


The Diablo Gazette

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**Amit Elor
World Dominance!**

In her proudest moment, Walnut Creek's Amit Elor celebrates immediately after winning the gold medal in Paris in women's freestyle wrestling.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Amit Elor Wins Big.....pg.2

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- OKTOBERFEST 2024 OPTIONS
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Martinez Section, Book Review, Movie and Streaming Review, Calendar of Events by City and much more...

Another CBCA Event Benefiting the Clayton Community

CBCA Clayton Oktoberfest

OCTOBER 5 & OCTOBER 6
 Sat. 11am - 8pm Sun. 11am - 6pm



German Biergarten • Food Court
 Giant-Carnival • Craft Vendors
 Live Music by The Internationals



On Main Street in Downtown Clayton - www.claytoncbca.org

LITTLE POLAND



European Grocery Store

1984 Monument Blvd, Concord CA 94520

The Many Ways to Celebrate Oktoberfest

Little Poland And Alpine Bakery Are Excellent Home Options

by David King

There is nothing like the coming change of the season to inspire our favorite fall festival, Oktoberfest.

There are several ways to celebrate this lively occasion. In Contra Costa County, we have three promising Oktoberfest events to enjoy, all on different dates. Why not explore all three?

Walnut Creek Oktoberfest is on September 27 & 28 at Civic Park East. This two-day event, like most, will include live entertainment, music, dancing, gourmet food and dozens of artisan vendors, arts & crafts, a biergarten with dozens of craft beers, wine, international music, and a Kinder Platz Kids Zone.

Crockett Oktoberfest - Sunday, October 13. This is Crockett's 3rd Annual Oktoberfest held at 628 2nd Ave. It is free to attend and offers plenty of unique activities such as axe throwing and a live yodeling contest. Don't forget about the food: Brezen (Pretzels), Würstl (Sausages), Maypole Dance, German Beer & Wine and of course live music and Polka.

Clayton Oktoberfest comes October 5 & 6. It is the most popular and largest of the three Oktoberfests, boasting more visitors (16,000) than Clayton has residents. It features biergarten, Oompah band, live music by The Internationals, authentic German foods, arts and craft, polka dancing, and carnival rides and games for kids. Every effort is made to immerse yourself in Bavarian culture.

There are also options to enjoy an Oktoberfest inspired party at home.

Little Poland European Grocery for Authentic Foods

Maybe you don't like crowds. Then bring Oktoberfest into your home. Popular among our local European immigrants is a small grocer at 1984 Monument Blvd. in Concord, called Little Poland.

Owner Jacob Gruzynski was well aware of this Concord store offering Polish foods at a time when he lived in Livermore. At that time, it was called Ted's Delicatessen. Gruzynski



eventually moved to Concord, bought the store, and changed the name to Little Poland, honoring his native country.

That was in 2017. Little Poland is a specialty store which he says there are only two like it in the Bay Area. "There is a large segment of first- and second-generation immigrants who still prefer the products from the Old County, including beer and wine," according to Gruzynski.

Virtually all the products sold at Little Poland are imported from the old world through family heritage companies that distribute foods from Russia, Lithuania, Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Poland, Germany and others.

"Groups from various countries in Europe do not like American foods such as American mayonnaise or ketchup," Gruzynski says. "American sausages and hams are full of water and preservatives. You can find some organics at stores but will pay \$30 or more per pound. It's way different than the foods you get here in the States. Our sausages are better than anywhere else."

I called him on that and it's true. The grillin' sausages have a much better snap with each bite. The seasonings embedded are much more vibrant. The texture seems more compact. They are indeed, delicious.

The point is, try out this quaint import grocer and get some Old Country meats and other products if you are going to truly experience some Oktoberfest cuisine at home.

And don't forget the treats. Local bakeries also get in the spirit. Concord's **Alpine Bakery** offers themed cookies, pretzels, black forest cakes, beehives, strudel, Bavarian crème puffs.

If you really wish to get in the Oktoberfest spirit, go authentic. Try your local European imported food store and a bakery.

Domination: There's No End to Amit Elor's Competitive Spirit

by David King

There's few who can say at age 20 that they are the best in the world, but Walnut Creek native, Amit Elor, can having walked away with what appears to have been an easy gold medal at the Paris Olympics in the 68kg freestyle women's wrestling division.

Walnut Creek, the County, neighbors, friends, local gyms, schools, all seek to be a part of her success and embrace that connection. Even LeBron James, Steph Curry, and Snoop Dogg had their photos taken individually with Elor.

It wasn't that she won the gold medal, this area has had its share of Olympic medalists. It's that she did it with such mastery. Given the successes in sports of Stanford and UC Berkeley, the Bay Area has always been mainlining athletes to the Olympics. In Paris, Central County was well represented by sending 10 athletes. But not since the Gold medal performances of Walnut Creek Aquanauts and Concord's Natalie Coughlin has there been such local elation over our home-grown champions.

Elor had to drop from her usual wrestling class from 72kg (where she has won eight World Championships in the last three years) to 68kg (about 9 pounds) in order to compete. She entered her bracket as unseeded because she had not won any titles at that weight class. She drew the #1 seed, World Champion Türkiye, Buse Cavusoglu Tosun. Elor easily won 10-2. Tosun eventually took home the bronze medal. Elor won the rest of her matches, 8-0, 10-0 and was in complete control of her final's opponent from Kyrgyzstan, Meerim Zhumanazarova, despite the lower score of 3-0. Completing a domination over Olympic and World Champion opponents by a combined score of 31-2!

Elor's history of success is equally amazing. In 2018-19, as a freshman at College Park High, she went undefeated winning the CIF State Title. From there she entered home studies through the Mount Diablo Unified School District Horizons independent study program to pursue a higher level of training, which required much traveling across the world.



The 2024 Olympic athletes from Contra Costa County competed in Paris (in last name alphabetical order). Top Row: Amit Elor, Megumi Field, Drew Holland, Sabrina Ionescu and Kara Kohler. Bottom Row: David Liebenberg, Daniella Moroz, CJ Nickolas, Jewell Roemer and Maggie Steffens. Photo courtesy Antioch Herald



up with a bronze.

"Back then, it wasn't like I had this undefeated win streak that I have now. Of course, I was disappointed by my loss, but it's not the same as if I were to lose right now after such a long win streak.

"But being in the wrestling world, we all the time see these upsets happening. We had a bunch of them happen at the

Olympics. Things happen. We can get injured and sick. So, it's pretty cool that I have a win streak, but at the end of the day, we all need to prepare for our competitions because things happen.

"Every single person who was in my bracket was a very excellent wrestler with their own challenges. In general, wrestling is always so much harder than it looks. There's a lot of strength and struggle that happens underneath that you can't see. Sometimes it just looks like people have their hands on each other, but they're constantly using their whole body to fight for position and look for openings and moves and attacks."

What may have been tougher than competing in the Olympics is that Elor returned to the States and had to battle pneumonia. She beat that as well. I spoke with Elor, still nursing a mild cough, while she was on her way to the beach in Southern California. She had traveled there to watch her boyfriend Mica Galvao, a jiu-jitsu world champion, conduct some clinics.

Having won eight World Championships, why are the Olympics more exciting?

"The world championship is the biggest competition within our sport. But the Olympics happens every four years, and the entire world stops what they're doing for two weeks and tunes in to watch all of the best

athletes in the world compete. So, it's 100 times cooler than the world championships because people who are not from the sport of wrestling will tune in and watch wrestling. They'll discover wrestling. The audience and support we receive from the Olympics is day and night difference than the world championships. Many people tell me that they didn't know anything about wrestling and now they're a huge fan of the sport. Just knowing that is so cool to hear."

Elor says her next major wrestling goal is to be a gold medalist at the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles.

Is hosting clinics in your future?

"It's something I've only started recently. My first ones were at the end of 2023, but I really hope to make it more of a profession sharing wrestling, teaching wrestling to kids and youths. I've received a lot of messages

Amit Elor continues pg. 10

"We express our deepest gratitude to everyone who played a part in making this season possible. From our generous donors and volunteers to our talented education and design staff, our Board of Directors, Alumni, Partners, and Sponsors—we are profoundly grateful for the support of our entire BD World. Thank you, and we can't wait to see you all again in 2025!" Dr. Reed concluded.

The Blue Devils Earns the Bronze Medal at the 2024 Drum Corps International Championship

Blue Devils B Captures Silver Medal at DCI Open Class

The Blue Devils organization has once again demonstrated its exceptional artistry and excellence at the 2024 Drum Corps International Finals, on August 08-10, with top honors in both World and Open Class competitions in Indianapolis, Indiana at Lucas Oil Stadium.

The Blue Devils, competing in the World Class division, brought the era of Romanticism to life with their production, "The Romantics." This captivating performance earned them an impressive score of 97.075 and secured the Bronze Medal.

"The Romantics" was an immersive journey through the essence of Romanticism, celebrating the movement's emphasis on nature, individuality, and the exploration of the unknown. With a dynamic soundtrack that blended past and present, and choreography that celebrated human emotion and curiosity, the production was a living, breathing tribute to the power of the imagination and the human spirit.

"Romanticism gave people the freedom

to dream, to explore the fantastical, and to understand the essence of humanity. This summer, 165 extraordinary performers traveled across the United States, bringing "The Romantics" to Drum Corps International's (events)," said Pat Seidling, Corps Director of The Blue Devils. "This season has been remarkable in so many ways, and my pride in our members is boundless. Their unwavering dedication, relentless commitment, heartfelt passion, and remarkable maturity have brought "The Romantics" to life in the most stunning and inspiring way."

Blue Devils B Captures Silver Medal with "Sacred Geometry"

In the Open Class division, Blue Devils B, members aged 15-19, delivered a breathtaking performance with their 2024 production, "Sacred Geometry" to earn the Silver Medal at the DCI Open Class World Championship Finals.

Reflecting on the season, Program Director Dr. Marvin Reed, Jr. shared, "This summer has truly been a magical and uplifting experience as we step into



a new era of BDB. There's nothing better than seeing the corps perform what they're capable of. We, as staff, see it during rehearsals in chunks here and there. But when they finally put the whole thing together, and it clicked in front of the audience — that was the most beautiful thing...we knew that all the sacrifice and dedication put forth was worth it."

The silver medal win at the DCI Open Class World Championship Finals is well-deserved. Their innovative approach to this year's show has left an indelible mark on the world of drum corps.

calendar of events

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September 21, World Doll Day Show and Sale, 10 AM - 3 PM, We bring top quality vendors together selling vintage, artist, antique, and contemporary, dolls, bears, toys, and miniatures for collectors looking for that special something to add to their collections. We specialize in creating fun and inspiring shopping experiences that are family friendly and all-inclusive events, that open the door to meeting with other enthusiasts and having fun enjoying a day filled with treasure hunting! Concord Plaza Hotel, 45 John Glenn Dr., Concord [SEE AD THIS ISSUE]

October 3, City of Concord Health Expo, 9 AM - 2 PM. Free health screenings and information. Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Cir., Concord [SEE AD]

LIBRARY
Concord Library, 2900 Salvio St, Concord For more information please call (925) 646-5455. <https://ccclib.org>

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

MARTINEZ

CLUBS
Martinez Rotary Club meets

weekly, 5-6 PM on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Campbell Theatre, 636 Ward Street., Martinez <http://www.martinezrotary.org> Pleasant Hill. <https://pleasanthillrotary.org/>

EVENTS

14th Annual Martini Shake-off
The last day to buy tickets (unless sold out) is September 6. Tickets are not available at the Door. Must be 21 years of age. IDs are required. Forward your table guest names to: irene@martinezchamber.com or contact at (925) 228-2345 by September 6. Details at www.martinezmartini.com. Proceeds support the Martinez Chamber of Commerce.

September 14, Birding Mt. Wanda, John Muir NHS, Martinez, 8:30 - 11:30 AM. We'll walk through oak woodlands and oak savannah habitats, climbing uphill on a rugged fire road with one steep section. Then we'll walk a single track trail back to the fire road, about 2.5 miles total. Parking lot at the Mt. Wanda Trailhead, intersection of Alhambra Ave and Franklin Canyon Rd in Martinez. Tickets needed, Limited space. Contact Cheryl Abel, 925-957-6229

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

LIBRARY

Calendar continues pg. 18

OKTOBERFEST



CLAYTON
October 4 - 6, Oktoberfest Festival 2024 Times vary. Carnival only on Friday, no vendors or alcohol sales that day. <https://claytonoktoberfest.com/info/>

CROCKETT

October 13, Oktoberfest in Crockett, FREE, located in our downtown district, with art galleries, shops, restaurants and bars. Live music, axe throwing, Oktoberfest bier (beer), brazen (pretzels), wurstle (sausages), raffle items, jumpy house for kids, yodeling contest, plus art and craft vendors, car show and much more. Bring your dirndls and lederhosen!, 1214 Pomona st, Crockett. [SEE AD THIS ISSUE]

WALNUT CREEK

September 27, 28, Oktoberfest, 4 pm - 10 PM Friday, Noon - 9PM Saturday. Arts, crafts, food vendors, music, and more. Civic Park East, 1375 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek

CLAYTON

CLUBS

Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club. <https://www.lionsclubs.org>

Rotary Club of Concord. <http://www.concordcarotary.org>

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

EVENTS

September 9, Tarantula Trek For Adults, 6 PM - 8:30 PM, Join us for a nature walk through Mitchell Canyon and we will dispel any malicious rumors you might have heard about Mount Diablo's misunderstood arachnids. Mitchell Canyon Interpretive Center Parking Area, 96 Mitchell Canyon Rd, Clayton

September 20, Coastal Cleanup Day at Balcerzak Inholding, 9 AM to Noon. Participate in a state wide movement to cleanup waterways and beaches by joining us to cleanup the Balcerzak Inholding! Each year, volunteers gather at creeks, rivers, beaches, drainages and all types of waterways around California to clean up trash and protect precious natural spaces. Meet: Save Mount Diablo's Curry Canyon Ranch - 3500 Curry Canyon

Rd, Clayton. <https://allevents.in/clayton/10000954369523937>

LIBRARY

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

CONCORD

CLUBS

Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club. www.lionsclub.org

Rotary Club of Concord. <http://www.concordcarotary.org>

EVENTS

Thru - September 26, Music and Market series every Thursday(except July 4). • September 5: The Big Jangle: Tom Petty Tribute, •September 12, Twist on Taylor: Taylor Swift tribute, •September 19, Annie Sampson, Concord's own, •September 26, Queenology: Queen Tribute

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

September 5, Emergency Preparedness Fair, 5-8 PM, Are you prepared for an earthquake or other natural disaster? The City of Concord is hosting an Emergency Preparedness Fair on Stop by to pick up useful information and free giveaways from local emergency service organizations. The fair will be held in conjunction with Concord's Music and Market concert series. The farmers' market begins at 4 p.m., and Tom Petty Tribute Band, The Big Jangle, will be playing between 6:30 and 8 p.m. Todos Santos Plaza, Concord. [SEE AD THIS ISSUE]

September 7, Family Fall Market, Noon - 5 PM, Shop from a variety of local vendors offering unique crafts, delicious treats, and more. Todos Santos Plaza, Concord

September 14, Side Gate Brewery Oktoberfest 2024, Noon - 9 PM, An authentic Oktoberfest experience at Side Gate Brewery, Live Music All Day, Craft Fair, Stein Holding Contest & Corn Hole, Side Gate Brewery & Beer Garden, 1822 Grant St, Concord

September 15, Festival Latino, Noon - 5 PM, The Unity Council's 3rd Annual Festival Latino is a free, outdoor festival that brings 5,000+ people to Concord' historic Todos Santos Plaza to enjoy live music, family-friendly games, Ballet

<p>\$5.00 OFF</p> <p>ANY PURCHASE OF \$25.00 OR MORE</p> <p><small>One per person. May not be combined with any other offers. Not valid with online orders. In-restaurant only. Valid at Concord, CA location only. Expires 09/30/2024.</small></p>	<p>\$2.00 OFF</p> <p>ANY PURCHASE OF \$10.00 OR MORE</p> <p><small>One per person. May not be combined with any other offers. Not valid with online orders. In-restaurant only. Valid at Concord, CA location only. Expires 09/30/2024.</small></p>
<p>10% OFF</p> <p>YOUR ENTIRE PURCHASE</p> <p><small>One per person. May not be combined with any other offers. Not valid with online orders. In-restaurant only. Valid at Concord, CA location only. Expires 09/30/2024.</small></p>	<p>FREE</p> <p>ANY SANDWICH with purchase of another sandwich</p> <p><small>One per person. May not be combined with any other offers. Not valid with online orders. In-restaurant only. Valid at Concord, CA location only. Expires 09/30/2024.</small></p>
<p>FREE</p> <p>CHEEESY BURGER</p> <p>With purchase of a Cheesy Burger</p> <p><small>One per person. May not be combined with any other offers. Not valid with online orders. In-restaurant only. Valid at Concord, CA location only. Expires 09/30/2024.</small></p>	<p>FREE</p> <p>CLASSIC BURGER</p> <p>With purchase of a Classic Burger</p> <p><small>One per person. May not be combined with any other offers. Not valid with online orders. In-restaurant only. Valid at Concord, CA location only. Expires 09/30/2024.</small></p>
<p>FREE</p> <p>Milk Shake</p> <p>With purchase of a Mike Shake</p> <p><small>One per person. May not be combined with any other offers. Not valid with online orders. In-restaurant only. Valid at Concord, CA location only. Expires 09/30/2024.</small></p>	<p>FREE</p> <p>REGULAR FRY</p> <p>With purchase of any Sandwich & Regular Drink</p> <p><small>One per person. May not be combined with any other offers. Not valid with online orders. In-restaurant only. Valid at Concord, CA location only. Expires 09/30/2024.</small></p>

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Jim Diaz
Mayor, Clayton
jdiaz@claytonca.gov

Clayton Mayor

A Letter from the Mayor

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Here Are Some Highlights For The City Of Clayton.

We have a new City Manager. The City Council appointed Kris Lofthus, at the council meeting on Tuesday, August 20, 2024.

Kris comes to Clayton from the City of Suisun City, where he served as Recreation, Parks and Marina Director / Deputy City Manager. His first day in Clayton will be Monday, September 16, 2024.

Prior to Suisun City, Kris served with the City of Richmond as Community Services Manager, and the City of Vacaville as Recreation Coordinator.

Kris has over 26 years of Public Service and he brings a breath of experience and leadership to Clayton. Please extend a warm Clayton welcome to Kris Lofthus!

The City of Clayton also recognized several individuals who have contributed to our wonderful Community.

Sandy Johnson was recognized for her exceptional and dedicated leadership in managing and coordinating Clayton's Annual July 4th Parade and associated activities. The 2024 July 4th events were noteworthy, as Clayton also celebrated its 60th Anniversary of Incorporation as a City. Well done Sandy.

Lon Goetsch, Assistant Fire Chief, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District — We honor his retirement with over 34 years in Public Service. When the 2012 economic downturn



Kris Lofthus



Sandy Johnson



Lon Goetsch



Adam Politzer

came to Contra Costa County forcing the closure of several Fire Service facilities, including Clayton's own Fire Station 11, your City Council established a special committee to address this issue. Chief Goetsch was appointed by the Fire District to assist and guide the special committee to facilitate Station 11's re-opening. His contributions assisted Clayton to reopen Station 11.

Congratulations, Lon, upon your retirement and for your immense assistance to the City of Clayton.

Adam Politzer, Clayton's Interim City Manager, was recognized for his leadership and contributions for returning Clayton to a strong fiscal position. Adam brought nearly 30 years of public service experience to put Clayton on a "sound footing" and set the stage for our new City Manager. "Positioning Clayton for Success!" Thank you, Adam.

Best wishes to you.

In one other announcement, the Council Proclaimed September 2024 as "Childhood Cancer Awareness Month."

Action Items and Announcements

Granted a One-Year extension to the Oak Creek Canyon Project, a Planned Residential Development for six (6) residential units, located on the north side of Marsh Creek Road at the intersection of Diablo Parkway. Our City Planning Commission and our City Community Development Director also support this extension.

Additionally, our 17th Annual Concerts In The Grove Season concluded on Saturday, August 3, with the East Bay Mudd Orchestra.

The final Classic Car Show is set for Saturday, September 21 and will feature "Low Rider" cars. We also plan to have a Mariachi Band perform to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs between September 15 through October 15, 2024.

As your mayor, I will continue to work hard to maintain Clayton's small-town charm and character while running an open and transparent local government.

You can reach me directly with any questions or concerns at 925-673-7316 or JimD@claytonca.gov.

Sincerely,

Jim



Edi Birsan
Concord Mayor
cityofconcord.org

Concord Mayor

Libraries: Big and Small



As the Past President of the Concord Friends of the Library, libraries are very special to me. The Concord Library sits at City Hall. I spent many Wednesday mornings with two other volunteers putting books for sale as well as being involved in more than a dozen book sales.

As Mayor in 2018, I donated half the funds of the Mayor's Tournament to the library. When the children's yard area was in need, I arranged for the group "I Love My City" to redo it.

It should be noted that while the city owns the building, the county provides the staff. But the county only provides 35 hours in staff time.

City Council approved funds for additional hours so that it remains open late nights and weekends. They have shared events with the community from learning to play the guitar to knitting and unique reminders of the importance of books such as when I was honored to be asked to read from banned children's books (I read where The Wild Things Are).

The current library is small but bigger than our first library which was a Carnegie Grant library in Todos Santos Plaza. Sadly, generations ago, I recall that the only building knocked down to expand a park was a library.

The plans for the Base include a new large library but that is years out. This March, as Mayor along with Vice Mayor Obringer and

Councilmember Aliano, went to Washington D.C. to meet with our Senators to get support for a Federal Grant (sometimes called an Earmark) of \$4,000,000 to expand our existing library.

We gained support of both our state Senators who put it through to the next level in the process where it rests, and we will continue to look for opportunities to expand what we have.

The Concord Friends of the Library always need volunteers: start here: <https://ccclib.org/con-friends/>

Meanwhile, the community has a library expansion of its own in the form of residential 'little lending libraries.

While most are of the small classic size of a small box with maybe 20 books several have grown quite extensive having multiple levels and shelves. Several of them specialize in children's books and if you contact me with some surplus I can pick them up and distribute them.

Regardless of being BIG or small, libraries are part of what we call community.

Views expressed here are the personal views of Edi Birsan who would like it to be the views of government everywhere. EdiBirsan@gmail.com



Your Vote Counts

Election season is upon us. Social media has a lot of misinformation circulating that can lead residents to question whether their vote will be counted accurately. Democracy is reliant on voter participation, and misinformation weakens that. I want to ensure you have accurate information on how Contra Costa County Elections (Elections) protects your vote.

First, Elections checks that you are eligible to vote. Only eligible people can register to vote, and they sign under penalty of perjury that they meet eligibility requirements. Registration is validated against DMV or Social Security records and if an applicant cannot be validated, they must provide a government-issued photo identification the first time they vote.

Second, Elections makes sure it is you when you vote. Election officials check every ballot return envelope to compare the signature to the voter's signature on file before the ballot can be counted. If the signatures do not

match, or if the signature is missing, election officials contact the voter to "cure" their vote-by-mail ballot status. Once the voter's signature is verified, then the ballot can be counted.

Third, Elections checks that you only vote once. A voter's activity is logged in the voting history system when they submit their vote-by-mail ballot or vote in person. Safeguards are in place so only one ballot is accepted per voter and only the first ballot received is counted.

Fourth, Elections checks that your ballot is read and properly counted. Contra Costa County's voting system is a paper-based, optical scan ballot system that is tested before and after every election to verify votes are counted and recorded properly. Any ballot that cannot be read by the scanners is manually reviewed by a team of two Elections' staff. After Election Day, officials perform a 1% manual hand tally (audit) of the votes to confirm that the voting system accurately tabulated

and reported votes cast for all races.

To summarize, before election results are finalized, election officials ensure that every eligible ballot is counted, that voters only voted once, that all proper procedures were followed, and that the vote tabulation system counted ballots properly. Your vote and identity are checked four times throughout the voting process.

In addition to the multiple system checks, the public can observe all election processes and procedures at the Elections Office and/or Election Operations Center, including the preparation of tabulating devices, vote-by-mail processes, and central count. This ensures transparency every step of the way.

I hope this information gives you peace of mind about your vote. This is just a brief overview and



QR Code.

<https://www.contracostavote.gov/elections/candidates-campaigns-measures/observer-rules-and-regulations/>.

there are more ways Elections works to protect your vote. If you are interested in learning more about election security, please visit secure-election.org. If you are interested in observing any election-associated activity, please scan the

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Know Your Concord Candidates

This November, two City Council Districts will be on the ballot, District 2 and District 4. Here is a look at the candidates and a gently edited look at their filed campaign statements.

DISTRICT 2

Carlyn Obringer, incumbent, Vice Mayor

Let's keep moving Concord forward. I have served as your Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Planning Commission Chair. I know how to get things done. Over the past four years, we've rebuilt roads, put more police officers on patrol, and added new housing at all income levels – all while balancing the budget.

I helped to secure funding to stabilize officer recruitment and retention, added two School Resource Officers at Concord high schools, and upgrade the roads including East Street and surrounding neighborhood roads, Port Chicago Highway, and streets in the Estates, Hillcrest, and West Sun Terrace neighborhoods. More is coming.

I have also worked to create a pipeline of 1,000 units of new housing in Concord and to get the unsheltered off the streets and into permanent supportive housing; protected the community's vision for a world-class project at the former Concord Naval Weapons Station that supports working families; ensure that everyone has access to 24/7 professional, timely and compassionate behavioral health support by supporting the creation of the A3 Miles Hall Crisis Call Center in Concord; and launched and lead the annual "September of Service" initiative to beautify Baldwin, Hillcrest, and Willow Pass parks. www.carlynobringer.com.

Eric Antonick

I aim to offer a tangible alternative to the status quo in Concord. I am a long-time resident of Concord with a commitment to the community. It is my disposition to be on guard towards those in power. I have a history of being a critic/gadfly/whistleblower. I'm all about transparency and accountability, with a professional career of getting complex projects completed and with a record of exposing fraud and unethical actions.

Empowerment: Consistently soliciting feedback from public regarding concerns/priorities.

Naval Weapons Station

Development: The residents of Concord, not another corporation, need to own the development's assets through a nonprofit entity and trust. We would engage with a development company to manage the project.

Defend residents against larger jurisdictions. Protect, informed consent, consumer safety.

Promote neighborhood and community organizations, foster discussions/presentations/ debates among groups.

Ensure transparency and integrity in the awarding of all city contracts. Audit city operations. Inform the public regarding behind-the-scenes coordination with other entities/ jurisdictions.

Data visualization tools for better understanding of community make-up, crime insights, trends, challenges, initiatives.

Accountability: Clearly communicate listing of city's consensus of top priorities,

objectives and measurements by which success/failure will be determined.

<https://substack.com/@eric4concord>

DISTRICT 4

Edi Birsan, incumbent, current Mayor of Concord

Leadership: I'll take us forward to deal with public safety, homelessness, repairing roads, continuing the good stewardship of our finances, and uniting the community.

Homeless Strategic Plan: I worked to put the plan together, securing a \$5.2 million to pursue seven strategies that will build on the 28% reduction in homelessness we achieved in our city this year.

Public Safety: I supported increasing police patrols, requiring body cameras, opening the Miles Hall Crisis Center providing non-police response to mental health crises, and improving crime-fighting technology. I'll continue to fight for a substation on Monument.

Roads: Street repairs have begun on Treat, Oak Grove, Monument, and others with \$120 million investment while balancing the budget.

Housing: We continue building housing affordable to all income levels.

Elected to council in 2012, transparent and accessible. Reach me at home 510-812-8180 or edibirsan@gmail.com.

I'm supported by unions, Assemblyman Tim Grayson, diverse community leaders, council colleagues, and locally elected officials.

Myles M. Burks

Concord is my home. Six years ago, my family and I built two successful Concord businesses, Concord Tap House and Frickin' Fried employing 8-20 people.

In these inflationary times, local government and businesses must work hand-in-hand to serve the needs of the people. Concord's Rent Control Ordinance is antagonistic, irresponsible, and too extreme. As your councilman, I will work to repeal it. The state capped rental control law is the long-term solution. It is fair to both owners and tenants.

Community service: As a member of Living Way Church, quarterly, we feed the homeless and believe strongly in helping others.

As your councilman, I will work to protect your personal safety, property rights, and support the effort of the Concord Police department.

Environmentally, I opposed Seeno's Faria Project. I agree with both Save Mount Diablo and majority of city councilmembers who opposed the project. Both Seeno and Save Mount Diablo should have negotiated a fair solution for Concord and Pittsburg.

I will work to protect and promote your interest with fresh independent ideas. I hope to earn your vote.

Pablo Benevente

My vision is for Concord to thrive, not just survive. Our council needs steady, proactive and visionary leadership grounded in honesty, values and accessibility – not the same tired strategies.

That's why trusted leaders like California Attorney General Rob

Candidates continues next page

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Median Home Prices Begin to Flatten, Walnut Creek Still Shines

July statistics for our micro-markets show us that median home prices are gently flattening compared to last year (red numbers) except in Walnut Creek. Walnut Creek is up almost 11%. Depending on the city, 31% to 52.6% of active listings have reduced their prices. Wow! What a difference a year makes. This still means prices on 50% to 69% of listings are still holding steady. Discuss with your realtor about marketing strategies to meet and maintain your pricing goals.

MONTHLY MARKET REPORT JULY / 2024			
CLAYTON Existing SFR Median Price \$1.30M % Change from Last Year -1.9%		CONCORD Existing SFR Median Price \$820K % Change from Last Year -1.8%	
MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 7 Sales-to-List Price % 100.4% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 52.6%		MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 12 Sales-to-List Price % 101.6% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 38.8%	
MARTINEZ Existing SFR Median Price \$738K % Change from Last Year -5.3%		WALNUT CREEK Existing SFR Median Price \$1.68M % Change from Last Year +10.9%	
MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 20 Sales-to-List Price % 100.0% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 31.0%		MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 9 Sales-to-List Price % 100.9% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 33.3%	

SOURCE: Car.org



There's a New Cat Rescue in Town



Leona Patterson with felines, Prince and Reeses. Photos by Diane Walsh

At first glance, the Cat Lounge, which is changing its name to The Cat Chillin' Zone (CCZ), in Martinez is in the business of saving the lives of senior cats. Since they opened their doors in January 2024, they have found homes for fifteen cats. But CCZ is not a typical animal rescue organization. This Harry Potter-themed space contains comfortable couches where patrons can relax while cats curl onto their laps. Harry Potter books are available in the on-site library and each cat is sorted into a house (Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff, Gryffindor or Slytherin).

CCZ is the brainchild of Leona Patterson, who wanted to create a place to save cat's lives while bringing the community together. Besides providing an opportunity to play with cats, they organize many activities to bring animal lovers together. These include a face-painting event every Wednesday, children's birthday parties, karaoke, and trivia nights. Their pasta feed with Alan Skverksy, an executive chef of Wolf Gang Puck, on June 2nd was a huge fundraising success, and they plan to make this an annual event.

CCZ has about twenty-five cats available for adoption. Bonded pair, Prince (8 years) and Reeses (11 years), are still in search of their forever homes. They are fast friends and must be adopted together. Both cats are absolute sweethearts. Prince was rubbing against my legs within minutes of my entering the facility. While there has been a lot of interest in adopting only Prince, Reeses has a

benign mass on his face and, although he gets around fine, his front legs are a little wonky (he walks on his elbows). CCZ invites you to come down and meet these two special felines.

Visitations are scheduled Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday between 11 am and 8 pm. Drop-ins welcome, but appointments are encouraged. They are located at 532 Center Avenue in Martinez. Admission is \$20/hour for adults, \$15/hour for military/seniors 62+ and children are free (must be accompanied by an adult, no infants or toddlers).

For those not wanting to adopt, CCZ is looking for volunteers to donate two hours of time once a week. People are needed to transport the cats to the vet, help with routine care and office tasks. They also have an Amazon wish list on their website, and an on-site gift shop, where you can get a copy of Patterson's book, "Whiskers and Wisdom".

CCZ was voted second best non-profit in Martinez by the Martinez community. As a 501c3 non-profit, they rely on the generosity of adoring cat-a-holics and animal lovers to save as many senior cats as possible from euthanasia. To learn more, visit www.catlounge Martinez.com/.

Jill Hedgecock is a local author of several novels featuring animals. Her newest release "In Shadow's Reflection" is the third novel in her Doberman series.

It is With Great Pride and Pleasure That I Present 437 SUTCLIFFE PLACE, WALNUT CREEK NEW LISTING - NORTHGATE JEWEL 4 BEDROOMS | 2.5 BATHS | 3 CAR GARAGE | .25 ACRE LOT | TheBestofSutcliffePlace.com



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

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

Terrylynn Fisher

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Candidates continued from page 6

Bonta, Contra Costa County Supervisor Ken Carlson, MDUSD Trustee Cherise Khaund, and Concord residents like you believe we need a new generation of leadership.

As a lifelong resident and product of Concord's public schools, I'm deeply committed to our city. I love Concord and am proud to raise my family here. I understand the value of hard work, dedication and, most importantly, trust and collaboration.

As chair of the Measure V Committee, I led efforts to secure \$30 million annually for road improvements. As Parks Commissioner, I've ensured public spaces are well-maintained, enjoyable and accessible by all. My work as chair of a Concord-based nonprofit and on the Economic Opportunity Council of Contra Costa has helped families

achieve economic prosperity and participate in our community.

This experience in public service, and my career in innovative industries, equips me with a practical perspective that serves all residents. I'm committed to policies that support sustainable growth, fiscal responsibility, public safety, good governance and inclusivity.

I would be honored to earn your vote. 925-338-1473 or benaventeforconcord@gmail.com or visit pablobenavente.com.

Dashner Matthew — Did not file a Candidate statement.

To read their complete statement, go to cityofconcord.org/1204/November-2024-Candidates

Embracing the Future of Education with GTAi

Tailored Learning for Every Student
by Nick Driver

The global pandemic upended many aspects of our lives, but one silver lining has been the revelation that education must evolve to meet the diverse needs of students. The traditional classroom, once the cornerstone of learning, is increasingly being recognized for its limitations in accommodating all students' unique needs and learning styles.

As we continue to navigate this new educational landscape, it's clear that flexibility and personalization are key. Griffin Technology Academies (GTA) is leading the charge with its innovative new program, GTAi, launching in Fall 2024. This program epitomizes the future of education by embracing the reality that each student learns differently and excels at their own pace. GTAi is now being offered in the SF Bay Area region – including Contra Costa County.

GTAi is designed to offer a robust independent learning curriculum that caters to students' varying needs while providing the flexibility that is increasingly necessary in today's world. The program is particularly well-suited for students who require an alternative to traditional schooling due to personal circumstances, whether it be because of extensive travel, involvement in non-traditional industries, health conditions, or other unique situations. It is a forward-thinking solution for home-school students, student-athletes pursuing professional tracks, and those who find the traditional classroom setting challenging.

One of the standout features of GTAi is its flexibility. Students benefit from personalized, one-on-one attention with individualized plans tailored to their specific learning needs. This means that students can accelerate or decelerate their academic progress based on their personal pace, ensuring that no one is left behind or held back. Weekly meetings with advisors provide ongoing support and guidance, fostering an environment where students can thrive academically and personally.

Moreover, GTAi isn't just about academics. It integrates the best of both worlds by offering students access to GTA's award-winning extracurricular activities. From sports teams to bands, clubs, and more, students can engage in a full range of activities that enhance their educational experience and personal development. In fact, GTAi students will be one of the first to enjoy the use of our new gym currently being built on our campus. This holistic approach ensures



Nick Driver, Superintendent of GTAi, welcomes students back to school.

that students are not only advancing academically but also growing in other important areas of life.

The program also holds up to the highest standards, with teachers holding appropriate California credentials and offering courses in all core disciplines such as Math, English, Science, and Social Science. AP and Honors courses are available for those seeking a more rigorous academic challenge. Students who complete the program will receive a full GTA high school diploma, including the opportunity to participate in graduation ceremonies—a crucial milestone in their educational journey.

It's never too late to explore new opportunities, and GTAi is designed with flexibility in mind. Whether students are transitioning from traditional schooling or seeking a new path, GTAi provides a welcoming and adaptable learning environment. Families are encouraged to enroll—even if your school year has begun, it's not too late to consider GTAi as an option.

In conclusion, GTAi represents a significant step forward in education, aligning with the understanding that no single approach fits all students. It offers a personalized, flexible learning experience that accommodates diverse needs while maintaining high academic standards. To schedule a personalized introduction for your family or to enroll, reach out to program director Margie DiGiorgio at (707) 656-3725 or via email at mdigiorgio@gtschools.org. Embrace the future of education with GTAi, where your child's unique needs and potential are at the forefront of their learning journey.

About the Author: Nick Driver is the Superintendent of GTAi, an independent learning program designed to prepare students to be ready for college, career, and life through diverse, innovative instructional programs. To learn more, please visit: www.gtschools.org/GTAi.

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

Behind the Scenes, Clayton Community is Gloria-ous!

Many of us are looking forward to the Clayton Oktoberfest on October 5-6. This event has become one of the premier events in the Bay Area. The downtown festival aims to recreate a real "Munich Style" Oktoberfest with an authentic German biergarten, Oompah band and lots of German food and beer. People arrive from all over the Bay Area costuming traditional German attire, including, men wearing 'lederhosen.'

It is one of two outstanding events organized by the Clayton Business and Community Association (CBCA) that has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years to be awarded back into the community. And while many volunteers make this possible, there is one person who we must recognize was at the forefront of it all, Gloria Utley.

If you do not know Gloria, long-time resident of Clayton, you have been living under a rock. Gloria has been an integral part of this community for more than 50 years and has been instrumental in keeping many of the events that we know and love today, continuing.

In 1972, after she and her husband settled in the area, she opened a craft shop in this sleepy village of just 1,400 people.

It was because of her knowledge of juried artists and craftspeople that led to the formation of what we now know of as the Clayton Art- & Wine Festival, which became the main fundraiser for the Clayton Business & Community Association (CBCA).

In 1984, Gloria, then a mother, wife and activist, threw herself into serving this community. She was a principal organizer of the Clayton Roundup, an annual BBQ Kansas-style event on the Easley Estate that by 1996 grew to more than 1200 people in attendance.

In 1997, it was replaced by the Clayton Art & Wine Festival. The Clayton Art & Wine Festival is now a two-day juried event with more than one hundred booths and attracting artists from all over California and attended by thousands of people from all over East Bay. Proceeds from this event fund scholarships and other support for the Clayton community. Gloria, as a founding member of the CBCA, is listed as the Vice Chairman on its constitution documents.

She was a juror at the Art & Wine Festival for several years and has helped double the CBCA professional membership.

In 1984, she became the chair of the 4th of July committee and chuckled recounting the beginnings of the parade committee.

"I was now the chair and proposed that we create and hang a huge banner across Main Street. The idea took off and we excitedly hoisted it up, congratulating ourselves on a job well done. It looked magnificent. But our joy was short lived. Just a short while afterwards, a huge truck lumbered down the street taking our banner with it!"

Also in 1984, she joined the Concord Soroptimists, which lead to launch the Pleasant Hill and Martinez Soroptimists. Eventually, three clubs merged to form Diablo Vista Soroptimists. For 39 years she



Gloria Utley, left, Clayton Valley Garden Club receive a 1st Place award for their plant sales during covid. Photo credit Clayton Pioneer.



Gloria Utley hands a Soroptimist check to Executive Director Sandra Scherer of Monument Crisis Center

has been an active Soroptimist.

Soroptimist International, founded in Oakland over 100 years ago, is focused on issues facing women and girls including education, human trafficking and scholarships.

The local Diablo Vista chapter were instrumental in supporting the newly opened Monument Crisis Center back in 2003 when it was just a storefront, as well as providing funding for the Shelter Inc. and the Pleasant Hill Community Center.

She was on the initial committee to start Clayton Valley Village which launched in 2017. Their Service allows seniors to stay in place in their home by offering volunteer support, much of it in transportation, so that they can complete their errands, appointments, or help with yard and housework. Clayton Valley Village now serves over 70 members.

Since joining the Clayton Garden Club, she has served as president multiple years, and currently as parliamentarian. Among the Clayton Garden Club activities is "Blossoms for Barbara," a program distributing flowers each Valentine's Day to seniors.

The club also teaches people how to propagate plants. Recently, they have arranged for their student volunteer to earn college credit in horticulture at DVC for their work with Clayton Valley Garden Club.

Gloria smiles in telling me about the history of how Clayton has grown and developed over the years, but that it has still managed to retain its small-town authenticity.

This is because of people like Gloria Utley, a spright senior citizen full of life, and still a highly active member of the community, busy as ever making certain that Clayton keeps its original charm that is loved by so many in our community. We are grateful for this dynamic lady, and she is your neighbor.

[Kim Trupiano assisted with this article.]

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by Kristin Peterson
Pacific Service Credit Union, pacificservice.org

Understanding Credit Utilization

Credit utilization refers to the percentage of available credit that you're using across credit cards and additional lines of credit. This is determined by the balances shown in your credit report. Credit utilization plays a significant role in determining your credit score and can impact your ability to access credit in the future.

Why is it important?

Credit utilization accounts for a significant portion of your credit score, specifically 30% of your FICO score. A high credit utilization ratio may indicate to lenders an excessive dependence on credit, potentially categorizing you as a higher-risk borrower. Keeping a low credit utilization ratio can have a positive impact on your credit score. This shows lenders that you can responsibly manage your credit and may increase your chances of being approved for loans or credit cards in the future.

How is it calculated?

To determine your credit utilization ratio, begin by summing up the credit limits across your revolving credit lines. Next, add up all your current balances owed on these revolving credit lines. Then, divide the total debt by the total credit limit, and then multiply this figure by 100 to calculate your credit utilization ratio. For example, if you have a \$6,500 balance on a credit card that has a \$10,000 credit limit, your credit utilization ratio is 65%.

How do I lower my credit utilization ratio?

Lowering your credit utilization ratio can help improve your credit score. Here

are a few ways to lower your utilization rates:

1. Pay down balances: Aim to pay off your debts early. Even small additional payments can make a difference over time.
2. Request higher credit limits: If you're in good standing, your credit card issuer may be willing to raise your credit limit. Consider requesting an increased credit limit if you've responsibly held the card for some time and consistently made on-time payments.
3. Spread out your charges: Instead of using one card for all purchases, distribute your spending across multiple cards to keep the individual and overall utilization low.
4. Don't close your credit cards: It may seem logical to close a credit card that you no longer use, but doing so could lower your available credit and increase your overall utilization rate.

Understanding and managing your credit utilization ratio is a pivotal step in mastering your financial habits. It not only impacts your credit score but also reflects your financial discipline. By taking control of your credit, you can enhance your creditworthiness and open doors to better financial products and terms.

If you currently have high-rate credit cards or loans, call Pacific Service Credit Union at (888) 858-6878 or stop by one of our local branches. A member service representative will help determine if we can save you money by refinancing high-cost loans.

Written in conjunction with AI.

Jennifer Stojanovich
Realtor, Better Homes Realty

How to Seamlessly Sell and Buy a Home at the Same Time

Selling your home while buying a new one can seem daunting, but with careful planning, it's entirely achievable. Here's a streamlined guide to help you manage both transactions smoothly:

Assess Your Financial Situation. Start by evaluating your current financial status including your equity in your existing home and your budget for the new one. Consult with a financial advisor to understand your borrowing capacity and down payment requirements.

Get Pre-Approved for a Mortgage. Secure a pre-approval for a mortgage to understand how much you can borrow. This will make you a more attractive buyer and streamline the process when you find your next home.

List Your Home. Partner with a real estate agent to list your home. Ensure it is in optimal condition by addressing any needed repairs or upgrades to enhance its market appeal.

House Hunt with a Strategy. Begin searching for your new home while your current one is on the market. Be ready to make an offer quickly when you find the right property.

Consider a Contingency Offer. If possible, make your offer on a new home contingent on the sale of your current home. This can provide you with more flexibility and reduce the risk of owning two properties simultaneously.

Coordinate Closing Dates. Work with your real estate agent and attorney to align the closing dates for both



transactions. Ideally, you want the sale of your current home to close shortly before or on the same day as the purchase of your new home.

Prepare for a Temporary Move. In case your closing dates don't align perfectly, be prepared for a temporary move. Renting a short-term place or staying with family can bridge the gap between homes.

Stay Organized. Keep all documents and communications organized. This includes contracts, inspection reports, and correspondence with both your buyer and seller agent.

Bridge Loans. Some lenders offer bridge loans or other programs where you can make an offer non-contingent to purchase a home before you sell.

By following these steps, you can navigate the process of selling and buying a home with greater ease. With the right planning and professional guidance, you will be well on your way to a successful transition to your new home.

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56 La Honda Ct, Clayton

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\$899,000

5825 Del Trigo Ln, Clayton

Charming Single Story Rancher on a Large Lot lovingly maintained by original owner situated close to downtown Clayton, trails & elementary school. 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, approx. 1646sf on an approx. .26 acre lot with an attached 2 car garage.

\$649,000

5541 Louisiana Dr, Concord

Incredible Opportunity to make this Charming Home your own in the sought-after Clayton Valley Highlands. 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, approx. 1232sf on an approx. .21 acre lot.

\$699,000

32 Rolling Green Cir, Pleasant Hill

Desirable Townhome in the popular Rolling Green Community is in a great location tucked away in the rear of the complex backing to greenbelt and close to walking paths & community pool. 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, approx. 1320sf with attached 2 car garage.

Clayton Market Update

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
501 E Myrick Ct	\$1,155,000	1648	3/2	6/24/2024
242 Stranahan Cir	\$820,000	1663	2/2.5	7/1/2024
8051 Kelok Way	\$1,300,000	2894	5/3	7/10/2024
7 El Molino Dr	\$1,235,000	2324	4/2.5	7/15/2024
1282 Shell Cir	\$745,000	1367	2/2.5	7/23/2024
102 Oak Ct	\$1,950,000	3575	4/3	7/29/2024
5929 Cardinet Dr	\$1,340,000	2093	4/2.5	8/9/2024

Concord Market Update

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
1382 Swallowtail Rd	\$829,000	1304	3/2	7/24/2024
1290 Kestrel Ct	\$1,377,000	2961	5/3	7/26/2024
4532 Melody Dr #A	\$450,000	918	2/2	7/30/2024
914 Hastings Dr	\$1,180,000	2209	4/2.5	8/7/2024
5489 Los Gatos Ct	\$725,000	1657	3/2	8/9/2024
3956 Beechwood Dr	\$800,500	1392	3/1.5	8/13/2024
1830 Noemi Dr	\$602,500	909	2/1	8/15/2024

Jennifer Stojanovich
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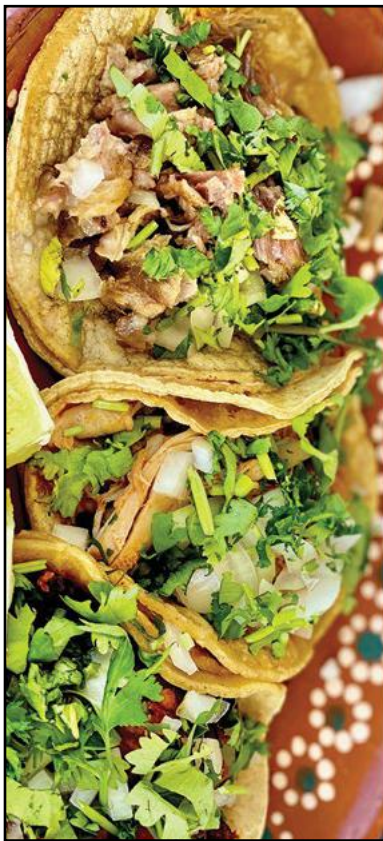
Based on information from CCR/Paragon MLS as of 8/19/24. All data, including all measurements and calculations of area, is obtained from various sources and has not been, and will not be, verified by broker or MLS. All information should be independently reviewed and verified for accuracy. Properties may or may not be listed by the office/agent presenting the information.

VOTE Myles Burks

City Council District 4

"Concord can go for Myles!"

Paid for by Myles Burks for City Council 2024 FPPC # Pending



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VisitConcordCA.com/Taco-Trail

Concord's Taco Trail Adventure Returns

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

The first collaboration is at Side Gate Brewery & Beer Garden. It is their newest release, "Diablo Dreamin'" is a West Coast Pale Ale, blending Citra, Columbus, and Amarillo hops to create a "devilishly" good combination.

The label art for "Diablo Dreamin'" features the stunning

"Mt. Diablo," a vibrant piece by talented local artist Calee Dunlap. Calee created the piece live during a previous Creative Concord's Art & Music Jam.

Paul Culbertson, Co-founder of Side Gate Brewery, loved the collaboration stating, "Calee Dunlap's colorful and ethereal depiction of Mt. Diablo inspired us to brew something bright and full of character, yet still approachable. We landed on a Pale Ale utilizing some of our favorite hops to balance orange zest and citrus aromas with a clean, crisp finish."

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

The second collaboration will debut in October when Epidemic Ales releases a special brew in honor of Concord's 50th Anniversary as



a sister city of Kitakami, Japan. The label art will be provided by esteemed artist David "Hyde" Cho. Follow Visit Concord and Epidemic Ales as details and release date are announced.

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



Indian Summer?

I adore Indian food and though I am an adventurous cook, I would rather leave the cooking of this cuisine to the professionals. Indian food is some of the most aromatic and flavorful I have ever eaten. Indian food's strong flavors make it difficult to pair with wine, however, there are a few that can work with classic Indian dishes including creamy Chicken Tikka Masala or any one of the spicy Indian curries.



milk and sugar which will cool the heat from the dishes. As you see in the recipe below, the spices in the tea are the perfect complement to the classic Masala spice blend: cardamom, cinnamon, coriander, pepper, cumin, and clove.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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

CHAI TEA

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon fennel seed
- 6 green cardamom pods
- 12 whole cloves
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 (1/4-inch) piece ginger root, peeled and thinly sliced
- 6 black peppercorns
- 7 cups water
- 2 tablespoons Darjeeling tea
- 4 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 cup milk

DIRECTIONS

In a medium saucepan, combine fennel seed, cardamom, cloves, cinnamon stick, ginger root, peppercorns and water. Boil for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and steep for 10 minutes. Add the tea, bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer for 5 minutes.

Strain mixture, discard spices and return the tea to the saucepan. Stir in the brown sugar and milk. Serve immediately.

Yield: 8 servings

The first wine style I recommend with Indian food is a medium-bodied (read: 12-13.5% alcohol), fruit forward, off-dry white wine. A little sweetness in the wine is the best way to complement dishes with a spicy heat; highly flavored foods need fruity wines to hold up to their pungent flavors. Look for wines from cool areas like Coastal regions of Northern California, Oregon, Washington, and Germany. German Kabinett Riesling and some Rieslings from the states are good places to start if you like this kind of wine.

The second wine style I recommend is a dry, fruit forward, red wine. It should have good acidity and not be too tannic or alcoholic. Tannins and alcohol increase the perception of spice in a dish and the spice increases the perception of alcohol and tannin in the wine. Each will throw off the other's balance. Grenache based wines from Southern France would work well or lighter style Zinfandels from California.

Forgoing alcohol, the true classic drink with Indian food is Chai Tea. Chai Tea is made with

Amit Elor continued from pg. 2

about setting up clinics all over the place. For now, it's just too much for me."

No one seems to score on you, what's been your toughest match?

"The most I've given up was four points. The start of 2024 has been a huge struggle for me because I had to drop from 72 kilos to 68. My first few competitions at 68kg, I performed poorly even though I won. My performance was poor because my weight cut to 68kg was not done correctly. I would always feel bad and very sluggish. I accumulated little injuries.

"In February, I was in the Olympic qualifier in Acapulco. At the start of one of the matches, I got thrown to my back in the beginning of the competition. But after that, I kept accumulating points and ended up winning. I'd say that was probably the worst. Heading into the Olympic trials and the Olympics, things did not seem very bright because of how much I was struggling.

"It just goes to show that if you

don't give up and keep trying, things can work out. It turns out for me, the preparation for the Olympics was the best that I've ever done. I felt amazing. My body and all the little injuries I had were finally going away. My body was healing. I felt good and energetic."

Elor will not be competing again until 2025, but in the meantime is considering doing some clinics to give back to the community.

If you didn't know Elor, you would think she must just be a beast. But there is a dichotomy of her world dominance over women in wrestling and her youthful, playful persona in everyday life. She admitted she has some aspirations and experience in acting and performing. She is in fact quite endearing and is wearing her notoriety like a star. Maybe Marvel Entertainment will take notice. For now, her focus is still on wrestling.

"I love wrestling. I don't see why I would ever not wrestle."

Scan QR code for Amit's Post Olympic Interview.





Growing Winter Vegetables

There is a crispness in the air, which means that Autumn is right around the corner. In Europe and most of the USA, fall is when the growing season ends. But not in Contra Costa. We are blessed with a mild winter climate that allows us to grow and harvest delicious, healthy table vegetables and citrus throughout the winter months. Do you grow fall and winter veggies? You should. Here's how.



Butternut Squash are excellent winter produce - Courtesy Shutterstock

Preparation: Make sure that your planting bed has full sun, even in the depths of winter. Shadows lengthen in winter months, and your winter veggie beds should receive at least 6 hours of direct sun each day. Pull out and compost your spent summer plantings and add 1-2 inches of your homemade compost to the bed. Mix compost into the first several inches of existing soil. Have a good supply of mulch available to surround your new winter vegetables with a 2- to 3-inch layer after planting.



Sugar Snap Peas produce abundantly in cool weather

Planting: If planting seeds, start them for the first several weeks in a warm, shaded location in small starter pots. Make sure they receive water each day. When the seedlings are 4-6 inches tall, transplant them into their permanent location. Some seedlings like to be planted deep while others prefer shallow. Read the instructions on the packet or ask your friendly garden center staff. You should plant purchased seedlings within a few days since their roots grow so quickly in starter pots. Leave about 12-16 inches between plants to allow for mature size. If a fall heat spell moves in, you may need to protect your vulnerable seedlings with shade fabric for the first several weeks until their roots have a chance to establish.

Watering and Cold Protection: Assuming a normal Central Contra Costa rainfall season, you will need to irrigate your veggies until about the end of November, or until we receive some soaking rain. After that, only water during prolonged winter dry spells of 3 weeks or more. Many winter veggie varieties can withstand below freezing temperatures, but their growing will slow or stop during the cold. Don't worry though as their growing will pick up again with warmer temperatures. Protect leafy greens (lettuce and spinach) against cold nights with shade cloth or another covering, as they can get frost burned.

Veggie Choices: My favorites for more protected spots in the garden or a greenhouse are lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, kale, and garlic. Lettuce and spinach will continue to produce new edible leaves until the weather turns hot in

spring. Favorites of mine for colder beds are butternut squash, broccoli, cauliflower, bunch onions, Brussels sprouts, asparagus (a perennial), carrots, and sugar snap peas. Harvest times and techniques vary, so do your research or email me NakedGardener@diablogazette.com.

Winter vegetables are fun to watch as their flower heads turn harvestable. And they are a healthy addition to your dinner plates and salads. Try them.

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Around Martinez



by Brianne Zorn, Mayor, City of Martinez

My Close Call with the Park Fire is a Lesson for all of Martinez.

I cannot express my gratitude enough to the firefighters who mobilized in the state of California to fight the Park Fire.

My family purchased a cabin in Mill Creek, just south of Lassen National Park, in July 2023. It had been our dream to own a cabin in the mountains and we found the perfect place. We had just celebrated our first anniversary at the cabin with the annual 4th of July community parade (the highlight is the Mineral Women's Kazoo Band!) and supporting the volunteer fire fighters at the annual pancake breakfast fundraiser.

When we locked up and headed back to Martinez, we had every expectation that we would be returning in a few short weeks. But on July 24, an arson in Chico kickstarted a wildfire that within only a few days had grown to hundreds of thousands of acres covering four counties. Our little cabin community of Mill Creek received evacuation orders 24 hours later.

Desperate for information and updates, participation in our community's Facebook group grew tenfold, and active members began posting updates of CalFire briefings and sharing images shared from other fire departments.

Our neighbors recommended we download apps such as "Watch Duty" to be able to track the progress of the fire, evacuation orders, and updates from the Genasys system (formerly Zonhaven).

CalFire had daily briefings, and everyone who had been evacuated checked hourly on the status of the lands they hold so dear. We were notified, as the fire crept up the Mill Valley canyon, that firefighters were setting backfires to protect communities like ours to reduce the impact when the fire came through.

We received kudos for clearing the forest floor around our cabins and creating defensible spaces. Butte County Fire Department posted photos of firetrucks on our roads, undergrowth ablaze, and thick smoke in the trees that we recognized; we all held our breath. When the evacuation orders for our Genasys district were lifted on August 17, all of the cabins in Mill Creek and surrounding communities had been successfully protected. My family gave a



Park Fire. Photo Credit Cal Matters

huge sigh of relief.

Thirty days after the fire first started, it is still only 71% contained and has reached 430,000 acres, making it the 4th largest wildfire in the history of California. Fire departments from all over the region reported to protect our northern California communities, totaling over 2,500 personnel, five helicopters, 66 engines, 72 dozers, and 118 water tenders.

Although all of the cabins in the Mill Creek and Mineral communities were saved, across the entire extent of the fire, 637 structures were destroyed. My heart goes out to these families who lost their homes, or their retirements, or their dream of rural mountain living. But the most important statistic is that there were no fatalities or injuries to fire personnel or civilians. I commend the CalFire leadership for protecting the lives of both civilians and their staff.

Just a few Diablo Gazette issues ago, I wrote an article about wildfire preparedness, creating defensible space around your home, and emergency alerts. Experiencing a near miss with a major fire like this makes me realize how very poignant the information in that article was.

As the mayor of Martinez, I commit to continuing to work with our fire departments and emergency personnel to do whatever we can to prepare for, and actively prevent, wildfires in Martinez.

My heartfelt appreciation goes out to everyone who mobilized to protect the many rural communities from the Park Fire. Thank you!

14th Annual Martini Shake-off Celebrates the Birthplace of the Martini

Who makes the best martini? On September 14, you will find out as local mixologists and bartenders representing their establishments will compete for the "People's Choice Award," while official judges will determine first, second, and third place winners for mixing the best martinis.

Now in its 14th year, the annual Martinez Martini Shake-off is Martinez Chamber's signature event, held at Plaza Ignacio Fountain at the steps of Martinez City Hall. This is a suggested black-tie or cocktail gala honoring Martinez's historical claim to the birthplace and home of the martini.

One of East Bay's more stunning and creative social events and always a sell-out with a capacity of 450 features live music, a fully catered dinner, specialty libations, a shake-off contest, beer, wine and a silent auction. Admission price includes dinner and two drink tickets per person. Additional



drink tickets may be pre-purchased at a discount, or at regular price at the event. Table Purchases of 10 will be reserved seating. All other tickets are open seating.

The last day to buy tickets (unless sold out) is September 6. Tickets are not available at the Door.

Attendees must be 21 years of age minimum and IDs are required at Check-In. A VIP Check-In will be available for Table Purchases. Forward your table guest names to: irene@martinezchamber.com or contact directly at (925) 228-2345 by September 6. For more details go to www.martinezmartini.com.

Proceeds from this extravagant affair support the Martinez Chamber of Commerce



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

Explore Martinez

www.martinezchamber.com

It Took a Village to Bring 2nd Annual National Night Out Martinez Celebration

by Pete Sabine

By Pete Sabine

National Night Out Martinez returned August 6, at the Waterfront Park for the second year since the Covid outbreak. Before Covid from 2015 to 2019, the events were hosted at the Alhambra Christmas Tree Farm in Martinez. More than 900 were in attendance this year, which is double the attendance of the first Alhambra Valley event in 2015.

"We have expanded the Alhambra Valley event from a neighborhood gathering to a city-wide celebration under the National Night Out Martinez organization. Our location at the Martinez Waterfront Park allows room for more attendees and exhibitors as well as including and integrating other smaller local National Night Out groups to participate," said event organizer Pete Sabine in a statement.

The event also attracted a few attendees from nearby communities.

It was the culmination of just over nine months of planning from a six-person team of organizers. The team consisted of Christine Dean, a former member of the Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff, Irene Merkel with the Martinez Chamber of Commerce, Cliff Chan with Martinez CERT as well as Kevin Murray, Steve Riccobono, and Pete Sabine.

Participants, Sponsors, and Volunteers Coordinate Support

The organizing team enlisted the support of the Chief of Police, Mayor of Martinez, City Manager and City Council Members. Plus, it obtained the endorsement of the Martinez Chamber of Commerce and the Martinez Downtown Association.

The City of Martinez provided a grant of \$5,000 to apply toward the event expenses (which was over \$10,000) as the primary sponsorship of the event. The balance of the event expenses was covered by additional sponsors, including MCE Clean Energy, Les Schwab Tires, Nuvision Credit Union, Pete Sabine Real Estate, Martinez Music Mafia and donations from Republic Services and Bill's Ace Hardware.

"Our National Night Out event brought the community together with local law enforcement and first responder participants who were very grateful for this opportunity to interact with our neighbors in a positive light."

Keynote speakers included Martinez Police Chief Andrew White, Martinez City Council Members Satinder Malhi, Jay Howard, Mark Ross, Martinez Vice Mayor Debbie McKillop and Rochelle Badgley representing the Martinez Education Foundation.

The Martinez Waterfront Park is the perfect size venue to hold all the activity including live music, food trucks, shaved ice treats, kids face painters, a children's entertainer, a petting zoo and giant colorful kites flew over the park by Tony "the kite man" Jetland.



Free Child ID kits were distributed to attendees by Pete Sabine. Several local security companies displayed their wares including ADT, one of the national sponsors of National Night Out.

Also at the event were six area First Responder agencies who brought their police vehicles, ambulance and fire trucks to the location. This included participation from Consolidated Fire, American Medical Response, Martinez Police Department, California Highway Patrol, and the Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff. The Martinez Police Department brought two motorcycles to the event, much to the glee of the children.

The Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff Search and Rescue provided a vehicle display at the event as well as with packets of information which included information concerning crime prevention specifically for children, as well as a Junior Sheriff sticker and a temporary tattoo of a Sheriff's badge.

Our local CERT (Community Emergency Response Training) team brought their radios and yellow glow-in-the-dark safety vests to provide valuable assistance to our event by coordinating the entire parking effort during the event.

Even the Martinez Boy Scout Troop 429 volunteered their time to support the event.

"We are very grateful to CERT and Scout Troop 429 for their volunteerism and all the sponsors and participants who contributed to making National Night Out a growing and successful event for Martinez."



by Craig Lazzeretti, Martinez News and Views

Our Hometown Olympian

Martinez's Jewel Roemer and the rest of the USA women's water polo team came up just short of winning a medal at the Paris Olympics, suffering heartbreaking losses to Australia (in a shootout) in the semifinals and to the Netherlands (11-10) in the bronze medal game. Roemer had a big goal to give USA the lead in a 5-4 quarterfinal win over Hungary.

This was the Stanford star's Olympic debut, and hopefully she'll be back in 2028 to go for gold in Los Angeles!



Fishing Pier Renovation Update

The City Council gave the go-ahead to city staff to begin soliciting bids for the long-anticipated project to renovate the waterfront's municipal fishing pier at an estimated construction cost of \$2.6 million.

Which the city has in grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the project will go out to bid in September.

The "fish window" to complete in-water work on the project runs through Nov. 30, and Public Works Director Joe Enke said he hopes the entire project will be completed sometime next spring.

New Waste Collection Rates

The council approved new maximum residential and commercial rates for Republic Services solid waste collection effective Sept. 1. The new rates can be found in the following table:

Monthly Residential Rates (Maximum): 22.26% Increase Effective September 1, 2024*				
Container Size/ Service Level	Customer Count	Current Rate	Proposed 9/1/2024 Rate	Per Customer, Per Month Increase
20 Gallon	1,218 (11%)	\$28.17	\$34.44	\$6.27
20 Gallon (Senior)	926 (8%)	\$22.92	\$28.02	\$5.10
32 Gallon*	2,791 (25%)	\$40.36	\$47.75	\$7.39
32 Gallon (Senior)*	1,547 (14%)	\$28.60	\$33.84	\$5.24
64 Gallon	3,489 (31%)	\$49.59	\$60.63	\$11.04
64 Gallon (Senior)	909 (8%)	\$35.73	\$43.68	\$7.95
96 Gallon	202 (2%)	\$94.47	\$115.50	\$21.03

*18.32% increase for 32-gallon residential service

Local Office Races

There will be only one competitive City Council race, for the District 2 seat currently occupied by longtime incumbent Mark Ross. Because of redistricting, Ross no longer lives in the district and was ineligible to run for re-election.

The race for Ross' seat is between longtime Martinez Parks, Recreation, Marina and Cultural Commission Chairperson Dylan Radke (who previously ran for City Council in 2012) and Greg Young, a consumer protection commissioner with the state Department of Financial Protection and Innovation. Candidates' packets can be read Online at CityofMartinez.org.

In District 3, incumbent Satinder Malhi was the only candidate to file papers to run and will automatically earn a full four-year term.

Martinez Unified School District Board of Trustees

Although three seats are up for election, there will be only one competitive race for the school board, in Area 1 between incumbent Carlos Melendez and Logan Campbell. Melendez was appointed to fill the seat in 2021 when incumbent Jonathan Wright resigned after defeating Melendez in the 2020 race. Campbell, a small business owner and community activist, was an applicant for the vacant City Council seat that went to Malhi in 2023.

Incumbents Anne Horack Martin in Area 2 and Courtney Masella-O'Brien in Area 4 were the only candidates to file to run for those seats and will be automatically elected to new four-year terms.

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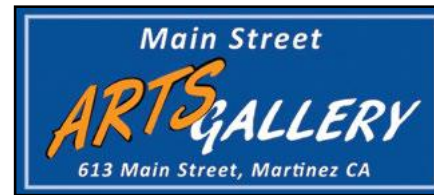
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Mark Jezierny Landscapes

Exhibit at aRt Cottage

Mark Jezierny is a well-known art teacher in the Mount Diablo Adult Education Program. He has taught in the Martinez and Lafayette programs as well. Jezierny has had several shows at the aRt Cottage. We are happy to welcome him and his students back once again.

Jezierny is well known for his palette knife paintings and heavy textures in his work. However, in this new upcoming show the viewers will notice he has gone lighter on the texturing. His scenes are mostly familiar landscapes from the area and are recognizable. His colors are rich and vibrant.

Jezierny credits his junior high school teacher for being his mentor. "I went to Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. It was there I had my first formal teaching from Walter Mast." He continued being a follower of Mast to the point where they were painting together in plein-air for years after



Mark Jezierny



Mt. Diablo from Heather Farm

that. Several students from Jezierny's current class will be exhibiting along with their teacher. For some, it will be their first time showing in a gallery. This can be very daunting and exciting.

aRt Cottage is also reserving a small section of the gallery to show off some of the current work by aRt Cottage students.

All are invited to the open house reception on September 7, from 2:00 -4:00 p.m. for refreshments, live music and a tour of the exhibit and sculpture garden. The exhibit closes October 31.

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

Main Street Arts Lets the Light Shine In

By Paula Oesterling

At Main Street Arts, September will be a month of shared light and enthusiasm, as they welcome talented members of Lamorinda Arts Alliance to its guest wall.

Artists of varied mediums have put their unique spin on the theme "Delighted by the Light." This show will run September 6 through November 2.

Participating artists include: Robert Anke, Donna Arganbright, Annette Laurel Batchelor, Terry Blair, MaryLou Correia, Syliva Fones, Lynn Fulton, Leslie Golden, Jennifer Granat, Denise Hillman, Kim Homes, Elizabeth Kennen, Melchia Kutches, Lori Larks, Claudette McDermott, Samantha McNally, Connie Millholland, Craig Moline, Ebba Navas, Chelsea Picksley, Maxwell Picksley, Judith Rohrer, Yi Shepard, Ruth Stanton, Charlene Steen, and Lorna Strotz.

Members of the gallery will present their exceptional new works during these same dates. Each of our artists offer their own special type of light for you to enjoy. A reception for all of these artists will be held Friday, September 6, from 6-9pm.

Main Street Arts includes members



Chris Granillo mural

who are truly "out and about." Chris Granillo is currently involved in several mural projects. His colorful beauties can be seen throughout the Bay Area.

Nate Holbein is currently at Burning Man, where he received a grant to create an installation of very large proportions.

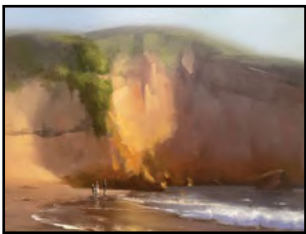
Congrats to both of these guys as they share their art with the rest of the world. Work by both of these artists is available at Main Street Arts.

Each month Main Street Arts gives away a piece of art to one lucky winner. In September, they are offering a piece by Gwenn Spratt. Drop in to sign up.

Blackhawk Gallery Guest Artist Carol Tarzier to Present at Black Hawk Gallery



Josephine



Cliffs at Rodeo Beach

All are invited to attend an art demonstration by Carol Tarzier at the Blackhawk Gallery 3416 Blackhawk Plaza Circle in Danville on September 10 at 7:30 p.m.

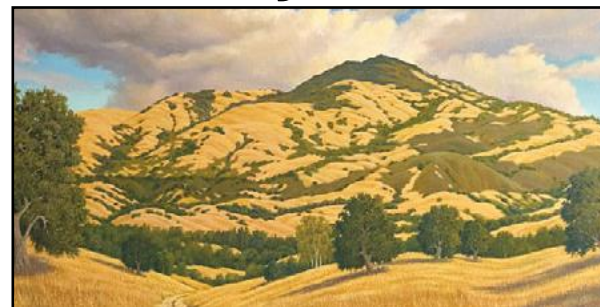
Carol Tarzier is a Bay Area painter and sculptor. Her sculptures are figurative and abstract works in bronze. Awards for sculpture include the John Cavanaugh Memorial award, and several awards from the National Sculpture Society including the Roger T. Williams Prize, Gold Medal and Maurice B. Hexter Prize, and the Bosque Conservatory Art Council's Silver Medal.

Commissioned sculptures include a 7' bronze memorial to C.L. Dellums, unveiled at the C.L. Dellums Amtrak station

in Oakland, and a life-size memorial to George Hasslein, Dean of the College of Architecture, at Cal Poly State University in San Luis Obispo.

Over the last few years she revisited an early love, oil painting. Carol has received numerous awards at plein air events. Her paintings have been represented at the California Art Club's Gold Medal over the last six years, the Greenhouse Gallery's Salon International, the Haggin Museum in Stockton, and in the Oil Painters of America Western Regional Exhibitions. Her paintings create a structure

Radiant Visions: A Must-See Art Exhibit at JOR Fine Art Gallery



Mount Diablo Vista by Charles White - Oil Painting

Whether you are an art aficionado or simply looking for a delightful way to spend an afternoon, "Radiant Visions" is an exhibit not to be missed.

Nestled in the heart of Clayton, the JOR Fine Art Gallery is currently showcasing this stunning exhibit. This show brings together the diverse works of 28 gallery artists

alongside two guest artists, offering a visual feast that resonates with both contemporary flair and timeless elegance.

Among the highlights is a breathtaking oil painting of Mt. Diablo by Canadian-born artist Charles White. His talent shines through in every brushstroke, capturing the majesty of the East Bay's iconic peak. The vivid hues and intricate details invite you to lose yourself in the landscape, leaving a lasting impression that will linger long after you've left the gallery.

This exquisite show will run until October 27. Jor Fine Art Gallery is located at 1026 Oak Street, Suite 102, in Clayton. Open Wednesday to Sunday, 12-5 p.m.

Appointments are available through our website at jorfineartgallery.com or by calling 925-768-5662.

of illuminated form on the canvas. She understands painting as a structure of light and color, beginning from the edges and moving through a created space.

See www.tarzier.com and facebook.com/caroltarzierfineart for her work.

East Bay Gallery Tour Adds Six More Galleries

The Second Annual East Bay Gallery Tour has added six Benicia Art Galleries to the Tour this year. There are now 13 art galleries for you to visit during the month of October.

Visit any of the galleries listed below beginning October 1 to pick up your Tour postcard with a map and addresses of all the Art Galleries. Each gallery you visit will stamp your postcard for a chance to win a prize worth \$300. There will be three winners from those who visited all 13 galleries. Two additional prizes will be awarded among those who visited at least nine of the galleries. The winners will be chosen at random.

The winners will get a certificate to purchase any artwork at any of the galleries in the Tour. This event is free and open to anyone.

Participating Tour Galleries

- aRt Cottage, 2238 Mt. Diablo Street, Concord • Bedford Gallery, 1601 Civic Dr, Walnut Creek • Benicia Art Glass, 309 1st Street, Benicia • Benicia Plein Air Gallery, 307 First Street, Benicia • Blackhawk Gallery, ADAS, 3416 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville • Gallery 621, 920 First Street, Suite 203, Benicia • HQ Gallery, 333-D First Street, Benicia, • JOR Clayton Gallery, 1026 Oak Street Suite 102, Clayton • The Little Art Shop, 129 First Street, Benicia • Main Street Arts Gallery, 613 Main Street, Martinez • Moraga Art Gallery, 432 Center Street, Moraga • NY2CA Gallery, 617 1st St, Benicia • Valley Art Gallery, 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110, Walnut Creek

World Doll Day Show Returns September 21

World Doll Day Show is returning to the Concord Plaza Hotel on September 21.

Did you know that Doll Collecting remains in the top collecting interests today? They are still a “collecting passion” for many people young and old.

Mary Senko, owner of World Doll Day Shows and Events tells us, “People want to collect items that have meaning and history, represent a special place or time, remind them of a special person, or are just beautiful and artful.” Dolls do a little of all of that and more.



The Blythe Doll and several modern doll creations are going to be previewed by DollDreamSpace and Ion Tallmon.

Senko received a Bubble-cut Barbie when she was seven and has been collecting dolls ever since. That Barbie was her favorite. Now she is sharing her love of dolls, toys, bears, and miniatures, by promoting World Doll Day Shows and Sales and encouraging others to join the fun.

What better place to learn about dolls than to attend a doll show and sale? Collectors and attendees can ask questions, meet a fabulous line-up of nearly 50 vendors, or get a doll evaluated. Enjoy the fun of a treasure hunt shopping dolls from every era along with the toys and treasures that help bring doll displays to life in their own collections.

The Show and Sale has something for everyone including vintage dolls and toys; artist and one-of-a-kind dolls and plushies; doll house furniture and doll house accessories; modern and contemporary dolls such as Barbie, Blythe, Monster High; antique dolls, Madame Alexander dolls, Barbie, Patty Pal, and so much more.

We asked Senko what her plans are for the future of World Doll Day Doll Shows and Events. “I want to continue to keep doll shows fun, give dolls away to encourage young and not-so-young collectors to keep collecting, and give back to the community to thank the community for supporting these shows through raffles that support important charity work in the community.”

Senko invites everyone with a passion for shopping and treasure hunting to attend the Concord show at the Plaza Hotel, 45 John Glen Dr. Hours are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with discounted parking, food on site, door prizes, raffles, and evaluations of dolls available.

Admission is \$10, children under 13 free. Save \$1 with a coupon (or with this article) and learn more about World Doll Day Shows and Sales at www.worlddolldayshows.com or World Doll Day Shows and Events on Facebook.

“If you love dolls, you are certain to love this event,” Senko promises.



Tammy was created by Ideal Corporation to compete with the Barbie franchise.



Barbie and her fashions. Photo credit by: Barry Sturgill Art



The Bye-lo Baby first appeared in 1922. It remains one of the most successful dolls of all time.



Skipper, Barbie’s little sister, was created to extend the Barbie Franchise for Mattel.

Mary Senko Presents
World Doll Day Show & Sale
 Concord CA Sept. 21st 2024

Tickets \$10.00
 Children under 13 Free

10am-3pm
 Crown Plaza Hotel (Bay Area)
 45 John Glenn Dr.
 Concord, CA

BP

CITY OF CONCORD'S HEALTH EXPO

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2024, 9AM-2PM
 CONCORD SENIOR CENTER, 2727 PARKSIDE CIRCLE

This **free** community event brings together a diverse array of resources, free health screenings, and information for seniors, families, and caregivers.



We are seeking vendors and sponsorships for this event that attracts 400+ people. Vendor registration is open until filled - register today at www.concordreg.org!

If you have any questions please reach out to Ally Pethebridge
ally.pethebridge@cityofconcord.org | 925-671-3017



Edi Birsan



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REDUCED HOMELESSNESS 28%

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

ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY

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

STREET REPAIR

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

BUILD AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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

RESPONSIBLE BUDGETING

Edi will continue maintaining the fiscal integrity of Concord’s finances.

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Paid for by Edi Birsan for Concord City Council FPPC ID# 1320964.



Didi

Didi (IzzacWang) is a 13-year-old Taiwanese American boy living in Fremont, California in 2008. In the summer before he is about to begin high school, he spends his days playing video games, goofing around with friends and trying to get closer to his crush.

With his father constantly away on business in Taiwan, Didi is surrounded by a house full of women. He fights with his older sister Vivian (Shirley Chen), enjoys time with his grandma Nai Nai (Zhang Li Hua) and has a tense relationship with his mother Chungsing (Joan Chen).

The title character goes by several names. Online and to his friends, he is Wang Wang. Attempting to broaden his friend circle with some older skater boys, he introduces himself as Chris. And he goes by Didi within his family. The names he chooses show how he begins to try on different personas and tailor himself to fit what he thinks others want to see and who he hopes to become.

The depiction of boys at this age is authentic. Didi and his friends curse a lot, have questionable exploits and behave in a disrespectful and annoying fashion. These are not kids out of control; they merely make stupid mistakes and push their boundaries like all teenagers. As Didi and his friends struggle to cultivate a veneer of cool, they seek to navigate the world of girls, friendships, and the realization that school will need to be taken more seriously.

Where this could simply be a story about embarking on the tumultuous years of being a teenager, the film goes a step further and dives into how difficult and confusing it is to raise teenagers. Although we mostly follow Didi's trajectory, a substantial portion is also devoted to



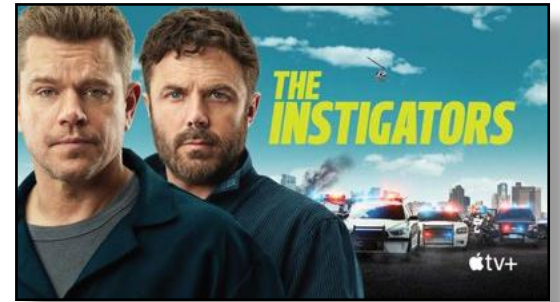
his mother. It is interesting to see one character try to find their place in the world, while another reflects on how their life choices put them somewhere they did not expect to be. There are touching mother and son moments that many parents will be able to relate to.

This film will invariably draw comparisons to 2018's "Eighth Grade," where we follow a teenage girl during the same time of adolescence. They make great companion pieces, illustrating different perspectives of finding a way to steer through an emotionally charged time of life. Younger viewers will feel seen, while adults will most likely be glad this time of life is in their rearview mirror.

In Theaters. Rated R



The Instigators



Mr. Besegai (Michael Stuhlbarg) is a mid-level crime boss who needs three crooks to help him rob the mayor of Boston. Finding himself short-handed for the heist, he allows one of his regular delinquents, Scalvo (Jack Harlow), to bring on the two new guys.

Scalvo recruits the fast-talking, know-it-all Cobby (Casey Affleck) and the inexperienced, but desperate for money, Rory (Matt Damon). When the heist does not go as planned, Rory and Cobby are left holding the bag and stuck with each other until they can figure a way out of the mess.

The guys bicker as they traverse through Boston, trying to salvage their botched job while creating newer and bigger problems along the way. At one point, Rory enlists his therapist to help and ends up dragging her into their mounting problems. Hong Chau, as Dr. Donna Rivera, showcases her capability of elevating any film she is in and holds her own in the heavy action scenes.

Do not look for an intricate plot or backstory. The characters are not fleshed out and you need to accept that you are simply here for the ride. This film relies heavily on the likability of its actors. Casey Affleck is humorous and Matt

Damon is relatable as a regular guy driven to desperate measures. They have an enjoyable onscreen rapport as two people forced to work together due to their circumstances.

The cast is top-notch with Ron Perlman as the corrupt mayor and Ving Rhames as one scary cop who will stop at nothing to complete his assignment. Both seem to relish their over-the-top roles, as do the rest of the cast. The plot attempts to say something about moral choices and how easily power can lead to corruption, but it does not get too heavy-handed.

If you can accept this film as pure entertainment, and you enjoy big explosions and long car chases, then you can expect to have a satisfying good time. Stay through the credits to make sure you get the update on a couple of characters.

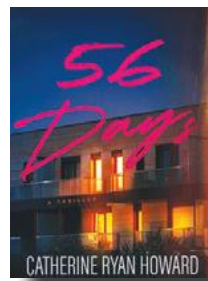
Rated R. Currently streaming on Apple+



56 Days

by Catherine Ryan Howard

Since the Bay Area is having a summer covid surge, it seemed appropriate to review a novel that takes place during the lockdown. "56 Days" (Blackstone Publishing, paperback, 320 pages, \$10.39) by Catherine Ryan Howard is a suspenseful psychological thriller set in Dublin, Ireland during the early days of the pandemic.



down. The tight tension and twisty plot of this page turner will make you forget that you were a part of these dark days of the global pandemic. The story is told in various time periods, so readers who are not fond of this storytelling approach may not appreciate the intricacies of this tale.

However, if you love a good who-dun-it that will leave you guessing about the character's motivations, then this is the book for you.

"56 Days" was a #1 bestseller in Ireland, a New York Times Best Thriller of 2021, a Washington Post Best Thriller for 2021, a New York Public Library Best Book of the Year and an Amazon Editors' Pick. It was short-listed for the Edgar Award for Best Novel and is currently being developed for screen by Amazon Studios and Atomic Monster.

Catherine Ryan Howard is an internationally bestselling author of seven crime novels. Her debut novel "Distress Signals" won, or was shortlisted, for many prestigious awards, such as the WA John Creasey New Blood Dagger, and the Independent Press Awards Best Mystery of 2017. Her fourth novel, "The Nothing Man" was a #1 Irish Times bestseller and a #1 Kindle bestseller in the UK and was shortlisted for Irish Crime Novel of the Year. She has also authored two light-hearted travel novels detailing her experiences working in Europe and the United States. She lives in Cork, Ireland. Find out more on www.catherineryanhoward.com.


Throughout the novel, Howard does an excellent job of planting questions in reader's minds. Is main character, Ciara, a naive romantic? Is debonair Oliver who he presents himself to be, or does the secret he harbors hold the key to his true colors? The narrative jumps between the point of view of these two characters starting on the day they met in a supermarket and moving around in various time sequences. Scenes in current time are also depicted by Detective Leah Riordan as she tries to sort out the identity of a decomposing body in a bathtub.

Thirty-five days after Ciara and Oliver meet and begin dating, Ireland goes into lockdown. Ciara takes a leap of faith and moves in with Oliver. The stakes are high because Ciara may have made a critical error by not letting her family know her whereabouts. When a journalist warns Ciara to be careful of Oliver, and as readers ponder why Oliver fled London, the tension skyrockets. As clues unfold and Oliver and Ciara's relationship deepens, readers are left wondering what happened on day 56.

I highly recommend picking up this novel, even if you cringe at the thought of being reminded of those days we all spent in lock-



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In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from Claycord.com and Other Sources

Get Emergency-Ready at Preparedness Fair



How prepared are you for an earthquake or other natural disaster? The City of Concord is hosting an Emergency Preparedness Fair on Thursday, Sept. 5, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., at Todos Santos Plaza.

Stop by to pick up useful information and free giveaways from local emergency service organizations. The fair will feature representatives from the Concord Police Department, Contra Costa Fire & HAZMAT, Contra Costa CWS (Community Warning System), Contra Costa County Aging and Adult Services, Contra Costa County Animal Services, American Red Cross, Bill's Ace Hardware, Dangers of Vaping Booth, Independent Living Resources, Mobility Matters, VistAbility, Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control, and East Bay CPR.

The fair will be held in conjunction with Concord's Music and Market concert series. Tom Petty Tribute Band, The Big Jangle, will begin playing at 6:30.

Ygnacio Valley Library Temporary Closure Thru September 8

For the health and safety of the Ygnacio Valley Library staff and patrons, it will be closed through Sunday, September 8, due to the continued issues with the cooling tower inside the Library. Repair work is underway.

Holds currently on the shelf will remain in place until the library reopens. Holds arriving during the closure will be sent to the downtown Walnut Creek Library. You can change your hold pick-up location to another library by contacting Walnut Creek Library staff and requesting a change to your holds.

The book drop will be closed. Please do not leave books outside the book drop. You can return your books after the library reopens or to any other Contra Costa County Library.

Thank you for your patience and for supporting the Library.

Brookfield Properties to Host Community Workshop

Brookfield Properties, the master developer for the Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS) Base Reuse Project, will host a community workshop on Parks and Open Space on Tuesday, September 17.

This is your chance to hear plans and suggest your ideas for the development. They are listening.

The event takes place from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at the Centre Concord, 5298 Clayton Rd, Concord.

For information go to <https://concordbproject.com/>

Former Clayton Resident and Rock Star, Greg Kihn, Passes



Greg Kihn, An Iconic Figure in the Realm of Rock Music Has Passed Away at the Age of 75.

Greg Kihn Will Be Remembered for the Hit Songs Jeopardy and The Breakup Song

Greg Kihn, an iconic figure in the realm of rock music lost his battle with Alzheimer's disease on August 13, at the age of 75. Kihn was best known for hit songs "Jeopardy" and "The Breakup Song. Locally he was former Morning Radio host for KFOX for 17 years, while he resided in Clayton, as well as hosted a nationally syndicated nighttime radio show.

It's Cow Birthing Season – Steer Clear Of Calves and Their Mothers



The East Bay Regional Park District is asking residents to avoid young cows and their mothers through calving season, which will end in October.

Residents should not approach or touch calves, attempt to take selfies with them, allow their dogs near them or get between them and their mothers. Interactions with calves can be a danger to both people and grazing animals, according to the Park District.

Residents should not worry if they see a calf by itself, as its mother is usually nearby. However, if a calf appears to be in significant distress, or injured, sick, or dead, it should be reported to park staff at (510) 881-1833. Reports should include the location, color and ear tag number of the animal, if possible.

Grazing animals are part of the regional ecosystem and have been for tens of thousands of years, the Park District said. Conservation grazing is still used to maintain a healthy ecosystem for native plants and wildlife, while reducing wildfire risks.

Demolition Begins On The Bel-Air Shopping Center On Clayton & Treat In Concord

Demolition began on the middle section of the Bel-Air shopping center on Treat Blvd. at Clayton Rd. in Concord.

The shopping center, which is about four decades overdue for a makeover, is being demolished between the US Post Office and CVS. Staples, the Post Office and CVS will remain open for the time being. The plan is to build a section in the middle nice enough to attract a grocery store.

Visit Claycord.com for more stories



Neuroplasticity

by Jessica Raam Foster,
NeurologyofPresence.com

Better Health

Good nutrition, regular exercise, and good sleep obviously will help you stay healthy, but it may always feel like you are swimming upstream if your inner monologue is tearing you down.

The way that you talk to yourself matters immensely to your health. It impacts the way that you move, how clearly you think, and how much energy you have available.

Why? Your brain prioritizes safety. The safer brain feels, the more it will let you come out and play. If your brain doesn't like your tone, it will do whatever it can to keep you safe — even if the "danger" is coming from your own internal monologue.

But don't take my word for it, test it.

Do some kind of movement such as reach for your toes, check your balance, check the tension levels in your neck (Do not move into pain as that will skew the "data"). Any type of movement will do. Do a few reps to make sure you are as warmed up as possible.

Then try on some different tones

Positive Self-talk to

of self-talk and see how it impacts your movement.

If your movement improves, it means your brain feels safer and is willing to take off the brakes.

If your movement declines, it means your brain feels threatened by the words or tone you have used and will shut down your movement in an attempt to keep you safe.

The majority of people benefit from nurturing self-talk. But your brain may prefer a more direct, matter-of-fact tone. Or you may be a Positive Pessimist. False praise may actually feel threatening to you.

What matters is that you are talking to yourself in the way your brain feels safe. Give it a try and see what you notice.

Scan the QR code to see a demonstration.



Calendar cont'd from pg. 3

Martinez Library, 740 Court St, Martinez (925) 646-9900 <https://ccclib.org/www.friendsofthemartinezlibrary.com>

PLEASANT HILL

EVENTS

Thru September 19, Thursdays, Downtown Pleasant Hill Annual Summer Concert Series, 7 PM - 9PM. September 19th // Foreverland (Michael Jackson Tribute Band) in front of Jack's Restaurant and Bar, 60 Crescent Dr Suite A, Pleasant Hill

WALNUT CREEK

CLUBS

Rotary Club of Walnut Creek meets weekly 12:15 to 1:30 on Tuesdays at Assistance League Diablo Valley, 2711 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek. <https://rotarywc.org>

EVENTS

September 14, California Writers Club—Mt. Diablo Branch., National award-winning filmmaker, author, and inspirational speaker Chris Hennessey, upcoming memoir, Touched by Hannah—A Man with Cancer (Hennessy), his one-pound newborn, HannahZio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. Guests are welcome. <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/meetings-and-workshops>

FARMERS MARKETS

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

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

Diablo Valley Farmers Market North Wiget Ln. and Mitchell Dr. Shadelands, Walnut Creek, Saturdays 9AM-1PM Year Round 1799 Locust St. www.cafarmersmkts.com
Rossmoor Farmers Market

Rossmoor residents and their families only. Fridays 9AM-1PM, Golden Rain Rd. <http://www.cafarmersmkts.com/roossmoor-farmers-market>

LESHER CENTER

•September 8-28, Arsenic & Old Lace •September 18, Fireside Chat with Rita Moreno, 7:30 PM - 9 PM •September 19, 2024 Contra Costa Teachers of the Year, 6-7:30 PM. Leshar Center for the Arts 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, <https://www.lesherartscenter.org>. Tickets: (925)943-7469 Wed-Sun Noon to 6:00 p.m.

LIBRARY

Walnut Creek Library, 1644 N Broadway, Walnut Creek. (925) 977-3340 <https://ccclib.org>

Other Cities

EVENTS

PITTSBURG: September 5, October 3, SIR Branch 19 will hold its Monthly Luncheon, 11 AM with a social hour and lunch served at noon. Pittsburg Elks' Lodge, 200 Marina Blvd., Pittsburg. SIR is a social organization of men who get together and participate in fun activities. www.sirinc2.org/branch19 or call: 925 338-1996 for more information.

PITTSBURG: November 16-17, Holiday Craft and Vendor Fair. Seeking Variety of unique items, collectibles, and gifts. To participate, Crafters and Vendors should Contact Sue at 925-204-7384. www.elks1474.org/craft Pittsburg Elks Lodge, 200 Marina Blvd., Pittsburg

LAFAYETTE: September 21,22, Lafayette Art & Wine Festival, Saturday, 10 AM - 7 PM, Sunday 10 AM - 6 PM, Featuring 4 stages with 20+ bands, 250 artist / craft booths. Downtown Lafayette. <https://lafayettefestival.com/>



Ugly Eagles – Welcome Back to School!

As we stand on the brink of the 2024-25 school year, Clayton Valley Charter High School is buzzing with anticipation and enthusiasm. I am delighted to welcome both our returning students and our new faces to what promises to be another dynamic and successful academic year. This year marks my first “Back to School” experience as the Executive Director, and I am filled with optimism about what lies ahead for our community.

Having spent the past seven years as an assistant administrator, I have always looked forward to the arrival of students and staff each year. Our campus, though quiet over the summer, has been abuzz with preparations as we gear up for our 13th year as a public charter school. The energy and dedication of our team make this a positive and vibrant environment, and I feel incredibly fortunate to be a part of it.

This school year is shaping up to be unique in several exciting ways. We have just welcomed the Class of 2028 through our Link Crew Freshmen Transition Program. This initiative is designed to ease the transition into high school by providing our new students with a week-long camp that prepares them for the journey ahead. The Link Crew program is an invaluable part of our approach to ensuring that freshmen start off strong, with the support of Link Leaders—responsible upperclassmen chosen for their role-model qualities and leadership

skills. A big thank you goes to our Link Crew coordinator, Sarah Lovick, and her dedicated team for their efforts in making our new students feel welcome and ready for the academic challenges ahead.

In addition to our welcoming initiatives, we are thrilled to announce the return of our 6th Annual College Bound Day. This year, we have made significant enhancements to further enrich the experience for our students. College Bound Day is a cornerstone of our commitment to fostering a college-going culture. All CVCHS students will have the opportunity to take the SAT for free, thanks to the generous support from the CVCHS Governing Board. This is a fantastic chance for students to familiarize themselves with the SAT testing environment and gain valuable insights for their future. For those not participating in the SAT, we have arranged alternative activities, including visits to Northern California colleges and universities and a series of college and career-focused workshops right here on campus. Our goal is to equip students with the necessary tools and opportunities to explore their academic and career paths, and College Bound Day is a critical component of that mission.

As we dive into the school year, our extracurricular programs are also off to a strong start. The CVCHS band has completed another successful summer camp and is gearing up to exhibit their



College Bound Day includes visits to Northern California colleges and universities.

amazing talents at upcoming music competitions. I am particularly excited about our fall sports teams. While the Ugly Eagles Varsity Football team often takes the spotlight, I was excited to see that over 60 students turned out to join our popular Women’s Flag Football team. I am eager to see how our Cross-Country, Women’s Volleyball, Women’s Tennis, Men’s Water Polo, and Women’s Golf teams perform. Each of these teams brings a unique spirit and determination to our school community. For schedules and updates, I encourage you to visit

the CVCHS Athletics website at www.uglyeaglesathletics.com and come out to support our student-athletes.

As we embark on this new school year, I am filled with enthusiasm and hope for what we will achieve together. At CVCHS, we are committed to providing a nurturing and challenging environment where every student can thrive. Here’s to a fantastic year ahead for all of our Ugly Eagles—let’s make it one to remember!

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