

Dear Friend,

Welcome to the January 2026 edition of the Ben Lomond Village Alliance newsletter! Happy New Year to you all! We hope that the afterglow of happy holidays is keeping you warm in all this rain.

We are so grateful for the participation in 2025 of all of you—our residents, volunteers, business owners, and supporters—who have shown up, helped out, and had a good time building community. We look forward to seeing folks at upcoming events. Volunteers are needed at both of the January events, so read on for ways to get involved, and what's coming next in our beloved Village.

~The Team at the BLVA

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## UPCOMING BLVA EVENTS

### CONTRA DANCE & POTLUCK

Friday, January 9, Doors open at 5:30pm

*Park Hall Community Center, 9400 Mill Street*

Potluck 5:30pm – 6:30pm

Beginner's Tutorial 6:30pm – 7:00pm

Dancing 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Contra Dance is a traditional American dance in which couples dance in two long facing lines or in groups of four. Affectionately referred to as an “entryway dance” by dancers, contra dance is by far the most accessible of all dances for beginners. The contra dance is also known as English country dance, New England folk dance, a barn dance, or Appalachian folk dance. More info and tickets [HERE](#). Click [HERE](#) to volunteer to help!

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### TALES OF BEN LOMOND - PART 1

Thursday, January 15, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (Doors at 6:30 pm)

*Park Hall Community Center, 9400 Mill Street*

**Local History Takes Center Stage at Park Hall!** Back by Popular Demand – with expanded material and new photos! Join us Thursday, January 15 at 7 pm for Tales of Ben Lomond Part 1: “Rugged Rogues and Fearless Mavericks: San Lorenzo Valley Adventurers in Ben Lomond – The Early Years.” Local historian and Realtor Ronnie Trubek returns with expanded content and new photos, bringing Ben Lomond’s early characters and stories to life. This is Part 1 of a three-part series covering the fascinating history of Ben Lomond and the San Lorenzo Valley. (Part 2: March 12 and Part 3: April 16). Proceeds will help Park Hall install much-needed sprinklers!

Tickets: \$25 for adults, \$20 for seniors/youth. Series tickets are \$65 for adults and \$50 for seniors/youth. More info [HERE](#). Volunteers are needed for this event, click [HERE](#) to sign up.

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## OTHER LOCAL EVENTS

### BAREROOT FRUIT TREE PLANTING TALK - FREE

Saturday, January 17 11:00 - 12:00

*Mountain Feed & Farm Supply, 9550 HWY 9*

Expert Jess Tunis is offering this workshop for an overview of bare root fruit tree planting, care, and requirements Details [HERE](#).

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## BBQ MONDAYS

Mondays 12:30pm until it's gone!

*Henflings Tavern, 9450 HWY 9*

Local BBQ professional Charlie Brown of Native Outlaw BBQ sets up his rig out front at Henflings every Monday around noon cooking up tri-tip, ribs, brisket, whatever's good plus all the fixin's. More info [HERE](#).

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## CALL FOR ARTISTS: Honoring Women

DEADLINE FOR ONLINE ENTRY: Thursday, January 29 | by noon

*Santa Cruz Mountains Art Center, 9341 Mill Street*

For their first exhibit of 2026, the Santa Cruz Mountains Art Center invites you to create art that honors and celebrates women. From famous or historical figures, to local heroes, or women know only to you. This is an opportunity to recognize their lives, culture, achievements, resilience, personal pain, or acts of courage. The Center hopes this exhibit will show our gratitude to women for their impact on the world, or even on our own personal lives. More information and how to enter your art [HERE](#).

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## LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

### BEN LOMOND LIBRARY

9525 Mill Street

Did you know our little local library is a non-profit, volunteer run organization? Check it out next time you are downtown! More info [HERE](#).



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## GET INVOLVED

Ben Lomond Village Alliance events & initiatives are being organized by a small group of very dedicated volunteers. Wouldn't you like to join the fun? Your input is needed to make Ben Lomond the best village in the valley, so join a committee today [HERE!](#)

Don't see a committee that's working on issues or events important to you? Email [secretary@benlomondvillage.org](mailto:secretary@benlomondvillage.org) and propose a new committee. Find your passion and help make it happen!

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We currently have a few specialized volunteer openings: a photographer for events, law services, a Fundraising Committee Chairperson, and a non-profit-knowledgeable CPA. If you have an interest in any of these roles, please email [secretary@benlomondvillage.org](mailto:secretary@benlomondvillage.org)

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There are also two opportunities in January to volunteer at BLVA events, and your help is needed! Sign up [HERE](#) to help at the Contra Dance on Jan 9, or [HERE](#) to volunteer at the Tales of Ben Lomond History Series Part 1 on January 15.

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## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### VILLAGE MARKET COMMITTEE FORMING

If you liked the farmer and craft market last year, you will love the expanded version of the farmers/makers market coming to Ben Lomond in 2026! Be a part of the team that's making it happen. Sign up [HERE](#) to learn more today!

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## BETTER STREETS & BEAUTIFICATION

While we have a long way to go to obtain funding for the major projects, the Beautification and Better Streets Committee succeeded in getting our BLVA voice heard on traffic and pedestrian safety issues on Highway 9 and local streets. Below is a recap of our 2025 activities. Chair of the committee, Jamie Helmer (lightmovesjim@gmail.com) encourages your response and to contact him with your ideas for new service requests to Caltrans, County and the Regional Transportation Commission.

- Speed Limit Reduction- Caltrans plans to lower the speed limit to 25mph in the downtown core early in 2026.
  - Population signs- The population/elevation signs on Highway 9 entering Ben Lomond have been missing for years, and Caltrans has created work orders to replace them near Alba Road and Brackney Road.
  - Curb ramps- Eight new high visibility accessible curb ramps were installed on Highway 9 at Glen Arbor, Main and Fillmore intersections. The only ramps remaining to be upgraded are the two ramps at Mill St. north.
  - High Visibility Crosswalks- All crosswalks on Highway 9 were repainted with "ladder" style markings making them more visible to motorists driving through Ben Lomond.
  - Bridge Safety Railing- The County added a new rails with fresh paint on the Love Creek bridge lessening the risk for a small child or pet from climbing or falling through the rail.
  - Main Street Walkway- The County filled a very large depression on the walking route between Highway 9 and the Post Office on the east side of Main at Central.
  - Decorative Streetlights- All decorative streetlights on Highway 9 and Mill Street have been repaired by the County or PG&E making walking at night much safer. BLVA will seek volunteer opportunities with the County to refurbish the poles and apply I.D. numbers.
  - Crosswalk on Glen Arbor at Madrone & Newell- A sub-committee of the Better Streets Committee met with County Public Works requesting a crosswalk and push-button beacons be installed due to lack of a crosswalk anywhere on Glen Arbor and the popularity of this crossing point. The request is currently under study for eight months but has been noted in two County planning documents as a desirable location for a crosswalk.
  - New Walkway on Glen Arbor Road- For over a decade Ben Lomond residents have been requesting a safe walking area on the East side of Glen Arbor for the two-block stretch from Highway 9 to Pine-Madrone. This project is partially funded and we continue to advocate for full funding of this safety project.
  - Mill Street Improvements- The County has included \$280,000 for street and pedestrian safety improvements in its long range funding plan. Among other safety improvements, BLVA will advocate to lower the speed limit to 15mph, make curb ramp improvements, fill in missing sections of sidewalk, and to reduce speeding and stop-sign violations. Although funding is identified in the 25 year planning document, there is no funding identified in the 2025-30 capital improvement program.
  - Complete Streets Improvements on Highway 9- The Regional Transportation Commission has included \$10 million in its long range funding plan (25 year) for a series of safety improvements on Highway 9 in in Ben Lomond. Enhancements being studied are sidewalk extensions to Old County Road on each end of the village, new decorative lighting, gateway islands at each bridge, adding another crosswalk across Highway 9 at the traffic signal, new crosswalks at Fillmore and Hillside, walkway improvements at Love Creek-Firehouse frontage and improved transit stops at Hillside.
  - Bridge Replacement on Glen Arbor Road- The County has included \$4 million to replace the narrow two-lane bridge over Newell Creek in its 25 year long range planning document. This bridge is critically important when Highway 9 is closed due to repairs. When replaced it will be 40' in width with striped shoulders and raised walkways on both sides.
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## RECENT IMPACT ✨

### COOKIE PARTY AT HOWDEN CASTLE RAISES \$425 FOR VALLEY CHURCHES UNITED

A BLVA Supper Club graciously hosted by Tia and Will Verches at their home, Howden Castle, not only allowed two dozen Ben Lomonders to enjoy an afternoon admiring the castle, making new friends, eating appetizers, drinking mulled cider and wine, and sharing their favorite holiday cookies, but also raised \$425 for Valley Churches United! It was so much fun, we hope this becomes a new annual tradition!



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## 'OUT AND ABOUT' WITH THE BLVA 👠

In what has been a Ben Lomond tradition for at least a decade, a number of Ben Lomond Village Alliance members could be found among the festive carolers who went door-to-door on Riverside Ave singing holiday tunes to the residents.



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# THANK YOU! ❤️

As we begin a new year, we are grateful for the wonderful people who make Ben Lomond such a special place to live. Your involvement—whether through attending events, supporting local businesses, volunteering, or simply showing up for one another—keeps our village strong. We look forward to building on this momentum together in 2026, with more opportunities to celebrate our community, support one another, and shape a vibrant future for Ben Lomond.

Please invite your friends and neighbors to join the BLVA community and stay connected with us online. Sign up for our email list on our [WEBPAGE](#), follow us on [FACEBOOK](#) and fave us on [NEXTDOOR](#).

If you have questions, want information about BLVA initiatives, or have any Ben Lomond–related news for us to share in a future newsletter, email Ariel at [Secretary@BenLomondVillage.org](mailto:Secretary@BenLomondVillage.org).

Thank you for being a part of the Ben Lomond Village Alliance family, and we hope everyone has a Happy New Year!

Warm regards,

Ben Lomond Village Alliance

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