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*Serving the El Sobrante Business Community Since 1957*



# About Town

The El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce Monthly Newsletter

**April 2023**

## President's Message

By Nicole Donn, President

In March, our 2022 Business of the Year, Reach Out Mode, hosted a wonderful mixer with delicious food, a bake sale and lots of great raffle prizes. Usually the raffle proceeds go to the Chamber of Commerce, but we decided to donate the proceeds to Reach Out Mode, a non-profit that does excellent work with the youth in our community. We raised \$220 from the raffle and our most generous member, Mark Porter of Ameriprise Financial, donated an additional \$500 to them. Thank you Mark for your generosity!

In April we have four great events to share with you. We are co-hosting a Mega-Mixer in Crockett on April 6, and a Sunrise Networking Breakfast on Wed., April 12 (see flyer in newsletter). Then the Earth Day Community Cleanup and Celebration will be held April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 9:30 to 2 pm at the library, with the cleanup in the morning, plus food, informational booths, music and more in the afternoon. That evening at 5:30pm, we will host a fundraiser for our scholarship fund at the Masonic Lodge, 550 El Portal (see flyer in newsletter). We give scholarships annually to graduating seniors from De Anza High who are going to community college. Tuition may not cost much, but books and living expenses certainly do. Our goal is to help a few deserving students achieve greater success. The fundraiser will have great prizes, a plant based menu, the nicest people to socialize with and admission is only \$25.

In March we started a survey of commercial vacancies. We have formed a working group and by next month hope to complete our survey. I am hoping for some assistance from the community, so if you or anyone you know owns any vacant commercial property in 94803, please contact me at [ndonn@gemcorp.com](mailto:ndonn@gemcorp.com), so the Chamber can help fill the vacancy.

The El Sobrante Stroll will be held in September. We close off San Pablo Dam Road between El Portal and Appian Way. There will be a great parade, a car show, vendors of crafts, food, goods and services, music, a bike show, and other performances. It will be the Best Dam Block Party ever!

There is power in numbers and we need for all who do business in El Sobrante to join the Chamber of Commerce and help us help you be as successful as possible.

## 2023 Chamber of Commerce Officers & Directors

President - Nicole Donn - US Financial Mortgage Lending  
 Vice President - Judy Ward - SPAWNERS, Friends of the El Sobrante Library  
 Treasurer - Su Li - Lynden & Associates CPA Services  
 Secretary - Beverly Wallace - West County Resident  
 Jose Velarde - El Sobrante Town Garage  
 Edgar Rosales - Staff Member for El Sobrante Supervisor John Gioia  
 Cathy Werner - MPA Healthcare Professional  
 Harry Wiener - West County Wastewater District Board Member  
 Marie Carayanis - Resident, retired business owner  
 Jim Cowen - Farmers Insurance  
 Mark Croda - Retired business owner, and Past President, ESCC  
 Susan McCloskey - Resident, retired business owner  
 Bob Sharp - Commercial property owner  
 Donnie Beeler - Director, Sports Manager, Special Olympics, Northern California and Nevada

## 2023 Chamber Board Meetings

Board meetings are usually held on the first Monday of every month at 5:15 pm. **We will meet by Zoom on April 3, 2023.** Nicole Donn will send out the Zoom link before the meeting. The 2023 meetings are scheduled to be held on the dates below:

January 2	February 6	March 6	April 3
May 1	June 5	July 10	August 7
September 11	October 5	November 6	December 4

## Events Table

April 6	Mega-Mixer in Crockett
April 12	Sunrise networking Breakfast, Crockett
April 22 Earthday Cleanup 9:30 – 2pm Scholarship Fundraiser 5:30 – 9 pm	Earthday Community Cleanup, (Green Team and SPAWNERS) Scholarship Fundraiser, Moose Lodge, 550 El Portal
May 11	Mega-Mixer, Four Fools Winery in Crockett
June 21	US Financial Mortgage Lending Mixer
July 19	Jim Cowen Farmers Insurance Mixer 5341 Valley View Rd
August 16	Nerd Crossing 400 Appian Way Mixer
September 17	STROLL!
October 18	Open to Host
November 15	Elks Lodge Mixer 3931 San Pablo Dam Rd
December 20	Mechanics Bank Mixer 3884 San Pablo Dam Rd

# Mortgage Minute

by Nicole Donn

With all the headlines and talk in the media about the **shift** in the housing market, you might be thinking this is a housing bubble. It's only natural for those thoughts that make you think it could be a repeat of what took place in 2008 to creep in. But the good news is, there's concrete data to show why this is nothing like the last time.

## **There's Still a Shortage of Homes on the Market Today, Not a Surplus**

There were too many homes for sale during the 2008 housing crisis (many of which were short sales and foreclosures), and that caused prices to fall dramatically. [Supply](#) has increased since the start of this year, but there's still a shortage of inventory available overall, primarily due to almost 15 years of underbuilding homes. Today, unsold inventory sits at just a 3.2-months' supply at the current sales pace, which is significantly lower than the last time. There just isn't enough inventory on the market for [home prices](#) to come crashing down like they did last time, even though some overheated markets may experience slight declines.

## **Mortgage Standards Were Much More Relaxed Back Then**

During the lead-up to the housing crisis, it was much easier to get a home loan than it is today. Running up to 2006, banks were creating artificial demand by lowering [lending standards](#) and making it easy for just about anyone to qualify for a home loan or refinance their current home.

Back then, lending institutions took on much greater risk in both the person and the mortgage products offered. That led to mass defaults, foreclosures, and falling prices. Today, things are different, and purchasers face much higher standards from mortgage companies.

## **The Foreclosure Volume Is Nothing Like It Was During the Crash**

Another difference is the number of homeowners that were facing foreclosure after the housing bubble burst. Foreclosure activity has been lower since the crash, largely because buyers today are more qualified and less likely to default on their loans. In addition, homeowners today have options they just didn't have in the housing crisis when so many people owed more on their mortgages than their homes were worth. Today, many homeowners are [equity rich](#). That equity comes, in large part, from the way home prices have appreciated over time.

For a FREE, no obligation consultation to see what loan programs are a viable option for you or someone you know, please call 510-758-3035 or email [ndonn@gemcorp.com](mailto:ndonn@gemcorp.com)

# BUSINESS OF THE MONTH APRIL 2023



Tire and Wheel Xperts  
5050 Appian Way, El Sobrante  
510 680-0124

Ricky and Sam, co-owners of Tire and Wheel Xperts, have been awarded Business of the Month for April, 2023. On the corner of Fran Way and Appian Way, what used to be a smog station has been given a bright paint job and now has a nice neat appearance. They are open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 am to 5:30 pm and Sundays from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The two owners noticed that El Sobrante really didn't have an established tire shop that could accommodate the population density. They thought that they could meet the needs of the community by setting up shop here.

"Since opening two months ago the community has been really good to us" says Ricky. "The location is really good, the neighborhood is quiet and it's a good use of the property."

They sell new and used tires, all major brands, in stock, every size, same day service. They sell aftermarket wheels, brakes, shocks and struts. They also do wheel alignments and tire and rim repair. So if your rims are not looking their best, Ricky and Sam can take care of cracks and bends and curb rash.

Right now, they're offering 20% off of everything. So stop by and give Ricky and Sam a visit. And tell them the El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce sent you.



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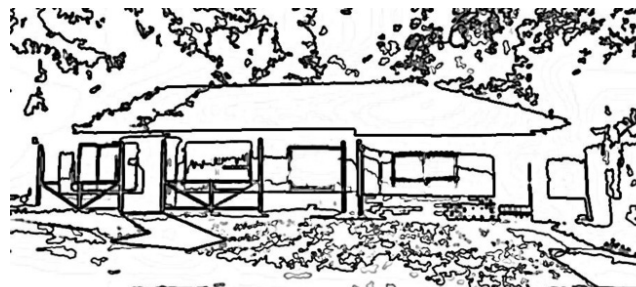
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## **BOOK SALE**

### **Friends of the El Sobrante Library, April 1, 2023**

The Friends of the El Sobrante Library Book Sale will be on Saturday, April 1, 2023, from 10 am to 2 pm, at the Fahden House, at the back of the Library parking lot. Masks are recommended. The Friends will be selling Memberships. Member hours will be 10 am to noon, and the general public from 12 pm to 2 pm. Proceeds from the sale fund several library programs.

For April we are featuring Gardening Books. How Does Your Garden Grow?! We have books on roses, herbs, vegetables and more.



*Friends of the El Sobrante Library*

# SPAWNERS

**Join SPAWNERS for our 23rd annual Earth Day Cleanup** on April 22, 2023! The cleanup will last roughly from 9:30am to 12pm, and will be followed by food, community events and performances on the plaza behind the El Sobrante Library until 2pm. Go to [www.spawners.org/events](http://www.spawners.org/events) to learn more! (Please note that we will not be hosting our April workday at Wilkie Creek in order to concentrate our efforts on the following week's Earth Day celebrations.)

**SPAWNERS is hiring** for a Program Coordinator position! SPAWNERS leads community activities like invasive plant removal, creek health monitoring, nature walks, student workshops and so much more! Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis; all applications received by April 10th will be prioritized for review. This position will remain open until filled. For more information, please visit our website at <https://www.spawners.org> To learn more about SPAWNERS and/or see the job description, [click here](#).



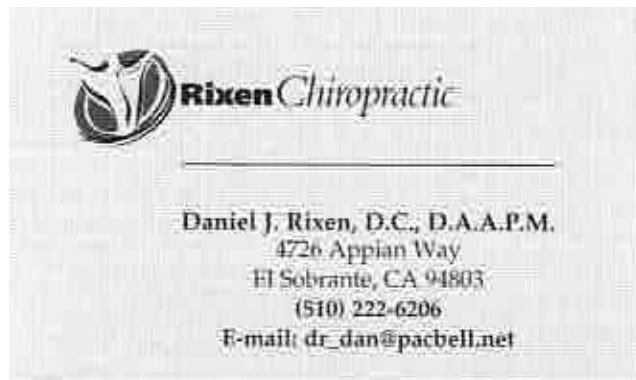
## Protect your local creek!

Join us for...

- Volunteer work parties
- Nature walks & talks
- Educational programs

### Contact:

Charlotte Diamant, Program Coordinator  
[cdiamant@thewatershedproject.org](mailto:cdiamant@thewatershedproject.org)  
[www.spawners.org](http://www.spawners.org)



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# Be Part of the 94803 Earth Day Cleanup!

By **Chris Conrad**, *El Sobrante Green Team*

Extreme weather, drought and pounding storms that have beset us recently all emphasize the message of the original Earth Day, 52 years ago: Our fragile planet needs help. Today, packaging and plastic waste are worse than ever, choking our streets, streams and oceans. Things can feel overwhelming but we can't afford to abandon our future. So don't despair or feel hopeless. It's time for us to act!

The El Sobrante / Richmond 94803 Green Team is out here to help and support you. We are determined to make a difference with fun and free community events.

So, please be part of our April 22 Earth Day Cleanup and Library Event! The Green

Team, SPAWNERS, SOS! Richmond, and others are again collaborating on a local cleanup of 94803 streets, creeks, and encampments staged from the ES Public Library, 4191 Appian Way. First and easiest, please make a special effort to clean and beautify your own property. Pick up cigarette butts and litter in your own parking lots, sidewalks and gutters. Plant flowers, add a streetside trash bin, refresh paint and decor. Better yet, help sponsor our community-wide event to show support and promote your company. Providing drinks, food, publicity or money to help is always welcome and greatly appreciated.

**Participants** can sign in, borrow equipment, and find designated locations to pick up litter starting at 9:30 AM. Cleanup is from 10 AM to noon, with a fun celebration for the volunteers with beverage, food, entertainment, speakers, music, information, etc., from 11:30-2 PM at the library. We'd love to see you there.

**Join in our Third Saturday cleanups** any month (meet at 10 am at ES Library, 4191 Appian Way). We have a vest, bag, buckets and grabbers ready and a list of places that need to be cleaned up.

**To be a sponsor**, please contact Mikki Norris, [info@keepelsobrantebeautiful.info](mailto:info@keepelsobrantebeautiful.info) or 510-215-8326. Much more info online at [KeepElSobranteBeautiful.info](http://KeepElSobranteBeautiful.info).

## El Sobrante Valley - 94803

# Earth Day Cleanup



**Sat., April 22**

**El Sobrante Library**  
4191 Appian Way

*It's fun and free!*

Be part of the Creeks and Community Cleanup in the local Richmond / El Sobrante 94803 area. The library will host an origami art installation, Earth Day book displays, landscape gardening, and other fun and educational activities!

### Cleanup 9:30 – Noon

Sign in for grabbers, vests, buckets, gloves, and location. Join the Green Teams to clean up streets, SPAWNERS to garden at library, clean creeks.

### Program Noon – 2 pm

Community info tables, library displays, food, children's art activities, entertainment, speakers, electric bike / car demos and more



[KeepElSobranteBeautiful.info](http://KeepElSobranteBeautiful.info) • [SPAWNERS.org](http://SPAWNERS.org) • [sos-richmond.org](http://sos-richmond.org)

For more information or to co-sponsor the event:  
Send an email to: [info@KeepElSobranteBeautiful.info](mailto:info@KeepElSobranteBeautiful.info)

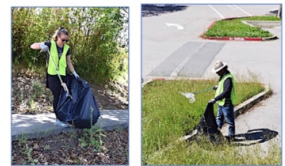


**FREE Cleanup postcards** are available from us for businesses to provide as a free public service to your customers. It promotes our Third Saturday Cleanups, with a list of the area's disposal resources and free services.

## THIRD SATURDAY MONTHLY LITTER CLEANUP

**El Sobrante / Richmond 94803**

Every Month • 10 AM – Noon • Fun & Free  
Meet up at ES Public Library, 4191 Appian Way



**JOIN US!**

[KeepElSobranteBeautiful.info](http://KeepElSobranteBeautiful.info)  
El Sobrante / 94803 Green Team





Photo from website: Central Foods EL Sobrante [Google](#) image

### **SHOP AT CENTRAL FOODS**

4352 Appian Way, El Sobrante, CA 94803

Hours 8 am - 9 pm Sunday 8 am - 8 pm

Fresh produce, dairy, meat, canned goods, packaged foods: Come see what we have!  
Enjoy our huge selection

**FOODS FROM ALL CULTURES**

**AMAZING VARIETIES**

## **SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISING DINNER**

**The Lauren Hanley Scholarship Fund**, administered by the El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce, will put on a fundraising dinner on Saturday, April 22, 2023, at the Richmond Masonic Hall located at 5050 El Portal Dr. in El Sobrante. Beginning at 5:30 pm we will gather to visit with friends. We will also sell tickets for a variety of raffle prizes. Dinner will be served at 6:15 pm. Since the date is also Earth Day, the menu will be a plant-based pasta buffet in keeping with the theme of the day.

The Fund provides scholarships to graduates from De Anza High School who will continue their education at a local community college. The amount and number of scholarships awarded depends on both the size of the fund and the number of qualified applicants. Past recipients of the scholarship have gone on the Contra Costa Community College in pursuit of degrees in Public Administration, Pre-med and Pre-law. The fund is built entirely on donations from the community, and awards are announced at the end of the school year in late May or early June. Invest in our future by supporting this event. Tickets may be purchased online at the chamber's website: <https://www.elsobrantechamber.com/events/>



Sponsorship opportunities are still available. Contact [stuffnell09@yahoo.com](mailto:stuffnell09@yahoo.com) for information on becoming a sponsor of this event.s

The Scholarship Fund is named after Lauren Hanley , a young lady of incredible talent and drive who was President of the Chamber in 2020. She was a writer, actor and the Marketing Director for Nerd Crossing at the time of her death. She supported many causes in the community including the Scholarship Committee as well as pursuing her interests, among which were a love of animals and the environment. This event will honor her spirit as well as provide needed support to our graduating seniors who share some of her interests and talents.

We hope to see you all at the event, Saturday April 22, 2023

**Dinner Sponsorship levels: [SPONSORSHIPS MUST BE ESTABLISHED BY APRIL 5 including Raffle Donations]**

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**VENUE SPONSOR - \$500** - 2 tickets for dinner, advertising on web, in newsletter MARCH, APRIL and MAY, in program and at event

**DINNER SPONSORS UP TO 6 slots** - \$500 - 2 tickets for dinner, advertising on web, in newsletter MARCH, APRIL and MAY, in program and at event

**GOLD SPONSOR - \$1000** - 8 tickets for dinner, advertising on web, in newsletter MARCH, APRIL and MAY, in program and at event , opportunity to present certificate to scholarship recipient (in June)

**RED SPONSOR - \$200** - Advertising at event. Posters and program (DOES NOT INCLUDE DINNER TICKETS or online ADS)

**RAFFLE PRIZE DONATION** - Donate an item or service of value to be auctioned /raffled off during event, style of auction/raffle to be determined by \$ value of donation and number of prizes received.

Thank you for your consideration and anticipated generosity for this cause. Scott Tuffnell, Scholarship Committee Chair

**El Sobrante Chamber of  
Commerce Scholarship  
Fundraiser  
Saturday, April 22, 2023**



**Invest in our future**

**Masonic Lodge**

**5:30 pm**

**Dinner, Raffle, Fellowship**

**\$25.00 per person**

<https://www.elsobrantechamber.com/events/>



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\*One coupon per visit per vehicle. Must present coupon when vehicle is being checked in. Not valid with any other offers.

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**EL SOBRANTE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**  
**28<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL EL SOBRANTE STROLL**  
**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2023**  
**PARADE 11:00 AM – STROLL TO 4:00 PM**

**Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Business Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Type of Business:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-Mail:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Participating in Parade:** Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Booth Specifications: MAXIMUM SPACE SIZE IS 12' X 12'**

**Product or service you will be offering:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Using: Tent/Canopy \_\_\_ Table Only \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**FEES (Include Booth Space and One T-Shirt)**

<b>Non-Profit Organization ( schools, churches, etc.)</b> _____	\$ 100.00
<b>Crafter</b> _____	100.00
<b>Business</b> _____	140.00
<b>Dam Road Business – (See Page 2)</b> _____	105.00
<b>Food Booth [ includes \$126.00 Health Dept. Fee plus \$140.00 booth fee ]</b>	264.00

**Food Booth Applications must be returned by AUGUST 1<sup>ST</sup>. (See Page 2).**

**Bands, Demonstrations & Entertainment must have prior approval. No Fee.**

One Free T-Shirt (included with booth fee):

Mens Sizes: MED \_\_\_ L \_\_\_ XL \_\_\_ XXL \_\_\_ XXXL \_\_\_  
 Ladies Sizes: MED \_\_\_ L \_\_\_

**Additional T-Shirts** available @ 15.00 ea.

Mens Sizes: MED\_\_\_\_L\_\_\_\_XL\_\_\_\_XXL\_\_\_\_XXXL\_\_\_\_

Ladies Sizes: MED\_\_\_\_L\_\_\_\_

**Total additional T-Shirts: Quantity\_\_\_\_\_@ \$15.00 each = \$ Total amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Make check payable to El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce. Mail to: Marie Carayanis, 4460 Fieldcrest Drive, El Sobrante, 94803 For booth information: **e-mail:** [mariecofces@yahoo.com](mailto:mariecofces@yahoo.com).

**Chamber Website:** [www.elsobrantechamber.com](http://www.elsobrantechamber.com).

## BOOTH CATEGORIES

**Non-Profit Organizations** – Any organization which can provide proof of non-profit status with this application. If selling food or beverages see **Food Booth** description below.

**Crafters** – Home made products only – **non food**. Original hand-crafted work in any media by the artist who is present.

**Business** – licensed business, resale manufactured products.

**Dam Road Businesses – REMINDER** – If you do not send in an application and fee, the Stroll Committee will place another booth in front of your store on the street. All sidewalks must remain clear per Contra Costa County requirements. A SPECIAL RATE OF \$105.00 FOR BUSINESSES ON THE DAM ROAD.

**Food Booth** – Commercial or non-profit groups selling or sampling foods/beverages prepared on or off-site for immediate or later consumption. Must comply with County Health Department requirements and pay licensing fee of \$126.00 additional. Make check payable to the El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce.

## PARADE NOTES

**Line up** – Parade begins at 11:00 am. Line up starts at 10:00 am at the Walgreen's parking

Lot, but location may be subject to change. The parade line begins at the drive thru pharmacy and goes behind the building.

**Parking** - The Walgreens parking lot is NOT for parade participant parking. Walgreen's is still open for business, and any parking should be SHORT TERM. We appreciate Walgreen's for letting us use their lot. Public parking is usually available at the Masonic Lodge lot and a Stroll Shuttle will be available.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

**Weather:** No cancellation for weather—the stroll goes on rain or shine.

2023  
Q2

Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>

# quarterly **SUNRISE NETWORKING**

## **PRESENTATION:**

Melanie Nuni

The Alliance Community Development

### ***Growing & Thriving***

How the Alliance for Community Development  
can help your business grow and thrive.



8:30 to 9:45am  
Crockett Community Ctr  
850 Pomona St.  
Crockett

**FREE EVENT**  
RSVP Eventbrite  
Light Refreshments  
Bring your business cards & your questions!

INFO: [BayFrontChamber.com/our-events](http://BayFrontChamber.com/our-events)

*"It's what you learn after you  
know it all that counts."  
—John Wooden*

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Join Us for the Sunrise Breakfast in Crockett!



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Before you renew you owe it to yourself to call Jim. You'll be glad you did.

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- o AFLAC
- o Group Life
  
- o Home
- o Auto
- o Umbrellas



### Jim Cowen

5341 Valley View Rd  
El Sobrante, CA 94803  
Office at Valley View & Dam Rd

**510-222-7890**

Fax 707-922-2313  
Email: [Jim.Cowen@JimCowen.com](mailto:Jim.Cowen@JimCowen.com)  
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# El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Representative \_\_\_\_\_

Resident's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ sCell \_\_\_\_\_

New- Referred by \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal- year first joined \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to appear on published mailing lists?  yes  no

Would you like to serve on a committee?  yes  no

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

[Membership period February 1 through January 31 of following year, prorated only after August 31]

Paid annually as follows:

Business  \$150  
[over 10 employees]  \$200  
In-Home Business  \$100  
Non-Profit Organization  \$100  
Resident  \$ 40

### ADVERTISING FEES

Newsletter

Full Page - per issue  \$100  
- full year  \$600  
Half Page - full year  \$350  
Qtr. Page - full year  \$200  
Business card - full year  \$100

MEMBERSHIP DUES \$ \_\_\_\_\_

ADVERTISING FEES \$ \_\_\_\_\_

DONATIONS:

Beautification \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Scholarship \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

ADVERTISING ART:

INCLUDED WITHIN

TO BE SENT SEPARATELY

USE PREVIOUS ART

JOIN/RENEW online at [elsobrantechamber.com](http://elsobrantechamber.com) or

COMPLETE FORM and RETURN WITH CHECK TO:

El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce 3769-B San Pablo Dam Rd.

El Sobrante, CA 94803 ATTN: Membership

Membership is a great way to promote your business• A good source for business networking• Mixers & Special Events  
ESCOC App Form REV 01/2020

# CLOVERFIELD FARM IN APRIL

## What's Ready for U-Picking in April

The rains are abating and the sun is warming the soil and bringing back lush growth in the vegetable garden at Cloverfield Organic Farm. This year's rain and the weather will likely limit the quantity of our stone fruit harvest but our orchard trees are loving the extra moisture in the warming soil.. Our garden beds are bursting with items that may tempt you. It is still too early in the year to pick most of the fruits that we grow, but Summer is coming.

Things to be u-picked in April include kales, mustards, chard, green onions, green garlic, garlic chives, fava beans, lemon balm, lettuce, parsley, cilantro, ginger, dandelion greens, bay leaves, Greek oregano, chamomile, absinthe wormwood, epazote, asparagus, spinach, mint (apple, chocolate, & strawberry), beets, calendulas, nettles, arugula, and fennel. Towards the end of the month we hope to have some ripe strawberries and elderberry blossoms.

We have a selection of potted edible plants for sale, as well as dried herbs, seeds, raw honey, and extra-virgin organic olive oil in the farm shed. Our farm also makes a special location for a private tour, therapy horse interaction, picnic, or other event that can be arranged on our website, [www.cloverfieldfarm.us](http://www.cloverfieldfarm.us). Visit us at 501 La Paloma Rd in El Sobrante.

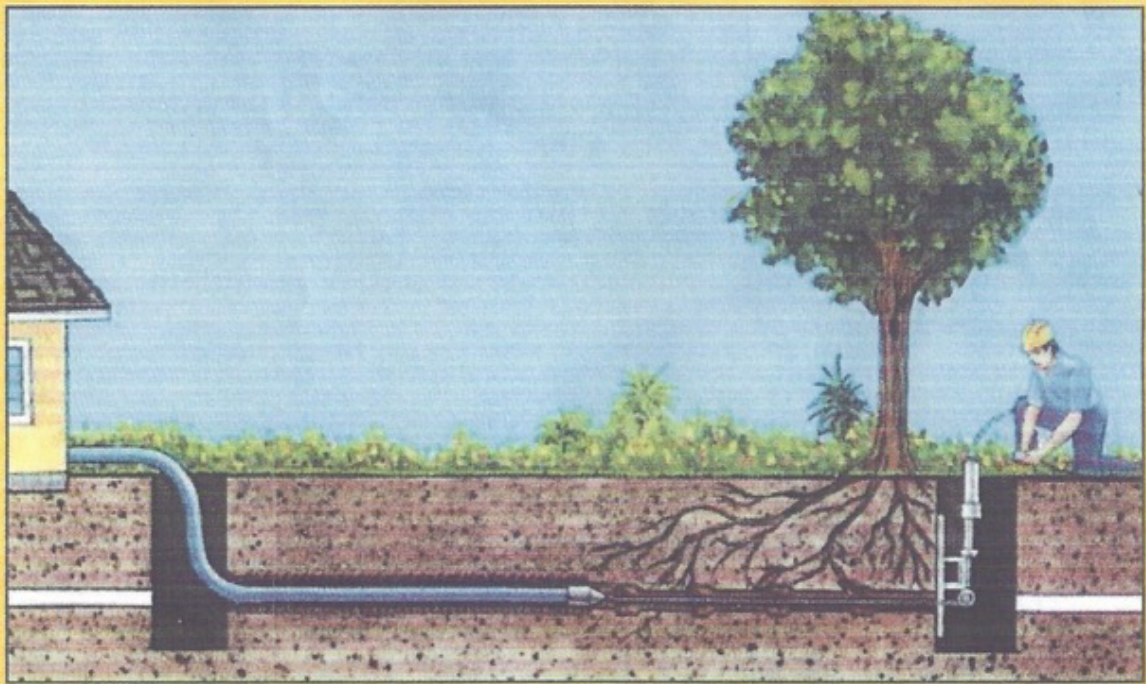


Spring Wildflowers

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*About Town* Newsletter  
April 2023



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[www.ElSobranteChamber.com](http://www.ElSobranteChamber.com)

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