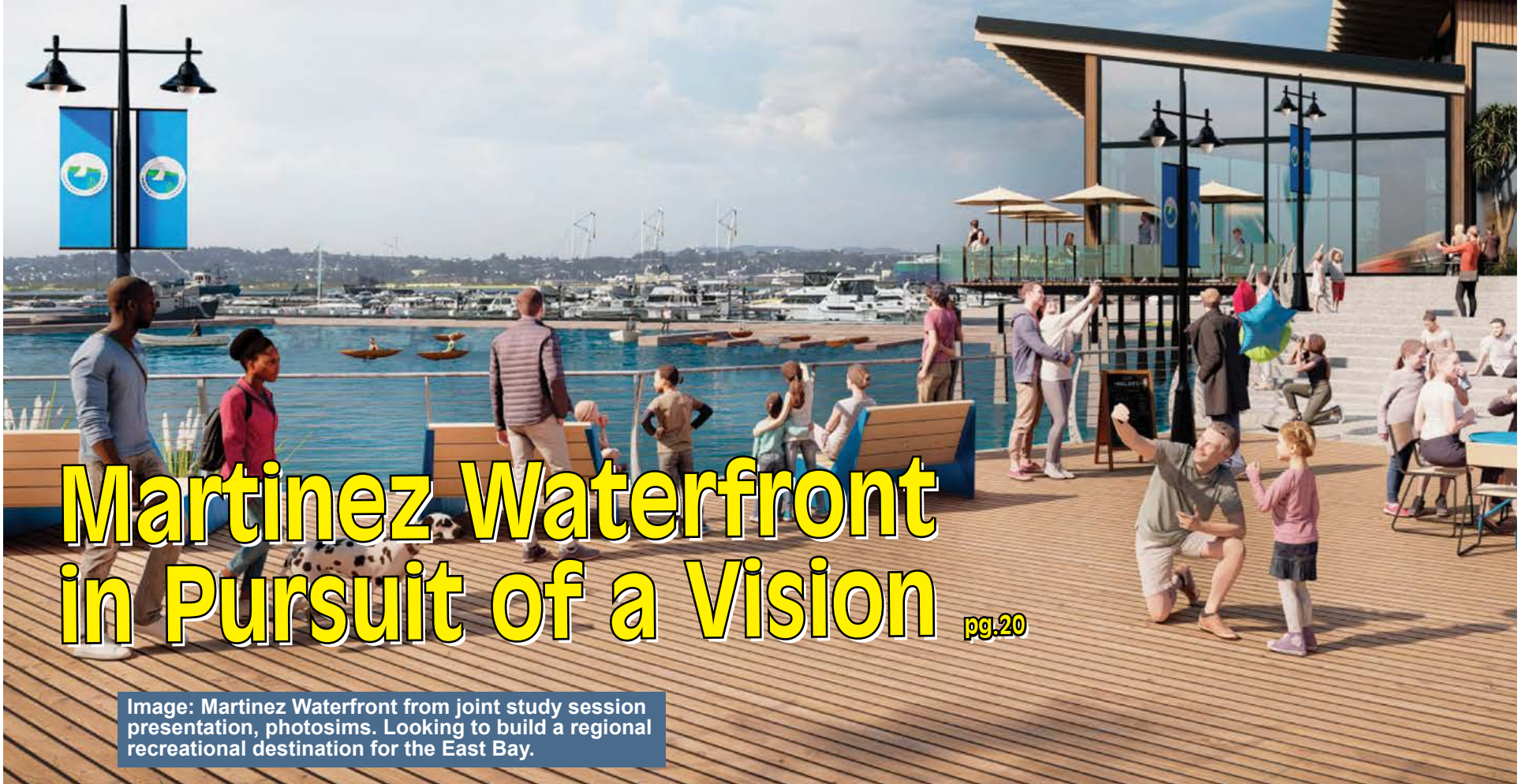
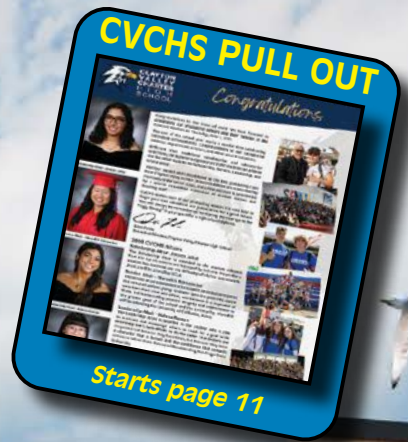


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**SPECIAL EDITION**



## Martinez Waterfront in Pursuit of a Vision pg.20

Image: Martinez Waterfront from joint study session presentation, photosims. Looking to build a regional recreational destination for the East Bay.

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## King of the County BBQ

### Calling All Clayton BBQ Lovers

Best Option after Clayton BBQ Cook-Off Cancellation



By now you may have heard that Clayton Business and Community Association (CBCA) has cancelled this year's Clayton BBQ Cook-off planned for July 29-30 despite several websites still announcing the event is happening.

What happened? Social media posts are pointing fingers at Mayor Jeff Wan's desire to raise fees as a personal vendetta against political rivals inside the CBCA (which Wan denies). However, the City of Clayton has been apparently vague in communicating what the total cost increases will be and when it will be in effect.

City Manager Bret Prebula, who recently accepted this position, told the Diablo Gazette the problem has been a communication issue. "It has basically been a misunderstanding due to personnel vacancies from within the City."

The good news for BBQ enthusiasts, Diablo Gazette is happy to be a sponsor of this year's King Of County BBQ Competition and Music Festival over Father's Day weekend, June 18-20. With BBQ, Live Music, Kid Zone and more, it is everything a father would expect. For more on that, turn to page 21 for a breakdown of all its activities.

### Diablo Gazette Contributors Honored at Inaugural Ekphrasis Exhibit

by Colleen Gonzales

Artists and writers gathered on May 6, 2023, for the Inaugural Ekphrasis Exhibit Reception held in the upstairs gallery at the Orinda Library. "Ekphrasis" is a Greek word meaning a writing that describes or explains art. Art can also describe or explain writing.

I write this proudly when I say several of the "Diablo Gazette" contributors participated in this unique event, including Michael Barrington (art & writer), Fran Cain (writer), David George (writer), Colleen Gonzalez (writer), and Jill Hedgecock (art & writer). Both Cain and Hedgecock were two of the six featured ekphrasis speakers at the opening reception.

With one hundred and twenty-four ekphrastic visual and written works on

display through June 2, the event was a collaborative effort from the Mount Diablo Chapter of the California Writers Club (CWC), The Lamorinda Arts Alliance (LAA) and the Lamorinda Arts Counsel (LAC).

Attendees were treated to a deep dive into three of the exhibited works. The artists explained their process and vision, and the responders read the written pieces they created.

Fran Cain responded to artist, Marilyn Snow's "Are We Destroying Ourselves?" which was a statement on her perspective of current events.

In Snow's art, she used spirals and orbs to represent the atmosphere we live in including climate change. Snow also included an unfinished fence to represent the border wall and coat hangers to symbolize the tool of illegal abortions which she added to her art when Roe V. Wade was overturned.

Cain's written response described her impressions of the work and concluded with an upbeat answer to the piece's question by declaring that "No, we are not destroying ourselves."

The last showcased artist/responder team of Jill Hedgecock, with her drawing "Contentment" and Al Garrotto, with his written accompaniment "If Miracles Happen," were thrilled that they unknowingly collaborated together. Al was "shocked to find out Jill was the artist. I always knew her as a writer."

The afternoon proved to be an enjoyable event. Let us hope this ekphrasis event is the first of many.



Diablo Gazette contributors took part in the show. (left to right) Jill Hedgecock, Fran Cain, Colleen Gonzalez, Michael Barrington and David George, not pictured.

Colleen Gonzalez is a regular contributor to The Diablo Gazette with the column "Screen Time."

Photo courtesy of Diane Walsh [endlesspaws28.com](http://endlesspaws28.com)

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**YOUR NEIGHBOR'S SHOES**

by Michael Barrington, mbwriter.net

**From Kabul to Concord: An Afghan Interpreter's Escape to Concord, Part II**

In last month's edition, we reported the amazing and incredible escape from Afghanistan of Jamil Hassan, an interpreter for US and NATO forces for seven years. He and his family's lives were in danger as Taliban was searching those that had worked for the "infidels."

Part two continues that story as he, his wife, Shazia, and young daughter, Lima, with only a suitcase, were forced to leave his family, home, friends for a challenging and uncertain life in the USA.

At 4:00 a.m. and not having slept for 36 hours, Jamil and his wife and daughter were finally seated on the cargo deck floor of a C17 along with 450 other Afghan refugees. Their next stop was Qatar.

It was 7:30 AM when they arrived at Al Udeid airbase in Qatar. Even at that early hour it was already 95 degrees outside, and the evacuees were informed that because there were several planes in front of them, they would have to wait two hours before deplaning. Since he had already assisted the US crew, Jamil became the unofficial interpreter speaking Pashto, Dari, and English.

As temperatures soared, the small air conditioners were inefficient. He begged the captain to open the doors and then the ramp, to allow in fresh air; it was still insufficient. People fainted with the heat now well over 100 degrees.

The blocked aircraft toilets were unable to cope with such numbers and both men and women had to embarrassingly ease themselves outside on the edge of the runway. Finally, after eight hours, buses arrived to take them to a hangar where they received water, food, and clothing. They were informed that their ongoing flight would be in the morning at 7:00 AM and would have to spend the night as best they could sleeping on the floor.

On August 21, at 4:00 p.m., they received a warm welcome at US



2016 – Jamil with former Afghan President Ashraf Ghani at the Presidential Palace, Kabul, Afghanistan.



August 28, 2021: On board a United Airlines flight from US Air Force Base Ramstein (Germany) to the Dulles International Airport (USA)

Ramstein Air Force base in Germany. As they entered a hall for processing, a tired and sleep deprived group became unruly and refused to comply with instructions. Offering to help, Jamil explained to the officer in charge that the Pakistani female interpreter was speaking in Urdu, a language not spoken in Afghanistan. For the rest of the week, he became the official spokesperson for the makeshift camp of three thousand evacuees. While the US military distributed clean clothes and shoes, the one thing not available was a shower.

Six days later at 4:00 a.m., they were taken to a hangar for screening by the Department of Homeland Security. This was followed by US Customs and Border control. The rest of the day was spent waiting. A second check took place at



August 31, 2021: With his family at US Army Base Fort McCoy Wisconsin, where they spent 65 days.



November 21, 2021: With his family, finally in the Bay Area, now living in Concord, California

8:00 p.m. After more than thirty hours of what Jamil describes as 'detention,' and one week in Germany, they finally boarded a United airlines flight bound for Dulles International at 2:00 p.m. the following day.

Arriving at 10:00 p.m., the evacuees were transported to the Dulles Expo Center that had been turned into a makeshift camp. It was the first time in ten days people had an Afghan meal and more importantly, there were showers.

What struck and touched Jamil was that whenever a new group of evacuees arrived, all the staff gave a standing ovation. "For the first time, I actually started to believe we might be free to build a new life in America," he said.

The next day, a Delta Airlines flight took Jamil and his family to La Crosse Airport, Wisconsin. Accommodation at Fort McCoy gave almost no privacy but included central heating and hot and cold showers.

They were initially informed: "You will be here for a minimum of two weeks before being taken to the state of your choice." Their luggage was lost in the transfer process. Jamil's backpacks were finally delivered in December 2021 and the suitcase in January 2022...to Concord.

There were five stages to the resettlement process: medical exams, address confirmation, resettlement by the Organization of Migration (IOM), interviews with IRC and USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.) As soon as the medical

exams were completed, family, friends or relatives were contacted. Once housing was confirmed, the process of releasing families began.

"How much longer will we be here?" Jamil asked.

"It could be months," answered the USCIS agent.

"Does months mean for ten or twelve months?"

"All I can say is that it could be months," he said again.

"If we stay as long as it takes, will we be sent to the state of our choice?" Jamil pressed.

"I cannot guarantee that."

"If finally, we are told to go to another state rather than the one we have chosen, will we have the right to deny it?"

"No, we will make you go there."

The two agencies IOM and IRC initially worked together, but as many families decided to leave on their own, IOM became solely responsible for those leaving through the normal process. In spite of assurances regarding family

support, the two agencies would not guarantee that the families would be sent to the state of their choice. Once this became common knowledge, the numbers of families leaving on their own increased exponentially. Families were warned it could jeopardize their future benefits and drop them down the list in the resettlement process.

After advice from his former military US boss, and discussions with his brothers in the US, Jamil decided to take his family out. The process for leaving, however, was still tedious. It required waiting for three weeks for the results of blood tests. The individual had to buy air tickets, book a taxi (the airport was 40 miles from Camp McCoy), present the tickets to the IRC, attend a departure briefing by the IRC, and prepare for the departure itself. Jamil's brother took care of all the arrangements.

At 12:15 on November 3, 2021, Jamil, Shazia, and Lima, left Fort McCoy after more than two months — from Wisconsin to Chicago and then to San Francisco.

Jamil choked on his words as he told me, "We landed at 11:30 p.m. My brother Abdul Habib was there to meet us. An hour later we arrived at his home in Concord. It had been 78 days since we left Kabul, Afghanistan."

"And what were your thoughts as you finally came to Concord," I asked.

"I made the right decision to leave the camp in Wisconsin. My wife and I left our parents and siblings behind. We are unable to go back to spend time with them in Afghanistan at least for the foreseeable future. For them, the immigration process will take years, so they can't come either. We are praying everyday they will be safe."

Jamil Hassan's complete story can be found in his book, "Promises Betrayed. An Afghan Interpreter at the Fall of Kabul."

Today, Jamil, Shazia and Lima live in Concord. They are your neighbors.

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## Avoid a Relationship Disaster During a Home Renovation

My husband and I personally just went through a kitchen and flooring remodel. Renovating a home can be a stressful and time-consuming experience. It is easy to get caught up in the chaos and lose sight of other important aspects of your life, such as your relationship with your significant other. If you have seen the movie "The Money Pit", then you know what we mean. However, with a little effort and communication, you can keep your relationship intact while renovating your home.

This article courtesy of virtualresults.net is near and dear to my heart. Here is what you need to keep in mind when you and your partner are renovating your home.

### Communicate with your partner.

The most important thing you can do is to communicate with your partner about the renovation process. Make sure you are both on the same page about what needs to be done and when. Discuss your expectations for the renovation and how it may affect your daily routine. This will help you both be prepared for any disruptions or changes that may occur.

**Set a budget.** Renovations can be expensive, and financial stress can put a strain on any relationship. Set a budget for the renovation and stick to it. This will help alleviate any financial concerns and prevent arguments over money.

**Divide tasks.** Divide the tasks involved in the renovation between you and your partner. This will not only make the process more efficient but also ensure that you both have a sense of ownership and control over the project. Decide which tasks each of you will be responsible for and make a schedule to keep track of your progress.

**Take breaks.** Renovations can be

exhausting and overwhelming, so it is important to take breaks and prioritize self-care. Make time for yourself and your partner to relax and recharge. This will help you both maintain your energy and focus throughout the renovation process.

**Keep the romance alive.** With the stress and chaos of renovations, it is easy to forget about romance. Keep the romance alive by planning date nights or doing something special for your partner. This will help you both feel appreciated and connected, despite the chaos of the renovation.

**Be flexible.** Renovations rarely go according to plan, and unexpected problems can arise. It is important to be flexible and adaptable to these changes. Work together with your partner to find solutions and overcome any obstacles that may arise.

**Communicate with your contractor.** If you are hiring a contractor for the renovation, make sure to communicate with them regularly. Keep them informed of any changes or concerns you may have and ask for updates on the progress of the project. This will help you stay informed and involved in the renovation process.

**Keep a positive attitude.** Keeping a positive attitude will help you both stay motivated and excited about the project. Focus on the end result and the benefits of the renovation, such as increased home value and improved living space.

**Be patient.** It is important to be patient with yourself, your partner, and the renovation process. Remember that the process may be slow and frustrating at times, but the end result will be worth it.

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



Michael Barrington 'Your Neighbor's Shoes' Column



David George 'Naked Gardener' Column



William Gensburger Editorials



Jill Hedgecock 'BookEnds' Column

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1774 Indian Wells Way, Clayton

**Rarely Available "Grove" Model in Black Diamond at Oakhurst Country Club** backing to 11th green with views of golf course and Mt. Diablo. Updated with downstairs primary bedroom and primary bath. 2 bed plus loft/optional 3rd bed, 2.5 baths, approx. 1797sf.



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3124 Windsor Pl, Concord

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SOLD over list.  
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\$830,000

1463 Indianhead Cir, Clayton

**Stunning "Willow" Model in Chaparral Springs at Oakhurst Country Club** backing to golf course with 13th fairway and Mt. Diablo views. 3 bedrooms, 3 baths, approx. 1709sf. Downstairs bedroom and full bath.

### Market Update - Clayton

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
714 Reising Ct	\$1,300,000	2066	4/2.5	5/3/2023
410 Meadow View Ln	\$1,100,000	1735	3/3	5/3/2023
411 Mt Tamalpais Dr	\$1,075,000	1959	4/2	5/3/2023
1463 Indianhead Cir	\$830,000	1709	3/3	5/4/2023
7 Malibu Ct	\$1,300,000	2324	4/2.5	5/9/2023
1000 Mariposa Cir	\$1,721,000	3665	5/4.5	5/9/2023
219 Mountaire Cir	\$1,145,000	1919	4/2	5/12/2023

### Market Update - Concord

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
1863 Elkwood Dr	\$770,000	1438	3/2	5/1/2023
841 Sullivan Ave	\$1,000,000	2296	4/2.5	5/2/2023
3660 Greyhawk Ct	\$1,050,000	2230	4/2	5/5/2023
1410 Bel Air Dr #306	\$478,000	940	2/2	5/9/2023
5252 Hiddencrest Ct	\$1,340,000	3942	5/3.5	5/10/2023
3977 Juniper Dr	\$827,000	1938	4/2	5/12/2023
3124 Windsor Pl	\$760,000	1143	3/2	5/16/2023



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

# CLAYTON NEWS

## Budget Woes: City of Clayton Facing Difficult Decisions Ahead

Concerts Update - Summer Concerts in the Grove are back. The first concert was on Saturday, May 13, and will continue in downtown Clayton every other Saturday through September 16th. See the City of Clayton's [website](https://claytonca.gov/fc/Concerts-In-The-Grove-2023.pdf) to learn more or go to <https://claytonca.gov/fc/Concerts-In-The-Grove-2023.pdf>.

**Traffic Safety Updates** - As summer rolls around, I would like to give everyone a friendly reminder to watch your speed as you drive through town. Enhancing pedestrian and traffic safety has long been an area of focus for me, and with our new Police Chief, I have emphasized the desire to maintain safe roads for our residents.

In an effort to address excessive speeding and overall traffic enforcement, a new Traffic Safety officer assignment was created by our Police. The primary function of this officer will be to enforce traffic laws in an effort to educate the motoring public and reduce speeds. In addition to speeding, all moving violations will be addressed. The traffic officer will also deploy the police decoy vehicle and the radar trailers in an effort to maximize visibility.

**GHAD Updates** - Recently the Oakhurst Geological Hazard Abatement District (GHAD) Board has had several discussions regarding the financial situation the GHAD is in. I have written regarding its status on my website, [jeffwanforclaytoncitycouncil.net](http://jeffwanforclaytoncitycouncil.net), in detail with several diagrams and a timeline of activity. I encourage readers to review those articles.

In summary, the GHAD receives approximately \$50K in funding each year from assessments levied against the approximately 1,450 properties in the District. Required baseline expenses for administering the District including the cost of the levy itself are approximately

\$28K. This leaves only \$22K per year for all things that GHAD is responsible for. Our GHAD General Manager indicated that it would take approximately \$500K in revenues each year to adequately fund the GHAD for its activities and build a reasonable reserve. The GHAD is severely underfunded and as a result can only perform activities with the resources available.

Unless the residents of the GHAD agree to an increase in assessments, this will continue to be the case and the GHAD will need to prioritize what it does, though with the current level of funding it will likely be minimal. The GHAD Board will continue to discuss options that are available including how to achieve the maximum value with the resources available.

**Budget Updates** - Historically the City subsidized many activities in town that could not have happened without those taxpayer subsidies because they made the City better, and the City could afford to do so. With the financial headwinds the City is currently facing, that is no longer the case and as a result we are updating our Master Fee Schedule in order to ensure the City is recouping its costs for providing certain services.

This, along with other budget discussions that are occurring at the City are not easy. As I committed to in my campaign, there are difficult choices ahead regarding what we should prioritize as a city, and how we should be funding those priorities. Raising taxes should be a last resort, and while many may say this in passing, what it means in practice is that we will need to make choices on what the city can and cannot afford to continue to do. We are working through some of those difficult choices as part of the overall budget process.



VISIT CONCORD  
by Elaine Schroth,  
CEO & President

## Dine Out Before the Shows this Summer

Live music is such a big part of Concord's culture and appeals to locals and visitors alike. Those evenings on the grass at Todos Santos Plaza or Concord Pavilion are calling. Get ready to gather with friends and family to dance, sing, sway, and smile while listening to your favorites performed live. But don't forget to eat.

Here are a few places for dining before the show. Each offers something for every craving and are budget friendly too.

Headed to the Concord Pavilion? Pavilion Bar and Grill (1508 Kirker Pass Road) is a casual and fun go-to before you see your favorite band. Their menu is filled with tempting sandwiches, pizza, pasta, and more. Happy Hour is 3 - 6 p.m. with a bar menu that boasts wings, garlic fries, and other favorites.

Or dine on authentic Mexican cuisine at Guadalajara Grill Mexican Restaurant (5446 Ygnacio Valley Rd). Their engaging staff and laid-back atmosphere make for the perfect place to fuel up before the show with amazing tacos, enchiladas, tamales, and more. They also serve refreshing margaritas and cervezas, perfect for warm summer nights. Your taste buds will be happy and your stomach satisfied for the night ahead.

Another great spot is Love Thai (5434 Ygnacio Valley Road). They offer a variety of tasty Thai dishes using the freshest and finest ingredients, Pad Thai, Spicy Basil Fried Rice, Papaya Salad, and more. They have fast and friendly staff to make your experience exceptional and get you to the show on time.

This year, Music & Market runs every Thursday night, June 1 through September 28, at Todos Santos Plaza. Bands include everyone from the New Orleans sounds of Tom Rigney and Flambeau to The Purple Ones Tribute to Prince. The market is open at 4 p.m. with the music starting at 6:30 p.m. giving you plenty of time to grab dinner before the show. Here you have many choices

for dining at nearby restaurants or picnicking on the park's lush lawn.

Here are a few to get you started:

Make it a picnic before the music starts. The Concord Farmer's Market with over 30 different local vendors is open 4 - 8 p.m. serving fresh local produce, ready-to-eat bites and so much more.

The Hop Grenade in Salvio Pacheco Square (2151 Salvio Street) has a cold brew waiting for you from the 21 draft choices they offer. You can sip indoors or outdoors and pair your craft beer with the perfect beer bites, like Bratwurst or BBQ Brisket.

Cream (2070 Salvio St) brings the sweets with hand-crafted ice cream sandwiches made with warm, gooey cookies and rich, creamy ice cream. Just the right treat to revel in while the music plays.

Grab a slice or a full pizza pie loaded with your favorite toppings at Skipolini's (2001 Salvio St). You can dine at the restaurant before the performers take the stage or bring your pizza to Todos Santos and make a lot of friends.

Award winner for Favorite Restaurant in the 2023 Taco Trail Challenge, Canasta Kitchen (2118 Mt Diablo St.) is another great restaurant offering delicious dishes, including quesadillas, tacos, empanadas, and flautas.

Out of town guests booking a hotel room for the night of the show can take advantage of the Stay and Play Concert packages offered by Visit Concord. Your bonuses include sunglasses, a fanny pack, a lanyard, and more. Contact Visit Concord at [info@visitconcordca.com](mailto:info@visitconcordca.com) or call (925) 685-1182 for details.

For more about Concord experiences come see the Visit Concord team at the Concord Visitor Center in Downtown Concord Monday thru Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. We would love to see you.



A Walk Through Time with Misty Bruns

## "Them"

### The Graduates from 114 years ago

A large audience attended the commencement exercises of an unusual class of the Alhambra Union High School 114 years ago. Featured was John Swett, then the well-known patriarch of California educators and president of the board of trustees of Alhambra Union.

The unusual graduating class of all females, of which several may be recognized today as some of Martinez's historically prominent names in this Contra Costa Gazette article of 1909.

Alma Honegger delivered the salutatory for ten graduates, all girls; and the statement cannot be disproved that no ten girls as individually handsome ever graduated from any school all by themselves. Not only so, but they were attractive in their high average in intellectual appearance.

Agnes Mayo delivered the valedictory for the class, followed which W.E. Stoddard, principal of the school since its foundation, presented the graduates with their diplomas which are passports for them to the State University.

During the evening, four selections were rendered by the Martinez Orchestra. After the ceremonies, dancing was declared in order.

The young ladies of the graduating class of 1909 of Alhambra Union High School have not all fully determined at this early date what line of work or what

studies they will take up in the future.

The following is a bit of gossip on some of them:

Miss Agnes Mayo plans on entering the University of California Berkeley at the beginning of the fall semester.

Miss Orpha Dombaugh will probably complete her studies at State Normal in San Francisco.

Miss Ida Hale, after a trip to the north, has decided to attend the U.C. College at Berkeley.

Miss Nellie Glass will go to San Jose next September and enter the Normal of that city.

Miss Florence Morris expects to enter a business college in Oakland in several months.

Miss Hazel Soto has not decided definitely but will probably take up some special studies.

Miss Alma Honegger, Leila Veale, Villani Hoey and Lydia Bulger have not made definite plans as of yet but will remain in Martinez at the present.

Congratulations Graduates of 1909!

Source: Contra Costa Gazette, June 5, 1909

**"THEM" GRADUATES**

The young ladies of the graduating class of '09 of Alhambra Union High School have not all fully determined at this early date what line of work or what studies they will take up in the future. The following is a bit of gossip about them:

Miss Agnes Mayo has planned to enter the University of California at Berkeley at the beginning of the fall semester.

Miss Orpha Dombaugh will probably complete her studies at the State Normal in San Francisco.

Miss Lydia Bulger has not made definite plans as yet but will remain in Martinez for the present.

Miss Ida Hale after a trip to the north has about decided to attend the U. C. College at Berkeley.

Miss Hazel Soto has not decided definitely but will probably take up some special studies.

Miss Nellie Glass will go to San Jose next September and enter the Normal of that city.

Miss Villani Hoey has not decided what she will take up this fall.

Miss Florence Morris expects to enter a business college in Oakland in several months.

Miss Leila Veale will remain in Martinez for the present and later will travel some.

Miss Alma Honegger has not arranged her plans fully but will stay in Martinez for some months.

**GRADUATING CLASS, ALHAMBRA UNION HIGH SCHOOL**

LEILA VEALE	HAZEL SOTO	FLORENCE MORRIS	
ORPHA DOMBAUGH	NELLIE GLASS	VILLANI HOEY	LYDIA BULGER
ORPHA DOMBAUGH	AGNES MAYO	ALMA HONEGGER	

ALHAMBRA UNION HIGH SCHOOL  
MARTINEZ, CALIFORNIA



## Homeowners Must Prepare for Fire Season or Risk A ConFire Citation

As we look over the lush, beautiful hillsides, in a month or so those hillsides will turn brown as all the beautiful greenery will become dry. The change in the hillsides marks the telltale signs of fire season.

Every property owner and homeowner has a responsibility to prepare their property for fire season. Much like Smokey the Bear says, “only you can prevent forest fires” and that includes slowing down fires too. There are two important steps you can take – weed abatement and creating defensible space on your property.

What is weed abatement? The California Fire Code considers “weeds” to be all wild plants growing on streets or private property. These include sagebrush, chaparral, dry grass, brush, or other flammable materials which are capable of being ignited and endangering public safety by creating a fire hazard. For parcels that are less than five acres, all weeds must have a height of no more than three inches. Starting on June 4, Contra Costa Fire Protection District’s (ConFire) Fire Prevention Bureau will have the ability to cite owners of properties that are out of compliance.

What is defensible space? It is an area around a building or structure in which vegetation, debris, and other types of combustible fuels have been treated, cleared, or reduced to slow the spread of fire to and from the building.

There are some tools and programs that ConFire provides that can assist you in preparation for fire season. Please visit <https://www.cccfpd.org/wildfire-prep/> where you can find tips and information like a Defensible Space

guidebook and an Equipment Safety flyer for when you are working on your property.

New this year, ConFire, in partnership with Crockett Carquinez, El Cerrito, Kensington, Moraga Orinda, Pinole, Richmond, Rodeo-Hercules, and San Ramon Valley Fire Departments, is launching the Contra Costa County Wildfire Mitigation Program. ConFire is managing this innovative program which offers Contra Costa Residents the opportunity to work together to complete a neighborhood project that will reduce the wildfire risks. This program is being funded through the County’s half-cent sales tax, Measure X, and offers financial assistance for larger projects.

First, find a few neighbors to combine efforts in preparing your properties for fire season and identify the best project that can benefit everyone. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/FireMitigationInfo> to check out what types of community projects may qualify. Some examples include a community chipping day, removal of dead trees, or vegetation management.

Once you identify a project, reach out to your local fire district, which will evaluate the project and provide guidance. Then you can apply for the program at <https://tinyurl.com/FireMitigationApp>. All projects will be evaluated and ranked by the Wildfire Mitigation Program. The program aims to select projects across the County.

Let’s work together to make everyone a little safer this fire season. If you ever have questions about the Wildfire Mitigation Program or other ConFire programs, please reach out to my office for assistance at (925)655-2350.

## Clayton Valley Charter High School Selects Nick Tiva to Replace Retiring Head Football Coach Tim Murphy



Tim Murphy with the CVCHS team

Tim Murphy, one of the state’s most successful high school football coaches, has announced his retirement after 28 years of coaching. He retires with a remarkable record of 221 wins, a Clayton Valley State championship, 20 league championships, and several accolades, including the 2003 USA Top 25, 2003 State Coach of the Year, and the 2006 ESPY Coach of the Year. What makes Murphy’s career even more impressive is that all three high schools where he coached won their first Section Title under his leadership.

He has spent his last 11 years at Clayton Valley where his teams have won 10 of 11 league championships, four NCS championships, three NorCal championships, and one state championship.

“Coach Murphy’s dedication, passion, and outstanding coaching skills have

earned him a reputation as one of the best high school football coaches in the state,” said Dave Fehte, Executive Director at Clayton Valley Charter High School. “He has inspired generations of players and instilled in them the values of teamwork, hard work, and sportsmanship. He will be remembered not only for his impressive achievements, but also for his impact on the lives of his players.”

In 2019, Murphy was named NCS Coach of the Year, and in 2014, he set a state record for having the number one rushing team in the nation, with 7,055 yards, first in high school history.

“I’m grateful to have had the opportunity to teach and coach at the same school where my daughter attended... and to coach so many amazing student-athletes over my career,” said Murphy.

Murphy plans to spend more time with his family and explore other interests in retirement. He will continue to teach Physical Education at CVCHS.

Those are big shoes to fill.

To fill them, Clayton Valley Charter High School selects Nick Tisa as Varsity



Coach Nick Tiva

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

## We’ll Sue Them for Everything They’ve Got!

Angry Arthur marched into my office with a red face and nostrils flared. “I’ve got a great case for you, my friend,” he announced.

Let’s just pause right there for a moment. Having practiced law now for over 40 years, I have seen a few things, including potential clients who offer me their unsolicited opinion about the value of their case.

For example, I have had people leave me a message to call them back about their “million-dollar” case. The problem with such a potential client is that they have the relationship between the attorney and the client reversed. It is the attorney who advises the client about the value of the case, not the other way around. The case may very well be a great case, or a million-dollar case, but having the client approach the attorney with this opinion is just a red flag for the attorney that this particular client may be difficult.

My advice? Just tell the lawyer you have a case and let the lawyer ask questions. While I am on that subject, beware of a lawyer who provides you with an opinion about the value of your case based on an initial consultation with you. Almost always, a lawyer will need additional information or documents to accurately evaluate your case. I have seen television ads from attorneys who claim that you will be told the value of your case within minutes if you just call. What a crock that is.

I do not want to denigrate lawyers, as I am one, but some lawyers will try to get you hooked as a client by initially leading you to believe that loads of money are coming. If one lawyer told you that your case was worth \$100,000.00 and another lawyer told you that your case was worth \$1 million, who would you hire?

I would hire the lawyer who could not yet accurately tell me what my case was worth without further investigation and information.

Okay, let’s get back to Angry Arthur. He recites to me the following facts. “Last week, my gut was exploding so my wife drove me to the emergency room at I. M. Useless Medical Center. They told me I had gas and sent me freaking home with a bottle of Tums! Well, I knew it was something worse, so I went to John Muir Medical Center – they took one look at me and sent me in for an emergency appendectomy. Damn fools, I want to sue them for everything they have – I could have died!”

Football Head Coach. Tisa served as the Co-Head Coach alongside Tim Murphy for the past four years. Tisa brings a wealth of experience and a strong track record of success to the position, making him an ideal choice to lead the school’s football program.

With 17 years of coaching and teaching experience, Tisa has demonstrated his dedication and expertise on the field and in the classroom. During his tenure, Tisa played a vital role as the Defensive Passing Game Coordinator and Defensive Backs Coach.

Under his guidance, CVCHS secured five consecutive League Titles and clinched a State Championship. Expressing his enthusiasm for the opportunity to lead the Ugly Eagle program, Tisa stated, “I’m coming into this job with great enthusiasm and gratitude for the chance to lead the CVCHS football program. I have learned so much from my time as Co-Head Coach alongside Coach Tim Murphy, and I’m

Of course, I responded by telling Arthur that it must have been horrific what happened to him, that it sounded like the first hospital screwed up big time, and that I was glad he had not died. However, as a lawyer I had some explaining to do in terms of taking them for everything they had.

I explained to Arthur that personal injury claims have three basic parts. First, the injured person usually must prove fault. I did not think that was going to be the hardest part of Arthur’s claim since the other hospital, John Muir, correctly diagnosed Arthur. However, maybe Arthur’s symptoms had changed after he left the first hospital, so I would have to review his records from both hospitals, and perhaps get an expert medical opinion, to be sure.

The second part of a personal injury claim is called “damages.” This is where Arthur’s claim is weak. Although Arthur “could” have died or been seriously damaged from not being properly diagnosed at the first hospital, the fact is that he did not die and apparently was not seriously injured by the delay in being properly diagnosed. Arthur cannot sue for what might have happened to him, only for what actually happened to him. Arthur’s damages were his suffering during the short delay from when he was at the first hospital and when he was properly diagnosed at the second hospital.

The third part of a personal injury claim is called “causation” – the damages suffered must have been “caused” by someone’s fault. In Arthur’s case, he cannot sue for having gone through an appendectomy. The need for the appendectomy was not caused by the first hospital’s misdiagnosis. Arthur needed the appendectomy regardless of what the first hospital did or did not do.

So, I had to explain to Arthur that even though the first hospital screwed up, his damages were very limited and, therefore, the value of his case was not high. We would not be taking them for everything they had.

As a final note on this subject, almost all personal injury lawyers, like me, work on a contingency fee basis. We receive a percentage of whatever money is recovered in the case. This means the more money awarded, the more money the personal injury lawyer makes. Therefore, lawyers have no incentive to settle a case for less than it is worth. So, hire an experienced lawyer and trust him or her to handle your case.

thrilled to be part of the Clayton Valley community and its successful winning program.”

Before joining CVCHS, Tisa served as the Head Football Coach at Dougherty Valley High School in San Ramon.

CVCHS is confident that Tisa’s experience, passion, and dedication will elevate the football program to new heights. “Nick’s commitment to the development of our student-athletes extends beyond the field,” said Dave Fehte, CVCHS Executive Director. “He prioritizes their academic success and character growth, fostering a positive team culture that inspires excellence both on and off the gridiron. Nick’s coaching philosophy aligns with CVCHS’ mission to provide a well-rounded education and produce not only skilled athletes but also responsible individuals.”





the concordian  
by Edi Birsan  
EdiBirsan@gmail.com

# Juneteenth: An American Celebration and Reminder

The Civil War had been over for months. Yet slavery in Texas continued. The Emancipation Proclamation had declared two years earlier that all slaves in rebel states “henceforth shall be free...” Yet slavery in Texas continued. The Congress had approved the 13th Amendment three months earlier and sent it to the various states to ratify the abolishment of all slavery in America. Yet, slavery in Texas continued.

The United States Army (no longer simply the Union Army, for the war was over) marched into Texas with its rifles and bayonets and at Galveston, General Granger said we are here to enforce freedom. Millions of soldiers had taken arms with hundreds of thousands dead so that General Granger could assemble in Texas on June 19th, 1865. It took the most vulgar of expressions of raw power so that then slavery ended in Texas and celebrations were had.

It was more than the breaking of chains, but it was a hope and promise of a new America with a universal bond of shared values that we teach ourselves of what it is to be an American.

It did not erase the past outrages and sins. One cannot change what we had for breakfast, let alone history. But we must remember it and celebrate the goodwill and better times that was then expected to be the start of a great new era. That era is not finished.

The unity of the country, while costly in lives, was much simpler to accomplish than the unity of the people and the true creation of a universal American under the ideals we seek with pride. Racism,



caste, class stratification, took on new forms and to the scars of the past were added new wounds as things denied our hopes, they had names like Jim Crow, Segregation, Red Lining, and a collection of systemic threads that drove divisions and allowed a hatred to fester openly as well as take on nuance in the mainstream and the shadows of our society.

Juneteenth is a Celebration for all Americans and a reminder that we must not forget the path that was pointed to on this day, nor allow us to be distracted from the promise of what it is to be an American: one people, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

*Views expressed of Edi Birsan, a proud American and member of a greater multi-ethnic and racial family. While tax dollars were used to bring our country to the point where we are, none were used in this article. EdiBirsan@gmail.com.*

## Shop Concord Gift Card Program Returns for the Summer

The City of Concord and the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce have relaunched the popular Shop Concord digital gift card program. The program supports local businesses by encouraging residents to shop locally over the summer months to boost the local economy.

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

“The Shop Concord program has been an overwhelming success since it was originally launched in November 2020,” said Melissa Rea, President/

CEO of the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce. “We are thrilled we can continue to support our business community in this way.”

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

All the gift cards sold out in a week around Thanksgiving to support the last Holiday season according to Robert Carrera, Economic Development specialist for the Cit of Concord.

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



## A Veteran’s Mission to Support Fellow Veterans Transition to Civilian Life

by David King

Gary Bostick served eight years in the US Army deployed in Afghanistan. He served as 14th Psychological Operations Battalion (POB), 301st Psychological Operations Company (POC), and 870th Military Police (MP) Company, leaving in 2017 as a first lieutenant.

When he returned from his last deployment in 2012, he had a difficult time readjusting to civilian life. Largely because he was unaware of the benefits and resources available to him as a veteran.

“I also didn’t have peer support,” he says. I was a member of a three-person team, and we all came home to different states. I didn’t have that daily support that I needed. He eventually received the help he needed and realized that veterans who witness a lot of combat, have a challenging time transitioning into American Life. He wanted to help.

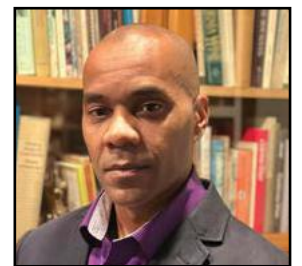
Bostick co-founded Junked: Powered by Veterans™ in 2021 with partner Ryan Spiegel. Junked is operated entirely by veterans. “I realized that junk removal is ideal for veterans to make their transition into society. It offers a flexible schedule, so if you need treatment from the VA, you are available to do that. It also provides peer support because you are working with other Veterans who understand the experiences you had. These are your battle buddies.”

Trucks began running in July 2022. As a business, their mission is to provide professional, eco-friendly junk removal and hauling services serving the Bay Area residences and businesses while supporting veterans. “We do our best to hire as many veterans and their family members as possible and support veteran businesses and organizations.”

They are also actively partnering, donating, and volunteering with non-profit organizations and events that also serve veterans. One such non-profit is the Delta Veterans Group.

“We will be donating a portion of our revenue from all junk removal services to support the Delta Veterans Group “Stand Down at the Delta 2023” event. This event will bus in about 500 unhoused veterans throughout all nine Bay Area counties and provide them with services from housing to education to medical and legal.” It will be life-starting for many.

As they continue to grow their business, they plan to volunteer, attend local events, raise money for local veteran non-profits, and give back to our local community.



Gary Bostick, an army veteran and co-founder of Junked: Powered by Veterans™

“I longed for a sense of brotherhood and camaraderie that I knew could only be forged on the battlefield amongst soldiers willing to sacrifice everything for their country, unit, and fellow soldier,” said Bostick in a former interview. “Both of my grandfathers served. One served in World War II. One served in the Korean War. I saw it as a young child as I watched my

grandfathers and their friends and saw the bond that they shared. There was a brotherhood and camaraderie.”

My main focus is providing peer support. I am hiring veterans and giving them the support they need. We have contacts with the Veterans

of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Delta Veterans Group, and others. And we will also take them to their VA appointment and be their battle buddy.

We are making sure that Veterans employed by me are not only making an income, but they are getting the help, encouragement, and sponsorship they need in order to be successful in American Society.

As for the service, they can take almost anything that is not hazardous (paints, oils, household chemicals, etc.).

Their business model serves both commercial and residential. Commercial debris is taken to a place vetted by the State of California that recycles material before sending the rest to landfill.

For residential, they have a warehouse to store the items that can be reused and donate those items to whoever needs them. The main point of donation is to keep the stuff out of landfills.

“If you use our service, know you are helping us help our veterans.”

For costs of service information, go to [www.junkedbyvets.com](http://www.junkedbyvets.com) to schedule a pickup and free estimate.





# JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

by Lisa Bonnington

# All Aboard for a Staycation

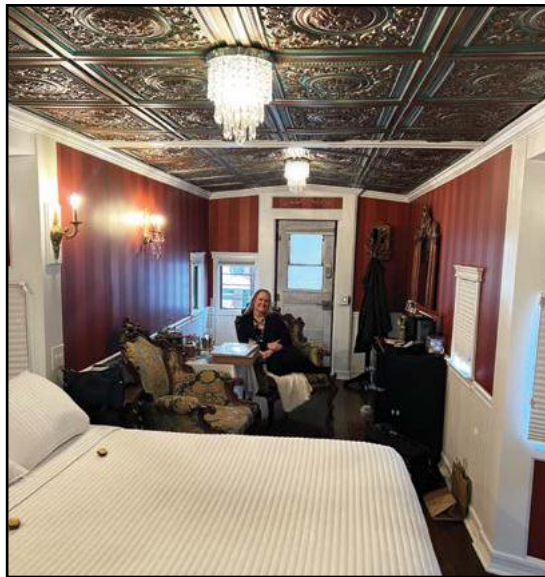
As I was planning a special occasion for my sweetheart, I stumbled upon a unique staycation, which I am now affectionally referring to as a train-cation right in the heart of Martinez. Imagine stepping back in time and immersing yourself in the rich history of the railroad industry. Nestled in Franklin Canyon is a unique and captivating accommodation option: staying in a caboose.

This unconventional lodging experience offers a glimpse into the bygone eras of train travel allowing you to sleep in a renovated caboose while enjoying modern comforts.

I found this hidden and relatively unknown getaway on AIRBNB. This unique setting and accommodation offered a romantic privacy that both train enthusiasts and those just looking to create a memorable experience and occasion (like me), can appreciate.

As we arrived and passed through a secure gate, it was as if we stepped back in time. We drove up the driveway in wonderment, as our tires rolled over an old-fashioned gas station bell hose, which immediately announced our arrival as it rang out. I half expected a gas station attendant to come out of the mini gas station replica to greet us and begin washing our windows with a smile.

Staying on a caboose offered a one-of-a-kind experience where history and comfort seamlessly blended. While the exterior retained its nostalgic charm, the interior has been tastefully renovated to provide modern amenities while retaining "old-world" charm. Adorned in antiques with a touch of railroad memorabilia and décor, it evoked a sense of sentimentality and curiosity. Expect cozy sleeping quarters, a comfortable bed, a beautiful clawfoot tub and a picturesque dining/sitting area. The atmosphere of the railroad era envelops you as you settle into the caboose.



bustle of daily life, allowing us to relax and recharge. What a surprise and delight after only having driven minutes away from home.

Additional amenities included access to a hot-tub, axe throwing and cornhole.

Or you could enjoy rocking in the rocking chairs outside while seated by the firepit.

Whether you are seeking a romantic getaway, a unique experience or a peaceful retreat, a caboose stay in Martinez provides a welcome escape from the ordinary.



For non-Martisians, the City of Martinez offers a haven for railroad enthusiasts. I would encourage anyone with interest to delve deeper into the city's railroad history. Visit the Martinez Museum, where exhibits showcase the significance of the railroad in shaping the city's development. You can also explore nearby attractions like John Muir Historic Site and the Martinez Amtrak Station, which continues to be a hub for trail travel.

Having lived in the area all my life, I was delighted to discover this amazing, secretive gem and will be enthusiastically expounding about my experience to anyone looking for a unique staycation.

Although stationary, this property still sits on its foundation of actual train tracks. Trains periodically passed by, adding to the ambience, and created just enough vibration in the caboose to simulate actual movement creating the feeling that we were en-route to a destination unknown.

One of the most enchanting aspects of staying in the caboose was the sense of tranquility. Surrounded by a serene setting, we felt far removed from the hustle and



## The Naked Gardener

David George, UC-Certified Master Gardener

Have you noticed that unusual feeling in the air – heat? June's warm temperatures really heat up activities in the Naked Garden. Because of all the ground water this year, landscape trees and shrubs peak with seasonal growth this month, but slow down in July when temperatures soar, and ground water levels drop.

Natural food and water sources have already begun to diminish for tree squirrels and other rodents. They seek more juicy and nutritious foods, such as your orchard's plums, peaches, and pears. Tree squirrels do not wait for ripening to occur. Their insatiable appetites have them heading for your orchard trees right now.

My fellow Master Gardener volunteers and many research articles



Young Tree Squirrels will eat tiny unripe peaches  
Courtesy Shutterstock

state that excluding tree squirrels from your fruits and veggies is impossible. It is war in the garden, and we can win this seasonal battle with some handy engineering and exclusion techniques. Squirrel baffles are your best choice.

First, make sure that tree squirrels are your true enemy. Check your fruit trees in the early morning and pick up and dispose of all fallen fruit. (Wear gloves.) Notice any tooth marks or chew holes? Check underneath your trees again late that same evening. Tree squirrels are active during the daytime (diurnal) and sleep at night. They are most likely to eat your fruit during daylight hours. If your fruit is destroyed at night, you have other critters to blame such as rats, opossums, gray foxes, and/or deer.

Even though they are active in broad daylight,

tree squirrels are excellent hidiers. They are patient, clever, and can snatch a plum or two in no time. Just watch some popular You Tube squirrel videos if you do not believe me.

Squirrel baffles are usually made of slick plastic, galvanized steel, or aluminum sheet metal, so squirrel claws cannot dig in. They encircle the trunk just below the main branching crotch at the top of the trunk. You can purchase them online for small-trunked trees.

If your baffle is at least six feet up from the ground, squirrels may not be able to jump straight up and over it. Make sure your tree is separated from walls or higher ground by eight to 10 feet so that Mr. Squirrel cannot launch over the baffle and into the fruit tree.

If an online product does not fit your need, you can download a design and create your own.

Tree squirrel baffles can also be installed around the top rails of orchard fencing. If you have a pre-existing deer fence for example, attach a long sheet of aluminum or steel can to the top rails, facing upward and angled a bit outward.

Home Depot, Loews, and others provide 25-foot rolls of 20-inch-wide flashing metal. Use this for an effective fence-top baffle. Aluminum is my choice because it is easy to bend or cut it into the shapes I need. Join the segments together with small bolts, nuts, and washers.

Tree squirrel baffles can be fun to construct and effective for a long while



The Naked Gardener Adjusting his New Tree Squirrel Baffle.

— at least until crafty Mr. Squirrel finds another way to your fruit. For more squirrel management and exclusion options, check out: [https://ipm.ucanr.edu/legacy\\_assets/pdf/pestnotes/pntreesquirrels.pdf](https://ipm.ucanr.edu/legacy_assets/pdf/pestnotes/pntreesquirrels.pdf).

For details on how to build your own plastic tree baffle, go to: <https://www.welcomewildlife.com/tree-baffles-to-baffle-squirrels/#prettyPhoto/3/>.

Email your comments and questions to: [NakedGardener@diablogazette.com](mailto:NakedGardener@diablogazette.com). In some cases, these may appear in future columns.



Make your own squirrel baffle from a plastic paint can.  
Courtesy Welcome Wildlife

# SALE!

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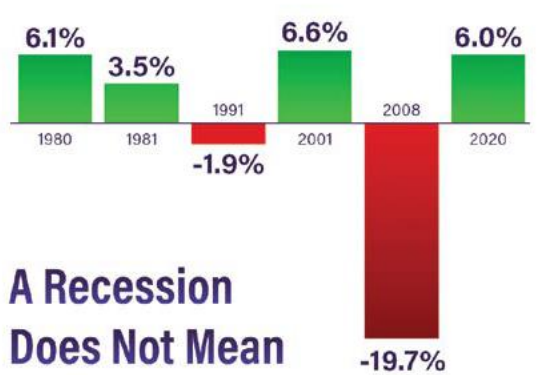
## How is the Real Estate Market?

This is the question that more Realtors are asked every single day.

Two sources for national real estate news are National Association of Realtors and Corelogic.

For a take on this question, these are recent headlines, excerpts and quotes from economists that are currently being reported.

Home Price Change During Last 6 Recessions



A Recession  
Does Not Mean  
Falling Home Prices

CORELOGIC / THE BALANCE

“The Worst Home Price Declines Are Behind us.” If past headlines saying home prices would drop 20% had you worried about a crash, consider this. Nationally, prices have already hit a low point and are now starting to rise again.

“A smaller home typically means lower bills and less upkeep. Then there is the potential windfall that comes from selling your larger home and buying something smaller.” — Realtor.com

“% rates’ — so long as inflation continues to ease, the overall trend for mortgage rates should continue downward.” — Senior Economist & Director of Research NAR.

“A one percent point decline in mortgage rates has the same impact on affordability as an 11 percent decline in home prices.” — First American Economist.

By now, you all realize I am a strong proponent of prepping and staging a home for sale. And I am not the only one that believes that is the right move when selling your home.

“Move-in ready homes with curb appeal and in desirable areas that are priced to sell are especially likely to move quickly this spring.” — Realtor.com.

This appears to be true in our area, where we have a shortage of listings to buy. Buyers are out looking. Our recent weekend open house, May 20-21, had 65 groups come through and most were not neighbors.

“82% of buyer’s agents said staging a home made it easier for a buyer to visualize the property as a future home.” — Realtor.com.

Of course, aside from staging, everyone expects the property to be in sound condition, with a good foundation, roof, and no damage from pests, water or fire. Do not hesitate to ask questions. Home prep and staging can be as simple as a bucket of paint to a remodel. Do not let it scare you. In California, one typically gets more than their money back when spending on prepping their home. (See ad below.)

**MT. DIABLO  
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Happy Father's Day!



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All Sizes

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# Congratulations



Scholarship Altair - Jessica Johal



Service Altair - Meredith Edmonston



Leadership Altair - Kalena Raman



Grand Altair - Ellie Tsao

Congratulations to the Class of 2023! We look forward to celebrating our graduating seniors and their families at the Concord Pavilion on Thursday, June 1, 2023.

The end of the school year marks a special time celebrating individual achievements. Congratulations to our exceptional athletes, department scholars, and Altair award recipients.

Different than traditional valedictorian and salutatorian selections, the highest recognition a CVCHS student can achieve are 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. Altair candidates are nominated by members of the Senior Class, and a final decision is determined by a special committee comprised of student leaders and teaching staff.

CVCHS wishes each of our graduating seniors the very best to begin your new adventure and preparation 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.

Dave Fehte  
Executive Director, Clayton Valley Charter High School

## 2003 CVCHS Altairs

### Scholarship Altair - Jessica Johal

The Scholarship Altair is awarded to the student selected from the top six seniors and is judged by not only the grades a student has received, but the difficulty of his/her coursework. Jessica will be attending UCLA.

### Service Altair - Meredith Edmonston

The Service Altair is awarded to the student who best exemplifies the virtue of selfless giving. Students who are given this award volunteer their time and effort, not because it is expected of them, but because they possess integrity and commitment to the greater good of the school and the community. Meredith will be attending the University of California, Irvine.

### Leadership Altair - Kalena Raman

The Leadership Altair is awarded to the student who is able to motivate and encourage others to reach for a goal while exercising one's own efforts to do the same. True leaders are respected not because they have titles, but because they have a character that is honest and the confidence that compels others to follow them. Kalena will be attending San Diego State University.

### Grand Altair - Ellie Tsao

The Grand Altair is awarded to the student who has a 4.0 GPA or higher and represents all three areas: Scholarship, Leadership, and Service. Ellie exemplifies the very best of an Ugly Eagle -- an outstanding student, confident leader, and community member. CVCHS is inspired by your level of leadership, character, and commitment. Ellie will be attending UCLA.



# CVCHS Class of 2023!



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Gianni Mangrobang  
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Mako Neidlinger  
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Ty Nguyen  
Kyle Nolan  
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Chimere Onyeador  
Sofia Pella  
Haley Perez  
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August Underwood  
Angelo Urias  
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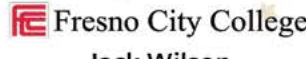


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**AND, CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE ADDITIONAL MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 2023!**

Melanie Aguilar  
Jack Alexander  
Shaheed Ali-Felder  
Lucy Andrada  
Jazmin Arriaga-Juarez  
Genesis Atoche  
Katya Avila  
Lynden Burkes  
Alex Callaghan  
Kevin Castaldo  
Kayden Crowell  
Mina Darland  
Gavin Davidson  
Sam Desmond  
Bella Donzelli  
Angelina Drolette  
Lizbeth Duque  
Jacob Ferreira  
Noe Gonzalez  
Diego Greely  
Stella Harrison  
Katelyn Hitchcock  
Jimmy Jones  
Jackson Jue  
Dylan Levitt  
Rafael Limon  
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Marques Richards  
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Matthew Sobajian  
Emilio Strange  
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**Clayton Valley Charter High School**

**Assembly California Legislature**  
TIMOTHY S. GRAYSON  
ASSEMBLY MEMBER, 15th DISTRICT

June 1, 2023

Presented to  
**CVCHS Class of 2023**

I want to congratulate you on your graduation from Clayton Valley Charter High School. The knowledge you have acquired will enable you to proceed with confidence into your future. Your dedication and pursuit of excellence will continue to have a positive impact on your life, your family, and your community. On Behalf of the People of the 15th Assembly District, Congratulations!

*Timothy S. Grayson*  
Assembly Member Timothy Grayson  
15th Assembly District

**Contra Costa County Office of Education**  
77 Santa Barbara Road, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 • (925) 942-3388  
Lynn Mackey, Superintendent of Schools

May 22, 2023

To: Clayton Valley Charter School Class of 2023

Congratulations on your graduation CVCHS Class of 2023! You have successfully completed your high school education, and I am thrilled to join in celebrating your accomplishment. Your hard work, dedication, and perseverance have paid off, and you should be very proud of yourselves.

You have now taken an important step towards a bright future, and I wish you all the best. Whether you are attending college, trade school, or entering the workforce, I have no doubt that you will excel in your chosen field. The skills and knowledge you have gained over the years will serve you well as you embark on this exciting new chapter of your lives.

As you move forward, remember to stay curious, continue learning, and always follow your passions. You have the potential to make a positive impact on the world, and I am confident that you will do so. Congratulations once again, and I wish you all the best on your journey ahead.

Sincerely,  
*Lynn Mackey*  
Lynn Mackey  
Superintendent of Schools  
Contra Costa County

**California State Senate**  
SENATOR STEVEN M. GLAZER  
SEVENTH SENATE DISTRICT

June 1, 2023

The Class of 2023  
Clayton Valley Charter High School  
1101 Alberta Way  
Concord, CA 94521

RE: Congratulations Clayton Valley Charter High School Class of 2023

Dear CVCHS graduates,

I send my sincere congratulations to the Class of 2023. Over the duration of your time in high school, you have faced many challenges. Adjusting to a new environment, juggling extracurricular activities, and navigating a post-pandemic world are just a few you may have confronted.

Despite all of that, I want you to take the time to appreciate all you have learned and conquered over these pivotal years – it is important to appreciate coming together, in person, to celebrate the hard work that has led you to this very moment.

As a generation of students who have faced unique circumstances, I want you to remember how these challenges taught all of us to look at things differently, change long-standing approaches of how we achieve our goals, look out for one another, and how these last few years forced the world to be innovative beyond what we thought was possible.

As you move into this new chapter of your life, these skills that you have gained, in addition to your own experiences and cultural backgrounds, will serve you with the knowledge and tenacity to become our future leaders.

Again, I extend my sincere congratulations to all of the 2023 graduates and wish you much success. Your futures are bright. Your graduation from Clayton Valley Charter High School is only the beginning of the achievements you will accomplish!

Sincerely,  
*Steven M. Glazer*  
Steven M. Glazer  
Senator

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

May 22, 2023

Dear Students:

While I am unable to join you today, I wish to extend my personal congratulations on your graduation from Clayton Valley Charter.

Your high school diploma is a very special tribute to all your hard work, and you should take great pride in your accomplishments. It is truly a mark of your outstanding character and tireless commitment to learning. Your passion and enthusiasm for success will serve you well in the future.

You represent the next generation of leaders in our community, and I look forward to hearing of your accomplishments to come.

It is my honor to join your teachers in appreciating your outstanding commitment to learning. I am honored to represent you all in the California 10th Congressional District, and I encourage you all to continue to strive for excellence in the years ahead.

Sincerely,  
*Mark DeSaulnier*  
Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress  
10th District, California

**California State Senate**  
SENATOR MARIE ALVARADO-GIL, M.P.A.  
CHIEF, HUMAN SERVICES  
FOURTH SENATE DISTRICT

May 22, 2023

It is my honor to wish all of the graduating students at Clayton Valley Charter High School, my most sincere congratulations on this memorable day. This is a momentous occasion of which you and your families should be proud.

Now is the time to determine for yourselves the types of people that you aspire to be and what unique experiences that have made you who you are and brought you to where you are now. You are all capable of accomplishing great things in this life, and half the battle is showing up, again and again until you reach your goals. Remember all those who helped you throughout your academic career and never forget the friends that you have made along the way, such friendships can last a lifetime. Finally, thank your teachers, coaches, mentors, parents and anyone who has supported you in your journey—never forget how much our success depends on those around us.

I am proud to recognize this outstanding accomplishment. Receiving a High School Diploma is a tremendous accomplishment that should always be recognized as worthy of celebration and admiration. If I can ever be of further assistance to you and your families, please contact me at (916) 651-4004 or at senator.alvarado-gil@senate.ca.gov

Sincerely,  
*Marie Alvarado-Gil*  
MARIE ALVARADO-GIL  
4th Senate District

**Alpine Pastry & Cakes** CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

**Graduation Cakes and Cookies!**

**Grad Theme**

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**Graduation 2023**

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Join the East Bay's premier dance family offering Classes and Camps: Ballet, Jazz, Tap, Contemporary, Hip Hop, and more.

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Closed week of July 4

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for ages 2.5 - Adults

Scan for summer CLASS schedule

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Email or call today to register for our 6-week Summer Classes and Camps. We can't wait to dance with you!

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(in the Clayton Valley Shopping Center) Concord

## For the Love of Pets

by Jill Hedgecock, [Jillhedgecock.com](http://Jillhedgecock.com)

### It's Showtime, a Canine Lovfest

Woofstock Dog Show (June 8 to June 11): No that is not a typo. It is not a Woodstock Revival. Woofstock is a uniquely-themed dog show where a judge will evaluate purebred dogs against their established breed characteristics while groovin' to throwback music from the 1960s. Yep, the Solano County Fairgrounds in Vallejo will be transformed into a tie-dye haven from the hippie era as the serious business of a conformation dog show takes place between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. This canine lovefest is open to the public. The grand finale Best in Show event will occur on the afternoon of June 11. So come out and have a barking good time and maybe pick out a new toy for your own pooch at one of the many vendor booths. Admission is free but parking is \$15. Woofstock Revival is one of the largest dog shows in the U.S. Last year, over 2400 dogs competed each day. For more information, check out [www.facebook.com/WoofstockDogShow](http://www.facebook.com/WoofstockDogShow).



Woofstock Revival, "Summer of 2023", a hippie era themed event comes to Solano County for four days of peace, music and dogs.

**Ugly Dog Competition.** If admiring the perfect pooches is not your thing, how about admiring the uniqueness of the not-so-pretty canines? On June 23, you can watch mixed breeds with an overbite or pups with raggedy fur (or even furless pooches) who will be competing for an ugly dog title during the World's Ugliest Dog® Contest at the Sonoma-Marin Fair in Petaluma, CA.

**More Dog Show News:** Congratulations to Buddy Holly, a Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen, who is the first of his breed to win best of show in the conformation ring at the 147th Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show on May 9. Buddy Holly from Palm Springs handled by Janice Hayes beat out approximately 2,500 other entered dogs, standing out amidst the six finalists considered the best of the best of their breed. This shaggy, short-legged hound was bred to hunt rabbits on the rugged west coast of France. It is a low-shed breed that is affectionate and tends to get along with other dogs, making it a great family pet. The Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen needs a lot of exercise, so an outdoor enthusiast who loves hiking, running, and biking might want to consider this breed. Also, a big congratulations to Truant, the Border Collie, who won the Westminster Masters Agility Championship title by completing an obstacle course of jumps, teeter, A-frame, weaves and dog walk in the lightning speed of 28.68 seconds.



Charles Lindsey, (aka owner of Concord's Ruby Dooby Do, the internet star Doberman, who recently passed), with his new Doberman, Bruce, seen here with the unusual haul of winning two majors and 9 points in his first ever event at the Doberman Pinschers Club of Northern California "Fun in the Sun" Specialty Show in Turlock on May 19. Bruce, 9 mos., will next compete in Woofstock at Solano County Fairgrounds on June 8-11. Breeder is RDC Doberman Pinschers of Alamo.



Buddy Holly being groomed at Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show.

**Forget Snakes on a Plane, How About Dogs and Cats on a Train?** Summer vacations are upon us, and pet owners may be wondering if there is a way to bring Fido and Garfield along on their cross-California trip. Of course, driving and staying in pet-friendly hotels is always an option.

But now, owners of small dogs and cats have another means of travel. Dogs and cats up to 20 pounds (combined weight of pet and carrier) are now welcome in Pacific Surf Liner's Coach class for \$29 or 1,000 Amtrak Guest Rewards points.

They only allow five small animals per train, so book early. Pets must be 8+ weeks old, not disruptive, and up to date on vaccinations. For safety and space reasons, pets must remain in

their carrier the entire time and the carrier must fit under the seat. For more information about train travel with pets visit [www.pacificsurfliner.com](http://www.pacificsurfliner.com).

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

### Clayton Valley Rotary's "Art in a Box" Project Delights Homeless Children

For families facing hardships, poverty and homelessness, art supplies are often considered a "luxury item" that people forgo so they can eat. This year the Rotary Club of Clayton Valley/Concord has been collecting donations and purchasing art supplies for children who are experiencing homelessness.

They are partnered with the Mt. Diablo Homeless Outreach Program for Education (HOPE) to provide "Art in a Box" that brings art supplies to students experiencing homelessness in our community. This is also an opportunity for everyone to make a meaningful contribution.

For many years, the Rotary Club has supported children and families who are vulnerable and living in poverty throughout the world. This year the members collaborated with the Mt. Diablo HOPE program and distributed art supplies to students throughout all the schools in the Mt. Diablo Unified School District.

Conferences with the Mt. Diablo Unified School District Board of Education got the ball rolling, and many meetings later ART IN A BOX was conceived. One hundred boxes have been distributed so far.

Sadly, it is a drop in the bucket as there are a total of 528 houseless students in the Mt. Diablo Unified District which is only one of 17 other districts in Contra Costa County.

"When we started on this program there

were 270 houseless students in our school district. Two years later we are up to 528," explained Joan D'Onofrio, Editor, Clayton Valley/Concord Rotary International Newsletter.

Art in a Box is a personal size box filled with age-appropriate art supplies to be distributed by Mt. Diablo HOPE. Each box costs about \$30 to produce and is filled with art tablets, construction paper, colored pencils, art erasers, markers, crayons, clay, painting sets, scissors, sharpeners, glue sticks, and even a drawing instruction booklet.

"Children are overjoyed and their eyes light up once they receive an "Art in a Box."

"Rotary is applying for a grant to continue this program. We would like to provide 500 boxes in August for next school year."

Research has shown that art is vital to human development because creativity is the foundation of a child's education. It helps develop motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and has a large impact on their social and emotional growth. Promoting creativity in a child's life enhances their cognitive development which can have a positive effect on math skills and other academic related subjects.

For youth facing a range of traumatic experiences and social exclusions, art can provide an avenue for self-expression, self-esteem, individuality, discover they have artistic skills or just find out that art is a joyful experience.



The first 20 boxes filled with art supplies were delivered to the MDUSD H.O.P.E. offices. The boxes will be given to students in distressed living conditions under the direction of MDUSD Community Services Student Department.

### aRt Cottage

by FROgard  
[www.artcottage.info](http://www.artcottage.info)

### Extended Plein Air Artists Exhibit Returns for Encore Reception

The aRt Cottage is preparing for an encore reception with the Contra Costa Plein Air Painters on June 17 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The reception in May was such a success, we all decided to do it again. There will be live musical entertainment by Roy Gonzalez with his guitar and beautiful voice. Enjoy refreshments, meet the artists, and discover their creative process as you view their work.

This Plein Air exhibit has been such a successful show. People are simply loving these gorgeous paintings of familiar locations in Contra Costa County and beyond and have purchased several pieces throughout the month.

If you missed May's artist reception or have not visited this exhibit as of yet, it continues through June 23. This is your opportunity to own an original painting of a familiar landmark in your area and meet the artist who created it.

In addition to the gallery, art Cottage's gardens are in full bloom and ready for exploration. Watch student artists at work Wednesday through Saturdays, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in either a studio setting or sometimes in the garden with their French easels and painting "en plein air", the way the impressionist did.

art Cottage is located at 2238 Mount Diablo Street in Concord.



One of the many gardens at aRt Cottage. Below: Artist uses garden inspiration.





# Food Delights of the Pacific Northwest

Consider yourself lucky if you live close to the waters of the Pacific Northwest. The bounty of the ocean provides the perfect starting place to create a wine-friendly meal. Additionally, fresh blueberries are commonly available this time of year and serve as the sweet ending to your delicious evening.

Shrimp ceviche is a cool way to start. I like this recipe because the shrimp are partially cooked in boiling water first and then finish 'cooking' in the citrus juices as they marinate. Serve this recipe in a large bowl in which to dip tortilla chips or portion individually in cocktail glasses with a few chips perched on the side for crunch.

A terrific wine partner for a spicy ceviche is a slightly sweet, slightly tart Washington Riesling. The wine's bright citrus flavors are complemented by pear, kiwi, and white peach.

You can keep the seafood theme going with Pacific Northwest sockeye salmon as your main entree. Salmon is wonderful grilled and is one fish that defies the white wine with fish rule. Try out an Oregon pinot noir to pair with the salmon. The slight smoke from the grill will blend nicely with the oak flavors the wine takes on as it spends time in the barrel. Furthermore, the high fat content found in sockeye salmon will be complemented by the fuller body found in red wine.

The finale to this great summer meal is a dessert bursting with flavor. Blueberry Glacé Pie is made in the style of a fresh strawberry pie since the blueberries are not cooked inside the crust. It is amazingly simple to make and always gets fantastic reviews at my house.

Personally, I do not find sweet desserts, especially those with whipping cream, pair well with wine. My best suggestion is



dark, rich coffee. We will need to depart from the Northwest for this. Why not choose coffee beans grown in Kenya? Kenyan coffee is generally known for its sharp citrus notes and undertones of berries and chocolate.

So, go on. Pair Up!

## Shrimp Ceviche

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound medium-small shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 tablespoons salt
- ¾ cup lime juice (juice from 4-6 limes)
- ¾ cup lemon juice (juice from 2-3 lemons)
- 1 cup finely chopped red onion
- 1 serrano chile, ribs and seeds removed, minced
- 1 cup chopped cilantro
- 1 cucumber, peeled diced into ½-inch pieces
- 1 avocado, peeled, seed removed, cut

into ½-inch chunks

### DIRECTIONS

In a large pot, bring to a boil 4 quarts of water and salt. Add the shrimp and cook for

1 minute to 2 minutes max, depending on size of shrimp. (Over-cooking the shrimp

will turn it rubbery.) Remove shrimp with a slotted spoon and place into a bowl of ice

water to stop the cooking.

Drain the shrimp. Chop shrimp into rustic chunks that can be scooped up with the

chips. Place shrimp in a glass or ceramic bowl. Mix in the lime and lemon juice.

Cover and refrigerate for at least one-half hour and up to eight hours.

Mix in the chopped red onion and serrano chile. Refrigerate for an additional half hour.

Right before serving, add the cilantro, cucumber, and avocado. Serve with tortilla chips.

Yield: about 4 cups

## Blueberry Glacé Pie

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- ¼ cup water
- 1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 4 cups fresh blueberries
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- ¾ cup sugar

Pinch of salt

1 prebaked 9 in pastry shell

¾ cup heavy (whipping) cream

1 tablespoon confectioners' sugar

### DIRECTIONS

Mix the cornstarch, 2 tablespoons of the water, and the lemon juice together in a small bowl and stir until the cornstarch has thoroughly dissolved.

Place 1 cup of the blueberries and all the remaining water in a medium size saucepan over medium high heat and bring to a boil.

Cook until the berries begin to pop, about 4 minutes.

Add the cornstarch mixture along with the butter, sugar, and salt.

Cook, stirring, until the mixture is thick and clear, about 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat.

Fold the remaining 3 cups berries into the cooked berry glaze and pour into the prebaked pie shell. Refrigerate, at least two hours but no more than eight hours. Just before serving, whip the cream until it forms soft peaks, gradually incorporating the confectioners' sugar as the cream thickens. Either spread the cream over the pie or serve on the side.

Yield: 8 servings



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AT

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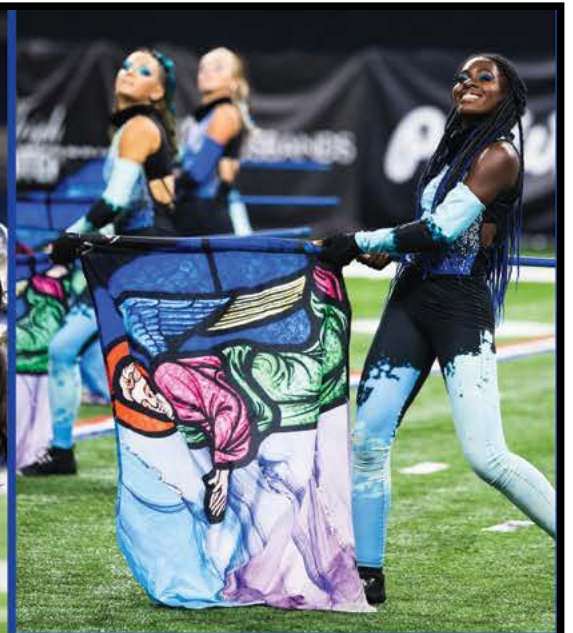
STANFORD STADIUM

JULY 9, 2023

[HTTPS://WWW.BLUEDEVILS.ORG/TICKETS](https://www.bluedevils.org/tickets)



SCAN ME







## Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.

Eleven-year-old Margaret Simon (Abby Ryder Fortson) moves from New York City to a New Jersey suburb in the summer of 1970. She has to make new friends and leave her beloved Grandma Sylvia (Kathy Bates) behind.

Margaret adapts quickly to her new surroundings, but with puberty looming, she has a fresh batch of concerns. Her new circle of girlfriends collectively decides to wear bras, keep journals about the boys they like, and share every detail with the group regarding the arrival of their periods.

With Margaret's mother and father raised Catholic and Jewish, respectively, they decide to let Margaret choose her own religion. This is something she never gives much thought to, but as she navigates all the changes in her life, she finds herself talking to God and exploring the different faith options among her friends and family.

Everyone in the Simon family deals with adjustments to their new lives. Dad (Benny Safdie) finds lawn mowers quite menacing; Mom (Rachel McAdams) is in school volunteer overload and Grandma Sylvia misses sharing time with Margaret.

The movie captures the early 1970s perfectly. Those who remember that time period will feel a warm sense of nostalgia. For young viewers, it is an interesting time piece on how youths interacted before computers and cell phones.



Although honest and authentic about the confusing time of adolescence, everything is handled with a gentle and loving touch. Particularly engaging is the depiction of being a woman from various stages of life. From Margaret's new journey to womanhood, to Barbara's boredom and difficulties with being a stay-at-home mom, to Sylvia contemplating moving to Florida now that her family is not around, the three women are represented with a compassionate narrative.

This film, adapted from one of Judy Blume's most famous books, has faced book bans and censorship over the decades since its publication. In a time when certain books are coming under fire again, hopefully a movie like this can show a larger audience how important it is to have stories that talk to children honestly. Much like her books, this screen version will bring joy to audiences for years to come. I just hope it doesn't keep young people from reading the book.

Rated PG-13  
In Theaters

## Clayton Valley Athletic Hall of Fame Inducts Its Class of 2023



Inductees. L-R Jason Nolting, Dana Lawson, Suzanne Boehner Miladin, Kip Yaughn, Laura Davis, Sean Reilly, Dee Billeter, Jennifer Coddington Curry and Brian Strock

The Clayton Valley High School Athletic Hall of Fame held its seventh Induction Ceremony in front of an overflowing crowd on Friday, May 19, at Centre Concord. Inductees, past and present, were greeted at their tables with the 2023 induction program which replicated the cover of Clayton Valley's first yearbook in 1959. After the social hour and dinner, the induction ceremony took place for eleven individuals and five teams and organizations.

The most senior inductee was Jim Henderson who was a member of Clayton Valley's first graduating class of 1960. From the podium, Jim queried the audience for any others who might have been at school on the opening day in September 1958. There was one other, Bud Beemer, class of '62. Both Henderson and Beemer would go on to become teachers and coaches in the Mt. Diablo School District.

Dee Billeter, who started at CVHS in 1966, served as Clayton Valley's girls Athletic Director from 1976 until her retirement in 2003. During this time, Billeter oversaw the creation and growth

of the girls athletic program at Clayton Valley. She was clearly a popular and beloved member of the CVHS family as she was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Other inductees included multi-sport athlete Gene Montori, Class of '64 and outstanding CV pitcher Kip Yaughn from the Class of 1988. Yaughn was inducted as an individual and as a member of the 1988 baseball team.

Herc Pardi, class of '70, served as master of ceremonies for the event which was universally praised as a success by all who attended. The next induction ceremony will take place in 2025 with a new class of inductees.

The list of all inductees included: Dee Billeter, Suzanne Boehner Miladin, Jennifer Coddington Curry, Laura Davis, Jim Henderson, Dana Lawson, Gene Montori, Jason Nolting, Sean Reilly, Brian Strock and Kip Yaughn. Along with the Clayton Business and Community Association, the 1985 football team, the 1996 girls track team, the 1988 baseball team and the 1976 and 1977 girls' gymnastic team.



1976-77 Gymnastics Team. L-R: Terry Turner-Nelson, assistant Coach, Tammy Kuhl-Dominguez, Wendy Kuhl-Rubins, Jennifer Thomason, Valerie Thomason-Patton, Marcie Betz-Arata, Lisa Prohoda-Gudjohnsen, Terri Markey, Charli Patterson-Martucci, Laura Landgraf-Wilson, Andre Eisner-Beutel, Monica Hobson. Photo: Scott Feuer.



## Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt

"Remarkably Bright Creatures" (Ecco/Harper Collins, May 2022, hardcover, 368 pages, \$17.99) by Shelby Van Pelt is a feel-good story about Marcellus, a giant Pacific octopus living at Sowell Bay Aquarium in Washington State, Tova, the aquarium's custodian and Cameron, a 30-year-old man who cannot seem to hold down a job. The three main characters' lives all intersect at the aquarium and each holds a clue as to how Tova's son, Erik, died over 30 years ago.

Marcellus, who provides his own narrative in the novel, counts down his passing days based on his time living in captivity. He is painfully aware he has reached the end of his life span. The octopus has taken a special interest in Tova and plots a way to help the older woman understand something important about her son's death before he passes. Marcellus is incredibly intuitive and smart, is a crafty escape artist, and often provides comedic relief.

Tova, a seventy-something widow, is only making the motions of living. She has never recovered from the unsolved mystery surrounding her only child's death. She "found something to do" as a night shift cleaning lady at the aquarium after her husband passed. When she is not working, Tova spends time with the "Knit-Wits, her long-term woman's group, but she feels left out as the women discuss their children and grandchildren. She has a special platonic friendship with the local grocer, Ethan, who is definitely interested in pursuing her.

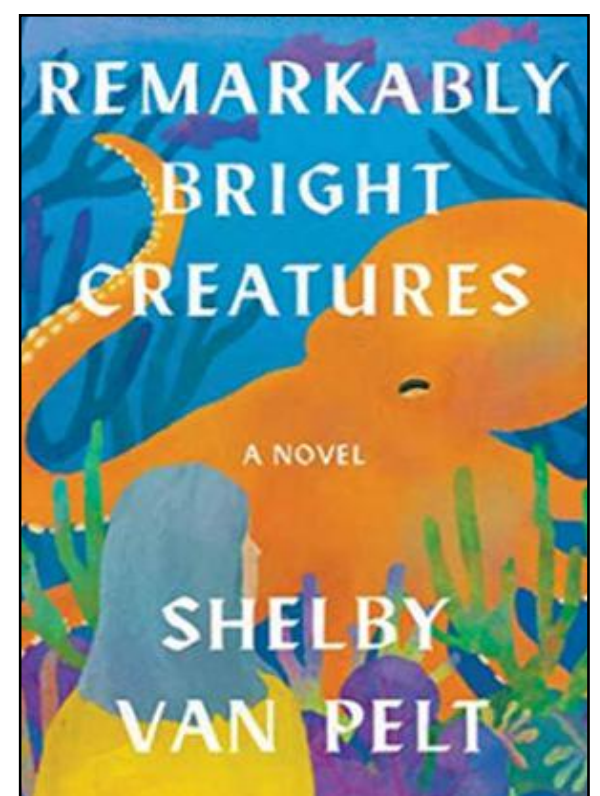
Cameron is struggling to find his way. His deadbeat

mother pawned him off on her sister and he has never known his father's name. When he discovers an old photo of his mother with a real estate mogul living in Washington State, he jumps to the conclusion that the man is his father. His money woes lead him to travel across the country as he concocts a plan to extract back child support. Things do not pan out and Cameron must get a job to pay back a loan from his aunt. When he lands a job at the aquarium, he sets a new trajectory for his life that he could not have predicted.

"Remarkably Bright Creatures" is part mystery, part love story, and one-hundred percent enjoyable. It instantly became one of my favorite reads of 2023. Fans of "A Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared" by Jonas Jonasson, "A Man Called Ove" by Fredrik Backman and "The Art of Racing in the Rain" by Garth Stein should put this novel on their "must read" pile.

"Remarkably Bright Creatures" was an instant New York Times bestseller, a Read with Jenna Today Show Book Club Pick, and an Amazon Best Book of 2022. Chicago Tribune and USA Today named it a Best Book of the 2022 Summer.

When Shelby Van Pelt is not indulging in her flash-fiction addiction, she is wrangling her cats and children. "Remarkably Bright Creatures" is her debut novel. She was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, but now calls the suburbs of Chicago home. Find out more at [www.shelbyvanpelt.com](http://www.shelbyvanpelt.com).



# calendar of events

## CLAYTON

### CONCERTS/MUSIC



### CLAYTON CONCERTS IN THE GROVE

Every other Saturday, 6PM-8:30PM  
**June 10, Vybe Society**, Top 40 hits.

**June 24, Pride and Joy SF**, Hits from 60s to 80s. Schedule: [claytonca.gov/our-city/annual-events/concerts-in-the-grove/](https://claytonca.gov/our-city/annual-events/concerts-in-the-grove/)

**July 8, Foreverland**, Michael Jackson, 1-4 man tribute band

### CLUBS

#### Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club.

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

#### Rotary Club of Concord.

<http://www.concordcarotary.org>

**Cars2ndChance**, vehicle / car donation programs turning vehicle donations into cash for charities administered by the Clayton Valley Concord Sunrise Rotary Charitable Fund. <https://cars2ndchance.com>

### EVENTS

**June 18, Father's Day Run for Rotary**, 8-11 AM. This will be a fun 5k out-and-back course beginning at Clayton Community Park near the intersection of Regency Drive and Marsh Creek Road. Clayton community park. Clayton

**June 30, Summer Used Book Sale** Friday, Members Only. 4:00 PM - 7PM. Clayton Community Library, 6125 Clayton Road, Clayton

### LIBRARY

**June 1- August 5, Summer Reading: "Find Your Voice!"** Readers of all ages can visit [cclib.org/summer](https://cclib.org/summer) for activities and challenges.

**Lapsit Storytime. Thursdays** from 11:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. Best for ages 0-3. Toddler/Preschool Storytime. Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. - Noon. Best for ages 3-5. Explore the joys of movement, books and songs, while building early literacy skills you can practice at home.

**Tai Chi. 1st & 3rd Thursdays** of the month from 12 p.m. - 1 p.m. Adult Program. Enjoy a gentle and energizing class with Tai Chi movements.

**June 7, 14, 28, Camp Clayton.** from 2 - 3 p.m. Children's Program. STEAM focused events, drop-in programs, and take home activities! No registration required.

**June 15, Teen Thursday - Sphero & Lego.** from 4-5 p.m. Get creative with coding.

**June 17, Clayton Memory Café.** 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Free Program for Adults. Participate in cognitive activities designed to perk up memory.

**June 24, Planting for Pollinators.** from 2 - 3 p.m. Adult program. Attract native birds, butterflies, bees and more by choosing plants that will make them feel at home!

**June 27, Clayton Library Book Club.** from 6 pm - 7:45 pm. Adult Program June's book is "This Time Next Year We'll be Laughing" by Jacqueline Winspear.

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

## CONCORD

### ARTS

**Thru June 23, Contra Costa Plein Air Painters at aRt Cottage.** 2238 Mt. Diablo Street Concord. (925) 956-3342 [www.artcottage.info](http://www.artcottage.info)

### CLUBS

#### Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club.

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

#### Rotary Club of Concord.

<http://www.concordcarotary.org>

### CONCERTS/MUSIC

#### Concord Music & Market Series Todos Santos Plaza on Thursdays

6:30 PM. Farmers' Market and free music concerts in the Park with a great line-up of wonderful Bay Area musicians playing Salsa, jazz, zydeco, blues, and more.

**June 1 BLUE DEVILS DRUM & BUGLE CORPS** ConCORDS own award-winning corps

**June 8 FAST TIMES BAND** 80's party band

**June 15 TOM RIGNEY and FLAMBEAU** New Orleans grooves

**June 22 MAJESTIC** Journey tribute

**June 29 DAKILA** Latin beat. Todos Santos Plaza, 2175 Willow Pass Rd. Concord

**June 30, An Evening with Midnight Flyer (Eagles Tribute),** 7:30 - 11:00 PM. Vinnie's Bar & Grill 2045 Mt Diablo St, Concord.

### EVENTS

**Thru July 9, Galindo Home and Gardens** Sundays 1PM - 4PM. Admission: \$5 Come take a tour. No reservation is required and starting now through September the Concord Historical Society has organized a quilt display throughout the rooms of the Galindo home! 1721 Amador Ave, Concord.

**June 3, NorCal Plumerias "4th Annual" BBQ/Potluck.** 11 AM. Concord Community Park 3501 Cowell Rd, Concord.

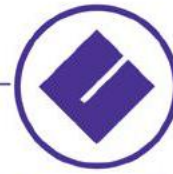
**June 4, Concord Pickleball Tournament,** Willow Pass Park & Athletic Facilities, 2748 E Olivera Rd Concord. Email: [sports@cityofconcord.org](mailto:sports@cityofconcord.org) (925) 671-3404.

**June 9, 10 East Bay Coin Show,** Concord Plaza Hotel, 45 John Glenn Dr, Concord.

**June 9, 16, 23, 30, Concord Friday Night Car Gathering.** 11:30 PM. Every Friday Night a Gathering of Cars, Trucks and anything with wheels. Hot Rods, Muscle Cars, Sport Cars, Trucks, etc. All makes, years and models welcome. 901 Sunvalley Blvd, Concord.

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[kcabral@concordchamber.com](mailto:kcabral@concordchamber.com)

**June 17, Pride in the Plaza 2023** 12-6 PM. Todos Santos Plaza 2175 Willow Pass Rd, Concord.

**June 24, Vette-O-Rama 51 Car Show,** 10 AM - 3 PM. Hosted by Diablo Valley Corvettes Todos Santos Plaza 2175 Willow Pass Rd, Concord.

**June 24, 25, East Bay Card Show.** Sat, 10 AM - Sun, 5 PM. East Bay Card show with Special Autograph Guest, Orlando Cepeda, appearing June 24 only from 12:30 PM - 2 PM. Concord Plaza Hotel 45 John Glenn Dr, Concord

**June 25, JUNETEENTH,** 1 PM - 4PM. Vendors, Music, Food, Crafts. Todos Santos Plaza. 2175 Willow Pass Rd, Concord.

### FARMERS MARKETS

#### Pacific Coast Farmers Market

<https://www.pcfma.org>

Todos Santos Plaza.

Tuesdays, 10AM- 2PM Year Round

Thursdays 4PM - 8PM June 1-Sept 28

### LIBRARY

**June 1-**

**August 5,**

**Summer**

**Reading:**

"Find Your Voice!" Readers of all ages can visit [cclib.org/summer](https://cclib.org/summer) for activities and challenges

**June 7, BYOB (Bring Your Own Baby) Book Club,** 10:15 AM - 11:15 AM. Want to talk about books written for adults and meet in a baby-friendly setting?

**June 13, Monthly Movie Night: Spoiler Alert (2022)** 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM Starring Jim Parsons, Ben Aldridge and Sally Field

**June 20, Concord Library Pen & Ink Society,** 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM. Collaborate and learn more about writing with creative writing

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

## MARTINEZ

### CONCERTS/MUSIC

**June 16-18, King of the County BBQ Competition & Music Festival - Father's Day Weekend** Fri

5-9 PM; Sat 11 AM - 8 PM; Sun 11-6 PM. Free outdoor family festival.

Three Days of Music, Arts & Crafts, Kids Activities, Carnival Rides, and the Best BBQ Food in Contra Costa. (See cover Ad and pg 21)

**Friday, June 16, LITTLE LAZY** Rock. 5:45 - 7:45 PM.



**Saturday, June 17**  
**KEN MAFFEO** Motown Soul, R&B, FM Classics. 11 AM - 12 PM.

**THE UNINVITED BAND** Guitar pop, amplified banjos & mandolins. 12:30 PM - 2 PM

**GARAGELAND RODEO** Stones, Black Crowes, Allman Bros. 2:30 PM - 4 PM

**BOBBY ZOPPI** Today's country hits and classics. 4:30 PM - 6 PM...

**NATIVE ELEMENTS** Reggae dance band. 6:30 PM - 8 PM

### Sunday, June 18

**HEART & SOUL** Huey Lewis tribute. 11 AM - 12 PM

**THE GREAT SPACECOASTER** Fleetwood Mac, Tom Petty, Blondie. 12:30 PM - 2 PM

**THE 925 BAND** 70's dance party. 2:30 PM - 6 PM

Martinez Waterfront Amphitheatre, 115 Tarantino Dr., Martinez



### EVENTS

**Saturdays, Free food pantry** from 9:30-10:30AM Helping our neighbors in need. Call 925-788-7409 for assistance. St Vincent de Paul located on Henrietta St. between Castro St and Estudillo St.

**June 9 & 10 Tri-Cities Horsemen's Assoc. is hosting the Bomb Proofing Playday!** Bring your horse, pony, mule or mini to the Playday at the Waterfront Arena in Radke Martinez Shoreline! Have fun while introducing and desensitizing your equine in a safe, controlled environment! Morning sessions start at 9:00 am. Spectators welcome! For more info and to register check out our website at <https://tricityhorsemen.org/bpp/bpp-info.html>

**June 10, Free Car Seat Check-up.** 10 AM - 1PM by appointment only. Call (925)586-1879. Martinez Adult Education Center on F street, Martinez.

**June 17 & 18 Tri-Cities Horsemen's Assoc. is hosting competitive Obstacle Challenges!** Join us with your equine for fun obstacle challenges at the Waterfront Arena in Radke Martinez Shoreline! In Hand and Mounted events both days, all ages welcome! Spectators welcome! For more info and to register go the Equine Trail Sports website at [https://www.equinetrailsports.com/event\\_group/12486/view](https://www.equinetrailsports.com/event_group/12486/view)

### FARMERS MARKETS

#### Pacific Coast Farmers Market

<https://www.pcfma.org>

Sundays, 9AM-1PM, Year Round. 700 Main St. Martinez.

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

## PLEASANT HILL

### CLUBS

**June 10, Five Bios Every Author Needs**, the Topic of California Writers Club Meeting. 11 AM. Joey Garcia, relationship coach and the author of *When Your Heart Breaks and It's Opening to Love*, will be the guest speaker. To register for the meeting online, visit <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/meetings-and-workshops>. Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. Guests are welcome.

### CONCERTS/MUSIC EVENTS

**Sunset by the Lake every other Thursdays, 6PM at City Hall, 00 Gregory Lane.**

**June 11 - VAN GOAT** -Swing punk & rock

**June 25 - HEY HEY MAMA** with Darby Gould, Led Zeppelin Cover

**July 9 - TOM RIGNEY & BANFLAMBEAU** -Cajun, Blues, Boogie woogie

**June 17, Homeless Outreach** — Hope 680. 9 AM – 12:30 PM, Please consider serving in one of the following ways: 1) Prepare Lunches 2) Serving at the Homeless Camps 3) Volunteer Breakfast 4) Cookies for Volunteers. Hope680, 1214 Contra Costa Blvd, Pleasant Hill <https://www.hope680.org/events/april-15th-homeless-outreach-hn5lg>

## WALNUT CREEK

### ARTS



**Thru June 25, About Face.** About Face, a contemporary juried and invitational exhibition, explores the timeless art of portraiture and its role in reflecting cultural values of beauty, power, and significance for future generations. *Bedford Gallery, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek* <https://www.bedfordgallery.org/exhibitions/current-season>

**June 3, 4, WALNUT CREEK ART & WINE FESTIVAL.** Sat 11-7PM, Sun 11-6PM. Heather Farms Park setting and family-friendly activities,



the popular Walnut Creek Chamber Art & Wine Festival returns for its 40th year. 301 N San Carlos Dr, Walnut Creek. <https://www.walnut-creek.com/art-wine-festival-2023/>

### EVENTS

**June 7, Game Night.** 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm at Ygnacio Valley Library. We will have board games, card games, and a Nintendo Switch. Play, watch, or socialize, this event is open to all Teens and Tweens. Ygnacio Valley Library 2661 Oak Grove Road. Walnut Creek.

### June 10, Classic Car Show presented by Walnut Creek Elks Lodge.

Participants and Sponsors register now. Sponsorship call Judy Godar 925-937-8995. Registration fee \$40 includes meal. A portion of proceeds to benefit Elks charity projects. Register Online at <https://bpoe1811.square.site/> <https://www.elks1811.org/events> Phone: Judy Godar (925) 937-8995. [WCElksCarshow2023@gmail.com](mailto:WCElksCarshow2023@gmail.com)



### June 11, Classic Car Show, 10 AM – 3 PM.

The Walnut Creek Historical Society is excited to announce the 3rd Annual Shadelands Classic Car Show. Shadelands Ranch Museum, 2660 Ygnacio Valley Rd, Walnut Creek.

**June 17, MAKER'S MARKET, 11 AM-5 PM.** Open Air Artisan Faire. Stop by to enjoy a beautiful day outdoors with live music, great food, and incredible products from local makers! Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek. <http://makersmarket.us>

**June 18, A Brighter Day Car Show** sponsored by Elite Motor Cars. 10 AM – 6 PM. Fuel your Father's Day at A Brighter Day Car Show! Shift gears against teen suicide with exotic autos, high-octane tunes & prizes. 1275 Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek,

**June 27, Nature Science, Half-Day Camp** (Ages 8-11): 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM. Get mad about science at Lindsay Wildlife's Nature Science Camp. Budding scientists will explore the science of ecology, climate, and sustainability through fun and exciting experiments. Lindsay Wildlife Experience, 1931 1st Ave, Walnut Creek. <https://lindsaywildlife.org/events/nature-science-camp/>

### FARMERS MARKETS

**Contra Costa Certified Farmers Market** <http://www.cccfm.org>

Sundays 9AM-1PM, Year Round. Locust Street between Cole and Lacassie St <http://www.cccfm.org/walnut-creek-market/>

**Kaiser Permanente** 1425 South Main St.

### Diablo Valley Farmers Market

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

### Rossmoor Farmers Market

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

### LESHER THEATRE

**June 2, Delfeayo Marsalis and the Uptown Jazz Orchestra,** Presented by Leshner Center and Diablo Regional Arts Association, 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM

**June 11, The Sparks Sisters,** a talented music duo with a unique sound. Based in Los Angeles, CA and Nashville, TN, their music fits into a classical crossover genre, including Cinematic, Celtic, and Pop elements. 3:15 PM - 4:30 PM

**June 17, El Hakeya (The Story):** A Collaboration of Movement and Music with Suhaila Salimpour and Fadi

# Stone Fruit Means the Arrival of Summer

by Deb Morris, PACIFIC COAST FARMERS' MARKET ASSOCIATION

There is no better reminder that California is the largest producer of juicy stone fruit in the U.S. than to see of peaches, nectarines, plums, and apricots at farmer's markets. In fact, California produces over 90 percent of the nectarines and plums grown in the U.S. and provides approximately 60 percent of all the peaches. At farmer's markets, you will find fabulous stone fruit in varieties not available at your local grocery store from farmers like Diaz Farms in Gilroy, J&J Ramos Farm out of Hughson and Cipponeri Farms from Turlock. Summer has arrived.

Stone fruit gets its name from the large seed or "stone" inside and includes peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, pluots, and apriums. They are available during the summer from May to October.

### Peaches and Nectarines: "Freestone" vs. "Clingstone"

Freestone peaches and nectarines have flesh that slips easily away from the pit, clingstone fruits do not. Most peach varieties are freestone and are available April through October. Some nectarines are freestone, and some are clingstone. Freestone nectarines are available in June and July. Most plum varieties are clingstone.

### Plums

There are two types of plums—European and Japanese. Most plums produced in California are Japanese plums, with a distinctive round shape and dark color, and European plums, which are more elongated in shape and have a mottled appearance with purple and green skin tones.

### Pluots and Apriums

First introduced in 1989, pluots and apriums are unique crosses of plums and apricots. Pluots are smooth skinned, like plums, while apriums are slightly fuzzy, like apricots, but they have unique flavors and higher sugar levels than the standard varieties. The new fruits are complex hybrids



of plums and apricots that are created by making several generations of crosses and selecting desirable traits such as high sugar content.

### Apricots

The apricot, a native of China, has been cultivated for over 4,000 years. The first recorded commercial production of apricots in America

was in 1792, south of San Francisco. A relative of the peach, the apricot is smaller and has a smooth, oval pit that falls out easily when the fruit is halved.

### Selecting and Storing Stone Fruit

Look for fruit that is soft, gives to gentle palm pressure and has a sweet aroma. The best indicator of high quality fruit is color. Ripen firm peaches, plums or nectarines in a paper bag, folding the top over loosely, and keeping it at room temperature for 1-3 days. Check the fruit daily. Tip: Never place firm, or unripe, fruit in the refrigerator as it may inhibit the ripening process and can cause the fruit to become dry and mealy and lose flavor.

### A tasty dish to relish this summer

#### Peach Salsa

2 pounds peaches, pitted and diced  
1 large tomato, diced  
1/2 medium red onion, diced  
1 sweet pepper, diced  
2-3 sprigs cilantro, finely chopped  
1 lime, quartered  
Salt

Wash all your produce and your hands. Remove pits and dice the peaches, sweet pepper and the tomatoes. Put ingredients into a bowl. Add the juice of 1/4 lime, salt, 1-2 tablespoons red onion, and 1-2 teaspoons cilantro, and stir, tasting as you go. Adjust flavor by adding more lime, salt, onion or cilantro if desired. For a spicier dish, use a jalapeno instead of sweet pepper in whatever quantity you enjoy.

Islambouli, a dancer and a musician, as they tell their story through an exploration of Classical Arabic music and dance. 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM

**June 22, Comedian Gina Brillon,** 7:30 PM - 9 PM. Presented by Leshner Center and Diablo Regional Arts Association. Her special Gina Brillon: The Floor is Lava (Amazon Prime Video) won a 2021 Gracie Award. Her 1/2 hour special "Easily Offended" was one of the top shows from the Entre Nos franchise on HBO Latino, and streams on all HBO Digital Platforms. She's made appearances on Late Night with Seth Meyers and Jimmy Kimmel Live.

**June 24, Fiesta Cultural Street Fair.** 12 PM - 7 PM. This free event is a program of Fiesta Cultural! Fiesta Cultural is a week of vibrant events and performances.

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

## Other Cities

### CLUBS

**June 1, SIR Branch 19 Monthly Luncheon** 11 AM with a social hour and lunch. The featured speaker will be Fred Fuld, who will speak about AI, Space Travel, and Robotics. SIR is a social organization of senior men. All are welcome. Pittsburg Elks' Lodge, 200 Marina Blvd., Pittsburg.

### EVENTS

**June 2 - September 1, PITTSBURG FIRST FRIDAY'S.** 5:30 PM - 9:00 PM. Live music, great wine, craft beer, local art, and Marina views. \$10 for the first pour and a souvenir glass; each additional pour is \$5.

**June 23, Alameda County Fair,** 10 AM. With the theme "Summer Vibes," featuring a concert series, live horse racing, animals, pig racing, competitions, kids' activities, rides, Hispanic festival and, of course, fair food. Alameda County Fairgrounds, 2005 Valley Ave Gate 8, Pleasanton.

# Around Martinez



Brianne Zorn, Martinez Mayor  
bzorn@cityofmartinez.org

## Martinez Supports Draft Waterfront Marina Trust Lands Use Plan

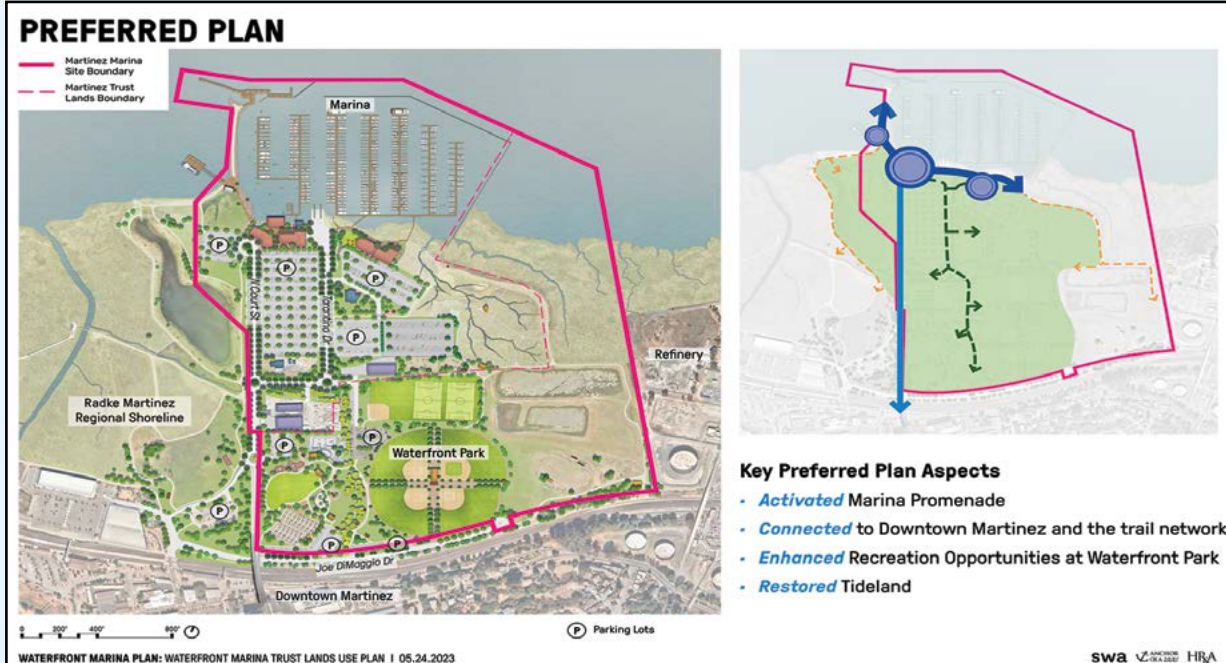
On May 24, the City of Martinez held a workshop to review the first draft of the Waterfront Marina Trust Lands Use Plan. The workshop was a joint effort with the City Council, Planning Commission, and the Parks, Recreation, Marina, and Cultural Commission.

In addition to the participants from these three groups, we had an excellent turnout from the public, in person and online, as these meetings are held in hybrid format and residents can participate from wherever they are.

The consultant, SWA Group, held a series of public workshops leading up to this presentation of the proposed design. The vision statement that came out of those workshops is as follows:

“The Waterfront Marina will be a recreational asset for the City of Martinez and a regional destination for the Contra Costa County and the East Bay.

The waterfront is a place that draws visitors to experience an active waterfront complete with a vibrant marina, waterfront promenade and fishing pier, dining opportunities, event venues, regional recreational facilities, and other



habitat.

The proposal includes expanding the skate park and installing a musical stage between the playground and the bocce courts. Roadways are to be connected with roundabouts, and trails and connectivity are also to be expanded.

The commission and the public voiced a variety of excellent comments including prioritizing repairs to the marina infrastructure, clearer incorporation of bicycle pathways, and incorporating regional tribes and cultural history in the plan.

Other concerns considered the need to elevate structures to address sea level rise, as well as construct a new alignment of the road which incorporates a major connection over the train tracks.

destinations surrounded by open space and trails.

The waterfront will be welcoming to all and a place to celebrate Martinez’s connection to the water.

With initial, significant capital improvements completed, the waterfront will contribute revenue to support the continued evolution and development of the site as a regional resource while acting as a resilient buffer to rising sea levels and tidal flooding.”

The Council and Commission were impressed by the proposed plan and

agreed it met the objective of the vision statement. The plan is comprised of infrastructure repairs and replacements throughout the marina. Improvements to the “Marina Village” adjacent to the marina consists of a cafe, restaurant, and an educational and events center as well as access to a small craft zone.

The current dredging dewatering ponds (which will no longer be used moving forward) is proposed for passive recreation, trails, and reconnection to natural conditions to support salt marsh

Next steps will be to incorporate the comments and finalize the document. You can expect to see the Council approve the plan for submittal to California State Lands for their review in July. The overall estimated cost of this plan is significant, and it was proposed as a “generational project”. You can expect to see our next steps include preparing requests for grants and other outside funding.

To see and enjoy the proposed plan for yourself, visit [martinezwaterfront.com](http://martinezwaterfront.com).

## Refinery Investigation Update

by Craig Lazzeretti, Martinez News and Views

The county-led Martinez Refining Co. Oversight Committee held its latest meeting, on May 18, to receive updates on the collection and testing of soil samples related to the refinery’s Thanksgiving night “spent catalyst” release of heavy metal-laden dust into the community. The video of the meeting can be viewed on YouTube. Consultant TRC is taking the samples and testing them for concentrations of metals such as aluminum and chromium that are commonly found in spent catalyst.

Deputy Contra Costa County Health Director Matt Kaufman explained that the initial soil sample results will only be the “first piece” of a comprehensive process to try to determine any long-term health and environmental impacts from the release. The lab results will need to be validated and the numbers then crunched into a “risk assessment” model that will compare the levels of metals found against benchmark standards and background levels expected to be found in California.

“It’s not necessarily the sample results we’re looking for,” Kaufmann said. “It’s taking those results, validating them and putting them into a risk assessment model and getting a report from TRC to really explain to us what all of these numbers mean in terms of the health impacts that may have resulted from the release.”

Martinez Unified School District Trustee Courtney Masella-O’Brien, a member of the board’s newly created ad

hoc committee exploring the refinery release, addressed the oversight committee during public comment, pointing out that six MUSD schools are within a mile and a half of the refinery.

“I know our board and community members, teachers, parents, are very concerned about student safety and would like to have further discussions and look at having all of the school sites tested,” she said.

A site near Las Juntas Elementary School was previously added to the list of testing sites, to go along with testing near Martinez Junior High School, where the spent catalyst dust was visibly observed by a county inspector after the release.

Initial sample results are expected before the next oversight committee, tentatively scheduled for June 8.

Update: ABC7 reported that agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Environmental Protection Agency fanned out in Martinez, interviewing residents about the Thanksgiving Day release from the Martinez Refining Company.

About 10 groups of agents from the FBI and EPA were going door-to-door interviewing residents on Friday May 27 along Camino del Sol.

The investigation could result in a criminal or civil case involving the company.



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Barbecue and Fathers go hand in hand. Over 10,000 attendees are expected to come out to Marina Waterfront Park this Father's Day weekend, June 16-18, for the Martinez Chamber of Commerce's annual King of County BBQ Competition and Music Festival.

The three-day outdoor festival kicks off with live music Friday evening from 5 – 9 p.m. with the rock band Little Lazy.

On Saturday, June 17 and Sunday June 18, 2023, backyard barbecue teams from near and far will compete for the coveted title of King of the County as the smoke and grill tasty ribs, chicken, or chef's choice. (which can be vegetables, side dishes, or beef, pork chicken, or sausage.

Families can spend the day Saturday from 11 a.m.- 8 p.m. and/or Sunday from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. and enjoy live music, arts and crafts, food, carnival rides, and some award-winning BBQ and other special attractions.

A Kids Zone is new to the event this year. Bay Area Festivals (Kids Fest) is bringing its popular rides and attractions including the Ferris Wheel, Mind Winder, Giant Slide, Jeep Ride, Loop O Plane, Tubs of Fun, Helicopters and more. Admission to the festival is free.

The Competition and awards are on Saturday and Sunday only.

Awards include cash prizes, trophies, swag, bragging rights, and Hotel Savings Cards up to \$500.00 for our winners.

The competition is fierce with between 30-40 local Backyard Barbecue Teams competing over the two days. Many competitors are local family teams that return every year in hopes of defending the title or dethroning previous victors and royals.

Judges conduct a blind tasting with numbered boxes and are supervised by two Event Committee Chairs and designated table monitors.

So, do you think you make the best BBQ in town? Are you ready to fire things up? Do you have grit, the grill, and the competitive spirit?

If you are interested in joining the

royal family of Backyard Barbecue Teams that have gone before, application and guidelines can be found at [www.countybbq.com](http://www.countybbq.com). You have until June 5 to submit your team application.



### Kids Zone

Ferris Wheel, Mind Winder, Giant Slide, Jeep Ride, Loop O Plane, Tubs of Fun, Helicopters and more!

## 14th Beaver Festival to Celebrate Beavers as Superheroes

Martinez led the way for Sacramento Environmental Policy



The 14th Martinez Beaver festival is coming to Susanna Park on June 24 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. This beloved annual nature festival will include live music, children's activities, a silent auction, and the dynamic chalk artist, Amy G. Hall of Napa who will be creating a focal mural that shows off the beavers' prowess.

Additionally, environmental displays will include Native Birds, Nor Cal Bats, Save the Snakes, Lindsey Wildlife, and a huge mobile fish aquarium from East Bay Regional Park. Fro Schmidt, curator at Concord's aRt Cottage, and volunteers will help children watercolor the inside of beaver lodges this year.

Back when the now famous beavers moved into Martinez in 2007, their presence was an anomaly. There were no other cities working to live with beavers, and no articles in the New York or LA times praising their environmental contributions, or noting that their dams can alleviate droughts, reduce fires, and mitigate flooding.

The world was a different place when hundreds of local residents forced the City of Martinez to try coexisting with the popular rodents instead of trapping them. This success allowed Martinez to see firsthand how beaver habitat created more birds, frogs, muskrats and otters and provided a vibrant creek that stayed lush year-round.

Launched by the advocacy group Worth A Dam as a way to reinforce local support, the beaver festival used to be the only one of its kind in North America, but there have since been others in Utah, and Oregon, a second beaver festival in San Luis Obispo this year and, the first of its kind in Minnesota.

More importantly, the California budget introduced a \$1.44 million addition for beaver restoration California Department of Fish and Wildlife now has the hard job of teaching more people to



coexist with beavers as Martinez has to benefit our fragile waterways.

The event is free, with free parking in Susana Park downtown Martinez from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. While it may be true that our little city does not deserve credit for all the good things that have happened to beavers over the years but events like this surely got the ball rolling.

The Beaver Festival has grown to be one of the biggest wildlife events in Northern California and has inspired environmental policies for all of California.

For a dam good time for all, come out learn why beavers are called climate change superheroes. For more information go to [Martinezbeavers.org](http://Martinezbeavers.org).

### 2023 KING OF THE COUNTY BBQ COMPETITION & MUSIC FESTIVAL - FATHER'S DAY WEEKEND

Date: 6/16/2023 - 6/18/2023  
 Fri 5-9 PM; Sat 11 AM - 8 PM; Sun 11-6 PM  
 Martinez Waterfront Amphitheatre, 115 Tarantino Dr., Martinez

Friday, June 16, 2023  
 5:45 - 7:45 PM... LITTLE LAZY Rock

Saturday, June 17, 2023  
 11 AM - 12 PM... KEN MAFFEO Motown Soul, R&B, FM Classics  
 12:30 PM - 2 PM... THE UNINVITED BAND  
 Guitar pop, amplified banjos & mandolins  
 2:30 PM - 4 PM... GARAGELAND RODEO  
 Stones, Black Crowes, Allman Bros

4 PM - 4:30 PM... BBQ AWARDS Saturdays BBQ competition awards  
 4:30 PM - 6 PM... BOBBY ZOPPI Today's country hits and classics  
 6:30 PM - 8 PM... NATIVE ELEMENTS Reggae dance band

Sunday, June 18, 2023  
 11 AM - 12 PM... HEART & SOUL Huey Lewis tribute  
 12:30 PM - 2 PM... THE GREAT SPACECOASTER Fleetwood Mac, Tom Petty, Blondie  
 2:30 PM - 4 PM... THE 925 BAND 70's dance party  
 4 PM - 4:30 PM... BBQ AWARDS Sundays BBQ competition awards  
 4:30 PM - 6 PM... THE 925 BAND 70's dance party



# Like Spring, Real Estate is in a Time of Rebirth

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

Okay, maybe this is a stretch, but stay with me as I use simile to explain the current market conditions.

Spring, a time of birth, growth, and renewal. Nature is hard at work transforming itself and spreading seeds for the future. This transformation can be seen all around us from the flowers in bloom, to the baby birds chirping. And just as nature is hard at work transforming itself, so do we begin to transform ourselves and our living situations. (i.e it's the start of home shopping season.)

Whether this means looking to buy a first home (birth), buy a new home (growth) or just a simple spring cleaning (renewal), the seeds of change are all around us and overwhelmingly evident in the hot spring real estate market.

The spring market is historically the busiest time of year for agents, and although it started late, this year is no different. I am personally involved in six transactions as of this writing. Six. That is quite the contrast to the slow and dreary winter market. With home buyers coming out of hibernation, home prices are on the rise and competition is fierce.

In nature, this beauty and rebirth sometimes comes at a price, such as the misery of seasonal allergies. For many the spring real estate market causes its own seasonal misery. The devastation of a losing offer, low inventory (currently at historic lows), and a competitive market can feel absolutely miserable —just like my seasonal allergies.

To deal with spring allergies,

you need to take action by taking antihistamines, eye drops, nasal spray, etc., or maybe you just hide inside. To deal with the spring real estate market, you also need to take action. Here are a few recommendations.

Have your preapproval ready to go, you are not putting in any offers without it unless you intend to offer all cash. Buyers, go aggressive for what you want. This is not the market to try and haggle over a few thousand dollars. Be ready to view listings as soon as they come on market. As they say, the early birds get the worm.

Most importantly, next to getting preapproved, find a great agent and listen to them. Your best friend's cousin or your ex-girlfriend is not an expert unless they are in real estate. Looking at values on Zillow does not qualify as valuation expertise. I cannot emphasize this enough. Listen. To. Your. Agent. An experienced agent knows the market. They are there to guide you and advise you. Having a great agent is always crucial to success, but never is it more evident than in the spring market.

I recommend you not do the following:

Make passive offers, wait to see what is going to happen, listen to your friend who bought a house during the market crash, put in offers only with listing agents, sell your home as a FSBO (For Sale By Owner), and stay inside and hiding. Leave that for managing spring allergies.

To everyone out there competing in this hot spring market I wish you the best of luck. Unless I'm up against you that is.

# Heated Pleasant Hill Council Meeting Shines Light on Changing Politics of Housing as Martinez Finalizes its Plan

by Craig Lazzeretti, Martinez News and Views

A marathon special Pleasant Hill City Council meeting held on May 19 holds important significance for Martinez, both geographically and politically.

The special meeting to take another crack at adopting a Housing Element that will pass muster with the state devolved into a storm of protest and acrimony.

Residents from the Paso Nogal area of the city packed the meeting to oppose the designation of two vacant parcels near the Martinez border for high-density, low-income housing (there is no actual proposal to build housing on the parcels; the designations simply make it possible at some point).

As the Martinez Planning Commission moves the city's own overdue Housing Element onto the City Council for adoption, what happened at this meeting in Pleasant Hill serves as a cautionary tale and clear evidence that the political terrain around housing policy in the state has shifted in a major way.

Pleasant Hill's amended Housing Element for the 2023-31 cycle now allows for 298 low-income units on the Paso Nogal and Morello Terraces hillside sites. City Council members made clear both before and after the hours of impassioned public comment that they did not want to see housing on the privately owned hillside slopes and did not believe they were an appropriate place for it. But their hands were tied, because the state Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) had already rejected the city's first proposed Housing Element and implemented strict requirements for approval that left the city no choice but to make the parcels in question available to potential housing.

The residents lambasted the City Council for not doing things that it apparently has no power to do under new state laws meant to deal with the housing crisis. With the council chamber packed, overflow seating was set up in adjacent community rooms for the public to watch the proceedings on video monitors (not to mention those following at home on Zoom). Even before public comment began, Mayor Tim Flaherty explained that state mandates, and HCD's rejection of its initial proposal, had boxed the city into corner, with no alternative but to grudgingly open up the parcels to potential housing.

## Martinez Fishing Pier Restoration Project Begins

The Martinez City Council allocated \$150,000 to "jump-start" planning for the Martinez Fishing Pier restoration project, but it was made clear that this is a project likely to take a while.

The city has received roughly \$2.5 million in federal funds to renovate the faltering fishing pier, one of the few on the Carquinez Straight. After it was closed in September 2021 because of safety concerns, temporary repairs were undertaken to allow for a partial reopening.

The \$150,000 allocated Wednesday will go toward an environmental assessment of the work to be done and obtaining professional permitting assistance.

Staff made clear that the permitting process for this process is complex, with many regulatory agencies involved in the ultimate approval of the project. City Manager Michael Chandler said a one-year time frame for the renovation is a "best-case scenario" but later clarified that it is "very unlikely" that the project will be completed that soon.

He did express optimism that the relationships developed with regulatory officials during the temporary repairs will facilitate and expedite the process.

## Health Advisory for Mercury Spill Lifted

Contra Costa Health Services lifted its health advisory for the mercury spill affecting parts of downtown Martinez. County hazardous materials crews completed a cleanup of spilled mercury that contaminated the Amtrak station and some surrounding streets.

"At no point did we detect enough mercury on city streets to cause an immediate health concern. The primary concern was reducing the risk of people tracking it inside, where over time it could cause health issues," Dr. Ori Tzvieli, Contra Costa County's health officer, said in a news release. "We realize the work has been disruptive to the community and appreciate the partnership of the city of Martinez as we worked to keep people informed about our progress."

Martinez News and Views is an independent reader-supported local news service for the residents of Martinez, California.

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Real Estate Buyer and Seller Agent

## 2023 Martinez SCHEDULE

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>JUNE-23</b>					1 MRY 6:00 PM	2 SRF 6:00 PM	3 MON 6:00 PM
	4 SRF 2:00 PM	5	6 DUB 6:00 PM	7	8 SRF 6:00 PM	9 MRY 6:00 PM	10 MRY 6:35 PM
	11 DUB 2:00 PM	12 LAN 6:00 PM	13	14 DUB 6:00 PM	15 DUB 6:00 PM	16 MON 6:00 PM	17 MRY 6:00 PM
	18 MRY 2:00 PM	19	20 MON 6:00 PM	21 MON 6:00 PM	22	23 MON 6:00 PM	24 MRY 6:35 PM
	25 DUB 2:00 PM	26	27	28	29 BAK 6:00 PM	30 MRY 6:35 PM	

MON- MONTREY AMBERJACKS SRF- SAN RAFAEL PACIFICS MRY- MARTYSVILLE DRAGERS VAL- VALLEJO BEAVERES  
DUB- DUBLIN LEPRECHAUNS LAN- LANCASTER SOUND BEAVERES BAK- BAKERSFIELD TRAIN ROBBERIES

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

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# Writer-Director David Mickey Evans Addresses Movie, Baseball Fans At 'The Sandlot' Screening In Martinez

by Beth Weilenman

You get one shot at a second chance in Hollywood, writer-director David Mickey Evans told fans of his famous baseball movie, "The Sandlot," at a special screening Saturday in Martinez.

"I wrote my second chance," Evans said.

Evans, appearing at a fundraiser for the Martinez Sturgeon independent professional baseball team players, described how he found himself "in a pickle," just like the beloved characters he would create. He'd just been fired from the helm of "Radio Flyer," which he also had written.

Driving on traffic-laden I-405 after the firing, he recalled an incident involving his brother, who had been injured while fetching a baseball from a yard holding a large dog who escaped restraints during the episode.

"I thought it'd make a movie," he said. By the time his three-hour trip was done, he'd composed most elements of the story except one key part, a baseball signed by Babe Ruth. He wrote the complete script in six weeks.

His characters resembled boys he knew growing up, with one exception: "I would turn these into heroes, not punks," Evans said. "No one wants to see bullies."

Neighborhood boys playing on a rough ball field, creating a ball game when they didn't have enough players, encountering and accepting a new kid to their ongoing game and facing childhood adventures together struck a nerve with the movie's audiences. "The Sandlot" often is ranked among the top five baseball movies. But at the time, there was no guarantee Evans would succeed.

"If I'd botched it, I wouldn't be here," he said.

Good casting was essential. Mike Vitar quickly was chosen to play Benny "The Jet" Rodriguez; but casting Ham took much longer. Finally chosen for the role was Patrick Renna, who had flown out from Boston to audition for television roles.

As Ham, Renna is responsible for creating the movie's iconic line, "You're killing me, Smalls!"

"I wish I had the marketing rights to that," Evans said. But he'd written it, "You kill me, Smalls."

During the scene in which Ham teaches Scotty Smalls to assemble s'mores, Renna struggled with the dialog. When he spontaneously revised his line, Evans decided, "Yeah, it's better," and the script was promptly revised.

But Evans wrote other memorable lines, including Babe Ruth dream sequence dialog. "Everybody gets one chance to do something great," the baseball legend counsels one of the boys. "There's heroes and there's legends. Heroes get remembered. Legends never die. Follow your heart; you'll never go wrong."

Originally, Arliss Howard, cast as an adult Smalls, was to do the narration. But his delivery didn't work. "I brought a clarinet to this party," Howard told Evans. "You need a trumpet." Evans ended up doing the narration himself.

The director was guided by his own photograph slides and postcards from the era for the look he wanted for the film, which was shot in Salt Lake City and surrounding towns. "Vincent Drug Store is still there," Evans told his audience.



"The Sandlot" Director David Mickey Evans meets Martinez Resident Steve Kovnas, whose late son, Brandon, loved Evans's movie. Evans later signed the bat for Kovnas. Photo by Beth Weilenman

A couple of coups scored along the way were casting James Earl Jones in one key role and spending a day filming at Dodger Stadium, okayed by Tommy Lasorda himself.

One key story element is Hercules, which the boys build up as a "The Beast," a canine monster that devours any human who stepped into his yard. The boys need to retrieve a priceless ball they hit into The Beast's territory.

Giant puppets were used to suggest the dog's enormous size. Evans played on childhood memories that make things bigger than they are. Don't believe it? "Go to your childhood home!" His audience laughed in concurrence.

Evans agreed to the appearance at the request of another writer, artist and director, Martinez resident Ken Mitchrone, who volunteers with the Martinez Sturgeon. The two have worked together on several projects, including Evans's movies "Wilder Days" and "The Final Season," another baseball film.

Through their friendship, Evans has become a strong advocate for the Martinez Sturgeon, which is in its third season in the Pecos

League.

"You guys have a great reputation east of the Mississippi!" Evans said after seeing the team, General Manager Eric Halverson and Field Manager Matthew Repplinger introduced to the fans.

Halverson said the appearance and theater screening at Contra Costa Stadium Cinemas was "exhilarating. It's so cool to have Dave here and share his insight...Those who didn't show - it's their loss!"

Theater manager Joe Fitzpatrick said he was glad fans turned out to see movies the way they were meant to be shown. "It makes a difference."

Evans had compliments for Martinez. "I've never been to Martinez before. You didn't oversell it. I love a town you can walk. People here are friendly and polite."

As for the screening itself, he also was pleased. "These things are a great love fest. People who are here want to be here. They love the movie," he said. "Seeing the picture again on a movie screen projected correctly was a real treat. I haven't seen it projected like that in 15 years."

Those interested in the Martinez Sturgeon team and schedule may visit <http://www.martinezsturgeon.com/> or the Facebook pages Martinez Sturgeon and Martinez Sturgeon Fans and Boosters.



# Bands Van Goat and Hey Hey Mama to Perform at Sunset by the Lake Concert

by Vince Martellacci

Pleasant Hill's Sunset by the Lake Summer Concerts is a perennial and nearby option for Martizian music lovers who enjoy free outdoor concerts. Concerts are scheduled every other Thursday through September 3 with a variety of music genre tover the summer.

On June 11, Oakland-based band Van Goat with their unique take on rock and roll will take the stage.

Van Goat bills themselves as a "swing-punk" band, but you do not have to talk to them long to learn that they dabble in several rock styles. Van Goat will play Concerts By The Lake on June 11 at 6 PM outside of City Hall.

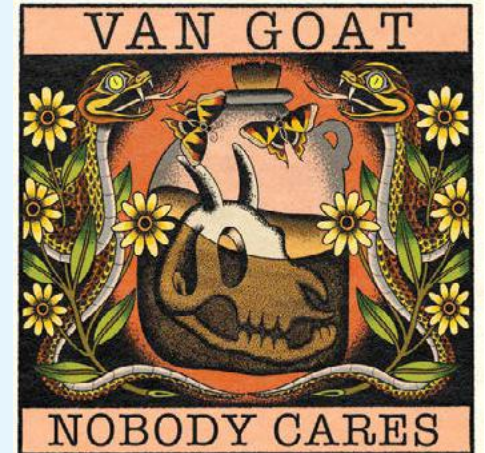
More interesting than their eclectic sound is the way they all work together seamlessly, the way each member's contribution is unique, and the way they blend disparate instruments and styles. The result is an outstanding sound and a group with over fifteen years of longevity.

The band got together during the aughts in college in Santa Cruz. A NorCal band through and through, its three original members, Aidan Ward, a clarinet player by nature with a background in Dixieland jazz; Derek Burle, who teaches electric guitar, acoustic guitar, bass guitar, ukulele, baritone ukulele, uke bass and Merlin dulcimer; and Ben Einstein, who tells me he plays the pineapple. Einstein turns fruit into music and the other members are as proud of the pineapple as they are of the horns.

The two newer members, trombonist Lindsay Alexis and percussionist Taylor Moxon joined years down the line and impacted the group's sound heavily.

Over the years, Van Goat has gone from playing Beatles' covers at local coffee shops to maintaining a consistent schedule of performances and releasing their own music.

Click on the album cover or link below and give a listen to their most recent album, "Nobody Cares," and whet your appetite for an outstanding concert on the horizon. See you there.



<https://www.vangoatband.com/epk>

## Hey Hey Mama, June 25



Zeppelin fans should flock to Pleasant Hill City Hall June 25, and rock out to Hey Hey Mama. Darby Gould will be fronting the band for this performance and according to the bands Facebook page, they are pretty excited about that. So should you be.

Fans may remember Gould from her days with Jefferson Starship and World Entertainment War. Over the years she has developed a loyal following based on her passionate, soulful vocals and intense stage presence.





# Your Brain is Like a Snowflake

Just like no two snowflakes are alike, science has now proven your brain is equally as unique.

A recent study entitled "Patients with chronic pain exhibit individually unique cortical signatures of pain encoding," (Mayr et al., 2022) just proved that no two people experience pain in the same way.

The study included 20 people with chronic back pain and 20 people with chronic migraines in an attempt to locate where in the brain pain was experienced (and ultimately a way to manage it).

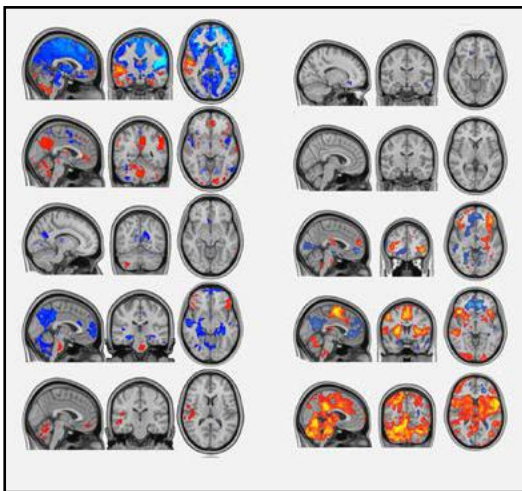
A picture is worth a thousand words, so take a look at these brain images. There is a set of three images for each person taken from the side, front, and top of the head.

What they concluded is that each person's brain is like a snowflake: our pain patterns are unique from anyone else's brain, even if our symptoms are identical. While there may be some general similarities, the specific connections and patterns of activity

within the brain can vary widely from person to person.

Why is it important to understand that our brains are like snowflakes? It highlights the need for personalized approaches to medicine and therapy.

There is no magic pill, no fail-proof therapy, no ideal diet or exercise plan that will work for everyone. Protocol-based healing needs to be seen only as a starting point and then tailored to the individual.



BRAIN PAIN: L-Brain scans of five patients experiencing chronic back pain; R - brain scan of five patients experiencing chronic migraines.

On a separate but related issue.... An individual's combination of genes, experiences, and environment shapes their brain and influences everything from personality to cognitive abilities. Understanding that uniqueness can help us appreciate the diversity of human experience.

Recognizing these differences can help promote a more supportive society.

# Dental House Calls Set to Improve Oral Care Among Seniors

Many seniors and those with mobility issues such as wheelchair-bound, home-bound, or in a senior care facility, are challenged in getting the appropriate dental care. These challenges of transportation, financial, and dependency on others are common among the elderly.

In addition, the time most offices can spend on a single basic care oral appointment is not enough to fully provide the necessary care required for many of the special needs patients.

As a result, oral healthcare is poor within this community, which in turn affects their overall health.

Now there is an alternative solution to receiving proper oral hygiene. In Concord, that option is called Travel 2 You Dental Hygiene Care, LLC by Julie Singh, RDH, RDHAP. Julie has been in the dental field since 1998 working as a hygienist. She is among the most accomplished and highly regarded dental hygienists in Concord.

She recognized this problem with immobility in elders and decided there was something she could do to help this segment of the community to improve their access to dental care. Simply, she will go to them.

Her RDHAP (Registered Dental Hygienist in Alternative Practice) license authorizes her to provide treatment at the patient's premises...in other words, make dental house calls.

"My heart goes out to seniors. I don't have any seniors in my life anymore, so I just want to give back that way. COVID taught me a lot. Seniors are fragile and during COVID, it was too risky for them to make it to the office. That was my inspiration to start the business."

Julie went back to college to University of the Pacific Arthur A. Dugoni School

of Dentistry (UOP San Francisco) and graduated as an RDHAP. This special license allows her to make house calls to those with special mobility issues. Once a patient contacts her, she will help screen them if they can qualify for her services.



Julie Singh offers oral care to her patient Dr. Felice Parisi, 92, along with caregiver Saloni Mitchell in Piedmont.

While some dentists fear she is out to steal their patients, that is not actually the case. By license, her practice is limited to home-bound patients and those who can demonstrate mobility issue in visiting a dentist. If there is advanced treatment required that she is not allowed to perform, she will make dental referrals.

Julie still maintains her hours at an office four days a week but is available for mobile calls on Mondays and Fridays. She says she is diligent in her pursuit to stay current in providing the profession's leading dental hygiene care while utilizing state-of-the-art equipment and supplies.

There are only a few practicing RDHP practitioners. "California has maybe a dozen alternative practitioners, with perhaps only a couple in the Bay Area. So, it's a lot of work," she says.

Julie brings her state-of-the-art equipment to your home. Initial complimentary services include consultation, oral cancer screening, oral health education for patients and their caregivers, and x-rays.

Once the appropriate care need is determined, Singh treatments can include dental cleanings, blood pressure, topical fluoride, arresting decay treatment, temporary fillings, and more.

To learn more, and to schedule an appointment, go to [travel2youdental.com](http://travel2youdental.com); Call or text 925-474- 4402,

Or email [julie@travel2youdental@gmail.com](mailto:julie@travel2youdental@gmail.com)



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