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JANUARY 2023



KEEPING THE PEACE AT CITY HALL

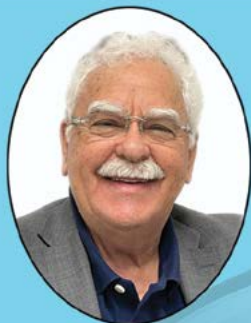
Concord Police Officers on hand for the marathon hearing on the Concord Naval Weapons Station Redevelopment project.

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

Changes with Clayton City Council

I am grateful that the residents of Clayton elected me again to represent them for the next four years here on the Council and my fellow Councilmembers chose me to represent Clayton as its Mayor this year. Clayton is such a special community with a great number of residents who are actively involved and engaged. I have spoken to so many people who really appreciate transparency and clear communication. I will continue to update residents as best I can as we move forward.

As we start the new year, I look ahead to quite a bit of change at the City of Clayton. We have several open positions including City Manager and Finance Director. When these roles are filled, they are sure to bring new ideas and energy to City Hall. Recently we hired our new Police Chief, Rich McEachin. Chief McEachin started his career here in Clayton and has advanced in different roles throughout the state. Most recently he served as Police Chief in Dos Palos. I am excited to see what his leadership will bring to the Police Department.

We are poised to bring on an Interim City Manager while we continue our search to replace the current City Manager who is leaving at the beginning of February. There is also change at the City Council. Kim Trupiano began her term of office last month and I look forward to the exciting ideas she will bring to the table.

Even with all of this change, city operations continue. We are on target to approve an updated housing element this month in compliance with state requirements. Clayton was assigned

570 additional housing units it needed to zone for across all income levels. With diligent work from city staff, our Planning Commission, and input from the public, we will meet this requirement.

Clayton's mid-year budget review will be coming up soon and it will be a data point to assess the financial health of the city. While our initial budget projections reflected a deficit this year and going forward, it is clear we need to continue to gather information to allow us to make informed decisions. The city will need to prioritize resources and time in order to deliver services in the most efficient manner possible. I look forward to serving as Mayor this year, and while there may be difficult choices ahead, we will make them together and I am confident the City will persevere as we address our immediate staffing and budget challenges.



Clayton Police Chief, Rich McEachin



Kim Trupiano

Carlson Sworn into Supervisor Office, Mitchoff Says Goodbye

On January 2, Rep. Mark DeSaulnier administered the oath of office to Ken Carlson to officially start his term on the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors as a result of November election victory over candidate Debora Allen.



In a press release from the Supervisor's office, former Karen Mitchoff sends her parting words.

Supervisors. As Supervisor, I have had the opportunity to work on numerous projects in the areas of water advocacy, improved transportation, and economic development. I have been honored to serve as one of our County's representatives on the Delta Counties Coalition, where we have continued to preserve the critical ecosystem in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

On the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, I have worked towards improving the daily commute of our residents. Projects like additional lanes on Highway 4, completion of the Caldecott Tunnel's fourth bore and improving the Hwy 4/I-680 interchange each have had a direct impact on our community. GoMentum Station, located on the former Concord Naval

Weapons Station, has brought several companies to our region for autonomous vehicle testing. CCTA will continue their mission to reduce emissions, improve mobility and implement innovative transit programs with the support of the County.

Buchanan Field Airport is one of two airports in Contra Costa County. I am proud that JetSuiteX offers commercial flights out of Concord, and the growing drone industry also found a home here with offices at Buchanan Field and

Dear Residents of District 4,

When I started working for Contra Costa County in 1981, the county's population was only 657,000, the BART line terminated at the Concord station, I used a typewriter and when we got computers, I used floppy disks that were floppy. A lot has changed over my 40-year career with Contra Costa County!

I am grateful for the opportunities that I have had while working in multiple County departments and now serving three terms on the Board of



The Most Delicious Time of the Year - Comfort Food Month 2023

The Concord culinary community has entered the New Year comfortably by designating January as Comfort Food Month. In previous years, this celebration originated as Comfort Food Week, but expanded to two weeks, and now, due to its popularity, Visit Concord is extending this observance to an entire month giving all of us more time to indulge in the enticing, delicious dishes our local restaurants have prepared.

What better way to start the New Year than by supporting our local eateries by indulging in mouth-watering bites filled with sweet, salty, cheesy, gooey, and decadent flavors that bring you instant warmth, and happiness. Consider this your opportunity to get familiar with all the variety of comfort Concord serves up preparing you for each time such cravings strike again.

Grab the Comfort Food Passport for Offers and Prizes

Each of the 35+ participating Comfort Food Month restaurants has provided special deals and offers just for Comfort Food Month. Download the free 2023 Comfort Food Month passport onto your smartphone and you will have instant access to all of them. The passport features participating Concord restaurants, each with exclusive offers with required purchase.

Download the passport and Visit Concord will automatically enter you to win a giveaway of a Stay and Play Getaway at Hilton Concord and dining at some of our Comfort Food restaurants.

Ready to Embrace a Month Full of Comfort?

Here are ideas to inspire.

How about a yummy slice of pie at Buttercup Pantry, Bangkok Dumplings at Love Thai, or Chili Cheese Brat at Next Level Burger?

Or discover your new favorite dishes at La Fritanguera, Longport and Pizza Twist, each offering 20% off comfort food dishes.

Treat yourself to sweet temptations including cookies at Cookie Crumble,



cream puffs at Beard Papa's of Concord, or a cookie dough sundae at Out The Dough.

Follow Us on Social Media for More Foodie Finds

Throughout January, Visit Concord will highlight the many ways to enjoy Comfort Food Month with specially themed weeks:

January 8-14: Eat the World Week - Discover Concord's many ethnic and cultural cuisines

January 15-21: Takeout & To Go Week - Scout out the best food to take on a hike, local brewery - wherever your adventure takes you.

January 22-31: Dessert Week - Revel in sweet temptations that cannot be missed

Follow us on Instagram @visitconcordca and Facebook. Join the conversation and tag @visitconcordca and add #ConcordComfortFood to your own local food pics and you could be featured on Visit Concord social media.

Stay and Play All Comfort Food Month Long

If friends or family are visiting this month, Visit Concord has created specially themed packages for anyone booking a stay at one of Concord's nine hotels. Packages are available throughout the year including Comfort Food Month and include fun extras for those who like to dine, shop, and explore! All package options can be found here: <https://www.visitconcordca.com/hotels/specials-deals/stay-play-hotel-packages/>

For more on Comfort Food Month and to download your Comfort Food Month free passport, visit www.visitconcordca.com.

testing at both airports. Now, with federal funding, this airport will see a new terminal and flight tower. I have always strived to maximize the offerings at Buchanan Field Airport while mitigating its impact on its surrounding communities.

Collaboration has always been a critical part of my work for a better quality of life for you. The City of Pleasant Hill recently opened its new library building, and the County's role in that partnership was pivotal for the project to be completed. The passage of Measure X has enabled the County to fund new initiatives and expand services. Contra Costa Health Services A3 (Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere) initiative was created in collaboration with nonprofits, community members, police departments and cities. This initiative creates mobile crisis teams who will respond to individuals experiencing mental health crises. I look forward to seeing the impact of these collaborations benefit our community in the years to come.

I deeply appreciate and have the utmost respect for my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors. We may respectfully disagree on things, but I know this comes from our deep sense of duty to our districts. I am proud of what we have accomplished together and am honored to have learned from those who came before me and now, to contribute to the rich history of Contra



Costa County.

It has been an honor and a privilege of a lifetime to serve the residents of District 4. In retirement, I look forward to continuing my commitment to a progressive vision and a better future for our community.

Thank you,
Karen Mitchoff

Thank you for your many years of community service.



the concordian
by Edi Birsan
EdiBirsan@gmail.com

Marathon Base Reuse Nine Hour Marathon Discussion

On Saturday, January 7, from 9AM to 6PM the City Council sat through roughly two hours of presentations and then over about 90 public comments. Union members turned out in mass in person and dominated the public comment with an emphasis on they want the jobs and how great the proposed term sheet is. There was a group of not more than 20 that concentrated on their hatred for the Seeno family and wanting there to be no development where they were involved in any manner or form. There were also actually a few people from public comment that focused on the term sheet and had their concerns and perspectives. Issues stated included:

JADUs should not be counted as an affordable housing unit:

These are one bedroom or studio residencies attached to a larger home with separate entrances; in effect, a duplex with three bedrooms on one side and one bedroom on the other side. However, the JADU is deed restricted in that in the event of being rented out, they must be rented at an affordable rate (i.e., not more than 30% of income and the overall income level has to somewhere below 80% of the average medium income of folks.

Concerns about water:

Though it was stated that there would be another certification of acceptability coming from the Water Board. Interesting there was a comment from staff that in the prior approved quest it was stated that the water usage would be LESS than what the same amount of folks are using in Concord now because of the upgrade in technology and the extensive use of recycle water.

Who was responsible for the clean-up?

The navy is responsible.

Could we start at the BART station rather than at Willow Pass and Highway 4?

Utilities all come from the other side and the build out of Willow Pass was forced into Phase 1.

Concern over the methodology of awarding the Affordable Housing Site:

It is quite complex and interesting.

Sierra Club had an interesting combination of concerns. One, start the project at BART; and two, maybe there should be more JADUs to make sure that there are units available for folks if the JADUs provided were being used by family and not open to market competition.

There was concern over the widening of Willow Pass bringing in more people to Concord Downtown.

Wanting more information on the breakdown of affordable housing percentages, such as how many units for folks under 40% of average income, 60%, 80% etc.

What is the fiscal impact on the Concord First Partners and their ability to do the term sheet given the recently revealed issues between the Seeno Family members dispute?

How the city council digests all the input and answers these questions is something that we will find out on Saturday, January 28, at 9AM at City Hall.

Edi Birsan, where the 49er game the next day provided a political-free 24-hour mental health session. If you want to talk about this or anything else send me an email to EdiBirsan@gmail.com and as always, I buy the coffee at Peet's at Oak Grove and Treat.

TO BE CONTINUED...

No Term Sheet Vote, Concord City Council Extends Discussion

by David King

The much-anticipated vote on the Concord First Partners (CFP) proposed Term Sheet for the Base Reuse project planned for Saturday, January 7 ended in a 5-0 vote to continue the discussion at the next Special County meeting on January 28.

Starting at 9 AM, the meeting went as far as hearing the Term Sheet presentation, answering questions by members of the council regarding the presentation, and then hours of public comments, appearing both in-person and via Zoom with each person given two minutes to speak on the subject.

The Council Chamber and overflow room were at capacity, mostly filled with members of local trade unions who arrived early to guarantee a seat filling the Chamber with supporters of the proposed Term Sheet. Various labor unions set up pop-up canopies outside the Chamber, some offering coffee and donuts to host



Guy Bjerke, Director, Economic Development and Base Reuse

dispute pitting Albert Seeno Jr. vs. Albert Seeno III over control of the company.

“Seeno Jr. says his son previously had taken hundreds of millions of dollars without permission from his father and his father’s companies, has debt of over \$100 million, bullied his father to hire him as CEO under threat that he would otherwise never see his grandchildren, and has been abusive and misogynistic toward employees.”



the many supporters relegated to standing outside due to room capacity.

With the seats filled with Union members, most in-person comments came from them advocating for Council acceptance of the Term Sheet. Meanwhile, many who opposed were appearing via Zoom eight hours into the meeting.

Officers from the Concord Police Department were on hand to keep the peace of what had the potential to become quite the contentious meeting.

Most commenters, both for and against favored the project for its promise to deliver 40 years of jobs, new homes - especially affordable homes, and needed prosperity for the City of Concord in retail and community benefits.

The Term Sheet is a non-binding document that basically sets a vision of development and a plan for its financial feasibility. While some objected to the changes from the original RFP (request for proposal) such as building 3700 more homes, the majority that lobbied to Vote NO rest their complaint on the fact the Seeno Family’s Discovery Builders is one of the entities within the CFP consortium.

Save Mount Diablo recently sent 37,000 flyers to Concord residents concerned about the potential problems looming if Seeno is involved based on their history of convictions and litigations.

A few opponents have also complained of intimidation and filed recent police reports claiming to have received personal threats for their opposition.

In addition, the East Bay Times published two Dan Borenstein editorials revealing a presumably unknown legal



Seeno III, 48, in his legal filings, denies that his father was bullied into signing the employment contract and disputes that Seeno Jr. was inadequately represented by an attorney. The son says claims that he is diverting money, mismanaging



Members of the Concord First Partners

workers and construction jobs, concealing documents and otherwise breaching obligations to his father’s companies are untrue.”

According to Borenstein, case management conferences are scheduled for March in the litigation over control of Seeno Jr.’s companies and for Jan. 12 in Seeno III’s lawsuit accusing his father of trying to disrupt the operations of Discovery Builders.

Guy Bjerke, Director, Economic Development and Base Reuse, offered not to answer Council questions regarding litigation, dismissing it as a private matter.

Council was assured that the outcome would not impact their commitment to the project.

At the end of public comments, Council was then to discuss the issue amongst themselves, but after nine hours, Councilman Edi Birsan moved to continue that part of the meeting to the special meeting planned for Saturday, January 28. All five councilmembers happily approved that motion.



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Keeping Our School Community Safe & Healthy

As we wrap up 2022 here at Clayton Valley Charter High School, I want to thank our students, parents, teachers, staff, administrators and governing board members for another amazing and productive calendar year.

I also want to wish each of you a joyous, healthy and safe New Year. I appreciate your time allowing me to share some of this year's memorable experiences and student achievements.

Our last few months marked a busy final semester of 2022, especially as it related to finals, athletics and extracurricular programs. However, as we end the year, I want to share a couple of events hosted here on campus which emphasize our commitment to keeping our school community safe and healthy.

One Pill Can Kill Assemblies

There is no debate that Fentanyl is a dangerous drug killing young people in our community at an alarming rate. Fentanyl overdoses accounted for more than 80% of all drug-related deaths among California's young people in 2022.

That is why CVCHS made the decision to host several assemblies to help young people stay safe. Our public awareness campaign was mirrored after the Drug



Enforcement Agency's "One Pill Can Kill" program which educates parents and caregivers on the current drug crisis and how to have informed talks with kids. I am grateful to Superintendent Adam Gray and the partnership with MDUSD to bring our community together.

Personally, I am proud of our staff, students and families for attending these community events and addressing this serious threat. With so much dominating our lives, it is important to educate young people about the dangers of Fentanyl, offer positive alternatives, and provide CVCHS students with the tools they need to thrive.

Canine Coping Skills

Providing each student with a safe, healthy and nurturing learning environment is our greatest priority — on campus and off. Research shows that students with positive well-being are more likely to go to college and launch careers and reach their goals.

Throughout the school year, our Link Crew shares coping skills with students as well as strategies and resources for our emotional toolbox. Link Crew is a national youth organization of student leaders who help fellow incoming students adapt to their high school experience.

Link Leaders dive into such topics as exercise and animals to identify how CVCHS students can better cope with daily emotions, challenges, and stress. Learning concepts are provided monthly to 9th graders during PE class sessions to develop unique character and coping skills.

This year, Link Crew was fortunate to team up with Dogs for Diabetics and Guide Dogs for the Blind. These national organizations help enhance the quality of life for individuals suffering from diabetes and sight impairment by creating



independence, companionship, and lifesaving abilities.

This partnership allowed our students to learn first-hand how animals can serve as a source of comfort and support. Link Leaders hosted several four-pawed guests and their trainers on campus in the Small Gym. It was a fun and rewarding experience for our 9th grade students. The event was such a success that both organizations agreed to make this learning session an annual event here at CVCHS.

In closing, CVCHS has taken bold



initiatives this year to ensure that our students' academic pursuits and well-being are paramount. Enjoy the holidays and best for an UGLY New Year!

Community Unfamiliar with De La Salle Academy Educational Program

Here is a little-known bit of information. Concord's De La Salle Academy is an independently operated institution apart from De La Salle High School (DLS). We learned this after speaking with the Academy's Principal and CEO, Chris Giangregorio.

There are many families who want a Lasallian, Catholic college-preparatory education for their sons, but whose financial resources are severely limited. The Bishop Cummins Program at DLS is a comprehensive program to ensure that students from diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds have the opportunity to experience educational excellence. The Program provides significant tuition assistance, additional financial support for incidentals, and a supportive learning environment over four years.

"In pursuit of higher success," Giangregorio stated, "the conversation was had, how do we do better, how do we attract more, how do we better prepare them for the paths of education."

Ken Hofmann, a well-known Concord developer, a philanthropist, former co-owner of the A's and Seattle Seahawks and supporter of DLS, went to then President of DLS, Mark DeMarco, and offered his family's support to launch a school for 5th to 8th grade students to support the same population of students that enter the Bishop Cummins Program.

He offered his facility at 1380 Galaxy Way in Concord and \$5 million dollars over its first five years to start the Academy. The Academy was officially launched in August of 2014 as a division of DLS.

In July, 2019, the Academy became the recipient of a 10-year gift from the Hofmann Family Foundation which stipulated that it must operate independently of the DLS.

As an independent school, the Academy established its own Board of Trustees and hired their first President, Giangregorio, and has added a Graduate Support Director, Director of Philanthropy, a Director of Finance, and a Counseling Department.

The Academy offers a low student-counselor ratio, small class sizes, monthly family meetings, and a strong relationship and understanding of the student and the



Chris Giangregorio teaching class at De La Salle Academy.

family they are serving. Currently, the Academy is at its highest enrollment of 72 students.

"The first layer of the admission process is looking at the financial aid piece, making sure the families we are serving are falling within 250% percentage of the California free reduced lunch scale." The medium household income of an Academy family is \$48,000.

Of 92 total alumni, 29 are now of college age, of which 23 are enrolled in college. Twenty-eight of the 29 finished high school within four years, a graduation rate higher than that of the local public school system.

All students receive at least a \$20,000 scholarship. The Academy family pays a participation fee of \$75 to \$100 per month on average to cover uniforms, books, breakfast/lunch, field trips and summer school.

Hoffman also set up an endowment with DLS for graduates of the Academy to support their education at DLS. In the first five years, 100% of Academy graduates have been accepted to DLS, giving them access to a college-prep high school experience that might not have been otherwise accessible for them.

Inspired by the mission of the De La Salle Christian Brothers, the Academy provides a transformative, life-changing, and accessible Catholic educational experience for promising boys from under-resourced families in the greater Concord area. It is currently accepting applications for the 2023-2024 school year.

"Look for upcoming announcements for an open house to be held on Sunday, January 29, on our website www.Dls-academy.org."

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2023 Home Design Trends

It is time to think about what the New Year has in store. If you are buying or selling a home, or even if you just want to give your home a style refresh, then it is important to know what design trends the experts are forecasting. We have scoured the Internet to get an idea of what is ahead for our homes in 2023 and have chosen some of our favorites.

Wellness: Wellness has been top-of-mind since the pandemic began in 2020. Experts are forecasting that wellness will continue to be a top priority when it comes to our homes. Home designs in 2023 will emphasize slowing down and embracing mindfulness to create a peaceful and healthier home.

Natural Elements: In 2023, we will incorporate more natural elements into our homes. Color schemes will be influenced by those found in nature, such as soft greens and warm browns. Furniture and decor will also come from nature, such as live-edge tables, baskets, and plants.

Art Deco: Experts are also predicting that we will embrace Art Deco design in 2023. It has been 100 years since the Roaring 20s and it is about time the design of that era made a comeback. While minimalism has been a favorite of designers for a long time, many will start including more decorative elements. Look for bright colors, geometric patterns, and symmetrical designs and layouts.

Old is New: Sustainability is on the minds of many homeowners, and that will be reflected in how we choose to decorate and furnish our living spaces in 2023. More people will be turning toward secondhand furniture or beloved family

heirlooms that evoke special memories. With inflation fears escalating, more homeowners and designers will be turning to pieces from thrift and consignment stores to score a great deal.

Organization: Thanks to Marie Kondo, we all still love to organize, and that trend will continue into 2023. While some people have returned to the office, many of us are still working from home. When you spend so much time in your living space, it is important to keep it clean and organized. We will be turning away from open shelves and cabinets with glass doors in a desire to eliminate visual clutter.

Designer Laundry Rooms: Laundry rooms are no longer dark and dingy dungeons lurking in the basement. They are now being embraced as rooms that are both functional and beautiful. More homes will have designer laundry rooms that echo the aesthetic found in the rest of the home.

Round Edges: Round edges and curves will also make a comeback in 2023. Curved sofas, egg chairs, round rugs, and moon-shaped hardware will become more common. Overall, we will see a softening of living spaces and a departure from the straight-line modern aesthetic that has been popular in recent years.

Gold Colors: If 2023 were a color, then it would be gold. Experts are predicting that soft golden hues will be hugely popular in the coming year and will complement traditional neutral hues. You will find the color on everything from furniture to lighting fixtures to wallpaper.

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Concord's Early Alert Canines Trained to Detect COVID-19

By Jill Hedgecock Photos by Diane Walsh, endlesspaws28.com

One-eighth of a dog's brain is dedicated to detecting odor. The superior sniffing ability of dogs, who have 300 million smell receptors compared to a human's six million, can help people in many ways. Dogs can sniff out cancer. Search and rescue canines can locate the scent trail of missing people. They can assist law enforcement and the military using their sense of smell to locate drugs and explosives.

For insulin-dependent diabetics, the noses of these amazing companions can save lives. A dog's ability to detect low blood sugar inspired Carol Edwards to start Early Alert Canines (EAC) over a decade ago. EAC trains and places Medical Alert Service Dogs with diabetics. The diabetic service dogs must be taught to alert their humans of a blood sugar problem when they are walking, sleeping, at a desk, and while driving. These canines can beat electronic alert systems for low blood sugar sometimes by 15 to 20 minutes. EAC's diabetic program is unique in that they specialize in working with children and their parents. Their youngest diabetic client was a three-year old, and her dog had to learn to alert the parent not the child.

Victoria Briskin, EAC's Development Director, describes the work that EAC does for diabetics as life-changing and lifesaving, because the dogs are able to quickly detect a problem. "The client does not have to wait to experience the symptoms of a low or the symptoms of a high."

Carol Edwards, the Executive Director, described how rewarding starting EAC has been for her and how much the team is learning about the long-term benefits with early alerts. Their 3-year-old client is now 13. "I would love to see how being able to stay within a normal blood sugar range [has helped]. What's her life going to be like as she becomes an adult? Is she going to have good vision? Will none of her organs fail her because the dog is still faster than the medical device and the dog has caught something before the person is in a bad way."

Now, EAC has undertaken a new detection challenge. They have partnered with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to train two dogs in a pilot program to detect COVID-19 in school children. The goal of the program is to evaluate whether dogs can detect Covid infections similar to, or with increased accuracy, as compared to rapid over-the-counter nasal swab tests. The study involves schoolchildren taking a home test as well as being presented to Scarlett or Rizzo to be scent checked.

Two yellow labs, Scarlett and Rizzo, who were career-change dogs from Canine Companions, were initially evaluated by head trainer, Elizabeth



Johnston of EAC, as to their suitability for the COVID-19 study for four months. Johnston, who has been training dogs for over 30 years, taught Scarlett and Rizzo to sniff individual canisters on a scent wheel and to sit when they detected the volatile odors emitted based on COVID-19 patient's discarded socks. Their preliminary training was performed



Left to Right: Katerina Bouzos - Assistant Dog Handler, Collette Yee - Rizzo's Handler, EAC Rizzo (the dog), Alysia Santos - Scarlett's Handler, Head Trainer - Elizabeth Johnston

using a double-blind test where Johnston and the dog both did not know where the positive COVID-19 canister was located. The two dogs passed with flying colors.

"Over 400 blinds were required to prove that the dogs knew what they were doing," said Johnston who was impressed with Scarlett and Rizzo. "These guys are brilliant. They're so fast. They're so smart. They're so easy to train."

In February 2022, the dogs were confirmed as suitable for the program and individual handlers were hired. Collette Yee became Rizzo's handler and Alysia Santos became Scarlett's handler. Within a week of being brought onto the team, Yee and Santos were taking the dogs to schools to launch the study. Yee, who has a background in training wildlife conservation dogs, admitted it is impossible not to get attached to the dogs she trains.

Collette Yee described how impressed she was one day when Rizzo was off duty at a drive-up COVID-19 test site. A car

drove up about 100 feet away and when the passenger left the car to line up for the dog test, Rizzo alerted. "That was really fun to see. Before I even asking her to search, she picked it [the COVID-19 scent] up."

Alysia Santos, who grew up volunteering at local animal shelters, became a service dog puppy raiser in Florida and later in California. Santos described how rewarding it was when Scarlett identified a COVID-19-positive child in a line up when the child's nasal swab test gave a questionable result. "Scarlett just lit up. She was wagging her tail. It was really awesome seeing all the work we'd done here transferred to out in the field."

On occasion, EAC's COVID-19 dogs have given false positives when the dogs were presented to people who were symptomatic with a respiratory illness. EAC suspects that the patients may have had the flu and were giving off a similar VOC scent as COVID-19.

When the COVID-19 dogs are not working or being trained, they live in a foster home. Chip Bishop, who works nearby, and his wife, have fostered about 70 dogs over the last 11 years for EAC. Sometimes they have kept the dog only one or two nights, but typically they foster for about one month. Because the COVID-19 dog study is long-term, they have been caring for Scarlett for longer than normal.

"It's really a win/win for us," said Bishop about fostering. "The dogs are very well-trained and behaved. We don't have puppy issues when they're young. We don't have end of life issues and vet bills. When we travel, they're [EAC] great about finding coverage. Each one of them has a piece

of my heart."

In a Center for Disease Control Foundation podcast interview called "Contagious Conversations," Dr. Carol Glaser of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) discussed the many benefits of using dogs for COVID testing.

Dog testing avoids the discomfort of nasal swabbing, results in the reduction of plastic waste associated with medical testing and requires the kids to spend less time outside the classroom. But most of all, the dogs evoked a positive response to testing from the students.

"They absolutely love the dogs," said Glaser.

With the waning severity of COVID-19 infections, it is unclear what future role Scarlett, Rizzo and other COVID dogs will play in assisting schools or other facilities in protecting public health.

"We have been in discussions with



Dogs working on a scent wheel.

CDPH with what's next," said Edwards. "We have been successful in showing proof of concept. And now we are talking about what other diseases we can help with."

According to Edwards, tuberculosis and RSV have been discussed. But if it turns out there is no next study, Scarlett and Rizzo will become part of the diabetic program.



Collette Yee working with Rizzo on a scent wheel will sit when detecting COVID odors.

"Once a dog is scent trained, it is very easy to put a second scent on them," said Edwards.

This is good news for public health officials. As EAC and other organizations discover more applications for a dog's scent detection capabilities, the potential for dogs to help curb the spread of human diseases, especially during a pandemic, may become invaluable.

Funding for Early Alert Canines, an incorporated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (Tax ID is #27-4237968), operates almost entirely by private individual donations and grants. Temporary foster homes are also needed. To help, visit www.earlyalertcanines.org.



CDC Podcast



EAC podcast

Scan these QR codes to hear the podcasts from CDC and EAC on Covid-19 early detection medical dogs.

Jill Hedgecock has degrees in Biological Science and Environmental Science. She writes Diablo Gazette's pet rescue column, and is the author of two dog inspired novels, "Between Shadow's Eyes" and "From Shadow's Perspective."

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The Naked Gardener
David George, UC-Certified
Master Gardener

Planting Trees?



Happy New Naked Gardening Year! It is tough to find a decent day to work in our gardens in January. So, we can do what other dedicated gardeners do in winter months, plan for the next growing season. No all-natural garden is complete without trees. If you are looking for extra color and cool summertime shade, plant a tree or two now. Fall and winter months are ideal for planting trees to minimize transplant shock.

Transplant shock will not show up in

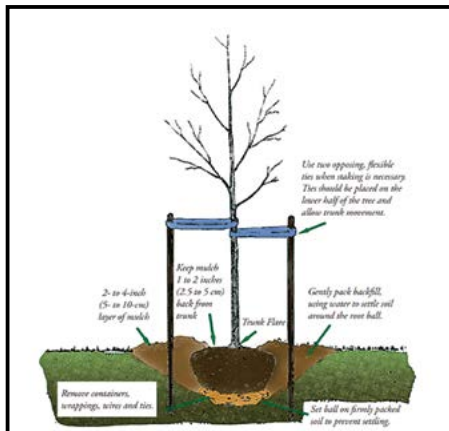
Fertilize your tree naturally. Mix into your planting hole native organic mulch, for example leaf litter, or homemade compost. Avoid adding store-bought fertilizers the first year to your tree's base, as they could burn its roots.

Protect your tree. Do not allow the soil to get too compacted around the tree's base. Break it up with a screwdriver or hand spade on occasion. If you use a tree support, avoid wire or tightly wound string to protect the growing bark and underlying xylem and phloem which transport nutrients up and down the trunk. Remove tree supports after the first couple of years. Do not leave them on too long as they interrupt the tree's natural strength-building against wind damage. Also, be careful to protect the tender new bark from chewing pests, such as deer, gophers, and voles. You can encircle the young tree with 1/4 inch metal fencing, buried 12-18" below the surface and extending upward past the tree's branch crown.

Protect your new darling like you would a small child. Give it the love and attention it deserves for the first couple of years. It will reward you and your family with years of beauty and cool shade.

You can find more successful tree tips at [SexyTrees.com/blog-tree-care-tips-and-guides/](https://www.sexytrees.com/blog-tree-care-tips-and-guides/), or at the UC ANR online tree site at https://ucanr.edu/sites/gardenweb/Landscape_Trees/

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



your new trees for several months. It is characterized by yellowed or brown leaves, branch or limb dieback, or a lack of new growth. You can do several things at planting time to minimize this shock:

Choose the right planting site. Consider the tree's mature height and width, its light and water requirements, and whether it is appropriate for your neighborhood climate. For example, do not try to plant a coastal Monterey pine in Richmond or a crepe myrtle tree in Richmond. Your garden center staff can advise you about this.

Prepare the planting hole. The planting hole should be twice as wide as the tree's root ball and just deep enough so that the tree's root crown is slightly higher than the soil level in the nursery container. Be careful to prevent settling in loose soil. A tree planted too deeply (or too high) will languish later.

Water your tree regularly and deeply. This is important for the first year or two of its life, especially during hot summer months. Newly planted trees need about an inch of water each week until established (usually by the following fall).



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Happy New Year from The Diablo Gazette

JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

by Fran Cain

Exploring the Amazing di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art

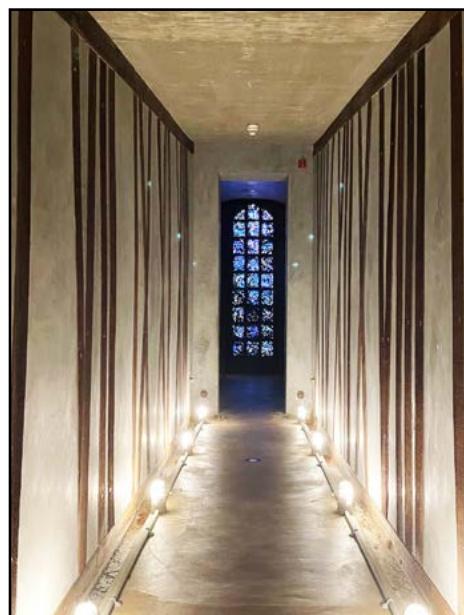
My husband and I are always looking for outings that let us “get in steps”. I had been to sculpture gardens on the East Coast. Wouldn't it make sense that the art-crazed Bay Area should have something like it? I started a search and was rewarded by finding the delightful di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art. Described as an art park and nature preserve complete with bird walks and nature hikes, it is located on 217 acres with a 35-acre lake in the Carneros region of Napa Valley. We decided to make a day of it.

The entrance to the main building reminded me of a giant galvanized grain silo. We were cordially welcomed. We knew right away this was no ordinary gallery. We learned that Rene di Rosa had purchased the land in 1960, first using it as a vineyard. Later he and his wife Veronica gave their substantial art collection and lands to their foundation with plans to create an art environment and nature preserve for the public.

On exhibit was Adia Millet's “Force of Nature”, a show characterized by brilliant kaleidoscope colors and patterns. Other items from the rotating permanent collection of 900 artists are arranged throughout the window-lined gallery.

We exited to the grounds, which we chose to explore at leisure, although tours are available, as well as shuttles for those less willing to walk. The first work to set the stage was the giant “Gong” by William T. Wiley. Should I bang it? I'm too polite to touch art unbidden, so I resisted even though it would have been okay.

We ventured down a path into a



semi-secluded garden overlooking the lake with remarkable sculptures of a giant harp, a chair for very tall people, and a miniature pond surrounded by a wrought iron fence. Further on, we found a dragon, sheep on a hill, the world's tallest filing cabinet, a giant peace sign, and a house made of bottles. The list goes on and on.

Perhaps the biggest and best surprise of all was an enormous wooden door in the hillside beneath the di Rosa residence. It led to Paul Kos's “Chartres Bleu.” Coming in from the bright daylight, my eyes took a moment to adjust to the low light of a long narrow corridor. Admittedly, I was a bit nervous until a couple approached and advised us to be sure to “ring the bell.”

We continued along the dark corridor into a cavernous chapel with high ceilings and lit only by “Chartres Bleu”, a single large panel of 27 stacked monitors which appeared to be a stained-glass window. But this is no ordinary window; the images shifted. Mesmerized, I watched the images as they change every few seconds. After a while, I continued beyond the chapel to find a foyer with a bell on either side. I did indeed ring both, experiencing their sweet reverberations in the chamber.

The courtyard outside Gallery 2 is home to David Ireland's “Angel-Go-Round.” Fascinated, I wondered would the life-sized rotating relic overhead come untethered and knock me down? And why is there a pile of statues on the ground below it?

Inside, I followed an art-lined hallway to the main gallery where “The Incorrect Museum: Redux” exhibit displayed many pieces of di Rosa's art collection floor to ceiling in salon style.

In the center of the room, David Best's “Rhino Car” covered in whimsical paraphernalia of every kind perhaps explained everything we had just seen that day.

Rene di Rosa believed art should be freely available to all. He eschewed the snobbery in the art world. Instead, he



and Veronica chose to embrace a playful, unpretentious, often irreverent version of art clearly on display throughout the center.

If di Rosa and his wife were alive today, they would be high on my list of people to meet. As it is, I can only imagine how gracious they were to bring such a fun and unforgettable art

experience to the people. There is so much to see, I can't wait to go back.

Di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art is located at 5200 Sonoma Highway, Napa.

For general admission, hikes and tour information, go to <https://www.dirosaart.org>

In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from Claycord.com and Other Sources

Sierra Nevada Snow Season Off To Best Start In A Decade

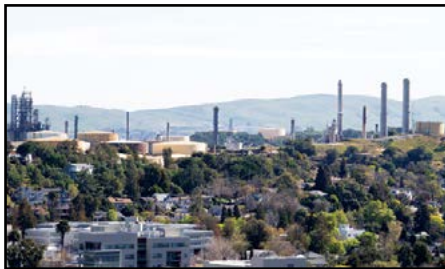


State water officials say the Sierra Nevada is experiencing its snowiest start to the winter season in a decade, thanks to a handful of storms that dropped several feet of snow.

State officials say California currently has one the best snowpack levels covering its mountain ranges in four decades, the Associated Press reported.

The California Department of Water Resources conducted the first manual snowpack survey of the year this week at Phillips Station near Lake Tahoe. They found 55.5 inches of snow depth, which is 177% higher than average for the location, according to a statement from the department.

Martinez Refining Company Says Raccoon Caused Last Month's Flaring At Refinery On Pacheco Blvd.



A raccoon allegedly broke into the Martinez Refining Company and caused a power interruption that resulted in last month's flaring at the refinery.

The company said in an incident report to the Contra Costa Health Services' Hazardous Materials Programs that the masked marauder got into a refinery substation on Dec. 22, causing the substation to suffer a three-phase fault in a capacitor bank and a breaker to open "that resulted in a loss of equipment across the refinery."

The power interruption resulted in seven minutes of flaring.

American Mink Recovering At Lindsay Wildlife Experience In Walnut Creek After Being Found "Unwell" Behind The Antioch Police Department

An American Mink is recovering at the Lindsay Wildlife Experience in Walnut Creek after being found lethargic and unwell behind the Antioch Police Department (APD) earlier this month.

APD says the Mink is now well enough to be released back into the wild.



"Tripledeemic" Causing Shortage Of Children's Medication In Contra Costa County, Throughout The Country

The so-called "tripledeemic" of RSV, COVID-19 and the flu is causing a shortage of children's medication in Contra Costa County and throughout the Country.

DMV Highlights New California Laws Taking Effect In 2023

Several new laws took effect on January 1, 2023. These include:

Online Driver's License Renewal for Californians 70 and Older Ends December 31 – Starting January 1, California law will again require drivers 70 and older to renew their license in person at a DMV office.

New Requirement for Permanent Disabled Person Parking Placard Renewals – The DMV is sending notices to Californians who have had their permanent Disabled Person Parking Placard for at least six years and asking them to confirm that they are still in need of one. The DMV will not renew placards for people who do not respond.

Enhanced Safeguards for Bicycle Riders – Drivers are now required to change into another available lane, when possible, to pass cyclists, building on the current requirement for drivers to give cyclists at least three feet of space when passing. The law also permits Class 3 e-bike riders to use approved bicycle paths and trails, bikeways, and bicycle lanes. In addition, starting on January 1, 2024, the law allows cyclists to cross an intersection when a walk sign is on.

Veteran Designation on Driver's Licenses – This law eliminates the \$5 fee for obtaining a military "VETERAN" designation on a driver's license or identification (ID) card.

Toll Exemptions for Certain Veterans – This law exempts vehicles registered to veterans displaying specialized license plates from paying tolls on roads, bridges, highways, vehicular crossings, or other toll facilities.

For more local stories visit Claycord.com.

Peter Visendi, OD, FAAO, Creator of Soft Contact Lenses, Offering Eye Exams at Orion Optical

Peter Visendi, OD has made quite an impact in his lifetime in the optical field. He is credited for inventing the soft contact lens. He also ran a 20-year practice called the Danville Optometric Group, which was one of the largest practices in the state. He sold that practice in 2020 but has come out of his pseudo-retirement to restart his practice in Concord.

Visendi began studying Physics at University of California, Berkeley, in 1964, the year of the infamous "Free Speech Movement." During this period, some of the teachers in the physics program offered a seat in the Optometry program to coincide with the physics program, thus qualifying him to be recognized as a medical student. At that time, only medical students were excused from having to go to Vietnam.

"I was working with a Physicist, Irving Fatt, PHD. He taught me a lot about physics related to the eye. He developed the first membrane detector of oxygen, which precisely measured oxygen profusion of soft contact lens. The amount of oxygen that comes through the contact lens is proportional to the health of the eye. That is why soft contacts are generally a healthier system for the eye than hard contact lens," Visendi explained.

Fatt's device was able to measure the amount oxygen levels passing through lenses.

While also working as an organic chemist for Dow Chemicals, he developed a formula for the making of soft contact lenses that would allow more oxygen transport and wettability for a better contact lens.

In 1972, Visendi gave a Dual Doctorate presentation presenting his research on the making of a better soft contact lens. The document received several awards and accolades worldwide which led to a job offer from Bausch and Lomb.

He was recruited to develop the lens his research promoted. Soft contact lenses were considered a drug in those days and had to be approved by the FDA. Bausch and Lomb had the first

and only FDA approval for its lens. "It was approved, but it was a lousy lens," Visendi admits.

As Director of Research, Visendi's role was to make sure the lens was healthy and to work closely with the FDA while improving the lens so that it would continue to be allowed to go market. Meanwhile, no other companies had yet received FDA approval. Peter was to keep Bausch and Lomb on the edge of production to capitalize on what was a monopoly in the category. By the time he left, Bausch and Lomb had a good lens. Unfortunately, all patents belong to Bausch and Lomb.

In 1972, that old lens was quite expensive. Soft lenses were sold at \$300 per pair (equivalent to over \$2000 in 2022 money, adjusted for inflation), and they only lasted only two to three months.

"In 1973, I was sent to Mayo Clinic to develop the enzyme for cleaning the lenses which is still in use today."

Visendi can also lay claim for developing colored Contact lens. He experimented and researched materials

that led to the successful making of colored contact lens that would still be safe for the eye.

In 1979, Visendi taught at UC Berkeley in 1979 in the Optometric program and helped develop their Ocular Pathology program.

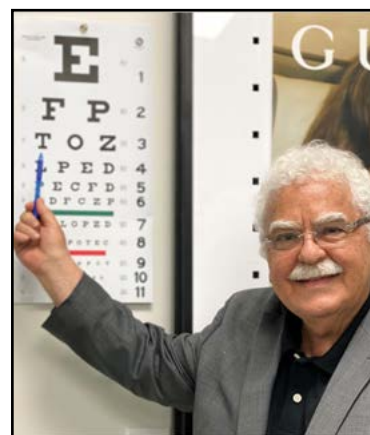
In the way that optical markets go today, it is very difficult for a company to survive without Optometrics as part of its services. Since it is

illegal for an optical company to hire an Optometrist,

Visendi subleases space at Orion Optical to perform exams and treatments on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

"Orion Optical sells designer frames, I am only interested in treating people and taking care of them."

There should be no doubt that patients will be in good hands there. Orion Optical is located in the Veranda at 2075 Diamond Blvd. (see ad on cover of this edition.)



Fiore's Moroccan Nights Features Chef from the Old Country

You do not need to go to Rome, Venice, or any other city in Italy to experience real Italian food. All you have to do is visit Luna and Fiore Restaurants in Concord. These fine dining restaurants send their customers traveling across the globe with their tasty Italian dishes known for the additional Moroccan twist.

Fiore has prepared two special Moroccan evenings, Moroccan Night Party, featuring special guest Chef Malika Redouane and belly dancing entertainment on Thursday, February 2 and Sunday, February 5 (see ad page 6.)

Chef Redouane has always loved culinary arts, a talent she inherited from her grandmother, who was cooking for all the family, including weddings. Chef Redouane quickly decided that she had to pursue this

natural culinary gift. Born in Morocco, and armed with determination and

passion, she operated her successful catering business in her home country for the past forty years serving up delicious and creative dishes.

The Moroccan cuisine is known for its worldwide reputation and is marked by the medley of spices found in its dishes. It is considered one of the most important in the world for its remarkable diversity of influences: Arab,

Berber, Mediterranean, and European. In Moroccan dishes, one can trace the country's long history of colonizers and immigrants who have left their mark there.

Chef Malika has learned from the diversity of influences and has also become the mentor of her son, Chef Habib El Jacifi, Executive Chef of Luna & Fiore Restaurants in Concord. [See ad on p 6.]



CBCA Nominated into Clayton Valley Hall of Fame

Clayton Valley Business and Community Association (CBCA) will be inducted into the 7th Clayton Valley Athletic Hall of Fame Ceremony and Dinner on Friday, May 19, 2023, at the Centre Concord. Pat Middendorf nominated the CBCA because of the years of financial support for scholarships for Clayton Valley High students that they have provided for the athletic teams. CBCA donates much needed money to help



support Clayton Valley's athletic programs. Ticket information to the ceremony is forthcoming.

The CBCA is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promoting the general welfare, prosperity and common good of the Clayton community. CBCA annual fundraising events include the Clayton Arts and Wine

Festival, July BBQ Cook-Off, Oktoberfest, Skip Ipsen Memorial Bocce Tournament and the Clayton Holiday Tree Lighting & Dessert with Mrs. Claus.

Annual Contra Costa County Christmas Bird Count Uncovers Surprise Bird Sightings

by Jill Hedgecock

Photos Credit: Jerry Britten



Barn Owl Los Vaqueros

over the past 50 years due to rising temperatures attributed to climate warming.

The preliminary tally of species observed in 2022 was 160 species, an increase from 2021, and was close to the all-time high of 161 species in 2020. Weather, the volunteer's birding skills, and public access to prime habitat areas can result in annual fluctuations of counted birds.

Joel Cervantes, leader of the Old Borges Ranch count area, accompanied Old Borges Ranch Park Ranger, Alan Bade. Cervantes directed Bade and his team to where he knew barn and western screech owls often hung out. The barn owl was located, but the screech owl was not occupying its typical roosting spot on count day.

2022 highlights included a couple of never-before-seen birds, including a northern saw-whet owl observed near Springhill Road in Lafayette and a long-tailed duck located at Suisun Bay.

This year, 72 volunteers documented the type and numbers of every bird they saw that day either on established routes led by a trip leader or in their backyards. Based on the enthusiasm of the count participants during a Zoom call on the evening of the count day, it was clear how much each volunteer enjoyed their bird count experience.

During the call, Jerry Britten, the MDAS President and CBC compiler, described a thrilling moment during his census of the Black Diamond Mine area when a red-tailed hawk went after white-throated swifts as they emerged from a rock crevice. Others reported memorable moments during the day when they observed a rare species, a personal favorite, or an unexpected abundance of some of the more common species. Species getting special shout outs included purple finches, phainopepla, Townsend solitaire, barn

and burrowing owls, and a mountain bluebird.

and burrowing owls, and a mountain bluebird.

"One thing I love about birding is you really have to immerse yourself in the habitat in order to understand the birds and it brings a whole new depth to your experience," said Alan Bade.

Bird enthusiasts or anyone wishing to learn more about Audubon activities are invited to learn more about MDAS' programs (www.mtdiabloaudubon.org).

Jill Hedgecock has a master's degree

in Environmental Management and a bachelor's degree in Biology. Her love of nature inspired her to write the award-winning novel, "Rhino in the Room" and the sequel, "Queen of the Rhino."



Osprey in Holland's Tract



Lewis' Woodpecker



Surf Scoter Coyote Point



Purple Finch



Phainopepla

This year marks the 123rd count for the National Audubon Society which began on Christmas Day 1900 and is the world's longest-running citizen-driven wildlife census. The Mount Diablo Audubon Society's (MDAS) Contra Costa County (CCC) Christmas Bird Count (CBC) took place on Saturday, December 17, 2022.

The MDAS Contra Costa County bird count circle, which is centered approximately halfway between Pleasant Hill and Clayton, has been underway for the last 68 years. The count circle is divided into 24 sections and volunteers count every bird of every species sighted on the assigned day. The results are logged into eBird and compiled into a central database by the National Audubon Society. The bird count data has been used by scientists around the world to conduct research. A 2021 study using CBC bird count data for 16 common duck species wintering in the Southeastern U.S. found that their populations have shifted northward

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This is How It Always Is

by Laurie Frankel

"This Is How It Always Is" (2018, paperback, 336 pages, Flatiron Books, \$13.04) by Laurie Frankel is a heart-warming, heart-breaking, and sometimes hilarious novel about two loving parents navigating the confusing maze of raising five children. It is also a book about struggling to find the right thing to do when one of their children is born a boy but identifies as a girl, the debilitating cost of keeping secrets, and the constant worry and second-guessing that comes with child-rearing.

Rose and Penn are a happily married couple. Rosie is a medical doctor. Penn is a stay-at-home dad and writer. They already had four boys when they decided to try for a girl, and they got their wish, sort of. Claude comes out of the womb with boy parts, but as he ages, he decides he wants to be a girl when he grows up. Claude, who later renames himself Poppy, only wants to wear dresses. When he uses a purse as a lunchbox on his first day of kindergarten, Rose suspects that perhaps Claude is not just going through a phase. Her suspicions turn to reality when Claude goes shopping with Grandma and comes home with a pink bikini as swimwear.

As Claude ages and his/her life choices become more complicated, like which bathroom he/she can use at school, Rosie and Penn decide to move across the country to Seattle, Washington, where there is a greater tolerance to different lifestyles. But after a series of events result in Rosie and Penn not revealing Claude's/Poppy's true gender in their new community, the entire family colluded to keep Claude's secret — a decision not without costs.

The strength of this book is not necessarily the fascinating world of raising a child with gender dysphoria, but in the kind and loving attitudes and approaches that Rosie and Penn take to raise their children. Penn uses a nightly fairy tale story to help all their kids deal with the complications of growing up, particularly Claude/Poppy whose life is rife with special challenges. Rosie takes a more direct approach to parenting, keeping the lines of communication open and creating a safe space for her kids to talk to her.

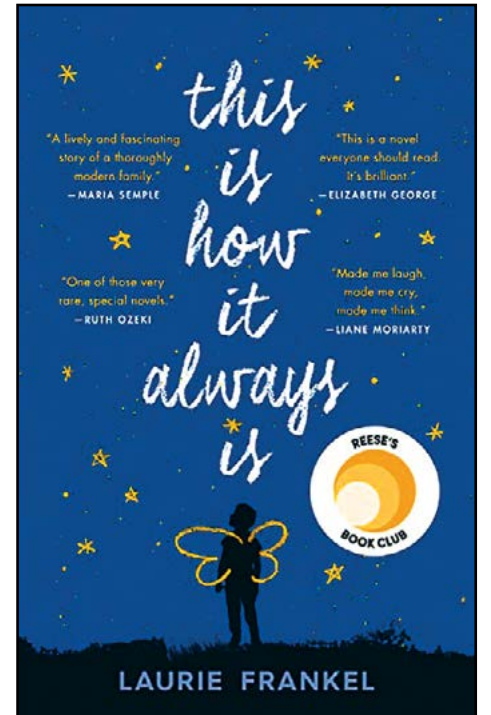
Frankel's own boy child identifies as a girl, and the author's direct experience with dysphoria shines through the pages. Frankel does an excellent job of

balancing tragedy and heartache with humor in this excellent and unforgettable novel.

"This Is How It Always Is" was a Reese Witherspoon x Hello Sunshine Book Club pick. Fans of Liane Moriarty's "Big Little Lies," "Tomorrow Will Be Different" by Sarah McBride, "The Knockout Queen" by Rufi Thorpe, and "Such a Fun Age" by Kiley Reid will likely enjoy this book.

Laurie Frankel is a New York Times bestselling and award-winning author. In addition to "This Is How It Always Is," she has written three other novels: "One Two Three," "Goodbye for Now," and "The Atlas of Love." Her novels have been translated into more than 25 languages and have been optioned for film and TV. Her writing has also appeared in "The New York Times," "People Magazine," "The Guardian," and "Publisher's Weekly." Her work has received the Washington State Book Award and the Endeavor Award. She lives in Seattle, Washington with her family.

Visit her website: www.lauriefrankel.net.



In Theaters

The Fabelmans

When we see someone at the top of their field, we often wonder how their life shaped them into the person they became. In "The Fabelmans," we get a glimpse on how a filmmaker develops their craft. In this particular film, we watch Sammy Fabelman (Gabriel LaBelle) grow into a filmmaker, but the fictional character is very close to famed director Steven Spielberg's own life.

The decision to tell a fictionalized story of your life frees the creator to take liberties with reality and possibly tailor outcomes to how one wishes things were. Spielberg keeps most of the facts of his childhood the same as Sammy's, yet his scope seems more like someone reflecting back in time than believing young Sammy is as mature as portrayed.

Sammy is the eldest of four children. His father Burt Fabelman (Paul Dano) is a computer engineer and his mother Mitzi (Michelle Williams), people say, could have gone far as a concert pianist. Sammy seems to have the combined gifts of both parents, as he has an analytical mind blended with the creativity of an artist. This is apparent early on when Sammy is allowed to use his father's movie camera and begins to make his own films. He recruits his sisters and boy scout troop as the films quickly grow into bigger productions.

While both parents are supportive of his craft, his father sees it only as a fun hobby. Mitzi, however, admires Sammy's talent and understands his



need for creative expression, resulting in their deep bond. Later, we learn that Mitzi is a complicated character prone to depression, with dreams that were squelched once she married and started a family. We see a budding artist in Sammy and an unfulfilled promising talent in Mitzi, who embodies what life can be like if you do not follow your passion.

As Sammy's skills develop, he begins to see life through his camera. Enacting his filmmaking skills, he is able to discern things he may have missed if he wasn't watching his life unfold through the lens. Sammy also learns that the storyteller can manipulate their audience and there is a responsibility that comes with the stories you choose to tell the world and how you portray your characters.

Any fans of Spielberg will enjoy seeing nods to his future filmmaking style and it is a wonderful tribute to the love of film and the shaping of an artist. With so many iconic films in Spielberg's archive of work, this film does not rise to that level. Still, it is an important and loving film, necessary to understand the heart of the filmmaker.

Rated PG-13

Now Streaming

Pinocchio



I must confess the first thing I did after watching Guillermo del Toro's new adaptation of "Pinocchio" was to immediately rewatch the Disney version, not because I wanted to compare them, but because I did not think I remembered a lot of the plot points. Actually, there was not too much to remember. In the Disney version, Geppetto is a wood carver who makes a boy puppet and then wishes on a star for the puppet to become a real boy. The wish is granted, and the adorable Pinocchio comes to life. Anyone familiar with Guillermo del Toro's films can guess this version is not going to go down so easily.

Widower Geppetto (David Bradley) is a wood carver who loses his son Carlo (Gregory Mann who also voices Pinocchio) which leaves him a lonely, bitter man consumed by grief. He drinks heavily and in one drunken rage, carves a wooden boy. When this wooden creature is brought to life, it is filled with unbridled curiosity. This leaves Geppetto feeling the wooden child is

more of a burden than a blessing.

The film depicts the complex relationships between fathers and sons. It grapples with religious themes and, as in many of del Toro's films, war. While it is true that the Disney version has its dark moments (Pleasure Island is no cakewalk), this new incarnation has higher stakes in regard to how we treat others and the dangers of comparing our children instead of accepting them as unique individuals.

Like the original, there are musical numbers. Although the music is good and the execution more than capable, this is not a movie that will have you walking away humming the songs, unlike the many infectious tunes from the Disney version.

The stop-motion animation techniques used in this film are amazing. The subtle movements and expressions should be viewed on the biggest television in your home. Fans of del Toro's signature creatures will not be disappointed. I also recommend watching Netflix's companion piece, "Handcrafted Cinema," to really see the love and dedication it took to bring this movie to life. It will also give insight into some of the stars voicing the characters.

I am grateful that this film made me revisit Disney's Pinocchio, which is a beautifully animated and joyous treasure. I am also glad that del Toro was courageous enough to create his own tale. There is room in our world for both films and I cannot wait to watch this one again.

Rated PG. Now streaming on Netflix



All Creatures Great and Small

Our January show is "All Creatures Great and Small," which runs from January 11th through February 3rd. This annual show is one of our most popular. Local artists have submitted their animal-themed work – anything from ants and alligators to zebras and zoos.



is a wonderful surprise of mood and color.

In March, we are highlighting the work of George Rammell, Robert Bradley, and Walter Crew. These artists are each well-known and loved at our

gallery, but this will be the first time the trio are featured together. Robert's mixed media work merges acrylic with colored pencil and watercolor. Walter carves his imagery into a black scratch board and then adds color with ink. George likes to go big with his acrylic paintings, using broad brush strokes, palette knife techniques, and textural paint skins.

January, February, and March will be full of exciting creativity that you must see. Check our blog and Facebook for upcoming details and subscribe to our email list to get notices about our Artist Receptions.

We welcome your feedback at aRt Cottage - it really is "R" (our) cottage. Keep the ideas coming as we continue to grow and evolve, and as always, thank you for your support.

aRt Cottage is located at 2238 Mt. Diablo Street in downtown Concord. Open Wednesday – Saturday 11a.m.-5 p.m.

The aRt Cottage's gallery and gift shop is open Wednesday through Saturday (11am-5pm) at 2238 Mount Diablo Street in downtown Concord. Visit artcottage.info for details.

In February, we are offering a series of photography workshops, taking place on all four Sundays from 1:30-3:30pm (8 hours total). Our instructor, Roc DeWilde, will teach you all the secrets of a great shot. Space is limited, so register by January 25 to get early bird pricing of \$169 for the series (\$195 after) by emailing rocdewilde@astound.net.

February's show will be bright and beautiful, featuring the unique work of Tim Aguino.

He incorporates beadwork into his acrylic paintings that celebrate his Native American heritage. Each piece



Little Cat by FROgard. (colored pencil)



Create Small Daily Habits to Achieve Resolutions Success

If you find New Year's Resolutions overwhelming, I have two simple suggestions:

1 Pick one small thing you can do for yourself every day that makes you feel better.

2 Make a plan for implementing that habit into your day-to-day life.

As a Neuro Performance Coach, I help people find "neural inputs" that help improve the function of their nervous system. These become their "physical mantra," something they do at least once a day to help reground their nervous system. You do not have to be too technical, though. You can choose anything as your mantra. Try looking out the window, listening to music, doing 10 jumping jacks - anything that feels good.

The truth is that most new habits, even simple ones, actually take more energy to set up than to execute. As a coach, it's important that I have lots of suggestions on how to integrate new skills into my clients' daily lives. Here are a few habit hacks to get you started:

Tie it to an existing habit. Here are some suggestions:

Once per day, consider bedtime

Twice per day, when you brush your teeth

Three times per day, around meals

Four or more times per day, restroom breaks

Set an alarm

Pick times that you know will not

interrupt important appointments.

And please choose a pleasant alarm sound; we are trying to make you feel better.

Visual Reminders

Post-it note reminders are great for this. Stick one next to your coffee pot, your refrigerator, or on the bathroom mirror. You can even put graphics on your home screen to remind you every time you pick up your phone.

Note: Brains respond to novelty. You will eventually ignore your reminders, so you need to keep changing them up.

Rewards

Rewards, even small ones, are extremely helpful in establishing new habits.

Accountability

Whether you track your progress on a chart or check in with an accountability buddy or a coach, accountability is a powerhouse tool when it comes to creating new habits.

This may seem like a lot of effort to add in a simple habit but supporting your new habits will make it probable that you will still be doing it come next New Year. Three hundred sixty-five days of small things can add up to real positive change.

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

E-mail: NeurologyofPresence@gmail.com.

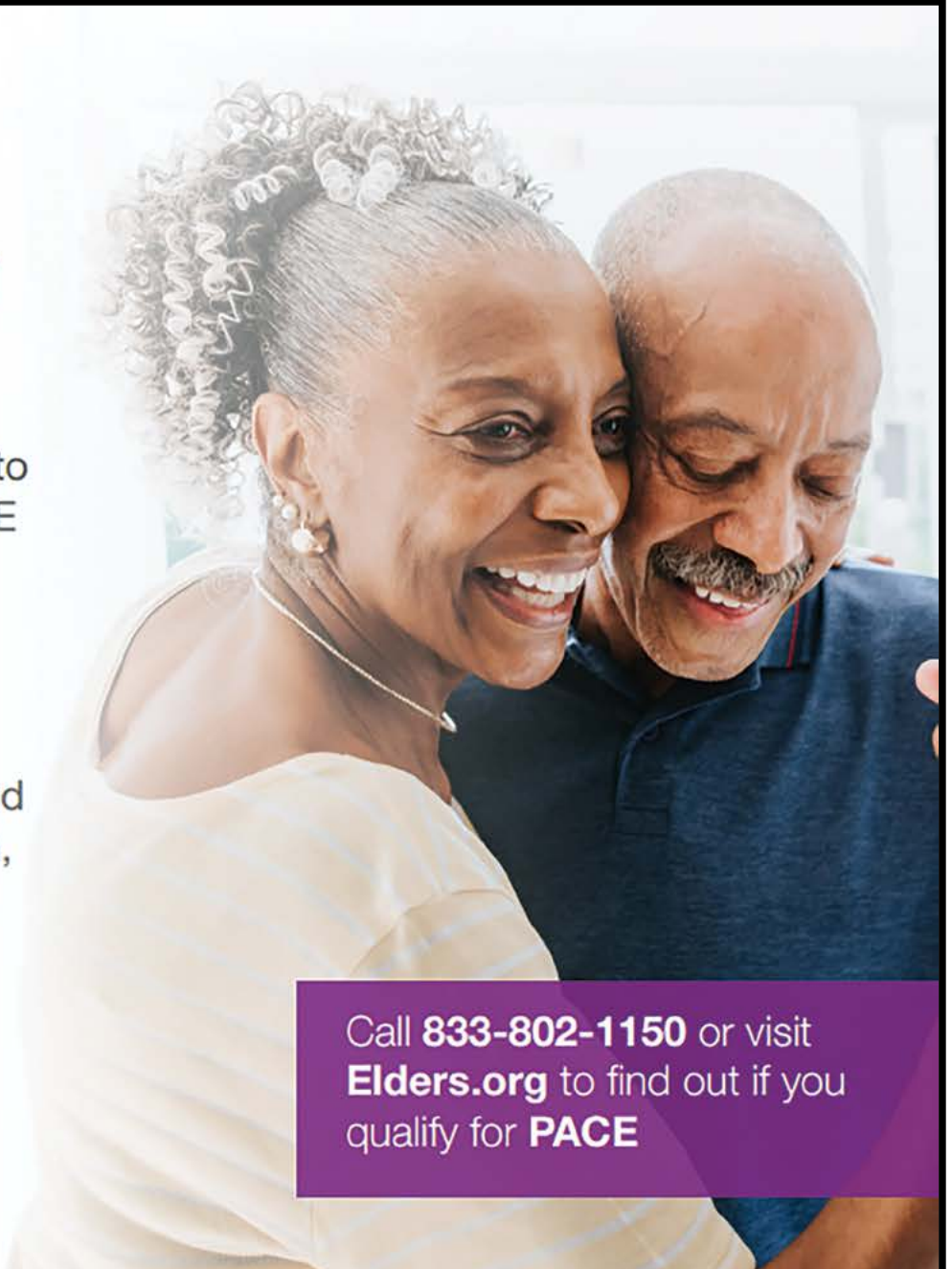
Staying connected to your roots makes your health blossom

Center For Elders' Independence is here to help you flourish through personalized PACE healthcare and services that keep seniors living safely and independently at home, because home is where your roots are.

East Bay seniors 55 and older with health needs can rely on us for medical, dental, and vision care, plus services like transportation, a senior gym, group activities and more, all with no deductibles for you.



Call 833-802-1150 or visit Elders.org to find out if you qualify for PACE





Couch Potato Comfort



Kick back and take it easy as the New Year rolls in and the flurry of activity from the holidays is a distant memory. This is a menu that will be ready when you are.

Early in the day, mix up a cheese ball and put it in the fridge. That way when the game is on you can settle-in on the couch with a knife, crackers, and a cold beer. Pair this piquant cheese ball with a brown ale. Flavors of nuts and caramel in the beer will echo the nuts in the dish. But ales



are not wimpy beers and are not overpowered by the roasted pepper and sharp cheddar cheese.

After your cheesy snack, you might not be too hungry for dinner. But if you have planned and made a big pot of chicken stew, when your appetite returns, you will be all set. Caramelized onions and chunks of chicken with spicy ginger,

cumin, and garlic are balanced by fresh green cilantro. Add a bit of white rice to the bowl and you have a complete meal. To match these flavors, the wine needs a bit of unctuous body, moderate-high acid, and a little spice. A rich Alsatian or Oregon pinot gris will fill these requirements.

Look for a dessert that is warm and comforting to end this evening. If it is an evening for two, pick up a little apple tart or if you have a group at home, get a whole pie. I think sweet, cinnamon-scented apples would be just the right flavors to end this relaxing night. Finally, don't try to overthink the pairing, go with a hot cup of coffee.

So, go on. Pair Up!

Pimento Cheese Ball

INGREDIENTS

- 1 jar (5 oz.) pimientos, with juice
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 lb. med-sharp or sharp Cheddar cheese, grated
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped pecans
- Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

Combine pimientos, juice and mayo and mix thoroughly. Mix-in cheese and then nuts. Season to taste and form into 1-cup balls or one long log. Serve with crackers.

Yield: 4 cups

Garbanzo Bean Chicken Stew



INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, 2" dice
- 1 tbsp. butter
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 small onions
- 2 large garlic cloves
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 1/2 tbsp. ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 2 cans garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 clove fresh garlic, chopped

DIRECTIONS

Sauté diced chicken and onion in butter and olive oil until chicken is cooked through and onion is soft, seasoning with salt and pepper. Add the garlic, spices, and pepper flake. Pour in broth and add beans. Simmer until chicken is tender. Mix cilantro and garlic together and add as garnish to each dish when served.

Yield: one big pot of stew, about 6-8 people

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



Buying a Home Now? Will Gift Funds help?

The housing market is always changing, so it can be hard to determine exactly when to buy, when to wait it out or how to produce the down payment. Getting help with the down payment is fairly common as roughly 29% of millennials receive gift money from a loved one. It is important to understand the rules surrounding this strategy when applying for a mortgage. Here is what you need to know:

How much can you get?

This depends on your mortgage program: With FHA loans, for example, the entire down payment can be funded via gift money. Conventional loans will only allow this if you put down 20% or more.

Who can offer gift money?

A conventional loan only allows for family gifts, while others may let you use gift money from friends, employers, down payment assistance programs and more.

How should gift money be documented?

You will need to create a paper trail for the lender to their specifications. If you are using gift money for your down payment, your lender will require a letter from the gift-giver which states that you, the recipient, do not need to repay the funds. If you do repay the money later, it could be considered mortgage fraud. You may need a copy of the check or wire transfer from the gift-giver, your deposit slip and the withdrawal slip showing them taking the funds from their bank account. Also, you might need to share a copy of your bank statement showing when and the amount you deposited.

And without a crystal ball, what if home prices or interest rates rise? What if

lower costs are just around the corner? Here are five factors to consider before making your decision.

1. The State of the Market: Is a housing market crash or recession likely? Look to expert predictions to determine how the future of the market may look.

2. Supply and Demand Trends: If supply is up and demand is down, you might be able to get a great deal. If the opposite is true, you will likely contend with more competition and higher prices due to bidding wars. Talk about the market trends to an experienced realtor to design a strategy for you.



3. Mortgage Interest Rates: Keep tabs on overall economic trends. If rates are expected to keep rising, acting sooner could save you money in the long run, especially if home prices also rise. There is the possibility that you may be able to refinance for a lower rate in the future.

4. Home Prices: Consider that price declines can help you get a deal upfront, but they could also mean your home may not gain as much in value immediately. This might be more of an issue if you are not planning to stay there for the long haul. Small price fluctuations in either direction are usually not indicative of larger trends.

5 Personal Finances: Your financial situation is the most important factor. Does it make sense to buy now? Consider your credit score, debts, income and other expenses when evaluating whether or not buying a home is affordable. If producing a down payment can feel like quite a hurdle, it is worth considering gift funds.

Do you need help finding a home and a trusted lender? Reach out for more guidance. Your experienced Realtor has resources.

It's Back!
Concord High School Athletic Boosters

Crab Feed

& AUCTION

Saturday, February 4th, 2023
from 6pm-11pm

Dinner, Silent Auction and Dancing. Let's help raise money for our CHS Athletic teams! **BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW \$80.**

<https://www.concordhighschool.net/crab-feed>

Terrylynn Fisher

REALTOR® | CRS, SRES, CSP Elite Agent
925.876.0966 | DRE# 00615420
Info@BuyStageSell.com | BuyStageSell.com

DUDUM

REAL ESTATE GROUP
DRE# 01882902

Consult with me Early, so we can Plan, Budget, and Strategize!

I have not and will not verify or investigate information provided or supplied by third parties.

calendar of events

YOUR PARTNER IN BUSINESS

GREATER



CONCORD

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

concordchamber.com | (925) 685-1181
kcbra@concordchamber.com

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Family Food Sort: Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano. Families with children as young as five are invited to a family volunteer opportunity on special days in both Food Bank warehouses! Families will bag fresh produce for the Community Produce Program. These shifts are specifically geared to include families with children between the ages of 5 - 10. For more information: <https://volunteer.foodbankccs.org/opportunity/a1c6S000014G6YqQAK> 925-676-7543 4010 Nelson Ave, Concord

EVENTS

FARMERS' MARKETS

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

Ruth Bancroft Gardens

Save the Date
Saturday, May 6th at 5:00pm
Join us for our annual Gala – Journey Through the Garden – come explore Ruth's rare plants and get to know more about the curated collection. This year we will be highlighting plants native to Latin America.

Ruth Bancroft Gardens, 1552 Bancroft Road, <https://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/events/>

Jan 5-31, Concord Comfort Food Month, 10 AM - 8PM. All month long, indulge in Concord's most delicious, decadent eats and treats. Find special deals at participating restaurants, weekly themes highlighting everything from takeout to dessert, a grand prize giveaway, and more. Come see what's on the menu. (925) 685-1182 visitconcordca.com

Jan 13-14, East Bay Coin Show
9 AM - 6 PM. Crowne Plaza Concord/Walnut Creek, 45 John Glen Drive, Concord.
<https://10times.com/coin-shows-concord>

Jan 10, 19 It's a Scavenger Hunt! 10 AM - 8 PM
The Veranda, A traditional scavenger hunt with a modern twist! About this Event All you need is your own mobile device and a data connection.
2001-2003 Diamond Blvd, Concord
Tickets: <https://allevents.in/concord/its-a-savenger-hunt-concord/10000358701835847>

January 13, Monument Boulevard Animal Hospital Grand Opening! 1PM. Official grand opening! It is National "Dress Up Your Pet Day" so we are encouraging the community to come with their pets dressed in their best! 1410 Monument Blvd, Concord

January 15, January Kids Club: Kung Hei Fat Choy. 10 AM - 11:00AM. Happy Chinese New Year 2023 - The Year of the Rabbit! Attendees will be delighted with a martial arts demonstration, a Lion Dance Show, and a craft and calligraphy corner led by local calligraphy artist Jojo Liu. The Veranda 2001-2003 Diamond Blvd, Concord. <https://www.visitconcordca.com/events/january-kids-club-kung-hei-fat-choy/>

February 4, Concord High School Crab Feed & Auction
6:00 - 11 PM. Centre Concord Community Center, 5298 Clayton Rd, Concord <https://www.concordhighschool.net/crab-feed>

January 21, Northgate H.S. Athletic Boosters Crab & Pasta Feed 2023: Centre Concord, 6PM. Dinner includes crab, pasta, salad, bread & dessert. Pitchers of water will be available at the table. Soda, beer, wine and cocktail for sale. 5298 Clayton Road, Concord
Tickets: <https://www.northgatebroncos.org/boosters>

January 21, 74th Black & White Benefit Ball. 6:00PM. The Bay Area Community Project, Inc at Walnut Creek Marriott. Tickets starting at \$30.00. All proceeds go to support award winning mentoring youth program, college bound scholarships, and Bay Area homeless assistance. www.bayareacommunityproject.org

February 4, Super Bowl Crab Feed. The St. Bonaventure Knights of Columbus will be hosting their Super Bowl Fundraiser, aka Crab Feed w. crab, pasta with bolognese sauce, and caesar salad, no-host beer and wine bar, raffle prizes, a dessert raffle and a live auction. Price is \$70 per person with a discounted price of \$65 for groups of eight or more. Tickets for In-Person and Take-Out are on sale and will continue all the weekends in January. See us after Mass at in the main lobby of the Church. 5562 Clayton Rd., Concord.

CLUBS

Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club.
<https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/start-our-approach/club-locator/details?id=148928>

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

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

ARTS/THEATRE/MUSIC

Thru January 16, 2023 WALNUT CREEK ON ICE
11 AM- 9 PM daily; 11 AM-11 PM Weekends
Ice skate at Civic Park. Great fun for the whole family. Open 7 days a week. <https://walnutcreekonice.com/12/9/2022-1/16/2023>
Civic Park, 1365 Civic Dr, Walnut Creek

January 15, Itzhak Perlman, 7:30pm, Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness Ave, San Francisco. Tickets: <https://www.vividseats.com/itzhak-perlman-tickets-san-francisco-davies-symphony-hall-1-15-2023--concerts-classical/production/4017353>



January 21, Rock for Shelter, feat. ABC-7's Dan Ashley. Proceeds benefit Shelter Inc's Solano based services. 6 pm. Empress Main Stage, 330 Virginia St., Vallejo <https://empresstheatre.org/event/rock-shelter/>



January 23: Sing with the Diablo Women's Chorale!
Spring season starts on January 23. Auditions by appointment that evening between 6 and 9 PM for any woman with a love of music and spirited company. Choral experience and music-reading ability are a plus, but not required.[see ad above]

Lescher Center for the Arts:

January 12-22: Kenn Adams creates the sun and the moon in Synergy Theater's **Spontaneous Myth and Magic:** An Improvised Ancient Mythology! This completely im-



provised two-act comedy will keep the audience in laughter from the dawn of time until the end of days! Showtimes: Thursdays – Saturdays at 8:15 PM and Sundays at 3:15 PM



January 21: Forejour - Tribute to Foreigner & Journey, 8PM- Presented by Harkenback Tributes. The group's setlist includes the 20th century's most downloaded song, "Don't Stop Believing", as well as power ballads such as Foreigner's "I Want To Know What Love Is", and Journey's "Faithfully".

January 27, The Peking Acrobats 7:30PM Presented by Leshar Center and Diablo Regional Arts Association



February 4, 5, California Symphony presents "Chopin in Paris" 7:30PM Continuing California Symphony's season featuring all female soloists, Austrian-Romanian pianist Maria Radutu headlines the evening with Frédéric Chopin's beautiful Piano Concerto No. 1 (in E minor, Op. 11).



February 10-11, Diablo Ballet's Swan Lake Suite
Presented by Diablo Ballet. Featuring selections from "Swan Lake," the poetry of this timeless ballet and majestic score by Tchaikovsky will showcase the Diablo Ballet dancer's stamina and artistry in this breathtaking tale.



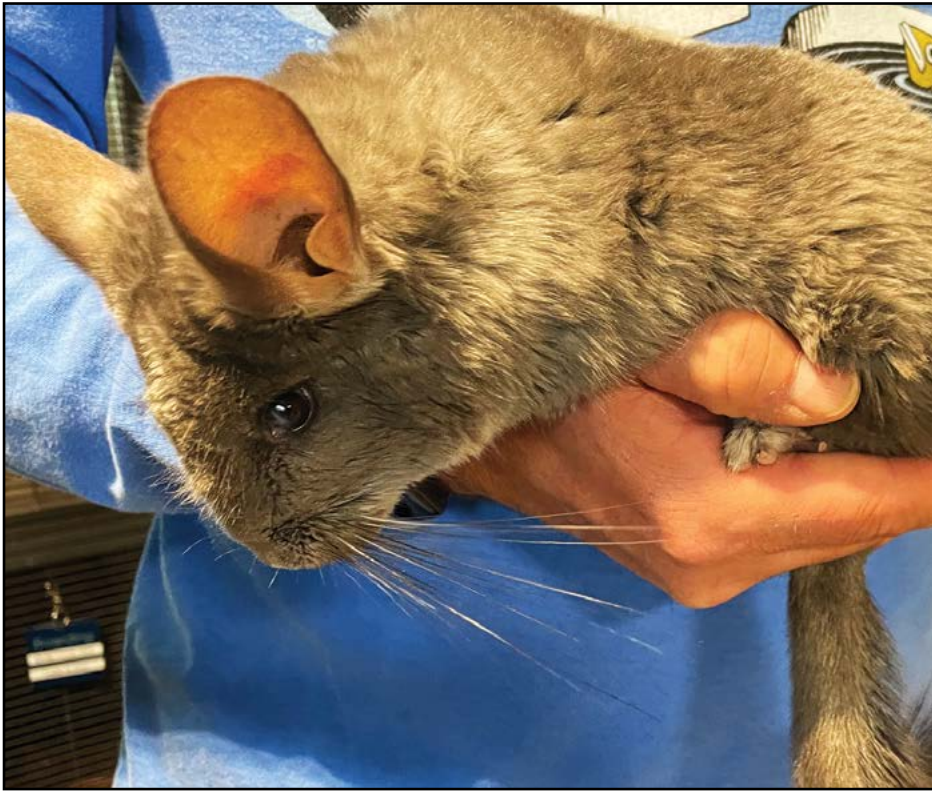
February 25: Carpenters Legacy: 8PM A Re-creation of the 1976 UK Tour starring Sally Olson and Ned Mills, Presented by West Coast Performing Arts Presenters

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



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

Chinchillas: Adopt, Don't Shop for This Cute Low Maintenance Pet



Chinchillas can make wonderful pets. They are long-lived and loaded with unique personalities. These hypoallergenic, dander-free cutie-pies are usually only active in the morning and evening hours, which is perfect for working pet owners. They do not have to worry that their pets are bored during daytime hours.

Chins are roughly about half the size of a guinea pig. No bathing is required, only dust baths, and yet they have no body odor, and their excrement doesn't smell bad.

Owners can use fleece for bedding instead of messy shavings. While rabbits require exercise outside their cages, chinchillas can get sufficient exercise on a wheel. Chins have no claws to scratch you.

Chins come in a variety of colors. The most common is a mottled gray, but their fur can also be white, violet, chocolate, beige (with freckled ears), and ebony. Regardless of color, these soft, furry pets are so darn cute. But before you shop for one, consider a rescue.

Currently, CC has an abundance of chins in need of homes, in part because during the pandemic, many house-bound people wanted a companion and did not plan for or realize how long these creatures live. They can live up to 20 years or more. Mike Trapp, VP of California Chins (CC), a chinchilla rescue in Sunnyvale, California, reported he had one chinchilla live to be 27.

CC will take surrendered chins without judgment, and they are a "no-kill" rescue. They also operate a boarding service for chins (\$25/per cage/week).

Chinchillas are native to the cooler climate of the Andes Mountains of South America (9,000 feet and above) and their fur is so dense (each hair

follicle can have up to 60 feathers, only a sea otter has a denser fur) that fleas cannot penetrate their pelt.

According to Holly Trapp, CC President, "Chins were imported into the US in the 1920s as fur animals before synthetic materials were invented, when fur was the primary means to keep warm."

Although pressure from anti-fur groups and man-made clothing options has led to less demand and thus fewer fur farms, there are still about 800 fur farms in the U.S.

Chins are very easy to care for, but they have some specific requirements. They are very sensitive to heat. Therefore, housing needs to be kept cool in the summer months (maximum of about 80 degrees) and chins should only be kept as indoor pets.

Chins can bite, although it is generally a nip and usually a result of mishandling. Their teeth grow continuously, so they require a continuous supply of wood to chew on. Owners should also have fast reflexes, because capturing a loose chin requires quick movements.

CC has over 50 chins to choose from (www.chinchillarescue.org). Miss Piggy, a curly tailed 10-year-old female, has been at CC for almost two years. Be aware that bonded pairs cannot be separated. If adoption is not the right choice for you, consider fostering.

CC will not allow adopted chins to be bred, used for testing or laboratory purposes, or be pelted for their fur. To visit chinchillas available for adoption or for more information, call (805) CHINS-88 or email cachins88@gmail.com. January 24 is "Change a Pet's Life Day," so why not adopt a chinchilla?

ARF ADOPTION STARS

Looking for a furry friend? Visit arflife.org to view all of ARF's adoptable animals or read more about ARF's adoption process.

Daisy



Ten-month-old Daisy is ARF's little social butterfly! This sweet and active terrier mix gets along with pretty much every dog she meets – so she would love a home with canine bff. But don't worry, she loves engaging with people, too! She'll happily cuddle up for some love or even show you some of her many mastered tricks! She currently weighs 41 pounds.

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

Saffron



Two-year-old Saffron is a regal, little calico lady, just looking to be pampered day in and day out! This gorgeous and gentle girl is the total package. Both playful and affectionate, she enjoys getting pet in a lap as much as she does getting wild and crazy with a toy mouse. Saffron is awaiting her adopter at whom she can purr with all day long!

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



Monument Boulevard
Animal Hospital

LET'S PAWTY!

- Ribbon cutting
- Meet the team
- Costume contest
- Photo booth
- Prizes
- Giveaways
- And more!



January 13 @ 1pm
1410 Monument Blvd

The Diablo Gazette
is the **BEST WAY** for **LOCAL**
BUSINESSES TO **ADVERTISE**
LEARN HOW WE CAN HELP YOUR
BUSINESS (925) 298-9990

Microgreens, a Growing Trend in Produce

by Deb Morris, Pacific Coast Farmers Market

Farmers are now offering tiny baby seedlings of familiar plants, called microgreens, with chefs promoting them as a popular addition to their menus. They are even appearing in recipes prepared by your local food trucks. What are microgreens and why are they currently so popular?



Microgreens, not to be confused with 'sprouts,'* are very young, leafy shoots of some of your favorite vegetables and flowers, such as wheat grass, sunflowers, buckwheat, radish, lettuce, broccoli, arugula, carrot, and many more. They are no larger than 1-1/2 to 3 inches tall and no older than two to three weeks between germination and harvest. Think about them as a stage of growth between sprouts and standard baby greens.

This stage of growth could hold more nutrient value than their grown-up counterparts, according to recent research.** Looking at various nutrients, they found that microgreens have four to six times the nutrient value of mature plants.

Oliver Gayo, owner and farmer of Super Duper Microgreens states, "They are the perfect food, full of minerals and vitamins. And they all have different tastes and textures."

Microgreens can also offer intense wonderful flavor and texture to your everyday meals. Use microgreens in salads and sandwiches. Sprinkle on seafood or meat. Garnish deviled eggs and appetizers. Add as a topping to pizza or egg dishes.

Most grocery stores only stock a few varieties, if any, but the farmers' market will offer many different varieties and flavors. Farmers pick their microgreens just before coming to the market. Gayo says, "I pick my microgreens the day Rosaem to the market."

Some farmers even allow customers to select and harvest this delightfully tiny row crop right at the market. Meet the farmer and talk to them about the blends they offer. They can suggest how to best

incorporate them into your meals and recipes.

Microgreens are very delicate. After all, they are baby shoots. Because of their small size and water content, it is not recommended to cook them. Use them fresh to retain their tender texture. Purchase only a few days before using them – due to their delicate nature, they do not stay fresh for long. Be sure to gently wash them right before eating and not before. Remove any roots and eat only the stem and leaves.

Super Duper Microgreens out of Hercules grows a wide variety of fresh healthy greens. They also sell containers of mixed microgreens. You can also have them grow-to-order special greens. Rapha Farms from Campbell sells hydroponically-grown microgreens and offers several condiments and pesto made with them. Lake Family Forest Farms in Carmel Valley also grows a nice variety of hand harvested microgreens.

Be sure to try some of these delightful little greens. They are a new crop sure to gain a foothold in the farmers' market world with their amazing flavor and nutrition.

*Sprouts are grown in water without sunlight and are susceptible to E. Coli; the US Government recommends against eating sprouts.

**Journal of Food Chemistry, 2012, 60 (31), pp 7644–7651.

Why Age 7 is the Right Time to See an Orthodontist

By the age of 7, the first adult molars erupt, establishing the back bite. During this time, an orthodontist can evaluate front-to-back and side-to-side tooth relationships. For example, the presence of erupting incisors can indicate possible overbite, open bite, crowding or gummy smiles. Timely screening increases the chances for an incredible smile.

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Here is a relatively easy puzzle, to start off the new year on the right foot.

White to mate in 2.

Hint: You need to know about the special chess move with a fancy French name.



1. Bh7+ f5
2. gxf6#
(en passant)

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