

Lori Martin

From: Estela DePaz [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 2:23 PM
To: Lori Martin
Cc: Bernardo Dunn; Estela's
Subject: Jan 12 City Council - Public Comment Letter

Ms Martin,
Happy New Year! Can you please add this letter to those that will be read during the Public Comment portion of tonight's Council Meeting? Thank you, estela 🌸

Good evening Mayor Kelley, Councilmembers, City Manager Biggs, and Staff,
Happy New Year!! I hope this letter finds you well, safe, and healthy.

My name is Estela DePaz. My family moved back to Hercules and purchased our home in 2003, but I consider myself a local because I grew up in Rodeo.

My family has a tradition of counting "Christmas Houses". It started as a way to encourage my boys to practice counting but soon became a family game. We take our cue that Christmas is around-the-corner when we start seeing holiday lights go up.

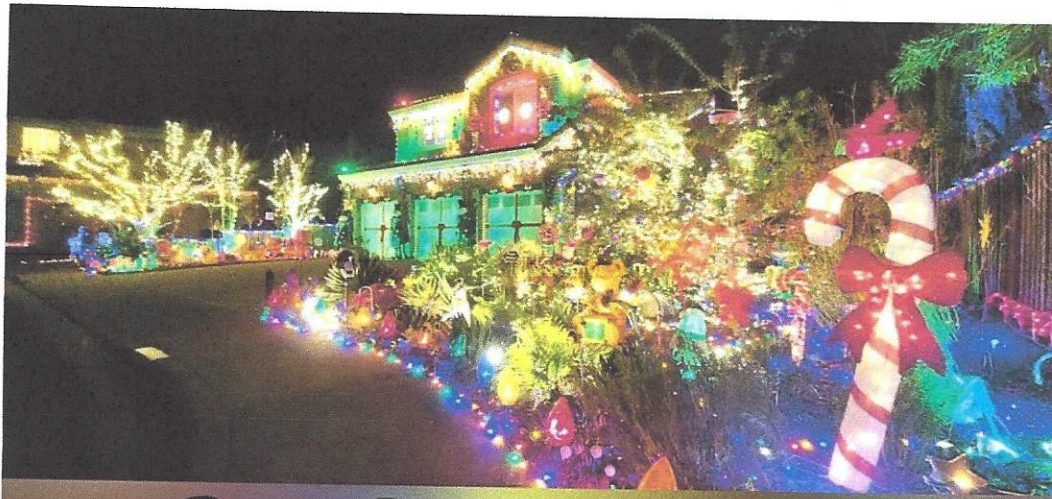
Throughout the years, the Hercules community has had a great festival of lights display during the Holiday Season. And, in spite of the great challenges of 2020, Herculeans were eager to get their holiday lights up. This year, Herculeans did not wait till after Thanksgiving to get out the lights. Houses on Sparrow had their lights up after Halloween!

In 2020, Holiday Lights became a symbol of our community's resilience. The most spectacular group of houses were those in Onyx Court. Many know that the Palma-Dunns on Onyx have been decorating their yard and home for years. It's a family tradition for them. Onyx Court is part of my running route, so for years I have seen many of Bernardo and Tracy's decorations for Valentines, 4th of July, Halloween, and Christmas. They have a knack with design, and the whole family (Tracy, Bernardo, and the kids) all get into the action of designing, hanging up, and taking down the decorations in their yard. Bernardo says it's like therapy. The Palma-Dunn family therapy is what our community especially needed in 2020 - a dazzling lights display.

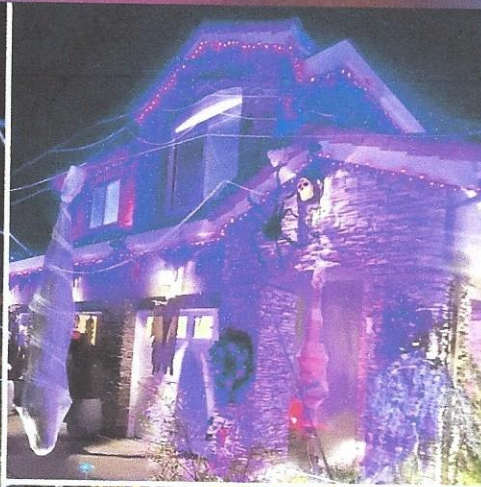
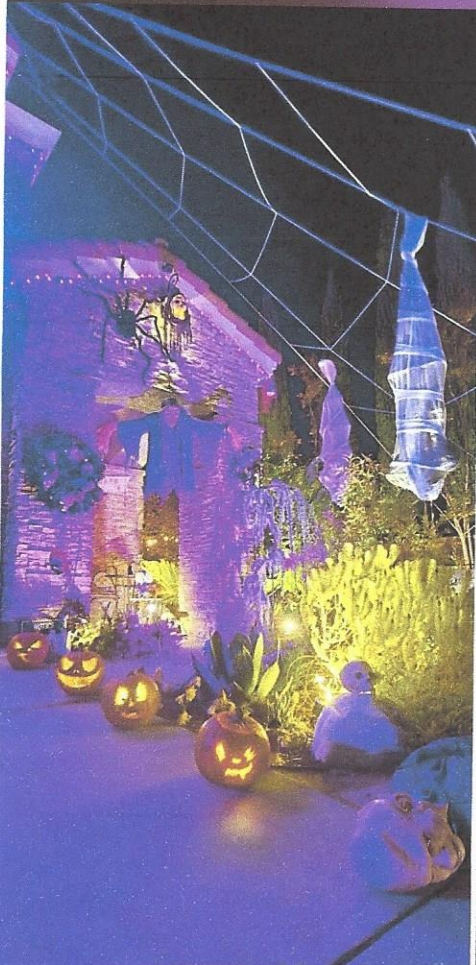
For Christmas 2020, the Palma-Dunns and their neighbors went above and beyond to bring lights and joy to our community by creating the "Onyx Candy Cane Court". The lights display was so spectacular that it won 96.5 KOIT's "Light Up The Bay" Photo Contest. Here is the link to the article from ABC7 with more information <https://abc7news.com/hercules-holiday-lights-light-up-the-bay-photo-contest-family-wins-10-000/8599790/>

Is there any way to recognize/acknowledge/thank the Palma-Dunns and their neighbors on Onyx Court? They have brought much needed joy to our hearts and smiles to our faces.

For those who did not get to visit this Bernardo and Tracy's display this year, you'll need to wait till next year. As a consolation, below are some photos from this year's Onyx Candy Cane Court as well as past years' decorations. Enjoy!!



Onyx Candy Cane Court
2020



Halloween 2020

