

From: [Eydie Mendoza](#)
To:
Cc: [Kimberly Castro](#)
Subject: Response to 2025 Holiday Home Decorating Contestant who Complained about the Contest Fw: The Cultural Commission is Grateful for Your Participation in 2024's Annual Contest Re: 2024 Holiday Home Decorating Contest Contestant
Date: Friday, January 24, 2025 4:05:34 PM

Dear Cultural Commission,

At the Jan. 6 Cultural Commission meeting, staff sought the Commission's direction in responding to a 2025 Holiday Home Decorating contestant, Valerie Vaccaro, who emailed a complaint about losing and that the same winners win each year. As suggested, staffed responded with a thorough explanation of the judging process with a list of the winners from 2024 and 2023, and Valerie responded one more time. Please see the response and email thread.

Eydie Mendoza | Communications Coordinator | Parks & Recreation
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From: Valerie
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2025 2:41 PM
To: Eydie Mendoza <EMendoza@SantaClaraca.gov>
Subject: Re: The Cultural Commission is Grateful for Your Participation in 2024's Annual Contest Re: 2024 Holiday Home Decorating Contest Contestant

Hi Eydie,

Thanks for your response. In D1 the same house has won for the past 20 years - there really is no incentive for anyone else to enter.

As mentioned, we will continue to decorate but will not be entering the contest.

Thanks

Val

From: Eydie Mendoza <EMendoza@SantaClaraca.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2025 1:49 PM
To: Valerie
Subject: The Cultural Commission is Grateful for Your Participation in 2024's Annual Contest Re:

2024 Holiday Home Decorating Contest Contestant

Hello Val,

Happy New Year! I hope this email finds you well.

Thank you for your patience regarding a response on behalf of the City of Santa Clara Cultural Commission. The Cultural Commission is grateful for all the City of Santa Clara residents who participated in 2024's annual contest and thanks and encourages you to enter future Home Decorating Contests. They are listening and will continue to improve the contest process.

While we had a couple repeat winners, we had several new winners. The 2024 Winners are:

District 1: **4292 Burdick Lane**

District 2: **2085 Warburton Ave.**

District 3: **2139 San Rafael Ave.**

District 4: **875 Pepper Tree Lane**

District 5: **1735 Benton St.**

District 6: **69 Michael Way**

Best Group Entry: **960 Capitola Way**

Best of the Best: **345 Sloat Court**

The 2023 Winners were:

Best of the Best: 875 Pepper Tree Lane

D1: 4292 Burdick Lane

D2: 2133 Hoover Court

D3: 3031 Santa Maria Ave.

D4: 960 Capitola Way

D5: 1210 Lincoln St.

D6: 345 Sloat Court

The contest rules, completed contestant application, including the reason for entering are part of the judging criteria; the Cultural Commission uses that information along with visiting the addresses to complete a judging rubric to help score and choose the winners.

CONTEST RULES

- Open to residents of the **City of Santa Clara**.
- Contest is only for residential homes (apartment, home, condo, or townhome) and judging is based on decorations of the exterior only.
- To be considered for voting: you must complete the online entry form.
- Select members of the Cultural Commission will vote for the eight winners.
- Judging criteria: 5 categories, each worth 5 points:
 - Explanation of "What my decorations mean to me, my family, our group,

and/or my household (Maximum of 4 sentences)"

- Lighting
- Decorations
- Creativity
- **Overall theme**

JUDGING

- The Cultural Commission will judge homes in-person by driving to the contestants' addresses.

I look forward to seeing your 2025 entry.

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From: Valerie

Sent: Thursday, December 26, 2024 10:47 AM

To: Eydie Mendoza <EMendoza@SantaClaraCA.gov>

Subject: Re: 2024 Holiday Home Decorating Contest Contestant

Hi Eydie,

Thank you for your message. I have to say when the same house(s) win every year it doesn't give others much motivation to enter the contest. If you really want to promote more community engagement, you may want to think about changing the rules to something like 'the same entry can't win 2 years in a row'. It is our tradition to decorate, so we will continue to every year, but I don't think we will be entering the contest anymore unless something changes.

Thanks and Happy Holidays!

Val

From: Eydie Mendoza <EMendoza@SantaClaraCA.gov>

Sent: Monday, December 23, 2024 2:21 PM

To: Cultural Commission <CULTURALCOMMISSION@santaclaraca.gov>

Subject: 2024 Holiday Home Decorating Contest Contestant

Thank you for entering the 2024 Holiday Home Decorating Contest and making it fun! We had so many fabulous entries that made the judging process competitive. Although your entry was not selected as a winner, your decorations helped create more community engagement.

To keep the Holiday spirit going, we will be listing the addresses of all submissions on the City of Santa Clara's website to encourage the community to see your display.

The Cultural Commission will hold the Halloween and Holiday Decorating Contest next year. We hope you will enter.

May your Holidays is as brilliant as your colorful décor!

Cultural Commission