

Diablo Gazette

May 2026



Greg Berkowitz, owner of Berk's Beans, the thriving family-run roastery start-up in Concord, stands next to his roaster, Story page 15.

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Remembering Things

There seems to be a lot of important dates to remember and recognize these days.

April 1 marked the 150th anniversary of when Martinez became incorporated. In the midst of celebrating its 150th anniversary also known as sesquicentennial, (a word no one could apparently pronounce at the Martinez City Council's Commemorative presentation) event.

Contra Costa County Central San is celebrating its 80th anniversary with an open house coming up June 13. The year 1946 is when voters and County Supervisors decided we needed better management of wastewater than septic tanks.

Contra Costa Water District is celebrating its 90th anniversary on May 9 with a Free Open House.

Mount Diablo High Alumni contacted the Diablo Gazette to reach out to the Class of 1976. The planners there are in the midst of organizing its 50th Reunion. For that matter, anyone who graduated in 1976 may want to check their school's Alumni Association if you haven't been contacted. Most will have something in the works.

On Thursday, May 21, Martinez will have a ceremony at the

Waterfront Marina to observe the 50th anniversary the bus crash at the Marina off-ramp that killed 28 Yuba City high school students and teacher.

Patricia, our subscriber from Hercules, sent me this 1937 photo of Chester and Dick Brunelle at a newspaper stand somewhere downtown Concord. The Brunelle's are early residents of Concord and owned Concord Electric. Patricia grew up in a newspaper family (father worked for Boston Evening Transcript) and was married to Chester. She thought I would appreciate the historical image, newspaperman to newspaperman, and that readers may be able to identify the specific location of this photo. Send me a note if you can.

The other historical photo was offered to me from Contra Costa Central San. This is an old image of a lab technician testing wastewater. It is one of many historical photos offered to help commemorate their upcoming 80th anniversary. I put the photo here, because I ran out of space to post within their article on page 23.

Two more dates to honor lest we forget, May 10, Mother's Day and May 25 Memorial Day.



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Rattlesnake Advisory



Rattlesnakes and like other snakes, become more active in early spring and summer. This can lead to more encounters with humans and dogs, especially along trails and roads.

East Bay Regional Parks reminds visitors to keep snake safety precautions in mind when visiting the parks or at any time one is encountered.

Snakes are an important resource in the natural environment. They are primary controlling agents of rodents and other reptile populations. Enjoy snakes from afar and leave them where they are found. Collecting, killing,

or removing any plants or animals from East Bay Regional Parks is illegal.

Here are some Rattlesnake safety tips

1. Avoid hiking alone so that you have help in case of an emergency.
2. Scan the ground ahead of you as you walk, jog, or ride.
3. Stay on trails and avoid walking in tall grass.
4. Look carefully around and under logs and rocks before sitting down.
5. Listen for the buzz of a rattlesnake's rattle warning you it is there.
6. Avoid placing your hands or feet in places where you cannot see clearly.
7. For maximum safety, consider keeping your dog on a leash.

If you see a rattlesnake, leave it alone. Do not try to capture or harm it. Move carefully and slowly away or around it to give it plenty of space.

If bitten by a rattlesnake, stay calm and call 911. Getting medical attention quickly is critical. Do not use tourniquets, snakebite kits, or attempt to suck venom from the wound. If you are alone, walk calmly to the nearest source of help to dial 911. Do not run; doing so increases your heart rate and spreads poisoned blood faster through the body.

If bitten by any other type of snake, wash the wound with soap and water or an antiseptic and seek medical attention.

If you are unsure what kind of snake bit you, check the bite for two puncture marks (in rare cases, one puncture mark) associated with intense, burning pain. This is typical of a rattlesnake bite. Other snakebites may leave multiple teeth marks without associated burning pain.

You do not need to identify the specific type of rattlesnake to receive the correct antivenom. The northern Pacific rattlesnake is the only venomous species found in East Bay Regional Parks.

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German Occupation of the Netherlands May 1940 - May 1945

(Part 4) by Nell Fliehmann

Nell Fliehmann, Oakland, is 103 years old and is the mother of Jack Fliehmann of Concord. She is one of a very few people still alive to tell the story of living through Germany occupation during World War II.

In 1933, Neil lived in Holland. She was only 10 years old and would have no understanding that Hitler's rise to power in Germany would relatively soon change her life. It was sudden.

She has written her experience of life under the German occupation of the Netherlands in a 50-page booklet that she has shared with the Diablo Gazette.

This is the fourth installment of her story. You can find the first three installments from previous editions at diablogazette.com beginning with the February 2026 issue

Some Partying Around the Curfew



Wassenaar; swearing-in of twelve policemen trained in Schalkhaar in front of the De Paauw Town Hall, with members of the Wassenaar Volunteer Auxiliary Police on the right, November 9, 1943. Location: Raadhuislaan, Wassenaar. Image courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

A year into the war, we began to have a curfew and we were not allowed out in the streets after eight at night. I was about nineteen years old and from time to time friends and I managed to get together.

One night my boyfriend, Kees, myself, and some others, went to a party. Shortly before eight we left that party in a private home and walked a long distance to another party. By now it was after eight and we were cautious. It was pitch dark outside, streetlamps did not burn, homes were not permitted to show any light, heavy curtains or black shades were tightly closed.

Our second party was in a dress boutique in The Hague. It had a big parquet floor in the center of the store. This became our dance floor for the night. Good dance music on gramophone records had been brought in and legally purchased beer was available and plentiful. There was quite a crowd of young people, friends of friends.

Kees and I both loved to dance, and had been doing this for hours, starting at the first party, when all of a sudden some policemen popped in. Since it was forbidden to gather in groups of this size, the crowd quickly dispersed in all directions, upstairs, downstairs, and through the back door.

It turned out that these Dutch police men were OK. A dance contest was arranged and the cops were asked to be the jury. Kees and I had been dancing for hours by now. The police voted us the number one couple. We won a bottle of Champaign, which someone had donated.

Dutch police had a very difficult task during the war. They could not afford to lose their jobs, but now received orders from the Germans, while being sympathetic to the plight of Dutch

citizens.

For about three years during the occupation, I took the streetcar to The Hague where I worked as secretary. Thereafter, streetcars no longer ran due to a lack of maintenance and spare parts. I had a bicycle but the tires were bad. So, I quit working.

Severe Food Rationing

By 1943 food rations were insufficient. New clothing was no longer to be had. Neither were many other items, such as bicycles, tires, toys, because the Germans looted all factories and warehouses.

Our town, Wassenaar, leased out land, suitable for agriculture, so people could grow vegetables. My father rented a plot and enjoyed growing his own vegetables. He had also located a source of beer, available without coupons. It was nice having a glass of beer with our meals, and it was filling.

From time to time my mother was able to get blood sausage made of pure blood with a thickening agent. This type of sausage had not been sold before. Under normal circumstances I would never have consumed pure blood and would have left that to the Maasai tribesmen in Africa, but I was hungry enough to do this now and grew to like the way my mother fixed it, fried with a thick slice of baked apple on top. After the war ended, and we had sufficient food once again, I wanted no more blood sausage. We tried to eat boiled tulip bulbs but did that only once. Nettles, which grew along the highways, were quite edible, when cooked

One day I bicycled to the office where I should be working. I had not given my notice, nor had I been fired. I had been told that a black-market dealer came by weekly to sell food stamps. We all bought stamps and unbeknownst to the dealer, he dropped quite a few sheets with stamps on the ground. I immediately put my shoe on these. After he left, I shared my bounty with my co-workers. I had absolutely no qualms about this, inasmuch as I had questioned how the man got the food stamps, and I also knew that he made a bundle from these sales.

In England these same stamps were printed and given to couriers to take to Holland, where the underground movement used them to get food to Jewish persons in hiding. As a matter of fact, many fake papers and licenses found their way from the presses in England to the underground in Holland.

During the five years of occupation, the food situation gradually became worse. We received less and less food. By the fourth year the situation began to have a great effect on all of us. My father had the hardest time coping.

I recall one time when he was mowing the rear lawn. It was a beautiful sunny day. My sister Truus and I were sitting on the patio, leafing through pages of old glossy American magazines to look at photographs of food. This was too much for my father and he became irritated. I asked him "why"? He could not bear to see his daughters go hungry. We assured him, "Dad we are having fun doing this."

Occasionally on Saturdays, a colleague of mine stopped by. He knew that was the day my mother baked sweet bread from flour we got from items my sister and I



"The Road to Tender Hearts" (Ballantine Books, 2025, hardcover, 384 pages, \$22.95) by Annie Hartnett is a heartwarming story of second chances.

Sixty-three-year-old PJ Halliday had never recovered from the tragic death of his eldest teen daughter, who drowned on prom night in inches of water. His resulting self-destructive drinking behavior led to a divorce. His surviving child, Sophie, is tired of rescuing him from drunken mishaps. His windfall of winning a million dollars in the lottery had only served to further enable his alcoholism. After three heart attacks, he had finally reached rock bottom.

But when PJ unexpectedly became the guardian of his estranged brother's grandchildren and simultaneously learned that his high school sweetheart had been widowed, he vowed that the time for change had arrived.

His former love interest now lived at the Tender Hearts Retirement Community in Arizona, so he embarked on a cross-country journey determined to reignite the heart of his old flame. Taking two young children wasn't on the agenda, but after Sophie agreed to accompany him on his trek from Massachusetts, his journey of self-discovery began.

The unlikely crew PJ recruited for his mission wasn't complete without

a former nursing home therapy cat named Pancakes. This mysterious feline had recently taken up residence with PJ.

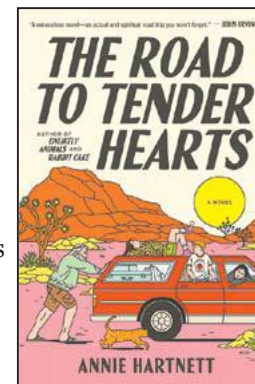
Unable to leave the cat behind, PJ included Pancakes in his entourage. This special kitty, with a knack for predicting when humans die, adds a splash of drama throughout the novel.

Throughout the book, PJ's cohorts (daughter, Sophie, and grandchildren, Luna and Ollie) travel on their own trajectory of change that will pull on reader's heartstrings.

"The Road to Tender Hearts" takes a damaged man who is at times maddingly daft and transforms him into a sympathetic character that readers will cheer on to an unexpected finish.

"The Road to Tender Hearts" is a National Bestseller, and an NPR and Lit Hub Best Book of the Year. The novel received starred reviews from Kirkus and Booklist.

Hartnett has been awarded fellowships and residencies from the MacDowell Colony, Sewanee Writers' Conference, and the Associates of the Boston Public Library.



All That We Love

When Emma (Margaret Cho) loses her beloved dog, Tanner, she finds herself unmoored in her current life. Her adult daughter, Maggie (Alice Lee), talks about moving to Australia with her boyfriend, with no set date to return. Stan (Jesse Tyler Ferguson), her longtime best friend, is ready to jump back into the dating pool after the death of his husband. Emma, however, has never really let anyone new into her life since her husband left her to raise their young daughter alone while he pursued an acting career in Singapore.

Although Emma thrives in her job as a catalog editor for a high-end furniture company, she is distant with her co-workers. She leads a small life filled with her dog, her daughter, and her best friend. Now that her dog is gone, her daughter is moving away, and her friend is dating, Emma doesn't see a place for herself in this new world.

As Emma continues to alienate those

around her, she receives a condolence card from her ex-husband. She knows this signals he is back in town and wonders if seeing him would be healing or further damage her fragile state.

Emma has spent a long time setting up walls around herself, and now those walls keep her from moving on to the next stage of her life. She needs to grow and change a bit if she wants to follow her daughter and best friend into the next phase. This makes her wonder if people can really change and if you can forgive someone who hurt you.

In the hands of the talented comedic actors, the film never gets bogged down in a heavy-handed approach to life's challenges. Instead, viewers can find a very relatable character in Cho. We really root for her, and when she asks Tanner's spirit for direction, all pet owners can feel the tug at our heartstrings. The film does a wonderful job of showing how important our pets are, not only for companionship, but in our life's purpose. **Rated R on Amazon Prime**

had traded. The bread had grated apple and cinnamon in it. My mother would serve this man a thick slice of the bread and we'd have tea together. My father was not happy about these visits, since he was hungry all day long. In many households, relations became strained due to the many difficulties that arose in those times and the stress people lived

under. When the war ended there were quite a few divorces.

Next month, "Hunger Winter of 1944-1945"



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

What the Results Mean for Our City

Restoring What We Already Own

Cities often focus on what is new. New projects are visible and easy to point to. But the more important work is maintaining what we already have. Our City is responsible for a wide range of public assets, including the library, roads, parks, sidewalks, trails, and open space. All of these require regular care. Paint fades, trees grow, road markings wear down, and infrastructure ages. That is expected. The issue is how we manage that responsibility.

A System Without a Schedule

Since 2019, I have raised concerns that still exist today. The City does not have a comprehensive inventory or maintenance schedule for many of its assets. We have not clearly defined how often key items should be inspected or maintained. How often should the Library be painted? How often should trees along trails be assessed? How frequently should road markings or sidewalks be reviewed? Too often, the answer is unclear.

Instead, the City has relied on an ad hoc approach. When a problem becomes visible, it gets addressed. When it does not, it can go years without attention. This creates gaps where routine maintenance is missed and small issues grow into larger ones.

At the same time, the City has increased its reserves. That is a positive step and reflects fiscal discipline. But it also highlights a tradeoff. When maintenance is deferred, costs shift into the future while needs continue to

build.

A Shift Toward Action

That approach is starting to change. With new leadership and a renewed focus, staff have begun identifying and addressing deferred maintenance across the City. An initial list of projects was recently presented. It is not complete, but it marks a shift toward a more proactive approach. Work is already underway. Weed abatement and landscape maintenance have expanded across major corridors, hillsides, and open space, with more areas scheduled in the coming weeks. Crews are also addressing core needs such as irrigation repairs, removal of dead vegetation, replanting, fence repairs, and ongoing tree trimming throughout the community and along trails. We are also addressing a backlog of safety-related items, including curb painting, replacement of street signs, roadway reflectors, and refreshed striping at intersections and crosswalks. These improvements directly affect visibility and safety for drivers and pedestrians.

Investing in Longer-Term Improvements

Alongside this work, the City is advancing more significant infrastructure projects. We are moving toward more durable roadway repairs through a new pothole contract focused on longer-lasting solutions. This will be supported by a broader pavement project planned for Summer and Fall 2026. Pedestrian safety is also a priority. Downtown improvements

will include raised crossings and intersections, along with flashing beacon systems to increase visibility at key locations. Beyond downtown, an ADA-accessible pathway between Four Oaks Lane and Pine Hollow is in design and supported by dedicated funding. Trail improvements, including repairs to the Cardinet Trail, are also moving forward. These efforts reflect a more coordinated approach to safety, accessibility, and long-term reliability.

From Reactive to Routine

The goal is simple. We need to move from an ad hoc system to a scheduled one. That means creating a clear inventory of City assets, setting maintenance intervals, and planning for these needs on a recurring basis. With that structure in place, we can manage costs more effectively and predictably. We have made progress in building reserves. Now we need to apply that same discipline to maintaining what those reserves are meant to protect. Taking care of what we already own may not draw attention, but it is one of the most important responsibilities we have as a City.

Switching gears

I want to announce the opening of a new local business, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming - a neighborhood pet store, offering full-service grooming and a wide selection of nutritious pet treats and food. They are at 5433 Clayton Road Suite M. <https://woofgangbakery.com/pages/locations/clayton>

A Clayton Club Saloon Saga

by David King

The Clayton Club Saloon, a 153-year-old landmark and one of California's oldest bars, appeared headed for closure in late March, with a farewell event planned before an April 3 auction. The historic saloon, known for its Old West character, had fallen into receivership after months of unpaid lease payments.



At auction, the winning bid came in at \$281,000, exceeding expectations. The bidder, Martinez business owner Alex Galvin of Car Doctor, said there were seven participants and that bidding moved quickly. Galvin initially plans were to keep the saloon intact, noting it mainly needed cleaning.

However, complications quickly surfaced. The purchase covered only the business, not the building itself. Without securing a lease, Galvin's ownership offered little more than its contents. Despite having sufficient collateral, he was unable to finalize a lease agreement.

A court date on April 24 was expected to clarify the situation, but Galvin has not responded to our follow-up inquiries. City officials indicate Galvin is out, and the opportunity is being extended to the next highest bidder, who will also need to secure a lease to operate. The saga continues.

Consider it SOLD!

<p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">COMING SOON</p> <p>49 Tule Ct, Clayton</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">\$849,000</p> <p>1531 Eclipse Way, Concord</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">\$1,488,000</p> <p>367 Mt. Washington Way, Clayton</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">\$999,000</p> <p>2000 Curry Canyon Rd, Clayton</p>
<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">\$599,000</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">PENDING</p> <p>5070 Bonwell Dr, Concord</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">\$359,000</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">PENDING</p> <p>1430 Bel Air Dr #103, Concord</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">\$870,000</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">SOLD Overlist</p> <p>5021 Murchio Dr, Concord</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">\$905,000</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">SOLD Overlist</p> <p>1394 El Camino Dr, Clayton</p>

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CLAYTON MARKET UPDATE

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
5900 High St	\$1,332,000	2681	4/3	3/17/2026
305 Mountaire Pkwy	\$1,100,000	2078	4/2	3/20/2026
321 Semillon Cir	\$1,295,000	2391	5/2.5	3/31/2026
1105 Peacock Creek Dr	\$1,688,000	4294	5/3.5	4/3/2026
1383 Shell Ln	\$800,000	1709	3/3	4/6/2026
1394 El Camino Dr	\$905,000	1462	3/2	4/14/2026
376 Blue Oak Ln	\$1,350,000	3602	5/3	4/15/2026

CONCORD MARKET UPDATE

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
880 Madigan Ave	\$900,000	1148	3/2	3/17/2026
3530 Kevin Pl	\$875,000	1844	3/2	3/24/2026
5408 Oakstone Ct	\$1,540,000	3206	5/3.5	3/25/2026
1023 Bermuda Dr	\$1,010,000	2281	5/2	3/30/2026
1078 Mohr Ln #A	\$315,000	861	2/1	3/30/2026
4650 Phyllis Ln	\$775,000	1745	4/2	4/6/2026
5021 Murchio Dr	\$870,000	1646	3/2	4/14/2026

Based on information from CCR/Paragon MLS® as of 4/15/26. 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.

Clayton Student Meets with Congress in Washington, D.C. to Advocate for the Tourette Syndrome Community

Eleven-year-old Grayson McChesney from Clayton was one of 116 young people selected nationwide to attend the Tourette Association of America's (TAA) Ambassador training in Washington, D.C., where he met with Congressman Mark DeSaulnier to advocate for greater support for people living with Tourette Syndrome and other Tic Disorders.

"I was diagnosed with Tourette's at 8-years-old," Grayson told the Diablo Gazette. "I have both vocal and motor tics."

It is estimated that one in 50 school-aged children in the U.S. are affected by Tourette Syndrome or another Persistent Tic Disorder, conditions that cause involuntary movements and sounds known as tics. Tourette Syndrome is a neurological disorder that impacts individuals of all races, ethnicities, and genders. Due to the complexity of the condition, approximately 50% of those with Tourette Syndrome remain undiagnosed. Because the condition is highly stigmatized and often misunderstood, individuals with Tourette Syndrome often face bullying, misdiagnoses, and a systemic lack of support, all of which can have a deep impact on quality of life and sense of belonging.

Last year Grayson's teacher offered that he give a presentation to the class about Tourette Syndrome, which he was happy to do.

"I wanted people to understand that what I do is not out of the ordinary, that it is just a condition I have. And this year, I got to be a junior ambassador for Tourette Association of America."

The TAA Ambassador Program brings together, trains, and supports youth, teens, and young adults to advocate for people living with Tourette Syndrome and other Tic Disorders in their community. The goal is for Ambassadors to educate their peers, school administrators, local leaders, and elected officials about Tourette Syndrome. TAA Ambassadors spread tolerance and understanding while dispelling myths and stereotypes that are often associated with this misunderstood and misdiagnosed condition. Learn more about the TAA's Ambassador programs.

"I'm really excited to be chosen as a Youth Ambassador! I want to help people understand what Tourette Syndrome is all about," said Grayson. "I know that by sharing my



Clayton's Grayson McChesney, 11 stands in front of the Capital Building. As junior Ambassador for Tourette Association of America he met with congressional representatives on the challenges of living with Tourette Syndrome.

story with members of Congress and other leaders, I can help others feel less alone and show that everyone deserves respect and support."

"The TAA Ambassador Program is designed to strengthen the resilience of young people living with Tourette Syndrome and other Tic Disorders, while providing them with the tools needed to take action and advocate for change at the personal, local, and national level," said Jasmine Tarkoff, Board Chair, TAA. "By sharing their stories and experiences, these ambassadors not only educate others about Tourette Syndrome, but also inspire hope, and foster a sense of community."

In Washington, D.C., Grayson took part in public speaking workshops, built leadership and advocacy skills, and connected with other young advocates. The training culminated in the TAA's annual "Trip to the Hill" on Tourette National Advocacy Day, where Grayson met with congressional representatives to share his personal story and raise awareness about the challenges of living with Tourette Syndrome.

Founded in 1972, the Tourette Association of America (TAA) is the only national organization serving the Tourette Syndrome and Tic Disorders community. The TAA works tirelessly to raise awareness, advance research, and provide ongoing support to patients and families impacted by Tourette Syndrome and Tic Disorders. The TAA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

"I want people to know that having Tourette's is normal," Grayson reiterated.

###

Is there someone who should be recognized in our community? Centenarians? Award recipients?

Send us YOUR news and announcements.

Email us: Editor@DiabloGazette.com and let us know.



Jennifer Stojanovich

Broker/Owner, Better Homes Realty

How's the Market?

The Honest Answer: "It Depends."

If you've talked to a real estate agent lately, you've probably asked the question everyone is asking right now: "How's the market?"

And if you've gotten the answer "it depends," you may have walked away feeling like that wasn't very helpful.

But here's the truth—it's actually the most accurate answer we can give.

Today's real estate market isn't one-size-fits-all. It's not even one market. It's a collection of smaller markets, all behaving differently depending on a few key factors.

Let's break it down.

Property Type Matters More Than Ever

Single-family homes, condos, and townhomes are not moving the same way right now. In many cases, single-family homes, especially those with desirable features, are still seeing strong demand. Meanwhile, some condo and townhome communities are facing more challenges, often due to HOA costs, financing hurdles, or deferred maintenance issues.

Location, Location... Still Location

Even within the same town, one neighborhood can be hot while another sits a bit quieter. Proximity to schools, downtown areas, commute routes, and even walkability all play a role. Buyers today are very specific about where they want to be and they're willing to wait for it.

Condition is a Game Changer

Updated homes are winning right now. Properties that are move-in ready tend to attract more buyers and stronger offers. On the flip side, homes that need work are sitting longer and

often require price adjustments. With higher interest rates, many buyers don't have the extra cash (or appetite) for major renovations.

Price Point Tells a Different Story

Entry-level homes are still competitive, often drawing multiple buyers. However, as prices climb, the pool of buyers becomes smaller and more selective. Higher-end homes are selling but buyers are taking their time and expect strong value.

One Story vs. Two Story, Yes, It Matters

This might surprise some people, but even the layout of a home is influencing demand. Single-story homes are highly sought after, especially among downsizers and those planning long-term. That added demand can make a noticeable difference.

So... How Is the Market?

It's active. It's selective. And it's very segmented.

Well-prepared, well-priced homes in desirable locations are still selling and sometimes quickly. But homes that miss the mark, even slightly, are sitting longer.

For buyers, there may be more opportunity and negotiating power depending on the property. For sellers, strategy matters more than ever.

The bottom line is when you hear "it depends," it's not a brush-off, it's an honest reflection of a market that has become more nuanced.

If you are thinking about buying or selling, the key isn't just understanding the market, it's understanding your market. Because in real estate right now, the details make all the difference.

Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming Opens in Clayton

Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming has finally opened in the Clayton Station Shopping Center at 5433 Clayton Rd. Meet the new owners, Brian and Lisa Chui (coincidentally pronounced Chewy). Both are avid animal lovers, especially dogs, and volunteer at animal rescues.

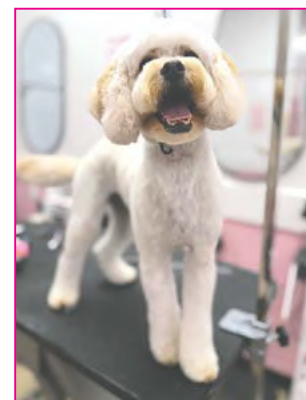
Woof Gang Corporation reached out to them with an idea of opening in Orinda, but the Chui's insisted on Clayton.

"We heard that basically it's a rule that you need to own a dog or be a pet parent to be in Clayton," Lisa joked. "Hearing their business proposal just sort of hit the mark for me."

The store looks like a bakery, deceptively so, but those treats are for the dogs. Although, they are made from human grade ingredients.

"It may not be palatable to our taste, but we could eat it."

Every dog gets a free treat when they enter the store, but grooming is the core business here. "I think of it as a pet spa where dogs feel pampered." Depending on the dog, service could take from one to four hours. However, the one thing they offer every dog owner in Clayton — is convenience.



In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from Claycord.com and Other Sources

Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery Achieves SWEEP Platinum Certification, 1st Waste Industry company in the Nation.

Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery (MDRR), has been awarded the Solid Waste Environmental Excellence Performance (SWEEP) Platinum Certification, the highest level of recognition offered by the SWEEP Standard. This distinction places MDRR among the nation's top performers in sustainable materials management and environmental stewardship.

Walnut Creek Eyes "Entertainment Zone" Allowing Outdoor Drinking Downtown

Walnut Creek leaders are weighing a proposal that could reshape the downtown scene by allowing people to carry alcoholic drinks outdoors within a designated area. The City Council is reviewing an ordinance to create an "Entertainment Zone," a concept recently authorized under California law to help cities boost foot traffic and support local businesses.

If approved, the plan would let customers purchase drinks from participating bars and restaurants and enjoy them while walking through a defined section of downtown.

Local Students Honored at Career Technical Education Awards Ceremony

The Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) recognized 45 outstanding high school juniors and seniors during the 2026 Students of Excellence Awards held at the Pleasant Hill Community Center on April 28, 2026, honoring exceptional achievement in Career Technical Education (CTE) and Regional Occupational Program (ROP) pathways.

Three of those students attend Clayton Valley Charter HS. In all, the 50 total honorees represented 10 Contra Costa County school districts and 17 high schools. The ceremony will also recognize five students who completed the Early Childhood Educator Apprentice program, representing two school districts.

Here are the names of the honorees within Central County.

Clayton Valley Charter HS - DJ Ramos, Forest Sarah Sinclair, Fiona Sahle;

Los Lomas HS - Ashton Hamlin, Farah Abdelshahid;

Floyd I. Marchus School - Dakiraj Bolton;

John Swett HS - Dulce Rebolledo.



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(Next to Sprouts in the Crow Canyon Plaza)
925-866-2200

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calendar of events



May 10 Mother's Day

May 25 Memorial Day

Fundraisers

"Papa Jake" Larson monument Brick Drive. Be forever a part of this bronze monument in Martinez Igancio Plaza honoring War Hero Jake Larson. Engrave your name on a brick. All brick purchases are donations and are tax deductible. papajakelarson.com.

Cars 2nd Chance, vehicle / car donation programs turns donations into cash for charities Clayton Valley Concord Sunrise Rotary Charitable Fund. www.cars2ndchance.org/

Clayton

May 2 Mitchell Canyon Medicinal Herb Walk Learn about the modern-day uses of the plants we see and discover some of the diversity that this abundant ecosystem holds. \$6 park entrance fee (exact amount in cash required) 2 mile walk, easy walk. Leader: Anna Marie Beauchemin Meet: Mitchell Canyon Interpretive Center parking area, 96 Mitchell Canyon Rd.

May 9 Clayton Valley Garden Club 2026 Plant Sale 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Drought tolerant perennials, veggies, and California natives. Used garden items, handmade garden art, wreaths, and pottery. Endeavor Hall, 6008 Center Street. More information at ClaytonValleyGardenClub.org or call 925-276-2299.

Clayton Valley Garden Club is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

Concerts in the Grove

> **May 17** 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. **Foreverland**, a 14-piece tribute to Michael Jackson

> **May 30** **Take 2 Band** 8- to 11- piece Dance band performing Today's hits and yesterday's classics

Concord

Concord Chamber First Fridays Coffee - 2nd Friday of the month, 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM at Gratitude Coffee Bar, 1655 Willow Pass Rd. Suite B (Park n Shop). Business leaders and community members come together to network,

share updates, and hear the latest from the Chamber and the community. Members Free, non-members \$10.

May 2 -3 Concord Historical Society's Spring Tea - at the Galindo Home. 72 Amador Ave. Two seatings, 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. each day. Call Carol at 925-899-9737 for ticket information. Reserve early.

May 16 Concord Repair Workshop. 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Concord residents can get an item fixed for free, such as jewelry, clothing, toys, lamps, small household items, bicycles and electronics. Hosted by Sustainable Contra Costa, City of Concord, and Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery. Contact: Ozge@sustainablecoco.org with questions or Louisa.stevens@cityofconcord.org. Willow Pass Community Center, 2748 E. Olivera Rd.

June 6 VFW Post 1525 All In or Walk Away Texas Hold'em Tournament. 7:00-11:00 p.m. Maximum 64 players. \$80 Buy in. Fundraiser for Veterans in need. Grand Raffle Prize 1956 Vintage 30-30 Lever Action Winchester. 2290 Willow Pass Rd. Concord. Leonardcaulder@gmail.com

June 8 Mt. Diablo High School Class of 1976 50th Reunion Meeting at Round Table Pizza on Port Chicago Hwy & Olivera. This gathering is for 1976 classmates as we count down to our 50-year reunion in July. More info: ReunionMDHS76@gmail.com.

Pleasant Hill

May 16-17 Pleasant Hill's Art, Wine & Music Festival Crescent Drive. Two music stages, Kids and Cultural Stages. Arts and Crafts booths, craft beer and fine wine, food. Hosted by Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce. Admission is free.

June 8-July 27 Diablo Women's Chorale Summer Workshop for youth singers (middle and high school) and mixed voice adult choir (men and women). Open to public, no audition required. Weekly classes meet Monday evenings from June 8 to July 27, 2026, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 3051 Putnam Blvd, Pleasant Hill. Sign up at diablowomenschorale.org.

Martinez

May 10 Open Air Market Always the second Sunday of each month May through October. Downtown Main St. 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

May 14 Chamber Mixer Wililam Welch Wines Tasting 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Business networking. Enjoy special wine tasting experience featuring Steve Welch who will share his passion, story, and expertly crafted wines. 877 Main St.

May 16 Sesquicentennial Hike - Carquinez Strait George Miller Trail 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. All ages are welcome (including dogs on leash). The walks will be docent-led. Bring water, sunscreen, sturdy walking shoes, and a camera to document the beautiful Martinez landscapes on its 150th anniversary year! Register to participate at www.cityofmartinez.org/activities

May 21 Martinez Chamber of Commerce Best of Martinez Marina Awards Night. Heavy Appetizers, no host bar. AT IBEW Local 302 (1875 Arnold Dr.) Come dressed your best to honor Martinez's voted best. Tickets \$45 can be purchased at Eventbrite.com

May 25 Memorial Day Ceremony at Alhambra Pioneer Cemetery 10:00 -11:00 a.m. Honor the fallen at our historic Alhambra Cemetery followed by a gathering at Ignacio Plaza. The Veterans Commission, Veterans of Foreign Wars chapter and local eagle scouts, highlight this event with ceremonial performances and solemn words from our city council. 3 Carquinez Scenic Drive

June 6 Patriotic Concert at John Muir Historic site. Diablo Regional Concert Band will perform classic patriotic favorites in celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Martinez's Incorporation and America's 250th Anniversary. 1:00 p.m. 4202 Alhambra Ave. FREE.

June 13 Central San 80th Anniversary Open House Take a 30 minute tour of the plant and get a first-hand look at what it takes to remove pollutants from wastewater everyday. 15 tour slots to choose. Must be 10 years or older. Inovles stairs and not accomodating for mibility disabilities. Please register to secure your tour. centralsan.org/tours

For more Martinez Community events, go to Martinez Section, page 20.

At the Martinez Campbell Theater

634 Ward St.

> **May 1-17 Four Old Broads** Four sassy senior ladies, Beatrice, Eddy, Imogene, and Maude need a break from bingo and macrame and take a Cruise. Throw in a senior citizen beauty pageant, Elvis impersonator, bizarre thigh exerciser incident and you have a laugh a minute. \$24, Discount Thursday \$18

> **May 23 Bob Dylan Birthday Show** presented by the Martinez Music Mafia. \$25 for reserved admission. Table seats \$35. Proceeds donated to Martinez Junior High music program. 6:00 p.m.

May 28-30 "Driving Miss Daisy" Reserved \$22, Discount Thursday \$18.

Walnut Creek

May 8 Paint & Sip: Spring Watercolor Florals Workshop 7:00-8:30 p.m. Celebrate Mother's Day with a relaxing watercolor floral workshop! Sip wine, socialize, and create a beautiful spring-inspired painting. Center for Community Arts - 111 N. Wiget Ln, 925-943-5846 Walnut Creek

May 9 Ridge to Ridge Challenge Run walk or explore with purpose. a variety of outdoor activities designed for every age and ability. Participants can choose from a 5K trail run, a 1.4 mile educational nature walk, or a family-friendly scavenger hunt. Registration is \$50 per Adult 18+; \$35 Youth 12 - 17, Free Under 12, and all proceeds go directly toward training and empowering young leaders to take climate action in our community. Participants are encouraged to register online at RUNREG.COM/R2R-2026

Walnut Creek Merry Mixers Dances 7:30 to 10:00 p.m. Free coffee and water, no-host bar, \$20 corkage. Outside liquor prohibited. \$20, \$15 members. Walnut Creek Elks Lodge 1475 Creekside Drive. 925-969-9693 Membership dues \$25

> **May 1st - Oaktown Strutters**, preceded by a Nightclub 2-Step dance lesson

> **May 15th - Bob Gutierrez** - preceded by a potlucka

> **June 5th - 100 PRUF** - preceded by a dance lesson

Leshner Center

1601 Civic Dr. Walnut Creek. 925-943-7469.

> **May 8 The Carole King & James Taylor Story** (featuring Phoebe Katis and Dan Clews) 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

> **May 15-16 Diablo Ballet's Coppélia** Coppélia features a brash young protagonist, a doll that comes to life, and a dash of magic. With lively characters, a case of mistaken identity, and a bright orchestral score, this enchanting ballet will charm and delight the young and young at heart.

Other Areas

Benicia:

Crockett:

> **June 6 Town-wide Yard Sale** 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Sales all over town including Downtown Plaza. Find antiques, art, car parts, toys, furniture, plants, office supplies and more. Maps available the day of for \$2 at the Downtown Plaza. at 2nd and Pomona. (includes a reusable commemorative bag, filled with other items)

Lafayette:

> **May 19 Taste of Lafayette** 4:00 to 8:30 p.m. **Sold Out**

Pittsburg:

> **May 06 SIR Branch 19 Luncheon** 11:00 a.m. This will be a special event honoring our wives and significant others. Providing entertainment will be The Swinging Blue Star Singers, who will serenade us with songs from the 50's through the 60's. Pittsburg Elks Lodge, 200 Marina Blvd. Pittsburg. 925-338-1996. www.sirinc2.org/branch19

> **May 18-24 Pittsburg Restaurant Week.** Enjoy a wide range of restaurants from beloved staples to new dining destinations. offering a mix of special menu items and exclusive deals throughout the week. For more info, follow @cityofpittsburgca on Instagram and Facebook

> **June 4 SIR Branch 19 Luncheon** 11:00 a.m. with social hour and lunch served at noon. There will be an interesting guest speaker. SIR is a social organization of men who participate in fun activities, such as golf, bowling, hiking, bocce, fishing, dining out, wine tasting, day trips, etc. All are welcome. Our motto: "Make friends for life." Pittsburg Elks Lodge, 200

Marina Blvd. Pittsburg. 925-338-1996. www.sirinc2.org/branch19

Library Events

> **Clayton** 6125 Clayton Rd.

May 15-17 Clayton Community Library Book Sale. Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.. Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Friday Clayton Library members Only 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.) Most books \$1.00. Children's books \$.50. Filla bag on Sunday for \$5.00. 6125 Clayton Rd. Clayton Community Library Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit. Tax ID #680190535.

Clubs

Clayton Clubs

GFWC Clayton Valley Woman's Club 9:30 a.m. Serving the communities of Clayton and Concord, meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month September - June. Clayton Community Church, 6055 Main St, Clayton. www.claytonvalleywomansclub.org



Salty, Savory, and Sparkling

Mastering the Cocktail Pairing

Throw caution to the wind and pair an entrée with a cocktail. Cocktails can be notoriously tricky to match with food due to their higher alcohol content; hence, their traditional accompaniment of salted nuts, where salt helps temper the alcohol's heat.

Successful pairings also benefit from a sense of place. More often than not, the best beverage for a dish is a local specialty from the same region.

A hearty Cuban pork roast served with red beans and rice is classically paired with its natural companion, the mojito, Cuba's national cocktail.

The mojito takes its name from the African word mojo, meaning "to cast a spell." It's an inspired match for the salty pork and savory spices, offering just enough sweetness to soften the heat, while its lively bubbles cleanse the palate of richness.

If wine is more your style, opt for a slightly sweet prosecco. It delivers many of the same pleasures, with nothing more required than the pop of a cork.

So, go on. Pair up!

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



Cuban Pork Roast

INGREDIENTS

- 2 teaspoons cumin powder
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 1/3 cup dry sherry
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 pounds pork shoulder, trimmed and tied

DIRECTIONS

Make a paste with cumin, pepper, garlic, salt, and oregano. You can also do this in the small bowl of a food processor. Transfer to a small bowl, and stir in orange juice, lime juice, lemon juice, sherry, and olive oil.

Place the pork in a large resealable plastic bag. Pour citrus marinade over meat and seal. Refrigerate for 12 to 24 hours, turning the bag over occasionally.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F (165 degrees C).

Transfer pork and marinade to a roasting pan and place in the oven. Roast for about 2 1/2 hours, basting with pan juices occasionally, or until an instant read thermometer inserted in the center reads 145 degrees F (63 degrees C). Add small amounts of water to the pan if it dries out.

Transfer the pork to a carving board, cover loosely with foil, and let rest for 15 minutes. Carve, and serve with red beans and rice. Yield: 8 servings

Mojito

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 lime, cut into 4 pieces
- 1/4 cup fresh mint leaves, torn, plus 1 mint sprig for garnish
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- Ice cubes
- 1/4 cup (2 ounces) white rum
- 1/2 cup club soda, chilled



DIRECTIONS

In a tall glass, muddle the pieces of lime with the mint leaves and sugar until the sugar is dissolved. Fill the glass with ice and stir in the rum and club soda. Garnish with the mint sprig and serve right away.

SUBMIT YOUR CALENDAR ENTRIES

by the 20th of the month before Issue month. diablogazette@gmail.com

Concord's Music & Market Concert Series Returns June 4



The City of Concord has announced that its popular concert series, Music & Market, will return this summer to Todos Santos Plaza on Thursday, June 4.

The four-month free concert series features a talented lineup representing an array of musical genres.

The events also include a vast farmers' market where visitors can shop for produce, snacks, home goods, and more that the Bay Area has to offer, including food trucks.

The concerts will take place every Thursday from June 4 to September 24, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., with the

farmers' market beginning at 4:00 p.m.

The City of Concord thanks its generous sponsors for this year's concert series: Pacific Service Credit Union, Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery, Ashby Lumber, the Concord Police Association, Marathon, John Muir Health, PCFMA, MCE, the Hilton Concord, and Brookfield Residential.

The full concert lineup for this year's Music & Market concert series can be found at:

cityofconcord.org/DowntownEvents.

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Neuroplasticity
by Jessica Raam Foster
NeurologyofPresence.com

Feeling Drained?

Your Body May Be Drowning in Its Own Garbage

Are you exhausted all the time? No matter how much sleep you get? That bone-deep depletion may be a sign of a sluggish lymphatic system.

The lymphatic system is your body's garbage collection service. Unlike the heart, which has a pump, the lymphatic system relies entirely on movement and manual stimulation to clear inflammatory waste from every tissue in your body.

Inflammation is actually a protective mechanism designed to combat injury and stress. But chronic stress can lead the lymphatic system to become overwhelmed.

Your brain has a threat detection system that is ancient, fast, and not very nuanced. It cannot tell the difference between a tiger and a text. Every alarming headline is fodder for inflammation. Your body responds the same way it would to physical danger: stress hormones flood your system, inflammation follows, and your whole body goes on high alert.

When that alarm runs long enough without a release valve, it stops being protective and starts being destructive. Chronic stress fueling chronic inflammation is one of the most well-documented findings in modern medicine, linked to fatigue, brain fog, disrupted sleep, joint pain, weakened immunity, and cardiovascular disease.

When you're stressed and sedentary, the lymphatic system backs up. Think of the day after a big holiday weekend when every garbage can on the block is overflowing. The trucks are running; they're just overloaded. That's your lymphatic system right now.

The good news? You can help it along. Deep belly breathing, and something as simple as rubbing or patting your body or using a dry brush daily can go a long way in keeping things moving.

There's also the glymphatic system which is our brain's own waste-clearance network, discovered only in 2012. It flushes out inflammatory byproducts linked to cognitive decline, primarily during deep sleep. Your brain takes out its own trash, but only under specific conditions. And you can help create those conditions by keeping the rest of your lymphatic system clear.

The bottom line is that a depleted body is not a creative body. Taking care of yourself in this wild world is not a luxury. It is how you stay capable, clear-headed, and ready for whatever you're called to do. All it takes is a little bit of rubbing.

For a step-by-step video on how to drain your lymphatic system more specifically, click here or scan the QR code to watch.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSyQymZtoWY>

More Than Just a Meal: How a Bay Area Nonprofit Is Protecting the Planet While Feeding the Hungry

by: Tyler McCarthy, White Pony Express

As communities organize activities in observance of Earth Day, one local nonprofit is quietly executing an unprecedented environmental feat every single day; Contra Costa-based White Pony Express rescues 10,500 high-quality meals from supermarkets, farmers markets, and restaurants and delivers them to neighbors in need.

While we usually think about food recovery as a low cost, high impact way to feed the hungry, the environmental impact of keeping six tons of food out of the landfill every single day is staggering. When perfectly good food ends up in a landfill, it generates methane, a greenhouse gas up to 86 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

According to the USDA, nearly 40% of the US food supply goes uneaten and just 2% of that surplus food is ever donated. We aren't just wasting these meals; we are throwing away all the precious land, water, and energy it took to grow them.

The environmental benefit of White Pony Express work is significant, but it's only half the story. Last year alone, they delivered 768,343 meals across 61 nonprofit partners in Central Contra Costa County, including Concord, Clayton, Walnut Creek, Martinez, and Pleasant Hill.

In Contra Costa County, one in five of our neighbors faces food insecurity. When White Pony Express picks up food and brings it to a large distribution center where it's carefully sorted for quality, anything that would not be offered to a family member goes to compost. Food deliveries are curated based on the unique needs of 150 nonprofit recipients and reach their doorstep within hours, always free of charge, creating a turnkey solution to two of our region's most pressing crises: climate change and food insecurity.



White Pony Express rescues discarded food before it ends in landfills to process into quality meals for those with food insecurities.

Despite moving over six tons of food daily, the reality is that our local safety net remains severely strained. Right now, the organization's waitlist has grown to a staggering 75 local nonprofits requesting weekly food deliveries.

White Pony Express recently launched its "Growing Hope, Delivering Love" campaign with a fundraising goal of \$350,000. These funds are critical to sustain and expand operations in a climate where nonprofits like this one are struggling to make ends meet.

As one looks for ways to honor and protect our planet, supporting food recovery is among the most direct, high-impact ways to take climate action while building a stronger, healthier community for all of us. To help expand this vital work across Contra Costa County, learn more about the campaign at foodinmotion.whiteponyexpress.org/. All of us taking care of all of us!

Solutions, puzzle page 18

WORD SEARCH - EMOTIONS

R T I K B A C D E T M H J J F Q M V
 B Y S S H U P E L E E T U D L W H W
 I K P U O R E T L J L J G F Y U V J
 D K G P O K U I A I K N U G V I C I
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| CALM | ECSTATIC | HAPPY | NERVOUS |
| CONFUSED | EXCITED | HOPEFUL | PROUD |
| DELIGHTED | FEARFUL | JEALOUS | RELIEVED |

SUDOKU

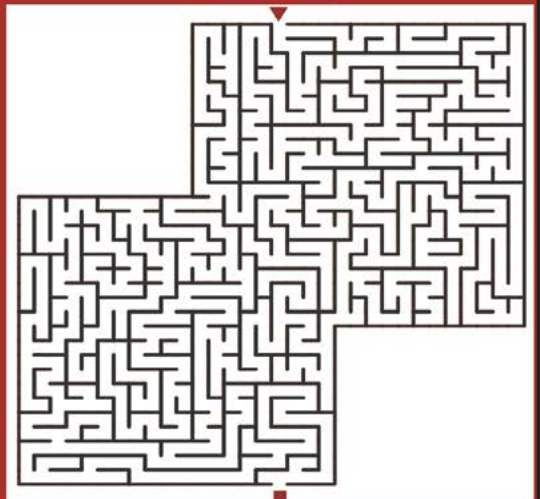
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A		D			I			

WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble these RELAXATION words:

- DNWIUN _____
 ELOTABMROCF _____
 OETHOS _____
 SMEDEPCROS _____
 UFLCEPA _____

MAZE



DO YOU KNOW?

Approximately how many dimples does an average golf ball have?
 92 | 160 | 218 | 336

Puzzles column by Marc Rokoff
RokoPuzzles.com



Walnut Creek: Community Service, Remembrance, and Active Living

by Kevin Wilk, Mayor, Walnut Creek

Walnut Creek continues to reflect the strength of its community through volunteerism, civic engagement, and opportunities to come together. With warmer weather and a full calendar of events, this is an exciting time to connect, give back, and celebrate what makes our city special.

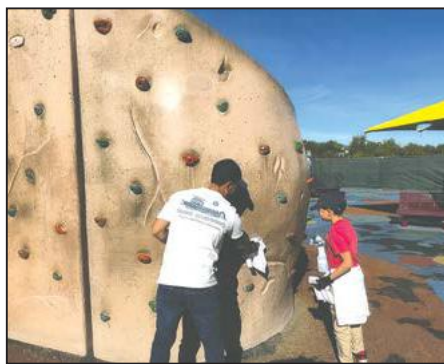
We begin with a warm thank you to the more than 900 volunteers who participated in this year's Community Service Day on April 18, 2026. Residents of all ages came together to support projects across the city, demonstrating the spirit of service that defines Walnut Creek.

Volunteers planted 45 trees at Heather Farm Park, assembled 500 emergency preparedness kits, supported 12 school projects with more than 400 participants, decorated four downtown pianos, refreshed local pickleball courts, and spread nearly 30 yards of bark at Larkey Park. These collective efforts make a lasting impact, and we are grateful to everyone who contributed their time and energy.

Memorial Day Observance

Later this month, we invite the community to join us for Walnut Creek's Memorial Day Observance on Monday, May 25 at 11:00 a.m. at Civic Park. This annual event provides an opportunity to honor and remember those who gave their lives in service to our country. The ceremony will include performances from Walnut Creek Concert Band, led by musical director and conductor Matt Sadowski, remarks from community leaders, and a keynote address from Lieutenant Colonel Karl Davis. The event will culminate in the traditional procession across the street to the Veterans Memorial in front of City Hall, where we will observe a moment of silence and the lowering of the flag to half-staff.

May also brings opportunities to celebrate active transportation and connect with Walnut Creek's vibrant biking community. On Wednesday, May 14, residents are encouraged to participate in Bike to Wherever Day, with a morning commuter pit stop at Broadway and Newell from 7:30 to 10:00 a.m. City staff will be on hand to



Community Service Day 2026

greet cyclists with refreshments and giveaways as they make their way to work or school.

Also happening on May 14 is Pedal Palooza at Civic Park, a family-friendly bike rodeo taking place from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. This all-ages event brings together City departments and community partners for an afternoon of fun and learning, including an obstacle course, safety demonstrations, and interactive activities designed to encourage biking in Walnut Creek.

In addition to these events, Walnut Creek Arts + Recreation continues to offer a wide range of programs for all ages this spring and summer. Registration is open for summer camps, which run from June through August on a flexible, week-by-week basis, alongside a variety of classes, workshops, and performances. Highlights this month include community events such as the Spring Performing Arts Showcase, new youth programs and sports offerings, and special arts experiences at the Bedford Gallery and Leshar Center (view all upcoming events at LesharArtsCenter.org).

As always, Walnut Creek continues to be shaped by the energy and involvement of its residents. Whether volunteering, honoring those who have served, or participating in community events, these shared experiences strengthen the connections that make Walnut Creek such a vibrant and welcoming place to live, work, and visit.



For the Love of Pets

by Jill Hedgecock, Jillhedgecock.com

Ahchoo!

Does Your Pet Have Allergies?



Allergy season has arrived. Pollen is in the air. Some pets will react like humans do, and exhibit sneezing, wheezing, or coughing. But it's possible your dog or cat may not show respiratory symptoms but are still suffering from allergies. How would you know?

Your dog's breed could be a clue, since certain breeds are predisposed to pollen allergies. These include German shepherds, boxers, cocker spaniels, bulldogs, golden and Labrador retrievers, pit bulls, and West Highland white terriers. But all pets, including cats, could be affected, so it is also important to recognize the symptoms.

Some common behaviors associated with environmental allergies such as pollen and dust mites, include obsessively licking their paws, excessive scratching, or rolling or rubbing their skin. Red welts (hives), or for breeds with extra hairy coats patches of raised fur where the inflamed skin is hidden, may appear.

For environmental allergies, fortunately, preventative steps can be taken once a pet is diagnosed. Dogs and outdoor cats can be wiped down with pet-friendly wipes after outdoor excursions. Dog baths may be warranted in some cases but be cautious about over-bathing which can dry out the skin. Be sure to thoroughly clean the paws, where dogs and cats tend to lick. Better yet, a cat sensitive to pollen should be kept indoors. An indoor air cleaner that uses HEPA filters can also help by capturing pollen and dust entering indoor spaces when doors or windows are open.

In extreme cases, allergic reactions can be life-threatening. A pet can go into shock and faint or stop breathing.

Early clues that the pet needs emergency care include lethargy, blue gums, loss of bowel or bladder control, and

difficulty breathing. Always have the phone number and address of your nearest emergency veterinary clinic stored in your phone or on a note in a convenient place, such as on the refrigerator.

It is also important to recognize that pet allergies aren't limited to pollen. Extreme facial swelling, including ears, muzzle, eyes and nose may be a sign that pets are allergic to bee stings, flea and tick bites, medications, vaccinations, or certain foods. Dogs, in particular, may experience stomach upset causing vomiting and/or diarrhea.

For flea and tick allergies, a variety of flea and tick medications can be used. Shampoos, pills, and topical treatments can prevent itchy bites from happening. Mild skin reactions may be treatable at home with antihistamines such as Benadryl or Zyrtec, but check with your veterinarian first, and make sure to give them the proper dose. In some cases, a prescription medication may be needed.

Allergies can't always be avoided, but with proper diagnosis, and some preventative actions, you can keep your pets comfortable and healthy.

Jill Hedgecock is a retired environmental scientist and an award-winning author. Her Doberman trilogy series: "Between Shadow's Eyes," "From Shadow's Perspective," and "In Shadow's Reflection" are available on amazon.com.



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Top Five Renovations to Make Before Listing Your Home

When selling a home, it is important to prepare it to make as strong of a first impression as possible. This can mean making renovations, with a priority of those that photograph well. Online matters more than ever. Photos entice people to go see for themselves what you have to offer with an in-person visit. It only takes one buyer to fall in love, but having a number of people liking what you have creates a sense of urgency to act before someone else does. This could mean a quicker, often multiple offers and with more money. Plus, usually less negotiating.

With this in mind, these five updates are highly recommended because they help your home stand out, attract positive attention from buyers, and improve the opportunity for an offer.

1 "I see a red door and I want it painted black..."

Who knew that the lyric from the Rolling Stones song, "Paint It, Black," was also good advice when selling a home. Real Simple magazine published an article recently stating that a black front door garners over \$6,449 more in a sale price.

Zillow did a survey where experts mused that a black door is a classic choice that won't go out of style and makes a home look crisp and sophisticated. So, paint the front door and update the house numbers.

Other colors are popular as well, however, the most desirable was black.

If you like dark colors, green is very popular right now, and an acceptable next choice could be black forest green, a dark, rich, Benjamin Moore color. Slate blue was the next most popular, increasing the price by \$1537. But heck, paint it black and get the most value for the money.

2 Paint interior walls a warm neutral.

Most paint stores have neutral interior paint color palettes or ask the staging professional what is trending at the time.

3 Update and replace every light fixture

Consider asking for help by someone such as a staging professional. Modern, trendy okay if it matches the style of your home. Staging professionals know the most in demand styles and colors. This can update a home immediately for minimal expenditure.

4 Deep clean and declutter

It should look as if you don't live there any longer. It's easier to hit all of the nooks and crannies, when there is nothing obstructing them. Use a professional cleaning agency and have those windows washed inside and out.

5 Power Wash Everything

Wash the driveway, patios, walkways, and siding. Be sure to remove all trash and dead trees, plants and debris.

MONTHLY MARKET REPORT MARCH/ 2026

CLAYTON		CONCORD	
Existing SFR Median Price \$1.25M	MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 10 Sales-to-List Price % 102.3% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 18.8%	Existing SFR Median Price \$785k	MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Marke 11 Sales-to-List Price % 100.0% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 24.7%
% Change from Last Year +13.4%		% Change from Last Year -4.8%	
MARTINEZ		WALNUT CREEK	
Existing SFR Median Price \$909K	MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Market 22 Sales-to-List Price % 100.0% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 34.0%	Existing SFR Median Price \$1.48M	MARKET COMPETITION Median Days on Marke 8 Sales-to-List Price % 103.4% % of Active Listings Who Reduced Prices 23.7%
% Change from Last Year +10.8%		% Change from Last Year +4.2%	

SOURCE: Car.org

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Concord Students are the Future of Concord

by Kevin Cabral, CEO, Concord Chamber of Commerce

Spring has sprung, and great things are happening at the Concord Chamber of Commerce. If you have the opportunity, we encourage you to check out some of the exciting programs and events we have underway.

One of our standout initiatives is our partnership with the Mt. Diablo Unified School District. Each month, a group of students attend our First Friday Coffee event - held, as you might guess, on the first Friday of the month at Gratitude Coffee in the Park 'n Shop Center on Willow Pass Road. The district has done an outstanding job developing a program that allows students to connect directly with the business community serving Concord and beyond.

Through this program, students are not only introduced to local professionals but are also being prepared for the workforce. Many go on to participate in summer internships, gaining valuable, real-world experience over several weeks. It's truly a win-win for everyone involved. The Chamber has hosted an intern for the past two years and will do so again this year. The experience and results have been exceptional.

At the Mayor's State of the City address earlier this month, Mayor Nakamura invited about ten students from various schools across the district to attend and participate in the event. This is a great example of how we can (and should) integrate young people into our business community. Our collective future depends on how we engage and

support the next generation, providing meaningful opportunities so they can live, work, and continue to build pride in Concord. It was inspiring to see this level of involvement, and we commend Mayor Nakamura for engaging with our emerging young professionals.

Lastly, we're excited to share that Pedal Fest is coming to Concord. Scheduled for September 27, 2026, the inaugural Concord Pedal Fest will be a family-friendly event taking place at Olympic High School which is home to the Concord Bike Kitchen and Bike Concord, and nearby Baldwin Park.

This promises to be a vibrant community celebration featuring a wide variety of activities designed to be fun, interactive, and accessible for all ages. Attendees can enjoy live music, food trucks, hands-on bike skills courses, and bicycle safety education. A short, easy bike circuit will connect Olympic High School and Baldwin Park, allowing participants to ride between activity areas and fully experience everything the festival has to offer.

Be sure to keep an eye out for more information in the coming months, including opportunities to volunteer, sponsor, and participate.

For more about the businesses and organizations that make Concord a vibrant place to live and to learn about the benefits of membership—visit the Concord Chamber of Commerce at www.concordchamber.com.



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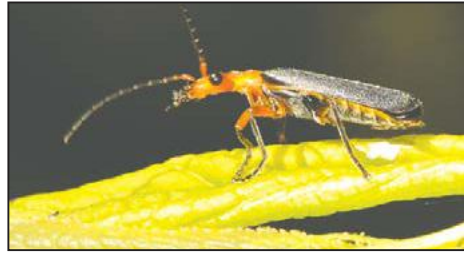
Garden Wars: Good Bugs vs. Bad Bugs

There's a war going on in your garden if you're an all-natural gardener like me. Practicing natural gardening techniques by not using pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides protects your roses and tomatoes during this historic battle between good bugs and bad bugs. All-natural gardening preserves nature's food chain balance and the overall health of your landscape and veggies.

Despite spending several hours each day tending to my little darlings, I admit to being a lazy gardener. Instead of consuming time applying toxic chemicals, I let nature do my pest control work. My birds, bats, and bugs (the three Bs of organic pest control), lizards and frogs are healthy and well-fed, as are pollinating critters such as honeybees and butterflies. Ninety-nine percent of pest control work can be left to natural predators. The remaining one percent can effectively be managed with non-toxic controls such as neem oil, insecticidal soap, jet-sprays of water, and sticky traps. Let's peer closely into the all-natural garden to view some important bug versus bug matchups.

Roses and Other Ornamentals

April and May present the largest number of critter pests to these showcase plants. Locally, our wet, mild winters are ideal for hatching millions of aphids, white flies, mealy bugs, scale, and leaf hoppers who literally suck the life juices from stems and leaves. Coming to our rescue with voracious springtime appetites are lady bird beetles (ladybugs), aphid lions (ladybug larvae), green



Soldier beetles can destroy an aphid infestation in days

lacewings, soldier beetles, hover/syrphid flies, parasitic wasps, and assassin bugs. They clear out heavy infestations of aphids within days. Once weather turns dry and hot, aphids and other pests disappear along with rust, mildew, and black spot fungi.

Vegetables

In addition to the same beneficial bug list for roses and ornamentals, if you garden naturally, you can rely on minute pirate beetles to control tiny pests like thrips, mites, and small caterpillars. Spiders capture and eat many flying pests as well as their larvae in the form of destructive caterpillars. Lizards eat flies, ticks, grubs, and ants in veggie beds, and black ground beetles hunt for caterpillars, slugs, and snails.

Trees and Lawns

Fewer insect pests attack fruit and ornamental trees and lawns because birds, parasitic wasps, yellow jacket wasps, and spiders constantly eat their healthy portion of borers, aphids, and other bad

bugs daily. Listen for the buzzing sound of wasps in tree canopies or watch them hovering above your lawn on warm spring afternoons, grooming aphids and thrips from leaves.

If you see bugs on your roses, cucumbers or oaks, don't assume they are doing harm; learn to identify them through online photos or apps. Beneficial insects, spiders, flies, wasps, as well as birds, bats, frogs, and lizards abound in well-balanced natural gardens. They comprise an army that battles daily against harmful critter infestations. Protect their health and help them win this war by avoiding toxic sprays and chemicals – always.

Seasonal Notes: If you own citrus or avocados, May is the month for the second dose of tree fertilizer. And this is the last month to plant summer vegetable crops, such as tomatoes, peppers, squash, cucumbers, and beans. Wait for nighttime temperatures consistently above 50 F. Early berry crops like strawberries, blueberries, and red raspberries should be ripe enough to harvest after May 15. Blackberries ripen June through July.

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

Right: Beneficial Lacewing larvae are often mistaken as bad bugs.



Ladybugs eat aphids voraciously. Image courtesy UCANR



Harmless Western Fence Lizards eats harmful pests. Photo courtesy Shutterstock



Gardens Grow Families Too

by Angela Dawne, Landscape Designer



Every Mother's Day, I am reminded how gardens are living heirlooms, passed down through generations. My own passion began by helping my grandmother tend to the vegetable garden and by my mother sharing with me her delight in a blooming yellow rose.

As a landscape designer, I've shaped hundreds of gardens, but sometimes the most meaningful designs are those that grow people, not just grow plants. Now, I see that same spark in my clients' children when they're given space to explore

The secret? Design with wonder in mind. I don't always create gardens solely for aesthetics, but build landscapes where children can also dig, hide, discover, and claim a corner as their own.

A raised bed at waist height invites small hands to plant sunflowers; a tucked-away den beneath shrubs becomes a kingdom. When we get down to a child's eye level, what looks like a messy understorey, could be a secret forest to them.

I encourage families to invite the children to choose the flowers, name the garden bed, and press their favorite petals into journals. When we frame gardening as play, not work, we plant more than seeds, we cultivate connection and pathways for life's journeys.

In every family garden I design, I ask: "Will this invite a child to pause, to wonder, to return year after year?" Because the true legacy of a garden isn't in its blooms, but in the stories it grows.

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Know Your E-Bikes

If your child rolls into the driveway on two wheels, would you know what they are riding?

Is it a 10-speed... or an e-moto?

That simple question is a critical one for families. Electric bikes and scooters are now a common sight, especially among young riders. They offer freedom, convenience, and a fun way to get around. But they also move faster, weigh more, and come with rules and responsibilities many parents (and youth) may not fully understand.

Parents need clear information, and young riders need guidance that helps keep them safe.

Not every e-bike is the same. Some e-bikes are pedal-assist and operate much like a traditional bicycle. Others include throttles or can reach higher speeds that fall closer to mopeds or motorcycles depending on speed, power, and design.

California classifies e-bikes into three categories:

Class 1: Lower speed, pedal-assist only, up to 20 mph

Class 2: Lower speed, pedal-assist and throttle-equipped, up to 20 mph

Class 3: Higher speed, pedal-assist only, up to 28 mph, age 16+ only.

In California, helmets are required for all riders under 18 and for anyone riding a higher-speed Class 3 e-bike.

Safety experts agree; every rider, at every age, should wear one.

Electric scooters also have rules regarding speed, where they may be ridden, and licensing requirements.

The City of Concord has recently added new bicycle and e-mobility safety resources to the city website for riders, parents, and drivers alike:

Bicycle Safety: cityofconcord.org/515/Bicycle-Safety

E-Bikes Road Rules: cityofconcord.org/1341/E-Bikes-Road-Rules

Know Your E-Bike, Scooter and Moto: <https://www.cityofconcord.org/1339/Know-Your-E-Bike-Scooter-and-Moto>

Concord's bicycle safety guidance also reminds riders that bicycles must have working brakes. Bikes ridden at night need proper lights and reflectors. Visibility matters, especially as more youth riders are out during evening hours.

The most important safety tool is not found on the bike; it is a conversation at home.

Parents should know what type of device their child is riding, where they are riding it, and whether they understand the rules of the road. Do they stop at intersections? Yield to pedestrians? Use lights at night? Wear a helmet? Understand that higher

speeds require more time to react?

Concord continues investing in safer streets through crosswalk upgrades, bike lane improvements, traffic-calming measures, better lighting, and our Safety Action Plan (concordsafeststreets.org). But infrastructure alone cannot replace awareness, supervision, and shared responsibility.

If You Drive, Test Your Knowledge

Safety is a shared responsibility. Drivers also play an important role in protecting people biking, walking, and rolling through our community. Do you know the laws around passing cyclists, bike lanes, crosswalks, and right-of-way?

Take this quick quiz to test your knowledge and sharpen your awareness:

Bikeeastbay.org/bikefriendlydriver

Dates to Celebrate Biking

May 17 - Join thousands regarding the Bay Area for Bike to Wherever Day (BTWD). Hop on a bike and get to work, school, the store or wherever your day takes you. It's a fun, healthy, and visible reminder that biking is an important part of active transportation.

September 27 - Concord Pedal Fest 2026 is coming this fall. This new family-friendly event will feature youth skills courses, safety education, food, music, and community fun for riders of all ages and abilities.

Free Senior Food Program Launches At Concord Senior Center

The Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano has launched its "Senior Food Program" at the Concord Senior Center, expanding access to free, nutritious food for eligible older adults in the community. This program is offered twice monthly on the first and third Thursdays from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. at the Concord Senior Center. It is a free drop-in service available to Concord residents age 55 and older who meet income guidelines. No reservations are required.

Program Details:

Open to eligible Concord residents age 55+

No RSVP required; participants may drop in during program hours of 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

First-time participants should bring:

Photo ID (drivers license, passport, government-issued ID)

Proof of Concord address (e.g., utility bill or PG&E bill)

Completed intake form (available at the Senior Center reception desk)

For additional information about the program schedule or application process, community members may contact the Concord Recreation Services office at the Senior Center at 925-671-3320. To learn more about food assistance resources throughout Contra Costa and Solano counties, please contact the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano County at 855-309-FOOD (3663).



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From Hobby to Thriving Family Business, the Story of Berk's Beans

Greg Berkowitz (Berk) with 30 years in the electrical industry has a side hobby that has evolved into something much bigger. Berk is the owner of Berk's Beans, a growing coffee roastery in Concord that has transformed from a garage experiment into a thriving, family-driven business.



Why have a coffee roastery and not a coffee shop?

Berk will tell you because it's a better coffee experience. Roasteries source their own green coffee beans and roast them in-house to maintain complete control over the roasting process, enabling the creation of unique flavor profiles and ensuring the utmost freshness. Roasting isn't a one-size-fits-all process. Berk's Beans will custom roast to the preference of the consumer understanding that different beans require different roast profiles to unlock their full potential.



The story of Berk's Bean begins in 2021 during the pandemic. Berk was roasting coffee out of his house as a hobby. "My wife had given me a small Behmor roaster oven." Berk says he's always loved smoking meat, so with the Behmor, he began roasting coffee. "I was getting that same sensation I get from smoking, meats. I was roasting a ton of coffee, just having fun, and going down this rabbit hole of coffee."

Since he couldn't consume as much as he was roasting, he would give it all away to everybody: family, friends and neighbors. They loved it and kept coming back for more.

"I realized then what they were getting was really good roasted coffee, but freshly roasted. That was the difference." Most commercial coffee is roasted 3-6 months before brewing, well past its prime.

"My kids dared me to sell it. That's when I decided I was going to prove you can take a hobby or a passion and turn it into something."

They created a name, drew up the logo and launched a website. Within a week and a half, they were officially in business and operating out of their garage.

Through word of mouth and live social media announcements people began putting in orders. However, along the way, Berk's made mistakes.

"The first order we got was from a friend of mine in New York," Berk says. "Everything that could go wrong went wrong." A \$100 order had turned into a \$300 delivery. It was fixed, but it was a valuable lesson about pricing, shipping, and systems.

During COVID, people were ordering coffee from us and having little coffee bubble parties at their house with four or five friends and we were delivering to their doorsteps.

They would receive orders during the day, and when Berk arrived home from his job, he would roll the two-pound roaster into the front yard and start roasting—two pounds at a time.

Berk's wife, Lori, would pack them and ship them out the next day or deliver them.

"Neighbors would go for a walk at night and stop by to pick up their coffee or put orders in. It was cool."

Berk went on to explain the meticulous processes of roasting coffee required to bring out the best flavor of the bean. We discussed type of roast, light, medium or dark roast, temperature, roasting times, the bean variety, listening for the first crack of the roasting bean; it all matters. He explained that beans from different regions have different flavor profiles, be it floral, fruity, caramel, earthy, chocolate — it was quite a science lesson.

By 2023, the business had outgrown the garage and they moved to a commercial location in Concord at 1717 Solano Way, #12, where a steady stream of customers came during our interview.

"This is what I love all day long. This is what happens every day," he says with a grin.

As for the wholesale side of his business, you will find Berk's coffee is served by several local places such as Alpine Bakery, Concord Creamery, Brother Sister in Martinez the Hideout in Lafayette to name a few.

Berks carries an inventory of 60 varieties. "We've got the largest selection of coffee in the country. Nobody offers a larger variety of coffee than we do."

"We roast to orders, so it's fresh, and we'll roast it the way you want it.

Hence, the sales doubled from 2024 to 2025. This year, March was their best month ever. "What began as a daring idea in a garage has grown into a thriving business that continues to honor its humble beginnings. Berk's Beans Coffee remains committed to delivering small-batch, artisan-quality coffee and building connections one cup at a time."

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The Arts Pages



Spring to Summer Exhibit at Papillon Cafe in Lafayette

by Samantha McNally

The Lamorinda Arts Alliance is pleased to present "Spring To Summer", a curated exhibition at the Papillon Cafe & Gallery in Lafayette.

The days are getting longer and it is time for the wildflowers to show off their beautiful blooms. We are exhibiting artwork that celebrates the seasons of Spring and Summer. Flowers, butterflies, birds and bees in our gardens, local landscapes and scenery. The paintings include the pastel colors of spring and the bolder colors of summer. The show will end June 9, 2026.

Papillon Quality Gourmet Coffee & Tea is located in La Fiesta Square, at 67 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette.

Lamorinda Arts Alliance is a diverse group of artists, each on a unique artistic journey, whose work reflects their experience, dreams, passions and heritage.

For more information go to LAA4Art.org.



"Agave" by Anette Laurel Batchelor



Bee by Samantha McNally



"Mangini Farm Spring" by Judy Feins

Finding Beauty in Every Brushstroke: The Work of Kelley Werner

by Julia O'Reilly

Bay Area raised artist, Kelley Werner, brings a strong sense of place and emotion to her landscape paintings, Werner's work resonates with local audiences through vibrant color, expressive brushwork and a clear intention to transport viewers into moments of beauty and tranquility.

Working in oil and watercolor, Werner describes her style as "expressive realism." While rooted in observation, her paintings are guided by emotional response. Bold color, energetic strokes and layered textures invite viewers to experience the landscape beyond what is seen.

Now based in the Lake Tahoe area, Werner continues to draw inspiration from the natural world while maintaining strong ties to the Bay Area arts community. She is and has been a member of the Alamo Danville Artists' Society since 2019. In addition to Blackhawk Gallery, her work is also shown at Chickadee Art Gallery in Kings Beach, reflecting her connection to the Sierra landscape.

Werner began her artistic path at the University of California, Berkeley, earning a degree in Social Welfare. A defining influence came through a color theory class with Bay Area figurative painter Joan Brown, shaping her understanding of color as an emotional force.

She later earned both a Teaching Credential and an Art Credential from San Francisco State University and went on to teach in San Francisco and Sacramento, inspiring students as both a classroom teacher and art instructor.

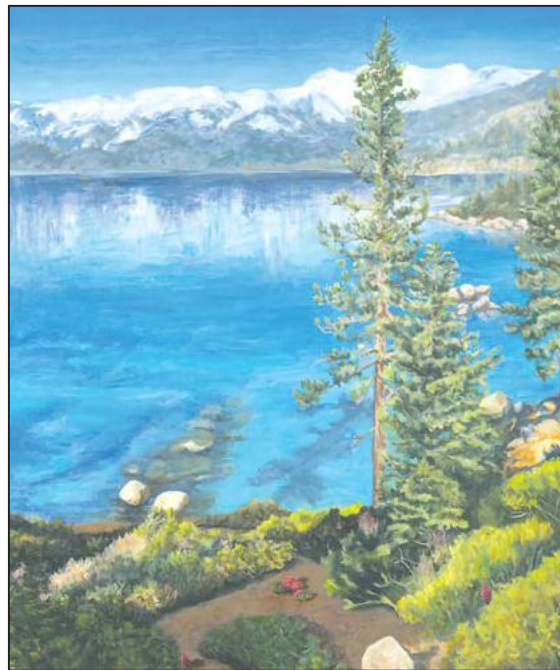
Werner's work is held in private collections throughout the Bay Area and beyond. She continues to refine her practice through advanced classes and workshops, consistently expanding her visual language.



Kelley Werner

Her work has earned notable recognition, including being named Best Local Artist in the Sierra Sun's "Best of North Lake Tahoe and Truckee" Awards in both 2024 and 2025, and she remains a finalist for 2026.

Through each painting, Kelley Werner creates a quiet, reflective space where color, light and movement leave a lasting impression.



Serenity in the Sierras - oil by Kelly Werner

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May 30 - 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Reception from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
May 31 - 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

3416 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville adas4art.org

Alamo Danville
ADAS
ESTABLISHED IN 1977
Artists' Society

Paintings, Photography,
Sculptures & Jewelry

SOLO EXHIBITION
ARTIST **GENE HOWARD**
SURFACE SENSATIONS

You're Invited!
Join us for our opening reception.
Experience the energy and depth of
Gene Howard's beautiful abstract paintings!
Saturday, May 9, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
JOR Fine Art Gallery 1026 Oak Street, Ste. 102, Clayton



THE WONDERS OF PLEIN AIR

The Wonders of Plein Air is the featured exhibit at aRt Cottage for May and June. Have you ever wondered what en plein air means?

It will all come clear when you come to aRt Cottage and see these paintings for yourself. All of the artists participating will be exhibiting work that was done outside, en plein air. There are many groups in Contra Costa County and beyond that participate in plein air painting. The artists travel to locations that inspire them to paint their "masterpiece".

Many mediums are used when creating an art piece in plein air. The artist may use oil or soft pastels, watercolor, gouache (opaque watercolor), acrylic or oil paint, graphite, charcoal, etc. The weather will not dissuade the enthusiastic artist.

The plein air artist spends time scouting out a good spot where he/she can set up the equipment, easel, paint, sun umbrella and so much more. The artists must be aware of the fact that they need to bring sunscreen, water for drinking, and scope out a bathroom. Sometimes not finding a restroom can be a problem. Upon returning back to their set-up, they could find that the wind has blown down their paper or canvas, a bird has pooped on the work in progress, or their sun umbrella collapsed. It's all happened. But... art must go on.

Most painters knock out a complete painting in one morning when the sun and shadows are just right. If they do not work fast enough everything changes as the sun climbs higher to the 12:00 position and shadows disappear.

Artists hike to a scenic spot, set up easels, paints, brushes, water and then interpret their vision onto their medium. No pressure, just a beautiful morning to complete a masterpiece outdoors.

aRt Cottage will host a reception for the plein air artists May 2 from 2:00 -4:00 p.m. with refreshments and music. This exhibit ends June 25. We know you will enjoy this one and recognize paintings of some of your favorite places in the Bay Area.

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



"Vineyard Rest" by Shalaka Mulherkar



"Old Teardrop & Truck" by Mary Young



"Look Up" by Marina Omelianenko



Celebrating 10 Years of Art on Main Street

The Main Street Arts Gallery is celebrating its 10-year anniversary since opening in its current location in May 2016.

The gallery was established by eight members of the long-time Martinez Arts Association (MAA) Gallery, which had closed after losing its location at Court and Marina Vista Streets. While the Court Street location had been virtually rent-free due to the MAA's nonprofit status, the founding members of Main Street Arts decided to take the leap and rent commercial space at 613 Main Street.

The 12-member artists in the gallery work in a wide variety of styles and mediums, and guest artists rotate through the gallery every other month. Check the "gallery" page on our website for a preview.

From May 1 through June 28, the gallery is featuring guest artist Iretta Hunter, a watercolorist whose vibrant work explores a variety of subjects, often from unusual angles and close-up perspectives.

Iretta says, "I like to share how I see the world around me, and the best way I have found is with watercolor." Iretta's exhibit is called "Rocks and Roses" and you can see her paintings on their website, mainstreetarts.net.

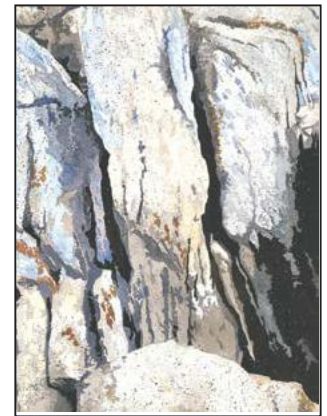
In addition, the display windows of the gallery will be featuring Martinez-themed art during May and June, in honor of Martinez's 150th Anniversary of Incorporation.

The public is invited to attend a reception on May 1 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., held in conjunction with First Friday and a festive celebration of the gallery's 10-year anniversary. Guests will have the opportunity to meet the artists, enjoy refreshments, and enter a monthly prize drawing. In May, the featured artwork for the free drawing is a ceramic sculpture by Olga Jusidman.

Now in its tenth year in downtown Martinez, Main Street Arts Gallery continues to be a welcoming destination for art lovers and collectors. The gallery is open Wednesday through Sunday and showcases a wide range of media, including painting, sculpture, ceramics, glass, jewelry, and mixed media.



Free drawing. Win this sculpture by Olga Jusidman



"High Sierra" by Iretta Hunter



"Blooming Rose" by Iretta Hunter



JOR Fine Art Gallery Presents "Spring in Bloom"

Celebrate the beauty and renewal of the season at JOR Fine Art Gallery's newest exhibit, "Spring in Bloom", opening to the public on Saturday, May 9, from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.



ARTIST/ IRENKA KUDLICKI

ART EXHIBITION

SPRING IN BLOOM

MAY 9TH - AUG 9TH

RECEPTION: SATURDAY, MAY 9TH FROM 4-6 PM

1026 OAK STREET, SUITE 102 CLAYTON, CA
JORFINEARTGALLERY.COM

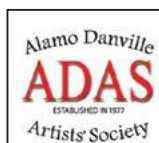


Flutist Nika Rejito will perform live during the evening's reception as Jor welcomes spring through a vibrant collection of artwork.

This curated exhibit showcases a diverse range of sculptures, painting, photography, and handmade jewelry, highlighting both established and emerging artists.

Creativity is in full bloom for guests to discover unique pieces that capture the spirit of the season.

JOR Gallery is located at 1026 Oak Street, Suite 102 in Clayton.



"Spring Blossoms" Exhibit at Blackhawk Gallery

"Spring Blossoms" exhibit is now open to the public at Blackhawk Gallery and is bringing a vibrant collection of artworks inspired by the beauty of the season.

Experience Daniel Riley's latest artwork alongside beautiful pieces from 16 talented member artists. Enjoy an evening of art, conversation, and community as we welcome spring together.

3416 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville, <http://adas4art.org>.

Artist/ Daniel Riley	SPRING BLOSSOMS
<h1>Art Exhibition</h1>	



Artemis II

From Clayton Valley to Mission Control: A CVCHS Graduate Reaches for the Stars

At Clayton Valley Charter High School (CVCHS), we often tell our students that their potential is limitless. Every so often, one of our alumni proves just how true that is.

Jared Ralleta, Class of 2020, is one of those remarkable examples. He recently served as part of NASA's Mission Control team during the Artemis II mission, an important step in returning humans to deep space. For our community, this wasn't just a milestone for NASA; it was a powerful reminder of what can begin in a classroom in Concord.

Jared's journey has been fueled by curiosity, discipline, and a passion for discovery. After graduating from Clayton Valley, he studied physics at Saint Mary's College, where he quickly became involved in NASA-funded research.

As part of the RISE2 (Remote, In Situ, and Synchrotron Studies for Science and Exploration) expedition, Jared was the only undergraduate working alongside scientists and graduate researchers in a field environment designed to simulate the Moon. In the deserts of New Mexico, he helped test technologies that future astronauts will rely on during lunar missions.

What sets Jared apart is not just his participation, but his innovation.

He wrote the core code for the XRISE system, a tool paired with an X-ray fluorescence device that allows astronauts to instantly analyze the composition of rocks. His software translates complex data into clear, usable visual outputs, giving astronauts real-time insights while conducting research on the Moon, Mars, and beyond. In environments where time and resources are limited, that kind of capability is critical.

Today, Jared is applying those same skills at NASA, supporting Mission Control operations and contributing to tools that help guide astronauts and interpret scientific data during Artemis II. His work plays a small but meaningful role in shaping how humanity explores new worlds.

That kind of impact doesn't happen by chance. It begins with opportunity and the willingness to take full advantage of it.

At CVCHS, we emphasize experiential learning, critical thinking, and real-world application. Jared embraced those opportunities, and in doing so, laid the foundation for what he has accomplished today. His story is a reminder that when students are encouraged to explore, question and create, they can achieve outcomes far beyond what they might initially imagine.

Jared's journey from Concord to Mission Control reflects the very best of a charter school education: a system that, when working well, unlocks talent, fuels ambition, and opens doors to extraordinary opportunities.

We are incredibly proud of Jared, not only for what he has achieved, but for



Jared Ralleta at Mission Control



The XRISE runs on code written by Jared Ralleta

how he continues to inspire others. His story reminds us that the future isn't something that happens somewhere else. It's being built right here, by students who are willing to dream big and work hard to make those dreams a reality.

And if Jared's path is any indication, the sky is not the limit—it's just the beginning.



Jared Ralleta demonstrates the XRISE at the Kilbourne Hole in New Mexico.

Concord Open, Where Pinball Wizards Converge

by David King

If you were to ask Visit Concord, there are many reasons for tourists to come here, but to play pinball is probably not on the list.

Yet, twice a year, sometimes three times a year, some of the best pinball players from across the state, country, sometimes other countries, come to compete in the Concord Open at The Flipper Room, 1033 Shary Circle.

This is the fourth year owner Mike Moretti hosted the Concord Open, an IPFA sanctioned event (International Pinball Flipper Association).

"There's basically four tournaments including a Concord Open Women's tournament over the two days, each of different formats with strict rules and guidelines. Many of the players will play in most of them. For the main event, Saturday is a qualifying round. You can play until midnight and earn points. The top 24 move on to the finals on Sunday in match play in group elimination. A group is four players. The top two players move on, the bottom two are eliminated. Eventually the field narrows to the final four. The final four then play one last set of three games

"No one is allowed inside except for the players and tournament operators." For enthusiasts, they can watch all the action from outside on monitors as the finals are streamed live. There is also a pop-up art exhibit and several pinball machines are set up for people to play.

Moretti estimates that there were

probably over a hundred players entered overall. "To play there is a buy in, which funds the prize money for up to 16 places."

In November The Flipper Room will also host Concord Champ. And every other year it will host the State Championship. "It alternates every year between Northern California and Southern California,"

The Flipper Room itself is a love letter to another era. With a collection of 70 machines spanning decades of design and pop culture, about half are on the floor at any given time.

Moretti's journey into pinball began simply, with a gifted machine placed in his wholesale frame business breakroom. Today, The Flipper Room is open six days a week, offering games for as little as a quarter.



Winners of Concord Open 2026: 1st Dan Dempsey, 2nd Tim Hansen, 3rd Gabe Da Silveira, 4th Brian Alexander



Winners of Pin-golf tournament: 1st Ryan Dunn, 2nd Peach Ruiz, 3rd Michael La Frieda, 4th Ruben Green



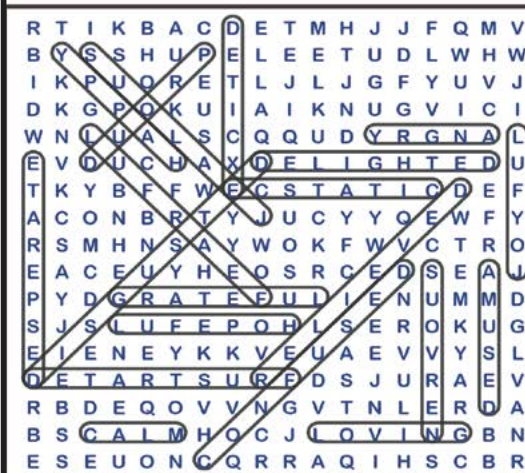
Winners of Concord Open women's tournament: 1st, Krish Reinhart, 2nd Stephanie Kirby, 3rd Jackie Dioro, 4th Linda G



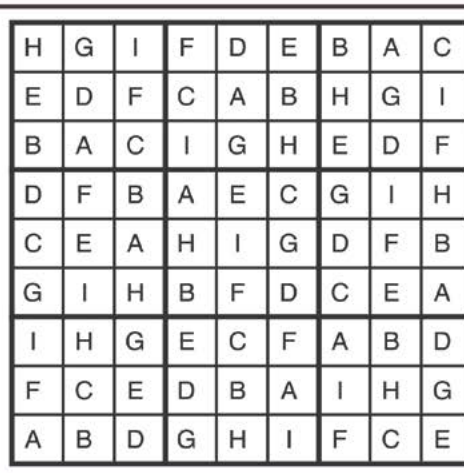
Outside, Pop-up art exhibit and pinball.



Solutions from page 10



Puzzles by Marc Rokoff RokoPuzzles.com



WORD SCRAMBLE
UNWIND, COMFORTABLE, SOOTHE, DECOMPRESS, PEACEFUL

MAZE

DO YOU KNOW?
336 dimples per golf ball.

CITY OF CLAYTON PRESENTS

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16 **CONCERTS**
TO
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22 **IN THE GROVE**
6:00 - 8:30 P.M.

JUNE
10 **CLASSIC**
TO
AUG
19 **CAR SHOW**
6:00 - 8:00 P.M.

JULY
4 **4th OF JULY**
PARADE
10:00 A.M.

SEPT
20 **HISPANIC**
HERITAGE DAY
12:00 - 4:00 P.M.

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SCAN THE QR CODE
Support Concerts In The Grove
And The Parent Faculty Club

Around Martinez



The Future of Martinez Parks

by Brianne Zorn, Mayor, City of Martinez



Scan QR code and complete Parks questionnaire

I am excited to share the progress we are making on our Parks System Master Plan, a long-term, community-driven vision for the future of our parks, open spaces, and recreation opportunities.

Over the past several months, more than 1,000 community members have helped shape this effort through surveys, workshops, and discussions. Their message has been clear: our parks are at the heart of Martinez because they are the places where families gather, neighbors connect, and we all enjoy the natural open spaces that define our city.

We also heard thoughtful and consistent feedback about how to make our system even better. Residents want well-maintained, safe, and welcoming parks, with improved lighting, clean facilities, and comfortable spaces for all ages. There is strong support for expanding recreation opportunities, especially family-friendly amenities like playgrounds and splash pads, as well as enhancing trails and connections between neighborhoods and open spaces. Trail connectivity to the SF Bay Trail, the Contra Costa Canal Trail, and the Iron Horse Trail, has been a priority of mine for years; incorporating this idea into our plan that will guide the next decade of Martinez parks is a perfect fit.

Importantly, this plan is not about starting from scratch. It is about building on what we already love and preserving our natural landscapes by making targeted improvements that reflect community priorities.

We are now entering Phase 2 of community outreach, where your input is more important than ever. This next round will help refine priorities, evaluate potential improvements, and guide the development of specific recommendations for the future of our park system.

I encourage every resident to take a few minutes to participate by scanning the QR code and completing the Phase 2 questionnaire. Your voice will directly shape the next chapter of Martinez's parks. Do you want the splash pad? Do you want an expanded skate park? Do you want a bike pump track? I want to see Martinez leading the pack by installing innovative park amenities. Send in all your ideas. Your opinions matter and you haven't missed your opportunity to provide input! Together, we are creating a park system that reflects our shared values today and built for the next generation of Martinez residents.



Marina Awards Gala Set to Announce Best of Martinez

by David King

Martinez Community have made their choices. Residents nominated their favorite business or organization in one of 52 categories, while the Martinez community voted their favorites in each over several weeks.

Voting ends May 1 and the winners will be announced on May 21 at the Marina Awards Gala at the IBEW Local 302, 1875 Arnold Drive.

In addition to business winners, the evening will also announce Citizens of the Year 2026 winners who will receive their award that evening. They have already been chosen.

Congratulations to the following:

Young Woman of the Year: Isabella Barlettano

Young Man of the Year: Landon Poston

Volunteer of the Year: Bruce Ortega

Woman of the Year: Christine Dean

Man of the Year: Eddie Togonon

Educator of the Year: Vincent Pitzulo

Lifetime Achievement Award: Gary Hernandez

The Chamber encourages the public to help celebrate the winning businesses and citizens at this year's ceremony.

Best of Martinez Marina Awards

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

DATE	TIME	VENUE
Thursday May 21, 2026	6:30 PM - 9:00 PM	IBEW LOCAL 302 1875 Arnold Drive Martinez, 94553

Check in starts at 6:00 PM

thebestofmartinez.com

The evening event will include heavy appetizers and a no host bar, and a great deal of excitement. Tickets to this sell-out event are \$45.00 and can be purchased at thebestofmartinez.com.



★ May 2026

COMMUNITY EVENTS



- 5/02 9:00 AM -11:00 AM Martinez Community Cleanup
- 5/03 9:00 AM -1:00 PM Park System Master Plan Info Pop Up
- 5/09 9:00 AM -11:00 AM Martinez Community Cleanup
- 5/10 9:00 AM -1:00 PM Open Air Market
- 5/13 6:30 PM -8:00 PM Park System Master Plan Webinar
- 5/14 7:00 AM -9:00 AM Bike to Wherever Day
- 5/16 10:00 AM -12:00 PM Sesquicentennial Hike: Carquinez Strait George Miller Trail
- 5/21 11:00 AM -12:00 PM Yuba City Bus Accident Remembrance Ceremony
- 5/25 10:00 AM -11:00 AM Memorial Day Ceremony: Alhambra Pioneer Cemetery
- 5/25 11:00 AM -12:00 PM Memorial Day Ceremony: Ignacio Plaza
- 5/30 9:00 AM -11:00 AM Martinez Community Cleanup
- Sundays 9:00 AM -1:00 PM Downtown Farmers Market



The City of Martinez turns 150! Celebration info at www.cityofmartinez.org/150



More event details on our City Calendar at www.cityofmartinez.org/events

Rancho Las Juntas Vineyard
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William Welch Wines

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Free Wine Tasting for all Moms

William Welch Wines

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50th Anniversary Observance of Yuba City Bus Crash May 21

by David Scholz

Fifty years ago, a fatal bus crash on the morning of May 21, 1976, claimed the lives of 28 Yuba City High School students and their teacher. A memorial ceremony on this 50th anniversary of that fatal accident will take place at 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 21, at the Marina memorial site, 7 North Court. Timing of the event will occur just minutes after the actual accident happened that day 50 years ago.

Hosted by the City of Martinez with support from the First Responders from that tragic day, the Remembrance will include acknowledgement of the following:

The 24 “Survivors” (children) of the accident;

Fire Fighters, Sheriff’s Department personnel, Coroner’s Office, CHP, AMR, and Fire Rescue coming;

Shell Refinery personnel who so miraculously appeared with their cranes, which may include the last living Shell person, an 87-year-old

crane operator.

The medical ER staff and medical facilities that were instrumental in saving so many lives - representing County Hospital, Veterans Hospital, Mt. Diablo and Kaiser Hospitals;

The City of Martinez, its leaders, and most generous community members;

The Miramontes High School Choir, Orinda (which was the destination the Yuba City Choir was going to that morning) will also be doing a tribute;

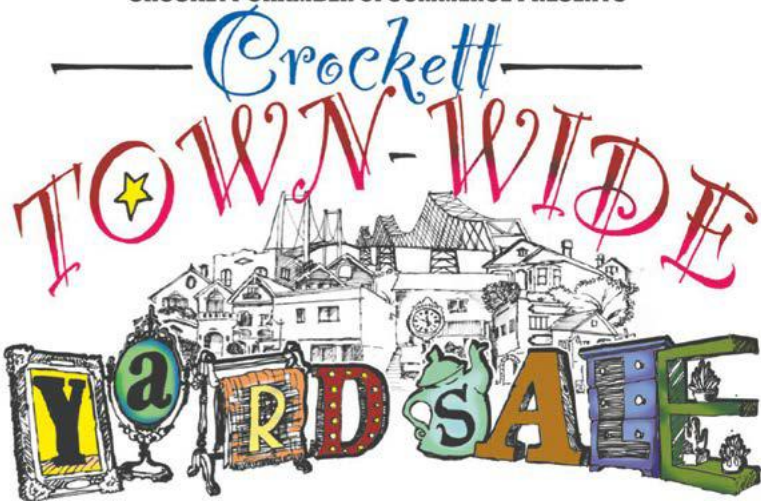
ConFire Fire Fighters Honor Guard will present the “Bell Reading” Service. The reading of the names is what family members always remember.

The brother of the twin sisters who died at the scene is flying in from Utah and will open the Remembrance by playing the bag pipes.

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CROCKETT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS



June 6, 2026
8:00 am to 3:00 pm

Crockett’s Annual Town-Wide Yard Sale.
Sales all over town – including at the Downtown Plaza

Find antiques, art, car parts, toys, furniture, plants, office supplies and so much more. . .

Maps available the day of for \$2 at the Downtown Plaza (2nd & Pomona)

(includes a reusable commemorative bag, filled with other items)

The Papa Jake Larson Statue Project

Statue Project

Honor a Bay Area Hero

Papa Jake Larson is our local World War II Veteran and a beloved storyteller who touched millions by sharing his firsthand history with the world through TikTok



We are creating a memorial statue to honor Papa Jake’s memory, service, sacrifice, and incredible impact on future generations

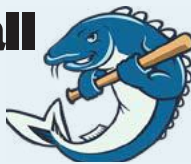
This statue will stand as a permanent reminder of the men and women who served and the importance of remembering their stories

You can help make this memorial a reality. Every donation, no matter the amount, brings us one step closer



LEARN MORE AT PapaJakeLarson.com

Martinez Sturgeon Baseball Returns for Sixth Season



by David King

The Martinez Sturgeon is returning for its sixth season, with games beginning May 20 and continuing through the end of July. The Sturgeon compete in a high-level summer league (The Pecos League - Pacific Division) that draws top semi-pro players and professionally driven athletes from around the country to display their skills and develop for the next level in the baseball farm system.

Team Manager Matthew "Skip" Replinger returns to lead the Sturgeon for his fourth season. Several players will be returning as well.

Players play an active role in the community while the Martinez Sturgeon Boosters play a vital role in supporting players through the season by raising funds for gas cards, meals, and other day-to-day expenses. Community contributions directly help these athletes enjoy their summer in Martinez and focus on their game.

"We have our booth down in the Martinez Farmers Market on Sundays, and we're e selling, shirts and sweatshirts and raising awareness of the team. Obviously, we also want to get people out to the ballpark," said Alex Ticehurst who heads the Sturgeon Boosters organization. Tanna Thompson will manage stadium operations,"

"I've been supporting the team since 2023 in a variety of roles but mostly helping on the field," Ticehurst stated. That included throwing at batting practice and helping around the stadium.

Sponsorships from local businesses and organizations also help with team funding. In return sponsors become more interested in connecting and engaging with the community.

Host a Sturgeon

The season is near. "Most players will start arriving in the next two to three weeks," Ticehurst says.

The team is seeking host families for players traveling to Martinez from across the U.S. These families provide room, board, and a welcoming environment. It is an essential part of what makes summer baseball special. Players come in from all over and between their involvement with the community, lasting bonds with their host, some elect to make this their home.

"We had one player who came here from the Philadelphia area, played for us for two years. He was an all-star but doesn't play for us any longer. He now lives in Walnut Creek."

Anyone interested in becoming a host can contact the Boosters at Martinezsturgeon1@gmail.com.

Youth Baseball Camps

The Sturgeon players lead the Youth baseball camps. They have proven to be a fun and affordable way to keep kids ages six to 17 active. In the process, they learn baseball fundamentals, improve their skills through one-on-one coaching from pro level players. It's also their opportunity to meet the Sturgeon team and experience the game in a fun, encouraging environment. The cost is only \$40 per participant.



Camps run for eight consecutive Mondays beginning June 8. (see ad below) Check the Sturgeon website for signups.

For information about sponsorships, hosting a player, kids camps, or attending games, visit MartinezSturgeon.com

NewsWrap

Short Stories of Local Interest

by Craig Lazeretti, Martinez News and Views and other sources

Car Slams Into Martinez Safeway, Injures Customer

A car crashed into a Safeway store in Martinez on Wednesday afternoon, leaving one customer injured, according to police.

Police said the driver, a 76-year-old woman, was not injured. She told officers she became confused while attempting to park and accidentally pressed the accelerator instead of the brake. The vehicle jumped the curb, knocked over several potted plants, and slammed into the building.

Inside the store, the impact caused an ice machine to topple, striking a 71-year-old woman. The customer fell and hit her head but was conscious. She was taken by ambulance to John Muir Medical Center in Concord as a precaution.

Pleasant Hill Night Market Returns on May 1

After a successful launch in 2025, the Pleasant Hill Night Market has returned to Chilpancingo Park. The Night Market is held on the first and third Fridays of the month from May through November and features 50 assorted food and merchandise vendors. The event also regularly has activities for children, live music, and other entertainment.

The 2026 season gets underway on May 1 with an inaugural celebration of Asian American- Native Hawaiian- Pacific Islander (AANHPI) month. The Night Market will run from 5:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Join the Volunteer Patrol

The Pleasant Hill Police Dept. is looking for volunteers to join the Volunteers on Patrol Program!

Volunteers Assist with non-emergency patrols, observe and report suspicious activity, support community events, be extra eyes and ears for the officers. Flexible hours. No prior experience required. Training is provided.

Contact Stacy Corr at (925) 288-4630.

Fire Chief Lewis Broschard Reinstated to Lead Contra Costa County Fire Protection District

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (Con Fire) has reinstated Fire Chief Lewis Broschard to serve as Fire Chief on an interim basis until a permanent appointment is made. Chief Broschard retired in March after more than 18 years of distinguished service.

"Chief Broschard's return ensures experienced leadership and continuity while the District conducts a search for its next permanent Fire Chief," said Board Chair Diane Burgis, District 3 Supervisor

MARTINEZ STURGEON KIDS BASEBALL CAMP

9 AM TO 12 PM MONDAY'S 6/8 - 7/27

KIDS 6-17



\$40

PER PERSON

JOE DIMAGGIO FIELD 3
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MARTINEZ

PROCEEDS BENEFIT OUR PLAYERS

SIGN UP AT WWW.MARTINEZSTURGEON.COM

2026 Martinez Sturgeon Schedule (48) Home 30 Away 18

5/2026 Schedule							6/2026 Schedule							7/2026 Schedule						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1	1	2	3	4	5	6								
						2	7	8	9	10	11	12								
						3	13	14	15	16	17	18								
						4	19	20	21	22	23	24								
						5	25	26	27	28	29	30								
						6	31													

NEW!

BAR & GRILL • MARTINEZ
bellaspot.com

Mama Mia!

Mother's Day Special

Save 15% on Mother's Day Lunch or Dinner!

Hours: Sun-Thurs 11A-9P; Fri-Sat 11A-10P

Bella's Spot Bar and Grill
925-387-8610
512 Center Ave., Martinez (Next to Nob Hill)



A Contemporary View of Mother's Day

by Edi Birsan, Concordian edibirsan@gmail.com

With Mother's Day approaching, and as people extol the virtues of Motherhood, I find myself reflecting on its true meaning. Growing up as a latchkey kid in the 50's and 60's, the image of Motherhood as it was depicted on the Donna Reed Show or Ozzie and Harriet inspired an overwhelming envy in me, especially after I had been abandoned by my mother and left with only my stepfather - Dear Ole' Dad.

In retrospect, it became apparent that the TV shows of that era promoted a concept of motherhood which was in fact a sham. The images of motherhood, and for that matter, family life, that the TV dangled in front of us were, for most of us, quite unreal.

The time has now come for us to salute the reality of those mothers who, rather than standing in their spotless kitchens, all dolled up in their pretty dresses, waiting for hubby to come home from work (as depicted on TV), actually lived through the challenges of a shortage of time, food, money, spousal and filial attention and support, and/or the scorn that was given to mothers who worked.

We must now salute those mothers,

as well as all those who took on the role of mother, who resisted the temptation to escape into a bottle, into a collection of pills, or to simply leave home.

Those who managed to deal with the vagaries of children and the demands of a family, with less than adequate resources, both financially and emotionally, were in my opinion able to drive out the darkness with a level of commitment that we usually say can only be given by a mother to her child.

I therefore salute you, my Dear Ole' Dad. You turned out to be more of a Jewish Mother than you would ever admit, or that I gave you credit for when you were alive during that terrible time.

On this Mother's Day, I salute not only you, but all those mothers, then and now, who resisted the temptation to pack it all in, and who demonstrated the truth of the saying that "virtue only shines in the shadow of temptation."

Happy Mother's Day

(Originally published in May, 2017)

A Brief History of Central San 80 Year of Innovation



1948 Plant

In the early 1940s, central Contra Costa County was a largely rural area of orchards, farms, and a few small towns. After World War II, however, a building boom began. As the nearby cities of San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley grew, so did the population of Contra Costa.

This growth led to a sanitation crisis. Most of the county depended on septic systems, which were often inefficient due to the area's heavy clay soil. With septic tanks overflowing, waterborne diseases like typhoid were becoming a threat.

In response, a group of concerned citizens and civic leaders led efforts to create a new agency to collect and clean the community's wastewater. In an election held on June 24, 1946, voters approved a proposal to form a sanitary district for areas of central Contra Costa County. On July 15, 1946, the County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution officially creating the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central San).

Work began immediately and, within 26 months, Central San's newly constructed main sewer trunk line and

treatment plant were operational. At that time, Central San's service area population was 15,000 people, the treatment plant's capacity was 4.5 million gallons per day, and the collection system consisted of 50 miles of sewer pipe.

That original system was expected to handle the area's wastewater for at least two decades. But by 1952, it was evident that demand would soon exceed capacity. So, Central San began a series of expansions and improvements to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population—activities that have continued throughout our history. These improvements were necessary not only to serve a growing community but also to keep up with new technologies and increasingly stricter water quality standards and regulations.

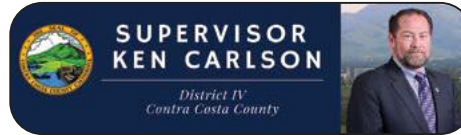
Today, Central San serves nearly 500,000 residents and more than 15,000 businesses within the 146-square-mile service area. They maintain more than 1,500 miles of neighborhood sewer pipes and 18 pumping stations to carry wastewater to the treatment plant in Martinez, where they clean more than 13 billion gallons of wastewater every year.

Most of that cleaned water flows through a giant outfall pipeline to Suisun Bay, where it returns safely to the environment. However, some of it receives further processing to produce more than 500 million gallons of recycled water every year for landscape irrigation and industrial use.

Much has changed since Central San's beginnings in 1946 as a small agency serving a rural area. What hasn't changed is the unwavering dedication to protecting public health and the environment.



1987 Pipe Construction



Pacheco Marsh

The Largest Wetlands Restoration Project in Our County



Pacheco Marsh - photo courtesy Bay Nature

As we recognized both John Muir Day and Earth Day in April, it is a fitting moment to highlight the work happening in Contra Costa County to protect and restore our natural spaces. One of the most significant examples is the restoration of Pacheco Marsh, which is the largest wetlands restoration project our county has ever undertaken.

For more than a century, this landscape was pushed far from its natural state. Ranching in the 1800s introduced non native grasses that weakened the soil. Development after World War II increased flooding and erosion. Even major engineering efforts in the 1960s could not prevent sediment from filling Walnut Creek's historic tidal channels. Over time, the marsh became degraded and disconnected from the community.

After two decades of planning and construction, that is beginning to change.

This project is the result of strong cooperation among nonprofit, county, state, and federal partners. The John Muir Land Trust, the Contra Costa County Flood Control District, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, which contributed about \$11 million

through Measure AA, each played an important role. Their shared commitment made it possible to restore tidal flow, rebuild habitat, and open this landscape to the public for the first time.

Today, visitors will find 2.4 miles of new trails and bridges, including a wheelchair accessible route. A small watercraft launch now creates a two-mile paddling loop through the marsh. The restored channels are already supporting wildlife, including species like the black rail that depend on healthy tidal wetlands.

This project is not only about environmental benefits. It is also about giving residents a safe and welcoming place to explore and reconnect with nature. Restoring the marsh and opening it to the community creates a space people can take pride in.

I encourage everyone to visit Pacheco Marsh, walk the trails, enjoy the views, and see firsthand what this partnership has accomplished. Projects like this show what is possible when we work together. Pacheco Marsh is a reminder that restoration and resilience are within reach when we stay focused on the future and choose collaboration.



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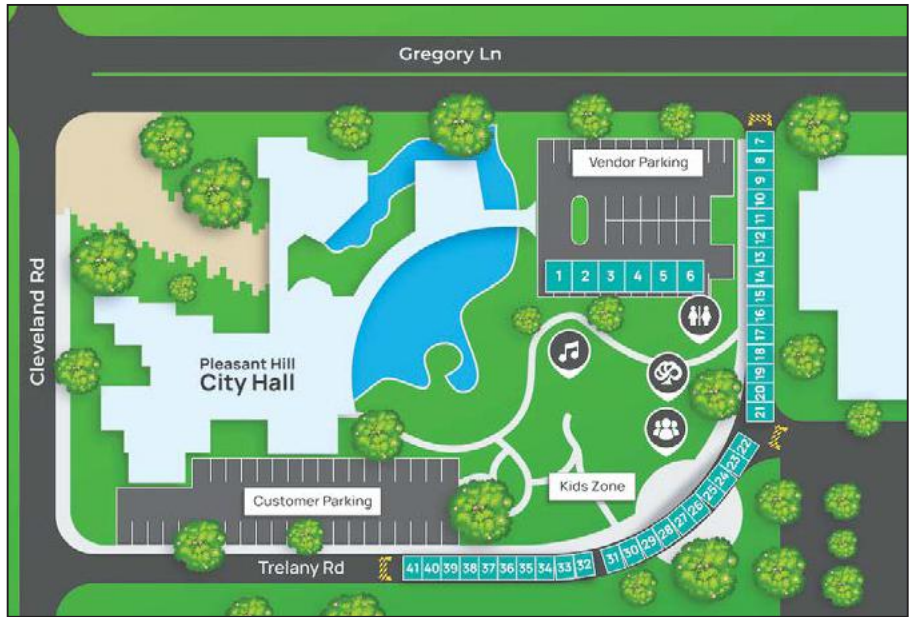
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Pleasant Hill Farmers Market Opens May 2



Starting May 2, 2026, every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Pleasant Hill City Hall will transform into a vibrant gathering place as the Pleasant Hill Farmers Market returns.

Now along Trelany Drive, attendees will find a bounty of family farms, local artisan food producers, talented artisans, and entertainment all gathering together in the spirit of community.

Children are invited to join the weekly scavenger hunt, searching for hidden fruity plush characters tucked throughout the market.

As a year-round market, the new Pleasant Hill Farmers Market is committed to reflecting the best of each season.

Whether you come for the produce, the people, or simply the pleasure of a Saturday morning well spent, the Pleasant Hill Farmers Market welcomes the whole community, every week, all year long!

Check out the layout and the vendors with an amazing interactive map at <https://www.cccfm.org/pleasant-hill/>

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