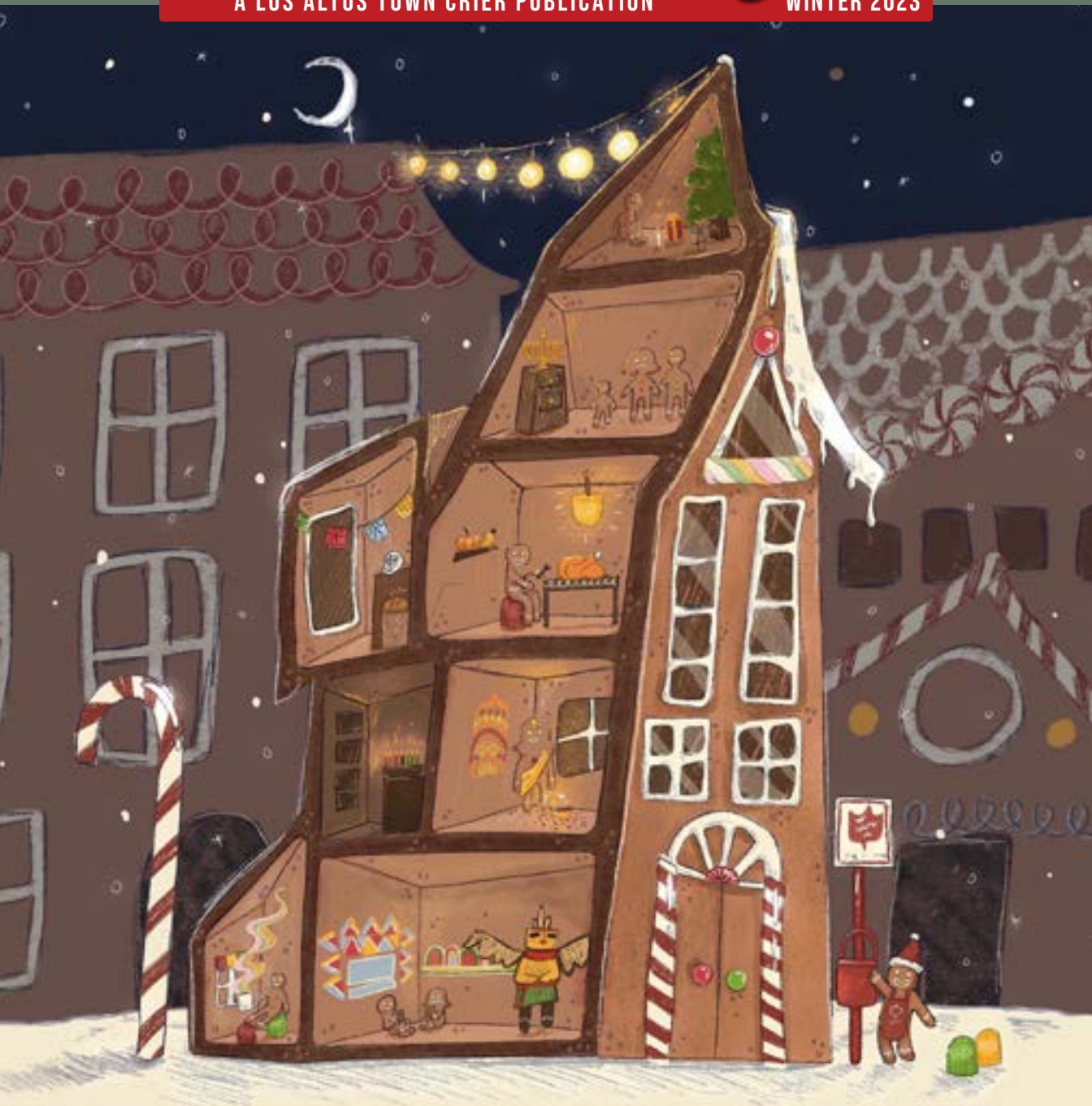


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A LOS ALTOS TOWN CRIER PUBLICATION

WINTER 2023



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A LOS ALTOS TOWN CRIER PUBLICATION • WINTER 2023



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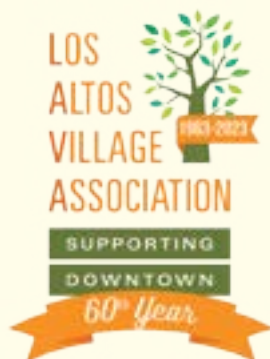
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Dear Santa,

What I want for Christmas this year is to help spread the giddy excitement I felt at 8 years old waking up on Christmas morning. Heart pounding and hands shaking, I was up at the crack of dawn, eager for my parents to wake up so I could run into the living room and see what you brought down the chimney.

No longer 8 years old, it's harder to find that sense of pure joy during the holidays. I feel like joy comes in smaller, spread-out doses as an adult, rather than one big rush on Christmas morning.

As an adult, holidays often become a time to reflect back on the year and to celebrate its high points. I know for me, reporting for the Town Crier and giving back to the community I grew up in has given me so much joy. It's provided me a newfound appreciation for a town I once took for granted. And it's shown me that local journalism can do more than report on facts – it touches hearts.

So, Santa, within the pages of this magazine, you'll find different ways some people experience holiday joy – whether it's through treating your friends and family to a delicious feast, donating gifts and necessities to those in need, listening to some acoustic holiday tunes or cracking a pint of holiday beer. My Christmas wish is for you to help me distribute this magazine to our local communities so that they, too, can experience holiday joy.

Happy holidays,

Adrienne Mitchel



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MERRY

multicourse meal

A Christmas dinner party is all about preparation

BY CHRISTINE MOORE
SPECIAL TO THE TOWN CRIER

In my 20s, I traveled with a group of friends to Greece. Dinners on that trip provided my first experience with a meze meal – 10 or more flavorful dishes served on sharable platters that ramble out in no particular order over an extended period of time.

Offered up in tavernas that felt like homes, they were the meals of my dreams come true. With patios complete with creeping vines and meandering cats, it wouldn't be uncommon for a bowl of figs and cheese to appear after the grilled-fish course, or for fried potatoes to arrive as one of the last plates of the meal.

A meze-style meal is a manner of entertaining that I have often replicated. Not necessarily with Greek flavors, but the concept of family-style courses

served throughout an evening around a dining table is equal parts comfortable and celebratory. Luxurious, abundant and relaxed, it is a style of entertaining that will make for the dreamiest and most memorable meal you and your lucky guests will enjoy this season.

Our friends range from helpfully right on time to happily late. I have a bowl of spiced pecans and flutes of champagne ready for all as soon as welcome kisses are bestowed and coats and bags are thrown on our bed. This initial bite and sip are all that will be offered to start.

Once we have the entire dinner party assembled, we make our way to the dining table. Before we sit, I enjoy noticing how friends pause for a moment and take in the table. Festooned with simple but festive decor, candlelight, bottles of wine and trays of food, it's clear this is a celebration we can settle in for.

Just off of our compact kitchen, our long and narrow dining room is perfectly positioned for my popping in and out to grab a course. I have no problem with an interactive environment. Often guests follow me to continue a conversation started tableside as I pull things out of the oven or refrigerator. They'll grab a dish on their way back to the table for sharing.

A successful shareable, multicourse meal is all about preparation. Using a combination of store-bought items and make-aheadish dishes, the hosts are able to relax along with their guests. Wines are opened throughout the evening, and both still and sparkling water are always available. In addition to the recipes I'm sharing here, we'll enjoy an array of store-bought nibbles, a beet and goat cheese salad, stuffed portobello mushrooms and slow-roasted citrus salmon. ➤

What to Drink

Champagne is the little black dress of wines – pairing with everything from hollandaise sauce to wedding cake. As such, Champagne will work as a pairing for every course of this Christmas dinner. If you are looking to offer a few options, I love a Rioja for a red and a dry Chenin Blanc for a white option.

PHOTO BY SHELLY BOWERS. This holiday feast is inspired by meze-style meals in Greece, where dishes are served throughout the evening.





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Brussels Sprout, Bacon, Blue Cheese and Apple Salad



This salad relies on familiar flavors put together in a new way. I like that it can be served warm, because that allows me to make it just before guests arrive and have it ready to go when we sit to eat.

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 425 F. Line sheet pan with parchment paper. Toss brussels sprouts with some olive oil, salt and pepper, and pour onto one side of sheet pan. Add bacon to other side. Place in preheated oven and cook 10 minutes. If bacon is cooked to your liking, remove baking sheet from oven. Using tongs, lift bacon off and set aside. Mix brussels sprouts with bacon grease and put sheet back in oven to cook 20-25 minutes.

In the meantime, make dressing by adding 1 tablespoon olive oil, diced apples, celery, vinegar and maple syrup to small bowl. When brussels sprouts are cooked, remove from oven and add to serving platter. Allow to cool for a few minutes, then toss with dressing, apple and celery mixture. Add pine nuts and some blue cheese. Toss through. Add kale and gently toss. Finish by breaking bacon into large pieces and placing atop sprouts, scatter remaining blue cheese. Serve warm.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 pounds brussels sprouts, washed, trimmed and halved
- Olive oil
- 1 apple, washed and cut into bite-sized cubes
- 1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted
- 4 ounces blue cheese, crumbled into chunks
- 4 strips natural thick-cut bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1 celery stalk, washed and thinly sliced
- 5 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1/2 cup lacinato kale, finely chopped



Saffron Couscous

When it comes to grains to serve, it doesn't get much easier than couscous. It cooks up quickly and is the perfect accompaniment to all manner of dishes, from fish to beef and veggies. The addition of saffron to the basic couscous recipe creates a luxurious flare with its delicately earthy flavor and bright smattering of goldish-color scatter through the couscous.

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 F. Add broth, salt and oil or butter to saucepan and bring to boil. Add large pinch of saffron and let simmer 2 minutes.

In the meantime, pour couscous into oven-safe dish. Pour broth-saffron mixture over couscous and cover tightly with tinfoil. Set in oven 5 minutes.

Use fork to fluff couscous and serve.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 box couscous
- 2 cups broth
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon olive oil or butter
- 1 pinch saffron



Spanish Meatballs with Pan-Roasted Garlic and Cherry Tomatoes

Deeply flavorful and warming, I have yet to meet someone who doesn't like these meatballs. My family enjoys lamb. When I'm cooking for company and uncertain if they enjoy lamb, I'll use ground beef.

DIRECTIONS

Place first 8 ingredients into mixing bowl and combine with hands. Cover and rest in refrigerator 30 minutes if you have extra time.

With medium ice cream scoop, form 12-14 meatballs, roll with hands and set aside.

Heat grapeseed oil in cast-iron or nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. When oil begins to glisten, add meatballs. Brown on each side 4-5 minutes, turning carefully until all sides are browned.

Remove meatballs from pan and set aside. Pour all but 1 tablespoon of rendered fat from pan. Reduce heat slightly and add additional oil if needed. Add tomatoes, garlic and Aleppo pepper and cook 4 minutes, stirring periodically. Season with salt and black pepper, then add parsley and water.

Cover and simmer 15 minutes. Return meatballs to pan and simmer an additional 5-10 minutes.

Remove from heat. Finish with chopped parsley. ➤



INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds ground beef or lamb
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh mint, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons smoked Spanish paprika
- 2 teaspoons grapeseed oil
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 3-4 cloves garlic, finely sliced
- 1/2 teaspoon Aleppo pepper or red pepper flakes
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, finely chopped – plus extra for garnish
- 1/2 cup water
- Kosher salt
- Fresh-cracked black pepper

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Lemon Posset

I fell in love with this refreshing and bright British dessert on my first trip to the South of England. With just three ingredients, Lemon Posset makes an extraordinary holiday sweet. Serve it with fresh raspberries and your favorite Christmas sugar cookies, and you and your guests will be feeling merry and bright indeed.



DIRECTIONS

Slowly bring cream and sugar to boil in saucepan. Stir mixture regularly until sugar dissolves. Reduce heat to simmer and cook 3 minutes. Keep an eye on pot the entire time to prevent boiling over. Reduce heat as needed to keep gentle simmer going. Remove from heat.

Stir in lemon zest and juice and let mixture cool 10 minutes. Then pour into six individual ramekins or one large serving bowl if you prefer. Cover well with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator for at least a few hours but ideally overnight. ❁

*Christine Moore is a Mountain View resident.
To read her blog, visit writeyum.com.*



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 3/4 cups sugar
- Zest of one lemon
- 5 tablespoons lemon juice from 2-3 lemons
- Fresh raspberries, washed for serving



*Wishing you and your family
the best of the holidays!*



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Helping hand

Donation opportunities abound in local community

BY KARINA ARONSON
TOWN CRIER EDITORIAL INTERN

As the leaves on trees turn golden and fall to the ground and holiday lights begin to line rooftops, giving back to the community crosses many residents' minds. A host of charitable programs, run by police and fire departments or nonprofits, serve local youth and their families. Read on to find out how to give back.

COPS & GOBBLERS

The Mountain View Public Safety Foundation has scheduled its annual Cops & Gobblers Thanksgiving food donation drive Nov. 19. Launched in 1997, the program funds delivery of food baskets, gift cards and stuffed animals to approximately 500 local families' doorsteps. Because the families are selected by police officers, local school districts and Community Services Agency of Mountain View, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills, the majority of families do not know they will be receiving a basket beforehand, according to MVPSF executive director Amber Wilson.

"It's such a blessing to see the happiness and joy it brings when you get to bring the basket to their house and see them light up and wonder why they're receiving this gift," she said. The foundation seeks volunteers to help assemble and deliver food baskets 9 a.m. Nov. 19 at the Mountain View Police and Fire Building, 1000 Villa St. Volunteers do not need to register for the event. ➤



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In addition, MVPSF is accepting financial donations, gift cards and new or gently used stuffed animals online or at the Police and Fire Building.

To donate and for more information, visit mvpsf.org/programs/cops-gobblers.

WINTER COAT DRIVE

The Los Altos Police Department is set to begin its winter coat drive Nov. 16. The donation program, which runs through Dec. 15, collects new coats for children ages 4-13. The jackets will be distributed to low-income elementary and junior high students in the Los Altos School District.

Donations may be dropped off during business hours in the police department lobby, 1 N. San Antonio Road. There will also be collection bins at the Holiday Tree Lighting Dec. 1 in downtown Los Altos, the Los Altos Holiday Market Dec. 7 and 14, and the police department's holiday event Dec. 12 in the Grand Oak Room of the Los Altos Community Center.

For more information, call the police department at (650) 947-2770.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMBER WILSON. Roughly 125 volunteers helped assemble and deliver baskets to families at last year's Cops & Gobblers event.

HOPE'S CORNER HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

Mountain View nonprofit Hope's Corner accepts new toy, sock, book and gift card donations appropriate for babies, children and teens. Donations for the annual holiday toy drive may be dropped off 8-10:30 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays Dec. 2-13 at Hope's Corner, 748 Mercy St.

Hope's Corner is primarily run by volunteers, so those involved with the organization seek volunteers to help register families and collect donations as well as to help run the toy giveaway event Dec. 17.

"I don't know if people realize that for our neighbors who are working one or two jobs, it's hard to make ends meet," said Alice Cota, head of volunteers. "Parents have to decide whether they're going to buy toys or food or pay the rent or pay medical bills. And all this just goes to help parents provide something fun and extra for their kids."

For more information, visit hopes-corner.org/holiday-toy-drive.

COPS THAT CARE

Through Dec. 22, the Mountain View Police Department accepts new and unwrapped gifts such as books, stuffed animals and toys for its Cops That Care toy drive. The department also accepts gift cards, checks and online donations. Toys and financial donations can be dropped off at the Mountain View Police and Fire Building lobby at 1000 Villa St. Online donations are accepted through Roonga.

Department members will set up a mini toy store for kids to shop for holiday gifts prior to Christmas.

Since 2002, the toy drive has served 1,300 low-income families in the community, according to Youth Services Unit coordinator Elizabeth Mendez. ❄️

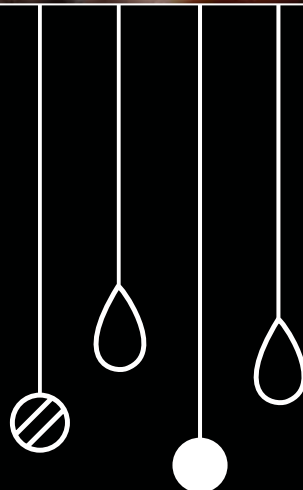
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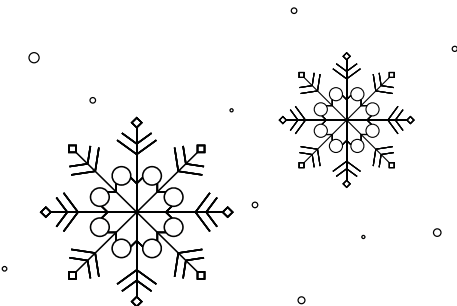
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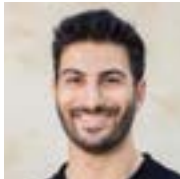
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Coping at Christmas



How to navigate
estrangement from family

BY DR. DANIELLE KAMIS
SPECIAL TO THE TOWN CRIER



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The holiday season is often portrayed as a time of joy, togetherness and cherished family gatherings. However, for those who are estranged from their families, this time of year can bring a unique set of challenges and emotional turmoil. Below, we will explore the difficulties individuals facing family estrangement encounter during the holidays and provide insights on how to cope, with expert advice from a psychiatrist.

Understanding family estrangement

Family estrangement occurs when one or more family members voluntarily distance themselves from one another, often due to unresolved conflicts, misunderstandings or issues that have grown over time. While estrangement can be a healthy choice for some, it can be incredibly challenging during the holiday season, as the desire for connection and belonging is heightened.

Challenges

Among the challenges faced by those estranged from family during the holidays:

- **Loneliness and isolation.** Estranged individuals may experience a profound sense of loneliness and isolation during the holidays. Seeing others come together with their families can exacerbate feelings of sadness and alienation. ➤



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- **Guilt and shame.** Many individuals dealing with estrangement from their families may grapple with guilt and shame, particularly during a season that emphasizes forgiveness and reconciliation. They may question their own actions or feel judged by others for not “making amends.”
- **Triggers and emotional resurfacing.** The holiday season can trigger painful memories and unresolved emotions, causing distress and anxiety. Old wounds may resurface, leading to increased stress and emotional turmoil.
- **Coping with unwanted advice.** Well-meaning friends and acquaintances often offer unsolicited advice, urging estranged individuals to reconcile with their families. This pressure can be overwhelming and create additional stress.

Coping strategies

The following strategies can help individuals cope during the holidays.

- **Self-compassion.** A board-certified psychiatrist emphasizes the importance of self-compassion. “It’s essential to be kind to yourself during the holidays, especially if you’re estranged from your family,” the psychiatrist advised. “Remember that your feelings



are valid, and you are not alone in experiencing this challenge.”

- **Create new traditions.** Consider creating your own holiday traditions or spending the holidays with chosen family or friends who provide a supportive and loving environment. Embracing new experiences can help counteract feelings of loss and loneliness.
- **Seek professional help.** If you find yourself struggling with emotional distress or unresolved issues related to estrangement, it’s crucial to reach out to a mental health professional. Therapy can provide a safe space to explore your feelings and develop coping strategies.
- **Set boundaries.** Establishing clear boundaries with those who may pressure you to reconcile can be empowering. Politely but firmly communicate your needs and limits, and don’t feel obligated to explain or defend your choices. ➤

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**Downtown offers array
of stores for seasonal gifts**

BY SOPHIA YAO
TOWN CRIER EDITORIAL INTERN

The holidays are right around the corner, and thus it’s time to commence the chaotic hustle and bustle of holiday shopping. With such a wide variety of products on the market, it may be difficult to figure out where to begin.

For those who want to shop local, there are three stores in downtown Los Altos to consider. ➤

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CRANBERRY SCOOP

Cranberry Scoop, a gift boutique at 295 State St., offers a wide variety of seasonal products. The store, which has been a staple of Los Altos since the 1970s, is also known for its festive window displays every year that go up in early November.

Cranberry Scoop owner Ellen Biolsi said some of the most popular holiday gifts every year are wrapping paper, seasonal ornaments and products from the store's local section, which feature Los Altos-based designs and graphics on them. This year, Biolsi expects some more niche products to be popular as well.

"We already have the Christmas paper out, the Christmas cards, and people are already buying them," she said. "We have Shimmers, which are like these water globes that light up, and one thing that I expect to be popular this year are the pickleball ornaments."

Biolsi added that the product she's most excited about is a new light-up tree topper.



"It's actually like a globe that lights up and you can play music with it," she said. "It has Santa inside and it snows and there are these three reindeer that are going around in a circle when it's on."

One of the other appeals of Cranberry Scoop is that it's a neighborhood store with a personalized feel, according to Biolsi.

"People come in and they run into their friends," she said. "I try really hard to find people different items and to make (holiday shopping) a good experience."

For more information, visit thecranberryscoop.com.



BK COLLECTIONS

BK Collections, a gift store at 342 State St., sells collectibles, jewelry, handmade products and home decor pieces, among many other items.

The shop celebrated its 45th anniversary in August. Store owner and founder Belinda Chung, who has been heavily involved in the Los Altos community for years, said some



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of the shop's most popular products include Christopher Radko's hand-painted and felt holiday ornaments, which some customers collect over the years, and festive home decor.

"We have some people who have actually been buying (these ornaments) for three generations, which is really awesome," Chung said. "We also have holiday-related home decor pieces, so that people can have festive decorations when the family is gathered – especially since we're at the end of COVID-19, so people are starting to get together."

One distinctive gift offering from BK Collections is its customizable wellness packages, which include locally grown health and beauty products.

"We'll put together a wellness basket with elderberry preserves and syrup, with a couple of candles," Chung said. "We also have locally grown honey, which is grown in Gilroy. When you have local honey, it helps people who have allergies because the flowers and the pollen that's collected locally will

make the immune system stronger."

Chung added that some of the customizations that can be made to the wellness baskets include food products such as locally made biscotti and fine tea.

According to Chung, BK Collections also offers personalized services, and employees remember returning customers and what they had purchased the past year.

"We actually have gentlemen that come in here every year to buy something for their significant others, and then we try not to repeat anything," she said. "We know people by their first names, and we're very fortunate that people have been supporting us, too." ➤

For more information, visit bkcollectionslosaltos.com.



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PAPERWHIRL

Paperwhirl, a gift and stationery shop at 151 Main St., is known for its custom packaging and quirky gifts and products. The shop opened in Los Altos in 2012 and carries everything from trinkets to designer products.

Store co-owner Christine Chang said it’s difficult to pinpoint the store’s most popular gifts because of its wide range of products and customers. Some unique gifts that customers have enjoyed include charcuterie kits, collectible mice toys, Baggallinni and Mywalit handbags, board games, reversible rain jackets and Sugarfina candy.

However, if Chang could pick one item that has been particularly popular, it would be Paperwhirl’s miniature speaker.

“Our best-selling item through the years, which we’ve carried for a number of years and continue to still: a little wireless speaker,” she said. “It’s about an inch and a half around, and it comes in different colors and the sound is incredible. One man compared it to his Bose speaker. ... Almost everyone who buys one comes back and gets more.” ➤





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Paperwhirl’s most well-known holiday products are its gift wrapping, Christmas cards and nutcrackers, Chang noted.

“We’re known for our selection of Christmas nutcrackers, and there are people who collect nutcrackers, but it’s also just a fun holiday decoration,” she said. “And we also do custom Christmas cards. ... Some clients have actually already ordered their Christmas cards.”

Chang added that Paperwhirl’s specialty is that there is something for everyone, especially from a pricing perspective.

“We have a wide range of products that cover everyone in your family, from price points as low as a dollar or two to a beautiful piece of jewelry for hundreds of dollars,” she said. ❄️

For more information, visit
paperwhirl.com.



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HOPS

for the holidays

SELECTING THE BEST CELEBRATION BREWS

As the weather gets colder, pumpkin brews on store shelves make way for beers brewed specifically for winter holiday celebrations.

California craft breweries have a long history of annual seasonal beer releases to celebrate Christmas, starting with Anchor Christmas Ale (RIP) in 1975, which in turn inspired Sierra Nevada's Celebration Ale starting in 1981. Anchor Christmas was traditionally a relatively low-alcohol-by-volume spiced ale, and Celebration is a classic IPA brewed with Cascade, Centennial and Chinook hops. Contrary to popular belief, Celebration's recipe has remained unchanged through its history, and annual flavor variations are due to characteristics of a given year's hop harvest.

In more recent years, many Christmas beers tend to be higher-alcohol style like barleywines, Belgian quads or imperial stouts, which provide a wonderful warming sensation on a cold winter's night. Another advantage of such high-alcohol beers is that they can continue to develop with age, unlike IPAs, lagers and other beer styles meant to be consumed fresh. At press time, 2023 Christmas beers were not yet available in stores, but your intrepid beer columnist was able to track down a couple of vintage 2022 bottles.



SANTA'S LITTLE HELPER

San Diego's Port Brewing Co. began annual bottled releases of Santa's Little Helper imperial stout in 2006, and the recipe has changed multiple times over the years. Since 2020, Santa's Little Helper has included additions of coffee and hazelnuts, amping up both the bitter, roasty character and the sweet notes of an already-luscious stout.

The beer pours a deep black color with garnet highlights and a relatively short-lived tan head. Elements of dark dried fruits, baking spices and semisweet cocoa dominate the aroma, and the coffee and hazelnut are both quite subdued. Pleasant coffee bitterness on the palate complements the moderately sweet dark fruit character to provide a balanced flavor. Hops do not stand out in the flavor or aroma. Hazelnuts are lost in the mix, perhaps due to aging, as I remember them being more prominent when I've had this beer fresh. The beer is full-bodied and velvety smooth in texture, with moderately low carbonation, and the finish is surprisingly delicate and smooth for a beer as strong as 9.9% ABV.

SANTA'S BRASS

Drake's Brewing Co. in San Leandro has been brewing Santa's Brass, its bourbon barrel-aged holiday barleywine since 2014. Despite the

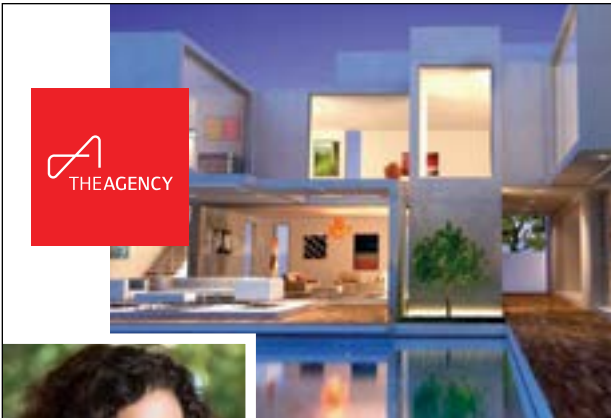


name, barleywines are not wines, nor do they include fermented grapes – they are strong ales made from malted barley like most other beers, and the name comes from the strength and complexity they offer.

The 2022 vintage of Santa’s Brass was a blend of barleywines aged in both whiskey barrels from St. George Spirits in Alameda and port barrels, and it weighs in at a generous 13.7% ABV. The full body of the viscous beer is apparent as it pours into a glass, and not much head forms atop the deep reddish-brown liquid with copper highlights. The aroma is boozy and malty, with notes of dark bread crust and toffee, but not overly sweet. Overall, aroma characteristics are subtle due to the minimal carbonation of the beer. On the palate, the beer is sweet but not cloying, with elements of burnt caramel, fruity port-like notes and distinct alcohol heat, which carries through into the long, smooth finish.

Wishing you and yours the warmth, coziness and comfort of rich, decadent holiday brews this winter. Cheers! 🌟

Derek Wolfgram is a Certified Beer Judge through the Beer Judge Certification Program and an officer of the Silicon Valley Sudzers homebrew club. For more information, visit sudzers.org.



Susan Sims

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Sounds of the Season

Instrumental albums provide
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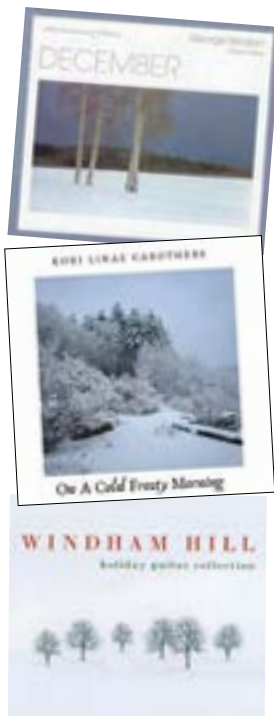
BY MARY LARSEN

STAFF WRITER/NEWSROOM@LATC.COM

From the new-age offerings of George Winston, Kori Linae Carothers and William Ackerman to the jazziness of Vince Guaraldi's classic "A Charlie Brown Christmas," if you enjoy acoustic guitar and piano, there's a lot to love here.

Whether used for background music or focused listening, these albums – ranging from recent to nearly 60 years old – will put a harmonious spin on your holidays.

- **Various artists, "Windham Hill Holiday Guitar Collection," 2006.** Artists include William Ackerman, Alex de Grassi, Sean Harkness and Steve Morse. Ackerman, one of the originators of new-age music, introduced many great artists through his Windham Hill label, originally based in Palo Alto. Tracks include "Christmastime Is Here," "Emmanuel" and "Carol of the Bells."



- **George Winston, "December" (solo piano), 1982.** The late acclaimed pianist Winston (d. 2023) recorded for the Windham Hill label, as well as his own Dancing Cat Records. Tracks include "The Holly and the Ivy," "Joy," "Thanksgiving" and "Carol of the Bells."
- **Kori Linae Carothers, "On a Cold Frosty Morning" (mostly piano), 2022.** A self-proclaimed "instrumental music escape artist," Carothers credits discovering the aforementioned Windham Hill Records as a tipping point in her career; two of her albums were recorded by Ackerman in his Imaginary Road Studios in Vermont. Tracks include "What Child Is This?" "Emmanuel" and "Gésu Bambino."
- **Vince Guaraldi Trio, "A Charlie Brown Christmas" (piano, bass, drum; choir on one track), 1965.** San Francisco jazz ➤



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- pianist Guaraldi's classic album never gets old. Tracks include "My Little Drum," "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," "O Tannenbaum" and "Christmas Is Coming."
- **Dave Brubeck, "A Dave Brubeck Christmas" (solo piano), 1996.** California-born jazz pianist Brubeck's Christmas album ranked among the best-selling jazz albums of 1997. Tracks include "O Tannenbaum," "Joy to the World" and "Winter Wonderland."
 - **Terry Disley Experience, "The Jazzcracker & Other Delights" (keyboards, bass, drums, percussion), 2007.** U.K.-born pianist and composer Disley is a longtime Bay Area resident and frequent performer at the Miramar Beach Restaurant in Half Moon Bay. Tracks include jazz variations on Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker Suite," "The Little Drummer Boy" and "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring."
 - **Jim "Kimo" West, "Kimo's Hawaiian Slack Key Christmas" (2008) and "Ki Ho'alu Christmastime" (2013).** Slack-key guitar master West, best known for his work with Weird Al Yankovic, transports the listener

- to the islands with a mix of traditional and Hawaiian Christmas music. Tracks include "Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella," "Kanikapila Christmas," "Deck the Halls" and "Mauna Kea Sleigh Ride."
- **John Fahey, "The New Possibility – John Fahey's Guitar Soli Christmas Record" (solo guitar), 1968.** This album remains the American folk guitar master's best-selling recording. Tracks include "Auld Lang Syne," "The First Noel," "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" and "Go, I Will Send Thee."
 - **Jeremiah Lockwood, "A Great Miracle – Guitar Soli Chanukah Album" (solo guitar), 2021.** Inspiration for this album came from guitar legend Fahey's 1968 Christmas album "The New Possibility" (see above). Eight tracks, one for each night of the Festival of Lights, include "Ritual," "Little Dreydl," "Maoz Tzur" and "Chanuka Oy Chanuka." ❀





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Holiday HAPPENINGS



Plays, ballets and concerts celebrate the season

A host of holiday-related local events and shows are on the horizon as winter approaches. A rundown of performances and activities follows.

NOV.
18
&
19



‘Elf, the Musical’

Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts
Nov. 18 and 19

Peninsula Youth Theatre kicks off the holiday season with “Elf The Musical.” Based on the popular 2003 movie, the comedic musical follows Buddy, a human raised as an elf, who discovers his true identity as he embarks on a quest to reconnect with his biological father in New York City. Through his infectious charm, Buddy manages to ignite the Christmas spirit in those around him, while also finding love and rekindling family bonds. Shows are scheduled 2 and 7:30 p.m. Nov. 18 and 1 p.m. Nov. 19. Tickets are \$25.

For more information, visit pytnet.org.

NOV.
26



Festival of Lights Parade

Downtown Los Altos
6-8 p.m. Nov. 26

The annual Festival of Lights Parade on Main and State streets features floats, decorations and live music that celebrate the holiday season, as well as an appearance by Santa Claus. Admission is free.

For more information, visit losaltosparade.org.

DEC.
1



Holiday Tree Lighting

Veterans Community Plaza, Los Altos
6-8 p.m. Dec. 1

Los Altos’ Holiday Tree Lighting ceremony takes place downtown at the intersection of Main and State streets. The annual event features musical performances by local school choirs. After lighting of the official city tree, Santa Claus makes an appearance at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free.

For more information, visit downtownlosaltos.org.



DEC.
1
through
3



‘The Nutcracker’

Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts
Dec. 1-3

Presented by Mountain View’s Western Ballet, the annual production of “The Nutcracker” is making its return just in time for the holidays. Tickets range from \$38 (children under 12) to \$43 (general admission). The performance, suitable for all ages, runs 90 minutes and includes an intermission.

For tickets and more information, visit tinyurl.com/yck7ptm9.

DEC.
3



Holiday Barn Lighting

Westwind Community Barn, Los Altos Hills
2-5 p.m. Dec. 3

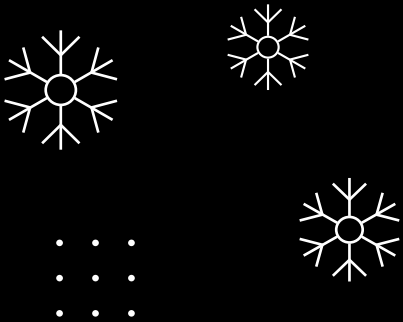
Westwind Community Barn, 27210 Altamont Road, hosts an afternoon of activities, including a petting zoo and crafts. After the barn lights up, Santa Claus makes an appearance. Local student groups perform traditional carols and holiday music. Admission is free.

For more information, visit tinyurl.com/4dfmedm9.

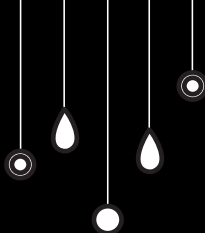
**‘Tis the Season
for Gratitude.**

Warmest wishes to you and yours
through this Holiday Season. Hope
it’s filled with new memories and
heartfelt celebrations.

Happy Holidays from the Sangsters.



Sangster Team
650.224.5295
teamsangster@compass.com
DRE 01856274 | DRE 01898271 | DRE 02074481



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DEC.
7
through
10



‘The Christmas Ballet’

Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts
Dec. 7-10

San Francisco’s Smuin Contemporary Ballet ushers in the holiday season with its production of “The Christmas Ballet.” It features two acts and a variety of dance styles. Tickets are \$24-\$99.

For tickets and more information, visit smuinballet.org.

DEC.
7
through
14



Holiday Market

Downtown Los Altos | 4-8 p.m. Dec. 7 & 14

The Holiday Market features holiday treats, baked goods, chocolate and more from some of the Los Altos Farmers’ Market vendors. The festivities also include live music and warm holiday drinks for shoppers. Admission is free.

For more information, visit downtownlosaltos.org.

DEC.
9



Pictures with Santa

Enchanté Boutique Hotel | 2-4 p.m. Dec. 9

Santa Claus takes time out of his busy holiday schedule to visit downtown Los Altos for a photo-taking session at Enchanté, 1 Main St. The event is free.

For more information, visit downtownlosaltos.org.

DEC.
15
through
17



‘Snow Queen’

Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts
Dec. 15-17

Mountain View-based dance academy school Bayer Ballet performs the two-hour “Snow Queen,” appropriate for all ages. The ballet, based on the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale, celebrates friendship, love and courage.

For tickets and more information, visit bayerballet.com.

DEC.
16



Family Fun Day

Los Altos Community Center | 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dec. 16

The Los Altos Parks & Recreation Department and the Los Altos Library host a winter-themed family fun day at the community center, 97 Hillview Ave. The free event includes games, crafts, movies, and more for the entire family to enjoy.

For more information, visit tinyurl.com/33zsz9ut.

Compiled by Prisha Mohapatra
TOWN CRIER EDITORIAL INTERN



Los Altos Town Crier

Holiday Fund 2023

The Los Altos Town Crier Holiday Fund was launched in 2000 to raise funds for hands-on nonprofits throughout Silicon Valley, particularly those serving families and children. Most recipient organizations rely on many volunteers and maintain low overhead in their efforts to touch the lives of those in need.

The Holiday Fund has raised more than four million dollars since its inception. The money has been distributed to local charities that tirelessly make a difference for families in our community with special needs, addressing education, literacy, social issues, food insecurity, mental health, drug abuse and general well being.

DONATE NOW!

Each year more than 400 local donors support the Fund. All contributions are tax deductible through our fiscal partner, the LAMV Community Foundation. Contribute by phone with a credit card at (650) 949-5908, online at www.losaltoscf.org/lafc-holiday-fund or by mailing a check made out to LAMV Community Foundation, with "LATCHF" on the memo line. Mail to LAMV Community Foundation, 183 Hillview Ave. Los Altos, CA 94022.

Contributions are 100% tax deductible and every dollar helps bring a smile to someone in our community.

HOLIDAY FUND RECIPIENTS

CHAC (Community Health Awareness Council)

Child Advocates of Silicon Valley

Community School of Music and Arts Artistic Intelligence Program

Community Services Agency - Keep Low Income Seniors Housed

Day Worker Center of Mountain View

Help One Child

Hidden Villa

Hope's Corner

Los Altos Youth Theatre/Los Altos Stage Company

Mentor Tutor Connection

MERIT Program (Making Education Relevant and Interactive through Technology)

Music for Minors

MVLA Scholars

Sky's The Limit Fund

Veterans Resource Center at Foothill College

WomenSV





The Town Crier wishes happy holidays to our readers, subscribers, advertisers and supporters. We appreciate all the support we've received. Thank you!

Here's to a wonderful 2024!

The Town Crier Staff

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CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

Your Los Altos Holiday Calendar

Festival of Lights Parade
November 26th 6-8pm

Holiday Tree Lighting
December 1st 6-8pm

Holiday Market
December 7th & 14th 4-8pm

Pictures with Santa
December 9th 2-4pm

Denise & Jack Welsh

Broker Associates

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