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MCE, Concord Residents' New Energy Provider

Concord residents should have received the first of four mailers from MCE, the new community choice energy not-for-profit company that will start providing service to all Concord residences and businesses in April. MCE allows residents to choose if they want their electricity to come from 50% renewable sources or 100% renewable sources. Customers can also choose to stay with PG&E for their electricity; PG&E electricity is about 30% renewable. Typically, MCE service costs the same or slightly less than PG&E.

MCE is in the process of informing residents about their electricity choices through a series of mailers. The City joined MCE last year. Per State law, Community Choice programs are opt-out programs. This means that because the City joined MCE, everyone in the City will automatically be enrolled in MCE but may opt out and stay with PG&E if they wish. PG&E will continue to transmit, distribute, and bill for the electricity service.

On Thursday, March 22 at 6 p.m., the City and MCE will host a Town Hall meeting, and on Monday, April 9 at 7 p.m., the City and MCE will host a solar

workshop. Both meetings will be held in the Concord City Council Chamber at Civic Center, 1950 Parkside Drive.

This is your opportunity to learn how the program works, its potential for local economic and environmental benefits, and the various program options available.

MCE currently serves residents and businesses in Marin County, Napa County, and the cities of Richmond, Benicia, El Cerrito, San Pablo, Walnut Creek, and Lafayette. In April, in addition to Concord, MCE will begin providing service to the cities of Danville, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Pinole, Pittsburg, San Ramon, and unincorporated Contra Costa County in April.

Benefits of joining MCE include: providing customer choice, establishing local control, expanding renewable energy portfolios, enhancing local economic development, and implementing the City-wide Climate Action Plan to achieve City and State environmental goals.

For more information, visit www.cityofconcord.org/mce or contact MCE at (888) 632-3674.

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legalbriefs

by Douglas A. Prutton, Attorney

Doug@PruttonLaw.com

Tinder Dating App Pricing Discrimination?

Wally Wrinkles limped into the lawyer's office, grimaced, and flopped into the chair. "How ya' doing, Wally," the lawyer asked, hoping that Wally would not truthfully expound on his various ailments and anxieties. "How can I help you?"

"Well, counselor, have you ever heard of Tinder, the on-line dating app?"

The lawyer, who had three grown daughters of his own, was aware of Tinder, but was beginning to wonder where this conversation was headed. "Yes, I've heard of Tinder," he responded.

"Have you scrolled through the pictures on Tinder?" Wally winked with a smile.

"Nope, I haven't gotten around to that," the lawyer said, thinking to himself that this was getting a bit creepy.

"Well you should, but anyway, I signed up the other day (now it was really getting creepy) and I think my legal rights may have been violated."

The lawyer's mind was churning – what did this guy do?

Wally explained, "Although Tinder is usually free, I signed up for 'TinderPlus' at twenty bucks a month. Then I found out my grandson, who is 19 years old, also signed up for TinderPlus, but they only charged him 10 bucks a month because he was under the age of 30. Isn't that age discrimination?"

"I think I agree with you, Wally," the lawyer responded. "There are two laws in California that are violated by this pricing policy by Tinder. First, the Unruh Civil Rights Act declares that all persons 'are entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges, or services in all business establishments of every kind whatsoever.' Second, the Unfair Competition Law forbids all unlawful, unfair, or fraudulent business acts or practices."

The lawyer's conclusions are backed by the recent case of Candelore v. Tinder, Inc., decided on January 29, 2018 by the Second District Court of Appeals in Los Angeles. Tinder argued that it's pricing policy was based on market research that showed that people under the age of 30 were "more budget-restrained," i.e., they had less money. The Court acknowledged that this might generally be true, but, worried about where such an argument might lead: "Were Tinder's justification sufficient, generalizations about the relative incomes of different age groups could be employed to rationalize higher prices for all consumers 30 and older in

even the most essential areas of commerce – such as grocery shopping, gasoline purchases, etc. ... It is inconceivable that an antidiscrimination law like the Unruh Act would countenance a grocer charging an unemployed 31-year-old patron twice as much as an employed 28-year-old customer merely on the basis of market testing showing that those over the age of 30 'as a group' generally earn more than 18 to 29-year-olds."

The Court did acknowledge that some generalized price discounts are lawful, such as those in favor of children and seniors, but those discounts are independently justified by compelling social policy considerations." Also, the Court acknowledged that another California Court of Appeal had reached a different conclusion in a similar case – in Javorsky v. Western Athletic Clubs, the court upheld a luxury health club's age-based discount for 18 to 29-year-olds. Because of this conflict between two courts of appeal in California, the California Supreme Court may need to address the issue and resolve the conflict.

The Unruh Civil Rights Act which forbids most discrimination by businesses, and the Unfair Competition Law which forbids "unfair" business acts and practices, are broad powerful laws in California that apply in many areas beyond just price discounts.

Tinder	
1	Tinder Plus \$9.99
2	Package of 5 Super Likes \$4.99
3	Tinder Plus \$19.99
4	1 Boost \$3.99
5	Package of 5 Super Likes \$4.99
6	Tinder Plus \$9.99
7	Tinder Plus \$2.99
8	Tinder Plus \$34.99
9	Package of 5 Boosts \$14.99
10	package of 25 Super Likes \$19.99

According to Lifehack.com, the screenshot shown is Tinder's current top in-app purchases on the iOS App Store. Tinder Plus has five different price listings, ranging from \$2.99 all the way up to \$34.99. The most common one is the \$9.99 plan that's for individuals 28 or younger in the U.S., and the second most common one being the \$19.99 plan for individuals 28 or older.



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Blossoms For Barbara



The Clayton Valley Garden Club's seventh annual 'Blossoms for Barbara' Valentines event was a blooming hit again this year. They delivered 1,311 gifts of love and compassion for Valentine's Day. The flowering plants were gifted to those under hospice care, shut-in patients in assisted living and convalescent locations, battered Woman's Shelters, a Veterans Hospice, and the elderly and shut-in recipients of Meals on Wheels in the Contra Costa area.

Linda Karp, the events founder and Chair, was thrilled to receive a request to do a television news story for Ch2 FOX news with Anchor Frank Millacoat. The story about this wonderful event aired throughout Valentines Day. The news crew with camera in tow followed Linda and her team to some of their delivery locations. Meals on Wheels and Senior Out Reach Executive Director Elaine Clark said "Linda and her group have extended the life of these folks."



At Concord Royal assisted living location, residents were surprised and extremely delighted recipients of the lovely blooms. Through the smiles on their faces, many recipients said that they haven't received flowers until now.

Linda created this event in loving memory of her mother Barbara who had passed away. Linda wanted to bring a little joy to those who were dying, and their families which were dealing with the horrible grief of losing someone they loved. Over these past seven years the hearts of 5,656 recipients have been touched. Linda never anticipated touching the hearts of the executives, caregivers, nurses, min-



isters, counselors, and volunteers who were helping to deliver the flowers.

"We will continue to touch even more hearts and gift even more flowering plants to those so much in need of a little love and kindness, we look forward to next Valentines," Linda promised.

Donations for this event is gratefully appreciated, and can be mailed to Clayton Valley Garden Club, c/o Blossoms for Barbara, P.O. Box 633, Clayton, CA 94517.



Group picture: Linda Karp, Marlene Kinney, Robin Willis, Carolyn Whitmore, Patty Remoy, Carla Thompson, Carin Kaplan, Dorothy Bradt, Lew Thompson, Betty Armes, Sharon Osteen, Brenda Orcutt, Nicole Hackett.



Jennifer Stojanovich
Realtor, Better Homes Realty

Must-Ask Questions Before Buying a Home

Buying a home is one of the biggest financial transactions you will make in a lifetime. As such, it is one you should not enter into without being fully informed. By being armed with knowledge, you will make better decisions and feel more confident. Here's your checklist of must-ask questions you need to pose before buying a home.

How much house can I afford and are my finances ready? When calculating how much you can afford to spend on a home, you need to take into consideration more than just the listing price. You will also need to budget for repairs, renovations, closing costs, and homeowner's insurance. Find out how much you can really afford by contacting a qualified loan officer. You should get pre-approved for a mortgage before making an offer, to signal to a seller that you are a serious buyer.

What is the history of the home? When was the last time the house sold, and for how much? This information is easy to find online. Have there been any recent renovations, additions or major repairs? How old is the roof? Have there ever been any broken pipes? Are there warranties on any of the appliances that are staying with the house? Has anything strange ever happened there? The more you know upfront, the less likely you'll be surprised by issues that might come up in the future.

Is it in a good location? Location is

paramount when it comes to real estate. You're not just buying a home, you are buying the neighborhood, too. What is the crime like in the area? Are the streets dark at night? Are there sidewalks? Is it near amenities, like restaurants, gas stations and grocery stores? How well do the neighbors keep up their properties? What are the schools like? Is the neighborhood noisy or fairly quiet?

What are the costs of living in this house? Not only will you be making monthly mortgage payments, but you'll have other expenses, too. How much do the utilities generally run? What are the annual property taxes? How much will you spend commuting back and forth to work? Will you need to replace any appliances soon, or make any major repairs? How much are HOA fees?

How much should I offer? Once you've found the house you like and asked all the questions you need to about it, it's time to consider how much you want to offer. If your offer price is too low, you might get outbid. However, if you offer too much, the house might appraise for less and you'll have trouble securing your mortgage. Your agent should help you find comps in the neighborhood that will tell you what homes like yours are selling for. Be prepared with your counteroffer if you're buying in a competitive market.

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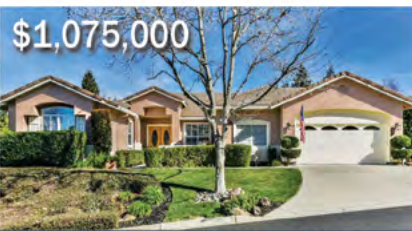
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with Tillie Turner *Views of the Valley* Photos by Micah



Kiwanis Officer of the Year. Assemblyman Tim Grayson honors Concord Detective Rey Valeros for his work with Mt. Diablo High School students and other schools. Police Chief, Guy Switzer, looking on.



The Leung White Crane Lion Dancers performed a Lion Dance at the Martinez Library to bring in the Chinese New Year, Year of the Dog.



Larpers in action at DunDraCon 42 Gaming Conference at the San Ramon Marriott



Heroes and villains arrived by the hundreds at the East Bay Comic-Con at the Concord Crowne Plaza.



The Pentagon? No, would-be generals play war games at DunDracon.

**parentfootprints**by Dr. Dan Peters www.DrDanPeters.com

What To Do When Your Child is a Worrier

Worry may appear in your children in all sorts of fashions. Is your child afraid of being alone or away from you or your co-parent? Is your child fearful of "bad" things happening or of closed places like in the closet or under the bed? Is your child scared of getting bad grades or failing in school? Or does your child get anxious when they aren't allowed to be the boss or control things amongst their friends and school peers? All of these suggest your child may be worrying.

The first thing you can do is to identify this feeling with your child as an actual Worry Monster, a mythical creature whose job it is to make them feel scared. Giving this feeling a name and a living and breathing presence allows your child to imagine this feeling (monster) as being outside of them and separate from them, allowing you to battle the Worry Monster (worry and fear) together. You can even find a picture or draw one of a goofy, funny monster character. Then it's time to start helping your child learn more skills to help drive this monster away.

First, we need to help your child understand that most worries stem from the Worry Monster tricking us into feeling uncomfortable or scared by messing with your thoughts. When we first feel one of these irrational thoughts, or thoughts that aren't true, a small almond-shaped group of neurons in our brain called the amygdala goes off like a fire alarm. This is what triggers the "fight or flight" response. Our survival response is just that – it is designed to keep us alive! In

order to do that, a slew of adrenaline is sent to our arms and legs to help us run or escape. However, this natural survival response causes a host of physiological symptoms within us such as heavy breathing, stomach pain, light headedness, heart palpitations, lump in the throat, clenched teeth, cold hands, etc. I have found it incredibly helpful to explain this response to children so that their body's reactions to their fears become less of a mystery and scary to them. This helps them to feel empowered by knowing that it is just the Worry Monster making his visit again. This information tends to be very fascinating to kids, and again, helps them separate from the awful feelings.

Then it's important to remind your children that these scary and overwhelming mental and physical sensations always DO go away. Let them know it's like surfing a wave and they will get through it if they hang on for the ride.

Through this process of understanding what worry is and what worry does, your child will learn that in the end they have the power to drive the monster away. By using their thinking brain (which understands all this solid information you've given them) over their emotional brain, your child can work towards being happier and more productive.

For more information about the Worry Monster you can check out my companion books for parent and kids: Make Your Worrier a Warrior and From Worrier to Warrior.

**concordmayor**by Edi Birsan, Email me CityCouncil@cityofconcord.org
Add EDI in subject line

Forming Election Districts

On February 27th the Concord City Council complied with the demand for forming Election Districts based on a law suit filed against it with the process of the California Voter Rights Act. The process was fairly straight forward in that you have a demographer provide a background image of the city reflecting the various recognized minorities, a couple of open meetings were held at City Hall and more than a couple were held in communities, then four possible maps were created by the demographer on that information, they were reviewed, and refined to one preferred plan and then that was looked at and compared to changes requested. Voted on the Council and off you go.

There was a lot of noise around the process being short: 135 days as dictated by the state legislature procedures when a law suit was filed. People complained, about not having enough outreach, about transparency and why not this or that and when not getting exactly what they wanted, then attacking the Council for not listening. In several cases, the Council ordered changes based on public suggestions, and in other cases suggestions were turned down.

What was forgotten was that this subject has been around for years, in fact decades. Not only have I been arguing for a district approach for the last ten years, but in the 90's Mayor Ron Mullin argued for it and in the 80's candidate

Steve Williams pushed the idea forward. Where was all the passion when this concept was brought up before? It was presented to the City Council every year for the last several years as part of reports on the League of City meetings. Neither the Council, nor the public were moved to action by it, until there was a law suit and the matter was forced.

There is a story that my Dear Old Dad would say: "In the old country there was a young boy who was seriously crippled by a street accident. He went to the priest and said that he asked the Divine to cure him. The priest instructed him on some rituals and encouraged him to continue. The child was still distraught week after week. Finally, the High Priest was coming by the village and the village priest brought the boy to them. The boy complained that he had prayed and performed the rituals, but the Divine was not listening to him. To which the High Priest told the boy: "No is also an answer".

In politics, "No" is the hardest answer to be heard.

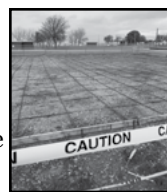
We must redo all this in three years and the nature, power, and make-up of a Commission to work on the next set of District lines will be a new issue, but will it be insisted on by folks at the ballot box, or will it fade away until the last minute?

Clayton Rotary Club Builds Concord Youth Baseball Batting Cages

Jr. Optimist Baseball League players in Concord have new batting cages thanks to fund-raising and construction efforts by members of the Clayton Valley/Concord Sunrise Rotary Club. In a team effort, volunteers from Rotary District 5160 and JOBL poured concrete and set the cages at the JOBL ballfields near the Tesoro refinery close to Solano Way in Concord.

The project was conceived of and managed by Clayton Valley/Concord Sunrise Rotary Club president Dr. Tommy Wolf, D.C. Other club members joined Dr. Wolf in writing a grant proposal, doing other fundraising, tying rebar and setting cages.

The cement platform is 70 x 70 feet and supports four 55-foot batting cages. Nearly a thousand children all over Contra Costa County use the baseball fields,



with programs for boys ages 4-18 affiliated with Babe Ruth Baseball and girls ages 5-16 affiliated with American Softball Association and Babe Ruth Softball.

"This project demonstrates Rotary's commitment to our youth, both today in our future," said Bob Hooy, past president of Clayton Valley/Concord Sunrise Rotary. "This is important because baseball is a common ground for international cultures. It gives children, kids, and teens, regardless of their socio-economic status, the chance to meet new friends that can broaden their culture."

Construction and installation costs totaled \$26,000.00. Roto-Rooter supplied gravel and Central Concrete provided concrete for the foundation. Baseballtips.com provided the cages at discount.



JOBL, founded in 1963, is an all-volunteer youth organization dedicated to teaching baseball and softball to area youth, primarily from Concord, Martinez, Clayton, Pittsburg, Clyde and Walnut Creek. It operates 15 playing fields at the Tesoro site.

"Baseball got me into college, which led to my post-graduate doctorate degrees," said Dr. Wolf. "I'm pleased to give that same opportunity to the next generation."

**computercorner**

by William Claney, Computers USA

Tech in English

Bad Windows Update Locks Your Screen

Have you ever had your computer lock up and not work after a software update? Well, if you haven't already you will likely experience this thrill. This heart stopping event will remind you that a good backup copy is essential. But, knowing which patches to install in the first place may be a better idea. Can one prevent installing a bad patch?

Woody Leonhard, columnist for Computerworld may have said it best, "Microsoft Patch Alert" February's fixes aren't as bad as last month, but problems abound... All is not well."

A "patch" is a software update meant to fix previous errors and add new features. Sometimes these patches seem to create more errors than they fix. In Windows 10, problems like the Blue Screen of Death occur. This involves displaying a blue screen background with text letting you know your computer is not going to boot today. For Windows 7 users, you get the Black Screen of Death with the same results, your computer will not start, also bad news.

But trust me, said the man with three walnut shells and a pea, Microsoft is working on the issues and as far as I know, the Russians were not involved. Although it is important to update your computer on a regular basis to keep up with the security fixes, how do you identify those that should be installed from those that shouldn't?

How do you know when to patch (update) your computer and when to wait until the bugs are out of the software? One way is trial and error, another is to

wait for the complaints to die down, or even better, use a managed service from an MSP (Managed Service Provider).

Most patch updates go off without a hitch. Failed updates could be a result of your computer software, BIOS configurations or odd firmware settings. There is really no way to predict which of these will kill your computer. Always have a backup handy. If you don't have a backup, call us.

From Betanews, Microsoft is releasing the Windows 10 Spring Creators Update (build 17110), that will address some of these issues. My best suggestion is to wait a period of time if the patch is not critical to security, like two or three weeks after the patch is released, before you install it. An MSP will test the patches before they are released to you. A patch service is inexpensive and could save you a lot of grief.

Check into hiring a Managed Service Provider to support you.

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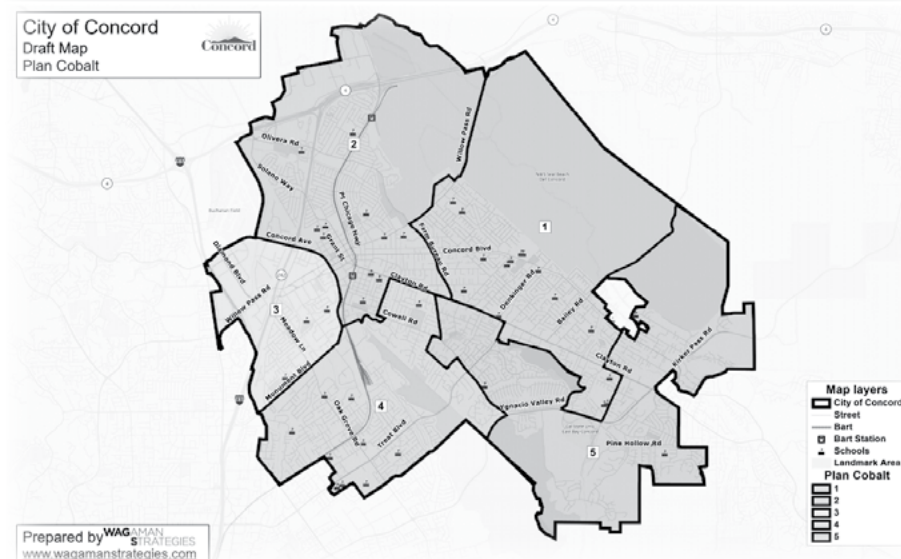
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Council District Election Map Selected for November 2018 Election



At the February 27 City Council meeting, the fourth public hearing was held on proposed district boundary maps and the draft ordinance to establish five Council voting districts. The City Council voted to introduce Ordinance 18-2 and waive further reading, which established the Cobalt Plan map as the map setting five Council District boundaries that will apply in the November 2018 District Elections. The adoption of the ordinance will occur on March 6, 2018. The Council also directed staff to propose a work plan to explore the establishment of an independent commission for the next re-dis-

tricting effort which will occur after the 2020 U.S. Census Data has been received by the City, before the 2022 election. Until now, five City Councilmembers were elected at-large, meaning that all registered voters had the opportunity to vote for all five council positions. Under the new system, City Councilmembers will be elected by district. One Councilmember, who lives in a district, will be elected by registered voters who also live in the same district. This process has allowed the City to become compliant with the California Voting Rights Act of 2001.

Sneak Peek: Pacheco Clay Portrait Sculpture

by David King

We heard from Master Sculptor Paula Slater who is diligently working on the life-size Father Don Salvio Pacheco bronze statue for unveiling at Concord's Sesquicentennial Celebration on July 4th. In an e-mail message to the Concord Historical Society and City of Concord, and Concord Art Association early February, she was almost done with the clay portrait sculpture and sent along a few photos revealing the incredible intricate details of the 7-foot sculpture.

"I've been very busy sculpting the Pacheco portrait with tons of fine detailing--down to his watch chain, button hold threads, and veins on the back of his hand. This is going to look so incredible in bronze--I think it will be one of my favorite portrait sculptures!"

One look at these images, and we share in her excitement. There are several steps yet to go before completion. A silicon mold must be made, then it will be divided into eight pieces and sent to a foundry to pour the bronze, which is bright brassy color. The pieces will be welded back together and polished. Then a patina artist will perfect the final touches through patinization, a process of applying high heat and chemicals to give it the texture and the proper bronze coloring.

Locked in the granite base of the statue,



150th Celebration Committee : L-R Leslye Asera, Florence Weiss, Lisa Fulmer, Marilyn Fowler, Nellie Meyer, Brandy Leidgen, Ron Leone, Suzie Swift, Carol Longshore, Ray Barbour, JoAnne Fryer, Carlyn Obringer, Julie Marquardt, Justin Ezell

the Concord Historical Society will place a time capsule approximately 20" x 4" with five to ten items of current memorabilia to store for another 150 years to be opened in the year 2168. Items suggested

for the time capsule are an iphone, gas prices, photos, movie ticket/poster, and newspaper. "We would like to get some ideas from the community," Brandy Leidgen who is on the celebration committee. "Perhaps your

readers or those of Claycord.com can give us for some ideas."

Personally, we think a copy of the July 2018 Diablo Gazette would be a good idea.

On another note, the members of the Concord Historical Society and celebration committee expressed their gratitude to all the local businesses and residents who sponsored bricks and tiles to be placed around the base of the statue. "We are completely sold out," Brandy stated. "Those purchases are what funded this project. We are lucky to have found Paula, and lucky to have such great people in our community to support this."

My Failed Foray Into International Diplomacy

Franklin Burroughs of Concord is an Adjunct Professor at John F. Kennedy University. At one time he lived in Iran for 15 years and served as the Executive Director of US-Iran Chamber of Commerce.

Before the Islamic Revolution, Mohammed Reza Shah Pavli attempted to inform President Carter of his willingness to establish a constitutional monarchy. Later, US asked Burroughs for help to communicate with a religious ally to overthrow Ayatollah. In both instances, Burroughs served as the potential intermediary. He shared with the *Diablo Gazette*, his role between the US and Iran, just weeks surrounding the historic

encouraging remarks following his New Year's Eve visit to Tehran, he has not communicated with me at all," the Shah stated.

The Shah feared Carter favored his deposition. He felt the nation of Iran could be kept from extreme turmoil if he abdicated in favor of the Crown Prince and supported the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.

The talk really proved to be an expression of the Shah's concern about Carter's apparent ambivalence related to Iran and the continuation of the monarchy. The Shah explained he had attempted to communicate further with President Carter following the New Year's Eve gathering in Tehran, but his efforts had been rebuffed. The usual channels of diplomacy, the Shah reasoned, might involve too much prejudice either for or against him, and so he had decided to make his proposal through a private emissary, me.

He wanted to discover, if possible, what President Carter had in mind for him and Iran. He offered on the spot to abdicate in favor of the Crown Prince and conduct an election for the purpose of establishing a constitutional monarchy under the direct leadership of a prime minister.

I had been selected as the emissary since I served as the Managing Director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Tehran and had lived in Tehran for several years. I could hardly contain my excitement. I would be representing the reigning monarch of the ancient Kingdom of Iran, an honor I had never thought possible but had dreamed of for many years.

I readily agreed to make every effort to convey the Shah's message to President Carter. I explained that I was leaving for the United States within a few days to attend a U. S. Chamber of Commerce conference and would attempt to obtain an appointment at the White House through the U.S. Embassy prior to my departure.

I introduced the Shah's request to the



intern but requested that I remain for few minutes for a brief discussion.

He asked me if I would be willing to represent him and his interests to President Carter. This caught me completely off guard. Nervously, I asked what interests the Shah had in mind.

"I can't seem to discover how to work with Mr. Carter," he said. "After his initial

U.S. Embassy in Tehran and inquired as to whether an appointment could be arranged during my visit to Washington. After a couple of days, I was told that I should be in touch with the White House upon my arrival in Washington.

Shah continues on page 19....

Your March 2018 Guide to the Bay Area**The Diablo Gazette's****ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE**

March 11 - Daylight Savings, move clocks forward one hour.

March 17 - St. Patrick's Day

March 20 - Vernal Equinox at 9:15 a.m. first day of Spring

April 1 - Easter, no foolin'

FUNDRAISERS

Pancake Breakfast - Supporting Veterans of Foreign Wars - 2nd and 4th Sundays includes eggs, pancakes, sausage, beverage. 8 - 11 a.m. Willow Pass Road, Concord \$5 buys a terrific breakfast. <http://www.vfwpost1525.org>

Music and Market Series

Funding for Concord's Music and Market concert series was lost with the elimination of the Concord Redevelopment Agency. Thanks to generous donations from local businesses, fund-raising events collected throughout the year, enough support was raised to continue the Thursday Music and Market series. Elected officials and volunteers are now working to raise support for the season. To Make a Donation Make checks payable to: City of Concord -- Mail to: City of Concord Music Donation, 1950 Parkside Drive, MS 1B Concord, CA 94519

April 7-Ygnacio Valley Christian School Golf Tournament. For reservations or questions email: golf2018@yvc.school.org Price Per Person: \$140 includes golf, cart, snacks, drink ticket and post round BBQ. Sponsorships available. Boundary Oak Golf Course, 3800 Valley Vista Rd. Walnut Creek.

OUTDOORS

Concord: Todos Santos Park OFF the Grid Mondays. offering cuisine from around the world from 5 to 9 p.m. Full lineup available at <http://offthegridsf.com>.

Farmers' Markets

Concord Tuesdays, 10am to 2pm, year-round, rain or shine.
Martinez Sundays, 10am to 2pm, year-round, Main St. and Estudillo.
Walnut Creek Diablo Valley Farmers Market Saturday 9a.m. - 1 p.m. Shadelands Business Park, N. Wigett Lane and Mitchell Dr. Also, from Contra Costa Certified Farmers Market - North Locust St between Giamona and Lacassie St. Sundays 9 am - 1 pm, Year Round, (925) 431-8361 <http://www.cccfm.org>

Camp Concord - Affordable Family Vacations in Lake Tahoe. 2018 Family Camp Dates: Friday, June 22 - Saturday, July 14; Monday, July 30 - Friday, August 12 You choose the length of your stay. You choose your arrival and departure days.

March 31- Spring Brews Festival 2018 One of the best craft beer festivals in the Bay Area returns to Todos Santos Plaza in Concord for its ninth year. Unlimited tasting from over 60 craft breweries, live music, and great food. All attendees must be of legal drinking age, including designated drivers. Proceeds benefit the TSBA Arts Foundation, which

helps fund the summer music program in Todos Santos Park, as well as youth music programs around Concord. Tickets are now on sale and are \$40 pre-sale online at www.thebrewingnetwork.com/spring-brews-festival-2018/ or \$50 at the gate and include unlimited pours and a commemorative glass. Designated Drivers are just \$5. Rain or shine, the beer will flow.

CLUB/SUPPORT GROUPS' NEWS AND EVENTS

Galindo Home and Gardens Tours - 1721 Amador Avenue, Concord. Visit the fully-restored 1856 Victorian home of Francisco Galindo, one of Concord's founding fathers, and his wife, Maria Dolores Manuela (Pacheco) Galindo. This includes the 1875 addition by Francisco Galindo's son, Juan "John" Galindo. No reservations needed. Fee \$5 for adults and children over 12. One of only a few Victorian ranch houses in the country. By 1880, the structure was reconfigured in the Queen Anne style, with bay windows, sweeping steps, and a broad porch. Visitors can tour the 10 rooms and see 15 original pieces of Eastlake furniture. For more information go to concordhistorical.org.

March 10-Mt. Diablo Branch, California Writers Workshop, Award-winning novelist and creativity coach Beth Barany will lead a workshop on Writing Compelling Characters: Be-

yond the Five Senses. How to trigger your readers' "Mirror Neurons" to immerse them in your story. A master neuro-linguistic programming practitioner, and a certified creativity coach for writers, Barany runs an online school for fiction writers and a 12-month coaching program to help them get published. Sign-in is 10:30. Includes luncheon. \$45 for CWC members, \$55 for guests. Reservations are required, and must be received no later than noon on Wednesday, March 7. To reserve, go to the CWC Mt. Diablo website at : <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/current-cwc-mt-diablo-meeting/> Website, <http://cwcmt Diablowriters.org>. Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill.

March 10-Mt. Diablo Unified students show their genius at 2018 STEM Symposium: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Showcase highlights approximately 300 junior geniuses from 28 schools. Student projects will include engineering design challenges, robotics, and hands-on demonstrations from DNA extractions to flames, flares, and explosions. Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Ln., Concord. The event is free and open to the public.

March 17-Parkinson's support: 9 to noon at Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Blvd, Walnut Creek. The Parkinson Network of Mt. Diablo Support Group hosts. All are welcome.

CALENDAR continues on page 9

Unlimited tasting from over 50 craft breweries, live music and great food!



Saturday, March 31 12 Noon-4pm Todos Santos Park

Tickets are now on sale and are \$40 pre-sale or \$50 at the gate.

Includes unlimited pours and a commemorative glass.

Designated Drivers are just \$5

This is a 21 and over only event so all attendees must be of legal drinking age.

A benefit for the TSBA Arts Foundation, which helps fund the summer music program in Todos Santos Park, as well as youth music programs around Concord.



aRt Cottage

by FROgard www.aRtCottage.info

CAA's New Works Exhibit

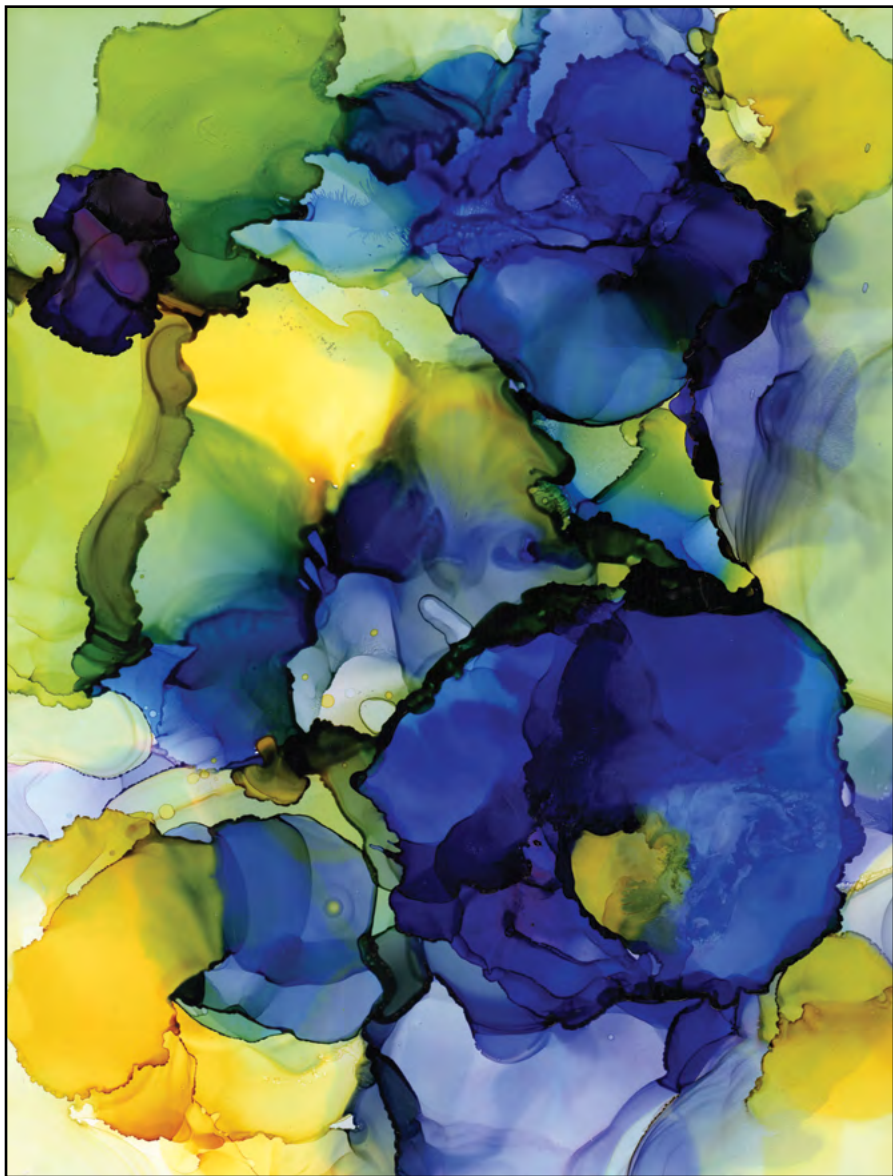
This year is Concord Art Association's 55th Anniversary. Come to the New Works exhibit

March 6-30 featuring the works of 20 plus CAA members. Attend the Artist Reception - Saturday, March

10th 1-4pm.

aRt Cottage - 2238 Mt. Diablo Street, Concord and enjoy Live music, wine and appetizers.

(20+ CAA members participating)



"Bouquet" by Sharon Petersen (16x20" alcohol ink)

REVAMPING

EARTH DAY 2018

SATURDAY, APRIL 21 FROM 10:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.

Tours • Reuse Art Activity • Jump Houses • Trucks • Food
Cart Races • Table of Education Pieces • What we do in the park

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"Right on target, I have received a few comments on the article "Concord and Clayton is the Right Move" (September 2017), and the owner liked (seeing his listing in) the ad." -- Terrylynn Fisher, Real Estate Broker

"I was telling a co-worker how much I love the Diablo Gazette. Your paper is fun to read. It's light and happy. I really enjoy your paper." -- L. Cruz, Clayton

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CALENDAR Continued....

Speaker Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, will speak on "Living with a progressive illness: important resources you want to know about." Fodrini-Johnson is a licensed family therapist and certified professional care manager with over 32 years of experience working with elderly and special needs adults. She is the Founder/CEO of Eldercare Resources and a partner of the Village Plan. Web site: <https://www.pnmd.net/>

March 19- Lindsey Wildlife Museum presents internationally acclaimed Sam Labudde, the man whose undercover investigation of fishermen slaughtering dolphins led to a nationwide boycott of canned tuna. Labudde is the 1991 EIA Goldman Environmental Prize winner, and orchestrator of one of the most successful consumer boycotts in history. All money raised goes to the Lindsay Wildlife Alliance. 9:30 a.m. to noon. 1931 First Ave., Walnut Creek. Cost: General Admission \$45, Seniors \$30. Tickets at www.lindsaywildlife.org/alliance

March 22 MCE Town Hall at Concord City Council Chamber, Civic Center 1950 Parkside Drive

Walnut Creek Model Train Show

March 17, 18 and 30 -The Diablo Valley Lines (DVL) model railroad, one of the most mountainous and one of the largest exclusively HO scale model railroads in the United States. This model railroad features standard gauge, narrow gauge, and interurban (overhead electric) freight and trolley lines. 2751 Buena Vista Ave. Walnut Creek. \$3 Adults, \$2 Seniors and Kinds 6-12, under 6 are free.

VISUAL ARTS/ THEATRE/MUSIC

March 2-12 22nd Annual International Film Festival: Century 16 Theaters, 125 Crescent Drive, Pleasant Hill. Award-winning films with international flair. For brochure, information: 510-809-4953, www.eastbayjewishfilm.org.

March 7 5 Year Anniversary Comedy Show with Headliner: DJ Real, (Nick Stargu). Nick has been featured on Comedy Central's Colossal Clusterfest, Outside Lands, SF Sketchfest, Bridgetown Comedy Festival and more! 8 PM. In the lounge at Clayton Valley Bowl, 5300 Clayton Rd. Concord. Host Dan Mires.

March 8-24-Clayton Theatre Company presents "Lend Me A Tenor" by Ken Ludwig-a madcap, screwball comedy. Tickets \$20-\$25. Endeavor Hall 6008 Center St., Clayton. Please visit www.claytontheatrecompany.com or www.brownpapertickets.com for more info.

March 16, 18-Diablo Choral Artists presents a concert featuring choral works by Bach, Brahms, Haydn, and Mozart, with string ensemble. Mark Tuning, Music Director, John R.S. Walko, Accompanist. Friday, March 16, 8:00pm, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Pleasant Hill. Sunday, March 18, 4:00pm, Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church, Walnut Creek. General Admission: adults \$25, seniors 60+ \$15, students \$5, children 5-12 free. Tickets at www.dcachorus.org, 925-680-7089, info@dcachorus.org

March 22 Diablo Ballet 24th Anniversary Performance, one-night, one-hour special at the Leshar Center for the Arts. Featuring selections from

Swan Lake by Marius Petipa, Solas by Salvadore Aiello with music by Heitor Villa-Lobos, A World Premiere of a new film, Spiritus, and encore performances of Trait d'union by Sonya Delwaide, The Blue Boy by Trey McIntyre and Sixes and Seven by Robert Dekkers. Plus Gala reception, wine tasting and a delicious dinner with the dancers at Scott's Garden. Visit: www.diabloballet.org for more gala and ticket information. 6:30pm, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. (925) 943-7469

March 23-25-Walnut Creek Bead & Design: Handcraft and jewelry design, bringing together artistic beads, gemstones, one-of-a-kind jewelry, designer clothing, jewelry-making supplies, and vintage items. Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Walnut Creek Marriot, 2355 N. Main St. For tickets Visit www.beadanddesign.com.

March 24 -Thirteenth Annual "Festival of Tables and Song" – Vintage Trio will perform music from the 50's and 60's at Concord United Methodist

Church, 1645 West Street, Concord. See article on this page for more info.

March 25-Jazz Room - Eve Marie Sings Eva Cassidy! 7p.m. An evening of authentic jazz and blues. Former Tonight Show vocalist, Eve Marie and keyboardist, bandleader, arranger/composer Frank Martin (credits include collaborations with Whitney Houston, Sting, Herbie Hancock, Narada Michael Walden, Al Jarreau, Tevin Campbell and Chris Isaak.) will pay tribute to the late singer and guitarist Eva Cassidy. Eve will also feature tracks from her latest EP Believe. Village Theatre, Danville. \$15-\$30. For tickets call 925.314.3400 or visit VillageTheatreShows.com

April 10 Hero Appreciation Night CVCHS Men's Lacrosse hosts Foothill HS Lacrosse in a game honoring our heroes: law enforcement, 1st responders, fire fighters, military, and medical personnel at Clayton Valley Charter High School. 6:00 pm.

April 19-22-Synergy Theater Spontaneous Noir: An Improvised Piece of Pulp! Murder, crime, seduction, private eyes, femme fatales, and ridiculous metaphors pile up like a heap of trash at the city dump. All based on audience suggestions in this hysterical homage to Hollywood's Film Noir. The Leshar Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. Tickets \$20.00 at www.lesherartscenter.org or (925) 943-7469



Thirteenth Annual "Festival of Tables and Song"

GFWC Clayton Valley Woman's Club presents their Thirteenth Annual "Festival of Tables and Song" event on Saturday, March 24, at Concord United Methodist Church, 1645 West Street, Concord. Social gathering and opportunity prizes at 11 a.m. Luncheon by Rick's on Second at 12 p.m. the entertainment to follow.

The beautiful and festive decorated tables are designed by CVWC members and friends. In the past there have been tables for "Paris", "Red, White and Blue", "Teapots and Tulips", etc.

"The Vintage Harmonic Trio", Maryann Tarantino, Santiago Martinez and Joyce Martinez will perform music from the 50s and 60s. The Clayton Trio is an active member of the music community teaching lessons and performing in local choirs and theater groups.

Proceeds from this event benefit Clayton Valley Woman's Club charities and scholarships. Reservation price is \$45; seating is limited. Reservation deadline is March 17. Contact Rosemary Harwood at 925-672-3490.

The Clayton Valley Woman's Club is



Photo by Cindy Robinson
Pictured L to R: The Vintage Harmonic Trio, Maryann Tarantino, Santiago Martinez, Joyce Martinez,

a non-profit organization of community-minded women volunteers who persistently do fundraisers to donate to the community. The club meets at 10 a.m. on the second Tuesday of the month, at Saint John's Episcopal Church, 5555 Clayton Road, Clayton. Guests are welcome to attend meetings and social events.

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Why Age 7 is the Right Time to See an Orthodontist...

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



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Key Lime Pie Bars

I adore lemons and any kind of lemonade, lemon curd, lemon bars, lemon cheesecake, lemon-anything. I enjoy that tart taste that makes your mouth pucker a little. I also happen to LOVE Key Lime Pie. So, I thought, why not combine the two? The best of citrus-bar land (I'm pretty sure that isn't an actual term, but I'm going with it.) Key lime juice is yellow, so if you'd like to stick with a green theme for St. Patty's Day, add a few drops of green food coloring to the filling mixture.



Crust:

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
2 TBSP sugar
1/4 tsp salt
7 TBSP melted butter (salted)

Filling:

7 oz. softened cream cheese
14-oz. can of sweetened, condensed milk
3 egg yolks
1 whole egg
2 TBSP lime zest
1/2 cup + 1 TBSP key lime juice
1/2 tsp vanilla

Preheat oven to 350°. Line a 9" x 9" pan with foil and set aside. In a mixing bowl, combine the crumbs, sugar, salt,

and melted butter. Press evenly into the lined pan. Bake for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese until smooth, add the condensed milk, and then add one egg yolk at a time, mixing well after each. Add the remaining whole egg and key lime juice, lime zest, and vanilla. Mix well. Pour over the hot crust, return to the oven, and bake for another 20 minutes (the top should not brown). Remove and chill in the refrigerator for 3-4 hours. Cut into desired size bars.

Note: This recipe can be gluten free, if you switch out the graham crackers for gluten free ones, just use 8 TBSP of melted butter.



Snap Peas

Spring in a Tasty Little Pod

We're getting a hankering for sugar snap peas, those big fat pods filled with sweet pea flavor. They are arriving at your farmers' market this month.

Sugar snap peas have a very short history in the cross-breeding scheme of things. They were developed as recently as 1952 by cross-breeding a snow pea with a mutant shell (garden) pea plant.

Like snow peas, the flat ones commonly used in stir-fry dishes, the whole pod can be eaten and has a crunchy texture with very sweet flavor. They're full of vitamin A, vitamin B, calcium, and extra protein as well. Sugar Snap and Sugar Daddy are the two varieties of sugar snap peas, the latter being a cross between a green pea and a snow pea.

Snap peas may be eaten raw or cooked. Steamed, stir-fried, sautéed, or roasted are some easy ways to enjoy their sweet flavor. We have even seen customers walking around the farmers' market with small brown paper bags filled with recently purchased fresh snap peas, eating them like potato chips.

Freshness counts with these tasty green pods. Relish their just-picked flavor when purchased from your local farmers' market. Visit Iacopi Farms from Half Moon Bay, Three Brothers Farm of Orosi, Fifth Crow Farm coming from Pescadero, and Nha



Trang Farm out of Sacramento.

Grab a bag of fresh snap peas at the farmers' market and enjoy in any number of delicious ways.

Stir-fry with other vegetables such as carrots, onions, and mushrooms. Add shrimp or other proteins for a complete meal. Serve with rice.

Toss on a salad. Yes, eat them raw for crunch and texture. Be sure to trim the ends.

Sauté with olive oil, salt, pepper, and minced garlic. Add a little toss of mint leaves. Easy peas-y!

Add sautéed snap peas to cooked quinoa or wheat berries with sliced radishes and a splash of lemon juice.

Complement an Asian chicken salad.



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Out to Lunch

A Passion for Mexican Food

by Richard Eber

I am really fond of Mexican food but have a small problem. With my taste profile for South-of-the-border cuisine, most of the time I prefer the food in small taco stands over sit down restaurants. For me, hot plates are less important to what is received in take-out Styrofoam containers.

In trying to evaluate the best of this genre, one inevitably turns to La Tacqueria on 19th and Mission in San Francisco. Although it has gotten a little expensive in recent years, their freshly grilled carne asada tacos stuffed with fresh avocado slices are second to none anywhere on the planet.

Locally, there are so many restaurants in the Diablo Valley that fit my taste for tacos, burritos, chiles rellenos, and chimichangas, their names could fill an entire legal tablet page.

Among my favorites around here are:

Taqueria Los Gallos: They are open late at night in several Concord locations with an outstanding salsa bar and hot, fried corn chips that are likely unhealthy, but taste great. Los Gallos has some low priced ceviche offerings and the usual faire one might expect. I especially like their burritos with only meat, cheese, and salsa inside. In addition, their house made fruit drinks which include mango, watermelon, and other assorted flavors are a refreshing treat. Almost all of their combination plates are less than ten dollars and are a great value.

Los Panchos Mexican Restaurant: Located near the California Grand Casino in Pacheco, this place has long been a favorite of our family for a couple of generations. We have always liked their fried beef and chicken tacos which are filled with lettuce, meat, cheese, and salsa. This item is so popular we always order a large stash of tacos. Another dish preference is Los Panchos cheese enchiladas which are covered with a mild red sauce. They have always appealed to the young macaroni and cheese set. A Small bowl of Los Panchos signature bean dip and chips is gratis if one orders enough food in advance. But don't be fooled by this and purchase another one for your group as the beans with melted cheese disappear in a hurry.

Tortilleria El Molino: The smell of fresh cooked tortillas fills the air when entering this restaurant. Their tacos utilize fresh ingredients and reminds one of a sunny day in Rosarita Beach being served by local street vendors. Especially tasty are dishes made with carnitas (pork) and carne asada steak. Their small menu also

offers tasty tortas sandwiches and house made papusas filled with your choice of Mexican cheese, beans and meat.



They are served with a large portion of spicy cole slaw. But wait there's more. El Molina also offers freshly squeezed tropical fruit drinks and smoothie like concoctions. They also serve Boches which consist of a large cup of fresh fruit for which granola and cream are added. Kids love this treat, but adults are known to appropriate their fair share.

Canasta Kitchen: If it is necessary to go formal with napkins, table service, and practicing good manners, the best place to go by far is Canasta Kitchen in Concord. Normally, gourmet and Mexican food don't belong in the same sentence. Canasta is the rare exception. Between their food trucks and restaurant, this is a special place. The menu put together by co-owners Ivan Telez and Carlos Rivas looks like works of art with their dishes plated like a photo spread from Bon Appetite. Even better is the way their food tastes. Canasta's empanadas are a must. They consist of fresh, handmade corn masa (dough) filled with pollo chicken or caritas and Oaxaca/jack melted cheese, and then fried until crispy. The sopitos are a gourmet treat. Their mole con pollo, slow cooked chicken with a homemade mole sauce, especially stands out.

From the top to the bottom of their menu, everything at Canasta is special including their guacamole with house made chips. This restaurant is a great place to share dishes so that your whole party can experience the different offerings.

Canasta is a bit more expensive than most Mexican food we are accustomed to. However, the quality speaks for itself and is well worth the price.



frugelegance

by Carol and Randi -The Frugirls www.frugelegance.com

Wire Basket Shelves

It's March and though it might not feel like Spring yet, we are ready for some spring cleaning and organizing. Whether you live in a studio apartment or a large house, keeping things clutter free and organized is always a challenge. So is putting together an organized nursery, especially if you live in the city.

Carol's daughter and son-in-law recently transformed their closet into a beautiful baby's nursery thanks to some creatively decorative projects. One of those projects can be useful in just about any room, so it's worth a share - Wire Basket Shelves. They use these shelves to keep changing table necessities, books,



magazine racks work beautifully for baby books. These wire basket shelves and magazine racks are also fabulous for a home office, bathroom, kitchen, pantry, and I'm sure you can think of other places.

We hope you give it a try and share



and other things tidy and organized. They are very easy to build. Here's what you will need:

Gold Spray Paint, Spectrum Pegboard and Wall Mount Baskets, and InterDesign Wall Mount Magazine Racks.

Start by Spray painting the wire baskets gold. This is an easy and elegant update that just about anyone can do. We recommend spray painting outdoors for good ventilation. Spray light coats to prevent drips and follow the manufacturer's directions listed on the can.

Do you see how beautiful and functional these shelves become? The



with us where and how you use them. Visit our blog for additional details, pictures, and nursery decor links.

Carol and Randi, the Frugirls, are local home stagers and decorators. You can also find them Blogging about many other ways to live an elegant life for less at www.frugelegance.com. FrugElegance is where Frugal and Elegance come together.



9th Annual Spring Brews Festival Returns



The Brewing Network will host its 9th Annual Spring Brews Festival in Todos Santos Plaza, Concord on Saturday, March 31 from noon to 4pm.

More than 50 breweries will be featured while showcasing dozens of award-winning

craft breweries, including The Rare Barrel, Russian River, Drake's, Societe, and Alvarado Street.

There will be live music to set the mood for an afternoon of great beer and a worthy cause. All proceeds will benefit the summer concert series held in Todos Santos Plaza put on by the local business association and Todos Santos Business Association Arts Foundation.

Tickets are now on sale and are \$40 pre-sale or \$50 at the gate and include unlimited pours and a commemorative

glass for all attendees. Designated Drivers pay only \$5, however this is a 21 and over only event.

The event will take over the entire Todos Santos Park, which is conveniently located just two blocks away from the Concord BART station, making it easy to get to and from the festival safely.

For more information on the event, and to purchase tickets, please visit: www.thebrewingnetwork.com

cover photo: Concord Winter Brew Festival 2014

**bookends**by **Jill Hedgecock**, Program Coordinator Mount Diablo California
Writer's Club jillhedgecock.com

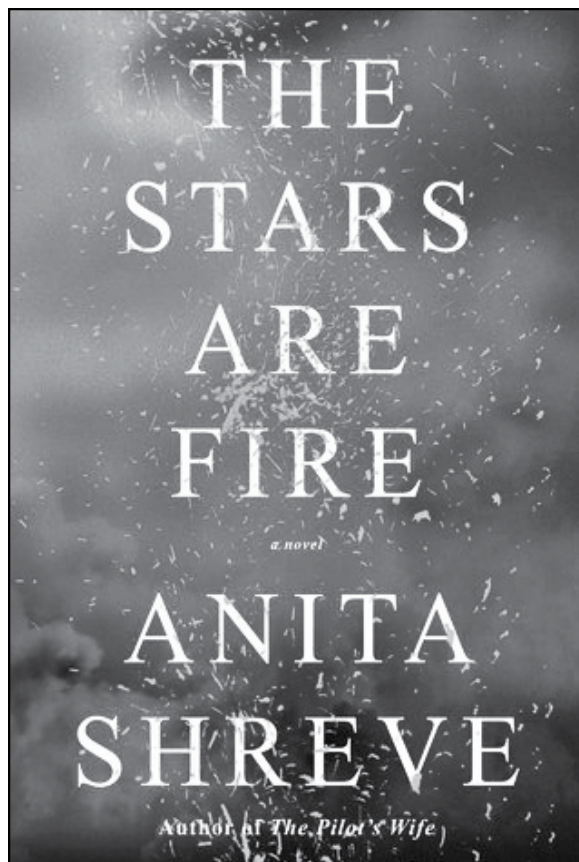
The Stars are Fire

The Stars are Fire by Anita Shreve (2017, Knopf, hardcover, 256 pages \$11.98) centers on 23-year-old Grace Holland, a mother of two living in coastal Maine at Hunt's Beach near Bar Harbor. The novel was inspired by out-of-control fires that devastated Maine in October 1947 and how it affected those who lost their homes. The book opens with Grace trapped in a loveless marriage. Grace's husband, Gene, is domineering and demanding, but Grace tries to make the best of it by rationalizing that he's a good provider. She manages to find solace in her friendship with her next-door neighbor, Rosie. But when the fire hits, Grace's life is turned upside down.

When Gene disappears after helping to fight the flames, Grace suspects that he has run off from his family duties and will never return. If that wasn't bad enough, Grace's home has burnt to the ground. Having lost all her possessions, including her house insurance policy in the file, Grace must now pick up the pieces of her ruined life and find a way to provide for her children. Luckily, her deceased mother-in-law's home was spared, and so Grace takes her kids and her mother there. Because her best friend, Rosie, was not so fortunate and had to move out of Maine with her husband and children to rebuild their lives, Grace initially feels very much alone. But her resourcefulness soon lands her a job.

Since women rarely worked outside the home in the 1940s, Grace's fortitude is admirable. Her mother babysits her children while she's at her new place of employment. The loss of her husband also provides the opportunity for Grace to explore a more satisfying love relationship. And Shreve takes on the challenge providing two strong choices—one is a likely enough candidate—a medical doctor Grace meets after her harrowing experience during the fire who

then becomes her employer. The other less likely love interest is a pianist she



encounters squatting in her mother-in-law's house. But as Grace relishes her newfound freedom and settles into her new lifestyle, the unimaginable happens and her life is shattered once again.

For survivors of recent local fires, the book may ring too true to withstand right now. For others, the glimpse into what happens when everything is lost may be insightful. One thing is for sure, the historical aspects of this novel are fascinating and Shreve's deft skill at character development and her lyrical prose will not disappoint.

Anita Shreve grew up in Dedham, Massachusetts (just outside Boston.) She taught high school after graduating from Tufts University. She has written 14 other novels, including *The Weight of Water* and *The Pilot's Wife*. *The Pilot's Wife* was an Oprah's Book Club selection, an international bestseller, and CBS aired a film version in 2002.



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The Post



The Post is a polished retelling of a seminal event in publishing history. Steven Spielberg directs with his typically assured and visually magnetic style. This time his cast does the difficult work of making real-life characters pop with vibrancy and intelligence. That noun could be used to describe the entire film. The Post is a film aimed at adults who lived through the time depicted and serves as a chilling parallel to the struggle going on currently between the President and the press. Hanks and Streep do fine work in understated performances that feel more authentic because of their low-key nature.

Katharine Graham (Meryl Streep), is bequeathed the Washington Post by her late husband, thus making her the first female publisher of a major American newspaper. Her close ties to popular and powerful figures in the White House presents a dilemma, when editor Ben Bradlee (Tom Hanks), Graham presents

her with the story of the decade—an expose on the massive cover-up of government secrets that spans three decades and four U.S. presidents. Both Graham and Bradlee put their ethics and freedom on the line to help uncover long-buried truths.

Spielberg has fashioned an adult drama that carries little appeal to those weaned on Superhero tent-poles or gross-out comedies. However, *The Post* lacks the urgency that was so palpable in Spielberg's *Bridge of Spies* and *Munich*. John Williams delivers a haunting and thunderous score, and the photography by another longtime Spielberg collaborator, Janusz Kaminski, is Oscar-worthy. *The Post* ranks well with *Dunkirk* as good but not great works from a pair of critically lauded filmmakers.

Director: Steven Spielberg

Stars: Meryl Streep, Tom Hanks, Sarah Paulson



“Lend Me A Tenor”

Clayton Theatre Company opens its 6th season with the musical “Lend Me A Tenor”, winner of three Tony Awards and four Drama Desk Awards by Ken Ludwig. The show is set in Sept. 1934. The Cleveland Grand Opera Company, is primed to welcome world-famous Tito Merelli, the greatest tenor of his generation for a one-night appearance. Things go terribly wrong. What follows is a series of hilarious mishaps!

A sensation on Broadway and in Lon-

don's West End, this madcap, screwball comedy is guaranteed to leave audiences teary-eyed with laughter.

The show is directed by La Tonya Watts who recently won the Shellie Award for Best Director of a Play. Teresa Grossette won her first Shellie Award for Best Actress in a Play and will be playing the part of Diana.

Show dates-3/8/18-3/24/18 at Endeavor Hall 6008 Center St., Clayton. Please visit www.claytontheatrecompany.com.

ADVERTISER TESTIMONIAL

“We had our first CWC meeting after (taking) the summer off and quite a few of our guests say they saw the announcement in the *Diablo Gazette*. Thanks for supporting our group!” --Jill H. Walnut Creek



2019 Calendar Art Contest



Children ages 8 to 11 years of age, who have a knack for art should enter in the Contra Costa Water District "Water Awareness" art contest. Winning entries will be featured in the District's 2019 calendar.

The contest runs through April 6 and is designed to challenge local youths to think about the importance of clean, reliable tap water. Children are encouraged to illustrate the water cycle, ways they use water or ways to use water efficiently. Winning entries will be announced during National Drinking Water Week, May 6-12.

Entries will be screened by Contra Costa Water District staff and posted online for a public vote.

To participate in the contest, children must be between the ages of 8 and 11 years and reside or attend school in the Contra Costa Water District service area, which includes Antioch, Bay Point, Brentwood, Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Martinez, Oakley, Pacheco, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Port Costa and Walnut Creek.

In addition to having their artwork featured in the 2019 Contra Costa Water District calendar, children who submit winning entries will receive a \$50 gift certificate to an art supply store; framed artwork with a certificate of appreciation; and a copy of the printed calendar. Prizes will be awarded at a Board of Directors meeting in the fall, after the calendars are printed.

All submissions must be hand drawn original, unfolded artwork on a single horizontal 8.5-inch by 11-inch piece of paper. You may use pen, pencil, cray-

on, chalk, charcoal, marker, paint, or watercolor. Digital reproductions will not be accepted. All entries must include, on a separate piece of paper, the child's name, age, city of residence, school, a parent or guardian's name, email address and a phone number. Submissions can be mailed or hand-delivered to CCWD Calendar Contest, 1331 Concord Avenue, Concord, CA 95420. For a contest overview and additional contest rules and requirements, visit www.ccwater.com/calendarcontest or contact osymonds@ccwater.com. Good Luck!

March Riddles

Wheel Advice:

Oh their way to a St. Patty's Day party, a couple gets a flat tire. While changing the tire, all four wheel nuts accidentally rolled into the sewer grate. They tried everything to retrieve them but to no avail. Fearing that they were about to spend hours by the roadside and miss the party, a leprechaun appeared. Without using magic, he helped them solve the problem. They successfully mounted the new tire and drove to the party on time rather than go to a tire store, because well, priorities. What was the advice the leprechaun give them?



Easter Bunny Mystery:



A farmer keeps Easter bunnies in large pens set side by side on his farm. Each pen is painted a different pastel color; pink, yellow, and baby blue. The number of Easter bunnies in the pink pen is twice as large as the number of bunnies in the yellow pen. The farmer released five bunnies from the left pen to spread their chocolate eggs. He then took half of the bunnies that remained in the left pen and moved them to the baby blue pen. What color is the pen on the left?

ANSWERS to riddles can be found on Page 15

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What Is the Vernal Equinox?

At the spring equinox, the amount of daylight and darkness is approximately equal. The name equinox comes from Latin words which mean "equal night"—aequus (equal) and nox (night).

On the equinox, Earth's two hemispheres are receiving the Sun's rays about equally.

The tilt of the Earth is zero relative to the Sun, which means that Earth's axis neither points toward nor away from the Sun. (Note, however, that the Earth never orbits upright, but is always tilted on its axis by about 23.5 degrees.) If you were standing on the equator, the Sun would pass directly over-

head on its way north. Equinoxes are the only two times a year that Sun only rises due east and sets due west for all of us on Earth.

Enjoy the increasing sunlight hours, with earlier dawns and later sunsets.

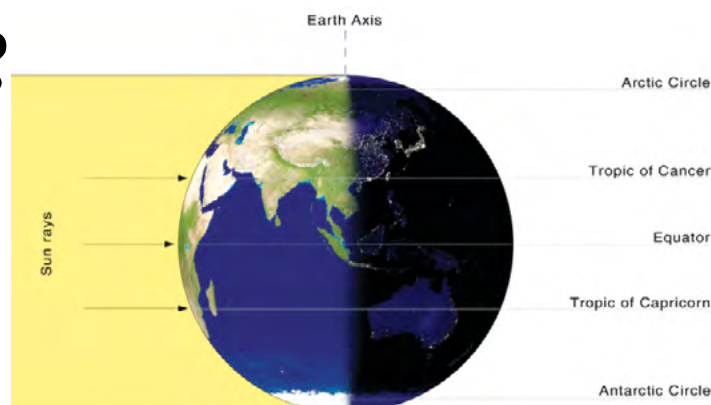


Image credit: Wikimedia Commons: Przemyslaw "Blueshade"

Beyond the Ivory Problem: Local Biologist Speaks About Elephants

by Jill Hedgecock

[This elephant-inspired companion piece was written to complement the talk to be given to the Mount Diablo Audubon Society on April 5, 2018.]

Elephants are fascinating creatures. Their size, their rumbling vocalizations, and their familial loyalty make them unique. Elephants cry, play, have long-term memories, experience grief and laugh. The elephant brain is the largest among living and extinct terrestrial mammals. Their trunks can sense the size, shape and even the temperature of an object. African elephant trunks are “two-fingered” and are able to pluck a single blade of grass.

There are two types of elephants: Asian and African. They are genetically distinct and cannot interbreed. There are also visible differences. In addition to the larger size of African elephants, their ears resemble a map of Africa, as opposed to the smaller Asian version that has smaller ears shaped like a map of India.



While ivory poaching is typically thought of as the biggest threat to elephant survival, this is true for African elephants. They are the victims of most illegal ivory trafficking. For Asian elephants, expanded human communities and the resulting destruction of the forest habitat poses a bigger threat. Approximately 20% of the world's humanity lives in or near the current range of the Asian elephant. This encroachment has resulted in elephants raiding crops and villages. Sadly, the end result is that the marauding elephants are often killed because in a single evening a herd of elephants can eat the annual crop of many small farmers. Thus, peaceful co-existence becomes impossible. And the populations of elephants are in sharp decline. At the beginning of the 20th century Asian wild elephant numbers were reported to be in excess of 300,000 with a further population of 100,000 domesticated elephants. Today, about 40% of Asia's remaining 50,000 elephants live in captivity.



In Thailand, less than 2,000 wild elephants remain. Changing times have strained the relationship between Asian elephants and the Thai people. In 1989, the Thai government banned logging. Overnight, significant numbers of trained elephants that supported the timber industry were retired. These elephants went from a valuable resource to the family to an unaffordable liability; the cost to provide for these long-lived animals was no longer within the owners' means. Many of these Thai elephants have since been repurposed by the tourism industry, but because young elephants are more desirable, wild elephants continue to be captured for the live elephant trade in Thailand.

For many reasons, wild elephants are poorly suited for the tourism industry. In order to “tame” these wild creatures to become soccer players, street beggars, painters, or trekking animals that allow people to ride on their backs in cages, the animals are subject to a technique called phajaan, which appropriately means “crushing”, and involves separating calves from their mothers – a traumatic experience for these tightly-bonded creatures. These young elephants are then tied down or squeezed into a small space, starved, dehydrated, and beaten until they learn to fear the bull hook. Trekking is particularly brutal because the cages placed on their backs can weigh upwards of 500 pounds, which usually leads to spinal, joint and feet injuries. And when the elephants age out of their usefulness or develop health issues, options are limited.



The lucky ones land at The Elephant Nature Park, a 250-acre rescue and rehabilitation center in Northern Thailand which houses 76 rescued elephants. At the reserve, elephants such as elderly Sook Jai are allowed to roam free. At 73 years old, Sook Jai is completely blind and mostly deaf. This gal worked very hard her whole life, first as a street beggar and then as a tourist trekking elephant. She was in very poor condition

when she arrived at the park with wounds on her head and body from her abusive handlers. Today, she relishes mud baths

and playing nanny to two young rescued elephants.

The Elephant Nature Park is a testament that elephant encounters can be a positive experience for both these gentle giants and tourists. I hope that this organization's popularity (slots fill up months in advance) sends a strong message to the owners of less scrupulous companies that practicing humane treatment will benefit their business.

Even if you don't plan to visit Thailand anytime soon, you can help these rescued animals by sponsoring a specific elephant for six months for as little as 1,750 Thailand baht (equivalent to about \$50) (<http://www.saveelephant.org/product/elephant-nature-park-sponsorship/>) or by making a general donation in an amount of your choosing (<http://www.saveelephant.org/donate/general-donation>).

To hear more about the plight of Thailand's elephants and heart-warming stories of the elephants living at the Elephant Nature Park sanctuary, come to Mount Diablo Audubon Society's program on April 5, 2018 at the Camellia Room of the Gardens at Heather Farm in Walnut Creek (across the street from The Greenery). Doors open at 6:30 p.m., main program at 8:00 p.m. The event is free.

Jill Hedgecock is a biologist and holds a Master's degree in Environmental Management. She is currently writing a suspense novel called *The Rhino in the Room* that centers on rhino poaching. In addition to her *BookEnds* book review column and dog rescue column, Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue, Jill's freelance articles have made regular appearances in the *Diablo Gazette*. Using her background in biological science, she has written about rhinos (May 2016) and about elephant trekking (September 2017). For more information, visit www.jillhedgecock.com.

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by **Terrylynn Fisher**, Broker Associate
Your Most Recent Market Data

Is Your Next House Going to Be Free?

The current statistics show that Contra Costa County sold single family homes are up in value 7.2% from January 2017 to January 2018, making this a good time to sell as interest rates are still under 5% as of this writing. That means more buyers can afford what you are selling and that their payments will be lower now, than if the interest rates jump up and reduce their spending power. Realtor.com reports that for every one-quarter percent interest rates increase, you will need an added 3% of income to qualify for the same home. If you don't expect an increase in your income of 3%, then where are you?

If you don't need the money from your current home to buy your next home... maybe your next house is FREE. But, I've never had a seller say, "I don't need the money, just sell my house at a discount." In fact, without exception, every seller I have worked for has asked to receive the maximum amount they can realize when selling their home, so they can move to the next home or retire. Some are willing to make some improvements, some no improvements; however, if 63% of buyers say they will pay more for a move-in ready home, does it make sense to do the things that make a difference to those buyers? Did you realize that 40% of home sellers contact a stager prior to contacting their Realtor? This rising trend tells you sellers think it's important too.

When we recommend a stager as decorating is not staging. The differences are not readily apparent to the average person, if you have not seen a professional staging. But once you have, you will notice from then on which homes are decorated and which are staged. We want to be sure you have someone with the knowledge and expertise to provide the result we are moving toward. We can't underestimate the value of a trained staging professional who knows what things make the difference. Often at minimal cost, their consultations are of great value at the planning stage, as they have expertise in all aspects of home staging, including luxury, vacant, occupied homes, senior move management and so much more. CSP, Certified Staging Professionals, have training and undergo

rigorous testing prior to receiving their certification. Go to www.StagingTraining.com for specialties and information on a qualified stager near you (or ask me for a qualified stager in your area.) Lastly, there are neighborhood and lifestyle factors that are vitally important that should be included in your staging plan to bring you maximum effect and value.

Besides interest rates and pricing, it also makes sense to think ahead when you are selling so that you can choose the optimum time to maximize your sale. Timing is sometimes a key factor in obtaining multiple bids, or overbids (who doesn't want that?). Your Realtor will have a strategy as part of their listing presentation that spells out when and why they feel it is a perfect time for your home to go on the market. What could change any of that? Perhaps selling a home with a pool in hot summer vs. winter months would be prudent. Your neighborhood and city statistics can show a trend for your area worth considering in the marketing plan. (Trendgraphix is a statistical source for the data in many of our articles and can be broken down by city and zip codes.)

Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate, DRE # 00615420, Dudum Real Estate Group, DRE#01882902, a 35+ year veteran of local real estate. 925 876 0966 www.BuyStageSell.com, www.RealEstate4Seniors.net

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## Readers Rants & Raves

I picked up your paper to see "Marching for Change in Walnut Creek". After reading the article, I was disappointed. I don't see anything in there about real change. It seemed like a long hateful diatribe against people like me, Republicans and people who voted for Trump. It seems like bitterness and malcontent. The author said she believed in positivity, I guess positive as long as you're a Liberal! These ranting and raving entitled people wouldn't know a tough day if it fell on them.

~Ken K., Concord

Thank you Diablo Gazette for your feature on the Mount Diablo Education Foundation and our work to support ALL students in MDUSD!

~MDUSD

My compliments on your article "The State of the City of Concord" by Mayor Edi Birsan for being informative, and for challenging all of us "Concordians" to be responsible, respectful, "the simple golden rule" type of people who live in concordance with each other. Pulling everyone together! Your sense of humor is always appreciated. Thank you.

~Gita Lunacek, Concord

Thank you for posting the support groups in the January. I am from the Concord Neurapathy Group and we

had three new Members that all said they saw it in the Diablo Gazette.

~Group Moderator, Wayne G.

I would like to thank you for publishing an excellent report in Diablo Gazette (Feb 2018) regarding the recent Noor Islamic & Cultural Community Center's Open House in Concord. Your report was informative, concise, and interesting.

~Dr. Popal, University of San Francisco

My sister and her family came to visit us recently, and we were looking for places to take them other than the more common tourist locations which they have seen. On one of the stops, we decided to take them to Pt. Reyes to see the elephant seals which I would never have known about had it not been for Diablo Gazette's February's article "Back from Extinction" by Jill Hedgecock.

~C.L., Concord

I just saw your piece on "Rock the CASA 2018" and I want to sincerely thank you for your kindness. That was really very nice of (Diablo Gazette) and I deeply appreciate the support for this effort. Thank you very much.

~Dan Ashley, ABC 7 News

The Diablo Gazette looks forward to all comments from our readers. Please email: [diablogazette@gmail.com](mailto:diablogazette@gmail.com)

## Riddle Answers from Page 13:

•Wheel Advice: The leprechaun suggested that he use one lug nut from each of the other three wheels.

•Easter Bunny Mystery: Yellow. Since the number of bunnies in the pink pen is twice as large as the number in the yellow pen, we know the pink pen has an even number of bunnies. Since the farmer removed five bunnies from the left side pen, it too became an even number of remaining bunnies (or he couldn't have removed half of them). therefore, the left side pen contained an odd number of bunnies, which means it could not be pink. It also can't be the baby blue pen either as that's where it put half the bunnies.

## ADVERTISER TESTIMONIAL

"Right on target, I have received a few comments on the article "Concord and Clayton is the Right Move" (September 2017), and the owner liked (seeing his listing in) the ad." – Terrylynn Fisher, Real Estate Broker

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## Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue

## Peanut Butter

Each month a hard to place dog in foster care will be featured to give them extra exposure to find their forever home.

Peanut Butter is an approximately 8-year-old Chihuahua mix. This pup was relinquished by his owner to a veterinarian when he got a foxtail in his eye. Peanut Butter has fully recovered from his injury and is in foster care through

Lucky Dog Rescue. He is an ideal well-mannered pet. Peanut Butter loves treats, going on walks, and is very good and gentle with small children. However, he is not compatible with cats. He is a *pawsitively* special dog. If you're ready to let this 25-pound cuddlebug wheedle his way into your heart, please fill out an application at <http://www.1luckydogrescue.org/adoption-application>. A home visit will be required prior to adoption. Peanut Butter's adoption fee is \$250.

Lucky Dog Rescue is based out of Pleasanton. They are a group of dedicated volunteers who believe dogs never choose to be homeless and they certainly do not deserve to be euthanized. **The normal adoption events** are second Saturday of every month, from 10:00 - 1:00 at 4460 Tassajara Road, Dublin (Petco Unleashed); and all other Saturdays, from 10:00 - 1:00 at 625 Main Street, Pleasanton in front of the Blue Agave Club. Since their dogs do not always attend every adoption event, it is always a good idea to check with them first (email: [olveiry@yahoo.com](mailto:olveiry@yahoo.com)).



**UPDATE:** I am pleased to announce that Blanche, January's special dog has been adopted.

Also, from December's column, Bentley, in addition to having received cataract surgery and is no longer blind, has been groomed and is quite the looker now. To inquire about adopting this adorable six-year-old, deaf maltese mix whose adoption fee has been sponsored, fill out an application form at <http://form.jotform.com/underdogca/dog-adoption-application>



**Editors Note:** Ruby Dooby Do is Concord's Instagram celebrity with more than 54,000 followers. [Instagram.com/rubydoobydo](https://www.instagram.com/rubydoobydo). Special thanks to Jill Hedgecock, Program Coordinator, Mount Diablo Branch of the California Writers Club for her help in translating canine for this article. [www.jillhedgecock.com](http://www.jillhedgecock.com).

## Home Share Matches Home Owners and Home Seekers

The Home Share Contra Costa program connects home owners and home seekers. The program matches Concord homeowners who are over age 55 and who want to share their residences with home seekers who are over age 18 and live, work or go to school in Contra Costa County and have an annual income under \$61,380.

Home owners benefit from extra income, security, companionship, and sometimes even help around the house. In this era of limited rental opportunities, home seekers are provided with another option for housing.

Last year, the Concord City Council approved this pilot program through the local non-denominational non-profit Episcopal Senior Communities to launch Home Share Contra Costa.

Program staff provides matching services for shared housing including: outreach, applicant screening with back-

ground checks, reference checks, in-person interviews, home visits, written living together agreements, and on-going mediation and counseling to create long-term successful shared living arrangements.

According to the Director of Senior Resources for Episcopal Senior Communities, Annette Balter, "Home sharing is a win-win for both older homeowners, who are looking for extra income or just someone to say good morning to, and for people who need a safe, affordable place to live in the community close to their jobs or school. The magic is in the match."

The program is based in the Consultation Room at the Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Circle, and is open Thursdays from 1 to 5 p.m. and Fridays from 9:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For more information, contact staff at (925) 451-9890 or visit [www.jtm-esc.org/home-share-program](http://www.jtm-esc.org/home-share-program).

## SUPPORT GROUPS

• Al-Anon Family Group 7:30 p.m. Mondays, St. Martins of Tours Anglican Church & Preschool, Concord. 932-6770 or [www.ncwsa.org](http://www.ncwsa.org).

• Alcoholics Anonymous – 925-939-4155 or [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org).

• Bereavement Support Group: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, 4:30 - 6:00 pm. pre-registration. Call (925) 887-5681

• Adult Day Services Network of Contra Costa – (925) 682-1000 490 Golf Club Rd. Pleasant Hill – [www.adultdaycc.org](http://www.adultdaycc.org)

• Alzheimer's Respite Day Program (925) 370-8772 1111 Ferry St. Martinez – Activities and lunch for elders with dementia in a supervised setting. Wednesdays 10 am-4 pm.

• Alzheimer's Association (925) 284-7942 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 250 Lafayette [www.alz.org/norcal](http://www.alz.org/norcal)

• LS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) Support Group FREE. This support group provides education and support for those with ALS and their families and friends. Meets the 3rd Saturday of the month from 1-3:00pm. Please call 818-865-8067 for more information.

• Breast Cancer Support Group FREE For women coping with breast cancer. Guest oncology experts present information and tools to assist in coping and sharing experiences. Meets every second Thursday of the month from 11am-12:30pm. Please call (925) 933-0107 for more info or to register.

• The Bridge - A bi-weekly support program for grieving children and teens using art, play, journaling, music and conversation. Support is also available for parents/guardians. This group runs during the school year. Pre-registration is required—dates of sessions will be distributed at that time. Alternating Tuesdays to accommodate school schedules, 6:00-7:30 pm September 2017 - June 2018  
Valhalla Elementary School, 530 Kiki Drive, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

• Contra Costa Senior Legal Services free legal clinic for seniors 60 and older who reside anywhere in Contra Costa County. Attorneys will meet individually for 45 minutes with seniors to prepare an Advance Health Care Directive tailored specifically to your wishes and then notarized for free. An AHCD is the legal document used to (1) ensure that your health care wishes are known if you are unable to speak for yourself, and (2) allows you to appoint an agent to make health care decisions for you. By appointment only through the Pleasant Hill Senior Center front desk, by calling (925) 798-8788 or the Concord Senior Center calling 925-671-3320.

• CalFresh (Food Stamps) Central County (925) 602-9379 400 Ellinwood Way, Pleasant Hill – issues monthly electronic benefits similar to a bank card that can be used to buy most foods. Apply on-line or call or in person, [www.mybenefitscalwin.org](http://www.mybenefitscalwin.org)

• Cardiac Care Support Group - 7 p.m. second Thursdays, John Muir Walnut Creek or Concord. 947-5206.

Fibromyalgia Support Group - 2nd Friday of each month. 11A.M. - 1 P.M. Concord Library, 2900 Salvio St. Concord. More info: Call Joyce 925-671-2779

• Concord Neuropathy Support – 1:30 p.m. 3rd Thursday of every month at the First Christian Church, 3039 Willow Pass Rd. Concord For more information call 925-685-0953

• Diabetes Support Group sponsored by American Diabetes Association (ADA) -FREE Support for those diagnosed with diabetes and their friends and families. Meets the second Saturday of the month 9:30 - 11:30am at John Muir Health Walnut Creek 1601 Ygnacio Valley Rd.

• Debtors Anonymous (DA) meets every Friday Night 7:15 to 8:30 PM, First Baptist Church, 1802 Alhambra Ave. Martinez. Call (925) 228-9111 or go to: [www.debtor-sanonymous.org](http://www.debtor-sanonymous.org).

• Hearing Loss and Cochlear Implant Wearers Support Group - 7 p.m. 1st Wednesdays,

Walnut Creek United Methodist Church. [HLAADV@hearinglossdv.org](mailto:HLAADV@hearinglossdv.org) or 264-1199.

• Hospice East Bay has announced a new schedule for their support groups and classes. All, except drop-in, require pre-registration. Call (925) 887-5681 or email [griefservices@hospiceeastbay.org](mailto:griefservices@hospiceeastbay.org). Our Bereavement Services are provided free of charge to all community members in need. All groups and classes require pre-registration, with the exception of our drop-in groups. Please call (925) 887-5681 to register! Our calendar is also available on-line. <https://www.hospiceeastbay.org/services/griefsupport/groups-classes>

• Drop-In Grief Support Groups for Adults - These ongoing drop-in groups meet twice per month to provide support for anyone grieving the death of someone close to them. No registration required.  
1st & 3rd Thursdays of each month, 4:30-6:00 pm 3470 Buskirk Avenue, Pleasant Hill  
2nd & 4th Thursdays of each month, 4:30-6:00 pm John Muir Urgent Care Center (Large Conference Room) 2400 Balfour Road, Suite 223, Brentwood

• Pet Loss Support Group - In a nurturing small group, you are encouraged to process natural feelings of grief resulting from the loss of a beloved animal. No registration required. 2nd Tuesday of each month, 5:30-7:00 pm. Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation, 2890 Mitchell Drive, Walnut Creek

• Parent Loss Support Group - This eight-week support group is for any adult who has experienced the death of one or both parents. The group seems to be the most helpful if you are at least three months past the death of your parent(s). A short phone assessment is required before registration is complete. Tuesday Evenings, 6:00-8:00 pm Jan 9 - Feb 27, 2018; 3470 Buskirk Avenue, Pleasant Hill

• Spouse & Partner Loss Support Group - This eight-week support group is for men and women who have experienced the death of a spouse or partner. The group seems to be the most helpful if you are at least three months past the death of your spouse. A short phone assessment is required before registration is complete. Monday Evenings, 1:00-3:00 pm February 26 - April 16 ; 3470 Buskirk Avenue, Pleasant Hill

• Meals On Wheels (MOWSOS) Senior services including care management, fall prevention, health and wellness, congregational meals, caregiver training, home delivered meals. (925) 937-8311 1300 civic dr. Walnut Creek [www.mowsos.org](http://www.mowsos.org)

• STAND! For Families Free of Violence – shelter, counseling, job placement, and legal assistance for battered women and family members affected by violence. 24 hr. Crisis line 888-215-555 [www.standffov.org](http://www.standffov.org)

• HIV/AIDS Support Group - 7-9 p.m. 2nd & 4th Thursdays, John Muir Concord. 925-674-2190.

• John Muir Behavioral Health Center 2740 Grant Street Concord. Call 925-942-0767 or [www.namicontracosta.org](http://www.namicontracosta.org)

• Leukemia Society Family Support Group - 7 p.m. first Thursdays. 947-4466, ext. 32797.

• Nar-Anon - 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays, John Muir Concord. <http://naranoncalifornia.org>.

• Pet Loss Support Group, Second Tuesday of the month, 5:30-7PM. (925) 887-5681. Pre-registration required.  
Retired & Senior Volunteer Program - 472-5777.

• Stroke Support Group of Contra Costa County will hold its meeting on November 9th in the Sterns Conference Room at John Muir Medical Center - Walnut Creek Campus (1601 Ygnacio Valley Road) from 7-9 p.m. Contact Ann Dzuna at 925-376-6218. Meetings are free and open to the public.

• Veterans Crisis Line, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – National suicide prevention line for veterans. Online chat. <http://veteranscrisis.net> 800-273-8255 24 hours

**While every attempt is made to offer correct information, we rely on support groups to keep us updated. If you know of any information that needs correcting, or would like to add new information, please email [diablogazette@gmail.com](mailto:diablogazette@gmail.com) with the information. Thank you.**



# A Day of HOPE is Coming to Concord!

Convoy of Hope is a faith-based organization dedicated to helping people in need in the U.S. and throughout the world. On Saturday, April 28, they will host a poverty-free day to families and individuals at Concord's Meadow Homes Park. The event's goal is to offer more than a million dollars in goods and services. Free services include health and dental care evaluations, housing and community services information, job and career services, haircuts, veteran services and family portraits. Lunch, a Kids' Zone, and

groceries will also be provided.

This is a great opportunity for local businesses, community service agencies and other organizations to help establish long-term solutions that can improve the lives of those in need in our community.

Volunteers, service providers, and financial support folks, if you are interested in making a difference in our community, please visit: [www.convoy-of-hope.org/concord](http://www.convoy-of-hope.org/concord) or contact us at: 925.643.1207 or [infoconvoyconcord@gmail.com](mailto:infoconvoyconcord@gmail.com)



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Coach Eric and daughter, Ali Bamberger

## Father/Daughter Dance

A Special Winter Of Carondelet And Clayton Valley Basketball

Story By Chace Bryson

Photos by Phillip Walton

Eric Bamberger and his daughter Ali have a rule when it comes to breaking down her basketball games.

"If I was able to see the game, I get five minutes right after it," said Eric, a former All-State post player for Ygnacio Valley in the late 80s. He's now in his third decade of coaching in the East Bay, the last five of which have come as the boys coach at Clayton Valley. "After that, I'm done. I have to be done."

Ali, 16, is the star junior post for Carondelet.

And on this night, March 2 at Saint Mary's College, daughter gave dad a reason to gush. She scored 28 points, grabbed eight rebounds and added four blocks and four assists in a 71-58 win over Heritage that clinched the Cougars' 13th North Coast Section crown in 16 years.

And yet it's entirely possible that by the time both got home, Ali was likely eager to give her dad all the time he wanted — to talk boys basketball. Because on a unique night in which dad and daughter both competed for NCS Division I section titles, in back-to-back games at the same venue, it was only

Ali who came home with a medal after Clayton Valley fell to Heritage 71-66.

And despite the night ending in mixed results, the Bamberger Family had no intention of taking the night for granted. It was a culmination of what's been a special year for both dad and daughter — a year in which the two may have shared more through basketball, despite seeing less of each other's games than previous seasons.

"We talk basketball a lot," Eric said. "There are nights where we'll just go back and forth, venting or sharing or whatever. We'll talk about my team and we'll talk about her team. It's kind of cool."

And both have been able to take an immense amount of pride in one another.

"Everyone who has a dad that's a coach always really likes to say 'Oh my dad is an incredible coach,'" Ali said after her team's championship victory. "I feel like up until this year, no one has really seen how great of a coach my dad really is."

"He's developed this whole program, and they started from nothing and look where they are. And he's developed me into the player that I am, and I'm so happy for him because it couldn't have come at a better time."

Despite the loss in the final, the older Bamberger has led Clayton Valley to a landmark season that's included a Diablo Athletic League-Foothill title and a 26-3 overall record heading into the CIF Northern Regional playoffs. It was the program's first trip to an NCS final in 14 seasons.

Meanwhile, Carondelet (22-8) has been a consensus Top 8 team in NorCal throughout the season and Ali has

been its go-to star.

"I think she's matured a lot more and learned to play more of a lead role," Eric said of Ali.

"She's learning all these things that have kind of lifted her game and lifted who she is as a person — which is what basketball is hopefully all about. She was able to play in the post her first two years real easily. Now she's moved her game a little more outside and she's not afraid to dribble."

She's also her mom's first choice on game nights.

"I'll come to Eric's games whenever she isn't playing," Kate Bamberger said with a grin. "But our son (Mason, 13) represents Eric and chooses to go to dad's game over sister's games, so we're evenly divided and supported in the family."

During the NCS final, one of Ali's few games in the last month or so that Eric has been able to watch, he only managed to stay in his seat for the first five or so minutes of the game. Not coincidentally, things weren't going well for the Cougars during a first quarter in which they had nearly as many turnovers (7) as points (8).

But Carondelet settled down and Ali poured in 13 points in the second quarter to help lead a comeback from a 10-point deficit. The Cougars would lead 28-27 at halftime, 48-41 after the third quarter, and never trailed in the fourth.

"We kind of knew that Heritage was going to be a tough game," Ali said. "This game required more intensity and more focus. I think this year coming in, we knew they were going to be tough, and they were. They showed us what they could do, but I think it was just a matter of who wanted it more in the end"

She said this as the Clayton Valley boys warmed up for their final in the background. As she watched, she admitted her nerves were growing for her dad and his team.

"Dad said to me before my game, 'I have more butterflies before you play than when before we play,'" she said. "And I told him it's the same for me. I have more butterflies before his games than my own."

Watching the boys final probably didn't help Ali or the rest of the family's nerves. Clayton Valley and Heritage played neck-and-neck throughout. Heritage had one point leads after the first quarter and at halftime. It was tied 52-52 after three quarters, and the fourth quarter featured three lead changes and three ties before the Ugly Eagles went scoreless in the final two minutes.

"We just didn't make shots down the stretch," Eric said afterward. "Shots that we usually make. ... I'll let them have tonight and tomorrow and then we'll get back to work (for the NorCal playoffs). This team has been resilient all year. ... Nothing has fazed them so far. I'm expecting this won't faze them either."

As for Eric, a hug from Ali probably went a long way in soothing the defeat.

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## Shah continued from page 6

I flew to Washington and immediately telephoned the White House. Based on the response of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, I concluded I could at least make the Shah's request known to the President either directly or through the appropriate channel. My assumption seemed confirmed when I was told to be at the White House at a specific time on a particular day.

The morning I was to visit the White House, however, I received a telephone call to the effect that President Carter had been called away and the message I had would be best conveyed through the Iran Desk Officer in the U.S. Department of State.

I followed the White House instructions and met the same day with the Desk Officer. The meeting with the Desk Officer proved to be less than cordial. From the outset of the meeting, the officer displayed no interest in the message. In fact, he seemed very antagonistic toward the Shah and Iran, and I later learned he was not fond of the country or its leader. I was finally allowed to give my message, but the officer immediately informed me that the U.S. Government had no interest in what the Shah was proposing or wanted to do. I was summarily dismissed from the Department of State. My attempt to serve as a private emissary of the Shah to the White House failed.

I sent a message to Tehran regarding my experience. There was nothing more I could do.

I returned to Tehran and to my duties at the

Chamber of Commerce for some two weeks before my wife, Mahin, our daughters and I traveled to the South of France for a brief vacation. While in France, we heard about the burning of a movie theater in Southern Iran. The rumor was that the theatre had been set ablaze by the Iranian Secret Service in response to opposition to the Shah in the area. The precise motivation for the event and the people and/or organization may still be a mystery, but the event did cause a stir among Iranians vacationing in Europe.

Upon our return to Iran, we discovered a substantial amount of unrest and anti-Shah activity in various parts of the country. Throughout the remainder of 1978, the level of unrest seemed to propel forward at an amazing speed.

After the takeover of the embassy, I went into hiding. Soon after the Revolution, the Iranian military and the Ayatollah Kazem Shariatmadari sought the assistance of the US Government in initiating a coup against Khomeini and the Islamic Republic, but that request was rebuffed. The U.S. Government sent a member of the British Secret Service to my place of hiding and requested that Ayatollah Shariatmadari intervene on behalf of the hostages. But at this point, the lack of trust with the US discouraged possible intervention. My international diplomacy career had ended as abruptly as it had begun.

## Fighting PGE, Walnut Creek's Erin Brockovich

by Robin Gigoux



*[Switching to MCE from PGE for electricity service (story pg.2) will unfortunately have little impact on our electricity costs as they continue to rise. With all that power they provide us, why do we feel powerless to do much about it? Robin Gigoux of Walnut Creek retells the monumental challenges she encountered when she fought PG&E over rate increases...and won. (Our own Erin Brockovich)]*

It was September 1980 and I was pregnant with my second child due in November. Utility rates were climbing. PG&E was urging customers to conserve.

Hearings were being held at California Public Utilities Commission offices to consider PG&E's proposed rate restructure to allow discounted gas to customers in foggy coastal areas to keep warm in summer.

This disturbed me because customers in central and eastern Contra Costa County, who were likely to subsidize those reduced gas rates, were already paying high and rising electric rates to stay cool in summers that often exceeded 105°.

I set out to attend a CPUC hearing in San Francisco. When I arrived, the hearing had been canceled with no notification about where and when the next hearing would take place. Since hearings were scheduled to conclude shortly, I didn't want to leave without answers to certain questions.

Directed to the office of the Administrative Law Judge in Charge of Electric Rates, he explained that a consumer/rate payer could not impact code but could possibly impact the rate structure being considered. He provided me with paperwork that motivated me to try having the gas hearings extended to consider electric rates.

I compared historical weather data, then enlisted help from community service organizations. With media support, we gathered enough signatures to have the hearings extended. I submitted my research, arguments, and signatures to the CPUC and appeared at subsequent hearings. I answered their questions and was inundated by paperwork from more than fifty California utility companies ([www.energy.ca.gov](http://www.energy.ca.gov)).

Weeks later, I received a call from CPUC staff who said the Administrative Law Judge had "secured City Council chambers in Walnut Creek to hear what I have to say", that PG&E was preparing a proposal, that I should review to prepare my comments. I was shaken.

I poured over the two-inch-thick document. Then on the big day, I stood before CPUC staff, PG&E representatives, citizen supporters, and the media in a crowded Council Chambers. It was 104° that July day which bolstered my argument that central and eastern Contra Costa was extraordinarily hot in summer. I made my points and answered questions with only one dissenter.

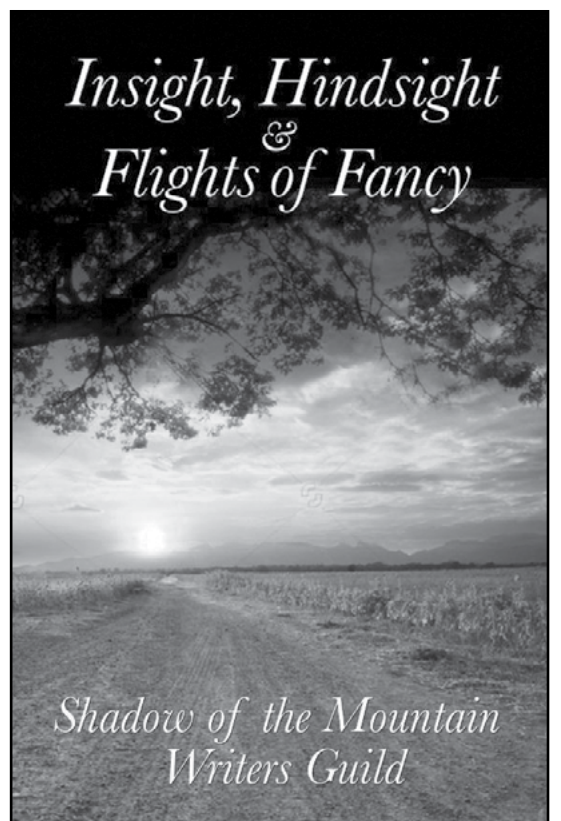
Newspaper had covered my original letter to the

editor in September 1980. In the end, on July 23, 1981, Robert Bartlett / SF Chronicle (Bay Area Gets Lifeline Rate for Home Air Conditioning) stated: "240,000 households affected;" "Saving \$6-12 a month during six months from May through October;" "...lower rates will cost PG&E about \$6.7 million annually" (in 1981 dollars).

Patricia Radin / Oakland Tribune (PG&E Hot Area Customers to Get Discount Rates) wrote "...a victory for Robin Gigoux, a WC housewife who raised the issue ... New rates take effect immediately."

I felt celebrated, not only in the media, but also on the streets; like the day a woman in a department store rushed up to me holding my newborn and gushed, "Oh my goodness. Aren't you that lady I saw on TV?"

Robin Gigoux, is a local published author, "Chronicles of an Occupational Prostitute, A Workplace Survival Story" (Amazon) Other works include, "The Fridge", "Once Before I Die", "The Ghost of Joseph Martini", and "What a Waist".



Franklin Burroughs and Robin Gigoux are two of the eleven local authors participating in the just-released anthology of short stories, "Insight, Hindsight, and Flights of Fancy".





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