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## **Public Meetings**

### **City Council**

Wednesday, Dec. 12, 7 p.m. Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### **Planning Commission**

Monday, Dec. 17, 7 p.m. Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd. **Design Review** 

## Monday, Dec. 10, 7 p.m. Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd. **School Board Meetings Moraga School District** Wednesday, Dec. 11, 7 p.m. Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga www.moraga.k12.ca.us See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements **Town of Moraga:** www.moraga.ca.us Phone: (925) 888-7022 **Chamber of Commerce:** www.moragachamber.org Moraga Citizens' Network: www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community. Send a letter to the editor: letters@lamorinda weekly.com



# **Students help teacher give Paradise hope**

# **By Vera Kochan**



**Rheem Elementary School teacher** Angie Guidi is shocked by outpouring of support. Photos Vera Kochan

ngie Guidi, a second grade teacher at Donald Rheem Elementary L School in Moraga, knows firsthand the devastation of the Paradise, California fires. She grew up there, and several of her family members lost their homes. Even though her aunt, uncle and cousins' houses and possessions are gone, her parents' home was spared. Guidi said, "Some businesses have survived. A building here and there, but Paradise is resilient and that's enough to give them the spirit to rebuild."

Guidi's students and their families the idea that they could help in the process. Spearheading the recovery endeavor was Kimberly Anderson, organizer and mom to one of Guidi's students.

Anderson spread the word for parents to buy gift cards to various stores and donate them to Paradise. Quickly gift cards from grocery stores, big box stores, clothing stores and even pet stores came pouring in. The gift cards would allow the Paradise fire victims the opportunity to make their own purchases for whatever they needed most.

The surprise presentation was to have taken place in Guidi's classroom, but schools were closed due to unsafe air quality. Instead, the Rheem Starbuck's played host on a smoky Nov. 16 morning.

The gift cards, representing blooms, were artfully arranged around two large plants - a Spider Plant and Peace Lily - which according to Anderson (and NASA) are nature's air filters. Several of Guidi's students, their parents and Rheem Principal Brian Sullivan were on hand for the surprise. Sullivan said, "Ms. Guidi has been a

special part of the Rheem com- I could fit things in it to donate to munity for over 10 years. I'm glad that we can provide her with a little bit of support in these very trying times."

Before Guidi's arrival, she was told that the kids wanted to help her hometown, but she had no idea what was planned. When presented with the "bouquets," she was visibly moved to tears. As late arriving students approached with handfuls of more gift cards and handmade tokens of affection, the spirit behind the gesture was intensified.

Amid the hugs and expressions of support, Guidi stated, "I have a small car and was wondering how

Paradise. These cards solved the problem!"

Guidi explained why she loves Moraga so much. "It reminds me of home. Paradise and Moraga have the same type of people. Neighbors supporting neighbors."

Donations of gift cards are still being accepted by anyone wishing to participate in the Paradise recovery efforts. Simply stop by the Donald L. Rheem Elementary School's administration office and let them know you're donating for Guidi's Paradise cause.

For information call (925) 376-4441.



# Holiday toy drive looking to top last year's success

## **By Vera Kochan**

n the spirit of the season, the a new, unwrapped toy or make a ation along with the Moraga Police d'oeuvres and good cheer will be Department is once again partnering with The Marine Toys For Tots throughout the United States.

day Toy Drive, takes place at 6 p.m. '90s," he said. "I count it as one of Friday, Dec 7 at the Hacienda De the most important and satisfying mately 75 people attended the event Las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive, in endeavors in which I have partici- last year and were very generous in the event can be seen at the town toys for children, with the remain-Moraga.

Moraga Police Officer's Associ- cash donation. Beer, wine, hors provided to all who drop by.

That type of determination gave

Moraga Police Det. Kevin Program, to bring joy to less fortu- Mooney is this year's event organate children in the community and nizer. "I have been involved with the Toys for Tots program since my This year's second annual Holi- Marine Corps Reserve days in the

Last year, six Toys for Tots boxes were filled with all types of toys. Cash contributions totaled a little over \$5,500. Toy drive organizers are hoping to double those numbers this year. Even one extra toy or dollar can go a long way to needy child.

donations for the food or beverages 888-7056. would be greatly appreciated.

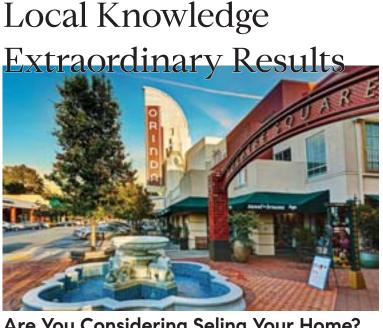
If you can't make it to the festivities, but would still like to donate new, unwrapped toys or cash, please drop them off at the Moraga Police Department, 329 Rheem making the holidays happy for a Blvd. If you'd like to donate on- the program has donated over 548 line, go to the Toys for Tots web- million toys to over 251 million

According to Mooney, "The Toy for Tots program began in Southern California in 1947, and became a nationwide Marine Corps Reserve program in 1948." He proudly stated, "Since that time, children. Ninety-seven percent of Additional information about donations go directly to providing

Attendees are asked to donate cause."

Mooney noted that approx1- site: www.toysfortots.org.

pated. A great program for a great supporting the cause. And while of Moraga website: www.mora- ing 3 percent going mostly to fundvolunteers are no longer needed, ga.ca.us. Or call Mooney at (925) raising efforts."





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