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FEBRUARY 2018



## *The Ferrells* *An Eventful Life*

*Cover by Kate Karwan Burgess*



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# Healdsburg *Living*

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### CONTENT SUBMISSION DEADLINES

DUE DATE FOR CONTENT	MAGAZINE EDITION
November 20	January
December 20	February
January 19	March
February 20	April
March 20	May
April 20	June
May 18	July
June 20	August
July 20	September
August 20	October
September 20	November
October 19	December

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## Dear Neighbors,

Love. According to the authors of the book *A General Theory of Love*, "It is not just the focus of human experience but also the life force of the mind, determining our moods, stabilizing our bodily rhythms and changing the structure of our brains...Love makes us who we are and who we can become."

In this issue, you'll read about three of our neighbors who built their personal and professional lives on a foundation of love -- love of family, love of friends, love of life!

Our cover story features the Ferrells, who work together to help other couples from near and far kickoff their life's journey together. Dundee Butcher's love of design using living flora to enhance life and Gina Jackson's story of resilience when her life hung in the balance.

Each of these stories is so Healdsburg because they recognize the importance of love in living life to its fullest. We hope they warm your heart.

Happy Valentine's Month,

### Cindy Butner Publisher

Photo by Kate Karwan Burgess



### Laurie Wachter Content Coordinator

Photo by Leigh Wachter



### Kate Karwan Burgess Photo Editor



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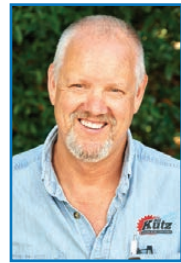
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Healdsburg Living is all about bringing people together and fostering a closer-knit community. If you have an idea you want to share, simply email us at [cbutner@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:cbutner@bestversionmedia.com). Please note the submission deadlines found on page 3. We look forward to hearing your ideas.



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## PARTY PIX

# Farm to Pantry Holiday House Party

Images by Linda Wilke



Ross Stromberg and Melita Love

Kathy Taylor and Terry Atkinson hosted a Holiday House party at their home to raise funds for Farm to Pantry (F2P). Donations support the nonprofit's produce gleaning, which has distributed over 158 tons of fresh and nutritious produce to 30 programs since its inception in 2008. They are proud to have just produced their own F2P olive oil to give to donors.

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Connie Newhall, Kathy Taylor, Mirijana Samadzija



Left to Right:  
Anthony Solar, Dani Wilcox, Terry Atkinson, Bruce Mentzer, Kathy Taylor, Connie Newhall, Ann Simon and Ross Stromberg

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*Thinking Spring!*

# The Ferrells

## An Eventful Life

By Cindy Butner  
Images by Kate Karwan Burgess

When it comes to relationships, there's the fairytale and the reality. Marisa and Brian Ferrell, the husband-and-wife team behind two Healdsburg-based businesses, So Eventful and The Posh Privy, routinely deal with both. They're successful event planners and recently started a business that, um, well, takes care of "business" at upscale events.

Marisa founded So Eventful in 2008 after stepping into the shoes of a winery's event planner who had stepped down. A third-generation grape grower from the Central Valley, she studied economics and wine business at SSU. While managing events at the winery, she became highly sought-after. In part, she thanks her parents' penchant for throwing parties at their home.

"Mom was always entertaining. She's unbelievable! They built this whole separate room that is the ultimate party pad. We don't come from a huge family, but she likes to entertain," says Marisa. Still, she had to get her ducks in a row to break the news and let her parents know that she wanted to do something other than work in the family's grape growing-business as planned.

"She is her dad," says Brian adding, "He has the entrepreneurial spirit. He took risks and decided to buy Mechanical Grape Harvesters when people thought he was crazy to do that. Now, he has a fleet of Harvesters. Starting her own company had to resonate with him."

"That's a great point. I never thought about it like that. I had my business plan, though. I said, 'I've got this,'" Marisa says confidently. Since then, she's planned hundreds of weddings. Her success is largely due to her love of networking and "hustling it." As the company grew, she needed more staff. Marisa built a team of planners and, in 2015, Brian gave ample notice at his tech job and jumped in full time.

Soon after, they launched The Posh Privy, a luxury portable restroom rental company. It was an idea that Marisa had given to a friend of theirs while they were out to dinner. On the way home, she wished she hadn't and said to



Brian, "I know that I told him he should do it, but let's call him. If he's not going to, we should."

They did. In the beginning, Marisa was ready to start designing the company, but Brian, fresh from his corporate job, was crunching numbers. "In this relationship, I'm the gas and he's the

brakes," says Marisa. Brian laughs and adds, "Not just in life, but when she's driving too."

Brian has had to step on the gas on more than one occasion to retrieve forgotten items, like the ring the groom discovers he forgot. "Now that I'm in the industry, I realize how much detail

*continued page 8*



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goes into every event," confesses Brian. They could write several books about the unusual requests, circumstances and things that don't go according to plan. Of course, no one can control everything or everyone. What is their measure of success? Their ability to problem solve so that no one else knows that things aren't going according to plan.

Much of their work, such as reviewing contracts, event design, creating schematics and floor plans, planning weddings and events, booking rooms for out-of-town clients or destination weddings, can be done from home. This gives them the opportunity to see their two children throughout the day.

Their daughter is 16-month-old Sutton. Their son Asher is three years old. "I was thick into wedding season, working long nights

and many hours during the day. Asher came into my office, gave me a big hug and said, 'I love you, Mommy. I'm proud of you. I know when you get done working we will get to have a dance party in the kitchen.' That made me laugh and realize why I work so hard – so we can play even harder," she adds.

They do like to party. An annual trip to the Academy of Country Music Awards is one of their many adventures. They like to sneak backstage and crash the after parties. As event planners and fortified by liquid courage, they know how to navigate behind the scenes. They like the thrill of the chase.

There's a question posed in a song by Tim McGraw and Faith Hill, "Have you made plans for the rest of your life?" I can just imagine Brian's and Marisa's answer, "Yes. We've got this."



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Featured Nonprofit



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HEF raises funds for our approximately 1,680 K-12th grade Healdsburg public school students. HEF funds programs generate strong learning outcomes, reduce the achievement gap and increase graduation rates.

### Who We Are

Chartered in 1985, the HEF volunteer Board of Directors come from all walks of life, but share a common goal: they believe all the students of Healdsburg's K-12 public schools deserve an excellent public education.

### What We Do

HEF raises funds to seed innovation and sustain vital programs in Healdsburg's public schools. HEF works to support, enhance and enrich the educational experience for all K-12 Healdsburg public school students.

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# Healdsburg Calendar of Events

## February

**Sun.-Wed., Jan. 25-Apr. 25**

### **She Persisted**

@Healdsburg Museum

The *She Persisted* exhibition highlights notable women and women's organizations in local history. Their colorful lives and significant achievements in the 19th and early 20th centuries helped shape the character of our community. The stories of their persistence, despite obstacles, are compelling and relevant today. The exhibition includes historic artifacts, narratives and photographs, plus an extensive display of local historic artwork by Jane Raabe, Myra Hazen, Ollie Gaddini Bacigalupi, Maude Needham Latimer, Alice Haigh Dixon and Rosinda Holmes.  
Time: 11am to 4pm  
Cost: Admission Always Free  
[www.healdsburgmuseum.org](http://www.healdsburgmuseum.org)

**Sat., Feb. 3**

### **Great Sonoma Crab and Wine Fest**

@ Grace Pavilion, Sonoma County Fairgrounds

The 29th Annual Great Sonoma Crab and Wine Fest is the premier Crab and Wine event of the North Bay Area! The event features Medal Winning Wines, Fabulous Local Cuisine and Live and Silent Auctions. Proceeds benefit Sonoma County Farm Bureau's agricultural education activities, including Ag Days, Scholarships, 4-H & FFA, Young Farmers & Ranchers, youth leadership activities, local fair exhibitors, farm worker and management training, environmental education and the Farm Bureau Institute.  
Time: 4pm  
Cost: \$85  
[www.sonomacounty.com/sonoma-events/great-sonoma-crab-and-wine-fest](http://www.sonomacounty.com/sonoma-events/great-sonoma-crab-and-wine-fest)

**Sat., Feb. 10**

### **Noche de Amor**

@ Sonoma Jet Center

The Healthcare Foundation has a new fundraiser event for the winter – Noche de Amor – a night of celebration for love of friends, family and community. Sponsorship available!  
Time: 6-9 p  
Cost: \$100.00  
[www.healthcarefoundation.net](http://www.healthcarefoundation.net)

**Sat., Feb. 10**

### **25th Annual Barn Dance and Dinner**

@ Shone Farm, 7450 Steve Olson Ln, Forestville

Bring your Valentine to this fun event that benefits the Healdsburg Future Farmers Country Fair and Scholarships. No Host Bar & Silent Auction, Dinner and Live Auction, Live Entertainment and Dancing. Must be 21 years old to attend.  
Time: 5 pm  
Cost: \$65 per person or \$700 for a table of 8  
[www.Healdsburgfair.org](http://www.Healdsburgfair.org)

**Mon., Feb. 12 & 26**

### **Cuentos y Cantos Bilingual Storytime**

@Healdsburg Regional Library

Explore books, songs, rhymes and plays in English and Spanish! Libros, canciones, rimas y actividades en ingles y espanol. For children 1-5. Para edades 1-5. This program is presented by Colors of Spanish.  
Time: 6-7 pm  
Cost: Free  
[sonomalibrary.org/events/cuentos-y-cantos-bilingual-storytime-26](http://sonomalibrary.org/events/cuentos-y-cantos-bilingual-storytime-26)

**Wed., Feb. 14**

### **Annual Valentine's Day Brunch**

@Healdsburg Senior Center

Make your reservations to join us for a celebration of love! Visit our Healdsburg Senior Center Facebook page for updated information about this event.  
Time: 11 am  
[www.facebook.com/HealdsburgSeniorCenter](http://www.facebook.com/HealdsburgSeniorCenter)

**Fri.-Sat., Feb. 16-17**

### **Mr. Healdsburg Pageant**

@Raven Performing Arts Theater

Past winners meet head to head in the final battle for the crown over two nights of fierce competition. May the best Mr. Healdsburg win! A benefit for the Raven.  
Time: 7:30 pm  
[www.raventheater.org](http://www.raventheater.org)

**Sat., Feb. 17**

### **African Village Celebration with Onye Onyemaechi**

@Healdsburg Regional Library

Join us for an exciting musical program with master drummer Onye Onyemaechi. Onye will use rhythm, music and instruments to journey with children and families exploring the beauty and soul of the drum in African village life. For children ages 3+ with a caregiver.  
Time: 10:30-11:30 am  
Cost: Free

**Sat., Mar. 3**

### **3rd Annual Give Me Shelter**

@Villa Chanticleer

We're excited to host our 3rd annual Give Me Shelter fundraising event to support the Healdsburg Center for Animals! Guests will mix and mingle with shelter pets, enjoy delicious local wine, a fabulous seated dinner, lively auctions and highlights about the work we do. Seating is limited.  
Time: 6-9 pm  
Cost: \$125.00  
[www.sonomahumane.org](http://www.sonomahumane.org)



## Gina Jackson on Resilience

By Cindy Butner | Image by Theresa Rousset



In his *Poetics*, Aristotle muses about drama, poetry and plays performed by actors in the presence of an audience. He posits that tragedy uses direct action rather than narrative to incite pity and fear, and that this is a cathartic exercise intended to purge spectators of emotions, so they feel lighter as they leave the theater. That may be true in poetry and plays, but in real life, when tragedy strikes, negative emotions tend to stick around.

How then, do we navigate life's tragedies with resilience? Is it a given that our "new post-tragedy normal" will always be unfavorably compared to life before tragedy?

Gina Jackson, a Mindful Meditation teacher and fashion designer, doesn't accept the premise of the question. "Living longer means experiencing more -- good and bad. Tragedy will strike most of us more than once in our lifetime. It's all okay. It's okay to feel grief, to suffer, to feel joy, to laugh. Understanding that is resilience," she says.

She practices mindfulness and calls it a form of exercise for the brain that connects mind and body. She also says, "Don't believe me. Be your own scientist. Begin practicing for 6 to 8 weeks and judge for yourself. It's not magic. Like any other form of exercise, it takes practice and results come over time."

Perhaps she's so passionate about mindfulness because she knows that it saved her life. To illustrate its practical application, she shares how.

In her mindfulness meditation, she routinely mentally scans 32 different parts of her body. A few years ago, while doing this, she could tell that something was not right, but she didn't know what was wrong. She always writes in a journal, so she began to write down what she was noticing. After enumerating her findings to her doctor, her doctor wanted to prescribe Prozac. Gina said, "No thank you."

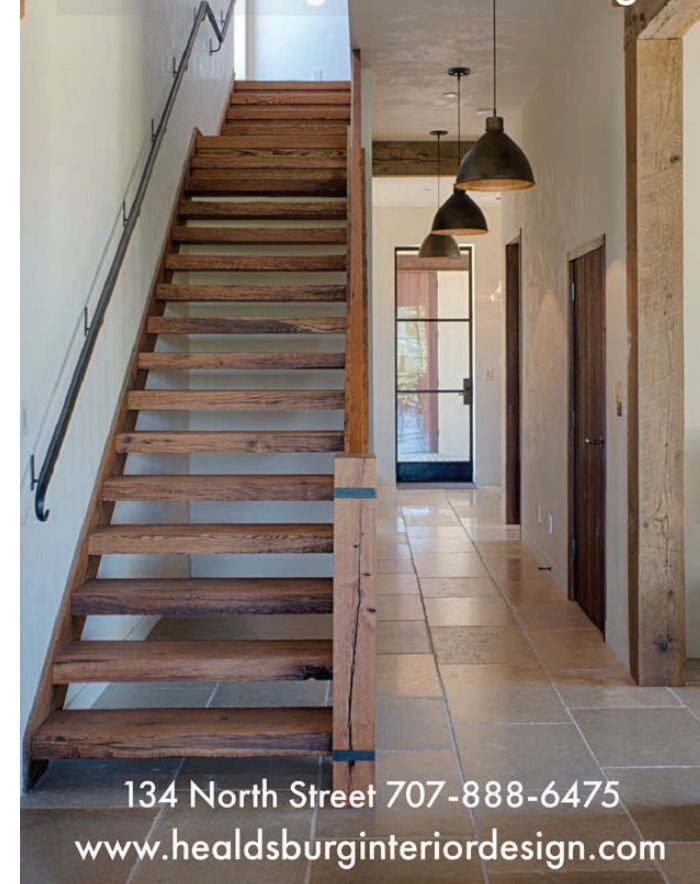
Soon after, she watched a Dr. Oz segment on gynecological cancer. There was a quiz on his website and, because she still sensed something was wrong that her Doctor had failed to diagnose, she took it. It turned out that all the signs pointed to cancer. This time, instead of offering Prozac, her doctor offered her an apology and genetic testing. Gina was found to have Lynch Syndrome, an inherited genetic propensity for increased risk of developing a variety of cancers, and the tests confirmed that she had uterine cancer. As if that wasn't enough, after her uterine cancer treatments were complete, her doctor

subsequently diagnosed her with breast cancer. The self-awareness that mindfulness augments led to the early diagnosis and successful treatment of both cancers. In fact, not only did her mindfulness practice help make her aware of her cancers, it helped her navigate the surgeries and treatments, which in turn lead to a full recovery and a renewed outlook on life.

Managing physical pain is just one application of mindfulness. Gina uses it to illustrate the general practice, "Our mind will focus on the part of our body that is experiencing pain and tell us over and over again that we have chronic pain - it languages pain. Your doctor tells you that you have pain. You feel pain. What you start to believe is that 'My whole body is in pain. Therefore, my whole life is in pain.' Practicing mindfulness is being present and acknowledging that most of your body is working well." Referencing the late Viktor Frankl, a Holocaust survivor, neurologist and psychiatrist, she adds, "Between the pain stimuli, be it physical or emotional, and the response to it, I can be in a space where pain is a part of my life, not my whole life."

Putting it another way, Gina says, "When first diagnosed, I said, 'Why me?' Then, I decided, 'Why not me?' I thank God that I'm someone who can tap into this practice and understand that this is all part of being human. I have a sense of my direction, my own 'North Star'. Every day, I do a 3-minute mindful check-in, put my feet on the ground and go." This above all else gives her the ability to remain resilient when navigating the challenges of life -- and "we all have that ability," she says.

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# Mad About Dundee

By Cindy Butner | Images by Kate Karwan Burgess

Dundee Butcher is the life force behind Russian River Flowers and a devotee of the late Diana Vreeland. Like Vreeland, she is full of creative energy and she celebrates uniqueness. For Vreeland that meant Barbra Streisand's nose, Mick Jagger's lips, Twiggy's stick figure. For Dundee, it's using the tops of persimmons, picking up date-palm branches a local tree cutter is felling near Memorial Beach Bridge and weeds.

She describes her style while snapping her floral scissors as if clacking a set of castanets in a Flamenco dance. "I like to use the unloved and the unseen. Weeds are just the right plant grown in the wrong place," she says pointing her scissors at wreaths made of a variety of thirsty Old Man's Beard that they've pulled like carpet from oak trees in Chalk Hill.

A Texan by birth, she began her foray into floral design when the youngest of her four children, who are twins, were old enough to be out of the house until early evening. The Butchers lived in London – her husband's hometown. It was he who suggested that she take a course at the nearby Jane Packer Flowers while he watched her create a beautiful arrangement one day. She did and was eventually hired by them as an instructor and business development manager.

At the risk of stating the obvious, working in Healdsburg is different from working in London. "I was used to going to the flower market where flowers were flown in from Amsterdam, Ecuador and other places around the world. Our flower market here is in San Francisco, and much of what's there is grown

here. I thought I've just got to meet the farmers. Now, they'll call me. I bought these pomegranates from Earl and Myrna at Early Bird Farm in Chalk Hill. These pears are from Middleton Farms," she grins.

Sourcing wasn't the only difference. "My style was too formal. I had to learn to throw some dirt on it," Dundee confesses. She talks the trade with an array of international colleagues-friends, including the floral designers in charge of some of the world's most auspicious weddings, like William's and Kate's. (Yes, that William and Kate.) Their advice? You've got to learn the rules to break the rules, and they knew she knows the rules. They told her to relish her skills and develop her own style.

"If you just look to other florists for inspiration you will only end up copying them. I look at the texture on the side of a building, the color of a car, the colors in the movie Babette's Feast. Diana Vreeland is still today always tapping me on the shoulder. 'Don't <scissor snap> do <scissor snap> boring. <scissor snap> Boring is a form of laziness,'" she quotes.

Like Vreeland, she is an editor. "It's hard to do 'simple' because you gotta be bloody perfect," she says with a little Texas twang, adding, "I'm trying to teach people to take things out. Look at more than just how many flowers you can use. It can become this big opaque mass. Can you see through it? Can the breeze blow through it? What shadows does it cast? I want you to connect with flowers in your way," she says.

Last September, she partnered with



McQueen's Flowers from London to hold a week-long career course. Twenty-six students and some instructors descended on her design studio on North Street. They came from England, Australia, South Korea and throughout the U.S.

She teaches them to be original and relevant using more than flora. For weddings, she may incorporate a family keepsake or memento, each piece arranged and edited through a rigorous thought process. She likes stacks of plates, boxes and more. "I'm OBSESSED with containers! I'm MAD ABOUT THEM! I had a conversation with this incredible florist in Kyoto. He said the art of the container illuminates the nature, and the flowers illuminate the art in return. That is really how I feel about it," she says.


We pause our interview several times as friends pop by with gifts for her birthday. Each is prompting another fascinating conversation about a new dumpling venture, a gurgling fish pitcher, travel to Switzerland and Palm Springs.

I've been here three times now, and I really like it. Is it a flower shop? A social stop? An event space? I can't quite put my finger on what it is, but one thing it isn't is boring. I ask Dundee what she likes most about her work, and she doesn't skip a beat – "The people. It's not just about flowers. It's about life."



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- 1½ parts H.O.B.S. Gin
- ¾ parts fresh lemon juice
- ¾ part spiced pear simple syrup\*
- Club soda topping

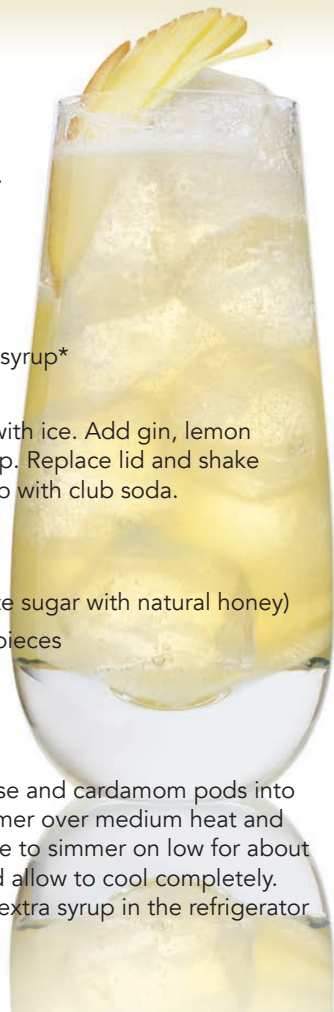
**Directions:** Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Add gin, lemon juice and spiced pear simple syrup. Replace lid and shake vigorously. Pour into glass and top with club soda.

**\*Spiced pear simple syrup**

- 1 cup of water
- 1 cup of sugar (or substitute sugar with natural honey)
- 1 pear cored and cut into pieces
- 3 star anise
- 2 cardamom pods

**Simple syrup directions:**

Add water, sugar, pear, star anise and cardamom pods into a small sauce pan. Bring to a simmer over medium heat and stir to dissolve the sugar. Continue to simmer on low for about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool completely. Strain out pear and spices. Store extra syrup in the refrigerator for up to a month.



Sarah Fiske and Josh Opatz.

**About the Author**

After four years of building Young & Yonder, Sarah Fiske and her husband, Healdsburg native Josh Opatz, are set to re-open their new distillery behind Healdsburg's City Hall. This young couple is full of ambition and willing to look yonder, beyond their former corporate careers, to go all in to craft vodkas, gin and soon, absinthe and bourbon. With the recent addition of a third partner, Josh's step-brother Shane Harlan, Young & Yonder Spirits is a true Healdsburg family business. [www.youngandyonder.com](http://www.youngandyonder.com)

## REAL ESTATE LISTINGS

### Homes For Sale

### Sold Homes

Address	Bds/Ba	Sq. Ft.	List Price	Address	Bds/Ba	Sq.Ft.	List Price	Sold Price	Sold Date
Oak Cir	2/1	1,008	\$515,000	185 Quarry Ridge Ct	3/2	1,362	\$495,000	\$491,500	11/29/17
Cedar Cir	2/2	1,200	\$589,000	288 Monte Vista Ave	2/2	1,226	\$575,000	\$575,000	12/8/17
University St	3/2	1,600	\$635,000	220 Fuchsia Way	2/2	1,004	\$629,000	\$605,000	12/15/17
Fieldcrest Dr	4/3	1,704	\$699,000	210 Sequoia Cir	2/2	1,212	\$550,000	\$619,500	12/4/17
Dry Creek Rd	2/1	1,128	\$795,000	928 Bradley Ct	3/2	1,578	\$699,000	\$640,000	12/5/17
Buena Vista Ave	3/3	2,397	\$899,000	573 Alexander Valley Rd	2/1	1,137	\$715,000	\$697,000	12/14/17
Dry Creek Rd	1/0	1,100	\$1,050,000	324 Equestrian Gap Ct	4/3	1,879	\$750,000	\$765,000	12/5/17
Dragonfly Ln	3/2	2,449	\$1,175,000	429 Piper St	4/2	0	\$899,000	\$880,000	12/8/17
Grant St	2/1	2,004	\$1,266,000	2464 W Dry Creek Rd	4/2	2,253	\$995,000	\$895,000	12/1/17
Lincoln St	3/2	1,344	\$1,425,000	834 Josephine Ln	4/3	2,556	\$995,000	\$945,000	12/6/17
W Dry Creek Rd	2/1	977	\$1,500,000	340 Burgundy Rd	3/3	2,658	\$1,099,000	\$1,079,000	11/28/17
Alexander Valley Rd	5/5	3,200	\$1,800,000	408 Fairway Ct	3/3	2,063	\$1,350,000	\$1,350,000	12/7/17
W Dry Creek Rd	2/2	2,000	\$1,849,000	518 North St	4/3	2,780	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000	12/8/17
Old Redwood Hwy	3/2	0	\$1,999,000	10177 Westside Rd	4/6	4,171	\$3,999,000	\$3,600,000	12/8/17
Clear Ridge Dr	3/4	3,342	\$2,495,000						
Pozzan Rd	3/3	1,800	\$2,550,000						
Sausal Ln	4/4	3,624	\$3,400,000						
Palmer Creek Rd	3/2	1,480	\$3,495,000						
Old Barn Rd	3/6	4,468	\$4,850,000						
Pine Flat Rd	4/5	4,989	\$7,495,000						

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Anyone who used social media during the last election can attest to the tiring intensity of the political posts. It becomes very uncomfortable when you face the choice of either "unfriending" your relatives and co-workers or building frustration by reading their divisive opinions.

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