

The Diablo Gazette

Arts, Entertainment and All That's *Good* in Our Communities
Concord, Clayton, Walnut Creek, Martinez, Pleasant Hill
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APRIL 2023



Spring Into Action

Never too young for an Easter egg hunt. New Hope Church Easter Egg Hunt at Todos Santos Park in Concord delights thousands.



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Another CBCA Event Benefiting the Clayton Community

CBCA CLAYTON

Art & Wine

FESTIVAL IN DOWNTOWN CLAYTON

Saturday April 29th 10am - 7pm
Sunday April 30th 10am - 5pm



www.claytoncbca.org





Publisher's Notes
By David King

It's Time to Get Outdoors

There is nothing like warm weather and the start of Springtime to bring out our friendly community. If all goes well, we have plenty to look forward to this Spring and Summer.

In fact, events have already begun with a successful return of Concord's Spring Brewfest. Approximately 2,500 came out for the beer tasting and live music on a Saturday afternoon, March 25.

On the cover, New Hope Church moved their annual Easter Egg Hunt from Hillcrest Park in Concord.

to Todos Santos Park downtown before hiding 25,000 eggs! Seldom would you have seen more excited kids.



On April 15, after filing your taxes (or likely extension), head over to Martinez Craft Beer Festival at the Waterfront Park from 12 to 4 p.m. Hint: Tickets are less if you get them Online in advance.

Concord Ambassadors is inviting all to join in to celebrate Earth Day, April 22, at Todos Santos with their own Clean



Downtown Concord Day.

Meet inside the City parking garage (near the elevator) next to Skipolini's Pizzeria in downtown Concord (across from Brenden Theatre).

It starts at 9:30 a.m. but

they ask that you arrive a few minutes early to sign in and pick up your equipment. The project should only take about 90 minutes. You will be done by 11 a.m. If you plan to attend, please email Mike Pastrick at mapastrick@gmail.com

On April 29 And 30, Clayton hosts its wonderful Art and Wine Festival. Who doesn't look forward to that?

Beginning May 13, Clayton Concerts in the Grove will jam every other Saturday evening through September 16. We will have the full band line up next edition in our Calendar.

In June, Todos Santos launches its Thursdays Music and Market Series from June 1 to September 30 from 4P to 8P. That will be dovetailed three weeks in July with Tuesday Night Blues, July 11 to July 25.

There's plenty more happening in Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill. Just check our Calendar page for more activities. Be a good neighbor and join the fun.



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Small Non-profit, Veterans Accession House, Offers Homelessness Services to Those Who Served First, Veterans

The Veterans Accession House (VAH) has existed as a 501 (c)(3) organization serving homeless veterans since 2017. Its principal goals are to break the cycle of homelessness by combining housing with supportive services, increase and or stabilize income, encourage personal growth, support education, and link achievements to employment.

That's quite the effort for a relatively small non-profit that started with one concerned veteran. It began when Leonard Ramirez sought a way to give back after having spent his life serving in the military and law enforcement.

As an Army reservist while working at the San Francisco Sheriff's Department, he was deployed twice to Iraq, once to Afghanistan and also to the Balkans.

At first, he purchased a Pittsburg duplex with the plan of simply renting it out, but instead, decided it would better serve as transitional housing for Homeless Veterans.

"I guess it was a calling," Ramirez said. "It's not a feel-good thing, but a duty and a privilege to help fellow Veterans."

A case manager at another local nonprofit mentioned the need to find a bed for a homeless Veteran living in Todos Santos park in Concord, and Ramirez welcomed him indoors. From then on, word spread of a new place for homeless veterans to get indoors, and the duplex filled up. And for the first few years, Ramirez did all of it on his own dime. "It was a challenge in many ways, but I echo the belief that 'From Whom Much is Given, Much is Expected.'"

Starting October 1, 2020, VAH received a grant through the Department of Veterans Affairs to offer services to unsheltered Veterans. VAH now operates as a VA Grant & Per Diem (GPD), Service Intensive Transitional Housing (SITH) program and Bridge housing service provider. The SITH speaks to the level of intense case management used to aid a program participant in their stabilization, and to prepare for independent living; Bridge is offering short term housing for a Veteran with a housing voucher who



Veterans Accession House began in Pittsburg with the Puller and Kyle duplex.

needs time and a place while seeking and securing permanent housing.

Since its founding, VAH has housed 107 Veterans, with 58 Veterans served in the GPD program. Of this number, 47 had been placed into low-income permanent housing, two had purchased property, 38 being employed and or receiving a pension to ensure housing stability. Much of this is made possible through the determination of the Veteran, and with the support of our case management team.

VAH maintains an active caseload of Veterans, assessing 100 percent of program applicants to identify their needs in finding employment, benefits, medical and or mental health services, and where necessary, arrange for, and or transport them to scheduled appointments. Since its inception, VAH has been an active contributor of the county's Council on Health, Housing and Homelessness (H3), fitting squarely within the Continuum of Care's (CoC - collaborative of local service providers) mission, to end homelessness.

There is currently an enormous deficit of transitional and permanent supportive housing in this county, particularly among Veterans, starkly evidenced by one overwhelming statistic: in 2018 the Contra Costa CoC (2018 Annual Report) reported shelter-bed-capacity was sufficient to serve only 28% of the overall shelter-need for single adults. During the height of the 2020 - 2022 COVID epidemic, Contra Costa County decompressed their shelter dorm living spaces cutting shelter capacity by half.

Ramirez says the program caters both to veterans who are currently homeless, as well as those who are at-risk of becoming homeless. They are encouraged to seek employment, attend college or vocational training and must be sober. Instead of rent, their residents pay a regulated "program service fee" whose amount may be adjusted to up to one third of their net income. However, in VAH case, it never tops \$400 a month. Most pay much less. "It has never been about charging to be in the program, it actually costs more to operate our housing units, more than is gained from the Service Fees, but rather it is part of our goal to develop responsibility, habit, and accountability that will be expected once a Veteran is permanently housed."

"Our agency is hosting a free Veteran Employment & Resource Fair on April 20 at 10:00 a.m. in the Concord Veterans Memorial Building; the event is also open to the public at 11:00 a.m.," Ramirez announces. (See their ad on this page or go to their website.)

Small non-profits such as VAH rarely see large donations from corporations. In fact, donations only account for about 3% of the programs funding. To support a veteran, you will help VAH keep their promise to "help those who served first." All donations are applied directly to the benefit of our program residents in personal support, care and services.

Donations can be made on their website: <https://www.vahouse.org/>

VAH offices are located at 1820 Galindo Street, Suite 210 in Concord.

[Portions of this article by Jakob Rodgers, Bay Area News Group]

VETERANS ACCESSION HOUSE

Contra Costa & Solano Counties



VETERAN JOB & RESOURCE EXPO

APRIL 20, 2023 10 AM - 2 PM

(OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AFTER 11AM)

CONCORD VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING

2290 WILLOW PASS RD CONCORD

FREE PARKING 2255 Salvio Street Between Grant St. & Colfax St.

Over 25 Employers and over 15 Community and Government Organizations will be present. Meet Recruiters and find out about Veteran benefits, housing, counseling, job training, child support and more.

- General Questions on the Expo Dennis Rojas 925-791-3716
- Veterans Needing Transportation Tristan Ring 925-597-8869
- Veterans Needing Help with Resumes Olivia Rocha 510-459-1303



Veterans Registration:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/524039354817>

RSVP/Event Details:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/524042444057>

Public Registration:







In springtime, a sommelier's thoughts turn to lighter foods paired with vibrant white wines. The albariño grape is an adaptable wine. It is a great starter wine that continues through to the main course. Keep the fresh and fruity flavors going by ending with an ice wine from Canada.

Albariño is a grape classically found in the northwest region of Spain called Rias Baixas (pronounced: rhee-us buy-shus). You can find many well-priced imported albariños or seek out California producers.

Albariño is similar to sauvignon blanc, but it has less grass and citrus notes, and more floral and peach aromatics.

It is a delicious salad wine and pairs nicely with spring greens tossed with a fennel dressing. Add color, flavor, and texture by adding bright red beets, grated Manchego cheese, and toasted almonds.

Go vegetarian with a hearty, main dish pasta. It has tons of fresh herbs and toasted nuts for depth. The shallots offer a subtle garlic-onion flavor and fresh lemon juice with the zest provides zip.

If you want to add protein to your meal, the pasta makes an excellent side alongside grilled chicken or seafood. Albariño is fantastic with these fresh, light flavors.

A pear tart is a light dessert for a spring evening. This one has an almond filling and apricot glaze to echo the common flavors found in many dessert wines.

One of my favorite dessert wines is icewine. Icwine is made in many of the colder wine regions of the world where the grapes can freeze on the vine.

In Ontario, it is commonly made from the vidal grape. A tough outer skin makes vidal resistant to botrytis and prevents the grapes from bursting when frozen. When vidal is aged in oak it takes on rich overtones of vanilla, almonds, and oven baked bread. The high sugar and high acid found in icewines preserve the wine and add to their ability to age.

However, many suggest that icewine is



Icewine With Spring Greens

most enjoyable young when its apricot and pineapple flavors are at their peak.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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

Pasta with Lemon, Pine Nuts & Fresh Herbs

INGREDIENTS

- 1-pound dry pasta (rotelle/penne)
- 8 ounces sugar-snap peas
- ½ cup mixed coarsely chopped fresh herbs: Marjoram, basil, lemon thyme, Italian parsley, chervil, or hyssop (any combination, include flowers if available)
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 5 tablespoons pine nuts
- 4 shallots, chopped
- 1 teaspoon tiny capers (optional)
- ½ cup softened sundried tomatoes, cut into thin strips

Salt & pepper

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl combine herbs, 2 tablespoons olive oil, lemon zest, lemon juice, capers and sundried tomatoes.

Sauté pine nuts in 1 tablespoon olive oil until they begin to color. Add shallots and continue to cook until shallots are soft and pine nuts are light brown. Add to bowl.

Micro cook peas until crisp-tender. Boil pasta for 6-8 minutes. Drain both. Add to bowl. Salt & pepper to taste. Toss well to coat.

Yield: 12 cups

Apricot-Glazed Pear Tart

INGREDIENTS

Crust:

One butter crust recipe (follows)

Frangipane Filling:

- 1/3 cup almond paste (not marzipan)
- 2 teaspoons of sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon of flour
- 1 egg
- pinch of kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon of almond extract
- 3 large Bosc pears or one can of canned pears

lemon juice

Glaze:

- ¼ cup apricot jam
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- piece of lemon peel
- 2 tablespoons water

DIRECTIONS

Prepare the butter crust. Roll it out to a 13-inch circle and press it into a 10-inch tart pan with a removable bottom. Fit the dough into the edges and then trim off the excess dough leaning over the top. Put the crust in the freezer to chill for a half hour. Preheat the oven to 375 F.

To prepare the frangipane beat together the almond paste and sugar to break it apart. Beat in the butter. Mix in the egg, flour, salt, and almond extract and beat until light and fluffy.

Peel and core the pears, and slice thinly, about 1/8 to 1/4-inch thick. Place

the slices in a bowl with the lemon juice to help preserve their color. Or simply open the can and slice.

Spread the frangipane over the bottom of the tart shell and arrange the pear slices in a circular pattern. Bake for 30-35 minutes or until the pears take on a bit of color and the edges of the tart shell are golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

While the tart bakes, place the apricot jam, lemon peel, vanilla extract, and water or Riesling into a small saucepan and

warm over medium heat for 5 to 8 minutes, constantly stirring. Once it has reduced and thickened take it off the heat and set it aside. After removing the tart from the oven, brush the apricot glaze over the pears.

Yield: 6 servings.

Butter Crust

INGREDIENTS

- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for rolling
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, very cold, cut into ½-inch cubes
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon sugar (increase to 1½ teaspoons if for a sweet recipe)
- 4 to 6 tablespoons ice water, very cold

DIRECTIONS

Cut the sticks of butter into 1/2-inch cubes and place in the freezer for at least 15 minutes (preferably an hour or longer) so that they become thoroughly chilled.

In a food processor, combine flour, salt, and sugar, pulse to mix. Add butter and pulse 6 to 8 times, until mixture resembles coarse meal, with pea size pieces of butter. Add water one tablespoon at a time, pulsing until mixture just begins to clump together. If you pinch some of the crumbly dough and it holds together, it is ready. If not, add a little more water and pulse again.

Remove dough from machine and place on a clean surface. Carefully shape into a disc. Do not over-knead. You should still be able to see little bits of butter in the dough. These bits of butter are what will allow the crust to be flaky. Sprinkle the disc with a little flour on all sides. Wrap the disc in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least one hour.

Remove the crust disk from the refrigerator. Let sit at room temperature for 5-10 minutes. Sprinkle some flour on top of the disk. Roll out with a rolling pin on a lightly floured surface to a 12-inch circle; about 1/8 of an inch thick.

As you roll out the dough, add a few sprinkles of flour if necessary to keep the dough from sticking. Gently fold in half.

Place on to a 9-inch pie plate, lining up the fold with the center of the pan. Gently unfold and press down to line the pie dish with the dough.

Yield: (1) 9" crust

Farm-Fresh Eggs Offer a Rainbow of Colors

by Deb Morris, Pacific Coast Farmers Market

photo courtesy Tuscaloosa Coop.

Have you ever wondered why shells on chicken eggs are different colors? The shells range in colors from the usual white, to shades of cream, tan and brown, to light and dark turquoise.

A chicken's genes determine their eggshell color. But you can tell what color of egg they will lay by looking at their earlobes.

Hens Have Earlobes?

Yes, even though their ears are covered with feathers, the chicken's earlobes are visible and come in different colors. White-feathered chickens with white earlobes lay white eggs; red or brown chickens with red earlobes lay brown eggs; blue to green chicken eggs come from the Araucana, a breed of chicken developed in Chile. Araucanas have also been crossed with other breeds to produce the Ameraucana, sometimes called the "Easter egg chicken" because of multicolored eggs.

The color of a chicken's feathered coat is irrelevant to the color of eggs; chickens actually come in a wide range of shapes, colors, and sizes which run

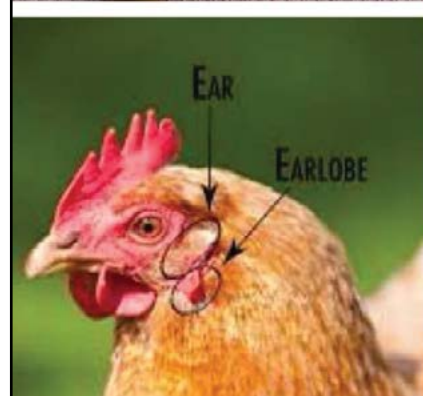
the gamut from the strange-looking Frizzled Cochins to the sleek black and white Lakenvelders.

Originally, all chicken eggs were probably brown. Over time, selective breeding for white eggs became the norm. It wasn't until the late 20th century when brown eggs were reintroduced, and then came the return of those breeds with bluish-colored eggs, although breeders and farmers were obviously familiar with them.

Eggs of different colors are essentially identical in flavor, with the taste itself determined by the chicken's diet. Have you ever cracked open a farm-fresh egg to discover a deep rich yellow yolk? Compare that to the pale yellow yolks you get in supermarket eggs.

Pasture-raised chickens are free to roam and eat insects, grass, and other natural foods in their environment. They are free to consume the dietary minerals they need, which is passed down to the eggs and the shells.

Some really beautifully colored eggs can be found at your farmers' market.



White to play and draw.
Hint: Keep the initiative with forcing moves!



SOLUTION

- 1.gxf8=N+!
- 1...gxf8=Q? This intermediate check kills White's position. 1...Rf5+! 2.Ke7 Bxf8+--
- 1...Bxf8 2.Ng5+!
- Forcing more trades. A rook and bishop vs rook endgame is a draw.
- 2...Rxc5 3.Bxc4
- If Black plays Rxc4, then Rxc3 with a theoretical draw. Black has one more trick up his sleeve though. It seems like Rxc3 fails to Rg6+, but there is a catch.
- 3...Bh6!?
- 3...Rxc4 4.Rxc3=
- 4.Rxc3 Rg6+ 5.Ke5!
- 5.Kf7?? Rg7+! 6.Kf6 Bxc3 Bf5 is not a pin!
- 5...Bxc3 6.Bf5=
- Black cannot get out of the pin, and White makes a draw.



Staging Your Home For a Quick Spring Sale

Staging your home is an important part of the selling process and can help you have a quick spring sale. When a home is staged, it appears well-maintained, clean, and inviting, which can increase its value and help it sell faster. A well-staged home is more likely to be featured in listings, open houses, and real estate tours, which can increase the visibility of your property and generate more interest from potential buyers. Here are some tips for staging your home for a quick spring sale.

Clean and declutter. This is the first step in preparing your home for a spring sale. Remove personal items, clean windows, wipe down surfaces, and vacuum carpets. Your aim is to create a clean and clutter-free environment to help make your home appear more spacious and welcoming to potential buyers. Consider hiring a professional cleaning service to deep clean your home before listing it for sale.

Paint and touch up. Give your home a fresh look by painting the walls in neutral colors such as white, beige, or gray. Touch up any scuffs or scratches on the walls, doors, and moldings. A fresh coat of paint helps to create a clean and modern look and can make your home appear well-maintained to potential buyers.

Maximize light. Natural light is a major selling point in a home. Open curtains and blinds and turn on all the lights to create a bright and welcoming atmosphere. Replace any burned-out light bulbs and upgrade to higher-wattage bulbs. A bright and airy environment is attractive to potential buyers.

Rearrange furniture. Rearranging furniture can make a big difference in how a room is perceived by potential buyers.

Try to create a clear and open space while still making the room feel comfortable and lived in. An over-furnished room can make it appear cluttered and smaller. Consider rearranging the furniture to create a more functional layout and highlight key features of the room.

Accessorize. Accessorizing adds personality and interest to a space. However, be mindful that if it is not overdone, it can be a distraction. A few vases of fresh flowers, candles, and decorative pillows can easily create a warm and inviting atmosphere for potential buyers.

Depersonalize. Depersonalizing your home is important to help potential buyers imagine themselves living in the space. Remove any family photos, religious items, and political posters. This will help potential buyers to see the full potential of your home and to imagine themselves living there.

Emphasize outdoor spaces. If you have a backyard, patio, or balcony, make sure it is tidy and attractive. Plant some colorful flowers and add outdoor furniture and accessories to create a space that potential buyers will want to spend time in. Outdoor spaces can be an attractive selling point for a home and can help to make your property stand out from others on the market.

Fix any major issues. Repair leaks, holes in the walls, and broken fixtures. This will not only improve the appearance of your home, but it will also show potential buyers that the home has been well-maintained. Consider hiring a professional contractor to fix any major issues, as this can help to ensure that your home is in top condition for a quick sale.

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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.

Market Update - Clayton

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
1028 Tiffin Dr	\$1,449,000	3675	5/3.5	3/6/2023
703 Condor Pl	\$630,000	1252	2/2.5	3/7/2023
770 Bloching Cir	\$1,221,000	2032	4/2.5	3/10/2023
6026 Golden Eagle Way	\$975,000	1816	3/2	3/13/2023
15630 Marsh Creek Rd	\$950,000	2414	4/2	3/17/2023
221 Stranahan Cir	\$865,000	1361	3/2	3/21/2023
24 Mt Wilson Way	\$675,000	1378	3/2.5	3/22/2023

Market Update - Concord

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
2666 Richard Ave	\$668,000	1467	5/2	3/2/2023
4436 Willowood Ct	\$915,000	1717	4/2	3/3/2023
2037 Sierra Rd #5	\$460,000	1099	3/2	3/10/2023
1778 Clayton Way	\$825,000	1963	4/2	3/14/2023
1272 Pinecrest Dr	\$995,000	2242	4/2.5	3/15/2023
5143 Coral Ct	\$895,000	1762	4/2	3/21/2023
4706 Curletto Dr	\$1,070,000	2005	4/2.5	3/22/2023



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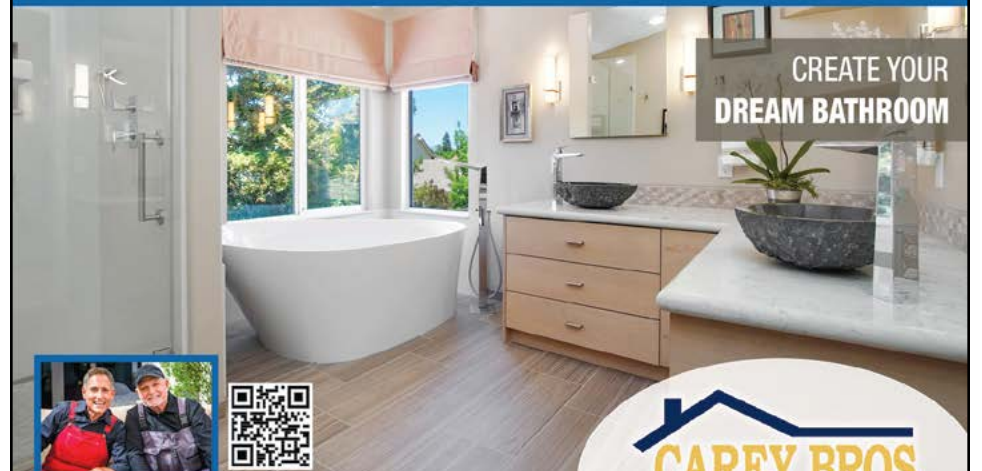


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That Moment a Struggling Local Musician Became a National Rock Star

Concord resident and digital marketer and videographer, Pat Mosca, from the outside, walks and talks like any other Bay Area successful entrepreneur, smiling, casually dressed, oozing with confidence. But this warm-hearted and humble man has never forgotten his roots – he became a rock star virtually overnight. He was the keyboardist for the Greg Kihn Band from the mid-80s to mid-90s.

(Later, lead singer and band founder, Greg Kihn, became a resident of Clayton while working as the morning host of San Jose's KUFX-FM [KFOX 98.5] until 2012.)

How does one become a rock star? Mosca shared his rags-to-riches story.

Born in West Pittsburgh (Bay Point), Mosca graduated from Pacific High School knowing that music, especially keyboards, would be at the center of his life. With friends he started a band that played on weekends, and after graduation in 1973 he became a starving musician.

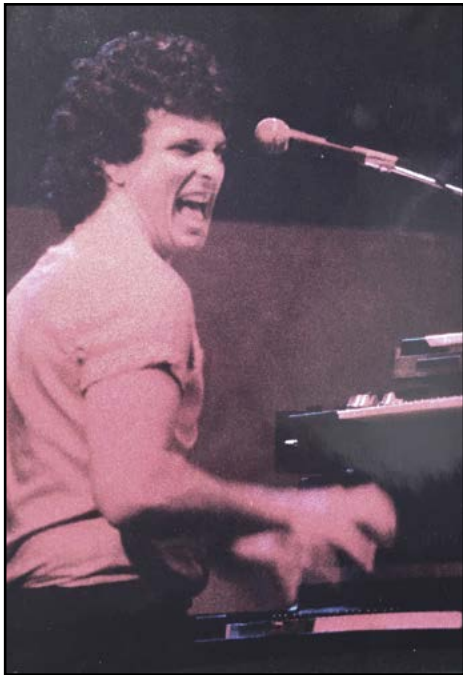
With Elton John as his idol and The Allman Brothers as his favorite rock band, he began writing music, playing local gigs, earning little but wanting to make it to big time Rock and Roll.

Finally, realizing that it was just too difficult and needing to pay his bills, he gave up.

"I sold all of my equipment, cut my hair, bought a suit and tie and earned my real-estate license," he says. But three years later he decided he would not spend the rest of his life doing something he did not like and returned to pursue his musical passion.

He joined several bands, played events all over California, and lived in his car and on his mother's couch. Realizing he needed a more stable income, he began working at Leo's Music in Oakland, a landmark place for almost every band in Northern California. Leo's was their hang-out place, where they bought or had equipment repaired or where they simply socialized.

Pat started to meet the roadies for such bands as the Grateful Dead, Santana, Tower of Power, Steve Miller Band and Van Morrison. He developed friendships and listened intently to local



news about the industry.

One of Santana's band members mentioned that Greg Kihn had fired his keyboard player and suggested he ask for an interview. Not believing he had a chance, he applied anyway and was shocked when he received a call telling him to show up two days later. Rushing out, he went to Tower Records and bought every recording the band had made staying up all day and night practicing. He went to studios in Berkeley and auditioned. He thought

he did well but days went by with no word from the band. Now waiting for the call while Greg Kihn continued their concerts all over the state including making appearances on TV's America Bandstand in Los Angeles and Solid Gold. Mosca kept to his day job at Leo's.

Life, however, suddenly changed forever. Greg Kihn called.

Mosca was to join the band in New York. For his first performance, the band was to be the musical guest for the Saturday Night Live's Season 10 Finale, on April 13, 1985.

Leo's was not going to give him time off for the engagement, so Mosca quit his job, packed his bags, and flew to New York City.

Very much a 'rookie' in the industry, he was in awe at the opulence of the hotel they were staying at in downtown Manhattan. It was crawling with movie stars and his room was next to the U2 band. Intimidated by it all and unable to socialize at the bar or dine out since he only had \$40 in his pocket, he spent most evenings watching TV except when U2 gave him a ticket to their show at the Meadowlands arena.

Rehearsals lasted four days and while his playing was excellent, being around the famous stars overwhelmed him even though they all treated him kindly. It was a far cry from West Pittsburg as he talked casually with Billy Crystal, Jim Belushi, Martin Short, and the whole cast. He sat nervously like a starry-eyed, embarrassed teenager next to a scantily clothed Julia Louis-Dreyfus, as he waited his turn for make-up. The highlight of the week was meeting Howard Cosell of NFL fame, the special guest and who treated Pat with real kindness.

On the fourth night, the manager of the band came into his bedroom and dumped armfuls of cash on the bed. Mosca was in shock. "You are now hired,"

he explained, "you're going on tour with us."

After years crisscrossing the USA (1986-96) mainly playing headliners to other bands such as Journey, Cheap Trick, the Beach Boys and the Rolling Stones, life on the road was exhausting and prevented him from having his own family. For the next twenty years he worked from his own home studio writing music and producing soundtracks for TV commercials, National Geographic and History channels. Unable to finish a music video for a national hamburger campaign he knew he was burned out.

Mosca moved on and created his current Concord business. Scrolling through his impressive website, www.patmosca.com, Mosca now offers business solutions, especially digital marketing including video production, website design and drone services. He is a licensed drone operator. Mosca recently received a prestigious Poppy Award for his "Visit Concord" video for the Concord Taco Trail promotion with the star of "Workaholics", Clayton Valley High graduate, Blake Anderson.

On his website Mosca attributes his success to his experience. "Any form of success in the entertainment world is unbelievably difficult. For over twenty years I turned music into mortgage payments and that's hard to do."

It is an amazing career for a boy from a disadvantaged neighborhood who just wanted to be another Elton John... and this man is your neighbor.

Michael Barrington is a local humanitarian and author: his memoirs, "The Bishop Wears no Drawers", a historical fiction novel, "Let the Peacock Sing" and romance novel, "Becoming Anya". www.mbwriter.net.



Saturday Night Live Guests Howard Cosell, Greg Kihn in red, Pat Mosca on the left.



Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery

JOIN US FOR A FREE FUN FAMILY EVENT

EARTH DAY 2023

CELEBRATING THE EARTH, TOGETHER, AGAIN!

April 22
from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
1300 Loveridge Rd,
Pittsburg

TOUCH-A-TRUCK

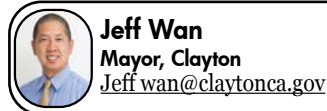
FACILITY TOUR

BOUNCE HOUSES

CART RACES & MORE



CLAYTON NEWS



Master Use Agreement Update

In 2008 the City of Clayton entered into a Master Use Agreement (the Agreement) with the Clayton Business and Community Association (CBCA). Under the terms of this Agreement essentially all fees established by the City's Master Fee Schedule for events held in town were waived. This included fees for temporary use permits, street use, noise permits, and all fees associated with using the Grove Park. Direct support costs for things like police services, maintenance services, and use of certain city equipment were still being charged on a cost recovery basis; however, under the terms of the Agreement, overhead, other staff time, and the cost for use of certain city facilities were also waived or never charged. This may have been appropriate at the time of execution, but in our current environment, we need to ensure we are doing an exhaustive review of our activities to enhance fiscal sustainability.

Recently the Council took action to terminate and renegotiate the Agreement with the CBCA. This action is not a reflection on the great work done by the CBCA, but rather it is the result of an effort to ensure the city is reimbursed for the costs incurred when events are held. It is fairly routine for cities to charge a fee for use of their facilities, and Clayton is no different. We have a master fee schedule that outlines the fees associated with the various uses of City resources. But with the agreement that was executed in 2008, the CBCA as an organization was exempted from paying these fees that make the city whole for its costs.

I maintain and will reiterate that the CBCA is a fantastic organization that adds a tremendous amount of value to the residents of Clayton. By hosting several events throughout the year, they are able to use the income generated to donate back into the community. In the past, the CBCA has generously donated not only

to local non-profits and businesses but also to schools, scholarship programs, and directly to the City for things like benches, the Grove gazebo, sponsorship of events, among other activities. These are great things, but this should not exempt someone or a group from paying for services rendered or facilities used in order for the city to recover its costs.

The commitment I made when re-elected was that I would not seek any tax increase without first exhausting all options to reduce expenses and increase efficiencies – raising taxes should be a last resort. Right now, the effort is focused on cost reduction through efficiency and elimination of unnecessary work, including efforts relating to energy efficiency, discontinuing service contracts that don't provide sufficient benefits, and even closing City Hall to the public one day per week to provide staff time to focus.

On the revenue side, we have begun a more robust analysis of our investment portfolio to ensure we are achieving the best possible yields in this high inflationary market. Later this year, we will be examining the City's master fee schedule to ensure the amounts being charged reflect the costs incurred for various services. When it comes to fees one thing stood out, and that was the Agreement between the City and the CBCA.

As a result, the Council voted to terminate the existing Agreement effective July 1, 2023, and to renegotiate a new agreement. This provides sufficient notice, aligns with the City's fiscal year so budget planning could incorporate any relevant changes, and provides enough time such that a new agreement with the CBCA could be reached so that we can maintain efficient operations of the City, and the City could recoup its costs.



The Death of Don Pacheco Or Was It? 163 years ago

"The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated," is a misquote attributed to Samuel Clemens, aka Mark Twain in 1897, referring to his response to an article published in the New York Journal that got it wrong assumably confusing his cousin's illness as his. Neither had died.

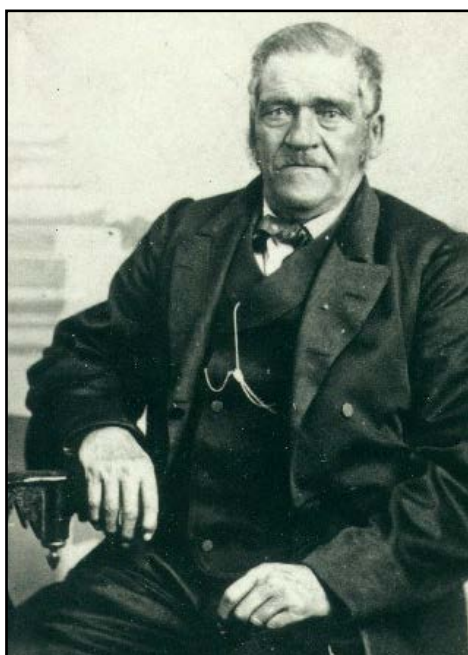
Our local founder, Don Pacheco, had similar news published of his demise just 37 years earlier. This clipping from the Contra Costa Gazette calls out the error.

"Don Francisco Perez Pacheco, one of the eldest and wealthiest citizens of California, is dead. He owned large tracts of land near Martinez and the town Pachecoville was named after him. About 40 years ago, he came to Monterey (county) from Guadalajara, Mexico. He was a poor man, and for a long time worked at his trade of wagon making. In the course of time, he became possessed of several fine ranches and large herds of cattle, which he sold at immense profits in 1849-50," said the "Morning Call."

You have things slightly mixed, Mr. Call! The Pacheco who owns "large tract of land near Martinez," and after whom Pachecoville was named, is NOT dead—at least he looked anything like but a corpse when we saw him in our streets a day or two since. We were not aware he was formerly a poor man, or that he ever

worked at wagon making, although he does possess land efficient for several fine ranches and large herds of cattle. His name is Salvio Pacheco; the Pacheco who is dead, lived and died at Monterey (county).

Contra Costa Gazette-May 8, 1860



Clayton Library Calendar

Homework Help. Every Saturday from 10 a.m. – Noon. Homework Help is available for elementary school students in all subjects. Assistance for Grades 6 - 9 is available based on subject knowledge of volunteers working. Please ask library staff for more information. Appointments are strongly recommended and last 30 minutes.

Arab American Heritage Month Treasure Hunt. April 1- April 29. Children's Program. April is Arab American Heritage Month! To celebrate, search the shelves for eight famous Arab Americans and if you find them all you can choose a prize from our treasure chest. For an extra challenge, read the provided biographies and answer a question about each person to win an extra prize. Just pick up a game sheet to get started.

Clayton Knit & Crochet. First Wednesday of each month 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Adults come to knit, crochet, and make friends with this friendly group at the Clayton Library. Staff will be present for the first hour to answer questions followed by two hours of free crafting.

Camp Clayton. Wednesdays April 5, 12, and 26 from 2 – 3 p.m. Children's Program. Join us on Wednesdays for STEAM focused events, drop-in programs, and take-home activities. No registration required.

April 5: Join us for seasonal arts & crafts.

April 12: Come check out the Discovery Zone and learn more about the natural world.

April 26: Stay and play or grab and go exploring with a mix of crafts and activities that can be done here at the library or at home.

Storytime. Thursdays from 11:00 – 11:15 a.m. (Lap sit for birth – 2 years) and Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. – Noon (Toddler/Preschool Storytime). Learn new songs, listen to delightful books, and meet new friends.

Board at the Library. Thursday, April 6 from 3 – 5:30 p.m. We have strategy games, card games, word games, drawing games, and more for tweens, teens, and adults. Check them out at the front desk for in-Library use.

Computer Tech Assistance. Every Friday from 10 a.m. – Noon. Do you need help with your technology? Visit with our wonderful and knowledgeable volunteer

for a half hour of one-on-one assistance. You can bring your own device or work on one of our available computers. Call for an appointment or sign up at the Library Desk.

Clayton Memory Café. Saturday, April 15 (third Saturday of every month) from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. for adults. Participate in cognitive activities designed to perk up memory. These gatherings are free and open to all older adults with or without current memory concerns. A small snack will be provided. If you have a food allergy or restriction, please contact the library at least 24 hours prior to your visit. The Clayton Library is not responsible for Memory Café attendees. Attendees must be accompanied by a caregiver or loved one for the duration of the Memory Café if assistance or supervision is required.

Insect Discovery Lab. Wednesday, April 19 from 2-3p.m. Children can explore the world of insects and other arthropods, including millipedes, tarantulas, walking sticks, scorpions and more. Meet live specimens and learn about their key roles in the web of life.

Succulent Terrarium Workshop for Teens. Thursday, April 20 from 4-5 p.m. Teen Program. Celebrate Earth Day by creating your own desert ecosystem. Get your hands dirty as you learn how to create a thriving terrarium.

Upcycled Magazine Plant Holders. Saturday, April 22 from 2-3:30 p.m. Join the Earth Day crafting program for teens and adults. Cut, roll, and weave recycled magazines to make a beautiful and functional decorative plant holder. Materials for making the holder will be provided, but plants are not included. Register online at cclib.org under the Events tab. Seats are limited.

Clayton Library Book Club. Tuesday, April 25 (4th Thursday of each month) from 6 pm – 7:45 pm. Adult Program April's book for discussion is *The Lost Apothecary* by Sarah Penner and May's book is *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher.

Special thanks to the sponsors of these events: the Clayton Community Library Foundation, Sloat Garden Center, and the Cheese Steak Shop. Clayton Library, 6125 Clayton Rd. For more information and appointments, please call 925-673-0659.

Bocce Athletes Wanted!

The Clayton Valley High School Athletic Hall of Fame (HOF) Committee has announced that their next Bocce Ball fundraiser will be held Saturday, May 6, 2023. The tournament will be held at the Ipsen Family Bocce Park in downtown Clayton 6000 Main St.

This is the second Bocce Ball fundraiser for the CVCHS HOF. What was expected to be an annual event, the first tournament was held in 2019. but due to the pandemic, the tournament and the semi-annual induction ceremony were postponed.

The Bocce tournament will consist of 16 teams with four members each. Cash prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place. The tournament will start at 9:00 a.m. and is expected to conclude around 2:00 p.m. The cost of entry is \$400.00 per team. To register your four-member bocce team, e-mail Herc Pardi at herc_pardi@hotmail.com.

One hundred percent of the proceeds will go to the CVHS Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony.

The return of this year's tournament coincides with the 2023 HOF Induction Ceremony being held at Center Concord, 5298 Clayton Road, Concord, on Friday, May 19. The event will start at 5:00pm with a social (no host wine and beer), followed by dinner at 6:30pm and the induction ceremony at 7pm.



Because of those pandemic delays, the HOF will be inducting an expanded class of outstanding athletes, coaches and community members.

DINNER TICKETS

Dinner tickets for the Induction Ceremony on May 19 are now available through the Clayton Valley Charter High School web site. You, your family and your friends are all invited and encouraged to attend to help honor this class of inductees. Adult tickets are \$50 each, Kids 12 and under \$25 each. Ticket(s) will be mailed to you. Go to: <https://rb.gy/267p>

You may also purchase ticket(s) via check payable to CVHS HOF. Checks should be mailed to CVHS Hall of Fame, PO Box 314, Clayton, CA 94517.

Visit the Clayton Valley High School Athletic Hall of Fame website anytime and learn more about the committee, view an archive of photos and past inductees, and be included in other announcements. www.cvshof.com.



the concordian

by Edi Birsan

EdiBirsan@gmail.com

Squaring the Circle of Homelessness



I started as a Math Major in the last century, there was (and still is in some dark shadows of the current academic world) the expression of trying to “Square the Circle.” That is taking the area of a circle and making a square with the same area. This is impossible in the classic two-dimensional geographic world. The main culprit being the inclusion of an irrational number in the computation of the circle, namely pi. I remember suggesting that we shift from a base 10 number system to a base pi number system. The teacher was not amused and commented that maybe I should be in politics. I would end college in dual majors of History and Political Science.

Homelessness is on the mind of everyone in city government and is one of the four top issues for the League of California Cities (www.CalCities.org), and in Concord, it is the focus of a working group of nine folks to form a Homeless Strategic Plan.

Sitting in the City budget is \$5.2 million dollars to be applied in the effort on homelessness and hopefully should still be there after the nine months or so of its mission to produce a plan, unless the Council were to suddenly move before the expected advice.

Just as pi is irrational, so is the expectation that the plan will eliminate homelessness. The culprit is humanity. The hope is that there will be a plan to provide a consistent, effective, and measurable set of approaches or policy that will reduce the suffering of those unsheltered, reduce the generation of newly unsheltered, save city resources in dealing with the concurrent problems

therein, as well as ease the grating on our fundamental compassion within the general community.

The first meeting of the Concord group was March 22 at the Concord Senior Center in Baldwin Park. All future meetings will be held there on the fourth Monday of the month at 6:00 PM. Limited amounts of coffee/tea and munchies will be provided.

The nine members consist of two councilmembers (Laura Nakamura and Edi Birsan) and seven members that represent expertise in categories: Concord resident, Concord business, lived experienced, non-profit provider, mental health, addiction and veteran. The format allows for public comment and interaction during the meeting and the group is very accessible before and after the meetings.

I encourage you to submit your questions, ideas, experiences and to digest as we go through what will be a challenging mission to make the community of all of us better. In Concord, we must strive to be in concord with each other.

The website for the group is: <https://www.cityofconcord.org/1036/Homeless-Strategic-Plan>

The views above are from Edi Birsan, whose conception of a seven-dimensional world described in a pi base number system was never in vogue in the 1960's, and there was a war to be stopped that distracted him from the thesis. How irrational is that? Contact him at EdiBirsan@gmail.com.

Sunvalley to host the 2nd Annual MDUSD Art & Digital Media Exhibition

Sunvalley Shopping Center will host the Second Annual Art & Digital Media Exhibition by showcasing the creative work of students from four area high schools' Digital Art Media programs.

Mt. Diablo Unified School District has a robust Career Pathways Program at five of their comprehensive high schools and a few of their middle schools. In April, the Art & Digital Media Pathways will be participating in a Digital Art & Digital Media Exhibition in partnership with the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce and Sunvalley Shopping Center.

From April 17 to April 30, Sunvalley Shopping Center will exhibit artwork submitted by Mt. Diablo High School, Concord High School, College Park, and Northgate High School students in the Food Court. The students have worked extremely hard to create unique and expressive art in a variety of photography, animation, and digital media pieces.

Kickoff Reception

The public is invited to the kickoff reception and ribbon cutting ceremony in the Food Court of Sunvalley Shopping Center on April 17 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

“As firm believers in supporting our community, Sunvalley is proud to continue our relationship with the Mount Diablo Unified School District in hosting their second annual Art & Digital Media Exhibition Showcase. The alignment of our outreach efforts with the Community Alliance for the Future and the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce strengthens Concord and the surrounding areas, making it enjoyable to partner and provide positive and impactful events. With Sunvalley being a longstanding staple in Concord, we look to continuing to build our relationships and connecting with other community partners,” stated Luther Daniel, General Manager of Sunvalley Shopping Center.



Neuroplasticity

by Jessica Raaum Foster,

NeurologyofPresence.com

Lessons From Physics Can Keep You Healthy

Scientists are currently discussing a theoretical space mission to Alpha Centauri. This journey could take approximately 120 years, but what is fascinating is that one third of that time would be used to accelerate the craft to top travel speed, one third of the time will be spent at top speed and one third of the time will be required to decelerate before landing.

This is really just basic physics at work, but the idea of it taking 40 years to slow a craft down is hard to grasp. In fact, I think it's hard for a lot of us to grasp “slow down” generally.

What does that have to do with health and wellness?

This analogy highlights a missing piece in our common understanding of self-care; recovering from a big event (wanted or unwanted) requires as much time, energy, and effort as the event itself.

Crashing is common after a big push. For example, I used to get sick every college break after I finished my finals. I would like us to consider shifting that narrative to “landing gracefully.” How do we do this?

Like the spacecraft, we need to budget energy and time for the recovery process, not just sleep, but actual rehabilitation training. Why?

Think back to the last time you had to push- to give more than you actually have the energy to give. When that happens, stress hormones (adrenaline

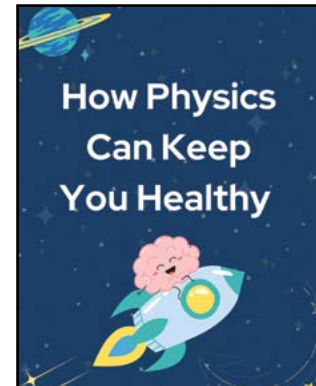
and eventually cortisol) kick in to keep you moving. They do keep you going- and can often feel amazing- but it costs you something. Stress alters everything- our breathing patterns, our posture, our movement patterns, etc. If you have to push for more than a few days, your brain will begin to adapt to those stress patterns.

While sleep and good nutrition can go a long way in halting the hormonal cascade, you won't actually begin to repair your breathing, posture, etc. until you start moving again. Intentionally repairing the nervous system can not only speed up the recovery process- it can also prevent those new stress patterns from becoming permanent.

How do we do this? Even a few minutes of intentional breathing, get outside for a walk, and while you're at it, take a look around you (distance vision can be very rejuvenating). Any type of slow easy movement like Tai Chi or an impromptu dance party can get you reconnected to your body.

If you know there is a big push coming, give some thought to how you are going to land the craft gracefully and avoid the crash.

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



Contra Costa Health Winds Down Covid-19 Plan, Vaccination Sites Close

I know we all remember when the first Shelter in Place orders were issued in March 2020. Over the last three years we have adapted how we do business. We wore masks, got vaccinated, tested when necessary and did our part to get our community back to some resemblance of normal. While COVID-19 is not eradicated, it is now part of our daily lives and will likely be here for the next 5 to 10 years.

The pandemic was likely the first time that many residents heard of Contra Costa Health as the department quickly went into action to help protect our most vulnerable residents, support local nonprofits with personal protective equipment, provide PCR testing across the County, and develop a plan to make the vaccine accessible to as many residents as they could.

Contra Costa Health is a unique department that runs the County's public health department, maintains the public hospital, a county health plan (Contra Costa Health Plan, CCHP) and is a Medi-Cal provider. This means that the department can develop strategies with direct feedback from those implementing the work.

During the height of the pandemic, CCH focused on its role as a public health department and served residents in the County regardless of their insurance status. This allowed the County to offer testing across the County, distribute three million vaccines, provide thousands of PCR testing and self-testing kits, and prescribe COVID-19 treatments for those testing positive. Their hard work was highlighted when Contra Costa County was recognized as having the second lowest rate in the country of

COVID-19 deaths among large counties.

Now that the emergency orders have expired, the County-run vaccination sites will be closed as of March 31 and CCH will return its focus to serving CCHP members, Medi-Cal recipients, and uninsured residents. CCH will provide no-cost testing at our ten County Health Centers, 24/7 advice nurse, vaccinations, immunizations, and treatments for COVID-19. A key goal of the CCH COVID-19 wind-down plan is to ensure that those without insurance continue to have the same access to services as is granted to insured individuals.

CCH's Equity Mobile Team will continue to partner with community-based organizations to hold pop-up clinics in areas with hard-to-reach residents. These pop-ups are an important part of CCH's commitment to equity in care.

All Contra Costa County residents, regardless of affiliation with CCH, can request free at-home testing kits online at bit.ly/home-tests, calling 1-833-829-2626, by visiting a CCH health center or your local library. Vaccinations and boosters are available through your local pharmacy, or you may contact your healthcare provider.

I know the pandemic has been a very trying time. As we move into this new phase of normalcy, I hope COVID-19 becomes less of a factor in our daily lives and continues to be treatable.

For more information on Contra Costa County's COVID-19 response or to locate a county health center, please visit <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/> or call 1-833-829-2626.



Earth Day, Easter and Spring featured in Robert Bradley's work at aRt Cottage

Robert Bradley is one of the three artists currently featured at the art Cottage in The Three Amigos exhibit.

Bradley uses mixed media in his pieces. He includes colored pencil, acrylic paint, watercolors, gum arabic, graphite, and varnish. His painting "Spring Colors" is hung diagonally, which is quite unique and really makes you look twice.

When visitors come into the main room of the gallery, they will find another one of Bradley's paintings, "Colossus of the Sea", hung diagonally. It is easy for the viewer to get lost in the imagery. It is like being lost in a dream world under the sea.

When traveling further into the room you will find a forest with large drips of brown which feel like roots growing under the earth.

Proceeding further into the smaller gallery room, the Fantasy Room, "Hamlet" can be viewed. I want to live in this little town of Hamlet. I can picture Easter eggs all around the town, spring animals, deer,



Oregon Coast

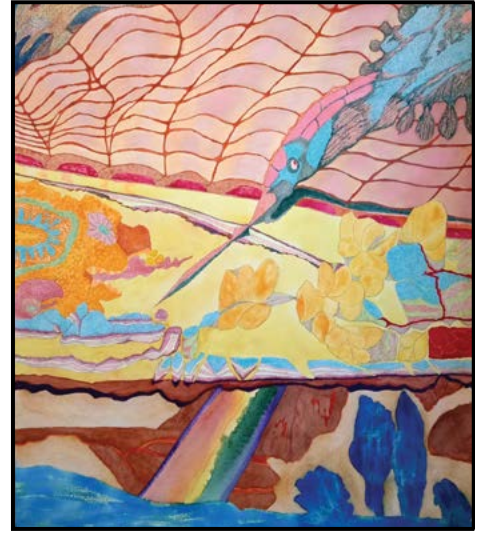
rabbits and lots of happy children running around. "The Oregon Coast", "Dimensions of Earth" and "Knight Sky" are also on display in the Fantasy Room.

It is a cool place to hang out and think about our world, a dream world and the real world.

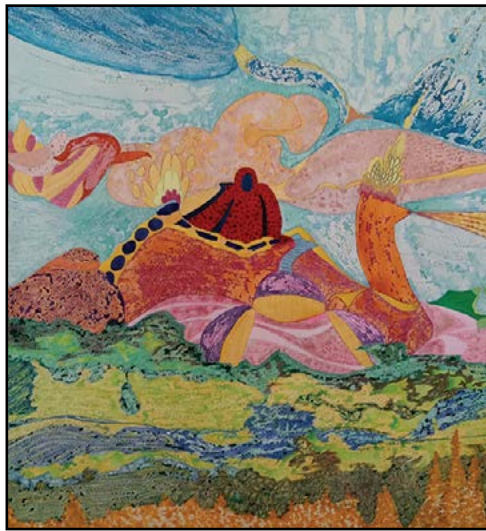
Come join us and celebrate Earth Day, Easter, or Spring. aRt Cottage has a little bit of each thanks to Robert Bradley's beautiful paintings.



Forest



Dimensions of the Earth



Knight Sky



Spring Colors



MUSIC AND DANCE CLASSES

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by Elaine Schroth, CEO & President

The Gift that Keeps on Giving

We are excited and honored to be selected as a recipient of funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The gifts we received on behalf of the City of Concord will allow Visit Concord to bring a critical focus to our arts and accessibility programs in Concord.

Last year we partnered with Local Edition Creative for the installation of nine amazing murals throughout the city. Each mural reflected the style and individuality of the artist who drew creative inspiration from flora to culture to the human spirit. Creative Concord gave locals and visitors a full arts and cultural experience. Events in Todos Santos Plaza included an Artist Jam generating 12 smaller murals, donated, and placed with various non-profits around the city, and performances from our own Blue Devils Drum & Bugle Corp and Diablo Taiko Drums.

Creative Concord continues this year, thanks to funds provided by ARPA, as well as much-needed generous donations from businesses, organizations, and residents in the Concord community. This year's infusion of arts and culture will build on the foundation from last year.

Creative Concord will offer new murals while embracing new genres such as temporary sculptures. Surrounding these eye-catching installations will be live performances from local arts groups giving the community a fun day to gather, engage, and be inspired.

This focus on art in Concord has proven to bring significant benefits to the small business community too. The



art connects patrons to surrounding merchants as residents and visitors tour each mural, sculpture or other display.

Our second gift

of funds from ARPA will go to what has become a labor of love for our team — Accessible Concord. Visit Concord is highly invested in the future of tourism in Concord. When you have friends or family visiting, our wish is to ensure an exceptional experience for everyone. Inclusivity is a big part of this agenda. You can see these efforts displayed already in ADA friendly playgrounds like Matteo's Dream and accessible areas in Concord parks and Mount Diablo; think barrier-free parking, accessible picnic areas, restrooms, drinking fountains, trails, and visitor centers. Concord hotels and attractions like Six Flags Hurricane Harbor and Concord Pavilion all offer options for guests with special needs allowing them to travel with a feeling of confidence.

The additional ARPA funds will allow this area of tourism in Concord to expand.

This month our team has initiated training for Concord hotel and business partners to best serve guests diagnosed with sensory sensitivities or on the autism spectrum. We expect an estimated 1,000 families to benefit from this additional coaching, as well as sensory kits, special hotel amenities, and more. This instruction, including

insights from the traveler's point of view, will allow each business and its staff prepare to make travelers feel at ease.

Participating businesses will also prosper from this specialized training. Customers will welcome the extra attention paid to family and friends with special needs.

If you would like to find out more about these training courses, contact Visit Concord at info@visitconcordca.com.

For more about experiences in Concord, visit www.visitconcordca.com. Or better yet, come see us at the Concord Visitor Center in Downtown Concord (Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) You can find special offers for Concord attractions and shop from our Concord merchandise line.



Creative Concord brings local artist painting sessions to Todos Santos in July, 2022. While other artists work to create the nine murals now placed around downtown Concord.

Contra Costa Psychic

Free Mini Reading
1800 Clayton Rd., Concord
Inside the Body & Mind Spirit Center
925-727-9839

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ouimetbrothers.com



The Naked Gardener
David George, UC-Certified
Master Gardener

What is a Master Gardener Volunteer?

It is full speed ahead for spring and summer gardening with plenty of water in the rain gauges and in the ground, our veggies and landscaping plants will not suffer like they have for the past few years. If you want to get a head start on your summer veggies, check out one of the many community and garden events held each year by the UC Master Gardeners of Contra Costa County (UCMGCCC). Better yet, maybe you are ready to become a UC-certified Mater Gardener yourself.

Formed over 40 years ago, this program is part of the UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) Cooperative Extension. The Master Gardener program is the bridge between University of California researchers and Contra Costa gardening communities. Their mission is to communicate research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices



Concord Farmers Market MG Booth - Courtesy CCMG

to residents. Every certified UC Master Gardener in the program is a volunteer, dedicated to providing this knowhow bridge to gardeners throughout the county.

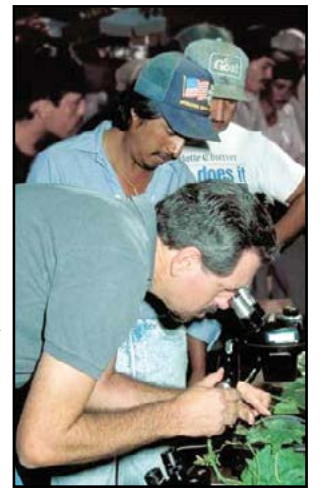
Popular “Growing Gardeners” classes in both English and Spanish teach residents how to successfully grow vegetables at home. “Ask a Master Gardener” booths are set up each week during warm months at many local farmers markets. Experienced Master Gardener volunteers will answer your questions and

provide literature that will guide you to a successful gardening experience. Do you have issues with gophers or aphids? Ask a Master Gardener volunteer.

Contra Costa Master Gardeners also staff a Help Desk that answers emails from worried gardeners and professionals. All information is up-to-date, non-commercial, unbiased, and research based.

Public demonstration gardens welcome visitors during the growing season in Richmond, Walnut Creek, Pittsburg, and Antioch. Free regular scheduled talks and demonstrations of advanced growing and pest management techniques are open to the public. The program also provides speakers for libraries and gardening clubs, supports local community gardens, and runs yearly master

gardener volunteer training courses, next offered this fall. In addition, the Walnut Creek MG annually donates literally tons of fresh produce to the Monument Crisis Center from their garden.



Hands-on Training offered through UC ANR - Courtesy UC IPM

To become a UC-certified Master Gardener Volunteer, you do not need to be a biologist or have extensive professional experience. All you need is a desire to help others, learn all you can about the latest research-based gardening techniques from the training and certification course, and donate a few hours a month to their worthwhile and fun events. Only about 25 applicants are accepted for the yearly training and certification course. If you are interested, complete an application found on the Contra Costa Master Gardener website at: <https://ccmg.ucanr.edu>.

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



Regular Education at Walnut Creek Demo Garden



CVCHS NEWS
Dave Fehle, Executive Director
Clayton Valley Charter High School

Extracurricular Activities Lead to Academic Success and Positive Life Lessons

Extracurricular activities offer high school students an opportunity to learn the values of teamwork, individual responsibility, commitment, selflessness, and a sense of culture and community. CVCHS offers 65 clubs which are student-led and inspired.

These activities provide a wonderful way to widen their social circles, expand interests, and build leadership skills. Studies show that participation in high school extracurricular activities leads to positive and healthy outcomes, as well as academic success.

While grades and test scores are important, colleges also want to see the person a student is becoming and the skills they have learned outside of class. They want to know what makes one unique – and extracurricular activities on and off campus help CVCHS students stand out.

“College admissions officers are not just interested in what you’re doing in the classroom,” said Ellen Coleman, a CVCHS counselor. “They also care about students’ interests and passions before and after

school hours.”

So, what types of extracurricular activities can students experience at CVCHS? Each year, we offer our students the opportunity to participate in athletics, student government, community service, after-school job experience, arts and music, hobbies and clubs.

Students Inspire, Organize and Lead Clubs

Organizing a club is easy and the process is straightforward – find a topic or issue which interests a group of like-minded students, recruit a teacher-sponsor and complete a club application. We want our students to feel empowered and bring new, exciting ideas to the current slate of clubs offered at CVCHS.

Many clubs are traditional high school groups or associated with one of our Academies such as Applied Physics and Chemistry Club, Art Club, Chess Club, Debate Club, Model United Nations, National Honors Society, Sports Medicine Club, Robotics Club, and Women In Science and Engineering.

Some have a public service or cultural link to our community like Asian American Pacific Islander Club, Black Student Union, Change Makers Club, Citizens of the World, Gay Straight Alliance, Key Club, Muslim Student Association, LA RAZA Club, and CVCHS Red Cross.

And others are simply for fun and socializing such as Book Club, Game Club, Garden Club, Karaoke Club, Pickleball Club, Thrifting Club and Travel Club.

Cheer the Children Club Provide Educational Supplies to Aid Latin America Poverty

One of the clubs which deserves

recognition is Cheer the Children Youth Organization (CTC -Cheer the Children), which is led by Stacy Olortegui, a Junior attending our EAGLEi independent study program. The club was established in 2022 to help spread awareness of the extreme poverty children experience in Latin America.

“We were inspired to create the club when we recognized that...some children do not have access to the supplies they need for their education, which prevents them from honing their creativity and learning to their fullest potential,” said Stacy.

In March, Stacy and her fellow Ugly Eagles teamed up with several organizations to sponsor a Toy & Supply Drive at CVCHS for children living in Columbia and Peru. Cheer the Children sought to collect toys and educational supplies such as spiral notebooks, pencils, markers, glue sticks, paint brushes, crayons and erasers.

To help Columbian children in need, Cheer the Children partnered with FUNPROK which distributes educational supplies, including coloring books designed by CVCHS students and translated into Spanish. To date, hundreds of toys and educational supplies have been donated, thanks to our generous CVCHS community.

Stacy also has a personal connection for helping children in Peru. “My family is from Peru, and I have been distributing toys to children there since the age of 11. My greatest inspiration for involving the Peruvian children is when a little boy



Members of the Cheer the Children Youth Organization accepting donations for their Toy & Supply Drives/residential job site in Antioch.

told me, ‘I’ve never had a toy like this.’ He taught me the value of believing in oneself and how society can distort an individual’s perception of themselves...”

Stacy and her classmates hope to expand Cheer the Children nationally as an organization and continue its pursuit of advocating for children’s education around the globe. Each club officer is currently a junior, so it is their intention to promote the club and its mission throughout their senior year in high school.

“We hope that CTC remains a club at CVCHS while we are in college and expands as an organization nationally,” said Stacy. “We advocate for the children, who are the world’s future because we’ll need them, but right now, they need us.”

Great things are happening at CVCHS thanks to students like Stacy and her classmates. Extracurricular activities are proof of our Ugly Eagle success and letting our students expand their boundaries and dreams. To learn more about CVCHS clubs or to donate to the Cheer the Children, please contact our front office or visit: www.claytonvalley.org.



Stacy Olortegui

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 By Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate
www.BuyStageSell.com



How to Save Equity to Reinvest When Selling an Investment Property

If you own an investment property, rented out for income, and would like to sell it, consider a 1031 tax deferred exchange.

Why? Because when utilizing an exchange, the entire profit can be used to purchase a new property. This avoids paying a huge portion in taxes and investing whatever is left. Think over time how much more wealth you are creating for yourself, your retirement, your heirs by utilizing this tax benefit. There are IRS rules for a 1031 Tax Deferred Exchange and a Reverse Exchange, and they must be followed to the letter.

close on an exchanged property. This is unprecedented.

This allows clients doing a 1031 exchange to take more time to do the due diligence on properties they want to purchase and potentially get a better interest rate during the ups and downs of the financial market. In addition, they can take more time to find a suitable replacement property and not have to rush to pick something. This is a big financial decision affecting your goals for retirement, your need to move to a better performing asset, or to move to something in closer proximity to where you are living and investing.

Selling a property with the hope of completing a 1031 Tax Deferred Exchange can cause stress because of the deadlines, especially in a market with low inventory. IRS rules state that in a typical exchange from the time you close the escrow (leg one of an exchange,) you have 45 days to designate the property you want to purchase and 180 days to close the escrow. There is not one minute, hour, or day leeway on those time frames.

For example: If you were to close your investment property on April 1, you would have until May 16 to identify the purchase property (or properties) you are going to exchange into, and up to September 28 to close on that property or properties.

Reverse 1031 Exchange

You can purchase a property and then sell and exchange an investment property. This is called a Reverse 1031 Exchange. There are rules, and complications, but just as with a regular exchange, you will need an exchange accommodator, approved by the IRS as an intermediary, to receive the properties and funds during the process. The Exchange Intermediary you choose can give you the rules and advise how they work, guiding you toward a successful exchange.

One such company some of my clients have used to great success is www.IPX1031.com. James Callejos is a very knowledgeable and skilled expert in this field. He would be happy to help you understand the nuances and details of what you are wanting to accomplish. You cannot do this alone. And yes, you can purchase more than one replacement property, and keep out some funds if you so choose. Just be sure you understand the nuances and tax consequences of your actions. Have a qualified 1031 Exchange Intermediary on your team. (And a Realtor who understands and has done them for clients.)

California Disaster Designation Extends Deadline

What has changed? The IRS has defined an "affected taxpayer" and designated areas of natural disasters in California and other States; and Contra Costa and Alameda and other Counties in the Disaster Relief Notice, which extends both of those deadlines to October 16, 2023, to both identify and

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calendar of events

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CLUBS

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/>.



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>

FARMERS' MARKETS

Pacific Coast Farmers Market Concord Todos Santos Plaza
Tuesdays, 9:00am to 2:00pm.
Thursdays 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Martinez Sundays, 9:00am to 2:00pm, 700 Main St.
Walnut Creek Kaiser 1425 South Main 10 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Fridays 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.,
Rossmoor Golden Rain Rd.
Saturdays 9:00am.-1:00 pm.
Shadeands North Wiget Ln. and Mitchell Dr., Sunday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. 1799 Locust St.

EASTER EVENTS

April 8, Easter Egg Hunt & Lunch, 10AM -3PM. Hop on over to Gehring-er Park Gardens on Saturday, April 8 from 10 to 1 pm for a fun Egg Hunt, with your chance to win a GOLDEN EGG, and enjoy lunch! Your \$20 donation gets 1 child (18 years and younger) a hot dog, chips and bottle water, plus the ability to participate in their age - specific egg hunt! *BYOB - Bring Your Own Basket* 1790 Lynwood Dr, Concord. Signup: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508044aa-fab2aa0f49-easter#/>



April 8, Boundary Oaks Golf Course Presents FREE Easter Egg Hunt. 1-3PM. Bring the family to the beautiful Boundary Oaks Gold Course for a fun afternoon of Easter activities. Kids can participate in one of three egg hunts depending on age from 0-12 years old. There are also bounce houses, face painting, and a visit from the Easter Bunny. Boundary Oak Golf Course 3800 Valley Vista Rd,

Walnut Creek. <https://rb.gy/8p0kt6>

April 9, Easter Sunday w/2000 Egg Hunt and Free BBQ. 10:30 AM - 2PM. Every year we provide a great service, an Easter egg hunt for the children, and a free BBQ for the entire family! Sign up today to register your children for the Easter egg hunt! V.O. CONCORD 2351 Olivera Road Concord. Register FREE <https://rb.gy/wiqv64>

EVENTS

April 8, Celebrate Arbor Day by helping plan trees at Concord Community Park off Cowell Rd. Volunteers will help plant 15 trees and spread recycled mulch. Instructions and tools will be provided. 9A -12P.

April 8, Pollinator and Friends Day at Ruth Bancroft Gardens. 10-4PM. Learn what you can do to protect them and their habitat. The Ruth Bancroft Garden & Nursery 1552 Bancroft Rd, Walnut Creek. <https://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/product/pollinator-friends-day/>



April 15, 16, Eastbay Sports Card & Collectors Show. 7 AM - 2 PM PDT, Crowne Plaza, 415-470-2670, 2872 Ygnacio Valley road, #260, Walnut Creek. <https://www.eastbaycardshow.com>

April 17 deadline: 2023 Congressional Art Competition. High School students living in the 10th Congressional District can enter their art. Submit to: Kaylee. deland@mail.house.gov



April 20, Earth Day 2023, Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery, 10AM-1PM, 1300 Loveridge Rd., Pittsburg. <http://www.MDRR.com/RCTS>

April 23, Veteran Job & Resource Expo, 10AM - 2PM, Veterans Accession House of Contra Costa & Solano Counties, Over 25 Employers and over 15 Community and Government Organizations will be present. Meet Recruiters and find out about Veteran benefits, housing, counseling, job training, child support and more. 2290 Willow Pass Rd., Concord. Register <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/524039354817>

April 22, Concord Historical Society Annual Membership Dinner. 6-9PM. Zandonella Catering will be providing a delicious buffet of Sirloin Tri-Tip Roast, Italian Roasted Chicken, and Penne Pasta with Sides and Desserts. Admission: \$50 per person. Concord Museum and Event Center, 1928 Clayton Rd, Concord. <https://rb.gy/a6jbgm>

April 29-30, CBCA Art & Wine, 10 AM- 5PM, Downtown Clayton. www.ClaytonCBCA.org

[See ad front cover]

April 22-23, Spring Contra Costa Crystal Fair. Civic Park Community Center, Civic Park Community Center, 1375 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. <https://www.crystalfair.com>

April 23, Walk MS: 8AM. Every step you take at Walk MS leads to something greater. With accessible routes that are stroller- and mobility device-friendly, there's nothing quite like looking around you to a sea of orange-clad people who want to support you and the MS community. Heather Farm Park 301 N San Carlos Dr, Walnut Creek. Register and info: <https://ntlms.org/walkMS23>

May 5-7, Concord Historical Society's Spring Tea and the Concord Art Association's Colors of Spring Show. 2 seatings a day, 11AM and 2PM. Entry fee \$50. Concord Museum and Event Center 1928 Clayton Rd, Concord <https://concordhistorical.org/events/spring-tea-save-the-date/>

May 6, Bay Area SpringFest 2023 - Noon - 7PM. Bay Area SpringFest celebrates the beginning of spring with plants, arts & crafts, music and food in Downtown Concord at tree-lined Todos Santos Plaza in the largest city of upscale Contra Costa County, free admission and free nearby parking. There will be music on the Todos Santos stage, a variety of food vendors, free activities for kids and myriad shopping opportunities. 2175 Willow Pass Rd, Concord. <https://www.kidfestconcord.com/>

May 6, Ruth Bancroft annual Gala, 5:00PM, Join us for our - Journey Through the Garden - come explore Ruth's rare plants and get to know more about the curated collection. This year we will be highlighting plants native to Latin America. <https://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org>

Martinez Calendar of Events, see Page 17

ARTS/THEATRE/MUSIC

April 28, Disney's Newsies: The Musical, 7 PM El Campanil Theatre 602 W 2nd St, Antioch, CA <https://www.elcampaniltheatre.com>

Thru April, HQ Gallery, "Colors of Change", 11am - 5 pm Thursday - Sunday, Featured artists Gay Roche and Carol Levin, 333 First Street, Suite D, Benicia. <https://www.hqgallery.net>



Leshar Center for the Arts

April 8, SuperTrouper: The ABBA Concert Experience, 8-10PM. Presented by West Coast Performing Arts Presenters. AB-BA's greatest hits live onstage!

April 11, News-makers: Emmy Award-Winning Actor, Author, Director & Producer Henry Winkler Presented by the Leshar Foundation. 7:30-9PM.



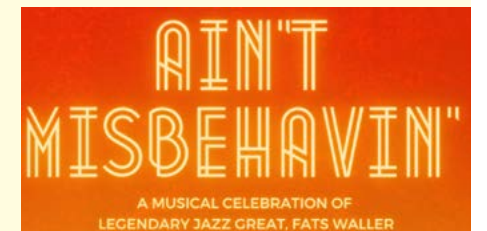
Thru April 16, SWEAT, Presented by Center REP. A group of friends in a Rust Belt town has spent their lives sharing secrets and laughs on the factory floor. But when layoffs begin to chip away at their trust, they're pitted against each other in a heart-wrenching fight. See website for showtimes.

April 13 - April 23, Synergy Theater presents The Mating Game: An Improvised Game Show that's More than a Game! Three enchanting contestants, a hopeful single looking for love, and a fast-talking game show host who seems to know too much. Don't miss this completely improvised romantic-comedy all based on your suggestions! Thursdays - Saturdays at 8:15 PM and Sundays @ 3:15 PM at the George & Sonja Vukasin Theatre. Tickets \$25

April 15, Dan Ashley presents Rock the Casa, featuring Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, An evening of music for children in need, inc. Friends of Camp Concord, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Club of Contra Costa. For tickets: www.RockTheCasa.org



April 24-29, 'Ain't Misbehavin' Presented by Contra Costa Musical Theatre. The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s comes to life in this three-time Tony award-winning musical revue. Join five performers on a journey through the timeless music of legendary jazz great, Thomas "Fats" Waller.



April 30, Arod Quartet, 2:30-4:30PM. Presented by Chamber Music San Francisco. Laser-focused sound and thrilling interpretations.

May 11-15, Robin Hood, Presented by Fantasy Forum Actors Ensemble. Join Robin Hood's band of merry men for adventure!

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

Tickets: (925) 943-7469 Wed-Sun Noon to 6:00 p.m.

In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from Claycord.com and Other Sources

Newsom Rolls Back Some Water Restrictions, Stops Short Of Declaring Drought Over

The drought might not be completely done with California, but the state's residents are now free of the strictest water conservation measures put in place by Gov. Gavin Newsom nearly two years ago. "To answer the question 'Are we out of the drought?' Mostly but not completely," Newsom said.

After three months of extremely wet weather that lashed the state with nearly 20 major storms, the Sierra Nevada snowpack is now roughly 228 percent of average and most reservoirs are at or above their historical averages for this time of year. In response, Newsom signed an executive order eliminating more than 50 of the 81 drought emergency provisions that he enacted in April 2021, including the 15 percent statewide voluntary water conservation goal and the requirement that roughly 450 local water agencies enact their own drought emergency plans.

While the 15 percent conservation goal was in place, Californians saved roughly 600,000 acre-feet of water, which is enough to supply water to 1.2 million households for a year.

Chick-fil-A On Concord's Design Review Board Menu



The Concord Design Review Board

is reviewing the proposed Chick-fil-A restaurant on Diamond Blvd.

As previously reported, Chick-fil-A will be located where the former Claim Jumper restaurant was located, in the Willows Shopping Center.

The proposed 4,974-square-foot restaurant would have a drive-thru, and sit on 1.2 acres. Chick-fil-A has over 2,800 restaurants in 47 states.

Habitat Conservancy Organization Seeks Out Research Projects In \$30K Grant Program

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy is seeking out research proposals surrounding special status species and habitat management in a \$30,000 grant program.

Awarded projects would not only receive a two-year stipend, but also have access to the conservancy's 14,000 acres of conserved lands in east Contra Costa County.

The conservancy hopes to fund projects that focus on habitat management uncertainties, like restoration techniques, ecological requirements of special status species and the habitat's response to management actions.

Proposed projects will be accepted until July 27 at 5 p.m.

New Mural On Brenden Theater Building In Downtown Concord



Have you seen the new mural on the

Willow Pass Rd. side of the Brenden Theater building in Downtown Concord?

The mural, created by artist John Horton, focuses on "a female heroine, as the focal subject, in a modern aesthetic that feels futuristic. Within the imagery the hero takes action in a 'choose your own adventure' for the viewer, intriguing them to wonder where the hero is going," according to the artist.

Latest California Voter Figures Released, More Than 82 Percent Of Eligible Californians Registered

The latest statewide registered voter figures have been released.

Secretary of State Shirley Weber released the latest report of registration which reflects data as of Feb. 10.

A total of 21,980,768 Californians are registered to vote, which is 82.27 percent of eligible Californians, compared to 79.09 percent at the same point after a regular gubernatorial election four years ago.

The report of registration is a compilation of voter registration numbers reported by California's 58 county elections offices.

City Of Concord Secures Nearly \$8 Million In Transportation Grants

The City of Concord received news that it has been awarded \$7.9 million in grant funds from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to support a massive street lighting and safety improvement project.

This is the largest grant allocation to any Bay Area agency from Caltrans' recent effort to provide \$225 million for projects designed to reduce traffic deaths and serious injuries on city and county roads.

The funding for Concord will go toward installing new lighting, upgrading existing street and intersection lighting, installing pedestrian countdown signals, modifying signal phasing, and installing three new

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons and four HAWK traffic signals — systems that are used to alert motorists to crossing pedestrians. Funds will also be used for upgrading uncontrolled crosswalks and installing additional bicycle safety improvements.

Claycord Post Reaches Over 3 Million to Mourn Wild 94.9 Radio Host, Jeffrey Vandergriff



Our hearts go out to the friends and family of Jeffrey Vandergriff, the Wild 94.9 radio host whose missing body was found in the water at Pier 39 on March 22.

The San Francisco medical examiner confirmed that the body was Vandergriff, 54, who was last seen in late February at his home on King Street.

His employer, Wild 94.9, said there was no trackable activity on his phone, credit cards or bank accounts since he was reported missing.

His wife announced on his radio station's social media channels that Vandergriff will likely "not be coming back", due to personal information discovered in early March.

Police do not suspect foul play in Vandergriff's death. Vandergriff had reportedly been despondent over his suffering from Lyme disease.

"Having once worked in San Francisco radio, I closely followed this story to its unfortunate end. I would like to thank the Claycord.com readers whose thoughts and prayers and condolences have been shared to over 3 million so far," said Claycord Mayor. "May JV rest in peace."



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

APRIL IS NATIONAL FROG MONTH

DO FROGS MAKE GOOD PETS?

Purchasing a captive-bred frog from a reputable breeder can be a good option for anyone interested in keeping amphibians as pets. But before making a commitment to a pet frog, there are several things to consider, including how much interaction an owner can expect and how noisy they can be.



Poison frogs are not poisonous in captivity since they do not eat the toxic insects that make them deadly.

of the frog species you are considering and make sure you are willing and able to provide for its long-term needs for the duration of its life.

It is never recommended to capture frogs in the wild and make them pets. Wild frogs may not survive the stress of captivity and they can carry infectious diseases.

Most frog species are nocturnal, so they sleep by day and croak by night. Most species are not fond of being held. According to Christopher Stills, founder of The Reptile Room, the four species most likely to tolerate handling are White's tree frog, white-lipped tree frog, crowned tree frogs, and waxy monkey leaf frog. However, waxy monkey frogs can be fickle, and tolerance for handling varies between individuals. Those wanting an exotic pet to handle would do better looking at species in the lizard family.

Amphibian enthusiasts who don't mind not handling their pets and who want to enjoy the more colorful species can consider arrow frogs. In captivity, poison dart frogs are not dangerous when fed a pet store diet. The poison comes from the "toxic" insects they eat in the wild. These toxic bugs have become poisonous from accumulated alkaloids from toxic plants. With their modified diet, colorful arrow frogs can make excellent pets.

Be aware that a frog's life expectancy can be 10 years or more. Terrariums will require cleaning every two to four weeks. Temperature and humidity may need to be monitored and adjusted. Those on the squeamish side need to know that most frogs eat live insects such as crickets, mealworms, flies, grubs, and bigger frogs may even need to be fed small rodents. It is important to research the specific needs

In addition, wild frog populations are declining. According to an interview in "Bay Nature" with Jim McKissock, founder of Earthcare, the chorus frog population in the Bay area has declined over the last 60 years as low-elevation frog habitats in the East Bay have been changed by human activities.

There is also a species, the California red-legged frog, that is illegal to capture because they are federally listed as threatened and are protected by law.

National Frog Month is observed in April to celebrate frogs. Why? Because they represent a symbol of transition, the leap from one thing, place, situation to another.

APRIL 8 is Draw a Picture of a Bird Day.

Polly does not want a cracker; she wants you to draw her. This fun event is for artists of all ages. Actually, budding artists can draw a picture of any type of bird species: wild, pet bird, or even a domestic bird, such as a chicken. Then share it on social media with the hashtag: #drawapictureofabirdday.



Drawing courtesy Jill Hedgecock from her high school days.

ARF ADOPTION STARS

Looking for a furry friend? Visit arlife.org to view all of ARF's adoptable animals.

Pancake



Ten-year-old Pancake is the sweetest little girl in the sweetest little body. This girl is ready to kick back, relax, and enjoy a nice nap in a spot of sun. Pancake has snuggles, sass, and lots of love to give. She would be great in any home that is ready for love. She currently weighs 10 pounds.

Breadstick



Six-year-old Breadstick is one of a kind. This boy was affectionately named after a treat that is universally adored for a reason. He's got the sweetest face. He loves being petted and is ready to find his best friend. Are you ready to fall in love with Breadstick like us?

ARF Dog adoption fees: \$250 for an adult dog, \$375 for a puppy (<6 months), \$150 for a special-needs dog, \$200 for a special-needs puppy (<6 months), and \$150 for a senior dog (7+ years).

ARF Cat adoption fees: \$125 for an adult cat, \$175 for a kitten (<6 months), \$200 for two adult cats, \$300 for two kittens, \$75 for a special-needs cat, \$100 for a special-needs kitten (<6 months), and \$75 for a senior cat (7+ years). Adoption fees are waived for US military Veterans.

ARF SHRED DAY: On April 22 from 10:00 a.m. to noon (or earlier if truck fills), you can bring unwanted papers (no e-waste) to ARF at 890 Mitchell Drive, Walnut Creek. Proceeds from the \$10 per box fee (no oversized boxes) will support ARF. Mobile shredding is a secure process with the shredding occurring on site. Help ARF and get rid of clutter. <https://arlife.org/blog/shred-day/>

JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

by Jill Hedgecock www.jillhedgecock.com

Boudin at the Wharf: A Surviving Gold Rush Nugget That's Worth a Trip to SF

Tourists come from all around the world to visit San Francisco and taste its world-famous sourdough bread. Fortunately for East Bay residents, Boudin (pronounced Boo-deen) is just a quick jaunt across the Bay.

There are multiple Boudin's locations, but to get the full experience of what this historic French establishment offers, the home of the historic mother dough is the place to be. Visitors can watch bakers work their magic, learn about the history of one of the oldest mother dough starters, and peruse their well-stocked marketplace. History buffs will enjoy learning about the bakery's roots.

It was a chilly, but rain free day, when my sister, Sue, sister-in-law, Diane, and friend, DeeDee, embarked on a fun adventure across the Bay to explore this classic destination. Once we arrived at the Wharf near Pier 29, we spotted the red Boudin logo displayed on a large white cylindrical structure in front of the building. The ground floor includes an old an old horse-drawn cart reminiscent of the days when Boudin did home deliveries, leaving fresh-baked breads on a nail peg on the homeowner's door.

We had arrived plenty early for our lunch reservation, giving us time to explore and view many of the informational displays and the Marketplace.

The Marketplace is both a souvenir shop and bakery store. It is a destination in and of itself. In fact, it's ranked fifth out of 408 SF shopping locales by TripAdvisor with an average of 4.5 stars out of 5.

In addition to the fun-shaped sourdough bread, croissants and other baked goods on sale, souvenirs such as tea towels of the Golden Gate Bridge, SF-themed coffee mugs, aprons with Boudin's logo, cans of Boudin clam chowder stacked in a decorative display, specialty wines and chocolate, silly crab hats, and much more are available. I loved watching the train of baskets filled with sourdough items continuously move overhead from the bakery to the retail area.

We walked outside to the



demonstration window, where bakers were busy kneading dough into animal shapes. We peered through the glass windows as the bakers assembled various sizes of teddy bears.

We ate a leisurely lunch with views overlooking the Bay and Alcatraz. I opted for the traditional clam chowder bowl. DeeDee's op corn and crab chowder soup served in a sourdough bowl was to die for.

After lunch, an Executive General Manager escorted us into the empty private dining area to peruse the remnants of the history museum and to get a bird's eye view of the Baker's Hall where the mother dough is stored, and where dough is created in giant mixers. A giant bowl of heavy dough tipped over a guard rail to an unseen landing spot was highly

entertaining.

During the heyday of the gold rush, Isadore Boudin left mining to the prospectors and discovered his own golden nugget by opening a bakery. During the heyday of the gold rush, the San Francisco population exploded from about 1,000 citizens to 25,000 by 1849, leaving hungry folks flocking to bakeries like Boudin's.

After the earthquake of 1906 flattened San Francisco and set the city on fire,

Louis Boudin didn't save her photo albums or her jewelry, she snatched a bucket full of the sourdough starter (a slurry of flour, water and microorganisms) that had been used to bake every loaf of bread sold by the family since 1849.

This same mother dough has been the essential ingredient in Boudin's popular breads for the last 174 years. In the 1970s, a bacterium, *Lactobacillus sanfranciscensis*, was identified as a reason for the unique taste of SF's sourdough bread, but the bacterium has since been found to occur worldwide. So, the answer to Boudin's special blend cannot be simplified to a single ingredient. Perhaps, the popularity of their product is due to patience. From start to finish, it takes Boudin 72 hours to make a loaf of bread. Or maybe it's that the starter only thrives in the cool, moist environment of the San Francisco Bay.

For other Boudin locations in California, new starters must be shipped to their remote restaurants on a regular basis. Here is an excerpt from an article by Kimberly K. Fu in the Vacaville Reporter describing the somewhat ceremonious transference of a starter bit of the precious "Mother Dough."

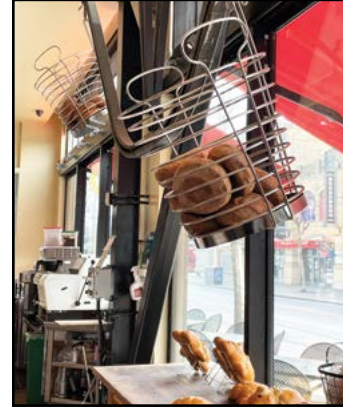
Boudin Bakery "mother dough" Comes to Vacaville



A police escort leads a van with the "mother dough" of Boudin Bakery to its new home in Vacaville.

With lights, sirens and a cacophony of applause early Wednesday, a police-escorted truck bearing Vacaville's newest, yet oldest, resident was welcomed to town.

No, it wasn't a person, but a healthy



pinch of a 165-year-old starter that will live on in every loaf of sourdough bread to come out of Boudin Bakery at the Nut Tree, slated to open to the public on Feb. 13.

Described as "Mother Dough," the starter was first cultured in 1849 in San Francisco, where the original Boudin still stands. Isadore Boudin handcrafted the starter which was later passed on to Steven Giraudo, who then taught current Master Baker Fernando Padilla.

Handling the boxed dough with awe, the master baker of nearly 35 years removed it from its transport with a flourish, waved to the crowd of Boudin staff, then kissed and blessed the dough before leaving it in the care of the Vacaville eatery's head baker.

"Imagine you have something alive since 1849," Padilla mused, explaining that the San Francisco air and atmosphere is what makes the bread so crusty, tangy and unique. "Every day we feed it or else it will die.... There's nothing like it."

It's with pride that he personally delivered the starter, he confessed, because now, even more people will be able to enjoy the San Francisco delicacy.

"We're so delighted to be here in Vacaville and at the Nut Tree," he said. "We have a lot of loyal customers here."

To keep the cultures in the starter alive, flour and water will be added every day. As well, more "Mother Dough" will be brought in every three to four weeks to replenish it, Padilla said.

An estimated 10,000 pounds of dough will likely be made each week.

Published February 6, 2014 | Updated August 29, 2018

Whatever Boudin's secret "sauce" is, it is clear that people love their product. Boudin Bakery can be found at 26 locations across California, with seven in San Francisco and one in Walnut Creek.

But even though Boudin's sourdough can be enjoyed locally, it's worth the trek across into San Francisco to visit the original Boudin at the Wharf and experience its history.

Young Entrepreneurs Driven to Succeed by Covid

What parent doesn't worry about their children's transition into the "real world" to fend for themselves? Have years of education, team sports and recreation, play and parental advice given them the tools to not only survive, but thrive? Will they find steady good paying work, or will they have the drive necessary to succeed as entrepreneurs at such a young age?

Here is a spotlight on two young Concord men who are currently making a strong go of it. This story begins with two kids competing against each other on the baseball field at the age of seven. From competitors to teammates in just a few short years, Evan Enos and Chris Rogan quickly became friends. Playing on the same baseball and basketball teams, they realized at an early age that to win, one must be dedicated, focused, and driven to work harder than the competition.

Both graduated from Northgate High School. Afterwards, Rogan attended San Mateo Community College and Enos attended Diablo Valley Community College. However, during Covid, together, they decided to pivot and

ignited a dream to create their own business.

As restaurants began turning their exterior patios into dining areas and businesses began to reopen to the public, they saw an opportunity to start an exterior cleaning company. This was during a period when sanitation and cleanliness were a top priority. One thing they knew for certain, they wanted the ability to utilize their knowledge and experience. Enos, 23, with his marketing and business background, and Rogan, 22, with his engineering and construction background, started up an exterior cleaning business, E.T.C. Pressure Washing LLC (licensed and insured).



Pressure washing warehouses for the commercial clients.

With nothing but time and drive, they purchased their first pressure washing machine and equipment. They spent the first couple of months testing and offering free services to family and friends to perfect their craft. They began marketing by going door to door, selling their services and building a connection with the community. As business began to pick up, they spent their time and earnings scaling the business. They built a website to reach a larger audience with a more professional approach and added marketing agencies such as Angi (formerly Angie's List).

"We are more than just your typical pressure washing business. We use some of the newest machinery, tools, and cleaning agents to clean and detail an array of surfaces from businesses and homes to semi-trucks and trash cans," Enos proudly states.

As referrals and client reviews began spreading, the business grew, allowing Enos and Rogan to purchase multiple commercial-grade machines and equipment. While continuing to serve residential customers, they were ready to enter into the commercial business. They expanded their operations and now provide 14 services for servicing corporate campuses, city properties, apartment complexes, local golf courses, and more.

"We may be newer to the business side of things, but not to the profession. With over three years of construction and pressure washing experience under our belts, 100% satisfaction is guaranteed," Enos says confidently.

Their budding success is a pleasure to witness. Hustle and hard work are paying quick dividends and providing inspiration for other new entrepreneurs. Nicely done.

If I were one of their parents, I would be proud and feel quite comfortable in my empty nest. Good luck, gentlemen.

[See their ad on page 12]

Around Martinez



Brianne Zorn,
Martinez Mayor
bzorn@cityofmartinez.org

Forward Progress at our Waterfront

The City of Martinez embarked on a waterfront and marina master planning process last fall. This planning process evaluates the potential for the entire waterfront area, with additional analysis of the economic viability of the granted trust lands the City acquired from the State back in 2014 (through Senate Bill 1424). These granted lands, referred to as Trust Lands, are under the direction of the California State Lands Commission and are held in trust for the people of California. There are five parcels that make up the Trust Lands at the Martinez Waterfront.

The outcome of the master planning process will be a Trust Lands Use Plan (TLUP) for the Martinez Waterfront that presents conceptual land use options that have been informed by community and stakeholder input. The project has involved three public workshops with the community and multiple study sessions with the City Council. Draft plan concepts are being developed now and will be made available on the project website: www.martinezwaterfront.com. The TLUP is expected to receive final approval from the Planning Commission and then adoption by the City Council in early summer.

We have made some other good progress lately, too. In January, Reps. Mike Thompson (CA-04) and John Garamendi (CA-08) presented a check for \$2,546,600 to the City of Martinez for the Municipal Fishing Pier Renovation. This funding was secured in the Fiscal Year 2023 government funding bill. The fishing pier is a cherished regional amenity that gets thousands of visitors a year. The funding for this renovation includes not only extending the life of the pier itself, but also replacing the breakwater. I anticipate the infrastructure



improvements to the breakwater will reduce sediment inputs in the marina and extend the duration between dredge events. The most recent dredging of our marina was completed in late 2022.

The City of Martinez has partnered with Contra Costa Transit Authority and other municipalities along the Carquinez Strait (Hercules, Pittsburg, and Antioch) to conduct a feasibility study for ferry service. The subject of ferry service has been discussed in Martinez for years. I hope that partnering with these other organizations will successfully bring ferry service back to Martinez.

The Martinez Waterfront is comprised of a marina, park, open space, and marine-related businesses. Adjacent Trust lands are held by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) which are leased to the City, and include baseball fields, Martinez Bocce Federation courts area, trails and a horse arena. I envision a Martinez Waterfront with a restaurant, improved docks and infrastructure, a popular destination for human-powered boat access, and a pedestrian ferry terminal. The TLUP is only the first step in the City's long-term investment in the waterfront; this Plan will lay the groundwork for our waterfront to become a regional destination for Martinez residents and visitors alike.

Pacheco Marsh Project Is Blooming As Contra Costa County Eyes Next Phase

by Tony Hicks, Bay City News

Pacheco Marsh just survived one of the most frantic winters in recent memory. Seasonal ponds are now full and flowers are blooming as 31,000 new native plants are growing, freshly arrived shorebirds are starting to nest, and the tide is pushing and pulling water in and out of the 5.32 miles of new channels.

The Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project has taken root, literally.

Most of the natural work is done. The largest public works project ever undertaken by Contra Costa County is on schedule and ready for the John Muir Land Trust to begin shaping the 232 acres into a park that has been described as a future bird-watcher's paradise.

"We designed this site to handle a wide range of kind of extreme weather events and those atmospheric rivers that we had ... have really been the best test of how the site has done," said Paul Detjens, the project manager and a senior engineer with the Contra Costa County Flood Control District. "This site has passed with flying colors. We're really pleased with it."

Since county supervisors gave the go-ahead a little more than two years ago to spend \$11.285 million to return the area to its natural state — before 19th century industry intervened — the marsh just southeast of the Benicia-Martinez Bridge has undergone big changes.

Just over the hill from the Al McNabney Marsh — across Interstate Highway 680 from the Martinez Refinery Company — Pacheco Marsh is where Contra Costa's largest watershed drains more than 150 square miles from eight cities into an area that became a dumping ground for dredging and an industrial buffer to Suisun Bay.

The goal is to enhance the area's flood-carrying capacity near the end of Walnut Creek (the waterway, not the city) on the marsh's eastern edge. Naturalists want conditions closer to those existing when grizzly bears, elk, salmon, and steelhead co-existed in the area, until the mid-1800s.

Industry filled in much of the wetlands over the years, as merchant ships sailed up Walnut Creek. Refineries were later built around the marsh, which was a dumping ground for other dredging projects all over the Bay Area.

Contra Costa County bought 122 acres of the marsh in 2003 from a towing company that planned a junkyard there. The nearby Marathon oil refinery bought another 18 adjacent acres formerly used for sand mining and donated it to the land trust in 2020.

While the pandemic progressed, the area was cleaned up. New channels were carved. Native plants were brought in as non-native species are still being removed.

As Detjens talks, he occasionally stops to pull or kick something not from the area out of the ground. He points out various species that do belong there, including creeping wild rye, pickleweed, fiddleneck plants and California poppies. About 28,000 of the 31,000 new plants put in the ground have survived the first year, Detjens said, a healthy 92 percent survival rate.

"A lot of them are now kind of getting their bearing, they're getting their roots, they're growing, and so a lot of our effort has been in nurturing those plants," Detjens said. "We've also done our first year of monitoring. We monitor for the vitality of the plants, and we monitor for the tidal exchange that we have in the various channels."

Sensors connected by Bluetooth collect data for things like dissolved oxygen and water temperature integrity.

"... we want and to make sure that the channels are the right size and the right volume to be able to bring those tides in and down," Detjens said.



The area has been designed with sea level rise in mind. Walnut Creek has the second-highest amount of sediment coming through its watershed, which the marsh will now better help dissipate.

"We've designed the project to be resilient until mid-century," Detjens said. "Resilient basically means it just does everything that is going to do, and we don't have to touch it. We designed it to be adaptable to the end of the century. Adaptable means we've built this so we can come in later and make it taller."

The John Muir Land Trust will handle the next phase, which starts in September once the final design is complete. As of now, there will be 2.6 miles of trails, three pedestrian bridges, three kayak launches, built-up viewing areas, boardwalks, and interpretive displays.

Linus Eukel, the land trust's executive director, said last week the group is aiming for the area to be open to the public in 2024.

Birdwatching will likely be a major draw, as will school groups. Detjens said conservation groups have been out to tour the site recently and are excited.

"Before there were a lot of jackrabbits and coyotes in sagebrush, whereas now it's a much more vibrant system. Almost every time I'm out here I see multiple types of egrets and other kinds of shore birds ... pipers. I see herons, those are pretty common. Usually, we see the osprey making appearances."

The land trust has said that, even before the project started, there were more than 80 bird species at the marsh, including short-eared owls, white-tailed kites, American kestrels, northern harriers, and the loggerhead shrike.

"We've had the Golden Gate Audubon Society out here for a tour and they gave it like 25 thumbs up," Detjens said.

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MARTINEZ CALENDAR

Martinez Farmers Market, Every Sunday year-round, 9 AM - 1PM, located on Main Street from Las Juntas St. (800 block) - Castro St. (600 block)

Thru April 30, Tamsen Armstrong Exhibit at Main Street Arts. Artist Tamsen Armstrong was once told, "Don't paint the extraordinary, elevate the ordinary." And with a clear voice she has applied this to her impressionistic paintings whether still life, figures or landscapes. With beautiful, luscious brush strokes she honestly portrays her subjects. This is the fifth year Main Street Arts has hosted Armstrong's delightful works. She has also been busy exhibiting at the Blue Line Gallery, Crocker Museum and the Pence Gallery. The public is invited to the wine and appetizer reception on Saturday, March 11, from 4pm - 6pm located at 613 Main Street.



Magic in March, Magicians are gifted with a sense of humor that's off the charts. A big evening of amazing fun! California Magic Club, 514 Main St, Martinez, <https://www.calmagic.com>

April 15, BAY AREA CRAFT BEER FESTIVAL, Noon - 4PM, returns to Martinez Waterfront on April 15th, noon to 4pm with over 40+ local breweries and over 100 beers to sample including Home Brew! Local Breweries, live music, delicious food, and fun! Waterfront Park, 115 Tarantino Dr, Martinez. <https://downtownmartinez.org/bay-area-craft-beer-fest>



April 21, ShowQueen: 8PM "Chicago" vs "Cabaret" ShowQueen is a monthly musical theater revue hosted by award-winning drag entertainer Ana Mae Coxxy and featuring a cast of local Musical theater performers and Bay Area drag entertainers. Starlight Dance Studios and Theater, 6648 Alhambra Ave Suite B, Martinez

May 14, Open Air Market Returns. Join us on the 2nd Sunday each month from May through November for the Downtown Open Air Market featuring Vintage, Collectibles, Antiques, Arts & Crafts, and more. You will find us on the 800 block of Main St. during the Farmers' Market. Vendor Applications Now Available.

MARTINEZ CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EVENTS

April 12, 2023, State of the City Mayor's Address & Breakfast, 7:30-9:00 AM, Keynote address by Brianne Zorn, Mayor. Creekside Church at 444 Fig Tree Lane, Martinez. Reserve your ticket. www.martinezchamber.com

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ADDRESS & BREAKFAST

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MAYOR
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Savvy Buyers are Entering the Marketplace

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

It's up; it's down, it's up again. To some, the roller coaster ride of the ever-changing Real Estate market is downright terrifying. Rising rent, low inventory, changing rates, and amazing loan options are all factors in the wild Real Estate market right now.

For the last few months, rates have been fluctuating and the media has been hyping up fear. Despite this, the Market picked up in February and March. All over the Bay Area buyers had materialized and were competing for property. In Martinez, many houses were on the market for a mere week before going pending and receiving four to 15 offers.

Innovative Financing Programs Open Doors for Would-be Buyers

So, what gives? With rising rents to consider, loan incentives like 2-1 Buy Downs that allow you to buy down your interest rate for the next two years.

"DREAM for All," is a new first-time home buyer program that offers qualified buyers up to 20% down on

a home with some shared equity. The downpayment loan is not repaid until you sell your home. But hurry. The market response for this program has been so strong that most lenders believe funding could run out in two to three months.

One of my favorites, "JVM Freefi" will refinance you at no cost if the rates fall. That is huge. It gives buyers the opportunity to purchase a home now and lock in the lowered home prices, and refinance at a lower rate when it becomes available.

It is not just buyers benefiting, though. We are still in a housing crisis. Inventory is and has been at historic lows. As I write this, there are 29 homes on the market in Martinez, including condos, townhouses, detached homes and estates. That is it. A seller has a clear advantage of having little competition.

Whether thrilled or scared, for many it is the ride of a lifetime. Having an agent help you is tantamount to a successful real estate transaction.

Go Fund Me to help Family of Former Martinez Native Who Passed in Tragic Snow Accident

Be aware, you are about to read a tragic story of a former neighbor/resident, Jason Cassem, whose family could use your help.

Jason was born and lived in Martinez for several years before moving to Concord where he attended school at Ygnacio Valley High.

The Cassems, Jason, his wife Melissa and two kids, moved away believing they had purchased their dream home in Drum Forebay, near Alta, California in Drum Forebay

2022. However, since moving there at the beginning of fire season, they have had to be evacuated more than once due to fires burning within three miles of their home.

Then this winter storms arrived with snowbanks towering up to the second story. On the day that Jason passed away, March 29, 2023, it had been raining and snowing. They had been without power all day except for their generator that had been running for several hours.

As the family prepared to watch a movie that night before going to bed, Jason decided to go outside to refuel the generator before the gas ran out. The snow had built up a snow "cave" around the generator bear box house. He dug an entrance through the snow to get into the generator room.

A short time had passed since he had gone outside before Melissa realized that Jason had not yet returned. Worried, she walked out into the snow calling for him. She brought a flashlight and walked to the generator to find a large snowbank that had collapsed trapping Jason inside.

She immediately tried to dig him out. The snowbank was extremely deep and the opening at the top was very small. She found Jason unconscious in the snow "cave" and started performing CPR, but had to take breaks and climb back to the top of the opening for fresh air. But with each trip, more snow would cave in on them. She could not get out. She had to keep remarking that hole because snow was falling from the roof and closing the opening.

She started screaming "Please help call 911" hoping a neighbor would hear her. When the two children, Geoffrey, 10, Juliana, 11, heard their moms cry for help, they ran outside dressed in pajamas, still wet from having just completed showers.

With little reception the daughter was finally able to call 911. But due to their

Jason Cassem



Alexis Zahner McKelvey is organizing this fundraiser on behalf of Melissa Cassem.

remote location, the roads were not yet plowed. It took emergency crews some time to reach the home.

In the meantime, the fire dispatchers stayed on the line with the kids instructing them to grab pots and pans from the kitchen and dig through the snow to get to their parents. An off-duty firefighter who is a neighbor got word of what was happening and quickly responded to the home to help.

Finally, crews reached their home and performed CPR, but unfortunately, Jason did not make it. When the snow caved in right next to the generator with Jason under it all, he died of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Melissa was also starting to suffer the effects of the generator's odorless fumes. If it wasn't for her children calling 911, and their continuous efforts to keep the hole open for fresh air, they would have lost both parents that night. The kids are heroes for the efforts to save their parents.

Melissa and the kids are beyond devastated. Their lives have been changed forever and the emotional trauma they endured will be with them throughout their lifetimes.

Jason was a former employee and dear friend of one of our longtime advertisers at Diablo Gazette, AM/PM Tree Service who notified us of this tragedy.

A GoFundMe account has been organized to help the family financially as they grieve his death. This small mountain community relies on the kindness of its neighbors. But this tragic event is something even those with years of experience living up there can imagine.

Any help for Melissa and her two kids is greatly appreciated.

<https://gofund.me/433fca59>

Annexation of Unincorporated Areas Would Drain City Finances, Study Finds

by Sam Richards, from Martinez News and Views

Annexation of six separate areas bordering Martinez would likely be a significant drain on the city's general fund coffers, according to a recent analysis, but economics aren't necessarily the only consideration.

At a March 15 City Council annexation workshop, community activist Linda Olvera said residents of neighborhoods including North Pacheco, Mountain View, Vine Hill and parts of the Alhambra Valley can feel "disenfranchised" because they can't vote for council members, and because they often have inferior streets, sidewalks and other infrastructure. Those reasons, she said, are good ones to move ahead with annexation efforts.

But consultants with Irvine-based RSG Inc. told the City Council that annexation of any of six currently unincorporated areas – with North Pacheco and Vine Hill each split into two sections – would cost far more for Martinez to serve and maintain than the city would gain in new property tax and sales tax income.

Monroe Roush, an RSG analyst, used the 2025-2026 fiscal year as an example. Overall, the RSG study showed that new revenues from those six areas, using existing tax "splits" between the city of Martinez and Contra Costa County, would total an estimated \$1.349 million, while estimated expenditures would be about \$6.8 million. The revenues would be mostly through property taxes; the main expenditures would be for police protection and public works expenses.

These estimates do not include major infrastructure projects such as new sidewalks and storm drains that the city would likely consider for most of these areas, Roush said.

"Our overall finding is that annexation of the study area as a whole would not be financially beneficial to the city's general fund and would lead to a significant

deficit both in the short and the long term," Roush said.

The council heard from others who oppose annexation, fearing it would add to their tax burden and represent an added level of government.

Jim Simon, a principal with RSG, told the council that annexation would not change property tax bills, but those property owners of residences and commercial spaces would henceforth be included in city-approved tax measures, with a corresponding increase in taxes if annexation were approved.

Martinez City Manager Michael Chandler said annexation of any of these areas would be up to the residents of those areas. Residents of any area can lodge "protest votes" if they do not favor it. If at least 25 percent of landowners and/or registered voters protest, an election is triggered; if 50 percent or more of those parties object, the annexation effort ends there.

The city commissioned the annexation study, Chandler said, at the behest of Contra Costa LAFCO (Local Area Formation Commission). That agency approved annexation of a small portion of the Alhambra Valley in 2012; two years earlier, an effort to annex part of North Pacheco failed by one vote.

City Councilman Satinder Malhi said one purpose for presenting results of the RSG study is to help inform residents of these unincorporated areas about the pros and cons of being annexed into Martinez. One "pro," he said, might be better representation.

"Some of the most marginalized voices in our area are in those spaces," Malhi said.

Originally posted on Martinez News and Views, <https://lazeretti.substack.com/>

Sea Scouts' Seafarers Regatta 2023

by Ken Shupe

Seafarers Regatta is the first of three Sea Scouts' regatta competitions that take place in the Bay Area each spring. On Saturday, April 1, the 43rd Seafarers Regatta took place in Martinez, CA at the Sea Scout Ship (SSS) Albatross 72's base at Martinez Yacht Club.

Sea Scouts' regatta competitions involve 15-20 different maritime-related events (such as rowing, ring buoy toss, scuttlebutt, breeches buoy, rope climb, boatswain's chair, radio, etc.), where youth-led teams from around California compete against each other. The events apply a variety of hands-on, athletic, and academic skills. Teams practice throughout the spring to place as high as possible in each event and overall, at the regatta. This year, 187 youth attended Seafarers from 22 different units across the Bay Area, and from as far as Lake County and Merced. Adults from each unit help judge each event and make sure the youth stay safe and, most importantly, thoroughly enjoy the day.

The sun was out for the majority of the day, a rarity of late. Everyone had a blast running to and from events. The day of competition was followed by a dinner, awards ceremony, and dance at the Martinez Yacht Club

The event was a huge success, with guest Dan Ownby, national chair of Scouts, BSA, coming to speak to youth about scouting nationally and internationally, and how their voices can help to grow the program for future



generations.

Sea Scouts is a youth sailing and boating program for ages 13-21 that is part of the Scouts, BSA. It is an opportunity for youth to practice leadership, teamwork, sportsmanship, discipline, and other important skills in an open and supportive environment.

Younger youth ages 11-13 should check out Maritime Explorer Clubs (MECs). You can learn more about Sea Scouts <https://seascout.org/>.

If you are interested in learning more about Sea Scouting in the Bay Area, check out the Golden Gate Area Council website:

<https://goldengatescouting.org/seascouts/>.

The Sea Scouts program prepares the next generation for life in a fun and supportive environment. The next major regatta will be at California Maritime Academy (CMA) in Vallejo, CA on May 27-28, 2023. This regatta is over 80 years old and is a great one to come watch on the CMA campus. See this impressive group of youth row historic wooden whaleboats, sail, complete obstacle courses, and more. Find out more at: <https://rb.gy/u4cx>

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The Guide by Peter Heller



"The Guide" (Knopf; First Edition, August 24, 2021, hardcover, 272 pages, \$15.39) by Peter Heller is a stand-alone sequel to "The River." In the outdoorsman adventure thriller, Jack is back. This time as a fly-fishing guide at a remote lodge in Colorado. Heller once again immerses readers in the sensory details of a beatific wilderness while somehow maintaining edge-of-your-seat tension.

His compelling and intelligent characters must face impossible obstacles and complex moral dilemmas. The book is set in contemporary times, using the threat of COVID as a backdrop. A helpful map of the grounds of the fishing retreat's buildings and land features, including the location of the "Don't Get Shot!" sign, is a welcome addition to the novel.

The book opens with a prologue describing Jack's new accommodations, a cabin next to the Taylor River. The idyllic setting is in stark contrast to his new boss, a crusty manager, Kurt Jensen, a grouchy and dangerous neighbor who has a rifle and isn't afraid to use it on trespassers, and a mysterious Mr. Den, the owner of Kingfisher Lodge.

Jack, who has been working on his father's ranch since his friend's death during a kayaking misadventure (as described in "The River"), thought a change of scenery along with the soothing rhythm of fly fishing was what he needed. Little did Jack know that he and his new client, Alison, were stepping into a situation where the gated grounds were about to turn deadly.

Heller not only has crafted a tension-filled book suffuse with high stakes and a bit of romance, but his knowledge of fly fishing makes the tome highly informative. Sprinkled throughout are reminders of the need to mask up because of the lingering threat of COVID infections.

This is the perfect book to crack open on an air-

plane, to take to the beach, or to lose yourself in during a long car trip.

"The Guide" is a national bestseller, USA Today Book Not to Miss, A LitHub Most Anticipated Book, A CrimeRead Novel You Should Read, An Alta Best Book, and A Veranda Magazine Best Book.

It is not only an entertaining read but a wonderful reminder of how far we have come since the COVID lockdown.

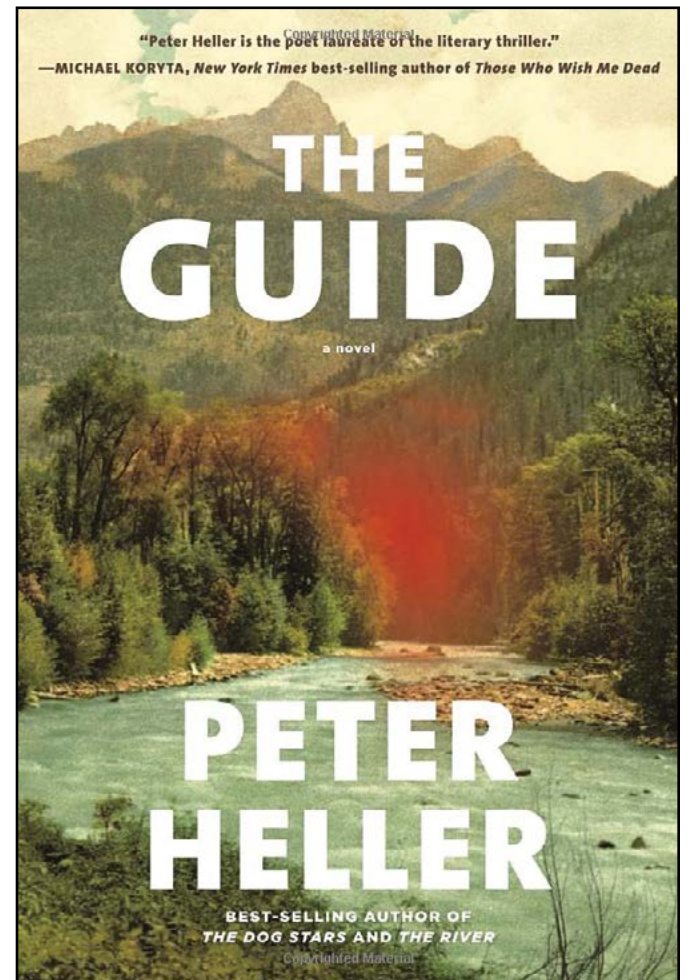
Peter Heller is the national bestselling author of "The River", "Celine", and "The Painter." "The River" was a national bestseller, an Edgar Award Nominee, and an Indie Next Pick. It made the 2019 Forbes Recommended Books list, was described by the New York Times as a book to look for and lauded as one of the best books of the year in 2019 by both Amazon and Apple.

His breakout bestseller debut, "The Dog Stars", has been published in twenty-two languages. Heller is a longtime contributor to NPR, a contributing editor at "Outside Magazine" and "Men's Journal", and his work frequently appears in "Businessweek".

He was also part of the film crew in the Academy award-winning film, The Cove, participating in a clandestine filming mission into the guarded dolphin-killing cove in Taiji, Japan.

His memoir, "Kook: What Surfing Taught Me about Love, Life, and Catching the Perfect Wave" won the National Outdoor Book Award for Literature.

He holds an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop in poetry and fiction and lives in Denver, Colorado.



The Whale

To say "The Whale" is a hard movie to watch is an understatement. Director Darren Aronofsky keeps the audience sequestered with Charlie (Brendan Fraser) throughout the entire hour and 57 minutes of the film. As an obese man, unable and unwilling to leave his apartment, Charlie's world has closed in on him. He surmises he is probably too late to turn his life around and must also accept that he may be in his final days.

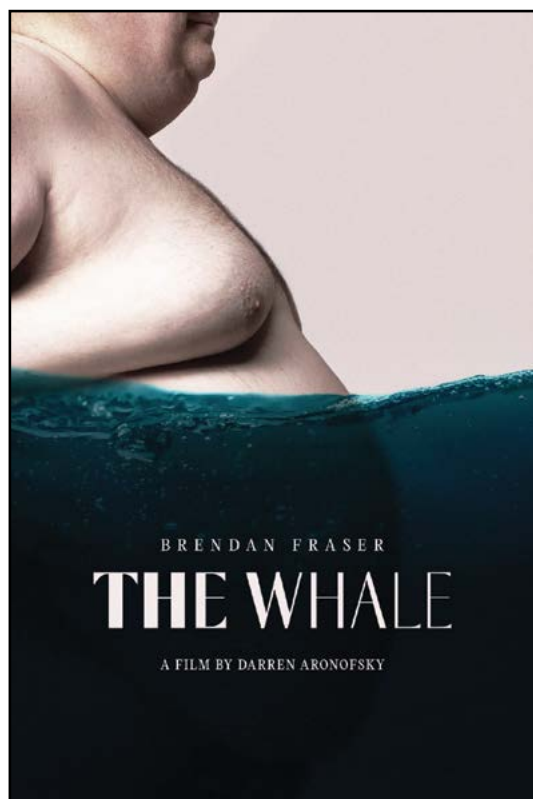
Charlie's one wish is to reconnect with his estranged teenage daughter. This is a difficult task since Charlie, by his ex-wife's request, has not spent time with his daughter in eight years. Ellie (Sadie Sink) is willing to come see him without informing her mother once Charlie offers her money. Ellie is a surly teenager, mad at her father for not fighting harder to be in her life, and the world in general. Her visits are peppered with insults, hatred and disgust toward Charlie.

Several people come in and out of Charlie's life as the movie unfolds. The entire film takes place in his apartment with only a few brief scenes outside his front door. The viewer is trapped with him and the life he has created. His only friend and pseudo caregiver is Liz (Hong Chau), a tell-it-like-it-is nurse, who has long given up trying to change Charlie's ways and is resigned to help as much as he will let her.

Thomas (Ty Simpkins), a young man going door to door to spread the word of God for his

church, stumbles upon Charlie and his situation. Thomas believes God had their paths cross for a reason and continues to show up with the hope of saving Charlie.

The pot simmers for all these characters as they enter Charlie's world in different ways. The slow reveals make this a tense and powerful drama



that excels because of the superb cast performances. Much has been said about Brendan Fraser's return to the cinema and this film is a reminder that he is a great actor. You may remember him in mindless action films, but his capacity to break our hearts with just his eyes confirms he was an excellent choice for this role.

On the surface, this movie could appear to be nothing more than a voyeuristic venture into the lives of the obese. A closer view, however, reveals humanity's need for connection, forgiveness, acceptance and the belief that everyone has inherent goodness.

Rated R. In Theaters



Vengeance

B.J. Novak of television's popular sitcom, "The Office," writes and stars in his directorial debut, "Vengeance."

Novak is Ben Manalowitz, a New York writer and podcaster. He goes to A-list parties and has a phone filled with the numbers of attractive girls he has hooked up with. One night, Ben's phone buzzes with a call from Abilene, a past tryst. The caller, however, is actually Abilene's brother Ty (Boyd Holbrook), informing Ben that Abilene has died.

Abilene's family is under the impression that she and Ben were in a serious relationship. This makes it difficult for Ben to wriggle out of flying to Texas to attend her funeral. Clearly out of his element in West Texas, Ben tries his best pay respect to a woman he barely remembers and get back to New York as fast as possible.

Abilene's family fawns over Ben and her brother wants to not only bond with him, but to recruit Ben to avenge his sister's death. Ben does not believe Ty's theory that his sister wrongfully died, as opposed to being just another victim of the opioid crisis, but he does see a potential story. Ben pitches the idea to his producer, Eloise (Issa Rae), and decides to stay in Texas. With the family's blessing, he begins to gather information for a true crime podcast



about Abilene.

Ben's research forces him to get to know Abilene's family and friends, which makes him look at them and himself differently. Abilene was an aspiring singer-songwriter and Ben finds her performances online. This leads him to Quentin Sellers (Ashton Kutcher), a music producer and somewhat of a sage to the youths in town. Quentin worked in L.A. for a time, but returned to his hometown with

the intent of helping aspiring artists in the area reach their potential. Ben finds himself spending time with Quentin, learning how the citizens grapple with the limited life choices in the small community.

As Ben uncovers more information, "Vengeance" becomes an edge-of-your-seat thriller. The film shines a light on bureaucracy, the challenges of the opioid crisis, our obsession with pseudo-celebrities and the stereotypes that often divide our society. This is not only a taut thriller, it is also a smart conversation starter for many of today's ills.

Rated R

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