



With her team of veterinarians and volunteers, Dr. Deborah Aparicio, center, owner of Clayton Valley Pet Hospital, and founder of the nonprofit, Wild DVM, is on a mission to eradicate rabies in Kenya, a disease that is killing an estimated 2000, mostly children, annually.

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Local Stories for the World

This is the fourth consecutive month that I've been sent a photo of a reader who has shown up with a copy of the Diablo Gazette in a foreign land—twice in France, and now a second time in Scotland.

To the right is Sylvia Boyce, mother-in-law to Daren Olson. Olson was the Clayton drummer who just performed in the Edingburgh Military Tattoo we featured last month. Sylvia received much media attention for attending the 75th anniversary of the Tattoo, as well as its inaugural performance. Since her son-in-law was performing and featured, she received a copy for keepsake. It only cost \$15 to send it! Thank goodness there were no tariffs. I don't sense she will become a subscriber.

Where will the Diablo Gazette's internationally appear next? If you are traveling abroad, bring a copy of the Gazette with you, send a photo of you near a recognizable landmark holding the paper, and you too can be featured just as Ms. Boyce was.

There's much to look forward to in October. Two popular choices are the CBCA Clayton Oktoberfest, October 4 and 5, and the Martinez Zombie Brew Crawl on October 11, assuming beer-wine-costumes is your thing. I hope you can enjoy them both and more.



CBCA CLAYTON OKTOBERFEST OCT. 4 & 5



MARTINEZ ZOMBIE BREW CRAWL



Sylvia Boyce, 83, Scotland, stands in front of The Bridge of Sighs at Hartford College, Oxford, with her October edition of Diablo Gazette.

Telemedicine: Eye Care without Dilation

by David King

The eyes are complex organs, but few realize that they are actually an extension of the brain. As an integral part of the central nervous system, the eyes are the only part of the body where nervous tissue and blood vessels can be seen directly. The brain and eyes share similar origins in development, similar vasculature or blood vessels, and similar processes that lead to dysfunction.

Eye dilation has been the most common way doctors can obtain a comprehensive view of the retina and other internal eye structures, which is critical for early detection of various eye conditions. Innovations in technology have minimized the need for dilation.

As we get older, the chance of developing eye diseases increases. Common issues include cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration and retinal detachment.

Detecting eye diseases early is important. Conditions like glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, and retinal detachment show early signs. Finding these conditions early can greatly improve treatment results.

Monitoring chronic conditions for individuals with diabetes, high blood pressure, or other chronic health issues, a comprehensive eye exam is particularly crucial. These conditions can cause or worsen eye diseases.

There is technology available that can perform these exams without dilation and cuts down the exam time, cuts down the recovery time, and also doesn't bother the eye.

While eye dilation is a safe and non-invasive procedure, it does come with some temporary side effects that you should be prepared for such as light sensitivity, blurry vision, difficulty focusing on near objects, driving limitation, and if you wear contact lenses, you may not be able to wear them until the dilation drops wear off, which could be hours.

With the new technology, patients



Dilation drops allow for an inside view of the eye, but can leave vision blurred for hours

can benefit from a complete eye exam without the need for dilation. At Orion Optical, who employ the Oculus 20/20 system, a telemedicine procedure. Once the machines examine your eye, the data is instantly transmitted to a licensed doctor who can review the data and greets the patient in the exam room and conducts the exam through a monitor. Patients leave with both a

written prescription and a printed report of their results. Your pre-test will screen you for color blindness, depth perception, and motility.

The process is faster, more thorough, and much more comfortable than an exam using dilation.

The frequency of eye exams depends on your age, eye health history,

and risk factors. As a general guideline:

High-Risk Groups: Those with diabetes, a family history of eye disease, or certain health conditions should have comprehensive exams annually or as recommended by their eye doctor.

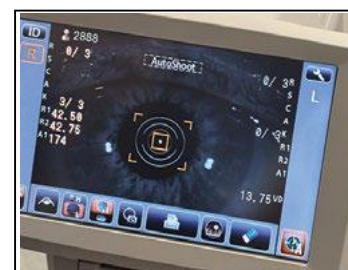
Adults aged 18 to 60: Every two years if you have no signs of eye disease.

Adults over 60: Every year, as the risk of eye diseases increases with age.

According to Sid Afshar, owner of Orion Optical, they are the only opticianry using the Oculus 20/20 diagnostic system. "The Oculus 20/20 gives us doctor-on-tab service six days a week."

For those who need lenses or frames, Orion Optical can provide the necessary eyewear.

Orion Optical is in Concord, located in the Veranda



Oculus 20/20 test looks inside the eye for possible damage or disease. The image is also viewed by a doctor remotely.

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Concord



Dr. Deborah Aparicio, Concord, is not your average veterinarian. Although she owns Clayton Valley Pet Hospital and has been serving the Concord community for many years as a small animal and exotics veterinarian, and she is certified in Wildlife Conservation and Rehabilitation.

She is also on a mission to eradicate rabies in Kenya.

"In 2023, I started my first rabies vaccine campaign in the Maasai Mara. The Mara is divided into 24 conservancies. My plan is to rotate through all the conservancies and vaccinate as many dogs, cats, and donkeys as I can with the help of an American-Kenyan veterinary team. The team is composed of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other volunteers who assist with writing rabies certificates and documenting the events. The vaccines and dewormers are donated. We provide the rest of the medical supplies and assume the cost of local transportation."

As a young girl she watched reruns of the TV series "Daktari", a late 1960s American drama that followed a veterinarian working at a wildlife center in East Africa, and featuring an iconic cross-eyed lion Clarence and a chimpanzee named Judy as prominent characters. The show focused on themes of wildlife conservation and adventure.

Aparicio was 'hooked' and made two goals for herself: to become a veterinarian and work in Kenya.

Although born in San Leandro, her studies and work took her to Oklahoma State University, the National Autonomous University of Mexico and finally, to Concord.

For nine years, Aparicio traveled all over Africa, but was always drawn back to Kenya. There she collaborated with local veterinarians and conservation specialists and participated in an elephant project.

"I just loved the work," she said, her eyes sparkling, "and I learned so much about these amazing animals."

But seeing the lack of animal care in the small and remote villages, and the people's lack of financial resources, she decided to start a nonprofit called Wild DVM (Wildlife Damage Veterinary Management.) It would focus on conservation but especially work with the Kenyan government in its objective of eradicating Rabies by 2030. But why Rabies?

"Rabies," Aparicio explained, "commonly known as mad dog disease, is a fatal viral disease that affects the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord). It is primarily transmitted through the saliva of infected animals, is highly contagious, and in Africa, most commonly dogs." (The United States successfully eliminated canine rabies transmission in 2007.)

In 2022, members of the University of Nairobi, in collaboration with Washington State University, gave a clear picture of the situation: "People will continue to die from rabies if Kenya

doesn't educate healthcare workers." It also stated rabies is endemic in Kenya and the disease accounts for an estimated 2,000 deaths per year. The majority of these are children under the age of fifteen. Once symptoms appear, it is 100% fatal.

The Maasai people are herders and nomads, and living out in the open, rely on their dogs to guard their cattle, which are exposed to predators, mainly lions, hyenas and leopards. Their role is to scare them off and chase them away from the encampment.

Unlike many other African countries, all wildlife in Kenya is protected, and since 2013 it has been unlawful to hunt or kill animals, and that includes predators. The only recourse of the Maasai to protect their livestock is to have healthy working dogs.

While not feral, neither are they pets; they are working animals and are typically close to children. However, capturing them so they can be vaccinated is a challenging experience. Each animal is identified, given a shot, its owner recorded, a certificate of vaccination provided and the dog given a color tag. A volunteer staff maintains all records which are then shared with the Kenyan Director of Veterinary Services and GARC, Global Alliance for Rabies Control.

Aparicio has worked exclusively with the Maasai Mara of southern Kenya for the past three years. Together with volunteer staff from the United States, and with a few supplies provided by a pharmaceutical company, she has made three vaccination missions.

Stringent control laws prevent her from acting as an independent veterinarian, so she pays a Kenyan veterinarian out of her own pocket so she can work under his license.

She provides all other supplies herself, which includes the animal spray paint to tag the dogs that have been vaccinated. All the accompanying US staff pay their own way.

"I would like to financially support a larger team so we could complete more vaccinations. It is a labor of love, but it is also an essential and life-saving mission."

World Rabies Day was September 28. In October, Aparicio will take another group to Kenya. If interested in supporting her work, call and talk to her; she also speaks fluent Spanish.

Aparicio's work and nonprofit, Wild DVM, have not gone unnoticed. Both have been featured in multiple veterinarian industry magazines. It will be quite the accomplishment and a proud moment for Concord when her mission successfully eradicates rabies in Kenya, saving thousands of their children's lives along the way.

And she is your neighbor!

(Michael is the author of 13 books. "Four Mile House" and "No Distance Between Us" are his most recent novels. "Take a Priest Like You" is a memoir. www.mbwriter.net.)

Local veterinarian is leading a team to end rabies in Kenya



Other projects in Africa included putting GPS tags on elephants. Volunteers endure visits to their open transport by wild inhabitants.

Concord Pavilion 50th Anniversary

The Big Blues Bash

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calendar of events

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Fundraisers

October 4 - Don Fernando Pacheco Adobe Bowling - 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. \$60 per individual, \$400 per team of five. Register by September 20.

Proceeds to fund the restoration of the Don Pacheco Adobe in Concord. Contact Carlyn4CityCouncil@gmail.com

October 18 - GFWC Martinez Women's Club Annual Scholarship Luncheon. Provides scholarships for college and ongoing education for our Alhambra High School senior students. Funds other educational projects impacting Martinez high school students. Luncheon, raffle baskets and a silent auction. Advance tickets are required. IBEW Hall, Local 302, 1875 Arnold Dr., Martinez; martinezwomensclub@gmail.com.

Clayton

-October 4&5 Oktoberfest! Carnival (October 3, 5:00-10:00 p.m.) Saturday 12 noon -10:00 p.m. Sunday 12:00-6:00 p.m. Downtown

GFWC Clayton Valley Woman's Club 9:30 a.m. Serving the communities of Clayton and Concord, meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month September - June. Clayton Community Church, 6055 Main St, Clayton. www.claytonvalleywomensclub.org

Concord

October 9- Health Expo, Free health screenings and information for seniors and families. and caregivers. Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Circle, Concord. Go to www.cityofconcord.org/SCEvents

October 9 Water Treatment Plant and Pacheco Marsh Tour. Learn how water is treated and waste water is handled and discharged. 1:00 p.m.. FREE register at Eventbrite; Search Contra Costa Water District

October 12 - Taste of Concord. Come out for Kiwanis Club of Concord's 18th annual culinary stroll around Todos Santos Downtown Concord. Sample food from menus and enjoy tastings of beer and wine from some of Contra Costa County's award winning breweries and wineries. \$30 adults. \$15 children 12 and under. Proceeds to benefit Key Club leadership programs in local schools. 2072 Salvio st. Concord. Call Rocci 925-285-2225

October 18 - La Concordia Wellness Center's 3rd Annual

Gala: "Breaking the Stigma—Men Feel Too" Black-tie event. Spotighting Men's mental health. Gathering of mental health professionals and supporters. Full course dinner, live entertainment and auction. Concord Hilton 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. 1970 Diamond Blvd. Concord.

October 25 Trunk Or Treat The Concord Police Department's and Concord Police Association's 4th annual. From 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Concord Police Department front parking lot, 1350 Galindo Street. There will be treats, goodie bags, food, games, and prizes. FREE Including parking at BART at the corner of Mt. Diablo St. and Mesa St.

Pleasant Hill

Off the Grid Nights

>October 2,9,16 5:00 - 9:00 p.m. Picnic on the lawn. Bring blankets to the gazebo for live music, food rucks, beer, cocktails, and wine.

Pleasant Hill Night Market. First and third Fridays of each month through November 7. Food, beer truck, vendors, corn hole and other activities plus live music. 200 Golf Club Rd.

>October 3 The Flashback Band, Petting Zoo Bounce



Join us every Thursday from 6pm - 8pm between Fusion Buffet & BJ's for a night of music

	OCTOBER 2 Brothers of Sirens 2.0 Classic Rock, Folk & Country
	OCTOBER 9 Audio Aquarium Original Rock n Roll
	OCTOBER 16 Frequency Classic Rock

SUNVALLEY SHOPPING CENTER

House, Face Painters 5:00 - 9:00 p.m. in Chilpancingo Park.

October 5,12, 19 and 26 Pleasant Hill Instructional Garden (PHIG) Garden Work Party 9:00 a.m.-12 Noon. Help restore the garden at Pleasant Hill Education Center. email phinstructionalgarden@gmail.com or call Monika Olsen 925-482-6670.

October 10 -30th Anniversary Celebration Rainbow Community Center- 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. Hosts Holotta Tymes and Jaymes Anthony. Commemorate 30 years of advocacy, healing, joy and empowerment for LGBTQIA+ community in Contra Costa County. Silent auction, dinner, live entertainment and After Party. Dress to impress. Pleasant Hill Senior

Center, 233 Gregory Lane. Pleasant Hill.

Martinez

WILLIAM WELCH WINES Tasting Room Events 837 Main Street

>October 3: Dave Land and Sunflower Charcuterie

>October 11: Authors Showcase 3-6PM. Local authors share books, readings, raffle.

>October 17: Los Californios history night. 5-7pm Californnia history discussions & workshop, merchandise.

>October 24: Comedy Night

October 11 - 13th Annual Zombie Crawl Main Street Martinez . 1:00-4:00 p.m. Craft beer, costume contest, for individual and group. advance tickets \$50. <https://downtownmartinez.org/zombie-brew-crawl>.

October 12 - Contra Costa Jazz Band, "Swing into Monday" 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Dance lessons at 12:30 p.m. by Strait up Swing, Ray Goodmannd Noemi Catalina. Martinez Event Center, 524 Main St. Martinez. FREE

October 12, November 9, December 14. Open Air Market, 9 AM. Embrace the charm and allure of unique finds at the Downtown Open Air Market, a monthly treasure trove of Vintage, Collectibles, Antiques, Arts & Crafts, and more. 718 Alhambra Ave, Martinez.

November 1 - Dia de la Meurtos 12 noon-4:00 p.m. (Day of the Dead) at Plaza Ignacio Park, 550 Henrietta St. Public is invited to create an altar in remembrance of someone they've lost. To participate submit application by Oct. 24. Free workshop to creat e nicho boxes at Martinez Library Oct. 25 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Free event from Martinez Arts Association.

November 8 -The Martinez Community Emergency response Team is hosting a free disaster preparedness talk CERT will discuss identifying your most likely disaster risks and how to prepare and survive those events. MartinezCERT.org

Sundays - Farmers Market Main St. Martinez

At the Martinez Campbell Theater

>October 3-4 Dirty Cello San Francisco based band brings a high energy and unique spin on blues, rock, and Americana. Led by vivacious cross-over cellist, Rebecca Roudman.

>October 10-12 Radio Plays 2025. "Crazy Mike's Place" and "Traveling with Gina's Ghost". Fri & Sat. 8PM, Sun 2:30 PM \$20

>October 16-17 Contra Costa Comedy Sandra Rsser and Friends.

Oct. 17 is Greg Asdourian live comedy album recording. 8 PM. \$20 / \$25 at door.

> October 24-26 The Savannah Sipping Society hilarious and heartwarming play and enjoy an evening of laughter, friendship, and Southern charm. >636 Ward St, Martinez, www.campbelltheater.com

Walnut Creek

Walnut Creek Merry Mixers Dances 7:30 to 10:00 p.m.

>October 3 Natural Blend

>October 17- Bob Guterrez preceded by potluck

Elks Lodge #1811 1475 Creekside Dr. www.merrymixers.life \$20 guest/\$15 member

October 11- Writing Flamng Great Dialogue.

Award-winning novelist and playwright Martha Engber will offer tips. Zio Fraedo's Restaurant 611 Gregory Lane Pleasant Hill. 9:30 a.m.check-in. \$50 members, \$55 guests. Register at <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/meetings-and-workshops/>

October 4, 18 and November 8, Heather Farms Plant Sale 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.. 540 marchbanks Drive. gardenshf.org

At the Leshner Center

1601 Civic Dr. Walnut Creek

>October 14 FallPops Concert "Legends and Lore"

>October 28 Newsmaker Christine Baranski Actress and 15-time Primetime Emmy nominee.

Other Areas

Crockett:

> October 12 4th Annual Oktoberfest. 628 2nd Ave. 12:00-.5:00 p.m.. Axe throwing, Pretzles, WÜRSTL, Maypole Dance, Car Show, Beer & Wine

San Francisco

OCTOBER 5-13 FLEET WEEK

Air show-Oct. 10-12, career fair, parade of ships, ship tours, concert series. <https://fleetweeksf.org/air-show/>

Library Events

6125 Clayton Rd, Clayton

Clayton

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS

>October 8 Create Your Own Comic Bookcharacter. 2:00 -2:45p.m.

SUBMIT YOUR CALENDAR ENTRIES by the 20th of the month before Issue month. diablogazette@gmail.com

Letters to the Editor

Bike lanes save lives

After reading Mr. Eber's article in September's Diablo Gazette, "Many questioning the effectiveness of bike lanes," I can determine a couple of things about him:

He's part of the baby boomer generation, around 60y/o or older.

He doesn't own a bike or other equipment that allows him to utilize the bike lanes in our community.

Eber thinks bike lanes are about him, that bike lanes exist solely to make his life unpleasant and inconvenienced. To be fair, he's not alone in this line of thinking.

But bike lanes are not designed for people in vehicles. Bike lanes exist to keep pedestrians safe from people in vehicles, but he already knew that! He knows they are statistically safer for pedestrians to use a dedicated lane versus having bikes and scooters in the street with vehicles.

And this may come as a shocker to him, but those bike lanes he specifically refers to in his article are very much used by children on bikes and scooters



to get to and from school.

So, just because he thinks bike lanes aren't being utilized because he doesn't personally use them or see others using them at the same exact time he's driving around doesn't mean they aren't being accessed by countless other individuals throughout the day/week/month/year.

The bike lanes help keep our community connected and, as far as I am concerned, if one life isn't cut short thanks to the existence of dedicated lanes, then bike lanes are effective!

Sincerely, M. McAuliffe

Concord, Clayton Officers named for 2025 Blue Knights Award



2025 Blue Knights Award. Sgt. Shawn Phalen of the Concord Police Department displays his 2025 Blue Knights Award. Right: Clayton Mayor Kim Trupiano and City Council honor Clayton Police Officer Mitch Stroski.



Congratulations to Sgt. Shawn Phalen, Concord, and Clayton Officer Stroski both recently recognized for 2025 Blue Knights Award. 2025 Blue Knight Award.

Sgt. Phalen joined CPD in 1998 and over the past 27 years has served in many roles, including K9 Officer, Field Training Officer, Major Crimes Detective, and now as the Traffic Sergeant.

In his current assignment, he leads community safety efforts like the Bike Rodeo, Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day, and major city events such as the Christmas Tree Lighting and Concord

Pavilion concerts.

He holds a master's degree, an Advanced POST Certificate, and is a respected leader on the CPOA Board.

During the Clayton City Council meeting on September 16, 2025, Officer Mitch Stroski was honored with a proclamation recognizing him as this year's Blue Knight Award recipient. Let's give him a shout-out and thank him for his dedication, hard work, and commitment to our community. The residents of Clayton truly appreciate their police officers!

Fortifying Your Home Against Wildfire: Practical Fire Prevention Tips for Clayton Residents

by Eric Halverson, genreal contractor

Nestled at the base of Mount Diablo, the City of Clayton offers scenic beauty, but with that beauty comes elevated wildfire risk, especially during hot, dry summers and high-wind conditions.

Fortunately, homeowners can take proactive steps to greatly reduce the chance of a fire damaging their property. The key is creating a "hardened home," one built and maintained with fire-resistant materials and defensible space.

Here are some of the most effective measures you can take:

Choose Fire-Resistant Exterior Siding

Traditional wood or vinyl siding can ignite quickly when exposed to embers or radiant heat. Fiber cement siding, such as James Hardie® Plank, Shingle or Panel is a durable and non-combustible option.

This works as it is made from cement, sand, and cellulose fibers. Fiber cement siding resists ignition and does not contribute fuel to a fire. It also holds up well to weather, pests, and requires less maintenance than wood.

Seal Your Home with Ember-Proof Vents

Embers carried by wind are the leading cause of home ignition during wildfires. They often enter through attic, soffit, or crawl space vents.

Install Vulcan Vents® or other ember-resistant vent systems. These vents use fine, corrosion-resistant mesh and an intumescent coating that expands when exposed to heat, sealing off ember entry points. Focus on attic gable vents, under-eave vents, foundation vents, and roof ridge vents.

Use Class A Roofing Materials

Your roof is your home's largest exposed surface and one of the most vulnerable. Replace untreated wood shake roofs with Class A fire-rated materials such as composition shingles, metal roofing, slate, or concrete tile. Be sure to keep the roof and gutters free of

leaves, pine needles, and debris that could ignite from embers.

Upgrade Windows and Doors

Heat from a nearby fire can break single-pane windows, allowing flames and embers inside. Your best option is tempered double-pane glass, which resists breaking from heat.

For doors, install solid-core or metal doors with weather stripping to block embers from entering the home.

Create Defensible Space

Clayton follows Cal Fire's "Ready, Set, Go!" guidelines, which recommend 100 feet of defensible space around your home.

Zone 0 -from the house to five feet border area must be completely free of combustible plants, mulch, or firewood. Use gravel, stone, or non-combustible hardscape.

Zone 1 (5-30 feet): Space plants apart, remove dead vegetation, and keep lawns well-watered.

Zone 2 (30-100 feet): Thin trees and shrubs to slow fire spread and reduce fuel load.

Protect Decks and Fences

Wooden decks and fences can act as a fuse leading fire straight to your home.

Use fire-resistant decking materials such as composite boards or exterior-rated fire-retardant lumber.

Where fences attach to the home, replace the first 5-10 feet nearest the structure with non-combustible material (metal, masonry, or fiber cement).

Maintain Year-Round Vigilance

Even with the right materials, upkeep matters. Clear gutters and roofs regularly.

Prune overhanging branches. Store propane tanks, wood piles, and combustible items at least 30 feet away from the house.

While no home can be made 100%

fireproof, these measures significantly improve your odds of surviving a wildfire.

Residents who invest in fiber cement siding, ember-resistant vents, Class A roofs, and defensible space are not just protecting their property, they are safeguarding their families and

community.

Fire prevention is most effective when neighbors work together. Participate in Clayton's fire-safe initiatives, and help create a community that is truly "ready for wildfire."

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Kim Trupiano
Mayor, Clayton
kimT@claytonca.gov

Clayton's second annual Hispanic Heritage Day – A Huge Hit

We had a beautiful day at The Grove on Saturday, September 20. The park seemed to come alive with the energy and excitement of so many wonderful people who gathered to honor and celebrate Hispanic culture. There was an undeniable sense of community as families, neighbors, and friends spent the afternoon enjoying each other's company, dancing and singing along with Mariachi Mexicanismo, who graced the stage throughout the afternoon, along with Ballet Folklorico Netzahualcoyotl, featuring dances from Jalisco, Hidalgo, Veracruz and Nayarit.

Naturally, no celebration would be complete without incredible food and Ranchero Catering made that happen in a big way! From street tacos to tortas to quesadilla, each bite was a reminder of the rich and diverse flavors that define Hispanic culinary traditions. The food brought people together and brought back memories of family gatherings and home-cooked meals.

We want to thank Sound Events, who provided the sound system and staging and a special thank you to the Royal Ladies Car Club of Contra Costa County and Kodiciados 925 Truck Club for coming out on Saturday. It meant a lot to us to have you all there.

A Heartfelt Thank You goes out to all of our generous sponsors who without their support this event would not be possible: Globe & Anchor Wealth Management &

Financial Planning, CEMEX, Oakhurst Country Club, Enye Latin Table, IMC Payment Systems, Ponderosa Homes and Ed's Mudville Grill.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our City staff, particularly our Maintenance team, Clayton Police Department and Janessa Torres, for all of the hard work and dedication in making this event extra special.

Also, thank you to Councilmember Jim Diaz and Frank Gavidia, Chair of our Financial Sustainability Committee, who put so much hard work into making this event a real success.

As we close out another celebration, I'm already looking forward to next year's Hispanic Heritage Day Event and if this year's event is any indication, I know we can expect more joy, community spirit, and unforgettable performances.

Let's continue to celebrate the richness of our shared heritage, support one another, and make memories that will last for years to come. I am excited to see what next year's celebration will bring. It is truly an honor to serve as your Mayor.

Other City News

The switch has been flipped and City is now generating renewable energy for our Maintenance shop, City Hall and Library buildings. In addition, the EV Charging Station will be activated soon, so be sure to check our City website and social

media sites for additional details. We are planning a ribbon cutting to celebrate the conclusion of this two-year Climatec project and we hope to have a date soon. Congratulations to everyone who has been involved in this project, which will help the City control its energy costs while protecting the environment.

Upcoming Events:

CBCA Clayton Oktoberfest, Saturday, October 4, and Sunday, October 5, downtown Clayton, sponsored by Clayton Business and Community Association.

Clayton Theatre Company celebrates its 14th season with "Tootsie" the musical, running Oct. 17-19, 23-26 at Endeavor Hall 6008 Center St. in Clayton.

Clayton Community Library Foundation Fall Book Sale, October 17 (members only), 18 and 19, at Hoyer Hall.

The next Clayton City Council meeting will be on Tuesday, October 21 at 7:00 p.m. at Hoyer Hall.

State of the City Town Hall, Wednesday, November 5, at 6 pm at Hoyer Hall.

Holidays in the Grove, Saturday, December 6 at 5:00 p.m. Sponsored by the City of Clayton in partnership with Clayton Business and Community Association (CBCA). Enjoy marching bands, singers, tree lighting and Santa's arrival.



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UPDATE**

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
921 Arrowhead Ter	\$830,000	1939	3/2.5	8/8/2025
1 Malibu Ct	\$1,050,000	2010	4/2.5	8/14/2025
228 Stranahan Cir	\$919,000	1650	3/2.5	8/18/2025
5171 Keller Ridge Dr	\$1,100,000	2843	4/3	8/28/2025
511 Mt Davidson Ct	\$1,195,000	2694	5/2.5	9/12/2025
1826 Yolanda Cir	\$1,100,000	2443	4/3	9/18/2025
47 La Canada Ct	\$1,050,000	2390	4/2.5	9/19/2025

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
4889 Cherokee Dr	\$950,000	1891	4/3	8/27/2025
735 San Bruno Ct	\$1,160,000	2014	4/2	9/2/2025
1932 Jameson Ct	\$868,000	1548	3/2	9/5/2025
5494 Roundtree Dr #B	\$398,000	914	2/1	9/10/2025
1181 Ridgewood Dr	\$935,000	1877	4/3	9/15/2025
2955 Parrin Ct	\$1,300,000	2128	4/2.5	9/16/2025
1868 Lynwood Dr	\$725,000	1438	3/2	9/18/2025

Based on information from CCRAR/Paragon MLS* as of 9/22/25. All data, including all measurements and calculations of area, is obtained from various sources and has not been, and will not be, verified by broker or MLS. All information should be independently reviewed and verified for accuracy. Properties may or may not be listed by the office/agent presenting the information.



CVCHS News
Bill Morones, Executive Director
 Clayton Valley Charter High School

Clayton Valley Charter opens a new school year with opportunities for all

There's always something exciting about the start of a new school year with smiling faces, challenging opportunities, and fresh possibilities. At Clayton Valley Charter High School (CVCHS), we are kicking things off with a lot of energy and a renewed commitment to our community. As we welcome back returning students and greet new families, it's clear that great public education has the power to open doors and change lives.

For those who might not know, CVCHS is a free public charter school in Concord, serving students from all over East Bay. Since becoming a charter in 2012, we've focused on providing an education that's both supportive and challenging, helping students get ready for whatever comes next whether that's college, a career, or service to their community. This fall, over 2,300 students will join us, excited to learn, create, and grow.

What makes CVCHS stand out? We like to call it the "Profile of an Eagle." It's the roadmap we've created to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and character traits they need to succeed in life. Yes, academics matter. We want every student to complete the college-prep "A-G" courses required for UC and CSU admission. But our focus goes beyond just grades. We want students to become critical thinkers, clear communicators, and great collaborators. These are skills that help in any career or life path.

Students are encouraged to



The "Profile of an Eagle" gives every student the tools and confidence to chase their dreams.

challenge themselves with Advanced Placement classes, explore career-technical programs, and engage in service projects that give back to the community. Our counselors work closely with families to make sure each student's path aligns with their strengths and interests. The goal is simple: we want every Eagle to graduate with the tools and confidence to chase their dreams.

We are also in the middle of Open Enrollment for the 2026-27 school year, and it's a great time to get to know what makes CVCHS special. Enrollment is open to all families, and because we are a public charter

school, there's no tuition, entrance exam, or residency requirement. The enrollment window closes on January 6, 2026. If applications exceed available spots, we will hold a public lottery in February to keep the process fair.

Last Wednesday's Parent Information Night was an enormous success with over 750 people attending. Families got to hear directly from our administration, teachers, counselors, and coaches about the exciting opportunities at CVCHS. From award-winning athletics to our vibrant performing arts programs, we showcased all the ways our students

grow and thrive. It was a great chance for families to ask questions and get a feel for our school community.

Those that missed the event can still explore what CVCHS has to offer on our website. It has all the details about our programs, campus tours, and upcoming information sessions.

We also invite our neighbors to join us for athletic events, concerts, and theater performances. Your support means a lot to our students and staff.

As this year unfolds, we'll continue to celebrate our students' achievements, expand our enrichment programs, and strengthen our ties with the community. We'll make sure every Eagle has the opportunity to soar.

For more information about the Profile of an Eagle, upcoming events, or Open Enrollment, visit www.claytonvalley.org.



Open Enrollment for 2026-27 is now underway to join CVCHS.



2026 National Merit Semifinalists

One hundred and one (101) high school seniors have been recognized among 16,000 Semifinalists in the prestigious 71st annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

"Achieving National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist status is a remarkable accomplishment," said Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools, Lynn Mackey. "I would like to commend the schools, teachers, and support staff who have inspired and helped these students thrive academically. These young people represent the top one percent of high school seniors nationwide. Congratulations to each of them for advancing in this highly competitive program."

Dougherty Valley High School in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District had 35 students earn Semifinalist honors, the most in the county. In total, students from 15 high schools across Contra Costa County are represented on the nationwide list. The schools with Semifinalists include Dougherty Valley (35), California (14), Campolindo (10), Monte Vista (10), Miramonte (6), and Northgate (5). Acalanes and Athenian each have four Semifinalists. Las Lomas has three Semifinalists. Alhambra, Heritage, and San Ramon have two Semifinalists. Meanwhile, Carondelet, College Park, De La Salle, and a homeschool each

101 County students named

have one Semifinalist.

These students now move forward in the competition for approximately 6,930 National Merit Scholarships, collectively worth nearly \$26 million, to be awarded in spring 2026. To become Finalists, Semifinalists must meet rigorous academic and program requirements. Historically, about 95 percent of Semifinalists reach Finalist status, and roughly half of those earn the title of National Merit Scholar.

More than 1.3 million juniors from over 20,000 U.S. high schools entered the 2026 program by taking the 2024 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®). Semifinalists represent the highest scorers in each state, making this recognition a significant academic milestone.

Scholarship winners will be announced between April and July 2026, joining a distinguished group of over 389,000 students who have earned the Merit Scholar title since the program's inception.

Contra Costa County has the 11th largest public-school student population in the state (approximately 169,394 students) among 58 counties. For more information on the National Merit Scholarship Program, visit www.nationalmerit.org.

Mary Senko Presents

World Doll Day Show & Sale

Santa Clara, CA

October 18th 2025
10am-3pm

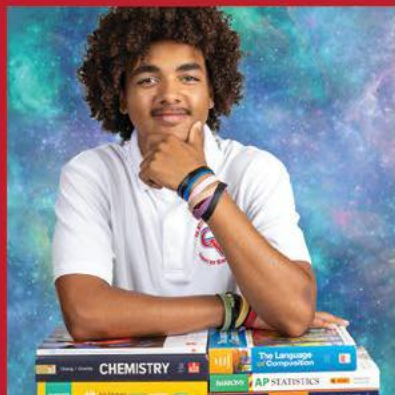
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Admission
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www.worlddolldayshows.com





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CVCHS is honored to be named one of the "Best High Schools" in the nation by US News & World Report.



SECURE YOUR SPOT!

Open Enrollment for the 2026–2027 School Year opens online:

APPLICATION LINK

**MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 2ND
9:00 AM**



DISCOVER CVCHS!

Join us for our **New Student & Parent Preview Night** to see everything Clayton Valley has to offer.

**WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 17TH
6:00 PM**

**CVCHS LARGE GYM
1101 ALBERTA WAY
CONCORD, CA 94521**

EVENT RSVP



EXPERIENCE CVCHS!

From Friday night football to concerts and community events, there's always something exciting happening—come feel the pride, spirit, and energy of the Ugly Eagles!

Connect with us at (925) 682-7474 or email admissions@claytonvalley.org.

EXPLORE MORE AT WWW.CLAYTONVALLEY.ORG.

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Why we love Clayton

Clayton is a gem of a town. Nestled against the rolling foothills of Mount Diablo, it is a community that beautifully blends small-town charm, scenic beauty, with modern convenience. Its passionate community spirit, coveted quality of life, and unique sense of place, Clayton stands out as one of San Francisco Bay Area's most desirable places to call home.

Clayton's natural beauty and outdoor recreation is surrounded by the dramatic landscapes of Mt. Diablo State Park and unparalleled access to hiking, biking, horseback riding, and a variety of outdoor activities.

Zoning regulations and careful planning have kept the community low-density, helping to protect open spaces and prevent overdevelopment. With a population of under 12,000 residents are rewarded with small-town neighborly closeness. Who doesn't appreciate the charming historic Downtown with its parks, local restaurants, bocce courts, cozy coffee shops and ice cream parlor.

Served by Mt. Diablo Unified School District, its elementary and junior high schools receive high marks for academic and parent satisfaction.

As for location, major Bay Area employment centers are within reach, as are many popular destinations for those

exploring Northern California.

Homeowners take pride in their homes. Whether it's condos to charming mid-century ranches to newer custom-built houses, many feature generous yards, mature trees, and panoramic views of the surrounding hills.

Clayton has a blossoming arts and culture scene. Residents enjoy local art galleries, theatre performances, art fairs, concerts, Oktoberfest and even parades.

People of all ages appreciate Clayton's serene environment and highly rated schools, while professionals value the ability to live in a peaceful, community-focused city without sacrificing career prospects.

Living in Clayton means enjoying the best of both worlds, the serenity of a close-knit community and the opportunities of the broader Bay Area. Residents treasure the city's harmony with nature, traditions, and community spirit.

This is why we love Clayton.

Please support local high school and college baseball and come to Crawdads' Bingo night. (see ad on this page).

See you there!



Bingo 4 Baseball

Fundraiser for the Walnut Creek Crawdads

Saturday, October 4th | 6:00-9:30PM
(Dinner 6:00 / Bingo 6:30)

Winslow Center - 2590 Pleasant Hill Road, Pleasant Hill



Scan to
Buy Your Tickets

Tickets are **tax deductible: \$100 per person**. Payable via PayPal, Venmo, Zelle, Cash or Check (**Pre-Payment required to attend**). Ticket price increase after **Friday, September 26th** to **\$125/per person**.

- 15 bingo games, with many chances to win cash from each game
- All bingo supplies provided
- Dinner and libations included
- Raffle prizes. Bring cash to buy your raffle tickets at event
- **Seats are limited - buy your tickets TODAY!***



Support the Crawdads!

The Walnut Creek Crawdads are a collegiate summer league baseball team and member of the California Collegiate League (CCL). The team provides a venue for young men to further develop their athletic/life skills while competing against some of college baseball's very best talent. As a non-profit group, the team relies heavily on donations to help pay for league fees, field rental, uniforms, equipment/gear, umpires, transportation, hotels, and more.

Please join us at the Bingo for Baseball fundraiser and help position the Crawdads for success during the 2026 season!

* Your ticket purchase is tax deductible under More Than a Game (EIN # 27-2164949) the parent organization of the Walnut Creek Crawdads.

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Directed by **Roxanne Pardi**

Assistant Director/Choreographer **La Tonya Watts**

Musical Director **Jess Reyes**

PG-13

October 17-26

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ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Friday, Oct. 10th, 2025 6-10pm

Hosted by

Holotta Tymes & Jaymes Anthony

Pleasant Hill Senior Center

233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

Tickets available @[Tinyurl.com/RCC30](https://tinyurl.com/RCC30)

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9 AM - 12 PM

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Robert Chislett: A Legacy in Ice and Art

Robert Chislett's journey has been nothing short of extraordinary. After more than 20 years as a classically trained chef, he carved a new path, literally, founding Chisel-It Ice Sculptures in 1998. For the past 26 years, his artistry and vision have made him a respected name in the ice sculpting industry, bringing elegance, creativity, and wonder to countless events. Even when pandemic shut down most major events, the business survived when Robert's began selling snowballs. (Steph Curry once purchased 10,000 of them!) Now, Robert is proudly passing the ice chisels to David Ochoa and his talented

team, who bring with them over 100 years of combined experience. Together, they will carry forward the tradition of excellence that has defined Chisel-It for nearly three decades. As one chapter closes, another begins. Post-ice, Robert looks forward to inspiring in new ways through mentoring, music, travel, and paying it forward through charitable work. Have a happy retirement Robert. Now let's admire is work one final time.

Wells Fargo Stage coach, Ice guitar for Todd Rundgren, Golden Gate Bridge, Ice Bar





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Mushrooms: Soup-n-Salad

After a long summer of white wines, I am happy to say that this month's recipes pair with red wines. I know for many of you, this alone is cause for celebration.

Start with a warm salad with sautéed onion, mushrooms, and raisins. The dressing has just a touch of lemon juice and top with Manchego cheese, another wine friendly additive.

While Pinot Noir is usually my go-to wine with mushrooms, Grenache (or Garnacha as they call it in Spain) is a great substitute for Pinot Noir. It has softer tannins than wines like Cabernet, Zinfandel, or Syrah and offers bright berry fruit with substantial acidity, two qualities that will work with this salad.

The Garlic Sherry Cream of Mushroom Soup is a great fall soup that is just right for a bold red wine. Its rich cream and meaty texture and taste of mushrooms will work well with a California Cabernet Sauvignon. The deep, red and black fruits offset the pungent garlic, and the contrasting colors of white soup against the red wine are a beauty to behold. Serve warm crostini sprinkled with truffle salt on the side. It is perfect for dipping and adds a welcome crunch.

With Halloween candy around this house, grab a fun-sized chocolate bar to finish the meal. The only wine I pair with milk chocolate is Vin du Bugey-Cerdon, a sweet, pink, bubbly wine. A well-stocked wine shop may have it, but it can also be purchased online. A Twix bar, with its caramel, chocolate and cookie crunch will be terrific with the sweet strawberry and toasty yeastiness of the wine.

So, go on; Pair Up!

SAUTÉED MUSHROOM SALAD



INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoons + 1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1 small onion, halved and sliced
1/4 cup raisins
1 pound cremini mushrooms, quartered
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme, or 1/2 teaspoon dried
3 tablespoons dry sherry
2 tablespoons + 1 tsp. lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
8 cups salad greens like arugula, frisée or blend
1/2 cup grated Manchego cheese

DIRECTIONS

Heat one tablespoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onion and raisins and cook until softened, about three minutes. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring, until they release their juices, 10 to 12 minutes.

Add garlic and thyme and stir until

fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add sherry and cook until mostly evaporated, about another minute. Stir in the remaining one tablespoon oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper and turn off heat.

Just before serving, toss greens in a large bowl with one teaspoon olive oil and one teaspoon lemon juice and a sprinkle of salt. Then add warm mushrooms/onion/craisin mixture and toss again. Sprinkle with Manchego cheese. *Yield: 6 servings*

GARLIC SHERRY CREAM OF MUSHROOM SOUP

INGREDIENTS

1 medium butternut squash (about 1 1/2 p1 cube salted butter
6 cloves garlic, chopped
1/2 pound cremini mushrooms, chopped fine
1 cup cream sherry
1/2 gal heavy cream
3/4 tablespoon chicken base (find it next to the chicken bouillon)
1/2 teaspoon fresh ground white pepper
Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large stock pot, sauté garlic in butter until caramelized. Add mushrooms and sauté briefly (30 seconds). Add cream sherry reduce liquid to almost half. Add heavy cream. Season with chicken base, white pepper and salt to taste. Reduce about 20% or until soup reaches desired consistency. *Yield: 6 servings*

*Maria Terry is a Certified Sommelier and Wine Educator in Northern California. LaSommelier@gmail.com
lasommelierre.com*

All invited to PHIG's garden work parties

Since 2007 the Pleasant Hill Instructional Garden (PHIG) has demonstrated healthy and sustainable garden practices using no pesticides or herbicides, water conservation and water recycling methods, with drought-tolerant and native plantings. The garden is a certified wildlife habitat with the National Wildlife Federation and a registered monarch butterfly waystation.

Several organizations, community supporters and volunteers are teaming up to restore a community eyesore with a beautiful, water-conserving, low-maintenance garden at Pleasant Hill Education Center, across from Pleasant Hill Middle School. PHIG is inviting you to join the October work parties and help.

Please choose one or more of these October work party days to help out at the garden: Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. October 5, 12, 19 and 26.

Many activities are active, community service types of projects suitable for individuals or small groups. Instruction will be provided to assist in performing these garden tasks. Bring drinking water and small hand garden tools to use, and wear hat, gloves and closed-toe shoes.

Located At 1 Santa Barbara Rd., in Pleasant Hill. For more information and to confirm availability please email: PHinstructionalgarden@gmail.com or call Monika Olsen, Teacher, (925) 482-6670. PHIG is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.



Longevity veggies you can grow

Living a longer, healthier life could be a simple matter of eating healthy foods—foods you can grow in your own garden.

Fruits and vegetables are important sources of natural substances that have been linked by science to longevity. Let's look at the biology that makes these garden-grown foods such healthy and life-extending choices.

Many of these all-natural food compounds are antioxidants, which supplement antioxidants produced naturally by your body. Antioxidants are crucial to longevity since they eliminate free radicals that roam through your body, causing cell damage and accelerated aging.

Free radicals are natural byproducts of human metabolism. Body levels should roughly be balanced between antioxidants and free radicals. Too many free radicals when compared to antioxidants results in what is called oxidative stress.

One of these antioxidants is glutathione which is especially important as we age since body-produced glutathione levels decrease over time. Quercetin is another powerful antioxidant that is only obtained through food, since humans don't naturally produce it. This antioxidant and flavonoid is present in fruits and veggies as a pigment, usually in the skins to provide the ripe produce with their distinctive colors.

Both glutathione and quercetin have been shown in research studies to slow or prevent diseases such as Alzheimer's, various forms of cancer, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, and type-2 diabetes. This is due to their powerful anti-

inflammatory effects, and chronic inflammation has been shown to lead to disease.

What are the best antioxidant-rich fresh fruits and vegetables that you can grow?

Fruits such as avocados, bananas, grapes, oranges, and strawberries are rich in glutathione.

Asparagus, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, spinach, and tomatoes are also great sources. Onions, apples, grapes, berries, peppers, kale, and broccoli (again) are rich in quercetin. Because of Contra Costa's mild Mediterranean climate, you can grow every one of these health-packed fruits and veggies in your own garden.

Yellow, red, or pink onions are rich in phytochemicals, including quercetin, which are not nutritive calories but are otherwise bodily-active chemical compounds.

Raw or cooked apples contain about 4.4 mg of quercetin per fruit. Eating grapes raw maximizes their antioxidant benefits, and the same is true for blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, and strawberries.

Red bell peppers have the highest levels of antioxidants, while kale bite-for-bite has the highest concentration of antioxidants you can harvest.

Finally, the easy to grow winter veggie, broccoli is an all-around star in many categories of longevity supporting phytochemicals.

So, live a longer, healthier life by growing your own micro-nutrient rich fruits and vegetables, harvesting them



Winter broccoli is a rich source of healthy compounds - Photo: Shutterstock

at perfect ripeness, and enjoying each delicious, fresh mouthful.

Seasonal Notes: If you missed my recent webinar through the CCC Library system about Gardening Wisely around Native Oak trees, you can still watch it through the Contra Costa Master Gardener YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/c/cocomguc>.

Plant your winter veggie seedlings by October 20 to ensure they have enough time to establish themselves before cold nighttime temperatures slow their growth. January – March are the best months for winter harvests.

Pick up and dispose fallen or rotting fruit from under your trees to discourage mammal pests such as squirrels, rats, and even coyotes!

Email your comments and questions to: NakedGardener@diablogazette.com.



Kale and other leafy veggies rank high in longevity benefits. Photo courtesy UCANR



Blueberries are one of the highest antioxidant fruits by volume. Photo courtesy Shutterstock



Apples are one of the best antioxidant sources.

New “Chupcan Village” mural complement’s Concord Historical Museum continuing mission

by David Scholz

A collective artistic effort is gracing significant wall space to help mark the newly renovated Concord Historical Museum in downtown Concord.

The 6 feet by 7 feet mural, entitled “Chupcan Village,” is the work of Concord Art Association members Renaye Johnson, Thea Jue, Janice Davis, and Karen Giorgianni. It will be officially unveiled Sunday, Oct. 5, as part of the re-grand opening celebration festivities planned at the museum at 1928 Clayton Road.

Inspiration for the mural was twofold. Previously, museum officials had provided images of the Chupcan tribe to the California Artists Association which



Thea Jue (top) and Karen Giorgianni do some of the final touch ups on the mural prior to its late September delivery to the Concord Historical Museum. Photo by David Scholz

the artists painted on one of the electrical utility boxes and the result was well received. Then, during the museum renovation, a blank space was identified in the Concord Museum suitable for a larger

scale work.

“We thought a mural of the Indigenous people would help to finish off the area set aside for information about them,” said Vivian Boyd, Director of the Resource Center and the First Vice President of the Concord Historical Society.

With each artist bringing their own unique skill set to the piece, Davis cited the early challenge of determining what the large-scale composition would entail. So, sketches followed to suggest what elements might be included, such as inclusion of enclosures and baskets, but also the absence of faces to represent those First people being represented.

Reading about the lifestyle of the Chupcans through historical documents and learning how they were a peaceful people, “We tried to recreate (a scene) as best we could,” said Giorginanni, a former teacher.

She hoped that the mural would serve as an additional tool for what is being taught in schools about local Native American groups.

Johnson noted each artist had opinions, but it was fulfilling to be able to work together for a common objective. “Knowing their shared work is now hanging in the museum made the experience all the more fulfilling,” Jue added.

Work on the two-panel mural began



Concord Art Association members Renaye Johnson, Thea Jue (left) and Janice Davis and Karen Giorgianni (right) stand alongside the 6 feet by 7 feet mural entitled “Chupcan Village.” Photo by David Scholz

in early August when the two canvases were initially positioned side by side on easels so all four artists could be working simultaneously on specific elements they were contributing to the overall project. Over the subsequent weeks, the mural was worked on as many as three days a week to ensure timely progress was being made.

The mural was installed on Saturday, Sept. 20, in time for the facility’s multi-faceted October re-grand opening festivities dubbed “Celebrating Concord’s Past, Present, and Future.”

The Oct. 5 event is from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. and will feature a book reading of “C is for the Concord” by author

Kori Barton, live jazz music performed under the direction of Dr. Matt Zebley, and a showing of the 1960 movie “The Wild Ride” directed by Harvey Berman (a teacher at Mt. Diablo High School and Diablo Valley College) that features a very young Jack Nicholson.

Along with seeing the museum, attendees will be able to explore all aspects of the Concord Historical Society, the Galindo Home, the Gardens, and the Resource Center.

For more information about the Concord Historical Society and its offerings, visit www.concordhistorical.org

East Bay Gallery Tour

The Third Annual East Bay Gallery Tour currently underway has a total of 15 galleries to visit through October. Visit them and get your Gallery Tour postcard stamped by all 15 galleries for a chance to be one of three winners of a certificate worth \$300. If you have your postcard stamped by 11 galleries, you could win one of three certificates worth \$100.

The winners will be chosen at random, picked from the turned in postcards. You can turn in your postcard at the last gallery you visit. The winners will get a certificate to purchase any artwork from any of the galleries in the Tour. Visit any of the galleries listed below before the end of October to pick up your postcard with a map and addresses of all the Art Galleries.

aRt Cottage 2238 Mt. Diablo Street, Concord artcottage.info

Arts Benicia 1 Commandants Lane, Benicia artsbenicia.org

Benicia Art Glass 309 1st Street, Benicia beniciaartglass.com

Benicia Plein Air Gallery 307 First Street, Benicia beniciapleinair.com

Blackhawk Gallery, ADAS 3416 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville adas4art.org

First Street Arts 333-D First Street, Benicia firststreetarts.org

Gallery 621 920 First Street, Suite 203, Benicia gallery621.com

JOR Clayton Gallery 1026 Oak Street Suite 102, Clayton jorfineartgallery.com

Main Street Arts Gallery 613 Main Street, Martinez mainstreetarts.net

Moraga Art Gallery 432 Center Street, Moraga moragaartgallery.com

NY2CA Gallery 617 1st St, Benicia ny2cagallery.com

Studio 55 Art Gallery 55 Howe Rd., Martinez studio55martinez.com

The Little Art Shop 129 First Street, Benicia thelittleartshop.com

Valley Art Gallery 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110, Walnut Creek valleyartgallery.org

Village Theatre and Art Gallery 233 Front Street, Danville danville.ca.gov/arts

From Independent Artist to Media Mogul: Shauny B Expands his Empire with Roku Channel Launch

What began as a journey in the independent music scene has evolved into a multi-media empire for Pittsburg-based artist and entrepreneur, Shaun “Shauny B” Smith.

Known for founding the innovative Hip Hop magazine Knocksmith, Shauny B has recently released some ground breaking projects, including “143 the inception story of AI” completely produced by AI and written by him and his son, a very unique improv comedy album called the “Voices in My Mouth” and now expanded his reach by launching a lifestyle and travel channel on Roku TV.

The Knocksmith TV channel is a digital extension of his magazine, covering a wide array of topics with a signature comedic twist. Filmed at his local production studio, “The Factory,” the channel features exclusive content, including talk shows like “Ascending with Toni Rochelle,” which focuses on positive and motivational themes. This move not only capitalizes on Shauny B’s diverse skillset in music, design, and publishing, but also showcases his evolution as a media pioneer.

Shauny B’s journey to media entrepreneurship was a strategic one. Starting as a rapper and producer, he realized his graphic design skills offered a more stable income stream. By designing materials for dozens of local musicians, he built a deep network within the industry. This foundation laid the groundwork for the launch of Knocksmith magazine, which distinguished itself by combining a traditional print format with digital content, accessible via QR codes.




The success of Knocksmith was also built on extensive community partnerships and strong local ties. Shauny B has worked closely with various community organizations, including the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church (MDUUC), Team Jesus, and Branches of Community Services.

This dedication to local roots and community empowerment extends to the business sector as well. Shauny B has fostered relationships with local Chamber of Commerce leaders and supported local business owners. His network also includes major local employers, demonstrating his commitment to elevating the entire Bay Area community through his work.


The launch of the Roku channel represents a new chapter for Shauny B and the Knocksmith brand, showcasing how a local, independent venture can successfully transition into a multi-platform media company. With its blend of entertainment and community-focused content, Knocksmith TV promises to be a compelling and positive new voice in the streaming landscape.



aRt Cottage



Las Juntas~East Bay Artist Guild



Show ends October 29
aRt Cottage is open Wed-Sat, 11-5
925-956-3342 www.artcottage.info
2238 Mt. Diablo Street Concord, CA 94520



“Picture This” Exhibit

Artist redeption Oct. 3, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Lamorinda Arts Alliance’s* latest member exhibition “Picture This” will run through November 1. and is free and open to the public at Main Street Arts Gallery in Martinez.

The exhibit will be featured during the City of Martinez First Friday events, where visitors can enjoy live music, boutique shops, and art galleries along Main Street.

“Picture This” invites viewers to experience how member artists express creativity rooted in memory, inspired by landscape, or shaped by emotion. The works on display hint at stories, feelings, and moments, inviting each viewer to imagine their own.

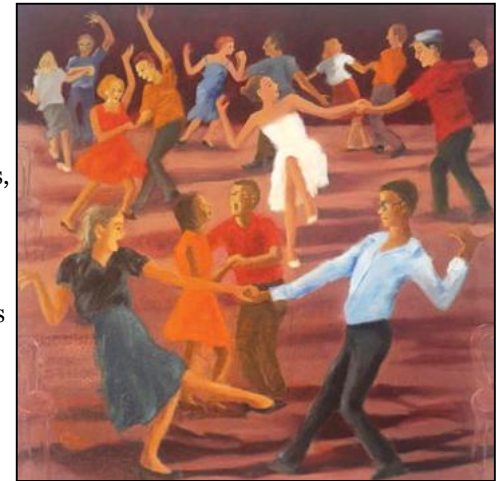
A Reception will be held Friday, October 3, from 6:00–9:00 p.m. at Main Street Arts Gallery, 613 Main Street, Martinez. Visit the gallery to see the 2D and 3D works, meet the artists and enjoy refreshments. All are welcome to attend.

Vistors can pick up their East Bay Gallery Tour postcard and have it stamped for a chance to win \$300 valued gift certificate. More details can be found on the Main Street Arts website.

Visitors can also register to win original artwork by one of our members. October’s giveaway features the painting, “Roses, Chrome and Glass” by John Tullis.

Gallery hours are Wednesday–Saturday, 11:00 am–4:00 p.m.

**Lamorinda Arts Alliance is an organization of local artists and friends who reside or work in the area*



“Swing Dance” by Connie Milholland

Blackhawk Gallery to feature Rhu A. Bigay

The ADAS General Meeting with Art Demo is scheduled to take place on October 14, at 7:30 p.m. at 3416 Blackhawk Plaza Circle in Danville.

The guest artist will be Rhu A. Bigay, a celebrated American painter known for his patriotic heritage art honoring servicemen and women.

An Army veteran and former ICU nurse at Brooke Army Medical Center’s renowned Burn Unit, his detailed oil paintings and aviation art are collected nationwide.

His works include portraits of Pope John Paul II and John Steinbeck, the latter inducted into the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery, His 9/11 Twin Towers painting is housed at the White House.

Bigay has received the Arts Recognition Award from Contra Costa County and is currently creating a series on military railroad Americana.



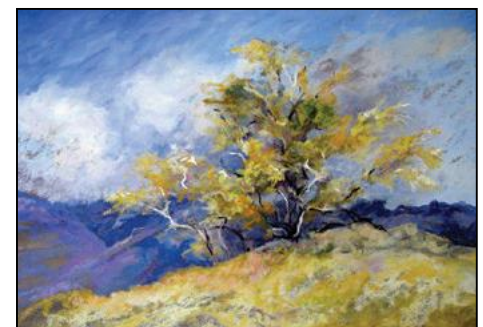
Valley Art Gallery

Connecting to an original work of art can be electric, so to speak, by sparking an emotional response that recalls a time, a place, an event, from your own personal experience.

Aptly named “Connections”, this new fall show offers some 300 original works spanning a wide spectrum of media, motifs, formats, sizes and price points—each ready to spark a personal connection.

If you’d like help finding a connection arrange a personal one-on-one no obligation appointment at your convenience. Call or email the gallery.

Also on hand is our usual display of wonderful fine crafts and artist designed gift cards. 66 Botelho Dr. #10 Walnut Creek 1661 Betelho Dr. #10, Walnut Creek. valleyartgallery.org



Sunlit, pastel by Diane Ringwood

Jor Gallery presents “Seasons of Splendor”

Join us for current exhibit “Seasons of Splendor” and discover the stories behind each piece. This free event invites you to explore the magic of the seasons through vibrant art, conversation, and creative inspiration. This exhibit continues through Nov. 2.

JOR Fine Art Gallery is located at 1026 Oak Street, Suite 102, in Clayton.



A diverse collection of artwork. Discover the beauty in JOR Fine Art Gallery’s collection of jewelry, water colors, photography, multimedia abstract, and oil.

joreillyfineartgallery@gmail.com



Donna Arganbright A Dedication to the Arts

On Tuesday, October 21, the Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County will be recognizing Donna Arganbright for her leadership and lifelong contribution to the Arts in Contra Costa County.

Arganbright has served Lamorinda Arts Alliance (LAA) as President for nearly sixteen years. Prior to that, she devoted her life to teaching art in schools, initially on the East Coast. After moving to the West Coast, she taught art to children and youth at our local public schools for over two decades.

Arganbright has contributed to the Lamorinda Arts and Science Foundation, the Lafayette Gallery, and taught at Civic Arts in Walnut Creek. She continues to be a positive and engaged community leader in the arts, always welcoming and encouraging participation of the young and mature alike.

LAA invites you to attend and join in this very special recognition session at 9:30 a.m. at 1025 Escobar Street in Martinez.

Congratulations, to Donna. Thank you for your years of service and leadership.
www.laa4art.org



Carlyn Obringer
Concord Mayor
cityofconcord.org

Cities slowly integrating AI technology

I recently participated in a roundtable discussion with city leaders and technology professionals from across Contra Costa County, focused on artificial intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity. The program highlighted both practical applications and emerging policy issues as cities navigate the opportunities and challenges of AI. The Diablo Valley Tech Initiative (DVTI), of which I was a founding member back in 2019, organized the event. DVTI aims to surface, connect, and grow tech talent here in the Diablo Valley.

The City of Concord issued an Administrative Directive on City AI usage in June to safeguard city information and ensure that staff use AI responsibly. This is part of an evolving governance structure around responsible AI use which will continually be updated as we gain more experience. How is the directive being implemented? As an example, if AI plays a significant role in developing a document that needs to be relayed, and if AI provides information, staff must check and cite the official source the AI used.

The City of Concord is piloting CoPilot for Government from Microsoft. This solution keeps all city data within the city and allows queries against city information but does not connect directly with internet searches. As a result, staff can use confidential information and receive responses without having to scrub the data first. We are also able to create repositories of related City information such as City of Concord policies and run a search within those repositories.

The Concord Police Department is also using law enforcement-specific AI to help with case review and to ask questions against police reports. For example, this tool has been applied to queries such as identifying which officer took photos at a particular event. By scanning case files and extracting the relevant details, AI can provide accurate answers quickly. AI

can accelerate workflows by quickly analyzing case reports and identifying relevant information, reducing the need for a person to manually review each document.

When asked about my concerns regarding the use of AI within the City of Concord organization during the DVTI roundtable discussion, I shared the following:

Privacy – How do we ensure that the data submitted to AI is appropriately used and not secretly collected?

Accuracy – AI sometimes states something as fact when the content was fabricated. As we start to use and even rely on AI, we need to ensure the information it provides is correct and fits the right context.

Humanity – AI lacks empathy and cannot replace genuine human interaction, though it can mimic it.

Ethics – Do we want AI writing the press release on a critical incident, writing tickets, issuing fines, or, as it gets more advanced, responding to inquiries on sensitive subjects?

For me, I take pride in personally responding to inquiries from constituents as these interactions enable me to build and maintain a connection with the people of Concord, stay current on issues concerning the community, and build my expertise as a policymaker, so I am not inclined to have AI perform this function.

The DVTI roundtable highlighted that cities near and far are actively piloting or using AI to improve government operations and services. I, too, am an advocate for even more efficient use of taxpayer dollars and enhanced customer service and look forward to further exploring the potential of AI in an ethical way that protects privacy and supplements but doesn't supplant workers.

City of Concord to Host 10th Annual Health Expo October 9

The City of Concord is hosting its 10th Annual Health Expo on Thursday, October 9, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Concord Senior Center (2727 Parkside Circle). This highly anticipated free community event is open to the public and offers valuable resources for seniors, families, and caregivers. No reservations are necessary.

The Health Expo will feature a wide variety of health and wellness services, including free haircuts and information on Medicare, transportation, assisted living, and more.

Participants will have the opportunity to connect with local healthcare providers, nonprofits, and community organizations. These partners will share resources, tips, and strategies for healthy living, covering everything from nutrition and fitness to mental health and chronic

condition management.

New this year is a free shuttle to and from the event for Concord residents age 65. For details, please contact the Senior Center Transportation Office at 925-671-3035.

The Health Expo is part of the City of Concord's ongoing commitment to fostering a healthy and vibrant community.

If you are seeking information on a healthy lifestyle, exploring options for elder care, or simply looking to improve your overall health, the Health Expo has the professional to help you.

For more information about the Health Expo, please visit www.cityofconcord.org/SCEvents, call 925-671-3320, or email concordsc@cityofconcord.org.



Jennifer Stojanovich
Realtor, Better Homes Realty

The First Two Weeks: Timing Matters When Selling Your Home

When you list your home for sale, the first couple of weeks are the most important. Think of it as your home's "opening night." Just like a new restaurant or a movie premiere, that's when people are most excited and paying the closest attention.

During those first 14 days, your property gets the most exposure online and through agent alerts. Serious buyers, those already pre-approved and waiting for the right home, are quick to schedule showings. If your home is priced right and presented well, that early energy often leads to stronger offers and increased competition among buyers.

On the flip side, if a listing lingers too long without activity, buyers start to wonder why. Even if there's nothing wrong with the home, the perception alone can work against you. That's why pricing is so critical.

A home that's overpriced risks being overlooked, while one that's competitively priced can create urgency and sometimes even drive the final sale price higher.

Presentation matters, too. Professional photos, good staging, and an inviting curb appeal help your home stand out from day one. Small touches like fresh paint, decluttering, and landscaping can make a big difference in how buyers see your property.

Strong early interest often creates a domino effect: more showings lead to more offers, more offers give you negotiating power, and that usually means a better outcome at closing.

Bottom line? Don't underestimate the power of the first impression. Make those first two weeks count, and the rest of the sale often falls into place.

Toothpaste tubes are now recyclable

Effective immediately, MDRR's residential recycling program will officially accept #2 plastic squeeze tubes in the blue recycling cart.

#2 Lotion, Toothpaste, Sunscreen, and Cosmetic plastic squeeze tubes now go into the blue bins.

Before placing them in your cart, please be sure they are: Plastic (no metal tubes), as empty as possible with the cap on. Tubes should be placed loose in your blue recycling cart, do not place in bags.

This program expansion means that more of the items you use daily can stay out of the landfill and enter a recovery pathway, supporting a cleaner, greener community for everyone.

Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery's Material Resource Facility in Pittsburg contains the area's largest state-of-the-art recycling processing center and C+D line to keep items out of the landfill.



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Horror Movie

Reading a horror novel is a great way to celebrate Halloween. "Horror Movie" (William Morrow Paperbacks, 2025, paperback, 288 pages, \$12.98) by Paul Tremblay, is an excellent choice for readers looking for an unusual twist to the traditional horror genre. The main plot revolves around events surrounding the 1993 filming of a horror movie, creating a sinister backdrop that will leave readers as unsettled as a typical slasher storyline.

"Horror Movie" is told by a character who played "The Thin Kid" in the 1993 film and is the last surviving cast member. The story unfolds in dual time periods, switching between 1993 and current time. Tremblay also incorporates scenes from the 1993 script written in traditional screenplay format, making this a truly unique reading experience.

The novel opens in current time where The Thin Kid is meeting with a Hollywood producer who wants him involved in a reboot of the 1993 movie. The film production was never finished because of the grisly events that took place during the filming of the final scene.

During The Thin Kid's flashbacks, it is revealed the 1993 screenplay was inspired by the discovery of a mask in an abandoned high school. The uncanny resurfacing of the mask over the years, despite The Thin Kid's efforts to distance himself from the object, is one of the many disturbing elements of the novel.

In current time, The Thin Kid's insistence on playing his same role in key scenes of the new film, and his obsession with the mask, reveals a twisted side to the narrator's personality.

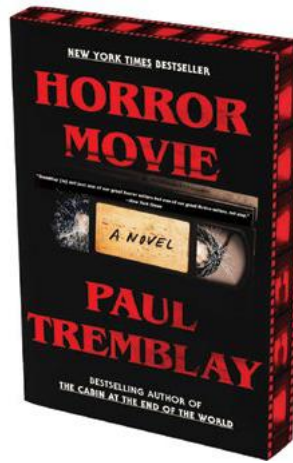
The novel explores several themes, including how humans revise their own history and how they cope with the darkness that lies within. At times, the Thin Kid's sanity seems to spiral out of reality. This may confuse readers, but at the same time the uncertainty ramps up the tension. The convoluted story structure can be unsettling, but I suspect

that was Tremblay's intention.

"Horror Movie" is a perfect read to gear up for a spooky Halloween night. Its unique format that blends elements of screenplays and traditional literature, coupled with an unreliable narrator, will leave readers guessing what exactly happened in 1993.

In addition to other novels by Tremblay, similar horror books that might put you on edge include "Episode Thirteen" by Craig Di Louie, "Incidents Around the House" by Josh Malerman, and "Experimental Film" by Gemma Files.

Paul Tremblay has won the Bram Stoker and Massachusetts Book awards for his novel "A Head Full of Ghosts." He is also the New York Times bestselling author of "Another." Other notable works include "The Beast You Are," "The Pallbearers Club," "Survivor Song," "Disappearance at Devil's Rock," and his crime novels "The Little Sleep" and "No Sleep Till Wonderland." His novel "The Cabin at the End of the World" was adapted into the 2023 Universal Pictures film "Knock at the Cabin." Two of his short stories, "The Last Conversation" and "In Bloom," were Amazon Original shorts. His essays and short fiction have appeared in the "New York Times," "Boston Globe," and "Los Angeles Times." Tremblay lives outside of Boston, Massachusetts, with his family. To learn more, visit his website at paultremblay.net.



A Big Bold Beautiful Journey

Rated R
In Theaters

Once you get beyond the tongue twister of a title, "A Big Bold Beautiful Journey" is a film that will make you reflect on decisions from your past and what it means to share a life with someone.

We meet David (Colin Farrell) on his way to a wedding. Circumstances lead him to an unusual car rental company run by the hilarious Phoebe Waller-Bridge and Kevin Kline. David is forced to accept a 1994 Saturn as the car for his journey. He is also strong-armed to get the special navigation feature.

At the wedding, he meets and flirts with the alluring Sarah (Margot Robbie). On the way home from the wedding, their paths keep crossing and they discover the automobile navigation is leading them to magical doors that take them to pivotal moments in their lives.

In between the emotional replays of their lives, they drive and have meaningful conversations with each other. Movies often show physically beautiful characters that viewers cannot imagine having a



difficult time finding partners. Here, we get to see how their flaws, mistakes, and the results of their decisions have contributed to their loneliness.

This is a very character-driven film, and Farrell and Robbie are charming and believable. Immediately invested in their story, viewers will get on board with the magical realism of the plot. Even though we watch them struggle with the emotional complexities of their lives, they never appear maudlin. We, the audience, root for them.

The visuals are quite beautiful. The navigation system takes them to places that seem real on the surface but are altered with vibrant colors and unrealistic locales.

Have your tissues ready. While some scenes are quite emotional, you may tear up because you recall a scene from your own life. Although you may feel melancholy throughout most of the film, you will walk away with a warm heart.

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HAVE A SAFE HALLOWEEN

JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

by Jill Hedgecock, jillhedgecock.com

Photos by Jill Hedgecock
from 2024.

A Holiday Journey: Glowfari lights up the night at the Oakland Zoo



When most people think about going to a zoo, they envision walking around and looking at wild animals or maybe interacting with domestic animals at a petting zoo. The Oakland Zoo houses more than 850 native and exotic animals, including gibbons, giraffes, bats, a variety of birds, reptiles, and otters. But in the fall and winter months, the Oakland Zoo offers a special exhibit called Glowfari, a unique nighttime activity for the whole family.

While the live zoo animals are tucked away for the night, Glowfari provides visitors with an opportunity to view an extraordinary display of lighted lanterns in the form of larger-than-life exotic animals and displays.

Since 2020, Glowfari has become an annual event. The exhibit is a collaboration between the Oakland Zoo's Conservation Society of California and Tianyu Arts and Culture. Each year new and exciting themes are planned. I couldn't wait to share my experience from attending last year. This is a great family outing and the proceeds go to the Oakland zoo. The photos accompanying this article were taken from that visit in 2024 when barnyard and Nile River themes were offered.

"Conservation and education while having fun is a fundamental goal of the Glowfari event," says Isabella Linares, Senior Manager of Marketing and Communications, Conservation Society of California/Oakland Zoo. The displays planned for 2025 will be just as magnificent.

This year, visitors will step through the zoo's gate and enter the African savanna lit up with lanterns of iconic African animals. Glowfari ticket holders can also behold a futuristic look at the wildlife of Oakland and delight in the colorful creatures in an underwater reef. During this nighttime exploration, oversized bug and insect caricatures will wow guests,



while a train will take riders on a journey to see glowing lanterns representing various creatures of the reptile world.

"One of the themes I am most excited about this year," said Linares, "is the Future of Oakland Exhibit which will promote coexistence between humans and animals, and will feature Oakland's native wildlife such as mountain lions using an overhead freeway wildlife crossing."

Glowfari 2025 will be held between November 7th and January 25th (check the Oakland Zoo website for blackout dates). It is a holiday journey families are certain to enjoy. Glowfari occurs between 4:30 and 9:00 p.m. Allow two hours to fully experience this special attraction.

Glowfari tickets go on sale starting October 2, at 9:00 a.m. for Members & Friends of the Wild and at 12:00 p.m. for General Admission. Ongoing Glowfari ticket sales can be obtained online 28 days before each visit date at 9:00 a.m. each day. This popular event requires reservations and often sells out.

Purchase timed tickets at <https://www.oaklandzoo.org/programs-and-events/glowfari>. To avoid lines, early start times are recommended. Consider taking the gondola upon arrival because its lines get long as the evening progresses and on clear days, the skyline provides sensational sunset views. Regardless of when visitors attend, Glowfari is a one-of-a-kind event that will thrill animal lovers of all ages.

Jill Hedgecock has a master's degree in environmental management. Her love of nature inspired her to write the award-winning novel, "Rhino in the Room" the sequel, "Queen of the Rhino", and "Pizco".



In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from Claycord.com and Other Sources

Antioch's new desalination plant will produce 6M gallons of drinking water per day



The newly launched Brackish Water Desalination Plant, which converts the mixture of salt and fresh water known as brackish water from the San Joaquin River mouth into drinking water, will ultimately up to 40% of the drinking water for the city of about 112,000 people, according to the city and the California Department of Water Resources.

Planning for the \$116 million plant began in 2016 with the application for a state loan that financed the construction of an intake pump, the facility and 4.3 miles of new pipeline.

Help clean up Grayson Creek

For those who missed out on Community Service Day, or who just can't get enough of helping out, the Watershed Project will be in Pleasant Hill on October 18, 2025, for a cleanup of Grayson Creek from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The cleanup will start around 250 Cleveland Rd. To register to volunteer, contact the Watershed Project paula@thewatershedproject.org.

Keep your animals off fields 4, 5 and 6 at Boatwright in Concord

If you're at Boatwright Field in Concord, the City is asking you to keep your animals off soccer fields 4, 5 and 6. They're using animal repellent. Wild animals, most likely pigs have been damaging the fields.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists issued a statement on the usage of Acetaminophen by pregnant people.

"Acetaminophen is one of the few options available to pregnant patients to treat pain and fever, which can be harmful to pregnant people when left untreated. Maternal fever, headaches as an early sign of preeclampsia, and pain are all managed with the therapeutic use of acetaminophen, making acetaminophen essential to the people who need it. The conditions people use acetaminophen to treat during pregnancy are far more dangerous than any theoretical risks.

Contra Costa County awarded state funds for Delta Recovery Center

Contra Costa County has been awarded \$43.7 million in state funds to establish the Delta Recovery Center, a new treatment facility in East Contra Costa that will expand access to critical behavioral health services.

The funding is part of a \$98 million grant and comes from California's Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program, a multi-year state initiative funded through Proposition 1 to improve behavioral healthcare infrastructure.

The Delta Recovery Center will be located on the border of Antioch and Oakley near Highway 4.

Healthy snacks only: Contra Costa Supervisors advance "Healthy Checkout" ordinance

Larger retail stores in unincorporated parts of Contra Costa County will soon be required to stock healthy food and beverages in checkout aisles.

At the September 16 Board of Supervisors meeting, a County staff presentation stated that 30% of the county's adolescents between 12-17 years old are considered overweight or obese.

The board voted unanimously to initially approve an ordinance that will require retail stores of more than 2,000 square feet to stock only healthy items in checkout areas and within three feet of a register. The proposal will return to the board on Oct. 7 for final approval.

The proposal defines healthy foods as those with no more than 5 grams of added sugar and no more than 200 milligrams of sodium per serving, gums and mints with no added sugars, and beverages with no added sugar and no artificial sweetener.

Concord police recover stolen item after theft from church



A bronze sacred item was stolen from the altar of a church in Concord but was recovered. The theft occurred September 4, at the Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Church on Oak Grove Road.

A 3-foot-tall, 30-pound monstrance was taken during the morning hours, according to Concord police. Investigators eventually identified and located the suspect and recovered the monstrance at his home.

It has since been returned to the church, and the suspect was arrested on suspicion of grand theft, police said.

More west nile virus-infected mosquitoes found in contra costa county

The Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) confirms mosquitoes collected from a trap in Holland Tract are the second group of mosquitoes to test positive for West Nile virus (WNV) in Contra Costa County this year.

"The risk of disease will continue until average overnight temperatures drop below 55°, so residents should continue to protect themselves from mosquito bites and reduce the risk of mosquitoes on their own properties," said Steve Schutz, Ph.D., Scientific Programs Manager.

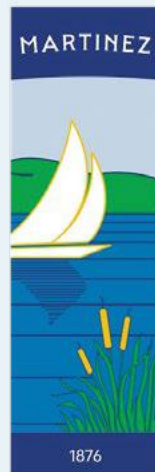
To reduce the risk of mosquitoes, dump out all of the standing water on the property at least once per week, and use EPA-registered insect repellents with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, Picaridin, the repellent version of Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus or IR3535.

Around Martinez



Martinez beautification efforts are underway

by Brianne Zorn, Mayor, City of Martinez



Have you noticed the recent upgrades to our entryways and major thoroughfares?

Each of our entryways has received a new, refreshed monument sign. The signs have a contemporary style and highlight 1876, the year Martinez was incorporated, nearly 150 years ago. Light poles in the city have been donned with a new banner with imagery highlighting Martinez history and culture, including bocce, our courthouse, our golden hillsides, the John Muir house, and our waterfront (a shoutout to our City logo). Downtown received new banners, too, with images of the economic drivers that keep our downtown vibrant, such as music, retail, restaurants, and bars.

The City Council approved a significant investment in a median enhancement and tree planting capital improvement project, which was adopted as part of the 2025-2026 fiscal budget. In honor of our sesquicentennial (i.e., 150 years!) we are kicking off the median enhancement project by planting 150 trees. As you drive throughout town, you will see blue stakes marking the identified locations for drought tolerant and ornamental trees including maples, crepe myrtles, Chinese pistache, and chitalpas.

In addition to celebrating Martinez, trees improve air quality and support our ongoing participation with Tree City USA.



In honor of Martinez's sesquicentennial, the City will plant 150 trees as part of its median enhancement project.

Following this initial tree planting phase, Phase 2 will include replacement of broken irrigation lines, replanting of shrubs and groundcovers, and other beautification efforts.

We all love living in Martinez. I am confident that improvements to our entryways and medians will continue to build on our civic pride and spirit.

Martinez Historical Society Home Tour

by Kevin Murray

Over the last two decades the Martinez Historical Society, working with local homeowners, has presented annual historic tours of our homes and classic buildings. Because Martinez has the greatest number of classic homes in our area, this has become an immensely popular regional event.

A knowledgeable docent team staffs each home and we provide comfortable shuttles between the homes.

Historically, Martinez was the commercial and political center of Contra Costa County back to its origins as a Gold Rush Era seaport. Typically, we have had about 500 people join the tour, who not only learned about the history of Martinez, but also about our region, and were amazed by the gardens and interiors of these private homes.

This year the tour will present two incredibly special parts of town. Our six featured homes are clustered in two compact areas in the winding streets to the east and west of town. This is a great walking experience, but we also provide shuttles within the neighborhoods and from neighborhood to neighborhood. Most of these homes have not been on prior tours, and many of the homes were built in the popular Craftsman Style in the 1910s and 1920s.

We have the home of a mayor, a prominent doctor, and a distinguished judge. We also have a home built by a



schoolteacher where she served as the general contractor managing the various trades. And the home of the first woman to serve as a deputy sheriff, where she and her husband raised a naval officer and war hero.

We also include the 1890 Victorian Borland Home which is an interesting museum cottage, the Martinez Refining Company (MRC) Alumni Museum, and the 1937 MRC Clubhouse, where our tour begins.

Embark on a tour through time and architecture with the Historical Society Annual Home Show. Leisurely stroll through homes and take in their unique features, breathtaking views and hear the history of these structures that make for the majestic tapestry of Martinez.

Saturday, October 11, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Spend a day to discover the treasures that make Martinez an amazing small town. Tickets are \$60 at the event, or advance discount tickets (\$50) can be purchased online at: tinyurl.com/mhshomes.



OCTOBER EVENTS



www.cityofmartinez.org/events



Follow Us on Social Media for more!

- 10/03 Taylor Swift Album Release Party
- 10/04 Special Olympics Northern California:
Bike the Bridges, Bands & Brews
- 10/08 Cemetery Tour, Alhambra Pioneer Cemetery
- 10/09 Cemetery Tour, Alhambra Pioneer Cemetery
- 10/11 Alhambra Pioneer Cemetery Cleanup
- 10/11 Zombie Crawl
- 10/25 Downtown Trick or Treat Spooktacular

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Sundays Farmers Market

Sundays Nu-Rays Bike Night

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News Wrap

Stories of Local Interest

Martinez Council Votes to slash Pickleball hours at Hidden Valley Park

The Martinez City Council voted to reduce play at Hidden Valley Park's new pickleball facility after months of complaints from nearby residents and two 90-day trial periods that failed to quell concerns.

According to the resolution, the courts will be available on Sundays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and on Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. City staff may add up to four more hours on a third day after consulting with players, but the courts will be locked outside of approved hours. The tennis court at the site will be locked on the same schedule to prevent pickleball play from migrating there.

C&H Sugar settlement pays \$500,000 for odor violations

Crocket's C&H Sugar Co. for odor violations in 2022. According to a news release from the D.A.'s Office: "The emissions violations by C&H Sugar occurred on various dates between Sept. 8 and Oct. 14 at a wastewater treatment plant the company jointly owns at Dowrelio Drive in the unincorporated community of Crockett." The settlement calls for \$400,000 in civil penalties, \$100,000 in costs, and various compliance measures by the company.

Stewardship Volunteer Days at Pacheco Marsh on Nov. 1

by Martinez News and Views and other sources

Stewardship Volunteer Days for Pacheco Marsh on Saturday, Nov. 1, from 9 a.m. to noon, to pull weeds, touch up trails, and prep the site for future planting. Participants should bring and wear the following: closed-toe shoes, layered clothing, water, sunscreen and a snack. Tools and gloves will be provided. The event is canceled if it rains. Pre-registration is required for all volunteer stewardship events. Visit this link: 2025 Land Stewardship Volunteer Workdays - John Muir Land Trust to sign up.

Papa Jake Larson statue proposal headed to City Council

The city's Parks, Recreation, Marina and Arts Commission approved a public art application for a full-figure bronze statue of "Papa Jake" Larson to be installed at the southern end of Plaza Ignacio. Larson, a decorated World War II veteran who landed on Omaha Beach during the D-Day invasion, was a longtime Martinez resident who died July 17 at the age of 102.

The statue, proposed by professional sculptor Paula B. Slater, would face the Police Department and City Hall to serve.

The statue, estimated to cost \$200,000, would be paid for through fundraising, according to the report, with a goal of unveiling it on Veterans Day of 2026. The commission will forward its recommendation on the proposed statue to the City Council.



Supervisor Scales-Preston visits C&H sugar refinery

Newsletter Updates

On Wednesday, September 26, Supervisor Scales-Preston visited the C&H Sugar facility in Crockett for a tour and presentation about the company's operations, workforce, and longstanding contributions to the region. The visit highlighted the critical role C&H plays in the local economy and its deep roots in the community.

The C&H Sugar Crockett Refinery has been in continuous operation for 119 years, providing good-paying, stable jobs to generations of families. As one of the longest-operating sugar refineries in the country, it employs more than 480 workers and invests millions of dollars annually in local goods, services, and infrastructure.

Each year, 25 ships deliver over 750,000 tons of raw sugar to the Crockett waterfront, where the product is stored in nine massive silos—each capable of holding 25 million pounds. The refinery can process over 6 million pounds of sugar per day and operates 29 packaging lines that produce more than 100 different grades and package sizes to serve a wide range of consumers and businesses.



One of the most recognizable features of the facility is the iconic C&H sign, first installed in 1956. The sign's 900 bulbs were recently replaced with energy-efficient LEDs, reducing energy usage by 80%. The 22-foot-tall "C" and "H" letters remain a proud landmark, visible from miles around.

C&H is proud to be part of the Crockett community and actively supports local events, schools, and non-profits. Supervisor Scales-Preston's visit underscored the importance of maintaining strong partnerships between industry and local government to support economic growth and community well-being.

The 13th Annual Zombie Brew Crawl!

Calling all zombies. Bring your undead self to Downtown Martinez on October 11 for the 13th annual Zombie Brew Crawl. Roam from shop to shop and sample over 30 craft brews. Best zombie costume will be awarded prizes in the costume contest. Prizes will also be awarded to the best ghoulish group ensemble. Or you can come casually and join the fun for some live zombie entertainment and a Halloween themed

market.

You must be 21 years or older to sample beer. DDs are free! Must have valid ID. No alcohol to be consumed outside tasting locations. Beer will only be served in the 2025 tasting cup. No other cups are permitted.

For tickets and more information, visit DowntownMartinez.org.



Soroptimist International of Martinez

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8th Annual Bingo **BLAST!**

Saturday, November 8th, 2025

Doors Open 5:00 p.m. Games Begin 6:00 p.m.

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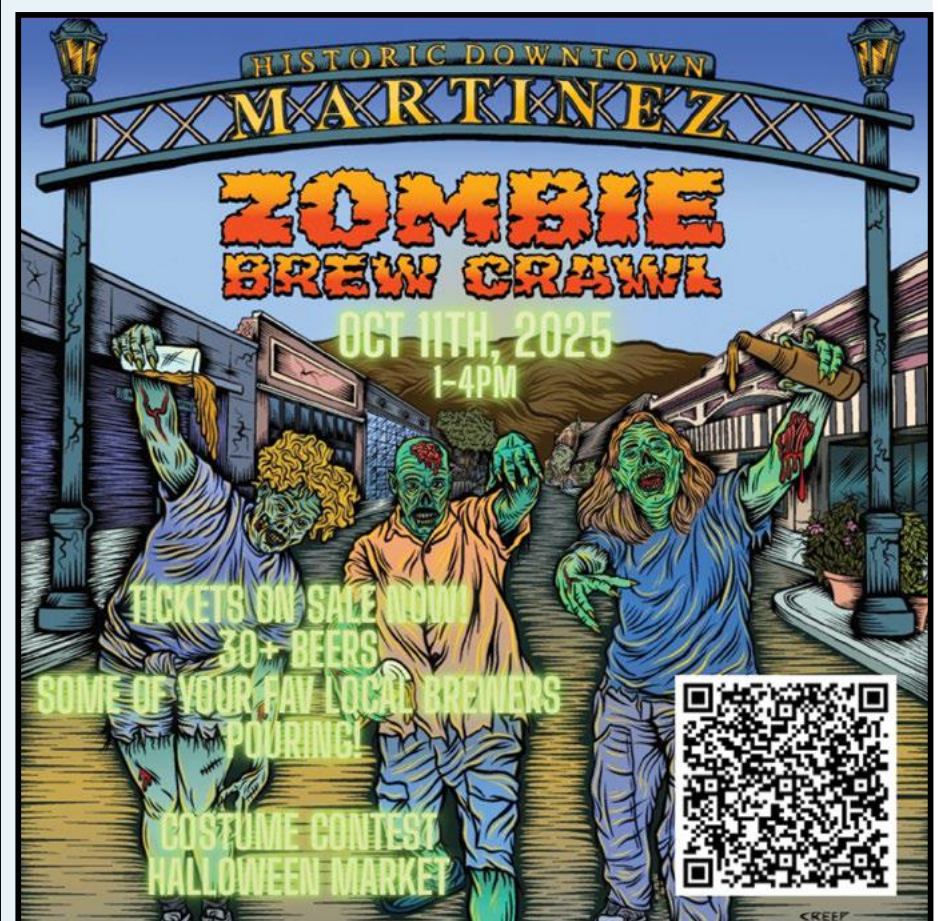
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Overcoming being overwhelmed

If the world feels louder, faster, and more overwhelming than it used to— you're not imagining it.

Whether it's managing everyday aches and pains, keeping up with appointments, feeling the weight of uncertainty, or simply trying to stay balanced, physically and emotionally, many people today are navigating a kind of quiet overwhelm. The world feels different than it used to, and it can be a lot for our bodies to adapt to.

But the good news is, your body already holds the tools to help you recalibrate. Balance isn't just about strong legs or good shoes— it starts with your brain. And your brain listens to your senses.

When we engage our senses with purpose, we do more than soothe our nerves. We support memory, reduce pain, improve coordination, and shift out of stress— often in just a few minutes.

Here are a few straightforward ways to do that:

Feel the earth. Taking off your shoes and walking barefoot on grass or dirt or sand can activate thousands of foot receptors, improve balance, and help calm your nervous system. If your feet are sensitive, start small! Just explore what feels good!

Smell something. Scents like lavender, cinnamon, or even a favorite soap can stir comforting memories and soothe mental tension. (I call this “déjà-pu” because smell is processed in the hippocampus, home of long-term memory. Scent brings the past right back!)

Feel the beat. Listening to music, especially something with a steady beat, can steady your gait, stabilize your mood, and support brain health. Both sound and balance share the vestibulocochlear nerve, so firing up those ears can help with both hearing and balance.

Stare off into the distance. Looking at the stars or watching the sun set on the horizon can literally help us see the bigger picture. Distance vision also supports our ability to take a deep breath and can activate the parts of our brain that can help us feel more awake and alert.

Savor taste. When you truly taste your food, the nerves in your tongue send signals into the brainstem, the hub that regulates pain perception and stress responses. This is why mindful eating can literally help the body ease discomfort.

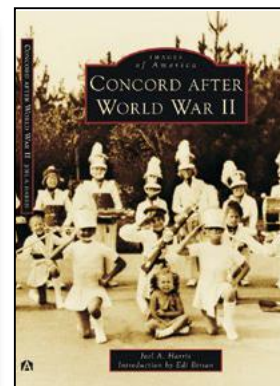
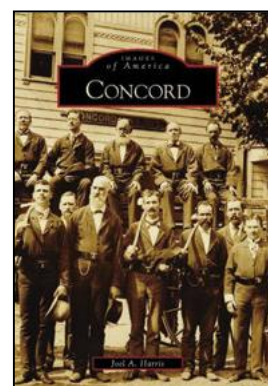
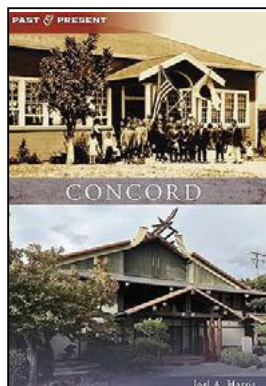
Play with temperature. A warm bath or a splash of cold water can reset your body's stress response and bring you back into the present moment. Dance in the rain, step outside on a chilly night. Get creative and get back into your skin.

Just walk. Walking activates movement rhythms in your brain that support both thinking and coordination. It helps clear inflammation, improves circulation, and gets those lungs working a bit more.

Your body is the anchor point to the present moment. Just paying attention to your senses can go a long way in alleviating stress and can even reduce pain. The next time life feels a bit too much, try just paying a bit more attention to the basics of being a human being.

Third book of Concord history trilogy to release in January '26

Joel Harris, a member of the Board of Directors of Concord Historical Society, has announced his third installment of his Concord History Trilogy. The third book is due to be released on January 6, 2026, titled “Concord after WWII,” from Arcadia Press. The first book, “Images of America Concord” ends at the Port Chicago explosion, the new book starts at the Port Chicago 50 Mutiny Trial through the 1990's. The second book is called “Concord Past & Present”. Copies are available at Berkshire Books on Clayton Rd.



Kristianne Ong is Nurse of the Year

by Francisco Sudiacal

Congratulations to the 2024 California Association of Health Facilities (CAHF) Nurse of the Year, Kristianne Ong. She has been recognized by the CAHF Director of Regulatory Affairs and panelists from the CAHF Nurses Council for her commitment to patient care, leadership, and achievement in the industry.

Serving as the Director of Nursing at Tampico Healthcare Center in Concord, Kristianne is known for building strong relationships with residents and their families, personally taking time to talk with them about all aspects of care. She knows the details of care for every single resident. With a loving bedside manner, Kristianne can relay even the strictest patient instructions with a soft kindness, keeping her residents' well-being at the forefront of her mind.

Kristianne leads her staff by example, diligently working long hours in pursuit of excellence, whether for herself or her facility. For her staff, she maintains an open-door policy and a personal relationship with each member. Kristianne takes special pride in serving as a mentor, using her decades of nursing experience to patiently lend her expertise to her team.

The CAHF panelists took note of Kristianne's efforts to obtain the American Heart Association's Heart Failure Certification for Tampico, only the second



skilled nursing facility in the state to do so. This certificate recognizes a facility's ability to improve patient health outcomes and elevate the level of care provided for residents with heart failure. The local community is blessed to have a humble, sincere, yet fiercely dedicated healthcare professional leading services at Tampico Healthcare Center. Well done, Kristianne.

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The Contagion of Misinformation (aka lies)

by Edi Birsan, Concordian edibirsan@gmail.com

We are in a whirlwind of misinformation spreading accusations and amassing a lengthy list of offenses to the concept of Truth, Justice and the American Way; and Superman is not coming to save the day.

People have been fired for giving out what they believe is accurate job number information. Government agencies have been directed to make policy changes when overwhelming data conflicts with a party line. Meanwhile, the very image of blind justice is perverted into vengeance from the highest offices quite openly and without a shred of shame. The constant chaos and gnashing of the body politic is being witnessed nationally; what of our local government and their dealings with folks?

We have not seen the wholesale replacement of facts generated by a staff with political make believe and outright bombast in such things such as a Traffic Study, or a sustained challenge to the portrayal of data from what is still a professional and serious staff at all levels of local government. Facing the realities of fiscal cliffs and under-maintained infrastructure are still hard focus points, but no one is making up numbers and accusing foreigners for its existence.

There have been cracks in this civil play as some aspects of the national malaise have seeped through. For example, the traditional rotation of Mayor positions has had its blood bath phase with all four central cities of Concord, Clayton, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek breaking with usual rotation of Vice Mayor to Mayor in favor of retaliation and disgraceful infighting.

Clearly from the public perspective, there is a pitch of rising anger over such topics as immigration, citizenship or detailing the level of government interface with schools, rents, guns and the like.

I have seen the lack of civility climbing at public comments in council meetings, but for the most part, the dais side has not got the contagion to lash out in kind. Although, their restraint is a thin shroud and weakening and the manipulation of the process still continues though less obvious means than what is seen in Washington.

When an ordinance called for yearly review of data and policy such as in the Concord Rent Stabilization and Just Cause provisions, as it is a hot topic, the provision is removed so that you have to struggle with an agenda process that allows for a majority to block the public discussion of the item by keeping it off the agenda and having a procedure that forces a majority to agree to put something on the agenda. There is no way that the general public can force something to be discussed when a majority does not want to deal with it, not even by petition or similar process.

There was a short window several years ago in Concord where the idea of a petition of 300 voters could force a discussion item on the agenda, but it died, overwhelmed by a fear that people might actually do that and jam up the agenda with hot topic, emotionally driven policy calls, be it in foreign affairs to buying drones from unfriendly countries.

So, for now, that divisiveness and ugliness that is being displayed at the highest levels of government has not penetrated deep into central Contra Costa, however time will tell (unless the A.I. robots figure out how to mimic the voice of time and they too knowingly lie to us.

Views above are of Edi Birsan and not to be confused ...hopefully, not confused but mistaken for that which it is not intended to. EdiBirsan@gmail.com



For the Love of Pets by Jill Hedgecock, Jillhedgecock.com

Do dogs and cats speak the same tail language

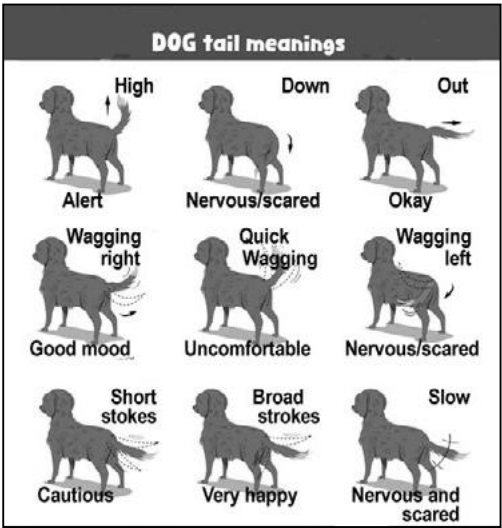
The best way to understand your pet s to watch its behavior. Perhaps its most expressive body language is shown through its tail movement and position. Most people would readily conclude that a dog wagging its tail is happy, but that is not always the case. A tail moving to its left may reveal the dog is fearful, while a swishing tail veering right usually reflects happiness. Cats can give mixed messages as well.

There are two common tail positions that communicate the same emotional state in dogs and cats. The lowered or tucked tail means the animal is nervous or scared. The other commonality in tail language is when the tail is held straight up. This tail position usually shows that the cat or dog is feeling excited and happy. However, there are times the same tail position could indicate the animal is stressed and worried. When trying to interpret a pet's mood, it's important to realize that dog and cat tail communication can be situational.

Dog tails can be easier to read. A canine with a steady thumping tail while lying down may be an expression of a happy greeting or an invitation for a belly rub, but another pup exhibiting the same rate of tail wagging while standing might be feeling apprehensive. A dog with a fast, shaky "rattlesnake" tail is most likely feeling high tension, which may escalate to aggression. The best kind of tail wagging is when the hind end also shimmies. This kind of tail wag conveys a dog's joy, and its happiness can be contagious even to the grumpiest of owners.

Cats can be much more subtle when it comes to expressing themselves. A swishing fluid motion of the entire tail indicates a calm and interested kitty, while flicking only the tail tip may indicate the cat is in predator mode and ready to pounce. A stiffly lashing cat tail, or if the tail fur is extended and spiky, it may be fearful and about to transition into attack mode. A cat curling the tail tip into a hook is essentially smiling. Even an aloof kitty will sometimes express its love for an owner by twining its tail around a human's leg.

But what if there is no tail? There are seven dog breeds and one cat breed (the Manx) that are born tailless. Tailless dog breeds include Boston terriers, Pembroke corgis, and French bulldogs. Several other canine purebreds and mixed breeds may have docked tails. Reading a tailless dog's mood can be trickier, but observing



their eyes, ears, mouth, and the tenseness in their posture can provide clues. For example, if a dog's eyes are alert (particularly if its attention is directed at a toy), its ears are pricked forward, and its body is slightly tense, the pet is likely excited and ready to play.

Dog and cat tail communication has some common traits, but there are more differences than similarities. If owners take the time to learn their animal's tail language, they can create a deeper connection with their beloved pets.

Jill Hedgecock is a retired environmental scientist and award-winning author of several books, including the Doberman trilogy series: "Between Shadow's Eyes," "From Shadow's Perspective" and "In Shadow's Reflection." Her books are available on amazon.com.

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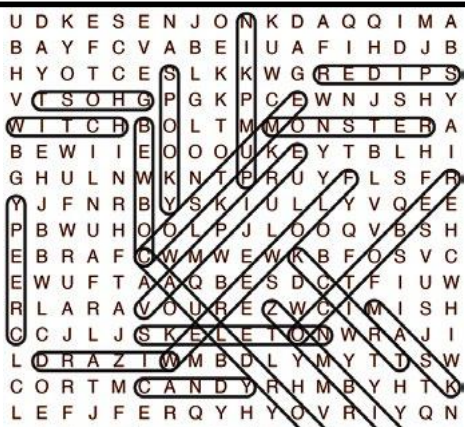
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Cryptogram

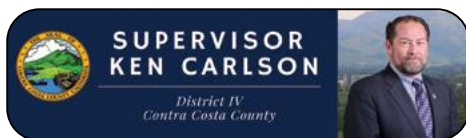
"Halloween is not only about putting on a costume, but it's about finding the imagination and costume within ourselves."
- Elvis Duran

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Contra Costa Television brings access to the community

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY (Sept. 30, 2025) – Have you noticed the seamless video production of the Board of Supervisors meetings? It's the hard work of the team at Contra Costa Television (CCTV).

CCTV operates the cameras and software necessary to broadcast meetings on live TV. It's a complicated endeavor I see up close from the dais and it's one I deeply appreciate. Their efforts contribute to modernizing accessibility to the public in a way that embraces how information is consumed today.

Located in Martinez, CCTV houses professional-grade recording studios for filming, podcasts, and audiobooks. Their office is a multiuse studio for programs like the Veterans Service Office's talk show Veterans Voices, the county's podcast Government Speak, and even hosts agency-wide meetings for the Employment and Human Services Department.

Most importantly, their services are also open to the public. CCTV offers residents access to the same sets and equipment at low or no cost. With staff at hand, creative minds have a place to execute on their ideas.

Authors across Contra Costa County have used CCTV's dedicated voiceover booth to record their own audiobooks, bringing local stories to life in their own voices. The technology available at CCTV rivals what you might expect from a private studio, yet it is designed to be accessible to the public.

Innovation is not always a word people associate with government, but Contra Costa County proves otherwise. By pairing cutting-edge technology with accessibility, CCTV makes it possible for residents to share their stories, amplify their voices, and connect with wider audiences.

As a community, we benefit when more of our neighbors can tell their stories, whether through a podcast episode or an audiobook chapter. I encourage all Contra Costa residents with a story to tell to take advantage of this remarkable public resource.

To learn more about this CCTV and its services, visit <https://tinyurl.com/4692efm6>.

Ken Carlson is a Contra Costa County District IV Supervisor. Email questions or comments to D4info@bos.cccounty.us or call his office at (925) 655-2350.



From Storage Bins to Shopping Wins

by Kevin Cabral, CEO, Concord Chamber of Commerce

I hate to even say it, because this year has flown by, but the holidays are officially upon us. There, I said it. Sorry. It really does feel like summer ends and suddenly the holiday season is here. From bags of candy and turkey dinners to endless ads and hauling decorations out of storage, for me it can be a whirlwind. Add family debates, extra trips to Ace or Home Depot for those little things you didn't know you needed, and the annual promise to finally get organized. It all sounds familiar, doesn't it?

But amid the chaos, I've been hearing something encouraging. My family, and many friends too, are committing to shop locally this year, and adding meaningful gifts and experiences for their list.

For many of our local businesses, the holiday season is the busiest and most crucial time of the year. They work hard all year long, but these next few months really matter.

As President of the Concord Chamber, I'm always excited to share positive updates about local business. Recently, our Government Economic Policy Committee had the opportunity to meet with the general managers of Sunvalley Shopping Center and The Veranda. Both of these shopping centers are not only thriving but also playing a significant role in keeping Concord's economy strong.

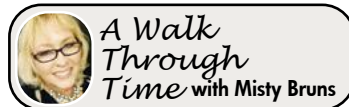
They shared that occupancy is great, above 90%, with a healthy mix of

retailers, restaurants, services and entertainment. But what stood out most is how each center is finding creative ways to bring people together. From live music and family-friendly events to unique pop-up experiences, they're focused on making shopping more than just a transaction; it's about building community.

Equally important, both centers are committed to safety, cleanliness, and top-notch customer service. That combination of a great vibe, welcoming atmosphere, and diverse shopping options makes them wonderful places to spend time. Concord is fortunate to have two thriving centers that not only serve our residents but also attract visitors to our city.

So, when you're out shopping, dining, or looking for something fun, consider keeping it local. Take the family, make a day of it, and enjoy the experience. Spending your hard-earned money close to home not only supports our community but also makes those holiday purchases feel even more special.

For more about the businesses and organizations that make Concord a vibrant place to live, and to learn about the benefits of membership, visit the Concord Chamber of Commerce at www.concordchamber.com.



Strange Disappearance in Martinez 164 Years Ago

Strange disappearance.

A man, just from Washoe passed through Martinez, on Monday evening on his way to his family near Pinole, stayed overnight at a farmer's in Briones Valley; and left there early next morning, since which time nothing has been heard of him. It was but a few miles to his family abode. His name was WEEKS, we understand. Diligent search has been made for him, but without success thus far. - *Contra Costa Gazette- May 11, 1861*

Supposed Murder-The strange disappearance of a gentleman just arrived from Washoe, we mentioned in our last issue. His true name is MEEKS, of the firm of Dupuy Foulkes & Co., of San Francisco. He left his carpet-bag at Mr. Hall's on the morning of his disappearance with directions to give it to no one but himself or his brother-in-law Mr. Robertson, where his wife was then staying. Although men and dogs have scoured the country on every direction, through all the hills and ravines in that neighborhood, yet not the least trace of the missing man has been found. His family are in the deepest anxiety and grief. Friends and policemen from San Francisco, have aided in the search but without avail. -- *Contra Costa Gazette-May 18, 1861*

The Missing Man-The Sheriff of our county, Mr. James C. Hunsaker, has scattered numerous posters throughout our county, calling a meeting of three hundred men upon the 2nd of June next, the object of which is to institute an organized search, which shall leave no foot of ground unexamined where there is any likelihood of finding the body of Mr. Wil-

liam Meek, whose mysterious disappearance we have previously. - *Contra Costa Gazette June 1, 1861*

The Missing Man-The search organized last Sunday, under the direction of our Sheriff, was completely successful. The body of the deceased, Mr. William Meeks, was found by Mr. Edward Bent. A Coroner's jury was summoned to examine the body, and E. F. Weld Esq., who acted as coroner, gives us the following statement of the circumstances:

Upon arriving at the spot, about 3 O'Clock P.M., we found a number of citizens, who in obedience to the call of the Sheriff, had ridden from Alamo and even beyond.

The body was lying face downward, in the bottom of a deep ravine, close by a creek. From appearances there was no struggle, nor even a movement after the fall. The relatives of the deceased were present and recognized the remains from the clothes. The cap, even, was still upon the head. A jury was summoned and empanelled upon the spot. Dr. John Tennet carefully examined the body, and after the position of the deceased was changed, a watch, pistol; And some \$17 in coins were found on his person. The Dr. With the jury, came to the conclusion that the deceased received his death from an apoplectic fit.

The verdict of the jury was accidental death from some cause unknown to the jury.

Since the above was in type, we learned that Mr. Meek was a native of Hamilton, Scotland, was aged 29 years, and that his funeral took place last Wednesday, at 3

O'Clock P.M. in Rev. Mr. Lacy's church, San Francisco. *Contra Costa Gazette-May 11, 18, June 8, 1861*

Liberal Citizens-A reward of \$500 and \$250 also, was offered for the discovery of the dead body of Mr. William Meek. Mr. Edward Bent was the finder, and yet he generously declines and rebounces his claim to any reward or compensation whatever for his services in the search, and his success in finding the body of the deceased. - *Contra Costa Gazette- June 22, 1861*

STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE. A man just from Washoe, passed through Martinez on Monday evening, on his way to his family near Pinole, stayed over night at a farmer's in Briones valley, and left there early next morning, since which time nothing has been heard of him. It was but a few miles to his family abode. His name was Weeks we understand. Diligent search has been made for him, but without success thus far.

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The body was found lying face downward, in the bottom of a deep ravine, close by a creek. From appearances, there was no struggle, nor even a movement after the fall. The relatives of the deceased were present, and recognized the remains from the clothes. The cap, even, was still upon the head. A jury was summoned and empanelled upon the spot. Dr. John Tennet carefully examined the body, and after the position of the deceased was changed, a watch, pistol, and some \$17 in coins were found on his person. The Dr. with the jury, came to the conclusion that the deceased received his death from an apoplectic fit.

The verdict of the jury was accidental death from some cause unknown to the jury. Since the above was in type, we learn that Mr. Meek was a native of Hamilton, Scotland.

LIBERAL CITIZEN. A reward of \$400 and of \$250 also, was offered for the discovery of the dead body of Mr. William Meek. Mr. Edward Bent was the finder, and yet he generously declines and renounces his claim to any reward or compensation whatever for his services in the search, and his success in finding the body of the deceased.

Five clippings from the *Contra Costa Gazette* 164 years ago pieced together their story of the missing Mr. Meeks.

Concord City Manager Valerie Barone resigns, praises Council

by David King

In a letter written to members of the Concord City Council, Concord City Manager, Valerie Barone, announced she is retiring. Her last day will be December 29, 2025.

The letter went on to list the many accomplishments during her 14 year tenure as City Manager.

“Working together, we have enjoyed many accomplishments, including:

“Navigating the community and organization through the financial challenges of the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We stabilized the General Fund Operating Budget, owing from almost zero reserves to restoring reserves to 30%.

“These efforts required partnerships with our employees and their unions to implement significant pension and retiree health reforms and increased annual employee benefit contributions, strategic decisions by the Council, including facilitating a 20% downsizing of the workforce with very few layoffs, and support from the community through the passage of Measure Q (twice) and Measure V.

“Partnering with other agencies to launch innovative public safety initiatives, such as the central-county Family Justice Center, and the county-run A3 (Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime) Community Crisis Response (a mental health response program).

“Developing impactful community policies and responding effectively to changes in state legislation, including: the elimination of redevelopment agencies; adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan; establishing district-based Council elections; and creating new regulations for tenant protections, tobacco sales, multi-family smoking, Styrofoam containers’ use and sales, truck and sidewalk vending, and new housing mandates, including affirmatively furthering fair housing and objective design.

“Increasing the City’s focus on infrastructure maintenance, particularly roadways, through strategic investment, including grants, Measure V dollars, low-interest debt financing, redirected capital dollars to support residential roadway patch paving and by addressing staffing within our Capital Division and Public Works Department.

“Developing successful programs that assist unsheltered residents in accessing resources including housing, and that minimize the impact of this population on the community.

“This includes initiating support for a 3-member CORE team, funding a rapid rehousing program, developing a Homeless Strategic Plan, investing in nonprofits to enhance services, and coordinating responses to encampments that create health, safety, or crime impacts.

“These efforts are having an impact; the most recent Point-in-Time count shows a 45% decrease in Concord’s homeless population since 2023.

“Progressing the 5,000-acre Concord Naval Weapons Station Base Reuse Project, including completing the federally-required Area Plan, incorporating the Plan into the City’s General Plan, advancing federal and state environmental permitting, facilitating the transfer of half the property to the East Bay Regional Park District for the

Thurgood Marshall Regional ParkHome of the Port Chicago 50, progressing negotiations with the Navy for price and terms of payment for the property, and partnering with the Council’s chosen Master Developer, Brookfield LLC, to realize the community’s vision for a world-class development.

“Modernizing technology throughout the City, enhancing cyber security, traffic signal integration, streetlight energy use, website uptime, accessibility of city records for the public, usability of the City website, and agenda and records management.

“ritically important, the City is in the implementation phase of a multi-year process of upgrading its backbone software system, which will significantly improve operational efficiency and security.

“Public safety has been improved through technology enhancements, including implementing body-worn and dash cameras; license plate readers; upgraded software for records, dispatching and analysis; and the establishment of a drone program.

“Fostering the arts by supporting partner agencies in purchasing, relocating, and opening the Masonic Temple as the Concord Events Center; adding artwork to traffic cabinets; painting murals downtown; and hosting multiple Creative Concord weekend and Visit Concord Jazz events.

“The City also stabilized funding for the Music and Market series, established an art gallery at Centre Concord, and is in the process of integrating art on downtown Big Belly receptacles.

“Achieving economic development goals, including transitioning the Concord Pavilion from a general fund expense to a revenue source; creating a Tourism Improvement District (Visit Concord); developing a cannabis business sector; redeveloping a vacant office building into The Veranda Shopping Center; creating an auto zone marketing district; developing a life science co-location center; deploying small business support programs; investing \$27 million of American Rescue Plan Act funds effectively; increasing the City’s housing supply with over 880 units opened or in the construction phase, 576 units approved but not yet in-construction, and 800 units in the review and approval stages; attracting a new building supply store, hotel and big-box retailer; and nearing completion of a new Economic Development Strategic Plan to guide City economic investment over the next five years.

“In closing, I extend my gratitude for the Council’s leadership and partnership over the years. It is my hope that my tenure as a leader is remembered for seeing the best in others and my dedication to ethical, innovative, and transparent governance.”

Now the Council will begin their search for a new City Manager. Assistant City Manager Justin Ezell is expected to be a candidate.



Concord City Manager Valerie Barone. Photo Staff directory

From Guinea to Concord: The Inspiring Journey of Marie Louise

by David King



Concord Chamber of Commerce celebrates the grand opening of the newly remodeled Marie Louise Beauty Supply & Salon with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Rarely do you stumble across a story where personal challenges seem insurmountable and yet, triumph emerges.

Marie Louise was born and raised in Guinea, where she nurtured dreams of a brighter future for her children. As a gifted student, she earned a degree in Veterinary Science and later worked as a secretary. But despite her determination, opportunities were scarce.

In 1993, as a divorced mother of two, she made the difficult decision to temporarily leave her children behind and journey to the United States hoping to build the better life she envisioned for them.

Marie attended San Francisco City College to learn English and took her first job in San Francisco where she learned African hair braiding, a skill that became her calling.

Along the way, she continued her education studying courses in Business Management at University of Phoenix, and later cosmetology at the Paris Beauty College in Concord.

Within six years, she launched her own business, first braiding hair out of her apartment, then opening a small two-chair salon on Salvio Street in Concord. By 2002, she expanded to her current location on Clayton Road.

Her journey wasn’t without heartbreak. In 2001, Marie was diagnosed with breast cancer and given just two years to live. More than two decades later, she continues to thrive, her resilience shining through every obstacle.

Today, Marie Louise is joined by her daughter, Jean Marie, at the salon, while her son serves in the U.S. Navy.

For Marie Louise, the newly expanded salon is more than a business. It is the fulfillment of a promise to herself, to her children, and to the community

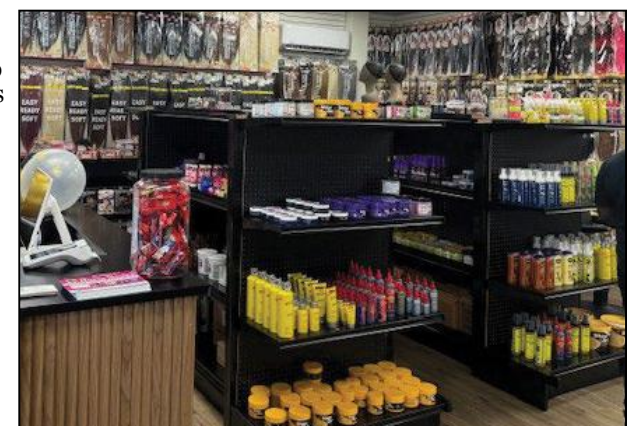


Marie Louise and daughter Jeanne Marie

that perseverance can turn even the most difficult beginnings into a story of triumph.

On September 25, the Concord Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon-cutting celebration for Marie Louise Beauty Supply and Salon, marking its grand reopening after a major remodel and 20 years in business. The expanded space now features seven stations and a beauty supply store. They specializing in African braiding, including braids, hair weaving, cornrolls, and extensions.

Marie Louise Beauty Supply and Salon isn’t just a place for beauty, it’s a living symbol of hard work, sacrifice, and determination. And for that, Marie Louise deserves a ribbon-cutting party.



Marie Louise newly remodeled salon offers a large inventory of beauty supplies.

Transforming landscapes is a work of art

The initial phase in realizing your ideal landscape involves establishing a solid working relationship with your designer.

Angela Dawne of Utopic Gardens, regards the initial consultation as a valuable opportunity for both client and designer to exchange information about the project's scope, requirements, and mutual expectations.

Given that each landscape presents unique challenges and possibilities, this meeting is crucial for setting project goals, addressing specific site characteristics, and outlining budgetary and scheduling parameters.

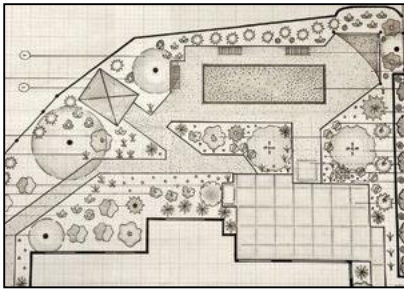
Following the initial discussion, developing a 'Design Concept' often provides necessary visual context. This overview presentation illustrates proposed design elements and facilitates further dialogue on preferences and priorities.

"Our designs typically feature hand-drawn artistic plans rendered in black and white, depicting major features such as hardscape pathways, patios, garden walls, and softscape or plantings," Dawne says. "They frequently incorporate areas for recreation, social gatherings, relaxation, water features, or edible gardens, tailored to individual needs and aspirations."

All designs are carefully conceived to be aesthetically pleasing, functional, livable, and unique. Once the project's scope and conceptual design are established, a formal written proposal is prepared.

Throughout installation, the designer remains actively involved, coordinating homeowners and installers, overseeing plant selection and placement, and supervising the arrangement of materials such as boulders and flagstones, to ensure every aspect aligns with the original vision and proposal.

Every project, whether it entails a concept sketch, a simple planting refresh, or a comprehensive redesign, receives meticulous attention and a high degree of professionalism. "We exclusively use high-quality materials from local suppliers."




Above: Three phases of a landscape transformation: the before, the hand-drawn design, the installation (not shown), and the final results.

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Pacheco Reservoir expansion stopped

by Stephen DePaschalis and Juan Pablo Galván Martínez, Save Mount Diablo

In late August 2025, the Board of Valley Water voted to halt all spending and staff work on the Pacheco Dam project.

[The project was expected to boost Pacheco Reservoir’s operational capacity from 5,500 acre-feet to up to 140,000 acre-feet, enough to supply up to 1.4 million residents with water for one year in an emergency.]

The current reservoir sits in the middle of Pacheco Pass and covers about 200 acres of land and about 5,000 acre-feet of water. It is north of Highway 152 and southeast of Henry W. Coe State Park.

Valley Water wanted to dramatically expand the reservoir to make it 20 times larger.

Their decision to halt the project follows the California State Water Commission refusing to assign any money to the project because of lack of progress and increasing costs.

That same week, the federal Bureau of Reclamation stated that they would not spend money on the project and would not store water in the expanded reservoir, compelling the Board to put an end to the project.

Rising Costs

When Valley Water applied to the state



View from above the North Fork of Pacheco Creek, which would have been flooded by the project. This badly placed reservoir expansion would have blocked a vital wildlife corridor. Photo: Cooper Ogden

seven years ago for funding, it said the new reservoir would cost \$969 million.

Since then, costs have tripled to \$2.7 billion. With inflation and finance expenses, final costs could have been above \$5 billion.

This new larger reservoir would have flooded 150 acres of protected land on The Nature Conservancy’s Romero Ranch conservation easement area, as well as a portion of Henry W. Coe State Park, land that is designated to be permanently protected.

Save Mount Diablo, along with landowners and conservation organizations had opposed the project for years.

“We savor this win and the end of a threat to this crucial wildlife corridor and beautiful part of the Diablo Range,” said Save Mount Diablo in a newsletter.



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