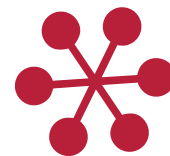


2 Holiday

■ CALENDAR
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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

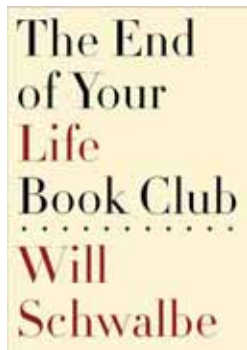
Local booksellers' top picks for 2012

Staff members from Books Inc., Kepler's, list their year's favorites

The Palo Alto Weekly asked local booksellers Kepler's and Books Inc. to recommend their staff's top five picks for 2012.

Here are some of their favorites.

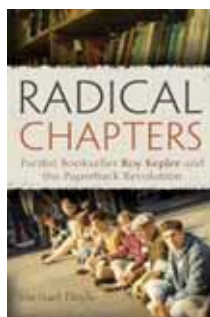
"End of Your Life Book Club," by Will Schwalbe, Knopf: If you are an avid reader and love books, you will love this one. It's a non-fiction story about a mother going through chemo for pancreatic cancer and her journalist son. They share books and their outlooks on life as she goes through her treatments. Each chapter deals with one of the books they shared, and the variety is amazing. It is very much about what they learn from each other. I loved this book and will read some of the featured books I have not read. (Nancy Salmon, Kepler's)



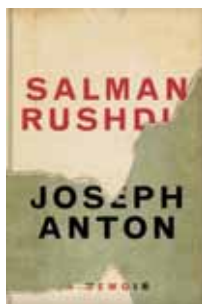
"Gone Girl," by Gillian Flynn, Crown: A delightfully twisted thriller centered on the discordant marriage of the strikingly smart child book-series star, Amy, and the charming, Midwestern bred Nick. The story starts with Amy's disappearance, and suspicion immediately falls on the husband. While the police are investigating, the reader learns when and how Amy and Nick fell in love, living fabulously as successful writers in New York City. Then the economy collapses, both lose their jobs and realize they're on the brink of bankruptcy. Nick takes Amy back to his hometown in Missouri, using the last of Amy's trust fund money to start up a bar. In essence, no one is happy with this situation, save perhaps Nick's sister Go. The secrets start with a trickle and build to a full-on flood. The story is clever, the telling is exciting and the end is masterful. (Tanya Landsberger, Books Inc.)



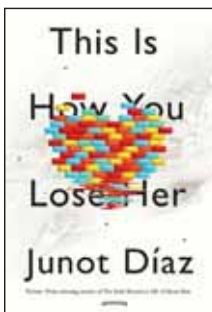
"Radical Chapters: Pacifist Bookseller Roy Kepler and the Paperback Revolution," by Michael Doyle, Syracuse University Press: Dense with local history, this well-researched biography celebrates Roy Kepler's life as a conscientious objector, peace activist and bookseller. Stories from the time when Jerry Garcia, Joan Baez and Ira Sandperl were regular fixtures at Kepler's Books & Magazines. (Christin Evans, Kepler's)



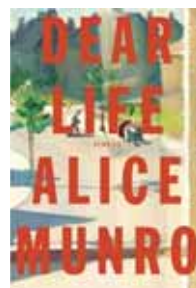
"Joseph Anton," by Salman Rushdie, Random House: A memoir no one should have had to write, this is the first-person account of the notorious milestone 1989 fatwa and how its target lived through years in hiding and on the run. He endured the disruption to emerge as much the consummate storyteller he always was. The pen is mightier than the sword. (Melissa Mytinger, Kepler's)



"This is How You Lose Her," by Junot Diaz, Riverhead Hardcover: Short, gritty, direct, expletive-laden bursts of confusion and pain, punctuated by moments of stunning clarity, as Diaz spins his tales of love and loss. "This is How You Lose Her" will leave you breathless. (Amy Stephenson, Kepler's)



"Dear Life: Stories," by Alice Munro, Knopf: Alice Munro is an expert of the ordinary. Her fiction is a delicate probe, and the object of her search — ex-

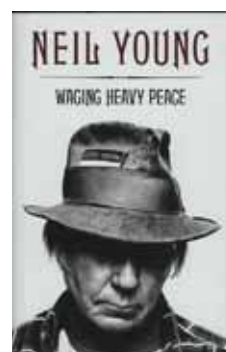


cutted through unornamented, subtly asymmetrical language — is a seismograph of internal life: complete, fully formed, an emotional register of the most delicate sort. To read Munro is to wake up to sympathy, intelligence, feeling. (Camden Avery, Kepler's)

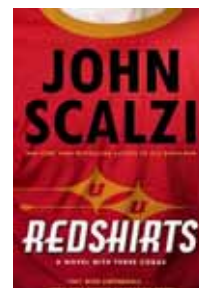
"Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore," by Robin Sloan, Farrar, Straus and Giroux: A perfect tale for our tech-driven time set in the Bay Area. Sloan's debut novel is a terrifically agreeable story of words, books, computer science and art with a marvelous mysterious thread throughout, and young love, to boot. Sloane — and Mr. Penumbra — signal a future in which books really do exist simultaneously with all that's "e." (Melissa Mytinger, Kepler's)



"Waging Heavy Peace," by Neil Young, Blue Rider Press: Neil Young is a legend. One of the most important, ground breaking, consistently awesome figures in rock history. Neil gives us an inside glimpse at what makes him tick. An essential for any fan. (Kelly McNerney, Kepler's)



"Red Shirts," by John Scalzi, Tor Books: John Scalzi has the rare gift not only of being a wonderfully funny writer but also a profound one. His latest novel offers up an affectionate look at the original Star Trek series. When the latest recruits on the starship Intrepid begin to notice that they keep dying during Away Missions while nothing ever happens to the bridge crew, they soon realize that their reality is far stranger than they



could have possibly thought. What follows is a hilarious look at science fiction tropes mixed with the most thoughtful debate on free will and determinism this side of Sam Harris. Great geek gift! (Steven Sautter, Books Inc.)

"The Art Forger," by B.A. Shapiro, Algonquin Books: "The Art Forger" is based on a real unsolved art heist. An artist who earns her crust by copying famous paintings agrees to forge an oil by Degas — using the stolen original as the template and inspirations. The original seduces her with its luminous beauty, until she starts to notice some of the flaws in the brushwork. Is this really an original Degas? The reader will learn a great deal about the techniques of art forgery and the obsessive love of collectors in this convoluted yet readable novel. One will also be able to amuse family and friends at the holiday table by dropping interesting forgery facts into the conversation. And, while trying to hide that last Brussel sprout under the napkin, one may wonder who stole those priceless canvasses, and where do they hang now? (Linda Reid, Books Inc.)



"Song of Achilles," by Madeline Miller, Ecco: Madeline Miller won a well-deserved Orange Prize for this lushly rendered retelling of "The Illiad." Told from the point of view of Patroclus (Achilles' companion, and, in this version, his lover), the book takes us from the boyhoods of Achilles and Patroclus (including visits from Achilles' sea-goddess mother, Thetis), the beginnings of their life-long relationship (an idea Miller took from Plato and Aeschylus) and through to the Trojan War and its aftermath. Miller's prose is gorgeous and her knowledge of the era (she has a doctorate in Classics) shines through. Ten years in the writing, this debut novel is the perfect gift for the history buff, the lover of all things



► See **TOP PICKS**, page 27

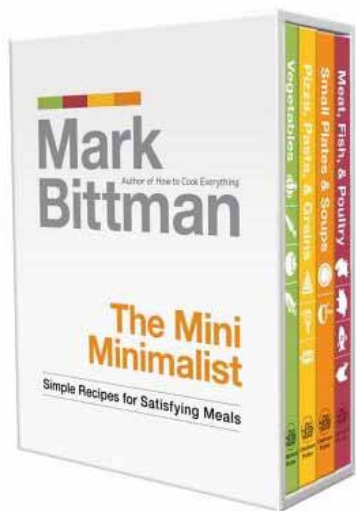
A world of cooking

From minimalist to Jerusalem, there's plenty to explore



By Anne Sturmthal Bergman

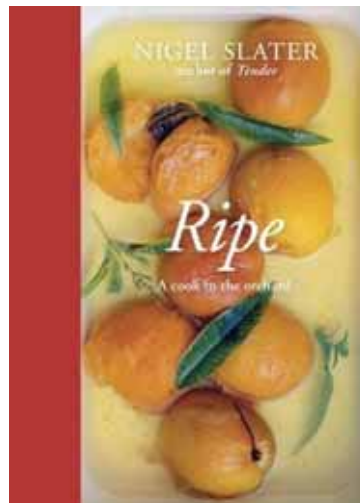
This year we have chosen a smorgasbord of cookbooks. From roadside to Jerusalem, there is a lot to explore.



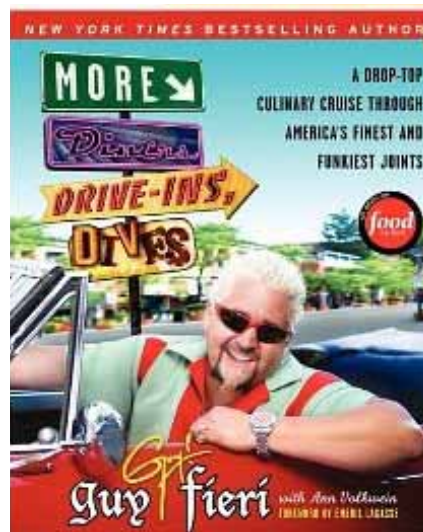
"The Mini Minimalist," by Mark Bittman, Clarkson Potter, four small hardbacks: In general, I like Mark Bittman, and find his recipes creative and easy to follow. However, this package of four little books seemed more like a gimmick to me. If one wanted to travel with a cookbook, one could choose one of these and have the recipes at hand, or perhaps the small size means that the cookbook is not so intimidating. I made Brussels sprouts with chestnuts, a favorite of the season. The recipe called for bacon, which I omitted in deference to my vegetarian guests. The world is divided into people who either love or hate Brussels sprouts, but in my test diners, all thought it was a great combination of flavors — with a little brown sugar added. By the time this recipe is complete, the chestnuts are almost caramelized and their flavor lightens the strong flavor of the Brussels sprouts. Some nice recipes, in four books in a box. A good holiday gift for those who like things simple and tasty.

"Ripe, A Cook in the Orchard," by Nigel Slater, Ten Speed Press: This beautiful book, by a British author, follows the fruits of the seasons and suggests recipes accordingly. I found it hard to substitute some of our kinds of fruit. British apples do not have the same names as our apples, and some of the recipes (such as those for currants or gooseberries) were mouthwatering, but since those berries are hard to find here, difficult to make. I did make an apple crisp, which uses a minimum of cinnamon with the apples. Crusts

of white bread that are tossed into the Cuisinart, with sugar added, cover the apples. The crust was then covered with melted butter. This was nice and tart, and the breadcrumbs made an unusual crust since we tend to use brown sugar, flour and occasionally oatmeal. I threw some golden raisins on the top. I also made Lemon Possett, a simple recipe that makes lemony custard, which, with the addition of some fresh berries and put in a wine glass, looks very elegant. This is a showy dessert that requires almost no effort. A wonderful book, especially for those who like to buy fresh fruit from the local farmer's markets.



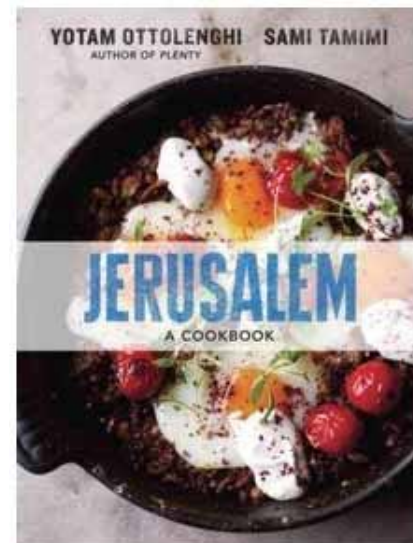
"More Diners, Drive-Ins, Dives," by Guy Fieri with Ann Volkwein, William Morrow: This book reviews a variety of low cost, relatively unknown (except to Fieri's fans) eateries from coast to coast. Fieri has a large fan base from his show on the Cooking Network and generously shows each team member and their comments early on in the book. Clearly, this is a tight-knit group of troupers who cross the country in an ancient Chevy and drop in on known



and unknown places to test their food. I made Tommy's Joint Lamb Shanks from the local landmark in San Francisco. I was taken there for lunch on my first tour of San Francisco when I moved to the Bay Area in 1964. The lamb stew was easy to put together

(the only thing I had to shop for were the lamb shanks — everything else I already had in my kitchen) and while it takes four hours, most of that time the lamb is in the oven and the cook can do other tasks. The lamb had a rich flavor, was extremely tender and went well with the potatoes and carrots that were recommended to serve with it. I made two large shanks and followed the recipe with a small addition of a teaspoon of sugar to cut the acidity of the tomato paste. A sort of cult favorite, this would be a good book for a man who wants to try making hamburgers, meatballs and even a turducken.

"Jerusalem, A Cookbook," by Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamini, Ten Speed Press: This is a beauty of a book — collaboration between two Jerusalem natives, one a Jew and the other from the Muslim east of Jerusalem. There is a well-written history of the city of Jerusalem and some mouth-watering recipes. I did have some frustration with the book because the recipes often use ingredients that are hard to find here: ras el hanout, harissa paste, za'atar (hyssop), fresh currants, sumac and barberries. There was not enough guidance in the book to find these items, although some are available at specialty stores or by mail order. I made the Roasted Chicken with Clementines and Arak. Arak can be easily substituted by Pernod. This is a simple recipe that can be put together in advance and marinated for a period of time. The fennel (fresh and seeds) and clementines were an unusual accompaniment to the chicken. One only wishes that this generous collaboration could be matched by the politics of this region.



"Well Fed Paleo Recipes for People Who Love to Eat," by Melissa Joulwan, Smudge Publishing: I found the layout of this cookbook to be very busy — lots of boxes and commentary. However, undaunted, I made Cumin-Roasted Carrots, and they not only added color to my dinner but made for an unusual side dish. It is easy to put together and then is baked in the oven. I also made Turkish Chopped Salad, with cucumbers, tomatoes, green peppers, red onion, radishes and pitted olives. This recipe gets a dressing with lemon juice, garlic, cumin, paprika, dried oregano and olive oil. Chopped flat leaf parsley goes on top of the salad. The vegetables were crisp and a good combination, but I was disappointed in the dressing. I added more lemon juice and olive oil, and it immediately perked up the flavor. This cookbook relies heavily on coconut oil, so if that is not to one's liking, I would not buy this book. However, the two recipes I made were well worth trying.

I hope that readers will find something to like in these books. "Ripe" and "Jerusalem" are both beautifully visually as well as having unique recipes. *Bon appetit!* ▀

Anne Sturmthal Bergman is a freelance writer in Menlo Park.

The gift of reading

From pillow forts to cathedrals, bully victims to spies

By Debbie Duncan

Artists, architects and spies (plus a few furry animals and other critters) play starring roles in great books for kids this holiday season.

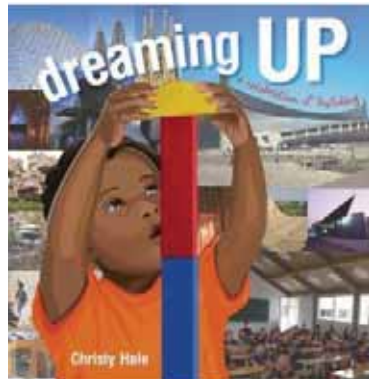
For those wishing to give the gift of reading and unlock children's imaginations, here are a few books that are sure to delight.

The Christmas Quiet Book by Deborah Underwood, illustrated by Renata Liwska, Houghton Mifflin, ages 2-8: San Francisco author Deborah Underwood finds examples of quiet moments during what can be a noisy time of year — things even California kids (who don't get snow) recognize: decorating the tree, reading by a fire, bundling up, drinking cocoa, listening to "Nutcracker Suite." Illustrator Renata Liwska's adorable fuzzy forest animals indulge in a bit of holiday mischief, too, which adds humor to this picture book kids will want to cuddle up with and parents will enjoy settling little ones down with.



Dreaming Up: A celebration of building by Christy Hale, Lee & Low, ages 2 and up: Imagine a book that's a terrific gift for a toddler as well as any older child interested in art, design or architecture, and you have "Dreaming Up."

Palo Alto author and illustrator Christy Hale uses mixed media and poetry to show the connection between the simple



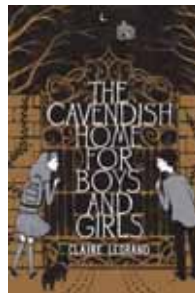
things a child builds and buildings of famous 19th, 20th, and 21st century architects from around the world. Stacking cups, wooden blocks, Popsicle sticks, Legos, sandcastles, a (fire)house of cards, even sofa cushion forts and blanket nooks are shown opposite real buildings inspired by their simpler creations. It's brilliant. "Dreaming Up" is further enhanced by architect biographies, portraits and quotes, as well as descriptions of the buildings and a list of a source materials.



This Is Not My Hat by Jon Klassen, Candlewick, ages 2-8: A little fish steals a hat from a big fish, then uses typical little-kid logic to convince himself he'll get away with the theft — even though he knows it is wrong. But will the little guy escape, especially when someone sees him

hide in the underwater jungle? Even when the someone (a crab) said he wouldn't tell? Kids will love to come up with their own ending for this artfully told tale that invites the question: Does crime pay?

The Cavendish Home for Boys and Girls by Claire Legrand, illustrated by Sarah Watt, Simon & Schuster, ages 8-12: Everything's perfect in 12-year-old super-student Victoria's hometown. Her best (and only) friend, Lawrence, may have a gray streak in his hair and be obsessed with playing the piano, but he is Victoria's personal project. Then he disappears. He's not the only one, as other less-than-perfect children and even teachers go missing. Are they possibly being held against their will in the town's creepy, bug-infested Cavendish Home for Boys and Girls? Victoria takes it upon herself to solve the mystery and rescue the "degenerates" (as Mrs. Cavendish calls them) though not before experiencing the horrors of the Home firsthand. She also learns to appreciate individual differences and true friendship — which is even better than perfection.



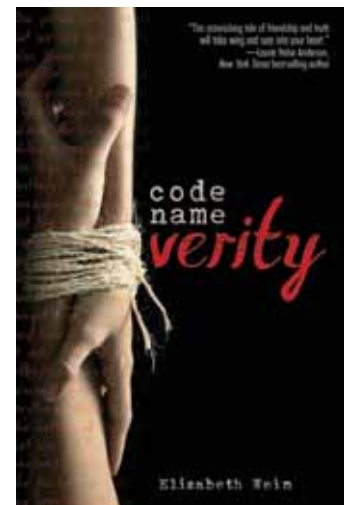
Liar and Spy by Rebecca Stead, Random House/Wendy Lamb, ages 9-14: Life is rough for Georges (the "s" is silent) — he's being bullied at school, his dad has been fired and they had to

sell their house and move into an apartment, and his mom, a nurse, is spending all her time at the hospital. Then he meets Safer, another 12-year-old who lives upstairs. Safer invites Georges to join a Spy Club and trains Georges to pay attention to details. For they need to spy on Mr. X, who may be a murderer living in their building. *Gulp!* The little things in this intricate, thoughtful novel add up to a big picture of reality — as bitter-sweet as it sometimes is — for Georges, his friends, family and most especially the reader. Fears eventually must be dealt with. And sometimes "rules are made to be broken."



Drama by Raina Telgemeier; Scholastic/Graphix, ages 10-14: San Francisco native Raina Telgemeier clearly understands middle school drama.

The graphic novel stars Callie, a theater geek with pink streaks in her hair who is filled with emotions as she goes about designing sets and navigating behind the scenes of the Eucalyptus Middle School play. Who does she like? Who likes her? Who's gay? Why do the roles keep changing? And why the heck won't her confetti cannon work when she needs it to? As if there weren't enough to love about "Drama," the last names of most of the main characters are California counties. Brava!



Code Name Verity by Elizabeth Wein, Hyperion, ages 12 and up: I am not exaggerating when I state that "Code Name Verity" is better than any book for adults (even NYT best-sellers and award-winners) I have read in the past year. "Verity," a British spy who goes by many names, is a heroine as fierce and clever as Katniss Everdeen in "The Hunger Games," trying to survive in a world just as evil: Nazi-occupied France. "Queenie" (another of her pseudonyms) has been captured and imprisoned in an old French hotel. She makes a deal with the Gestapo to tell her story. And what a tale it is, of how she becomes best friends with Maddie, a crackerjack English mechanic-turned-pilot who would and does do anything for her. As Maddie puts it, the Scottish spy's story is "full of bookish nonsense and foul language, brave and generous." It tells of a friendship forged and strengthened amidst the horrors of war. "Code Name Verity" is worth re-reading for clues and "aha!" moments. I also highly recommend the audiobook, which brings to life these remarkable characters. ■

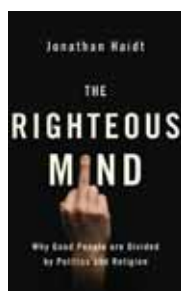
Debbie Duncan is the author of an award-winning e-book, "Caller Number Nine." She has reviewed children's books for the Weekly since 1997. Her complete reviews are available at www.debbieduncan.com.

TOP PICKS

► Continued from page 25

ancient, and for those always on the lookout for an intriguing and engrossing story. (Lori Haggblom, Books Inc.)

"The Righteous Mind," by Jonathan Haidt, Pantheon: Building upon certain elements of his previous book, "The Happiness Hypothesis," Haidt delves into what constitutes true civility and reason, and how we may work toward creating a uniting compassion in our lives, especially regarding the overwhelmingly divisive issues of religion and politics. This is a fraction of



the deeper meanings and theories examined in the book, often lacking any kind of definitive conclusion as each is discussed. The reader is called upon to weigh each side, view things differently and determine her or his own approach to the queries presented. Everyone will not likely agree with what's said, but one can suppose that could all be part of the point. (Tanya Landsberger, Books Inc.) ■

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The gift of giving

Community members share their stories of volunteering during the holiday season

People across the Peninsula are celebrating the holiday season by giving gifts that trump those you might find at a department store. These are gifts of time and generosity, of good will and inspiration. For many, volunteering during the holiday season has become a tradition that can unite families and inspire others.

Some help organize uplifting holiday exhibits and events, such as the annual Christmas Creche Exhibit in Palo Alto or the Bethlehem A.D. event in Redwood City, while others plan community food or toy drives. One fourth-grade student from East Palo Alto sent a hand-written letter praising her grandmother's volunteering — "I am proud to be her granddaughter," she wrote.

Here are first-person accounts from people in the community about how they help celebrate the holidays by volunteering to help others.

touching photos are taken each year, capturing the children proudly preparing and delivering their donations. It is always an eagerly anticipated activity and a wonderful experience for everyone.

My oldest son is now 4 and it has always been a mother/son date to select what food, which books and what kind of pajamas we donate. Last year when driving to the bookstore, my then 3-year-old said to me, "But Mommy, EVERYONE has books!" "No, sweetheart," I said. "Some children don't even have a place to live." He was silent for a moment and then, looking me in the eye through the rearview mirror, he said very seriously, "They can come live with us. Our house is really big and good!" (Our house being a modest two-bedroom apartment).

Does he have a highly developed sense of gratitude? Not quite yet. He does, however, possess a keen sense of compassion and is very considerate and generous to others. I am so thankful for this tender trait, for the example set by such wonderful role models and for the opportunity to build positive and lasting memories with my family while serving others.

— Amber Harrison, Mountain View

Holiday spirit and CSA

My high school daughter and I were introduced to Community Services Agency (CSA) in Mountain View through our involvement in National Charity League. The two of us participated in various volunteer activities during the year working in the food pantry and store. We also volunteered for the Christmas toy distribution.

To be honest, my daughter did not love getting up early for this event, but it became our favorite activity with CSA. Working with the parents to find a very special gift for each of their children was very rewarding. The parents are so appreciative to receive even a small amount of gifts and new pajamas to give their children at Christmas.

The next year my son and husband also volunteered, and it has become our annual family tradition. My children are now in college and this is one of the activities we will do as a family during their Christmas vacation. It reminds us all how fortunate we are and really sums up the meaning of the holidays.

— Janet Thompson, Los Altos



COURTESY ANNIE FLORIN PHOTOGRAPHY

Henry Harrison of Mountain View

Inspiring the children

Our family has been fortunate in many ways, but one of the most notable is the incredible child care that we found for our children. Sherry and Bob Marsden run a small day-care center out of their cozy home, and in addition to the love and care we receive, they have inspired and encouraged our entire family to be more thoughtful and charitable within our community.

Every year during the holidays, this couple organizes food and book drives, accepting donations of food, books and pajamas. Once all the donations have been made, the young children they care for, ages 5 and below, help wrap and deliver the donations to the Community Services Agency in Mountain View, where they get a short tour conducted by the staff. This provides the little ones with an opportunity to ask questions and to really understand the importance of their delivery. Of course,

Twelve days of service

Our family celebrates Christmas, and as part of our celebration we have two different advent calendars to count down the days to Dec. 25.

One of the calendars has a small box for each day where I place a square of paper with a typed message inside. I had initially written down fun activities and traditions for us to do as a family, such as walking down Christmas Tree Lane and decorating cookies.

But I felt like I also wanted to impart to my three children an awareness of the true spirit of selfless service that is a key part of our Christian faith. I decided to start the "Twelve Days of Christmas," where at least 12 of the papers in our advent calendar would be acts of service that we would perform together, and we have done this for the past seven years.

Some activities we do anonymously, so the kids can recognize that true service has no desire for

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Collage by Angella Dillan

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This original holiday youth ballet is set to the music of Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov, and performed in the world-famous Russian style. Enjoy a magical performance where good triumphs over evil as a Magician, beautiful Snow Maiden, Lovely Fairy, animated toys and other wondrous Fairyland creatures rescue a bunny who has been kidnapped by the wicked Bat Queen.

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thanks or recognition. And as each year has passed, I take it as a personal challenge to find even more activities that blend service and fun, so that the kids learn that the two can go hand in hand. Here are some of our favorite activities over the years:

- “Adopt” a family in need by buying gifts and/or food items and leaving the items anonymously at their doorstep

- Look at Heifer International online and choose a “share” of an animal to donate to a family in need

- Go to San Francisco on Christmas Eve with a handful of Subway gift cards to give to homeless people we see as we walk through the city

- Take toy and food donations to our favorite local performance of “The Christmas Carol,” “The Gift” at Notre Dame de Namur College

- Participate in our school’s “Working Wonders” toy drive supporting InnVision Shelter Network, and help sort the toys at their Toy Shoppe

- Go caroling with friends to neighbors who are elderly or alone

- Write thank you letters to teachers both at school and church

- Hold a free babysitting session at our home for moms of young children so they can go holiday shopping kid-free

I feel like my kids, now ages 7, 9 and 12, have really grown to appreciate performing these acts of service for others, and it has become a cherished part of celebrating the Christmas season for us.

— Heidi Mickelsen, Palo Alto

Charities and the ‘Cousin Exchange’

I am from a family of nine siblings. As we have had our children (now there are 21 grandchildren ages 6-30s) we wanted to come up with a meaningful way for cousins to exchange gifts with each other that minimized the financial burden on their parents, reduced waste (who needs all the plastic of cheap kid-to-kid gifts?), and realized the true meaning of the holidays across our family’s religions (Christian, Jewish and Muslim).

The result has become a favorite family tradition formally known as the Cousin Exchange.

In early December, all cousins are asked if they want to participate in the annual Cousin Exchange and what issue/organization they want to support this year. Names are put in a hat and an aunt picks and makes assignments (this is kept secret until Christmas Day). Each cousin makes a \$25 gift to the chosen charity/cause (sometimes they

have to search for the right charity) of the assigned cousin and prepares a card for Christmas Day.

When our extended family gathers that afternoon, the cousins get in a circle and one by one gift their cousin, presenting the card and talking about the cousin’s charity and the needs it addresses. The gifted cousin gets to add comments about why they chose that cause or organization.

Over the years we have learned much about the next generation of Swezeys — sometimes certain charities are chosen based on cuddly animals in trouble around the world, friends’ illnesses or support for aging grandparents; sometimes we learn new forays into high school or college activism; always we have learned the true meaning of the holidays.

— Megan Swezey Fogarty, Palo Alto

A great grandmother

My name is Zahra Roberts. I am a student at Costano Elementary School in East Palo Alto. I’m in fourth grade.

I’m writing this to you about my Nana. My Nana volunteers at Salvation Army, Food for Life on Tuesdays. She fills food bags and passes them out. Also once a month for the Family Harvest Program.

I would like this to be known because she shows more love to people and children. I am proud to be her granddaughter.

— Zahra Roberts, East Palo Alto

Soul food

Almost 13 years ago, my mom at age 65, a lifetime native of Alabama, decided to leave all her friends, her family, her house and all her “stuff” to relocate to Palo Alto to be near my young family. For years she volunteered almost daily at La Comida, an organization that provides nutritious lunches for local seniors.

In a word, she loved La Comida. She loved the seniors that came every day to eat lunch. She loved the other volunteers that made up the daily “crews” to serve the lunch. She loved the Avenidas and La Comida staff, the cooks and especially the manager, Mary Ruth, who she has often described as “the hardest working person I know.” She was part of the structure of that community and that sense of belonging was part of her core.

On Easter 2012, my mom had a pretty severe stroke followed by multiple related health issues over the course of the next three months. She was in and out of the hospital and spent an extensive few weeks at a local rehabilitation center. Once she was home and stable, she wanted to return

to La Comida to volunteer.

I was uncomfortable with her being there without any support, so I began to go with her to provide whatever “backup” she needed. I knew that she loved going there before, but now I understand it. The first day that she came in, walking rather unconfidently with her walker and having lost about 20 pounds, a table of seniors recognized her, then stopped eating and stood up and applauded her.

She was overwhelmed. This was her world, and I had just been allowed a glimpse of the genuine affection and gratitude that filled my mom in a way that nothing else could.

Going to La Comida now informs our week, we know that on Mondays and Wednesdays, she greets everyone as they come in and gives out milk. So that means on Sundays and Tuesdays we need to pick out her nicest clothes and matching shoes and earrings so that she is ready to go the next morning. It is motivating her to reorient in time and space because she is confident that they will miss her if she isn’t there.

I always admired my mom for what she did for other people at La Comida. Now in a different role, those people do so much more for her.

— Nannette Solvason, Palo Alto

Singing for seniors

Our Palo Alto Girl Scout Troop, 60893, has a favorite holiday tradition, singing to seniors at the Sunrise Assisted Living Center on El Camino Real in Palo Alto.

We sing traditional carols and make conversation with them. Some of the people there have some memory difficulties, but they always remember “Jingle Bells!” The best part about going is seeing all the happy faces. We started going when we were Brownies, in first grade at El Carmelo Elementary School, and now we are seventh-graders at JLS and Castilleja.

To be honest, it can sometimes feel sad because it can be hard to see someone struggling with remembering things, but that bittersweet feeling never stops us from going. For some of the seniors, they live in the moment, because that’s what they have, the moment, instead of lots of memories.

We are privileged to get to experience the moment with them. We want to do what we can to make the moment happy. We want them to enjoy themselves and the holidays, and we want them to know that they are cared for and surrounded by love.

— Palo Alto Girl Scout Troop 60893



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■ HIGHLIGHT

COMMUNITY TREE LIGHTING CELEBRATION

Attendees can enjoy live holiday music, refreshments, lights and the arrival of Santa Claus. Children can visit and have their picture taken with Santa at the free event. Dec. 3, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Civic Center Plaza, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 650-903-6331. mountainview.gov/city_hall/comm_services/recreation_programs_and_services/community_events/holiday_tree_lighting.asp

ART GALLERIES

'Full Color' by Karen White Award winning plein air artist and Palo Alto resident Karen White brings "Full Color" to Viewpoints Gallery in November. White is noted for her use of vivid color in her landscapes and florals. Nov. 6-Dec. 1, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Viewpoints Gallery, 315 State St., Los Altos. www.viewpointsgallery.com

Miniatures and More Gallery 9 Los Altos Holiday group exhibit features 30 local artists through Dec. 24. Small works in a variety of media: painting, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, photography, mixed media, metal work and jewelry. Holiday reception: Fri., Dec. 7, 5-7:30 p.m. Gallery hours: Tues.-Sat., 11-5 p.m.; Sun. 12-4 p.m. Gallery 9, 143 Main St., Los Altos. www.gallery9losaltos.com

Moldaw Residents Arts and Crafts Show Active seniors at Moldaw Residences are sharing their love for art with the community in a special arts and crafts fair. Attendees can come meet the artists, hear their stories and even buy some of the artwork. Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Oshman Family JCC, Room G103, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto.

CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

'Behind the Scene' of a Musical Composition Behind every musical work stands the person who authored it - the composer. Most have heard of the legendary Mozart, Beethoven or Brahms, and may be even familiar with some of their works. But who has actually met a living composer? Thursdays, through Dec. 13, Pre-registration \$20/ class, or \$25 individual class congregation Etz Chayim, 4161 Alma St., Palo Alto. Call 650-283-4541. www.nuritjugend.com/A/Behind_the_Scene_of_a_Musical_Composition.html

Beginning Improv Class With Corinne Kason Beginning Improv Class with Workshop Leader: Corinne Kason. Five Tuesdays (7 p.m. - 9 p.m.). Workshop is limited to 12 participants. Ages 18 and up, please. Open to everyone - no experience necessary. Nov. 13-Dec 11 7-9 p.m. \$200 for five sessions (\$175 if you sign up before November 6th). Dragon Theatre, 535 Alma St., Palo Alto. www.dragonproductions.net/rentalsclasses/classes.html

Breathing for Longevity, Love and Livelihood A morning exploring breathing skills and the science of breath. Breathing tools to use any time, any place for vitality and happiness. Dec. 1, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$31. Common Ground Garden Supply and Education, 559 College Ave., Palo Alto. Call 650-493-6072. breathingforlongevityloveandlivelihood.eventbrite.com/

Dance Workshop International Dance Festival-Silicon Valley presents Winter Workshop I, Nov. 20-Dec. 11. Each of four Tuesday class sessions includes contemporary technique, repertory, comp\$improv. Workshop led by internationally acclaimed dancer/choreographer Leslie Friedman. Nov. 20, 6:30-7:30 p.m. \$60 reg by Nov 13 /\$72. Mountain View Masonic Lodge, 890 Church St., Mountain View. Call 650-969-4110. www.livelyfoundation.org

Foothill College Winter Registration Foothill College Winter Quarter registration is Nov. 26-Jan. 6. Classes run Jan. 7-March 27. Continuing students register Nov. 26-Jan. 6. New and former students register Nov. 30-Jan. 6. California residents pay \$31 per unit plus basic fees. Review instructions and class schedule at www.foothill.edu 5 a.m. Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. Call 650-949-7325. www.foothill.fhda.edu/reg/winter13.php

Integrated Pest Management Attendees learn how to keep unwanted pests out of their gardens by joining the Santa Clara Master Gardeners for this workshop. Dec. 4, 5:30 p.m. Mountain View Senior Center, 266 Escuela Ave., Mountain View. Call 650-903-30



'Cuban at Heart: A Photographic Exhibition'

Foothill College presents "Cuban at Heart: A Photographic Exhibition," which captures the magnetic pull of the Cuban people -- their warmth, openness, and resourcefulness -- as photographed by 16 Foothill College photography students and their instructor. Admission is free; parking is \$3. Nov. 28- Jan. 16, 7:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Krause Center for Innovation Gallery at Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. Call 650-949-7082.

6330.

CLUBS/MEETINGS

Peninsula Region Winter Networking Social Attendees join HR colleagues for an evening to cultivate new relationships, catch up with friends, and enjoy great hors d'oeuvres at Ming's. Dec. 5, 5:30-7:30 p.m. General: \$35/NCHRA Members: \$25. Ming's, 1700 Embarcadero Road, Palo Alto. Call 415-291-1992. www.nchra.org

DANCE

Social Ballroom Dancing Lessons at 8 p.m. are beginning and intermediate West Coast Swing with Robin Rebello and Michelle Kinkaid teaching, followed by dancing from 9 to 12. No experience or partner necessary; dressy casual attire preferred. \$9 cover includes refreshments. Cubberley Community Center Pavilion, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-395-8847. www.Fridayat-thePav.com

FAMILY AND KIDS

Barbie Fan Club Day Watch a Barbie movie, show off your Barbie collection, and maybe win a Barbie to take home! For kids 3 and older on Dec. 1, at 2:30 p.m. Registration is required: <http://califa.evanced.info/paloalto/lib/events/signup.asp?ID=4588> Children's Library, 1276 Harriet St., Palo Alto. Call 650-463-4962. www.cityofpaloalto.org/library

Paint Out! Everyone - kids, parents, grandparents, painters, doodlers! - is invited to the Pacific Art League's Paint Out! event. It wants everyone's art right on the walls for its last exhibition in its current site. (The League is moving next door while we renovate!) Reservations recommended. Dec. 1, 1-5 p.m. Pacific Art League, 668 Ramona St., Palo Alto. Call 650-321-3891. www.pacificartleague.org

Palo Alto Boogie Attendees join DJ Kevin and the Palo Alto City Librarians as they disco boogie the morning away. For toddlers, preschoolers and their parents or caretakers on Dec. 3 at 10 a.m. Registration is required: <http://califa.evanced.info/paloalto/lib/events/signup.asp?ID=4589> Children's Library, 1276 Harriet St., Palo Alto. Call 650-463-4962. www.cityofpaloalto.org/library

The Wind in the Willows Kids can go for a wild ride with Mr. Toad as he is reunited with his beloved friends Mole, Ratty, and Mr. Badger. In an adventure with chases, jail

breaks and bandits, Mr. Toad learns the true meaning of friendship. Dec. 6-8, 14-15, 21-22 at 7 p.m., Dec 8-9, 15 at 2 p.m. and Dec. 12-13 at 4:30 \$10.00 children; \$12.00 adults Palo Alto Children's Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-463-4970. www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/csd/theatre/default.asp

LIVE MUSIC

Live French Guitar Soothing french classic with the lovely Betsy Stern. She plays with a core of blues and jazz and is able to play double base. Dec. 6, 5-9 p.m. Morocco's Restaurant, 873 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 650-968-1502. www.moroccosrestaurant.com

Live Jazz Music with Johnny Williams

Johnny Williams will play lively original jazz and blues. Tuesdays through Dec. 25, 5-9:30 p.m. Morocco's Restaurant, 873 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 650-968-1502. www.moroccosrestaurant.com

Live John Blues Boyd at Morocco's Restaurant Mountain View

John Boyd is one on word: blues. He will play with his five-piece band. Nov. 30, 5-11 p.m. Morocco's Restaurant, 873 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 650-968-1502. www.moroccosrestaurant.com

Ragazzi: Welcome Winter/Winter Solstice

Welcome Winter/Winter Solstice continues the Ragazzi Boys Chorus tradition of mixing music from many different cultures, with songs that celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Native American culture, and more in a musical expression of unification through song. Dec. 1, 5 p.m. \$10-27. First Congregational Church, 1985 Louis Road, Palo Alto. www.ragazzi.org

SENIORS

BridgePoint at Los Alto's Holiday Sale

For sale: clothing, jewelry, books, knick-knacks, electrical items; children's clothes, toys and books. Dec. 4, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. BridgePoint at Los Altos, 1174 Los Altos Ave., Los Altos.

Holiday Pinecone Crafts

Participants can discover their inner artist and help decorate the Senior Center for the holiday season. They will create critters, snowmen, and more from pinecones. No experience necessary, just a willingness to get messy with art supplies. Dec. 6, 1-2 p.m. Mountain View Senior Center, 266 Escuela Ave., Mountain View. Call 650-903-6330.

Keeping Out Garden Pests

Santa Clara County Master Gardener Laura Westley will provide expert advice on various integrated pest management techniques for the garden. Attendees can learn natural and innovative methods to keep critters from eating orchard, flowers, and other growing greens in the garden. Dec. 4, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Mountain View Senior Center, 266 Escuela Ave., Mountain View. Call 650-903-6330.

Charles Michael Viscovich

1925-2012

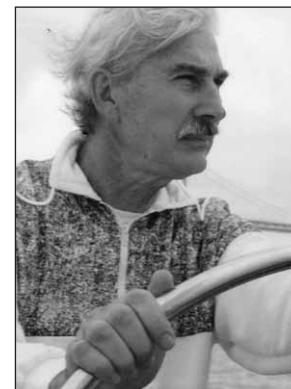
From the Orchard to the Sea

Chuck began a long and fruitful life symbolically being born on an apricot and prune orchard in Mountain View on May

18, 1925. The youngest of a hard working Croatia family who help settle the area. His father Anton and mother Philomena, sister Eva, brothers George, Steve, and John worked the family orchard from the early 1900's till it became Cuesta Park.

Chuck was a proud graduate of Mountain View High School and San Jose State University. He served with honor in the Army Air Corps as a S/SG in WWII. He then worked FMC where he met Roberta, his wife of 55 years. He then went on to work at Lockheed until his retire-

ment in 1991. An avid 49er fan he attended most games and made it to three of their Superbowl victories.



Chuck is survived by his beloved wife, his children Shawn, Bill, Jim and their wonderful families. Chuck lived his life quietly gallant and gently strong and in accordance with his wishes, services will be held privately. Any well wishes are welcomed by the family. Any donations in his name may be sent to the Parkinson's Institute in Sunnyvale.

As he loved sailing the waters of the bay and under the Golden Gate, please join us in remembering him whenever you see a sail under the bridge.

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SOLD IN 15 DAYS!
1745 Crane Ave., Mountain View
\$1,135,000



SOLD IN 9 DAYS!
840 Jefferson Dr., Mountain View
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SOLD IN 7 DAYS!
724 Leona Ln., Mountain View
\$999,000



1316 Brook Pl., Mountain View
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1717 Pilgrim Ave., Mountain View
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1724 Pilgrim Ave., Mountain View
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65 Dalma Dr., Mountain View
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27161 Moody Rd., Los Altos Hills
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412 Mundel Wy., Los Altos
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1105 Fremont Ave., Los Altos
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SOLD IN 7 DAYS!
1810 Austin Ave., Los Altos
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SOLD IN 7 DAYS!
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SOLD IN 7 DAYS!
858 Hierra Ct., Los Altos
\$1,599,000



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1025 Highlands Ci., Los Altos
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\$1,450,000



SOLD IN 7 DAYS!
1019 Ray Ave., Los Altos
\$1,350,000



SOLD IN 13 DAYS!
287 S. El Monte Ave., Los Altos
\$1,299,000



SOLD IN 8 DAYS!
1430 Kring Wy., Los Altos
\$1,299,000



2265 Deodara Dr., Los Altos
\$1,225,000



SOLD IN 20 DAYS!
13620 Roble Alto Ct., Los Altos Hills
\$4,498,000

Partial list of 2012 sales. Offered price shown.



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*Per 2011 # of homes sold on MLS





1208 PARKINGTON AVE, SUNNYVALE \$795,000
 Sat/Sun 1:30 - 4:30 | 3 BR 2 BA Well maintained home located in the highly desirable Cherry Chase area.
 Sara Ahsan
 DRE #01503694 650.941.7040



10600 STORY LN, SAN JOSE \$1,228,000
 Sun 1:30 - 4:30 | 4 BR 2.5 BA Spanish villa w/ classic Old World charm. 1.41 ac w/amazing views. Great for entertaining!
 Greg Stange
 DRE #01418178 650.325.6161



3552 DONALD CT, SAN JOSE \$575,000
 Sun 1 - 4 | 4 BR 2 BA Traditional home w/ updates has sep family & living room. Lg 14,450sf lot. Won't last long!
 Jeff Beltramo
 DRE #01274256 650.325.6161



3371 DOVER RD, REDWOOD CITY \$799,000
 Sat/Sun 1:30 - 4:30 | 2 BR 2 BA Charming home on large lot west of Alameda de las Pulgas! Large driveway and lush yard!
 DiPali Shah
 DRE #01249165 650.325.6161



3173 ALEXIS DR, PALO ALTO HILLS \$3,199,000
 Sun 1:30 - 4:30 | 3 BR 3.5 BA Infusing organic materials into its dramatic architecture, extraordinary home.
 Jo Buchanan & Stuart Bowen
 DRE #00468827 650.941.7040



796 CLARA DR, PALO ALTO \$1,795,000
 Sat/Sun 1:30 - 4:30 | 5 BR 3 BA Exceptional Midtown value. Light & bright. Move-in ready. 5 bedrooms plus office/den.
 Colleen Cooley & Kathy Nicosia
 DRE #01269455/01219308 650.325.6161



188 WILEY TERRACE, MOUNTAIN VIEW \$819,000
 Sat/Sun 1:30 - 4:30 | 3 BR 3.5 BA Newer 3 story Hm. Dramatic redmodeled! Custom use of marble, tile, hdwd. Duet Hm 3BR, 3.5BA.
 Lollie Gilbert
 DRE #00467994 650.941.7040



661 UNIVERSITY AV, LOS ALTOS \$2,495,000
 Sun 1:30 - 4:30 | 4 BR 3.5 BA Located in heart of Old Los Altos. Exquisite detailing everywhere, gourmet Kit, high ceilings
 Gary Herbert
 DRE #00762521 650.941.7040

CAMPBELL

Paseo De Palomar \$180,000
 2 BR 2 BA You are a land owner here, 55+ to live here. Unit 69 is a great interior location. Carmichael Team, DRE #01499696, 650.941.7040

CUPERTINO

LOCATION, LOCATION! \$1,000,000
 4 BR 1 BA Near all 3 TOP SCHLS in Cupertino: Lincoln Elem, Kennedy Middle, Monta Vista H.S. Ron & Nasrin Delan, DRE #01360743, 650.941.7040

HALF MOON BAY

Sun 1 - 4
500 Bayhill Rd \$1,468,000
 4 BR 3 BA Custom Ocean Colony home ideally located on golf course. Gourmet kit, master w/spa-like BR Donna Dickinson, DRE #01248679, 650.325.6161

LOS ALTOS

Sat/Sun 1:30 - 4:30
231 Hawthorne Ave \$2,980,000
 5 BR 5 BA Beautiful Architecture + Floor Plan Amenities Abound. Gleaming HW Floors, Lovely Granite. Jim Galli, DRE #00944554, 650.941.7040

Sun 1 - 4
318 Hawthorne Ave \$2,695,000
 4 BR 3.5 BA Located in prime North Los Altos. 3615 sq.ft. of living space, 3 car garage, huge Mstr Ste Gary Herbert, DRE #00762521, 650.941.7040

LA Country Club Area \$1,999,999
 4 BR 4 BA Opportunity to build new or remodel on a 18,225 sqft. level lot. 4BR/3.5BA. Dora Thordarson, DRE #00803498, 650.941.7040

Sophisticated Home \$1,750,000
 3 BR 3.5 BA Open spaces, vaulted ceilings, tranquil tree top views, this house is amazing! Ellen Barton, DRE #00640629, 650.941.7040

Opportunity KNOCKS!!!! \$1,590,000
 3 BR 2 BA Location Location Location. Ron & Nasrin Delan, DRE #01360743, 650.941.7040

LOS ALTOS HILLS

Sweeping Bay Views! \$5,595,000
 4 BR 3 full BA + 2 half Blending the romance of the Napa countryside w/ the best of CA living. Terri Couture, DRE #01090940, 650.941.7040

Acre w/Breathtaking Views \$2,495,000
 3 BR 1.5 BA Home on a 1,298 sqft lot needs a little love but you can't beat the location & the views. Marge Bosetti, DRE #00768722, 650.941.7040

LOS GATOS

Rarely Available! \$1,939,000
 4 BR 2.5 BA Fantastic cul-de-sac w/the small community feel. LG schls, 12,250 sqft lot, 2673 sqft hm. Terri Couture, DRE #01090940, 650.941.7040

MENLO PARK

Sun 10 - 2
1297 Crane St \$1,290,000
 3 BR 2.5 BA Downtown. 1-owner 2-level updt'd townhouse. Oak floors, fireplace, formal DR. Yard. Garage. Nancy Goldcamp, DRE #00787851, 650.325.6161

MOUNTAIN VIEW

New Single Family Home \$1,098,000
 3 BR 3.5 BA Distinctive new sngl FamHm, these meticulously designed Hms offer modern convenience Kim Copher, DRE #01423875, 650.941.7040

Mountain View Charmer \$998,000
 3 BR 2 BA Creek-side setting. Private yard. Wide lot. Remodeled Kitchen & bath. Move-in or expand. Diyar Essaid, 650.941.7040

End Unit Townhome \$499,000
 3 BR 1.5 BA Spacious living room/dining room combo features laminate flooring, a wood burning fireplace Royce Cablayan, DRE #01062078, 650.941.7040

PALO ALTO

Dramatic Barron Park Home \$2,295,000
 5 BR 3 BA Sophisticated Barron Park Home. Arched entry opens to soaring ceilings and upper balcony. Carole Feldstein, DRE #00911615, 650.941.7040

Sat/Sun 1:30 - 4:30
2022 Edgewood Dr \$1,448,000
 4 BR 2 BA Updated Eichler in Green Gables. Open flr plan. Pool. 2 car garage. Corner lot. PA schls. Nana Spiridon, DRE #01142729, 650.325.6161

PORTOLA VALLEY

Contemporary \$13,000/mo
 6 BR 5 BA For Lease! 5,115 SF main house w/quality finishes thru out, including exotic lpe flrs Melanie Johnson, DRE #01040928, 650.941.7040

REDWOOD CITY

Sun 1 - 4
55 Palomar Oaks Ln \$2,499,999
 5 BR 5 full BA + 5 half Located in Palomar Oaks in Redwood City. 5 bedrooms, 5.5 baths, Separate office. Suzanna Kubota, DRE #01124753, 408.605.0094

SAN JOSE

Santana Row Style \$1,349,000
 2 BR 2.5 BA Not just a hm but a lifestyle-sleek, classy, fashion forward. Prime location, secure building. Vicki Geers, DRE #01191911, 650.941.7040

Magnificent New Home \$1,199,000
 7 BR 4.5 BA This home features 7 bdms & 4.5 baths! Great for a large, extended family. Dory Marhamat, DRE #1176336, 650.941.7040

Gorgeously Remodeled Home \$649,000
 3 BR 2 BA Home is in excellent neighborhood of Almaden Valley w/TOP schls. Ron & Nasrin Delan, DRE #01360743, 650.941.7040

SAN MATEO

Sun 1 - 4
938 Peninsula Av \$499,000
 2 BR 2 BA Super sharp townhome features every amenity! Inside laundry. Large patio. HW flr. Carport. Tom Huff, DRE #00922877, 650.325.6161

SUNNYVALE

Sun 1 - 4
1180 Blackberry Ter \$678,000
 2 BR 2 BA Spacious open floor plan. End unit; large master Ste w/patio & garden; large dining room. Cindy Mattison, DRE #01052018, 650.941.7040

WOODSIDE

Prime Location! \$29,000,000
 Private prestigious location. 11+ acre property in central Woodside close to town. Susie Dews & Shena Hurley, DRE #00781220/01152002, 650.325.6161

Sun 1:30 - 4:30
240 Allen Rd \$2,498,000
 4 BR 3.5 BA Extensively and beautifully remodeled home. Breathtaking view of forest and ocean. Susan Selkirk, DRE #00699379, 650.328.5211