

**AROUND LIVERMORE: MARK TARTE**

## **Absent flagpole will not throw Santa off course**

I AM CONCERNED. Christmas is around the corner, and I've been wondering how Santa is going to find Livermore.

Growing up, I always assumed Santa homed in on the gilded ball on top of the flagpole to get his bearings and from there, could find our house.

That way of navigation is not available to the big guy this year. Don't worry, though: Others have made sure Santa won't bypass Livermore this year. Days without a flagpole: 59.

LETTERS FROM SANTA: Well, it looks as if the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District has come to the rescue concerning Santa. They have contacted Santa and have two programs with the big guy.

If you would like your child to receive a letter from Santa Claus, the park district has been contracted by the North Pole to assist. If you visit its Web site, [www.larpd.dst.ca.us](http://www.larpd.dst.ca.us), and select "index," then "alphabetical index" you will find an application for "Letters from Santa."

You can also visit the park district offices at 71 Trevarno Road. Dec. 17 will be the last day that Santa can send letters, because of the time it takes mail to reach Livermore from the North Pole. The cost per letter is \$3. For more information, call Moe Kline at 925-373-5700.

The second program under contract with Santa by the park district is for personal visits with the big guy! Signups for this special visit program begin Tuesday and will be held that evening from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., also at 71 Trevarno. Sign-ups will be on a first-come, first-served basis, and they will continue Wednesday during normal business hours and through the week until all slots are filled.

Unfortunately, this year Santa has contracted to visit only Livermore addresses, at least through the park district's program. The cost is \$35 per 10-minute visit any time between 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Dec. 17, 18 or 23. For more information, call 925-373-5717.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS: Well, it's the time of year that lights and decorations abound around town and the valley. I've written about Deacon Dave's place on Hillcrest Avenue in the past and suffice it to say, it's up and running again this year as well. Many other homes around the valley have beautiful and whimsical displays for people to enjoy.

If you want to find addresses and see pictures of these seasonal displays, Alex Dourov of Utkaduck Design has them on his Web site: [lightsofthevalley.com](http://lightsofthevalley.com).

You can visit this site, now in its sixth year, and see what homes are decorated and get addresses to visit, if you'd like. There's nothing better on a cold evening than to drive around and look at the wonderful crèches, reindeer sleighs or Santa's elves that people put up to help celebrate the season.

OFFICE SPACE NEEDED: The Livermore Valley Education Foundation is in need of donated office space in Livermore to house two desks, filing cabinets and room for file storage boxes. There will be

foot traffic from staff and volunteers.

If you own a business and can help, or know of someone who does have surplus office space, please call Kate Runyon at 925-454-1339 or e-mail her at [krunyon@comcast.net](mailto:krunyon@comcast.net) with information. This is an important organization that has been helping to keep our financially strapped schools and many of their programs going these past few years.

Even with the recent bond passage, more work needs to be done to help out schools. If you can help, please give Kate a call.

OBSERVANCE: Tuesday is the 63rd anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Please take time to remember those who served and sacrificed in that great and terrible war. Since 1964, the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association has celebrated the date by turning on the old beacon atop Mount Diablo that had to be extinguished just after the attack.

Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, the Commander in Chief of Pacific Forces during World War II, relit the beacon for the first time in 1964 and stipulated that it be lit every Dec. 7 to honor those who served and sacrificed.

So at dusk Tuesday, take a moment to look toward Mount Diablo and give thanks to those men and women of so long ago and remember those who continue to serve.

Until next week, be alert, be safe and God bless America.

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