

# Home for the Holidays

## Celebrate the season in your hometown

Keep this insert for information on holiday activities in Santa Clara

Winter Holidays 2015

## Holiday tree lighting “super” sized this year

The traditional start of the holiday season in Santa Clara – turning on hundreds of twinkling lights on the City’s holiday tree – is being expanded this year to include additional special activities as the launch of Santa Clara’s Super Community activities leading up to Super Bowl 50 at Levi’s Stadium in February.



This year’s holiday tree will be located in a Central Park meadow rather than the Civic Center so that it will be close to an outdoor ice skating rink that will be open Dec. 4 through Feb. 7.

The tree lighting ceremony begins at 5 p.m. and includes holiday music, entertainment, Santa’s Village and a few surprises. The evening ends at 9 p.m. with a fireworks display.

Tree lighting event with ice skating and fireworks is Fri., Dec. 4, 5-9 p.m. in Central Park.

Teddy, the stuffed bear that has perched atop the City’s holiday tree for more than 100 years, is also moving to Central Park. Be sure to look for him in a beautiful redwood tree near the skating rink.

Parking is limited and carpooling is encouraged. Please remember that animals are not allowed per City ordinance.

The Holiday Tree Lighting Event will be a memorable kick off to the season. Feel the spirit with family, friends and neighbors! For additional information, call the Santa Clara Senior Center at 408-615-3170.

## Nominate bright lights for Holiday Decorations Contest

Nominations for the annual Holiday Outdoor Decorations Contest will be accepted from Nov. 23 through Dec. 11. Decorate the exterior of your home or business in cheerful, colorful holiday décor and talk to your neighbors about doing the same. Homes, businesses and trees will be judged on use of color, lighting, festivity and originality.

### Super new category

In honor of the Super Bowl coming to Levi’s Stadium in February, the City is adding a new category into the contest this year called “Black & Gold.” For this category, judges will look for the best house, business or tree that celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Super Bowl.

Nominees for best outdoor decorations will be evaluated on Thursday, Dec. 17, by a team of judges. Awards for the five categories (residential, business, neighborhood, best tree and “Black & Gold”) will be announced Dec. 18, and posted on the city’s website [SantaClaraCA.gov](http://SantaClaraCA.gov), along with the full list of entrants in convenient driving order. Winners will be acknowledged at a City Council meeting in early January of 2016.

Nominate yourself, your neighbor or one of the brightly lit homes or businesses you’ve seen around the City. For more information, contact the Senior Center Office at 408-615-3170.



This home on Johnson Place was a past winner in the Holiday Outdoor Decorating Contest.

### December fun at Northside Branch Library

Twelve jam-packed programs are planned in December at the Northside Branch Library that will entertain the entire family. Programs will include crafts, do-it-yourself ideas, home organization for the new year and more! For specific program information, visit [SCLibrary.org](http://SCLibrary.org)

## Holiday Historic Home Tour is Dec. 4-5

The annual Holiday Historic Home Tour is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, Dec. 4 and 5. Started in 1978, this tradition-rich event showcases the community’s commitment to preservation of Santa Clara’s historic assets. The tour stops at four private homes of various Victorian and other architectural styles that will be beautifully decorated for the holidays.

For the fourth time in recent years, the historic Santa Clara Railroad Depot will be a host site for the tour. The Depot began serving passengers in 1864 and now includes a museum and library run by the South Bay Historical Railroad Society. The nonprofit Santa Clara Arts & Historical Consortium will serve refreshments and hold an opportunity drawing in the Railroad Depot during the tour as a fundraiser.

(continued on page 3)



# Two ways to meet Santa

The Parks and Recreation Department has made special arrangements with a very busy Santa Claus to visit with Santa Clara families before the big day.



Register early to meet Santa on Dec. 17 or Dec. 19

The first opportunity is on **Thursday, Dec. 17**, when Santa will be at the Community Recreation Center, 969 Kiely Blvd., from 6-6:45 p.m. and 7-7:45 p.m. to visit with children ages 7 and under and their families. The evening will feature festive crafts, holiday music, yummy refreshments and a photo opportunity with Santa. Activities are designed for children ages 3-7, but children ages 0-7 may attend.

Pre-registration is required and each family member, one year of age and older, must register. Children must be accompanied by an adult, with a minimum of one adult per family. Fees are \$5 for residents and \$6 for non-residents. Children under one year are free. To register, go to [SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec](http://SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec) or call 408-615-3140.

Santa returns to Santa Clara on **Saturday, Dec. 19**, to have breakfast

from 9-11 a.m. at the Santa Clara Senior Center, 1303 Fremont St. Following a tasty breakfast of pancakes, sausage, coffee, milk and orange juice provided by the Santa Clara High School Booster Club, children will have the opportunity to pose for a photograph with Santa and create unique holiday crafts. Bring the entire family to get into the holiday spirit!

Pre-registration is required and each family member, including children under one year old, must register. Children must be accompanied by an adult, minimum one adult per family. Fees are \$15 for residents and \$19 for non-residents. Children under one year are free. To register, go to [SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec](http://SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec) or call 408-615-3140.

Space in both Santa programs is limited and early registration is recommended.

## Classic Nutcracker ballet takes the stage Dec. 12-13

The Santa Clara Ballet will present its 42nd annual full-length ballet production of the holiday classic “The Nutcracker” on Saturday, Dec. 12, and Sunday, Dec. 13. All performances will be at the Santa Clara Convention Center, 5001 Great America Parkway. Curtain time for this performance is 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday, and 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets range from \$25 to \$35.



The company engages professional guest artists in lead roles while providing opportunities for semi- and pre-professional dancers, children and adults to perform in a professional environment. Open auditions for dancers of all levels and ages will be held on Sunday, Sept. 6. For more information on the auditions, call 408-865-9780 or visit [santaclaraballet.com](http://santaclaraballet.com).

## Fun holiday programs for children

Keep the youngsters entertained during the holidays with fun and educational programs at the City Libraries and at classes offered by the Parks and Recreation Department. Check the City website [SantaClaraCA.gov](http://SantaClaraCA.gov) for a complete list.

### Gingerbread House Construction

Children ages 2-12 can make their own personalized gingerbread houses at workshops on Wednesday, Dec. 16, at the Community Recreation Center. Parents and little ones ages 2-6 are scheduled for 1-2 p.m. and older children ages 7-12 will work on their own, with the help of an instructor, from 4-5 p.m. Everything is provided from graham crackers to royal icing, from gumdrops to candy canes and much more! It's going to be a yummy time! Pre-register at [SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec](http://SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec) or call 408-615-3140.

### Jingle Jam

Singer/guitarist Sean Mendelson will be the star of holiday “Jingle Jams” for children ages 1-4 in December. The program includes festive dancing, holiday songs, moving, jamming and having fun! Enjoy quality time with your child this season! Morning and evening performances at the Youth Activity Center and evening performances at Lick Mill Park are scheduled Dec. 15 through Dec. 23. Find details and pre-register at [SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec](http://SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec) or call 408-615-3140.

### LEGO® Holiday Camp

Keep your young Jedi busy during the holiday break with a three-day Jedi Engineering LEGO® Holiday Camp Dec. 2-13, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Children ages 5-8 will explore worlds far, far away and engineering principles right in front of them. Imagination and engineering combine to create motorized and architectural projects. The Camp meets at Westwood Oaks Park. Pre-register at [SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec](http://SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec) or call 408-615-3140.

### My First Art Class: Holiday Edition

Introduce young children to art with special holiday-theme projects at this class on Mondays, Nov. 30-Dec. 14, at the Community Recreation Center. Ages 1.5-3 meet from 9:30-10:30 a.m. followed by ages 2-5 from 10:45-11:45 a.m. Pre-register at [SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec](http://SantaClaraCA.gov/ParksAndRec) or call 408-615-3140.



### Holiday Collection Schedule

No refuse collection on Christmas Day, Dec. 25, or New Year's Day, Jan. 1. Garbage, Clean Green and recycling will be picked up one day later.

# Historic Home Tour

(Continued from page 1)

Tickets for the annual Santa Clara Historic Home Tour will go on sale in October with a discounted price of \$20 if purchased by Oct. 31. Order tickets on the tour's website at [sc-hometour.com/tickets](http://sc-hometour.com/tickets) or mail order ticket requests to: Historic Home Tour 2015, c/o Harris-Lass House Museum, P.O. Box 3311, Santa Clara, CA 95055-3311. (Mail order flyers will also be distributed to the City libraries in October.)

Tickets may also be purchased at City Lights Espresso, 1171 Homestead Rd. in Santa Clara and at Antiques Colony, 1881 West San Carlos St. in San Jose.

Beginning Nov. 1, ticket prices will be \$30 general admission, \$25 Seniors (60+) or Children (6-12). No children under the age of 6 will be admitted. If still available the days of the tour, all tickets will be \$35 at the door of the Railroad Depot, 1005 Railroad Ave., Santa Clara.

The Historic Preservation Society of Santa Clara and the Old Quad Residents' Association co-sponsor the Tour. Proceeds benefit the Harris-Lass Museum, historic preservation projects in the City and nonprofit groups in Santa Clara. For more information, view the Home Tour website at [sc-hometour.com](http://sc-hometour.com) or call the Harris-Lass Museum message line at 408-249-7905.

# Holiday Train chugs into town

The Caltrain festively decorated Holiday Train returns to the historic Santa Clara Depot, 1005 Railroad Ave., on Saturday, Dec. 5, at about 8 p.m. The dazzling show train has more than 70,000 glittering lights and each stop includes family-focused entertainment – a free memorable holiday experience for all ages.

During its visits to nine Bay Area railroad stations that weekend, the Holiday Train collects donations of toys for local children who might otherwise be forgotten during the holiday season. The toys are distributed after the event by The Salvation Army and Toys for Tots.



# Santa Clara Players present "The Christmas Mouse"

"The Christmas Mouse" tells the tale of Mrs. Robinson who is determined to win the Gingerbread House contest this year. Her efforts are thwarted by the Christmas mouse, who lives with the Robinsons and finds her tasty creation while looking for food for his family.

Written by Michael Antonucci and based on the music of Linda Arnold, performances of the holiday family play will be presented by the Santa Clara Players on two weekends in December at the Santa Clara Players Theater, 1511 Warburton Ave. (behind the Triton Museum of Art). Curtain times are 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturdays, Dec. 5 and Dec. 12, and 3 p.m. on Sundays, Dec. 6 and Dec. 13.

This production is free to the community, but reservations are recommended. Please RSVP to 408-248-7993 with preferred time. More information is available at [scplayers.org](http://scplayers.org).

# Looking for unusual gifts?

Get a head start on holiday shopping at the Senior Center Holiday Craft Faire on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 1303 Fremont St. Talented artists and crafters will showcase items from many different disciplines, including woodworking, knitting, photography, ceramics, jewelry and more. If you are interested in participating as a vendor, applications will be available Sept. 1. For more information, call the Senior Center Office at 408-615-3170.



Check out two other holiday fairs on Saturday, Dec. 5, for one-of-a-kind gift ideas. The 4th annual Holiday Craft Faire will be held at Central Park Library, 2635 Homestead Rd., from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., featuring local artists and crafts people. A Holiday Gift Fair is scheduled on that same day from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Triton Museum of Art, 1505 Warburton Ave., also featuring the work of local artisans. Shoppers will be entertained by a performance from Park Ave Jazz at 4 p.m. Proceeds from the Holiday Gift Fair support the museum's education and outreach.

# Shop local this holiday season

Support neighborhood businesses – and keep sales tax revenue in Santa Clara – by shopping local this holiday season. One dollar of sales tax on a \$100 purchase made in Santa Clara stays in Santa Clara to help pay for parks,

street repair, library books and the hundreds of other services provided to the public by municipal government.

# Holiday concert by Chorale

The Santa Clara Chorale celebrates the holiday season and the diversity of the Santa Clara community with a concert titled "An Evening of Lessons and Carols." Familiar carols, traditional folk music and reflective songs will be paired with thought-provoking readings and meditations offered by local leaders and luminaries. Join the Chorale at the Mission Santa Clara for a performance that promises to be both jubilant and complex on Friday, Dec. 11 at 8 p.m., or Sunday, Dec. 13 at 4 p.m.

For ticket information, visit [scc.org/concerts](http://scc.org/concerts) or call 408-883-4722.

# Be careful with candles

Candles can be dangerous. If you do use them to decorate your home during the holidays, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked

down. Never leave candles burning unattended and never put lit candles on or close to a tree or sprays of evergreen boughs.



## Recycle holiday tree



The holiday season's final tradition is putting the tree out for curbside recycling. This year, trees will be picked up on your regular solid waste collection day during the week of Jan. 4-8, 2016. Here's what to do:

- Remove all ornaments, tinsel, nails and the stand. Flocked trees cannot be recycled, so they will be collected and disposed of as garbage.
- Residents with Clean Green service can place their stripped tree next to the solid waste cart setouts at the curb on your regular collection day.
- Residents who don't have Clean Green service can set out their holiday trees on the nearest public street for pickup on the assigned single family home garbage/recycling collection days. To find out assigned garbage/recycling days in particular areas, call 408-615-3080.
- Trees may also be recycled after Jan. 8 by cutting up the tree and placing the pieces in the Clean Green cart.

For more information on holiday tree recycling, call the Public Works Department at 408-615-3080.

## Excess holiday waste picked up at no extra cost

Holidays bring friends, families, parties and get-togethers – and sometimes more trash than your garbage cart can handle. Santa Clara residents may set out as many as four additional 30-gallon plastic garbage bags (limit two bags per week) on their regular solid waste collection day from Dec. 26, 2015 through Jan. 8, 2016 at no extra charge.

### Extra pick up all year round

At any other time during the year, for a nominal cost, additional 30-gallon plastic bags of garbage tied with "extra bag" tags may be placed at the curb for pickup on your regular solid waste collection day.

Extra bag tags can be purchased for \$4 each at the Cashier's counter in the Finance Department at City Hall, 1500 Warburton Ave., between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Tags may be ordered by mail also. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a check (payable to "City of Santa Clara") to the Utility Services Division, Finance Department, 1500 Warburton Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95050. Indicate the number of tags to be purchased and make the check payable for the exact amount of \$4 per tag.

Residential customers with front-load dumpsters are eligible to get one additional collection per year free of charge. Call Mission Trail Waste Systems at 408-727-5365 to make an appointment for the extra collection. Questions? Call the Public Works Department at 408-615-3080.



## Lights are part of diverse winter celebrations



Hanukkah is one of several religious and cultural winter celebrations featuring lights.

The Winter Solstice in December is the shortest and darkest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere. From the earliest days of history people have celebrated the turning point of the sun with some type of festival of light.

Lights play a central role in many winter season religious and cultural celebrations including Santa Lucia Day on Dec. 13, St. Thomas Day and the Zoroastrian Solstice Celebration on Dec. 21, and Christmas on Dec. 25. Other "festival of light" celebrations have different calendar days each year, including Hanukkah, Diwali, Kwanzaa and Chaomos.

## Prevent holiday tree fires

Christmas trees, both real and artificial, are the items first ignited in an estimated average of 240 reported U.S. structure fires per year. These fires caused an average of 25 civilian deaths and \$13.1 million in direct property damage per year.

Christmas tree fires are a small percentage of the 156,000 fires in the U.S. that occur during the winter holiday season, not common, but when they occur, they are likely to be serious. On average, one of every 15 reported fires that began with a Christmas tree resulted in death.

According to the United States Fire Administration and the Santa Clara Fire Department, there are simple, life-saving steps you can take to greatly reduce the chance of becoming a holiday fire casualty.

### Buy a fresh tree

Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needles should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Identify old trees by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out and is a fire hazard. A dry tree can be fully engulfed in a fire in seconds.

### Place your tree in a safe location

Do not place your tree close to a fireplace, furnace or other heating element. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Do not go near a holiday tree with an open flame – candles, lighters or matches.

### Take care of your tree

Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times. It may need as much as a gallon of water a day.

### Be cautious with lights

Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up.

Use only holiday lighting that has been listed by an approved testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL). Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires – they should not be warm to the touch. Do not leave holiday lights on all night or when you leave the house.

### Dispose of your tree safely

Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood-burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is to take advantage of the City's tree recycling program.



Needles falling off the tree are a sign that it is too dry and may be a fire hazard.