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Santa makes breakfast rounds in Moraga before the big day

By Vera Kochan



Children give Santa some drawings during the Dec. 19 Breakfast with Santa event at the Hacienda de Las Flores in Moraga. Photo Vera Kochan

How many kids can say that they've had breakfast with Santa Claus? Thanks to Moraga's Parks and Recreation Department, on Dec. 19 a few more kids - and their parents - could check this item off their Bucket List.

The Hacienda de Las Flores, decorated for the holidays, provided a breakfast of pancakes, sausages, bacon, fruit, mini-muffins, hot cocoa and orange juice catered by Sunrise Bistro and served by the Moraga Youth Involvement Committee disguised as elves. Starbucks generously provided the coffee.

Parks and Rec Director Breyana Brandt, her daughter Layla (12), and Recreation Coordinator Donald Scully were on hand to keep things running smoothly during the three breakfast seatings. Approximately 150 guests enjoyed the festivities in either of two dining rooms decked out with red and white tablecloths and strategically placed red poinsettias. Over 120 people remained on the waiting list of the popular event that was skipped last year due to COVID mandates.

When Santa arrived with his sack full of candy canes to mingle with the breakfasting guests, children were either terrified, mesmerized or conversationally occupied with the man of the hour. Some even gifted Santa with handmade pictures they colored at home; expressing their love through art, from the heart.

After breakfast, Santa sat in a comfy chair next to the Christmas tree as children lined up to sit on his lap for a photo op and the traditional hint of what they'd like to see under their tree on Christmas morning. One parent asked if it was okay for the kids to take off their masks for the picture, to which Scully replied, "Sure, Santa got his booster shot from every country possible."

While a few kids were hesitant to approach Santa on an up-close-and-personal level (because meeting one's idol can be a bit daunting), the moment he asked them what they wanted ol' Saint Nick to deliver, the verbal floodgates opened and entire lists were rattled off without hesitation. Better add a U-Haul to that sled, Santa!

Reach the reporter at: vera@lamorindaweekly.com

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