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Arts, Entertainment and All That's Good in Our Communities
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JULY 2018



CONCORD CELEBRATES SESQUICENTENNIAL!



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Photo: Pearl Harbor survivor Mickey Granitch

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from the Publisher

David King

Vacationers, You Missed a Lot!

It's summer vacation time and if you've been traveling the last couple of weeks of June and into July, you missed A LOT! Things got hot around here. For starters, we had triple digit weather. But it got really hot when the Department of Navy leaked a list of suggested locations, that included the Naval Weapons Station, for tent city camps to detain migrants crossing the border. Local government reaction and resident protests ensued for days. That firestorm was followed by a literal firestorm. A 350+ acre brush fire threatened hundreds of homes in the Montecito and Crystyl Ranch neighborhoods. Fortunately, that disaster was averted thanks to our local firefighting heroes and first responders. What a way to end the city's first 150 years. Concord's Sesquicentennial celebration on the other hand was quite superb. All of it.

You also missed the unveiling of the bronze statue of founder Don Salvio Pacheco placed at the entrance of Todos Santos Park. The much-anticipated statue was paid for by generous donations of local businesses and residents whose names are forever recognized in stone, engraved on plaques, pavers, and tiles on the surrounding patio, including

ours, Diablo Gazette. It is worth going downtown just to admire the display (the statue that is, not our engraved tile). By the way, the word is that there are 29 more bricks that can be purchased if you wish to enshrine your family name into Concord's history. If you are interested, contact the Concord Historical Society.

"Happy 150th Concord!" You may read these words repeatedly throughout this edition (or something similar). This edition is encapsulated in a time capsule underground at the base of Concord's new monument and is to be opened in



another 150 years. Hello, 2168 (Happy 300th, Concordians).

Thank you for reading the Diablo Gazette.

Proud of Concord City Council

by Dominic Aliano, Concord

Recently, our community, the City of Concord, received troubling news. We were informed that the United States Navy has plans to house migrants on Navy bases around the country. One of those Navy bases includes the Concord Naval Weapons Station. According to an internal document, the Navy plans to spend \$233 million to construct these camps around the country and would house 47,000 migrants here in Concord.

As an American and as a grandson to emigrants, I truly find these camps troubling. My grandparents left their homeland because they knew that the United States of America would offer them far more opportunities of success and safety than their homeland could ever offer. This country was founded by men, women, and children who traveled many miles and battled many hardships to capture the freedom they were looking for. I definitely believe that people from other countries have the right to capture the American Dream even though individuals might have a different idea or definition of what the American Dream might mean to them.

My family would not be what is today if it was not for my grandparents dreaming big. Heritage and lineage is important for me and understanding my family's history is what makes me better understand who we are. I can learn from our past and proceed into the future with a better understanding of what to do and what not to do. Essentially, what I am trying to say, is that this country was created and built from people that descended from other countries. We should not forget who we are as a country and I feel that

the leadership within the White House has forgotten. Obviously, the immigration system in our country is flawed but it should not resort to camps and the separation of families.

I am proud of the City of Concord's response to the community about the Navy's plans at the Concord Naval Weapons Station:

The City of Concord is very concerned to learn of news reports that the Navy may be planning a detention center at the Concord Naval Weapons Station. The Navy has not communicated information to the City about any such plans, although we have reached out to them upon hearing these reports.

While the City of Concord is currently negotiating to acquire and eventually develop the Naval Weapons Station, we do not have jurisdiction or control over that federally-owned property.

Last September, the City of Concord passed a resolution affirming Concord's commitment to being a welcoming, inclusive, tolerant and supportive community for all. We do not feel that a detention center within city limits represents those values. We are working with Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, and through him, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, to gather additional information in order to address this issue.

Yes, the City of Concord is a welcoming, inclusive, tolerant and a supportive community for all and I am proud to call myself not only a Concord resident but a native. We as a city will only grow positively if we continue to support our hard working families.



concordmayor

by Edi Birsan, Email me: Put EDI in subject
line CityCouncil@cityofconcord.org

The Evolution of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness

As we celebrate the birth of our country with the Declaration of Independence and its stirring narrative of "inalienable rights... Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness." It may give us an opportunity to reflect on the evolution of those things that we call rights.

First, it should be noted that by "inalienable" it generally is agreed to mean things which you cannot give up. Yet at the time of its writing, newborns of slave mothers were automatically made slaves without liberty or the prospect of independent pursuit of happiness. Right to Life itself was less murky back then since they did not have machines that prolong life nor the prospect of clone replacements. The social norms around suicide were rather stark with religious dogma not bringing the "right to suicide" into the public discourse, even though the suicide statement of Socrates was a classic translation exercise of the elite educated in Greek or the old Latin rewrites. Abortion was not officially banned nor was it on the media radar. However, in fairness, the concept of media was limited to newspapers and discussions at pubs. Oh, and radar had not even been invented.

When you acknowledge that people have the right to life, does that mean that they also have the right to clean air, water and maybe a right to those things that sustain life? Or does it really mean that you have the right to struggle for your very life's existence? Are things which endanger your life such as disease, lack of food, and shelter to be dealt with because they threaten your life?

Second, the right of liberty had a strange (from a 21st century bias)

viewpoint: men had the liberty to vote, but not women. People had the liberty to own slaves. You were at liberty to partake of any substance you wanted in the form of drink, food, or chew or smoke. Have we evolved to lesser liberty in that regard? Certainly.

Third, what is the scope of the Pursuit of Happiness? What is happiness to be pursued? If the founding folks had the technology of today, what would be the thread on hashtag Liberty? Note that it says PURSUIT. It does not say obtain nor was it overwhelmingly clear what nature of happiness they were talking about specifically. So, are we expected to be underachievers in the happiness department forever pursuing and never enjoying?

All these ideals have evolved in many different ways into the current century where we talk about health care, environment, and education as rights of life itself. And as for our liberty, our government is at liberty to determine what you are allowed to eat, smoke, and drink. The pursuit of happiness remains as the great unknown as it was over 200 years ago. Through the decades, we have seen it evolve from happiness being a warm cookie, to a kissing embrace, to a day without a tweet from Washington. (D.C., not George.)

Through all this, we need to remember that the Declaration of Independence was setting a pathway forward with what at the time they felt were grave restrictions on their life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It is for us to continue along the many paths that were started then and evolve with what we hold to be self-evident.

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A Close Call

by David King

Residents are thanking the quick work of the firefighters that contained a four-alarm fire that threatened hundreds of homes in the Montecito Estates and Crystyl Ranch neighborhoods on June 29. The grass fire burned up to backyard fences in Montecito and within a hundred yards of homes in Crystyl Ranch.

A fire restarted the next day believed to have been caused by the wind rekindling hot spots. It burned an additional acre in Walnut Creek along the Ygnacio Valley Road.

The Diablo Gazette office is in Crystyl Ranch and was also evacuated. It was quite the emergency with a period of



Residents in both communities were told to evacuate by Contra Costa County Department of Emergency Services. The blaze was also burning towards the Discovery neighborhood before being extinguished.

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District wasted no time in bringing out the heavy equipment, using helicopters, 747 air tankers, and bulldozers that ended with no injuries or property damage

about 20 minutes of intense commotion: readers and photographers were calling, emergency text alerts chimed in, texts and phone calls from friends, family and neighbors, several emails popped up, two robocall alerts, Concord Police PA announcements in the street, door to door knocking facilitating the evacuation, helicopters thumping, air tankers buzzing overhead, sirens blaring, and smoke, all with one goal in mind, safety.



but did burn over 350 acres of golden hills.

Witnesses reported the fire was started from the exhaust of a truck along Ygnacio Valley Road at around 3:45 p.m. The all clear was given at 10:45 p.m.

Fortunately, the Homeowners Associations had recently cleared brush ahead of fire season.

"In the case of the threatened structures along Montecito, if those homeowners had not abated their weeds, this situation could have turned out much differently for them," says Steve Hill of Contra Costa Fire Protection District Public Information Officer.

Thank you everyone. Much thanks to the Contra Costa Fire fighters. What a great community we live in.



Children in Montecito neighborhood thank firemen for saving their homes.

Photos by Sean Liming



Jennifer Stojanovich
Realtor, Better Homes Realty

What to Know About Starter Homes

Buying your first home is so exciting. However, the process can be a little intimidating when you're doing it for the first time. Arm yourself with knowledge. Here's what you need to know about starter homes when you're ready to begin your search.

Be realistic about your budget. We all have champagne dreams and caviar wishes. Buying a home can be a very emotional decision, but it needs to be grounded in reality. Be honest with yourself about how much you can reasonably afford. Don't forget to factor in expenses like repairs, maintenance, and insurance. It's awful when you're stressed about making monthly payments. Give yourself some wiggle room by buying what's in your price range.

Be honest about what you need. Maybe you'd love to have an indoor swimming pool and a three-car garage. But do you really need it? It's important to get very clear about your needs vs. your wants. Sit down and make a list of your requirements. Consider how many bedrooms you need, what size yard will work for you, and the best location. Then make a wish list. This can include items like a playroom for the kids or a basement man cave. While these things would be nice to have, you can certainly live without them. Remember, you are looking for your first home, not necessarily your dream home. You can always trade up later.

Be willing to compromise. It's extremely rare for homebuyers to

find the "perfect" home that checks off every item on their list. If you're waiting to find that perfect home, you may be searching for a long time. Instead, you need to be willing to make some compromises. When you're looking at houses, use your imagination. Think about how you can personalize the house once you move in. If it doesn't have everything you need, like a garage, is it something you can build? If there's no separate room for a home office, can you create one in the basement or in the space under the stairs? If your kids really want a pool, is that something that can be added next summer? Get creative when you're on the hunt and look at each property with an open mind.

Be aware of the future. Of course, you're buying a home to fit your needs now, but think about the future as well. Are you planning to expand your family? Then you should consider that when determining the number of bedrooms and the school district. You should also think about the resale value of the home. We call them "starter" homes for a reason. Most people live in them when they're just starting out and move into another home after they've become a little more established in their lives and careers. For that reason, think about how easy or difficult it may be to sell this home down the line. Your future self will thank you. Feel free to give me a call.

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Andrew's Little Free Library

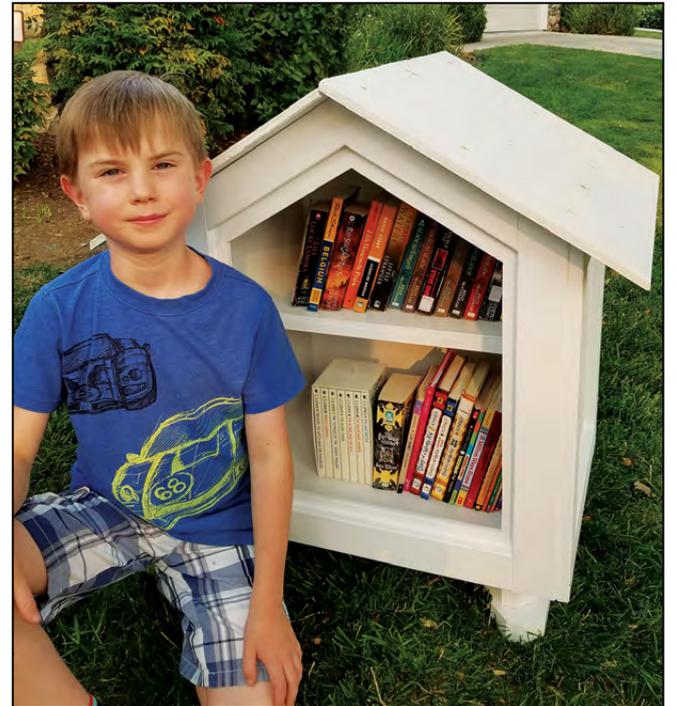
Clayton -- Andrew Drynkin, 8, of Clayton will be attending 3rd grade this fall at Mt. Diablo Elementary and yet, he has launched his own little free library. His grand opening was on July 8.

Little Free Library is a nonprofit organization that inspires a love of reading, builds community, and sparks creativity by fostering neighborhood book exchanges around the world.

Through Little Free Libraries, millions of books are exchanged each year, profoundly increasing access to books for readers of all ages and backgrounds.

There are two other Little Free Libraries in Clayton, but Andrew's is the only one ran by an 8-year-old.

"Since Andrew was a little baby, he had an interest in reading," Andrew's mother Katie said. "He loves books." Between ages 4 and 7, Andrew was interested in non-fiction books. He liked to learn about electricity, molecules, different kinds of animals, nature, machines, you name it.



together by inspiring a love of reading.

The difference between a public library and a little free library is that if you like the book you can keep it forever, you don't have to worry about returning it in time. In exchange, bring a book that you already read and want to share with other kids. Andrew's library holds up to 20 books for adults and 20 to 30 books for kids.

It is located 1233 Buckeye Terrace in the Oakhurst neighborhood. As of this writing, the organization's website, www.littlefreelibrary.org has yet to publish the exact address on its map, but now that he has been granted his charter number, it will be published very soon.

Andrew's parents, Alex and Katie couldn't be prouder of Andrew nor more grateful to those from the community that supported him in this endeavor. "We have many to thank for making Andrew's dream come true: Oak Hollow 2 Maintenance Corporation for supporting Andrew's idea, Nicole Lukinov and Alex Pyankov of Alcon, Inc. and Nathan Smith of Smith Bernal Roofing Co. for help with building Andrew's Little Free Library, and Chris Throop, the Magician, for running the magic show and entertaining our guests during the Grand Opening event," says Katie.

The way it works is simple. Andrew stocked the Library with a variety of good quality books to start. Anyone can take a book that they would like to read. You are encouraged to leave a book worthy of sharing such as favorite books from your childhood or books you would recommend to a friend. The books are always a gift. They are never for sale.

"I always think it's good to do nice things for the community and help others," Andrew says.

Little Free Library's mission is to "Promote literacy and love of reading and build a sense of community." In this case, I think mission has been accomplished.



Andrew's friend Nicole Lukinov helps build the library.

When he turned 7, he expressed an interest in reading fiction books. One of his favorite series is "Jigsaw Jones Mystery." In one of these books, he read a story about a Little Free Library.

"I thought it would be cool to have something like that in our neighborhood," Andrew says. "The rule is: take a book, return a book."

Andrew's library will be mostly focusing on providing books for kids, but there will be books for adults as well. He believes that this library will bring kids

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I was an American Refugee

by Franklin T. Burroughs

The unfortunate situation involving refugees and asylum seekers, especially from the Middle East and Central America, continues to make headlines. The recent Navy's suggestion of placing a detainment camp at the Naval Weapons Station in Concord has brought the issue close to home. Even closer for me, as it has brought back dark memories of the time when I became a refugee in America.

Because so few of the individuals writing about the refugees have actually experienced the physical and emotional problems involved, they tend to generalize and speculate about the effects of refugee status, but as an American citizen, I became a refugee shortly after the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and suffered from the effects for many years.

In the early 1960s, my Iranian wife and I decided to visit Iran for one year so that I could become better acquainted with her culture and family. One year became fifteen. We enjoyed Iran, our lifestyle, and made many friends. We became residents in Iran without relinquishing our U.S. citizenship or allegiance to America.

We constructed a lovely home in North Tehran, purchased a reasonable vacation home and operated a middle school for both Iranian and international students. Our net worth grew rapidly.

In the summer of 1978, a theater in the southern part of Iran was burned by Iranian rebels.

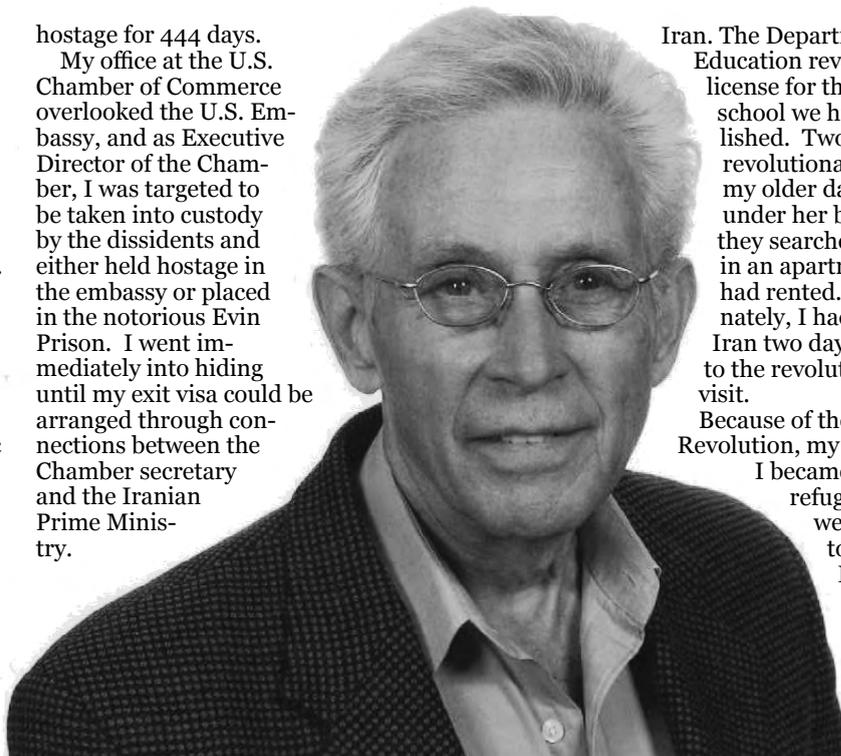
Conditions in Iran grew worse, and by early 1979 the situation had become chaotic. The Shah fled Iran in January and Ayatollah Khomeini returned to the country. Revolutionaries overran the U.S. Embassy and took Americans prisoner, fifty-two of whom were held

hostage for 444 days.

My office at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce overlooked the U.S. Embassy, and as Executive Director of the Chamber, I was targeted to be taken into custody by the dissidents and either held hostage in the embassy or placed in the notorious Evin Prison. I went immediately into hiding until my exit visa could be arranged through connections between the Chamber secretary and the Iranian Prime Ministry.

Life became more uncertain and dangerous for my family and me. Limiting conversations and my proficiency in Farsi prevented me from being imprisoned.

While in hiding, I discovered that I was on a wanted list by the revolutionaries. My wife and I often faced gunshots not aimed at us but possibly fatal for us as we were often in the crossfire. A mob of unknown revolutionaries attacked and destroyed our retreat home. We sold our Tehran home but ran into difficulties in our attempt to transfer the funds out of



Iran. The Department of Education revoked the license for the middle school we had established. Two armed revolutionaries forced my older daughter under her bed while they searched for me in an apartment we had rented. Fortunately, I had escaped Iran two days prior to the revolutionaries' visit.

Because of the Islamic Revolution, my family and I became virtual refugees. We were forced to leave Iran, fearing political oppression and religious persecution. We

had to flee for our lives. My family's lives had been compromised because of my American citizenship as well as their dual citizenships.

We returned to the United States as refugees with little money, no jobs and almost no professional connections. The financial losses we suffered included several hundred thousand dollars. We became a displaced family with few supporters. Only my older brother and his wife were kind enough to allow us to stay with them in their home for several months.

As we began to settle in after our forced return to America, we searched for empathetic groups to which we might be able to refer for advice and assistance but found little success. Technically, we could not be considered refugees since my wife, two children and I were already U.S. citizens and were not seeking entry into the United States from a third-world country because of persecution - even though our motivation for re-entry was for fear of persecution by the Islamic Government. Our U.S. citizenship denied us the possibility of being identified, vetted, and resettled as refugees. Further, our citizenship did not permit the U.S. government to offer us protection under international humanitarian law.

We approached the U.S. Government for help in initiating a lawsuit against the Government of Iran for our funds to sustain us until we could get resettled in the United States, but the response was very disappointing.

Government officials seemed to view us as migrants unworthy of much attention. After considerable effort and persistence, we were awarded a minimal amount of money. Our financial loss remained in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

For several years following the Islamic Revolution, my family and I lived the lives of distraught refugees. We continued to be concerned about our human rights and our poor economic situation. We experienced considerable trauma here, yet we knew we could not return to Iran.

My wife and I would often walk for hours to reduce our tension and fear for our future. At times, desperation overwhelmed us. It took several years for us to settle emotionally and accept that we had to begin again even though both of us were over forty years of age.

No one could really feel our pain brought about by the loss of everything for which we had worked so hard. Individuals and audiences loved to hear our story when I would be asked to speak

at political gatherings or before service clubs, but empathy seemed to end with verbal expressions of regret such as "I enjoyed your presentation, I wish you well."

Both my wife and I had graduate degrees from UCLA, but the degrees seemed to mean nothing to potential employers. Her Master of Science degree in Hospital Administration and her years of experience as an administrator didn't seem to impress employers, and my extensive background in international affairs and administration led nowhere. Almost every response to an application would read something like this: "Thank you for applying. We appreciate you taking the time to fill out the application, but your background doesn't fit our needs. We wish you luck in finding work." Each rejection left us more depressed.

Finally, we decided we needed to act independently. I went without work for some five years before discovering a developer in Santa Rosa who had heard about our plight and was willing to take a chance on my ability to interact successfully with local government officials in applying for building permits and responding to building inspectors. He at first offered me a modest salary and gradually accepted me as a limited partner.

For more than five years, my wife performed menial tasks in a variety of retail establishments. She eventually joined two other Iranians in a venture involving the establishment and administration of a few coffee shops, including the Il Fornaio Bakery, formerly on Main St., in Walnut Creek.

These developments gave us hope and put us back on the road to success. My wife sold the business and eventually became a successful banker while I worked as a developer for a few years before entering academia where I served as President of Armstrong University and later as Interim Dean of the School of Business at Notre Dame De Namur University in Belmont. Today, I work as an Adjunct Professor at John F Kennedy University in Pleasant Hill.

Only individuals and families who have been displaced, faced a bleak future, and are viewed as migrants can appreciate the intense and long-lasting effects of homelessness and the physical and psychological effects of being refugees. Even today, after more than thirty years, my experiences as a refugee at times haunt me.

I find it easy to identify with current refugees, no matter their countries of origin. They must address their personal and emotional problems resulting from their refugee status. Only then can they get on with life. The major role of the countries and organizations volunteering to accept and work with refugees is to ensure a safe and supportive environment that encourages each refugee to re-enter society successfully and begin the self-healing process.

About Franklin Burroughs: Franklin Burroughs lives in Concord. He lived in Iran for 15 years and served as the Executive Director of U.S.-Iran Chamber of Commerce. Mohammed Reza Shah Pavli attempted to inform President Carter of his willingness to establish a constitutional monarchy. (Diablo Gazette March 2018) Then after the Revolution, the Iranian military and Ayatollah Kazem Shariatmadari sought the assistance of the U.S. Government in initiating a coup against Khomeini and the Islamic Republic (Diablo Gazette, April 2018). In both instances, Burroughs served as an intermediary, before escaping and returning to the United States. Both articles can be found at www.diablogazette.com.

He is also one of eleven local authors participating in the just-released anthology of short stories, "Insight, Hindsight, and Flights of Fancy".



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computercorner
by William Claney, Computers USA

Tech in English

Risk Everything or Backup

Dateline:
July 4, 2018.
ComputersUSA (CUSA) in Clayton has introduced a new managed, fully automated backup service for Contra Costa residences and small business aimed at tackling some of the biggest obstacles that users face with protecting their data such as time, expertise and cost.

It is evident from years of serving the computing public, that there are obstacles that prevent users from making data backups because users that need backups usually don't have them. Why? Because it is a daunting task for many users. Purchasing the right media for the backup, loading the backup software, determining what to backup and how frequently the backup process runs, or trying to decide which cloud service to use requires a bit of experience and time. Reviewing the Internet and understanding all the backup options available can be confusing.

The software alone can be a task most users dislike and can rarely be assured they have performed the process correctly. It's not a lack of understanding or desire to perform the backup, it is more of an issue of learning yet another software program. Many users are not sure if they have achieved a proper backup and have no way to test a data restore procedure until the ultimate need arises.

Experts agree you should have a data backup; otherwise, risk the loss of data. This means photos, correspondence, emails, programs and applications, and favorites. All those hours spent setting up the computer and personalizing it are at risk. Once the periodic backup isn't performed your risk of data loss is heightened.

When failure occurs, it takes hours returning your computer to running order, loading and updating Windows, loading and updating the applications



like Microsoft Office, then marrying data back to the application, if a recovery is required. Usually, that's time one may not have. With CUSA backup, it's like the disaster never happened.

It takes time to back up your drives (media) and most users lack the patience to do so nor understand the need to protect themselves and their data against loss. Therefore, CUSA has devised a method whereby the backup process is fully automated. A "look-ma-no-hands" moment.

CUSA has made it simple. You are defined either as a workstation or a server and priced accordingly. Prices for workstations start at \$9.99/mo. And servers at \$39.99/mo. The workstation version includes 250GB of data storage and the server a terabyte. This storage is enhanced by data compression that compresses your data about three (or more) to one. That means if a workstation has a terabyte hard drive it is likely to all fit within your base data storage of 250GB. The same with the servers, the one terabyte allocation will hold about three to four terabytes after compression.

This new service is cost effective at about 33 cents a day and is easy to use because it is fully managed by pros. Your data is stored offsite and heavily encrypted for security. Nothing to buy, install or manage.

It is worth checking out. Call or visit ComputersUSA. (See ad below.)

11th Annual Superhero Walk for Dogs4Diabetics

Dogs4Diabetics (D4D), a local non-profit based in Concord recently held their 11th Annual Superhero themed Walk for the Dogs at Heather Farm Park on Saturday, June 9th. They join the diabetic community in hoping for a cure of the disease, but their sole purpose is to support Type 1 Diabetics by providing service dogs that empower and transform their quality of life today.

The organization exceeded their goal to raise \$70,000 to help support their life-saving Medical-Alert Service Dogs and Diabetes Buddy Dogs who are partnered with their Type 1 Diabetic clients at no cost. This incredible community effort will now allow D4D to create even more life-saving partnerships. "We cherish our community and are incredibly

response training is the trigger that the dog has been trained to identify.

In the case of a Diabetic Alert Dog, the trigger is the change in blood chemistry, allowing the diabetic to treat hypoglycemia prior to becoming symptomatic.

Founded in 2004, D4D has been primarily supported by generous volunteers, supporters, friends, and our local East Bay community. The organization's passion and reason for being is to transform the lives of their clients and the daily management of their diabetes so they can thrive and live relentlessly awesome lives in safety with the support of their service dog.

Many local community partners helped make this year's Walk for the Dogs a huge success. The list includes



grateful for their support. We're always amazed by what we can accomplish when we work together and couldn't do what we do without our community." said Executive Director, Christy Gillham.

As explained within their website, www.dogs4diabetics.com, Medical Assistance Dogs are service dogs that have been trained to respond to an identifiable element that is available to their senses in order to support the medical condition of their handler.

Diabetic Alert Assistance Dogs are a specific type of Medical Assistance Dog that has been trained to use their highly sensitive scent capabilities to identify the changes in blood chemistry that occur during rapid changes in blood sugar levels.

Medical Response Dogs are another type of Medical Assistance Dog that has been trained to assist persons based on recognition of symptoms pertaining to a specific medical condition. The differences between medical alert and medical

the Contra Costa Fire Protection District, Mercedes-Benz of Walnut Creek, BevMo, Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation, Walnut Creek Police Department K9 Unit, Bollinger Canyon Animal Hospital, Guide Dogs for the Blind (D4D's major donor), Slice of Italeigh Pizza Food Truck, and IzzyA's Frozen Custard.

That's a fine list of supporters. You too can help. Dogs4Diabetics is in need of canine training partners who help train and place a dog with a diabetic in need of their life-saving skills. You can help create life-saving partnerships by opening your home and heart to a D4D dog-in-training. These dogs are not kept in cages or overnight kennels. They go home to a foster care home. Learn more by visiting: Dogs4Diabetics.com or email: info@Dogs4Diabetics.com.

Photo by Yellow Neener Photography

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ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

150th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Concord is proud of its diversity. Several communities walked the parade. It was the largest parade ever assembled. Nearly two hours long and over 80 groups participated.



Blue Devils Drum Corps has been a perennial shining star for Concord. They were a fitting end to this parade. Saving the best for last?



These two jeeps put on quite a show running over each other throughout the duration of the parade. A wonderful demonstration of Jeep's off-road appeal.



A float of Rosie the Riveters was just one of several entries honoring those who served both overseas and on the homefront during in World War II . A Rosie the Riveter WWII Homefront National Historical Park is in Richmond. To think that was 73 years ago, is amazing.



Live music by Evolution entertained audiences at Mt. Diablo High School while waiting for the fireworks to start.



There's no official count, but given the long lines for breakfast, thousands and thousands of flapjacks were served at Concord-Diablo Rotary Pancake Breakfast.



Runners patiently waited for the start of the 9th Concord Police Association's Stars and Stripes 5K Run/Walk benefiting Shelter Inc. The race has been growing each year with 1500 5K participants this year.



Uncle Sam, the personification of America, was well represented in this float. Before there was an Uncle Sam, America was represented in art as a woman, Columbia, in the 18th and 19th centuries as a warrior, a guardian, and an innocent girl.



A large crowd assembled immediately following the parade for the unveiling of the Don Salvio Pacheco bronze statue.

Out to Lunch

The Best Pizza in Town

by Richard Eber

One of my favorite comfort foods is pizza. Whether the pepperoni dance when being cooked, the dough is artistically flipped, or be deemed “the last honest pizza” is of little consequence to me. When eating this Italian specialty bread, pure enjoyment is my only objective. All this dressed up Italian specialty bread offers us is a tasty culinary experience with family and friends.

If the truth be known, in general, there is not a significant difference between franchise quality pizza put out by likes of Mountain Mike’s, Round Table, Domino’s, Papa John’s, etc. These pizza places and almost all local family-run operations are using similar canned sauces, cheese, dough, Italian meats, olives, artichokes, and other components in making America’s favorite semi-fast food.

Locally, there is one restaurant that puts out a superior product. It is a small bakery-café called 54 Mint Il Forno, 1686 Locust St. in Walnut Creek. It is the brainchild of Claudio and Daniele who operated a white tablecloth restaurant of the same name at Treat and Oak Grove for several years. Their current Italian rendition is much more informal.

Outside of operating a coffeehouse-like destination in the morning, 54 Mint serves lunch and dinner featuring pasta, salads, and pizza that is unlike any in the region. Their decorated flatbread is unique having its culinary roots trace back to Naples, Italy; the very region credited for being the origin of this dish American’s have embraced so much.

What makes 54 Mint so much different from their competitors? To start with they use an imported flour blend from Italy. This is combined with yeast and salt that is raised into small units about the size of tennis balls. From there Chef Roberto stretches the dough into an oval shape. Rice flour is used underneath to make sure the crust is thin and light.

For tomato-based pizzas, Roberto uses small amounts of his house-made sauce. Fresh Roma tomatoes are peeled and cooked for several hours. They are then pureed with garlic, herbs, and olive oil to provide a taste that canned sauce (no matter how much doctored) can duplicate.

54 Mint imports Italian sausage, mozzarella, burrata, prosciutto, salami and other Italian meats used for the toppings of their pizza. My favorite, called Norcina, uses fresh cremini mushrooms, truffle pecorino, and sausage on a white dough base.

Naturally, for all of 54 Mints offerings, a small drizzle of Italian extra virgin olive oil is poured on top of the pizza right before they enter a 650° oven for about four



minutes. The end result is perfection. Each bite is full of different flavors.

With 54 Mint, it is all about taste. If one is interested in volume and the amount of ingredients that can fit on top of the crust, there are several restaurants in the area (which feature plentiful coupons) that specialize in weight per square inch. For me, the flavor profile at this establishment fits my pallet as do their fine Italian wines. One must make the dining experience complete.

This is not to say 54 Mint has a monopoly on a satisfying pizza experience in the area. One place that goes unnoticed by many is the E. J. Phair Brewery in Pittsburgh. Their brick oven pizzas use only high-quality cheese, produce, and meats and is pleasantly washed down with their home-brewed beers. Having limited refrigeration in the facility makes using fresh ingredients a necessity. Or, as Martha Stewart might say, “This is a good thing”.

Another quality Italian pizza favorite is Bambino’s in Concord. Located on Farm Bureau Road, it’s respectable crust and toppings can go toe to toe with the better pizza restaurants in the area, including Rocco’s, Pinky’s, and Sorrento’s in Walnut Creek.

Mello’s receives its fair share of raves as does Zachary’s Chicago Pizza. Both are in Pleasant Hill. Like its cousins in Oakland and Berkeley, Zachary’s is famous for their calzones, which is basically pizza toppings cooked inside a large pocket of dough. While several places have tried to replicate what Zachary’s does so well, no one else seems to be able to get this delicious meal right.

But as they say, it’s a big world out there for pizza lovers. Each of us likes what we think is a slice of paradise!



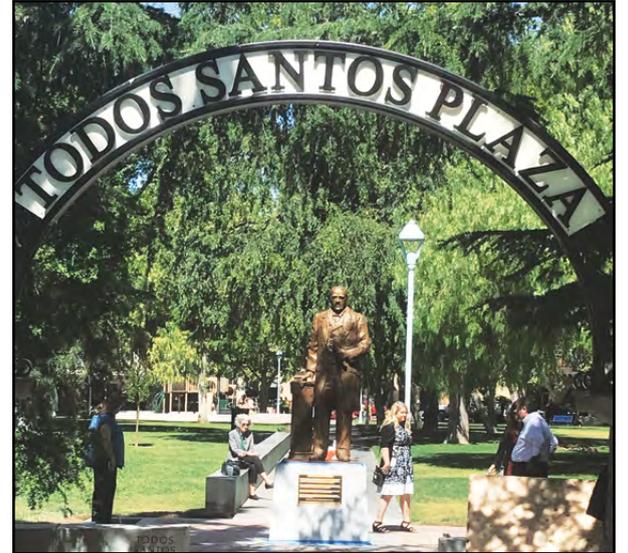
Concord Statue Unveiled

As part of Concord’s Sesquicentennial celebration on July 4th, Councilman Ron Leone unveiled the new 3.5 ton bronze statue of Concord’s founder Don Salvio Pacheco at the entrance of Todos Santos Park. Leone says he came up with the idea a couple of years ago while traveling with his wife. He passed through the town of Colfax, CA, population 2,000, and noticed that they had a statue.

“I thought, that’s what we need. If this small town has a statue, surely a town of 130,000 people deserves a statue,” he announced at the unveiling.

The council formed a committee in conjunction with the Concord Historical Society and Concord Art Association and others to spearhead the project. Lisa Fulmer researched to find internationally recognized Master Sculptor, Paula Slater. They then set out to raise funds from some significant sponsors. PGE, Andeavor, John Muir, Kerex Engineering, and Garaventa family donations were significant. Residents and businesses purchased more than 500 engraved pavers and tiles that raised another \$85,000. The total generated a surplus of \$55,000 that was then donated to the Concord Historical Society to help fund the building of an event center.

Concord founder Don Salvio Pacheco was a man of immense generosity. He was known for his loyalty to family and friends, his trustworthiness and high moral values. He donated the majority of his 18,000 acres of land to flood victims and many others in need that founded Concord. He loved children, had great respect for education and founded a school. Pacheco also donated a park that he named Todos Santos (all saints). Thus, the City of Concord was born in 1868. Happy Birthday Concord.



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CALENDAR

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>

August 11 “Tucker, The Man and his Dream”. 6 p.m. Hearty appetizers and wine will be served. Silent auction. Watch the restored film “Tucker, The Man and his Dream”. Fundraiser for the Martinez Historical Society. Celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Francis Ford Coppola’s critically-acclaimed classic based on the life of maverick car designer Preston Tucker and his ill-fated challenge to the auto industry. Cost is \$75, Go to EventBrite to make your reservations: just type in Tucker on the EventBrite website.

Volunteer Opportunities - Food Bank. 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month. Children ages 5-10 can volunteer at Family Food Sorts with an adult. Families will bag fresh produce for the Community Produce Program. Teenagers 16 and older can volunteer independently. To volunteer, visit: <https://volunteer.foodbankccs.org/>

Monument Crisis Center in Concord is accepting donations for several of their programs through the summer including Summer Camp and Senior Moments primarily toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, dish soap, sponges, pot holders, dish towels, foil, Saran wrap, baggies, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, unscented body wash, body lotion, cotton balls, Q-tips, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes in single or 2 packs, unscented conditioner, mens’ shaving cream, mens’ razors, unused hotel toiletries. For more information, please visit: <http://www.monumentcrisiscenter.org/>

August 4/5 Blackbelts for Butterflies Blackbelts for Butterflies is heading to Concord to bring awareness and acceptance to autism. Seven black belts will be teaching throughout the weekend. Tickets will be limited to 100 people. 100% of the proceeds will go to the local nonprofit for autism. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 pm (3:30 Sunday) with one hour lunch break. Sabre Jiu Jitsu Academy, 930 Detroit Ave Suite F Concord. Tickets \$100, Eventbrite.com

OUTDOORS

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. Wiggett Lane and Mitchell Dr. Also, from
Contra Costa Certified Farmers Market - North Locust St between Giamaona and Lacassie St. Sundays 9 am - 1 pm, Year Round, (925) 431-8361 <http://www.cccfm.org>

July 14 Clayton BBQ Cookoff 11a-8:30p. 40 BBQ masters and backyard chefs compete. Free admission, Main St.

July 28 Bus tours of Concord Naval Weapons Station. A free “first-

come, first-served” public bus tours of the base reuse project. Two-hour tours. See where new housing, retail and office buildings are planned as well as the Mt. Diablo Creek Restoration Project, tournament sports park, and a regional park. 9 a.m. and 12 noon. Starts from Concord Civic Center, 1950 Parkside Dr. Make a reservation. To learn more, visit www.concordreuseproject.org.

August 9 ‘Smores at Sundown’ Enjoy a fun evening of homemade s’mores, live music, crafts and more for all ages at The Gardens at Heather Farm. Supports The Gardens at Heather Farm’s nonprofit public garden and nature education center which brings natural and environmental science classes. 6 to 9 p.m. 1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek. For more info, visit gardenshf.org or call (925) 947-1678. \$5 admission.

CLUB/SUPPORT GROUPS’ NEWS AND EVENTS

July 10- August 7 Mommy - Baby Playgroup Learn about your baby’s development, connect with other moms, and support your baby’s play with same-age friends at the new Mommy and Baby Playgroup! For moms and their 12-month olds or younger. Tuesdays, from 1:30pm-3:00pm at Central Family Justice Center, 2151 Salvio Street Ste. 201 Concord.

July 21 Senior Safety Series “Staying Active on your feet.” 10a.m.-12p.m. Pleasant Hill Senior Center. A presentation by physical and occupational therapists on the benefits of exercise. Free. preregistration required. Call 925-671-5221.

July 26 81s Annual Greter Concord Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Installation Luncheon. Incoming Chair of the Board, Patty Deutsche, Andeavor. 11:35am Registration. \$55 per person, \$500 per table of 10. Concord Clarion Hotel. 1050 Burnett Ave. Reservations at www.concordchamber.com.

July 28 International Tea -benefits underprivileged senior citizens through the Concord Senior Center Scholarship Fund. 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Concord Senior

Center 2277 Parkside Circle, Concord. \$29. 925-671-3320 oppt. 1.

VISUAL ARTS/ THEATRE/MUSIC

Concord Pavilion
 July 24 Imagine Dragons
 July 28 Saturday Night Vibe comedy
 August 11 Comedy Get Down
 August 18 Steve Miller Band
 August 24 Avenged Sevenfold with Prophets of Rage
 August 28 Rob Zombie and Marilyn Manson

Clayton Concerts in the Grove
 July 21st - Southern Comfort
 August 4th - Diamond Dave
 August 18th - Apple Z

Leshner Center for the Arts. This is a completely-improvised, full-length comedy in the style of William Shakespeare. Four performances, Thursday – Saturday at 8:15 pm and on Sunday at 3:15 pm.

July 14 An Evening of Magic with Nick Fedoroff. A little bit of mentalism and an unending supply of illusions, balancing it all with a sprinkling of humor and an abundance of audience interaction. 7:30 PM Margaret Leshner Theatre, 1601 Civic Drive Walnut Creek \$45

July 20 Clif Payne at the Jazz Room. 8pm San Francisco smooth jazz vocalist Clif Payne with Pianist Frank Martin together will perform contemporary and classic pop songs! www.Villagetheatreshows.com

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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September 1st - Steel ‘n’ Chicago
 September 15th – East Bay Mudd

Pleasant Hill Summer Concert Series Thursdays 6:30-8:30 in the plaza in front of Jack’s Restaurant and Bar.
 Aug 2 Top Shelf Classics
 Sept. 6 Illegales

Martinez Summer Concerts and Movies Thursdays 6pm-10pm. at Main St. Plaza. Martinez

July 12-15 Spontaneous Shakespeare! at the

July 22 10th Annual Opera in the Park Solo Opera teams with the Orinda Rotary Club. 5p-7p. Orinda Community Park. Professional opera singers perform favorite arias, duets, and ensembles. Free admission, free parking.

July 26 Summer Sounds Walnut Creek T Sisters The summer’s hottest outdoor concert series in the East Bay, outside at the Leshner Center. All concerts are FREE, but reserved tables are available for purchase - perfect for the whole family!

August 9 Diablo Ballet’s 8th Annual Gourmet Gallop. 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. Sip, sample and stroll your way through 18 downtown Walnut Creek locations. A culinary adventure. Tickets are on sale now only \$39 if purchased on or before July 26th. After that date, \$45 a person. Special group pricing is available. Tickets at www.diabloballet.org or by calling (925) 943-1775.

August 11 2018 Blue Devils DCI Finals Viewing Party Spectators are welcome to bring blankets, chairs, etc. to sit and watch the show. 2p.m.-8:30p.m. Todos Santos Plaza, Concord. Free

August 25 Food Truck Cinema - Princess Bride. Combining gourmet Food Trucks, local live music, and pop culture films outdoor. Diablo Creek Golf Course. 4050 Port Chicago Hwy., Concord.

2018 Music Events at Todos Santos Plaza Concord		
Tuesday Blues		
Date	Show Billing	Tagline
7/10/18	Dana Fuchs	Raw, Soulful Blues Vocalist
7/17/18	Tommy Castro and the Painkillers	Irresistible Contemporary Blues-rocker
7/24/18	Tia Carroll & Her Awesome Blues Band	Bay Area Rhythm & Blues Diva
7/31/18	Jr. DeVille Blues Band	Concord's own Hot Blues Guitarist
Thursday Night Music and Market Series		
Date	Show Billing	Tagline
6/7/18	The Purple Ones	Insatiable Tribute to Prince (on Prince's 60th B-day)
6/14/18	DAKILA with DA ISLAND WAY	Latin Beat with a Filipino Twist and Polynesian Dance
6/21/18	LUMBERYARD	Favorite Covers from the 60's and 70's
6/28/18	The Highway Poets	New Retro Soul
7/5/18	Mariachi Mexicanisimo	Bay Area's Best Mariachi
7/12/18	Chance McKinney	Seattle's Country Music Sensation
7/19/18	Mike Amaral's California Beach Boys	Surf's up! Norcal's Premier Surf Band
7/26/18	Zepparella	The All-Female Zeppelin Powerhouse
8/2/18	James Clark Presents Elvis, Elton and Mick	The King of Rock 'n Roll meets the British Invasion
8/9/18	Stung	Concord's own Tribute to the Music of The Police
8/16/18	Incendio	Fiery Spanish Guitar Virtuosos
8/23/18	Kingsborough	New Generation Indie Rockers
8/30/18	Foreverland	An Electrifying 14-Piece Tribute to Michael Jackson
9/6/18	Lafayette Studio Big Band	Seventeen piece Count Basie style Jazz Orchestra
9/13/18	Annie Sampson	Concord's own Queen of Blues
Special Events		
Date	Show Billing	Tagline
10/4/18	Concord's 3rd Annual "Dark Side of the Moon" Night	A Family Friendly Music and Science Extravaganza

Angels For Minis

by Jill Hedgecock



Pat Van Horn, Mary Stewart kneeling (founder of Angels for Minis Rescue), Cindy Gorman, Sandra Mangrum, and Jill Brunker.

Since its inception on January 1st, 2013, Walnut-Creek's Angels for Minis has found homes for 382 miniature horses due to the dedication of founder, Mary Stewart. Stewart and her group of committed volunteers rescue unwanted minis from neglect, animal auction houses, or from people who can no longer care for them. Mini horses live 35 to 40 years, which means the horses can outlive their owners. Angels for Minis is one of four major mini-only rescue organizations in the United States.

The miniature horse breed was primarily created to pull mining carts, but their popularity spread, and now they are kept as pets, for show exhibitions, and are often used as royal gifts. Although the first mention of a small horse being imported into the United States was in 1888, research shows little public awareness of true miniatures until 1960. Popular belief is that American miniature horses were developed from the bloodlines of 19th century English and Dutch mining horses brought into this country for use in Appalachian coal mines. However, Shetland ponies appear in the pedigrees of some American miniatures. In the past decade, several breeders have imported miniature horses from England, Holland, Belgium, and West Germany, while others have selectively bred miniatures from larger horse breeds.

Minis often come to rescue afraid of people, so Stewart has developed several different approaches to rehabilitate these sensitive and resilient animals. From Reiki—a healing technique based on the principle that the therapist can channel energy into the patient by means of touch—to massage and chiropractic treatments, she zeros in on the best treatment for each horse. Music therapy is another method she uses, with orchestra bands being a favorite of the horses. Interestingly, these special creatures often develop trust more quickly with teens and people with special needs.

"Abused animals fare best when given boundaries and consistency," says Stewart.

During my visit to this facility, every volunteer said that working with the horses was therapeutic for both them and the horses. Their love for the horses was apparent as Pat Van Horn nuzzled up to Doris with her glamorous mane, Jill Brunker interacted with playful 4-year-old Jasper, and Cindy Gorman fawned over a group of three bonded minis. Volunteer Sandra Mangrum is in it for the long haul. Her goal is to set up a rescue organization to train mini horses as therapy animals for the court system. Even Stewart showered handsome Sparky with kisses.

Mini horses are equivalent to standard equines in every way except size. They are distinct from ponies, which have thicker coats, manes and tails, and are proportioned differently. Miniatures were not bred to be ridden. Their spines are not designed to carry weight, rather

they are built for pulling heavy carts. Some minis are bred for dwarfism which often leads to health issues, such as parrot mouth, a condition where their teeth don't connect properly. These horses must be fed a special diet. While these mini horses frequently come into rescue suffering from malnutrition, others come in overweight. Many suffer from hoof problems and parasites.

"If a horse arrives with an extra fuzzy coat," explains Jill Brunker, "it's probably suffering from malnutrition."

Victoria, a beautiful red mini that had been confined for too long in an undersized stall where she couldn't bend her rear legs nor rise by herself after lying down. Fortunately, Victoria can run again thanks to an unconventional surgery on one of her hind legs. A second surgery is scheduled for her other rear leg. Regardless of their afflictions, all horses are brought back to health before being offered for adoption. Because minis are herd animals, Stewart only adopts the horses in pairs, and bonded animals must be placed together.

In late June, 20 new horses arrived from Texas, Washington state, and southern California, each needing care. The average rescued horse costs about \$1,100 to ready them for adoption. Because the adoption fee is \$550, the Rescue must make up the difference through donations.

Angels for Minis are also active in community outreach and education. The Angels for Minis rescue will once again participate in the Martinez 4th of July parade. Last year, they won the Mayor's Choice Award.

Angels for Minis Miniature Horse Rescue is a 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to the well-being of this unique breed. Their goal is to rescue, rehabilitate and rehome the abused, neglected or unwanted minis that are innocent victims of circumstances. There are several ways to help other minis like Victoria. To make a cash donation, go to:

<http://www.angelsforminis.com/Donate.html>. To donate veterinary or other supplies, visit their Wishlist on Amazon <https://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/2WPCNS2LNFJG5>. To volunteer, contact mary@angelsforminis@att.net.



Mrs Butterbanks

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BUTTER

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Brown Sugar Peach Crisp



- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 - 1/2 cup brown sugar (packed)
 - 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
 - 1/4 tsp nutmeg
 - 1/4 tsp salt
 - 1 cup of rolled oats
 - 1/2 cup cold butter
- Preheat the oven to 350°. Throw the sliced peaches into a greased 8x8 baking dish. In a large mixing bowl, whisk the flour, brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, oats. Cut in the cold butter. Sprinkle over the peaches and press topping into the peaches. Bake in the preheated oven until topping is lightly browned, about 45 mins.

Do you know that first bite into a ripe and succulent yellow peach, where the peach juice runs down your chin? There is nothing like it! I've always thought of peaches as a luscious treat, whether they are baked or grilled, or my preference, being picked from the tree and eaten fresh. Summer is peachy-yum time. This peach crisp is one of my favorites and a super easy dessert to make and pair with a pouring of heavy cream, a scoop of vanilla ice cream or cold whipping cream. In all honesty, I add all three!

Ingredients

- 4-5 cups sliced fresh peaches

Note #1-To make this recipe gluten-free (GF), substitute all-purpose flour with GF flour or Almond flour and use GF rolled oats which are available in practically every market. Note #2-Most people detest the peeling of peaches. Here's a trick. Bring a large pot of water to boil, place the fresh peaches in and set your timer for 70 seconds. Scoop them out and place in a large bowl of ice water. After a few seconds, pull them out and cut the peach in half, and where the slice is, peel the skin right off.



Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue

TOBY

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

Toby is a "pawsitively special dawg" being fostered by Shake Wiggle 'N' Roll Foundation (SWRF) in Lafayette. Toby is an apricot-colored male yorkie/poodle (?) mix that came into rescue malnourished. Because nutrition can affect dog's teeth, his true age is hard to estimate. He's probably 4 1/2 years old and 13-lbs. Toby has a Stage 2 heart murmur, but it doesn't affect him, and he does not require medicine. He is neutered, microchipped, and current on shots.

Toby is a friendly little guy that loves car rides and will respect your property - no crates for him (thank you very much!). He's good with older children and has a positive history with small dogs and is probably fine with mellow cats. Toby has been debarked, unsuccessfully, so he makes a strange pseudo-bark. He is undergoing dental work and will soon have a dazzling white "smile." His adoption fee is \$300. To see if this little guy matches your lifestyle (ideally as a 2nd dog or a retired/work from homeowner), contact Maryann at 925 297-7915 or loviins@aol.com.

SWRF is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3). Please support their rescue efforts through tax-deductible monetary donations and/or volunteering. They hold adoption events on the first Saturday of the month at Walnut Creek Pet Food Express on 1388 S. California Blvd.

UPDATES:

Bentley, (Diablo Gazette, Decem-



ber 2017) the deaf and blind dog that received a pro bono eye operation has been adopted! He had a rough journey but look at him now. It doesn't even look like the same dog! It sure is fun seeing these pups find forever homes. 7 of the 9 featured dogs in the column have now been adopted.



Sweetie (Diablo Gazette June 2018) - Thanks so much- Sweetie went home today (June 9)! We could not have done it without you. We so appreciate your assistance. --Jackie De Vries, NorCal Poodle Rescue, Inc.

Editors Note: Ruby Doobie Do is Concord's Instagram celebrity with more than 60,000 followers. [Instagram.com/rubydoo-by__do](https://www.instagram.com/rubydoo-by__do). Column written by Jill Hedgecock, Program Coordinator, Mount Diablo branch of the California Writers Club, www.jill-hedgecock.com.



frugelegance

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

Watermelon Salad Recipe

We've got a summer salad that's perfectly refreshing for these warm summer days. Watermelon Salad! It's a fabulous combination of sweet and a little salty. It's super easy to make and it looks beautiful. This will make a wonderful addition to your next barbecue, picnic or outing.

Ingredients:

- 1 Watermelon
- 1/4 cup Red or White Wine Vinegar
- 1/2 cup EVOO (extra virgin olive oil)
- 2 TBSP. Chopped Fresh Mint
- Juice of 1 Lime
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- 4 oz. Feta Cheese
- 6 Whole Mint Leaves

Directions:

1. Cut watermelon into bite-size pieces.
2. In a small bowl combine vinegar, salt, pepper, lime. Slowly whisk in olive oil. Add chopped mint.
3. In a large bowl combine melon and feta, pour dressing over melon and toss.

4. Garnish with mint sprigs.

Helpful Tips: If you are entertaining, make things a little easier and prep ahead of time. Cut up the watermelon the day before it is needed and store in

gallon-size Ziploc bags. Keep refrigerated till ready to prepare. When you are ready to mix, cut the bottom corner of the bag and drain the juice that collected in it.

Toss and serve in a decorative bowl or use the scooped out watermelon shell.

Use a pre-designed

computer paper that comes with a fun summer barbecue theme to display the

Refreshing Summer Favorite
Watermelon Salad
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menu. Print out or write your menu items within the design, frame it, and then display. Visit our blog, www.frugelegance.com, for a super cute barbecue-themed print paper we like to use.

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.



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**bookends**by Jill Hedgecock, Program Coordinator Mount Diablo California Writer's Club jillhedgecock.com Blog: <http://writersotj.wordpress.com>

Wintergirls

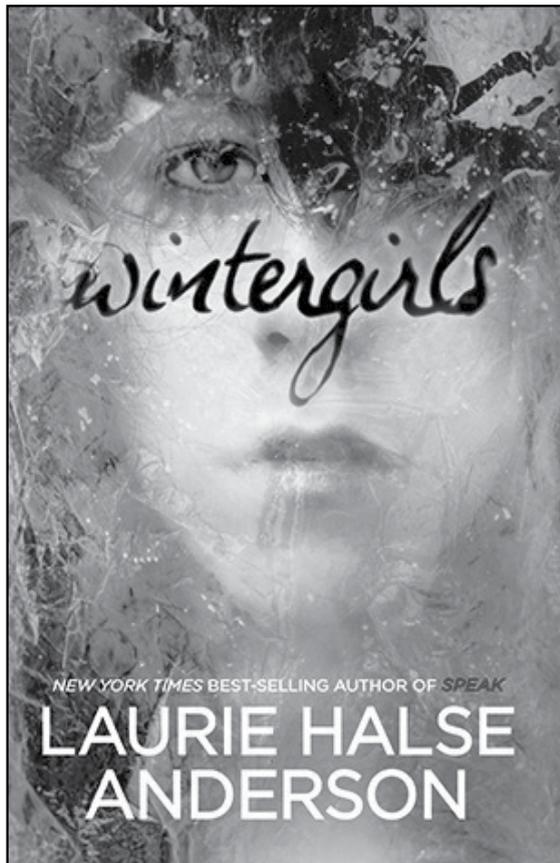
It's no secret that American culture equates a woman's beauty with a thin, shapely body. In *Wintergirls* by Laurie Halse Anderson (2010, Speak, reprint edition, paperback, 304 pages \$5.87), readers observe first-hand how 18-year-old Lia's weight-obsession takes her on a path of self-destruction.

The novel opens with Lia being told by her stepmother, Jennifer, that her former best friend, Cassie, died alone in a hotel room. Halse Anderson masterfully reveals that Lia is no ordinary teen. Throughout the narrative, Lia's thoughts are revised by crossing out a pleasant description and telling her truth. Here's an example of this technique: New Seasons, the prison, the rehabilitation center she lived at escaped from her deep-seated unhappiness. Lia's lack of popularity, lackluster grades in high school, leads her to try to excel at one thing—being the skinniest girl in class. She enlists Cassie to do the same and the two enter into a rivalry that ultimately ruins their friendship. And so, on the night Cassie decides to commit suicide, Lia ignores the 33 phone calls from her friend.

Lia punishes herself for not being there for Cassie by restricting what she eats. She never consumes meals (that she's usually being forced to eat) without also adding up the calories. Every. Last. One. Even a spear of kosher dill pickle of 5 calories is significant.

Her one and only source of happiness appears to be Emma, her younger stepsister, who she adores and helps shuttle around to soccer practice. Lia endeavors to cheer up when Jennifer, Emma's mother, puts too much pressure on the girl, who is struggling with long division. Meanwhile, Lia is losing more and more weight. Will she come to terms with her illness or suffer the same fate as Cassie?

Wintergirls is a New York Times bestseller and received the 2010 Best



Books for Young Adults award. It is considered suitable for ages 12 and up. While written primarily for a young adult audience, this book will appeal to parents of troubled teen girls or anyone who's ever wanted to get inside a teenager's head. Lia's story will grab you and won't let go, making it a perfect summer read.

Laurie Halse Anderson has been the recipient of multiple awards for her contributions to young adult literature. National Coalition Against Censorship has honored her for her fight against the censoring of literature. She is the author of the groundbreaking National Book Award finalist and Printz Honor Book *Speak*. Her other critically-acclaimed YA books include *Prom*, *Twisted*, *Catalyst*, and *The Impossible Knife of Memory*. She has also authored a number of middle-grade titles including *Fever 1793* and the National Book Award finalist, *Chains*. She and her husband live in northern New York State.

movie review

by Sandie Angulo Chen, Common Sense Media



Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom

3 of 5 stars

"Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" takes place three years after the catastrophic events of Jurassic World left the revamped Jurassic Park abandoned. When the volcano on the island where the park was located is forecasted to erupt, Claire (Bryce Dallas Howard), who now works for the Dinosaur Preservation Group, is asked by the billionaire who helped start the original park to go on a secret mission to rescue the remaining dinosaurs so they can be taken to a special preserve. She asks Owen (Chris Pratt), her now ex-boyfriend, to accompany her on the trip in order to track Blue, his beloved velociraptor. During the trip, it's clear that Claire and Owen are in over their heads; eventually they're forced into a life-or-death situation -- both for themselves and for the dinosaurs they want to save.

Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom is just as violent and terrifying as its predecessor, 2015's "*Jurassic World*." Although the action no longer takes place inside a tourist-filled dinosaur theme park, there's still a large body count (mostly armed mercenaries and billionaire moguls). And there are lots of intense scenes of sustained terror, suspense, and peril, including a prolonged sequence in which a very scary genetically modified dinosaur tracks and tries to kill a young girl. People are eaten, torn to shreds, trampled, and severely injured. On the upside, there are more notable female characters in this installment than the last, and the movie has themes of teamwork and bravery. Families who enjoyed *Jurassic World* will be able to handle this sequel, but younger viewers sensitive to violence and menacing creatures may not be ready for all of the people-chomping. Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard again co-star.

Despite this action-packed sequel's uneven tone, director J.A.



Bayona continues to thrill audiences with jump-worthy suspense and to create a bond between viewers and the dinosaurs. The elements of a summer blockbuster are all there: charismatic stars, smarmy villains (Rafe Spall, who's inherited his father Timothy's ability to play evil quite well), plucky/adorable child (Isabella Sermon, in her first role), swooping score (Michael Giacchino, doing a wonderful job of channeling John Williams), and lots and lots of heart-stopping action. But something keeps this sequel from ranking up there with the best of the Jurassic films. It explores too many avenues and doesn't close the loop on a few of the issues it raises.

While the story requires suspension of disbelief in several places -- and Spall's character is all but mustache-twirling in his stereotypical villainy -- *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* still delivers where it ultimately counts: the dinosaurs. The intricate computer-generated creatures are so convincing. One scene in particular involving young Maisie and a foodchain-topping dinosaur will definitely tie stomachs in knots. So go for the action and the dread, but don't expect a movie that's nearly as iconic as the original *Jurassic Park*.

Cast: Bryce Dallas Howard, Chris Pratt, Ted Levine; Director: J.A. Bayona; Universal Pictures; 128 minutes; MPAA rating: PG-13

Common Sense Media is an independent nonprofit organization offering unbiased ratings and trusted advice to help families make smart media and technology choices. Check out our ratings and recommendations at www.commonsense.org.

New Works from Bay Area Playwrights: Summer Staged Reading Series at B8 Theatre

by Lisa Fulmer

As the first in a series of staged readings happening at B8 Theatre in Concord this month, "January 23rd is a play inspired by an actual court case about a man accused of assault against his wife who had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's." "Because this case went to trial, I was able to learn how issues like autonomy and competency of older adults were being played out in the courtroom and presented in the media, which was fascinating to me," says the playwright Lorraine Midanik. "I look forward to hearing the entire play read by actors and getting constructive feedback from the audience. I hope that people will recognize in my work some of the important dilemmas facing older adults today."

In "Hill Country Pursuit", Harold Smith takes us on a journey back in time to Texas in 1946. "I wanted to write another play about one of my favorite

characters, Texas Ranger Luke Jackson," Smith says. "He's based on the county sheriff I knew when I was in high school. Jackson was bigger-than-life with an unerring sense of right and wrong. He was also a warm, educated, intense man who earned the respect and support of his community."

Susan Sobeloff wrote "Edits" to explore the question of whether or not the science of DNA can "fix" us.

Her story introduces researchers at two different genetics labs who both come up with a new technology that can precisely edit DNA and they have to compete for the patent. One of the researchers struggles with a decision to experiment on herself with the hope of healing her own mental illness.

The series ends with a multi-generational musical by Becky Potter and Branice McKenzie, called "A Planet for

Children", which explores our individual uniqueness and how we each fit into the world. "Creating a compelling story about this group of kids who learn to collaborate using their strengths has been a fun challenge," Potter says. "Our goal was to create something that speaks to all ages and encourages people to look inward to find the power of their true selves."

B8 Theatre is located at 2292 Concord Blvd. Tickets are just \$10 per person, per show for the Summer Staged Reading Series, which runs July 13 through August



5. Visit B8theatre.org or the B8 Facebook page for details.

Lisa Fulmer is a marketing consultant and a community arts advocate. She is on the Board of Directors for the B8 Theatre Company and the Concord Art Association.

DIABLO GAZETTE FUN ZONE

Aerobatics "Fun"

by Robin Gigoux

When I was a younger person, I took certain chances. Sometimes opportunity presented itself and sometimes I sought it out. Some situations were fun; others a little terrifying.

My good friend, Josh, was taking flying lessons at a local airport. One Sunday afternoon, he and I had lunch with David, a flying buddy, David's wife and his children at David's home: people I'd never met before. Leaving the wife and family behind after lunch as she wished, Josh, David and I headed for the airport where Josh had a prearranged flying lesson.

David and I remained on the ground watching as Josh and his instructor performed some stunt flying: things planes should not be able to do, I thought. After several minutes watching Josh and his plane cartwheel across the sky in the distance, David asked me if I'd like to go up for a ride in his plane while we waited.

"Sure," I said.

David's aircraft was an old military plane similar to the Gloster Gladiator, as shown and flown in the Duxford Battle of Britain Airshow highlighting this plane and the Curtiss P-40F (shown on You-Tube). The pilot sits up front and the only other passenger sits behind him with a segmented glass dome overhead. Neither can see the other and the only means of communication is via headset.

Having never been in a small aircraft like this, I felt lightheaded and giddy as we ascended the small portable staircase and climbed in. After sinking into the worn bucket seats, we donned and tested our headsets and off we went, exposed to the terrifying (to me) roar of rushing air through the glass dome. I continued to watch in awe as Josh and



his aircraft performed aerobatics in the distance until David asked if I'd like to try some.

Really? Was I ready to die?

"Sure," I said. After all, I told myself, my pilot is a husband and father. If he's not afraid he's going to die, why should I be a wuss.

Then David warned me about G-forces that might make me pass out. "Are you still ready?" he asked.

"Sure. Just don't pass out yourself," I said.

First, he rolled the plane in a smooth maneuver, left wing over right wing. It felt almost gentle. "Are you OK?" he asked.

"I'm good," I said, thrilled to the core while butterflies pummeled the lining of my stomach.

"Want to try a loop?"

"Sure," I said; and the plane climbed up and tumbled over itself backwards, threatening to stall at the top of the loop before dropping down again. Still I didn't pass out.

After a few random rolls and loops, with time to rest between, David asked me, "Are you up for something more complicated?"

"Sure," I said, now adding a feeling of recklessness to my trepidation.

I watched the horizon flip and flop during a roll, followed by a loop, followed by another roll, and I have no idea what else, all in one smooth maneuver: the sky above the horizon, then below, then above again. My brain was going crazy failing to make sense of it all. Those G-forces David mentioned had me pressed into my seat, and I never felt like I was upside down.

When we returned to normal flight,

David asked me how I felt. Glee and terror had paralyzed my face muscles, plastering a goofy grin on my face. Along with a dry throat and parched lips, I could hardly speak. "Fine," I managed to squeak out between virtually unmoving lips.

After Josh's plane landed and David and I were safely on the ground and the aircraft secured, Josh wheeled over the staircase for us to disembark. My legs felt like rubber and I wobbled as I descended the steps. I resisted kissing the ground.

Nevertheless, someday I may be convinced to try skydiving. I'll probably have a heart attack on the way down.

Robin Gigoux, Author "Chronicles of an Occupational Prostitute, a Workplace Survival Story", as Peechi Keane. "Insight, Hindsight & Flights of Fancy," an anthology, Contributing Author

Readers Rants & Raves

Seven of the nine dogs featured in "Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue" column have now been adopted! – Jill Hedgecock, Walnut Creek

I love this! I have seen your Gazette and love it. - Steve Elgin, Sacramento

I just moved to the area and picked up a copy of the paper downtown Concord at Todos Santos. I live in the Walnut Creek Transit Village. Is there somewhere I can pick up the Diablo Gazette that is closer? - Marsha B., Walnut Creek

DG: The 7-11 on Oak Rd. in Walnut Creek now carries the Diablo Gazette. Enjoy it with a cup of coffee.

The Diablo Gazettes were all gone at the Amtrak station in Martinez. I picked up a copy at the Walnut Creek Library this month. I hope you can provide more copies in your rack there next month. -- Clifford S., Walnut Creek.

DG: Yes we will.

If your home does not receive the Diablo Gazette, please contact us for a list of pickup locations nearest you.

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aRt Cottage

by FROgard www.aRtCottage.info

Local Artists and Art Lovers Flourish at aRt Cottage

Members from the Concord Art Association, Las Juntas/East Bay Artist Guild, and the aRt Cottage have been active in attending Concord's city council meetings advocating for an art and cultural center. A city with art is always a good thing. Concord has become a most welcome place for artists and art lovers. aRt Cottage sponsors and promotes local artists with new



Six aRt Cottage students had entered the Contra Costa Water District's 2019 calendar contest, and all were chosen finalists to be published in next year's calendar. Each will be also awarded a fifty-dollar certificate at an art supply store. Their original work will be returned to them in a framed format.

Classes for all ages are available on a private and semi-private level in a variety of disciplines, including watercolor, acrylic, pastel, sewing, ceramics, and mixed media, to name a few. You can learn more about classes on their website at www.artcottage.info.

By the way, if you attended Concord's Fourth of July parade,

you may have noticed the aRt Cottage car entry created by the aRt Cottage students. If not, you will see it around town. It will be around for a while and you can't miss it.



monthly exhibits free for anyone to enjoy at 2238 Mt. Diablo St. Hours are Tuesday through Friday from 11am-5 p.m. and Saturday 1pm-5pm. The current exhibit, "All Creatures Great and Small" has been a pleasant surprise.

Concord VIBE Presents

SATURDAY NIGHT VIBE COMEDY SHOW



DEBUTS AT THE CONCORD PAVILION
 featuring **Jessica Wellington** headliner **Jesus Trejo** hosted by **Mike Falzone**

The City of Concord's lifestyle initiative, Concord VIBE, is hosting a comedy show at the Concord Pavilion on Saturday, July 28. The two "Saturday Night VIBE" shows begin at 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Jesus Trejo is headlining the shows, with feature act Jessica Wellington and host Mike Falzone.

"Saturday Night VIBE is an exciting new venture for Concord and the Pavilion," said Brian Nunnally, City of Concord Business Development Manager. "We are excited to host three fast rising stars in the comedy world to kick off our inaugural standup show."

Jesus Trejo is based out of Los Angeles, born and raised in Long Beach, California. Trejo has appeared on "The Late Late Show" with James Corden, Comedy Central's "Adam Devine's House Party," Season 2 of "Stand-Up & Deliver" on Nuvo TV, "Uproarious" on FuseTV, and he was a recurring cast member on TBS's sitcom "Sullivan & Son" as Javier.

Jessica Wellington is a Los Ange-

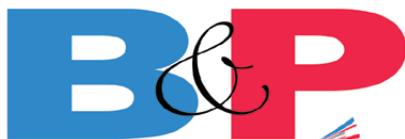
les-based standup, improv comic and the producer of "Comedy Pile Up", who is known for her brash comedic style. Jessica got her comedy start in Sacramento and is now a paid regular at the Comedy Store in L.A. Her credits include "Open," "People You May Know" and "Save the Date(s)."

Once dubbed the "Kevin Bacon of YouTube," Mike Falzone is someone all YouTubers are either connected to or inspired by. His successful online presence has led to opportunities for guest writing and hosting on SourceFed and YouTube Nation, which is a collaboration between YouTube and DreamWorks. He is currently writing a book entitled, "Never Stop Shutting Up: A Book of Advice and Other Things You Didn't Ask For," and is also creating a beloved podcast with his fiancée called "Welcome to Our Podcast" in addition to his solo podcast, "Mike in the Morning."

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit <https://bit.ly/2J-fuXji>.

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COOLING TIPS FOR SUMMER HEAT

Temperatures are rising. Contra Costa County Supervisor, Karen Mitchoff offers these tips and list of cooling off locations. Don't wait to call your doctor or 9-1-1 if you experience any of these WARNING SIGNS of heat related conditions, such as heat exhaustion or a heat stroke which can be life-threatening and can come on quickly. Here are a few tips the prevent heat related symptoms, particularly during power outages.

Drink water: Sip all day; don't wait until you are thirsty. Avoid alcohol, caffeinated beverages, sugary soft drinks and full-strength fruit juices.

Limit physical activity and wear a hat outside, preferably with a wide brim.

Keep shades drawn and blinds closed, but windows should be slightly open.

Open windows to cooling breezes in the evening

Keep electric items turned off, lights low and avoid using your oven or clothes dryer.

Do not just rely on fans; if the temperature is 90 degrees or above, fans alone usually cannot protect against heat-related illness.

Take baths, showers, or find a pool to swim in; bathe in lukewarm water, use cool towels.

Wear loose-fitting cotton clothing that is light-colored and lightweight.

Use a sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher when outside

Eat light foods high in water content: fruits, salads, and soups.

Don't wait-in or leave infants, pets, elderly or disabled persons unattended in cars or other vehicles for any length of time, even with windows cracked. Within minutes the temperature will become dangerously high and serious injury and/or death will result.

Bring pets indoors or ensure they have shady spots to protect them all day.

Make sure pets have plenty of fresh water that will stay cool all day

Develop a "buddy" system; keep in contact with your family & friends at least twice a day

Talk to your doctor about medications; you may need to alter medications or dosages, but under no circumstances should you change your medication on your own.

Use air conditioning and be prepared for power outages. If you don't have an a/c unit at home or the power is out, go to any air-conditioned building.

Diablo Ballet's 8th Annual Gourmet Gallop Returns

Diablo Ballet's Annual Gourmet Gallop food and wine walk returns to downtown Walnut Creek for the eighth consecutive year on Thursday, August 9 from 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. This self-paced, self-guided stroll offers the opportunity to savor amazing food and wine while supporting an amazing cause.

"We are so pleased to be in our 8th year of the Gourmet Gallop which is one of our main fundraising events for Diablo Ballet and our PEEK Outreach Programs. We are so thankful to the locations that have participated year after year and are thrilled to offer new locations and additional wine tasting options this year," said Lauren Jonas, Diablo Ballet's Artistic Director.

Participating businesses include the following locations: 1515 Restaurant & Lounge, Broderick, Buon Vino, Lokanta, Lottie's Creamery, Massimo Ristorante, MoMo's, San Francisco Creamery Co., Sourced BBQ & Spirits, Silk Road, Steinway Piano Gallery and Walnut Creek Yacht Club. Who's new? Canvas & Cabernet (serving McGrail Vineyards and Wines), Havana, Lettuce, Oke

Poke, Wine Hardware (serving Darcie Kent Vineyards wine) and the outdoor Water Light Plaza, which will feature food samplings by Urban Remedy, wine tasting by Rock Wall Wine Company and a fun selfie station. Wine tasting will also be provided at Steinway Piano Gallery (serving Jacuzzi Family Vineyards) and Buon Vino.

The event benefits Diablo Ballet and its PEEK Program (Performing Arts Education & Enrichment for



Kids), an arts education program offered by a professional dance that provides in-school movement curriculum and free dance performances to students and families in underserved areas. Tickets are \$45 but only \$39 if purchased on or before July 26th. Special group pricing is available. Tickets are available online at www.diabloballet.org or by calling (925) 943-1775.

Places for Seniors and People with Disabilities to COOL OFF

Please consider going to one of the following locations during a power outage on a hot day: shopping mall, library*, coffee shop, movie theater, restaurant, or senior center.

Please call first for hours of operation

Ambrose Community Center	3105 Willow Pass Road	Bay Point	925-458-1601
Antioch Senior Center	415 West 2 nd Street	Antioch	925-778-1158
Brentwood Community Center	35 Oak Street (In City Park)	Brentwood	925-516-5400
Brentwood Senior Center	193 Griffith Lane	Brentwood	925-516-5444
Concord Senior Center	2727 Parkside Circle	Concord	925-671-3320
Danville Community Center	420 Front Street	Danville	925-314-3400
Danville Senior Center	115 E. Prospect Avenue	Danville	925-314-3490
Hercules Senior Center	111 Civic Drive	Hercules	510-799-8219
Martinez Senior Center	818 Green Street	Martinez	925-370-8770
Oakley Senior Center	215 Second Street	Oakley	925-626-7223
Pinole Senior Center	2500 Charles Ave.	Pinole	510-724-9800
Pittsburg Senior Center	300 Presidio Lane	Pittsburg	925-252-4890
Pleasant Hill Senior Center	233 Gregory Lane	Pleasant Hill	925-798-8788
Richmond Senior Center	2525 MacDonald	Richmond	510-307-8087
Alcosta Senior and Community Center	9300 Alcosta Blvd.	San Ramon	925-973-3250
Walnut Creek Senior Club	1375 Civic Drive	Walnut Creek	925-943-5851

For further information, please call our Information & Assistance Program at 1-800-510-2020 (from within Contra Costa County using a land line) or 925-229-8434 (when using a cell phone or from outside Contra Costa County)

*El Cerrito and Kensington libraries do not have air conditioners

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parentfootprints

by Dr. Dan Peters www.DrDanPeters.com

Is Kindness

the Secret to Healthy Relationships?

My wife texted me the link to an article in The Atlantic called “Masters of Love.” The subtitle read, “Science says lasting relationships come down to—you guessed it—kindness and generosity.”

It was a great article summarizing over four decades of research on couples. This research started in the 70’s when the alarming divorce rate gained public attention. I am sure you won’t be surprised to hear that it hasn’t changed much since then. Estimated percentages of divorces vary but most sources agree the current divorce rate for first marriages remains at approximately 40%–50% with second and third marriages ending at a higher rate. Why don’t or can’t couples stay together? And...what is happening to their children?

I went for a run and pondered parts of the article that spoke to me. As I ran, I had several thoughts. First, I thought of all the therapeutic programs I have worked over the years where we taught “social skills” to kids by talking to them about the elements of friendship. We spent hours teaching and discussing things like: How do you know who is a friend and who isn’t? What characteristics do you look for in a friend? How do you show someone you care about them? What do you do when someone has hurt your feelings? When should you forgive someone and when should you realize they are not good for you? These questions and skills seemed so basic—yet, these basic skills seem to be related to picking your partner, lasting relationships, and happiness. Shouldn’t we be teaching this stuff to all kids?

I also became keenly aware that kids learn how to be in relationships by watching their parents relate to each other, as well as with their parent’s other significant relationships. Arguing itself is not bad, but how parents argue makes a difference. It is about how parents talk to each other—mean, dismissive, sarcastic, or attempts at kindness and

compassion—even when upset. Do they apologize or not? I took a quick inventory of my marriage and started asking important questions. Do I turn in or turn away? How do I communicate when I am mad? Do I show caring about my wife’s accomplishments, small and large, or do I focus on my own? Am I kind enough? I then immediately thought of my kids. What do they see? What do we model for them?

I found myself running much faster than usual as I was thinking about all this, being driven by emotion. It can’t be that hard! Why can’t people be kind?! What do we have to do to raise kind children who grow up to be kind adults in loving relationships who show their children how to be kind? It became clear to me that it all starts in our homes.

Many months from now we’ll all make our list of 2019 new year’s resolutions but I’m starting mine today:

- Show kindness and compassion to everyone you interact with—friends, family, and strangers.
- Teach your children about what it means to be kind and compassionate. Give them examples. Tell them stories from your day about yourself or others being kind.
- Be kind to your partner. Be kind to your kids. Be kind to yourself.
- Don’t settle for being mistreated. If you are not in a healthy situation, do something about it. Take action.
- Commit to being in healthy relationships where you care for your partner and your partner cares for you.
- “Turn in” to your partner as the small things often matter more than the big things.

Anyone can be kind. Anyone can practice being kind. Anyone can be taught to be kind. Show it to others and expect it from others. Show your kids what it looks like to be in a loving relationship. It starts in our homes.

Can CBD Treat What Ails You?

by Nik Wojcik

What if we told you there was a newly-found medicine showing strong promise in the treatment of pain, anxiety, nausea, insomnia, depression, inflammation, seizure control, cancer symptoms and migraines? What if I told you that medicine was extracted from cannabis?

Not all cannabis is created equal. Like any other thing in nature, different parts of the plant’s structure carry different chemical compounds that induce different effects. In this case, I am talking about a chemical compound commonly called Cannabidiol, or CBD for short. When extracted, CBD on its own has no psychoactive effect because it lacks THC, the active ingredient that induces the “high” effect.

It may surprise you to learn we are naturally built to accept what the cannabis plant has to offer, courtesy of the

endocannabinoid system and CB-1 and CB-2 receptors found in the human body and all other vertebrate species. According to Dustin Sulak, a licensed osteopathic physician and integrative medicine advocate, there are receptors present in the brain, organs, connective tissues, glands and immune cells that function to promote homeostasis. Thousands of

medical journals and academic articles that explain the function of each receptor in scientific detail, which can be overwhelming for the average reader.

Luckily, in this age of legalization and acceptance, people can turn to an increasing number of medical professionals and compassionate care providers to answer questions in simplified terms. Medical marijuana dispensaries and delivery services are staffed with knowledgeable people that take the time to address concerns and help potential patients identify the best CBD treatments for specific ailments, which can come in the form of soft gels, inhalers, tinctures, edibles, beverages, creams, and roll-ons.

Local delivery services such as Mountain Remedy have seen an uptick in cannabis usage among elderly communities. Owner Robert Spearin explained that he receives many referrals from vendors that actively promote their products in areas like Rossmoor and Orinda and he is happy to take the time to help older patients feel comfortable about the process. He finds that elderly patients tend to gravitate toward tinctures of CBD oil, applied with a dropper under the tongue, and infusions crafted in easy-to-ingest edibles such as gummies or candy bars.

“It works great for inflammation,” Spearin said. “It works great for arthritis. It works great for muscle pain and for some people, it helps with sleep.” Although Mountain Remedy reaches out to all demographics, the priority for Spearin is those with cancer and other debilitating pain - they “create tickets” to call and check in on people with severe conditions, just to ask how they’re feeling and if there’s anything they can do to help.

Interestingly, Spearin notes older patients are more commonly expanding into products containing THC as well, the psychoactive chemical found in cannabis. One topical cream product, containing both CBD and THC (although the

“psychoactive” effects are quite different when applied to the skin) sells out within a few weeks and he reports that approximately one-third of the supply goes to the Rossmoor and Orinda areas. The two different compounds are used to achieve different results, but that’s a topic for another article.

Today’s “average” user is anything but average. Inside popular walk-in dispensaries such as Harborside Health Center in Oakland, you’ll find adults of all ages and activity levels turning to CBD to alleviate a host of ailments. High-impact athletes use it for inflammation and pain, elders use it to reduce arthritis and glaucoma symptoms, patients undergoing chemotherapy use it to mitigate debilitating side effects and people suffering from anxiety are finding

much-needed relief, often eliminating the need for benzodiazepines like Xanax or Ativan. Many people are even utilizing specialized CBD products to safely treat their pets.

As use among the elderly population grows, so do the number of resources available. One website, Seniors for CBD, offers a plethora of Online information and forum spaces

that give older patients the opportunity to learn more and interact with others in a comfortable setting. Harborside offers a 15 percent senior (and veteran) discount, support groups for senior citizens and cancer patients and a care package program for eligible patients who otherwise can’t afford to purchase cannabis products.

One local distributor of CBD isolate (a pure powder form) and tincture products, Samer Sharaiha of Cali Born Dreams, offers greatly reduced prices for patients undergoing treatment like chemotherapy. His own father became a CBD user while fighting lung cancer, giving Sharaiha a first-hand and very personal perspective on the health benefits the compound can offer, solidifying his commitment to providing the highest quality products to people who need it most.

The former finance professional has found the cannabis industry to be much more rewarding. “With hemp and CBD, there’s people whose lives you’ve changed completely,” Sharaiha said.

Websites such as Leafly.com and Weedmaps.com are good places to start for those interested in learning more about benefits of CBD and how to access the right products. Unfortunately, since the federal government has refused to reschedule cannabis and formally acknowledge the medical benefits, CBD is not yet FDA-approved and remains uncovered by insurance companies. However, many compassionate companies and people within the cannabis industry will go above and beyond to help patients obtain treatments they need.

As Harborside expresses on their website, giving people safe access to cannabis (be it CBD, THC, or hybrids of both) is about “knowledge over ignorance,” “wellness over intoxication” and “generosity over greed.”

Photo courtesy of Cornerstone Collective



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theRIGHT move
by Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate
www.BuyStageSell.com

East Bay Quality of Life Attracts Home Buyers

So, you've chosen the East Bay for your next home and/or you have a home to sell. The real estate market is still brisk, although the recent interest rate increase has changed things a bit. Multiple offers may be fewer than a year ago, which has caused some of the prices to level off in certain neighborhoods. Even so, proper preparation and staging can still maximize sale prices for sellers. Depending on the property, buyers are sometimes offering cash over the appraised value to obtain a home. Some buyers remove the appraisal contingency altogether. It depends on the condition and presentation of the home as to what a buyer is willing to offer as an incentive for the seller to take their offer. A good Realtor can help buyers prepare a winning bid, or advise the seller on improvements and staging to enhance their final sales prices. In many ways, this has not changed. The well-kept and well-presented properties sell, but added market dynamics are properties that sell twice, or come off the market without offers. The hope for buyers in the coming year is that the seller's market balances out a bit so buyer can negotiate on their offers. For now, low inventory is keeping the pressure off prices and driving multiple offers.

San Francisco and South Bay home prices are forcing prospective homeowners to seek housing elsewhere. Our communities in the East Bay are good location choices for starter home buyers, move up buyers, retiring or move down buyers with public transportation and freeways within under 10 miles from most locations. Walnut Creek, Rossmoor, Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Concord, and Clayton are good choices for schools,

shopping, and home shopping.

Our East Bay cities have a lot to offer. There are miles and miles of regional trails for biking and hiking. You can hike Mt. Diablo in the daytime hours and have music downtown in summer evenings. Many of our cities offer all these amenities. Regionally, there are Farmer's Markets, entertainment, public transportation, and Bart lines. SFO and Oakland Airports are near while Concord has its own small airport.

The Concord Pavilion attracts major bands in rock, blues, jazz, acoustic and hip-hop as well as graduations, home shows, and other events. Families can enjoy Hurricane Harbor, shopping malls and Imax and other movie theatres. There are a variety of highly-rated restaurants and steakhouses in the region and a growing beer trade, and of course the wine country. In other words, the region has everything to serve your varied interests, whatever they might be. There are college options like Diablo Valley College, St Mary's College, Extension of Hayward State University that give local students options for their education.

All of this is why we all love living in the East Bay. It's no surprise why the value and amenities are attractive. If you are thinking of selling or buying, the East Bay is still a good value for the quality of life it offers.

Terrylynn Fisher, Real Estate Broker leads Terrylynn-n-Team and is a 30-year + veteran of real estate with Dudum Real Estate Group, Walnut Creek, and author for the staging industry. CalBRE#01882902. www.BuyStageSell.com. CalBRE#0615420

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Five Days of Chaos, Concord Prevails for Now

by Nik Wojcik

They say the city of Concord is “Where Families Come First”. The U.S. Department of Navy put that commitment to the test.

On June 22, Time published a story that rocked the city and surrounding Bay Area with news that the U.S. Department of the Navy was considering a detainment camp for up 47,000 immigration



detainees on the federally-owned Naval Weapons Station property and chaos and resistance actions ensued.

Concord Mayor Edi Birsan told us that “not a single person in the city’s government had been notified” of the proposal - he became aware of the situation when a journalist called and asked him for comment on the TIME piece. When Gov. Jerry Brown’s office was asked if the state received prior notification or had an official position, we were directed to



Patrick Little, who recently ran against Senator Diane Feinstein on an alt-right platform, appeared outside the Concord City Hall with his message of unilateral deportation.

the federal government for all questions. We inquired about the environmental safety of the base with the DON Base Realignment and Closure office but were forwarded to three different contacts and have not yet received confirmation of remediation work performed there, largely by Tetra Tech EM, Inc., the same contractor accused of falsifying results at Hunters Point Shipyard.

It was revealed five days later that the entire state of California was being pulled from consideration as potential locations for temporary detainment centers “for the time being”, but some real damage had already been done. It would have been a detainment camp with the population the size of Danville. For context, the U.S. detained about 117,000 Japanese Americans during WWII among 10 internment camps. The largest of which was Tule Lake, CA with 18,879 detainees.

In a show of solidarity, Birsan and

Congressman Mark DeSaulnier were quick to push back on the DON proposal as what DeSaulnier called “madness”, which he reiterated in a Facebook Live Town Hall meeting streamed on Tuesday, July 26. Birsan’s official letter of response, dated June 25, highlighted several reasons the property was “unsuitable for consideration as a detention facility”, including the base’s lack of infrastructure and presence of contaminants. The mayor is familiar with issues surrounding the 12,800-acre base, as he has been a participant in several years of negotiations for the transfer of the property to the city, where major development is well into the planning phase and millions have already been spent toward the effort.

Birsan also explained how inappropriate it would be to jail immigrants in a city gifted by Mexican-Americans to survivors of the tragic 1868 Hayward Fault earthquake, which destroyed the original city of Pacheco. Although the city was originally named Todos Santos, Birsan explained that “the people almost immediately began calling it Concord because we live in concordance with one another”.

“The town was created to take care of refugees and survivors,” Birsan said while vowing to lead the opposition.

The people of Concord quickly realized they had no say about the role their city would play in what could go down as one of the largest civil rights stains in U.S. history, but residents and many others from nearby communities came out in force to have their voices heard anyway. Tuesday’s regular session city council meeting was met with hundreds of concerned residents and protesters who marched with signs from Concord BART, an unusual site in the ordinarily quiet East Bay suburb. The chamber was quickly packed to capacity as the fire marshal turned people away at the door. Drums and chanting from outside served as a backdrop to the emotional meeting.

A special public council session was called the very next day to solely address the issue of CNWS and was again



heavily attended by residents of Concord and protesters from around the Bay, despite Tuesday’s late news that the plan was taken off the table for consideration. Those unable to enter the primary chamber or the overflow room were forced to wait outside in the courtyard.

Inside, public comments were heard, one after another for nearly two solid hours. Several speakers praised the council for their swift and strong condemnation of the proposal but begged them to keep up the fight and do more.



On occasion, emotions ran high inside and outside the chamber during the Concord’s emergency City Council meeting.

The story in Concord attracted people from all walks of life. The daughter of a Japanese-American interned during WWII urged the city to heed

her warnings. “My family has continued to suffer the intergenerational trauma from that,” Reverend Leslie Tokahashi said. Immigrant families expressed fear of federal agents and an ICE detention camp in a heavily-Latino community. Housing advocates explained that immigrants had already been adversely affected by the news. Debra Bernstein of Monument Impact said property owners had been “emboldened” and evictions of immigrant tenants spiked in the few short days after news of the proposal.

A recently retired Child Protective Services social worker, Rebecca Nassarre told horrific stories of sexual assault among young, unaccompanied female detainees. “They have been raped and assaulted by our government, by people who are supposed to take care of them,” Nassarre said



their response: “Immigrants are welcome here!”



as she pleaded with the council to stay resolute in their opposition.

Members of the clergy and BAMN activists took to the podium inside the chamber and although their tones were decidedly different, their message was the same: asylum-seekers are not criminals and “no human is illegal”.

We commonly see this level of community action and unity in cities like San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley, but it’s a rarity in Concord. That was a point of inspiration for many and fear for some.

One speaker by the name of Natalie thanked the council for their support but warned of what could come as the city becomes more vocal in the fight against the Trump administration’s “zero tolerance” policy. She worried the attention would bring “Nazis” and other alt-right counter-protesters into Concord, as they have shown up in cities like Berkeley over the past two years.

“We have to walk a very fine line,” Natalie said. “Please dance gracefully.”

Outside the chamber was one man by the name of Patrick Little, dressed in a suit and holding a sign that read “Deport Foreign Nationals”. Little believes the immigrants being detained at the southern border are a threat to his business and the only people who should be granted asylum are “victims of ISIS” persecuted for their Christian faith. Little recently made a name for himself in a bid for Dianne Feinstein’s Senate seat. The Albany resident was banned from the California Republican Party convention for his extreme anti-Semitic rhetoric.

BAMN activists attempted to drown out Little’s words as he spoke with the press and the exchange expanded in a heated debate between several people, at least partially affirming some of Natalie’s concerns.

A lot happened in Concord during the frantic days between the TIME article’s publication and the government’s rescindment of the proposal. According to Birsan, the city incurred costs for additional police, meetings, and compensatory time swaps. Fear struck the community, and some suffered from the backlash. But in the end, what we can say is that the immigration policy fight arrived at Concord’s front door, or backyard, and the people united in

Do You Know Concord?

by David King

The Concord Chamber of Commerce and the City of Concord hosted its 3rd annual Concord Business Insight Bus Tour on June 9. It has sold out all three years. Having taken the tour this year, I can recommend it for anyone looking to build their livelihood in Concord.

City of Concord Business Development Brian Nunnally and Pedro Garcia, Economic Development Specialist, narrated the tour pointing out some of the marquee elements of each district visited.

Nunnally and Garcia stated that companies are attracted to Concord for several reasons: affordability, accessibility (especially to highways 680, 242 and 4), its strong and diverse demographics, and its amenities such as two Bart stations, Hurricane Harbor (formerly Waterworld), two golf courses, an airport, Concord Pavilion, Solano Drive-In, global cuisine, Music and Market series, etc. All are signs of a thriving community. Here are some of the highlights on the tour.

Everyone met at Xfinity's new offices at the Veranda Shopping Center for morning coffee. Fitting, as Veranda is the first

destination on the tour. Veranda, which opened this year, is 375,000 square feet of retail shopping built on the former Chevron Office Campus. At Veranda, we were introduced to Super Duper Burger, founded by Michelin star-rated Chef Andriano Paganini. There are 10 such restaurants in the chain, and Concord was chosen as its first East Bay location.

Golden State Lumber is one of three lumberyards in Concord, along with Dolan and Ashby's. Add Lowes and Home depot and that demonstrates how strong of a construction market Concord supports. Golden State Lumber opened in July of 2017.

1200 Concord Avenue, formerly the Concord Airport Plaza sold to Sierra Pacific Properties in 2016 for \$33 million. It's undergoing extensive interior and exterior improvements. One of its tenants, Cerus Corporation specializes in blood transfusion safety. Cerus developed and use an innovative technology that kills viruses in blood such as HIV, Hepatitis, and Zika Virus.

Concord Avenue Auto District is larger than you think. More than 20 brands are represented and it is second only to Fremont Auto Row in the entire East Bay.

Big C Athletic Club completed a \$1 million renovation last year in time to host the 2017 World Racquetball Tournament.

Bay Alarm Headquarters is home to approximately 110 jobs performing back-office administrative functions.

Andeavor, formerly Tesoro, sits on about 2,200 acres right at the border of Concord and Martinez. Andeavor gave more than \$1.1 million in charitable giving to the surrounding communities in 2017, a 50% increase over its 2016 giving. They also provided the community with playing fields for Junior Optimist Baseball League (JOBL), Diablo and Heritage Futbol Clubs, and Blue Devils Drum Corps.

Blue Devils Drum & Bugle Corps may be Concord's brightest star. With more than 450 participants, ranging from 8-21 years old, it is Concord's perennial National Champions; 18-time DCI World Champion, and have finished in at least the Top 5 for the last 30 consecutive

years.

Fresenius Medical Care which moved to Concord from Walnut Creek is the world's leading provider of products and services for people with chronic kidney failure. Approximately 2.8 million people uses its devices worldwide. Concord is a 24/7 R&D Facility with more than 500 employees and they plan to add about 125 more.

Jet Suite X offers commercial flights with private jet amenities to Burbank and Las Vegas. More destinations are on the horizon. Las Vegas flights leave Friday and return Sunday evening.

When Sunvalley Shopping Center was built in 1967, it was the world's largest indoor shopping mall. Pleasant Hill didn't want the mall, so Concord



completed a friendly annexation.

The Monument District offers a diverse group of small businesses and eateries. It is a wealth of opportunities with an average daily traffic count of approximately 43,000 cars. Monument Grill is the highest Yelp!-ranked breakfast spot in Concord.

Rachel Dunn Chocolate factory on Detroit makes

some amazing chocolates and has been featured on Oprah, Food Network, and the Rosie O'Donnell show.

PG&E is Concord's largest employer when you consider their Concord Gateway Center offices and their State-of-the-art \$40 million complex which is the nerve center that will serve the Bay Area and Central Coast.

Factory Entertainment makes collectible figurines for Marvel, Disney, etc. Who knew those items were made in Concord?

Willows Shopping Center's re-investment to create a Main Street atmosphere has attracted several quality tenants such as UFC Gym. The Concord UFC gym was the first location in the franchise. It now has 135 locations across the globe with 50 more expected in the coming year. MidiCi the Neapolitan Pizza Company is opening in August bringing authentic Naples-style pizza to Concord.

There were many, many more highlights and a few fun facts thrown in as well. For example:

Did you know there are now twenty-five different countries represented by Concord's diversity of restaurants?

The Iron Horse Trail begins in Concord and runs through Walnut Creek for 32 miles.

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor (formerly Waterworld) is rated in the Top 10 waterparks in California.

Last year, the Food Bank provided about 21 million pounds of food directly and to other non-profit organizations in Contra Costa and Solano counties!

Who is Concord's Fastest growing company? Vapore, located on John Glenn Drive. They make PureMist, a humidifier that helps with sinus congestions and allergies.

Who is Concord's oldest operating business? Lehmer's Buick GMC. In 1936 you could buy a new Oldsmobile for \$665. That's the year Erv Lehmer got the franchise from General Motors to sell New Oldsmobiles. They converted his father, Lew Lehmer's Golden West Service Station, into Lehmer's. Much has changed in the world since 1936, but the Lehmer family continues to sell GM vehicles in Concord.

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NEWS & TALK

In case you missed it...

Contra Costa County Library is serving free lunches to kids at nine library locations in the county this summer in an effort to prevent a summer nutrition gap. Many low-income children face nutrient deficiencies when school closes for the summer break. Lunch at the Library is part of a statewide collaboration between the California Library Association (CLA) and the California Summer Meal Coalition to keep kids healthy and engaged when school is out.

Burlington Coat Factory will be opening in Pleasant Hill, taking over the building that once housed Toys R Us on Contra Costa Blvd. near Target. The 40,000-square-foot building will be remodeled. It's unknown when they plan to open.

Concord has a new art gallery. The Raquel Amaral Studio/Art Gallery is located at 1856 Colfax St. #6. Owner Raquel Amaral is very supportive of the diverse group of local artists. The gallery is open 12-2 Tuesday through Saturday.

You can now text 9-1-1 to dispatch within the Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff jurisdiction, which covers the unincorporated areas of the county. During an emergency or life-threatening situation, you should always make a voice call to 9-1-1. However, if you cannot because of hearing or speech impairment, or if you are unable to speak, or in a situation where it is unsafe to speak, you can send a text to 9-1-1.

To send a text to 9-1-1, enter the numbers 911 in the "To" field. The body of the text should include the exact location of the emergency and if you need police, fire or an ambulance. Please answer ques-

tions and follow the instructions of the 9-1-1 call-taker. Please keep your texts short and simple with no abbreviations, jargon or slang. Do not send any photos or videos. Text to 9-1-1 is only available in English and is slower than calling 9-1-1. Text to 9-1-1 may not be available in all areas.

Bay Area to Receive Over 2,000 New Electric Vehicle Charging Stations. The 2,059 stations will pop up in 134 locations, including workplaces, schools, transportation hubs and apartment complexes. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District approved more than \$6 million in funding for the project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants. GRID Alternatives also received \$56,000 to fund the project in low-income communities, district officials said. "More charging stations in key locations will make buying an electric vehicle a smart option for more Bay Area residents," district executive officer Jack Broadbent said in a statement.

Funding for the project comes from a \$4 car registration fee surcharge instituted in the Bay Area in 1991. The charge supports clean air vehicles, ride-sharing, shuttles and bike facilities.

Don't dump that fish. The Contra Costa Water District says they're counting on everyone to help them protect our fisheries, native species, and fragile ecosystems. Transporting and releasing live fish—or any aquarium species—into the Delta, Contra Costa Canal, Los Vaqueros Reservoir, and nearby ponds and creeks is illegal and harmful.

For breaking news daily, go to Claycord.com.

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Local Teen Wins Overall Grand Champion!

Braydan Tomizaki, a student at Las Lomas High School, won the title of Overall Grand Champion at the Tiger Claw Elite Championships on May 19. This kung fu tournament drew over 650 competitors in San Jose. Braydan won two 1st and one 3rd in different events. This earned him the Grand Champion title in Advanced Traditional Kung Fu. He then competed against the Grand Champions of Shaolin Kung Fu and Wushu styles. This was the first time Tiger Claw Elite had the Grand Champions of each style compete against each other. Against a field of 5 other Grand Champions, Braydan won the title of Overall Grand Champion in the 14 – 17 year-old division, and was the only traditional kung fu martial artist to win this title.



tournament draws over 600 traditional martial artists.

Braydan's father, Master Daniel Tomizaki, is an international Grand Champion himself, having won over eight Grand Champion titles as an adult, as well as the 4-Star International Grand Champion. He was recently featured on the cover of Kung Fu Tai Chi Magazine (Mar/Apr 2018 edition). Both he and Braydan can be found at Tomizaki's Champions Kung Fu teaching classes and training at 4700 Clayton Rd in Concord.

One of the judges was Wu Bin, the coach of Jet Li. Braydan has won seven Grand Champion titles over the last two years. He's competed in Los Angeles, Berkeley, San Jose and Concord. Coming in October, he will be going to Brazil to compete in the 10th ITKFA Chinese Martial Arts Championship. This international tournament is held annually alternating between Brazil and Concord. He has won the Grand Champion title twice at this tournament. However, he will face a much bigger challenge in Brazil, as that

Concord Teen Dancer Dazzles, Invited Back to New York



Claire auditioned for "Steps on Broadway". After returning home from New York, she learned she had been offered her a scholarship to dance in the highest level of their summer program.

Claire is thrilled to be able to dance at Steps. Their three-week program will give her a chance to continue her work in classical ballet as well as being able to continue studying contemporary and modern dance.

"I'm excited to be learning from world-renowned teachers," Claire says. "I hope to become more versatile in my dancing and I will increase my stamina." She will be dancing from 8:30am to 6:00pm five days each week.

Studying in New York is a dream for most dancers, and Claire feels blessed to have another chance to dance in this amazing city. While in New York, Claire was able to see her favorite dancer, Misty Copeland dance in Swan Lake and she was even able to meet Ms. Copeland after the performance.

Claire was able to work with Pierce Herrmann, an up-and-coming professional photographer who has worked with National Geographic. His photos of Claire captured her hard work and the beauty of New York.

While Claire was awarded a scholarship, these funds only cover the cost of the program. She is responsible for her flight, living expenses and accommodations. Many excellent dancers do not make it professionally due to the overwhelming costs associated with dancing at this advanced level. You can help Claire make her dreams come true by donating to her Go-fund-me account.

<https://www.gofundme.com/manage/claire-project-abt>

Claire Churchill of Concord will be returning to New York to dance with Steps on Broadway. Claire spent the past month dancing with American Ballet Theatre (ABT) in New York, where she was placed in their most advanced level. (see story April Diablo Gazette, (<http://www.diablogazette.com/ae/american-ballet-theatre-accepts-concord-dancer/>))

As a seventeen-year-old, Claire was the youngest dancer in the group of mostly college-age students. For Claire, "ABT was an amazing learning experience, from my ability to work in the highest-level group with people who train in companies, to the personal instruction, care, and correction the teachers gave to me"

At the conclusion of the ABT program,

(photos by Pierce Herrmann, pthphotography.com)

Avengers II, Clayton Bocce Champions

The highly successful Clayton Bocce League completed its Spring Season Playoffs. Avengers II defeated Ed's Mudville in the final 2 games to 1 avenging last year's finals loss to them. Avengers II finished with a record of 34-1. Their lone defeat was a 10-12 loss to Ed's in game two of the finals.



L-R: Nick Iacobitti, Char Iacobitti, Mike Berndt, Jon Thorsen, Steve Jayko, Rod Oversteet, Clayton Mayor Kieth Haydon (Mayor Haydon is not actually on the team but likes to hang with winners). Not shown but there in spirit:

Dave Shuey, Greg Berndt, Mike Jayko, and Dave Scolini.

De La Salle/Clayton Valley Footballer Drafted by KC Chiefs

Former De La Salle football star Kahlil McKenzie was selected by the Kansas City Chiefs in the sixth round (198th overall) of the NFL.

This pits McKenzie against his father, Reggie, the general manager of the Oakland Raiders, who play in the same AFC West division.



McKenzie played defensive tackle for the Tennessee Volunteers. He had a career-high 35 tackles and two sacks as a junior defensive lineman at the University of Tennessee in 2017, but it appears he will be making a position switch in the pros. The Chiefs listed him as an offensive lineman. He is expected to compete at a guard spot. Reports out of minicamp were that he looked like a natural at the position.

His uncle, Raleigh, was an offensive lineman for 16 seasons and won two Super Bowls with Washington. Reggie spent five seasons in the NFL as a linebacker for the Raiders and San Francisco 49ers.

Kahlil McKenzie joined the Clayton Valley Charter High football team his senior year but was deemed ineligible to play.

Photo: Kahlil and Reggie McKenzie

Local "Rockstar" Fighter, Charles Rodriguez, Undefeated as Pro

Take note, Concord's Charles "Rockstar" Rodriguez is a rising star in the kickboxing and martial arts arena. He holds the Muay Thai Super middleweight Intercontinental belt and is 7-0 as a professional with five stops. Rodriguez is still early in his professional fighting career, and each opponent gets a little more experienced. His last fight on May 27, Rodriguez stopped his opponent in the 3rd round with a crushing knee to the body.

"This was one of my most difficult fights and brought me the most satisfaction. I truly felt tested and it was a revitalizing experience." His next fight is presumed to be against Troy "Trouble" Jones, 9-1 with 8 knockouts. Promoters are still securing a date and venue.

Given his massive personality and natural charisma, it does not take long for one to guess how Rodriguez earned the "Rockstar" moniker.

"I started training Muay Thai at the beginning of 2012 because it is the coolest thing I'd ever seen. It's kickboxing but you get to use your elbows."



Born in Vallejo, he's been training at Concord's Combat Fitness since 2011 under George Tsutsui, owner and World Muay Thai Champion. Tsutsui is also his manager and promoter for Rodriguez. "Charles is one of the elite fighters in America," said Tsutsui.