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More Sparkle in **Downtown Lafayette**

By Cathy Tyson

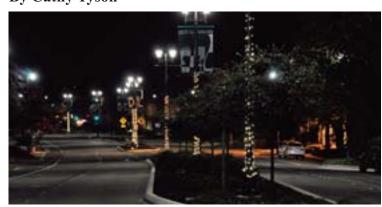


Photo Andy Scheck

median" doesn't have quite the same ring to it as "little stars," but and smaller than most of the trees to Lafayette's main drag is even more awash in festive white lights this year than last, with thousands of holiday lights bringing a magical ambiance from Dolores Drive to Brown Avenue and beyond.

It takes a village to bring this much sparkle to town. Credit the Chamber of Commerce with generous support from two members for paying for set up and take down, the Public Works team, contractor Ben Jorgenson for the installation, and the City of Lafayette to pay for the electricity.

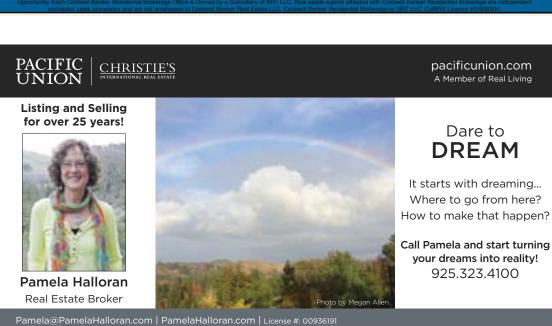
Blocks of festive twinkle lights along Mt. Diablo Boulevard were installed and ready for a flip of several switches the weekend before Thanksgiving. New this year was an expan-bility shifted to the Chamber of Comsion all the way down to Brown merce. As recently as 2011, Chamber Avenue which "has definitely helped of Commerce executive director, Jay to meld the east end of Mt. Diablo Lifson, was asking for donations to Boulevard with downtown," said keep the twinkle lights twinkling. Public Works Director Mike Moran. This year is brighter than ever, with He adds that recently planted baby thousands of lights that will remain up trees require more care and less through New Year's.

winkle, twinkle little civic weight from lights. "Since the median trees on the east end are younger the west, they will use less strands of lights per tree," he said. In addition to Mt. Diablo Boulevard, for the first time ever the islands on Pleasant Hill Road will also be lit at night.

> All of the many strands are composed of energy-efficient LED, or light emitting diode fixtures, that use much less energy than old-school incandescent bulbs, specifically about one-fourth the electricity and boast a longer lifespan.

> The annual tradition has, in years past, struggled to find funding to literally "keep the lights on." The city used to be responsible for the entire project, but amid budget cutbacks a few years ago most of that responsi-





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