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What Is It Like To Live In Concord, California?

I comb through a lot of emails daily even after the spam filters have done their job. One email I received recently came from Quora.com. Quora is a social question-and-answer website where users can ask questions and get answers from other users. One question asked caught my attention, "What is it like to live in Concord, CA?" I was particularly interested in one response submitted by Concord resident, Jenn Sramek, some of which I will now share.

"Right now, living in Concord is good! In my adult life, I have lived in SF (eight and a half years right by Golden Gate park, including through the first dot-com boom and bust), in Oakland (five and a half years, in the Temescal area) and now in Concord (for five and a half years, both on the West and East sides). I love it for:

- * The quiet (I work in technology but from home, so the extreme volume of both SF and Oakland were stressful)

- * The access to places beyond SF (without waiting in two hours of traffic on a weekend.)

- * Commutability - I still can get into SF downtown in 40 minutes on the BART, and also in the very different communities of Walnut Creek, Orinda, Lafayette, Oakland, and others easily.

- * Social activities - There are so many cultural festivals, community activities, kids' sports teams, and other things to do out here. I am always amazed! Almost any weekend there is something to do nearby, without the accompanying throngs of people that accompany almost ANYTHING one chooses to do, especially out of doors, in San Francisco.

- * Cost of living is reasonable. Rent is going up, which is why I decided to buy here, but the cost of living is more reasonable than elsewhere I have lived in the Bay Area.

- * Proximity of Mount Diablo - real honest-to-goodness-hike-for-an-hour-

and-not-see-anyone-outdoor space! In pretty much 10 minutes or less!

- * Farmer's Market on Tuesdays and Thursday evenings (in Summer) rocks!

- * Bike Concord is getting more active and improving the lives of cyclists around town.

- * Friendly people! I have met lots of nice folks here in Concord.

- * Small-town feel not only of Concord, but also other nearby towns. You can stroll along a "main street" and eat at locally owned restaurants and such."

How nice, I thought. This transplant nailed it. Then I noticed that the post was nine years old. I decided before I would share her response, I should verify if Jenn, a) still lives in Concord and b) still feels the same about it after all these years. So, I tracked her down. Yes! She still lives in Concord with her family and she says she likes it even more!

And that is the message I endeavor to exhibit in each edition of Diablo Magazine.

Diablo Gazette Puzzles Are Back!

Those of you who like to savor your time with coffee and paper will be happy to know that on page 11 puzzles are back thanks to local puzzle maker Marc Rokoff. Rokoff lives in Concord and has been crafting puzzles since grade school. He's the creator of RokoPuzzles.com, a site where visitors can print word searches, play Sudoku, or grab a coloring page for free. Marc has also published several activity books, including word searches, a coloring book, and a "Would You Rather?" book. Thank you, Marc.

Beautiful "Fire Bow" Over Mt. Diablo



Thanks to Stephanie for sharing this beautiful picture of a "Fire Bow" rainbow over Mt. Diablo to Claycord.com. A "Fire Bow," which is basically a flat rainbow, is a rare atmospheric optical phenomenon that occurs when sunlight refracts through ice crystals in high-altitude cirrus clouds.

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A Night in Morocco: Experience the Magic at Luna Restaurant

Step into a world of vibrant colors, mesmerizing rhythms, and unforgettable flavors as Luna Restaurant presents Moroccan Night—a special celebration of Moroccan culture, cuisine, and community May 1 and May 4.

To be sure, it is an enchanting evening filled with authentic Moroccan food, live performances, and a charming outdoor bazaar hosted by the talented Salwa Jalab.

Originally from Morocco, Salwa studied business and marketing in Lyon, France, and brings her passion for Moroccan heritage to life through a curated collection of artisanal treasures.

Begin a culinary journey with a flavorful first course of zaalouk served with crispy pita chips, followed by a warm, comforting bowl of traditional harira soup. For the main course, guests will savor slow-cooked beef tagine, classic seafood bastilla, and couscous with tender lamb—all prepared with the rich spices and time-honored techniques of Moroccan cuisine. Shared appetizers and decadent desserts will round out the experience, inviting guests to indulge and connect over a table full of joy.

To elevate the evening, guests will be treated to a captivating performance of Oriental and traditional Moroccan dance, bringing the spirit and energy of North



Salwa Jalab hosts a charming outdoor bazaar

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european-delights.com

2236-A Oak Grove Road, Walnut Creek

Africa to life through music and movement.

Outside, Salwa Jalab's Moroccan bazaar will feature a beautiful selection of handcrafted goods, including kaftans, Moroccan shirts, teacups, antiques, and other unique souvenirs. It's the perfect chance to find a gift—or a piece of Morocco to take home with you.

Don't miss this magical night of culture, flavor, and festivity at Luna Restaurant. It's more than a dinner—it's a journey. (see ad on page 5)

The City of Clayton Presents

CONCERTS IN THE GROVE

MAY 17 - AUGUST 23 | 6:00 - 8:30P.M.

MAY 17 **LEO VIGIL & THE "ROCKIN' HORNS"**
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Tower of Power, Santana

MAY 31 **THE HOUSEROCKERS**
Rock & Soul, Big Band, Big Sound, Big Fun!

JUNE 14 **THE CHEESEBALLS**
Bringing the funk, soul and 70s, 80s, 90s

JUNE 28 **THE BELL BROTHERS**
Country, Rock & Americana

JULY 12 **TAKE 2 BAND**
Dance Band

JULY 26 **CAMP JEFF BAND**
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AUGUST 9 **THE SUN KINGS**
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FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.CLAYTONCA.GOV OR CHECK OUT WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/CITYOFCLAYTONCA



Specialist (SRES)

Your senior advocate here. Yes, I've become a senior myself and as I assist clients and family going through their next phases of life as a senior, it gives me the opportunity to pass on wisdom and resources gained from my collective experiences and research. I love research.

Did you know a recent study of Real Estate industry demographics indicates that 36% of Realtors are over the age of 55? Whether it's a second career or, like me, licensed since my twenties, we have a level of life experiences that can assist in real estate decisions that perhaps are worth seeking out.

The statistics below have various sources of information that might be helpful depending on where you or your loved ones might be on their spectrum of life.

While researching, I have discovered a very comprehensive and educational website that offers a great deal of information on all phases of senior living and covers the progression to all types of living situations. I highly recommend a visit. www.Seniorly.com.

You do not have to find a local advisor to access all of the helpful information on their site. For example, the following articles, worksheets, resources are all available: Senior Living Cost Calculator, Care Quiz – based on the type of care you are researching, Comparison of Costs in nearby

The Role of the Senior Real Estate

cities, Definitive Guides for Active Adult communities, Skilled Nursing, Memory Care, Independent Living, Continuing Care, Home Care, Board and Care and Respite Care. It's a wealth of information. There are touring checklists for all of the categories listed above.

Looking for something fun to do this month? These activities are suitable for most everyone.

Exploratorium After Dark – Thursday Evenings 6:00-10:00 p.m., Pier 15. They have a variety of speakers and events for those over 18.

DeYoung Museum in San Francisco has a temporary exhibit of Paul McCartney Photographs that my husband is going to take me to. He's a big Beatles Fan.

Academy of Sciences' East and West Gardens – Thirteen oversized, animatronic dinosaurs have taken up residence there. Get up close to the imposing T. rex, the feathered Deinonychus, and the duck-billed Parasaurolophus, and see them move and roar. The Academy also has plenty of activities for kids and families to enjoy during Dino Days, from arts and crafts to a puppet theater running through September 1, 2025. Located at 55 Music Concourse Dr., San Francisco.

Have a wonderful, wise and healthy May.

Music & Market Returns June 5

City of Concord's Music & Market series returns to Todos Santos Plaza on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. starting June 5. (Farmers market begins at 4:00 p.m.)

The 2025 season lineup promises to have something for everyone with a mix of sounds from around the world from K-Pop to Zydeco, Latin, rock, and more.

Fan favorites like Zepparella, Maya Latin Roots, The Sun Kings, and Twist on Taylor are making their return.

The season ends September 25. This is a FREE event.



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FAST FACTS ABOUT SENIORS & DOWNSIZING

3.6 MILLION

members of the baby boomer generation will downsize by 2037.

JCHS.Harvard.edu

51%

of retirees ages 50 and over actually move into smaller homes after retirement.

SeniorLiving.com

64%

of retirees are likely to move at least once during retirement.

AgeWave.com

41%

of retirees believe they will downsize in their next move.

AgeWave.com

AGE 61

is when most people say they feel free to choose where they most want to live.

AgeWave.com

64%

of retirees have considered downsizing.

AgeWave.com

CONGRATULATIONS



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Call for Reservations

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Chef Habib Jacifi

calendar of events

GRADUATIONS

- > **May 18** De La Salle
- > **May 17**, Carondolet
- > **May 28**, Ygnacio Valley
- > **May 29**, Mt Diablo High
- > **May 30**, Concord High
- > **May 30**, Acalanes High
- > **May 30**, Las Lomas High,
- > **May 31**, Olympic/Crossroads
- > **June 2**, College Park
- > **June 2**, Northgate
- > **June 3**, Vincente Martinez
- > **June 5**, Clayton Valley Charter
- > **June 5**, Alhambra High
- > **June 7**, Adult Education

Clayton

May 10, Clayton Valley Garden Club Plant Sale.

Drought-tolerant perennials, succulents, tomatoes, vegetables, and California natives, garden art and friendly gardening advice, 9 AM - 1 PM Endeavor Hall, 6008 Center St., Clayton. www.claytonvalleygardenclub.org



May 16, 17. Clayton Gardens Tour.

10 AM - 4 PM. A benefit for the Clayton Historical Society & Museum. Purchase tickets for \$40 ahead. For details, call the Clayton Museum at 925-672-0420 www.claytonhistory.org



CONCERTS IN THE GROVE

> **May 17**, Leo Vigil & The Rockin Horns, Chicago, Blood Sweat & Tears, Tower of Power, Santana



> **May 31**, The Housrockers, Rock & Soul

> **June 14**, The Cheeseballs, 70s, 80s & 90s

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kcabral@concordchamber.com

> **June 28**, The Bell Brothers, Country, Rock, Americana

Concord

Thru June 6, "Elements." Concord Art Association (CAA) Show. 10 AM-4 PM.

Monday-Friday. Art is available for purchase. Artists' reception 4-6 p.m. June 6. Concord Visitor Center, 2151 Salvio St, Suite T. www.concordartassociation.org.

Bambino's Free Live Music

- Every Saturday 6:00 - 9:00 PM. Comedy Nights, last Tuesday each month. 1895 Farm Bureau Rd. Concord. www.bambinosconcord.com

May 3, Bay Area Springfest.

Our 4th annual Bay Area SpringFest celebrates spring with arts & crafts, plants, live music, beer & wine garden and food in Downtown Concord at tree-lined Todos Santos Plaza in the largest city of upscale Contra Costa County. There will be no-stop music on the Todos Santos stage. Vendor registration deadline April 25.

May 3, 4, Concord Historical Society's Spring Tea.

Two Seatings. 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. \$55.00 per person. Reservations required by 4/26/25. Call Carole Kelsch 925.899.9737

May 11, Concord Wedding Fair.

Noon - 4 PM. Spend the afternoon planning your wedding by meeting with wedding pros like DJ, Lighting, Photobooth, Photographers, Videographers, florists and more. Get entertained by the hilarious stage performances. Concord Plaza Hotel - Walnut Creek. 45 John Glenn Drive, Concord



May 11, Picnic on the Green. 11 AM-3 PM. The 50th anniversary of the Concord Pavilion celebration—live music, treats from Concord's Alpine Pastry. Concord Historical Society Museum, 1928 Clayton Road. Get tickets at www.visitconcordca.com

May 15, Coffee With Ken, 10 - 11 AM. Supervisor Ken Carlson invites you to join him for coffee and bring your questions and county concerns. John F. Baldwin Park, 2727 Parkside Circle, Concord.

May 17, NAMI Mental Health Awareness Fair. 9:30 AM - Noon. The National Alliance on Mental Illness offers mental wellness resources. Todos Santos Plaza, Concord. <https://namicontracosta.org/>

May 17, Senior 'Concord's Got Talent.' 5 - 9 PM. Residents 50 and up can participate. Proceeds go to recreation scholarships for seniors. Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Circle. Concord. www.VisitConcord.com

May 24-26, Bay Area KidFest. Three days of family fun including entertainment, attractions, rides, a food court and free activities, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Times vary. Mt. Diablo High School, 2450 Grant St., Concord. www.kidfestconcord.com

June 28, Midsummer Maker's Market. 10 AM-2PM. Unique handcrafted goods. Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Dr., Concord.

MUSIC & MARKET SERIES

Thursday Evenings 6:30-8 PM

> **June 5, Tom Rigney and Flambeau,** New OrleansGrooves

> **June 12, The Sun Kings,** Tribute to The Beatles

> **June 19, Pop Rocks,** Party Band 80's and Up

> **June 26, 2Z,** K-Pop Band on Tour from S.Korea

Todos Santos Plaza, Concord. For schedule:www.visitconcordca.com/

Pleasant Hill

May 6, Upcycled Lighted Wine Bottle Class, 6:30 PM. Transform discarded wine bottles into stunning upcycled art with our wine bottle and glass bead craft workshop. Tickets: <https://allevents.in/>

May 9, PTK the Band & Camden at WiseGirl, 7 - 10 PM. PTK theBand & Camden are back at it with new songs. Make sure to get your RSVPs for dinner, gather at the lounge and bar for some drinks, and dance to some great music! Wisegirl, 1932 Oak Park Blvd. Pleasant Hill.

May 10, "Gordon Ramsay. The Kardashians." says Allison Landa, guest speaker at the monthly meeting of the Mt. Diablo Branch of the California Writers Club. 11 AM to 2 PM. \$30 for members and \$35 for guests. Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. cwcmtdiablo.org

May 10, PHRec Bark in the Park, 10 AM - 2 PM. Join us for this celebration of all things canine, featuring local vendors, food trucks for humans, and adorable adoptable pets looking for their forever homes. Enjoy a day filled with canine activities, food & treats, and paw-sitive vibes for all ages, Fido included. Pleasant Hill Park, 147 Gregory Ln. Pleasant Hill.

May 10, Grayson Creek Earth Day 2025, 9 AM - Noon. Help protect Grayson Creek and improve habitat for birds, turtles, otters, and other riparian species. Restore riparian habitat by picking up trash and collecting community science data and removing an invasive reed called arundo donax from the creek bank. Grayson Creek is home to more than 100 bird species

and also provides habitat for river otters, western pond turtles, and even beavers. 250 Cleveland Road, Pleasant Hill.

May 17-18, Pleasant Hill Art, Wine & Music Festival.

11 AM - 6 PM. Beer, wine, arts and food trucks. Downtown Pleasant Hill. www.pleasanthillchamber.com.



May 27, FREE Homebuyer Education Workshop.

5-8 PM. How it's actually CHEAPER to own a home than to rent. The benefits of owning vs. renting. The current real estate market in your area. Total Wine & More at 3250 Buskirk Ave. Pleasant Hill

May 29, ESO Ventures Winter 2025 Growth Summit,

6-8PM. Entrepreneur Support Organization (ESO) Ventures is dedicated to empowering local business owners like you with the tools and support you need to grow, scale, and thrive in your community. That's why we're excited to invite you to The ESO Entrepreneur Growth Summit, a celebration of your hard work and accomplishments! Diablo Valley College, 321 Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill

June 7, Film in a Day! Actors, Writers & Feature Series Challenge, 9 AM - 7 PM. Filmmakers, actors, writers, compete to make the best short film. Also compete for - best actor, best story etc. Short films made during this event are played during BASH- Bay Area & Sacramento Film Festival at a local theater. You must register in advance. <https://www.mmtb.org/>

June 14, Reservations are now open for a limited-seat event with **Brian Copeland, Bay Area author,** comedian, and actor at the meeting of the California Writers Club—Mt. Diablo Branch. The public is invited. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$30 and includes a buffet lunch. Reservations required. <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/june-meeting-with-brian-copeland/> Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill

June 19, Juneteenth Celebration marking the end of slavery in the United States, 5-9 PM. Entertainment by the Joint Chiefs Band and Off the Grid food trucks. Pleasant Hill City Hall, 100 Gregory Lane. www.phillca.gov

July 18, 19, Pleasant Hill Blues & Brews Festival 2025.

4PM. The 14th Annual Pleasant Hill Blues & Brews Festival is the best FREE summer party of the season. Sip on local craft brews, listen to epic live bands, and explore a mix of food trucks and artisan vendors. 147 Gregory Ln, Pleasant Hill. BluesAndBrewsFestovl.com



DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

May 2025

7-9 PM at the plaza in front of Jack's Restaurant and Bar, Crescent Drive, Pleasant Hill

- > **June 20, Neon Velvet**
- > **July 17: Patron Latin Rhythms**
- > **August 21: The Cheeseballs**
- > **September 18: Foreverland**

SUNSET BY THE LAKE

Summer Concert Series. 6-8 p.m. Sundays. Family Fun Zones on May 25, June 8, July 5 and July 20.

> **May 25: The Billy Martini Show.**

> **June 8: The Great Space Coaster.**

> **June 22: Dakita.**

Outside Pleasant Hill City Hall, 100 Gregory Lane.

Martinez

May 2, Martinez Comedy Fest 2, 8 PM. Our first Martinez Comedy Fest was a huge success, SOLD OUT four weeks ahead of the show. So we're back with a new lineup of comedians! Martinez Event Center, 524 Main Street, Martinez. <https://allevents.in/eventsyouimmerseyourselfinthevibrant>

May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14, October 12, November 9, December 14. Open Air Market, 9 AM. Embrace the charm and allure of unique finds at the Downtown Open Air Market, a monthly treasure trove of Vintage, Collectibles, Antiques, Arts & Crafts, and more! 718 Alhambra Ave, Martinez.

At the Martinez Campbell Theater

- > **May 2-18, Earnest, 7:30 PM**
- > **May 4, June 8 Partners in Crime, 2:30 PM**
- > **May 29, Fox & Bones, Folk Duo,**

7PM.

Martinez Campbell Theater
636 Ward St, Martinez,
www.campbelltheater.com

Walnut Creek

Thru May 10, Color of Joy. How color enriches our lives, Tuesday-Saturdays, 11 AM -5 PM. Valley Art Gallery, 1661 Botelho Dr., Suite 110, Walnut Creek. valleyartgallery.org

May 3, Hello Kitty Café Truck will be at Broadway Plaza. 10AM-7PM. Say hi and pick up some super cute treats & merch, while supplies last! 1275 Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek.

May 3, Blooming Flowers, Joyous Harmony: ArcoStrum and NACYO, 2PM. Tthe North America Chinese Youth Orchestra (NACYO), and ensembles by our young, talented students. Admission \$25/ Students \$10. Gateway Clubhouse Rossmoor, 1001 Golden Rain Rd, Walnut Creek

May 4, 4th Annual Barks and Brews Fundraiser. 3 - 7:30 PM. Dog adoptions, vendors, games, help us continue our mission and help animals in need. Mike Hess Brewing 2313 Oak Grove Road, Walnut Creek

May 13,20, Karaoke Night At Pinstripes Walnut Creek. 6 - 9 PM. All Ages Event - Bring The Family - Every 2nd Tuesday in the upstairs Ballroom. 1115 Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek

May 14, June 11, July 16, August 6, Locust Street Festival, 5:30 - 9 PM. Walnut Creek's vibrant summer street fest happening one Wednesday a month from May through August! Formerly known as First Wednesdays. FREE ADMISSION. 1421 Locust St, Walnut Creek

May 31 - June 1, Walnut Creek Art & Wine Festival. Times vary. Arts and crafts, live music, wine, and beer gardens. Civic Park (new location), 1375 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. www.walnutcreek.com/art-wine-festival-2025.

At the Leshar Center

> **May 2-18, Earnest, 7:30 PM**

> **May 2, The Wonder of Elvis** starring Greg Miller

> **May 2, 16 Best of San Francisco Stand-Up Comedy**

> **May 4, June 8 Partners in Crime, 2:30 PM**

> **May 4, Postcards from Broadway,** Contra Costa Wind Symphony

> **May 6, Northgate High School Classical Spring Concert.**

> **May 8-11, The Wizard of Oz**

> **May 16-17, Alice in Wonderland,** Diablo Ballet

> **May 18, Kala Siddhi Spring Concert**

> **May 18, 50 Years of Pop Culture**

> **May 23-24, Smuin's Dance Series 2**

> **May 29-June 1, Sweeney Todd School Edition**

> **May 29, Fox & Bones, Folk Duo, 7PM.**

> **June 1, Happy Pleasant Valley, A senior Sex Scandal.**

Leshar Center for the Arts 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. Tickets: (925)943-7469 Wed-Sun Noon to 6:00 p.m. www.lesharartscenter.org

Other Areas

Danville/Alamo:

May 16 at 7:00 PM, May 18 at 3:00 PM, Reach for the stars with the Diablo Women's Chorale's electrifying new concert: 2025: A Space Rhapsody! San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church, 902 Danville Blvd, Alamo,. Tickets: diablowomenschorale.org.

May 17-18, 'Primavera,' 48th Annual ADAS Spring Show. 3416 Blackhawk Plaza Circle. Danville. www.adas4art.org

Moraga:

May 31, Kotlic Festival. 3 PM. Come hungry and be ready for a day filled with delicious food (goulash), live entertainment, friendly

competition and community spirit! Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church 1700 School St Moraga

Pittsburg:

May 9-18, "Chicago." Pittsburg Theatre Company. California Theatre, 350 Railroad Ave., Pittsburg. Call 925-427-1611 or www.tickets831.com

June 5, SIR Branch 19 will hold its Monthly Luncheon. 11 AM. SIR is a social organization of men who get together and participate in fun activities. All are welcome. Pittsburg Elks' Lodge, 200 Marina Blvd., Pittsburg. www.sirinc2.org/branch19 or call: 925 338-1996

Library Events

Clayton

May 28, Wonderful Wednesdays: Mr Shap's Balloon Magic, 2-2:45 PM. Mr. SHAP's amazing balloon bending and feats of magic. 6125 Clayton Rd, Clayton

Concord

May 3, Papel Picado Craft, 2:00pm-3:00PM, Come celebrate Mexican culture through crafting! Concord Library, 2900 Salvio Street Concord.

Martinez

May 13 Firescaping the Garden with UC Master Gardeners, 6:00-7:00 PM. Are You Ready for Wildfire Season? Learn how to firescape your garden. 740 Court St, Martinez

Pleasant Hill

May 20, Mushroom: Wonders of the Woods, 6:30pm-7:30pm. Join Carrie Staller from, Fork in the Path for an interactive hour !2 Monticello Ave, Pleasant Hill

Walnut Creek

May 5, 12, 19. Tai Chi, 10:15-11 AM. T'ai-chi Ch'uan is an ancient Chinese art which combines meditation in movement and healthful exercise. 1644 N. Broadway, Walnut Creek.

SUBMIT YOUR CALENDAR ENTRIES by the 20th of the month before Issue month. diablogazette@gmail.com



FREE



CHEEEESY BURGER

With purchase of a Cheesy Burger

One per person. May not be combined with any other offers. Not valid with online orders. In-restaurant only. Valid at Concord, CA location only. Expires 05/31/2025



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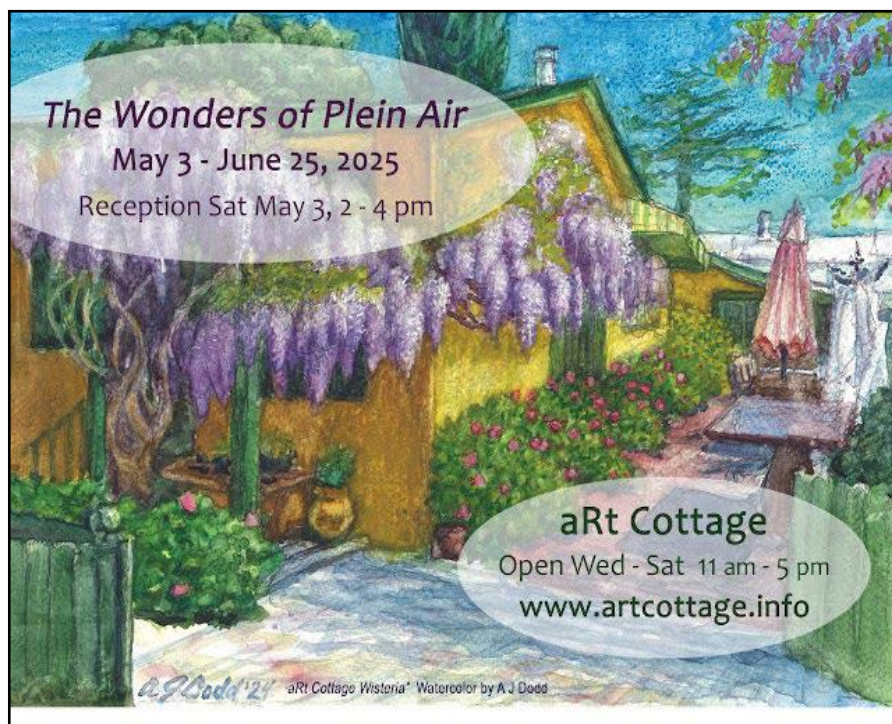


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4375 CLAYTON ROAD, CONCORD

The Arts Page

The Wonders of Plein Air at aRt Cottage



Main Street Arts Welcomes Robert Anke and New Members



New member Denise Hillman



New member Mason Robertswich his artwork.



Robert Anke Guest Artist for May and June - Lafayette ridge spring cloudscape

Guest artist Robert Anke is a painter and art instructor from the East Bay. Regarding his work, he states, "I try to find that balance between letting the paint be paint and clearly conveying something. My goal is to do this with an economy of stroke that speaks of the medium while creating an engaging representation of something. Really, I just like slapping the paint around while still having people enjoy looking at a fresh version of something they recognize." Robert's work can be seen at Main Street Arts from May 1-June 29.

In addition to our new guest artist, Main Street Arts welcomes two new members to the gallery in May, Denise Hillman and Mason Roberts.

"For me, the act of creating is about self-exploration along with the desire to connect with others on a deeper level. I strive to inject emotion into my work that sparks a response from the viewer while leaving much to the imagination...to state visually what can't be articulated in words. When a person is standing before my work, I want it to evoke an emotion or a memory from their life; perhaps a place they've been, someone they've known or simply a particular moment they've experienced," says Hillman.

"The time finally came when I could not

hold back the ever-increasing creative tide that was overtaking my life. All I could think of was forms, colors, lines and how all of this was bursting from me and needed to be put down on paper, canvas, or something else. I needed to create something that was real and perhaps one day be seen by others. I create from feelings, heat, passion, and love. I put my feelings on paper or whatever through line, color, and form. I love it!" Roberts states.

The entire gallery is bursting with new color and new work that will be displayed now until June 29.

Don't forget to drop in to sign up to our free drawing for a chance to win a lovely sterling jewelry set by Olga Jusidman.

Main Street Arts is located at 613 Main Street, Martinez. Check operating hours at www.mainstreetarts.net.



May Free Drawing Prize by Olga Jusidman

"Whispers of Warmth" Exhibit Opens at Jor Fine Art Gallery

A new exhibit, "Whispers of Warmth," at Jor Fine Art Gallery will be open to the public on Saturday, May 3, and runs through July 27, 2025. The gallery is showcasing artwork of the 35 artists in this exhibit.

Also at the exhibit will be 3D Guest artist, Nola Pardi Proll.

Nola Pardi Proll was born in San Francisco to Italian American parents. Her mother's family included generations of master wood carvers. She studied modern dance with Walton Biggerstaff and then launched a solo dance career performing in many cities around the world. Her interest in African culture was reflected in her dance choreography and in her self-

taught wood carvings.

Marriage and motherhood followed. Creating her own unique papier mâché puppets, she was a professional puppeteer in the Bay Area for many years.

In 1999, she enrolled in the Marble Arts Workshop in Pietrasanta, Italy, and has since sculpted marble at her studio in Danville, California. She has returned to Pietrasanta on many occasions to carve and relish the immersion in the ambiance devoted to sculpture. Her work has been featured in San Francisco's Museo Italo Americano and in local galleries.

Jor is located at 1026 Oak St. in Clayton.



Nola Pardi Proll is the guest artist at Jor Fine Art Gallery



Nola Pardi Proll's additional sculptures at Jor Gallery

ADAS Call for Artists at Blackhawk Gallery

Alamo Danville Artists' Society (ADAS) is inviting artists of all mediums (2D and 3D) to participate in the 48th annual ADAS Spring Show, "Primavera", on May 17th and 18th at Blackhawk Plaza in Danville.

"Primavera" will feature paintings, photography, and sculpture in a large-scale showcase. Plein air painters

are also invited to create live in the Plaza.

The public is invited to meet the artists at the Artists Reception and Awards on May 18 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Interested artists can find application information and more details at adas4art.org/primavera-2025-call-for-artists/



Julia O'Reilly, President of Blackhawk Gallery looking forward to Primavera, May 17 & 18.

JOR
FINE ART
GALLERY

A beautiful gallery in historic downtown Clayton
Open to the public Wednesday through Sunday 12-6 p.m.

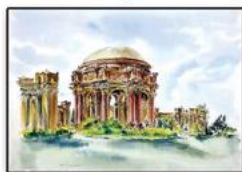
Appointments are available.
Contact 925-768-5662

1026 Oak Street, Suite 102, Clayton
website: jorfineartgallery.com
email: joreillyfineartgallery@gmail.com

Tribute to Betty Guy

Watercolor American Artist

May 3 through July 27, 2025



Betty Guy was an internationally renowned painter, illustrator, and San Francisco native best known for her luminous watercolors and pen & ink works capturing international cityscapes, landscapes, and cultural landmarks. Her art was exhibited across the globe from Paris and Tokyo to Vienna and Bucharest, and collected by figures such as Queen Elizabeth II, Luciano Pavarotti, and John Steinbeck.



Betty Guy 1920-2016

ADAS Blackhawk Gallery

Painting, Photography and
Sculpture by Local Artists



PRIMAVERA

48th Annual ADAS Spring Show

Saturday, May 17 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Sunday, May 18 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Artists Reception & Awards
May 17 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.



Join us for our annual Primavera Art Show, featuring a large artist exhibit at Blackhawk Plaza in Danville. Artists will be plein air painting throughout the Plaza. Come meet the artists! See the magic of a painting develop.

For more information: adas4art.org/spring-show

3416 Blackhawk Plaza Cir, Danville

ADAS is a nonprofit corporation helping fund local school art programs



Iris (Naomi Watts) is a writer and professor living in New York City. She lives a quiet life, surrounded by a tight-knit group of friends and colleagues. When a close friend and mentor dies, Iris is asked to care for his beloved dog.

Any dog would be a huge responsibility and life change for Iris, who does not have a pet. This dog, however, is more of a challenge. To begin with, Apollo is a Great Dane who weighs about 150 pounds and is mourning the loss of his owner, moping and refusing to eat.

Iris also lives in a rent-controlled studio apartment that does not allow pets. Due to Apollo's enormous size, she cannot sneak him in and out of her place and is immediately confronted regarding the violation of the building rules. Iris's friends are confused why she is adamant about keeping Apollo when doing so clearly puts her living situation in danger.

While the film touches on the obvious foibles (bed hogging, refusing commands and large poop), it thankfully does not fall into clichés. Instead, we see a slow bond form between Iris and Apollo, who both had a relationship with a complicated person and a lot of emotional baggage to work through. It is endearing to see Iris's devotion to do right by this enormous beast. For Apollo's part, he may be the size of a pony, but he has the eyes of a sweet puppy.

The film tackles the subject of complex emotions we may have for

The Friend



flawed people in our lives and the important role animals can play in our healing process. For all the work it takes to care for the furry creatures in our lives, this film reminds us they give back so much more.

Those expecting to see a Bill Murray movie should be warned that while his role is vital to the film, his appearance is limited.

Rated R In Theaters



Pizco by Jill Hedgecock

"Pizco" by Jill Hedgecock (2025, Goshawk Press, paperback, 254 pages, \$11.99) is a young-adult adventure tale that takes place in Peru in the year 450 BCE. An anaconda, creature of the underworld, had slithered through the Ara village as a baby boy was born. To the villagers, the birth was cursed, and the child was outcast with his mother.

The child, fifteen years old when the book opens, has not yet undergone the manhood ritual and has not been given a name. He is nicknamed "Toadhead" by his nasty nemesis, Korubo, son of the Ara chief. Both Korubo and Toadhead are kidnapped by Wasi tribesmen who pillage the Ara village for its fertile mud which they need for their own crops. Toadhead learns, to his shock, that he is the son of Kapac, an elder of the Wasi tribe who is responsible for ransacking the Ara village and killing the people. Kapac gives his son the name "Pizco", or bird, in the Quechuan language.

There is no such thing as a curse of the anaconda for the Wasi people. In a reversal of fortune, Pizco's past as an outcast is erased and Korubo becomes enslaved by Kapac, setting up a complex struggle between the boys. Pizco, ever optimistic, begins to learn the language and ways of the Wasi tribe, hoping to embrace his heritage and find his true identity, even as Korubo grows more and more hopeless about the future.

Things are not so straightforward for Pizco. On the long, eventful, river journey back to the Wasi homeland, Kapac alternates between brutality and affection towards Pizco. In an attempt to make amends with Pizco after inexplicably severing his wounded thumb, Kapac gifts him a tiny squirrel monkey named Micos which becomes Pizco's pet.

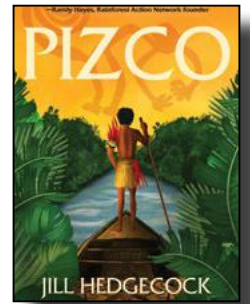
The Wasi live in a barren land. Their only hope for survival is that the boatloads of

mud Kapac and his men removed from the Ara lands can be used to fertilize the soil of the Wasi lands. If successful, this experiment would mean the Wasi can grow life-sustaining crops. Kapac and his son Pizco would be exalted. If it fails, however, it could end in disaster for Pizco whose life could be sacrificed by Kapac to appease the gods.

"Pizco" is an engaging page-turner for both young adults and adults interested in the era in which the Nazca lines were drawn, as explained in the Afterword. As a coming-of-age story, brave Pizco struggles with the tragic loss of his mother, his homeland, and his language; the rivalry between him and Korubo; and the terrible mutilation of a body part. What he gains, if only temporarily, is a father, status, the promise of a home, a family, and a name.

This rich and detailed story is a vivid reimagining of the early Pre-Incan history of Peru. The tribes are fictitious, but the rituals and customs are drawn from real life. Hedgecock, whose writing is informed by her stay in the Amazon, has woven in tribal culture, customs, plants, insects and animals of Peru, and the indigenous communities in South America.

Jill Hedgecock is a regular contributor to the Diablo Gazette. Check out her trilogy "Between Shadow's Eyes", "From Shadow's Perspective", "In Shadow's Reflection", and her novels, "Rhino in the Room" and "Queen of the Rhino", available on Amazon



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

In May 2000, American Tortoise Rescue designated May 23 as World Turtle Day. Fun activities such as dressing up as turtles, wearing green clothing, and adopting turtles or tortoises from rescue organizations or rehabilitation centers are ways to celebrate this annual event. Before deciding to adopt a turtle, there are some things to know.



turtles follow their owners around and are known to bond with their people.

7). They can carry salmonella. Selling turtles with shells less than four inches long was banned in 1975 to prevent the spread of salmonella. Always wash your hands

before and after handling your pet.

8). Different species may have requirements that may be better suited to certain homes. For example, box turtles don't swim, and red-eared sliders are one of the hardest pets.

9). Female turtles tend to be larger and need more space.

10). Turtles must be kept away from other pets.

Despite the potential costs and potential downsides, owning a turtle can be calming. Most, but not all turtles, are quiet and their long lives mean you can enjoy them for decades. Their longevity also means there are plenty of opportunities to adopt them. Nor-Cal Turtle and Tortoise Club operates a Facebook Groups page to

help rehome turtles and provide support to new owners.

Jill Hedgecock is a retired environmental scientist, an ecological

risk assessor and award winning author of several books including the Doberman trilogy series: "Between Shadow's Eyes", "From Shadow's Perspective" and "In Shadow's Reflection". Her books are available on amazon.com.

Turtle Adoption on World Turtle Day



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CVCHS News
Bill Morones, Executive Director
 Clayton Valley Charter High School

Celebrating Our Large Diverse School Community

At Clayton Valley Charter High School (CVCHS), one of the cornerstones of our educational approach is fostering a vibrant, inclusive community where every student's unique background, experiences, and voice are celebrated. From the wide array of clubs to extracurricular activities and cultural celebrations, I'd like to share some reflections on our recent Multicultural Rally and the many ways our students engage in activities that honor their diverse backgrounds.

In April, CVCHS hosted its highly anticipated Multicultural Rally — an event that highlights the beauty of individual backgrounds and experiences within our school. Students dressed in traditional clothing from their cultures, performed dances to music that told their stories, and proudly shared pieces of their heritage with the rest of the school. For many, the rally is an exciting day, filled with energy and pride, but the challenging work that goes on behind the scenes often goes unnoticed. The rally is produced by our Associated Student Body (ASB), who work months in advance to ensure that every student's culture is represented.

Auditions are held early in the school year to select the dancers, and from there, rehearsals take place after school. The ASB selects which students will participate, ensuring that a broad spectrum of backgrounds is represented. It's truly a labor of love, and the results are always breathtaking. The Multicultural Rally builds bridges, breaks down barriers, and creates a sense of unity within our diverse community.

Extracurricular activities play a vital role in the holistic development of our students, and we encourage all students to become involved in activities outside of the classroom. Whether it's joining a

club, participating in sports, or engaging in community service, extracurriculars provide a unique platform for students to apply their academic knowledge in real-world settings. These activities also allow students to grow in areas such as leadership, communication, and teamwork.

According to studies, students who are actively involved in extracurriculars are more likely to develop confidence, improve their social skills, and build resilience. Colleges and universities increasingly look for well-rounded individuals, and extracurricular involvement is one of the best ways for our students to stand out in their college applications.

College admissions officers aren't just interested in what students are doing in the classroom — they also care what they do outside of school. That's why extracurriculars are a graduation requirement and is an important piece of what Ugly Eagles do with their free time outside of their academic setting.

CVCHS offers over 60 student-led clubs, ranging from academic-focused groups like the Robotics Club and Model United Nations, to cultural and public service organizations like the Asian American Pacific Islander Club, Black Student Union, and Key Club. There are also plenty of fun social clubs like Karaoke Club, Pickleball Club, and the Garden Club, where students

can unwind, build friendships, and explore new interests.

These clubs are also powerful forums for students to voice their opinions, advocate for change, have fun and grow as leaders. Many of our clubs are directly tied to our school's Academies, including the Applied Physics & Chemistry Club and the Women In Science & Engineering Club, where students can explore their passions in specific fields of study.



Behind the scenes, the ASB is the heartbeat of CVCHS. They are a driving force in creating a sense of belonging for every student by overseeing club activities to organizing Blue Crew events and dances.

At CVCHS, each student is unique and multicultural events, clubs, and extracurricular activities create an environment where everyone can learn from one another, grow together, and most importantly, be themselves.



Host a Lovely May Day Lunch

When the weather is this gorgeous, I can't resist inviting my favorite people over for a lovely lunch. One of those people is my Aunt Charlotte. I felt this menu would be a great way to celebrate her, our friendship, and the lovely month of May.

Pinot Blanc is one of those white wines that instantly reminds me of spring. You will often find delicate apple and white peach aromas in Pinot Blancs, and there's also a fresh scent reminiscent of line-dried linens.

This classic shrimp salad recipe pairs perfectly with Pinot Blanc because it doesn't overpower it. The salad is mostly shrimp and mayonnaise, with a hint of lemon and sweet onion to give it a little zing.

The Lightly Sweet Salmon recipe here is big enough for dinner, but light enough for lunch. It's especially great when grilled, but you can also pop it under the broiler. Add a little jasmine rice and some broiled asparagus to complete your plate. As for wine, this dish is a perfect match for America's favorite style of wine, chardonnay with a touch of residual sugar.

For dessert I'll serve Lemon Charlotte paired with a sparkling Moscato, a lightly sweet, sparkling wine that will cut through the richness and complement the sweetness.

It is a perfect way to end this meal and a fitting tribute to my aunt. Present your favorite lady with this beautiful crown of ladyfingers. She'll feel like the Queen of the May!

So, go on. Pair Up!

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

LaSommellerie@gmail.com

CLASSIC SHRIMP SALAD

Ingredients:

- * 2 cups cooked shrimp, halved lengthwise and chilled
- * 1 cup thinly sliced celery
- * 1 tablespoon finely minced sweet onion
- * 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- * 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- * 1 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning
- * Salt and pepper to taste
- * 4 large butter lettuce leaves
- * 1 tomato, cut into 12 slices
- * 1 avocado, cut into 12 slices
- * 4 cherry tomatoes

Directions:

In a medium bowl, combine the shrimp, celery, onion, lemon juice, mayonnaise, salt, and pepper. Place a lettuce leaf on each plate and create a circular fan of three avocado slices and three tomato slices atop each leaf, leaving room in the center. Scoop 1/4 of the shrimp mixture into the center of each plate and garnish with a cherry tomato.

Yield: 4 servings, approximately 1/2 cup salad per serving

LIGHTLY SWEET SALMON



Ingredients:

- * 4 salmon fillets
 - * Salt and pepper to taste
 - * 1 tablespoon onion powder
 - * 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- Marinade:
- * 1/4 cup olive oil
 - * 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
 - * 4 cloves garlic, minced
 - * 3 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar
 - * 2 tablespoons white sugar
 - * 2 tablespoons chopped green onions
 - * 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro

Directions:

Season the salmon fillets with salt, pepper, onion powder, and red pepper flakes. Set aside in a baking dish.

In a medium bowl, combine the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, balsamic vinegar, sugar, green onions, and cilantro. Pour the marinade over the salmon; cover, and refrigerate overnight, or at least 6 hours.

Grill or broil in the oven, turning once, until cooked through.

Yield: 4 servings

LEMON CHARLOTTE



To prepare Lemon Charlotte you will need to only purchase three ingredients—ladyfingers, lemon curd, and whipping cream. Candied lemon peel for garnish is a nice touch. There are several easy recipes online to follow, just search lemon charlotte.

Those who prefer to make from scratch can find a detailed recipe in the Food tab at Diablogazette.com.



The Naked Gardener
David George, UC-Certified
Master Gardener

Add Color in Your Garden With Wildflowers

There is nothing more naturally scenic in spring than wildflowers adding color to our hillsides and road margins. Our area is blessed with a couple hundred native wildflower species, adding yellows, whites, reds, blues, oranges, and purples to our spring palette. Even though a “super bloom” did not materialize this year, and a relatively cold early spring slowed their progress, wildflowers are now in high gear and showy. Take a hike through your favorite regional park, take your camera, and enjoy this annual gift of nature.

Did you know that you can cultivate wildflowers or their horticultural cousins in your own garden? Many gardeners add the California state flower, golden poppies to their front yards or garden pathways for spring color. Poppies are easy to grow from seeds and are a tuberous perennial, meaning that under the right conditions they will resprout each spring and spread.

What exactly are the “right conditions” for wildflowers? Conditions vary from full shade to full sun, no extra water or some watering, and even the slope of the land can affect wildflower success. Most annual wildflowers that reseed themselves but die in the fall love full sun conditions – more than six hours of sun each day. In central Contra Costa, morning sun is better than hot afternoon sun. Scatter seeds then cover them with a 1/2 inch layer of mulch to discourage birds.

Watering should follow the normal annual rhythm of Contra Costa rainfall and should only supplement rain in dry winters. Most annuals do fine with the rainfall that nature provides. When rains end in late spring, annuals produce seeds then die back. Do not water and cut them back when they look fully dead, usually in August or September. Leave cuttings and their



A planted field of Clarkias and Coastal Poppies- Courtesy Wildfloweryard.com Courtesy Linda Cruz

seeds on the soil for germination when rainfall resumes in the fall.

Many California wildflowers hate to be crowded out by nonnative grasses. They germinate best on more open, sunny dry slopes. If you have sunny sloping terrain, seed it with golden poppies, bush lupines, farewell-to-spring clarkias, vetch, or wild pea. Yellow monkey flower, bleeding heart, Chinese houses, fairy lanterns, and shooting stars all do well on shaded slopes.

For sunny flat areas, the wildflower palette is large. Sun-loving varieties are grouped by flower color. My favorite yellow varieties are coastal poppies, buttercups, Mariposa lilies, mule ear sunflowers, tidytips, goldenfields, yellow yarrow, and fiddlenecks. White varieties for our area are star lilies, milkmaids, white yarrow, native strawberries, and narrow-leaf milkweed (monarch butterflies!). Blue or purple varieties include asters, groundcover lupine, bluedicks, blue-eyed grass, baby blue-eyes, forget-me-nots, larkspur, Douglas iris, foxglove, and elegant



Asters attract pollinators. Courtesy Linda Cruz

clarkia. For red or pink bloomers, consider rose clover, buckwheat, red ribbon clarkia, paintbrush, crimson columbine, and crimson clover.

Wildflower seed mixes are available from local garden centers and online. With mild California winters, the best time to start your wildflower garden is in fall just before annual rains. But go out your door this weekend and snap photos of your favorites during your wildland walks and look them up online or with a plant ID app such as iNaturalist.

Seasonal Notes: Get those summer veggie seedlings into your planter beds now. If you use a soil thermometer, soil temperatures should be greater than 55° F. for 3 straight days. Just in time, the Clayton Valley Garden Club will hold their annual Plant Sale on May 10 at Endeavor Hall in downtown Clayton from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. All are welcome.



Bluedicks and fiddlesticks make for a good combination- Courtesy Shutterstock



CA Native Narrow-Leaf Milkweed (asclepias fascicularis) is easy to grow

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

R A E G N L W N G Y M V W H B L O O M
K W D D Y C O Q D M N D A K Y M L E E
J A W I E S D S Q I A I Q G H S Y K N
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M E R N W H S E R F G R R Q M Q N T I
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SPRINGTIME WORD SEARCH

AWAKENING	CLEANING	MEADOW	SUNSHINE
BEES	DAFFODIL	PICNIC	THAW
BIRDS	FLOWERS	POLLEN	TULIPS
BLOOM	FRESH	RAIN	WARMTH
BREEZE	GARDENING	RENEWAL	
BUTTERFLY	GROWTH	SPRING	

SUDOKU

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1	5	3	4		6			8
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9	7	8	2	3				6
		2	5		4	7		9
	4	5	8		7			3
4			6	5	3		9	
	3					2	1	
7		9		4	2		6	

ROKO PUZZLES

Marc Rokoff produces a fun variety of word puzzles, sudoku, coloring pages, T-Shirts and more at RokoPuzzles.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Robins and other migratory birds have special proteins in their eyes that let them sense magnetic fields, helping them navigate! During Spring migration, robins can fly as much as 250 miles per day!

CRYPTOGRAMS – In the quote below, the letters have been substituted for other letters. For example, if A = H, it will always represent H.

“AOL KLSPJHAL IHSHUJL VM TLUAVYPUN ZVTLVUL PZ UVA JYLHAPUN
AOLT PU FVBY VDU PTHNL, IBA NPCPUN AOLT AOL VWWVYABUPAF AV
JYLHAL AOLTZLSCLZ.” —ZALCLU ZWPLSILYN



The Hidden Benefits of a Pre-Listing Inspection

In today's fast-paced real estate market, sellers are constantly looking for ways to gain an edge over the competition. One strategy that is gaining popularity is conducting a pre-listing inspection before putting a home on the market. While buyers traditionally order inspections after making an offer, sellers who take the proactive step of getting their home inspected beforehand can reap several significant benefits.

One of the biggest advantages of a pre-listing inspection is the ability to identify and address potential issues before buyers even see the property. Unexpected repairs discovered during a buyer's inspection can derail negotiations, lead to price reductions, or even cause a deal to fall through. By uncovering problems in advance, sellers can make necessary repairs or adjust their pricing strategy accordingly, avoiding last-minute surprises.

A pre-listing inspection demonstrates transparency and builds trust with potential buyers. When buyers see that a home has already been inspected and comes with a report detailing its condition, they may feel more confident in making an offer. In some cases, this confidence can lead to stronger offers and even competitive bidding.

Knowledge is power in real estate transactions. When sellers are aware of their home's condition ahead of time, they can be better prepared for negotiations. Instead of being caught off guard by a buyer's inspection report, sellers who have already addressed concerns can present their property in the best possible light. This can lead to fewer contingencies and smoother negotiations overall thus speeding up the selling process.

Homes that undergo a pre-listing inspection often sell faster than those that do not. Since buyers have access to a detailed inspection report upfront, they may feel more comfortable making a quick decision. This can also minimize the time spent in escrow, as fewer issues will need to be negotiated or repaired before closing.

A common reason for price reductions in real estate is the discovery of unexpected issues during the buyer's inspection. With a pre-listing inspection, sellers can price their home more accurately from the start. If major repairs are needed, they can either fix them or adjust their listing price accordingly. This prevents buyers from demanding excessive price reductions later in the process.

Buyers who see a home with a pre-listing inspection are often more serious about purchasing. They know that the seller is transparent and proactive, which can make the property more appealing. Additionally, pre-inspected homes may attract cash buyers or those looking for a faster closing process since they have fewer uncertainties.

A pre-listing inspection can be a smart investment for sellers looking to maximize their home's value and attract serious buyers. While it does require an upfront cost, the potential benefits—faster sales, stronger negotiating power, and reduced surprises—can far outweigh the expense. If you are considering selling your home, consulting with a qualified home inspector before listing may be a step worth taking to ensure a smoother, more successful transaction. Compliments of VirtualResults.net

Fundraiser Combats Federal Funding Cuts to White Pony Express Food Rescue Program

White Pony Express (WPE), a leader in food recovery and distribution, is urgently calling on the community to help bridge a critical funding gap due to cuts in federal support. With government funding reductions threatening one-third of WPE's budget, the organization must raise \$350,000 by May 31 to support ongoing services and fresh food distributions.

One in five people in our community face hunger and meal costs are at a 20-year high.

Every day, WPE rescues fresh, surplus food and sorts, curates, and delivers it to 100+ nonprofit partners, ensuring no good food goes to waste. Despite the abundance of surplus food, only 2% is currently donated, which presents a massive opportunity to expand food access. As WPE works to scale its service model, the need for local partnerships and donor support has never been greater.

May, The Moment to Act

WPE has launched the "Nourish to Flourish" Spring fundraiser which runs through May 31. WPE is calling on individuals, businesses, and philanthropic partners to contribute today. Every donation fuels vital food recovery efforts, ensuring fresh, nutritious meals reach those who need them most. Here are three ways you can help.

1) Donate today to help WPE reach its \$350,000 goal: whiteponyexpress.org/donate



WPE's fleet delivering fresh healthy food to over 105 nonprofit agencies in Contra Costa County



Food donor partners like local Farmers' Markets support WPE by donating fresh food.

2) Spread the word by sharing WPE's work on social media and through your networks

3) Get involved through volunteer opportunities and partnerships.

WPE's Food Rescue Program operates seven days a week, recovering a daily average of 12,000 pounds of high-quality, surplus, fresh food from over 80 local food outlets. This nutritious food is redistributed within 24 hours to over 100 nonprofit recipients that feed the hungry.

Founded in 2013 by Dr. Carol Weyland Conner, WPE is a volunteer-powered 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to eliminate hunger and poverty by delivering the abundance all around us to those in need—with love.



WPE volunteers sort and curate food for each of their 105 nonprofit recipient partners.



Better Homes Realty



5121 Keller Ridge Dr, Clayton

Beautiful "Crandall" Model in Windmill Canyon at Oakhurst Country Club nestled on a premium lot backing to the 5th fairway with sweeping golf course & hillside views. 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, approx. 1877sf with inside laundry & an attached 2-car garage.



1923 Eagle Peak Ave, Clayton

Sensational Diablo Ridge two story on a premium golf course lot with gorgeous views of rolling hills, the 8th hole, a lake, and a cascading waterfall at Oakhurst Country Club. 2 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, approx. 1252sf with inside laundry & an attached 2-car garage.



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230 E. 2nd St, Benicia

Charming Two Story Waterfront Condo nestled in the heart of the Benicia Marina. 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, approx. 1439sf. Living room offers semi-vaulted wood beam ceiling & slider to deck with gorgeous views. Spacious primary suite features cozy gas fireplace and sunny windows with views.



8051 Kelok Way, Clayton

Gorgeous Views Overlooking Valley to Delta & Beyond. Gorgeous Falcon Ridge two story on a private court setting on a premium lot featuring custom free-form in-ground pool with spa. 5 bedrooms, 3 baths, approx. 2894sf on an approx. .27 acre lot with an attached 3-car garage.

Clayton Market Update

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
200 Condor Way	\$1,040,000	1911	3/2.5	3/10/2025
203 Prospector Pl	\$1,070,000	2171	4/2.5	3/12/2025
8019 Kelok Way	\$1,525,000	2542	4/2.5	3/28/2025
1182 Easley Dr	\$1,122,000	2096	4/2.5	4/3/2025
60 Mountaire Pl	\$1,250,000	2481	5/3	4/11/2025
9009 Elk Dr	\$1,498,425	2894	4/3	4/14/2025
165 Mt Etna Dr	\$775,000	1310	3/2	4/17/2025

Concord Market Update

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
5425 Concord Blvd #C1	\$270,000	762	1/1	4/2/2025
4400 Striped Maple Ct	\$970,000	1641	3/2	4/3/2025
1692 Manor Ln	\$930,000	1696	4/2	4/7/2025
757 Sequoia Woods Pl	\$1,112,000	2055	4/2.5	4/8/2025
163 Roslyn Dr	\$840,000	1750	3/3	4/9/2025
4025 Hitchcock Rd	\$992,450	2227	5/3	4/11/2025
1680 Matheson Rd	\$1,150,000	2829	3/4	4/15/2025



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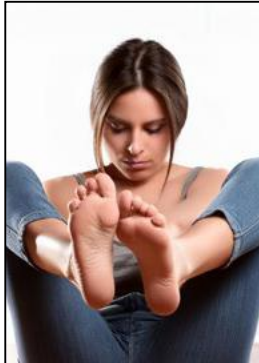
Take a Minute to Check in With Yourself

Right now, right wherever you are reading this... without looking at it, and without moving it, bring your awareness to your right foot. Can you feel it without moving it? What position is it in? How does it feel? Cold/Warm? Relaxed/Tense? How do you know it's there?

Now scrunch your toes a few times. Go ahead and give them a big squeeze. And then check back in with the foot. Can you feel the foot more?

Your brain is tracking every fiber of your body every second of every day without your awareness. To do this, it relies on an undefinable number of body maps that live in various parts of your brain (the sensation ones live in your parietal lobe). In fact, it is intentionally a redundant number of maps, because if damage occurs, say to your skin, your brain will need alternative ways of communicating with the hand.

The degree to which your brain feels connected to your body is a huge factor in how safe your brain feels generally. This skill of being able to feel your own body is called interoception, and it is a trainable neural skill.



I often say that the better you can feel something, the better you can move it, but the reverse is also true (as is often the case in the nervous system.) Improving the quality of your movement through regular doses of focused movement practices can go a long way to helping your body feel safer as you move through the world, or even when you are relaxing on the couch.

There are a number of other ways you can improve your body maps sensory work, like using heat, cold, light touch, vibration, or even sharp (but not too sharp. A thumbtack is my favorite tool for this) can go a long way in deepening your connection to a particular body part. Spend a minute experiencing one of these sensations on your foot (or anywhere else) and then check back in with it. Can you feel it even more?

Improving your sensory maps can go a long way, not just in improving movement, it can even increase strength, balance, and can go a long way in preventing injury and take your wellness to the next level.

Diablo Women's Chorale presents "2025: A Space Rhapsody"



Reach for the stars as the Diablo Women's Chorale (DWC) presents "2025: A Space Rhapsody"—a celestial adventure that transcends time and space, blending nostalgia, exploration, and the eternal quest for love. Accompanied by live musicians, experience the vibrant energy of Age of Aquarius, the haunting echoes of "A Space Oddity", the empowering spirit of "Defying Gravity", and more.

The DWC will perform on Friday, May 16, and Sunday, May 18, at the San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church, 902 Danville Blvd, Alamo, CA 94507. For tickets, visit: diablowomenschorale.org.

The DWC welcomes new members each January and August and presents concerts in the spring and fall each year. The DWC is a 501(c)(3).

Something Special on Mother's Day: Picnic on the Green

Visit Concord has creatively envisioned a unique experience to enjoy Mother's Day and at the same time honor the Pavilion's 50th Anniversary—A picnic on the green. It's practically a tradition for many of us who have attended many concerts over the years.

Bring the family out to the beautiful lawn at the Concord Historical Society Galindo House on Mother's Day, May 11 and enjoy "Picnic on the Green." From 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at 1928 Clayton Rd.

You will be treated to delightful desserts including cupcakes from Alpine Pastry & Cakes, drinks, raffle prizes, live music from John Paul Hodge trio, and Museum Tours. Scan the QR code in the Visit Concord ad on the front page for easy access to purchase tickets. Tickets are \$30 plus fees Online at Eventbrite, or \$40 at the door. Happy Mother's Day!



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JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

by Jill Hedgecock, www.JillHedgecock.com

It is a shame that most tourists visiting Ecuador fly into Quito as a gateway to the Galapagos Islands and overlook the mainland of Ecuador. As we soon discovered, this country is an underrated gem, especially for budget travelers.

We booked our 10-day Andes tour through Ecuador Green Travel. Our tour was a jam-packed adventure of exploring the capitol city of Quito, hiking and whitewater rafting, viewing wildlife, shopping at indigenous markets, tasting traditional cuisine, and experiencing things that are uniquely Ecuadorian, such as a traditional healing ceremony in Cuenca, a chocolate tasting in Mindo, and more.

Our driver/tour guide took us through central Ecuador hitting major tourist stops in and around Quito including Mindo Forest Reserve, Cayembe, Otavalo, Cotacachi, Banos, Riobamba, and Guayaquil. I would not recommend renting a car and driving yourself. There are few road signs, the rules of the road are convoluted, and Ecuadorian drivers are rarely insured.

In Quito, there are many must-sees in this mega city of 1.8 million residents. At an elevation of 9,350 feet, Quito is known for being the highest official capitol city in the world. Its immensity can be appreciated by taking the teleferico cable car, which rises to a fabulous overlook. The ornate religious establishments, such as Compañia de Jesús Jesuit church and the cathedral, are a must visit. The Mitad del Mundo (Middle of the World) offers the unique experience of straddling the equator and watching water move down the drain clockwise or counterclockwise, depending on which side of the equator the sink is located.

Ecuador's natural beauty is unsurpassed. The country is home to cloud forests, lowland rainforests and 84 volcanoes. My husband and I were caught slightly off guard by the elevations on our Cotopaxi and Chimborazo volcano hikes. Our one mile hike up the slopes of Cotopaxi volcano started at 15,100 feet and ended at 15,900 feet. The hike up Chimborazo Volcano starts at an elevation of 15,800 feet and ends at 16,500 feet.

Other scenic hikes included Cuicocha Crater Caldera Lake in Cotacachi and the blue green Quilotoa Lake which is a water-filled crater.

Laguna La Treadadora, located at 13,000 feet, is a glacial lake with unique vegetation and beautiful waterfalls.

One of our more thrilling outdoor adventures was whitewater rafting on the Pastaza River through the World Heritage Rainforest of the Sangay National Park. While safe, the guides made sure we all had the exciting experience of plunging into the frigid river—they intentionally flipped our raft.

A birding tour in Refugio Paz de las Aves in Mindo is a must for birding enthusiasts. Ecuador (including the Galapagos Islands) has more birds per square kilometer than anywhere else in the world. We arrived at an Andean cock-of-the-rock lek (a lek is a communal area where males compete for mating opportunities with visiting females) at dawn to hear the vibrant red, black and white, crow-sized males make a unique call that sounds like a rooster being strangled.

San Tadeo Gardens in Mindo is also a birder's dream spot. Highlights included spotting an Andean condor (the largest flying bird in the world), Andean lapwing, giant antpitta, Andean gull chicks, and crested guan.

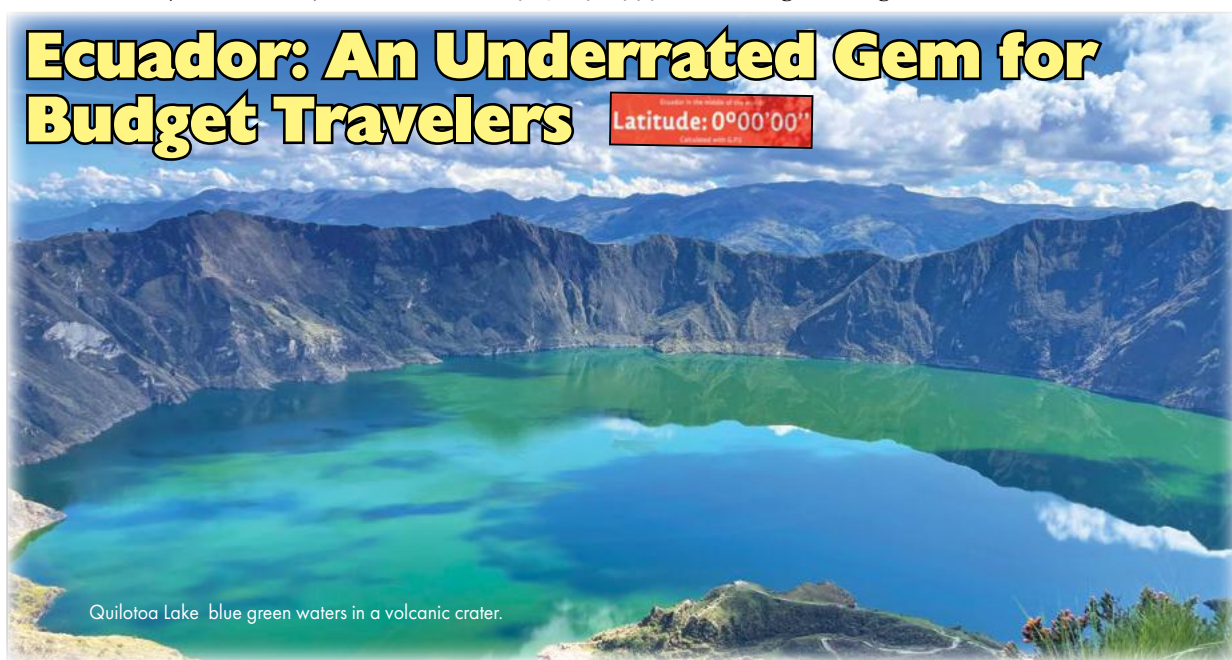
The country also supports numerous mammals. I was fortunate to see agouti, deer, speckled bear, and an Andean fox.

Shopping is another must do. The indigenous market of Otavalo is one of the largest markets in South America. It operates on Saturday with vendors offering llama or alpaca wool scarfs, Panama hats, leather belts, farm-fresh produce, and much more.

We also shopped in Cuenca, where local artisans offer a variety of handmaid fine gold and silver jewelry at bargain prices.

Ecuador: An Underrated Gem for Budget Travelers

Latitude: 0°00'00"



Quilotoa Lake blue green waters in a volcanic crater.



Arroz con camarones, succulent shrimp with yellow rice.



Worker at a Panama hat factory finishing up..



Compañia de Jesús Jesuit church and the cathedral

Our tour of the chocolate factory included tasting of many flavored dark chocolates and a chocolate facial.

We also toured a Panama hat factory and a textile factory where we learned about the natural dyes and tedious process used to hand make garments

Traditional Ecuadorian food consists of amazing soups and stews, plantains, ceviche, and various fish and meat dishes, including guinea pig. We passed on the guinea pig but tried other cuisines. Locro de Papa, a creamy stew containing potatoes and cheese, and served with a side of avocado and toasted corn, is a must try. Arroz con camarones is a delicious, classic Latin dish made with succulent shrimp and yellow rice.



Male Andean_cock-of-the-rock

We took the unique opportunity to participate in a traditional healing ritual in Cuenca. First they rub a raw egg all over our bodies, then crack the egg and read the egg yolk. I was deemed anxious, yet brave, while my husband was told many people were jealous of him.

All our hotels included breakfast and provided comfortable stays. The historic Hacienda Andaluza in Riobamba is reminiscent of

Yosemite's Ahwahnee Hotel with its stately rooms and a mixture of dark wood and stone architecture. The price was a bargain at about \$130 per night.

Booking a tour to see mainland Ecuador was an add-on to visiting the Galapagos Islands. But those 10 days were filled with extraordinary cultural experiences and natural beauty. This part of Ecuador had not been on our bucket list, but we now know it should have been.



Whitewater rafting on the Pastaza River

MAY 15TH - 18TH 2025

Contra Costa County Fairgrounds 1201 West 10th St. Antioch

ALL DAY EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS

- Xtreme Sports Zone
- Midway of Fun Carnival
- Arts & Agriculture Pavilions
- Livestock Pavilion (Closed Sunday May 18th)
- BC Characters
- Fables of the West
- Chicken Rider
- Ballonacy
- Pony Rides
- Camel Rides
- Petting Zoo
- Little Rascals Kids Club

SCHEDULE

May 15 **DOLLAR DAY**

May 16 **SENIORS DAY & OUT AT THE FAIR DAY**

May 17 **MILITARY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT DAY**

May 18 **FIESTA DAY**

More Info at contracostafair.com

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DID YOUR CONCORD COUNCILMEMBER REPRESENT YOU?

On April 22, 2025, the Concord City Council voted to align Concord's rental housing policies closer with the state and uphold the will of the voters who rejected an expansion of rent control during the November 2024 election.

See How Your City Council District Representative Voted.

Did it align with the will of the voters in November 2024?

Councilmember and District	Did the Vote Match the District?
 Councilmember Laura Hoffmeister DISTRICT 1	YES
 Mayor Carlyn Obringer DISTRICT 2	YES
 Councilmember Dominic Aliano DISTRICT 3	YES
 Councilmember Pablo Benavente DISTRICT 4	YES
 Vice Mayor Laura Nakamura DISTRICT 5	

That's right. In November 2024, 64% of Concord District 5 voters opposed strict rental regulations, but **on April 22, 2025, Concord District Representative Laura Nakamura ignored 64% of her constituents.** She voted to keep extreme regulations on Concord rental housing - so extreme that she even opposed exemptions for single-family rental homes.

Ask Vice Mayor Laura Nakamura:

- Why is she out of touch with her constituents?
- Why didn't she follow the will of the voters?

Laura.Nakamura@cityofconcord.org

Checking In: What's Happening With the Concord Naval Weapons Redevelopment?

by Michael Barrington, mbwriter.net

Not much has been heard recently regarding the redevelopment of the Concord Naval Weapons Station. So, I reached out to the one in charge, Josh Roden, President of Land & Housing Development at Brookfield Properties to find out where things currently stand.

Roden agrees that the general public in Concord doesn't really know what is happening with the Naval Weapons Station.

"What surprises us, we send out mailers and emails, and there's announcements from city hall, but they only go to people who have signed up to receive information. We would like to see the press provide more current and frequent coverage, understanding that historically there has not been a great deal of positive news. The people of Concord should be excited about what is happening now, and for the future development of their city," says Roden.

In similar projects across the United States, Brookfield conducts input sessions from the general public to garner ideas from each community as to what they envision for a development.

"We believe that with more input we can obtain, the better the planning and the better the project will be." Roden would like to see more attendance from the general public at the input sessions. With that, soon they can start developing specific plans and exhibits.

Make no mistake, the project has had years of community input already that has led to the eventual dismissing of two previous master developers. Much of that input needs to be updated at this point to the current lifestyle trends, especially regarding technology advancements.

"Some of it was collected before we had iPhones, before vehicle charging stations were even thought of. Technology is constantly changing. There are autonomous vehicles in San Francisco and LA. Will they play a role in this project? Drones did not exist when the first community sessions were held. And we have to consider all of those things."

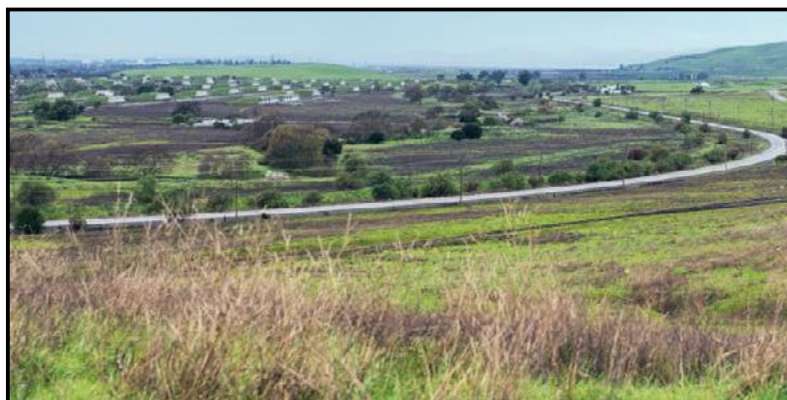
Roden recognizes that community needs change over time. For example, the proposed library and civic center are already in the Term Sheet, but what will it look like when the time comes to develop plans?

Brookfield's implementation is contingent on many things. The Navy still owns the land and there are areas that need to be cleaned up, approval given and a price negotiated. Some land has already been transferred.

In 2019, the Regional Park portion of the property, roughly 2,400 acres was donated to the East Bay Regional Park system to form the new Thurgood Marshall Park.

"We are working towards receiving the first 1,000 acres. This will be the first phase of real estate development." Most of the public is not aware that we are only four or five years out, not 10, 20 or 30. "I think that there is a feeling in the community that it will not happen in their lifetime." That's understandable given the history of the re-use process in Concord.

Regardless, it is a slow process working with the federal government. Roden says they are currently in negotiations to purchase the land from the Navy.



Upper right: Josh Roden, President - Brookfield Residential Northern California, meets with community at Open House

"We made the Navy an offer back in late spring of last year, but it had holes and placeholders in it because we needed to do more analysis of the property. We wrapped that up in the fall and then resubmitted with an updated offer."

The negotiations will include some cash, but it is far more complex than that. The Navy currently maintains the property, which they do not want to continue doing. That could be negotiated for a price, as well as other contingencies that would offset actual cash.

In the meantime, over the next four years Brookfield will continue to engage with the community via open houses, focus workshops on components such as affordable housing, open space, sports fields and how to promote current businesses and attract new ones. "The big item will be developing the specifics for the site plan. What will the actual housing look like architecturally? That is exciting."

Traffic on Highway 4 will be affected but it is not part of Brookfield's scope of work. At its peak, there will be 30,000 people in the new suburb, that's a new city the size of Pleasant Hill. It will be up to Caltrans and in some respects those responsible for the I-680 interchange.

Brookfield plans to continue its community

Can you Spare 3 Hours to Give Rides to Seniors and Veterans?



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more—all while supporting local artists.
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CONCORD SENIOR CENTER
2727 Parkside Circle

outreach on the Concord Naval Weapons Station Project in late spring/summer (no specific dates yet) and suggested that readers go to the project website (<https://concordbproject.com/>), click on Connect With Us and scroll down to Subscribe to Receive Project Updates.

Michael Barrington, an international author, lives in Concord and has written eleven books. Take a Priest Like You is his recent memoir. He has published more than 60 short stories www.mbwriter.net.

Protests, Protesters, and Distractions

by Edi Birsan, Concordian

Dear ol' Dad used to talk to me about Norman Thomas, a 'Christian Socialist' that rose to prominence in the 1920 and 30's in New York City. Thomas was advocating for the lowest worker and against the culture of Wall Street and for such radical things as desegregation, environmental protection and social safety net.

My dad pointed out that Thomas would wear a three-piece suit, was clean-shaven, eloquent and soft-spoken.

Learning from Thomas, Dad taught that you never want to have something which distracts attention from your main specific message or cause. You should concentrate your vices so they do not interfere with savoring the effort, which was difficult to follow in my own travails in the Anti-Vietnam War movement of the 60's and 70's. But I slowly observed how the concentration on Anti-Vietnam as opposed to a wide societal set of changes, or even a general pacifism position, ballooned the acceptance of a message focused on just one issue.

Locally we have seen protests at Tesla location in Walnut Creek and in the Concord City Council chambers. These bring back simple protesting points I learned, and echoed some of my Dad's words:

1. Do not let your protest be hijacked by other movements. Protests done well attract attention. If you are in a leadership role and you see that some folks are bringing flags and banners that relate to different struggles you should take them aside and ask for some consideration. I remember one 'Occupy Wall Street'

protest in Todos Santos where a half dozen folks turned up with rifles and signage advocating for Open Carry.

2. When arranging for public speaking, do not make noise when your folks are talking. If you are outside of the room, have someone at a window give you a signal to be quiet to a chanting crowd so that your folks are heard. Do not try to shout down the opposition or you may build sympathy for the other side. Your cause's arguments should be sharp enough to counter them.

3. Do not interact with the opposition or the target in a manner in which the focus of attention will be on the action as opposed to the message.

4. Spread your folks out amongst the general crowd if you are in a general meeting so that you can get a better gauge of the opposition and make your presence seem larger.

5. When rotating speakers have specific targeted messages.

6. Public speakers should not be 'uniformed' in appearance with tags/shirts etc. The inclination of an audience including elected decision makers is to simply jump to the assumption that you are all the same and they dial you out. Let the uniform or ID swag be for those that give a feeling of mass to the supporters.

7. Speakers should emphasize their positions of leadership in the community and in as many different roles as you can muster. Five members of a political party regardless of their position are not going to have anywhere near the effect of a Scout Leader, a Sunday School Teacher, a retail



manager, or a head nurse of an ER. Always use the highest-ranking person of the category to speak.

8. When speaking before a public debate such as a City Council, have a lot of outreaches to the folks who are going to vote on it done in advance of a public meeting—ideally one on one. One of the great failings of both political parties in Contra Costa is the lack of building relationships through direct one-on-one meetings after being elected; even with party leaders at the lowest levels such as directly elected party central committee people. It is not enough to simply send a letter on a position. You need to build face-to-face discussion capability and action on political issues.

9. Always ask yourself: is what we are doing going to distract or support our position?

Remember, the purpose of a protest is to deliver a message that will accomplish something. Do not disgrace your cause.

These are the opinions of Edi Birsan and not to be confused with the 1968 image of a full haired student standing on a car roof with a sign: Make Love Not War. EdiBirsan@gmail.com

Concord Police Association Announces Annual College Scholarship Award Program

The Concord Police Association will be awarding \$5,000 in scholarships; one \$1,000, four \$500, and eight \$250 in scholarships for their annual Scholarship Award Program. The program targets outstanding college-bound graduating high school seniors, as well as community college transfer students and continuing college students who attend Concord schools, are from the Concord community or dependents of active or retired Concord Police Association members. The scholarships are competitive, merit-based and intended to help defray the costs of higher education.

The Concord Police Association encourages all graduating seniors, full-time community college transfer students, and full-time continuing college students from high schools in the Concord community bound for a four-year college or university to apply. Dependents of active or retired Concord Police Association members are also eligible to apply.

Information is posted on their website on the "Scholarship" page at www.concordpoa.org.

Applications and Scholarship Guidelines may be downloaded from the website but may also be obtained by calling our office at (925) 676-8298 or via e-mail at concordpoa54@yahoo.com.

The deadline for application submission is Friday, May 30, 2025.

33rd Annual Clayton Gardens Tour

Rain or shine, the 33rd Annual Clayton Gardens Tour will take place on May 16 and 17, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to explore some of Clayton's most unique and beautiful gardens.

This year's tour features an exciting variety of gardens:

- A serene Japanese-style garden complete with a tea house.
- A charming small-scale garden.
- A stunning garden with panoramic views of Clayton Valley and the Carquinez Strait.
- A newly planted garden on a sprawling property that also houses an animal sanctuary.
- A natural setting that offers insights into wildlife rehabilitation.
- The Clayton Museum's Native American garden where you will learn how native plants were traditionally used.

Whether you're a garden enthusiast or just looking for a peaceful weekend outing in Clayton, reserve your tickets early and save \$5 per ticket.

Tickets may also be purchased online at www.claytonhistory.org or at these locations:

R&M Pool, Patio & Gardens, 6780 Marsh Creek Road, Clayton (925-672-0207)

Clayton Museum, 6101 Main Street, Clayton – Sundays and Wednesdays from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

If purchasing by mail, send a check for \$40 per ticket to: Clayton Museum, P.O. Box 94, Clayton 94517

Day-of tickets will be \$45.



All proceeds benefit the Clayton Historical Society & Museum, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

For more information, call the Clayton Museum and leave a message at 925-672-0420.

Clayton Community Library Foundation Book Sale

The Clayton Community Library Foundation (CCLF) will hold its spring book sale on Friday, May 16, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. (for members only and memberships are available at the door), Saturday, May 17, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday, May 18, 12 noon to 2:00 p.m. (half-price book sale), then 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., only \$5.00 per bag.

All proceeds from the book sales go directly to purchasing new books and other reading materials as well as supporting programs for the library.

Volunteers are welcome

and needed for the book sale to help sorting, transporting books from storage to the library, and during the book sale itself from May 12 to May 19. To learn more about available shifts for volunteering, please contact the CCLF website <https://claytonlibrary.org/>. Or, leave a note with your name, phone and email address at the library to be put in the CCLF "mailbox" there and someone will contact you.

If you would like to become a member, the form can be downloaded from the website or picked up at the library. Completed form and



payment can be left there. General tax -deductible donations may be left at the library or mailed to Clayton Community Library Foundation, P.O. Box 182, Clayton CA 94517.

This year the Library is celebrating its 30-year anniversary, since opening in 1995. We know Clayton loves its Library, and we thank you for your support. For more information, please visit the website.

2025 PLANT SALE!

CLAYTON VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Saturday, May 10th, 9A-1P
Endeavor Hall 6008 Center St, Clayton

**One Gallon Plant \$6
Buy 5 Plants -
Get the 6th Plant FREE!**

Shop for drought tolerant perennials, succulents, tomatoes, veggies, and California natives. Plus gently used garden items and handmade crafts such as Native Bee Houses.

COLOR BOWLS, SUCCULENT BOWLS, and other gift items - Just in time for Mother's Day

Free Friendly Gardening Advice

925-279-2299 claytonvalleygardenclub.org
Clayton Valley Garden Club is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization



Carlyn Obringer
Concord Mayor
cityofconcord.org

Connection With Canada Consul General Ignites Ideas for CNWS Redevelopment

Recently, I convened a meeting with Consul General of Canada Rana Sarkar, and representatives from the Consulate General of Canada and the Provinces of British Columbia and Ontario, to discuss potential opportunities to collaborate around the redevelopment of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS). The meeting was followed by a tour of GoMentum Station, the largest enclosed autonomous vehicle testing site in the United States. We were joined by representatives from Brookfield, the master developer selected by myself and my City Council colleagues to redevelop the former CNWS. The planning for this meeting, during which I learned that Contra Costa County currently exports \$160 million in goods and \$147 million in services annually to Canada, was initiated in February, before President Trump began escalating tariffs.


Since one of the goals for the CNWS redevelopment is sustainability, our conversation covered possible construction with Cross Laminated Timber, which the province of British Columbia is recognized as a global supply leader. We also learned how the Province of Ontario has managed to generate 94% of its energy from zero carbon energy sources, including small modular reactors. The area plan for the CNWS redevelopment includes a 120-acre campus district, so it was interesting to learn that the province of Ontario is home to 47 colleges and universities, many with international connections and partnerships. As a next step, I sent the Ontario representatives, one of whom is a Concord resident, a copy of the Blue Ribbon Committee Campus District Vision Framework so that we can start exploring synergistic industries. When the Youth Tournament Sports Complex



envisioned for the CNWS redevelopment was mentioned, one of the Trade Commissioners present shared how he had grown up in Kamloops, BC, a city of approximately 100,000 located halfway between Vancouver and Calgary, and watched how it has successfully reinvented itself as “the Tournament Capital of Canada” to draw amateur/youth athletes throughout the year.

On the topic of redevelopment, our Canadian visitors shared information about The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) which holds an annual conference to facilitate long-term agreements between governments and the private sector to build, expand or refurbish public infrastructure, deliver services, and provide maintenance. In Canada, P3s have been used extensively for big projects such as road repair, bridges, hospitals, water and wastewater treatment plants, transit systems, schools, etc.

I learned a lot from this meeting and was honored to have such a large Canadian delegation visit the City of Concord. I am very glad there are still such positive information-sharing opportunities to connect with our Canadian neighbors. I look forward to continuing the conversation around collaboration with “our best friends to the North.”



Kim Trupiano
Mayor, Clayton
kimT@claytonca.gov

Budgeting for Clayton’s Future

The City of Clayton officially began its budget process at the April 21 Budget and Audit Committee meeting. This marks an important milestone, as it will be the City’s first time adopting a two-year budget.

We remain committed to addressing both immediate and long-term needs while working within our financial limits. Our goal is to maintain the high level of service our community values. Throughout the process, we will evaluate priorities in key areas such as landscaping, parks and trails, public safety, road and infrastructure improvements, staffing, training, and planning for future events.

While budgets can be tight, they also offer flexibility. Our approach will be thoughtful, prudent, and focused on making meaningful impacts. This is one of the most important efforts we undertake each year—as a City, a Council, and a Community. Despite the new two-year format, there will continue to be opportunities for mid-year reviews and adjustments as needed.

A look at the upcoming Budget Workshop agenda and projects.

- Revisit and reflect on Council goals, building on last year’s goal-setting efforts.
- Review community feedback from last year’s survey and ongoing input.
- Hear department updates and priorities for the next two years.
- Assess the City’s current financial status and projections, including the General Fund, the Landscape Maintenance District Fund, Reserves and long-term obligations, and Capital improvement and infrastructure needs.



- Review results from our new Investment Advisory Services agreement with UBS, now managing the City’s investment portfolio.
- ### Current and Upcoming Projects:
- Roadway Paving for 2026 – Finalized at the April 1, 2025, City Council meeting.
 - Clayton Community Library Refresh Project – Scheduled to begin later this year or early next, in partnership with the County Library and Clayton Community Library Foundation.
 - Final Phase of the Climatec Project – Includes installation of a solar array and EV charging station to achieve a Net-Zero Energy site for the Library, City Hall, and Maintenance Facility—reducing energy costs and the City’s carbon footprint.

We encourage community members to attend the May 6th City Council meeting, which includes a Budget Workshop, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

My goal is always to be as transparent and accountable as possible with the community, so if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please contact me at kimt@claytonca.gov or 925.673.7324.

In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from Claycord.com and Other Sources

Concord Community Academy — What Makes the City of Concord Run?

Applications are open for the Fall 2025 Concord Community Academy. The Concord Community Academy offers a boots-on-the-ground view of what it takes to keep our city comfortable, safe, and livable. Participants engage in lively discussions and interactive activities as they meet elected officials and staff, and they learn about the processes that guide how decisions are made.

Participants must be able to attend all six sessions. There is no fee to attend, but applicants must be at least 18

years of age, and live, work, or own a business in Concord. Space is limited. Application deadline is July 18 at 5 p.m. For class dates and times and to apply, go to: <https://www.cityofconcord.org/290/Concord-Community-Academy>

Summer Bike Challenge: Explore Your Town, Win Prizes

Looking for free and fun summertime activities for the whole family? Check out 511 Contra Costa’s Summer Bike Challenge: a no-cost and non-competitive biking program for people of all ages. Each city has its own unique game board filled with bikeable

destinations. Simply ride to each location and cross off the squares as you go – like BINGO. There are prizes. Start by downloading your game board. Visit <https://511contracosta.org/sbc/sbc>.

Affordable Housing Opportunity: Blue Oak Square Apartments

The interest list is now available for the new Blue Oak Square Apartments, located at 2400 Willow Pass Road. This is a new, 181-unit affordable housing apartment complex that is being made available to individuals and households earning between 30-70% of the Area Median Income.

Those who sign up on the list will receive periodic updates via email, and an electronic invitation to complete an application once available. A waitlist will then be created based on the order



of applications received. Units will be made available based on the order of the waitlist. Meta Housing, the developer for the project, has provided that the apartments are expected to be available for occupancy in late 2025.

Visit Blue Oak Square’s home page for more information or to join the interest list directly, click here.

Puzzle Solutions

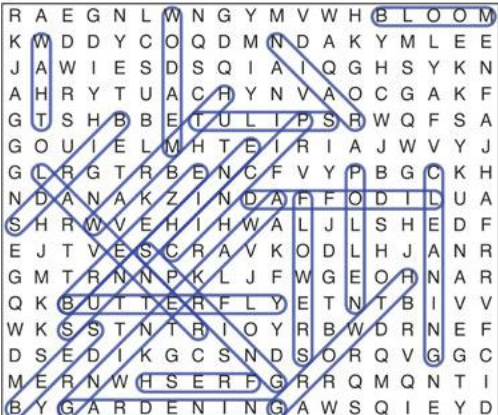
FROM PAGE 11

Cryptogram Solution:

“The Delicate Balance Of Mentoring Someone Is Not Creating Them In Your Own Image, But Giving Them The Opportunity To Create Themselves.”

Steven Spielberg

8	9	7	3	1	5	6	4	2
1	5	3	4	2	6	9	7	8
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Did Concord City Council Represent Their Districts?

On April 22, 2025, the Concord City Council took final action to amend its rent control law to ensure most Concord renters will never see a rent increase above 5%.

The city's own rent registry information collected over the past three years shows that rents in Concord were affordable to many low-income families, questioning the need for rent control in the first place.

In 2024 we learned Concord residents don't want strict rent control and housing regulations when 60% of the voters rejected Proposition 33. This statewide ballot measure would have given city councils free reign to impose any laws they wanted on rental housing, including single family homes.

Four of the five Concord city council districts rejected Prop 33. On April 22, did each councilmember vote in a way that reflects their district?

District 1 Councilmember Laura Hoffmeister listened to her constituents and rejected strict rent control.

• District 2 Councilmember Carlyn Obringer followed the majority of her constituents and opposed strict rent control.

• District 3 Councilmember Dominic Aliano voted in line with his district.

• District 4 Councilmember Pablo Benevente upheld the will of the voters in his district.

• District 5 Councilmember Laura Nakamura ignored her constituents

and supported strict rent control.

This raises several serious questions.

First, why was Nakamura so adamant about data but for the past two years she's ignored the data right before her?

Why did Nakamura dismiss the voices of District 5 residents, where several neighborhoods rejected Prop 33 by nearly 70%?

Why did she double down at the April 22 meeting to continue a radical law that has proven to make housing more expensive, not provide any benefit to low-income families, and lead to higher rates of gentrification and displacement?

Why did Nakamura ignore the scholars at Stanford and UC Berkeley who conclude that price controls are not the solution to our housing challenges?

Who are the special interests that Nakamura caters to that force her to turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to the people who elected her?

For years, tenant activists, including Nakamura, demanded the city "follow the data." The council did exactly that. But Nakamura and her activist allies did not like the results.

A hallmark of our democracy is that our representatives listen to the will of the voters, represent their views, and answer to their constituents.

Laura Nakamura missed the mark.

-- Rhovy Lyn Antonio

Seeking to Restore Concord's Historic Barnette House for Veterans

The Veterans Accession House (VAH) is presently negotiating a lease for the Barnette House, 2080 East Street, built in 1912. This will be VAH's second location in the City of Concord to provide interim housing for homeless veterans. They are hoping the business community will support their efforts to return this historic landmark to its original condition.

Through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the City of Concord has funded the VAH to operate two homes for a year to provide interim housing to local homeless veterans. Their goal is to house 24 plus veterans for the year, with 12 veterans being served at any one time depending on the service needs of each resident.

The generous ARPA funding pays for the lease of two homes, utilities, essential housing items, meals, staffing, transportation and many of the support needs common in housing operations.

VAH presently operates the Tillman House, (named for Pat Tillman, professional football player turned U.S. Army Ranger during 911 operations), a six-bedroom, four-bathroom house in Concord. All the veterans are receiving enhanced wrap around services during their stay and are connected to community-based resources to transition them into permanent housing.

Pacific States Aviation Flight School Receives Award



Pacific States Aviation Flight Academy, 101 John Glenn Dr., Concord (Google Maps)

Pacific States Aviation Flight Academy in Concord was selected as a 2025

Distinguished Flight School by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the world's largest aviation community. The award is given to flight schools that demonstrate excellence in training, customer service and student success.

The award is given to flight schools that demonstrate excellence in training, customer service and student success.

To celebrate, Pacific States Aviation invites community members, local officials and aviation enthusiasts to an open house from 2:00-4:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 14.



Concord Residents Rally and March to Defend Rent Protections

Before the Concord City Council meeting on April 22, dozens of Concord renters, housing advocates, and community members, alongside the Raise the Roof Coalition, rallied at Todos Santos Park and marched to Concord City Hall in a peaceful protest to demand the City Council resist corporate landlord pressure and reverse efforts to weaken the city's Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Program. Once they arrived at City Hall, many tenants and Raise the Roof members refused to go inside chambers, to protest against Mayor Obringer, Councilmember Benavente, and Councilmember Hoiffmeister's vote to weaken the renter protections and their disregard of Concord renters' voices.

The ordinance, which marked Concord's first renter protection against high rent increases and unjust evictions, was implemented for just 11 months before the Council moved to dismantle it. During the rally and march, protesters wore T-shirts reading "Real Concord Resident" and carried signs that read "Concord For Sale" and "Hands Off Our Housing!" as they voiced their outrage over the rollback.

The demonstration followed revelations from the March 25 City Council meeting, where affiliates of the California Apartment Association (CAA) paid attendees, including individuals from outside Concord, to fill the chambers and advocate for gutting the ordinance. This effectively drowned out local voices that have been pushing for renter protections for nearly a decade.

"At the last Council meeting, I was disturbed by what it turned out to be...what I was there to represent and moreover by the shamelessness of the organizing party. I was also pretty disturbed that they had people from anywhere but Concord, representing themselves as residents," said Jackson Brody, a Concord resident who revealed that California Apartment Association organizers paid protesters, including himself, to pressure the City Council to undermine the original ordinance at last month's council meeting.

"I am just really glad that I was able to connect with some people from Raise the Roof and speak out about this...I think it's really important that we stay aware, agitated, and angry about this."

Last month's City Council vote approved a weakened version of the ordinance. It

now allows annual rent increases of up to 5% flat—up from the original cap of 60% of CPI or 3%, whichever was lower—and exempts most single-family homes and condominiums from just cause eviction protections. The changes are set to go into effect within 30 days.

"The City Council didn't even bother to give the ordinance a year and study the data before they decided to move forward with these changes that will make it harder for Concord's renting families, seniors, and young individuals to stay housed in Concord," said Betty Gabaldon, president of the Todos Santos Tenants Union and EBASE organizer. "For eight years, tenants like me have made our voices heard through our local democracy about what we need to be able to stay housed in the City. The City has all the research and data proving the importance of the original ordinance for thousands of Concord residents and is making an active decision to ignore these facts and our voices and instead pander to real estate lobbyists and corporate landlords."

According to Concord's own Housing Element, a state-mandated plan for fair and affordable housing, median rent in the city has increased by over 44% since 2010, outpacing renters' income growth (37%) and forcing more residents to face housing instability and relocating in search of affordable housing.

"Even though the ordinance has been stripped, we will continue to fight for our right to a stable home and community in Concord and remain united against corporate influence," said Blanca Colin, Concord resident and Rising Juntos member. "Our fight is local, but it's part of the bigger picture of the corporate corruption that is happening nationwide. Concord is our home and we will not let corporate landlords have the final say over what happens here."

Raise the Roof coalition members, including EBASE, Todos Santos Tenants Union, and Rising Juntos will continue advocating for strong renter protections in Concord and across Contra Costa County while holding elected officials accountable to the communities they serve—not corporate landlords.

-by East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy's Raise The Roof Coalition

Council Adopts Amendments to Tenant Protection Ordinance

Concord, CA - At the April 22 city council meeting, the Concord City Council adopted amendments to the City's Residential Tenant Protection Program (the "Ordinance"), following its initial introduction on March 25, 2025.

Key Changes to the Ordinance Include:

Annual Rent Increase Cap for Multifamily Complexes Built Before February 1995

The allowable annual rent increase is set at 5%. This replaces the prior cap of 3% or 60% of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), whichever was lower.

Just Cause for Eviction Rules for Single-Family Homes and Condominiums

The updated Ordinance modifies the

application of just cause for eviction regulations as follows:

Applies to landlords who rent out three or more single-family homes or condominiums in Concord.

Exempts landlords with two or fewer rented single-family homes and condominiums in Concord from just cause eviction regulations.

All rental properties, regardless of size or type, are still required to participate in the City's Rent Registry Program.

The amended Ordinance will go into effect 30 days after adoption, on May 22, 2025.

The final version of the Ordinance is available at: www.cityofconcord.org/rentprogram

Around Martinez



Martinez Mayor's State of the City

by Brianne Zorn, Mayor, City of Martinez

For years the Martinez Chamber of Commerce has hosted the Mayor's State of the City address, a breakfast meeting annually attended by Chamber members and representatives of the business community in Martinez. This year, attendees may have noticed a change in the overall event.

Recently, the California Attorney General clarified that State of the City addresses, including those hosted by private organizations, are subject to the Brown Act when a majority of a local legislative body (like a city council) attends. This means the events must be open to the public, with proper notice and agenda requirements, even if the event is not formally part of a regularly scheduled meeting. The Attorney General's opinion underscores the broad application of the Brown Act to ensure transparency in public government.

While this guidance may have caused people to rethink how they plan the state of the city, I embraced the change. And I embrace transparency! For the first time, the tickets were free and members of the public who don't normally get an opportunity to attend were able to join us. There was an amazing cross section of people at the event and I appreciated everyone's participation.

The state of the city is the Mayor's opportunity to update the community on the successes and challenges at city hall. For me, this state of the city marks the halfway point of my term. It gives me the opportunity to look back at the successes and lessons learned from the past two years and look forward to the remaining two years so I can accomplish what I set out to do. Below are some highlights from the presentation.

Major Accomplishments

The past few years have seen the completion of some major projects in the City of Martinez. These projects are so important to Martinez and I thank staff for carrying each of these projects over the finish line:

Marina and Waterfront Trust Lands Use Plan

Major repairs/renovations at Rankin Aquatic Center

Alhambra Hills opening to the public

Hidden Valley Pickleball Courts

Water Main Replacements

Fishing Pier Renovation

Pine Meadow Park

Efforts by management at City Hall on staffing and recruitment have resulted in the current vacancy rate of 4.64%, down from 18 % in 2021. Filling vacancies has improved safety and restored city services to full capacity. Additional police department hires this past year have proactively filled anticipated vacancies from retirements or medical leave. The new Police Department Strategic Enforcement Team (SET) is comprised of two



dedicated officers who are tasked with responding to high-impact public safety issues in the city.

Challenges

Despite all these successes, we continue to face many challenges.

Fiscal Sustainability: The City is at a pivotal moment: we are navigating exhausted ARPA funding, managing growing service demands, and financial uncertainty amid an economic slowdown. Trending lower consumer spending resulting in sales tax decline and reduced cannabis revenues. The city is aware of these issues, and going into our biennial budget cycle, we are working on measures to address growing concerns about fiscal sustainability to avoid the deficit issues that have faced other cities in our region.

Waterfront and Marina: Our new Marina manager F3 Marina went online in January 2025. Renovation of Fishing Pier is in progress, which includes replacement of a sheet pile wall in the northwest corner of the marina, which will help prevent future accretion of sediment. Dredging requires significant infrastructure investment before it can resume. We submitted a \$20 million grant to the EPA last fall, but it doesn't appear that we have been awarded this grant. So, our strategy will have to be a Public-Private Partnership to revitalize and transform the marina and waterfront. Staff have already initiated these conversations.

PBF Energy Refinery: It goes without saying that living in a refinery town has its unique challenges, and Martinez has been in the news regularly following incidents over the past several years.

It is important to remember that the soil sampling risk assessment conducted in June 2023 by County Health found no health impacts to home gardens from the spent catalyst release.

We have made significant Improvements to communication via Martinez Alerts and Community warning system.

No fines or penalties have been formally assessed, and the enforcement actions remain incomplete. As a result, we have not yet seen any financial reimbursement for the impacts experienced.

Air District Rule 6-5 will go into effect in July 2026, which limits particulate



Personal Loans vs. Signature Loans – What's the Difference?

by Bonita Vega, Marketing/Bus. Development Manager, Shell Western States FCU swsfcu.org

In the world of borrowing, understanding the differences between "personal loans" and "signature loans" is vital for making informed financial decisions.

While all signature loans are personal loans, not all personal loans are signature loans. Let's clarify the distinction!

Collateral plays a key role in lending. It acts as a safety net for lenders—an asset that secures a loan. Loans can be categorized as secured, which require collateral, or unsecured, which do not. Signature loans are always unsecured, relying solely on the borrower's signature to finalize the agreement, making the borrowing process straightforward.

Interest rates, loan amounts, and payment terms significantly impact your borrowing experience. A short repayment term on a signature loan can make repayment difficult. Your credit score also plays a crucial role here: a strong score can lead to lower interest rates and larger loan amounts, enhancing your borrowing capacity.

Curious about your borrowing potential? An online loan calculator can help you estimate interest rates and borrowing limits that align with your financial circumstances.

Signature loans can be incredibly versatile. They are ideal for consolidating debts; consider rolling high-interest credit card bills into a single signature loan, which may lower your monthly payments and improve your credit score.

Additionally, you can use these loans for personal projects, such as home renovations or vacations. However, keep in mind that signature loans have borrowing limits, making them less suitable for larger expenses like homes or vehicles.

When exploring signature loan options, consider various lenders, from credit unions to banks. Though some institutions offer loans to individuals with less-than-stellar credit, approval is not guaranteed. Credit unions often provide more flexible terms and rates, making them an attractive choice.

As you search for the right borrowing solution, conduct thorough research and seek advice from financial experts. Their insights can guide you in achieving your broader financial objectives and exploring alternative options. Remember, knowledge is power when it comes to managing your finances!

Finances about to crash down on you?

Rates as low as

8%
APR!*



A Signature Loan can help you consolidate and afford whatever you need!

LEARN MORE



Continues page 21

Zorn Continued from page 20

matter emissions from petroleum refinery fluidized catalytic cracking units. PBF has committed to meeting this timeline.

Looking ahead

Over the next few years, your City staff and City Council are going to be busy.

The Fiscal year 25-27 Capital Improvement Project (CIP) list – These projects will be approved during the biennial budget process in May 2025, which includes investments in a Downtown Public Bathroom, city-wide beautification efforts, a bike park conceptual design, and safe routes to school planning.

Our Citywide Strategic Plan – This process will be completed in Fall 2025. A strategic plan provides a clear roadmap to align our goals with available financial resources for long-term planning and needed capital investments.

Citywide Parks Master Plan – This process will begin in Fall 2025 and will be an opportunity for the public to provide input on what parks amenities they want to see in their communities. I will continue to push for trail connectivity and innovative youth-focused amenities such as bike pump tracks and skate parks.

150th Anniversary of Incorporation in 2026 – You have a year to learn how to pronounce “sesquicentennial”! This is an opportunity to celebrate the best of Martinez. Our ad hoc subcommittee has begun budgeting and early planning. I look forward to partnering with local restaurants, businesses and local organizations as well as some special events to celebrate our history.

Watch the complete video of the State of the City on the City of Martinez website: www.cityofmartinez.org.

New Leaders appointed to Martinez Business Organizations

The Martinez Chamber of Commerce has appointed Aaron Alencastre as its new President and Chief Executive Officer. Alencastre has over two decades of experience in operations, team leadership, and strategic planning, and brings a fresh yet deeply rooted perspective to the Chamber’s mission of promoting business growth, economic development, and community prosperity.



Downtown Martinez & CO., also known as Main Street Martinez, Inc., has appointed Sarah Baird as its new Executive Director.

Downtown Martinez is a non-profit organization who is dedicated to the economic growth and vitality of Downtown Martinez including Main Street events. Congratulations to both.

Campbell Theater to Host Free Emergency Preparedness Workshop

by Stephen Andrews, Special to the Diablo Gazette

Saturday, May 17, is the perfect opportunity for Martinez residents to take the first steps toward becoming “Martinez Ready.” Martinez Ready is a communitywide awareness initiative aimed at equipping residents with practical tips and tools for when disaster strikes.



CERT volunteers working at a Martinez Police evacuation drill checkpoint.

“People believe that assistance from first responders will immediately be available in an emergency, but often the response is significantly delayed due to the scope of the incident. Residents and businesses need

to self-prepare for a delayed response.” The free, two-hour interactive workshop being held from 1:00-3:00 p.m. on May 17, will address basic self-readiness including how to receive alerts and warnings, “go” and “shelter in place” pointers, evacuation preparation, and practical tips on disaster resilience and recovery like insurance claims. Andrews stressed, “Preparedness equals resilience and resilience equals recovery. Let’s go Martinez. Bring your family, friends, and neighbors. It’s time to prepare.”

The initiative is the brainchild of Martinez Area Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) instructor and Martinez Community Foundation (MCF) president, Stephen Andrews. Andrews conceived of Martinez Ready through his teaching of the UC Berkeley course entitled Earthquakes in Your Backyard.” Recently retired, Andrews is now focusing his energy on teaching Martinez residents what it means to be ready for any disaster.

“Martinez, like many Bay Area communities, could experience prolonged water, electric, and gas outages as well as communications breakdowns following a disaster. It’s vital for everyone living or working in Martinez to ready themselves for an emergency,” Andrews notes.

To receive advance seating, send an email with the subject line “Campbell PEP” to martinez.cert@gmail.com.

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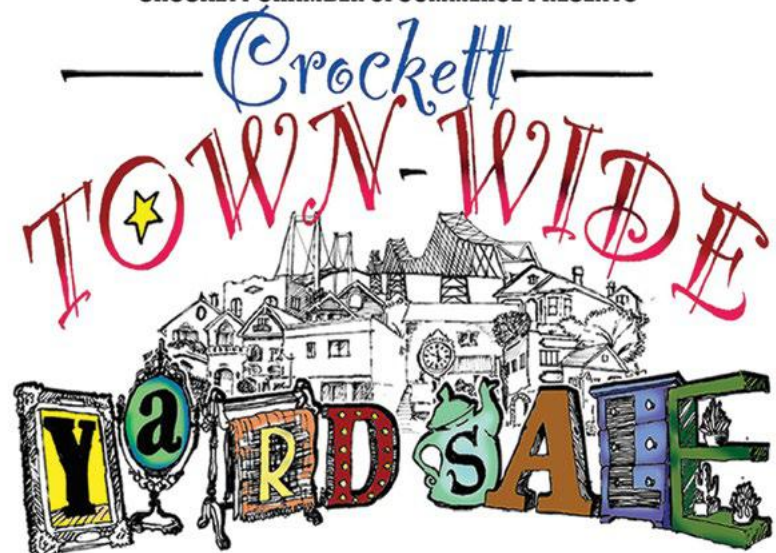
Learn more at ccwater.com/canal



CONTRA COSTA
WATER DISTRICT

**SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2025
8:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M.**

CROCKETT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS



TOWN MAPS FOR SALE AT PLAZA \$5

**FINE COLLECTIBLES, ANTIQUES, DINNERWARE,
CLOTHING AND MUCH MORE!**



Baseball Fever



Catching Baseball Fever

by David King

Baseball has arrived, and there's much to look forward to if you are a baseball fan in the Bay Area. San Francisco Giants have started its season in exciting fashion by owning the third best record in the majors. The Athletics (no longer referred to as Oakland A's) are playing in Sutter Health Park in Sacramento and are playing at a respectable .500 ball level.

Martinez Sturgeons season begins May 22, giving local fans easy access to some semi-pro level games. Martinez has been exceptional in supporting their team, and this year should be no exception. America's favorite pastime is alive. These two pages are loaded with baseball stories, our infectious attempt for you to also catch Baseball Fever.

Martinez Sturgeon Baseball Returns for Fifth Season

Martinez, CA -The Martinez Sturgeon is returning for its fifth season, with games beginning May 22 and continuing through the end of July. The Sturgeon compete in a high-level summer league (The Pecos League - Pacific Division) that draws top semi-pro players and professionally driven athletes from around the country to showcase their skills and develop for the next level in the baseball farm system.

Team Manager Matthew "Skip" Replinger returns to lead the Sturgeon for his third season, bringing consistency, experience, and a winning mindset to the team.

"We'll have a solid well-rounded ballclub with improved pitching this season. Our team has led the league in home runs the past two seasons and we will continue to feature lots of power. Fans can look forward to some exciting baseball."

Eric Halverson returns as General Manager and continues to build a program rooted in talent, integrity, and community involvement. Players play an active role in the community. The team also welcomes sponsorships from local businesses and organizations interested in connecting and engaging with the community while supporting youth athletics.

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

Host a Sturgeon

As the season approaches, the team is seeking host families for players traveling to Martinez from across the U.S. These families provide room, board, and a welcoming environment—an essential part of what makes summer baseball special. "Host families often form lasting bonds with the players they support and usually choose to host the same player each season should they return," Halverson says.



Youth Baseball Camps

Looking for a fun and affordable way to keep your kids active this summer? The Martinez Sturgeon baseball team is excited to offer a series of youth baseball camps led by the Sturgeon players themselves.

These camps are a wonderful opportunity for young athletes ages six to 14 to learn baseball fundamentals, improve their skills, and get

one-on-one coaching from pro level players. It's also a chance to meet the Sturgeon team and experience the game in a fun, encouraging environment. The cost is only \$40 per participant. Check the Sturgeon website for camp dates and signups.

With a strong leadership team and the backing of the local community, the Sturgeon are looking forward to another successful summer of competitive baseball and community pride.

For information about sponsorships, hosting a player, kids camps, or attending games, visit WWW.MartinezSturgeon.com or contact General Manager Eric Halverson at MartinezSturgeon1@gmail.com

My Interview with Joe DiMaggio

by Matt Sieger

In the summer of 1974, between my junior and senior years at Cornell University, I was freelancing for the Ithaca New Times, a weekly newspaper in Ithaca, New York. My editor suggested I write a feature story about the Oneonta Yankees, a New York Yankees farm team in the New York-Penn League (NY-P).

The NY-P was the oldest continuously operated Class A league in professional baseball until its demise after the 2019 season. The Yankees took over the franchise in 1967. Notable Oneonta Yankees alumni include Don Mattingly (1979), Bernie Williams (1987) and Jorge Posada (1991).

The team played at the well-groomed Damaschke Field, where attendance averaged around 1,000 a game. Admission was \$1.25 for adults and 60 cents for children.

I had intended to just spend the day, do my interviews and hitch a ride back home, but General Manager Nick Lambros informed me that I happened to arrive the day before "Famous Yankee Night," an annual promotional event when the team brings in a former Yankee star.

The star that year was Joe DiMaggio! The next evening 3,000 people jammed into Damaschke Field to see Joltin' Joe before the game. He signed autographs, talked with the fans and took a few swings for old times' sake.

Mr. Lambros invited me to a small press conference the next afternoon on his backyard patio. So, after sleeping the night on the floor of an apartment shared by some of the players, I headed over to the press conference.

As we sat on the patio sipping lemonade, Mr. Lambros emerged through the screen door of his home and announced, "Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Joe DiMaggio!" And behind him came the dapper, dignified Yankee Clipper himself.

As a 21-year-old cub reporter, I was in awe as DiMaggio sat down in a lawn chair right next to me. He would turn 60 in November, but apart from the silver hair, he looked like he could still be playing center field for the Bronx Bombers.

As I wrote in my August 24, 1974, article for the Ithaca New Times, "Even if he can no longer hit that high inside fastball, the grace and dignity that characterized him on and off the field still shine through."

What impressed me most was how unassuming and approachable and congenial he was. Here was the great Joe DiMaggio in a tiny town with just a few folks out on the patio, and he treated me and the others with the utmost respect, taking time to fully answer all our questions.

The Yankee Clipper reminisced: "I think I played in one of the most beautiful eras in baseball. At that time, you had



Matt Sieger, far right, interviewed Joe DiMaggio, seated, far left, at a press conference in Oneonta, New York, in 1974.

a different type of fan and a different type of ballplayer. We used to sit in the hotel lobbies and talk baseball for hours. Nowadays all the players have business interests and other things on the side to think about.

"As far as ability, that's hard to say. There were only eight teams in each league when I was playing. Today you have 12, and I believe that's diluted the talent a bit. Also, they're bringing along young ballplayers a little too quickly, so that they come out of the minor leagues unrefined. I remember when I was coaching for Oakland and Reggie Jackson first arrived. He couldn't catch a fly ball. We'd hit it to him, he'd pound the glove a few times, and the ball would drop 20 feet behind him. I'm not kidding."

"There's no perfect ballplayer," said the man who may have been the closest to it. "We all strive for it but there's no one who ever gets there. I worked for hours and hours in practice just charging ground balls."

After talking a little about his famous 56-game hitting streak, DiMaggio was goaded into answering one of the most frequently asked questions: "What was your greatest thrill in baseball?"

"I'll tell you one of them," he replied. "Putting on the New York Yankees pinstripes in spring training for the very first time."

It was such a thrill to interview the Yankee Clipper that day. Who knew that 44 years later I would move to Martinez (Joltin' Joe's home town) and get to share this story with local readers. Hope you enjoyed it!

Matt Sieger is retired and lives in Martinez. A former sports reporter, he is the author of "The God Squad: The Born-Again San Francisco Giants of 1978." A longer version of this article first appeared in The Martinez News-Gazette.



God Must Be a Yankee Fan

by David King

When Concord Pastor Willy Vega was invited to attend an A's game by then Vice-Mayor Edi Birsan, he was beside himself. Birsan and Pastor Vega had met a few years ago at a concert. They discovered that they were both New Yorkers and instantly bonded. For this invitation, the A's would be hosting the New York Yankees.

Pastor Willy is a diehard Yankees fan. So much so, he had named his son Yankee, Wilfredo Yankee Vega. Naturally, Yankee grew up as a Yankee fan, even though at age 15, he had never seen them play or even been to a major league game. But that was about to change as Pastor Vega was allowed to bring a guest.

So, on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, they headed to the A's vs. NY Yankees game. At this point, the day couldn't get any better for Pastor Willy and son Yankee. As the game began, the stadium appeared to have more Yankee fans in seats than A's fans.

In the third inning, a foul ball landed a



Domina German fires a perfect game against the Oakland A's on June 28, 2023

couple of rows in front of them. "I would have caught that ball," Pastor Willy had boasted to Birsan.

Birsan responded. "I've got a glove in my bag. I always bring my glove." Except Birsan hands the glove to Yankee. "Just maybe he will get lucky enough and catch a ball and make this an even better best day ever."

During a promotional break between innings, the A's marketing team tosses souvenir baseballs from the booth window into the stands. Yankee heads over near the window with his glove.

Moments later, Yankee is running back. "Look Dad," as he revealed a baseball from behind his back. "I caught the very first ball." Yankee was so overjoyed he asked his dad to sign it for bringing him to his first ever baseball game.

Still wearing the glove, Yankee moved away from the others to sit in a more open area closer to where the earlier foul ball had landed. In the eighth inning

a screaming foul ball rocketed towards them. Yankee leaned over the rows, reached with his glove, and sure enough, he caught it!

Everyone was surprised. "I've been here many times, and I have never caught a foul ball!" Birsan proclaimed.

By now the game is well on its way to a Yankee shutout. "How special it would be if my son's first game was a Yankee shutout and he caught a foul ball." Pastor Willy told the group.

But on this day, it wasn't just a no hitter. This was the game that Yankee Pitcher Domino German threw a perfect game, a feat which hasn't happened since 2012. In fact, it was only the 24th perfect game in Major League Baseball history and only the fourth thrown by a NY Yankee.

What did Yankee have to say about his first professional baseball game?

"I had fun because I was with my dad. It was almost magical because it wasn't just a normal game. There were a bunch of cool moments happening. I sat with the Mayor, I caught a foul ball, it was a perfect game, my name is Yankee. It was really a fun night," he answered.

Indeed, this extraordinary night was perfect. The stars were aligned for Yankee and Pastor Willy which could only have one plausible explanation—divine intervention. God must be a Yankee fan.

Alhambra High Softball Ace Reaches 300 K's

Congratulations to Alhambra High softball ace Willa Adler on reaching the 300-strikeout career milestone while tossing a 3-0 shutout over Northgate on Aug. 15. Quite a feat for Adler and well documented by this Instagram post.



Martinez Event City Revitalized to Host Your Next Event

The Martinez Event Center has opened its doors for special events, rehearsal dinners, wedding ceremonies, receptions, bridal showers, family reunions, private parties, corporate events, non-profit and fundraising events. You name it. The previously under-utilized center has been revitalized since it was purchased in February of 2024 by Prabin Regmi. "I thought that event center has a lot of potential." Now that he's begun promoting its availability they've been getting a lot of bookings.

Regmi expects the center to also attract events to Martinez from neighboring communities. The beautiful 5,000 sq ft. full-service banquet room has seating capacity for parties up to 200 guests.

Regmi says the Center's event planning staff will take the stress out of planning and create a spectacular celebration for your special event. "We are here to help you plan a memorable event. Our professional staff will take every measure to fulfill your



wishes." They offer bar and drinks, food and catering, equipment rentals and service staff.

"I'm willing to work with

people on price. I'm working with a lot of nonprofit, public sector and businesses. The public sector gets a special discounted rate with me all the time."

The choice is yours—rent the room and bring in your own caterer or choose our full-service catering option provided by La Tapatia Mexican Cuisine. You will save 10% on your room rental if you book full service. The Martinez Event Center is located on Main Street in beautiful Historic downtown Martinez, adjacent to La Tapatia Mexican Restaurant.

Save the Date: May 31, for Crockett's town-wide Yard Sale!

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2025 Martinez SCHEDULE

DATE	HOME	AWAY	NEUTRAL	SPONSOR	TIME
MAY 25	DUB	BAK			7:00 PM
MAY 26	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
MAY 27	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM
MAY 28	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
MAY 29	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM
MAY 30	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
MAY 31	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM
JUNE 1	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
JUNE 2	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM
JUNE 3	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
JUNE 4	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM
JUNE 5	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
JUNE 6	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM
JUNE 7	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
JUNE 8	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM
JUNE 9	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
JUNE 10	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM
JUNE 11	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
JUNE 12	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM
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JUNE 29	DUB	SRF			7:00 PM
JUNE 30	SRF	DUB			7:00 PM

MTZ - MARTINEZ STURGEON SRF - SAN RAFAEL PACIFIC VAL - VALLEJO SEAWARD DUB - DUBLIN LEPRECHAUNS BAK - BAKERSFIELD TRAIN ROBBER

www.martinezsturgeon.com



Resolutions Honor A Living History

In a world full of uncertainty, it's more important than ever to shine a light on the good within our community. As J.R.R. Tolkien once wrote, "May it be a light to you in dark places, when all other lights go out."

At each Board of Supervisors meeting, resolutions appear under consent items. Though often overlooked on the agenda, these official proclamations are a vital part of our public record—preserved for generations to come. Sponsored by individual Board Members or County departments, resolutions honor extraordinary individuals, organizations, cities, and county employees, helping to tell the story of who we are as a County.

Resolutions adopted by the Board of Supervisors serve as a living archive of achievement, resilience, and service. They mark significant milestones—such as the 40th Anniversary of the Clayton Business and Community Association—and elevate important observances like Red Cross Awareness Month and Mental Health Awareness Month.

During my time in office, I've had the privilege of recognizing many exceptional individuals.

Last year, I honored Holotta Tymes, a powerful advocate and unsung hero in the LGBTQIA+ community. As co-owner of Walnut Creek's Club 1220, Holotta has helped provide a safe and affirming space for LGBTQIA+ individuals. Holotta's leadership has

fueled countless charitable efforts supporting causes like AIDS/Lifecycle, Camp Sunshine, and Pride on the Plaza in Concord.

More recently, I recognized Tommy Kaufmann, the 2025 Corpsmember of the Year—a national honor awarded to young leaders in the Service and Conservation Corps. Tommy has been a member of Civicorps since 2022, which helps young adults build brighter futures through education, job training, and environmental stewardship. He spoke at a recent Board of Supervisors meeting where his pride was evident as he advocated Civicorps.

Resolutions also celebrate cultures, genders, and holidays. In March, the Board recognized César Chávez Day and Women's History Month; in May, we will honor Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Pride Month, we will recognize in June. Resolutions provide an opportunity for different segments of Contra Costa to shine and to be shared with others, which is becoming ever more important.

Resolutions reflect more than ceremonial gestures—they highlight the individuals and initiatives that strengthen the fabric of Contra Costa County and celebrate leadership, service, and community. To view upcoming agendas and recognitions, please visit <https://contra-costa.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

Clayton Valley High Athletic HOF Bocce Tourney Results

Twelve teams entered the Clayton Valley High Athletic Hall of Fame (CVHSHOF) Bocce Tournament on April 12 at the Skippolini's Bocce Courts in Clayton, and it was as competitive as advertised.

First Place: Game of Thrones
Second Place: Ed's Mudville Grill
Third Place: Take It In
Fourth Place: JR Electric

Funds from the entry fees went to benefit the CVHSHOF and its annual induction dinner and ceremony on May 2.

The CVHOF thanks all those who entered the tournament.



First Place: Game of Thrones - L-R Scott Doolittle, Concord; Scott Hickman, Antioch; Mark Hickman, Antioch; Joey Fowler, Antioch



"The Wonders of Plein Air"



Artists attended the third annual "Paint-Out" at aRt Cottage. works will be displayed during the Plein Air exhibit in May and June..

It takes a village, a community effort of giving people who make aRt Cottage a miracle place.

All good things take time. When May arrives, aRt Cottage has a show called the plein air exhibit which I've been eagerly waiting for since last year. This is where local artists create a masterpiece in the out-of-doors. They had a Paint-out here at aRt Cottage. It has become an annual event and we celebrate it with their work in May and June.

They usually start early in the morning and paint for about two hours or more and complete their entire piece on site. Whether it's a hot day, cold day, or winds pick up, they endure and finish.

There are 20+ artists participating in the show, and there are over 50 paintings. Each painting seems to have its own feel of the environment and portray the weather of the day. When visiting the gallery, you will more than likely recognize the majority of the portrayed locations.

aRt Cottage is most thankful for all the professional help our plein air painter, Lori Larks, has given to this exhibit in placing and hanging each piece in just the right spot. All I can say is, "You 'nailed' it again Lori, thank you."

The Wonders of Plein Air will have its opening reception May 3 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The show will run through June 25.

aRt Cottage is located at 2238 Mt. Diablo St. in downtown Concord. All are welcome. This is a free event.



Russian River by Marina Omelianenko



Fro's Garden by Jenna Hobbs



Bancroft HOfestead

Lamorinda Arts Alliance Exhibit "Art Passages" in Martinez

by Samantha McNally

The exhibition "Art Passages" at the County Administration Building in Martinez showcases the artwork of three Lamorinda Arts Alliance member artists along with other artists from four other art organizations.

Lamorinda Art Alliance member Pamela McCauley juried three figurative artworks out of 36 entries for this show.

Participating artists include Denise Hillman, Connie Millholland and Sharon Tama.

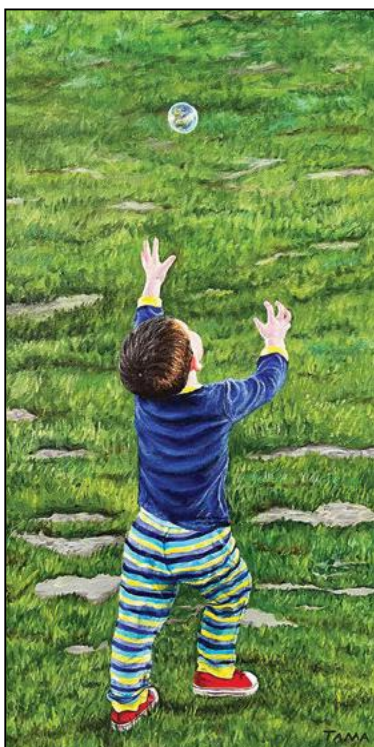
The exhibit runs through July 7 with an open house reception June 12 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

The County Administration Building is located at 1025 Escobar Street, Martinez, and is open Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The exhibit is free to view.

Lamorinda Arts Alliance is an organization of local artists and friends who reside or work in the area. For more than two decades, the Lamorinda

Arts Alliance has promoted visual arts through exhibits in libraries and businesses, at open studio events, street fairs, and lectures, and in the community's art galleries.

Lamorinda Arts Alliance website: www.laa4art.org



Sharon Tama "The Elusive Bubble"



Denise Hillman - The Overlook



Connie Millholland "Passersby"

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