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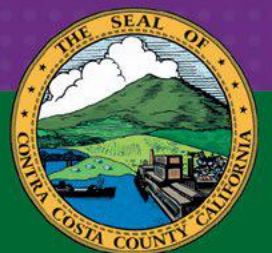
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ELECTIONS — MORE SECURE THAN EVER
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Local Former Secret Service Reveals Agency Missteps in Trump Shooting

by David King

Eric Enos of Concord was a former Secret Service agent for 11 years. Some readers may recall his column "Tales of the Secret Service" in the Diablo Gazette from 2016 through 2018.

In his initial article to Diablo Gazette in July 2016, he writes, "It is protection that most people think of when they think of the Secret Service. For me it was by far the most interesting and unique aspect of the job and the sole reason I became a Special Agent with the Secret Service. Protection operations are extremely detailed, time consuming, and often require days and even weeks away from home."

After the shooting incident of former President Trump, traditional and social media outlets were offering conflicting versions of the incident. Will we ever know the whole story? I decided to ask Enos his assessment of the event from the perspective of his experience and training. We spoke for hours, and this is a summation of that discussion.

"I saw it on TV like everybody else. I'm just speaking from my time at the service and my training and knowledge. My first observation was that I was really impressed that the agents performed exactly the way we were trained once shots were fired. Trump goes to the ground and the agents immediately form a human shield on top of him with their bodies. I was extremely impressed with that and the speed with which it took place. The first two agents got there probably before he even made it all the way to the ground. That was exactly how we were trained.

Once they made the decision to evacuate, their job was to do just that, shield and evacuate, not fight. You have other assets that are there to eliminate the threats. In addition to the counter snipers, you have agents posted all around the stage and throughout the event, as well as other local and state law enforcement.

But the evacuation was where I saw the first breakdown of the way we train. There was a call that came out, "shooter down." Well, that's one shooter. You don't know what other danger is out there. There could be multiple shooters. But once they heard that call, they decided to evacuate to an armored suburban which should have happened immediately and swiftly. Several times, Trump's head was exposed while pumping his fist multiple times. That should never have happened. Protectees should never be exposed like that. Agents are trained to push the head down and keep it down and get him out of there shielding him with their bodies the entire way. But Protectees are also informed of those response tactics.

Was protocol not followed as far as the setup? I seriously doubt it. The largest part of work and effort that goes into a site like this, a rally, is not on the day of the event. It's all the advanced work that took place days before the event: all the determination of what assets will be needed, where they're going to be needed, where are areas of opportunity for a would-be assailant or assassin. Whether it be a physical attack with a knife rushing the stage or a shooter. All that is mitigated with the advance work. I heard they had five up to eight days for this rally, which is ample time to do the advance work correctly. Many times, during a campaign, you may only have two days to do an advance.

Generally speaking, there is a coordination of three circles of protection around the protectee. The inner circle is primarily comprised of Secret Service agents, shift agents who remain with Trump, and post standers in and around the crowd and surrounding areas.



The second ring of security is going to be comprised of agents and local law enforcement. The outer ring is primarily local and state police posted out on

the fringes of the area.

We have meetings with our agents and law enforcement at the end of every day to discuss every site and every element of the visit and to see what changes have taken place.

This is all standard for any site. Part of that advanced work is, of course, the counter sniper team. Their advance work identifies all the areas of potential opportunity for a would-be sniper, high ground, line-of-sight to the podium and to where the protectee is going to be. Everything is put on a map and on a grid.

You do not have to have a person posted on every rooftop, but you have assets on the ground making sure nobody is accessing a rooftop. So how that breakdown happened, I don't know. We won't know, I guess, officially until the FBI investigation is finished."

"He's spotted on the roof. What should have happened at that point?" I asked.

"Well, the breakdown began with him even being up there. Event goes and people outside of the main event observed a suspicious person with a range finder and gave a description to local law enforcement. Under normal communication, they are trained to pass that information on to the Secret Service command post.

The Secret Service Command post is comprised of a representative from every law enforcement entity that is part of that visit. Local police, state police, sheriffs, any military assets that may be there, as well as a fire marshal or representative for the fire department, ambulance, etcetera. Everybody that's assigned to a protective level has a representative in that command post operating on different communication frequencies, and it all comes together in the command post.

So, I guess, it's safe to assume that the Secret Service knew there was a "person of suspicion" because of this range finder. The vast majority of Secret Service events and rallies will have persons identified as possibly suspicious until it's been investigated and identified.

They get a call that there's a suspicious person in a certain area. They respond to that area and attempt to identify the person. And then they will question the person or take whatever action is deemed necessary to either confirm or debunk the suspicion. Mind you, that would not have the Secret Service prevent Trump from taking the stage. It was suspicious person, not an identified threat — enormous difference in terminology.

Now, the counter sniper teams have eyes on all those areas and you have a person on a low-level rooftop with an unobstructed line of sight to the podium and the protectee. That was definitely a failure somewhere. There is no logical or acceptable explanation for that.

It is my understanding that the threat was not identified until the time that the shooter began firing. They should have been able to see him crawling up the rooftop. That is unacceptable. That was another failure or breakdown.

I was never involved in a situation where we had an actual attack. And most



agents aren't. That is the point of all the advance work, communication systems and working with other law enforcement agencies, to gather as much intelligence as possible. And that's why this is such a rare event."

"Do you think it was the right move that the head of the department should resign?"

"Ultimately, yes, because of the way it was handled afterwards. Why the Service didn't get in front of this immediately is concerning. There was a press conference that evening and the Secret Service was not present there. That silence from the Secret Service was deafening.

It took her to testify before Congress

nine days later to start trying to get some answers, but her answers were vague.

Every site is unique, but all are fundamentally planned this way. There's just not going to be a logical or an acceptable excuse for what happened."

While Enos was never involved in an actual attack, in his column published November 2016, he recalls an incident in a Bush/Cheney rally in Fresno where agents spotted a person in a trench coat behaving suspiciously among an excited crowd of 8,000. How that ended may surprise you. I have reposted that article on our website, diablogazette.com. You will find it interesting reading.



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Each neighborhood plans its own event. Examples include: Block parties, Festivals, Parades, Cookouts, Youth activities, Public information events

August Verandah Unplugged, 7 - 9 PM. •August 7, Jinx Jones, •August 14, Big Blu Soul Revue, •August 21, Carlos Xavier, •August 28, Salvage Title. The Veranda 2001-2003 Diamond Blvd, Concord

August 17, Pride in the Plaza, Todos Santos Plaza

2175 Willow Pass Rd., Concord

August 17, Rancho Days, 5-9 PM, Ranch Hand Dinner – Hamburger or Hot Dog, Beans, Green Salad, Drinks, Ice Cream music by “unconcord” (Country Band) Kids games, picture taking opportunities, meet your neighbors! Tickets: \$25 per person. \$50 per family. www.concordhistorical.org/

August 24, 2024 Pickleball Palooza in Concord, 9:30 AM - 1:30 PM, Join us for a fun-filled day of pickleball and help support Cancer Support Community’s mission! All proceeds from this event will go towards CSC’s programs, making a difference in the lives of those affected by cancer. Willow Pass Community Park, Concord.

FARMERS MARKETS

Pacific Coast Farmers Market
<https://www.pcfma.org>
Todos Santos Plaza.
Tuesdays, 10AM- 2PM Year Round
Thursdays 4PM thru September 26

MARTINEZ

EVENTS

August 6, National Night Out Waterfront Park, Join your neighbors to meet our some of our finest local law enforcement and first responders at National Night Out Martinez Waterfront Park, Dance to The Eagles music by the Midnight Flyer Band, Food trucks and shaved ice, Safety demonstrations from local law enforcement agencies, 245 N. Court Street, Martinez.

August 18, 53rd Annual Art in the Park, 10 AM -5 PM, Come and enjoy fine arts and crafts created by over 60 local artists, along with live music, food trucks and beverages including wine and beer. FREE. Susana Park, 701-999 Susana St, Martinez

August 24, Hauntinez for Martinez, 6 PM, An unforgettable evening at Hauntinez, our inaugural end of summer Halloween

spectacular fundraiser! This year’s theme is inspired by the Haunted Mansion, and all our incredible decorations will be up for auction. 516 Ferry St., Martinez

FARMERS MARKETS

Pacific Coast Farmers Market
<https://www.pcfma.org>
Sundays, 9AM-1PM, Year Round.

LIBRARY

August 10, Friends of the Martinez Library: Quarterly Book Sale, 10:30AM – 4:00PM, Fill your bag for \$10.00. **Martinez Library, 740 Court St, Martinez (925) 646-9900** <https://ccclib.org>. www.friendsoftthemartinezlibrary.com

PLEASANT HILL

EVENTS

Thru September 1, Concerts By The Lake 2024 Every other Sunday. Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM By The Lake at City Hall, Pleasant Hill City Hall. 100 Gregory Ln, Pleasant Hill. •August 4- Hot for Teacher •August 18, 2024: The Uninvited •September 1, 2024: Zebop! Pleasant Hill City Hall Lawn 100 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill

Thru September, Thursdays, Downtown Pleasant Hill Annual Summer Concert Series, 7 PM - 9PM. •August 15th ~ Andre Thierry (Accordian Soul), •September 19th ~ Foreverland (Michael Jackson Tribute Band)

August 3, Fun in the Sun Celebration, 1-3 PM, FREE Fun in the Sun Celebration! The event will feature a Face Painter and a Balloon Artist! Kids can also color their own flowerpot and pot their own succulent. In the plaza near Urban Plates.

August 17, The Maine Event, 6:00-9:00 PM, Celebrate the end of summer with a traditional outdoor Maine Lobster boil & dance party by Napa Valley Lobster Co. West Lawn in Pleasant Hill Park, next to the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Ln., Pleasant Hill. pleasanthillrec.com/35/Events

August 19, Singers Wanted For Fall 2024 Season. The Diablo women’s Chorale needs singers for their Fall 2024 season. Auditions will be held on Monday, August 19 at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, 3051 Putnam Blvd. Pleasant Hill, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. by appointment. Auditions are open to all female voice parts. 925-899-5050, or hickmandg@gmail.com. www.diablowomenschorale.org/

WALNUT CREEK

EVENTS

August Broadway Plaza, Summer Concert Series, 7PM, August 1: Featuring 24K Magic - the #1 tribute band to Bruno Mars, August 8, Featuring Evolution - the ultimate tribute to Journey, August

Calendar continues pg. 18

CLAYTON

EVENTS

Thru August 31, Concerts in the Grove. 6 - 8:30 PM. •July 6 Strange Brew 60’s-90’s Hits •July 20 Lavay Smith Red Hot Skillet Lickers 1930 s-1940’s swing & blues. •August 3 Pride & Joy R&B and Motown

LIBRARY

August 7, Clayton Knit & Crochet, 10:00AM – 1:00PM, This program meets on the first Wednesday of each month.

August 7, Dance Around the World with Nikola Clay, 2:00PM – 2:45PM, Children and their families are invited to experience a variety of cultures through the universal language of music and dance.. **Clayton Library, 6125 Clayton Rd.** For more information please call 925-673-0659. <https://ccclib.org>

CONCORD

EVENTS

Thru - September 26, Music and Market series every Thursday(except July 4). •Aug 1 – Steve Snyder’s Big Band (Playing the best from Concord Jazz Festival) •August 8: Aja Vu, Steely Dan & Chicago music •August 15: Maya Latin Roots •August 22: RagDolls: All-female tribute to Aerosmith •August 29: Mitch Polzak & the Royal Deuces, The Greasy Gills: Country & Rockabilly • September 5: The Big Jangle: Tom Petty Tribute

Thru October 12, Salvio Street Night Market, 4 PM - 10PM, Every Second Saturday, Local Artisans, Music, Beer, 2151 Salvio Street, Concord.

August 1, 7, Concord Jazz Around Town, 6:30-8:30 PM, The Concord Jazz Festival Started As A Small Outdoor Music has Since Grown Into One Of The Premier Jazz Events In The Country. Todos Santos Plaza, 2175 Willow Pass Road Concord

August 3,4, The East Bay Sports Cards & Collectibles Show. 10 AM - 5 PM, 125+ Vendors, Sports cards, Sports memorabilia, Autographs, Pokemon, TCG, Funko Collectibles & More, Concord Plaza Hotel, 45 John Glen Dr., Concord. www.eastbaycardshow.com

August 6, National Night Out,

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Jim Diaz
Mayor, Clayton
jdiaz@claytonca.gov

Clayton Mayor

A Letter from the Mayor

August 2024

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Here Are Some Highlights For The City Of Clayton.

There was no Council Meeting on Tuesday, July 18, 2024. Our next scheduled City Council Meeting is set for Tuesday, August 20, at 6:00 P.M. in Hoyer Hall.

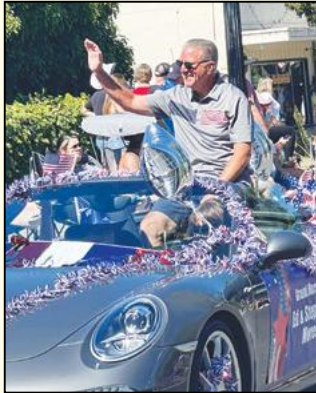
The City Council is currently deeply involved in interviewing Candidates for City Manager. This process is moving along very well, and we should have a finalist selected soon. We will keep you posted.

The City of Clayton also celebrated Independence Day, July 4th, with our annual Parade downtown which was very well attended. The Parade featured Ed Moresi as Grand Marshall. The Parade also continued the celebration of Clayton's 60th Anniversary on its Incorporation.

Also, many from our community started the morning of July 4th at the Clayton Valley Rotary Pancake Breakfast at Endeavor Hall. All in attendance enjoyed wonderful Pancakes and Sausage. As usual, it was an excellent way to start the day's events.

Our 17th Annual Saturday Concerts In The Grove season continues its fantastic season. The entertainment has been excellent and the attendance has been very good. The season opened with Leo Vigil and the Rockin' Horns, then, R.W. Smith and the California Cowboys, and the Mixed Nuts. The July 6 concert was cancelled out of safety precautions due to

the extreme heat. Strange Brew was set to perform that night. We have not yet determined if we can schedule them at the end of this season or have them return in 2025. We will keep you informed.



In any event, be sure to come out and join us at The Grove Park to attend at least one of the remaining three Concerts. The complete Concert Schedule is available on the City website.

Finally, the 2024 Clayton Classic Car show completed its first four shows on July 24. Each Car Show was completely filled with many great classic cars and car enthusiasts. The final Classic Car Show will be held on Saturday, September 21, and will feature many "Low Rider" cars on display. We also plan to have a Mariachi Band perform to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs between September 15 through October 15.

As your mayor, I will continue to work hard to maintain Clayton's small-town charm and character while running an open and transparent local government. You can reach out to me directly with any questions or concerns at 925-673-7316 or JimD@claytonca.gov.

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,
Jim



Edi Birsan
Concord Mayor
cityofconcord.org

Concord Mayor

Power Play Politics - No Does Not Always Mean No

In the course of city council considerations and votes, it is often thought that the vote settles things. In some cases, it does but at times, it is simply the continuation of negotiations. wherein one side of the issue at hand is making a statement to force another look at the issue. or another step to reach a desired resolution. In politics, "No" does not always mean "No."

It often means "try again," "Come back with more clarity", or "I really was not kidding when I asked for 'X'."

In Concord we recently had just a situation in which what was thought to be a slam dunk approval was shot down 4-1. Those who voted "No" had various reasons: an alleged verbal agreement was not committed in writing, a state mandates were offering conflicting guidance, review project costs to taxpayers, and so forth.

After this vote, we had seven days to submit financial filings that required a positive vote to receive millions of dollars in funding from the state to support this project. There was a noisy scramble to add in what should have been presented in the first place. The key here is that the power play by the four No votes left open the possibility of a redo. Conditions were then met and six days later, a 5-0 vote moved the project forward.

Sometimes the power play does not lead to a resolution and is simply left on the table (or the dais) because there is no apparent willingness or is simply not feasible to reconsider. Some time ago, there was a case where a committee of two councilmembers worked for six months on a proposed allocation of funds and made a stern recommendation to the full council. The Brown Act prevents any of the



Photo: Jane Tyska/Bay Area News Group

other councilmembers from having a private discussion on the project with those two whose intense efforts cemented their support for their recommendation.

In the public meeting, two other councilmembers had opposite views and were intent on their positions. A compromise was presented by the third remaining councilmember to which neither side would agree. In a power play, the councilmember then suggested taking the compromise or the vote would support the original recommendation. The vote went down 3 to 2 in favor of the original recommendation and things moved on.

One of the hardest things in California politics is to make a power play to force a moderate compromise. This forces a situation where we in California oscillate between extremes.

What makes this compromise play harder to pull off repeatedly is that both extremes clobber the one in the middle. We are left with the gathering of raw power on one side or the other and little capacity for a real power play in the middle to make things work in the classic nature of politics.

Views rambled on here are of Edi Birsan personally and not to be confused as part of any cabal trying to subtly convince you of anything that you are not determined to do. That much power no one has, really. Moan and Groan to EdiBirsan@gmail.com



CC Library's Adult Literacy Program, Project Second Chance

Offers free, confidential basic English reading, writing, spelling and conversation instruction

Contra Costa County Library has a wealth of free resources and programs that help improve the lives of residents throughout our County. A trip to the library is no longer simply borrowing a book. Our libraries are community centers where there is something for everyone – kids on summer break can receive a free lunch and watch a movie, numerous cultural festivals, a secondary classroom where everyone can learn new skills, or where community members can learn to read.

One of the primary strategic goals of the County Library is to champion personal and community engagement in literacy, learning, and reading to enrich lives. Project Second Chance (PSC), our adult literacy program, is one program that helps achieve this goal. Founded in 1984, PSC has helped more than 6,500 community

members accomplish their personal literacy goals related to family, career, community, and self-development.

PSC provides free, confidential, one-on-one basic English reading, writing, spelling, and conversation instruction to adults who are 16 and older and are not in high school. PSC is designed for adults who read or write below a 6th-grade level in English. People from various backgrounds and age groups have joined PSC for reasons such as never having the opportunity to learn to read, self-improvement, wanting to read to their grandchildren, and overcoming dyslexia. The program allows students to set their own specific goals, such as passing the General Educational Development Exam (GED), taking the California Driver's License Exam or furthering their economic growth.

Project Second Chance provides a fulfilling learning and teaching environment. Learners and their tutor meet for 90-minute lessons, twice a week, for at least six months. The one-on-one sessions provide a comfortable atmosphere where learners have the privacy to express their reading skills without embarrassment and, over time, increase their confidence. And tutors have an opportunity to directly impact our community, develop their professional skills and work with their learner to find material that resonates. Both tutors and learners have described PSC as fun, inspirational, a cultural exchange, and a way to form friendships. It is a win for everyone who participates in the program; a true second chance.

PSC serves adults in all communities represented by the Contra Costa County Library

system and is currently looking for volunteer tutors. No teaching experience is necessary, and tutors should feel comfortable with their own English reading, writing, and spelling. PSC staff provides a comprehensive training program and ongoing support for tutors.

If you or someone you know is struggling with reading or writing, or you would like to explore becoming a tutor with Project Second Chance, please visit <https://ccclib.org/psc/>.

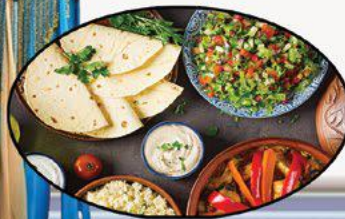


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Kids' Favorites. Adults, Too!

Making a meal from recipes my kids' love does not mean the adults won't like it. I look for recipes that can be made "plain" most of the way, holding back on some of the more "adult" ingredients to add later.

One of my kids does not like classic potato salad but loves baked potatoes with sour cream. Here is a potato salad recipe that uses all the favorite toppings for a baked potato. It can be served warm or cold, and the main flavor ingredients can all be served on the side.



LOADED POTATO SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- 5 large rose potatoes
- 16 oz. sour cream
- 1 bunch chives
- 1 cup bacon bits
- 2 cups cheese
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Parsley or dill, (optional) to taste

DIRECTIONS

Cut potatoes into small, bite size pieces. Boil in water for 10-15 minutes until very soft. Stir in remaining ingredients. Serve warm or cold.

Got a vegetarian in the group; serve the bacon bits in a small dish on the side. Another one hates onion; the onions make a great "optional" garnish.

Yield: 8 servings

Grilled sausages are the main course for this meal. They, too, are easy to adjust to suit your guests. For more adventurous eaters, Beer-Braised Sausages are moist and infused with the flavors of garlic, onion and beer. If those ingredients don't work for some of your diners, just leave those dogs out of the braise. For the non-sausage eaters, it's easy to cook a couple of standard hot dogs or even a veggie dog.

Grilled sausages and bacon-studded potatoes would be great with a meaty

Syrah. However, a hot summer night calls out for a cold beer. Summer Ale is perfect. Crisp and light, the flavors often include a citrus-y character. Not too hoppy or bitter, ales are made with malted wheat and traditional top-fermenting "ale" yeast. The head is unusually abundant due to the natural protein deposits of wheat, with a thick consistency similar to meringue. Summer Ales generally have alcohol content of 5% and are a welcome reprieve from 14% alcohol wine.

Keeping things cool at the end of the meal, pick up some sorbet or your favorite ice cream. Ice cold foods do not work with most alcoholic beverages. If your choice is fruit based, muddle orange slices with fresh basil and top with ice cold sparkling water. The flavors and temperatures will harmonize beautifully.

So, go on. Pair Up!

BEER-BRAISED SAUSAGES

INGREDIENTS

- 3 beers, your choice of style
- 1/2 onion, rough chopped
- 5-6 garlic cloves, rough chopped
- 6 uncooked sausages

DIRECTIONS

Bring the beer, onion and garlic to a low boil. Add sausages and cook for 15-20 minutes. Finish cooking on the grill to crisp casing.

Yield: 6 servings

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

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This month's statistics are encouraging but show a bit of a softening in median price in Concord and Martinez, even though homes sell for more than asking. Conversely Clayton and Walnut Creek are continuing to sell for more than asking and the median price is up double digits from last year. To dig deeper for real estate statistics, call your Realtor™.

| MONTHLY MARKET REPORT JUNE / 2024 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CLAYTON | | CONCORD | |
| Existing SFR Median Price \$1.55M % Change from Last Year +26.5% | MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 8 Sales-to-List Price % 105.1% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 22.2% | Existing SFR Median Price \$830K % Change from Last Year -2.3% | MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 12 Sales-to-List Price % 101.8% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 22.8% |
| MARTINEZ | | WALNUT CREEK | |
| Existing SFR Median Price \$794K % Change from Last Year -2.6% | MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 12 Sales-to-List Price % 101.0% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 38.5% | Existing SFR Median Price \$1.78M % Change from Last Year +15.1% | MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 9 Sales-to-List Price % 101.9% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 29.2% |

SOURCE: Car.org

AUGUST 1 & 7
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For the Love of Pets
by Jill Hedgecock, jillhedgecock.com

Dog Agility - Is This Sport Right for You?



The sport of dog agility requires a handler to memorize a course of up to twenty obstacles and guide their off-leash dog successfully through it within a set time. There are many ways to bond with your dog, but the depth of communication between dog and handler in this team sport is unparalleled. It does require a considerable time commitment and a great deal of patience to train the dog. Owners should also decide if their fitness goals are compatible. Because the handler usually runs alongside their canine partner, it means everyone gets a workout.

The types of obstacles a dog is required to master include navigating a set of six or twelve vertical weave poles, tunnels, running up a board and tipping it to the ground and running down (the teeter), jumping through a circular ring (the tire), crossing a narrow board that stands at a height of about four feet off the ground (the dog walk), launching themselves up, over and down wide boards set up in the shape of an "A" (the A frame), plus jumping over a variety of bars held up with vertical posts.

The jumps can be a single bar, a series of staggered ascending bars, or solid slats where the dog can't see the ground that lies beyond it. It is typical for a dog to have one obstacle that is more challenging than the others. My first agility dog often avoided the teeter. My current dog struggles to complete the weaves.

Because dogs are making split decisions as to what obstacle is next, handlers must be aware of their body language. For example, the dog is watching the direction of their owner's feet, looking at where the arms are pointing, or where the side of their face is directed. This body language can even be more important than a verbal command as to where the dog thinks you want them to go next. And at competition trials, the pup must listen to their handler without the incentive of food or toys.

If it sounds like a lot to learn, it is. But competing at the Canine Performance Events (CPE) Dog Agility Nationals this May with my border collie mix, Charlie, was a highlight of my year. After completing nine runs over the three-day Nationals event, Charlie walked away with six ribbons and one fourth place medal. But even more important was the quality time I spent with my dog.

Keeping yourself and your dog safe is important, so owners should start by taking classes that teach both the handler and dog how to navigate the obstacles safely. To learn about dog agility training classes at Farrington Dog Kennels located in Martinez, contact Rachele at educatingrover@gmail.com.

Jill Hedgecock is an experienced agility handler. She competed with her dog Charlie at CPE Nationals in May 2024.

It is With Great Pride and Pleasure That I Present

437 SUTCLIFFE PLACE, WALNUT CREEK
NEW LISTING - NORTHGATE JEWEL
4 BEDROOMS | 2.5 BATHS | 3 CAR GARAGE |
.25 ACRE LOT | TheBestofSutcliffePlace.com



I have rarely had a seller so organized and diligent about their home than the owners of 437 Sutcliffe Place, Walnut Creek. They have lived here since 1979 and have a five-page detailed list of every improvement and repair ever done to the home. In a way, their list is their story. Their inspections had little in the way of issues.

Preparing it for sale was like polishing a truly special treasure!



 *Terrylynn Fisher*

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Candidate Nomination Period Open Through Aug. 9

Are you interested in running for City Council? In this year's general election on Nov. 5, Concord voters will elect councilmembers in districts 2 and 4. The candidate nomination period runs through 5:00 p.m., Friday, August 9.

If you are interested in running for office, watch the short video on the City's candidate-information webpage, <https://cityofconcord.org/1021/Candidate-Information>, about the four important steps you will need to take. Completed paperwork must be submitted by Friday, Aug. 9, by 5:00 p.m.

To pick up a candidate nomination packet, you must make an appointment with Concord City Clerk Joelle Fockler. To make an appointment, please call 925-671-3390 or email cityclerk@cityofconcord.org.

To be eligible to run for City Council, a candidate must be a resident of Concord and a registered voter in the District of the office sought at the time nomination papers are issued. The Treasurer is an at-large position, and candidates must be a resident of Concord and a registered voter at the time nomination papers

are issued.

The nomination packet includes the Nomination Paper, Ballot Designation Worksheet, Candidate Statement (optional), Code of Fair Campaign Practices (optional), Statement of Economic Interests Form 700, and Campaign Finance Disclosure statements. The City Clerk is a candidate's primary source of information during the nomination and election process.

The Candidate Instruction Guide provides an overview of City Government and responsibilities of an elected City Councilmember and City Treasurer. It provides detailed information related to the process of running for elective office, overviews each of the nomination documents, and provides guidance and information related to campaign reporting requirements for candidates and elected officials.

All qualified candidates for city office will be invited to a meeting on Wednesday, August 14, to review the provisions of the Concord Municipal Code for elections. Candidates will be provided a Candidate Information Binder at the meeting.

Learn How to Spot Fake News

With an election around the corner, getting accurate information regarding issues, candidates, and propositions in order to make an informed voting decision will be difficult. Even if you are exposed to accurate information, can you trust it?

Join a presentation from 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. at the Lafayette Library on Thursday, August 22 for an eye-opening discussion of the impact of misinformation and disinformation on elections.

Learn how to spot fake news, fact-check sources and navigate the complexities of today's media landscape to become a more informed voter and citizen.

The presentation by the League of



Image credit, Visual Capitalist

Women Voters of Diablo Valley will take place in the Homework Center, 3491 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette.

Register at <http://www.tinyurl.com/LAF-misinfo>. Contact programs@lwvdv.org for more information.

Clayton Watch Launches Website in Time for Upcoming Election

by David King

At the Clayton City Council meeting on July 16, resident Gary Hood announced that Clayton Watch has formed a Political Action Committee (PAC) and has launched a new website, claytonwatch.org.

Clayton Watch is spearheaded by local activists Gary Hood and Bill Walcutt. The two are well known in the community for their conservative positions and their displeasure with certain members of the Council, Planning Commission and others in City Government as well as past decisions and conduct.

They are known to walk neighborhoods to distribute flyers, attend council meetings, and engage on social media platforms such as Next Door to express their position on various issues. Their opponents see them as being hateful and vindictive. As a result, hostilities have escalated.

Clayton Watch has been accused of using divisive tactics by distributing flyers containing misinformation and hit pieces; however, opposing factions have countered with their own attack including a flyer calling Hood and Walcutt puppet masters over the current City Council.

City government has been faced with high turnover in several key positions for the past few years. Is this because of the activities of Clayton Watch? You decide.

In the site's first few days, it has already exceeded 10,000 pageviews. While the site maintains a conservative narrative, anyone can research copies of past email exchanges with City personnel, news articles, Requests for Information, city budgets and audits, community activities, updates on city projects, candidate statements and much more.

Election Security: 2-Step Verification? Try 48-Steps

Security is layered into every aspect of Contra Costa County's elections and local officials take many steps – 48 steps to be exact – to protect our vote. The Contra Costa County Elections Division guarantees election security by securing technology, processes, facilities, and people.

“Elections are more secure than ever and we're proud of Contra Costa's reputation for fair and secure elections,” says Kristin B. Connelly, Contra Costa Registrar of Voters. “We want to show voters everything we do to protect their vote.”



Facts About Elections

1. Is the voting system or equipment connected to the internet?

No. The voting system and tabulators are never connected to the internet, they do not have modems nor hardware that could be remotely activated, all USB ports are locked and many layers of cybersecurity are in place.

2. How do election officials prevent voter fraud?

Many security measures help prevent voter fraud, including registration and signature verification. Only eligible people can register to vote and they sign under penalty of perjury that they meet eligibility requirements. Registration is validated against DMV and Social Security records and if an applicant cannot be validated, they must provide a government-issued photo identification the first time they vote.

3. Can people vote more than once?

No. Safeguards are in place so only one ballot is accepted per voter and only the first ballot received is counted. Voters sign their ballot return envelope, or when they check in at a polling place, so officials can confirm their identity, check that they are registered to vote and that they only vote once.

4. Is voting by mail secure?

Yes. Voting by mail is a highly regulated process with many checkpoints, people and systems

working together to keep it secure. Ballots are only mailed to active, registered voters and the envelopes have unique ID numbers for tracking (click to sign up). Mail-in ballot envelopes are signature verified against the voter's signature on file. If a signature is missing or not a match, voters are contacted to cure their challenged ballot status. Ballots are not counted until signatures are verified.

5. How can I trust that votes are counted correctly?

6. The voting system and equipment are tested before and after every election to ensure they are working properly and two election staff are always with ballots and voting equipment. See for yourself – all election activities are open to public observation and watched by certified election observers. Why does it take so long to count the votes?

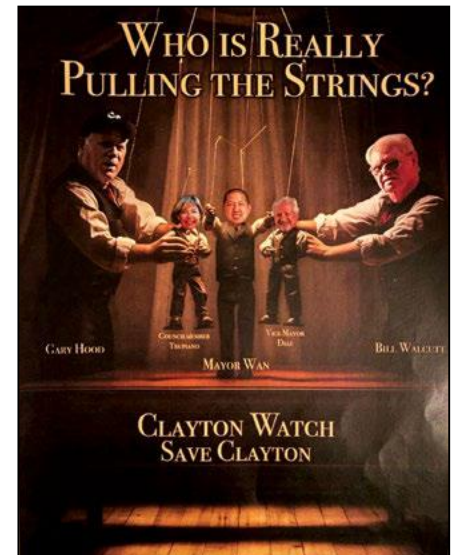
Election officials do not tabulate votes or share results until after the polls close at 8 p.m. on Election Day. Outcomes are not final until the official canvass is complete and certified, which can take up to 28 days after presidential elections. Officials ensure every eligible ballot is counted, voters only voted once, proper procedures were followed, and the voting system counted the ballots properly.

Contra Costa County is home to one of the safest, most secure and transparent election systems in the nation. Learn more at secure-election.org.

Whether progressive or conservative, claytonwatch.org serves as an exposé into local issues worthy of discovery for concerned citizens. Their efforts pressure the City government to be accountable, promote transparency, and insist that whatever decision the City makes, it governs by the rules.

Its mission statement says, “To help inform the citizens of Clayton about the true facts of various proposed projects and city sponsored initiatives within the city. We seek to counter the misinformation and will do anything and everything legally possible to stop this abuse of power. Only by knowing the facts can an informed citizen make a reasoned decision.”

As an official PAC, residents can bet Clayton Watch will be asserting its influence in the local election this fall.





3 Tips for Purchasing a Home

Whether you're a first-time homebuyer or looking to upsize or downsize your current home, preparing in advance can make the process of buying a home smooth and efficient. By conducting some preliminary research and planning, you can save both time and money.

Here are three essential tips to simplify your home-buying journey.

1. Determine your budget

Understanding how much you can afford is crucial. Creating a comprehensive budget that includes your mortgage payment, home insurance, property taxes, and anticipated utility expenses, along with any ongoing debts, will ensure you're financially prepared.

Getting pre-approved for a loan is a vital step. Lenders typically review your income, current debts, down payment amount, and credit score. A key factor is your debt-to-income ratio (your monthly debts divided by your monthly pre-tax income). Lenders typically prefer a ratio between 45% - 50%, with lower ratios being more favorable as they indicate less risk and a greater ability to afford the payment. Once pre-approved, you have the ability to make an offer to buy a home. Without a pre-approval, you are unable to make a firm offer to purchase a home.

2. Improve your credit score

A strong credit score can significantly impact your mortgage terms. Start by

obtaining a copy of your credit report, check for discrepancies or errors and work with the credit bureaus to have them corrected. Pay off any past-due balances and reduce existing debts to improve your payment history and debt-to-income ratio. These actions can improve your credit score, making you eligible for better loan rates and terms.

3. Choose a trustworthy lender

Finding a trusted partner as a lender is vital. Some lenders might steer you toward products that benefit them more than you. Mortgage brokers might receive incentives to promote certain products. It's essential to work with a lender you trust.

At Pacific Service Credit Union, our non-commission-based approach ensures we recommend products that truly meet your needs. We offer a variety of home financing options, including jumbo loans, second homes, and investment properties. We also offer home loan down payment assistance programs.

Starting with the right information can make your entire home buying process easier and more enjoyable. For a seamless experience and trustworthy guidance, the real estate team at Pacific Service Credit Union can help you understand your financing options. Happy house hunting!

Written in conjunction with AI



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We **See No** Reason to Re-Elect Mayor Edi Birsan



BIRSAN chose **SEENO** to be Master Developer for Concord Naval Weapons Station!

Edi's Politics Are the Wrong Direction for Concord.

12 Years on Council is Enough!

Concord District 4 Residents, On November 5,
VOTE out Edi Birsan for City Council!

Paid for by the Citizens of Concord District 4 and not authorized by any candidate or candidate committee.



Waterwise Gardening Tips

For dedicated gardeners, the dry summer months mean higher water bills. Wasting water is never fashionable in Contra Costa, even in abundant water years like this. How can a conscientious gardener save both money and water, especially during these dry months? Here are four tips for the waterwise gardener.

1) Plant Choices: Saving water begins at the garden center. Low-water-use or California native plant choices are well-labeled and easily found. Many varieties are as beautiful, or more so than traditional English garden (regular water requirements) choices. Some of my favorite landscaping plants that require little to no watering (once established) are: succulents of all types, flannel bush, narcissus and daffodils, penstemons, ceanothus, euphorbias, gazanias, mallows, California poppies, yarrows, lupines, and South-African irises.

2) Mulching: A 3-inch layer of mulch is the waterwise gardener's friend because it keeps soil root areas moist. Many garden centers and soil suppliers sell high-quality fir mulch. But fir mulch comes at a price to consumers and the environment. It is a by-product of tree harvesting and is trucked to the Bay Area from the Pacific Northwest, adding to its cost and increasing hydrocarbon pollution. Most local tree trimming services provide local mulch for FREE if you call them. Local tree mulch is just as "clean" and disease-free as Northwest fir mulch. However, you can request specific types of mulch when you call the trimming service (e.g., redwood versus eucalyptus). Remember though, not to mulch within 5 feet of your home for wildfire safety.

3) Drip Irrigation: Flexi-tubes with drip emitters, soaker hoses, or micro-sprays have been the go-to choices for waterwise gardens for 25 years.



Watering bulbs keep soil properly moist



Succulents make great waterwise plant choices



Micro-sprays deliver overhead water to small targeted zones

Drip emitters provide the right water portion to the right spot around root bases of long-lived ornamentals or trees. Emitters are available in 1/2-gallon per hour (GPH) to 3 GPH water flows.

Micro-sprays focus above-ground watering to small areas of annual or vegetable plantings. 5/8" flexi-tubing runs from your water valve through your landscape to provide water to emitters, soakers, or sprayers. Avoid lines in high traffic areas as they can be pulled up or tripped over.

4) Water Bulbs and Reused Plastic Bottles: Commercially available glass or plastic watering bulbs are great waterwise choices for indoor plants or containerized outdoor plants. They come in a variety of sizes, volumes, and decorative shapes or colors and add an attractive element as well as preventing overwatering. Properly moist soil will stop accepting water from the bulb until the soil becomes drier through plant absorption or evaporation. Therefore, the bulb

provides consistent, correct water amounts. You can easily see when the clear glass bulb needs more water.

A less expensive alternative is to repurpose your empty plastic bottles as watering bulbs. They will need a support stick to hold them upright, then bury their opening an inch or two deep. If you are against using plastic in your all-natural garden, use a clear glass (e.g., white wine) bottle instead.

Waterwise gardening will reduce your summer water bills and save precious water for our next drought. Try it!

Seasonal Notes: If your veggies have been cared for till now, you will be rewarded with fabulous harvests this month. Tomatoes, squashes, beans, eggplants, cucumbers, corn, and other summer favorites should be in full production. Protect your ripening veggies from hungry rodents with 1/2" wire mesh or row cover cloth. Row cover can also protect against sunburn on hot days. Also, condition empty beds now for winter vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, salad greens, and sugar snap peas. Plant your seeds or seedlings after Labor Day weekend.

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

Shop Concord Relaunches Gift Card Program

Popular Community e-gift card program keeps dollars local

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| BUY \$100.00 GET \$50.00 | BUY \$50.00 GET \$25.00 | BUY \$20.00 GET \$10.00 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|

On July 22, the City of Concord and the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce relaunched the popular Shop Concord e-gift card program to support the city's small businesses by encouraging residents to shop locally.

Shop Concord helps local businesses benefit consumers and provides a boost to the local economy, thanks to a \$10,000 contribution from the City of Concord to supply a bonus gift card with every purchase.

While supplies last, receive a free \$50 Shop Concord bonus card with every original \$100 gift card purchase, a free \$25 Shop Concord card with every \$50 gift card purchase, or a free \$10 Shop Concord card with every \$20 gift card purchase. Gift cards can be used for purchases at any participating business. The bonus gift cards with purchase are available until the allotted \$10,000 is distributed.

"We continue to support the very successful Shop Concord program that has received cheers from both shoppers and retailers," said Concord Mayor Edi Birsan.

The initial Shop Concord program launched in November 2020, with 978 e-gift cards purchased for a total of \$31,020 in value. Now, with eight

programs launched in the past four years, the total amount of gift cards distributed is more than \$250,000 in value.

"The Shop Concord program has been an overwhelming success since it was originally launched in November 2020 to support our local business community that experienced significant setbacks due to the pandemic," said Kevin Cabral, President/CEO of the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce. "This program will inspire a new wave of support for our local business community, and we are thrilled we can continue to support our business community in this way."

The e-gift cards can be purchased on the Shop Concord Yiftee page, which includes a list of participating merchants. The cards purchased can be redeemed at any participating Concord business. The digital nature of the gift cards allows customers to split the original and bonus portions to keep for themselves or gift to others via text or email.

Concord local business owners can sign up anytime for free to participate in the Shop Concord program. Instructions for how to become a participating merchant are online at www.concordfirst.com/shop-concord.

Is there someone who should be recognized in our community? Centenarians? Award recipients? Send us YOUR news and announcements. Email us: Editor@DiabloGazette.com and let us know.

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ZUMBA FITNESS SERIES COMPLIMENTARY CLASSES
August 28 - October 16
Wednesdays, 10am - 11am.
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Around Martinez



by Brianne Zorn, Mayor, City of Martinez

Summer Bike Series Shares the Joy of Martinez Cycling with our Kids

Del Cielo Brewing Company has partnered with Bay Area Bike Project to offer a Bike and Play Family bike series. On the first Wednesday of each month, the community is invited to join in a family group ride around the Martinez Waterfront that concludes back at Del Cielo for activities such as face painting, repair clinics, and fun activities for kids. The Bike and Play Series provides a safe space for kids and families to play on their bikes, learn bike skills, and interact with bike coaches. The next two events will be held on August 7 and September 4.



The Martinez Trail Connection

The Martinez Waterfront is a lovely, flat ride that is most appropriate for thicker tires, since most of the trails are gravel. Looking for a longer, smoother ride? East Bay Regional Parks has recently received funding to connect the Martinez Waterfront to the Nejedly Staging Area via a protected trail along the train tracks.

Once complete, you can travel via the well-maintained George Miller Trail to Port Costa, Crockett, and the I-80 bridge to cross into Vallejo and Solano County. This is just the beginning. The City of Martinez has cycling connections to regional trails such as the Iron Horse Trail and the Contra Costa Canal Trail, as well as endless road cycling and offroad mountain biking around and within Briones.

Practice Bike Safety

I would be remiss if I didn't remind you about proper health and safety when riding. Teach your children to always wear their helmets when they ride. And teach your friends to always have charged headlights and taillights ready for use. The headlights help you see; the taillights help you be seen. And don't forget the added value of cycling gear with bright colors and reflective striping. All will help you and your family stay safe on the road.

Need some help with your bike, your bike gear, or your bike maintenance? Shop Local. Pegasus Bicycleworks is located in downtown Martinez and often partners with Bay Area Bike Project to offer kids and adult workshops. They can help you find what you need and get you set up for a safe and smooth Martinez ride. They also offer regular group rides to help you build up your cycling strength.

Bike the Bridges and Brewfest

When you are ready for your next big adventure, join a ride event. The annual Bike the Bridges and Brewfest event is back in Martinez on October 5, 2024. Proceeds benefit Special Olympics Northern California to provide free year-round sports, inclusive education, health and leadership programs to children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Riders can select one of five distances (25 miles, 50 K, 100 K, 50 miles, and 100 miles), each boasting scenic views along the routes. E-Bikes are welcome.

I love nothing more than the wind in my face riding along the Carquinez Strait and I look forward to all the cycling opportunities Martinez has this summer.

Let's ride!



603 Marina Vista Ave, Martinez (925) 228-2345

Explore Martinez

www.martinezchamber.com

Contra Costa County Unveils New Administrative Building, Plaza In Martinez

Contra Costa County unveiled its new administrative building Tuesday, July 9. The county calls it "a new cutting-edge office administration building and civic plaza located in the heart of downtown Martinez."



The new building stands on the site previously occupied by the 12-story former county building built in 1964. The site also held the old county jail, which was built in 1902.

County supervisors awarded a \$58 million construction contract to Webcor in 2021 to demolish the old building and replace it with the new three-story structure.

The new site will hold several county administrative departments, including the public defender's office, the office of racial equity and social justice, and the county sheriff's civil division.

"The new building showcases state-of-the-art architecture that harmonizes beautifully with the surrounding historic buildings, rejuvenating the public plaza," the county said in a statement.

Funding for the project came from \$45 million in bonds issued in 2021, with the rest coming from the county's general fund capital reserves.

Martinez Area CERT Training Begin August 28

Martinez Area CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) is a non-profit organization that provides emergency preparedness training free of charge to residents in Martinez.

To participate and become a member of the CERT team, register for the upcoming 8-week Basic Training Program. Beginning Wednesday, August 28, Classes will run Wednesday evenings from 6:00 - 9:30 p.m. at the Martinez Senior Center, 818 Green Street, Martinez. Interested individuals can register for the Basic training at martinez.cert@gmail.com.



Martini Shake-Off Tickets on Sale

Tickets are now available for the Martinez Chamber of Commerce's Martini Shake-Off Gala 2024. Slated for September 14 from 5:30 - 10:00 p.m., this annual black-tie optional event is one of East Bay's best. Each year it sells out with a capacity crowd of 450 who come to celebrate Martinez as the birthplace of the martini.



Teams of Martinez's best mixologists will compete to make the best and most creative Martini. Enjoy live music, a delicious catered dinner, a silent auction, and of course, visit the competitors and vote for your favorites.

You will be given a voting token at the door. As explained on the event's website, when judging, think about the taste, creativity/mixology, and presentation/appearance.

Ask yourself these questions while enjoying your Martini:

Does the cocktail have an aroma, and does the aroma enhance the flavor?

Is the cocktail made to finish, or would it be too tedious to finish?

Is this what you expected from these ingredients?

Does the cocktail integrate the ingredients harmoniously?

Is this a cocktail that could become a classic?

Is the cocktail visually appealing?

Does the name give meaning to the ingredients and/or your experience drinking the cocktail?

There will be a whole lotta shakin' going on. Be safe and judge — rather, drink responsibly.

Last day to buy tickets is August 30, 2024 (Based on Availability). There will be no ticket sales at the door.



August Events!

- August 1 EPA Grant Scoping Meeting
- August 2 Friday Splash Night: Back to School
- August 2 First Friday Artwalk
- August 3-4 Mediterranean Food & Music Festival
- August 4 Shakespeare in the Park
- August 6 National Night Out
- August 7 Summer Bike Series
- August 8 Downtown Martinez Car Show
- August 11 Open Air Market
- August 15 Summer Evening Wine Sip & Shop
- August 17 Virtual Worm Composting Workshop
- August 18 53rd Annual Art in the Park
- August 24 Compost Giveaway
- August 24 Movies in the Park: Super Mario Bros
- August 24 CERT: Earthquake Hazard Mitigation
- Fri's/Sat's Downtown Outdoor Nights
- Sundays Farmers Market



www.cityofmartinez.org/events



Follow Us on Social Media for more!

City in Desperate Search for New Marina Manager

by Sam Richards

The City of Martinez is looking for a new marina manager but will have to become the marina's interim manager in the meantime.

Mayor Brianne Zorn and Jill Bergman, the city's community and economic development director, say there's much set to happen at Martinez's waterfront, headed by the renovation of the city's fishing pier starting this fall and filing applications in October for a maximum \$20 million federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grant that city leaders hope would jumpstart the long-awaited transformation of the Martinez waterfront and marina.

But other things, at least in the short term, are diverting people's eyes from the waterfront prize — most notably the imminent departure of the company that has managed the Martinez Marina since 2005 and the recent closure of the bait shop near the marina.

The planned August 21 loss of Almar Marina Management, which coincides with that Torrance-based marina management company being acquired by a rival company, is a "major blip" in the city's plans, Zorn said. But she insists the city is committed to a smooth transition to interim management of the marina, and, subsequently to a new management firm.

Zorn and Bergman met with concerned residents outside the Harbormaster's building, answering questions about the city's plans for the marina and waterfront.

"Our highest priority is to find funding to make the needed infrastructure improvements" at the marina," Zorn said. "That is where that \$20 million federal Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grant would come in.

One part of that infrastructure, Bergman said, would be a rebuilt seawall around much of the marina. That particular project, she said, figures to be a "domino piece" that, once completed, would make the marina more attractive to boaters and, hopefully, potential developers.

The city hopes one or more of those developers will help bring the Waterfront Marina Trust Land Use Plan to life. The city's plan includes an improved marina, a restaurant, expanded boat storage, an expanded skate park, a "community stage" that could host concerts and other amenities. That stage won't be the existing amphitheater, though; that will be torn down eventually.

One bit of early good news the city received a \$2.458 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to renovate the fishing pier, extending its life for an estimated 30 more years. Zorn said she hopes work will begin on that shortly and be finished by next summer.

There have been various plans for major improvements along Martinez's waterfront for two decades or more, few of which went beyond the planning stage. When asked why this series of plans is any different, Zorn said much of it boils down to City Council leadership.

CROCKETT Downtown

Wine STROLL

24TH AUGUST

12:00-4:00 P.M. LIVE Music in Plaza TICKETS ON EVENTBRITE

\$40 PER TICKET JULY 25 - AUG. 23RD OR TWO FOR \$75 EACH
\$50 PER TICKET DAY OF OR TWO FOR \$90 EACH

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Nomination Period Open For Three Elected Posts

The nomination period is now open for the Nov. 5 General Election for the following seats: Councilmember District 2, Councilmember District 3 and City Treasurer. For prospective candidates mulling whether to toss their hats in the ring, the nomination period closes Friday, Aug. 9, at 4 p.m.

Those interested in running may schedule appointments with the City Clerk's office to obtain and file nomination papers. Visit www.cityofmartinez.org/government/city-clerk/general-election-2024, district boundaries, for more information regarding the General Election and to schedule an appointment.

John Muir Land Trust Makes Major Acquisition Along Franklin Ridge

by Tom Lochner, Martinez News and Views

The John Muir Land Trust (JMLT) is poised to acquire two additional properties along the Franklin Ridge southwest of downtown Martinez.

The Martinez-based trust has raised the \$6.5 million needed to permanently protect the 134-acre Barnett Ranch and 100-acre Kenneth Gerlack Preserve as part of its Franklin Ridge Expansion, it announced in a news release. The two tracts, which the trust describes as pristine, will be added to the Franklin Ridge Wildlife and Trail Corridor, "a beautiful natural landscape...that is a vital refuge for native wildlife and a treasured recreational haven for outdoor enthusiasts."

Putting together the Franklin Ridge corridor has been a 35-year project. "The importance of adding these two new properties cannot be overstated," the trust's executive director, Linus Eukel, said in a press release.

The corridor is "home to over 20 local species, including vital predators such as mountain lions, and endangered and threatened species such as the iconic California red-legged frog," Eukel said in the release. "Here it is possible to walk in the footsteps of famed naturalist John Muir himself, who lived nearby and hiked and wrote about its delightful ravines, hilltops, plateaus, open grasslands, and



stunning panoramic views."

Funding for the Barnett and Gerlack acquisitions includes a \$2 million grant from the California Wildlife Conservation Board; \$1.23 million from the State Coastal Conservancy; \$500,000 each from two anonymous donors; \$300,000 generated by a challenge match from David and Janice Hammond of Alamo; and, "most importantly from thousands of local residents who contribute regularly to support JMLT's conservation work in Alameda and Contra Costa counties."

Said Eukel, "We are so grateful to the donors, volunteers, and to all of JMLT's generous and passionate community of supporters who came together to secure this important win in local conservation. It is ordinary people with extraordinary vision who make such achievements possible."

More information about Franklin Ridge, including a trail map, can be found at jmlt.org.

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California Coastal Living - Benicia

by Courtney Ayers, Realtor

Benicia truly epitomizes California coastal living with views of the water and hills at almost every turn. No matter where you are downtown the shore is nearby. Whether you are enjoying fine dining at Bella Sienna while watching the sun set across the water, having a drink and listening to live music at Lucas Beer Garden, standing in line for a treat from the amazing One House bakery, or enjoying a shrimp po boy from the Workshop you are always near beach access, a trail, or a view.

Water sports reign supreme here with people kite surfing, wind surfing, paddle boarding, boating, kayaking and swimming in the waters. Alvarado 9th Street Beach is particularly popular for its stretch of sandy beach and shallow waters.

Benicians have an incredible sense of community pride and spirit. Adults and families enjoy the many events throughout the year that celebrate this small-town including wine walks,

parades, scarecrow contests, movies under the stars and a waterfront festival. For commuters, Benicia is just a short drive to the Vallejo Ferry where you can enjoy a scenic and relaxing cruise to work.

Once our state capital, Benicia has beautiful palatial historic homes many of which are waterfront. Some of the Bay's most stunning real estate is found on the shores of this amazing community. Home prices over the last year here vary from \$ 280k for a 1-bedroom condominium to \$2.25m for a luxury downtown waterfront home.



View of Mt. Diablo in the background from a Benicia waterfront beach. FYC / Shutterstock, Downtown Benicia, canoeing the bay.

Lisa Bonnington to Transition from Martinez Chamber

Lisa Bonnington stepped down from her role as President & CEO of the Martinez Chamber of Commerce effective July 22, 2024. However, she will remain actively engaged with the Chamber on a contract basis to ensure a smooth transition and support succession planning efforts.

During her tenure, Bonnington has been instrumental in advancing the Martinez Chamber's mission and enhancing its community impact. She hopes to continue her legacy in her new role in the Fairfield Chamber.

In her new capacity, Bonnington will focus on critical aspects of succession planning, including assisting with interviewing, training, and identifying a qualified successor to assume the role of President & CEO. Her deep knowledge of the organization and the Martinez community will be invaluable during this transition period.

"We are immensely grateful to Lisa for her dedicated service and transformative leadership during her time as President & CEO," said Adam Hoffert, Board Chair. "Her decision to continue working with us in a strategic advisory role underscores



her commitment to ensuring a seamless transition and sustaining our momentum. We look forward to her continued contributions in this new capacity."

Bonnington expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve the Martinez Chamber and her enthusiasm for the future of the

organization. "It has been a privilege to work alongside such a dedicated team and supportive community," she said. "I am eager to assist in identifying the next leader who will build on our successes and guide the Chamber into its next chapter."

The Martinez Chamber of Commerce will search for its next President & CEO immediately, with Lisa Bonnington's guidance and support throughout the process.

The Martinez Chamber of Commerce serves as the unified voice of the business community in Martinez, advocating for economic prosperity and community development. It provides networking opportunities, resources, and advocacy to support local businesses and enhance the quality of life for Martinez residents.

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Edi Birsan

CONCORD CITY COUNCIL

PROVEN LEADERSHIP



REDUCED HOMELESSNESS 28%
Will continue to reduce homelessness by working with community partners and veterans groups to provide services and transition the unhoused into housing.


ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY
Edi supports re-opening neighborhood police substations, increased police patrols and using mental health professionals for mental health crisis police calls.

STREET REPAIR
Repairs for Treat and Oak Grove Roads are underway – part of a \$120 million investment over five years to repair Concord roads.


BUILD AFFORDABLE HOUSING
Edi has helped increase housing options for individuals at all income levels.

RESPONSIBLE BUDGETING
Edi will continue maintaining the fiscal integrity of Concord's finances.


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Jennifer Stojanovich
Realtor, Better Homes Realty

5 Essential Habits of Successful Home Buyers

Buying a home is a significant milestone, and successful buyers often share common habits that help them navigate the process smoothly. Here are five essential practices to adopt:



- 1. Set a Budget:** Determining your financial limits and adhering to them can prevent future financial strain. Evaluate your income, savings, and current expenses to set a realistic budget for your home purchase.
- 2. Get Pre-Approved:** Securing pre-approval for a mortgage not only helps you understand your borrowing capacity but also shows sellers that you're a serious buyer. This step can streamline your home search and make your offers more attractive.
- 3. Research Neighborhoods:** Investigating different areas is crucial to finding a home that suits your lifestyle. Consider factors like proximity to work, schools, amenities, and future development plans. Visiting neighborhoods at different times of the day can also provide a better sense of the community.
- 4. Find the Right Realtor:** A knowledgeable realtor can be a valuable asset in your home buying journey.
- 5. Be Patient:** Finding the perfect home takes time. Don't rush to making a decision just because you feel pressured. Take the time to thoroughly evaluate each potential property and consider how it aligns with your long-term goals. Remember, it is better to wait for the right home than to settle for something that does not meet your needs.

By adopting these habits, you can increase your chances of finding a home that not only fits your budget but also enhances your quality of life.



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Better Homes Realty



\$1,125,000

6028 Golden Eagle Way, Clayton

Beautifully Maintained "Baltusrol" Model in Windmill Canyon at Oakhurst Country Club. 4 bedrooms plus loft, 2.5 baths, approx. 2536sf on an approx. .2 acre lot with an attached 3-car tandem garage.



\$715,000 PENDING

1282 Shell Cir, Clayton

Gorgeous Townhome in Chaparral Springs at Oakhurst Country Club on a premium golf course lot with sweeping views. 2 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, approx. 1367sf with inside laundry & an attached 2-car garage.



\$875,000 PENDING

1271 Vignola Ct, Brentwood

Sprawling Single Story Located in the Sought After Sage Glen Estates Neighborhood. 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, approx. 2133sf on an approx. .33 acre lot with an attached 2-car garage.



\$820,000 SOLD

242 Stranahan Cir, Clayton

Charming Two Story Home Located on a Corner Lot tucked away at the end of the cul-de-sac adjacent & backing to walking trails. 2 bedrooms plus loft, 2.5 baths, approx. 1663sf on an approx. .1 acre lot with an attached 2-car garage. Fantastic location!

Clayton Market Update

| Address | Sales Price | SF | Bed/Bath | Sales Date |
|---------------------|-------------|------|----------|------------|
| 173 Brandywine Pl | \$1,610,000 | 3030 | 4/3 | 6/7/2024 |
| 109 Forest Hill Dr | \$1,525,000 | 2680 | 3/2.5 | 6/13/2024 |
| 1150 Waldamar Ct | \$2,475,000 | 3461 | 4/2/2 | 6/16/2024 |
| 136 Inverness Way | \$1,895,000 | 4076 | 5/3.5 | 6/18/2024 |
| 1927 Eagle Peak Ave | \$875,000 | 1554 | 3/2.5 | 6/21/2024 |
| 501 E Myrick Ct | \$1,155,000 | 1648 | 3/2 | 6/24/2024 |
| 242 Stranahan Cir | \$820,000 | 1663 | 2/2.5 | 7/1/2024 |



Jennifer Stojanovich

Broker DRE #01446062
(925)672-4433
925-567-6170 - cell
6160 Center St., Suite E, Clayton
jennifer@bhrbroker.com
www.jenniferstojanovich.com

Concord Market Update

| Address | Sales Price | SF | Bed/Bath | Sales Date |
|-----------------------|-------------|------|----------|------------|
| 1687 Farm Bureau Rd | \$950,000 | 1982 | 3/2 | 6/18/2024 |
| 1729 Baywood Dr | \$900,000 | 1839 | 3/2 | 6/21/2024 |
| 4360 Eagle Peak Rd #D | \$570,000 | 1496 | 4/2.5 | 6/24/2024 |
| 911 Autumn Oak Cir | \$1,490,000 | 3240 | 4/3.5 | 6/25/2024 |
| 1890 Lynwood Dr | \$845,000 | 1698 | 4/2 | 6/26/2024 |
| 4410 Spoonwood Ct | \$1,100,000 | 1740 | 4/2 | 6/28/2024 |
| 1871 Renee Way | \$1,715,000 | 3409 | 5/3.5 | 7/5/2024 |

Based on information from CCAR/Paragon MLS* as of 7/12/24. All data, including all measurements and calculations of area, is obtained from various sources and has not been, and will not be, verified by broker or MLS. All information should be independently reviewed and verified for accuracy. Properties may or may not be listed by the office/agent presenting the information.



For Artists and Students, aRt Cottage Brings Success

Last month was extraordinary for aRt Cottage. The Contra Costa Plein Air Group exhibit was quite successful. aRt Cottage broke its own record for the most sales within a one-show period. I owe a lot of thanks to the wonderful artists who participated.

I owe the greatest thanks to my curator, Lori Larks, for hanging the last several shows. Lori is an experienced photographer as well as an acrylic and oil painter. She is quite accomplished in the plein air painting field. She shows here regularly.

Three Students' Art to be Featured in 2025 Calendar

Three aRt Cottage students were winners in the annual Contra Costa Water District calendar art contest. Their winning entries will be featured and published in the CCWD 2025 calendar. It is an extremely exciting and wonderful achievement for being selected and voted for by the public out of hundreds of entries. Congratulations to them.

The votes have also come in for the long-awaited results from Diablo Valley Magazine's Favorites of the East Bay. Although aRt Cottage did not win this year, that honor goes to Bedford Gallery, but we were the runner-up and that is not bad for this little gallery.

Show and Event Schedule

"Inspired by the Greats" is our current exhibit with works by the Lamorinda Arts Alliance. The show continues through August 29.

Our September and October exhibit will be featuring works by Mark Jezierny and his students. Jezierny has been an active painter for many years and a teacher with adult education. An open house reception for the Mark Jezierny & Students exhibit will be held September 7 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. All are always welcome.

aRt Cottage is planning its second artists retreat at the Twain hARTE Cabin for



Kitty & Dog by Sofia, Pittsburg



Koi by MacKenzie, Concord



Raindrops by Sonja, Concord

August 4,5, and 6. If interested, check it out at artcottage.info

aRt Cottage is located at 2238 Mt. Diablo St. in Concord. Open Wednesday-Saturday 11:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.

Main Street Arts' August Guest Wall is a Big Deal

By Paula Oesterling

Each August, the guest artist wall at Main Street Arts is replete with gallery members' paintings. We call this the Big Sale wall and it is filled with bargains. To see a preview of the big sale wall online, visit mainstreetarts.net.

The gallery offers many reasons to visit the August show. Meet new gallery members, see new art, experience new "Oos and Ahhs," and enjoy special evening events.

First Friday is August 2 from 6:00 -9:00 p.m. This monthly celebration is fun for the entire family. Gallery members will greet you and discuss the beautiful art within.

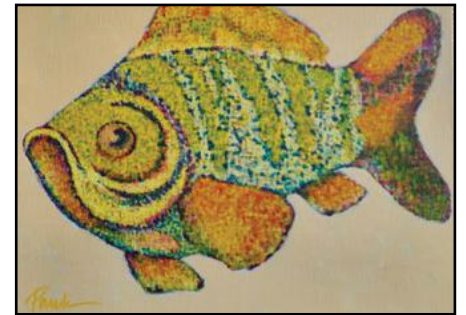
On August 15, from 5:30 -8:30 p.m., the gallery will take part in an "Enchanted Evening: Sip, Stroll, and Shop" in downtown Martinez. Wine will be served while guests enjoy the beautiful art displays.

Coming in September, the Lamorinda Arts Alliance will be featured.

Each month the gallery gives away an original work of art by one of its members. Congratulations to Amie Pattison who won a ceramic piece by Olga Jusidman in June. July's winner will receive a gorgeous watercolor by Samantha McNally. For August, win a great painting of a fish called "Dottie" by Paula Oesterling. Simply sign up on your next visit to Main Street Arts,

613 Main Street. The gallery is open Wednesday-Saturday, 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on Sundays.

In August, you can sign up for the free drawing for your chance to win "Dottie" by Paula Oesterling.



Dottie August Free Drawing by Paula Oesterling



Nearly Round by Gwenn Spratt



Peony by Samantha McNally



Tulip Mirage by Pam McCauley

New Art Gallery Opens at Centre Concord

by Fiona M. Hughes

Concord Art Association (CAA) is excited to announce a new art gallery space and new show, called "Meet Our Artists". This juried art show is running through October 11, 2024, at Centre Concord, 5298 Clayton Rd., Concord.

CAA members are exhibiting large 2D artworks in a number of mediums in the lobby of Centre Concord, which is open to the public for viewing from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, and during certain weekend events.

The public is also encouraged to "Meet Our Artists" in person and view the art show at an Artists' Reception event to be held at Centre Concord on August 2, 2024, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

CAA members are established and emerging artists who use a wide array of art disciplines to participate in exhibits, public art projects, workshops and community events.

"We're naming this new art venue Gallery CAA at Centre



Dancing Mallow Fiona M Hughes



Poppy Castle - Irene Bee Kain

Concord and are thrilled at the opportunity to bring artwork by local artists to this spacious venue," stated CAA Board Member, Renaye Johnson, who spearheaded the show and its new venue space.

As a 501c3 non-profit, a percentage of sale proceeds from this CAA show will be donated to the CAA Teacher Grant and Scholarship Programs. Concord Art Association (CAA) is the oldest art association in Contra Costa County. Members include artists, crafters, makers, and art enthusiasts and supporters of the arts.

For more information on CAA go to



Metal - Pat Calabro

<https://www.concordartassociation.org>



Thelma

Summertime is known for the blockbuster movie. Car chases, aliens, big blasts and special effects are dominant in sizzling summer films, and escapism is usually the overall theme for movies this time of year. If you keep your eyes open, however, this is also the time when small gems sneak in.

Such is the case with “Thelma,” a film with a timely tale about scams aimed toward the elderly. Thelma, played by June Squibb, is a senior who lives alone and is adamant about keeping her independence. Her daily life is made a bit easier by her devoted grandson Danny (Fred Hechinger). Although Danny seems directionless in his own life, he is dedicated to spending quality time with his grandmother, even going the extra mile to ensure her safety when she is alone.

One evening, Thelma receives a call from a scammer and she is bilked out of a hefty sum of money. Once she alerts her daughter and son-in-law to what has happened, they take it as a sign that Thelma may be declining, and changes need to be made regarding her care. Thelma, on the other hand, is steaming mad and wants to confront the horrible people behind such a swindle.

She decides to reconnect with her friend Ben (Richard Roundtree in his final performance), who is currently in a nursing home. Originally, Thelma only wants to borrow Ben’s motorized scooter, but he quickly gets roped into her elaborate vigilante quest to find the scammers.

This is all played for laughs as we watch Thelma and her friend do their best with their limited faculties; while also proving



they are still vital and productive members of society. There is also a lot of tenderness, especially in the loving relationship between Thelma and her grandson.

At 94 years old, June Squibb proves she is up to the task of being the leading lady and carrying a film. Her comedic timing is spot-on and she commands every scene she is in. Many well-known faces also pop up in the film and all deliver the stellar acting we have come to expect from them. Parker Posey puts on her hysterical best as the worried daughter, and Malcom McDowell and Richard Roundtree deliver dynamic performances.

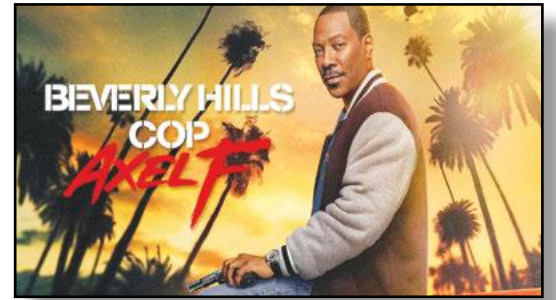
The messages about how we view the value of older citizens in today’s society resonate, and it is solidified by actors who have been around a long time and can still bring their A-game.

This film is a delightful, quiet charmer in a sea of flashy blockbusters. Stick around for the end credits and see the filmmaker’s real live grandmother who inspired the character.

In Theaters and Digital, PG-13



Beverly Hills Cop: Axel F



Fans of Eddie Murphy who enjoy his work, sans transformative makeup, can rejoice that he is back as his beloved star-making character in “Beverly Hills Cop: Axel F.”

The fourth installment of the franchise delivers almost everything a fan could want. Nostalgia abounds as all the major characters are back: Chief Taggart, detectives Billy and Jeff and the beloved Serge. Even though it is a delight to see Bronson Pinchot reprise the hilarious Serge, the character is sadly underused here. There is also the soundtrack. With the exception of a few new tracks, get ready to go back to the late 1980’s with Glen Frey, The Pointer Sisters and the iconic Axel F theme by Harold Faltermeyer.

Viewers are also treated to new characters played by heavy hitters Kevin Bacon, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, and Taylour Paige as Murphy’s estranged daughter.

Axel Foley finds himself once again returning to Beverly Hills. This time, his daughter, who is a defense attorney, is caught up in a case that involves some shady characters and possible police corruption. When this extends to the sudden disappearance of his old friend, Detective Billy Rosewood, Foley uses his rule-breaking ways to attempt to solve the case.

Murphy and Paige have a typical strained father-daughter relationship trope, but they play well off of each other and their combined talent rises above the predictable storyline.

Lovers of car chases and explosions will not be disappointed. Although this is a direct-to-Netflix film, the budget is more of a blockbuster theatrical release with no expense spared to bring full throttle action.

As for Murphy, he appears to be a member of the “Paul Rudd Never Ages Club.” He looks great and carries himself like an action hero. He has not lost his comedic touch and it is this ability that has always made these films appealing to an audience that may not usually watch action films.

While this movie may not create new fans, or offer anything fresh to the action film genre, it is a satisfying addition to the Beverly Hills Cop franchise and a fun way to spend your viewing time.

Netflix

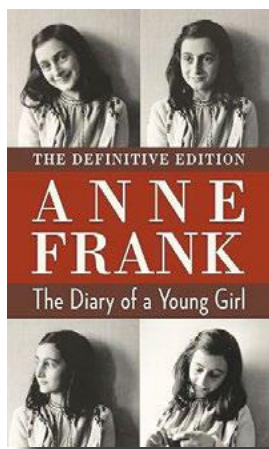


Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl

I recently reread “The Diary of a Young Girl” because of a planned visit to tour the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. Unlike the version I read in school, the definitive edition by Anne Frank (Bantam reprint, 1997, mass market paperback, 400 pages, \$8.09) is unabridged. The book chronicles her life between June 12, 1942 and August 1, 1944, during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands. It describes her fears, frustrations, and dreams while living in a secret upstairs annex of her father’s spice business. Anne shares the cramped space with her family, Mr. and Mrs. Van Daan and their son, Peter, and an unmarried dentist, Fritz Pfeffer.

The book is a published diary that Anne named “Kitty.” Her entries typically begin with “Dear Kitty” and read like she is sharing her intimate thoughts with a good friend. Her words are forthright, honest, and, above all, revealing. Not only does she share her private thoughts about her changing body and the hardships she endures, but her opinions about the Van Daans, her parents, the helpers that work in the office, and her roommate, Fritz Pfeffer. It is a historical documentary about the restrictions put on Jews and the consequences for them if caught.

While Anne showers her father with praise in her diary, her feelings toward her mother are



more complex. She reveals the annoyances that developed between the people crammed into the tight space. As Anne matures, a budding romance blossoms between her and the Van Daan’s son. Despite her youth, there are pearls of wisdom sprinkled throughout the book.

The tour I took of the annex in June during a visit to Amsterdam deepened my appreciation of the book. As I walked on the same stairs as Anne and tried, without success, to not make them creak, I could imagine how stressful it would be to live in fear for two years in these tight quarters. While none of the furnishings remain, Anne’s love of movie stars is still apparent on the pictures fixed on the wallpaper in her room. It was a startling reminder of how young she was and what a tragic loss to the world for this talented writer to have been taken from us.

I found reading the unabridged version was much more poignant than experiencing the content as a teenager. I highly recommend picking up this classic, even if you had read it in school.

Annelies Marie Frank (12 June 1929 to February 1945) was a German-born diarist and writer who lived in Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation. She did not live to see her dream of becoming a writer realized. Her father, Otto Frank, the only annex survivor, lobbied for its publication in 1947. It was first published in English in 1952. “The Diary of a Young Girl” has been the basis for several plays and films and has been translated into over sixty languages.



by Beth Javens, President & CEO

Visit Concord and Creative Concord have partnered for something unique, refreshing and bold. We have coordinated with two of Concord’s exceptional breweries, Side Gate and Epidemic Ales to create one-of-a-kind beer labels that highlight local artistry and craft brewing.

The first collaboration is at Side Gate Brewery & Beer Garden. It is their newest release, “Diablo Dreamin’” available now while supplies last, at the brewery in Concord, a premier stop on Concord’s Beer Trail. “Diablo Dreamin’” is a West Coast Pale Ale, blending Citra, Columbus, and Amarillo hops to create a “devilishly” good combination.

The label art for “Diablo Dreamin’” features the stunning “Mt. Diablo,” a vibrant piece by talented local artist Calee Dunlap. Calee created the piece live during a previous Creative Concord’s Art & Music Jam.

Paul Culbertson, Co-founder of Side Gate Brewery, loved the collaboration stating, “Calee Dunlap’s colorful and ethereal

Local Artistry Featured on Concord Craft Brewing Beer Labels

depiction of Mt. Diablo inspired us to brew something bright and full of character, yet still approachable. We landed on a Pale Ale utilizing some of our favorite hops to balance orange zest and citrus aromas with a clean, crisp finish.”



Local artist Calee Dunlap’s design for Side Gate’s ‘Diablo Dreamin’ ale.

It’s the perfect beer for this crazy, hot Concord summer.

The second collaboration will debut in October when Epidemic Ales releases a special brew in honor of Concord’s 50th Anniversary as a sister city of Kitakami, Japan. The label art will be provided by esteemed artist David “Hyde” Cho. Follow Visit Concord and Epidemic Ales as details and release date are announced.

In conjunction with this release, delegates from Kitakami will visit Concord from October 1-6. The Concord Ambassadors have planned an amazing schedule, including a 50th Anniversary Dinner to celebrate this milestone.

In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from Claycord.com and Other Sources

City of Concord Wins in Two Categories of Diablo Magazine's "Best of the East Bay" Awards

The City of Concord is excited and honored to announce that we have won in two categories of Diablo Magazine's annual "Best of the East Bay" awards, as selected by readers of the publication:

- Best Outdoor Concert Series: Music & Market
- Best Overnight Camp: Camp Concord

Taking place June through September, Music & Market is a popular Thursday night concert series, where listeners can enjoy live music, as well as the weekly farmers' market that runs in conjunction with the shows at Todos Santos Plaza.

Camp Concord is a summer camp in the South Lake Tahoe, offering family, youth and 50 and better camps. Camp Concord strives to provide a high quality, affordable vacation for campers by providing the highest level of hospitality and programming through a shared vision of teamwork, customer service and dedication to its natural environment.

We are proud of this accomplishment and we will continue to join with our community to make Concord a city of the highest quality!

U.S. Post Office Hiring More People For The General Election

According to data from the California Secretary of State's Office, 88.6% of voters in the state used mail-in ballots in both the 2024 primary and 2022 general elections, a trend that has risen steadily over the decades. To accommodate that role, the Postal Service has made technological changes, such as informed delivery for tracking ballots. USPS is also boosting its workforce.

"We have many different positions open across the Bay Area anywhere ranging from inside the post office with processing, to outside delivering the mail. And those salaries can range from \$18.00 per hour to over \$22.00 per hour and beyond," said USPS spokesperson Kristina Uppal. "We also have some specialized positions in our vehicle maintenance that can be over \$30.00 an hour. So, there's a lot of opportunity."

Benefits include paid time off, health and life insurance as well as 401k retirement savings plans. Hiring opportunities are across the Bay. Uppal said they are especially looking to hire carriers in San Francisco and South San Francisco.

Meals On Wheels Needs Doorbells For Seniors

Meals on Wheels in Walnut Creek is looking for a few good doorbells.

"Many of our seniors need doorbells, but can't afford to purchase one, can't get to the store, or do not have online shopping knowledge," the nonprofit said in a statement Tuesday. "Without a doorbell, some seniors are missing their meals because they can't hear our volunteers at the door."

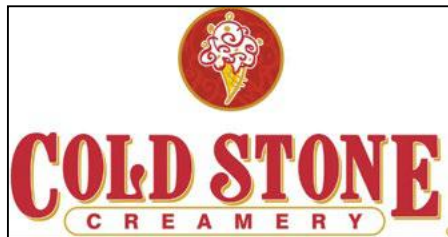
The group is asking for people to donate doorbells for them to deliver to seniors in need.

"We are specifically looking for

KERUI Wireless Doorbell which can be purchased through Amazon," the group said.

Donations can be sent directly to Meals on Wheels Diablo Region and delivered to the group's temporary office space at 2001 North Main St., Suite 300, Walnut Creek, 94596.

Cold Stone Creamery Moving Into The Clayton Valley Shopping Center In Concord



Cold Stone Creamery plans to open an ice cream shop in the Clayton Valley Shopping Center on Ygnacio Valley Rd. in Concord.

The business will be located in between Angry Chickz and Panera Bread.

U.S. Dept. Of Labor Recovers \$45K In Back Wages For Walnut Creek Restaurant Workers

A U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division (USDOL) investigation found the owner of Taqueria El Molino on Oak Grove Rd. in Walnut Creek did not pay overtime to employees for hours over 40 in a workweek, a violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The employer willfully paid overtime hours worked at straight-time rates and in cash, according to the USDOL.

Back Wages recovered:

- \$22,866 in overtime and minimum wages for 14 employees

- \$22,866 in liquidated damages for 14 employees.

U.S. News & World Report's Best Hospitals Ranks John Muir Health's Medical Centers Among Top San Francisco Metro Area Hospitals And Top 16 In California

John Muir Health's Concord and Walnut Creek Medical Centers were two of only 466 hospitals (10% of the 4,500 hospitals evaluated nationwide) to earn the designation of Best Regional Hospitals by U.S. News & World Report in its annual list of America's Best Hospitals released today. To earn this distinction, each medical center had to earn at least one national ranking in a specialty or at least seven ratings of "high performing" across the procedures and conditions evaluated by U.S. News & World Report.

The Concord and Walnut Creek Medical Centers are tied at #2 out of nearly 50 hospitals in the San Francisco Metro Area, which includes hospitals in San Francisco, San Mateo, Alameda, Contra Costa and Marin counties. The two medical centers are also ranked among the top 16 (Concord #16 and Walnut Creek #16) in the state out of 418 hospitals.

Visit Claycord.com for more stories



Neuroplasticity

by Jessica Raaum Foster,
NeurologyofPresence.com

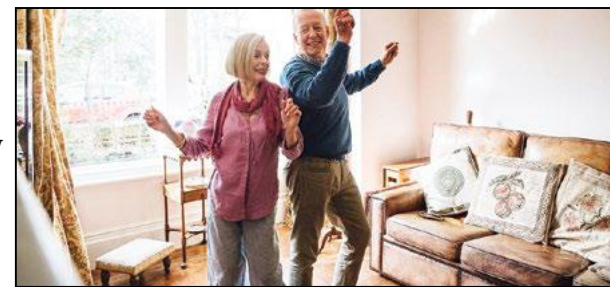
Exercise Less, More Often

If your exercise goals are simply to improve or maintain health and wellness, I am a huge fan of the "Do Less, More Often" philosophy. I know that I feel the best when I am able to exercise periodically throughout the day - just enough to challenge the body a little, without depleting the resources I need to adult my way through the world. This method also does not require a gym membership, a huge block of time on my calendar or even a change of clothes.

Here are some of my current favorite ways of moving: going for a quick walk, dancing with my daughter, jumping on the trampoline for a few minutes, running up and down the stairs, or lifting something heavy for a few reps. (I use my 40 lb. child, but even a gallon of milk makes an excellent kettlebell.) These can all be modified to any level of fitness. The goal is to keep moving. You should leave each "session" feeling more alert and energized for the next part of your day.

When there is time for a "workout," I love skill-building activities. Exploring new ranges of motion and trying new movements like handstands, or even coordinated efforts like throwing and catching a ball.

These are all complex multi-sensorial



movements that require use of multiple areas of the brain. Your brain thrives with novelty, and learning new things in a playful manner is usually a great pick-me-up in addition to improving strength and flexibility. It can also go a long way in injury prevention (unlike repetitive movements done with little thought or attention).

While there is merit in pushing your limits occasionally, regular exercise should not feel daunting. Our brains and bodies were designed to move, and it does not have to look like a "workout" to get the results. Movement is medicine: it needs to be taken regularly in appropriate doses.

Jessica Raaum Foster is a Neuro Performance Coach. For more information: www.NeurologyofPresence.com, IG: @JessicaRaaumFoster, FB: @NeurologyofPresence NeurologyofPresence@gmail.com

Calendar cont'd from pg. 3

15, Featuring Kalimba - spirit of Earth, Wind, and Fire

August 7, Walnut Creek First Wednesday Street Fest, 5:30 - 9 PM, Summer is in full swing, and so is the excitement on Locust Street! Join us for an evening filled with delicious food and drinks, and an array of activities Locust Street & Cypress St in Walnut Creek

August 15, History and Wine at the Shadelands Ranch Museum, 6 - 7:30 PM, Come and enjoy a fun evening touring the Shadelands Ranch Museum and listening to a local presentat. Ticket includes wine tasting and light appetizers.\$20 Suggested donation can be made at the door. 2660 Ygnacio Valley Rd, Walnut Creek.

August 17, Free! Artisan Faire | Makers Market, 11 AM - 5 PM, An Outdoor, Open-Air Marketplace, Handcrafted + Eco-friendly, Enjoy Live music!, Great food + drinks in all of the surrounding eateries, Bring your kids + fur babies! 100+ more local Makers! Broadway Plaza, 1198 Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek

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/>

Diablo Valley Farmers Market

North Wiget Ln. and Mitchell Dr. Shadelands, Walnut Creek, Saturdays 9AM-1PM Year Round 1799 Locust St. www.cafarmersmks.com
Rossmoor Farmers Market
Rossmoor residents and their families only. Fridays 9AM-1PM, Golden Rain Rd. <http://www.cafarmersmks.com>

com/rossmoor-farmers-market

LESHER CENTER

August 2 - 11, Disney's The Little Mermaid Presented by Poison Apple Productions. Based on the animated 1989 Disney film and the classic Hans Christian Andersen story.

August 10, 11, The Pirates of Penzance, Presented by Lamp-lighter-one of the most popular G&S operettas of all time—THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE.

Leshner 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.

LIBRARY

August 9, 16, 23, 30, Meditation, hosted by the Divya Babaji Sushumna Kriya Yoga Foundation, 10:10AM - 11:30AM. Walnut Creek Library, 1644 N Broadway, Walnut Creek. (925) 977-3340 <https://ccclib.org>

Other Cities

EVENTS

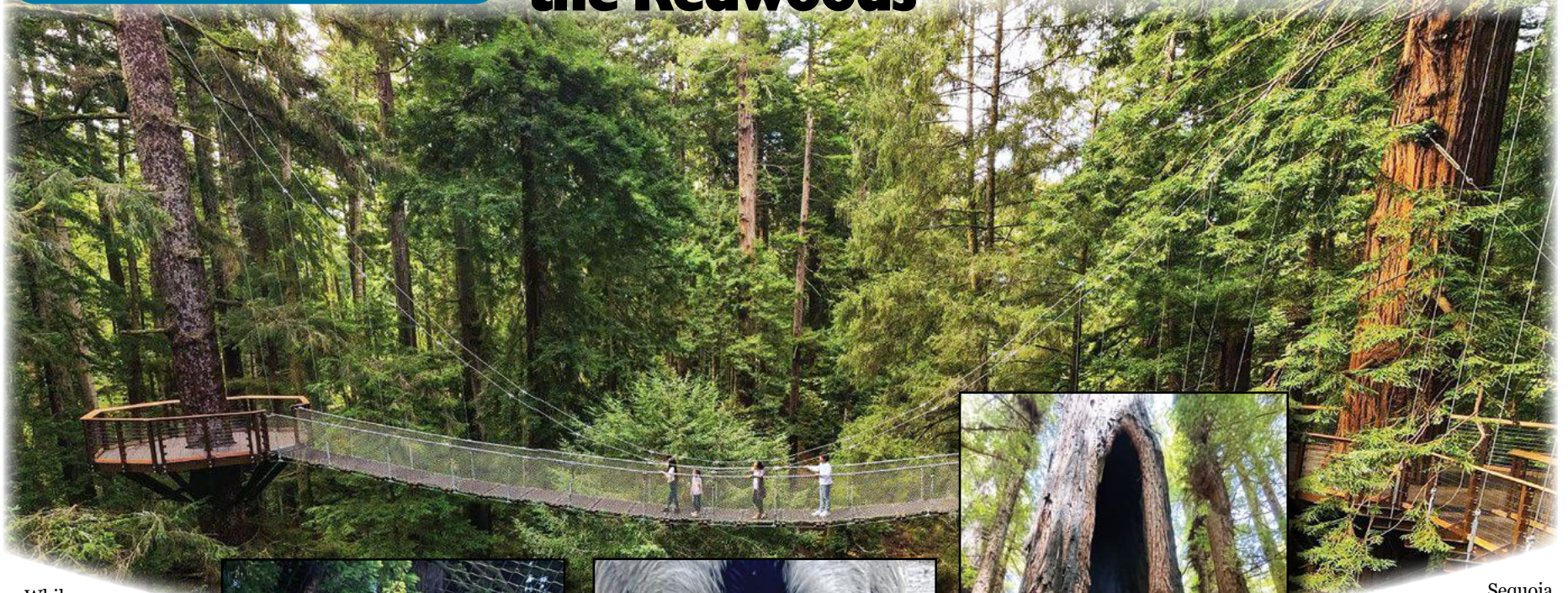
PITTSBURG: September 5, SIR Branch 19 will hold its Monthly Luncheon, 11 AM with a social hour and lunch served at noon. Pittsburg Elks' Lodge, 200 Marina Blvd., Pittsburg. SIR is a social organization of men who get together and participate in fun activities. www.sirinc2.org/branch19 or call: 925 338-1996 for more information.

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

JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

by Jill Hedgecock, www.JillHedgecock.com

For an Aerial Adventure, Skywalk the Redwoods



While Muir Woods National Monument in Marin is a short drive to escape the crowds and avoid transport buses, heading to the northern end of the state is an excellent alternative to view the iconic California coast redwoods.

The approximately four-hour drive to Humboldt Redwoods State Park in Weott, California, is well worth the drive. Given the distance and the number of things to see, a weekend getaway is warranted. Camping enthusiasts should consider one of the nearby campsites. parks.ca.gov/

The most impressive thing about Redwoods is their height, which gives them the distinction of being the tallest trees on earth. Some coast redwoods soar to 300 feet. The next tallest pine tree species reaches 268 feet.

The Redwoods Visitor Center is a destination in and of itself. Located just south of the town of Weott, the comprehensive exhibits include the world's first "motorhome," a unique vehicle that was a hollowed-out redwood log planted on top of a custom frame, photos and newspaper articles about the historic flood of 1964, plus interactive displays for kids, wildlife exhibits, souvenirs, and much more. Also



Bald Eagles



Giant Rhea



Giant Redwood tree

Sequoia Park Zoo in Eureka, California, this walkway rises 100 feet into the canopy of old-growth and mature second-growth redwood trees. The bridges and platforms of the skywalk are suspended from the trees in a manner that avoids harm to the redwoods.

The adventure sections of the attraction have open mesh decking and provide a unique viewing experience.

The nine platforms offer fascinating information about the trees. Redwoods are considered conifers. They

worthy of a quick look while in Weott is The Four Fireplaces, or the Federation Hearthstone, designed by Julia Morgan. Morgan was the first woman to receive the highest award from the American Institute of Architects, the AIA Gold Medal, posthumously in 2014.

But to really see the redwoods in a whole new way, keep driving north for another hour on Highway 101 to experience the redwood skywalk. If you make a weekend excursion out of this trip, drive the twenty-plus-mile Avenue of the Giants, which runs parallel to Highway 101. It is worth the extra time.

The Avenue of the Giants has been called the finest forest drive in the world. There are multiple hiking options along this

route and several access points to the Eel River, a federally designated Wild & Scenic Waterway, and home to an ancient creature called the Pacific lamprey. Lampreys are jawless fish that have existed since before the dinosaurs.

Pepperwood, located at the northernmost end of the Avenue of the Giants and Humboldt State Park, is also definitely worth the stop. At the Drury-Chaney Groves trail, head-height ferns flourish in the redwood understory, creating a jaw-dropping experience reminiscent of the scenery in Jurassic Park.

The redwood skywalk is a must-see for redwood enthusiasts. This attraction was voted the number one Aerial Adventure Park in the nation by USA Today Readers. The exhibit opened in 2021 and, at just under one-quarter of a mile, is the longest skywalk in the western United States. Located in the

produce cones and have needle-like leaves. Redwoods can survive lightning strikes and are adapted to wildfires. They do not contain pitch or resin, and their thick bark is fire resistant. Redwoods are also one of the fastest growing trees and a single tree can produce millions of seeds in a single year. They can control its climate by condensing fog moisture into drops that rain down and soak the soil. They also help combat climate change because they absorb more carbon dioxide in their plant tissues than any other tree on the planet.

After visiting the skywalk, be sure to visit the animal exhibits. All zoo animals were either born on site or are unable to survive in the wild. Two brown bears are rescues and are a delight to watch.

Another unique feature of the zoo is an opportunity to see bush dogs, an extremely rare species. The eleven bush dogs in the United States can be found in only four facilities. These 10–15-pound scrappy animals are known to take down animals much bigger than themselves such as an 80-pound greater rhea.

The greater rhea is the largest bird species in South America. It is related to African ostriches and Australian emus. There are many types of birds on display including two beautiful bald eagles, a flock of flamingos, colorful scarlet ibis and golden pheasant. A screamer showing off her egg and an African grey parrot that says "hello" were other highlights of the animal exhibits.

Kids will enjoy the barnyard exhibit that includes guinea pigs, donkeys, miniature horses, and chickens. The Sequoia Park Zoo and redwood skywalk are open year-round and an assured enjoyable adventure for the whole family.



Jill Hedgecock with friend, Fran Cain, in a mock eagle nest



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Port Chicago 50 Exonerated On 80th Anniversary Of Disaster That Killed 320

By Claycord.com

On the 80th anniversary of the Port Chicago disaster, the U.S. Navy on Wednesday, July 17, exonerated the 50 African American sailors convicted of mutiny after they refused to load explosives onto ships following explosions that killed 320 men.

The Navy also exonerated the 208 men who initially refused, then went back to work loading explosives, but were convicted of disobeying orders.

“Today’s announcement marks the end of a long and arduous journey for these Black sailors and their families, who fought for a nation that denied them equal justice under law,” President Joe Biden said in a statement. “May we all remember their courage, sacrifice, and service to our nation.”

Port Chicago was at the northern tip of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station, a busy hub during World War II in the Pacific against Japan. Sailors were loading the S.S. E.A. Bryan cargo ship when unsafe conditions led to it and another ship exploding on July 17, 1944, killing 320 men — two-thirds of them African American — and wounding another 400. The explosion also destroyed a train and flattened the town of Port Chicago. The cause of the blast, which was powerful enough to be felt as far away as San Francisco, was never determined.



The dangerous task loading of weapons was done exclusively by African American sailors at the base and was supervised by white commanders, who frequently pushed sailors to work harder. The disaster accounted for about a quarter of



all African American deaths in World War II.

The 50 African American sailors were convicted of mutiny after refusing to go back to loading ammunition at nearby



Mare Island in Vallejo in the weeks after the disaster, while white commanders were granted leave.

Each of the sailors were sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, 15 years confinement with hard labor and total forfeitures of their pay.

During subsequent reviews of the general court martial, the dishonorable discharges were suspended and the period of confinement was reduced from 15 years to 17 to 29 months. The Navy said by January 1946, nearly all the sailors were released and given the opportunity to finish their contracts.

The sailors were represented during their appeal by future Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall, for whom the East Bay Regional Park District named its nearby still-to-be-developed park on the former Navy base.

Marshall was lead counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Though all 50 were convicted and sentenced to prison, Marshall’s campaign was widely credited with President Harry Truman’s decision to end segregation in the armed forces in 1948.

“This is a monumental day for justice and for the families of the Port Chicago 50,” said Congresswoman Barbara Lee, D-Oakland. “I appreciate the Secretary of the Navy taking this crucial action to exonerate these courageous men who were unjustly court-martialed by the Navy following the explosion at Port Chicago. On the 80th anniversary of this tragic event, it’s fitting that these men are not only exonerated, but honored for their service to this country.”

[Port Chicago Historical Video](#)

County Bar Association Task Force Influences the Navy to Act

By Carole Lucido

Last year on the 79th anniversary of the Port Chicago Disaster, Jonathan Lee, Contra Costa County Bar Association’s (CCCBA) chair of the Port Chicago Task Force, sent an email to the Secretary of the Navy. He wrote, “next year on the 80th commemoration event, I hope to see you here with the announcement of full exoneration for the Port Chicago 50.”

Lee is an assistant US Attorney who volunteered to lead the Task Force in a personal capacity. Lee’s vision came true.

On July 17, Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro, as quoted in the Washington Post, called the charges “a tremendous wrong. I have made the decision inherent within my authority dating to the laws of the time, to set aside the court-martial of all sailors convicted as part of the Port Chicago incident.”

The Port Chicago Disaster, that occurred 80 years ago on July 17, 1944, claimed the lives of 320 men and left hundreds wounded. The little town of Port Chicago was flattened and the blast registered 3.4 on the Richter scale in Berkeley.

Post-disaster, 50 men were charged with mutiny for refusing to return to work under the same hazardous conditions under which the blast occurred, resulting in guilty verdicts for each defendant. The all African American sailors, faced injustice during a time of Navy segregation and racial inequality. The shame and discrimination continued well after they served their time and returned home, robbing them of opportunities that an honorable discharge afforded other veterans.

In February 2022, the CCCBA established the Port Chicago Task Force with the goals of raising awareness of the disaster and advocating for the exoneration of the Port Chicago 50. For the last two years, the CCCBA Port Chicago Task Force led by Jonathan Lee, a member of CCCBA’s Board of Directors, has actively communicated exoneration arguments to federal, state, and local

leaders, as well as the Department of the Navy.

The Alliance and the Task Force made presentations to Bay Area elected officials Mark DeSaulnier, Barbara Lee, John Garamendi, the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors and the mayors of Albany, Antioch, Brentwood, Concord, Danville, Lafayette, Martinez, Orinda, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, and Walnut Creek, who all signed on with resolutions calling for exoneration.

“[This] action by the Navy cements the legacy of the Port Chicago 50 as catalysts for the modern civil rights movement,” said Jonathan Lee who chaired the Task Force and has worked tirelessly on this project. “They served with honor at a time of great peril for our nation, while facing racial discrimination in every aspect of life, including their service. As a result of their trial and convictions, and through the efforts of Thurgood Marshall and others, the armed forces were desegregated by 1948.

This has been an 80-year cry for justice, and our Task Force’s work to shine a light on this injustice that occurred in our own backyard illustrates the power of the legal community to redress injustice.”

CCCBA President David Pearson said, “Congratulations to the families of all of the men wrongfully convicted 80 years ago. The exoneration has been a long time coming. Thank you to all who worked so hard to make the exoneration a reality including the CCCBA’s own Jonathan Lee who spearheaded the Bar Association’s efforts to assist the families of the brave men.”

The Port Chicago Alliance hosted a four-day festival highlighted with the 80th Commemoration ceremony at Port Chicago where the exoneration was announced in the presence of Carlos Del Toro, the Secretary of the Navy and Sean Coffey, General Counsel.

Exoneration Puts Port Chicago as Catalyst for National Civil Rights Movement

By David King

Did Port Chicago injustice start the national civil rights movement?

Yulie Padmore believes it did. Padmore is the executive director of Port Chicago Alliance which hosted the four-day Port Chicago Festival in July.

“I’ve been working at this for quite some time, since 2019,” Padmore says. “And by this, I mean, the exoneration of Port Chicago 50.”

On July 17, national news announced that the Secretary of the Navy exonerated the 50 plus the 208 savers that were wrongly convicted in 1944. The Navy has corrected a historical wrong.

“What this means for our nation is monumental because we can say California was the catalyst of the desegregation of the Navy and armed forces, which expanded to the workforce, school system, and folks with different heritages.”

As far as the future, Padmore firmly believes this addendum to history should be shared.

“When we’re talking about the civil rights era in the United States, we think of Montgomery bus boycott, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King. We’re now at a point where we can talk about what was the catalyst for that.”

When we think about different museums throughout the United States, oftentimes, student educational field trips go to Washington DC. But now, we have an opportunity for a cultural center here in California and a place for folks to learn about our role in this civil rights history and how that ties in with all of the other history in America.

The city of Concord passed a proclamation proclaiming July 17th as “Port Chicago Remembrance Day.”



Blue Devils at DCI West Championship at Stanford Stadium, July 6, 2024. Photos by Omar Sanchez

Blue Devils to Vie for Their 22nd World Championship

On August 8-10, the Blue Devils will be competing for their 22nd World Championship Title in Indianapolis, Indiana. Since 1975 the Blue Devils have never finished out of the top five and have won the DCI World Championship title in 1976, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1986, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2022 and 2023.

They have been dominant in the Drum Corps universe, envied by all. The last two years, Blue Devils went undefeated during the performance tours. It appeared they would be poised to continue that streak in 2024 after winning the DCI West Championship World Class Division in Stanford on July 6. The Blue Devils B Corps also won in the Open Class Division there.

However, this year the Blue Devils have met up with some menacing

rivals having finished second at DCI Southwestern Championship in San Antonio, Texas, on July 20 and third for DCI Southeastern Championship in Atlanta, Georgia, July 27.

Congratulations on the DCI West Win. You do Concord proud. Good luck in Indianapolis at the World Championship, Blue Devils.

Blue Devils with Taylor Swift

Did you know the Blue Devils Drumline performed with Taylor Swift at the 2019 Billboard Music Awards (BMA). "That was epic!" proclaimed BMA.



Click link to watch. <https://bdentertainment.com/casestudy/2019-billboard-awards/>

Pride in the Plaza Festival to Celebrate Community and Allies at Todos Santos Plaza



Rainbow Community Center (RCC) of Contra Costa County is hosting Pride in the Plaza at Todos Santos Plaza downtown Concord on August 17, from noon to 6:00 p.m. The theme is Colors of Love.

There will be performances, vendors by agencies serving the LGBTQIA+ community and their allies, artisan products, affirming churches, LGBTQIA+ organizations, and more. There will be a curated activities for kids.

Entertainment lineup includes: DJ Sir Ellis, Funkmode, Kazz-violinist, Bark, Indie Freak Folk Music Project and CAMP DRAG: Presented by The Young Actors' Theatre Camp.

This year's Pride in the Plaza will honor Dee Vieira as RCC's Community Champion of the Year and Giovanni Jaz as RCC's Business Champion of the Year.

Viera has been a long-time volunteer of Rainbow, a former member of the Board of Directors and invested countless hours in fundraising for RCC.



Dee Vieira, Community Champion of the Year and Giovanni Jaz, Business Champion of the Year

Additionally, Vieira worked with community members and members of the Clayton City Council to plan and organize the successful Clayton Pride Parades. She continues to fundraise for Rainbow and has raised over \$100,000.

Jaz has been a community member of the RCC since childhood. He credits Rainbow for providing support while growing up in Clayton. Now a business owner of Free to Be Electrology in Martinez, he has focused on providing gender-affirming care to his clients and has generously supported Rainbow's fundraisers. As a result, Rainbow has raised tens of thousands from his generous gifts. Jaz has also served as the treasurer of the board.

All are welcome. For up-to-date information on Pride in the Plaza, go to <https://www.rainbowcc.org/prideintheplaza2024>.

Views of the Valley



The Clayton Mustangs U15 travel baseball team won the Five Tool Kick Off Tournament at Canada College in Redwood City. "This was one of the best baseball teams I've ever been associated with as far as character, hard work, very coachable and most importantly cheering for their teammates," says Coach Herc Pardi.

Bottom L-R : Jerame Rodriguez, Coach Herc Pardi, Chris Sardi, Mick Coakley, Isaac Daly Hernandez, Angelo Gonzalez, Hayden Wong, Nolan Trautner. Top Row : L-R : Brycen Syrovatka, Jack Ossowski, Johnny Benkert, Tavion Stafford, Geno Coddington, Coach Bryan Bruno, Coach Casey Coakley. Missing : Nate Allen, Charlie Reyes, Nolan Lopez, Jordan Garcia, Everett Flanagan.



Sugartown Festival in Crockett attracted many from out of town. Featured four bands, food, arts and crafts.



The Martinez Sturgeon receives the key to the city from the Martinez Chamber of Commerce & Visit Martinez. California Beaver at the 2024 Pacific Division Pecos League All-Star game.



Clayton Theatre Company Summer Stage Camp performs "Snow White." L-R Ethan McChesney, Sawyer Goza, Gracie Martin, Julienn Brzovich, Penny Tello, Kaleigh Knight, Julia Meyer, Melanie Lynch, Charley Galletti, (Snow White) Emily Rhodes. Photo credit-Jennifer Hosel. Directed by Roxanne Pardi & La Tonya Watts. Assisted by Cara Bent and Owen Loyd.



One of the annual favorites, Zepperella performs at Music and Market at Todos Santos Park in Concord.

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