

Starkey leads effort to make 1,000 ornaments

August 21, 2021



As you may have heard, as part of the 51-year USDA Forest Service tradition, the Six Rivers National Forest is providing the People's Tree for the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol and 80+ smaller companion trees to adorn the offices throughout Washington, D.C. for the 2021 holiday season.

All California residents, schools, organizations and businesses are invited to help showcase the diverse peoples and ecology of California and its North Coast by creating and submitting ornaments and tree skirts to decorate the trees.

Del Norte County is doing its share. Supervisor Valerie Starkey committed the community to submitting 1,000 ornaments, and she is working diligently to deliver on that promise.

Starkey made arrangements to attend the Youth Fair on July 31 where she and her sister, Charlene Knowlton, made 100 (Dungeness) crab ornaments with the attendees of that event. Each ornament will be stamped with “Crescent City, CA” in order to draw attention to the unique species in our area.

In the first week of August, Starkey took to summer school and with the help of the Principal Angie Marshall and Superintendent Jeff Harris who helped coordinate the workshops. The students made over 100 reindeer, regular deer and 50 raccoons. Del Norte County is known for the large number of Raccoons and this will highlight some of the creatures we find living here in our everyday life.

In addition to these events, there were plans to attend farmer’s markets, the fair, and other community wide events. However, due to the surge in COVID cases, those events were cancelled. Starkey is now creating “kits” to distribute to the Del Norte Child Care Council, where Executive Director Melodee Mitchell will work to coordinate getting children’s handprints on wood rounds (also called cookies).

“Contributing 1,000 ornaments to the People’s Tree has been a community wide effort and I am grateful for the work of Eric Wier, Councilman Beau Smith and Parks and Recreation Director Holly Wendt for their contribution of cutting the wood slices and helping figure out ways to dry them quickly. Whether we are coming together to provide a solution for a crisis in our community or coming up with ways to celebrate our beautiful, natural environment, our residents always show up. I love this County,” Starkey said.

The ornaments are due by September 1 so there is a push to get these completed. However, if you did not get a chance to make an ornament, don’t worry. There will be other activities and ornament making sessions that will occur as we move into the next phase of the event, the tour of “Sugar Bear,” the 84-foot tree which was selected as the National Tree. The Tour of Sugar Bear will begin on October 29, right here in Del Norte County. Stay tuned for more information.