



October 2025 Newsletter

Dear Sunflower Hill Friends,

September was full of exciting activities and the arrival of cozy fall weather! Our fall-themed fun included **Fall Bingo** and creating **family trees with Adama**, decorated with autumn leaves and festive touches. Friday Night Live was all about **Disney magic** — we played Disney Music Bingo, decorated Disney princesses, and tested our knowledge with a lively Disney trivia quiz. To get into the gala spirit, Irby Ranch hosted our very own **Mardi Gras-themed gala and potluck!** Participants decorated crowns, enjoyed delicious food, and ended the evening with a joyful dance party.

We have a wide variety of fun activities planned in October. We started the month with our first-ever art workshop at the **Museum on Main** in Pleasanton, and later in the month, we'll join the **YMSL Fall Festival** on Saturday, October 18. To celebrate the season, we'll enjoy Halloween-inspired activities, including decorating masks, painting gourds, a spooky story time, and our annual Halloween Costume Party. Cooking Class will be



especially tasty as participants make bagels with cream cheese and a hearty fall soup. On Saturday, October 11, Crystal will lead a Pilates class at Irby Ranch, followed by fresh bagels to enjoy afterward. Finally, our **Sun Squad volunteers** will be assembling Fall Kindness Bags to share with local community members, including teachers, firefighters, and police officers.

With gratitude,
The Sunflower Hill Team



Mardi Gras Gala Wrap-Up

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Mardi Gras Gala! We are so grateful for your generosity and support — you made it a truly special evening celebrating Sunflower Hill and our programs designed to create joy and opportunities for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. What a fantastic night!

Be sure to watch the [powerful Sunflower Hill video featuring award-winning singer Josh Groban](#) that truly captures the heart of our mission.

Forward it to a friend too! Anyone can share their love for Sunflower Hill via our [Virtual Paddle Raise](#).

Relive the Celebration:

[View Gala Photos](#)

Watch a [fun short gala video](#) from Joy Liu Media

Download the [full program](#)

Thank you for helping us create opportunities where adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities can live, work, learn and thrive!

[Donate to Virtual Paddle Raise](#)



Financial, Tax Planning and Public Benefits Webinar Series

Sunflower Hill presents a FREE webinar series offering practical guidance for families **supporting a loved one with special needs**. Covering key topics such as estate planning, public benefits, future financial planning, and tax-smart charitable strategies, each session is designed to help families make informed decisions and create a secure, well-structured plan for their loved one's future.

Financial Webinar Dates:

Session 1: Estate Planning and Public Benefits

Wednesday, October 15 | 6:30 PM

Session 2: Funding Your Loved One's Future

Wednesday, October 29 | 6:30 PM

Session 3: Tax Planning and Charitable Tools in Special Needs Planning

Wednesday, November 12 | 6:30 PM

[Register for Webinar Series](#)



949 Moraga - Lafayette News

Exciting news! The proposed development at 949 Moraga Road in Lafayette is one step closer to becoming a reality after being awarded \$19,542,218 through the State's Multifamily Finance Super NOFA Program. Read more about this exciting news on the [City of Lafayette website!](#)

[Read Lafayette Article](#)



Welcome, Annie!

Annie Turner: Programs Assistant

Annie is a longtime volunteer of Sunflower Hill who recently joined our staff as a Programs Assistant. In her new role, Annie supports the programs team with important administrative tasks, including preparing our monthly calendar releases, tracking attendance, ensuring liability waivers are current, and more. Annie's dedication and familiarity with our community make her a wonderful addition to the team.



Garden News

September marked the transition from summer to cooler fall weather. Our participants harvested the last of the summer crops — tomatoes, basil, squash, and cucumbers — and are now busy pulling and chopping the spent plants. These will be added to compost piles, returning valuable nutrients to the soil.

We've begun preparing the beds for cool-season crops like kale and cabbage and, with support from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, are also prepping the ground for cover crops. This fall and winter, many beds will rest as we focus on replenishing the soil to ensure healthy harvests in seasons to come.

Garlic has been planted and will grow steadily over the next nine months, while the Brussels sprouts are thriving and on track for an early November harvest. Early fall flower harvests have been especially abundant, filling bouquets with vibrant cosmos and marigolds.



Garden Transformation

Thanks to funding from the **City of Livermore**, infrastructure improvements are underway at the Sunflower Hill Garden at Hagemann Ranch to enhance both accessibility and usability for all visitors.

In the first phase, new accessible pathways have replaced the mulch throughout the garden, improving access to key areas including the training circle, main field tables, shed, arbor, succulent garden, and sensory garden corner.

The next phase will include the construction of three permanent shade structures to provide shelter for program groups and the harvest area. Additionally, electricity will be routed to these structures and the shed, supporting expanded programming and garden activities.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to **Cemex** for providing all the materials and to **Landscape Experts** for performing the work that makes these improvements possible.



Save the Date: Sip 'n Shop at Rubino Estates Winery

Join us for our annual **Sip 'n Shop** at Rubino Estates Winery in Pleasanton on **Tuesday, November 19**. Sip on delicious wines, shop for holiday gifts, and support Sunflower Hill — all in one festive evening! Mark your calendars now for this fun event you won't want to miss.



Steve Van Dorn, Sunflower Hill Board Member, and Bobby Arte, Chair-Elect, Dublin Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Best of Dublin Results

Sunflower Hill was a top contender in the *Best of Dublin* contest! We are honored to be voted **1st for "Best Services for Elderly & Disabled Persons"** and **2nd for "Best Charitable Organization."** Thank you to everyone who voted for us!

October 2025 Activity Calendar						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
hello FALL Scan the QR Code to Register for Events!			1 Museum at Main Art Workshop Register Through Olivia 2:30 - 3:30 PM Fitness Class w/ Keith 4 - 5 PM	2 Cooking Safety with Tina 4 - 5 PM Adaptive Yoga w/ Kristen 5:15 - 6:05 PM	3 Fitness Class w/ Beth 4 - 5 PM	4
5 	6 Karaoke Social 4 - 5 PM	7 Learn Basic Swedish with Tina 3:30 - 4:30 PM Bring-Your-Own-Dinner + Spooky Story Time with Adama 5:15 - 6:15 PM	8 Ready Set Roll Board Game and Chat time with Tina 11 AM - 12 PM Fitness Class w/ Beth 4 - 5 PM	9 Fall Walking Club Walk to Starbucks with Crystal 4 - 5 PM Adaptive Yoga w/ Kristen 5:15 - 6:05 PM	10 Fitness Class w/ Beth 4 - 5 PM Irby Ranch Farmers Market 8:30 - 4:30 PM Friday Night Live! Live Performances, Dinner Provided, Heads up Activities and More! 5:30 - 8 PM	11 Morning Photos and Bagels with Crystal 9 - 10 am
12 	13 Beautiful Halloween Craft with Tina 4 - 5 PM	14 Cooking Class: Make-Your-Own Flavored Cream Cheese and Bagels 4 - 5 PM	15 Fitness Class w/ Keith 4 - 5 PM Ghostish Goodie: Good Painting with Adama 5:30 - 6:30 PM	16 Art and Fun with VSP Staff: Clay Illuminary 4 - 5 PM Adaptive Yoga w/ Kristen 5:15 - 6:05 PM	17 Fitness Class w/ Keith 4 - 5 PM	18 Community Activity: Fall Festival with YVESL 2:00 - 4:00 Location: Crownville Church Courtyard 1800 Fremont Road Livermore CA
19 	20 Learning with Olivia: Learning About Holidays and Celebrations 4 - 5 PM	21 Cooking Class: Fall Soup 4 - 5 PM	22 Fitness Class w/ Beth 4 - 5 PM Decorate Your Own Sun Sun Catchers with Adama 5:15 - 6:15 PM	23 Uno Hour and Board Game Social with Tina 4 - 5 PM Adaptive Yoga w/ Kristen 5:15 - 6:05 PM	24 Fitness Class w/ Beth 4 - 5 PM	25
26 	27 Pet Therapy and Coloring Hour 4 - 5 PM	28 Bring Your Own Snack and Dinner + Halloween Movie with Tina 3 - 5 PM	29 Fitness Class w/ Keith 4 - 5 PM Spooky Crafts: Decorate Masks with Adama 5:30 - 6:30 PM	30 Sun Squad: Decorate Fall Kindness Bags for Community Helpers 3 - 5 PM Adaptive Yoga w/ Kristen 5:15 - 6:05 PM	31 Costume Party and Halloween Social: Spooky Snacks, Games, and Dinner Party 3 - 5 PM	
Sunflower Hill Led Activities HCEB Led Activities Parent/Resident Led Activities SAHA Led Activities						
Please refer to the Activity Outline for more details. The date, time, and location of activities is subject to change. Please check the community cork board for more activities led by residents and caregivers. To register, go to: https://sunflowerhill.org/programs/irby-ranch/						
**If a participant requires 1:1 support to engage in an activity, it is required to bring your own support. Parent/caregiver/support staff should plan to attend and fully participate in each activity, supporting the participant as needed. Sunflower Hill staff does not provide 1:1 support during activities. **Registration is required to participate in Sunflower Hill Activities at Irby Ranch.						

Irby Ranch Activities

October at Sunflower Hill is full of opportunities to learn, create, and connect! Join us for engaging programs like fun **cooking classes**, Friday Night Live, and Halloween fun! Sunflower Hill activities are designed to bring people together in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Register for Irby Ranch Activities

COMMUNITY MEMBER *Spotlight*

**MATT
FOSTER**

Irby Ranch
Resident



When our son, Matt, turned 18, we were told to put him on every waiting list we could find for housing; unfortunately, there wasn't much to choose from in the Tri-Valley at that time. Then we heard about an organization called Sunflower Hill, and Matt and I attended a meeting at the Livermore Public Library. We filled out the paperwork, and in September 2020 we received notification that an apartment was ready for him. There were tears and angst but also excitement.

The changes in Matt since then have been monumental. Through the support system put in place, Matt has made many friends, and he enjoys the activities at Sunflower Hill. Matt, by nature, is very shy, so I had happy tears when someone sent me a video of him singing a Tom Petty song at one karaoke night. That is a testament to how comfortable he is in his SH community. He enjoys the cooking classes and pet therapy. And as an avid sports fan, he loved going to Chase Center to watch the Santa Cruz Warriors play. He looks forward to going grocery shopping and then to the gym every Wednesday, and he enjoys going to lunch on Fridays with two of his friends from Sunflower Hill. He still attends his day program three days per week, and he enjoys walking downtown to go to concerts and other city events.

Matt was diagnosed with autism at age 3, and his young life was filled with doctor and clinic visits, OT sessions, and therapists coming to our house three days per week to assist him with language and social skills. And now, whenever people ask us how Matt is doing, I tell them that instead of us telling him where he's going and what he's doing, he now tells us! He loves his friendships at Sunflower Hill, his independence, and that he has his own apartment in a very safe environment. I cannot say enough about the amazing people who support him: Amar, Jubie, James, Laura, and so many others. Matt has his own life, his own friends, and he is happy. That's all a parent can ask for!

—Matt's mom, Cathy Maciel

Donate to Sunflower Hill

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