

First ever Tabor Sister City gingerbread house contest brings a big surprise



Photos Sora O'Doherty

"It's easier to build a house!" he proclaimed during an interview with Lamorinda Weekly. "It's gotta be exact." He works on his creative hobby every evening for a few hours, building with gingerbread, of course, and fondant, marzipan and pastillage. All the buildings are supported only with gingerbread. In the end, he has a big crashing party, where family and friends attack the gingerbread house with hammers and reduce it to rubbish.

One year he recreated a village in Alsace with seven different buildings after a visit there inspired him. Another year he built a replica of the three famous "Painted Ladies" Victorian homes in San Francisco.

His was the only entry in the adult category and of course won an Honorable Mention on Dec. 3. Winners in the 0-5 age category were Bennett Gagon (first); Sophie Rogers (second); Aria Soltani (third); Emery Gagon (honorable mention). The 6-10 winners were Eleana and Grayson (first); Timmy Rogers (second); and Jessica and Monica (third).

A short documentary about Rettig and his unusual hobby is on YouTube, and can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/mzsQncqa25w>

By Sora O'Doherty

When the Orinda-Tabor Sister City Foundation decided to celebrate the holiday season with a contest for builders of gingerbread houses, they probably never dreamed that they would get a stunning reproduction of scenes from Alice in Wonderland in the adult division. But that is exactly what hobbyist Russ Rettig has provided. The gingerbread confection, all strictly speaking edible (although according to Rettig, you actually wouldn't want to eat it) has Alice looking in at the wonderful world she found when she fell down the rabbit hole.

There is the Mad Hatter's Tea Party in one corner, the Queen of Hearts' Castle, where the roses are being painted red, the White Rabbit, Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee and the Cheshire Cat.

Rettig, who is a general contractor, tries to build his gingerbread constructions as close to life as possible. He builds one every year and has done so for the past 25 years. He doesn't have a website, doesn't build them for contests, but just to amuse his family and friends. Every year, he begins in July, with the goal of finishing just before Thanksgiving, so that the family can reclaim the dining room table.



Chabad of Lamorinda opens Bay Kosher grocery store

... continued from Page A7

He wants to adopt the idea of some New York kosher grocers who allow low-income families to have an account with the store so that they can shop in the store but when they check out, they are charged reduced prices based on their needs. Labkowsky says that this is an easier and more dignified way of doing things. "We will be introducing a special program that will allow for lower income families to receive food at greater discounts and at times, free of charge depending on the families need," Labkowsky said. "This is a revolutionary program that will help feed the poor and low-income families."

Although the discount plan will be available to all, the rabbi notes that kosher food will still cost more than ordinary supermarket prices, so will probably only be attractive to those who wish to keep kosher.

The grocery has a complete range of foods, including, milk, meat, bakery, dairy, and dry goods. Everything is kosher, either meat, dairy or parve (foods that can be served with

either meat or dairy). Over time and with the proper approvals, they hope to prepare food and have a deli section. The hours have not been finalized yet, but Labkowsky says that the store will be open a good part of every day and will have full-time staff. He says that other Chabads don't have groceries here, but some do in other parts of the world.

Labkowsky noticed that in the Bay Area, Jewish style foods and kosher foods in particular can be challenging to come across. "Whether it's kosher meat, brisket, steaks, lamb, turkey, etc., or fresh challah, bourekas, kugel, cheese, deli sandwiches, or ready Shabbat and Holiday food packages," and, he added, "that's not to mention the high price that tends to go with it if you could find it."

With the opening of this nonprofit market, the Labkowsky's goal is to provide the Jewish community with a large variety of Jewish style and kosher foods of the highest quality and freshness at low affordable prices as well as helping the less fortunate within the community.



rayrobinson.attorney/

PROBATE ATTORNEY

- Probate/Trust Administration
- Wills/Trusts
- Conservatorships
- Financial Elder Abuse
- Inheritance Disputes

www.rayrobinson.attorney
925-255-1640
 ray@rayrobinson.attorney





When I say "good," you say "neighbor."

Mike Rosa
Agent
925-376-2244
Insurance Lic. #: OF45583
346 Rheem Blvd., Suite 106
Moraga
P097314.1

Now that's teamwork.
CALL FOR A QUOTE 24/7



State Farm Home Office, Bloomington, IL

Living Skills Group

Every week we have a free-form sharing and learning session called "Group"

**Are you a young adult?
Did Covid set you back socially?
Feeling too isolated?**



Join our Living Skills Social Group
Once a week in Orinda.
www.aspennetwork.net



50% OFF

FOR 2 MONTHS ON SELECTED UNITS
GOOD 12/1/22 - 12/31/22

Hours of operation
Mon-Sat 9am -6pm
Office and Yard.
Or call for an appointment.



455 Moraga Rd. Ste. F
(925) 643-2026
www.5Aspace.com

