

## Community Service

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions can be sent to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com) with the subject header In Service to the Community.

### Interfaith Communities Join Together to Help the Homeless this Holiday Season

Submitted by Jen Boxerman



Volunteers help serve dinner to over 30 guests at the 10th annual Winter Nights Shelter at Temple Isaiah.

Almost three years ago members of three Contra Costa faith communities, Temple Isaiah of Lafayette, San Ramon Valley Islamic Center and Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church came together to create Neighbor to Neighbor, an interfaith learning and action group dedicated to deepening ties between people of faith, identifying and discarding shallow stereotypes, and doing social justice work together in our community.

Activities have included study of each other's faiths, joint sponsorship of scholar lectures, worship at each other's services and participation in workshops on civil discourse. On Dec. 26 members of Neighbor to Neighbor, along with representatives from other Contra Costa faith communities provided and served dinner for the clients at the Mountain View Emergency Family Shelter in Martinez. Rabbi Judy Shanks of Temple Isaiah said, "This [was] the first small step of what we hope will be many opportunities for Neighbor to Neighbor to really to have an impact on the quality of life for all our neighbors as we join together to combat poverty, hunger and homelessness in concert with government agencies and other non-profits."

The interfaith community, including LOPC and Temple Isaiah, also comes together to host some of our county's homeless on their campuses during the coldest months of the year through Contra Costa Interfaith Housing's program Winter Nights Shelter.

The interfaith liaison at San Ramon Valley Islamic Center, Hina Khan-Mukhtar, really appreciates the shared values among the three Abrahamic faiths. "It's important to all of us to show gratitude for our blessings and then to also share those blessings with others who may not be as fortunate we are. Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the East Bay have been able to break bread together on numerous occasions ... it's nice to now take that same generosity and try to fill the hearts and tummies of the homeless in our communities."

Terry Clark, of LOPC and coordinator of Neighbor to Neighbor among the three faiths noted, "The unfolding journey of our learning and sharing together over these past several years has served to deepen all of our own faiths while enjoying the values and beliefs common among each of us, leading our faith communities inevitably together to identify common concerns where we can collectively engage in cooperative efforts on behalf of those disadvantaged or in need. The Dec. 26 shelter dinner became an obvious opportunity to address one of those concerns in the East Bay area, and it's a joy to experience the enthusiasm of all the participants in this common effort to help others less fortunate."

For information about Mountain View Emergency Shelter in Martinez, a service of Shelter, Inc. Contra Costa, visit [www.shelterincofccc.org](http://www.shelterincofccc.org). Learn more about Winter Nights Shelter, a service of Contra Costa Interfaith Housing, at [www.ccinterfaithhousing.org](http://www.ccinterfaithhousing.org).



Aliza Metzner interacts with Winter Nights youth during her family's stay at Temple Isaiah.



Phyllis Ceasar, Shirley Bolton and Judy Berg help serve dessert for Winter Nights guests at Temple Isaiah. Photos provided

### Moraga Rotary Sends Christmas Stockings to Children at Juvenile Hall

Submitted by Gary Irwin



Moraga Rotarians, spouses, and friends celebrate the completion of approximately 300 Christmas stockings. Photos provided

On Christmas Day, about 300 children currently held in Juvenile Hall received a gift of their own Christmas stocking which had been cut, sewn, decorated, and filled by Rotary Club of Moraga along with spouses, friends, and Campolindo Interact Club members. Treats in the stockings included a deck of cards, a pair of socks, puzzle books, candies, shampoos, soaps, and cosmetics. In many cases, these stockings are the only Christmas gifts these children received.

In early November, several Rotarians and friends joined with girls at Juvenile Hall to decorate the stockings with colorful glitter glue. Each stocking was uniquely and creatively designed. This year, eligible girls were able to decorate their own personal stocking. Many Moraga Country Club residents donated their

leftover Halloween candy for the stockings, and Joan Bruzzone donated funds for 100 dozen cookies to be given to the children while they received their gifts.

Coordination of this project was led by Janet Young, the executive director of the Juvenile Hall Auxiliary, working with Moraga Rotarians Barbara Bruner and Debbie Roessler. Rotary Club of Moraga has conducted this Christmas stocking project for more than a decade.

Rotary Club of Moraga is a local service club within Rotary International that meets most Tuesdays at noon at Saint Mary's College. For information about participating, please call Frank May of Moraga Rotary at (925) 376-8195.



Stocking stuffing assembly line workers. Facing camera, from left: Linda May, Carol Irwin, Mary Caburi, Suzanne Costanza, Ron Schopke, and Herb Wehmeyer.

### Successful One Warm Coat Drive

Submitted by Corinna Sossano



Photo provided

The Lamorinda Soccer Club U11 Girls Navy team made this winter a little warmer for other families by collecting 64 coats, which were picked up Dec. 26 by the Women's Daytime Drop-In Center in Berkeley.

### Local Students Work to Make a Difference During Holidays

Submitted by Stacy Giglio

While many local residents were caught up in the fever of the holiday season, local students at area schools decided to work to make a difference. Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School "adopted" classes from Cambridge and Fair Oaks Elementary Schools in Concord. Camino Pablo Elementary School's student council sponsored the Pennies for Patients program, which raises money for leukemia/lymphoma research. The student council chose this organization because they "want to help, to remember and to honor staff, students, families and friends whose lives have been touched by cancer." Rheem Elementary School kindergarten through third

graders provided holiday cheer to the children and mothers at the Women's Drop-In Center in Berkeley, while fourth graders collected spare change to benefit the Heifer Project, and fifth graders supported the current relief effort in the Philippines. Los Perales Elementary School again held their annual Toys for Tots program, and also raised \$420 in their "Chores for a Cause" campaign to support those affected by the recent typhoon in the Philippines by helping with chores around the house and the neighborhood. KTVU (Channel 2) matched these donations and \$840 has now been donated to The Red Cross to provide assistance and relief.



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