

Community Service

Community Members Restore Local Creek Habitat

Submitted by Emily Mathews



Community members hard at work transplanting native Santa Barbara sedge plants. From front to back: Sam McGonigle, Patsy Dinstell, and Larry Zedaker Photo provided

Sanders Ranch community members joined the Sanders Ranch Homeowners Association and The Restoration Trust Nov. 15 at a hands-on restoration project on a section of stream bank. Led by a team of biologists, volunteers helped remove non-native plants and plant native sedges and rushes.

The restoration work provides habitat for many native plants and animals, increases plant cover, which reduces erosion and sedimentation, and improves water quality.

Mike McGonigle and his son Sam were two of the participants. Mike especially liked the planting work and said that the event "... was a great opportunity to meet new neighbors and restore our creek at the same time."

Mike Dinstell, a HOA board member and organizer of the restoration project, noted that "The Sanders Ranch Homeowners Association supports restoration of our creeks and we're

glad to be able to organize events such as this. It's also great to get out during a break in the weather and do some planting that will help stabilize creek banks and provide wildlife habitat."

The project coincides with the completion of the reconstruction of two culverts in the Sanders Ranch creek system. The culverts had been inspected recently and discovered to be on the point of failing. With the assistance of California Department of Fish and Wildlife staff, the HOA was able to receive permits for the work in time to get it done before the winter rains. Stan Roth, head of the Ranch Creeks committee, said that "we couldn't have done this important work without the help of CDFW staff."

The Restoration Trust is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting native habitat restoration, stewardship, and education in central California. More information can be found at therestorationtrustonline.org.

Moraga Rotary Awarded Certificate of Appreciation from County Juvenile Hall Auxiliary

Submitted by Gary Irwin



Moraga Rotarians, spouses, and friends gather around about 300 decorated and stuffed Christmas stockings to be given to children in Juvenile Hall. Photos Carol Irwin

Rotary Club of Moraga was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by Janet Young, executive director of the Contra Costa County Juvenile Hall Auxiliary, an organization that aids the boys and girls incarcerated there. The award was accepted by Rotarian Barbara Bruner, the community services chair for several years, on behalf of the club.

This is the 18th year that Moraga Rotary has provided about 300-320 children at Juvenile Hall with handmade and decorated Christmas stockings filled with presents such as candy, a pair of socks, a deck of cards, puzzle books, soaps, shampoos, and other cosmetics. The stockings were cut and sewn by Moraga Rotarians, spouses, and friends; girls at Juvenile

Hall participated in the decorating of the stockings with original designs in glitter glue. This year, stockings were given to about 30 girls and 270 boys on Christmas Day, along with many dozens of cookies which were donated by Joan Bruzzone. In some cases, the stocking was the only present these children received. The program was originated by Rotarians Jim and Linda Campbell.

Rotary Club of Moraga is a local service club within Rotary International, one of about 33,000 Rotary Clubs in about 200 countries. Regular meetings are held on most Tuesdays at the Soda Center at Saint Mary's College. For further information, call Frank May at (925) 376-8195, or check out moragarotary.org.



Working the stocking stuffing line, from left: Ron Schopke, Janet Gregory, Marilyn Simonsen, Al Simonsen, Suzanne Costanza, Linda May, Roger Gregory, and Joan Ulrich

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 with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Girl Scouts Adopt a Family

Submitted by Karen Watson



Photo provided

Girl Scout Troop 30095 of Glorietta Elementary School (troop leader, Diane Acevedo) participated in the annual Adopt a Family with Shelter Inc. The gifts were delivered to Shelter Inc. Dec. 13 for a family of two: a mom and her 11-month-old daughter. From left, front row: Ava Caballero, Anaya Budayr, Samantha Scott, Sophia Acevedo, Anna Watson, Allyna Bagga; back row: Maddy Ng, Aubrey Rosso and Eva Santos

Outpouring of Love and Support Continues Through the Holidays

Submitted by Jen Boxerman



Photo Michael Fox

Temple Isaiah volunteers serve dinner to Contra Costa County families in need during Winter Nights Rotating Family Shelter, a project of the Social Justice Alliance of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County. For more information about the program, visit cccwinternights.org.

Assistance League of Diablo Valley's Operation School Bell Receives Donation from Wells Fargo

Submitted by Betty Miller



Wells Fargo-Walnut Creek Bank Manager Lori Noia, left, presents check to Assistance League of Diablo Valley President Veronica Gant, Vice President Resource Development Wendy Schmitz, and Grants Chairman Susan Angle. Photo provided

Assistance League of Diablo Valley has been serving the Contra Costa community since 1967. One of its nonprofit hands-on programs, Operation School Bell, has provided new clothing and shoes to elementary school children since 1994. When young, lifelong learners receive such items as two pairs of pants for boys and optional skorts for girls, three polo shirts, one sweatshirt, six pairs of socks and underwear; improved school attendance, campus citizenship and overall performance result.

While accepting a check in the amount of \$5,000 from Wells Fargo-Walnut Creek Bank Manager Lori Noia at a recent meeting, Assistance League of Diablo Valley President Veronica Gant expressed appreciation for continued generosity from the champions of "strength and stability."

With financial contributions and staffing support from corporations like Wells Fargo, Operation School Bell, which is the largest Assistance League of Diablo Valley's community-based program, furthered a successful learning experience for more than 4,200 local schoolchildren in 2013-14 alone. To date, Operation School Bell member volunteers have clothed 3,655 children in the Mt. Diablo and Pittsburg school districts. Succinctly worded, "Together, we'll go far!"

To learn about Assistance League of Diablo Valley's eight other philanthropic programs and its recently awarded GuideStar Exchange gold participation level status, please visit diablovalley.assistanceleague.org or the GuideStar Exchange.