

The logo for The Press Democrat, featuring the words "The Press" in a large, white, serif font, with "DEMOCRAT" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it, all set against a dark blue rectangular background.

The
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HIPPIER TIMES: High praise rains on "MorningStar," the stage play that recalls the glory days of the late Lou Gottlieb's Occidental commune, Morningstar Ranch. The historical musical (www.morningstarplay.com) is the creation of Cotati's Nick Alva, a librarian and musician. Nick delved into the story of Morningstar several years ago after a co-worker told him he reminded her of Gottlieb and showed him a scrapbook from the commune. "When I read that Lou had tried to deed the place to God," Nick said, "I just had the very strong sense that this was a perfect theatrical piece."