



- Home
- News**
- Local
- Breaking National
- U.S.
- World
- Politics
- Day in Photos
- Multimedia
- Sports
- Obituaries
- Business
- The Guide
- Entertainment
- Santa Cruz Style
- Opinion - Letters
- Weather
- Blogs
- Polls
- Email Headlines
- Traffic
- Play Games
- Special Sections
- Community
- Health
- Archives
- Site Map
- Customer Service
- Contact Us
- Marketplace**
- Find a Job
- Find a Car
- Find a Home
- Find a Rental
- Find a Business
- Find Stuff
- Find Local Coupons
- Find a Display Ad
- Build an ad



Local News

MORE LOCAL NEWS

Printer Friendly Email Story to a Friend Subscribe

September 24, 2006

SCOTTS VALLEY

Cuddle on

BY GWEN MICKELSON
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

This weekend, Peter Nowell of Scotts Valley was preparing for a party by setting out lots and lots of pillows.

That's because the event Nowell is hosting today isn't going to be a typical cocktail party or sports-watching get-together. It's a Cuddle Party.

The events, which are happening all over the United States and in Australia and Canada, are billed as playful, fun workshops where adults can rediscover nonsexual touch and affection, redefine their assumptions about men and women, and network.

The very words "cuddle" and "party" together might cause sideways glances or raised eyebrows from the general population, but Nowell and others say the parties are not about sex.

"I find that people really want to have more close-knit community in their lives," said Nowell. "They want to communicate in a way that makes them feel they really know someone on a lot of levels."

The parties are facilitated by specially trained and certified moderators who make sure no sex happens, that everyone feels safe and that the sexual energy, when it shows up, is dispersed safely, according to the Cuddle Party Web site.

Their purpose is "to create a new culture where intimacy and affectionate touch can be explored without it necessarily being a sexual overture," said Yvonne Shevnin, a certified Cuddle Party facilitator in Santa Clara who will facilitate the Scotts Valley event.

The movement was Advertisement launched in 2004 by Reid Mihalko, a self-described "bi-coastal sex and romance coach" whose background includes writing, acting, producing, teaching martial arts and street combat, doing intuitive massage and studying yoga.

In 2002, Mihalko began full-time relationship coaching. He enrolled in an intensive six-month coaching and leadership training program at Landmark Education of San Francisco, and began studying sexuality through workshops, classes, books and discussion.

Mihalko was joined in the endeavor by Marcia Baczynski, a New York-based relationship and communication coach, writer and sex educator.

Cuddle Partiers "spoon, hug, give each other back rubs," said Shevnin. They may even affectionately kiss. But, she said, "Some people don't participate at all. In fact, one of the rules of Cuddle Party is no one has to cuddle with anyone at a Cuddle Party ever."

That would seem to defeat the purpose of attending a Cuddle Party, but Shevnin says the parties can be about more than affectionate touching.

Archives

advanced search

Sponsored by:
FrontRowUSA
Sports & Concert Tickets

Marketplace

- SantaCruz JOBFINDER
- SantaCruz HOMEFINDER
- SantaCruz AUTOFINDER
- SantaCruz BUSINESSFINDER
- Today's Ads online
- Classified Ad Builder
- Local Coupons
- Grocery Coupons

Special Section

- Weddings
- Emergency Watch
- Health
- Home & Garden
- Wineries
- Golfing
- Homework Help
- SantaCruz PHOTOGALLERY
- Sentinel Triathlon
- Special Projects

Entertainment

- The Guide
- Santa Cruz Live
- TV Schedule

Travel

- Destination Santa Cruz

Community

- Forum
- Lottery

Sponsored Links

- Bridal Shower Favors
- Staples Center Events
- Vacation Rentals
- Diamond engagement rings
- Movers
- Aupairs & nannies available
- Personal Loan

[Accounting/Payroll/Billing](#)
Scotts Valley, CA
95066
Louis and Riparetti
Inc.

[ASSISTANT STORE MANAGER, PIER 1 IMPORTS](#)
CAPITOLA, CA
95010
Pier 1 Imports

[Outside Sales Representative](#)
Santa Cruz, CA
Coast Distribution

[electrician](#)
felton, CA
Robert Gray Electric

[More Jobs](#)



"It really helps people feel safer by teaching them that 'no' is a perfectly acceptable answer," she said. "It also challenges people's bias around physical image."

If one feels the slightest hesitation about any kind of connection with anyone, Cuddle Partiers are told to just say "no," said local therapist Beila Krow, who's attended several of the parties.

"Cuddle Parties are also a great place to get over fear of rejection, by practicing playfully saying 'no' to each other," she wrote in an e-mail. "Soon rejection loses its charge."

The upcoming Scotts Valley event is full, but Shevnin says more local Cuddle Parties are in the works. For information, visit www.cuddleparty.com.

Contact Gwen Mickelson at atgmickelson@santacruzsentinel.com.

- [Strollers](#)
- [Debt Management](#)
- [Diamond Rings](#)
- [Heat Press](#)
- [Chrysler](#)
- [Reverse Osmosis Water Filter](#)
- [Personal Loan](#)
- [How to design a website?](#)
- [Attorney Finder Lawyer Search](#)

Local News

[MORE LOCAL NEWS](#)

[Printer Friendly](#)

[Email Story to a Friend](#)

[Subscribe](#)

[VersionPrinter Friendly Version](#)

Santa Cruz Sentinel Home

[Local News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Obituaries](#) | [Business](#) | [Santa Cruz Style](#) | [Entertainment](#)
[Archives](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Associated Press](#) | [Weather](#)
[Travel](#) | [Community](#) | [Forum](#) | [Classified](#)
[Customer Service](#) | [Reporter Contact List](#) | [Contact Us](#)

207 Church Street, Santa Cruz CA 95060 USA (831) 423-4242
Copyright © 1999-2006 Santa Cruz Sentinel.
Ottaway Newspaper, Inc.

All rights reserved.
Using our site is your agreement to the terms and conditions.
[web master Feedback](#)

[Online advertising rate card](#)
For online advertising inquiries contact
Karen Cooper: kcooper@santacruzsentinel.com

[TOP](#)

Featured Links

- [SantaCruzLive.com](#)
- [Australia Accommodation](#)