

**From:** [Vikas Gupta](#)  
**To:** [Kimberly Castro](#)  
**Cc:** [Dale Seale](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Tree Lighter Nomination  
**Date:** Friday, October 18, 2024 12:50:58 AM  
**Attachments:** [Chris Carver biography.docx](#)

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Hi Kim,

Thanks for following up on this. I do continue to want to present two sets of nominations:

1. Chris Carver
2. Kevin Zacker, Todd Spohn and Bill May

I continue to challenge the irrelevant criteria of the nominee needing to be a resident of Santa Clara. The criteria should be about the service the person or group of persons or organization has provided to the city / residents of the city and I am willing to take my case to the mayor. I am including their bio as a background for the service these individuals have made to the city by putting it on the world map and serving residents for a long time, be it from drowning prevention, to sending them out as upstanding citizens, to the Olympics. It is easily conceivable why they should be honored.

Best regards,  
-Vikas

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About Bill May:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/06/us/synchronized-swimming-olympics.html>  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/08/us/synchronized-swimming-bill-may.html>

About Todd Spohn:

Head Coach Todd Spohn has been leading Santa Clara Diving Club since 2011, building it into one of the top clubs in the nation. Under his leadership, the team has produced multiple national champions and finalists. Before Santa Clara, Todd headed Mission Viejo Nadadores, where he boosted their national ranking to 4th place. He also served as interim Head Coach for the USA Diving National Training Center, coaching Olympians like Steel Johnson and Thomas Finchum. With over two decades of experience, Todd's career began at Miami University, where he earned numerous coaching accolades and was inducted into the Cradle of Coaches.

About Kevin Zacher:

Kevin Zacher is the current Head Coach of Santa Clara Swim Club, one of the most renowned and historic swim programs in the nation. With a strong background in competitive swimming and coaching, Zacher brings extensive experience to the club, having coached athletes at all levels, from age group swimmers to Olympic-level competitors. His leadership is characterized by a commitment to developing well-rounded athletes, focusing on both technical excellence and personal growth. Under his guidance, Santa Clara Swim Club continues to thrive, producing top-tier swimmers and maintaining a legacy of success in the aquatics community.

On Wed, Oct 16, 2024 at 11:06 AM Kimberly Castro <[KCastro@santaclaraca.gov](mailto:KCastro@santaclaraca.gov)> wrote:

Hi Vikas,

At the last Parks & Recreation Commission you suggested the three coaches from the three aquatic teams to be nominated as the honorary Tree Lighter. After researching the nomination further, it was determined that the coaches would not qualify for the nomination as they are not residents. Would you still like to put them forward as a nomination? Do you have a different nomination that would qualify?

The Holiday Tree Lighter is to be selected based on their service, generosity, and contributions to the City of Santa Clara. As such, the Commission should consider the following in evaluating potential nominees:

1. Is the nominee a resident of the City of Santa Clara?
2. What is the nature of the community service/community benefit that has been provided?

We are trying to get the reports finalized for the meeting on Monday – we would appreciate a quick response.

Thank you,

Kim

**Kimberly Castro** | Recreation Manager | Parks & Recreation

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