

ABOUT TOWN

The El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce Newsletter

January, 2026

Vol.1



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Nicole Donn



In December we celebrated two Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies, Cass' Closet, a sweet boutique and The Good Table Cafe. If you haven't already done so, check out these two welcome additions to our community.

I am at the end of four years as President of the Chamber. It has been a labor of love, helping our town spring back after the pandemic. Vacancies are being filled, new restaurants, retail, automotive repair shops and care facilities opened. Volunteers continued to work to improve our community's aesthetics through workdays and murals. While I will no longer be President, I will continue to be involved as a director and liaison on beautification and events. I hope to see you all at the Installation and Awards Dinner of January 24th.

PRESIDENT- ELECT'S MESSAGE by Catherine Werner



Greetings Chamber members, Board and community. As we begin 2026, I would like to take a moment to introduce myself.

My name is Cathy Werner. I am a long-time resident of El Sobrante, and daughter of former small business operators in town. I recently retired from the healthcare field after 38 years with John Muir Health doing risk management, quality improvement and regulatory compliance.

I am looking forward to serving my community and the Chamber of Commerce as President in 2026 and I am honored for the opportunity to collaborate with my fellow residents and the dedicated, passionate business owners in the community and those serving as Directors on the Board.

There are so many possibilities for growth and improvement ahead, so please join me in continuing the work already being done. We are so much better together, so let us focus on what we can do in 2026.

Yours in service,
Cathy Werner

TOP NEWS

Membership Renewal period starts now.

2026 Membership renewal period is starting. Look for the application to join or renew in the body of this newsletter, or on the Chamber's website, www.elsobrantechamber.com

Business of the Year for 2025

After over 50 years in business, this family-run service has just closed, owner Lyle Miller took the business over that his father started in 1974. The Chamber salutes the owner and his family for their half a century of service to our community.

Citizen of the Year for 2025

Putting on a car show is a lot of work. Organizing a parade is also a challenging endeavor. Doing both for the same day is monumental, Gene Tapia has done both for several years now.

COMMUNITY EVENTS IN JANUARY

2026 Chamber Installation and Awards Dinner
Saturday, January 24
5:30pm

ELKS LODGE BANQUET HALL
3931 San Pablo Dam Rd.

RSVP and purchase tickets by using the QR Code or link:
<https://square.link/u/MMhjrUFq>



elsobrantechamber.com

EVENTS

DAY & DATE	TIME	ORGANIZER	EVENT	LOCATION
Saturday Jan.3	10:00am -2:00pm	Friends of the El Sobrante Library	FESL Book Sale	Fadhen House El Sobrante Library
Monday Jan.5	5:30pm-7:00pm	CHAMBER	Board Meeting	OFFICE 3769-B San Pablo Dam Rd.
Saturday Jan.17	9:30am-Noon	SPAWNERS	Workday	Wilkie Creek Site
Saturday Jan.17	10:00am -Noon	Green Team 94803	Workday	El Sobrante Library Parking Lot
Saturday Jan. 24	5:30pm - 9:00pm	CHAMBER	Installation & Awards Dinner	Elk's Lodge 3931
Saturdays (or by Appt.)	10:00am -4:00pm	El Sobrante Historical Society	Museum OPEN	Fadhen House El Sobrante Library
Sundays	10:00am -2:00pm	Planting Justice	Farmer's Market	5116 Sobrante Ave. (street closed to traffic)

ANNUAL INSTALLATION AND AWARDS DINNER

Join us for an unforgettable evening of celebration and community spirit at the Annual Installation and Awards Dinner! This special event, set to take place on Saturday, January 24th at the Elk's Lodge Banquet Hall, 3931 San Pablo Dam Road, El Sobrante, will honor the outstanding achievements and contributions of our local leaders and promising students.

We are thrilled to introduce the newly elected Board of Directors, who will steer our community towards a bright future with their innovative vision and dedication. In addition, we will proudly recognize the Business of the Year 2025, El Sobrante Wheel and Brake, a testament to excellence and leadership in our local economy, and the Citizen of the Year 2025, Gene Tapia, whose selfless service and commitment to our community inspire us all. We will also celebrate the 2025 Scholarship winners, the young minds whose talents and ambitions promise a brighter tomorrow.

The evening will feature a delightful buffet dinner, engaging speeches, and a chance to connect with fellow community members. Dress in your finest and come celebrate the spirit of our community!

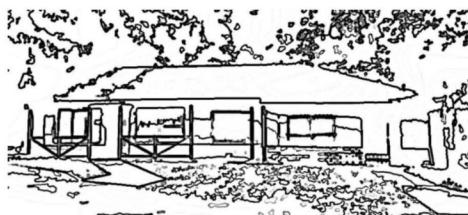
RSVP by Friday, January 16th to ensure your place at this prestigious event. You can RSVP online by clicking on the QR code at the bottom of this article, or following this link:

<https://square.link/u/MMhjrUFq>

We look forward to celebrating with you!



RSVP/TICKETS HERE



Friends of the El Sobrante Library
(FESL)

BOOK SALE

Saturday, January 3, 2026

Feature of the Month

"Friends" Favorites
We hope you enjoy our picks!

Members: 10 am - 12 pm

General: Noon - 2 pm

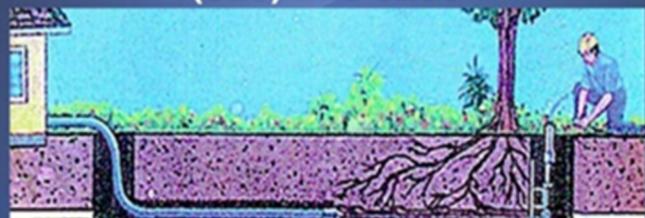
Proceeds from book sales fund El Sobrante Library
programs

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Nationwide Forecast

	2025	2026
Existing-Home Sales	+0%	+14%
New Home Sales	-2%	+5%
Median Home Price	+3%	+4%
Mortgage Rate	6.7%	6.0%
Job Gains	400,000 (not 2 million)	1.3 million (not 2 million)
Unemployment Rate	4.3%	4.4%

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your real estate goals. One
conversation can start you
in the right direction.



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**Cloverfield
Organic Farm**

CLOVERFIELD FARM

Here is a link to our November farm update:
<https://www.cloverfieldfarm.us/post/january-2026-happenings-at-cloverfield-organic-farm>

Our farm can be a great location for school visits, private tours, group events, picnics, and parties. Guided horse sessions are also available. We ask you reserve these special services at least four days in advance.



Magic Ben browsing pasture under the grapevines



Come Join Us!

Planting Work Parties
Creek Clean ups
Nature Walks
Water Quality Monitoring

Contact us at:
spawners@thewatershedproject.org

SPAWNERS

The SPAWNERS mission is to protect the San Pablo Creek Watershed and inspire community appreciation and stewardship through advocacy, education and habitat restoration. JOIN US at our monthly workday events and learn more about our group and how you can help. Our next workday is Saturday January 17 at 9:30am, meeting at the Wilkie Creek worksite.

GREEN TEAM 94803

The Green Team 94803 cleans up! Green Team 94803 invites you to our next monthly Third Saturday Cleanup (January 17 at 10:00am) at El Sobrante Library. We have the gear; you just need to be there! We also need help with maintaining the downtown planters and removing graffiti and stickers. Always fun and free! More at KeepElSobranteBeautiful.info, send an email to help out.

Keep El Sobrante Clean and Beautiful





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- ✓ What are the options beyond Medicare

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MEMBERSHIP

We hope this message finds you well! As we begin a new year, we're excited to invite you to renew your membership with the Chamber. Your continued support plays a vital role in our community, allowing us to offer enriching programs, exclusive events, and valuable resources.

For our existing members, renewing is as easy as completing the application on the following page to secure your membership for another year of growth and connection.

To those considering joining us for the first time, we extend a warm welcome! Becoming a member of the Chamber offers unparalleled access to a network of like-minded individuals, expert insights, and opportunities for personal and professional development. Join today and start taking advantage of all the perks our community has to offer.

Thank you for being a part of our journey. We look forward to another fantastic year together!

Warm regards,

Marie Carayannis
Membership Chair

El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____ New Member _____ Renewal _____ [year first joined]

Business Name _____

Contact Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone/Cell _____ email _____

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

Would you like to serve on a committee? What is your area of interest?
[interest areas] _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES and ADVERTISING FEES

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

Paid annually as follows:	Amount to be paid
Business with 11 or more employees	\$200.00 _____
Business with 10 or less employees	\$150.00 _____
IN-HOME, sole Proprietor business	\$100.00 _____
Non-Profit, local Organization	\$100.00 _____
Resident, non-business	\$ 40.00 _____

Advertising opportunities:

NEWSLETTER AD:

large ad approx..4.25" x 5.5" [only \$50/mth] \$600.00 _____

Business card ad .. [less than \$20/mth] \$200.00 _____

Newsletter ads are for the whole year, not prorated. Art formatted in JPEG style only accepted.

TOTAL AMOUNT FOR DUES AND NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING

\$ _____

[CALCULATE THE AMOUNT YOU OWE FOR MEMBERSHIP AND
ADVERTISING THEN PAY THIS AMOUNT USING METHOD BELOW:]

____ Pay by check – make payable to EL SOBRANTE CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE 3769-B San Pablo Dam Rd. , El Sobrante, CA 94803

____ Pay online – use QR code

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



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DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY

**About Town Newsletter submissions
will be Tuesday, January 20 @5:00pm
Send your pictures, flyers , etc in JPEG
format to be included in our newsletter
to el sobchamber793@gmail.com**



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WE DELIVER TO ALL CITIES

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

The El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to announce PJ's Restaurant and Cocktail as our Business of the Month for January 2026. This iconic spot at 3721 San Pablo Dam Road has been a cornerstone of the community since 1956, continuously operating as a restaurant through various eras. Now, under the passionate leadership of new owner Lorna Padia-Markus, PJ's has been beautifully revitalized and reopened in late 2025 bringing fresh energy while honoring its rich history.

Lorna, a retired principal from Mowat, Mackie and Anderson, an Oakland professional services firm with 35 years experience advising businesses, decided to pursue her own dream. As longtime customers and friends of the previous owners, the Padia family saw an opportunity to breathe new life into this cherished gathering place. "PJ's is the El Sobrante Cheers, where everyone knows your name – only better." Lorna has said. Her vision to create a family-friendly spot where the community can gather, celebrate, connect and make new memories.

PJ's specializes in Italian fine food, with a menu featuring homemade classics, daily specials, and soon to be customer favorites like the San Francisco - style Cioppino or Fried Calamari, perfect for warming up on a winter's evening.

What sets PJ's apart is its deep community ties. Lorna is connected with local organizations including the Boys and Girls Club of Contra Costa, the El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce, and the San Pablo Eagles. She loves how everyone in town feels interconnected, and she's most proud of the overwhelming community support since the reopening – along with the shared memories that make PJ's so special. Guests rave about the excellent food, welcoming ambiance, and attentive service that make every visit feel like coming home.



CONGRATULATIONS to Lorna Padia-Markus and the entire PJ's Restaurant and Cocktail team on this well-deserved recognition. We encourage everyone to visit and experience the warmth and flavors that make PJ's a true El Sobrante treasure.

PJ's Restaurant and Cocktail
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www.pjs-restaurant.com



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Jim Cowen

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