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After an early Thanksgiving, holiday events dominate December

By Sora O'Doherty



OIS students at last year's Hospice East Bay Tree of Lights event in Orinda. Lamo archive

Now that the turkey and fixings are put away, Lamorinda residents can turn their attention to the many holiday events planned in the area, starting with the return of Holiday Magic at Orinda's Theatre Square from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1. There will be a free kids ornament workshop from 6 to 7 p.m., followed by a performance by Lamorinda Theatre Academy at 7 p.m., ending with the 7:30 p.m. tree lighting. Throughout the event there will be free horse and carriage rides, as well as visits with Santa and photo opportunities.

Earlier on Dec. 1, at 4:30 p.m. in Orinda Village by the Bank of America, the Orinda Tree of Lights will be lit. For 32 years, Hospice East Bay Tree of Lights ceremonies have offered community members a way to honor the lives of friends and loved ones. Memorial names will not be read at this ceremony, which is part of the Orinda community holiday celebration. Lafayette's Tree of Lights ceremony will be held at 4:30 p.m. Nov. 29 in the Roundup Saloon parking lot, at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Lafayette Circle, and the Moraga tree lighting is scheduled at 5:30 p.m. Dec. 16 at the Moraga Country Club.

On Sunday, Dec. 9, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. toys will once again come to life at Orinda Theatre Square. Children are invited to meet their favorite characters, including: Belle, Elsa, Chase from the Paw Patrol and Spiderman, plus real live reindeer. There will also be a photo booth. Also at Theatre Square, Square Baby will

be collecting new diapers for victims of the recent fires. There will be a collection container outside their store. Lafayette has several holiday festivities planned on Dec. 9 as well (see stories on Page A3).

The Orinda Ballet Academy will once again present "A Sweet Dream Nutcracker," with performances on Dec. 7 at 6:30 p.m., Dec. 8 at 11:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., and Dec. 9 at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. at the Orinda Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way. Tickets for adults and children cost \$22 in advance or \$25 at the door, if available. Advance tickets can be purchased from brownpapertickets.com. There is also a Toys for Tots donation event planned in Moraga that day (see story on Page A4).

On Thursday, Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m. there will be a free movie screening of "A Christmas Story," presented by the California Independent Film Festival and Diablo Magazine and sponsored by Cine Cuvée.

On Sunday, Dec 16, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. families are invited to join members of the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation for a Czech cookie class in room number 4 in the Orinda Community Center. Participants will get a hands-on experience with traditional Czech cookie making and will be able to bring some home. The event, sponsored by Sokol S.F., costs \$10 per family.

Finally, while not quite holiday oriented, the Orinda City Council will honor outgoing Mayor Amy Worth and Council Member Dean Orr at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 11 at the Orinda Library. The meeting, which will feature the welcoming and swearing in of newly elected council members and selection of the 2019 mayor and vice mayor, will be followed by a reception.

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