

The Diablo Gazette

Arts, Entertainment and All That's *Good* in Our Communities
 Concord, Clayton, Walnut Creek, Martinez, Pleasant Hill
www.diablogazette.com | [www.fb.com/diablogazette](https://www.facebook.com/diablogazette) | (925) 298-9990

AUGUST 2023

SWS
Federal Credit Union

AUTO LOANS

4.00%* APR New
4.50%* APR Used

Loan Amount and Terms Subject to Approval. Membership eligibility requirements apply. see details on page 20



SUMMER LIVING
Bug Hoteller

Bug Hotels attract pollinators and beneficial predator insects that protect your garden. pg. 10 Photo courtesy Shutterstock

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- God Must Be a Yankee Fan pg. 2
- Grand Jury Report Finds Serious Problems with Concord Naval Weapons Process pg.3
- Summer Getaway, Santa Cruz Offers More than Beaches pg.9
- Pair Up: Sparkling Wines and Recipes for a Summer Party pg. 11
- Mediterranean Food and Music Festival pg.17
- 50th Anniversary of Sister City Friendship with Kitakami, Japan pg.13
- **Movies & Book Review and Calendar of Summer Events and Concerts**

PSRST STD
 ECRWSS
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 EDDM RETAIL

Local Postal Customer

Travel 2 You
DENTAL HYGIENE CARE

Professional Mobile Dental Hygiene Service that Caters to Home-Bound and Senior Living Communities.

SERVICES

- Dental Cleanings
- Topical Fluoride
- Blood Pressure
- Oral Assessment
- Periodontal Assessment
- Arresting Decay Treatment
- Oral Cancer Screening
- Hygiene Instruction
- Nutritional Counseling
- Saliva pH
- Dental Referrals as needed. and more...

State of the art portable equipment allows us to bring Travel To You Dental care directly to you.

Call for Appointment
(925) 474-4402
www.travel2youdental.com

RDH# 22460
 RDHAP # 919
 NPI # 1558080994
 julie@travel2youdental.com

ORION OPTICAL
VISION AND STYLE

Use Your Flex Spending
 No Insurance No Problem

Comprehensive Eye Exam
 includes Retina Photo

\$89 (value \$149)

Dr. Celesti Hao O.D.

Large Selection of Designer Frames and Sunglasses
 CARTIER, GUCCI, TOM FORD, VERSACE, PRADA, RAY-BAN, OAKLEY, DIOR and more!

Call for Appointment (925) 349-4777

2075 Diamond Blvd., Ste H-105, Concord (in the Veranda)
www.OrionOptical.com

Publisher's Notes
by David King

God Must Be a Yankee Fan

Better than Perfect

When Concord Pastor Willy Vega was invited to attend a recent A's game by Vice-Mayor Edi Birsan, he was beside himself. Birsan and Pastor Vega had met a few years ago at a Todos Santos Music and Market concert. Birsan was Mayor of Concord at the time. They discovered that they are both from New York and instantly bonded. For this game, the A's would be hosting the New York Yankees.

"I am a die-hard Yankees fan," Pastor Vega said. He says he wears a Yankee jacket every day to work. All the Yankee championships are listed on the back. "I said to Edi, 'Are you serious!' I had just received a special award by the county for helping so many people."

Pastor Willy is the Supervisor at the Concord Shelter. He had just been awarded by the County for his work there. He is also the associate pastor at Grace Free Will Baptist Church.

Once his son heard his dad was going to the game, Pastor Willy asked if there was room for one more so he could bring his son. His son was a Yankee fan but had never seen them play live nor ever been to a professional baseball game... yet his name is Yankee.

Yes, his name is actually Yankee. "On his birth certificate his name is, Wilfredo Baby Yankee Vega, Jr.," Pastor Willy reiterated.

So, on Wednesday evening, June 28, the party of five headed to the A's vs. Yankees game; Tim Carr who supplied the tickets and is a fellow curmudgeon with Birsan, Birsan's son, Pastor Willy and Yankee.

At this point the day couldn't get any better for Pastor Willy and Yankee, could it? It could. As the game began, the stadium appeared to have more Yankee fans in seats than A's fans.

In the third inning, a foul ball landed a couple of rows in front of them. "I told Edi I would have caught that ball if I had a glove." Pastor Willy had boasted.

"You know what?" Edi responded. "I've got my son's glove in my bag. I always bring a glove. I am going give it to your son and just maybe he will get lucky enough and catch a ball." Edi stated that every time he comes with a kid, the kid gets a foul ball.

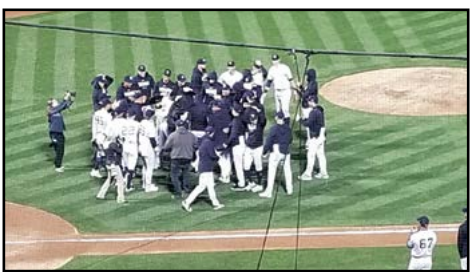
Yankee takes the glove. At one of the promotional breaks between innings, the A's marketing team tosses foam balls from the booth into the audience. Edi's son decided to take Yankee over near the window so maybe he can catch one of the foam baseballs.



Wilfredo Baby Yankee Vega holds his prize



Yankee with his father Pastor Willy Vega at the game



The Yankees swarm pitcher Domino German after pitching his perfect game.

Thirty days later, Yankee is running back. "What Happened, son?" Pastor Willy asked.

"Look Dad," as he revealed a ball from behind his back. "I caught the very first ball." Yankee was so elated he asked his dad to sign it for bringing him to his first baseball game. Could the day be any more special for Yankee and Pastor Willy?

Still wearing the glove, Yankee moved away from the group to sit in a more open area closer to where the earlier foul ball had landed...as if lightning strikes twice.

In the eighth inning a screaming foul ball rocketed towards them. Yankee leaned over the rows, reached with his glove, and caught it! Everyone was elated.

"I've been here a few times, and I have never caught a foul ball!" Edi proclaimed. "I have given it to three kids, and they all caught a foul ball."

By now the game is well on its way to a Yankee shutout. "How special I thought it would be if my son's first game was a Yankee shutout and he caught the ball." Pastor Willy told the group.

"It might be even better," Tim piped it.

"How could it be better than a no-hitter?" Pastor Willy asked.

Once the game ended, Tim was right. It wasn't just a no-hitter. This was the game that Yankee Pitcher Domino German threw a perfect game, a feat which hasn't happened since 2012. In fact,

It was only the 24th perfect game in Major League Baseball history and only the fourth thrown from a Yankee.

Thirty days later both Pastor Willy and Yankee still carry the emotional highs of that thrilling day. What did Yankee say of this night?

"I had fun because I was with my dad on my first game. It was almost magical because it wasn't just a normal game. There were a bunch of cool moments happening. I was with the Mayor, I caught a foul ball (thrown by German), it was a perfect game, my name is Yankee. It was really a fun night," he answered.

Surely this perfect day when the stars aligned for Yankee and Pastor Willy was remarkable. A turn of events like this can only have one plausible explanation — divine intervention. And for that to happen on this day, God must be a Yankee fan!

Don't pass us by

Your financial future starts here.

No matter where life takes you, we have the right product to help get you there.

Here's how you benefit:

- High-yield savings and certificates
- Low-rate loans
- Free checking
- Convenient online and mobile banking
- Local, friendly service at four Bay Area locations



Walnut Creek Branch
2868 Ygnacio Valley Road

Visit safeamerica.com to discover what a credit union can do for you.



INSURANCE

Your savings insured to \$500,000 per account. By member this institution is not federally insured, or insured by any state government.

Scathing Concord Naval Weapons Station Grand Jury Report

Seventeen years after Concord was designated as the Local Reuse Authority, little has been achieved and the project is once again at a crossroads.

[On June 13, the Civil Grand Jury filed its report #2305, "A Promise Unfulfilled" with the Concord City Council and to the Local Reuse Authority (LRA). The 37-page report was critical of 20 missteps of varying severity, including lack of transparency, mismanagement of funds, communication failures, alleged Brown Act violations, and failure to follow their own procedures that have led to the current failures.]

The Grand Jury recommends that the city considers remedying various prior practices and select a master developer with strong financial resources, and with experience in multi-decade military base conversion projects and working with varied stakeholders and constituents.

During this investigation, the Grand Jury also reviewed loans the City of Concord made to the LRA from Concord's general fund and two other funds. The Grand Jury also states several findings about the use of these loans and the appropriateness of certain payments made from these loans.

This article will only report the missteps identified by the Grand jury and their recommendations. The entire report offer details of the behavior and actions of the entities involved that

are responsible for these findings. It can be viewed at <https://cc-courts.org/civil/docs/grandjury/2022-2023/2305/2305wSignature.pdf>

Here is the summary of findings and the Grand Jury Recommendation for addressing those issues.

Failure of Selection Process

1.a The LRA team allowed master developer applicant Concord First Partners (CFP) to continue to be considered in 2021 master developer selection process even though its Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) submission dated June 18, 2021, did not include many required financial documents.

1.b The LRA allowed applicant CFP to continue to be considered in the 2021 master developer selection process after CFP did not comply with the LRA team follow-up request for financial documents made in July 7, 2021, correspondence.

1.c The Request for Qualification (RFQ) process adopted by the Concord City Council ad hoc committee of Councilmembers Birsan and Aliano did not utilize the LRA staff and consultants to issue a written report with a recommendation for CNWS master developer.

1.d The RFQ process used in 2021 master developer selection process did not use practices such as stated weighted criteria and objective scoring as proposed by the LRA.

1.e The RFQ process used in 2021 master developer selection process did not include a written, scored evaluation of the SOQ submitted for the CNWS project from LRA staff and consultants.

Recommendation - RFQs and RFPs for the CNWS project should be created by designated city staff and outside consultants of the LRA team.

The LRA should specify that there will be no extensions or second requests for information that was clearly requested in the RFQ or RFP.

The LRA team should specify that the stated RFQ or RFP response date and time is

the final cutoff for submission of materials by any applicant.

The Concord City Council should consider adding that incomplete or nonresponsive RFQ or RFP submissions may lead to disqualification of the applicant.

The Concord City Council should provide input on parameters and scope of a RFQ or RFP, prior to the document being written.

The LRA staff and designated consultants should be the sole evaluators of the RFQ or RFP responses for CNWS project.

Scoring criteria for RFQ or RFP evaluations used in the CNWS master development process should be provided on an RFQ or RFP template sent to each potential applicant.

A raw score or percentage weight should be assigned for each evaluation criteria used on CNWS master developer RFQs or RFPs. This methodology should be created and documented before the SOQ due date and council review of the responses.

The LRA director should issue a report with staff recommendations for the master developers considered for the CNWS project. The report should provide objective detail based on selection criteria on why the master developer candidates were chosen or eliminated.

The report on staff recommendations for the master developer should be publicly released immediately following the council meeting in which the Concord City Council selects the master developer.

LRA Contractor Management

2.a LRA staff and consultant reference checks in the 2021 master developer selection process missed certain points involving prior BRAC experience and litigation history.

2.b The Professional Service Agreements (PSAs) between the City of Concord and consultants during the period 2020 to 2022 did not have language to restrict hourly rate increases by consultants during one-year PSA terms.

Recommendation - To control costs and foster more accurate expense forecasting, City of Concord PSAs for LRA

consultants should have specified hourly rates by either position or by individual and the hourly rates should remain fixed across the one-year PSA.

RFQs and RFPs used to select a master developer for the CNWS project, there should be a full analysis and report issued by LRA staff.

Transparency

3.a The RFQ and SOQ process used in the 2021 CNWS master developer selection prevented LRA staff from providing analysis

and recommendations on the three respondents.

Recommendation - For future RFQs and RFPs used to select a master developer for the CNWS project, there should be a full analysis and report issued by LRA staff.

Concord City Loans to Local Reuse Authority

Through fiscal year 2019-2020, the City of Concord loaned the LRA \$14.06 million to pay for CNWS expenses not paid from funds from governmental entities or the initial master developer, Lennar.

These loans came from three Concord revenue sources: General Fund reserves of \$9.91 million and Workers' Compensation Fund of \$3.15 million and Pavilion Fund of \$1.0 million that total \$14.06 million.

California self-insured workers compensation employers are regulated by the California Office of Self-Insurance Plans (OSIP). These funds are needed to pay current and future workers compensation claims. There is a guideline in the Handbook of Cost Plan Procedures for California Counties (Cost Plan) that if funds are borrowed from a self-insured workers compensation fund, they should be paid back with interest within 36 months and if not repaid by then, the loan is considered a bad debt and requires an immediate rebate from the general fund.

4.a Concord city staff provided the Concord City Council in February 2020 a report that provided detail on CNWS-related expenses paid from loans the City of Concord has made to the LRA

4.b The annual Program Reports issued by the LRA do not show the actual fundings source.

Annual forecasts by vendor show projected funding sources but fiscal year actuals are shown as totals with no indication of the funding source.

4.c The City of Concord borrowed \$3.15 million from the city's self-insured workers compensation fund in FY 2017 and FY 2018 to provide funds to the City of Concord's loan to the LRA.

4.d The City of Concord's financial reporting does not show that loans made from Concord's workers compensation fund to the LRA have been paid off.

Recommendation - Concord city staff should provide updates to the February 2020 report to show payments made against Concord's loan to the LRA for CNWS-related expenditures for 2021, 2022 and 2023 and to show details on what funds were deposited and/or refunded from Concord First Partners and future master developers.

The City of Concord should produce an annual report on the city loans to the LRA, showing annual and project to date expenses by vendor in detail as was done in the February 2020 report.

The City of Concord should find funding sources other

than its self-insured workers compensation fund when making loans to the LRA.

The City of Concord should repay its self-insured workers compensation fund for any loans made to the LRA that are outstanding more than 36 months per state guidelines.

Use of CNWS Grounds as a Facility for Autonomous Vehicle Testing

5.a CCTA, AAA, and their partner clients have been using the GoMentum test facility on the CNWS site since 2014.

5.b There is language in a 2017 LRA document that CCTA would pay 80 percent of Guardian Security costs.

5.c In 2020, 2021 and 2022, AAA forwarded to Concord memos listed as Security Guard

Coverage for GoMentum Station that stated maximum monthly payments AAA will pay for GoMentum security services. These memos were signed only by AAA and are not signed by Concord city staff.

Recommendation - The signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Concord and Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCTA) states that CCTA should reimburse Concord for incurred fees/costs associated with providing access and security for the GoMentum facility at CNWS.

Since 2016, Concord has paid 33 percent of Guardian Security fees associated with GoMentum and CCTA and AAA have jointly reimbursed Concord for 67 percent of Guardian Security's costs associated with providing security services at CNWS.

The agreement for gate security between Concord, AAA, and CCTA should be modified to require that AAA and CCTA reimburse the Concord LRA for 100 percent of CNWS gate security costs as stated in the May 2019 MOU.

Notice on updated security reimbursements should be sent to AAA and CCTA within 90 days of this report being received by Concord City Council and the LRA.

The change in the CNWS security service rate agreement reimbursement should be effective within 90 days of AAA and CCTA being notified.

The LRA should seek reimbursement from AAA and CCTA on CNWS gate security payments in excess of 20% in 2020 and 2021.

Jenkins Report Charged Against LRA City Loan

The city loan to the LRA includes \$63,154 for the costs of a 2016 investigation, (Jenkins Report) authorized by the City of Concord to investigate improprieties associated with the master developer selection in 2015.

Concord commissioned attorney Michael Jenkins to conduct an independent investigative in response to a letter received from Catellus asserting that Lennar had

Continues on page 9

Now Accepting
New Patients!

Dr. Shrijana Shakya, DDS

925-825-1130
www.drkentdavis.com

Offering preventative,
restorative and cosmetic
dentistry.

sm:)e

Family Dentistry

5100 Clayton
Road, Ste. A19
Concord, CA



NO FEES UNLESS WE WIN!

LAW OFFICE OF DOUGLAS A. PRUTTON

Personal Injury
Labor & Employment Law

Former insurance company and corporate
lawyer, representing only employees and
injured persons since 1982.

CALL US FOR A FREE
CONSULTATION

925-677-5080



pruttonlaw.com

1985 Bonifacio Street Suite 101 Concord email:doug@pruttonlaw.com



YOUR NEIGHBOR'S SHOES
by Michael Barrington, mbwriter.net

Trauma and Adversity Lead to Life Legacies

I genuinely believe there is a book waiting to be written in each one of us. Such is the case of Wendy Reynolds (she uses her birth name) and her husband Scott Buckley. Wendy's story is one of remarkable tenacity and triumph following a life-altering tragedy.

One minute Wendy was riding in her family's car and the next she awoke in a hospital room fighting for her life at which time she discovered that her entire family: mother, father and sister were dead. At the tender age of 5, Wendy became an orphan.

As the ambulance left the scene and the wreck was hauled onto the flatbed to be taken away, a neighbor passing by recognized the car, stopped, and after asking about the passengers, insisted that there were four people in the family and that there might be another child in the wreck.

The firefighters using the jaws of life discovered that what he said was correct; another child, Wendy, very seriously injured, was found squeezed underneath the driver's seat.

After months in the hospital and multiple surgeries, Wendy's problems were only just beginning. Now an orphan, she became a ward of the court while her loving grandparents fought out a legal custody battle with her uncle and aunt.

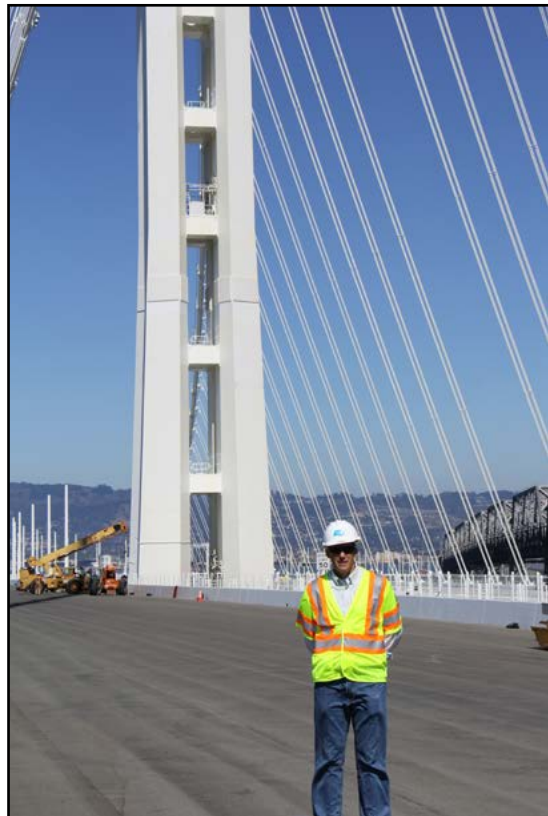
The pickup truck that had crossed over the center divider and smashed head-on into the family's car was driven by a man who was under the influence of alcohol. This was not the first time that he had driven drunk, nor would it be the last as with only a slap on the wrist from the local judicial system, he continued to drive.

Instead of succumbing to the tragedy that killed her family, or the pain of being identified as "that girl" in school, or being asked embarrassingly why her parents were so old (her grandparents), Wendy was driven to not only to succeed in life but to do something about the trauma in her early childhood.

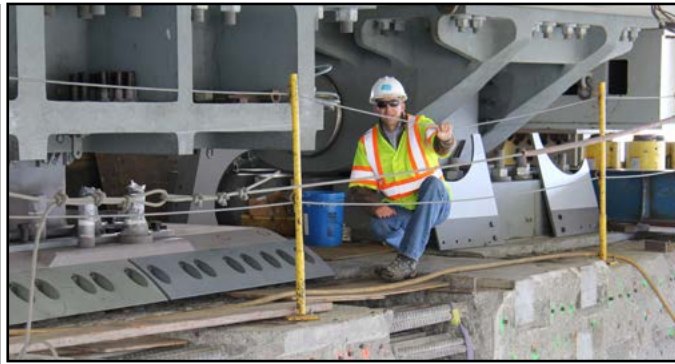
She earned degrees in Political Science and Speech Communication from Illinois University in Urbana-Champaign, and her law degree from the University of West Los Angeles School of Law. As the Deputy District Attorney in Manteca, she fought to combat driving under the influence and help prevent senseless crashes from taking the lives of others, her life took her in two unexpected directions.

Meeting regularly with families who had lost a loved one and the injured victims themselves, she discovered that in the case of a young person older than eighteen, if that 'child' were in an accident, the parents would have no access to any medical information. In fact, HIPPA laws in California would not allow any hospital to divulge anything even if the person had been admitted.

Encouraged by these families and her natural desire to help, Wendy gave up her position as Assistant DA, and together with her husband and two children settled in Walnut Creek where she changed her focus. She opened her own Estate Planning practice, helping families set up legal protection so loved ones are not left guessing or



Scott Buckley, working for CALTRANS on the Bay Bridge, had narrowly avoided getting shot during the Rodney King riots. He also experienced the Northridge Quake and witnessed the loss of life on collapsed portions of the freeways.



Wendy Reynolds who experienced major injuries as the result of a drunk driver, and overcame them, went on to talk at Every Fifteen Minutes events.

dealing with the courts. This included creating Trusts, Wills, Health Care Directives, Financial Power of Attorney, and advising about funding the trust.

Always passionate about the issue of driving under the influence, she became an advocate and presenter at "Every Fifteen Minutes" a two-day program funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and managed by CHP. It focuses on high school juniors and seniors, which challenges them to think about drinking, use of drugs, driving carelessly while using cell phones or other distractions, personal safety, the responsibility of making mature decisions and the impact those decisions have family, friends, and community. She is the proud recipient of the Life Saving Award (Public Service) from the National Traffic Safety Association and the US Department of Transportation.

Further, Wendy began accepting speaking engagements across the country addressing schools, parent groups and community organizations.

It takes extraordinary strength of character to surmount adversity and again Wendy dealt with it head on when in 2021 she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Even though she knew it was just a question of time when it would happen, it still came as a shock.

She is the fourth-generation cancer victim on her mother's side. Her relatives had known for years that each had the same gene, it simply had not manifested itself. Six out of seven of her mother's cousins also have it. Now in full recovery, Wendy continues her advocacy work and has even written a screen play about her life.

Throughout her married life Wendy has been supported by her husband, whose life experience is another book waiting to be written.

Scott Buckley and his Bay Bridge Legacy

From Connecticut, Scott became a brilliant student and three-time prize winner at Tufts University, earning his degree in engineering. Later he studied in Sacramento at the CALTRANS Bridge Design Academy. While working as a civil engineer in Los Angeles for CALTRANS on the 105 Freeway, he and his team were inadvertently caught up in the Rodney King riots; a gun was fired, and he narrowly missed being shot. During

team for the new Bay Bridge.

Since the center section deck and tower were made of steel by a company in Shanghai, Scott flew out to monitor its development.

While there he took a side trip on his own to Beijing hoping to see the Forbidden City and the China Wall. Instead, when looking for a restaurant, he ended up being mugged and drugged. His family did not hear from him for three days. He was fortunate to find his way back to his hotel and the airport.

As he talks about the Bay Bridge, I can see in his face and hear the satisfaction of a job well done in his voice, in spite of both construction and design issues. "They beset almost every major development anywhere," he says, "and as engineers we just see them as problems to be solved."

Having spent eleven years on site, seeing it emerge from design and ground breaking in 2002 to opening in 2013, Scott beams with pride knowing not only that his work will stand the test of time but has become another Bay Area attraction.

As we were about to conclude the interview he added, "And when you drive in Concord over the bridge across Walnut Creek at Willow Pass and Diamond, you'll know it is really safe. I was responsible for the retrofitting."

Just two wonderful people in Walnut Creek, each with a story to tell: and they are your neighbors.

the course of one year, he endured the Northridge earthquake and on three separate occasions, he witnessed the discovery of a dead body buried in freshly prepared drainage and culvert works; one was naked save for a pair of shoes.

In the Bay Area he worked on the HWY 280/101 interchange in San Francisco, the largest in the city, but his long-term contribution was as leader of the design



CA Lic #FD1006

OUIMET BROS.  **CONCORD FUNERAL CHAPEL**

Burial | Cremation | Catering

Providing funeral home, burial, and cremation services for Concord for over 60 years. Our friendly and professional staff is at your service - 24/7.

Call Us: 925-682-4242

Keith Collins - Managing Partner Founders John & Sharon Ouimet Don & Bea Ouimet	4125 Clayton Road Concord 925-682-4242 fax 925-682-4281
--	--

ouimetbrothers.com



Don't Fall for the Next Shocking Headlines About Home Prices

If you are thinking of buying or selling a home, one of the biggest questions you have right now is probably, "What's happening with home prices?"

It's no surprise you don't have the clarity you need on that topic. Part of the issue is how headlines are talking about prices. They report the news with a negative slant by comparing current stats to the last few years. But comparing this year to the "unicorn" years (when home prices reached record highs that were unsustainable) is an inappropriate analysis.

As prices begin to normalize, the headlines suggest that this is bad, thereby causing people to fear what's next, unaware that the worst home price declines are already behind us. It has not been reported that we are now starting to see the return to more normal home price appreciation.

The Seasonality of Real Estate

To help make home price trends easier to understand, focus on what is typical for the market and omit the last few years, — they were anomalies.

In the housing market, there are predictable ebbs and flows that happen each year. Spring is the peak home buying season when the market is most active. That activity is typically still strong in the summer but begins to wane as the cooler months approach. Home prices follow along with seasonality because prices appreciate most when something is in high demand.

Before the recent abnormal years, there was a reliable long-term home price trend. As the data from the last 48 years shows, at the beginning of the year, home prices grow, but not as much as they do entering

the spring and summer markets.

The market is less active in January and February since fewer people move in the cooler months. As the market transitions into the peak home buying season in the spring, activity ramps up, and home prices rise more in response. Then, as fall and winter approach, activity eases again. Price growth slows, but it still typically appreciates.

Headline Terminology Misleads, Provokes Fear

In the coming months, the housing market will move further into a more predictable seasonal rhythm. However, as in the past, headlines will mistake these typical home price trends as an alarming market event and at the very least are misleading.

They will use terminology to provoke a reaction from its audience such as:

"Appreciation" for when prices increase.

"Deceleration of appreciation" when prices continue to appreciate, but at a slower or more moderate pace.

"Depreciation" when prices decrease.

They are going to paint the slowing rate of home price growth (deceleration of appreciation) that is typical of market seasonality in the fall and winter and think prices are falling (depreciation).

Do not let those headlines confuse you or spark fear. Instead, remember it is normal to see a deceleration of appreciation, slowing home price growth, as the seasons change.

If you have questions about home prices in our local area, let's connect.

ENTERTAIN FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN A KITCHEN YOU LOVE



Transform Your Home:

- Complete design service - concept through construction drawings
- Personalized material and product selection
- Top quality craftsmanship
- Firm start and finish dates
- 5-Year Written Guarantee



CREATE YOUR DREAM BATHROOM



Call **877.734.6404** or visit **CareyBros.com** to schedule your virtual or in-home design consultation

CAREY BROS. REMODELING

CA State License #442880

Center for Elders' Independence Begins Construction on Tri-Valley PACE Center

Center for Elders' Independence, a provider of PACE healthcare and services for older adults in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, has begun construction for a new PACE Tri-Valley location in Livermore with a ground-breaking ceremony on June 30. This new center will cater to the growing number of older residents in the Tri-Valley area and provide coordinated medical and social services close to their homes.



PACE (Program for All-inclusive Care for the Elderly) is a national model of care designed for individuals over 55 years with pre-existing conditions. PACE focuses on preventive treatment, helping older adults to stay in their homes and out of hospitals and nursing homes.

The PACE Tri-Valley will serve the communities of Dublin, Pleasanton, San Ramon, and Livermore Valley. It will feature a recreational and social center, an occupational and physical rehab gym with exercise equipment, a primary care health clinic, a serving kitchen, a patio, and administrative offices.

Since May 1, 2021, CEI has served Contra Costa at its Concord location in the Civic Executive Park, 1465 Civic Court.

According to Maria Zamora, CEO, the Tri-Valley area has a large need for senior healthcare services and social connections. "By opening this new center, older community members won't have to travel over an hour to see

their doctor. They can find treatment from doctors who look like them and speak like them in a community they are familiar with," she said.

Alameda County's population of older adults is growing rapidly according to the California Department of Aging. Between 2010 and 2060, the population of those over 60 is expected to grow by 195%, while the over-80 population will grow by 534%.

PACE Tri-Valley is projected to open in the first months of 2024 at 2441 Constitution Drive in Livermore.

CEI has served East Bay seniors and their families for over 40 years. Currently over 1,100 senior participants are in CEI PACE. CEI's doctors, rehab therapists, nurses, social workers, drivers and home care aides specialize in serving only elders and are committed to advocating for healthcare equity. For more information about Center for Elders' Independence, visit elders.org or call (844) 319-1150.

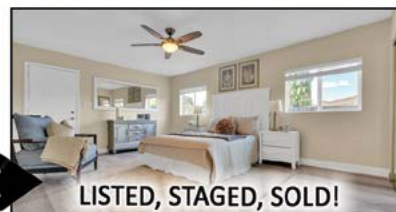


DRESSING UP HOMES WITH DESIGN AND PURPOSE

Dressed To Sell LLC has its own fleet of moving trucks, a fully stocked furniture, art and accessory warehouse, allowing a quick response and lead times. Our passion is turning spaces into showplaces!



LISTED, STAGED, SOLD!



LISTED, STAGED, SOLD!

Collaboration gets results for our clients!

No one understands my client needs, the theory of staging, demographics, and style like **Dressed To Sell**.



Terrylynn Fisher

REALTOR® | CRS, SRES, CSP Elite Agent
925.876.0966 | DRE# 00615420
Info@BuyStageSell.com | BuyStageSell.com



Consult with me Early, so we can Plan, Budget, and Strategize!

I have not and will not verify or investigate information provided or supplied by third parties.



Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny

The final chapter for iconic character Indiana Jones may surprise you. Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford) is eighty years old and if you think this means the latest installment will be slow-paced, hang on to your fedora!

Indy fans can expect the full gamut of action, adventure and an intriguing storyline that was missing from the previous film.

After an edge-of-your-seat opening scene that boasts an impressively younger CGI Indy, we are transported to the 1970s to find a retiring Professor Jones. With his swashbuckling days behind him, he leads a lonely life. He is estranged from his wife and when his goddaughter Helena (Phoebe Waller-Bridge) shows up, who he has not seen since she was a child, Jones is not up for adventure.

Lucky for us, adventure finds him, and he is thrust into a race to find the Dial of Destiny before the evil Dr. Voller (Mads Mikkelsen).

Phoebe Waller-Bridge, as Helena, is a formidable matchup for the aging thrill-seeker. Her character not only has questionable morals when it comes to the handling of rare artifacts, she also brings with her a slew of enemies and bad guys that Indiana Jones will need to deal with if he hopes to uncover the dial before Dr. Voller and his band of henchmen.

Helena's sidekick Teddy (Ethan

Isidore) holds his own against powerhouse characters/actors and is a welcome addition to the Indiana Jones family of worldly youngsters who come along for the ride.

The movie offers non-stop action with no lulls in its running time of two hours and 34 minutes. While the story drifts a bit off-center toward the end, the film delivers everything a moviegoer is seeking in a summer blockbuster.

So far, this film is not doing well at the box office. These days, although beloved by fans, Indiana Jones has a lot of competition with younger, flashier action adventurers. The character may simply no longer resonate with current audiences who do not want to make room for a swashbuckling archaeologist with a love of history.

While it is not necessary for Indiana Jones to have this final send off, fans should find this last chapter satisfying. This is a fitting farewell to a beloved movie hero.

Rated PG-13, In Theaters



A Thousand and One

In 1994, Inez (Teyana Taylor) is released from Rikers Island and returns to New York City. Although she does not have a job or a place to live, she decides to kidnap her six-year-old son Terry (Aaron Kingsley) from his current foster home placement.



adulthood, he is faced with serious life events and choices that will forever change his relationship with Inez.

This film is upheld by the strong performances of its cast. Teyana Taylor plays the young mother unapologetically. She may not be the typical mother you're used to seeing on screen, but that is what makes Taylor's portrayal of Inez all the more captivating. Both actors who play Terry at six and at seventeen give subtle but strong portrayals of the soft-spoken child and of the teenager.

Another important character in the film is New York City itself. The audience witnesses the changes and gentrification of the city from the 1990s to the early 2000s. As the movie draws to a close, we know it is becoming more and more difficult for families like Inez's to make it in the city, even with gainful employment.

"A Thousand and One" will remind you of someone you know, or of someone you have never met. At its core, this is a film about people whose voices should be heard and a story bursting at the seams to be told.

Rated R, Now streaming on Peacock

Once Inez secures an affordable apartment and a cleaning job, her main focus is Terry. She needs to purchase illegal paperwork and change his name to enroll him in school. They hide in plain sight as no one ever comes looking for Terry.

As Terry grows up, we see the changing landscape of New York City punctuated by the voices of mayoral speeches through the years. We watch as life becomes more difficult for families like Inez's, yet as she continues to work hard, Terry (now played by Josiah Cross) excels in school. Inez feels all her hard work has paid off when Terry is offered a spot in a higher academic high school. Terry, however, is not so happy.

Always a quiet and ponderous child, Terry struggles to fit in and the added pressure of keeping his mother's secret makes him long to be a regular kid. Being exceptional will make him stand out when all he wants to do is blend in.

Once Terry is on the precipice of



Where the Forest Meets the Stars

by Glendy Vanderah

"Where the Forest Meets the Stars" (Lake Union Publishing, 2019, paperback, 332 pages, \$8.29) by Glendy Vanderah is a novel about two emotionally damaged adults and one little girl (Ursa) who believes she is an alien. Ursa appears in Joanna (Jo) Teale's life one evening after Jo completed a dawn-to-dusk day of field research.

Her studies involve monitoring bird nests in a rural area of Illinois, so Jo assumes the little girl lives nearby. But Ursa tells Jo she is from the Pinwheel Galaxy, and she can only go home after she witnesses five miracles. The waif's presence in Jo's research cabin's yard as a shoeless child covered in bruises with a stray dog in tow makes Jo suspect the girl might come from an abusive home.

Jo feels she has no choice but to feed the girl and learn more about her. Jo's search of missing children's websites produces no clues as to the child's identity. When Jo contacts the local sheriff, the little girl disappears into the woods.

Jo is at a loss about what to do next, and reluctantly takes the girl in. She asks about Ursa around the rural community, but no one knows of a missing child. Her handsome, yet reclusive neighbor, Ga-

briel Nash, has not seen the child before, but the charming little girl soon wiggles her way into his heart.

Both Jo and Gabe are fighting personal demons. Jo is a cancer survivor reeling from the death of her mother. Her battle with the disease has left her body devoid of both her breasts. Nash fights depression and the wrath of a vengeful sister.

Soon, Nash is buying clothing for the girl and allowing her to play with the kittens on his farm. Drawn together by Ursa, these two adults form a three-way bond with the child that will forever change their future.

Vanderah's excellent characterization of an extremely bright, young child often had me roped into the fantasy vibe of this novel and believing this little girl was indeed an alien who scatters quarks around to make miracles happen. This 'feel good' novel about love, family, and overcoming adversity is a perfect summer read.

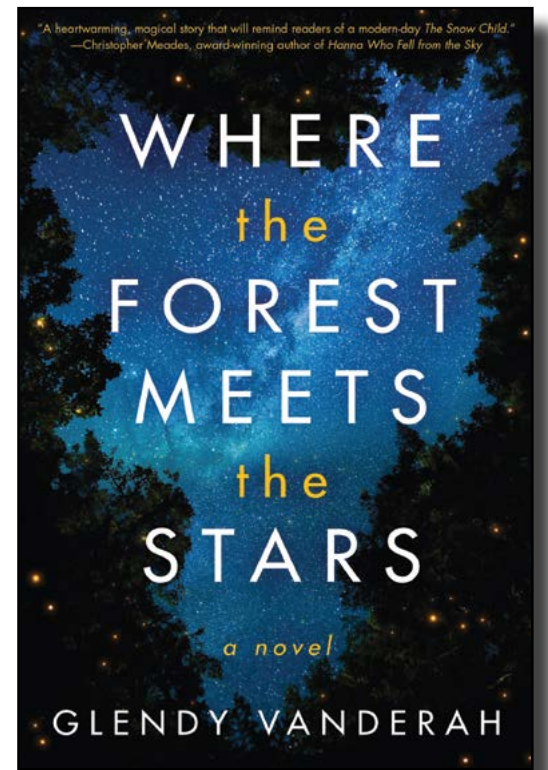
Fans of "Snow Child" by Eowyn Ivy, "West with Giraffes" by Lynda Rutledge, and "The Music of Bees" by Eileen Garvin will appreciate this heart-felt

novel with a splash of nature. I highly recommend this novel.

"Where the Forest Meets the Stars" was an Amazon Charts, "Wall Street Journal," and "Washington Post" bestseller, and a Goodreads Choice Award finalist. The book has been translated into multiple languages, including Spanish, German, Italian, Swedish, and Portuguese.

Glendy Vanderah studied writing, poetry, and literature. She received a master's degree in Ecology, Ethology and Evolution from the University of Illinois. Vanderah served as an assistant editor for a scientific journal and worked as an endangered bird specialist. When not immersing herself in nature in rural Florida and raising three children, she is busy writing.

"Where the Forest Meets the Stars" was her debut novel. Her second novel, "The Light Through the Leaves," was published in 2021, and her latest novel, "The Oceanography of the Moon," was released in March 2022.



<http://glendyvanderah.com>

the bar method

2023 Neighborhood FAVE nextdoor

2023 BEST OF THE EAST BAY

Scan Here To Redeem

Summer Is Here! Get 30 Days of Unlimited Classes for \$99!

5416 Ygnacio Valley Rd. #30 Concord, CA 94521
925-338-1366 claytonvalley@barmethod.com

Have You Read the Authors Who Also Write for **The Diablo Gazette**

Michael Barrington 'Your Neighbor's Shoes' Column

William Gensburger Editorials

Jill Hedgecock 'BookEnds' Column

Available on Amazon Books & Kindle

calendar of events

CLAYTON

CONCERTS/MUSIC



CLAYTON CONCERTS IN THE GROVE

Every other Saturday, 6PM-8:30PM
Aug 5, 2023, THE HOUSE ROCKERS Big band with a 5-piece horn section ready to dance you up!

Aug 19, 2023, FLEETWOOD MASK Fleetwood Mask tribute band

Sep 2, 2023, ALAMEDA ALLSTARS Allman Brothers tribute band

Sep 16, 2023, EAST BAY MUDD 9 piece, heavy horn, best of Tower of Power, Earth, Wind & Fire

Schedule: claytonca.gov/our-city/annual-events/concerts-in-the-grove/

CLUBS

Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club.

<https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/start-our-approach/club-locator/details?id=148928>

Rotary Club of Concord.

<http://www.concordcarotary.org>

Cars 2nd Chance, vehicle / car donation programs turning vehicle donations into cash for charities administered by the Clayton Valley Concord Sunrise Rotary Charitable Fund. <https://cars2ndchance.com>

EVENTS

September 30 and October 1, CLAYTON "MUNICH STYLE" OKTOBERFEST, Sat 11-8, Sun 11-6, Downtown Park, Clayton. Biergarten, Music, Carnival. Northern California's premier Oktoberfest. Clayton Business & Community Association invites you to experience Oktoberfest "Munich Style" in picturesque downtown Clayton

LIBRARY

August 2, Clayton Knit & Crochet, 10:00 AM

– 1:00 PM Come knit, crochet, and make friends with this friendly group at the Clayton Library. This program meets on the first Wednesday of each month. Staff will be present the first hour to answer questions.

August 3, 17, Tai Chi, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM. Come on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month to enjoy a gentle, energizing class with Tai Chi movements. Classes are taught by Carolyn Lee in the style of Professor Cheng Man-Ch'ing.

August 16, Lindsay Wildlife Experience presents Native Wildlife, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM. Meet animals that make up the diverse habitats of the Golden State, and find out how to support them! Learn about California's amazing wildlife directly from live animal ambassadors, natural history specimens, and expert staff.

August 26, Oaktown Jazz

Workshops, 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM. Oaktown Jazz Workshops' Performance Ensemble features young musicians ages 12-18 who perform a variety of exciting and challenging jazz classics.

Clayton Library, 6125 Clayton Rd. For more information please call 925-673-0659. <https://ccclib.org>

CONCORD

ARTS

aRt Cottage. 2238 Mt. Diablo Street Concord. (925) 956-3342 www.artcottage.info

CLUBS

Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club.

<https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/start-our-approach/club-locator/details?id=148928>

Rotary Club of Concord.

<http://www.concordcarotary.org>

CONCERTS/MUSIC

Concord Music & Market Series Todos Santos Plaza on Thursdays 6:30 PM. Farmers' Market and free music concerts in the Park with a great line-up of wonderful Bay Area musicians playing Salsa, jazz, zydeco, blues, and more.

Todos Santos Plaza, 2175 Willow Pass Rd. Concord

August 3, Jean Fineberg & JAZZphoria

August 10, Latin Touch Band

August 24, Native Elements, Reggae and salute to Bob Marley

August 31, Zeparella, All-female Zeppelin powerhouse

September 7, Pop Rocks, dance party band.

OTHER MUSIC EVENTS

August 2 - 4, CONCORD JAZZ AROUND TOWN. This year, Concord will continue its 50+ year Jazz Legacy with three days of special LIVE jazz performances, and events, at different locations around town

August 2-Jinx Jones Jazz at the Veranda 6:30 PM - 8PM 2001-2003 Diamond Blvd. Concord

August 3-Jean Fineberg & JAZZphoria, Music & Market, Todos Santos Plaza, 6:30PM - 8PM 2175 Willow Pass Rd. Concord

August 4-Charged Particles-Jazz Night at CHS Concord Historical Society 6PM - 8PM. 1928 Clayton Rd, Concord

FARMERS MARKETS

Pacific Coast Farmers Market

<https://www.pcfma.org>
 Todos Santos Plaza.
 Tuesdays, 10AM- 2PM Year Round
 Thursdays 4PM - 8PM June 1-Sept 28

LIBRARY

August 1 thru September 2, 1000 Origami Cranes, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Help us to make 1,000 origami paper cranes! We hope to have 1,000 cranes displayed around the library first to celebrate Peace Day (September 21st)

August 3, Yoga and Stories for Kids, 10:30 AM – 11:00 AM. Join us for a short mindfulness story followed for a yoga session with Sherry Ellingson, yoga instructor. Wear comfortable clothing. Feel free to bring a towel or yoga mat, but yoga mats will be

YOUR PARTNER IN BUSINESS

GREATER



CONCORD

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

concordchamber.com | (925) 685-1181
kcabral@concordchamber.com

provided.

August 8, Monthly Movie Night: Champions (2023) 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM, starring Woody Harrelson and rated PG-13

August 15, Concord Library Pen & Ink Society, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM. The third Tuesday of each month from 4-6 p.m. Collaborate and learn more about writing with creative writing instructor Rayshell Clapper.

August 17, The ABCs of Medicare with Susan Lucas, 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM. Are you new to Medicare or retiring soon? No matter your situation, Susan Lucas, a Medicare Benefits Educator, can help get answers to your Medicare questions.

August 29, Open Mic Poetry Lounge, 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM. Join us for an afternoon of poetry reading with an open mic. This is your opportunity to share your poetic creations.

Concord Library, 2900 Salvio Street Concord. For full list <https://ccclib.org>

MARTINEZ

EVENTS

August 1-31, Annual August BIG Art. Come on in and see what we have to offer. Main Street Arts, 613 Main Street, Martinez

August 5, 1ST ANNUAL MEDITERRANEAN FOOD & MUSIC FESTIVAL.



12PM - 9PM. Two days of fun! Come enjoy food, drinks, desserts, local vendors, hookah, kids' activities, live entertainment, and more FREE! Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church, 2370 Harbor View Dr, Martinez

August 8, MARTINEZ NATIONAL NIGHT OUT, 6-9 PM Join your neighbors to meet some of our finest local law enforcement and first responders at National Night Out, Martinez Waterfront Park, 245 N Court St, Martinez

August 13 thru November 11,

MARTINEZ OPEN AIR MARKET, 9 AM - 1 PM. Join us on the 2nd Sunday of each month through November for the Downtown Open Air Market featuring Vintage, Collectibles, Antiques, Arts & Crafts, and more. You will find us on the 800 block of Main St. during the Farmers' Market.

August 20, ART IN THE PARK - MARTINEZ, 10AM - 5PM The Martinez Art Association is excited to welcome back artists and art lovers to this beloved community event. Over 60 artists are expected at this free festival. Come and enjoy fine arts and crafts created by local artists, along with live music, food trucks, and beverages including wine and beer. The live music line-up will be announced soon. Susana Park, Susana St & Estudillo St, Martinez



September 16, MARTINI SHAKE OFF IN MARTINEZ, 6:30 - 10 PM. An enchanting evening under the stars surrounding the cool sparkling waters of the lovely fountain at Ignacio Plaza. Enjoy signature martinis, a delicious buffet, and a delightful array of treasures offered at our silent auction. Plaza Ignacio Park, 525 Henrietta St, Martinez.

FARMERS MARKETS

Pacific Coast Farmers Market

<https://www.pcfma.org>
 Sundays, 9AM-1PM, Year Round. 700 Main St. Martinez.

LIBRARY

August 5, Martinez Library Storytime, 10:00 AM – 10:30 AM, Build early literacy skills with stories, songs, finger plays and fun. Stay after for playtime or a simple craft.

August 12, Friends of the Martinez Library: Quarterly Book Sale, 10:30 AM – 4:00 PM. Bag of Books Sale. Grab your bags and come down to the Martinez Library between 10:30 and 4:00. Fill a bag for just \$5.00.

August 19, Needle Arts Meetup, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM. Bring your crochet, knitting, embroidery, or other needle art project. Ask for tips from experienced volunteers

PLEASANT HILL

CLUBS

Rotary Club of Pleasant Hill, meets Thursdays 12:15 PM. Pleasant Hill Community Center, 320 Civic Drive. Pleasant Hill. <https://pleasanthillrotary.org/>

CONCERTS/MUSIC

Sunset by the Lake every other Sunday, 6PM at City Hall, 100 Gregory Lane. August 6 thru September 3

arts /concerts/music /clubs /events farmers markets /theatre & more

August 6 – Groove Doctors pack any party

August 20 – Native Elements popular reggae band

Sept 3 – Big Jangle Tom Petty tribute show closes out the series, again.

August 17 and September 21, Summer Concert Series is back! Join us on the third Thursday of the month below for FREE concerts from 7 PM-9P M

August 17 ANDRE THIERRY (Accordian Soul)

Plaza in front of Jacks, 60 Crescent Dr, Pleasant Hill.

OTHER MUSIC EVENTS

August 14. Come sing with the Diablo Women's Chorale!

Our Fall season starts at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 3051 Putnam Blvd., Pleasant Hill. Auditions, by appointment, between 6 and 9 P.M. are open to all female voice parts. Contact Nancy Hickman, Membership Chair, at (925) 899-5050 or hickmandg@gmail.com. www.diablowomenschorale.org/join-us.

LIBRARY

August 5, Lego Builders Club, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM, Build your own unique Lego creations! With Duplo for small hands to Technic for advanced creators. No registration required.

August 8, Kalaikoil Dance & Arts of India, 6:30 PM – 7:15 PM. Kalaikoil dancers present an evening of classical dance from South India and join in the fun on stage. No registration required.

August 24, The Traveling Reptile Show (for teens!), 2:45 PM – 3:30 PM. The East Bay Vivarium will be visiting the library afterschool for a fun and interactive animal talk with frogs, lizards, snakes and more! Registration is not required.

Pleasant Hill Library, 12 Monticello Avenue. For more information please call 925-673-0659. <https://ccclib.org>

WALNUT CREEK

ARTS

Thru September 17, Sight Unseen: International Photography by Blind Artists. 12 – 2 pm. Bedford Gallery. The featured artists, whether completely or legally blind, all perceive an image of the physical world in varying degrees. Each artist brings their inner visions into the seeing world, revealing a visually rich and emotionally complex blend of physical and conceptual artworks.

Leshar Center for the Arts 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, <https://www.lesherartscenter.org>

ARTS AROUND AUGUST EVENTS

August 1, National Night Out

August 2, FIRST Wednesday Street Fest

August 3,10,17,24, Summer Concert Broadway Plaza

August 6, Opera in the Park

August 9,16,23,30 Moveable Feast

August 11,12, Mountain Shadow Film Society

August 18,20 Festival Opera, Carmen (free family day on 20th)

August 19, Family Mural Walk and Maker's Market Artisan Fair

Visit WalnutCreekDowntown.com for more information

CONCERTS/MUSIC

August 3 thru 24, SUMMER CONCERT SERIES '2023, 7:00 - 8:30 PM. Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek. Bringing your own chairs is encouraged.

August 1 TAINTED LOVE over the top 1980's pop.

August 10 DOG N BUTTERFLY Tribute to Heart

August 17 FLEETWOOD MASK Fleetwood Mac tribute

August 24 MUSTACHE HARBOR hardcore soft rock

FARMERS MARKETS

Contra Costa Certified Farmers Market

<http://www.cccfm.org>

Sundays 9AM-1PM, Year Round.

Locust Street between Cole and Lacassie St <http://www.cccfm.org/walnut-creek-market/>

Kaiser Permanente 1425 South Main St.

Diablo Valley Farmers Market

North Wiget Ln. and Mitchell Dr. Shadelands, Walnut Creek, Saturdays 9AM-1PM Year Round 1799 Locust St. <http://www.cafarmersmkt.com/diablo-valley-farmers-market>

Rossmoor Farmers Market

Opens May 19. Rossmoor residents and their families only. Fridays 9AM-1PM, Golden Rain Rd. <http://www.cafarmersmkt.com/rossmoor-farmers-market>

LIBRARY

August 1, Magician Perry Yan, 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM, Experience the astonishing magic and storytelling of magician Perry Yan! The show will be fun for everyone, so bring the whole family!

August 8, Loving Heart Meditation, 4 PM – 5 PM, Join certified hypnotherapist Michael Disend for a monthly meditation group that will include relaxation, meditation, hypnosis, and hypno-meditation.

Walnut Creek Library, 1644 N Broadway. For more information please call 925-673-0659. <https://ccclib.org>

LESHER THEATRE

August 8-12, Matilda the Musical,



National Farmers' Market Week Recognizes Behind-the-Scenes

by Deb Morris, PACIFIC COAST FARMERS' MARKET ASSOCIATION

National Farmers' Market Week, August 6-12, highlights the vital role that farmers' markets play in our nation's food system. Each year a different theme is highlighted, featuring one of the many aspects of farmers' markets.

For more than fifty years, farmers markets have influenced the way Americans eat, shop, and connect to their food, their farmers, and one another.

Greg Pursley, Regional Manager, states, "Most customers who go to their local farmers' market don't think about the fact that someone had to organize and fill this event and make it happen week after week. There are many others, besides the market manager, who make it happen – marketing, administration, and others. There are state and city regulations we have to follow as well."



A Summer Favorite, Sweet Corn

One of summer's favorite veggies (actually a grain), sweet corn, is now available through early August. Sweet yellow, white, and bicolor corn is the star of summer picnics and barbecues. There is nothing better than sitting down to a big crisp ear of sweet summer corn on the cob. Grilled or boiled, corn on the cob is a real treat that is hard to top for flavor, freshness, and just plain deliciousness.

Corn has a long and varied history, and it would not exist if it were not for the humans who developed it. The corn we know does not grow in the wild. It was developed from a grass called teosinte. Scientists believe that corn was developed by the native peoples living in central Mexico over 7,000 years ago.

Also known as maize, the natives throughout North and South America, eventually depended on maize for most of their diet. Corn spread throughout the Americas and was discovered by explorers from Europe who had never seen corn. There are numerous varieties of cultivated corn now.

The Bay Area is known for sweet

Brentwood corn, some of the best and sweetest corn available. This year corn arrived early because of the drought and the warm weather, but the flavor is still amazing. Grill, roast, boil – whatever you do, get your hands on some Brentwood corn from G&S Farms. And give this tasty recipe a try.

Air Fryer (or Oven) Corn Ribs

2 ears fresh corn on the cob
1 tbsp ghee butter, room temp
1 tbsp olive oil

1/2 tsp coarse sea salt
1/2 tsp smoked or sweet paprika
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp each parsley and oregano, plus more for garnish
Garnish with mayonnaise

Directions:

Prepare the corn by removing the husk and cutting off the ends. Microwave the whole corn on the cob on high for two minutes. Let cool to the touch.

This part is difficult. Slice the whole corn into ribs with a sharp chef's knife and a steady cutting board by placing the corn vertically (stand it up) and carefully and slowly slice it in half, then slice those halves into quarters. (Tip: To soften the cob, try boiling the corn for 10 minutes first.)

Combine seasonings from butter to parsley. Brush the ribs with the seasonings on all sides.

Air fryer: — Place the ribs in a single layer with some space in-between. Air fry at 400°F (204°C) for 12 minutes total (flip after 6 minutes).

Oven — Place the ribs on a lined baking sheet. Bake at 425°F for 12-15 minutes or until they are lightly charred and a little crispy.

To serve, brush the corn ribs with a thin layer of mayo and sprinkle with more parsley on top. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Presented by Poison Apple Productions. An extraordinary girl takes a daring stand to change her story.

August 8-20, Carmen by Georges Bizet, Presented by Festival Opera. Carmen has one creed: to live and love on her own terms. She never thought it would come to this...

August 20, Robin Hood, 11:30 AM and 1 PM. Presented by Fantasy Forum Actors Ensemble. With King Richard gone, Prince John unjustly taxes the people. Join Robin Hood's band of merry men as they try to outwit Prince John and the Sheriff.

August 26, 27, Il Ducato (The New Mikado), Presented by Lamplighters Music Theatre. Lamplighters' re-imagined version of Gilbert and Sullivan's THE MIKADO, the most internationally popular of all of the canon. This production contains all their famous dialog and music.

September 8, 8PM, 10, 2PM The Three Feathers, a family friendly chamber opera. Based on a fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm, the opera follows Princess Dora, not as a damsel in distress, but as a heroine. She summons her courage and compassion to face a series of mysterious and comic adventures that change her life to saves her father's kingdom from the plots of her selfish sisters and earns her right to the

crown.

Leshar Center for the Arts 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, <https://www.lesherartscenter.org> Tickets: (925)943-7469 Wed-Sun Noon to 6:00 p.m.

Other Cities

EVENTS

August 3 to September 7, PITTSBURG SUMMER CAR SHOWS, 6:00 - 8:00pm. The OLD TOWN CAR SHOWS are back every-other Thursday from 6-8 PM through Sept 7th. Live music, restaurants nearby, and a fun family event. Railroad Ave., between 3rd St., and 6th. Old Town Pittsburg, Pittsburg

Thru September 1, PITTSBURG FIRST FRIDAY'S, 5:30 PM - 9:00 PM. Live music, great wine, craft beer, local art, and Marina views. 51 Marina Blvd, Pittsburg

August 3, SIR Branch 19 PITTSBURG will hold its Monthly Luncheon on 11 AM with a social hour and lunch served at noon. It will be at the Pittsburg Elks' Lodge, 200 Marina Blvd., Pittsburg. www.sirinc2.org/branch19 or call: 925 338-1996

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

JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

Article and photos by Jill Hedgecock

Santa Cruz: Beaches, Boardwalk, and Beyond, Still a Popular Destination

Ah, Santa Cruz, my husband and I have made numerous day trips to this popular coastal destination. The beaches, Boardwalk and the wharf are always fun, but Santa Cruz has many other hidden gems.

We have watched surfers ride the waves at Steamer Lane, taken a self-guided historic home walking tour, observed wildlife, biked to Natural Bridges State Beach, visited a natural history museum and enjoyed unique dining options.

Beaches. While the Main Beach is conveniently located next to the Boardwalk. We opted to ride eBikes to Natural Bridges State Beach during our last visit. The black-and-white eBikes can be rented along West Cliff Drive, east of the Surfer Museum, making it a relatively flat bike journey to Natural Bridges where a second eBike station is conveniently located.

The natural rock bridge is a visual delight, and this beach tends to be quieter without the constant shrieks of amusement park visitors. At low tide, there are tide pools to explore. Because we were pet-sitting and had our dog Annie, our most visited beach this time was the off-lead dog beach at Mitchell's Cove near West Cliff Drive and Almar Avenue. This is a great place to people-and dogwatch.

Boardwalk. The iconic Santa Cruz Boardwalk has not changed much since I visited as a kid. It is home to two National Historic Landmarks, the 1924 Giant Dipper and the 1911 Looff Carousel. The Giant Dipper has to be one of my all-time favorite roller coasters. Since it opened, over 60 million people have taken this thrill ride. The one-minute and 52-second thrill goes by too quickly. The ride costs 8 points (\$8) and is worth every penny.

The carousel is the park's oldest ride and costs 6 points (\$6), and riders have their pick of 73 horses or two Roman chariots. We chose the horses on the outer perimeter so we could grab rings from a dispenser and try to chuck them into a



The Santa Cruz Boardwalk, home of the 1924 Dipper rollercoaster and more.

clown's gaping mouth. My husband was rewarded with bells and flashing lights when his ring hit its mark, but being a lefty, I was at a disadvantage, and failed to "feed the clown."

Those not interested in the rides or trying their luck at the many carnival games, can head indoors to Neptune's Kingdom for a round of miniature golf, go upstairs to learn about the Boardwalk's history, or play a round of pool.

Surfing (or Not Surfing) Activities. I was surprised to learn that the sport of surfing was introduced to the Americas in Santa Cruz in 1885 by three Hawaiian princes. (I learned this tidbit of history on a plaque outside the Santa Cruz Surfing Museum.) The free-of-charge museum is housed in a lighthouse and opened in 1986 as the first surfing museum in the world.

The lighthouse was built in 1967 as a memorial to Mark Abott, who died while surfing at the nearby Pleasure Point. Eric and I enjoyed watching the surfers at Steamer Lane from a cliff vantage point along West Cliff Drive.

Wildlife. As an animal lover and avid bird watcher, Santa Cruz proved a mecca for aquatic animal life. Along the wharf, the sea lions can be heard and close-up views are possible, particularly at the far end. From various beaches, I also observed Southern sea otters, several gull species, California brown pelican, Brandt's cormorants, pigeon guillemots, and surf scoters. Starting in mid-October through mid-February (and peaking in November), the annual winter monarch



The off-lead dog beach at Mitchell's Cove near West Cliff Drive is a great meetup spot



The Crepe Place displays an artistic array of colored bottles



Wildlife Kayak Tours offer great views of the ocean mammals.



The 1892 Triplett house built by descendants of Pioneer J.M. Perez

butterfly migration will begin.

I was envious watching a wildlife kayak tour exploring the kelp forests and getting close to the wildlife. This is an activity I would like to do in the future. According to the kayakconnection.com website, no kayaking experience is necessary. The cost is \$125.

Museums. The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History was established in 1904 and has the distinction of being Santa Cruz's first public museum. For parents of young children, there is a great opportunity for the kiddos to learn about the region's plant, animal, and human communities. The tide-pool exhibit was my personal favorite, along with a display about the Monarch butterflies, and a self-contained beehive display with active bees. Adults are \$4 and it's free for children 18 or less.

Historic Home Walking Tour. If you are a sucker for history, you will love the opulence of Queen Anne homes. Colorful historic homes ranging in age from 1870 to 1938 can be seen along Walnut Avenue, the first residential street downtown.

The Museum of Art and History

provides blue oval plaques describing the architecture, the build date, who it was built for, and sometimes the profession of the home's original occupants.

I loved the ornate balustrade and circular porch of the 1892 Triplett house that was built by descendants of Pioneer J. M. Perez. Other areas of Santa Cruz also teem with unique architecture.

An opulent 1891 Queen Anne home at 924 Third Street became the site of a notorious 1907 tragedy, when Major McLaughlin, saddened by the loss of his wife and financial problems, shot his stepdaughter and then committed suicide by drinking poison.

Dining. For breakfast, I recommend The Crepe Place at 1134 Soquel Avenue, which offers a unique opportunity to sit outside with an artistic display of colorful glass bottles.

Both sweet and savory crepes are excellent choices, but traditional fare such as eggs Benedict and eggs Florentine are also on the menu.

For dinner, the clam chowder at The Crow's Nest and watching the boats come and go from the Harbor was a memorable meal.

But by far our favorite restaurant for dinner was Barceloneta, a Spanish restaurant that delivers water in fish-shaped water carafes.

Penny Ice Creamery is the only place in town to get ice cream made from scratch. It uses locally grown foods and offers unique ice cream flavors such as balsamic cherry, strawberry pink peppercorn, and lemon blueberry shortcake. Be prepared to stand in line, but it is worth the wait.

Santa Cruz is 82 miles and only about an hour and a half drive from Concord. Did I mention there are wineries, hiking adventures, and other bike trails to explore? There is so much to see and do in this city that it is worth planning a weekend getaway, but it is also close enough to make multiple day trips, too.

Ethan Bindernagel Named Pleasant Hill City Manager



The City of Pleasant Hill hired Ethan Bindernagel as the new City Manager.

The Pleasant Hill City Council approved the hiring of Assistant

City Manager Ethan Bindernagel as the new City Manager. Bindernagel takes over for outgoing City Manager June Catalano, who retired on June 16, 2023, following a 17-year career with the City.

Bindernagel came to Pleasant Hill in 2021, after spending 14 years working for the City of Walnut Creek. He began his career in government in 2000 at the federal level as a congressional aide in the House of Representatives,

before attending graduate school and then transitioning to the field of urban planning in 2005. Bindernagel has extensive experience in economic development, housing, and land use planning. In his time in Walnut Creek, he served as both the Economic Development Manager and Planning Manager.

He has a master's degree in Community Planning, is a member of the International City/County Management Association and is a graduate of the Local Governance Summer Institute at Stanford University.

"The Council interviewed several well-qualified candidates, but Ethan's skillset and deep knowledge of the issues important to Pleasant Hill set him apart," said Mayor Tim Flaherty. "I am certain the City will be well-served by Ethan for many years to come."

Bindernagel resides in Lafayette with his wife Becca, and two children Rose and James.

Grand Jury Report Continued from page 4

violated the terms of an Agreement to Negotiate, signed by both firms, by lobbying the city council.

Catellus also raised questions about the removal of the Concord staff's analysis and recommendation for a master developer from a published staff report.

The report determined that one-on-one meetings conducted between the City Manager and Councilmembers Grayson, Birsan and Hoffmeister resulted in a reversal of the Council's September 2015 decision to include a staff recommendation in the final staff report. It also found those meetings were in violation of the Brown Act.

6.a The Jenkins Report presented the findings of an investigation authorized by the Concord City Attorney in 2015.

6.b The expense to the LRA for the investigation and report done by Michael Jenkins was \$63,154 and it was paid as a 2016 expense against the city loan to the LRA.

6.c The issues investigated in the Jenkins Report were improper lobbying by a councilmember, removing staff recommendation from final report on the master developer and Brown Act

violations. These findings involved real or perceived improper activity by the Concord city staff and the Concord City Council.

Recommendation - The expenses for this investigation should not be charged to the LRA loan and ultimately to the master developer on the CNWS project.

The payment for the Jenkins investigation should be reversed as an expense against the city loan to the LRA.

The payment for the Jenkins investigation should be paid as an expense from Concord general funds.

[Some citizens are requesting an outside auditor conduct a financial audit of the City Council, LRA, and developers for the potential misuse of taxpayer funds.

Diablo Gazette reached out to LRA Director, Guy Bjerke, and Concord City Manager, Valerie Barone, for comment, both responded that, "The City Council will consider a response to the Grand Jury report at their August 8 meeting. That response will be released to the public as part of the agenda packet for that meeting.]



CVCHS NEWS

Dave Fehte, Executive Director
Clayton Valley Charter High School

As we soon embark on a new academic school year, I am filled with an incredible sense of excitement and anticipation. Welcome back to our returning students and families. Let's continue our journey of a dynamic community dedicated to fostering academic excellence, personal growth, and lifelong learning.

To our new members of the Ugly Eagle family, I extend my warmest greetings and am confident you have joined a community that thrives on inclusivity, innovation, and support. Embrace this opportunity to shape your future and unlock your full potential.

But before we dive into the new academic school year, I would like to share some good news we received over the Summer: CVCHS was recognized as an Exceptional Charter Schools in Special Education from the National Association of Special Education Teachers for the 2022-23 School Year.

This award is bestowed on public charter schools that meet rigorous professional criteria and have demonstrated exceptional dedication, commitment and achievement in the field of special education. I am proud of Dr. Patrick Gaffney, our entire support team, and our special needs families. This is truly an amazing honor for our school and the students we serve.

What's New? Redesigned Academies at CVCHS

One of the most remarkable additions to CVCHS this year is the redesign of our traditional Academies, which now align

Welcome Back to Our Ugly Eagle Community



The CVCHS Medical Academy has been redesigned to offer more diverse opportunities..

our Pathways program with the state's Career Technical Education (CTE) goals. A special thanks to Kathleen Coakley, CVCHS's Director of Curriculum & Instruction, and her team for developing an impressive program. These Academies aim to provide students with a comprehensive and integrated learning experience – empowering them to explore their future career considerations right out of high school or to continue through college.

At CVCHS, we believe that education should be transformative and tailored to individual students' needs. Our Academies are designed to nurture each student's unique talents and strengths while preparing them for success in the ever-changing global landscape. By merging the core academic curriculum with CTE principles, we bridge the gap between theory and practice, providing students with real-world skills and knowledge.



The CVCHS Career and Technical Education Academy offers specialized course work.

Continuing the tradition, Academy students will have the opportunity to explore diverse fields such as Arts, Engineering & Design, Medical, Public Service and Technology. Each Academy, which function as small schools within CVCHS, offers specialized courses and extracurricular activities that cater to different interests and aspirations.

Our dedicated team of teachers, industry professionals, and community partners will continue to work collaboratively to ensure that our students receive the highest quality education and are equipped to thrive in their chosen fields.

Through internships, mentorships, field trips and hands-on projects, students will gain valuable experiences that will serve as a foundation for their future endeavors. I am convinced that our students will benefit greatly and see impressive changes to the Academy changes in the Fall.

And finally, I am also thrilled to report about the exciting addition of our high school girls' flag football team. Over the summer, more than 35 talented and determined young women have enthusiastically participated in our new conditioning program. They are the pioneers of this team, and their dedication is inspiring.

As a bonus, they have received invaluable guidance from Coach Dave Cooney,

Assistant Coach Wendy Bumbaca as well as a few of our retired Varsity football coaches, who have been generously sharing their expertise and teaching the girls the fundamentals of the game. With such passion and support, we are confident that our girls' flag football team will soar to new heights and make us proud on the field.

As we begin a new academic school year at CVCHS, let us remember that we are a family united by a shared vision. Together, we will soar higher, explore further, and accomplish greater heights. Let us embark on this new journey with open hearts, hungry minds, and an unshakable spirit of camaraderie.

Welcome back, Ugly Eagles. Here's to a 2023-24 school year filled with growth, accomplishments, and boundless opportunities.



The Naked Gardener

David George, UC-Certified
Master Gardener

Our cooler than average Contra Costa spring delayed vegetable produce ripening by about a month. Along with late late-ripening veggies, there seems to be fewer flying and crawling insects in my garden this summer. Have you noticed the same? Maybe it is time to erect a Bug Hotel.

An average garden will have more than 2,000 thriving insects according to SierraClub.org. Bugs play a critical role in the garden ecosystem. Fallen leaves, taller grass, and dead wood are necessary habitats for certain bugs, which are increasingly difficult to find in an urban or suburban backyard.



Insect Hotels can be Rustic and Inviting - Courtesy iStock.jpg



Constructing Insect Hotel- a great Kid's activity - Courtesy Shutterstock

What can you do that will help pollinators and beneficial bugs? First, avoid using insecticides which kill both bad and good bugs (as well as can sicken humans or pets). Next, make sure that your garden plants attract bees, butterflies, and beneficial predators like lady bugs and soldier beetles. A Garden Center staff can direct you to helpful and attractive plantings.

But do you want to do more to attract your beneficial insects and bugs? A new popular idea is to add a bug hotel (also called a bug house) to your garden. It makes for a fun and creative way to encourage biodiversity. Bug hotels provide shelter and nesting sites to native and migratory solitary insects. If your garden has very few nooks and crannies for insects to escape predators or bad weather, providing them with your own shelter can help fix the problem. It works the same way as a birdhouse –however, rather than one family, it can serve multiple types of insects.

Insect hotels are often composed of hollow bamboo tubes, wood chips or blocks with predrilled holes, cavities filled with pinecones, bark, twigs or dead leaves, or a compartmented combination. Search online for "insect hotels (or houses)" and you will be presented with a wide variety of attractive and inexpensive choices.

Another option is to build your own insect hotel. Construct a roofed structure which provides shade and space for two or three shelves or compartments. Stack small tree logs, leaves and twigs, decaying branches, bricks with holes in them, and pinecones on the shelves. Then cover the front of your structure with mesh wire to hold the contents in place. You can substitute hollow bamboo shoots for bricks to remain all-natural. Bugs are best attracted if you keep the contents moist with an occasional water spritz.

Become a Bug Hotelier

Constructing an insect hotel is a fun activity for getting kids involved in the garden. It also encourages everyone to think about how and why to welcome beneficial bugs into a garden and all the different roles they play.

Insects are important to a garden because of the volume of food that they eat. Their diets include weeds and other bugs deemed pests, as well as the volume of food they provide for creatures above them in the food chain. Bugs also help aerate the soil while recycling natural materials and decomposing nutrients. And

of course, they are pollinators. No naked garden is complete without beneficial predator insects and valuable pollinators. Become a bug hotelier.

For more information about insect hotels, the Sierra Club has a nice online link: <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/how-and-why-create-backyard-bug-hotel>.

Thank you, Roxanne, for your inquiry on insect hotels. Email your comments and questions to: NakedGardener@diablogazette.com. In some cases, these may appear in future columns.



A NEW PROGRAM IS COMING YOUR WAY!

Food waste recycling starts

September 4th.



LESS FOOD WASTE IN LANDFILLS
LIMITS GREENHOUSE GASES

Starting September 4, 2023, food scraps, food-soiled paper & yard trimming go in the GREEN CART!

For more info, visit mdrr.com/sb1383





Sparkling Wines and Summer Celebrations



Sparkling wine makes any event a celebration. In fact, I start almost all my parties with something bubbly. This menu takes it one step further and makes sparkling wine the star of the evening.

Choose sparkling wines from cooler regions where the grapes maintain a fresh quality. And remember, even if the grapes are grown in France, it isn't Champagne unless the grapes are grown in the Champagne region of France.

Sparkling wine is great with the salad course because it is naturally high in acid and pairs well with salad dressing. Choose a dry Brut style sparkling wine for this course because it has very little residual sugar.

A "Champagne" vinaigrette echoes the flavors found in the wine and can be used



to dress a salad of mixed greens tossed with green onion, dried cherry, edamame, and crumbled blue cheese. It is the perfect blend of sweet, bitter, savory, and salty.



Blanc de Blancs sparkling wines are made exclusively from chardonnay grapes and are an excellent choice for an entrée of barbecued Dungeness crab.

The sweet, buttery flavor of the crab along with melted butter for dipping complements the butter, apple, and pear flavors commonly found in chardonnay grapes.

To barbecue Dungeness crab, break each cooked, cleaned crab down the middle, leaving half of the body with five "legs" attached. Coat each half in olive oil and sprinkle with chopped garlic and lots of kosher salt. Wrap the crab individually in foil, place on a hot grill for 10 minutes, and serve with crusty bread.

End the evening with some good quality pound cake from your favorite bakery and make it your own with the delicious tropical fruit

compote listed here.

Because the dessert is a little sweet, choose a sparkling wine that has sugar added back in at bottling. Look for the words "Extra-Dry, Demi-Sec, or Doux" on the label.

So, go on. Pair Up!

Maria Terry is a Certified Sommelier and Wine Educator in Northern California. www.LaSommellerie.com

SPARKLING WINE VINAIGRETTE

INGREDIENTS

- ¾ cup "Champagne" vinegar
- ½ cup Dijon mustard
- 3 cups extra virgin olive oil

- ½ cup honey
- ½ cup water
- salt & white pepper

DIRECTIONS

In bowl, whisk vinegar, honey, and mustard. Gradually add oil and whisk until emulsified. Season with salt & pepper.

Yield: 2 cups

TROPICAL FRUIT COMPOTE

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup unsweetened pineapple juice
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated lime zest
- ¼ cup lime juice, (about 2 limes)
- 10 whole cardamom pods, bruised
- 8 whole allspice berries

- 8 whole black peppercorns
- 8 whole cloves
- 2 cinnamon sticks, broken in half



- 2 tablespoons orange liqueur
- 3 kiwis, peeled and sliced
- 2 mangoes or papayas, peeled, seeded, and cut into chunks

- 2 seedless tangerines or small oranges, pith and peel removed, sliced on the equatorial axis

- 2 carambolas (star fruit), thinly sliced
- 1 cup fresh pineapple chunks
- 1 banana, peeled and cut into thick slices

DIRECTIONS

Combine sugar, pineapple juice, lime zest and juice in a small saucepan.

Tie the spices in a small cheesecloth bag and add it to the saucepan.

Bring the liquid to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Cover the pan, reduce the heat to low and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool.

Stir in orange liqueur.

Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes, up to 24 hours. Remove the spice bag and syrup is ready to use.

Toss kiwis, mangoes (or papaya), tangerines (or oranges), star fruit, pineapple and banana in a serving bowl. Add the syrup and stir gently. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Yield: 6-8 cups

Rotary Club of Walnut Creek Donates \$10,000 To Start Education Program for Houseless

by Gary Stein, President, Rotary Club of Walnut Creek

The Rotary Club of Walnut Creek is presenting a check to the Trinity Center to start an innovative Education Program to help those people who are houseless to gain employment and navigate the difficult path to prosperity.

The Trinity Center is a resource for those who are houseless providing meals, laundry, and bathing facilities to them. They also have workshops to help them with everything from substance abuse remediation to how to apply for a job and interview for that job.

The New Program that the funding will be used for will be a unique approach to getting the houseless off the street. It involves the development of a comprehensive Wellness Program that addresses the challenges and barriers to health and well-being by those living unsheltered or in unstable housing.

This will provide a pathway to sustainable housing, enhance their ability to obtain and



Pictured are Marcia Gerg, Walnut Creek Rotarian, Moji Shobeiri, Operations Manager, Leticia Wiesner, Director of Programs and Member Services, Leslie Gleason Executive Director, Gary Stein President of the Rotary Club of Walnut Creek, Trudy Triner, Walnut Creek Rotarian.

maintain employment and income, mental and physical health, sobriety, and social connections.

RESERVE YOUR HOLIDAY ADVERTISING SPOTS

The Deadline for advertising in the September 2023 issue of THE DIABLO GAZETTE is **AUGUST 18**

(925) 298-9990 diablogazette@gmail.com

1st Annual

Mediterranean Food and Music Festival

Featuring Mansaf in a Cup!

Chance to win great raffle prizes!

August 5th & 6th, 2023
12PM - 9PM

Sts. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church
2370 Harbor View Dr, Martinez, CA 94553

Free Admission & Free Parking

Come enjoy food, drinks, desserts, local vendors, hookah, kids activities, live entertainment, and more!

Hosted By
Sts. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church



HOT AUGUST SAVINGS
OVERSTOCK REMNANTS
PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

OVER 100 ROLLS OF CARPET INCLUDING CARPET REMNANT AT DISCOUNT PRICES!

UP TO 35% OFF
Hardwood | Carpet | Laminates | Vinyl
Ceramic Tile | Flooring

SAVE UP TO 50% ON CARPET INSTALLATION

MACFLOOR WHERE QUALITY COST LESS

\$100 CREDIT REWARD
BRING YOUR COSTCO, HOME DEPOT, LOWE'S OR OTHER CARPET OR FLOORING ESTIMATE IN AND RECEIVE A \$100 CREDIT TOWARDS YOUR FLOORING PURCHASE FROM US.



McCurlley's
Carpets • Hardwood • Laminate • Stone

2395-J Monument Blvd., Concord
(Next door to Harvest House Shaw Carpet)
925-680-4433

Email: info@macfloor.com
www.MacFloor.com

3191-J Crow Canyon Place, San Ramon
(Next to Sprouts in the Crow Canyon Plaza)
925-866-2200

 **Jennifer Stojanovich**
Realtor, Better Homes Realty

Keep Your Home Comfortable for Summer Showings

Welcome to the sunny season of summer as potential buyers will be touring homes to find their dream abode. To ensure your home shines during showings, it is crucial to keep it comfortable and inviting. Here are some tips to help you create a welcoming atmosphere for potential buyers.

Embrace natural light. Open up curtains and blinds to let in the natural sunlight. Bright spaces appear more spacious and appealing.

Control the temperature. Maintain a cool and comfortable indoor temperature to combat the summer heat.

Keep it fresh. Eliminate any lingering odors by airing out your home. Use natural air fresheners or scented candles to create a pleasant ambiance.

Optimize air circulation and create a breezy atmosphere. During showings, open windows strategically to create a cross breeze. This allows fresh air to circulate, giving your home a pleasant and airy feel. Also,

You may help by setting up strategically placed fans to create a gentle breeze throughout your home.

Spruce up your outdoor spaces. Make your outdoor areas as inviting as possible. Clean patio furniture, arrange colorful cushions and add potted plants to create a charming outdoor oasis.

Add greenery indoors. Incorporate some indoor plants to add a touch of nature and freshness to your home. They also help improve air quality.

Declutter and organize. Keep your home clutter-free to create a sense of spaciousness. Organize countertops, closets, and storage spaces to show off your home's potential.

Create a relaxing ambiance. Play soft background music or use a white noise machine to create a calm and relaxing environment for potential buyers.

Consider outdoor activities. If your home has a backyard or outdoor space, then consider setting up activities like a small picnic or a game area. This helps potential buyers envision the fun they can have in the summer.

Promote cooling amenities. Highlight any cooling amenities your home offers, such as central air conditioning, ceiling fans, or even a swimming pool. Let buyers know how they can beat the summer heat in your home.

Provide refreshments. Leave a pitcher of cold lemonade or a tray of chilled water bottles for visitors to enjoy. This small gesture can make a big impression.

Mind the sun. If your home gets a lot of direct sunlight, then use blinds or curtains to control the amount of light entering the space. This will help maintain a comfortable temperature indoors.

Stage outdoor dining. Set up a table with colorful tableware and outdoor dining accessories to showcase the potential for al fresco dining in the warmer months.

Highlight shade and shelter. If you have a shaded area in your yard, then showcase it as a retreat from the sun. Highlight any covered patios, gazebos, or pergolas to demonstrate the versatility of your outdoor spaces.

By following these tips, you can ensure your home remains comfortable and inviting for potential buyers during summer showings. Remember, creating a pleasant atmosphere goes a long way in helping buyers envision themselves living in your home. Good luck with your showings, and happy selling!

Compliments of VirtualResults.net




Locally owned and operated in Concord | Certified Minority Business Enterprise

Whether you're planning a conference or a night out, we are here to fulfill your transportation needs.

Call for your free quote: 1-800-727-0279



CODE 3 LIMO
TRANSPORTATION

WWW.CODE3LIMO.COM | (415) 727-7717

MT. DIABLO SELF STORAGE
4901 Ygnacio Valley Rd Concord, CA 94521
Self-Storage Made Easy & Affordable
Open 7 Days a Week

WE BUY & SELL BOXES

(925) 685-2222
Fax: (925) 288-0669

From walk-in closet to a large house
How much storage do you need?

Video Surveillance • Secure Units • Computerized Gate Access • Complimentary Carts

Limited Units Available

CHECK WEBSITE for Rates on All Sizes

**50% off first month, while supplies last.*

mtdiablostorage.com

Small Units 5x5

Starting at ~~\$95~~
\$47.50*

Medium Units 10x10

Starting at ~~\$240~~
\$120.00*

Large Units 10x15

Starting at ~~\$300~~
\$150.00*



BETTER HOMES REALTY
6160 Center St., Suite E, Clayton

COMING SOON
\$1,450,000



1133 Peacock Creek Dr. Clayton

Desirable Peacock Creek!
4 bedrooms plus bonus room or optional 5th bedroom, 3.5 baths, approx. 3185sf on an approx. .23 acre level lot with inside laundry & attached 3-car garage. Downstairs bedroom & full bath. Views!

\$1,649,000



1107 Whispering Pines Rd. Clayton

Sensational Single Story Ranchette
on approx. .99 acres w/stunning Mt. Diablo views, 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, approx. 3149sf with 3-car garage plus covered RV parking. Backyard oasis with beach entry freeform pool, waterfall grotto, slide & separate spa, outdoor fireplace, BBQ island & basketball/pickleball court.

\$1,099,000



5935 Herriman Dr. Clayton

Charming Single Story Rancher
in desirable Clayton Neighborhood. 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, approx. 1849sf on an approx. .33 acre lot with an attached 2-car garage & in-ground pool with pool house.

\$1,099,000



19 Nottingham Cir, Clayton

Stunning and Meticulously Maintained
two story home nestled on a spacious lot. 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, approx. 2210sf on an approx. .28 acre lot with an attached 3-car garage & in-ground pebble tech pool. Possible RV/Boat parking.

Market Update - Clayton

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
4803 Keller Ridge Dr	\$645,000	1252	2/2.5	6/20/2023
138 Inverness Way	\$1,410,000	3030	4/3	6/22/2023
33 Petar Ct	\$1,225,000	2010	4/2.5	6/26/2023
159 Mountaire Pkwy	\$1,125,000	2619	5/2.5	6/27/2023
15715 Marsh Creek Rd	\$1,540,000	4047	4/3.5	7/5/2023
807 Gray Fox Pl	\$1,475,000	2543	3/2.5	7/6/2023
1291 Shell Cir	\$845,000	1709	3/3	7/14/2023

Market Update - Concord

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
4649 Benbow Ct	\$1,085,000	2003	4/2	6/28/2023
1109 Jaime Dr	\$1,407,000	3030	5/3.5	6/28/2023
1519 Heartwood Dr	\$915,000	1846	4/2	7/3/2023
1310 Aberdeen Ct	\$930,000	1568	3/2	7/5/2023
1336 Bent Tree Ln	\$1,150,000	2268	4/2.5	7/7/2023
3901 Clayton Rd #54	\$460,000	1038	2/1.5	7/12/2023
5048 Saint Garrett Ct	\$980,000	2324	4/2.5	7/13/2023

 **Jennifer Stojanovich**
Broker
(925)672-4433
925-567-6170 - cell
DRE #01446062
jennifer@bhrbroker.com
www.jenniferstojanovich.com



Laura Hoffmeister,
Concord Mayor
cityofconcord.org

Help Celebrate 50 Years of Sister City Friendship

The Concord Ambassadors was founded in October of 1974 as a result of two cable TV executives meeting at a conference and becoming friends. Court Kirkeeng of Concord TV Cable and Dr. Zenji Katagata and Engineer from Kitakami Japan developed their relations into an active exchange between the two cities and enlisted the help of other citizens to create an exchange program.

By having many cultural and environmental similarities in both cities, Kitakami and Concord officially declared a sister city relationship, and former Concord Mayor Dan Helix drafted the original sister city charter in 1974.

The city established a small Japanese-style sculpture, "The Communion Bridge" located in the Japanese Friendship Garden at the Concord Civic Center and represents a portion of the connecting span distance to our Sister City - Kitakami, Japan. The matching half of the bridge is in Kitakami.

Kitakami with a population of 95,000 is located in upper northeast area of Japan in the south-central Iwate Prefecture,

approximately 27 miles south of the prefectural capital of Morioka, and 304 miles north of Tokyo. The city is at the confluence of the Kitakami River and the Waga River with the Ou Mountains to the west and the Kitakami Mountains stretching out to the east, rising to 1312. The city regarded as one of the hundred best places in Japan to view cherry blossoms, especially in their large Tenshochi Park area, with its 10,000 cherry trees.



Mayor Laura Hoffmeister at a Kitakami event, 2014. Photos courtesy Concord Ambassadors.

How are we similar? We both share a historical agriculture economy, have grown due to nearby freeways, have many residential homes, light manufacturing, numerous light industrial, biotech, office and retail areas.

Taro potatoes, green asparagus, apples, and soybeans are some of the local specialties in the Kitakami area. Our East County boosts sweet corn and cherries among other ag products. Both cities have worked on businesses development with a focus on small and medium sized companies improve their technology levels and enter into new fields. Both cities also

have an annual Kids Festival.

Kitakami has 17 public elementary schools and nine public junior high schools operated by the city government and five public high schools operated by the Iwate Prefectural Board of Education. Concord has about 15 elementary, three middle and five high schools, all governed by the Local Mt Diablo Unified Board of Education.

For nearly 50 years there has been a steady flow of visitors between the two cities enjoying the opportunity for "home stay" visits and culture exchange.

Kitakami has been inviting many Assistant Language Teachers from Concord for many years. They teach at elementary and junior high schools in Kitakami. Additionally, we strengthen our mutual exchanges in both local communities. On each five-year anniversary of the relationship there has been a delegation visiting the Sister City led by the Mayor and city officials, along with businesses and residents and Ambassador members. The two cities alternate the five-year official visits, and there are periodic student exchange visits.

The Concord Ambassadors is the all-volunteer local nonprofit sister city organization that is dedicated to promoting

mutual exchanges in the fields of education, culture, social affairs and economics, and sponsors the Kitakami Sister City program.

They arrange to welcome these visitors with Concord residents and businesses and coordinate local home stays for the visitors. These exchanges increase our understanding of the culture and history of each country and create the opportunity for developing lasting friendships. The hospitality and memories last a lifetime. Friendships continue to strengthen through e-mail, telephone and zoom in between international visits.

Personal and business relationships between both individuals and groups are encouraged. For nearly 50 years there has been a steady flow of students and adults between the two cities enjoying the opportunity for "home stay" visits and culture exchange. We will be welcoming our Kitakami Sister City visitors in October 2024 and planning will begin soon.

Those interested in supporting, participating or helping out for our 50th Anniversary contact: concordambassadors@gmail.com. or www.concordambassadors.org. For more information on our sister city, visit the Kitakami, Japan website, <https://www.city.kitakami.iwate.jp/>.



Four Must-Visit Breakfast Spots in Concord

Rise, shine and dine. In celebration of National Waffle Day on August 24, we thought it would be the perfect time to highlight some of Concord's popular breakfast stops, each featuring whimsical and wonderful warm waffles embraced with maple syrup, whipped cream and other sweet delights.

Whether you're local or a visitor, these restaurants will leave you feeling happy and ready for a great day.

So, what makes for a great breakfast spot? We believe it's a combination of location (Concord, of course), a friendly and attentive wait staff, the art of preparing classic breakfast dishes, and, of course, the waffles.

Sugar Plum Coffee Shop (1815 Colfax Ave.)

Step into Sugar Plum Coffee Shop and be transported to a classic American Diner that has remained timeless since its opening in 1959. The retro-themed decor and menu add to its charm. Take

a seat at the counter - where the cool kids hang - and order from a robust menu that includes eight different kinds of omelets and other classic breakfast selections.

Buzzworthy waffle bites: Belgian Waffles with whipped cream, spiced apples and nuts. (Yes, please.)

ButtercuP Diner (4301 Clayton Rd.)

Founded with the vision of being a welcoming space for families, ButtercuP Diner is another local favorite and long-standing establishment. The Concord location doesn't disappoint with decadent choices including "Biscuit Bliss", southern-inspired, handmade biscuits topped with sausage gravy, eggs benedict or cream cheese frosting. Of note: That capital "P" at the end of ButtercuP is for the restaurant's delicious and authentic pies made from scratch.

Buzzworthy waffle bites: Chicken and

waffle with hand-breaded chicken on a house-made waffle dripping with honey butter, hot sauce and syrup.

Bay Leaf Cafe (2123 Pacheco St.)

A true embodiment of family-run warmth, Bay Leaf Cafe has been welcoming diners since 1999. They have an unpretentious vibe and vast menu that diners like to order and then share. From cajun sausage and eggs to a scrumptious burrito omelet their menu caters to every comfort foodie's taste.

Buzzworthy waffle bites: Banana Pecan Waffles - bring on your taste buds happy dance.

Diggers Diner (1895 Farm Bureau Rd.)

Recently voted Best of the East Bay, Diggers is a classic diner known for its warm customer service and lively atmosphere. Breakfast is available all day and comes with large portions and a definitive homemade feel. The

restaurant itself has a fun ambiance with colorful images painted on the walls, an authentic and friendly staff and a great backstory - Founder Digger Dave was an actual gravedigger at a cemetery and inspired their name!

Buzzworthy waffle bites: Gracie's Carmel Pecan Waffle

Share your favorite Concord breakfast experiences with us on Visit Concord social media, Facebook and Instagram. We love hearing from fellow foodies.

Visit Concord is located in Salvia Pacheco Square. We are dedicated to offering a fun and engaging stay for those traveling to Concord. Come by before visiting friends and family come for a stay. We have sample itineraries, interactive exhibits, discounted tickets and Concord swag for sale.

Find out more at visitconcordca.com or follow us at Visit Concord Facebook and Instagram.

City of Concord to Distribute \$2 Million in ARPA Small Business Reimbursement Grants

The City of Concord, in partnership with the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, is launching the second round of a \$2 million grant program to help small businesses continue their recovery from the economic strain caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Utilizing \$2 million of the funds that the City received from the federal government as part of the American Rescue Plan Act, Concord provided one-time reimbursement grants of up to \$5,000 to 176 small businesses in the first round in fall 2022. Another 207 grants will be awarded in the second and final round opening this month. Qualified businesses from the first round that did not receive funding will be automatically placed in the lottery, without the need to reapply.

Priority will be given to the following types of businesses:

Retail, restaurants, and



personal service establishments, specifically: hair salons and barber shops, nail salons, day spas, and fitness studios, that operate in a commercial storefront.

Family childcare homes licensed by the State of California

Residential cleaning services and residential landscaping/gardening businesses that operate

under a home-based business license.

Businesses that did not receive funding from the City of Concord Small Business Grant Program or Measure V Commercial Rent Relief Program.

The Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce is administering this grant on behalf of the City of Concord. Applicants may seek additional support by emailing grantprogram@concordchamber.com or by participating in office hours in-person. Support is available in both English and Spanish.

The application period is open and will close on Friday, August 11 at 5:00 pm.

For more information on the grant, including a link to the instructional video and schedule of office hours, please visit: concordfirst.com or send Direct questions to: grantprogram@concordchamber.com.

Scam Alert: Contra Costa County Assessor Issues Important Warning to Taxpayers

Many property owners throughout Contra Costa County are receiving an official looking document in the mail regarding a fee-based service to have their property's taxable value reduced. Although these mailers have the appearance of an official government document, the correspondence is not from the Contra Costa County Assessor or any other Contra Costa County Office.

The California Attorney General's Office has posted warnings to California property owners on their website about the practices of these companies. For more information, please visit the Attorney General's Consumer Alert at

https://oag.ca.gov/consumers/general/prop_tax_scam.

Current scam mailers

are requiring both a \$40 county filing fee with the Clerk of the Assessment Appeals Board for a formal appeal, and a contingent fee of 30% of any tax savings as a result of filing the application.

It is important for property owners to know that the Contra Costa County Assessor's Office does not charge a fee to complete an informal value review for our taxpayers.

Property owners who believe the current market value of their property is less than the assessed value, can file a FREE "Request for Value Review (Prop 8)" form with the Contra Costa County Assessor's Office. visit <http://www.cccounty.us/assessor> and select "Review Your Value" to find a downloadable application.

-Gus Kramer



Jeff Wan
Mayor, Clayton
Jeff.wan@claytonca.gov

CLAYTON NEWS

City Close to Defining New Master Fee Schedule

Recently the Council gave direction to staff regarding the proposed update to our Master Fee Schedule. As such, I wanted to share my thoughts on why this was an important action for the City to take. There were three main principals at play:

Ensure full recovery of costs. Historically, the City did not recover the full cost of providing services or renting facilities. The rates for each did not include a fully burdened rate for staff charges, including administrative staff and police, and they had not been updated beyond a perfunctory CPI increase in many years. By focusing on a full recovery method, the City ensures it is recovering the actual cost it incurs for these services and facilities.

Fairness to the taxpayers. Money is fungible. As such, fee waivers or discounts represent taxpayer funded subsidies and should be made judiciously. We offer discounts in a variety of ways throughout the fee schedule, typically for those that reside in Clayton vs. those who do not, or to promote certain activity. Endeavor Hall offers a steep discount for residents and non-profits as the intent of Endeavor is to be a community meeting place of residents, and to support the Arts; the uses of which do not typically generate net income.

Generate revenue. The City's tax base is relatively small, and somewhat inflexible. There are few opportunities for the City to generate additional revenue. As I stated during my campaign and multiple times afterwards, a tax increase should always be a last resort, and only after all other options have been explored. It is appropriate that City's charge a fee for use of City property. Many cities do this via rental charges or Special Event fees, and Clayton is no exception. The updated fee schedule recognizes that large events that generate significant revenue or support for event sponsors have the ability to pay for use of the City as a venue.

There has been high interest in the updated fee schedule. This update applies broadly to everyone and needed to be in place prior to any discussion with the CBCA. The Council is setting policy for the City as a whole, not just for one organization. A baseline must be established that ensures the City is adequately compensated for staff time and use of its facilities. Now that we have given staff direction on how to move forward, with the actual update to the Master Fee

Schedule targeted to be heard at a Public Hearing on August 15, it is appropriate that we renew discussion with the CBCA on ways we can continue to work together.

Under the prior Master Use Agreement (MUA) between the City and the CBCA that waived virtually all permitting fees and did not reimburse the City for actual costs incurred by staff, the interests of the two parties were not always aligned. The CBCA had an interest in successful events to further their mission. The City had an interest in generating greater revenue to support the financial health of the City. In this rubric, the City did not receive the full benefit from events as we were not recovering our full costs. The time spent by City staff (maintenance and police) was not fully invoiced, and staff were overall more burdened as there was a net increase in workload. Combine that with the waiver of fees for renting things like the streets and Grove Park, near \$5K-\$7K per event, and even the small amount of sales tax generated did not nearly make up for the burden on the City.

Recently I had a conversation with the President of the CBCA. I conveyed that because our interests were not always aligned, it could appear that activities between the two organizations were more adversarial than they actually were or intended to be. In an effort to find what could be a win/win, I suggested that there may be a way that we could work together in partnership and come to terms so that when the CBCA is successful, so is the City. Depending on the details, I would be open to the idea of reduced or waived fees in exchange for a revenue sharing arrangement. This would be mutually beneficial for all parties, including the taxpayers of our City.

The more financially successful the events are, the better it is for everyone. It would then be in the City's interest to assist as much as possible, and the CBCA could have a predictable cost structure like any other cost of supplies. For the larger events, the outcome could be about the same as what is in the current proposed update to the Master Fee Schedule, but for smaller events the fees would no longer be an impediment to their overall viability.

I hope that we can come to terms on an arrangement like this and I look forward to working with the CBCA on ways that we could continue working together.



legalbriefs
by Douglas A. Prutton, Attorney
Doug@PruttonLaw.com

Public Interest Organizations Given Powerful Legal Tool

Our community is full of public interest organizations advocating for many worthy interests. Groups like the Sierra Club and Save Mt. Diablo fight for our environment. The Contra Costa Crisis Center and Monument Crisis Center assist the homeless and people in dire need. The Contra Costa Humane Society (where I volunteer) offers care to abandoned cats and dogs. The list is almost endless of the myriad organizations working to making our society a better place to live.

On July 17, 2023, the California Supreme Court released an opinion which provides public interest organizations with a powerful tool to advance their interests. In the case of California Medical Association v. Aetna Health of California, Inc., the Court ruled that organizations can bring claims against businesses under UCL, the "Unfair Competition" law (Section 17200 of the California Business and Professions Code).

You might be thinking, "unfair competition," what does that have to do with public interest organizations? This title of the "unfair competition" law, is in fact very misleading. The law should be titled "The Unfair Business Practice Act," because the unbelievably broad language of the UCL forbids, among other things, "any unlawful, unfair, or fraudulent business act or practice and unfair, deceptive, untrue or misleading advertising." Take that in for a minute: the law forbids all "unfair" business acts or practices.

So how does this law work in the real world? The California Medical Association v. Aetna case is a good example. Many of us have health insurance through insurance companies like Aetna or Blue Cross, where you must be seen by healthcare providers who are in the companies' network. Your doctor can refer you to another doctor outside of the network, but that costs the insurance company extra money, which of course they do not like.

The CMA (whose members include tens of thousands of California doctors) sued Aetna under the UCL alleging that Aetna had an "unfair business practice" of punishing doctors for making these out-of-network referrals and, thereby deterring them from making the referrals. If you needed a referral to an out-of-network specialist and your doctor refused to make the referral because of Aetna's threats, you would not be a happy camper.

Aetna fought hard to defeat the claim and was backed by many powerful business interests, including the United States Chamber of Commerce. These businesses argued that organizations like the CMA cannot sue under the UCL because that law specifically requires that the person suing must have suffered an "injury in fact and loss of money or property." The CMA responded by stating that it did suffer

an "injury in fact and loss of money or property" because it had spent staff time advising its members how to address and counteract Aetna's policy and prepared a letter to the California Department of Insurance.

What do you think? If an organization does not like another company's business policy and spends time advising its members about the policy and writes a letter to the government complaining about the policy, has that organization suffered an "injury in fact and loss of money or property" because of that business policy? The initial judge hearing the case concluded "no" and threw out the case. A three-judge appeals court agreed with this judge concluding that the California Medical Association did not suffer an "injury in fact and loss of money or property" because of Aetna's policy of punishing doctors for making out-of-network referrals.

However, the Supreme Court of California saw it differently. The Court found that diverting staff time and other office resources was an "injury in fact and a loss of money or property."

The Court recognized that the CMA needed to show that the Aetna policy was a threat to the CMA's mission, but the Court concluded that the threat to physician independence and consequently to public health was enough. The Court emphasized that the case did not involve "an organization attempting to manufacture standing and insert itself into a dispute in which it had no natural stake."

Although laws can be passed, they are really only given teeth when someone files a lawsuit alleging that the law has been broken. Unfortunately, lawsuits are very time-consuming and expensive, involving the hiring of lawyers and the incurring of other expenses along the way. Most individuals do not have the desire or the money to pursue a lawsuit like that filed by the CMA against Aetna. Thus, if the Supreme Court had agreed with the trial court and the appeals court in this case, Aetna's policy would likely never have been challenged.

Why is this case significant? The door is now wide-open for organizations to pursue unfair business practices claims. It will be interesting to see if the legislature or the voters in a proposition (backed by business interests of course) attempt to change this ruling by the Supreme Court.

As a final note, I should mention that no court has yet concluded that Aetna actually committed an unfair business practice or had an unfair business policy. The Supreme Court has only concluded that the case may proceed.

Clayton Valley Woman's Club Celebrates 50 Years of Service

The Clayton Valley Woman's Club celebrated 50 years of service at a luncheon held at the home of Priscilla Manlove, in Clayton, on June 13. GFWC Mount Diablo District President, Lynn Confetti-Ledbetter presented the club with a 50th Anniversary Certificate.

In 1973 Eldora Hoyer and Emmy Joakimson were inspired to invite local women to join them at Endeavor Hall in Clayton to form a woman's club. Thus, Clayton Woman's Club was organized and federated later that year. Joakimson became their Charter President, and the first meetings were held at Endeavor Hall.

Members immediately made decisions on fundraising and the process for donating the proceeds from those events. They formed committees, Special Interest Groups and Adventure Groups.

Those early years set standards and precedents for them to follow. The club's purpose was, and is, service. They have made friends and shared lots of fun, proud of their community accomplishments.

GFWC Clayton Valley Woman's offers a \$2,000

scholarship to a graduating female Diablo Valley College student transferring to a four-year college or university to pursue a degree.



CVWC 2023 Scholarship winner, Ana Hernandez and Scholarship Chairperson, Nancy Boyle

Ana Hernandez is the CVWC 2023 scholarship recipient. She received the scholarship for outstanding scholarship at DVC, community service and leadership. Ana has chosen UCLA to attend this fall with the goal of furthering her education and becoming a physician.

Since its beginning, CVWC has also given both hours and goods to many community organizations including Friendly Manor, Blue Star Moms, the Lion's Club, STAND and Share. Coins are collected at meetings and donated to Heifer International and Penny Pines.

Their "Adopt-A-School" program provides school supplies to Silverwood Elementary School in Concord which the teachers are excited to receive. Supplies worth over \$1100 were donated in 2022.

The Club meets the second Tuesday of every month (no meeting in August) at the

Clayton Community Church, 6055 Main St. For more information about the Clayton Valley Woman's Club go to www.claytonvalleywomansclub.org



CVWC Past Presidents attended their 50th Celebration. Front row, L-R: Sheila Driscoll, Connie Weimar, Shirley Boyd, Bev Woods, Merle Whitburn, Nancy Boyle, Linda Garden. Back row, L-R: Joyce Atkinson, Judy Disbrow, Joan Reed, Jan Rubiales, Priscilla Manlove. All pictures were provided by CVWC



Neuroplasticity
by Jessica Raam Foster,
NeurologyofPresence.com

Avoid Bad Habits in Your Nervous System

Whatever you are doing right now, it is changing you. That is neuroplasticity in a nutshell. This can be good news or bad news depending on what you are doing.

Your brain is designed to maximize your efficiency. Every time you engage in a new activity, your brain lays down a new neural connection. Every time you repeat that action, the connection becomes stronger, faster, and more efficient. That is how habits eventually become automatic.

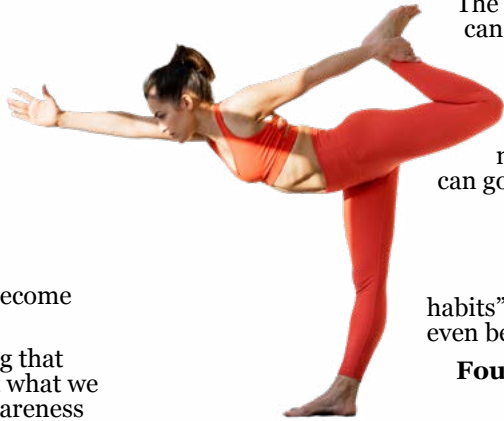
By understanding that brains get better at what we practice, a little awareness can help you create the changes you want.

Let's explore a real-life example. Right now, I am sitting in an awkward position typing this article on my phone. (I'm trying to multitask while I watch my kid at gymnastics.) My brain is adapting to this poor posture to make it easier for me to hold it next time.

Thankfully, with just a little awareness, I can adjust and choose something different. Now, I am sitting up straight with my phone at eye level — and now, practicing this posture. My brain will start to make it easier for me. I like that choice better because I know the difference my posture makes

when it comes to managing my pain and improving performance of all kinds.

This can obviously be applied to the conscious choices we make in a day, but what most people do not yet realize is that you may be practicing bad neural habits without you even realizing it.



The good news is you can improve these habits as well. Vision training, balance training, breath work, and mobility training can go a long way in improving the health of our brains and improve any "poor neural habits" that you may not even be aware of yet.

Four simple activities to avoid "bad habits" in your nervous system

1. Look up and look out often. There is a big world out there, look at it.
2. Breathe low into your belly and slow your exhale.
3. Practice Balance. It is not just about stability; it is a neural skill.
4. Move your joints, all 360 of them.

Cleaning up poor neural habits through these four simple tasks can make a huge difference in managing pain and overcoming performance limitations.



the concordian
by Edi Birsan
EdiBirsan@gmail.com

Homeless Strategic Plan: Ideals and Ideas / Goals and Gold

We are all aware of the massive homeless issue. There is not "a" cause of homelessness just as there is not "a" solution. There are many paths in and a few paths out. There are wonderful goals to eliminate people living on the street and the reality that there is a limited amount of 'gold.'

I am on the City of Concord's Homeless Strategic Plan Working Group to advise city staff, the consultant team, and the Council on the development of the Homeless Strategic Plan. In response to an agenda item for Goals, which should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound, I answered the group as follows.

My overall my concept is: Help those who want to be helped, help those that can be helped and can be convinced to be helped, and for the others, reduce the ability for self-harm and harm in the community until such time they can be advanced into the "help" categories above.

The Working Group has identified nine representative targets on which we can focus our homeless support. I have no idea what further will come within the Group or what the full City Council will act upon, but here are my starting ideas.

Veterans — We are indebted to this group. Establish a \$1 million grant to a veteran organization to obtain a house that would and operated by an organization to select/screen homeless vets and get them on a path out. Ongoing expenses would be the responsibility of the operating organization. If it fails, measurable by the success of transitions, the property will revert to the city.

LGBTQ+ — They are a particularly

high-risk group within the homeless community.

Similar to the Veterans plan, provide a house that would remain owned by the city and to be operated by an organization.

Organized Encampment Program — Budget \$1 million where the operating organization will secure a place and operate a facility for not more than 30 screened occupants. This money is to be for the purchase of land, structure and equipment. The organization must provide security, a place for services to arrive, a general community room, and habitable services including toilets, electric connection, water, microwave, and showers.

Safe Parking — Provide a series of grants, \$100,000 each and not more than \$500,000 total, to provide self-parking for up to 12 operable cars/RVs. It must operate only with an evening arrival, a morning departure, a general community room, screened occupants, full security, habitable services and ideally showers. There has been interest in this from some faith-based and non-profits.

Working Homeless — Establish a \$1 million support program for those currently working with the idea to subsidize what they currently earn with enough to get them into housing.

Work Program — This would be a two-tier program. Tier 1 would provide up to 30 people with a 20-hour week at \$20/hour paid in the form of vouchers for food, clothing, etc. The main idea is to develop basic soft skills like showing up on time. This may include a Blight Response team where workers will clean up the streets and roadways where previous camps made messes.

Tier 2 would assist businesses that employ these folks for full-time work with a \$10/hour subsidy by the city.

Rapid Response — The city has a small program of Rapid Rehousing that just started, and the targets high-priority cases such as families. We also need an emergency response for at least 20 sets of tents, supplies, which can be deployed during storms and disasters.

Mobile Service Team — Establish a mobile all-in service team of pop-ups and service trucks comprised of clothing, food, cleaning, showers, minor medical, clinical, placement, and other services. The goal is to be able to move to various places till we can have a functional idea of what works and where.

Business and Residents — We need to establish no tolerance for sleeping on sidewalks or camping in parks. Blight needs to be immediately dealt with using clean-up crews, perhaps from the Tier 1 work group. Crime and vandalism need to be stopped and pursued. We cannot have trespassing on private property or disturbances of normal community activities.

Mental Illness — We expect the wrap around services at the locations subsidized above to have accessible support. For those who do not want help, until we get a fast, efficient, and civil manner to get those who are dysfunctional and dangerous to themselves or others into treatment facilities, we have a problem.

We should pressure the County to make the 5150 holds mandatory to be at least 24 hours and up to 72 hours as the law allows. The county should be called upon to fund those beds as well as the facility they are in.

We also need to get the promised Care

Courts into action but those should not be financed by Concord.

CORE — Our outreach teams need to be expanded through the night. They are doing good things.

There are still other issues to consider. We need to have transportation capacity to bring folks to and from the Day/Warming Center Shelter. Storage lockers would help those people who are pushing around all their belongings in a shopping cart.

Sanitation services with public access are needed, but this has complications. For example, the bathrooms at Ellis Lake Park cost over \$350,000. How do we place them so as not to endorse troubling encampments?

The city has one-time dollars of \$5.2 million which is divided in two pools; \$2 million, part of which must be committed by December 21, 2024, and fully spent by 2026, and the rest of this one-time money can be doled out as needed.

But the city will have to decide what level of commitment it will make to ongoing funding and from where they are going to get those funds.

It is going to take an "all hands-on deck" approach with community volunteers, non-profits and businesses to make a dent in what we are facing. We know the ideal, we have ideas, we know the goal, but the limit is the gold.

As always if anyone wants to sit down and talk to me about this, I buy the coffee at Peet's at Oak Grove and Treat.

Write to me: EdiBirsan@gmail.com

Turning 65

Feeling overwhelmed with Medicare choices? Let me guide you! As your dedicated Medicare Insurance Broker, I provide expert advice tailored to your unique needs



Why Choose Me?

- ✓ In-depth Medicare Expertise ✓ Personalized Care
- ✓ Access to Various Insurance Plans ✓ Unbiased, Honest Advice
- ✓ FREE Consultation

Transition smoothly into your golden years with the right coverage.

Call today Walter Collazos 925-308-6898

We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all of your options. CA Lic #4154847

Perry's Knife and Tactical
The County's Largest Cutlery Store

NEW!
JP Bladeworks
Custom Kitchen Knives



The Coolest Gifts for Grads & Dads

Knife Sharpening!

3 for \$15.00!

With this ad, maximum value \$28
Single Knives \$7-\$11 each.
One coupon per customer.

925-270-3812
1815 Broadway St.
Concord, CA
www.knifeandtactical.com

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

Avast Ye! Celebrate National Meow Like a Pirate Day!

Talk Like a Pirate Day was established in 1995 and the cat-friendly spin-off “Meow Like a Pirate Day” was created in 2015. That day is coming on September 19.

All you cat lovers out there, celebrate National Meow Like a Pirate Day and post a photo of your kitty dressed like a pirate on social media with the hashtag #meowlikeapirateday.

Cats often rode along with pirates on the high seas for rodent control or as companion animals. The more superstitious dastardly sailors believed a black cat would keep away evil spirits. Conversely, if a cat was thrown overboard, storms would develop, and bad luck was on its way. Now, landlubber cat owners can do something fun on September 19. Here’s how:

Dress Up Your Kitty. This can be as simple as tying a bandana around their neck. If you want to go all out, you can create a homemade pirate hat, an eye patch, or other accessories. Please do not stress out or endanger your cat. This is supposed to be fun.



Is your kitty shy? No worries. Photoshop a new or existing photo or video. There are lots of ways to alter your cat’s pictures into a purr-fect pirate image.

Then, post your photo or video to your favorite social media. Remember to add the hashtag #meowlikeapirateday.

The real treasure of this day is to raise awareness about pet and cat overpopulation. Look into your local shelters to learn more about how you can help save a life by adopting a cat.

Luka (aka The Golden Boy) is an eight- to nine-year-old, neutered,

male domestic shorthair kitty who is being fostered by Community Concern for Cats (CC4C). This lovebug adores attention and is good with children. His former owners abandoned him when they moved. This handsome boy looks like a mini-mountain lion.

Luka is not good with other cats and is Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)-positive. FIV-positive housecats rarely show any signs of the disease, and usually live a normal lifespan. Because the virus is only spread by deep puncture wounds, it is not contagious to other cats from casual contact such as sharing food and water bowls, through litter boxes, or from grooming. Nonetheless, given Luka’s dislike of other cats and dogs, he would



Luka

do best as an only pet.

Luka prefers to be outdoors, so a catio home would be ideal. He uses a litter box when indoors but prefers the dirt and grass when in a catio. He is microchipped and up to date on shots. His adoption fee is \$100. If Luka isn’t what you’re looking for, check out www.communityconcernforcats.org for other available cats and kittens.

CC4C is an all-volunteer, non-profit cat rescue organization in Contra Costa County that offers abandoned and homeless cats’ medical rehabilitation, spay and neuter services, and foster care. They work to reduce the overpopulation of feral cats through an effective trap-neuter-return program. CC4C is supported entirely through donations from the public and fundraising, and grants.

Jill Hedgecock is a local author of several novels featuring animals. “Between Shadow’s Eyes” and “From Shadow’s Perspective” feature a ghost-seeing Doberman. “Rhino in the Room” and the sequel “Queen of the Rhino” include information about safari animals. All available on amazon.com.



aRt Cottage
by FROgard
www.artcottage.info

Coordinate Art to Complement Each Other



Oil painting “Rain in the Motherload” by Colin Hall is complemented by Lori Larks acrylic works (L-R) “The Lafayette Reservoir” and “Mount Diablo” grouping at the aRt Cottage Gallery.

There is something special about having an original piece hanging on your wall. The aRt Cottage is not a gallery where one artist has work on an assigned wall, with their pieces all together. There are a total of four Gallery rooms at aRt Cottage. Each Gallery room has its own feeling and flow where pieces are working together to complement each other. Every piece in the current CAA (Concord Art Association) exhibit at the aRt Cottage was curated and hung with thought and meaningful placement.

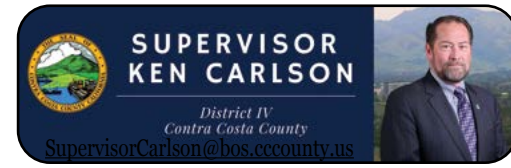
We want the general public and artists exhibiting to walk in and enjoy a coordinated and purposeful display which engages the viewers to use their minds to think, their eyes to see and their heart to feel. All the pieces entered to be on display must work together.

For example, one of the latest pieces currently hanging in the front Gallery room is an oil painting by Colin Hall. Below are three pieces in acrylic by Lori Larks. These are small in comparison to Hall’s larger piece, “Rain in the Motherload,” which

depicts a storm approaching a high point in the Sierras. The smaller pieces below are of three local scenes here in Contra Costa County, known as the flat land by Sierra residents. These paintings, “The Lafayette Reservoir”, “Sycamore Grove”, and “Mount Diablo” have unique styles and use different mediums, yet the grouping works and engages the viewer to think, feel, and ponder.

There will be an opportunity for the public to meet the artists at the next reception on Saturday, August 19, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The exhibit features over 20 CAA artists with over 80 paintings, photos, jewelry, and more. In addition, mingle with your friends in our Gardens and Tiny House Gift Shop and enjoy some live music drinks and refreshments. This is a free event, and all are welcome.

Several artists currently showing at the aRt Cottage have entered pieces in the current call for art at the de Young museum in San Francisco. They will hear in August if they have been accepted. aRt Cottage is cheering for them.



Foster Homes Needed for Contra Costa Animal Services

After the Fourth of July, Contra Costa Animal Services (CCAS) sees an influx of animals every year. To help our furry friends, I invite you to consider becoming a foster home with CCAS. You can foster for as little as five days. The best perk is that if you decide you want to adopt your foster, you get the first opportunity.



The animal shelter can be an overstimulating environment for our four-legged constituents and by welcoming one into your home, it allows them time to decompress and bring out their personalities. CCAS will provide training, information, supplies, food, medicine (if needed), and resources in the event your animal gets sick.

To be eligible for the Dog Foster Program or the Cat/Kitten Foster Program, individuals must be Contra Costa County residents and 18 years old or older. Since the goal of our foster program is to find forever homes for these animals, a potential adopter may want to meet your animal so volunteers must have a form of transportation to bring their animal to the shelter within 24 hours.

CCAS does its best to match the appropriate animal with each foster home. They do this through their application process which covers things like your experience, breeds you may prefer, type of housing, current pets, etc. So, if you have a specific animal in mind, be sure to mention that when you register.

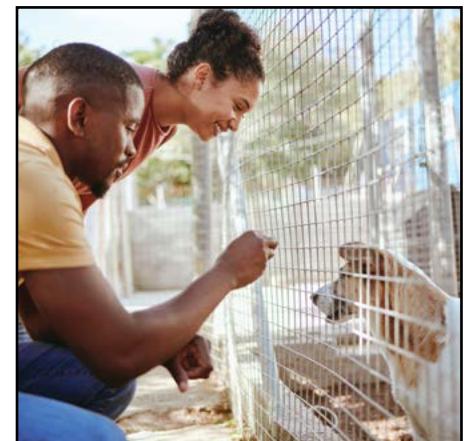
All dogs going to foster homes will

already be vaccinated and microchipped. Dogs of all sizes and ages are considered for the foster program.

Kitten foster responsibilities vary, depending on the age group you are fostering. Unweaned kittens need to be bottle-fed every two hours, while older kittens who eat solid foods may need cuddles and socialization as they grow big enough to be made available for adoption.

While fostering an animal, you will have the opportunity to experience the joys of having a furry companion. This will allow you the chance to share insights with CCAS on what that animal’s needs might be. Foster programs are a great way to help our community and to explore future pet ownership.

If you are interested in fostering, please visit www.ccasd.org for more information or to apply.



Concord is becoming more and more a place where art is visible to the public through murals and power utility boxes as well as pop up events. Concord Art Association has and is a big part of this art movement. ART in its many ways and

forms is really a big pART of one’s heART.

Art Cottage is located at 2238 Mt. Diablo St. in downtown Concord. Go to artcottage.info for more information.

Around Martinez



Mediterranean Food and Music Festival

“It’s almost here! Our very first Mediterranean Festival is around the corner!”

This is the announcement on St. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church Facebook page. Their excitement is in anticipation of their inaugural Mediterranean Food and Music Festival on August 5 and 6 from 12 noon to 9 p.m.

St. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church recently moved to Martinez, and this event is their way of introducing themselves and their culture to the community. Serving as the Vicariate for the Palestinian and Jordanian Christian Orthodox community, since its inception, the parish has grown significantly.

The two-day event will feature delicious authentic Mediterranean food, drinks, and desserts. Attractions include Hookah, kids’ activities, local vendors, music and other live entertainment.

Some of the dishes to enjoy will be traditional Jordanian dishes like Mansaf (rice,

meat and a yogurt sauce topped with almonds and/or pine nuts), knafeh (a traditional middle eastern dessert made of cheese, shredded dough, and topped with syrup and sometimes pistachios), falafel, falafel wrap, chicken kabobs, henna, middle eastern groceries, a flower cart and traditional jewelry vendors are planned.

If you are unfamiliar with Mediterranean foods, here are a few restaurants that serve it Sajj Mediterranean, Nick the Greek, and Pasha Mediterranean.

Come to 2370 Harbor View Drive, Martinez. Admissin and parking are free. (for more festival info, see their ad on page 11).



Inside Sts. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church new location, 2370 Harbor View Dr., Martinez.

Bentley’s Container Bar A Lively Addition to Downtown

A large and lively crowd attended the June 28 Grand Opening party at Bentley’s Container Bar. After Bentley’s brief two-week soft opening, the Chamber of Commerce officially launched this martini bar with the ceremonial ribbon cutting.



Bentley’s is the newest addition to Martinez’s trendy main street. Themed after Martinez’s history of Joe DiMaggio, Marilyn Monroe, John Muir, and most importantly; being the Home of The Martini, Bentley’s will be creating and serving up signature cocktails and martinis.

During the summer, Bentley’s will operate in the back patio of downtown’s Market & Main, nestled between Five Suns Brewing and States Coffee, 609 Ward Street.

The outdoor patio features a full bar, wine, tables and chairs, lights & music, and bar bites. It also allows for pets.



If you are interested in more than bar bites, walk inside Market and Main for these other dining options: self-pouring beer taps, Shuck It Oyster Bar, Out The Dough- Desserts Pizza Amore, Banh Mi & Rolls – Vietnamese Cuisine, La Fritanguera- Nicaraguan Cuisine. Foodies will be interested in Salt & Fig Marketplace.

Bentley is operating out of a converted shipping container placed on the patio next to Five Suns Brewing Co. They have posted a video of the delivery and conversion of the shipping container into an elegant bar on their Facebook page, facebook.com/homeofthemartini. It is fascinating viewing.

In the winter, Bentley will operate the full bar inside Market and Main on the Mezzanine overlooking Main Street.

Hours Tuesday-Thursday 4 – 10:00 p.m, Friday 4-Midnight, Saturday 11:00 a.m. – Midnight, and Sundays 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Improved Notification, Response Seen in Latest Refinery Coke Incident

by Craig Lazzeretti, Martinez News and Views

For the second time in less than two weeks, a release of “coke dust” was reported by the Martinez Refining Company (MRC). But unlike the July 11 incident that briefly caused community alarm, the July 22 incident showed no evidence that any of the coke dust (which is chemically similar to charcoal, according to health experts, and poses low risks to human health) traveled off the refinery grounds.

And unlike the failures and delays in activating the county’s Community Warning System seen in previous incidents, most notably the Thanksgiving “spent catalyst” release, there appeared to be no delay in notifying county hazardous materials staff to this incident. County hazmat and Bay Area Air Quality Management District crews responded after being alerted to the release at 6:04 p.m. and found no evidence of dust in surrounding areas, according to a Contra Costa Health post on Facebook.

In its own Facebook post, MRC said it activated a “Level 1” alert (which is the lowest level, indicating that no off-site health impacts are anticipated) out of “an abundance of caution.” “Based on community monitoring results, the release was contained on-site without any off-site impacts,” the refinery said.

While it is concerning that MRC had yet another dust incident at its facility (albeit a minor one), it is definitely good news that, finally timely notification occurred about such an incident and that MRC acted out of an abundance of caution despite having no evidence that the dust had traveled off site. As many

will recall, the reason MRC gave for failing to activate the warning system during the significant Thanksgiving night release that blanketed the community with 20 to 24 tons of toxic dust was that it did not know that the spent catalyst had traveled off site.

Although the coke dust incidents have involved a different refinery process, MRC said in the wake of the catalyst release that it would no longer wait for evidence of a release beyond the refinery’s fence line before activating the warning system in cases where an equipment malfunction or process upset occurs that could result in such an outcome.

At the City Council meeting, MRC Manager Daniel Ingram apologized to city leaders and the community for another dust release from the refinery and another failure to quickly notify the public and health authorities of the July 11 incident.

“This is not what we are about, this is not the history of the site, this is not who we want to be moving forward,” Ingram told the council during public comment. “We are going to work very, very hard to be better moving forward. That is my commitment to you.”

Meanwhile, County Supervisor John Gioia told me that he is planning to call for a special assessment of the safety culture at the refinery to try to get to the bottom of why so many incidents have occurred in recent months.

(Edited from its original post of July 24 on Martinez News and Views)



You don’t need A-Lotto \$ to afford a new AUTO!

There’s no better time than **NOW** to get approved. Best of all, we’ve got you covered!

Check out the APR’s on New and Used!!

www.SWSFCU.org or Call 925-228-4545



*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Rates of 4% and 4.5% reflect the as low as rate. Current and new members eligible. Loan amount and terms subject to approval; your rate may be different depending on loan amount, term, credit score and other factors. Rates are subject to change. Membership eligibility requirements apply.

Martinez Housing Market Remains Hot

by Courtney Ayers, Breaking Ground Real Estate, Dre #02121181

In looking at the most recent MLS reports, even with rates on the rise, the housing market remains hot in Martinez. There is simply far more demand than supply. According to the local market report posted on the MLS, in the two months of June and July, 68 homes were sold in Martinez. The least expensive was a two-bedroom condo selling for \$328,000. The highest price sale was a four-bedroom home that sold for \$2,743,000. The median list price was \$849,000, up 0.1% over June while the median days on market was 20, down from the previous 22 days.



will likely continue to see an active market.

While we saw a small dip in the number of homes sold in July compared to June as rates rose, the market still saw strong demand over supply. This summer snapshot of higher median price and shorter days on the market are indicative of the healthy real estate market in Martinez.

(MLS information should be deemed reliable but not guaranteed, all representations are approximate, and individual verification is recommended)

Where the market is headed is never a certainty and no one has a crystal ball. However, what remains clear is that demand for homes is continually outpacing supply and until there is a shift that supply exceeds demand we

Quick Stats

- Homes sold from June 1- July 27: 68
- Lowest Priced Sale: \$348,000
- Highest Priced Sale: \$2,743,000
- Median Listing price: \$849,000
- Median Days on Market: 20 days

MARTINEZ CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS:

13TH ANNUAL



MARTINEZ CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MARTINI SHAKE OFF

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 16TH 6:30PM - 10PM

TICKETS INCLUDE

- MULTIPLE COMPETING BARTENDERS
- FULL COURSE MEAL
- 2 COCKTAIL TICKETS
- LIVE BAND / ENTERTAINMENT

525 Henrietta Street, Martinez, CA 94553 // GET TICKETS HERE martinezmartini.com/



TICKETS

WWW.MARTINEZMARTINI.COM
(925) 228-2345

Your Local Real Estate Agents

Serving Buyers and Sellers with Expertise, Honesty and Passion



We aren't just Agents we are proud members of the community. We love to host fun community Events and hope to see you at one soon!

Events

- FREE Movie Nights
- FREE Wine Tastings
- Monthly Giveaways
- Community Events

Full Service

- Sellers and Buyers agents
- Consultations
- Marketing
- Light staging
- FREE Home Valuations

Walks

- Join us Wednesdays for walks around the region

FREE Home Valuations!

For your Current and Future Real Estate Needs

925-818-9649



Angelica Martinez



Courtney Ayers

(925) 705-3135
angelica@BreakingGroundRE.com
License DRE #01716724
Broker, SRES, MRP, epro

(925) 818-9649
courtney@BreakingGroundRE.com
License DRE #02121181
Real Estate Buyer and Seller Agent

Council Passes Port Chicago 50 Resolution

by Craig Lazzeretti, Martinez News and Views

Though a largely symbolic gesture, the council passed a resolution expressing support for local, state and federal efforts to exonerate the “Port Chicago 50” in connection with the World War II munitions disaster at the Port Chicago naval base in central Contra Costa County, an issue that has been spearheaded over the years by former Congressman George Miller and current U.S. Rep. Mark DeSaulnier.

“After all these years, their good names have not been cleared,” Chandler said of the Port Chicago 50 in summarizing the resolution to the council. “The tragedy of this was really two-fold. It wasn’t just the explosion and massive loss of life and devastation of that, but it’s the injustice that occurred thereafter for these men who were lucky enough to survive that and refused to work and were punished for it.”

The explosion was the worst home-front disaster of the war, killing 320 American naval personnel, 200 of whom were Black enlisted men. When 50 Black sailors refused after the disaster to return to work citing unsafe conditions and inadequate training at the facility, they were court-martialed for mutiny and sentenced to 17 years in prison with hard labor. Though most of the 50 were given a general discharge from the Navy under honorable conditions after the war ended, their convictions were never rescinded.

The resolution adopted by the council reads in part:

Section 1. The City Council of the City of Martinez does hereby support these and all efforts to exonerate the Port Chicago 50 and recognize their service to our country.

Section 2. The City Council of the City of Martinez recognizes the efforts that this case presents in our nation’s struggle for social justice, racial equity, and workers’ rights.

Section 3. The City Council of the City of Martinez affirms support for all future efforts which urge the President and Congress of the United States to take all necessary actions to restore honor to and rectify the mistreatment by the United States Military of any sailors who were unjustly blamed for and convicted of mutiny after the Port Chicago disaster on July 17, 1944.

Though the resolution was a routine item on the council’s consent calendar that is not generally discussed at meetings, City Manager Michael Chandler was asked by Mayor Brianne Zorn to summarize the issue and the history of the event following a request by a member of the public.

Business Bocce Tournaments Raises \$7,000 for Local Youth Organizations



1st Place Martinez Business Bocce Tournament representing Martinez Yacht Club. Hottie Yachties, Joanne Drumbor, Drue Kendell, Kenneth Perry, Marcus Wright

Congratulations to the Martinez Yacht Club for winning the Martinez Business Bocce Tournament July 22, hosted by Martinez Bocce Federation in partnership with Martinez Chamber of Commerce.

The tournament was designed to promote local business comradery, introduce new players to the game of bocce, and raise funds to support three local youth organizations.

At \$300 entry per team plus additional donations, unofficially, the

event raised approximately \$7,000 which will benefit the Martinez Boys and Girls Club, Juvenile Hall Auxiliary, and Martinez Sea Scouts.

Twenty teams of four were entered from a mix of local businesses and organizations. The Martinez Yacht Club had entered three teams. A round-robin format narrowed the field to an 8-team elimination playoff.

The champion was Martinez Yacht Club's "Hottie Yachties" team.

Farewell to Extraordinary Philanthropist, Dr. Carol Weyland Conner

Dr. Carol Weyland Conner, 80, a psychologist, teacher, and the murshida, or spiritual director, of Sufism

Reoriented (sufismreoriented.org) an American spiritual school founded in 1952 by Meher Baba that

honors all spiritual traditions and the essential unity of all life, passed away peacefully at her home in

Walnut Creek on April 22, 2023.

In recent years Dr. Conner won national prominence and numerous civic awards for the volunteer service programs she founded, Following Francis and White Pony Express, which seek to help those on the margins of society move closer to the mainstream.

"There is a simple solution that can end the problems of hunger and marginalization for good — a new paradigm: voluntary shared abundance," she explained in a talk to Women Forward International in 2021.

"In this model of life, responsibility for helping the family of man is assumed by everyone, or in the phrase the White Pony Express often uses, 'All of us taking care of all of us.' The idea of 'shared abundance' has caught on like wildfire and the program has never stopped growing."

The daughter of Rudolph Harry Weyland, a musician and educator, and LaJune Arletta Wendt Weyland, an elementary school teacher, Dr. Conner studied English literature at the University of California in Berkeley, French literature at the Sorbonne in Paris, and medieval studies at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. The sudden grave mental illness of her older brother caused her to switch her field to psychology in the hope that she could aid him and others so afflicted.

She received her doctorate in clinical psychology from Catholic University in Washington, D.C., in 1976. After teaching for several years at the George Washington University School of Medicine, Dr. Conner went into private practice as a therapist, practicing for twenty-five years in Walnut Creek during which time she was also a volunteer counselor with Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity in nearby San Francisco.

Dr. Conner learned of Meher Baba and Sufism Reoriented in the mid-1970s, joining Sufism Reoriented in 1979. In 2001, her predecessor, Dr. James MacKie, appointed her as the murshida, or spiritual director of the group, a position she held for nearly 22 years until her passing.

Dr. Conner was tireless in her efforts to care for the underserved, downtrodden and homeless, who she saw as her own family. An important part of her work has been to develop new models of community service, particularly in Contra Costa County, Washington, D.C., and Myrtle Beach, S.C., where Dr. Conner maintained homes. Programs she started on a small scale with volunteers from Sufism

Reoriented have been enthusiastically

embraced by the wider community.

In Contra Costa County, she formed White Pony Express in 2013, to gather surplus fresh food from markets and restaurants and deliver it to service agencies that feed the hungry in the county. White Pony Express is now one of California's largest food rescue programs and distributes new clothing and other goods to the underserved.

In 2018, Dr. Conner arranged for White Pony Express to gather and transport food, clothing and envelopes of cash on a regular basis to the survivors of the devastating Camp Fire in Butte County

for many months. This involved 182 volunteers making over 90 trips to the disaster area, delivering over 58,000 pounds of food and more than 1,800 articles of clothing to displaced community members. For this work, she was given the prestigious Andrus Award for community service by California AARP in 2019.

More recently, owing directly to Dr. Conner's concern for the people of Ukraine, White Pony Express began gathering and shipping emergency supplies of non-perishable food, clothing, and medical supplies to Ukrainian refugees in Europe.

Dr. Conner also founded Following Francis in 2011, inspired by the values of Francis of Assisi and his ideal of universal brotherhood. Following Francis volunteers staged musical dramas on the life and universal message of Francis, colorful Umbrian-style outdoor "fares" and other activities for nearly 15,000 children, first in Bay Area cities and eventually in Washington, D.C., New York City and Baltimore.

Dr. Conner conceived these programs with the aim of nurturing feelings of kindness, courage, and self-worth in children through loving experiences that would nourish their hearts.

Dr. Conner has been honored with the Jefferson Award from San Francisco TV station KPIX, the "Threads of Hope" Award from Diablo Magazine, she was named a Hometown Hero by the Contra Costa Times, and on April 8, 2023, two weeks before her passing, she was given the Soroptimist Ruby Award for Women Helping Women.

According to Dr. Conner, "We have reached a point in universal history where mankind, as a whole, can begin to realize the fundamental truth that we all share one life. Human brotherhood is not something to aspire to, it is the central fact of our existence. In this beautiful world we share, love knows all, does all, and is the most powerful force in the universe."

Dr. Conner's husband Gary, a retired attorney and former executive director of White Pony Express, passed away last year. She is survived by her stepchildren Marika Beck and Robin Conner; grandchildren Talin, Jonah, Cora, Sophie, and Viviani; her niece Lara Weyland; grandniece Reina and grandnephew Nico.



Main Street Arts Gallery



Main Street Arts Gallery promises to be jammed with lots of extra art by its member artists in August. This would be the time to slip into some comfortable shoes to find that missing work during your treasure hunt. Success or not, the browsing alone will be enjoyable. You can go to the website to sneak a peek at the upcoming art and shopping opportunities.

www.Mainstreetarts.net

In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from Claycord.com and Other Sources

Dutch Bros. Coffee In Martinez

Opening Soon

The drive-thru coffee shop, located at 3455 Alhambra Ave. (across from Safeway), has been under construction for several months, but will open soon.



CoCo Farms™ CONCORD

2366 STANWELL CIRCLE
CONCORD, CA 94520

KITCHEN GOURMET™

BAKING DROPS

**WE MAKE IT,
WE BAKE IT**



ENJOYTHEFARM.COM

MUST BE 21+ State License #C 12-0000444-LIC