

**Happy Thanksgiving to our loyal readers**

# ANOREXIA TO INSPIRATION

Local Sensation Maris Degener Documentary Shines at Film Festivals

Maris Degener, photo by Robert Martinez

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## from the Publisher

David King

### Winners, Rhinos, and Naked Gardening

Congratulations to our two winners from the Concord Oktoberfest. Lisa Robb won the \$300 Stein Cake from Alpine Pastry and Cakes. As luck would have it, Lisa happens to be German.

Mr. Klaus Parks stopped by our booth and offered to draw Jill Hedgecock a rhino using the cover of her book as his model. A few minutes later, he gave her this (see image). She paid him \$10, he then bought her book.

Kudos to Michelle Kline of Walnut Creek who guessed how long it would take for our Stein ice sculpture to melt. The official time was 7 h: 24m:16s. Michelle's guess was a very close 7H:19M:25.

Michelle won a year supply of root Beer and dinner for four at DJ's Bistro in Concord.

We are introducing a new column for you gardeners. Columnist David George is "The Naked Gardener" of Contra Costa. He maintains a substantial and challenging garden that cozies up to the wild land. He tries to control the damage from its hungry critters using natural, non-toxic techniques with natural, environmentally friendly gardening practices.

Gardening "naked" means he



only uses organic soil conditioners, mulches, composts, and fertilizers. Pesticides are strictly prohibited except for fly and yellow-jacket wasp traps. These do not pollute the earth with toxic chemicals. He promotes natural predation to keep insects and rodents in check.

"The same is true in my relationship with landscape-munching deer, barnyard-scraping turkeys, cat-chasing coyotes, apple-eating squirrels, and tomato-destroying voles. We fence or chase them off as best as we can, but we do not poison or otherwise destroy them," says George. We hope you will like his column and celebrate the joys of organic living! See page 10. Thanks for Reading the Diablo Gazette. Happy Thanksgiving!

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## concordmayor

by Edi Birsan, Email me: Put EDI in subject line [CityCouncil@cityofconcord.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofconcord.org)

### Paths to Making Them Listen

"Government is either listening to you, or to someone else." These were words I was told at age 11 by a New York Wise Guy to explain how government worked. By THEM, he of course meant those in government. Any government. Any type of government. I would add that silence among a politician's constituents has never been known to move a politician.

In the coming election about 30% of registered voters will not vote, not to mention thousands of people just in central county that have not bothered to even register. The least you can do, as a citizen in a Democracy, is to vote. The irony is that the fewer people that vote, the more relative weight each of their votes carry. Nonetheless, whichever side loses will always find in convenient to blame their loss on the large number of people who didn't vote.

As an aside, I knew an individual who refused to register to vote. Yet for over a decade he was a constant feature at City Council meeting and the only member of the public to attend almost all Council Standing Committee meetings. When he spoke, or towards the end wrote in shaky hand, we on the Council all listened intently, proving that there are more ways than voting to make THEM listen. Alas, age and poor health has seen him fade away. I miss you Chaz.

One easy way to make your voice heard regarding various local issues is via a phone app called "Concord Connect" that I am proud to have introduced and supported. This app is one way that can put YOU back into YOUR government, providing you with not only a quick update on city news and agendas, but also a way for you to report problems you see around you to the appropriate City departments. These could include issues such as graffiti, pot holes, light outages, abandoned shopping carts or vehicles, park maintenance issues, sidewalk issues, illegal dumping, and more.

Once you report an issue on the app, you will get a message that the notice was received. You will then be contacted, usually the next day, to brief you on the

status of your reported issue. You will again be briefed on when the project is started and again when it ends. You can do this anonymously or openly, and you can also use the app to see what other issues are being handled by the City.

Another way to get your voice heard by your local government is by supporting organizations, either political parties, or issue-oriented groups engaged in environmental, social, or economic endeavors.

Remember though that nothing that you do to express yourself should ever create a distraction from your basic message. That applies whether you prefer to write letters or emails, or post comments on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. Be civil, do not be insulting, and think about how you would feel or react were you to be the one to receive your message.

Finally, I believe that direct face to face contact has always been the best way for an individual to make his or her voice heard, at least by those in local government. I have always said that, at least at the local level, you can touch the face of democracy. Although "democracy" can get ugly at times, nothing compares to the impact that a face-to-face conversation and expression of your opinions can have on those in local government. We in local government are always available to you. You can meet us in or after formal Council meetings, or talk to us in person, on the street, at a coffee shop, or even occasionally at a place providing stronger libations.

And as a reminder, I also run a short survey site: [www.PulseOfConcord.com](http://www.PulseOfConcord.com) to gain a better sense of what problems and issues are of concern to our community and any ideas that people in the community may have regarding possible solutions to their concerns.

So, reach out and make a difference in our community. I can be reached at: Edi.Birsan@CityOfConcord.org, 510-812-8180, Facebook Edi Birsan, 950 Alla Ave. Concord, CA, 94518.

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"Ruby to the Rescue" Jill Hedgecock  
"Journey-Man's Journey" John Cooper  
"Computer Corner" Will Claney  
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# Help Set the Guinness Record for the Rhinos

Columnist Jill Hedgecock (“Book Ends” and “Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue”) has received international attention over her new book “Rhino in the Room”. The reviews on Amazon Books have been favorable, while her book signing events, including at Concord’s Oktoberfest have been well attended.

“Rhino in the Room” is a riveting story about the perils of poaching and rhino extinction. Brandon Challis, an artist from Capetown, Western Cape of South Africa contacted Jill after reading her book. His mission, called “Rhino Record 2019” is to stop the slaughter,

by raising awareness in countries most responsible, specifically, China and Vietnam. Vietnamese and Chinese cultures believe that rhino’s horn has medicinal value, thus driving the demand for them.

“Rhino Record’s” goal is to set a Guinness Book of World Records for the largest painting to promote awareness about the plight of the rhino. The plan is



to collect up to 1200 king-sized flat bedsheets depicting rhinos. Once collected, they will be sewn together into a continuous roll which will then be displayed first in Vietnam on World Rhino Day, September 22, 2019 and then shipped to China.

Jill couldn’t be more excited to participate. “I spent a good part of my day figuring out how to draw a big rhino and the best way to paint on a bed sheet. The end result was I completed the first painting,” she proudly stated.

So far quite a few local California studios and teachers have already voiced their readiness to

participate.

If you are interested in attending a painting session or have king-sized flat bedsheets to donate (white preferred, but light-colored or some patterned can work), or want details to create your own sheet, email Jill at [rhinorecord2019@gmail.com](mailto:rhinorecord2019@gmail.com). Let’s help set this record and save the rhinos.

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# Maris Makes a Movie

by David King

Maris Degener, Concord, is not any ordinary 20-year-old. At 13 she was hospitalized with life threatening anorexia. Today, she is a sensation who has grabbed the attention of thousands who suffer or suffered from mental health issues including depression, anxiety, and eating disorders. She has become an inspiration, a voice of positivity, a mentor whose star keeps rising.



We first told her story two years ago, ("Yoga Saved My Life", Diablo Gazette, September 2016) shortly after she had graduated from Clayton Valley Charter High and was already making waves in the media. At 17, she was an established Yoga instructor. Degener was an extremely articulate teenager who spoke with incredible authenticity and maturity. Even then, she had accomplished notoriety that most of us won't achieve in a lifetime. Not because of her illness, but because through her recovery process she has summoned the self-awareness and inner strength to overcome it and pave an enlightened drive to succeed at life; she had become an inspiration.

To bring you up to speed, at age 13, Maris was hospitalized with life threatening anorexia. While recovering, and on bed rest, she begged her doctor to let her be active. They agreed that Yoga would be a gentle enough form of exercise during her rehabilitation. She answered an ad for a Yoga class and fortunately, she connected with Yoga.

"Something clicked. I was able to make the connection between what was going on in my head and my body," says Degener. "Yoga gave me more awareness." Then Maris began blogging, expressing her most intimate emotions.

Her blog writings are savvy and mature beyond her years, loaded with life lessons, wisdom, and naked honesty. Thanks to an alert online CNN reporter Ashley Strickland who first reported Degener's story, it has spread on websites and blogs across the globe. CNN.com, Kids Yoga Daily, Seventeen, Girl's Life Magazine, AboutfaceGPA, sweat.com, essentialkids.com.au (Australia), and on several Radio podcasts, to name a few of the publishers who have covered Degener's remarkable story of enlightenment. She won the top award at Clayton Valley and delivered the graduation address. She's been on the cover of CNN Health, spoken to hundreds of audiences through podcasts and school guest presentations, and been a keynote speaker at the Women's Strength Summit.

Degener is currently in her third year at UC Santa Cruz studying Psychology and

Social Justice. Her life story is now being shared on the big screen. Yes, Maris made a movie. The documentary, "I am Maris" is being met with great success. "We've had great festival screenings at the Ashland Independent Film Festival, Kansas City FilmFest, Santa Cruz Film Festival, and Mill Valley Film Festival."

In "I Am Maris," director Laura VanZee Taylor looks back through Degener's anxiety, depression and eating disorder through high school. Taylor told the UCSC campus paper, City On a Hill Press (CHP), that Degener's paintings on Facebook portraying young women with solemn eyes and saddened faces caught her attention. Taylor then began reading Degener's blog, yogamaris.net, where she found Degener's personal testimony of living with mental illness.

"Her writing was so poetic, so beautiful and so honest and vulnerable," Taylor said. Originally, Taylor told CHP that she was just going to take her artwork and have it animated. But as had happened with so many who has stumbled upon Degener's story, she became engrossed with its aw honesty.

In the film, Taylor begins by interviewing Degener and her family regarding Degener's journey of self-acceptance. "I Am Maris" categorizes Degener's process of recovery into two yoga poses — the child's resting pose, showing her pain, and the strong spider pose, showing triumph.

Throughout the film, Taylor includes Degener practicing yoga while she tells her story of overcoming self-doubt.

"Not only can someone with a mental illness and an eating disorder survive and heal," Taylor said, "but that they can really thrive and lead an incredible life and have a huge impact on the world."

In "I Am Maris," Taylor reveals Degener's animated artwork while Degener narrates how she felt in states of anxiety and depression.

"I started picking up on all the things my teachers were really saying," Degener said in an interview, "about stepping back and really noticing where the thoughts are going and questioning the way your mind twists things."

She began to love herself again, and rather than causing harm to her body, she healed. Her therapist noticed Degener's art morph as she recovered.

Degener is grateful to everyone who has helped her along the way. "The only message I want to send is this: Talk about your story; share it, write it, sing it, create it. Nothing but opportunity has come from telling my own." People want to listen, they want to connect. They want to hear who you are."

In "I Am Maris," Degener shared her wounds to show we all face struggles. When asked what she sees in her future, she said she will follow where this continues to lead her for now. Degener teaches yoga on campus and continues to share her positive message. She makes appearances, paid speaking engagements at schools, churches, and treatment centers, and accompanies private screenings of her film. She is not an ordinary 20-year-old.



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## Does Your Home Have Resale Value?

It may seem counterintuitive, but the best time to think about your home's resale value is before you buy it. While it is important to buy a home that suits your needs, you should also consider how attractive it may or may not be to future buyers. One day you'll need or want to sell, and you want that process to be as stress-free as possible. Look for these features when it comes to a home's potential resale value:

**A good location** - Carefully consider a home's location when you are deciding whether to buy. We all know that location is one of the most important selling points in real estate. Good locations are often characterized as being in highly rated school districts, near amenities, and on quiet streets. If the home doesn't meet all these criteria, you may have trouble down the line when it's time to sell.

**Three or more bedrooms** - Most home buyers are looking for homes that have more than two bedrooms, and three is often the magic number. If the home has fewer than three bedrooms, it may be less desirable. However, if you're looking to move to a large city where space comes at a premium, two bedrooms is often the ideal number. Talk with your agent about the ideal number of bedrooms in your location. Also, it's important to understand what features a room needs to have to be marketed as a bedroom. This usually includes at least two exits, minimum size requirements, and heating and cooling elements.

**More than one bathroom** - Bathrooms are high on the list of must-

have features for home buyers. Although home buyers will buy a house with only one bathroom, they will expect to pay less for it. In addition, consider what types of bathrooms the home has. If it has more than one bathroom but is lacking a master bath, this could also affect the resale value.

**One level** - More and more home buyers are favoring single-level homes today. Families with children often avoid stairs so there's no risk of children injuring themselves. Seniors are also less likely to want homes with stairs because they can be difficult to climb as we age. It's important to take this into consideration when buying. If you buy a two-story house, it can be favorable to have a master bedroom that is on the first floor.

**An open floor plan** - Floor plans are also an essential characteristic to consider when buying a home. Houses with open floor plans tend to sell better in today's housing market. Many buyers prefer open space with ample light. Buyers with families are often in favor of open floor plans, as it is easier to keep tabs on children and to host parties.

**Garage** - Unless you are buying in a highly populated area where most residents rely on public transportation, it is important to have a garage. Homeowners need a place to park their cars, and most will prefer a space that is covered and enclosed. Depending on location, you should consider homes with garages that have space to park at least two cars, if not three.



**computercorner**  
by William Claney, Tech Writer, Computers USA

**Tech in English**

## Build Your Own PC

I just read an article from Tom's Hardware that details how to build your own PC and their opening statement said, "While the process of assembling a computer isn't difficult, it's daunting the first time you do it. For those embarking on their first build, we've put together a step-by-step guide to building a PC."

I read through the article and found it to be quite good for someone that already knows the ins and outs

of building a computer, perhaps not detailed enough for the first time builder. That being said, the illustrations, photos and tips are valid and a good guide to understanding what they are trying to tell you. Everyone should log into tomshardware.com and see for yourself how a PC is assembled.

"In-the-day" quite a few computer enthusiasts would venture into building their own computer because they could get the features they wanted. They could spend their money on features that mattered to them, like sound cards or extra printer connections. In the 90's, systems were somewhat simpler. Plug in a card here, another there; just make sure it's the right slot, has the right interrupt, and supported by the motherboard.

As strides in technology progressed more and more home builders and

DIY (do-it-yourself) builders fell by the wayside due to the difficulty of installing components and the software that supports them.

I find it interesting that Tom's Hardware is suggesting that building your own computer will be easy. Well, if you are really interested in building your own, I suggest having a professional or nerdy friend standing by to assist you when you run into issues.

I especially liked the comment one of the readers left at the end of the article, "How to build a PC? I do not build a PC. I just buy it!!!" I think this is the safest way to get your new computer to work the first time. But what about those features I wanted? Can't find them in a pre-build off the assembly line computer product?

You want a cool computer that fits your needs not just something off the shelf. You want it to have the components, performance and features you desire, and you want to spend your money on just the features you care most about, but you don't want to build it yourself. Consider a custom designed and built computer, also known as a BTO (built-to-order) to get exactly what you want and need. How do you find a custom computer builder in your area? We are here to help.




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# California Okays Hemp for Farmers

by Todd Runestad | New Hope Network



In what's being called "a major victory for the hemp industry," Gov. Jerry Brown signed California Senate Bill 1409, which will allow California farmers to enter the rapidly growing but stalled hemp industry effective Jan. 1.

In an interview with New Hope Networks, Eric Steenstra, president of Vote Hemp stated that agriculture is a hugely important sector of the California economy.

"We are thrilled that farmers can now benefit from the economic opportunity of hemp farming," he said. The bill allows California farmers to grow industrial hemp and to produce hemp oil, fiber, seed and extract.

SB1409 brings California's hemp laws up to date by adding pilot program status to California Department of Food and Agriculture's registration program in conformance with federal requirements. It also strikes outdated state statute provisions that conflicted with the expanded definition of hemp that includes extracts and derivatives from the non-psychoactive flowers and leaves.

The new law makes it legal for California farmers to grow industrial hemp which is cannabis containing less than 0.3 percent THC, the high-inducing cannabinoid.

The California Department of Public Health on July 6 issued an FAQ stating that, "Until the FDA rules that industrial hemp-derived CBD oil and CBD products can be used as a food or determined safe to use for human and animal consumption, CBD products are not an approved food, food ingredient, food additive or dietary supplement."

That meant that California farmers can grow hemp for CBD, but California retail stores cannot sell it and California consumers cannot legally buy it.

"The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) position makes no sense," Steenstra said. "The bill does not force a change in the position of CDPH, but it does give the industry new arguments as to why the CDPH statement is wrong; and we intend to use it to bring them to the table for discussions."

The contention is that the FAQ cites the FDA position on CBD based on the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) conclusion that CBD is a controlled substance. CBD, however, in and of itself is not scheduled under control substances Act (CSA) Rather, it is a controlled substance only when it is sourced from

marijuana, not when sourced from lawfully cultivated industrial hemp.

In addition, the 2014 Farm Bill legitimized industrial hemp at the Federal level.

The hemp coalition has also authored a one-page letter for Gavin Newsom, who is expected to be elected the next California governor in November.

The letter advocates California create a state regulation similar to that found in Colorado, where hemp is treated like any other food ingredient. The state applies existing food manufacturing guidelines to products such as hemp oil-infused beverages or hemp-derived CBD supplements. It also allows for the manufacture and distribution of hemp food products for consumer purchase and consumption and prohibits a company with an FDA-approved pharmaceutical from preventing or restricting the production, sale or distribution of naturally occurring CBD extracts.

Being that the FDA just approved a GW Pharmaceuticals CBD drug, Colorado law explicitly states that the pharma firm cannot fiddle with the state's hemp industry.

The Colorado law was model legislation for other states to emulate.

While the just passed California, law does not immediately change the state of affairs at California retail stores, hemp-based CBD is expected to return relatively soon.

In November, with a Newsom victory, we should see California be more hemp-friendly and that could change the status of CBD at retail level. In December we should see another bill, "Hemp Farming Act of 2018" passed that makes hemp—and CBD—that much more of a sure thing.

# WASH Project Concord Rotary Tackles Honduras School Sanitation

By David King

Dr. Michael Barrington, a Concord Rotarian, presented the WASH in School project to the local Rotary Clubs on the efforts being conducted in Honduras by the local Rotary clubs. It was an eye-opening education of the need for such humanitarian attention.

The WASH in Schools Target Challenge is a program created to motivate Rotary clubs to develop sustainable Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (collectively referred to as WASH) to impoverished schools. By improving the health and education of children, they hope to create a cycle of opportunity: that is, improved education, increased school attendance, and improved academic performance. These are two of Rotary's areas of focus: basic education and literacy and water and sanitation.

When schools have no water or sustainable infrastructure and poor sanitation behavior, students suffer. UNICEF has identified Haiti and Honduras as the two most needy countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Barrington reported that parents there hesitate to send their kids to school



clubs of Tocoa and Trujillo in Honduras to complete a six-year WASH in Schools Project. In all, 30 schools are being targeted with \$398,000 in funds from the Local clubs, District and Rotary International organizations.

Dr. Michael Barrington, travels all over the world providing Monitoring and Evaluation Services to humanitarian organizations such as USAID, UNICEF, Oxfam, Save the Children etc. He provides the same services for Rotary International and as a committed member of the Concord Rotary Club.

Working with civil engineers, they have built holding tanks so that the water can be chlorinated before being pumped to the schools. The goal is to provide the full range of WASH services to 30 schools including construction and renovation of bathrooms, provision of clean drinking water, WASH training for all teachers, Rotarians & parent groups. All UNICEF standards will be met, 650 teachers will be trained and the lives of approximately 12,000 students affected.

It is early in its development, but the reception has been well received. Since there is no money available from the Government, the schools' PTA have volunteered and agreed to a self-imposed tax on each family who has a child in school. This money will eventually be targeted to sustain and maintain the infrastructure once Rotary efforts and funding cease. Fortunately, their money won't be needed for another seven years and can accumulate until then.

For more information on the WASH in School project go to <https://my.rotary.org/en/wash-schools-target-challenge>.

Photos by Susan Wood



because of the water and sanitation circumstances. Water is scarce. It is only pumped in two days a week but the water is unsafe. Children often get sick due to E. coli contamination. Schools only have one bathroom to serve 400 students. They are unclean, dilapidated stalls, a step above an outhouse. So, if a student must go, they often go home, missing two to three hours of classroom. Menstruating girls will miss several days in a row. With no on-site sanitation facilities, what choice do they have? Unfortunately, most girls will drop out of school once they reach this age.

The Rotary of Concord and its partners (10 local clubs) are working with the host



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## Your 2018 Guide to Bay Area Events

## The Diablo Gazette's

# ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

### calendar of events

#### 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>

**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/>

**calendar continues page 9**

## Contra Costa Ballet's "The Nutcracker" Returns to Leshar Center

Transition into the holiday season with the Bay's Area's most family-friendly production of The Nutcracker! Returning for its 29th year, Contra Costa Ballet's production of this treasured classic has been a beloved holiday tradition for East Bay families for three decades. Join Clara and her beloved Nutcracker-turned Prince in an epic battle between giant mice and toy soldiers. Journey into the deliciously-delightful Candy Kingdom to meet the Sugar Plum Fairy. Contra Costa Ballet brings The Nutcracker to life in this festive production filled with colorful costumes, whimsical sets and an array of talented, young dancers. This hour-long performance is an elegant introduction to the holiday classic.

Artistic directors are Richard Cammack and Emily Borthwick. They welcome back guest artists Christian Squires, Jackie McConnell, Charles Anderson, Michael Wells, Katarina Wester



and Felipe Leon.

Show times are Friday, November 23 at 4:30 and 7:30 pm; Saturday, November 24 at 2:00, 4:30 and 7:30 pm and Sunday, November 25 at 2:00 and 4:30 pm at the Leshar Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek.

Tickets are \$30 - \$40 and can be purchased at the Leshar Center Box Office, by calling 925-943-SHOW (7469), or online at <https://lesharartscenter.showare.com/eventperformances.asp?evt=1087>.

The Contra Costa Ballet Company is

a pre-professional company of unusual stature. Under the direction of Richard Cammack and Zola Dishong for over thirty years, Company members are the most advanced-level dancers from Contra Costa Ballet Centre and perform twice annually at the Leshar Center for the Arts in The Nutcracker and Spring Rep'. Both productions are sponsored by the Contra Costa Ballet Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing affordable, professionally-staged dance performances to our community.



### aRt Cottage

by FROgard [www.aRtCottage.info](http://www.aRtCottage.info)

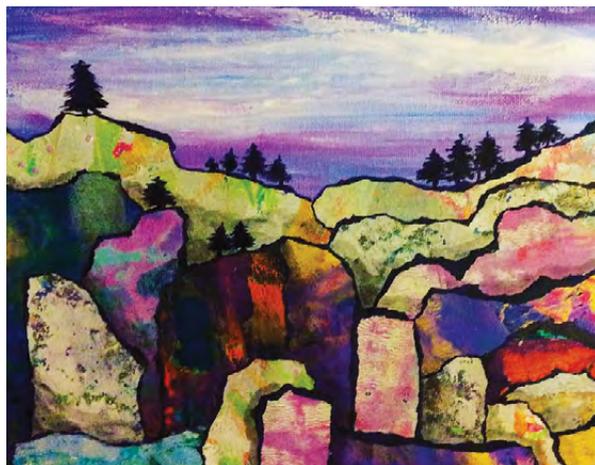
## Holiday Arts and Craft Show at aRt Cottage

For November and December, aRt Cottage is featuring crafts and original art made by local artists. These items are high quality, hand crafted, and one of a kind. This is the first time aRt Cottage is having an exhibit that will be continuous for a two-month period. Think of it as an extraordinary Holiday Craft Faire full of unique gifts ideas and décor.

"In order to get the best item, you will have to shop early," advises Fro, the aRt Cottage owner and docent. "There is no guarantee that the same item will be there in December. I suspect items will be 'flying off the wall' and out of the display baskets, as shoppers come in to purchase these unique gifts."

Although, local artists and crafters will have the opportunity to refill their "stock" as shoppers find that perfect gift, most items are originals.

There will be an Open House reception for the artists on November 10, from 2 to 4 pm. The public



is encouraged to come and meet the local artists and shop.

"We will have live music, refreshments, and lots of cool stuff to purchase. Here is your opportunity to be original and give a hand-crafted item this year," Fro says enthusiastically. "There will be many items to choose from. Your purchase will be helping the community by supporting the aRt Cottage, and our local artists. This is a win-win opportunity. We have trees with dried fruit, paintings of all kinds, miniature hot air balloons, handknitted and crocheted gloves, hats and scarves, holiday pillows and much more."

aRt Cottage hours are Tuesday- Friday from 11a.m.-5p.m. and Saturday from 1p.m.-5p.m. at 2238 Mt. Diablo St. in Concord. You can get more information at [artcottage.info](http://artcottage.info).



## Gift and Craft Fair

Friday, Nov. 30, 2018

9:00am - 2:00pm

Concord Senior Center  
2727 Parkside Circle

FREE ADMISSION

Stocking stuffers, jewelry, hand made goods, beauty aids, crafts & more!

For more Info,  
call 925-671-3320 or

email [concordsc@cityofconcord.org](mailto:concordsc@cityofconcord.org)

# DIABLO GAZETTE FUN ZONE

## Views of the Valley

with Tillie Turner  
Photos by Micah & Tillie Turner



Diablo Gazette publisher David King with ice mug carved from Chisel-It-ice Company, Rich Eber, "Out to Lunch", Former Secret Service Agent Eric Enos "Inside Secret Service" take a break at the Concord Oktoberfest.



Gabriela Freitag and crew from Alpine Pastries and Cakes offered strudel, cookies, beehives, and pretzels. Sweet!



Hundreds of families with kids in costumes gathered for the Trunk or Treat event to admire decorated cars and free trick-or-treating at Pleasant Hill Park on October 26.



The Diablo Gazette photo booth was a hit for those who wished to grace our cover.



Three lovely zombies looking for some craft beer to devour at the 7th Annual Martinez Zombie Brew Crawl and compete for the Galaween costume contest sponsored by party planners The Gala.



Photo L to R: Membership co/chairmen, Sheila Driscoll and Linda Garden of Clayton Valley Woman's Club assembled their display at the Clayton Library to showcase the club.



There was plenty of dancing at Concord Oktoberfest.



Olympic Gold Medalist Laurie Hernandez visit Liberty Gymnastic Training Center in Concord, inspiring young gymnasts and also Mayor Edi Birsan. Photo courtesy Concord Chamber of Commerce.



Jill Hedgecock signing copies of her book "Rhino in the Room."

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# calendar of events

## FUNDRAISERS



**BELL RINGERS NEEDED!**  
**Nov. 12-Dec 24**  
**\$11.00/hr.**  
**10:30 AM - 7:30PM**  
**CONTACT: Cynthia Hodges**  
**925-676-6180 x12**  
 Equal Opportunity Employer

**November 1- December 20 Frozen Turkey and Food Basket Drive.** The Salvation Army on Clayton Rd. in Concord is holding their annual Holiday Frozen Turkey and Food Basket Drive to provide food baskets and frozen turkeys for the families they are serving. 10-15 lbs. turkeys works best. Peanut butter, canned meats, and other staples are useful too. Mon.-Fri. 9:30am - 4:30pm. 3950 Clayton Rd. and West St. Concord.

## OUTDOORS

**USS Hornet Museum**  
**November 11: Hornet Anniversary Community Day & Veteran's Day Celebration.** 10:00 am - 1:30 pm. 75th Anniversary of Commissioning, 20th Anniversary of becoming a museum, and Veteran's Day. This year marks the 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day.  
**November 17 2nd Annual Model Expo.** 10:00 am - 4:00 pm. 2018 The USS Hornet Sea, Air & Space Museum, in conjunction with the International Plastic Modelers Society (IPMS) hosts. General Admission to the Museum, plus \$1 per model gets you entered in the contest!  
**December 15 Officers' Holiday Tea.** Two seatings 11Am and 3 PM. Join us for tea in the Officers' Wardroom. Includes General Admission to the Museum. We will be serving a Fixed Menu: Adult Ticket: \$30; Youth Ticket (17 and under): \$20  
 707 W Hornet Avenue, Alameda. (510) 521-8448. For more information on all USS Hornet events go to [www.uss-hornet.org](http://www.uss-hornet.org)

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

**THE VERANDA**  
**November 9-February 18: ICE AT THE VERANDA** Ice skating in front of Luxe theater. All dates & times are weather permitting. Follow @ShopTheVeranda on social media for up-to-date info. To contact the Ice at The Veranda, please call (925) 434-8466 or email them at [theveranda@icerinkevents.com](mailto:theveranda@icerinkevents.com). Hours and prices go to [www.shoptheveranda.com](http://www.shoptheveranda.com). 2001 Diamond Blvd. Concord.

**NOVEMBER 17-JANUARY 6 DC Solar Downtown Holiday Ice Rink.** A family friendly 50'x80' ice rink will be located at the corner of Marina Vista Ave. and Ferry St. in Martinez.

Open 7 days a week. Hours vary. Weather permitting. <https://downtownholidayice.com/>

**NOVEMBER 22 Concord Turkey Trot** Todos Santos. Proceeds benefit Bay Church Compassion Outreach. Only 1500 participants. Free Kids dash for under 10. Prizes to top male and female finishers. Rain or shine. No refunds. Register at <https://raceroster.com/events/2018/17850/turkey-trot-concord-2018>.

## CLUB/SUPPORT GROUPS' NEWS AND EVENTS

**November 2-3 The Senior Citizens Club of Martinez Annual Holiday Bazaar** 818 Green Street, Martinez, Bazaar hours are 9am-2pm and on Saturday, Nov. 3, 10am-2pm. There will be white elephant items, jewelry, crystal, books, kitchen items, cookbooks, seasonal decorations, small appliances, handmade crafts, collectibles, and other gently used items. A lunch of pasta, salad, and garlic bread with coffee or tea will be available for \$5 per person. For more information, call 925-370-8770.

**November 7 Parent Information Night, Clayton Valley Charter High,** large gym. 1101 Alberta, Concord. Open enrollment begins November 6. More info at [enrollmentclaytonvalley.org](http://enrollmentclaytonvalley.org). (925) 682-7474. RSVP: [facebook.com/claytonvalleychs](https://facebook.com/claytonvalleychs).

Enjoy a night dedicated to celebrating and honoring the talented female musicians of the diverse Bay Area music scene. Performing is a group of sensational vocalists, including Amikaeyla Gaston, Shana Dinha, Deborah Winters, Eve Marie Shahoian and more! They will be joined by Frank Martin on keys, Kai Eckhardt on bass and Kelly Fasman on drums.

**Tickets: \$15-30**  
 Discounted pricing available for groups of 10 or more. Call for details.

**925.314.3400 • [VillageTheatreShows.com](http://VillageTheatreShows.com)**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10 • 8PM**

**VILLAGE THEATRE**  
 233 Front St, Danville

**November 10 & 17 America's Boating Club Two-Day Course** for the California Boaters Card Offered by Diablo Sail & Power Squadron. Classes are open to the public and designed for ALL BOATERS. Meets educational requirements of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, and qualifies you to get your CA Boater Certificate. For more information go to [www.diablosquadron.org](http://www.diablosquadron.org) or e-mail: [martavanloan@yahoo.com](mailto:martavanloan@yahoo.com) Antioch Department of Public Works 1201 W. 4th Street Antioch. COST: \$65 includes text and educational materials.

**November 11 Veterans Day Pot Roast Dinner** Veterans eat free by showing their proof of service. 5 PM Price is \$10.00 for all others. For reservation call after 4pm 925-685-1994. Monday-Friday. Concord Elks Lodge at 3565 Clayton Rd.

**November 13 GFWC Clayton Valley Woman's Club "Members Sharing Their Talents and Interests"** Five members will be sharing their talents: Scrapbooking. Knitting. Styled wigs for the stage. Making glass jewelry, book writing. St. John's Episcopal Church, 5555 Clayton Road, Clayton. For more information, call Linda at 415-652-3503 or Sheila at 925-672-7947 or visit [www.claytonvalley-womansclub.org](http://www.claytonvalley-womansclub.org).

**November 17 Holiday Boutique and Crafts Fair** Over 40 craft vendors, great prices. Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill

**November 30 Gift and Craft Fair** 9 am-2pm. Free admission. Stocking stuffers, Jewelry, beauty aids, hand made crafts, and more. Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Dr. Concord.

## VISUAL ARTS/ THEATRE/MUSIC

**November 4-December 13 The Lafayette Community Center artists exhibit** at John Muir Hospital in the Auxiliary Gallery at Aspen Center, 133 La Casa Via, Walnut Creek. Shop for your special holiday gifts.

**November 10 aRt Cottage Open House artists reception. 2 PM-4PM.** 2238 Mt. Diablo St. in Concord. [artcottage.info](http://artcottage.info).

**November 9-11 Diablo Ballet 25th Anniversary with "A Swingin' Holiday"** featuring two ballets perfect for the whole family. Music of the 30's and 40's, audiences will enjoy their favorite holiday tunes and jazzy renditions of Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker Suite", performed live by the sixteen piece Diablo Ballet Swing Orchestra. Also includes the whimsical "Carnival of the Imagination" set to Camille Saint-Saëns' famous "The Carnival of the Animals." Showtimes: November 9 at 8 pm, November 10 at 2 pm & 8 pm and November 11 at 2 pm\*. Del Valle Theatre, 1963 Tice Valley Boulevard, Walnut Creek. Prior to the November 11th matinee, Diablo Ballet will present its 2nd Annual Sugar Plum Party. Tickets are packaged with the 2 pm matinee performance and are limited to 50 guests. Visit [www.diabloballet.org](http://www.diabloballet.org) for more information.

**November 23- 25 THE NUTCRACKER** presented by Contra Costa Ballet. November 23 - 4:30 and 7:30pm. November 24 - 2:00, 4:30 and 7:30pm. November 25 - 2:00 and 4:30pm at Leshar Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. Tickets, Visit Leshar Center Ticket Office, call (925) 943-SHOW (7469), or purchase online at <https://lesherartscenter.showare.com/eventperformances.asp?evt=1087>. Price \$30 - \$40.

**Nov. 1-17th. Clayton Theatre Company presents "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee"**, William Finn and Rachel Sheinkin's hit musical. Six awkward middle school spelling champions learn that winning (and losing) isn't everything. Endeavor Hall 6008 Center St., Clayton [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com). 925-222-

Clayton THEATRE Company

The 25th Annual Putnam County

## SPELLING BEE

November 1 through 17

**\$25 ADULTS**  
**\$22 SENIORS (62+)**  
**\$20 YOUTH/STUDENTS (Rated PG-13)**

For tickets:  
[www.ClaytonTheatreCompany.com](http://www.ClaytonTheatreCompany.com)  
 ENDEAVOR HALL 6008 CENTER ST. CLAYTON, CA

9106

**November 10 Bay Area Women and Music!** Celebrate and honor talented women who contribute to our diverse Bay Area music scene. Hear singers Deborah Winters, Amikaeyla Gaston, Shana Dinah and Eve Marie Shahoian. Supporting these women is Bay Areas treasure, Frank Martin on Keys, Marc Levine on Bass and Kelly Fasman on Drums. Tickets: [www.villagetheatreshows.com](http://www.villagetheatreshows.com). 925-314-3400

**Walnut Creek Model Train Show** Tickets \$3 Adults, \$2 seniors and Children 6-12 years, Under 6 are free. 2751 Buena Vista Ave., Walnut Creek.  
 Nov 16 8PM - 10 PM  
 Nov 17 11 AM - 6 M  
 Nov 18 11 AM - 6 PM  
 Nov 23 2 PM -10 PM  
 Nov 24 11 AM - 6 PM  
 Nov 25 11 AM - 6 PM  
 Nov 30 8 PM - 10 PM  
 Dec 28 8 PM - 10 PM  
 For more info: 925-937-1888 or [wcmrs.org](http://wcmrs.org).

**Nov. 30-Dec. 2 "The Gift of Magi".** Solo Opera and award-winning Bay Area composer, David Conte, bring to life the timeless turn of the century short story, One Christmas Eve, impoverished Jim and Della each gives up their most treasured possessions to buy gifts for each other. Set in the original 1905 time period, the opera will contain a cast of seven singers, accompanied by a seven-piece chamber orchestra. The opera is rounded off with the Three Magi: Jonathan Smucker, Michael Orlinsky, and Brandon Bell. Three performances: Nov. 30, 8:00pm; Dec. 1, 8:00pm; Dec. 2, 2:30pm Seating is reserved. Adults: \$40, Seniors: \$35, Youth 17 and under: \$25. For tickets call (925) 943-7469 or visit the Leshar Center for the Arts Ticket Office: 1601 Civic Drive Walnut Creek, CA. [www.SoloOpera.org](http://www.SoloOpera.org)

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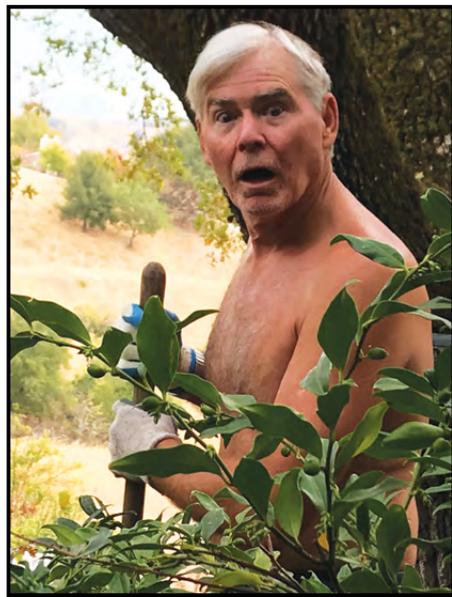
# THE NAKED GARDENER

Compost for Good Health  
by David George

I love to spend time in my substantial and challenging garden. The past twenty years, I have adopted natural (naked!), environmentally friendly gardening practices. As every gardener knows, a healthy garden begins with healthy soil. Composting is nature's way of replacing nutrients your garden plants consume over time.

You may have read about the benefits of composting, but do you practice it? It's so easy to stop by the local nursery and buy several expensive bags of compost to churn into your soil. But really, it is much easier to produce your own compost, and it's less expensive. As a first step, you can request a plastic composting bin from your trash pick-up service. Many provide them at no cost. Others credit a few dollars off each regular service bill. Online shopping sites advertise fancy composting systems, and they work faster than natural methods, but often at a much higher cost. Heck, how difficult is it to pile lawn clippings, plant trimmings, and dead leaves in the side yard? As long as you turn the material with a pitchfork and apply water occasionally, the material breaks down into rich compost over time.

Now that you have your own compost bin or heap, what do you put in it? Spent brown garden materials (dead leaves, branches, etc.) add carbon, and green materials (grass, fresh plant clippings, etc.) add a limited amount of nitrogen and other nutrients. If you add table scraps, egg shells, and coffee grounds into the mix, your mineral nutrient levels will soar. (Cov-



er them with brown leaves to minimize smells and flying insects.) Meat scraps can even be composted. But all of our meat and seafood scraps end up inside our two big dogs.

Buy yourself a sturdy pitchfork. Turn your composting material every couple of months. Keep your materials moist but not soggy. Treat the task like you are cooking a three-layer soil cake. Every 4-6 months, depending on the warmth of the weather, transfer the top and middle layers of material to an empty trash bin. Harvest the lowest layer, which has naturally transformed into rich, new soil. Move that fresh compost to your neediest garden spot and turn it into the existing soil with a shovel. Transfer the top compost layers back into the bins for more cooking.

The next time you peek through your side fence and see fleshy, sun-starved parts of your neighbor as he turns the material in his compost bin, think of me - and celebrate the joy of natural gardening!



## Free Compost for Free e-Waste Drop-Off

Clean out your garage and nurture our planet. Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery Center honors America Recycles Day on November 17. Old computers, printers, televisions, cell phones and other electronic equipment do not have to take up space in your home—they can be recycled for free on November 17th at Mt. Diablo Recycling (MDR), part of the recycling



and recovery companies of Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery. Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery's free e-Waste event will take place on Saturday, November 17th, 2018 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the MDR facility located at 1300 Loveridge Road in Pittsburg, Calif.

Anyone who drops off their e-Waste items may also receive up to two bags of compost for free. Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery's staff will be on hand to assist people with bulky recycling items; partici-

pants can even choose to stay in their cars during their drop-off. America Recycles Day, an annual celebration of all things recycling taking place across the country November 15.

Absolutely no Household Hazardous Waste or appliances will be allowed to be dropped off.

For more information on celebrating America Recycles Day, contact Nicole Impagliazzo at 925.692.2224 or [Nicole@Garaventaent.com](mailto:Nicole@Garaventaent.com)

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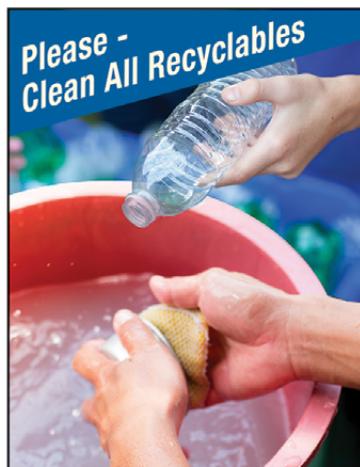


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## Thanksgiving Place Setting Ideas

Fall vibes are going strong as we put away the Halloween decorations and get ready for the next big occasion, Thanksgiving. Time to start planning the guest list,



the menu, and the Thanksgiving table.

We want to remind you to not overwhelm yourself. It's those little touches that can make a big impact, especially when it comes to setting the Thanksgiving table. We love the simplicity of things that can be used for little or no added expense. It is the consistent pattern from season to season, and holiday to holiday with us. Overwhelming and over the top is just not our thing. Simple and elegant



is how we roll. Mini pumpkins from our Fall decor are perfect for the table.

Place one on each place setting and several throughout the center of the table. If you want to have arranged seating, write names on each pumpkin with a sharpie marker or perhaps you would prefer meaningful words like "Blessed", "Grateful" and "Thankful". Pine cones also make wonderful table decor and place card holders. Painted or not, they are naturally beautiful.

We found fabulous Fall paper napkins

at the Dollar Tree. Double the napkins (as seen in the picture) and fold around the utensils. Tie with string, ribbon or jute. Top off with a decorative leaf or fresh cut rosemary. The rosemary adds such a wonderful Fall scent to the table. If you want to add a name or holiday message, there are plenty of free printables to

choose from online. Simply print, cut and fold or tie on.

At this time of giving thanks, we want to thank

The Diablo Gazette for letting us share our FruElegance Life-styles with you. And a big "Thank You", to YOU for bringing us in to your home and reading this wonderful community paper. Thank you for trying our decor ideas, our recipes, and all our easy to make projects. We are so grateful. From our tables to yours, we wish you a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday.



*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 online at [www.fruElegance.com](http://www.fruElegance.com). FruElegance is where Frugal and Elegance come together.*



## THANKSGIVING CAMEL PECAN ROLLS



Happy November! While most people are focused on pumpkin recipes and turkey, we sometimes forget that our family get-togethers include breakfast. This is a recipe that you can throw together the night before and look like a hero the next day. Who doesn't want that?

This is yummy delicious and feeds 8-10 people. I love that the best part of Thanksgiving time is family and food, and this is a perfect way to start the EAT-FEST DAY, which is what we all look forward.

**Happy Loose Pants and Turkey Dreams!**

### Caramel Pecan Rolls

- 18 frozen Rhodes rolls
- 1/2 box butterscotch pudding (not instant)
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter melted
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon

Place frozen rolls in buttered bundt pan, sprinkle with pudding, nuts, and cinnamon. Melt butter and brown sugar together and pour over rolls. Cover with foil and let sit overnight. While still covered with foil, bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Turn onto a platter, pull apart and enjoy!

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

**movie review**



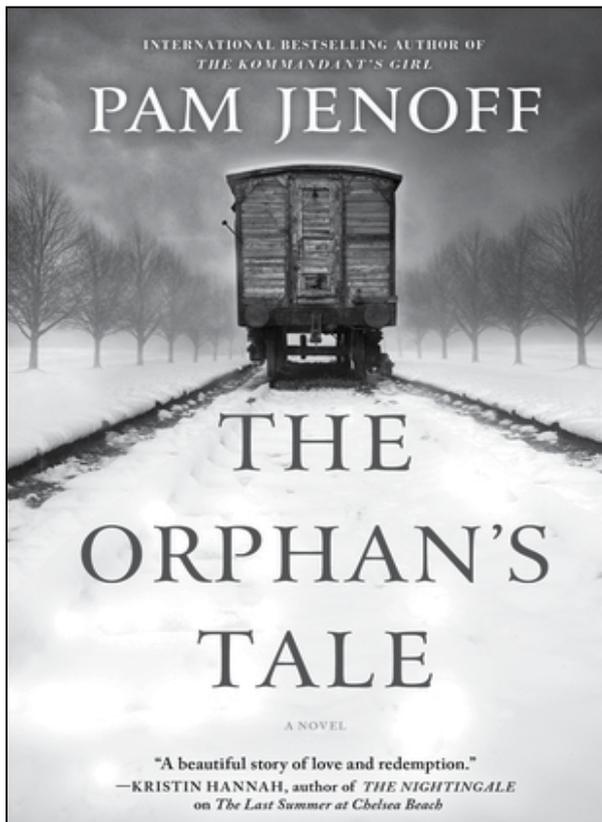
by Sandie Angulo Chen, Common Sense Media

# THE ORPHAN'S TALE

The Orphan's Tale (2017, MIRA, 368 pages, \$7.57) by Pam Jenoff provides fascinating insights into the lives of German traveling circus performers under Nazi rule in the 1940s. It is also a tale of hiding Jews in plain sight during the final years of World War II.

This historical fiction novel is told from two points of view: Astrid, a Jewish aerialist and a brave 16-year-old German girl, Noa. The two women's worlds collide when Noa, who was working at a train station, discovers a rail car full of Jewish babies. On impulse, she takes an orphan, who reminds her of her illegitimate child that she was forbidden to keep. Pursued by Nazi soldiers, she runs until she collapses from exhaustion in the snow where she is later found unconscious by the circus. The kind owner, Herr Neuhoff, takes her in along with baby Theo, who Noa claims is her brother. To pay for her keep, a reluctant Noa agrees to learn the flying trapeze. Astrid takes an instant dislike to Noa but is required to instruct her. Because of the frosty relationship, Noa has no intention of telling Astrid the truth about Theo. Likewise, Astrid has no intention of revealing to Noa that she's Jewish.

While Astrid appears to be very cold person, we soon learn of her unhappy history. She had been happily married to a German officer. Because he was a high-ranking Nazi, he was instructed to dissolve the marriage. Forced to leave her home and with nowhere to go, Astrid begs Herr Neuhoff to hire her as an aerialist, a profession she had left when she married. At great risk to himself and the other performers, the circus owner agrees to hire her. Astrid embraced her new life and became involved with the circus clown, a sympathizer. Meanwhile



as Noa struggles to overcome her fear of falling, she develops a desire to please Astrid, who in turn begins to respect her young protégé's grit. The friendship that develops is the cement that ties together this story which provides a unique view into a little-known aspect of the Hitler-era.

Pam Jenoff is the author of several novels. This book became an instant New York Times bestseller. Jenoff's *The Kommandant's Girl* received widespread acclaim and earned her a nomination for the Quill Award. While working at the U.S. Consulate in Poland, Pam helped Polish Jewish Holocaust survivors reclaim their property and developed close relations with them, an experience that no doubt helped her bring a sense of realism to *The Orphan's Tale*.

Readers who enjoy World War II historical novels and are fans of *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen, *The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern, and *Sarah's Key* by Tatiana De Rosnay will likely find *The Orphan's Tale* a compelling read.

# FIRST MAN

**4/5 STARS**

*FIRST MAN* is Academy Award-winning Damien Chazelle's biopic about Neil Armstrong (Ryan Gosling). It takes place between 1961 and 1969, the years that took Armstrong from being a test pilot in California to a pioneering NASA astronaut in Houston to the first person to walk on the moon. While he's still flying planes in the Mojave desert, Neil and his wife, Janet (Claire Foy), experience the loss of their second child, Karen, who dies from brain cancer. Neil is then hired to officially join NASA's space program in Houston. There, he and Janet befriend the other astronauts, like Ed White (Jason Clarke), Elliott See (Patrick Fugit), and Jim Lovell (Pablo Schreiber), and their families as the men embark on often dangerous missions leading up to the race to the moon.

Gosling gives a fabulous performance as the thoughtful, intelligent space pioneer in this intimate, visceral, serious biopic. Chazelle's adaptation of James R. Hansen's "*First Man: The Life of Neil A. Armstrong*" is an up close and personal exploration of Armstrong's life in the 1960s. The movie opens with a bumpy, hair-raising, dizzying test flight on the rocket-powered X-15 -- a scene that's contrasted with a heartbreaking sequence in which it's clear that Neil's little girl is sick. After her death, Neil can't allow anyone to see him break down, and that stoicism about loss continues throughout the years as he survives the death of fellow pilots and astronauts who weren't just colleagues but close friends. Gosling is a masterful actor: one who never overacts and seems to truly understand the art of subtlety. It helps that Armstrong isn't an alpha male space cowboy or an ambitious extrovert like Buzz Aldrin (Corey Stoll); he's humble, hardworking, and at times emotionally distant.



Although the movie offers plenty of nerve-wracking moments and beautiful cinematography (especially in the space/rocket scenes), this character study isn't as similar to "*Apollo 13*", "*Gravity*", or "*The Right Stuff*" as moviegoers might expect. Chazelle keeps the film focused on the two Armstrongs, without trying to capture every major event or figure involved in the space race. Unlike many other fact-based movies about that time, which only superficially include the astronauts' wives, Chazelle gives Foy's Janet lots of screen time as the wife left behind to keep house, tamp down her nerves, and hope that her husband doesn't end up as another NASA casualty. Thanks to Josh Singer's deft script, Linus Sandgren's memorable cinematography, and Gosling and Foy's excellent performances -- buoyed by an excellent supporting cast -- *First Man* proves that Armstrong is a uniquely humble legend and that Chazelle is one of the most versatile filmmakers in Hollywood.

Cast: Ryan Gosling, Claire Foy, Jason Clarke. Director: Damien Chazelle  
 Run time: 141 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. [www. commonsensemedia.org](http://www.common SenseMedia.org)*

# Diablo Ballet Opens Landmark 25th Season

Kick off the holidays in style with the first program of Diablo Ballet's landmark 25th Season, "A Swingin' Holiday & More", November 9-11, at the Del Valle Theatre in Walnut Creek. This program features two ballets perfect for the whole family, audience favorite, "A Swingin' Holiday" and the charming and whimsical "Carnival of the Imagination."

The first program of Diablo Ballet's 2018-2019 season features "A Swingin' Holiday" by Broadway choreographer Sean Kelly (Associate Choreographer/Resident Director for the National Tour of *An American in Paris*). The ballet, created in 2012, will feature new dances choreographed by Kelly. The ballet is set to the exhilarating music of the 30's and 40's, with holiday favorites by legends Glenn Miller, Nat "King" Cole, and Wynton Marsalis, in addition to

Ellington, as well as jazzy renditions of Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker Suite." This upbeat music will be performed live by the sixteen-piece Diablo Ballet Swing Orchestra under the Musical Direction of Greg Sudmeier.

The program also features the charming and whimsical "Carnival of the Imagination" choreographed by Robert Dekkers and set to Camille Saint-Saëns' famous "The Carnival of the Animals." The ballet follows a young child named Seven on a magical journey through his world of make believe. Filled with dragons and unicorns, pixies and panda bears, a phoenix and a jackalope, this coming-of-age adventure celebrates creativity and inspires imagination. Critics have applauded the ballet saying, "An all-around triumph, Dekkers' pieces prove over and over to be a magical phenomenon, which no one in

attendance will soon forget."

"A Swingin' Holiday and More" performs November 9 at 8 pm, November 10 at 2 pm and 8 pm, and November 11 at 2 pm at the Del Valle Theatre, 1963 Tice Valley Boulevard, Walnut Creek.

Prior to the November 11th 2pm matinee, Diablo Ballet will present its 2nd Annual Sugar Plum Party. This one-of-a-kind event starts with a family-friendly light lunch complete with tea and sweets, arts and crafts, and the opportunity to dance with the Sugar Plum Fairy. Tickets are packaged with the 2 pm matinee performance and are limited to 50 guests. Visit [www.diabloballet.org](http://www.diabloballet.org) for more information.

Single tickets are \$15-\$49. For tickets, call 925-943-SHOW (7469) or visit [www.lesherartscenter.org](http://www.lesherartscenter.org). For more information, visit [www. diabloballet.org](http://www.diabloballet.org).



Photo by XXXXXXXXXX



## Change Things Up With Chinese Broccoli

Thanksgiving means family and friends around a table laden with traditional food and drink. What about surprising them with some new and interesting recipes using Asian vegetables. They'll fit right in with some of your recipes, or replace some old ones with lighter, more flavorful combinations.

Chinese broccoli, or gai lan is the perfect pairing with grilled beef and pork, sweetener sauces, garlic and oyster sauce, or any number of Asian dishes! It's looks a lot like regular broccoli, but with thick, glossy stalks, large thick leaves, and small yellow flowers in the center.

A member of the Brassica family, just as Western broccoli, it's a little more bitter than broccoli, but the stalks taste similar to broccoli stalks. It also offers a stronger broccoli flavor, though the flavors mellow somewhat when cooked.

The leaves and stalks are often cooked separately due to the length of cooking each requires.

Gai lan is consumed widely in Chinese and other Asian cuisines, the most common preparation being a stir fry by itself or with meats and other vegetables. It is also great in soups and stews.

This vegetable is high in folate, calcium, and fiber. Like regular broccoli, it is low in calories and will be a welcome addition to your recipe repertoire.

When purchasing, choose heads with full, dark green leaves and fresh stalks. Avoid any brown spots which could indicate decay. Use as soon as possible and refrigerate, unwashed in a plastic bag for no more than 2-3 days.



Try this easy and delicious recipe to start or ask FT Fresh Produce from Fresno at the Concord Farmers' Market for expert advice. They'll be happy to provide you with tips and more recipes. They also have a wide array of Asian specialty greens, bok choy, ginger, fresh herbs, lemon grass, longbeans, and edible leaves and shoots from which to choose.

Get out of your rut and try something new and exciting. Your palate will thank you!

### Sautéed Gai Lan

- 2 medium cloves of garlic, chopped or sliced
- 1 bunch gai lan (Chinese broccoli), chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 2 teaspoons oyster sauce
- 1 Tablespoon cooking oil
- Salt to taste

Wash your greens, shake them dry and chop them into bite sized pieces. Then peel and chop your garlic. Warm your pan and add the oil. When the oil is warm, add the greens and garlic together. Sauté and stir until the stems are a desirable texture, not too tough but not mushy, 5-7 minutes at medium heat. Turn the heat off and stir in the oyster sauce. Salt if desired and serve. Recipe: Chef Marisa Ades, PCFMA.

# Out to Lunch

## The Culinary Delights of Oktoberfest

by Richard Eber

Oktoberfest is one the best times for local fair goers. This German celebration goes back over 200 years to the marriage of King Ludwig I in 1810. It has historically included music, dancing, horse racing, food, and of course beer. Today, this celebration is recognized in many countries across the globe. German-Americans are the largest self-reported ancestral group in the United States paving the need for hundreds of large and small Oktoberfest celebrations held annually throughout the country including Clayton, Concord, and Walnut Creek with turnout running into the thousands to each.

After a hiatus of several years, Concord revived its version of German festival organized largely from the efforts of Elaine Schroth of Visit Concord, The Concord Chamber, and Justin Crossley of The Brewing Network. Some six thousand happy fair-goers including whole families congregated at Todos Santos Park to participate in the Oktoberfest activities.

Local brewers Epidemic Ales and Hop Grenade concocted a special German-style beer called Hollenhunbe. This dark lager imparted a fresh taste that did not leave a bitter finish of excessive hops. With approximately 20 craft brews to choose, they were a perfect complement to go with barbecued Nava German sausages. Although they were a bit pricey at ten dollars a pop, these brats were authentic and reminded me of my favorite product put out by Lockeford Meat & Sausage, six miles up the road from Lodi.



on 1848 Willow Pass, it has a long history of producing treats that remind their customers of what can be found in the Old Country. Gabriela Freitag and her husband Ernest have owned and operated the business since 1995.

For Concord's Oktoberfest, Alpine's booth sold apple strudel, black forest cupcakes, cookies, and the crowd favorite bienenstich or beehive cake. This traditional German specialty consists of sweet layers cake with a large center of butter cream custard. It is finished with a honey-almond frosting that melts in your mouth.

To stay authentic, Alpine also served their homemade pretzels which are featured every Friday afternoon at their bakery. The only other pretzel sighting at the Concord Oktoberfest came from necklaces sold by the students in Cindy Gershen's Culinary Academy at Mt. Diablo High School.

Fortunately, the art of Germanic cuisine is not totally lost in Concord. Even if the owner Jerry Sedivy of DJ's Bistro on 1825 Sutter is of Czech origin, the popular café features primarily German food. As a regular of this restaurant for more than two decades, I can vouch for every item on the menu which are most enjoyed when the weather gets colder.

Their signature dishes are the Wiener and Jaeger Schnitzels. They consist of large pieces of pork loin who are prepared similar to fried chicken. The Jaeger version is served with a mushroom sauce. The helpings are so large that DJ's offers one or two-piece plates. I always get the big order and take any extras home with me.

Served with the Schnitzel's is German potato salad or my favorite spaetzle, which is an egg noodle concoction best known in and around Munich. DJ's also has other authentic dishes on their menu including bratwurst, sauerbraten (pot roast), Bavarian chicken, pork roast, and fried cheese. All are great but are not diet material. For the lighter side, DJ's offers a more than respectable garlic lemon chicken and Greek salads.

DJ's beer bar is often occupied by patrons watching European Soccer matches while enjoying tap favorites Spaten and Erdinger from Germany. I usually order the Czech beer Urquell on draft, or a bottle of Praga dark to compliment my meals there. Best of all, DJ's only charges \$5.00 per mug.

DJ's does not have much competition locally. It is unfortunate, but Speisekammer, arguably the most authentic German Restaurant in the region, is in Alameda.

Nevertheless, we can still procure bakery goodies from Alpine, visit Jerry's place, and look forward to Oktoberfest each year.



Most of the culinary output at Concord's Oktoberfest came from food trucks that didn't exactly come up to accepted German standards. However, one of my

favorites is the barbecued turkey legs from Cafe Oasis.

The most authentic food served came from Alpine Pastry and Cakes, the only German food enterprise in the area. Located

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# Colorful, Cultural Dia de los Muertos Exhibit

Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, is not a Mexican version of Halloween. Though related, the two annual events differ greatly in traditions and tone. Although the theme is death, the point is to demonstrate love and respect for deceased family members.

Whereas Halloween is a dark night of terror and mischief, Day of the Dead festivities unfold over two days in an explosion of color and life-affirming joy. This expression is brilliantly represented in an exhibit at Main Street Arts in Martinez from Oct 28th to Nov 21st with works from three local artists, Eric Carlstrom's, Denise Hillman, and Dorrie Bosley Langley.

Carlstrom's art is influenced by tattooing and tattoo art. Dia de los Muertos imagery happens to translate well into tattoos, which also suits his style of painting and color pallet.

Hillman has traveled throughout Mexico from the time she was a child. She recently visited Michoacan and Guanajuato during Dia de los Muertos celebra-



tions and was inspired to create a series of paintings and clay sculpture to capture the humorous and festive spirit of the events. The clay catrina skull is part of a series of "Bathing Beauty" sculpture pieces.

Langley, a local artist and art teacher, has several murals around town and has had her art shown in the Bedford Gallery as well as local co-op galleries. In this fifth year of celebrating Dia de los Muertos in Martinez, Dorrie's assemblages pay homage to José Guadalupe Posada's La Catrina.

Exhibit contains a variety of paintings, altars, sculptures, catrinas, and cards celebrating Dia de los Muertos.

An artist reception is on Nov 3rd, 2pm to 5pm, during Martinez Dia de los Muertos Festival.

Main Street Arts is located at 613 main Street in Martinez. Exhibit hours are 11am to 4pm Wednesday-Saturday and 10am to 2 pm on Sundays. [www.main-streetarts.net](http://www.main-streetarts.net).



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# A Guide to Managing Family Dynamics Over the Holidays

by Jill Hedgecock,

Author of Rhino in the Room,  
[www.jillhedgecock.com](http://www.jillhedgecock.com)



Even the most loving, connected families often find the holidays stressful. The trick is to plan to minimize problems according to Dr. Ann Steiner,

a California Marriage and Family Therapist. Dr. Steiner is a noted national and international speaker, workshop leader, author, consultant to therapists, and a highly-respected, psychotherapist with a practice in Lafayette. Her book, "Help Your Group Thrive: A Workbook and Planning Guide" offers advice on how to deal with family dynamics that can take a celebration from a loving event to an ear-splitting yelling match or a snooze fest as one family member dominates the dinner conversation. Dr. Steiner explains that conflict in families and groups is normal and suggests that the Thanksgiving holiday offers a unique opportunity to show appreciation. She offers a proactive road map to steer your gathering from challenging conflicts to happy concordance.

A host/hostess can guide what he/she wants from their Thanksgiving gathering this year by including in holiday planning emails a statement like: "This year we want to come together to celebrate our connection, love and gratitude."

If family anticipate conflict between members, ask everyone in advance to avoid hot-button topics that create more distance. Activities like sharing reasons to be grateful can become an annual tradition that sets a positive tone to discussions.



"We all know we have differences that may at times make it hard to feel loving towards each other," says Steiner. "How you spend your time together can either bring people closer or make them feel less connected. I am a fan of finding ways to increase connection, even when big differences exist. Keeping connected despite differences is often challenging but is an important investment in your future together."

"In today's world, political climate is especially challenging," Steiner commented. Most people have strong opinions that are unlikely to change. Thanksgiving may not be a good time for a political debate.

Being proactive can help everyone have a more enjoyable holiday if a family has a history of escalating arguments. For example, hosts could ask that everyone agree to ground rules before the holiday. Focusing on good memories and

what family members have in common, planning activities that foster fun and laughter, such as playing a family game or looking through old photo albums, are other strategies. Also, a host can suggest that guests avoid heated debates for the sake of small children. If arguments tend to be fueled by alcohol, consider delaying serving wine until after a few hors d'oeuvres have been served, and distract from refills before there is a problem.

To avoid disagreements, agree to wrap up and shift the discussion to less controversial topics if it becomes too heated. When people are not able to truly listen to each other, Dr. Steiner recommends it is best to simply agree to disagree.

Dr. Steiner recommends discussions about what is most enjoyed about Thanksgiving. Maybe have grandparents talk about what they did at night before TV, cell phones, or the internet. Use this year's gathering as an opportunity to express gratitude, appreciation, and give thanks for what they all have, including each other.

To deal with a long-winded relative, have some topics that everyone can talk about. Possibly even use a timer. If the long-winded relative starts to take over, feel free to say something like, "I wonder what the children think about what you're saying" or pick out the theme or message and ask everyone at the table "Who else has had an experience like that?"

Remember, old hurts can easily be re-awakened when families get together. Assume that every family member wants to feel like a valued member of a team of related

people who despite their differences, love each other.

It helps to create a culture of respect and tolerance of differences. Creating agreements about managing disagreements in your family or group, and encouraging open conversations, if everyone agrees to, can dramatically increase feelings of comfort, emotional safety and connection.

Holidays can be opportunities to create positive lifetime memories. Think about how you want to make this year's gathering more comfortable and enjoyable. Reasonable expectations make that possible. Have fun!

To learn more about Dr. Steiner's work visit, [www.DrSteiner.com](http://www.DrSteiner.com). Her book, Help Your Group Thrive: A Workbook and Planning Guide, Routledge Books, is available on Amazon. (<https://amzn.to/2SiGKoX>).



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GGLR was established in 1986. They adopted out 280 dogs in 2017. They are a nonprofit/tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. The all-volunteer organization

has no offices or overhead, so all direct donations go directly to shelter fees and medical care (shots, microchipping, spay/neuter) for labs in need. Other options to help GGLR include purchasing lab-inspired shirts, bags, bottles, scarves, and magnets (<http://labrescue.org/store.html>).

**Update:** Daisy the Pug (featured in August, 2018) has been adopted.

[Ruby Dooby Do is Concord's Instagram celebrity Doberman with more than 63,000 followers. [Instagram.com/rubydooby\\_Do](https://www.instagram.com/rubydooby_Do). Column written by Jill Hedgecock, author of Rhino in the Room, Program Coordinator, Mount Diablo branch of the California Writers Club, [www.jillhedgecock.com](http://www.jillhedgecock.com).]



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## The End to School Gun Violence Begins with a Promise and “Hello”

Story and photos by Nik Wojcik

Over 160 people comprised of predominantly school administrators, and a handful of law enforcement and PTA representatives, gathered at Pleasant Hill Community Center on October 24 for the first annual School Safety Summit, a collaborative effort between Sandy Hook Promise (SHP) and Contra Costa Crisis Center (aka 211). It was a gathering of minds and willingness to face the issue of gun violence in schools and learn about a program that seeks to prevent violence before it starts.

Nicole Hockley has experienced what no mother ever should. When her son Dylan died in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012, she was naive to the politics surrounding gun violence and to some degree, she continues to keep the divided political discourse at a distance. Her mission is not just about policy, instead, she’s doing everything in her power to save other students from the fate her son suffered.

Hockley represents one of three families that initially formed Sandy Hook Promise, an organization that put in the work to do what no other group seemed to be doing: to understand risk factors, what can be done to stop a threat before it becomes a tragic reality and to share that knowledge with schools.

After the events of Dec. 14, 2012, authorities swarmed Newtown and offered the community a crash course in the risk factors that lead up to school shootings. She became “furious” at the amount of information they had to offer, after the fact. She demanded to know why they weren’t out there teaching what they knew before tragedy strikes - she was told they just didn’t have the resources to reach every school, every parent, every student. So, she proclaimed, “If you can’t, we will,” and that is exactly what she and others incessantly travel from school-to-school attempting to do.

With each stop, she challenges schools to make and keep the same promise she has made: to not just fight gun violence in schools, but to save every student from harming themselves or others.

They devised a four-part program to offer schools nationwide. The information they present is heavily researched, and the programs they offer are measured for success. Resources to help implement and maintain the systems are given to schools free of charge. Sandy Hook Promise’s aim is simple: to ensure that every child put on a school bus comes back home alive. This summit was focused on giving Contra Costa County the tools to do just that.

Hockley told her own story and pitched her program that has already been implemented in 153 districts across the country. Her presentation included a video Titled “Evan,” that focuses on the life of a seemingly normal high school boy; but the crux of the story was the boy in the background, almost unnoticeable until he storms into the gym with a gun. It was a horrific and shocking visual - it was an effective dose of reality about the things we miss, the kids that go unseen.

Neither Hockley nor SHP’s next presenter, Brandon Rainey, demonize those students who may present a threat. They want people to understand that although mental health is an issue that needs to be addressed in this country, it is not necessarily a precursor to violence potential. “It’s an incredibly...small percentage of mentally ill people that go



Nicole Hockley

on to commit acts of violence,” Hockley said. “It’s much more likely they will become victims.”

The core belief at SHP is that every child can be at risk at some point or another and every child is worth saving. The method they have adopted is one of compassion and acknowledgment, which is at the heart of the first step in their program: Start with Hello. To explain further, Rainey led the room of adults on a journey back to their high school days, digging into emotions of their younger selves. He asked people to raise their hands if they had “ever felt alone” and nearly every hand was raised.

Rainey explained that the kids most at risk feel alone, they feel invisible, and the best first step in preventing an at-risk youth from becoming violent is to just “Say Hello.” The focus at SHP is not on the guns, it’s on the people and they are encouraging school staffs, students and parents to refocus their energy on the individuals - the quiet kid who sits alone at lunch, who doesn’t seem to have any friends, who may be screaming out for help in the comfort of social media.

“Validating someone’s existence can have a massive impact,” Rainey explained. Admittedly, it may be awkward at first, but keep trying, because the most important part is showing somebody that you actually see them. The other three portions of the program involve recognizing the signs, safety assessment and an anonymous tip line they offer as part of their “Say Something” campaign.

Launched as an app in March, the Say Something project gives students a safe place to report concerns when they relate to potential suicide or violence. The Contra Costa Crisis Center will work in collaboration to address the anonymous tips and that information will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine what, if any, action is needed. The gist of the four-part program is simple: reach out, know the signs, say something and assess the threat.

Hockley and the great people of SHP came to Pleasant Hill to challenge our schools to make the promise, and according to an October 25 press statement, the Contra Costa County Office of Education has accepted that challenge stating that the SHP Know the Signs programs are “currently kicking off in middle schools and high schools throughout Contra Costa County.”

Hockley admitted that schools in general are safe from violence, but they’re not immune and Contra Costa County schools are thankful for the tools SHP is bringing to help keep our kids safe until “violence on school campuses becomes a thing of the past.”

After all, it starts with a simple first step: Say hello.



parentfootprint

by Dr. Dan Peters [www.DrDanPeters.com](http://www.DrDanPeters.com)

## What Type of Parent Are You?

Do you think about how you parent or are you more in “auto-pilot”? Do you approach parenting in a way that feels natural to you? Do you think about what you want for your child’s future, and parent in a way that will lead to those goals, or do you focus on the parenting moments as they occur and feel the future will work out for your child? Different parenting styles tend to produce different outcomes?

The “authoritarian” parenting approach has been practiced the longest and by most cultures. This parenting style is generally considered to be “traditional.” The authoritarian parent is in charge, tells kids what to do, and expects compliance. While there are surely different outcomes and loads of variables that impact a child’s

experience beyond parenting alone, children of authoritarian parents tend to lean toward achievement and doing the “right” thing. They may be less likely to think outside of the box or take chances so as to not make a mistake or get in trouble.

The next most common parenting style, the “permissive” parent, emerged as a reaction to the authoritative style, and was seen more in the 1960’s in the U.S. The permissive parenting style allowed children to do what they wanted, and parents did not tell their kids what to do. This style tends to produce children who grow up not knowing where to draw limits in their behavior and may range from being anxious and nervous in the world to rebellious and lacking responsibility due to lack of guidance and parental expectations.

The “authoritative style” of parenting emerged in the 1980’s. The authoritative style continues to be common today because it is a combination of setting limits when necessary and giving space and freedom to children to have more choices in their own lives. Authoritative parents tend to talk more to their kids and listen to their thoughts and wishes, yet still make the final decision on matters of importance. Children raised in this parenting style tend to be responsible and cooperative adults yet may need to look to others for validation as they may lack an inner confidence in their decisions.

Do any of the above parenting styles describe you? Are you parenting like your parents parented you? Are you doing what you liked experiencing as a child? Are you repeating things you told yourself you would never do to your own child?

I can best answer these questions by using a term I invented: The Parent Footprint. We are all leaving footprints on our children just as we had footprints left us on by our parents. They may be positive, negative, or neutral, but we are all leaving our legacy to our children and future grandchildren every day. The real question is not whether you are parenting “correctly,” but whether you are parenting

with intention and purpose and whether you are acting in a way that is consistent with what you want for your child. The real question is - what footprint you want to leave?

As our society is evolving, so is parenting. There is a new paradigm of parenting that is focused on the type of person we are as parents and how who we are matters most to the outcome of our children. Sure, our parenting approach matters, but consider what you do day in and day out? What are you doing with your time, what are they hearing you say? Do they see you engaging in your life or “sacrificing” everything for

them? Do you tell them to stand up for themselves with mean friends, yet they see you get taken advantage of from others? These are hard questions to ask ourselves, but the good news is that our kids benefit from us parents looking at ourselves and becoming aware of who we are as individuals and as parents.

The new paradigm of parenting also focuses on parents teaching and guiding, rather than controlling and exerting our will over our children. It highlights the importance of parents realizing our children are separate people from us with separate paths, separate interests, and separate goals. This new paradigm focuses on us parents becoming more aware of ourselves, so we can separate what is our goal versus our child’s goal and taking a step back to parent in the moment to know the difference. Once we know who we are and what we want for our child, we can observe and listen to what and who our child is.

I want you to ask yourself the question that the late, wise Wayne Dyer asked in the title of one of his many enlightening books, “What do you really want for your children?” Pondering the answer will provide you with the initial plan in which to parent your child. Do you want your child to be confident, successful, compassionate, or hard working? What are you doing to support this parenting goal? Are you controlling and managing your child or are you guiding and teaching?

I work hard to be an “aware” parent – aware of myself, aware of where I came from, aware of what I want for myself and my kids, and aware of what I am showing my kids as an example of a grown person. I invite you to get on board. This is a 2 for 1 special. Your kids will benefit if they see you fully engaged in your life – and so will you. I challenge you to become more aware of where you came from and what you want for your children. We are all evolving, always, so be kind to yourself while you are growing. What footprint do you want to leave?





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

# Perspectives

A slow-down in the real estate market is probably most evident by the number of "For Sale" signs in the neighborhood, weekend "Open House" signs on every corner and the rise in interest rates. But why and how does that affect your home purchase or sale?

Rising interest rates affect buying power and the required income needed to purchase increases as well. So, for buyers, you are negotiating the price and terms on your offer and perhaps not having to compete with other buyers for one home. For sellers, the negotiations can include less than full price offers, credits for closing costs, or contingent offers. BUT...



Lets keep perspective. The market is just about back where it peaked in May 2007. The "slowdown" is just that, a slowdown. It is not a drop-the-bottom-out of the market. As incomes can't keep up with appreciation there is a natural

leveling off of prices that occurs. The result is a better balance for buyers to negotiate. And sellers are still able to sell their homes at historic high prices. Of course, your neighborhood and your city will have their micro-market statistics. Check with your Realtor for details of what is going on in your marketplace. We are happy to provide the local data and help you strategize your home sale or purchase.



Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate, Dudum Real Estate (DRE #01882902), a 2018 awardee of 5-Star Professional, Senior Real Estate Specialist (for active seniors and boomers helping buyers and sellers. She can be reached at 925-876-0966 or Terrylynn@BuyStageSell.com. (DRE #00615420).

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Morello Park Elementary  
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**Top of Hill**  
**\$625,000**



4 bed/2 ba double garage  
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**MAYBE IT'S TIME TO CALL TERRYLYNN**



*Terrylynn Fisher*



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# Concord needs Experienced Leadership

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- **Created economic development strategies to attract and retain businesses and jobs.**
- **Established balanced budgets**
- **Created a comprehensive world-class Base Reuse Plan.**

But more needs to be done. My experienced leadership will work to maintain public safety; enhance city street maintenance and pothole repair, neighborhood preservation, senior and youth programs; improve our older commercial areas, and improve traffic, pedestrian and bicycle safety.

**Re-Elect** Laura Hoffmeister  
**Hoffmeister**  
CONCORD CITY COUNCIL  
District 1



*Laura Hoffmeister*

**JOURNEYMAN'S JOURNAL**  
by Scott Feuer

# Tales from the Trail: **SHOULDER SEASON CAMPING AT LAKE SONOMA**

Summer is over, the kids are back in school, but don't put those backpacks, camping gear, and fishing poles in storage yet. There is still time to enjoy the outdoors. In fact, fall is a perfect time to seize a weekend and experience the beauty and tranquility of shorter days and cool evenings in our northern coastal foothills. With fewer crowds, and no need to book reservations months in advance, arrange a quick weekend outdoor jaunt for a night or two. Before the winter rains bring muddy trails to dampen your outdoor adventure, excite the kids with a visit to Lake Sonoma.



Constructed by the US Army Corps of Engineers for flood control and irrigation supply, Lake Sonoma is in the heart of the wine country nestled in the rolling hills 10 miles northwest from Healdsburg off Highway 101 and is certainly a shoulder season gem for backpacking. Although typically viewed as a "boater's" lake during the hot summer months, in the offseason I have discovered that backpacking to the boat-in campsites is a remarkable way to escape the crowds and enjoy the beauty of the landscape. It will often be an adventure to remember.

Last Fall, I took my son and some of his high school buddies to our favorite Lake Sonoma destination, Buck Pasture Camp. With backpacks overstuffed with Bluetooth speakers, fishing gear, swim noodles, hefty camera gear, and extra "teenage hunger" food rations, we jumped in the car and drove 2 hours north to the winding Old Skaggs Road turnoff to reach the South Lake Trail that skirts the lake's Warm Springs Arm. Old Skaggs Road eventually dead ends at the lake which was flooded back in 1983 when Warm Springs Dam was constructed.

Here, we left our car and began the short, but scenic, 2.2-mile hike along the

single-track trail peppered with Live Oaks and Madrone trees. Home to a variety of wildlife, it is common to spot wild pigs, turkeys, deer, acorn woodpeckers, and California quail here. In a little over an hour, after navigating a small stream, we arrived at our waterfront paradise ready to set up camp. Buck Pasture has about 13 "boat-in" lakeside campsites (no roads) each with a picnic table, fire pit ring, and fairly level areas to pitch tents. Secluded, we were the only people around in this backcountry wilderness. The picnic table and our Bluetooth speaker system civilized our campsite. We pitched our tents to classic songs of Johnny Cash and eagerly grabbed our float noodles to swim and bask in the warm afternoon sun.

Autumn days end quickly as night falls around 6:00 pm. We gathered around our campfire, enjoyed a hearty freeze-dried chili mac dinner and spent the evening stargazing, telling stories, and took some long-exposure star trail photography before going to bed.

We awoke to a crisp, dry morning. Our tents were just 10 short steps to the lake's edge. We grabbed our poles and promptly



ly began fishing. We landed a few nice sized smallmouth bass before breakfast and spent the rest of day exploring the hills, swimming, and fishing well into the late afternoon hours. With no other campers around, it was quite tranquil.

As the sun dropped behind the golden-brown hills, strong, dry winds whipped through our camp and agitated our campfire to the point that we decided to douse the flames with lake water. Nothing like a forest fire to put a damper on the outing. We made do with our headlamps, listened to music, and reflected on the day's events. Over the course of the evening, I captured a couple more



long-exposure star trail photos before retiring to bed.

We awoke to a dense haze of smoke that made for an incredibly beautiful orange-red sunrise. We fished briefly, but with the strong smell of smoke and dry steady winds, we decided we need to leave soon to safely make it back to the car. We devoured breakfast, and then hastily broke camp for the hike out. Unknowingly at the time, we did not realize this was the first morning of the Sonoma/Napa firestorm. We were lucky to not have had a forest fire ignited by our camp while we slept. Thankfully, we made it

home safely and chalked up a very memorable trip.

Hiking to the boat-in campsites at Lake Sonoma during the shoulder season is perhaps one of the best destinations if seeking an easy weekend backpacking trip without the crowds. Typically, pleasant weather, excellent fishing, and lakeside campsites allow one to truly enjoy the beauty of our local coastal foothill terrain. Google Lake Sonoma Recreation Area, and take a weekend pause from the holiday shuffle and work in an extra outdoor adventure this fall.





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# “Heart of the Home” Show Aids Quadraplegic Teen

In June 2018, Kyle McClay of American Kitchen Company (AKC) in Concord, launched a TV show concept called “Heart of the Home”, a kitchen remodeling program which is being produced and airing on KRON4. McClay has often proclaimed his love for Concord and has great faith in its future. He has searched for ways to give back to the local communities utilizing the best resource available to him, his years of kitchen remodeling experience.

McClay’s who says the show is about helping those family within our community who may be going through hard times. It is an extraordinary financial commitment. American Kitchen Company pays for all of it, including production costs, airtime, and the cost of remodeling. His show schedule requires him to pick six homes to remodel kitchens. Those interested would enter their personal hardship to be considered. With entries coming in all across the Bay Area into KRON4, McClay’s plan is to select six and award free kitchen remodels for the series.

One of those selected was the Molnar family of Pleasanton.

In 2015, Myles Molnar was 15 when he severely injured his spine during wrestling practice, while in Abu Dhabi. He had dislocated the C5 and C6 vertebrae and had it not been for the experience of the coaches, the injury could have been fatal.

He spent three weeks in intensive care, but Myles was rendered quadriplegic. He went through specialized rehab at Craig Hospital in Englewood, CO, which after two months and \$40,000, Myles regained use of his arms and wrists. Now attends Foothill High in Pleasanton in a wheelchair still ongoing through rehab therapy at SCI-FIT.

His mother, Laura Molnar maintains the Myles Molnar Recovery Updates Facebook page so people can follow Myles’ journey and perhaps help defray costs.

“We need people to help with the funding because insurance doesn’t cover everything,” said Lynne Menon, a close family friend, told East Bay Times.

The projected cost of care for health and insurance is \$67,600 annually, which does not include normal cost of living, or those expenses required because of the disability such as yard care, cleaning, therapy.

A gofundme page was set up and has raised just over \$50,000.

In trying to bring life to normalcy, Menon says, “Myles is very strong. He always has a smile. But this is a difficult journey. He is determined to make this better for everyone around him.”

Part of that normalcy is living arrangements.

Modifications of the kitchen would help make their lives more normal and accessible to everyone family, Laura points out in the show. The family used to eat breakfast at a bar together, but because of his wheelchair, the bar is too high, Myles must eat at a separate table in a different room. The kitchen is not accessible to him.

Needless to say, this was something McClay could and did address. You will need to watch the show to fully appreciate the effort, but these screenshots should give you some idea. By lowering cabinets and a bar, replacing the countertop and sink, and attending to other appropriate details, the kitchen was converted into one of accessibility. The Molnar family, Frank, Laura, sister Anna, and Myles can all enjoy meals together again.

McClay and American Kitchen Company should be commended for this clever community gesture...as

well as KRON4. This arguably may be their best production effort. You can watch the show online at <https://americankitchencompany.com/TV-Show>, look for episode 2 (EP2).



Screenshots in order: 1. Myles Molnar intensive care 2. Myles eating alone in his home 3. Kyle McClay begins demolition. 4. Cabinets were cut by several inches to lower the bar and countertop 5. Molnar family seems to enjoy watching the work 6. The big reveal moment 7. The new kitchen. 8. Myles enjoying his accessible kitchen.

# CLAYCORD® NEWS & TALK

## In case you missed it...

### Another Garbage Truck Starts On Fire.



Another garbage truck started on fire the morning of October 24. Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery would like to remind their customers not to put any batteries, old laptops, or any other hazardous waste in the trash. For complete information on what to do with hazardous waste, visit this website. [www.deltadiablo.org/services/hhw#Acceptable](http://www.deltadiablo.org/services/hhw#Acceptable). (Photo Claycord.com)

### \$770 Million in Cash waiting for Californians to Claim

State Controller Betty Yee announced her office is safeguarding nearly \$770 million in unclaimed cash belonging to Californians and is urging owners to take steps to retrieve it.

The unclaimed financial property includes forgotten bank accounts, uncashed checks, insurance policy proceeds, stocks and safe deposit box contents.

People who think they have unclaimed property can visit a state database for free and fill out a secure claim form online for most property.

“A search of the unclaimed property database only takes a couple of minutes and this is a great time to do it because more properties transfer from banks, businesses, employers, and life insurance companies each summer,” Yee said.

Potential owners can search the controller’s database at [www.claimit.ca.gov](http://www.claimit.ca.gov) or call (800) 992-4647. There is no time limit for submitting a claim.

Yee said that during the 2017-18 fiscal year, California property owners received about \$309 million for nearly 580,000 claims, with an average payout of \$534.

### Orphaned Mountain Lion Cubs Come to Oakland Zoo



Two recently orphaned mountain lion cubs from different locations in Northern California are now playing and bonding at Oakland Zoo. The cubs, a male and a female, are both approximately 10 weeks old and are being tended around the clock by Oakland Zoo veterinarians, zoo officials said. The female cub was found last month in Lake County after a property owner heard chirps that sounded like a bird for about a week. The cubs make the chirping sound when they are calling for their mother, according to zoo officials. The property owner finally reported the cub to the California Department of Fish

and Wildlife when its health seemed to be deteriorating. Video is on Claycord.com and they are really cute.

### San Francisco Dubbed ‘Doo-Doo Capital’ of U.S.

One of the most beautiful cities in the country has turned into a dumping ground for Bay Area bowel movements — and things have gotten so bad, the California city is now dubbed the “Doo-Doo Capital in the US.”

### MDUSD High School Teacher Named “California Teacher of the Year”

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson this week named five educators as the 2019 California Teachers of the Year.

“These five remarkable teachers deserve thanks and admiration for their deep commitment, hard work, and creativity,” he said. “They make profound differences in their students’ lives and provide students the tools they need to succeed.”

Of the five, Rosie Reid, a Northgate High School English teacher 9-12 grade, Walnut Creek, was chosen. Torlakson also nominated Reid as California’s representative for the National Teacher of the Year competition. Reid will compete against other state nominees, and a 2019 National Teacher of the Year will be named in the spring.

### BART Rolls Out Updated Earthquake Early Warning System

The ShakeAlert 2.0 warning system is designed to automatically kick in during an earthquake, slowing trains to a halt and giving passengers valuable seconds and even minutes to drop, cover or hold on.

The upgraded early warning system was developed by the U.S. Geological Survey, the University of California at Berkeley, the California Institute of Technology and the universities of Washington and Oregon, in partnership with the California Office of Emergency Services.

The alert system relies on sensors in California, Oregon and Washington, and kicks in when those sensors detect early waves from an earthquake.

“This is not only a game-changer, it’s a life-saver,” Senator Jerry Hill said.

BART has been slowing or stopping trains in advance of expected shaking for a few years.

Richard Allen, director of UC Berkeley’s Seismological Laboratory and one of the developers of the system, said he was recently riding a BART train during a 3.5 quake and the system worked.

The train slowed, an announcement was made and passengers were informed of what was happening.

The eventual goal is to send out alerts to everyone affected, sending messages to smart phones, but the technology hasn’t been developed yet to do that, Allen said.

The ShakeAlert system is being offered to all Bay Area agencies, businesses and utilities. The system can alert surgeons doing delicate operations, open firehouse doors so engines don’t become trapped, shut off valves to conserve water to fight fires and close down chemical lines at industrial sites, officials said.

# New Principal at Pine Hollow

Ben Campopiano is the new principal of Pine Hollow Middle School for the 2018-19 school year. Campopiano was a former teacher and Vice Principal at Northgate High. He expressed that he is looking forward to working with students, parents, and teachers to reach higher goals for the school.

"It's great to be part of such a strong team and I'm proud to be a Mustang," he professed.

Welcome to the neighborhood Mr. Campopiano.



## Clayton Valley Charter School Scheible Says...

# Eagles Liked Nuts?

Lydia Lim is very competitive, to say the least. In 2016, she arrived at Clayton Valley Charter High School as our new band director. She instantly loved how our marching band worked well as a team. She admired their self-discipline and commitment. But eventually, Lydia learned her students didn't place much emphasis on competitions. They were simply having fun performing in the marching band.

Lydia has more than 20 years of musical experience. She graduated from the University of Southern California with a Bachelor of Music in percussion performance as well as a Master of Art in teaching music (along with her teaching credential). After college, Lydia was fortunate to travel internationally with a touring orchestra. The profound experience led her to the classroom and ultimately here to CVCHS.

Reflecting back on her earlier days at CVCHS, she remembers motivating the band to be more competitive. "They said it was fun just being part of the band," Lydia said. "I kept telling them, 'we need to win!' THAT is what makes it the most fun!"

And it didn't take long for Lydia to convince the band just how much fun winning can be in marching band competitions. Winning, in fact, has become part of the Ugly Eagles playbook. Although CVCHS has a small program in comparison to most area high schools – only 62 students perform in our marching band – their spirit, talent and dedication is unmatched.

This year, for the first time ever, the



CVCHS Marching Band students enjoying The Nut Trophy from their win at the Walnut Festival Twilight parade. L-R: Seniors Haley Reese, Sarah Kidd, and Reese Romero

CVCHS marching band took home the top honor from the Walnut Festival Invitational Twilight Parade – The Nut Trophy. CVCHS performed "Celebration" (originally by Kool & the Gang), kicking off the competition season for our talented group of musicians. The band will compete five more times before the end of the year, including four consecutive weekends in October.

Winning trophies is a great accomplishment, but it's not the most significant factor for Lydia. With each student, she conveys the importance of developing social and team-building skills, stimulating personal growth and responsibility, and bringing a new perspective to the world of music. Her passion for excellence truly epitomizes the kind of instructor you want educating students – and we are lucky to have her teaching our Eagles. March on!

## 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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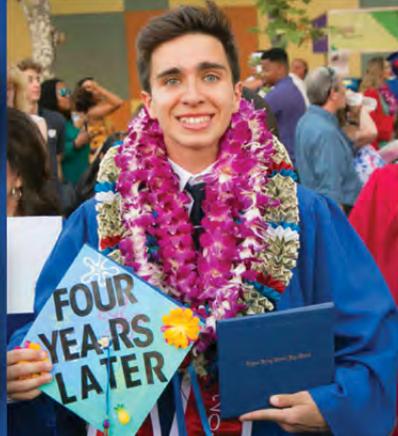


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Have questions or need more information?

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