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Family Gingerbread House Building event brings out the architect in everyone

By Vera Kochan

The Enfield family architects hard at work Photos Vera Kochan

The Moraga Parks and Recreation Department initiated Family Gingerbread House Building three years ago, but COVID mandates made group gatherings an impossibility for the first two years. Instead, the all-in-one kits were sold for families to assemble in the safety of their own homes. This year the Dec. 4 "construction site" was held at the Hacienda de las Flores' Casita building.

Recreation Supervisor Jasmine Bateson said that the sold-out event expected to see 45 families in three time slots, build gingerbread houses decorated with pretzels, gum drops, mini-marshmallows, peppermint candy, M&Ms, licorice, green or red frosting, and more for a price of $35 per family and $20 for each additional house.

As can be expected, the younger participants ate more of the decorations than they put on their houses. One father was heard saying to his daughter, "We're not here to eat; we're here to build."

Any parents who brought toddlers ended up creating the dream houses by themselves as their youngsters happily watched while munching on the candy (er, the building supplies). No one seemed put out by the turn of events. If anything, the adults appeared to be enjoying their own creativity even as the stock seemed to noticeably dwindle in record time - a clear case of supply and demand.

One builder, Layla (5), had constructed gingerbread houses at home before. She planned on using all of her will-power by not eating the day's masterpiece, but rather putting her latest endeavor near the fireplace by the Christmas tree, at least for one day. Her sister, Sofia (2), alas, fell victim to the munchies.

The Stewart family builds their gingerbread houses Photos Vera Kochan

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back