

**JUNE 2025**

# CVCHS Shines at Vex Robotics WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



Globally recognized, Clayton Valley Charter Robotics Team. L-R: Asher Wan, Will Gallagher, Santi Martinez, Alex Mihaylov, Eric Catalano.  
 Story page 10.

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June's Diablo Gazette is almost always my favorite edition. Graduation and the beginning of summer vacations are exciting times. Graduates can now look FORWARD to their unleashed future. By the way, I want to thank all the advertisers that honor and salute the Class of 2025 in this edition. Please appreciate them through your patronage.

The Martinez Chamber delivered their "Best Of" AWARDS based on citizens votes with a spectacular gala.

Summer is when communities ramp up their activities and that always leads to interesting items to tell, which I will share with you here.

### Free Shake on First Day of Summer

Diablo Gazette and Claycord.com have teamed up with Wayback Burgers in Concord to offer Free 12 oz. vanilla shakes to everyone on June 20, the first day of summer! REWARD yourself. All you have to do is go get it. See the ad on this page for details. Wayback is located at 4375 Clayton Rd.

### Father's Day BBQ

Coming up on Father's Day, we are happy to again sponsor the King of the County Backyard BBQ at Waterfront Park in Martinez. I hope you can bring Dad out to this annual three-day festival, June 13-15, for great food, music and of course BBQ contests. More on this and band line up on page 23.

### Warrior Festus Ezeli Feasts on Sugar Plum

Tik Tok users may have recently seen a

# Rewards, Awards, and *Looking Forward*

clip of former Golden State Warrior (2012-2016), Festus Ezeli, enjoying a hearty breakfast burrito and a giant blueberry waffle at Concord's Sugar Plum Coffee Shop.

Ezeli has launched "Festus Feasts" with video of his play-by-play reaction to dishes across the Bay Area on his Instagram. Many recognize Ezeli as a Sports analyst for NBC Sports Bay Area, but Sugar Plum owner, Claudia Lemus, says she didn't know who he was when her friend and loyal customer arranged his visit back in December 2025.

Ezeli is also developing a show featuring Bay Area restaurants set to debut soon on YouTube according to KTVU-TV. It seems the Sugar Plum feast was more of a practice run for him.

The Sugar Plum video was just posted on Instagram.com/feastusfeasts/reels on May 20 and has already amassed over 64 thousand views. Ezeli certainly enjoyed

his meal as he posted, "This Hidden 1950s Diner in the East Bay Area Is a Time Machine You Can Eat In. @sugar\_plum\_coffee\_shop is a Concord staple where generations have gathered over amazing food and strong coffee. It's the kind of place



that feels like home and tastes even better."

### Vote for 12 Winners in CCWD 2026 Wall Calendar Art Contest

Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) annual calendar art contest is now in its voting stage. According to Oliver Symonds, CCWD Senior Public Information Specialist, approximately 180 amazing entries competed to be on 2026 wall calendar, the most since the contest began. The theme this year, "The Value of Water."

The field has been narrowed to the finalists. Now it is up to the public to select their favorite 12. The contestants with the most votes will win \$75 each and their winning entry featured on the 2026 wall calendar. Warning: narrowing your favorites down to just 12 is not easy.

Voting closes at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, June 11. Limit one ballot per person. Go to: [www.ccwater.com/calendarcontest](http://www.ccwater.com/calendarcontest)

### Birdnapping Crime Lays an Egg, Hatches Avian Care and Rehab Foundation

In September, Feathered Follies was burglarized and two of their exotic birds, Tofu and Plato, were stolen. Concord police put out an APB for the birds and after months of extensive searching and collaboration with several agencies, both birds were found alive and well and returned. The two suspects are identified; one is in jail.

During those months, the community rallied to support Feathered Follies' loss by making donations for reward money. So much so, it led to the creation of a new non-profit, the Feathered Follies Foundation, whose mission focuses on education, conservation, and rescue/rehabilitation of birds. For those who love birds and animals

in general can now get hands-on learning experience as volunteers.

In fact, the Feathered Follies Foundation is currently looking for volunteers this summer. See their ad on page 6 and scan the QR code to access volunteer application forms. [Featheredfolliesfoundation.org](http://Featheredfolliesfoundation.org).

It's funny how something so devious has led to something very so altruistic.

### Have you seen the stunning new Shiva Murgan Temple in Concord?

Congratulations to Shiva Murugan Temple, Located at 1803 2nd St. The sacred Maha Kumbabishekam—a consecration ceremony marked the transformation of the temple, now rebuilt with the Chola architectural style of Tamil Nadu. The reconstruction culminates in the first-ever Panchavarna (five-color) temple in the United States, a rare and stunning color scheme symbolizing divine energies and cosmic balance.

This significant event in the Hindu

religious calendar is a time of devotion, joy, and renewal.

Festivities began on Tuesday, May 6 with pre-Kumbabishekam rituals, building up to a grand celebration on Friday, May 9. City of Concord leadership joined temple representatives and devoted supporters who traveled from near and far to honor this momentous occasion—a construction and rejuvenation journey that began ten years ago, now culminating in a beautiful and spiritually uplifting milestone.



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**CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2025!**

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The Diablo **Gazette**







## Nonnas

When Joey (Vince Vaughn) loses his mother, he finds comfort in cooking the foods he remembers his mother and grandmother “nonna” made when he was young. He gets the idea that others may also enjoy the type of home cooking only a mother or grandmother can provide and decides to open a restaurant using grandmothers instead of professional chefs.

This may seem like a far-fetched comedy plot, but the film is based on the true story of Joe Scaravella and his Staten Island restaurant, Enoteca Maria. Fictionalized, however, are the colorful nonnas played by Hollywood heavy hitters. The characters are inspired but not based on any specific cook that worked at the restaurant. Still, with a cast of Lorraine Bracco, Talia Shire, Brenda Vaccaro and Susan Sarandon, you can bet the performances are heartfelt and humorous.

It is refreshing to see a film where grandmothers are important characters to the plot and not regulated to one-dimensional roles. Each of the women have fleshed out lives and want to continue to be relevant members of their community.

The film depicts how difficult it is to open a restaurant and how many factors come into play to make it a success. In this film, Joey takes over a neighborhood institution that has



been in the town for decades. Much like Joey grieves the loss of his mother, the neighborhood grieves the death of the previous owner and closure of a beloved gathering spot. With the locals resistant to accept a new place, coupled with various inspections and constant money issues, opening and maintaining a successful restaurant feels impossible.

This film is suitable for the whole family and gives you characters to root for. Share in the celebration of the joys of family and friends while salivating over the delicious Italian dishes created throughout. If you are looking for a sweet story that emphasizes the importance of keeping family traditions alive, while upholding the value of our older generations, this one will leave your heart full and your stomach hungry.

Rated PG, Streaming on Netflix



**Jill Hedgecock's bookends**  
Author, *Pisco* and *Between Shadow's Eyes*

## Isola

“Isola” (The Dial Press, 2025, hardcover, 368 pages, \$20.47) by Allegra Goodman is a literary historical novel based on the fascinating re-imagining of Marguerite de la Rocque’s complicated life. Marguerite, a young, 16th century, French noblewoman, who was orphaned at age three and stripped of her wealth by her ward, Jean-François Roberval. The book opens to Marguerite’s early years when her fortunes were still relatively intact and she lived in a castle, Perigord, with her nurse Damiene. But as Roberval continues to steal her wealth over time to fund his sailing expeditions, her financial situation becomes dire.

After her guardian sold her estate home, Marguerite found herself without a dowry or marriage prospects. She was horrified when Roberval, a foul-tempered man, informed her that she must sail with him to establish a colony for France near the land now called Quebec. Her faithful nurse, Damiene, accompanied her, and remained stalwart in her religious convictions throughout the arduous journey. On the ship, after Roberval discovered Marguerite’s affection toward his secretary, Auguste, he banished Marguerite, Auguste, and Damiene to an uninhabited island. While this action is documented in history, as is Marguerite’s rescue two years later and her return to society, Goodman used her creative prowess to fill in the blanks of Marguerite’s real-life experiences.

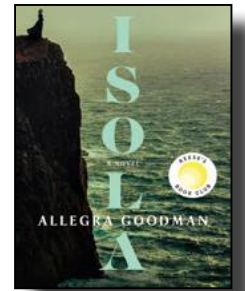
In addition to capturing the character’s emotions, one of the most compelling things about “Isola” is Goodman’s attention to detail in depicting 16th Century social norms, religious beliefs, and world exploration. From the biological life and weather conditions when Marguerite is abandoned on a remote island, to the types of clothing and dialects of 16th century society, Goodman creates an immersive experience of the period.

The novel is a studied blend of fiction and historical accuracy that is sure to please fans of Geraldine Brooks, Lisa See, and Kristin Hannah. Although slow to start, the action picks up when Roberval insists Marguerite accompany him on the long, dangerous voyage to New France (Canada). I appreciated Goodman’s exploration of societal norms and family ties during that period, and the age-old heartbreak of forbidden love.

“Isola” was Reese’s Book Club Pick and a National Bestseller. It was listed as a “New York Times” Best Book of the Year (So Far), and one of The 39 Most Anticipated Books of 2025 in “Time.”

Allegra Goodman has written nine other fiction books including “Sam,” a Read with Jenna Book Club selection, “The Chalk Artist,” winner of the Massachusetts Book Award, “Intuition,” “The Cookbook Collector,” and “The Family Markowitz”. Her fiction has been anthologized in The O. Henry Awards and Best American Short Stories. Goodman studied English and philosophy at Harvard and received a PhD in English literature from Stanford. She lives with her family in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Follow her at <https://allegragoodman.com>.

Jill Hedgecock is a regular contributor to the Diablo Gazette. Check out her latest novel “Pisco” and her trilogy “Between Shadow’s Eyes”, “From Shadow’s Perspective”, “In Shadow’s Reflection”, and her novels, “Rhino in the Room” and “Queen of the Rhino”, available on Amazon Books. [jillhedgecock.com](http://jillhedgecock.com).



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**theRIGHTmove**  
by Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate  
[www.BuyStageSell.com](http://www.BuyStageSell.com)

# Why Seniors Move While Others Manage to Stay Put Longer

Housing decisions for seniors often involve more than just finding a new home—they are about family, connections, and planning for the future. Here are some eye-opening facts:

- 16% of home buyers are over 69 years old. NAR (National Association of REALTORS®)
- Nearly 30% of seniors over 69 moves to be closer to family, friends, or relatives. (NAR)
- More than 338,000 Americans moved for retirement in 2023—a 44% increase from 2022. (NAR)
- 25% of retirees moved across state lines. (Raymond James)
- In 2021, 15% of multigenerational homes included parents moving in with their grown children. (Pew Research Center)
- Two-thirds of adult children expect to help their aging parents relocate. (Pew Research Center)

Whether it's downsizing, moving closer to loved ones, or exploring multi-generational living, these transitions are new, deeply personal, and often really emotional. SRES® (Seniors Real Estate Specialist) are professionals who help families navigate these decisions with care and expertise.

Perhaps you begin preparing your home for the next 20 years by adding

things like ramps, railings, and/or making repairs and updates so it's more user friendly for you as you age.

Or you might begin by making incremental improvements that can ultimately make your home more desirable for the next buyer.

You might begin to think about things that will result in more money if and when you sell or make it easier to live in your home longer. Either way you focus, a professional who can advise you can be a valuable asset.

It's difficult to look at your home as others might see it. You might say "who cares, it's my home and I'm comfortable here," however, removing trip hazards or making repairs that will keep things from becoming more expensive later can be things you can do now to make your home safer and more ready should you decide to sell someday.

Have a pest report to evaluate that you have no bugs or fungus. Those things can erode your home over time if not kept in check.

Have a handyperson come and fix a few things once a quarter to keep all in working order. Many Realtors have a resource list to share. I often share mine. These are lists of local vendors with a proven track record.

### MONTHLY MARKET REPORT

APRIL / 2025

#### CLAYTON

Existing SFR Median Price  
**\$1.18M**

% Change from Last Year  
**+7.3%**

MARKET COMPETITION

Median Days on Market  
**17**

Sales-to-List Price %  
**100.6%**

% of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices  
**132.1%**

#### CONCORD

Existing SFR Median Price  
**\$852K**

% Change from Last Year  
**+3.5%**

MARKET COMPETITION

Median Days on Market  
**12**

Sales-to-List Price %  
**101.0%**

% of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices  
**32.8%**

#### MARTINEZ

Existing SFR Median Price  
**\$805K**

% Change from Last Year  
**-8.0%**

MARKET COMPETITION

Median Days on Market  
**8**

Sales-to-List Price %  
**100.3%**

% of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices  
**23.8%**

#### WALNUT CREEK

Existing SFR Median Price  
**\$1.60M**

% Change from Last Year  
**-0.9%**

MARKET COMPETITION

Median Days on Market  
**10**

Sales-to-List Price %  
**100.5%**

% of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices  
**18.5%**



**Terrylynn Fisher**

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# calendar of events

## JULY 4 CELEBRATIONS

**CLAYTON:** Pancake Breakfast 7 & 10 am, Endeavor Hall, Parade 10AM, Main St.

**CONCORD:** Pancake Breakfast 8 AM, Parade 10 AM, Fireworks 9:15PM. Todos Santos. Entertainment 7:30 PM. Fireworks 9PM. Mt. Diablo High School

**MARTINEZ:** Parade begins at Court St. 10 AM. Fireworks 9:30PM. Martinez Waterfront Park 245 N Court St, Martinez

**PLEASANT HILL:** Firecracker 5k & Kids 100-Yard Dash 7:45-9:30AM, Parade 9:30-10:30, Fireworks 6:30-10:30

**WALNUT CREEK:** FREE 4th of July Concert in the Park, 6-7PM. 1375 Civic Drive Walnut Creek

## Clayton CONCERTS IN THE GROVE

> **June 14, The Cheeseballs**, 70s, 80s & 90s

> **June 28, The Bell Brothers**, Country, Rock, Americana

## Concord

-Thru June 6, **"Elements." Concord Art Association (CAA) Show.** 10 AM-4 PM. Monday-Friday. Art is available for purchase. Artists' reception 4-6 p.m. June 6. Concord Visitor Center, 2151 Salvio St, Suite T. [www.concordartassociation.org](http://www.concordartassociation.org).

-**June 6, The 4th Annual Contra Costa County Fire Fighter Of The Year Luncheon.** 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM Kiwanis Club of Concord. Reservation required. [roccibarsotti@yahoo.com](mailto:roccibarsotti@yahoo.com) Luna Restaurant, 2118 Willow Pass Rd. Concord

-**June 14, Vette-O-Rama 53**, presented by Diablo Valley Corvettes. All Corvette Type V Car Show, Enter your Corvette, or just come and enjoy the free show! Raffle Prizes. For information: [diablovalleycorvettes.com](http://diablovalleycorvettes.com). Todos Santos Park, 2151 Salvio

Street. Concord

-**June 14, 15, The Bay Area Amateur Open At Willow Pass Pickleball Courts**, Tickets Required. 2748 E Olivera Rd. Concord. [www.visitconcordca.com](http://www.visitconcordca.com)

-**June 28, Midsummer Maker's Market.** 10 AM-2PM. Unique handcrafted goods. Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Dr., Concord.

## MUSIC & MARKET SERIES

Thursday Evenings 6:30-8 PM

> **June 5, Tom Rigney and Flambeau**, New Orleans Grooves

> **June 12, The Sun Kings**, Tribute to The Beatles

> **June 19, Pop Rocks**, Party Band 80's and Up

> **June 26, 2Z**, K-Pop Band on Tour from S. Korea

Todos Santos Plaza, Concord. For schedule: [www.visitconcordca.com/](http://www.visitconcordca.com/)

## Pleasant Hill

-**June 6 and 20, Pleasant Hill Night Market.** Food, artisan vendors and entertainment, 5-9 p.m. (the first and third Fridays of the month through Nov.) 7, Chilpancingo Park off Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill. [www.phillca.gov](http://www.phillca.gov)

-**June 7-8, Pleasant Hill Art, Wine & Music Festival**, Local artists, wine tastings, live music, and delicious food options. Downtown Pleasant Hill

-**June 8, Teen Summer Kick-Off Party**, 6:00-8:00 pm. Ages 10-14 yrs. Swimming, games, music, cannonball contests, and more. Pre-registration required. Pleasant Hill Aquatic Park, 147 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. [pleasanthillrec.com](http://pleasanthillrec.com)

-**June 14, Reservations** are now open for a limited-seat event with **Brian Copeland, Bay Area author**, comedian, and actor at the meeting of the California Writers Club—Mt. Diablo Branch. The public is invited. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$30 and includes a buffet lunch. Reservations required. <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/june-meeting-with-brian-copeland/> Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill

-**July 18, 19, Pleasant Hill Blues & Brews Festival 2025.** 4PM. The 14th Annual Pleasant Hill Blues & Brews Festival is the best FREE summer party of the season. Sip on local craft brews, listen to epic live bands, and explore a mix of food trucks and artisan vendors. 147 Gregory Ln, Pleasant Hill. [BluesAndBrewsFestival.com](http://BluesAndBrewsFestival.com)

## DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

7-9 PM at the plaza in front of Jack's Restaurant and Bar, Crescent Drive, Pleasant Hill

> **June 20, Neon Velvet**  
> **July 17: Patron Latin Rhythms**  
> **August 21: The Cheeseballs**  
> **September 18: Foreverland**

**SUNSET BY THE LAKE**  
Summer Concert Series. 6-8 p.m. Sundays. Family Fun Zones on June 8, July 5 and July 20.

> **June 8: The Great Space Coaster.**

> **June 22: Dakita.**

Outside Pleasant Hill City Hall, 100 Gregory Lane.

## Martinez

-**June 7, Cobra Day Car Show**, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM. 11th Annual All Ford Show, 777 Arnold Drive, Suite 200, Martinez

-**June 7th, (Second Saturday monthly), Historical Ghost Tour** - 7-9PM, Discover downtown Martinez's spooky past on the Historical Ghost Tour! Flashlight-guided, spine-chilling stories await! Tickets required. MARKET & MAIN. 610 Main Street Martinez

-**June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14, October 12, November 9, December 14. Open Air Market**, 9 AM. Embrace the charm and allure of unique finds at the Downtown Open Air Market, a monthly treasure trove of Vintage, Collectibles, Antiques, Arts & Crafts, and more! 718 Alhambra Ave, Martinez.

-**June 12, (July 10, August 14, September 11), Downtown Martinez Car Show Series** 6-8PM. Come join us in Downtown for classic cars and vintage vibes!

-**June 13-15, King of the County BBQ & Music Festival**, 5:00pm - 9:00pm (Fri), 11:00am - 9:00pm (Sat), 11:00am - 6:00pm (Sun). This popular FREE community event offers fun for the entire family. Waterfront Park, 245 North Court St., Martinez

-**June 21, Martinez Ready! Wildfire Preparedness** - FREE, 9-11am Martinez Senior Center, 818 Green Street. Bring your friends and neighbors!

-**June 21, Meet Me On Main**, 10AM-3PM. where the community comes together for a day of fun and exploration, ome decore, food and more! [downtownmartinez.org](http://downtownmartinez.org)

-**June 28, Beaver Festival XVI**, 11AM-4 PM. Beavers are having a moment in the sun! This free, family nature event features live music, fifty wildlife exhibits, an award-winning chalk artist, children's activities and a wide range of conservation information. Susana St, Martinez

## At the Martinez Campbell Theater

> **June 8, Partners in Crime**

> **June 8, Open Mic**

> **June 20-22, Alter-Ego**

Martinez Campbell Theater  
636 Ward St, Martinez,  
[www.campbelltheater.com](http://www.campbelltheater.com)

## Walnut Creek

-**June 6, Dance to Claudio Medeiros Trio**, 7:30 to 10 PM, preceded by 7pm Half-Moon ChaCha lesson. Walnut Creek Merry Mixers Dances at Elks Lodge 1475 Creekside Dr. [www.merrymixers.life](http://www.merrymixers.life)

-**June 8, WCPC Backyard BBQ**, 4-7PM. Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, 1801 Lacassie Avenue

-**June 11, July 16, August 6, Locust Street Festival**, 5:30 - 9 PM. Each Wednesday, May through August! FREE. 1421 Locust St, Walnut Creek

-**June 14, Fiesta Cultural Street Fair**, America's first all-female mariachi ensemble Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles. Leshner Center for the Arts. 1601 Civic Dr. Walnut Creek.

## At the Leshner Center

> **June 6, 13, 28, Best of San Francisco Stand Up Comedy.**

> **June 7, June Ballet Demonstration**

> **Thru June 9, Happy Pleasant Valley: a Senior Sex Scandal**

> **June 21, Improvised Dungeons and dragons.**

> **June 21, Rock with You.**

> **June 26, Aaron Foster**, Mostly Jokes

> **June 28, Led Zepagain**

Leshner Center for the Arts 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. Tickets: (925)943-7469 Wed-Sun Noon to 6:00 p.m. [www.lesherartscenter.org](http://www.lesherartscenter.org)

## Other Areas

### Moraga

-**June 11- August 24th --Gallery**,  
-**June 28, Free Gala Reception**, Noon - 5PM. Acrylic paintings by guest artist Judith Rohrer and a display of Wenda Pyman's "knock-the-socks-off" photography. [moragaartgallery.com](http://moragaartgallery.com) or call (925)376-5407. Moraga Art Gallery, 432 Center Street, Moraga.

### Pittsburg:

-**June 5, SIR Branch 19** will hold its Monthly Luncheon. 11 AM. SIR is a social organization of men who get together and participate in fun activities. All are welcome. Pittsburg Elks' Lodge, 200 Marina Blvd., Pittsburg. [www.sirinc2.org/branch19](http://www.sirinc2.org/branch19) or call: 925 338-1996

### SUBMIT YOUR CALENDAR ENTRIES

by the 20th of the month before Issue month. [diablogazette@gmail.com](mailto:diablogazette@gmail.com)

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# New Green Ties Program Teaches Youths Entering Adulthood Respect, Integrity and Other Necessary Basic Life Skills

There is a sense that too many teens, tweens and young adults are not being taught basic skills that will lead to a more productive and successful lives as a young adults.

One former graduate of Mount Diablo High, Jon Green, wants to change all of that. He has launched a new non-profit called Green Ties, whose program's mission is just that... developing leaders, with solid traditional values for a successful future.

Green Ties, believes in the power of traditional values such as integrity, respect, responsibility, and discipline and teaches these values in young men to become men of character in the modern world. His classes and curriculum build a blueprint for becoming a successful young adult.

It's a duplicitous moniker with Jon's last name being Green and his use of ties. Green neckties generally symbolize vitality, renewal, growth, and harmony. They can also represent hope, optimism, and environmental consciousness. In a business context, a green tie might suggest a balanced

approach or a forward-thinking mindset. These are the nuggets of wisdom he hopes he can share that will inspire today's young men to grow into gentlemen.

Green, 40, has achieved more in his short time as an adult than many will in a lifetime.

From former gang leader in his teen years, (in the eleventh grade he was attacked by four men and stabbed.) He also lost many friends to violent deaths. That's when "...I took the opportunity to chase the dream," Green says.

He has traveled the world as a professional dancer, became a Hollywood choreographer, he worked in hotel management at some of Las Vegas premier casinos, Caesar's Palace, helped open the Cosmopolitan, and rose to upper management at the Golden Nugget. He most awarded salesman in Tiffany and Company's history. And more recently published a book "Gentlemen of Fortune: Academia," available on Amazon, that shares eight principles that changed his life from the streets to setting lofty goals



and being successful. He also wrote the curriculum for Green Ties Program.

The program will teach Stoic philosophy, a way to logically guide your life versus emotionally. Financial literacy, basic automotive skills for buying and maintenance, CPR, culinary skills, taxes, and more, complete with guest representatives from the varies industries of topic.

Also, it will teach positivity, the power of spoken word and changing poor social attitudes into goal setting and



Concord Mayor Carlyn Obringer with Jon Green, President of Green Ties, and a copy of his book "Gentlemen of Fortune: Academia"



Jon Green, Founder and President of non-profit Green Ties

accomplishments.

He is looking forward to collaborating with the Boys and Girls Club camps, presumably starting in

August.

Green knows he can relate to teens on the wrong path; he's been where they are.

He says he feels the support among city leaders and organizations for this program. We all want our children to succeed.

For more information go to [greenties.org](http://greenties.org). see their ad on page 9. Green Ties is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization.



**Class of 2025! Time to Spread Your Wings and Fly High!**



Summer volunteer opportunities at Feathered Follies Foundation care & rescue center. Scan here.

**Feathered Follies**  
925-681-2473

**We love Birds!**

Supplies, Boarding, Grooming, Adoption  
1460 Washington Blvd, #C3 Concord  
[FeatheredFolliesCA.com](http://FeatheredFolliesCA.com)



**Grads and Dad's, You Deserve a Treat!**

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[european-delights.com](http://european-delights.com)

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**VACATION WORD SEARCH**

N	W	J	O	E	D	K	W	F	U	V	T	S	J	K	W	R	E	T
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B	E	A	C	H	U	U	O	D	F	Q	W	C	J	T	M	E	M	H

ADVENTURE	HOTEL	POOLSIDE	SWIMSUIT
BEACH	ITINERARY	RELAX	TOURIST
DESTINATION	LUGGAGE	RESORT	TRAVEL
FLIGHT	MEMORIES	SIGHTSEEING	TROPICAL
HAMMOCK	PASSPORT	SOUVENIR	UNWIND



**ROKO PUZZLES**

Marc Rokoff produces a fun variety of word puzzles, sudoku, coloring pages, T-Shirts & more at [RokoPuzzles.com](http://RokoPuzzles.com)

**SPOT THE DIFFERENCE**

Can you find 10 differences between the top and bottom pictures?

**SUDOKU**

			6	5		2	1	
5	4				1			9
	1	3		8		5		
			8				6	
7	9		2				5	
4		2	1			7		
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# Raspberry Beret

Fresh raspberries were on my mind this month. Wine made from grapes offers a variety of flavors, including the flavor of raspberry, even though there isn't a raspberry anywhere near the fermenters when the wine is made. Yeast is truly nature's little miracle worker, creating brand new flavors from what the grapes give them. Of course, we do find wines made from a variety of fruits and vegetables that actually taste like their antecedents. As long as there is a sugar for the yeast to consume, you can make wine from it.

A terrific place that makes grape wines is The Terraces at Quarry Vineyards in Napa, just off the Silverado Trail. I had the pleasure of meeting with Ryan Calder on a warm spring day, and we started our tasting with his new Rosé blend. The wine is an ingenious blend of (white) Riesling grapes, early-picked Zinfandel, and saignée of Cabernet Sauvignon. Each component leaves its delicious footprint on the wine. The low-alcohol

Zinfandel gives the wine an unmistakable berry quality; the Cabernet imparts a deeper tobacco, earthy quality; and the Riesling contributes the perfect high note of stone fruits like peach and apricot. Light and refreshing, this wine is a great partner for a starter of Watermelon and Red Onion Salad with tangy, spicy Raspberry Dressing.

Cabernet Franc wines can also exhibit berry flavors, but the fruitiness is usually offset with black olives and rich soil. Maybe that sounds odd, but those dark flavors keep wine from tasting like alcoholic Kool-Aid.

Complement red fruit flavors in wine by drizzling grilled chicken with a balsamic glaze, easy to make or buy it bottled. Add mashed potatoes and roasted carrots to the plate and you have a super-fast supper that is elegant enough to serve your most discriminating guest.

For dessert, see if you can find wine made from fruits other than grapes. (If you can't, a ruby port will substitute nicely.) I

happen to have had the fortune to come across black raspberry fruit wine which will go nicely with Chocolate Truffles. Both are so intensely flavored, the smallest amount will satisfy your sweet cravings.

So, go on. Pair Up!

*Maria Terry is a Certified Sommelier and Wine Educator in Northern California.*

*LaSommeliere@gmail.com*

## WATERMELON AND SWEET RED ONION SALAD

### INGREDIENTS FOR RASPBERRY ESSENCE (makes 2 cups):

- 12 ounces frozen raspberries
- 1 (750 ml) bottle red wine (something with ripe fruit that's good enough to drink)
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

### FOR DRESSING:

- 6 tablespoons Raspberry Essence
- 1/4 cup raspberry vinegar
- 2 tablespoons finely minced shallots
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/4 cup safflower oil
- 1 tablespoon Asian chile sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

### FOR SALAD:

- 2 medium red onions
- 2 bunches watercress
- 3 pounds fresh watermelon, preferably both red and yellow
- 1/4 cup fresh mint leaves
- Fresh berries -- raspberries, blackberries, blueberries

### DIRECTIONS

For Raspberry Essence: In a sauté pan, combine the raspberries, wine, sugar and pepper. Place over high heat, bring to vigorous boil and boil until 2 cups remain.



Immediately pour the sauce through a medium meshed sieve, forcing all the pulp through the sieve by scraping it with a metal spoon. The sauce will last indefinitely in the refrigerator, but it may need to be thinned slightly with water before using.

Dressing: In a medium bowl, combine all the dressing ingredients, taste and adjust the seasonings.

Peel the onions, cut into thin slices and separate into individual rings. Toss the onions with the salad dressing and marinate for two hours in the refrigerator, turning over every 30 minutes.

Remove and discard the woody stems from the watercress, then

refrigerate the sprigs.

Cut enough watermelon into 1- to 2-inch cubes, rectangles, triangles or other shapes, knocking away the seeds, to yield 8 cups. Cut the mint leaves into shreds and set aside. (The recipe can be completed to this point up to 8 hours ahead.)

Just before serving, arrange a bed of watercress on six chilled plates -- or a single platter -- and top with watermelon. Arrange the onions attractively on top. Drizzle the dressing over the melon and onions. Garnish with the mint and fresh berries and serve at once.

Yield: 6-12 servings

*Photo by Nelliebellie.com*



## Growing Like it's 1825

A trending diet these days is, "Eat like it's 1825!", which means what Americans ate 200 years ago in our mostly agrarian days. This was before food producers began to tinker with ultra-processed meals and artificial ingredients designed to satisfy our hunger with little healthy nutrition. The 1825 diet is an interesting twist to the Naked Gardener's mantra of all-natural gardening and family food production. Would you like to grow (or raise) your own food, or at least eat locally grown — without the use of pesticides or other artificial means?

One aspect of life in 1825 America was the simplicity of the diet, rooted in local farm animals and seasonally available produce. Meals often included hearty grains like barley and oats, fresh vegetables such as cabbages, carrots, and beans, and protein sources like beef, pork and chicken. Dairy played a prominent role, with butter, milk, and cheese making regular appearances. Easy-to-grow herbs like parsley and thyme were used for flavor. This natural and unprocessed diet is the essence of "harvest to table".

What could they grow without modern pesticides or synthetic fertilizers? Just about anything with the aid of home recycled compost, manure, and crop rotation to enrich the soil. Companion planting was a widely employed technique in 1825, with crops like beans and corn growing side



You think you're too busy! Geo. Washington's 4 Mt. Vernon Gardens - Courtesy MountVernon.org

by side to support one another's nutrient requirements. Families cooked what was in season, with no need for high-priced, unripe produce shipped from unknown parts.

We modern families can also work in tandem with nature's rhythms. In hot summer months, grow beans, cucumbers, tomatoes, squashes, and corn. During cooler "shoulder" seasons, plant and harvest cabbages, lettuce, spinach, carrots, turnips, parsnips (sweet potatoes), white potatoes, and onions. Freeze what you can't eat for next season. Join a local meat or dairy cooperative to enjoy organic local beef, pork, chicken, lamb, eggs and cheeses year-round at [localharvest.org](http://localharvest.org). Add in your own tree-grown apples, pears, peaches, apricots, plums, berries, and (in Contra Costa) citrus to complete a wholesome and delicious diet.

But we are busy people, right? Well, agricultural experts state that if each family in the USA grew just a small plot of backyard produce, our nation would



Home-made Compost produced this Giant Tomato

have no need to import food. And if this were extended to every nation, world hunger would be solved! It's a small effort, just a few rewarding hours out in the fresh air during your weekend. We owe it to our family's long-term health to grow and eat like it's 1825.

Seasonal Notes: Warm June sunshine provides maximum growing energy for your garden plants, both landscaping and produce. But protect tender plants from harsh radiation with shade cloth draped over 3-4 support poles, or construct "hoop houses" for larger beds. Burned leaves reduce plant vitality and can lead to premature demise. West-facing garden areas receive the harshest afternoon sun.



Tree-Ripened Sweet Plums



Small family chicken coops deliver many fresh eggs - Courtesy Shutterstock





**Carlyn Obringer**  
Concord Mayor  
[cityofconcord.org](http://cityofconcord.org)

## Concord Council Prioritizes Industrial Areas to Support Manufacturing and Job Growth

I recently joined the mayors of Antioch, Martinez and Pittsburg in addressing the Industrial Association of Contra Costa (IACC), whose mission is to support and promote the manufacturing and industrial community by leveraging its members and collective resources to engage in public policy advocacy, education and relationship building, to ensure the continued success of manufacturing in our region.

Concord is home to over 5.5 million square feet of distribution and warehousing space, or 40 percent of the County total, an economic development strength. With a 3.5% vacancy rate, there is high demand for manufacturing space in Concord. Our centralized location and freeways near industrial zones create easy access for distributors, logistics companies, and manufacturers to end users and supply chains throughout the Bay Area and Sacramento regions.

For these reasons, my City Council colleagues and I designated our industrial areas as Priority Production Areas, to prioritize them for investment and protect them from competing land uses. As I often hear when participating in Diablo Valley Tech Initiative, East Bay Economic Development Alliance (East Bay EDA), and Green Empowerment Zone Board meetings, the preservation and expansion of our industrial uses is critical to ensuring that Concord residents have access to good, middle-class jobs.

To that end, Concord supports manufacturing businesses of all kinds. In January, I toured Roof and Realm, a manufacturer of high-quality, steel



built, fire retardant modular homes. We are currently collaborating with the owners to relocate their business for a fourth time within our city, as they have outgrown their current space.

In March, I met with the owners of Calitho, a full-service printing and packaging business, and winner of an East Bay EDA Innovation in Manufacturing Award. Calitho has chosen to grow in Concord because they own their building and benefit from access to a skilled workforce in Central and East County.

Tsar Nicolai Caviar, American sustainable caviar featured on fine dining menus across the country, is also headquartered and produced in Concord. As sales continue to increase, the owners are seeking additional warehouse space and a larger production facility so city staff is providing site selection services to assist with their growing needs.

To support the establishment of manufacturing and other types of small businesses, the City Council has allocated funding for free consultations with the Small Business Development Center: <https://www.eastbaysbdc.org/in-person-advising-concord/>



**Kim Trupiano**  
Mayor, Clayton  
[kimT@claytonca.gov](mailto:kimT@claytonca.gov)

## Clayton Has a Host of Events This Summer

We've officially kicked off our 18th season of Concerts in the Grove. Coming in June are The Cheeseballs on June 14 and The Bell Brothers on June 28. Grab a blanket, some friends, and come dance the night away under the stars. Check out the full concert lineup here at: [claytonca.gov/our-city/annual-events/concerts-in-the-grove/](http://claytonca.gov/our-city/annual-events/concerts-in-the-grove/).

Our amazing sponsors who make this series possible year in and year out, including Republic Services, CEMEX, Conco, PG&E, Diamond Terrace, Ponderosa Homes, Tim McGallian State Farm Insurance, Travis Credit Union and many others. Please recognize and thank them. See a complete list of all of our sponsors on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/CityofClaytonCA/](http://www.facebook.com/CityofClaytonCA/).

Also, a special thank you to our City staff, Stephanie Cabrera-Brown, Janessa Torres, Jennifer Giantvalley, Skyler Aitken and our incredible maintenance team for their hard work behind the scenes.

### Clayton's Fourth of July Celebration and Parade

The City's beloved 52nd Fourth of July Parade is going to be a spectacular celebration of community spirit.

Our theme is "Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Future" and is dedicated to the women of Clayton who have kept this parade going for decades.

We are excited to announce our Grand Marshals this year:

Jan Rubiales, the original spark behind our 4th of July parade;

Gloria Utley, who for 26 years carried the torch and kept the parade going;

Sandy Johnson, who has kept the tradition going for more than 10 years.

We are thrilled to welcome back local Claytonian and incredibly talented Mechele Fong to sing the National Anthem and former Mayor, Carl Wolf (CW) will Emcee. Our parade chair is Sarah Brinkman of the Clayton Valley Dance Academy.

If you would like to participate in the parade this year, please visit us at <https://claytonca.gov/our-city/annual-events/4th-of-july-parade/>. The deadline to register is June 29. No registration is necessary for the Kiddie Parade.



Before the parade, enjoy pancakes. The Clayton Valley/Concord Sunrise Rotary is hosting the Annual Pancake Breakfast from 7:00 – 10:00 a.m. at Endeavor Hall. Cost is \$10 for adults / \$7 for kids 12 and under.

Parade volunteers are still needed before, during and after the parade. If you are interested in helping out, please email Sarah Brinkman at [5678.sbrinkman@gmail.com](mailto:5678.sbrinkman@gmail.com) or contact me directly at 925.673.7324 to learn more.

### Classic Car Shows

Every other Wednesday from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. on June 18, July 2, July 16, and July 30, classic cars will gather in the parking lot right next to the Clayton Historical Museum. DJ Jeff Brown will be spinning the sounds of the 50s, 60s and 70s.

Make a night of it and enjoy a dinner at one of our many fantastic options. Plus, coffee, sweets and ice cream are available at Cup O' Jo and Sip N' Sweet.

### Get Involved and Make a Difference:

The City is currently filling open seats on several local and regional commissions including the Trails & Landscaping Committee, Planning Commission, County Office on Aging, Contra Costa Transportation Authority/Community Advisory Board. Find out more about each opening and how to apply at: <https://claytonca.gov/city-clerk> (click on Maddy's Act).

Finally, mark your calendars to attend the next City Council meeting on June 17. This month, we will be approving the new Chief of Police contract and finalizing the City's first two-year budget – and your voice matters.

Clayton is where community shines. Whether you are dancing in The Grove, cheering at the parade, cruising through classic cars or grabbing a bite in town, Clayton is prepared to excite your summertime.

**Remember, we are stronger together!**

## Clayton Valley High's KVHS Radio on Life Support

by David King

The historical public radio station 90.5 KVHS-FM is about to go dark.

Since 1964, the station has been broadcast from Clayton Valley High School. But with the Mount Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD) facing continuous budget issues, it was announced last month that they would not renew their tower lease of \$3,800 per month.

It also offered to sell its special non-commercial educational broadcast license for \$1, but the buyer must be either government or a non-profit in an educational capacity. Otherwise, MDUSD would discontinue the broadcast on or about July 1,

2025

The FCC license will automatically be surrendered to the FCC on June 20, 2026, if another governmental entity does not take it over and resume radio transmissions.

Several community members are scrambling to save the station. Pleas have been made to the County Board of Education, City Council, DVC, and others to not let this station go away. But time is simply running out.

The latest rumblings suggest there is interest to buy the broadcast license from MDUSD but it may



take up to a year to relocate transmitters, get FCC approval for any license transfer, and re-staff the volunteers who operate the station. It may still have to go off air, temporarily.

To learn the fascinating history of KVHS, go to its website at: [KVHS.com](http://KVHS.com)

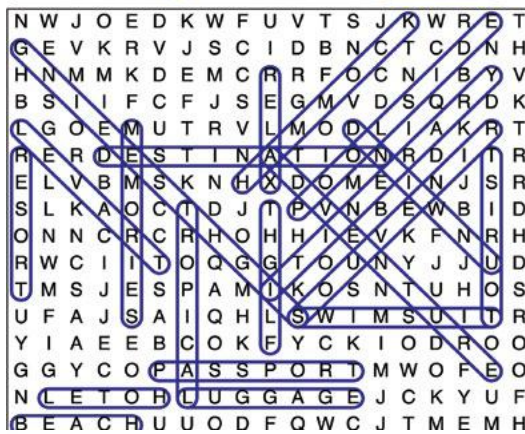
KVHS 1964-2025? While station fans fear the station is presumed dead, it appears to be on life support.

## Puzzle Solutions

FROM PAGE 3



8	7	9	6	5	4	2	1	3
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9	8	7	5	6	3	1	2	4
1	2	4	7	9	8	6	3	5
6	3	5	4	1	2	9	8	7



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## Clayton Valley High Senior Robotics Team Shines at World Championship

Robotic teams from 833 qualified schools across 33 countries all met in Dallas on May 6-8 to compete in the 2025 Vex Robotics World Championship.

After two years of hard work, dedication, and countless hours of building and refining, the Clayton Valley Charter High (CVCHS) Senior Robotics team, 94517X Mecha Maelstrom—Eric Catalano, Will Gallagher, Santi Martinez, Alex Mihaylov, and Asher Wan, finished as the second seed in the Technology Division and advanced all the way to the semi-finals. This is a remarkable accomplishment on a global stage.

What started as a rookie team last year has turned into one of the most impressive success stories in the robotics world. The five CVCHS students kicked off their robotics journey in August 2023 with zero experience, limited skills, and just a dream to build something that worked. In a year they qualified for the World Championship, a feat almost unheard of for such a new team.

They came back this season even more determined, refining their robot, perfecting their strategies, and sharpening their teamwork. In April, they won the National Division Championship in a three-day event in Iowa against 156 teams including international ones.

Their success was so impressive, the Concord City Council recognized the team with a Proclamation for National Robotics Week in an April Council meeting.

“All of their hard work paid off. Not only did they qualify for Worlds again this year, but they also solidified their place among the top-ranked teams globally,” says a beaming JoAnna Castillo, PLTW Engineering Academy Lead and Teacher at CVCHS. “We are extremely proud of everything they’ve accomplished and can’t wait to see what the future holds.”

“It’s not just the competition; teams are being judged on their personal skills and enthusiasm. Team members interview with judges, they all have to talk about how they build a robot, what their engineering design process is, their journey in robotics. It’s an interview.”

The schools are divided into 10 divisions. Teams are randomly paired up for each match and compete 2 v 2 during the qualification rounds. CVCHS competed in 10 matches in their division winning seven and tying one of those rounds. That placed them high enough to be chosen as partners with the team from Plano, TX, as 2nd seed in the elimination round. They won every match until losing in the semifinals. The winning pair of each division then competed against for the title.

“There must have been 7,000 students and coaches and families watching the finals.”

The competition was held at the Kay Bailey Convention Center, with a gigantic arena called The Dome.

“The Robotics Club is already hard at work preparing for the next challenge, and we look forward to making our school and community proud again. We host the CVCHS UGLY Robotics Tournament in September 2025 and January 2026,”

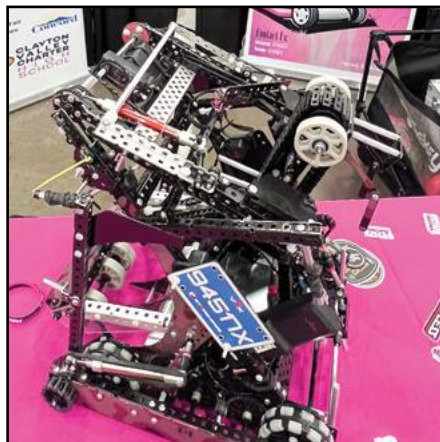
Castillo says.

For more photos and videos of the event, go to Clayton Valley Engineering Academy Instagram page.

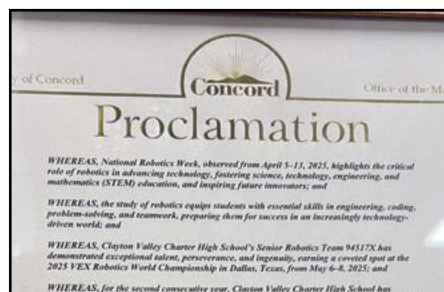
And who were the Vex World Robotics Champion(s)? That title goes to Piedmont, Calif. and Jackson, Tenn.



Vex Robotics World Championship inside the Dome at Kay Bailey Convention Center in Dallas, TX with 7,000+ in attendance.



The robot that Clayton Valley Robotics Club built.



Concord City Council awarded CVCHS Robotics a proclamation during National Robotics Week April 5-12.

## Northgate High School's Sophia Mitchell Earns National Merit Scholarship

Congratulations to Northgate HS student Sophia Mitchell, one of 10 seniors in Contra Costa County, and the only student in Mount Diablo Unified School District to receive the prestigious \$2,500 National Merit Scholarship Award. She is one of 2,500 recipients nationwide who have been recognized for their outstanding academic achievements and potential.

A selection committee

of college admissions officers and high school counselors evaluated candidates based on information submitted by both the Finalists and their high schools, including academic records, the difficulty level of subjects studied, grades earned, scores from the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/

NMSQT®), contributions and leadership in school and community activities, an essay written by the Finalist, and a recommendation from a high school official.



## Contra Costa County Fifth Grader Takes Runner Up Spot at State Spelling Bee

Akshara Thummala, a fifth grader at Quail Run Elementary School in San Ramon, spelled her way to second place in the Elementary Division of the California State Spelling Bee. The competition, held on Saturday, April 26, brought together spelling champions from across the state. The final round featured challenging words such as “rhizome,” “tintinnabulation,” and “wurtzite.”

Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools Lynn Mackey said, “I am very proud of Akshara for representing our county at this competition. Earning this achievement as a fifth grader is truly remarkable and showcases her dedication to studying the English language.”

The event, facilitated by the San Joaquin County Office of Education,



saw Akshara competing against 44 other students from fourth through sixth grade. The competition took place at the Great Wolf Lodge in Manteca.



**JOIN US FOR OUR 6TH ANNUAL BACK TO SCHOOL EVENT!**

# Back to School

**What:** Receive a backpack with school supplies

**When:** Saturday, July 19th, 2025  
9 am to 2 pm

**Where:** MDR Reuse Center  
555 California Ave,  
Pittsburg Ca

**Sign-ups required!**  
Scan to sign up or visit

[mdrr.com/school-supply-giveaway-2025](http://mdrr.com/school-supply-giveaway-2025)

Children must be present and up to 4 children per family.








# Class of 2025



**Scholarship Altair – Stuart Gilmore**



**Service Altair – Joanna-Thi Phung**



**Leadership Altair – Aiden Jensen**



**Grand Altair – Kai Leigh Hernandez**

Congratulations on reaching this significant milestone in your academic journey! As Executive Director of Clayton Valley Charter High School, it brings me great pride to extend my heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of you.

As we prepare to celebrate your accomplishments, I am filled with admiration for the dedication and hard work you have demonstrated throughout your high school years. Your resilience, determination, and passion have propelled you to this moment of success, and I have no doubt that you will continue to achieve great things in the future.

I am particularly excited to join you and your families at the Toyota Pavilion at Concord on June 5, 2025, where we will come together to honor your achievements and celebrate this significant milestone in your lives.

As you embark on the next chapter of your journey, remember that your time at CVCHS has equipped you with the knowledge, skills, and values to succeed in whatever path you choose. Stay true to yourselves, embrace new opportunities, and continue to make a positive impact on the world around you.

CVCHS wishes each of our graduating seniors the very best as you begin your new adventure and prepare for a great future. You will always be remembered for having the courage to be “Ugly Strong” in your quest for a high school diploma. Congratulations, Class of 2025!

*Bill Morones*

Bill Morones  
Executive Director  
Clayton Valley Charter High School

## 2025 CVCHS ALTAIRS

Different than traditional valedictorian and salutatorian selections, the highest recognition a CVCHS student can achieve is the Altair awards for Scholarship, Service, Leadership, and Grand Altair. The four awards were established by the first graduating class from Clayton Valley in 1960. Members of the Senior Class nominate Altair candidates, and a final decision is made by a special committee comprising student leaders and teaching staff.

### SCHOLARSHIP ALTAIR – STUART GILMORE

The Scholarship Altair is awarded to the student selected from the top six seniors and is judged not only by the grades a student has received but also by the difficulty of their coursework. Stuart will be attending UC Berkeley.

### SERVICE ALTAIR – JOANNA-THI PHUNG

The Service Altair is awarded to the student who best exemplifies the virtue of selfless giving. Students who receive this award volunteer their time and effort not because it is expected of them but because they possess integrity and a commitment to the greater good of the school and the community. Joanna-Thi will be attending the University of Notre Dame.

### LEADERSHIP ALTAIR – AIDEN JENSEN

The Leadership Altair award is presented to the student who motivates and encourages others to achieve a goal while demonstrating their efforts to do the same. True leaders are respected not because they hold titles but because they possess honest character and the confidence that compels others to follow them. Aiden will be attending UC Berkeley.

### GRAND ALTAIR – KAI LEIGH HERNANDEZ

The Grand Altair is awarded to the student who has a high GPA and represents all three areas: Scholarship, Leadership, and Service. She also exemplifies the very best of an Ugly Eagle -- an outstanding student, confident leader, and community member. Your level of leadership, character, and commitment inspires CVCHS. Kai Leigh will be attending San Diego State University.





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CHARTER  
HIGH  
SCHOOL**

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Justin Underwood-Nausaimone



THE AMERICAN  
UNIVERSITY OF ROME

Isabel Leyva



Sydney Bennett  
Ally DeMartini  
Bailey Fahey  
Malayna Koski



ATENEDE DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

Bianca Bradley



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Grady Rose  
Derek Townsend  
Nora Williams



BRIGHAM YOUNG  
UNIVERSITY

Jared Hubbard  
Caleb Muhlestein



Madeline Chase  
Kelsey D'Angina



BUTTE COLLEGE

Thomas Borem



Brody McCarney  
Rebekka Nemeth



CalPolyPomona

Jason Chiem  
Isabella Moreci



Grace Cleary  
Alessandra DelliGatti  
Sydney Downs  
Thomas Duffy  
Cole Edmonston  
Juliana Gonzales  
Corinne Jeandheur  
Rhea Kahlon  
Kiran Kumar  
Rafael Martinez  
Emily Oswald



Chico

Antonio Bird  
Zachari Modina  
Kaelyn Ramos Hoang  
Ethan Raichoudri  
Dominic Steeley  
Angela Torres Torres  
Giana Wells  
Alyssa Williams



CAL STATE  
EAST BAY

Devin Davis



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Vanessa Ontiveros  
Joelle Rice  
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OF SAN FRANCISCO

Nye No



COLLEGE OF  
MARIN

Giacomo Collova-Dextre



College of San Mateo

Marisa Vazquez



CONCORDIA  
UNIVERSITY IRVINE

Hannah Aguilar



CONTRA  
COSTA  
COLLEGE

Leland Trevino



Culinary Institute  
of America



DeAnza  
College

Isaiah Hernandez  
Rehana Yu



DIABLO VALLEY COLLEGE

Mark Justin Aguilar  
Anjali Ahluwalia  
Matthew Arnold  
Kamila Arszynska Fuentes  
Brishna Asalati

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Lynn Mackey, Superintendent of Schools

May 20, 2025

To: Clayton Valley Charter High School Class of 2025

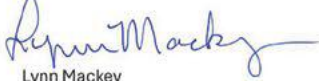
Congratulations on your graduation, CVCHS Class of 2025. You have successfully completed your high school journey, and it is a joy to celebrate this important milestone with you. Your dedication, perseverance, and hard work have brought you to this moment, and you should feel incredibly proud.

This achievement marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter. Whether your path leads to college, trade school, the workforce, or another endeavor, I am confident that you will bring the same determination and spirit that carried you through high school. The skills, knowledge, and experiences you have gained will continue to guide and support you in the years ahead.

As you step into the future, keep your curiosity alive, remain open to growth, and follow the passions that inspire you. Each of you has the potential to make a meaningful difference, and I look forward to seeing the ways you will shape the world around you.

Once again, congratulations. I wish you success, fulfillment, and joy on the road ahead.

Sincerely,



Lynn Mackey  
Superintendent of Schools  
Contra Costa County





# JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

Michael Barrington, mbwriter.net

## Facing Down Demons On Top of Mount Pinatubo

Thirty-four years ago, June 15, 1991, the second largest volcanic eruption of the 20th century occurred when Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, just 20 miles from Subic Bay Naval Air Station, blotted out the sky. The sun was completely hidden as volcanic ash and debris were spewed 28 miles into the atmosphere. By the morning of June 16, Subic Bay lay buried under a few feet of hot sandy ash.



Mount Pinatubo eruption



Mount-Pinatubo ashfalls eruption area causing deaths (June-1991)



Ash covers the Subic Bay naval station following the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in 1991. Credits: U.S. Navy/SGT PAUL BISHOP



Pinatubo Crater Lake

In the November 2024 Diablo Gazette's, "Neighbors Shoes" article covered the survival of our Lafayette neighbor Staff Sergeant Mark Clifford and his 19 marines who were slowly buried and 'cooked' alive as they sheltered for hours in a Quonset hut. Fighting for their lives, they eventually forced their way out.

You can read that [HERE](https://www.diablogazette.com/2024/11/a-veterans-story-i-survived-pinatubo/) at <https://www.diablogazette.com/2024/11/a-veterans-story-i-survived-pinatubo/>

Mark vowed that someday, he would face his demons and conquer them by

It took years of therapy for Mark before the trauma and nightmares subsided. But together with several of his military colleagues, they promised they would return one day and conquer their demons. Visiting Mount Pinatubo to him was more than a few days' adventurous journey. It would not be a vacation, but more of a pilgrimage, a life journey towards inner peace.

But it never happened. Everyday life took over. He married, raised a family and joined the San Leandro Police Force.

Then Thirty years later, on Memorial Day 2022, Mark suffered a heart attack. Realizing the fragility of life, he knew he had to quit talking about his Mt. Pinatubo experience and do something about it. He vowed to climb the volcano that almost killed him.

But it was as if demonic forces were working to prevent this from happening.

None of his military friends were able to accompany him. But his closest friend would not let him go alone, his wife, Beth, agreed to go with him

After a three-hour drive from Manila to Subic Bay where they would be staying, Mark was told that the arrangements he had made for the trek up the volcano had been canceled due to a landslide.

Exhausted, after being up for more than twenty-four hours, they woke up the next day only to discover that Beth had developed Bell palsy! She needed rest and relaxation.

Fortunately, before leaving the USA, and without knowing it would be critical, Mark had actually made arrangements with a second guide for the trek up the mountain. Now he was grateful he had not canceled it. The trek was confirmed. He and a guide would make the ascent three days later.

Two days were spent relaxing but also exploring the old Subic Bay Naval Air Station, searching for the Quonset hut in which he and his men had been buried.

The jungle had taken over almost all of his former camp. Only a few rusted, crumbling remains poked through the impenetrable jungle. As he and his wife walked inside the ruins, he shook with emotion. The command post was still recognizable and brought back vivid memories he thought had long been forgotten.

Even at 2:30 AM, the heat was stifling. He was transferred to what appeared to be an original ex-US military Jeep, resembling Rent-a-Wreck. Two hours later, after a bone crushing, bruising ride over a potholed, narrow track through the jungle passing tiny villages and grass roofed, mud block houses, they arrived at the infamous town of Capas. Infamous since it was the end of the Bataan Death March in World War II when the Japanese ordered 75,000 Filipino and US prisoners of war, without food or water, to march eighty-seven miles to the town. Only 54,000 arrived.

Protocol insisted Mark have his blood pressure checked by a government official. Being over the age of sixty, he was considered a senior citizen, and it was mandated he

undergo a brief health check. He was anxious. He had done nothing as physically strenuous as this ascent since his stroke.

He was introduced to his guide, a middle-aged man who throughout the climb was as nimble and sure-footed as a mountain goat but spoke no English. Treating Mark as a senior citizen, the guide wanted to take regular breaks but finally understood as Mark continually refused. He did not want to stop.

It was a daunting climb up the steep-sided volcano one thousand feet higher than Mt. Diablo. The path was so irregular and filled with lahars (old lava flow) in places, they scrambled almost on their knees. They crossed numerous streams. Thick, almost impenetrable vegetation confronted them, save for a narrow, uneven path.

Mark watched in amazement at the agility of his guide, who only wore flip-flops, yet was able to hold and prevent Mark from falling multiple times. It was a strenuous climb following his agile guide.

Once at the top, looking into the crater brought tears to his eyes. Now filled with a stunning azure colored lake one and a half miles wide, it looked scenic, picturesque, and peaceful. Looking around the perimeter, he could now visualize the magnitude of the eruption when a third of the volcano, including where he was now standing, had actually been blown off.

The towering volcano had been the scenic backdrop to his service for nearly two years and then in a matter of hours had seen it reduced to a smoking, terrifying killer. He was filled with a gamut of emotions; happiness, sadness, but above all, a feeling of relief and gratitude. In spite of his stroke, he had been given a second chance in life and taken it. A burden had been lifted. He had slain his dragon.

Two days after the ascent, the Philippines were celebrating their equivalent of Memorial Day, the Day of Valor, and Mark and his wife were guests of honor to Major General Dennis Estrella, the Commander of Air Logistics Command located at the former Clark Airforce Base.

Over the years, Beth heard the story of Mt Pinatubo until even her children could repeat it.

Seeing her husband fighting his demons, she had supported him every step of the way, including joining him in therapy. It was her decision to accompany him to Mt. Pinatubo, but knew he had to climb the volcano on his own.

She understood the trip to the Philippines would be difficult both physically and emotionally but did not anticipate getting sick herself. But for her also, in spite of having to deal with her palsy, there was a new sense of freedom. Without a word being said, she could see a different look in Mark's eyes.



Devastation post eruption. Courtesy Getty Images



Sergeant Mark Clifford at the top of Mount Pinatubo now Crater Lake..

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## For the Love of Pets by Jill Hedgecock, [Jillhedgecock.com](http://Jillhedgecock.com)

In 2017, the Berkeley City Council banned offering goldfish as carnival prizes after an investigation found a high death rate in the fish. In 2024, the Alameda County Fair also banned goldfish prizes. To avoid perpetuating this inhumane practice, if you or your child want a goldfish pet, forgo the carnival, and purchase one from a reputable aquarium or pet store where you can also buy the necessary equipment. Some local rescues, animal services, or humane societies often have goldfish that need homes.

Goldfish do make interesting pets. They can learn to recognize their owners and are surprisingly smart. They can anticipate feeding times if fed on a routine and can be taught tricks such as jumping through hoops. It has been reported these golden darlings can retain memories for up to five months.

Here are some important considerations about becoming a responsible goldfish pet owner:

First and foremost, if you place a goldfish in tap water, the chlorine will kill them. Tap water that has been set out for 24 to 48 hours may be okay, but if the tap water contains chloramine, the chlorine will not evaporate and UV treatment or use of a commercial instant dechlorinator is required. Weekly or biweekly water changes are needed to maintain a healthy environment.

Goldfish cannot live a quality life in a fishbowl because ammonia builds up quickly in small spaces, making the water toxic. They need at least a ten-gallon fish tank per fish or a properly designed backyard pond. Startup costs for a tank, stand, filter, heater, bubbler, light, water

test kit, and food can be around two hundred dollars. However, the Facebook Group NorCal Fresh Water Fish REHOME and MORE may have items available at no or low cost. After the initial investment, a good quality fish food can run six to nine dollars per month. Your electricity bills might increase an extra fifteen dollars each month.

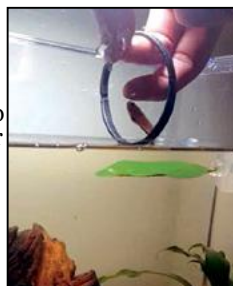
With proper care, goldfish are a long-term commitment. They can grow to be eight to twelve inches. Single tail goldfish can live up to twenty years, while the lifespan of fancy varieties is around twelve years.

Do not release a goldfish into a natural pond or stream, or worse flush them down the toilet. This is not a humane option or an environmentally responsible means to discard an unwanted pet.

If you find yourself unable to care for your fish any longer, re-home it. Contact schools, nursing homes, and community centers which may have existing aquariums. Also, local social media groups such as NorCal Fresh Water Fish REHOME and MORE and Bay Area and Peninsula Fish and Aquatic Society are great sites to check out both for rehoming and adoption.

*Jill Hedgecock is a retired environmental scientist, an ecological risk assessor and award-winning author.*

## Caring for a Goldfish



## Fathers' Day— Oh Daddy!

by Edi Birsan, Concordian

Dear ol' Dad used to talk to me about Norman Thomas, a 'Christian Socialist' that rose to prominence in the 1920 and 30's in New York City. Thomas was advocating for the lowest worker and against the culture of Wall Street and for such radical things as desegregation, environmental protection and social safety net.

My dad pointed out that Thomas would wear a three-piece suit, was clean-shaven, eloquent and soft-spoken.

Learning from Thomas, Dad taught that you never want to have something which distracts attention from your main specific message or cause. You should concentrate your vices so they do not interfere with savoring the effort, which was difficult to follow in my own travails in the Anti-Vietnam War movement of the 60's and 70's. But I slowly observed how the concentration on Anti-Vietnam as opposed to a wide societal set of changes, or even a general pacifism position, ballooned the acceptance of a message focused on just one issue.

Locally we have seen protests at Tesla location in Walnut Creek and in the Concord City Council chambers. These bring back simple protesting points I learned, and echoed some of my Dad's words:

1. Do not let your protest be hijacked by other movements. Protests done well attract attention. If you are in a leadership role and you see that some folks are bringing flags and banners that relate to different struggles you should take them aside and ask for some consideration. I remember one 'Occupy Wall Street' protest in Todos Santos where a half dozen folks turned up with rifles and signage advocating for Open Carry.

2. When arranging for public speaking, do not make noise when your folks are talking. If you are outside of the room, have someone at a window give you a signal to be quiet to a chanting crowd so that your folks are heard. Do not try to shout down the opposition or you may build sympathy for the other side. Your cause's arguments should be sharp enough to counter them.

3. Do not interact with the opposition or the target in a manner in which the focus of attention will be on the action as

opposed to the message.

4. Spread your folks out amongst the general crowd if you are in a general meeting so that you can get a better gauge of the opposition and make your presence seem larger.

5. When rotating speakers have specific targeted messages.

6. Public speakers should not be 'uniformed' in appearance with tags/shirts etc. The inclination of an audience including elected decision makers is to simply jump to the assumption that you are all the same and they dial you out. Let the uniform or ID swag be for those that give a feeling of mass to the supporters.

7. Speakers should emphasize their positions of leadership in the community and in as many different roles as you can muster. Five members of a political party regardless of their position are not going to have anywhere near the effect of a Scout Leader, a Sunday School Teacher, a retail manager, or a head nurse of an ER. Always use the highest-ranking person of the category to speak.

8. When speaking before a public debate such as a City Council, have a lot of outreaches to the folks who are going to vote on it done in advance of a public meeting—ideally one on one. One of the great failings of both political parties in Contra Costa is the lack of building relationships through direct one-on-one meetings after being elected; even with party leaders at the lowest levels such as directly elected party central committee people. It is not enough to simply send a letter on a position. You need to build face-to-face discussion capability and action on political issues.

9. Always ask yourself: is what we are doing going to distract or support our position?

Remember, the purpose of a protest is to deliver a message that will accomplish something. Do not disgrace your cause.

*These are the opinions of Edi Birsan and not to be confused with the 1968 image of a full haired student standing on a car roof with a sign: Make Love Not War. [EdiBirsan@gmail.com](mailto:EdiBirsan@gmail.com)*



## Neuroplasticity by Jessica Raaum Foster, [NeurologyofPresence.com](http://NeurologyofPresence.com)

If you've ever noticed that your pain feels worse when you are tired, hungry, or anxious, you are not imagining it. Science now tells us that when the brain is under-fueled, lacking the oxygen or blood sugar it needs to function well, it becomes more sensitive and more protective. And one of the brain's most powerful protective responses is pain.

Pain is an alarm signal from the brain. That alarm can come not just from injury, but from poor breathing habits, skipped meals, or even emotional stress.

The good news? You can support your brain in simple, powerful ways that can help turn off that annoying alarm.

One approach you may not have considered for alleviating pain is breath training. And while "taking a deep breath" sounds like a great way to get more oxygen to the brain, the truth is many of us actually need more carbon dioxide in our systems to actually absorb the oxygen we are breathing in. Carbon dioxide is also a vasodilator. It can help reduce inflammation throughout the body.

Here are two simple breathing practices that help balance carbon dioxide and oxygen. People generally prefer one or the other.

### Bag Breathing

Take a paper lunch sac or a clean plastic produce bag and cover your nose and mouth (Use your hands if you don't have a bag handy). Breathe slowly and gently in and out for 30 seconds to one minute. This helps raise your carbon dioxide levels slightly, which absorbs the O<sub>2</sub>, and improves blood flow to your brain. If you feel lightheaded, stop and return to normal breathing. Many people find



that an appropriate dose of this (different for everyone) can create a calming effect throughout the body, and yes, can reduce pain levels.

Breath Holds (CO<sub>2</sub> Tolerance Training)

Take a normal breath in, then a normal breath out. After exhaling, gently hold your breath. Start

by counting how many seconds you can comfortably hold before you feel the first strong urge to breathe. This is your baseline. Practice holding your breath after exhaling for three to five repetitions, gradually increasing time as comfort allows. Always stop if you feel dizzy or uncomfortable.

These drills help improve your brain's ability to regulate fuel and reduce its sense of threat, key steps in turning down pain. Practice them daily, especially when you're feeling anxious, foggy, or extra sensitive.

Blood sugar also plays a role. A long gap between meals or a drop in blood sugar can leave the brain running on empty. That "edgy" feeling many people get when hungry is often the brain crying out for support. A well-timed snack or balanced meal can help stabilize mood, energy, and even physical comfort. In fact, eating smaller meals more frequently can often be very helpful in alleviating chronic pain and/or mood

Your brain is the command center for everything—movement, mood, focus, and healing. But it can't do its job well if it's under-fueled. Breathing practices like the ones above and maintaining a steady blood sugar level are essential tools for helping your nervous system function at its best. When your brain has the fuel it needs, you're more likely to move with ease, think clearly, and recover more fully.

## A Hungry Brain Can Signal Pain

## Impressive Senior Art Project "Birds of Beauty" Dazzle Brentwood Intersection

by David King

In Brentwood, Liberty High's Public Art and Design Academy, (PADAA) completed their Senior project with another installment of large metal sculptures of native birds to add to an existing salmon statue from the previous year's project. The art is located at the corner of Sand Creek Rd. and O'Hare Ave.

Liberty's PADA program, led by Jake Edwards, presented their plans for this year's senior project to the Council earlier— to add sculptures of birds to surround the recently installed fish. The project is called "Birds of Beauty."

"The city wanted us to add onto it this year," Edwards said. "So, we just decided to go with local birds, and the kids had



to come up with the idea," Edwards told Brentwood Press.

The birds that are a part of the sculpture; the golden eagle, the great blue heron, and the long-billed curlew were made of sheet metal and

will feature glass eyes, amongst other materials, while the barn owl has a tile clay body.

"I've said it since the beginning, even before I came on the council, this is my favorite agenda item every single year," councilwoman Jovita Mendoza said. "We didn't have this when I was growing up. Kids didn't get to do this, but it's amazing."





## The Wonders of Plein Air at aRt Cottage

The plein air exhibit at the aRt Cottage continues in June. I look forward to this special exhibit all year. This is where local artists create a masterpiece in the out-of-doors at our annual Paint-out event here at aRt Cottage. We then celebrate their work in May and June.

There are 20+ artists participating in the show, and there are over 50 paintings. Each painting seems to have its own feel of the environment and portray the weather of the day. When visiting the gallery, you will more than likely recognize the majority of the portrayed locations. The show will run through June 25. All are welcome. This is a free event.

aRt Cottage is located at 2238 Mt. Diablo St. in downtown Concord.



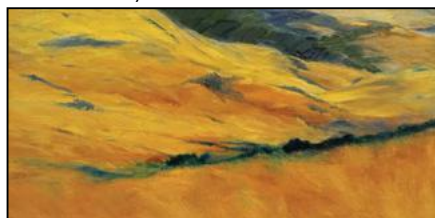
Bancroft Homestead by Nancy Roberts



Fro's Garden - by Jenna Hobbs



Russian River by Marina Omelianenko



Windy Day - Mt. Diablo by Lori Larks

## Remembering Betty Guy And To Celebrate Her Legacy at Jor Gallery

Jor Gallery will be hosting a reception to remember Betty Guy and to celebrate her legacy on Saturday, June 7, from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. at 1026 Oak Street in Clayton.



## Father's Day Art Social at Blackhawk Gallery

Blackhawk Gallery invites you to celebrate Father's Day with art and community for a Father's Day Art Social on Sunday, June 15, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 3416 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville.

Dad will enjoy a relaxing day surrounded by stunning artwork, meet talented gallery artists in person, and sip on something refreshing from the wine bar. It's the perfect day out for art lovers.



## Discover Local Creativity at the "Concord Art Community" Exhibition

Experience the diverse world of local art at the Concord Art Community show on display at Centre Concord (5298 Clayton Road). This vibrant exhibit features 41 unique pieces created by 25 talented artists, showcasing a range of styles from realism to abstraction, and mediums including oil, acrylic, and mixed media. For this show, the Concord Art Association (CAA) expanded the call for art beyond their membership, inviting local artists to join, resulting in a new show full of fresh perspectives and emerging talent.

The exhibition is open to the public Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Centre Concord.



## Eye-Catching Show At Moraga's Unique Art Gallery



The title "Seeing Differently" aptly describes the new art exhibit arriving on June 11, and running through August 24, at the Moraga Art Gallery, 432 Center Street in the Rheem Shopping Center.

The exhibit features work by more than two dozen artists and includes a collection of fanciful acrylic paintings by guest artist Judith Rohrer plus a display of Wenda Pyman's "knock-the-socks-off" photography that evokes the work of the immortal Ansel Adams and Eliot Porter, among others. Art lovers agree that her color photos are a "delight for the eye," her black and white images, "a delight for the soul."

The exhibit also contains striking creations by three dozen artists including painters, ceramicists, printmakers, woodworkers, jewelry makers, and more.

On Saturday, June 28, from 5:00 -7:00 p.m., the public is invited to a free gala reception to meet the artists, mingle with fellow art lovers while enjoying light snacks, wine, and congenial music.

The gallery is open Wednesday to Sunday from noon to 5:00 p.m. For more information visit [moragaartgallery.com](http://moragaartgallery.com).

## Lamorinda Arts Alliance Exhibit "Art Passages" in Martinez

The exhibition "Art Passages" at the County Administration Building in Martinez showcases the artwork of three Lamorinda Arts Alliance member artists along with other artists from four other art organizations.

Participating Artists: Denise Hillman, Connie Millholland, Sharon Tama

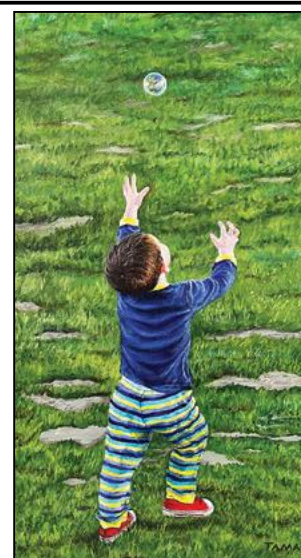
Lamorinda Art Alliance member Pamela McCauley juried three figurative artworks out of 36 entries for

this show.

The exhibit runs through July 7 with an open house reception June 12 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

The County Administration Building is located at 1025 Escobar Street, Martinez, and is open Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Lamorinda Arts Alliance website: [www.laa4art.org](http://www.laa4art.org)



Sharon-Tama-The ElusiveBubble

## "Paint Speaks," the 2D and 3D Art at Main Street Arts

You now have more time to visit Main Street Arts Gallery as summer hours have been extended on Saturdays to 8:00 p.m. Also, on June 6, the gallery participates in Martinez First Fridays when many of the local businesses stay open late and offer refreshments and other special activities.

Main Street Arts is celebrating its 9th year in business. Every other month 12 member artists bring in new art to be displayed. The guest artist is local painter Robert Anke whose expressive exhibit is titled "Paint Speaks." His works will be on exhibit throughout the month of June. Stop in to enjoy a wide range of 2D and 3D art from small to large.

Every month Main Street Arts offers a free drawing for one of the gallery members' art pieces. June's giveaway will feature an original watercolor painting from Samantha McNally. It's free to enter and the winner goes home with something new to add to their collection, just stop by and fill out an entry form.

Main Street Arts is located at 613 Main Street in Martinez. Viewing hours are

Wednesday-Friday 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.,



Free drawing prize – the sunsets in the west by Samantha McNally



10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. On Martinez First Fridays, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

[www.mainstreetarts.net](http://www.mainstreetarts.net)

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## The Price is Right: How to Sell Your Home Fast and

### Maximize Profit

When it comes to selling your home, pricing can feel like a guessing game. Price too high and your home may linger on the market; price too low and you risk leaving money on the table. So how do you strike the perfect balance between a quick sale and a solid return?

The answer lies in understanding your market, timing, and buyer psychology.

#### Why Overpricing Can Backfire

It's tempting to shoot for the stars with your asking price, especially if you've poured time, energy, and love into your home. But today's buyers are savvy. They've done their homework, and they're likely to skip over listings that seem overpriced.

An overpriced home often sits on the market longer, which can lead to multiple price drops and, ironically, a lower final sale price than if it had been priced competitively from the start.

#### Why Underpricing Isn't Always a Bad Thing

On the flip side, some sellers opt to list slightly under market value to generate buzz and attract multiple offers. In hot markets, this strategy can create a bidding war, potentially pushing the final sale price above asking. But it's a fine line to walk—and one that requires expert guidance.

#### Know Your Local Market

The best pricing strategy depends on your local market conditions. Is it a buyer's market or a seller's market? Are homes selling quickly in your area?

Are buyers looking for move-in ready properties or fixer-uppers?

An experienced real estate agent can help you analyze recent sales, look at days on market, and determine what pricing strategy is most likely to achieve your goals.

#### Think Like a Buyer

When setting your price, consider how buyers search online. Many people use price filters (e.g., homes under \$500k or between \$500k–\$600k), so pricing your home at \$499,000 instead of \$505,000 might reach more eyes.

Round numbers are easy to remember, but small adjustments can make a big difference in visibility and perceived value.

#### The Sweet Spot: Strategic Pricing

Ultimately, the right price is a strategic mix of timing, competition, and market demand. Your goal is to price your home attractive enough to generate interest quickly, but not so low that you sacrifice your bottom line.

Sometimes that means being bold. Sometimes it means being patient. But always, it means being informed.

#### Final Thought

Your home's price tag isn't just a number—it's a marketing tool. Getting it right from the beginning can mean the difference between a stressful, drawn-out sale and a smooth, profitable transaction.

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## Consider it SOLD!

**Clayton Market Update**

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
60 Mountaire Pl	\$1,250,000	2481	5/3	4/11/2025
9009 Elk Dr	\$1,498,425	2894	4/3	4/14/2025
1462 Indianhead Cir	\$745,000	1709	3/3	4/29/2025
621 Mt Olivet Ct	\$1,310,000	2177	4/2.5	5/2/2025
1140 Easley Dr	\$1,200,000	2391	4/2.5	5/5/2025
8051 Kelok Way	\$1,350,000	2894	5/3	5/9/2025
5544 Southbrook Dr	\$1,525,000	2727	5/3	5/15/2025

**Concord Market Update**

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
4665 Benbow Ct	\$940,000	2247	4/2.5	4/25/2025
5408 Rock Creek Ct	\$1,155,000	2032	4/2.5	4/28/2025
4226 Toyah Ct	\$822,000	1301	3/2	5/2/2025
738 Ygnacio Woods Ct	\$1,400,000	2380	4/2.5	5/7/2025
4322 Blenheim Way	\$810,000	1204	4/2	5/12/2025
4805 Clayton Rd #7	\$380,000	909	2/2	5/13/2025
4138 Joan Ave	\$795,000	1160	4/2	5/15/2025

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# Protecting the Mental Health of Seniors

by Dr. Alicia English, Director of Behavioral Health at the Center for Elders' Independence.



We spend so much time talking about our physical health when it comes to aging, we forget to consider the toll aging takes on our mental health.

Consider the changes older adults witness. Children grow up and move away. They may need to move out of their homes. Some lose their independence as they age. Cognitive functions may decline. They see their physical functions decline, which can be depressing. Friends, relatives, and, tragically, children die.

Older adults often face unique challenges that may impact their emotional and mental well-being. That's why it's critical to raise awareness about the importance of mental health in this population, because, when a person's mental health begins to affect their daily lives, it's time for help.

"Older adults experience emotional challenges just like everyone else, and they may need someone to talk with to help them cope with their feelings," says Director of Behavioral Health Alicia English of the Center for Elders' Independence. "They may need someone to talk with to help them cope with their feelings, but they may not always be willing to take

those steps to seek that help. That's why it's important for family members and caregivers to be available or help find a professional to speak with."

It's important to note that talking to a mental health professional does not mean a person has a mental illness. Rather, everyone can benefit from learning new skills to cope with challenging emotions. Older adults experience mental health diagnoses at the same rate as everyone else. They can benefit from mental health treatment with a professional, such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, or counselor.

The good news is that mental health disorders are treatable, and people can have positive outcomes. It's crucial to address emotional and mental health challenges when they arise as early interventions and treatment work well and can prevent hospitalizations.

There are several steps that older adults can take to promote their emotional and mental well-being. For instance, engaging in regular physical activity, eating a balanced diet, and getting enough sleep can help boost mood and reduce anxiety. Additionally, socializing with others and participating in activities that bring joy and purpose can positively impact mental health.

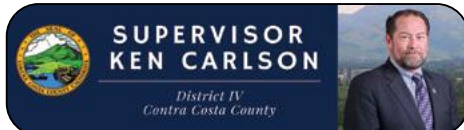
Furthermore, older adults may benefit from participating in counseling or therapy sessions. This may involve talking to a mental health professional

about personal struggles, learning new coping skills, or developing strategies to improve communication and relationships with loved ones.

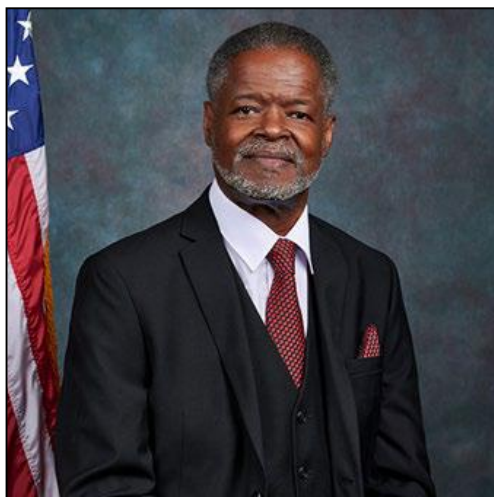
Mental health is just as important as physical health, and older adults should prioritize taking care of their emotional and mental well-being. Everyone can benefit from seeking help from a mental health professional, and early interventions and treatment can prevent hospitalizations and improve quality of life.

CEI provides space for seniors to not only receive physical care but also participate in a plethora of activities and social interaction, which contributes greatly to their mental health. They also offer personalized programs, calming meditation rooms, and daily exercise classes, to help foster good mental health.

*Dr. English is a highly experienced clinical psychologist with over 25 years' expertise spanning diverse areas including community mental health, chemical dependency treatment, and medical settings. Dr. English specializes in neurobehavioral assessment, capacity evaluations, trauma, and substance abuse treatment, demonstrating a commitment to holistic well-being.*



## Remembering Former Supervisor Federal D. Glover



### Supervisor Federal D. Glover

"We are deeply saddened to learn today of the passing of former Supervisor Federal Glover, who served our community with distinction and dedication during his time on the Board of Supervisors. Federal's leadership and tireless commitment to improving the lives of residents left a lasting legacy that continues to benefit our County today. Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences are with his family, friends, and all those who had the privilege of working with him. Federal will be remembered not only for his contributions to public service, but also for his compassion and integrity. We honor Federal's life and the positive impact he had on our community. Further details regarding services or ways to pay tribute will be shared as they become available. Thank you for joining us in reflecting on Federal's lasting contributions." - Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

### Also included is a family statement from Mrs. Janis Glover:

It is with deep sorrow that our family announces the passing of my beloved husband, Federal D. Glover, who departed this life today at the University of California San Francisco Medical Center. Federal was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and public servant. For over two decades, he served the people of Contra Costa County with distinction, becoming the first African American elected to the Board of Supervisors. His legacy is one of unwavering commitment to justice, equity, and service. He believed deeply in the power of community and worked tirelessly to uplift and unite the people he was honored to represent. As a family, we are heartbroken by this loss. After 47 years of marriage, I grieve alongside our children, Federal Glover and Carissa Dorton, our grandchildren, and the extended Glover family. We

are grateful for the outpouring of love, prayers, and support we have already received. At this time, there are no funeral or memorial plans in place, but we will share more information with the public as those arrangements are made.

We appreciate your continued prayers and kind understanding as our family grieves this tremendous loss.

With gratitude, Janis Glover

My colleagues and I honored the life and legacy of retired Supervisor Federal Glover, who passed away on Sunday, May 18, at the University of California San Francisco Medical Center.

I had the privilege of serving alongside him for two of his 24 years on the Board of Supervisors. Federal made an extraordinary impact on Contra Costa County.

His leadership on the Equity Committee was instrumental in supporting the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice and advancing the development of the African American Holistic Wellness Resource Hub. His service stands as an enduring example to us all.

My deepest condolences go out to his wife, Janis, his children, Federal Glover and Carissa Dorton, and his grandchildren.

Glover was born on May 9, 1956. In his honor, a funeral service was held on Wednesday, May 28.

Here is the Board of Supervisors' statement on Supervisor Glover's passing.

### Board of Supervisors Statement on the Passing of Former



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# Around Martinez



## We Can't Fix the Price of Eggs, but We Can Fix Our Roads

by Brianne Zorn, Mayor, City of Martinez

Why did the chicken cross the road? Because the Martinez pavement was so smooth it didn't ruffle a single feather. (Groan.)

Martinez has just completed resurfacing 8.5 miles of city roads, improving ride quality and extending their lifespan by more than five years on roads in Center, Morello, Chilpancingo, and surrounding streets. A total of 175,000 square yards of slurry has been applied, enough to cover 36 acres, or about 27 football fields.

The next paving project in Martinez, the Downtown Pavement Rehab Project, is set to begin on June 2. Several major streets in the greater downtown area will benefit from upcoming improvements, including Berrellesa Street (from Foster to Bertola), Alhambra Avenue (from Bertola to Jones), Ward and Pine Streets (Jones to Bush), and Pacheco Boulevard. Work is expected to continue through the end of August.

This project entails a range of pavement maintenance and improvement work, including milling and asphalt overlay work, chip seal and slurry seal treatments to extend the life of the roads, and the addition of new ADA-accessible sidewalk curb ramps and concrete gutters. Construction will start with curb ramp installations along Alhambra Ave.

People often ask: what are chip seal and slurry seal? A chip seal is a pavement maintenance process where a thin layer of asphalt is sprayed onto an existing road surface, followed by a layer of small rocks or chips that are compacted into the asphalt. This process creates a durable, cost-effective surface treatment that seals cracks, provides a new driving surface and extends the life of the pavement.

A slurry seal is a preventative maintenance treatment, consisting of a mixture of water, asphalt, fine aggregate like sand, and other additives. It is applied to the surface of existing asphalt



to seal cracks, restore lost flexibility, and protect the pavement from water and sun damage. This extends the life of the road at a lower cost than full pavement repair.

I know paving doesn't seem like a glamorous topic, but when city road conditions decline, the residents notice. The city of Martinez funds paving each year to the tune of \$2 million thanks to the Measure D 0.5% sales tax, which was approved by the voters in 2016 and provides funding exclusively for Martinez road improvements and maintenance needs.

Our paving projects continue to increase our pavement conditions index (PCI) from "poor" to "good." The Measure D 5-year Paving Plan is adopted each January, and you can check the schedule for your road at [cityofmartinez.org/departments/engineering/capital-improvement-projects/pavement-projects](http://cityofmartinez.org/departments/engineering/capital-improvement-projects/pavement-projects).

Our Paving Plan provides a methodical and cost-effective way of improving the Martinez roads annually. This year, we have also optimized our contract to include Bethany Hills Church (the parking lot for Alhambra Hills trailhead!) and Lot 4 (increasing downtown parking spaces!).

After every paving or slurry project, you will see fresh lane striping, buffered bike lanes, curb ramp improvements, gutter repairs, and bright, new crosswalks to improve pedestrian safety. Maybe we know why the chicken crossed the road after all.



## Fixed Rate vs. Adjustable Rate Credit Cards: A Graduate's Guide to Financial Survival!

by Bonita Vega, Marketing/Bus. Development Manager, Shell Western States FCU [swsfcu.org](http://swsfcu.org)

Congratulations, graduates! You've tossed your caps in the air, and now it's time to navigate the world of credit cards. With bills looming and student loans on your mind, you might wonder, Fixed Rate or Adjustable Rate Credit Card? Let's break it down.

The Fixed Rate Credit Card is your dependable friend. With a fixed rate, your interest remains steady, meaning no surprises at the end of the month. As a recent graduate, you are likely balancing a tight budget, so knowing exactly what you owe can offer major relief. You can plan for rent, groceries, and those artisanal lattes you love, without worrying about interest rates skyrocketing unexpectedly.

On the flip side, the Adjustable Rate Credit Card might tempt you with an appealing introductory rate. However, beware. After a promotional period, that interest rate can climb rapidly, potentially derailing your budget. For recent grads, this can lead to a precarious balancing act of unsteady payments that creates stress.



For graduates looking to secure their financial future, a low fixed rate serves as a crucial safety net. With stable payments, you can focus on building your credit score and finding a job, free from the anxiety of rising costs. Many credit unions provide attractive low fixed rates, often with fewer fees and requirements compared to traditional banks.

In contrast, banks frequently favor adjustable rates, which can lead to regret as you struggle to manage increasing payments. Choosing a fixed rate can help you make sound financial decisions and avoid unnecessary stress.

Whether you're starting your first job or still navigating post-grad life, opting for a fixed rate credit card can facilitate a smoother transition into adulthood. Wouldn't you rather save money for essentials - like rent and groceries - than gamble it on unpredictable interest rates? Keep your finances steady, and you will be ready to take on the real world with confidence.

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## June Community Events

All Month	Community Pride Ribbon Wall
6/4	Pride Flag Raising
6/4	Bike & Play, Del Cielo
6/6	First Friday + Martinez Music Mafia
6/7	Virtual Backyard Composting Workshop
6/7	East Bay GreenHome Tour
6/7	Cultural Polynesian Luau, Brix & Craft
6/8	Open Air Market
6/12	Main Street Thursday Car Show
6/13	King of the County BBQ
6/14	Martinez Volunteer Community Cleanup
6/14	Western Heritage Celebration, Brix & Craft
6/21	Free Compost Giveaway
6/21	Meet Me on Main
6/22	Juneteenth
6/28	Beaver Festival
6/28	Martinez Volunteer Community Cleanup
Every Wknd	Aire Libre Weekends (Del Cielo B.)
Every Sun	Downtown Farmers' Market

Follow Us on Social Media for more!

More event details at [www.cityofmartinez.org/events](http://www.cityofmartinez.org/events)

Full City Council Calendar [www.cityofmartinez.org/meetings](http://www.cityofmartinez.org/meetings)



## New Leaf Collaborative Awarded Phase 2 Grant for “Meet Me Martinez!” Project

by Stephen Andrews, President, Martinez Community Foundation

The Martinez Community Foundation (MCF) has awarded local nonprofit New Leaf Collaborative (NLC) with a \$13,000 grant for Phase 2 of its successful “Meet Me Martinez!” project celebrating community spaces featuring native flora.

A partnership with the Friends of Alhambra Creek, Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, the John Muir Association, and the John Muir National Historic Site, “Meet Me Martinez!” integrates environmental stewardship, education, and community engagement through public events held at garden sites along the Alhambra Native Plant Trail that travels from Ferry Point at the Martinez Marina to the native garden at the John Muir Visitor Center. To download a map of the trail visit: <https://www.ccrd.org/friends-of-alhambra-creek>

During Phase 1 of the project, funded by MCF in 2024, NLC and partners held six community events involving the removal of invasive species, the planting of native species, and increasing native plant awareness through art. The events attracted more than 150 participants representing a broad spectrum of the Martinez community. “The energy of everyone who attended events really shows in the completion of the new plantings,” noted Ellen Concepcion, executive director of NLC.



Scan for map of Alhambra native plant trail

Phase 2, to begin this summer, will focus on community events featuring native, pollinator-friendly plantings along the native plant trail that also support wildlife. Participants of NLC’s Martinez Boys and Girls Club program will create



NLC “Meet Me Martinez!” community planting of native halophytes at the Martinez marina. Photo by: Roan Foote, Youth photographer for the Diablo Gazette.

artwork expressing the importance of biodiversity for display at trail sites in anticipation of the 2026 Martinez sesquicentennial.

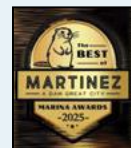
As MCF Board member Marta Van Loan commented, “It’s appropriate that we should shine light on the environmental heritage of Martinez as we plan to celebrate the City’s 150th anniversary.”

New Leaf Collaborative (NLC) is a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation whose mission is to provide hands-on, learning and leadership opportunities in science, nature and environmental literacy in order to inspire curiosity and connection in our youth and communities. <https://newleafcollaborative.org/>

The Martinez Community Foundation (MCF) is a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation whose mission is to promote, champion, and enhance an equitable and sustainable quality of life for the people of Martinez. <https://www.martinezcommunityfoundation.org/>

Look for news of “Meet Me Martinez!” events in upcoming editions of the Diablo Gazette.

## The Best of Martinez Recognized



The Martinez Chamber of Commerce held its annual “Best of Martinez” gala. This was a night of celebration and recognition of the best in the community. The event took place at 6:30pm at IBEW Local 302, 1875 Arnold Drive, Martinez. Two hundred eighty-nine local businesses were nominated among 64 categories. Winners were chosen by the community through online voting.

The 2025 Best of Martinez Marina Awards was a fantastic and delicious celebration catered by Stewart Beatty, Executive Chef at Postino Lafayette.

Congratulations to all the winners for your outstanding contributions. View all the winners at: [thebestofmartinez.com](http://thebestofmartinez.com)

**Photo credit: Thomas Rimple**

Above: May Yamamoto Marina Award for Volunteer of the Year 2025 with Chamber of Commerce President Aaron Alacastre.



## New Pickleball Courts Bring Complaints

by Craig Lazeretti, [martineznewsandviews.substack.com](http://martineznewsandviews.substack.com)

In a trend that has played out from coast to coast as the pickleball craze sweeps the nation, Martinez is learning that with the arrival of dedicated courts for the sport comes the arrival of neighbor frustrations.

Such has been the case for neighbors of Hidden Valley Park since the debut of eight pickleball courts there in February. The complaints have ranged from players clogging residential parking spaces to late-night distractions from court lighting to players bringing along pets and playing music at their games to, most prominently, the piercing noise generated from the plastic balls used in the sport.

A council meeting, a resident of the Glacier Classics neighborhood commented, “Since the completion of the courts, we’ve experienced what I consider unbearable noise coming from the courts,” she said, noting that up to 32 players (along with friends and dogs) routinely congregate for games.



The Hidden Valley pickleball courts (photo from city of Martinez)

“It can be so loud that I’m unable to open windows and relax in my own backyard.”

She noted that sound blankets were not effective enough as they were only installed on one of the courts—not

the side facing her home.

Signage is being installed to inform players not to park on residential streets.

New digital lighting timers were installed to shut courts down at 9:00 p.m. during the week and 10:00 p.m. on weekends.

“The big issue remains the noise,” Chandler said. “We knew this going in. It’s a common issue across the country, really, as popular as pickleball is.”

The most practical solution may be requiring quieter balls.

## Participants Needed for Martinez Air Quality Study

by Stephen Andrews

The UC Berkeley Air Quality Modeling & Exposure Lab (AQMEL) is seeking Martinez residents to be citizen scientists in a research study to better understand Bay Area residents’ perceptions of air quality.

Exposure to potential air pollutants has become a particular concern in light of incidents occurring at refineries neighboring Martinez. The grassroots community group Healthy Martinez is collaborating with Professor Cesunica Ivey a principal investigator in Berkeley’s Civil and Environmental Engineering department to analyze data from wearable pollution monitors that will be carried by study participants. Interested community members will be engaged to wear the pollution monitor everywhere they go for seven days, and to follow research protocol instructions. Up to 200 Bay Area residents will take part in the study planned to take place over two years.

This is an excellent opportunity to collect air quality data that leads to data-driven clear air quality standards and regulations. By participating you will be adding to our understanding of



air pollutant exposures and risks.

Healthy Martinez, as stated on their website, is a grassroots community group created to hold Martinez Refining Company (MRC), their parent company (PBF Energy) and other refineries in our area accountable for fires, flaring, and daily emissions that pollute the air, water and soil.

<https://www.healthymartinez.org/>

To learn more about the study and apply to be a participant, contact graduate researcher Sumukhi Prasad ([sumukhi\\_prasad@berkeley.edu](mailto:sumukhi_prasad@berkeley.edu)).

To learn more about the AQMEL visit: <https://www.iveyilab.com/>

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# King of the County BBQ and Music Festival June 13-16

This BBQ extravaganza and music-oriented event is an all-in-one outdoor family festival with free admission and few parking, with three days of live music, eight bands, kids rides and activities, arts & craft vendor booths, and of course, the best BBQ food around! Dads will be pleased. Waterfront Park, June 13-15. Diablo Gazette proudly sponsors this Fathers' Day weekend festival. We're so fired up. Band lineup:

## Friday, June 13, 2025

6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. The Floorshakers - High Energy Funk, Soul & Rock n Roll

## Saturday, June 14, 2025

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Evan Thomas & The Brotherhood - Funk, Soul & Blues

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Garage Land Rodeo- Rock, Blues & Soul

4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Sixteen Scandals- 80's Cover

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. RJae Hass Band - Latin Rock

**Saturday BBQ Competition Awards! 4:00 p.m. - 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place**

## Sunday, June 15, 2025

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. The Landbirds - High Energy 60's Rock & Roll



2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Michelle Lambert - Pop/Folk, Singer/Songwriter

4:30p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Ruby Party Band - Rock/Pop/Dance

**Sunday's BBQ Competition Awards 4:00 p.m. - 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place**

[www.countybbq.com](http://www.countybbq.com)

# Council Approves Five-Year Capital Improvement Program

By Tom Lochner, freelance reporter, courtesy Martinez News and Views

The City council on May 7 unanimously approved a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the next five fiscal years beginning this coming July. Still to come is the funding for the first two years of the CIP as part of the city's biennial budget, expected to go for adoption before the council in June.

A five-year CIP book of more than 100 pages gives a detailed description of the program, which runs from Fiscal Year 2025-26 through 2029-30, and documents more than 85 projects with a total cost of more than \$118 million.

Project details for the first two years revealed at the meeting included:

A downtown restroom with a single-stall lease model, to cost \$100,000 in Year 1 including design costs, and \$75,000 in Year 2; the \$6,000 monthly lease costs include daily maintenance.

Downtown Plaza improvements, \$100,000 in Year 1.

Bike Park conceptual design: \$50,000 in Year 1, with the design to be incorporated into the Park Master Plan.

Those three projects will be paid out of the General Fund Infrastructure Reserve.

ADA Transition Plan, for parks and other public facilities: \$125,000 in Year 1, to come out of General Fund excess reserves.

## Senior Center improvements:

\$250,000 in Year 2, from the General Fund Infrastructure Reserve and/or Facility Reserves.

Waterfront Park Stage, development of preliminary design and scope: \$200,000 in Year 1 and \$200,000 in Year 2, to be paid out of Cultural Impact fees.

Traffic Safety Improvements: \$200,000 for each year, an increase over the \$100,000 a year previously proposed, payable with Gas Tax funds, with an initial focus on areas near schools and other identified areas of concern.

Annual Street Tree/Landscaping: \$400,000 each year from Gas Tax funds, with a priority on key entryway median areas in need of repair.

A staff report prepared by City Manager Joe Enke and Finance Director June Du also identifies more than 20 unfunded future traffic improvement projects that are not listed in the five-year CIP but are identified in the recently adopted 2035 General Plan.

Among them construction of a ferry terminal and citywide bike lane improvements; two street-widening projects (on parts of Alhambra Avenue and Morello Avenue); and numerous traffic signal improvements.

This article can be read in its entirety at: [Martineznewsandviews.substack.com](http://Martineznewsandviews.substack.com).

# 16th Beaver Festival Returns June 28 in Susana Park

Back when the once-famous beavers moved into Martinez in 2007, their presence was literally an anomaly. There were no other Bay Area cities dealing with beavers, and no stories in the media praising their environmental contributions.

Nobody was saying that their dams could alleviate droughts, reduce fires, or mitigate flooding. The beaver isn't just an animal; it's an ecosystem.

Bring the family. Enjoy five bands, a parade, Kids can spin the Beavers of Fortune wheel to win stuffed animals. See mobile fishtank, birds, collect wildlife trading cards, and a silent auction for adults and the amazing chalk artist beaver mural.

The festival has become one of the largest nature events in California and is free in Susana Park Martinez from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. This event is free to attend.



Mayor Zorn of Martinez at a prior Beaver Festival

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DATE	HOME	AWAY	NEUTRAL	WILD	RAIN	ALL STAR
MAY-25						
JUNE-25	DUB	BAK	BAK	MON	BAK	BAK
JULY-25	VAL	MON	VAL	VAL	DUB	VAL
AUG-25	SRF	SRF	SRF	VAL	SRF	BAK
SEP-25	DUB	BAK	BAK	VAL	SRF	VAL
OCT-25	SRF	SRF	SRF	VAL	SRF	BAK
NOV-25	DUB	BAK	BAK	VAL	SRF	VAL
DEC-25	SRF	SRF	SRF	VAL	SRF	BAK

MON- MONTREY AMERJACKS  
MTZ- MARTINEZ STURGEON  
SRF- SAN RAFAEL PACIFIC  
VAL- VALLEJO BEAWEED  
DUB- DUBLIN LEFEBRECHS  
BAK- BAKENFIELD TRAIN ROBBERIES

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