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FEBRUARY 2019

ZOMBIE FILM ATTACKS CONCORD

Writer, Director Jason Ragosta instructs Tony Alrich, set carpenter and SFX blood-master, with Margaret Caragan Aldrich, makeup lead, both from Oakland special effects company Pandora FX. They were shooting a scene in Concord for a proof of concept trailer for their zombie feature film, "ZTV: The Preszerve."

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concord mayor
by **Carlyn Obringer**, Email: Put MAYOR
in subject line CityCouncil@cityofconcord.org

Join Concord Delegation to Visit Sister City Kitakami, Japan

One of the things I love about Concord is its diversity and the many ways we celebrate other cultures through festivals and community events. For example, Japanese culture has deep roots here, not only because of the physical presence of the Japanese American Religious and Cultural Center on Treat Boulevard, and the beloved annual Diablo Japanese

American Summer Festival, but due to Concord's 45-year Sister City relationship with Kitakami, Japan.

This Sister City relationship was founded in October 1974 as a result of two cable television executives meeting at a conference and becoming friends. Court Kirkeeng of Concord and Dr. Zenji Katagata of Kitakami persuaded their city leaders to approve the relationship and enlisted the help of other citizens to make the partnership work. This vibrant relationship has been preserved in large part due to the efforts of the Concord Ambassadors, an all-volunteer organization which is dedicated to promoting mutual exchanges in the fields of education, culture, social affairs and economics. Open to all, the Concord Ambassadors welcome members who are interested in furthering the mutual understanding of the culture and history of Japan and the United States, creating the opportunity to develop lasting friendships, and supporting a continued international exchange between the Sister Cities of Kitakami and Concord. The Ambassadors also encourage the development of personal and business relationships between individuals and groups, including the opportunity for

"home stay" visits.

For each five-year anniversary of this special relationship there has been an official delegation visiting the Sister City led by the Mayor and city officials, Ambassador members and interested citizens. The two cities alternate the five-year official visits. The last five-year visit from Japan to Concord occurred in fall

2014. A special 10,000 origami crane sculpture was commissioned by the Concord Ambassadors and displayed in the lobby of Concord's Brenden Theater to mark the anniversary of the 2014 devastating Japanese earthquake and tsunami, and several city dinners,

tours, and events were held to honor the Kitakami guests.

The 2019 trip will take place from October 18 through 31 beginning with a tour of some of Japan's most famous sites and concluding in Kitakami. As Mayor, a former Concord Ambassador board member, and a past Assistant Director of Research for the Japan External Trade Organization, I am looking forward to joining the Concord delegation, meeting our counterparts in Kitakami, Japan, and participating in a mutual exchange of friendship and ideas. It is of particular interest to me to learn more about Kitakami's development, as I have been told that our cities have developed along a similar trajectory over the decades. You can get more information about the Concord Ambassadors and how to participate in this Sister City trip by visiting www.concordambassadors.org or by contacting Mary Rae Lehman at mrae2@aol.com. "Let's go together!"

photo: courtesy of Claycord.com



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I-680/Hwy 4 Improvement Project Breaks Ground

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) have started construction on the first phase of improving traffic congestion on I-680/State Route 4 interchange.

The Improvement project will start by widening a four-mile stretch of State Route 4 in both directions between Morello Avenue in Martinez and State

Route 242 by adding a third lane to improve on and off ramp merging. It will also extend the eastbound carpool lane approximately two miles, install safety lighting, and replace Grayson Creek Bridge. The bridge is over 50 years old and has exceeded its serviceable life, and needed to be brought up to current State bridge safety codes.





Jennifer Stojanovich
Realtor, Better Homes Realty

Tidy Your Home with KonMari

If you have Netflix, then you may have tuned in to the new show Tidying Up. It's based on the best-selling book "The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up", written by Marie Kondo. In the show, Marie Kondo demonstrates her simple yet thorough way to declutter and organize your home. If you're a homeowner who is ready to sell, or you've just moved into a new home and you want to get a fresh start, the KonMari Method may work well for you. Here's an introduction to how the process works.



answer is no, you discard it. Remember, this is about how you feel, not about how anyone else feels. Even if it feels irrational to keep an old t-shirt that no longer fits, if it sparks joy, you should hold onto it.

Thank your belongings. When you have determined that an item no longer sparks joy, before discarding it Marie Kondo advises that you thank it. This is an important concept that can radically change how you view the objects you own. When you recognize that your belongings have their own energy and you begin to honor that energy, you will treat your things with more respect.

Carrying that idea forward, when you organize the things that you are going to keep, you store them in a way that is easy to see and gives each item some space.

Tackle belongings by category. Once you are ready to dive into the process, Kondo recommends tackling your belongings by category. She suggests starting with clothing because it is the easiest category. You then move on to books, followed by papers. The next category is called komono, which includes all your miscellaneous items that you'll find in the kitchen, bathroom, and garage, for example. Finally, you end with sentimental items. The idea is that you will begin to get a feel for what sparks joy and start to trust your intuition with the early categories. That way, when you get to sentimental items, which can be very emotional, you will be able to tell what you should keep and what you can let go of. Courtesy of www.Virtualresults.net.

Visualize the life you want. How can you create a plan for your life if you don't know where you want to go or what you want to do? The very first step in Marie Kondo's system is taking time to visualize the life you want to live in your space. Imagine your rooms being clutter-free and all your cabinets and drawers being neatly organized. Imagine how much less stressed you'll feel when you know where everything is. Think about the kinds of activities you'd like to do in your home, such as hosting more parties or creating a space for your hobbies. Doesn't it feel good to live in this imaginary space? The KonMari Method was created to help you attain that feeling.

Only keep items that spark joy. The key element of the KonMari Method is only keeping items that spark joy for you. How do you determine which of your belongings make you feel this way? You hold each of them in your hands. Yes, every single item you own. When you hold the object in your hands, you ask yourself "does this item bring me joy?" If the answer is yes, you keep it. If the

Photo: Marie Kondo believes you should purge your home of everything that doesn't spark joy. Courtesy Business Insider



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Laundry and Other Activities Contribute Microplastics into Our Food Supply

Steps You Can Take to Protect Rivers, Oceans

by Jill Hedgecock

Haunting images of gulls and seals with their necks trapped in plastic six-pack rings and turtles with straws stuck up their noses have increased public awareness of the hazards of plastic trash in our oceans. Much fewer people are aware of the impact of microplastics on sea and river creatures. Microplastics are tiny fragments of plastic that are less than five millimeters (about the size of a grain of rice) or smaller. These fragments of plastics are everywhere—in table sea salt, in fish and shellfish, in detergent and personal care products. Their widespread distribution is particularly troubling because plastic can take up to 1,000 years to degrade.

A 2018 study published in *Scientific American* confirmed that people are inadvertently eating these tiny particles. These barely visible plastics come from many sources – abrasive beads in cosmetics and toothpaste, fibers from synthetic clothing, and deteriorated plastic trash such as discarded water bottles, plastic grocery bags, and food wrappers. Several studies of nearshore sediments have found that in the United States, the most prevalent type of microplastic are fibers and fragments from clothing.

While studies need to be performed to better understand the implications of microplastic ingestion on human health, these plastic fragments are clearly causing harm to sea creatures. From zooplankton to corals to worms to fish, scientific studies have shown that microplastics are ingested and retained in the tissues of these in ocean creatures. One study on sea cucumbers found that these animals were preferentially selecting microplastics over their normal food.

Heather Loso, an environmental risk

assessor who presented on the toxicological impacts of microplastics during the National Society of Toxicology and Chemistry meeting last November in Sacramento, found that some species are more prone to be harmed by plastics.

“Recent studies on microplastics found that exposure to certain plastic polymers caused toxic effects in fish and shellfish,”

says Loso. “Examples of these effects include reduced reproductive success and abnormal development in certain species of aquatic organisms.”

Although cleaning up the rice-sized or smaller pellets currently in our ocean sediments is mind-boggling and probably impossible, there are steps we can take now to prevent further release of microplastics into our rivers and oceans.

A large amount of microplastics comes from laundering synthetic clothing. One simple solution is to buy 100% cotton or wool clothing. The more synthetic clothes

are agitated in the washer, the more they are likely to shed microfibers. The best way to preserve your clothes and reduce microplastic release into our waterways is to only wash a full load, use a liquid laundry soap, not an abrasive powder, and avoid oxidizers. Cold water wash and shorter wash cycles are also recommended.

Commercial products such as the Cora Ball (which simulates the filtering mechanisms of coral) can be placed in washing machines to trap the microfibers. Manufacturers of the Cora Ball report that if 10% of US households used it, the equivalent of 30 million water bottles could be kept out of our waterways. A clothing bag similar to a lingerie bag (such as Guppy Friend) could prevent the release of clothing fibers into the washing machine.

Because larger plastic items degrade

to microplastics, reducing and recycling plastic waste is also likely to reduce microplastic releases. To that end, consumers can bring reusable shopping bags to the grocery store (in many cities you will also avoid paying for a bag—a bonus). Commercial reusable produce bags can also be purchased. Consumers can reduce plastic waste by buying a reusable straw which can easily be carried around in a toothbrush holder and rinsed out at home. Beeswax-covered cloth (available in Trader Joe’s) can be used to cover food instead of sandwich bags. When purchasing products watch for the “Look for the Zero” label or go to www.beatthemicrobead.org for a list of products that contain microplastics.

Recycle, recycle, recycle! Most people are aware that water bottles can be recycled. Most grocery stores such as Safeway and Whole Foods have a bin out front to drop off clean plastic bags for recycling. A few trash services may allow clean plastic film curbside recycling (bread plastic bags, clean sandwich bags,

etc.). The small loose plastic film must be secured and sealed in a larger plastic bag. To learn more about plastic film recycling option, go to plasticrecycling.org or plasticfilmrecycling.org.

Whether or not microplastics are ultimately determined not to be harmful to people, we owe it to future generations and the ocean creatures that share our planet to do our best to reduce our “plastic footprint.”

Jill Hedgecock is an author and an environmental consultant with a master's degree in Environmental Management. She regularly speaks to the public on various environmental issues. www.jillhedgecock.com



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David George

THE NAKED GARDENER PLASTICS EXPOSED!

I love early spring the most. Have you noticed the sights and sounds of early spring? This year's wet weather has encouraged the early spring bloomers to pop. The mild damp nights can resonate with sounds of Pacific tree (chorus) frogs, hooting owls, and the occasional coyote yips and howls. Look upon our hillsides the next few weeks to spot white-flowering plums, our only California native plum tree.

But not all is beauty and song in our garden. Like most, I thought that plastic bags, black plastic tarps, and bend-er-board borders were harmless. Plastics in the garden are NOT inert or harmless.

They break down over time into tiny pieces until they become "micro-plastics". You cannot see these plastics, but they now surround us in the soil, get washed into our drinking water, and find their way into the ocean. The fish ingest them, and they enter our food chain. Yikes!

Shovel handles used to be made of wood, bags were made of paper, and composting bins were built out of lumber boards. Now, it's all plastic. Shopping and produce paper bags have been replaced by thin plastics, even fencing material is now plastic. But worse, the US recycling industry does not have a cost-effective way to recycle thin plastics, such as shopping or produce bags. The

only alternative to dumping these into our waste landfills is to return them to "recycling" bins that most local markets (Trader Joe's, Safeway, Diablo Foods, WholeFoods) provide to be reincarnated so to speak, into compost lumber, (a mixture of plastic, wood scraps, and sawdust), melted into new bags, or create into carbon nanotube membranes, which may potentially be used for energy storage and biomedical innovations.

If you can stomach it, watch the CBS 60-Minutes episode on Pacific Ocean plastic pollution from December 2018 at this link: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-great-pacific-garbage-patch-cleaning-up-the-plastic-in-the-ocean-60-minutes/>. This segment exposes the urgent threat to our oceans and our food chain that unwise use and disposal of plastics creates.

Every individual can make a difference with his or her choices. As a first step, let's get back to naturally occurring materials in our gardens. Push back this plastic threat and insist on natural products. Recycle when you can, but be careful that your plastic is clean or it will end up in the landfill. Reusable shopping and produce bags are the hip way to go. When it comes to plastics, let's get naked!

Please email your questions or comments to NakedGardener@diablogazette.com. In some cases these may appear in future articles.



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by William Claney, Tech Writer, Computers USA

Tech in English

Less Junk in Your In-box

Do you use a computer for email communications and think you are getting too much Spam? Did you know about half of all emails are spam or junk and they clutter your In-box, bring nasty surprises like malware and hacking attacks and are hard to manage?

What is Spam anyway? According to Wikipedia Spam is a, "meat product made mainly from ham." No wait that's the wrong Spam. Spam is, "irrelevant or inappropriate messages sent on the Internet to a large number of recipients."

Some Spam messages are "legit" and offer a plethora of goods and services that are beneficial to you but a large percentage are trying very hard to trick you into divulging details about you that the spammer can use to hack your computer, run off with credit card information or knowingly infecting your computer so they can sell you a total useless service that keeps getting you infected.

True, they intentionally lie to you and tell you you're infected, and you are not. Then these bandits want you to call a technician in some far off country to get it fixed. They don't fix it, ever. Worth repeating you will NOT get your computer fixed. You will get a tech intentionally damaging your computer, so you must pay for service again... and again, and ... you get the picture.

Spam can be blocked, and there are several methods of doing this including dedicated Spam blockers and manual blocking. If you use web-mail (log into

the Internet to get email) your service provider, Gmail for example, offers a manual way to mark an email message as junk. The way it works, if the SAME email sender uses the same email address it will be blocked and go to the junk folder. If the SAME sender sends you another email, but this time uses a slightly different email name, it will not be blocked.

When you use an automated Spam blocker it may recognize the ruse used to circumvent the manual blocker and automatically determine the email as Spam and assign it to junk.

Problem solved; well, sort of. The effectiveness of Spam blockers depends upon the number of times your blocker sees this message on the Internet, or algorithms used in the design of the blocker. Then there is the cost of the Spam blocker, the reputation for ease of use, effectiveness of keeping up on the Spam definitions and a whole host of other reasons.

Keep in mind Spam blocking is either manual or automatic. Manual depends upon your diligence at keeping up with new junk messages and managing variations of known Spam. Automatic blocking depends on the price, software you choose and the ability to update the international Spam environment. Perhaps you should look into an MSP (managed service provider) to manage it for you especially if you are a small to medium business without an IT department.

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Twisting A Child's Love

As a divorce attorney, I have become interested lately in the topic of "parental alienation." It is distressing when clients tell me that their "ex" is trying to turn their children against them and in some situations is succeeding. It can be very demoralizing for the parent who has suffered the alienation of their children. The alienating parent's methods can include:

- Pressuring the children to not visit with the other parent.
- Repeatedly changing visitation schedules without notice.
- Blaming the other parent for the divorce in front of the kids.
- Making unfounded accusations of abuse.
- Telling the child that the other parent does not love them anymore.

Parental alienation syndrome (PAS) was a term devised in the 1980s by child psychiatrist Dr. Richard A. Gardner. He defined it as a situation when one parent attempts to turn the couple's children against the other parent. The parent who is angry at the ex-spouse paints a negative picture of the other parent by making deprecating comments, blaming the other parent and making false accusations which they share with the children.

According to Psychology Today, the alienating parent typically shows signs of narcissistic and borderline personality tendencies. Narcissistic individuals tend to be self-absorbed. A narcissistic alienating parent uses the children as weapons, pawns in his or her battle to destroy the other parent. They show little capacity for taking into consideration what's in the best interests of the child.

An alienating parent with borderline personality disorder is emotionally hyper-reactive, often blaming others

for whatever goes wrong—which in turn enables them to victimize others. An alienating parent with a borderline disorder twists reality. They accuse the healthier parent of behaving in ways that are projections of how they themselves are. "Your dad is selfish," says the actual selfish parent.

How can an alienating parent be stopped? What about a parental obligation to foster a meaningful and positive relationship between the child and the other parent? In California, this parental obligation is a major factor in deciding custody cases. California Family Code §3040 says that custody should be granted to the parent who "is more likely to allow the child frequent and continuing contact with" the other parent. This mandate sounds like it would do the trick to stop a parent from alienating the affections of the children from the other parent, however, it still occurs.

For example, in the case of Catherine D v. Dennis B., the court upheld the father's visitation with his 5-year-old son. The alienating mom insisted on coming along on the father's visitation activities, undermining the father's parental rule, exhibiting hostility towards the father in the child's presence, telling the child that father was not giving her any financial support (which was untrue), and unilaterally changing the visitation schedule to times most inconvenient for the father. Mother had been the primary caretaker of the 5-year-old child. The trial court found that the father was the parent more likely to permit "frequent and continuing contact with the non-custodial parent. The wife appealed but the court of appeal affirmed the decision, holding that such factors provide adequate grounds for changing custody.

If you are experiencing, or are the target of this very disturbing tactic, keep your cool and seek legal help for ways to combat this situation.



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legalbriefs

by Douglas A. Prutton, Attorney

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California's New Employment Laws for 2019

As an attorney who primarily represents employees, I appreciate the difficulty that employers face keeping up with all the changes in employment law. 2019 brings many new employment laws in California and this article briefly discusses some of them.

Many of the new laws pertain to women, perhaps a consequence of the "me-too" movement. The law previously required employers with 50 or more employees to provide sexual harassment training for supervisors. Starting in January 2020 this has been greatly expanded to provide that all employers with five or more employees must provide harassment training to all employees within six months of their hire. The training for supervisors must be two hours and for non-supervisors one hour, and the Department of Fair Employment and Housing must develop one and two-hour online training videos that can be used. Special rules are provided for seasonal and temporary workers.

Other laws relating to harassment were passed last year. For companies with more than 50 employees "bystander intervention training" is mandated – providing guidance to bystanders to recognize bullying type behavior and how to effectively intervene. For persons and lawyers bringing harassment and discrimination claims, the law now makes clear that judges should rarely throw out those cases on "summary judgment" (which often happened in the past when a judge felt there was insufficient evidence), that a single instance of harassment may be sufficient to establish a hostile work environment, and that courts should not apply the "stray remarks" doctrine developed by federal courts ("stray" discriminatory comments insufficient to prove discrimination). As a lawyer who has filed many discrimination and harassment cases, I can tell you that these new provisions will be very helpful to employees wishing to pursue a claim.

The Unruh Civil Rights Act in California already permits sexual harassment cases outside of the employer/employee relationship to harassment occurring in various business, service or professional relationships (and relationships that are "substantially similar"). Due to the many recent high-profile sexual harassment cases, the new law specifically identifies

investors, elected officials, lobbyists and directors and producers as persons who can be liable for sexual harassment. The law now also includes individuals who hold themselves out as being able to help someone establish a business with that person or another party.

A new Civil Code provision protects a person who makes a sexual harassment claim based on credible evidence from being sued for defamation. In the past, some employees were reluctant to complain fearing a claim of defamation. Similarly, the law provides some protection to employers from defamation claims based on the employer reporting (like during a reference check) that a former employee had engaged in sexually harassing behavior.

By the close of 2019, publicly held corporations must have at least one female on their board of directors. This new provision illustrates the focus on women by the legislature last year, but if the government is mandating at least one woman, why not mandate one black, one Asian, one disabled person, etc.?

2019 brings some clarifications to a 2017 law forbidding employers from inquiring about prior salary history and requiring them to provide applicants with "pay scales." The new law defines "pay scale" as meaning "salary or hourly wage range" and provides that this information must be provided to applicants who request it after completing an initial interview. The new law allows employers to ask an applicant about his or her "salary expectations." Regarding equal pay for men and women, a new California law and a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal decision applying federal law, establish that prior salary cannot justify a disparity in compensation between men and women.

Regarding minimum wage, in California starting on January 1, 2019 for employers with 26 or more employees the amount is \$12.00/hour (\$11.00/hour if 25 or fewer employees). Many municipalities (like Oakland, San Jose, El Cerrito, Richmond, Mountain View and Redwood City for example) have their own minimum wage requirements that increased on January 1, 2019.

So, Happy New Year, and for all the employers and employees out there, let's work together for the benefit of all.

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JOURNEYMAN'S JOURNAL
by Scott Feuer

TALES FROM THE TRAIL

The Shadow of Mount Diablo

We see it practically every day. Reaching into the sky 3,848 feet above sea level Mount Diablo has a remarkable visual prominence over much of the Bay Area and Central Valley. We often take the mountain for granted not realizing its majestic beauty, rich history, and open space value right here in our own backyard.

With over 520 miles of hiking trails, impressive waterfalls, abundant wildlife, incredible spring wildflowers, and spectacular 360-degree views from the summit, Mount Diablo is certainly a hiker's paradise. Although the most popular time to hike and experience the beauty of the mountain is spring through fall, I especially enjoy exploring the mountain during the winter. Less people, cooler weather, and crisp blue skies offer a unique trekking experience.

One winter hike last January was exceptionally memorable. Enduring wind and frigid temperatures alone atop the summit, I experienced the most amazing sunset. I'm not referring to the traditional view of the golden orange sun setting

day ahead, I decided to descend Eagle Peak Trail to Back Creek Canyon and over Tick Wood Trail to Wasserman Trail. Meandering up and down rutted trails on Mount Diablo's north side, I made my way to the famed waterfalls to replenish

my water supply and break for lunch. I found a sunny rock ledge, sat down and enjoyed a well-deserved almond butter and jelly sandwich, cheese stick, and a handful of Oreo cookies while positioning myself to capture any warmth from the sun.

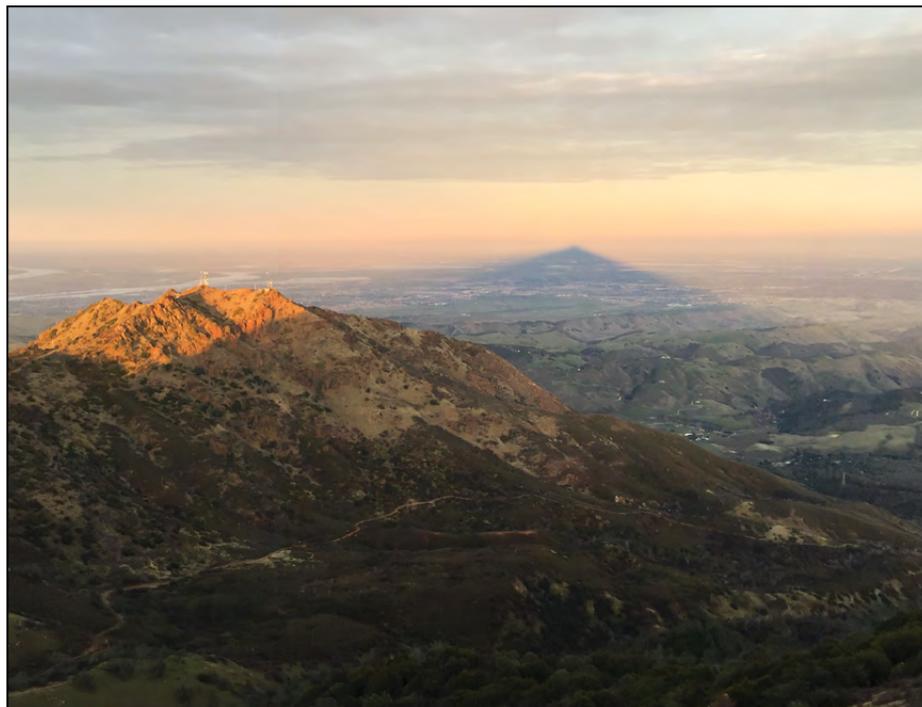
After the short recharge, I continued up the daunting grade to Prospector's Gap (the

notable saddle between North Peak and Diablo Summit) as the temperature dropped and winds increased. The chill was bearable as long as I exerted energy and kept hiking up the steep incline. Surprisingly, I still broke a sweat in the cold air. I pushed on, relishing the extraordinary views of the snow-covered Sierra Nevada range far off to the east.

By late afternoon, I found my way around the south side of Mount Diablo Summit closing in on reaching the top. I scrambled up the last segment of Summit Trail to the summit visitor center only to



Stunning winter sunrise - Mt. Diablo State Park



Mt. Diablo's majestic shadow reaching across the Central Valley

trollably, I dug frantically through my backpack searching for my headlamp to no avail. I must have forgotten my headlamp. Great, no light and it is getting dark fast. I checked my mini thermometer hanging on my backpack. It read just above freezing.

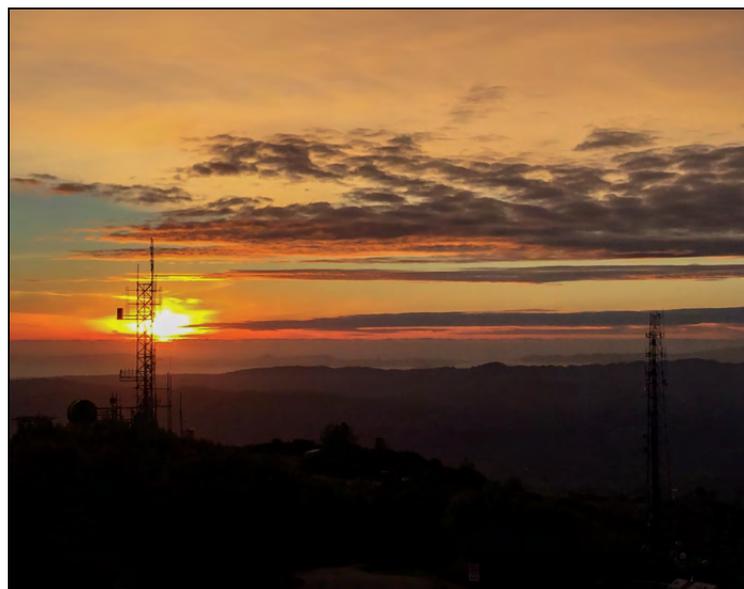
After about 10 minutes, I couldn't see a thing. The sun had completely set to a moonless night. I resorted to using my cell phone light to illuminate the trail. Rationing the phone's remaining battery life, I cautiously navigated through the darkness this way for about 20 minutes until I reached camp.

I pitched my tent, prepared a steaming cup of tea, and enjoyed a hot freeze-dried pouch of Italian Style Pepper Steak with Rice for dinner before retiring early to bed. To say the least, I slept like a baby after 13.8 strenuous miles of hiking the day's 4,911 feet of elevation gain.

I awoke early, excited to get on the trail again and witness that equally memorable shadow upon sunrise on my return descent. I prepared a quick breakfast of instant oatmeal and coffee and broke camp swiftly. Moving fast was key to

staying warm.

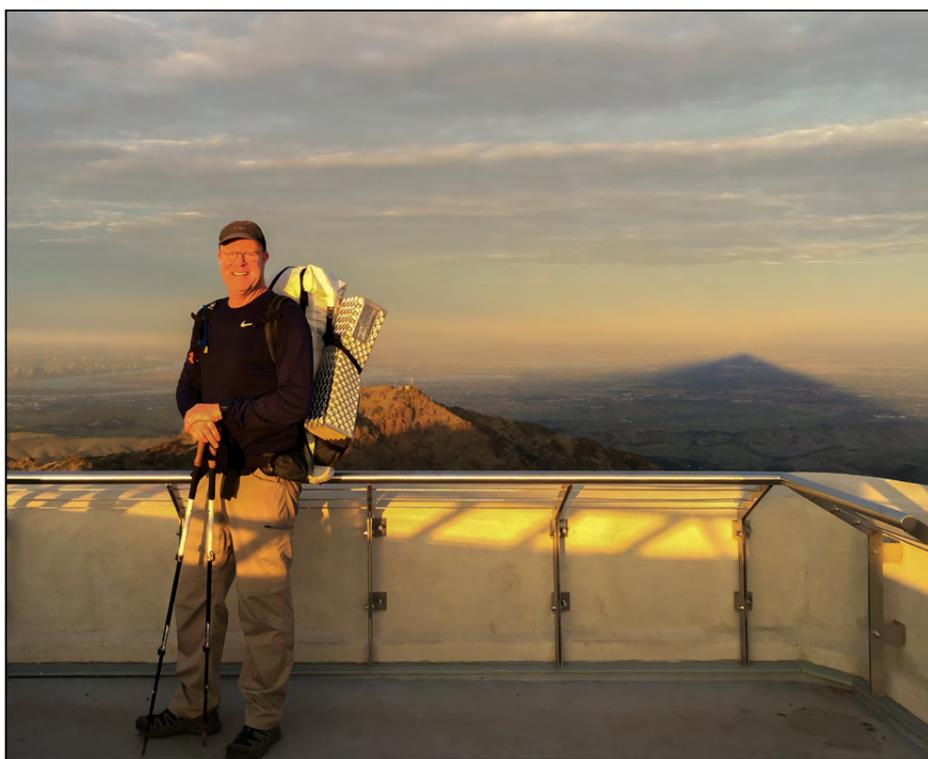
The early morning sight was almost as breathtaking as the previous evening's display of Mount Diablo's shadow at sunset. But the anticipated encore performance of the mountain's shadow



Twilight atop Mt. Diablo's frosty summit

reaching towards the Pacific Ocean was thwarted due to overcast skies.

Nevertheless, amazed with Mount Diablo's winter splendor, I gratefully hiked the 10.2 miles down the mountain and back to my warm house knowing such adventure is obtainable right here in our own bay area backyard. The next time you look up at Mount Diablo remember to not take this iconic peak for granted. Get out there and experience the beauty of winter hiking!



Summitting Mt. Diablo for a chilly overnight stay

over the horizon, but rather an incredible spectacle happening in the opposite direction, Mount Diablo's shadow casting across the Central Valley.

Excited to try out my new light weight backpack I gave myself for Christmas, I set my eyes on Mount Diablo's summit and planned an overnight hike to the top and back. Preparing for a cold winter night I assembled a full pack of ultra-light gear including my one-person tent, sleeping quilt, camp stove, food, and all the other backpacking essentials. With a pack weight of 22.5 lbs. including food, fuel, and minimal water, I walked out of my garage and hiked through neighborhood up to the Mitchell Canyon trailhead and began the long steep ascent to the summit.

My plan was to spend the day enjoying the trek to the summit then make camp at Juniper Campground and return home the next morning. I welcomed the brisk 44-degree morning as I labored up Mitchell Rock Trail to Twin Peaks breaking a sweat under blue skies. With a full

find one other couple in parkas snapping photos of themselves as the sun set before they raced back to their warm car and drove down the mountain.

I looked out over the horizon and was awestruck to see Mount Diablo's shadow gliding across the Central Valley at a mesmerizing pace. I realized then that this was what the couple was actually capturing in their selfies. I couldn't believe the colorful display of light and shadow in the evening winter sky. The wind blew, and the cold air was intense, but it didn't matter as I watched in amazement until the sun set and the shadow extended into darkness.

Knowing that at sunrise, this shadowy spectacle will return in the other direction, reaching towards the Pacific Ocean, it was time to call it a day. Camp was still over a mile away.

With the wind chill, it felt like the low twenties or teens. Alone and cold with little light left I knew I needed to put on my beanie and headlamp and get hiking again to warm up. Shivering uncon-

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Views of the Valley

with Tillie Turner

Photos by Micah & Tillie Turner



Protestors gathered at Sports Basement in Walnut Creek to prepare their signs for the 3rd Annual Women's March on January 19.



One of the most decorated houses in Concord during Christmas was located in Crystal Ranch. If you turned on a special radio station you could see the lights dance.



Students and physicians meet and watch demonstrations of the newly acquired Mako and da Vinci surgical robots at San Ramon Regional Medical Center.

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Alcohol inks class, "The Magic of Alcohol Inks", was one of several workshops at the aRt Cottage in Concord. Instructor, Laurie Mansur is the one standing in the back.



Chef Keith Burks, co-owner of Concord Tap House in Concord, breaks out his smoker in the parking lot to serve an off-menu Sunday Special of Grilled Chicken, Jasmine rice and salad.

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calendar of events

FEBRUARY 14 VALENTINES DAY

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>

March 2 & 9 Volunteer Opportunities - The Diablo Valley Literacy Council spring workshop for Adults interested in helping other ESL (English as a Second Language) adults to learn the English language. No teaching experience is required. We will teach you to be a tutor! \$20. Registration covers materials and training. You must attend both sessions. 1-2 hours per week with your student in the home or a public place such as a local library. 9A-1Pm. Go to www.dvlc4esl.org for information and to register. The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Concord. (925) 685-3881.

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/>



FEBRUARY 22 CRAB FEED Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce. Silent Auction. Centre Concord Contact: Tickets and Sponsorships now available. 925-685-1181, www.concordchamber.com 5298

OUTDOORS

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

THE VERANDA FEBRUARY 1- 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. Hours and prices go to www.shoptheveranda.com. 2001 Diamond Blvd. Concord.

RUTH BANCROFT GARDEN

MARCH 23 ALL ABOUT AIR PLANTS: 10AM-11AM. \$20 members/\$25 non-members. Register at: <https://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/event/all-about-air-plants/>
DIY FELTED CACTI; 11AM-12:30PM. At The Ruth Bancroft Garden \$50 members/\$55 non-members <https://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/event/diy-felted-cacti/>

APRIL 5 SPRING PLANT SALE Friday, 5:30PM-7:30 PM (MEMBERS ONLY)
Saturday & Sunday (All are welcome) 10AM – 4PM – 10% OFF non-members, 20% OFF members

APRIL 11,18 & 25 SPRING WATERCOLORS (3-PART SERIES) \$75 members/\$85 non-members <https://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/event/spring-watercolors/2019-04-11/>

CLUB/SUPPORT GROUPS' NEWS AND EVENTS

February 9 Valentine's Orchid Show & Sale! 10AM to 4:30PM. Diablo View Orchid Society. The event includes Ribbon Judging, Sale of Orchids and Supplies, Workshops, Repotting Service, Free Orchid With DVOS Membership (day of show only), and Raffle! First Lutheran Church, 4000 Concord Blvd., Concord \$5 or \$3 with coupon available at www.dvos.org, Under 12 Free.

FEBRUARY 9 Rock History of the 60's and 70's History talk presented by CCC Historical Society with Local author/journalist Richie Unterberger. Vintage film clips will also be shown. Campbell Theater 636 Ward Street, Martinez. 3:00pm – 5:00pm with intermission. Admission and parking are free. RSVP is requested. Email: mkting@cocohistory.org or Call: (925) 229-1042

February 10 EAST BAY COMIC-CON 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Dealers from all over selling everything from Golden Age Comics, Original Comic Art, Posters, T-Shirts, Back Issue Comics, New Comics, Manga, Beanies, Pokemon and Lots More! Admission is Only \$10.00 and sold at the door. Kids (8 to 15 yrs) Only \$6.00 (Children under 8yrs are Free). Crowne Plaza Hotel, 45 John Glenn Dr. Concord

February 12 Clayton Valley Woman's Club Meeting: 11:00 AM Guest Speaker "Taking Tea in the English Manner" by Susan Leech, owner of Orinda Village Antiques. 9:30AM Hospitality, 10AM meeting St John's Episcopal Church, 5555 Clayton Road

FEBRUARY 16 Rotary Club of Concord's Valentines Dinner Dance 6 PM. Take your sweetheart and friends to a fun-filled evening including Dinner & Entertainment, Complimentary wine for each table Silent, Live & Cake Auction, Music & Dancing with DJ Levy Masajo. \$50 per person. Proceeds will benefit local families as well as third world projects through our charitable healthcare, youth education and international programs. Clarion Hotel, 1050 Burnett Ave.

February 25 WAR WITH RUSSIA? - KPFA Radio & Nation Magazine present Katrina vanden Heuvel & Stephen Cohen. 7:30 PM at First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley. \$12 www.brownpapertickets.com

March 24 CONCORD WEDDING FAIR 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM Meet 60+ of the Bay Area's best wedding professionals. Win a \$10,000 wedding package or a Las Vegas Getaway! Fashion show. Couples must register first at www.bayareaweddingfairs.com/bride-groom-registration/. Tickets online for \$15 or \$25 at door. Crowne Plaza, 45 John Glenn Dr. Concord.

VISUAL ARTS/ THEATRE/MUSIC

FEBRUARY 9&10 DAVE FRIDAY BAND, THE HORMONES & JACK WAGON Vinnies Bar And Grill 2045 Mount Diablo St Concord. Admission: \$10 21+ I.D Is Required For Entry

FEBRUARY 11 & 25 MARCH 4,11,18 AFRICAN RHYTHM AND PERCUSSION CLASSES: MONDAYS, 7:45 PM TO 8:45 PM. Drumming and percussion are fun and rewarding ways to learn about oneself and other cultures, as well as to share in community. Students are introduced to basic rhythmic & percussive concepts, including measure, tempo, Call & Response, the Pulse/Beat, and more. Explore the rich and diverse African culture and rhythms through gentle, tried-and-true teaching techniques and games. Admission: \$74 - \$79 Centre Concord. 5298 Clayton Rd Concord.

For more information, visit: <http://www.holisticdrum.com>. To Register for classes: <http://www.ConcordReg.org>

February 14-March 2 FUDDY MEERS BY David Lindsay-Abair 2:00 PM to 8:00 PM Freddy Meers is about an amnesiac, Claire, who awakens each morning as a blank slate on

which her husband and teenage son must imprint the facts of her life. One morning Claire is abducted by a limping, lisping man who claims her husband wants to kill her. Admission: \$15 - \$22. B8 Theater Company, 2292 Concord Blvd. Concord

FEBRUARY 16 The "Alpha Rhythm Kings" swing band.



Clayton Valley Presbyterian Church's social hall for a dance just after Valentine's Day. 7:30 PM. Tickets \$15 at the door. 1578 Kirker Pass Road, Clayton. For more information call 925-672-4848 or visit the web site at www.cvpresby.org.

March 2-10



24th East Bay International Jewish Film Festival at the Century 16 in Pleasant Hill. 125 Crescent Dr. For a list of movies, view trailers and get showtimes visit <https://eastbayjewishfilm.org/2019/>



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Get Married on Valentine's Day at the Historic John Muir House

Valentine's Day is one of the most popular days for civil ceremonies. The Contra Costa Clerk-Recorder in partnership with the National Park Service will host weddings inside the picturesque and historic John Muir House from 10:20 am to 3:20 pm on February 14th. There are 16 appointments available for this unique "Destination Wedding" opportunity.

Weddings will be held inside one of the well-decorated rooms of the Italianate Victorian-style home, which was built in 1882. The room features an elegant chandelier, grand piano and a stunning backdrop for the ceremony with an archway in front of a window overlooking the property.

"We are excited to once again partner with the National Park Service and the staff of the John Muir National Historic Site to give couples this memorable opportunity on Valentine's Day," Clerk-Recorder Joe Canciamilla said.

National Park Service representatives also expressed enthusiasm at once again hosting on the historic grounds and sharing in their special day.

Couples interested in a ceremony at the John Muir House should call 925-335-7900 or go to www.contracostacore.us and click on the "Make a Ceremony Appointment" button.

Couples can also make appointments to have their Valentine's Day wedding

ceremony at the Contra Costa Clerk-Recorder Office, located at 555 Escobar Street in Martinez. The office features two beautifully appointed ceremony rooms adorned with handcrafted stained-glass windows.

Appointment times are from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. Walk-in couples are wel-



come and will be accommodated based on availability of ceremony rooms. Appointments are recommended as space on Valentine's Day fills quickly.

A civil marriage ceremony is \$60. Couples can obtain a public marriage license for \$86 or a confidential marriage license for \$90.

For more information, contact Joseph Barton, Clerk-Recorder Services Supervisor at (925) 335-7900.



farmerfresh

by Debra Morris, Pacific Coast Farmers Market
<http://www.pcfma.org/concord>

THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS

It's all about love at your farmers' market this month. What could be more appropriate than flowers to express your love? Flowers are a major part of significant occasions in our lives - birthdays, weddings, funerals, Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, and other events. But did you know that flowers have individual meanings attached to them? Each flower variety, color, and shape has a historical meaning that has been passed down through the ages. Almost every sentiment can be expressed with flowers.

Roses for love, amaryllis for beauty, or bird of paradise for joy reflect a flower's inherent qualities. Special occasions are the perfect time to offer your friends and significant others a flower that reflects your feelings towards them.

Here are just some of the traditional meanings for common flowers you'll find at the farmers' market:

Asters symbolize patience. It is also indicative of a love of variety. It also symbolizes elegance and daintiness.

Calla Lilies symbolize magnificence and beauty. White Calla lilies combine these two attributes with purity and innocence associated with the color white.

Carnations symbolize pride and beauty. A red carnation symbolizes love, pride and admiration; a pink carnation symbolizes the love of a woman or a mother.

Chrysanthemums symbolize fidelity, optimism, joy and long life. A red chrysanthemum conveys love; a white chrysanthemum symbolizes truth and loyal love while a yellow chrysanthemum symbolizes slighted love.



Daisies symbolize innocence and purity. It conveys loyal love and "I will never tell." Gerbera Daisy specifically conveys cheerfulness.

Gladiolas symbolize strength of character, faithfulness and honor. The Gladiolus flower signifies remembrance.

Hydrangeas symbolize heartfelt emotions. It can be used to express gratitude for being understood. In its negative sense hydrangea symbolizes frigidity and heartlessness.

Orchids symbol of exotic beauty. It symbolizes refinement, thoughtfulness and mature charm. It also symbolizes proud and glorious femininity.

Roses symbolize love. It signifies love in its various forms. Its symbolism varies based on color, variety and number. Red is love, pink is admiration, joy and gratitude, white is purity and chastity, and yellow is friendship and caring.

Sunflowers signify pure thoughts. It symbolizes adoration and dedication. It is symbolic of dedicated love. It is, however, also symbolic of haughtiness.

Visit Sunrise Nursery from Watsonville for fragrant and colorful bouquets of gorgeous seasonal flowers at the Concord Farmers' Market on Tuesdays, 10am to 2pm at Todos Santos Plaza.



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Why Age 7 is the Right Time to See an Orthodontist

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

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LOVE BEHIND BARS

Why is only one month of the year designated to celebrate love? I feel the other 11 months should focus on that also, because we always need love... but, alas, here it is the Hall-mark month of love and how better to celebrate than with a sweet gooey caramel chocolate treat! Who doesn't love a buttery shortbread crust with a yummy sweet topping?

Dulce De Leche Bars

Crust:
 2 cups all-purpose flour
 1 cup cold butter, cut into cubes
 1/2 cup powdered sugar
 1 TBSP vanilla
 1 tsp kosher salt

Middle Layer:
 1 can (13.5oz) Dulce De Leche
 1TBSP flour
 1 tsp vanilla
 1/3 cup heavy cream
 2 egg yolks

Topping:
 3/4 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
 3/4 cup chopped pecans

Preheat the oven to 350°. Line a 9-inch square pan with foil and spray with cooking spray. In a food processor, pulse the crust ingredients until crumbly. Press it



firmly into the pan and bake until lightly browned, about 25 minutes.

In a bowl, whisk all the middle layer ingredients until smooth, pour over the top of the baked crust and then sprinkle the chocolate chips and chopped pecans over the top. Return to the oven and continue baking for another 22-25 minutes. Remove and let cool. Lift out of the pan and cut into small squares. Enjoy the gooey happiness. Happy Valentines Day!

Note: This is easily made gluten-free. Just switch out the all-purpose flour for gluten free flour..



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

Wine Cork Hearts

We've got a home decor DIY (do-it-yourself) project perfect for Valentines or any time. We discovered this project online and had to give it a try for ourselves. It is easy to do and does not take a lot of supplies either. All you need are wine corks, glue (we use a craft hot glue gun), and a paper heart to be your guide.

To create the paper heart guide, we start with parchment paper. This paper keeps the glue from sticking to it. The trick to getting the sides of your heart to be even; fold the paper in half and draw a half heart. Cut along the line of the folded paper. Then unfold and ta-dah, the heart

will have even sides.

You can arrange the corks in many different ways. We mixed the colors, heights and designs on the cork. We also positioned the corks with the winery names to face on the outer side of our heart. We are blessed with lots of great wines from here. (note the picture, now you know our favorite wines.) If you don't have access to wine corks, they are sold in craft stores and online retailers. Even better, we suggest to first check with a local restaurant or bar, they might be happy to give them to you for free.

When deciding on the size of a wine cork heart, we found that when we made a larger size heart, we needed a lot more glue to hold the wine corks together. The heart was not very strong when made with a single row of corks. So, we made it with double row and our heart became much sturdier. We love how it came out - a beautiful Valentine's Day decor. We also love the idea of using it for a party or wedding as a table centerpiece. It even looks great hanging on the wall. The ideas are endless.

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.frugelegance.com. FrugElegance is where Frugal and Elegance come together.




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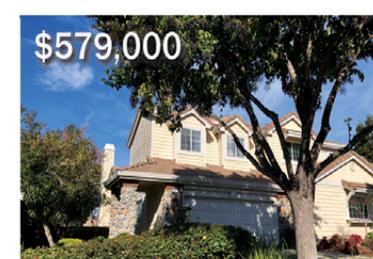
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WHERE THE CRAWDADS SING

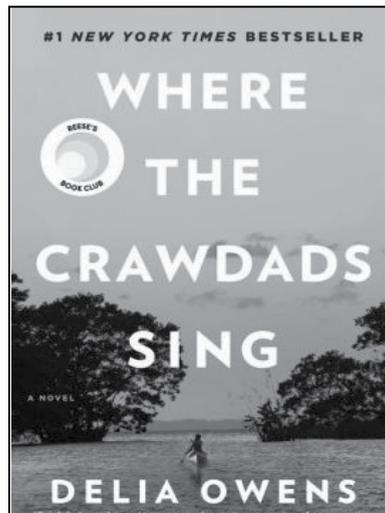
by Delia Owens

"Where the Crawdads Sing" (2018, G.P. Putnam's Sons, hardcover, 384 pages, \$16.20) by Delia Owens is the compelling story of Kya, also known as the Marsh Girl. Abandoned at 7 years old—first by her mother who walked out on all of her children and then by her drunken father—Kya learns to fend for herself with only gulls as companions. Resilient, smart and above all, a survivor, the spunky narrator soon discovers how to feed and clothe herself while evading local authorities.

Bullied in school due to her impoverished life, school is not for her. As she matures into a lovely teenager, her beauty lures two love interests; first Tate, her brother's good friend who befriends her and teaches her to read and then Chase, the local high school quarterback. But things don't go as planned for either romance and the book takes a turn that leaves the reader guessing what really happened. The twisty-turvy plot, the details of nature, and an infusion of poetry, makes the book a page-turner with just the right mix of tension and description.

Owens also has a knack for seamlessly weaving in socially-relevant topics such as the undercurrent of racism in 1950s and '60s North Carolina that Kya observes as she befriends Jumpin' who not only provides her with a small income by buying the mussels that she harvests but makes sure his wife educates Kya on the facts of life. Kya's other salvation is her friendship with Tate who not only encourages her love of nature by exchanging small marvels of nature with her such as a special feather or an interesting shell, but ultimately introduces her to a book publisher interested in her collections and observations of the natural world in the marsh.

Owens earned a Bachelor of Science degree in zoology from the University of Georgia and a Ph.D. in Animal Behavior from the University of California at



Davis. She has lived in some of the most remote areas of Africa while conducting scientific research on lions, elephants and other animals. Capturing these experiences in writing, she has co-authored three internationally bestselling nonfiction books about her life as a wildlife scientist. Owens won the John Burroughs Award for Nature Writing and her work has appeared in "Nature, Journal of Mammalogy", "The African Journal of Ecology", and "International Wildlife". She currently lives in Idaho.

The novel has received many well-deserved accolades: a #1 New York Times Bestseller, An Amazon Best Book of August 2018, A Reese Witherspoon x Hello Sunshine Book Club Pick, and the Goodreads Choice Awards List. Fans of Barbara Kingsolver's nature novels such as *Prodigal Summer* and *Flight Behavior*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, Helen MacDonald's *H is for Hawk* (January 2017 BookEnds column) and Diane Ackerman's *Zookeeper's Wife* (Sept. 2017 BookEnds column) will likely enjoy this novel. If you're an avid reader, *Where the Crawdads Sing* should be moved to the top of the pile.

movie review

by Sandie Angulo Chen, Common Sense Media



"ON THE BASIS OF SEX"

3/5 STARS

"On the Basis of Sex" begins in 1956 at Harvard Law School's orientation: Young wife and mother Ruth Bader Ginsburg (Felicity Jones) is one of nine pioneering women in that year's class. As Ginsburg navigates sexist professors and classmates, she's also faced with a domestic tragedy when her loving husband, third-year law student Marty Ginsburg (Armie Hammer), is diagnosed with testicular cancer. Ruth follows Marty to New York City and graduates from Columbia Law School, but she can't find a job as a practicing lawyer -- so she settles for teaching law as a professor in New Jersey. Fast-forward to 1970, when the Ginsburgs discover a tax law that discriminates against men who are caregivers and decide to contest it to chip away at the country's mountain of sexist laws.

This sincere, well-acted biopic benefits from Jones' and Hammer's performances, but it's not as informative or as extraordinary as the documentary "RBG". The first part of the film, at Harvard, feels slightly unnecessary other than the fact that it lets the filmmakers showcase Jones going toe-to-toe with the likes of Sam Waterston and Stephen Root, who play a dean and a professor who underestimate the women the law school has deigned to admit. This is the slowest third of the movie, but it establishes what a dream of a husband Marty is to Ruth. It's clear, from their earliest scenes together, that the Ginsburgs have a remarkable marriage.

Director Mimi Leder, working from a script by Daniel Stiepleman (Ginsburg's nephew), picks up the pace once it's 1970 and the Ginsburgs start



working on the case (*Charles E. Moritz v. Commissioner of Internal Revenue*) that puts her on the map as not only a law professor but an activist attorney. The character dynamics also ramp up because, by then, the Ginsburgs' oldest child, Jane (Cailee Spaeny), is an adolescent with her own feminist ideas, and the always entertaining Justin Theroux joins the proceedings as RBG's former camp friend/legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union, Mel Wulf. "On the Basis of Sex" does a fine job capturing the early legal career of a feminist, legal, and cultural icon, but consider it a complement to and not a substitute for documentaries and books about the legendary jurist.

Recommended for ages 13 and up, the movie provides a valuable opportunity for family discussions about the history of gender discrimination and applicable laws and why Ginsburg's contributions to equal rights are still relevant today.

PG-13 Cast: Felicity Jones, Justin Theroux, Armie Hammer.
Director: Mimi Leder

theater review

40th Annual Shellie Awards – and the Winners Are...

The 40th Annual Shellie Awards held Saturday Jan. 12 at the Leshner Center in Walnut Creek was another sell-out black tie event. The Shellies are like the Tony Awards but for recognizing outstanding achievement in the performing arts in Central Contra Costa County/Diablo Valley region.

Patterned after Broadway's Tony awards, the Shellies honor over 120 individuals and their work in musical and non-musical theatrical productions that took place between September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018. Currently the regional companies participating are: Brentwood Theater Company, Center REPeratory Company, Clayton Theatre Company, Contra Costa Musical Theatre, Onstage Theatre, Pittsburg Community Theatre, Town Hall Theatre Company and the Vagabond Players. Accompanied by a live band, selections are performed from each nominated musical and non-musical.

Nominees are selected by each participating organization and then a ballot is prepared to be voted upon by the Shellie Committee, a confidential group of individuals who attend each production. The Shellie Committee members then complete their ballots and forward them to the independent accountant who tallies the ballots and prepares the sealed envelopes which are not opened until the awards ceremony.

And the winners are:

- Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Musical Chris Finetti, *Man of La Mancha*, Ghostlight Theatre Ensemble
- Outstanding Scenic Design of a Play Brian Watson, *Woman in Mind*, Town Hall Theatre Company
- Outstanding Choreography Jennifer Perry, *Disney's Freaky Friday*, Center REPeratory Company
- Special Contribution to the Performing Arts Heidi Cross, presented by Clayton Theatre Company
- Outstanding Costuming of a Musical Bobbie Barlow, *Shrek the Musical, Jr.*, Pittsburg Community Theatre
- Special Contribution to the Performing Arts Shara Main, presented by Ghostlight Theatre Ensemble
- Outstanding Lighting Design of a



photo by Dr. Groserode . Heidi Cross and Don Stone of Clayton Theatre Company proudly show their Shellie Awards. Diablo Gazette is a proud sponsor of Clayton Theatre Company.

Play Don Stone, *Lend Me a Tenor*, Clayton Theatre Company

- Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Musical Ashley Cowl, *West Side Story*, Contra Costa Musical Theatre

- Outstanding Lighting Design of a Musical Kirk Bookman, *Million Dollar Quartet*, Center REPeratory Company

- Special Contribution to the Performing Arts Marilyn Berg Cooper, presented by Pittsburg Community Theatre

- Outstanding Costuming of a Play was a Tie! Victoria Livingston-Hall, *The Liar*, Center REPeratory Company Evelyn Owens, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Onstage Repertory Theatre
- Outstanding Supporting

Actress in a Play Monique Hafén, *The Liar*, Center REPeratory Company

- Outstanding Scenic Design of a Musical Kelly James Tighe, *Billy Elliot*, Contra Costa Musical Theatre

- Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Play Teddy Spencer, *The Liar*, Center REPeratory Company

- Outstanding Music Direction Eryn

Allen, *Billy Elliot*, Contra Costa Musical Theatre

- Special Contribution to the Performing Arts Johnny Hackenkamp, presented by The Vagabond Players, Inc.

- Outstanding Actress in a Play Kerri Shawn, *Shirley Valentine*, Center REPeratory Company

- Outstanding Director of a Play Susan E. Evans, *Sense & Sensibility*, Town Hall Theatre Company

- Outstanding Director of a Musical Jeff Collister, *Disney's Freaky Friday*, Center REPeratory Company Outstanding Actor in a Musical Keith Barlow, *Next to Normal*, Pittsburg Community Theatre

- Outstanding Actor in a Play Kenneth Matis, *Taming of the Shrew*, Pittsburg Community Theatre

- Outstanding Actress in a Musical Lynda DiVito, *Disney's Freaky Friday*, Center REPeratory Company

- Outstanding Production – *Play The Liar*, Center REPeratory Company

- Outstanding Production - Musical *Billy Elliot*, Contra Costa Musical Theatre

Diablo Gazette Congratulates all the winners and nominees and thank all the local performers for keeping our communities entertained throughout the year.

Out to Lunch

The Comforts of Concord Tap House

by Richard Eber | Photos by Eric Zhang

When venturing into the premises of the Concord Tap House as part of Visit Concord's Comfort Food Week, I wasn't expecting much. Normally taste challenged "Bun and Run" cuisine is served by bar owners to fulfill legal obligations set forth by the California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC)

Amazingly one whiff of aromas from the kitchen told a different story. Not only is the food produced by Tap House Owner Chef Keith Burks passable, but it is among the tastiest in town. He has a history in the restaurant business having worked at the iconic Caribbean Zone in San Francisco and owned the Rib Factory in Bethel Island for many years.

With his San Francisco lineage along with time spent living in Mississippi, it has been Burk's ambition for the Tap House to provide casual Southern comfort food with an Asian flair.

This comes from Keith's wife Cathy who offers several varieties of the Pilipino specialty Lumpia including Shanghai chicken, pork, and vegetarian. They are all crispy and pair well with a slightly sweet red pepper sauce.

Other appetizers served at The Tap House are Southern Fried Chicken Wings, tempura shrimp and the house specialty dots



sandwich that even meat eaters like. This consists of large slices of grilled mushroom, onions, yellow squash finished with a lemon aioli. It is a little messy with juices oozing on to the plate; but this is a small price to pay for culinary excellence.

Another extraordinary menu choice are the catfish sliders which are fried unbattered catfish bellies. They come on flame roasted buns with Pepper Jack, greens, and pickles underneath. They also offer a Midtown Beef Slider which has cheese, caramelized onions, and greens on the inside. Both dishes come with an order of tots or fries and can be easily shared.

This is not the end of menu. The Tap House also serves juicy burgers which can be ordered from medium rare to well done. Their Chicken marinated dark thigh meat chicken skewers are delicious. As might be expected from an eatery that specializes in Southern food, sliced hot links or German smokes sausages are also part of their offerings.

In addition, if folks don't desire fried food, the Tap House serves a more than respectable Mid Town Greens salad. It consists of lettuce, red cabbage, pickled onions, celery, carrots sunflower seeds and mandarin orange slices served with a creamy house dressing. Like every dish Chef Keith prepares, his salad blend seems to work.

Being a new establishment, the menu at the Tap House is still a work in progress. New items are being introduced all the time. After the restaurant opened last year and was shut down briefly by a spontaneous kitchen fire, it has been the goal of the two couples who own the business to continually improve what they serve.

It is the desire of Tony and his wife Valerie, who works in putting together the Tap House's wine menu, to create diverse selections that are fun to experience. Along with Keith and Cathy, they have created a business that reminds one of "Cheers, Where everyone knows your name." The only difference is that with the Concord Tap House, they also serve quality food to accompany their assortment of craft beers and wines.

In the words of Tony who also runs the bar, "We want The Tap House to be a fun place for us to work and give a shot of energy for mid Concord. Hopefully this attitude will rub off on our guests to make this a place folks want to patronize often."

Concord Tap House is located at 3513 Clayton Rd.



and dashes. They consist of both fried tater tots and small bits of corn fritters. Dipped in hot sauce or Keith's secret recipe Boss Mustard Sauce, this combination can be addicting.

Naturally, an excellent selection of draft beers is needed to wash down the delicacies prepared by the kitchen. This is where the Tap House's other owner Tony Fredericks comes in. As an accomplished home brewer, he has put together a selection of 24 Craft beers which is the most diverse this side of Hop Grenade at Todos Santos Square in Concord.

In selecting his collection of draft beers, Fredericks has put a lot of emphasis on local Micro breweries. Epidemic Ales of Concord, Del Cielo from Martinez, and Livermore's Altmont Beer Works, are among their suppliers. Also worth mentioning is Golden State Ginger Grass Cider brewed in Sebastopol.

Talking about food, if patrons are not content with only appetizers, Chef Keith offers other menu items for his patrons. Most noteworthy is their Portobello mushroom vegetarian

Seeking Community Input on Tournament Sports Complex

Join your neighbors and the Concord Parks & Recreation Department in providing input on the feasibility and conceptual designs for a new Tournament Sports Complex at the former Concord Naval Weapons Station.

Workshop 1: Wednesday, Feb. 13 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Willow Pass Community Center, 2478 E. Olivera Rd.

RSVP here: Workshop 2: Saturday, March 30 9 a.m. - 12 noon Willow Pass Community Center, 2478 E. Olivera Rd.

Go to the City of Concord website to RSVP and more information. <http://cityofconcord.org/>



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aRt Cottage

by FROgard www.aRtCottage.info

Inspiration Surrounds Us

by Lisa Fulmer

One thing to know about artists - we are inspired to create by just about anything. From the smallest insect to the tallest building, we fall in love with color, light, shadow, form and texture. From the way the sun shines on the petals of a garden flower, to the unexpected geometric pleasure of rows and rows of bright red stadium seats, any of it can move us to create beautiful works of art.

aRt Cottage is delighted to partner with the Concord Art Association for February's show, Inspiration Surrounds Us. More than 20 CAA members explore this concept - that inspiration can be found everywhere. You'll experience their creativity in so many ways when you visit - paintings,



collage, mixed media, plus plenty of locally handmade gifts and crafts including soaps, lotions, greeting cards, jewelry, treasure boxes and more.

Meet the artists and enjoy a glass of wine at the Artist Reception on Saturday, February 9th, 1-3pm at the aRt Cottage, 2238 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Concord.

Photo: Spring Joy by Sharon Petersen, watercolor

Main Street Arts Exhibit: The Beauty in Common Objects

Tamsen Armstrong is the featured artist through February 26th with her reception on Saturday, February 9th from 2:30 to 5:30, at Main Street Arts in Martinez.



Growing up in an artistic family in Southern California, oil painter Tamsen Armstrong was told there was no such thing as being born with talent. "By practicing keen observation, hard work, and imagination, talent will emerge," so said her mother who was a poet and sculptor and her father who was a painter and illustrator.

"My brothers, sister and I were encouraged to discover our creativity, so we all dabbled in music, visual arts, dance and theater," says Tamsen. It wasn't until she was older that she began to study oil painting, encouraged by her father. Remembering her childhood lessons, she approaches painting as "skills to be practiced with as much imagination as possible".

Lately, she has been searching high and low for places in the Bay Area that

are a little off the beaten path in order to capture and celebrate the experiences that make us human. She respects the beautiful places as well as battered places; the expansive oceanfront and the old, tired storefront. In her still lifes, she tries to see the beauty in common objects but also give equal weight to things that are deemed eccentric or just plain worn out.

"My goal is to find manmade and natural creations, see them intimately, paint them honestly, and hope the resulting paintings will touch people's hearts." Tamsen has been honing her skills in both plein air and studio work for the past seven years, studying and being inspired by her father, Norman Kingsford Vance, as well as the works of Jullian Merrow-Smith, Randall Sexton, Michael Chesley Johnson and Terry Miura. She is a member of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance and often paints with other East Bay plein air painters.

Main Street Arts is located at 613 Main in Martinez. www.mainstreetarts.net



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Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue



Vicky!

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

Two-year-old Vicky was rescued along with her puppies when they were found abandoned on the side of the road with no food, water and shelter. This sweet 22-pound Papillion/terrier mix is great with kids, dogs and cats and would make a wonderful family pet. Her small size makes her a good candidate for a home with a small yard. She deserves a loving home because poor Vicky clearly did not have a good life prior to rescue as noted by an embedded collar scar that encircles her neck.



Vicky will need someone that has time to devote to training as she is still working on being crate-trained and potty-trained. But she has made great progress on learning to walk on the leash. She is spayed, vaccinated, microchipped and a pawsitively special dawg. Her adoption fee is \$360. To meet this loving dog and find out if you are a good match for each other, fill out an adoption application at www.lovesecondchances.org. (allow a few days for review).

San Ramon-based Love & Second Chances (LSC) was founded in 2012 and supports adoptions throughout the Bay Area and beyond. This foster-based rescue operates both a local and international program. Their team consists of compassionate individuals who embrace the rescue's motto: "No one said it would

be easy, they only said it would be worth it."

LSC is always looking for fosters who are interested in opening their homes to their rescues and they also welcome donations.

[Ruby Dooby Do is Concord's Instagram celebrity with more than 72,400 followers. Instagram.com/rubydooby__Do. Special thanks to Jill Hedgecock, Program Coordinator, Mount Diablo Branch of the California Writers Club for her help in translating canine for this article. www.jillhedgecock.com.]

CLAYCORD NEWS & TALK

In case you missed it...

Insured Losses from Last Fall's California Wildfires Top \$11.4B

Insured losses from last fall's devastating California wildfires are now more than \$11.4 billion which is 25 percent or \$2.3 billion more than reported last month, the state's insurance commissioner said Monday.

The state has already assisted more than 5,000 survivors of the November fires, according to California Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara.

More than 13,000 insured homes and businesses suffered a total loss out of more than 46,000 claims reported by insurers, according to Lara.

Vanpooling Subsidies on the Rise in the Bay Area

Local transit officials are touting a new subsidy program for vanpooling, a form of carpooling where commuters can rent vans and split the cost.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission started offering subsidies for vanpooling in November of 2018. Commuters can get a total of up to \$350 per month off of a van rental from Enterprise, the company chosen by the MTC to host the program. For a seven-person vanpool, the savings would be around \$50 per person per month.

The MTC gave out money to 71 different vanpools in November, and the next month it offered the subsidy to 88 vanpools, according to a news release. Officials say around 500 vanpools are up and running in the Bay Area, and they hope that that number will increase to 800 in the next few years.

Commuters who would like to start or join a vanpool can get more information at 511.org/carpool-vanpool/vanpool/overview.

Concord City Council Approves Feasibility Study for Soccer Stadium Near Downtown BART

The Concord City Council authorized its staff to explore the feasibility and marketability of a professional soccer stadium near the Concord BART station as part of a master-planned mixed-use development by Hall Equi-



ties Group LLC.

The project proposes an 18,000-seat sports venue, a convention center, hotels, housing, parking and commercial space, according to a report by the city's economic development manager John Montagh.

The developer has agreed to cover all of the city's costs, including staff time and consulting fees, and offered up a \$100,000 deposit to pay those costs in advance as part of an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement, according to Montagh.

City council and staff were careful to make clear during their meeting Tuesday night that no funding would be coming from the city, and that signing the ENA does not in any way obligate the city to go forward with the project.

Some of the land in question belongs to BART and would require that agency's cooperation before the developer could break ground. Walnut Creek-based Hall Equities Group is owned by Mark Hall, who has acquired the rights for a United Soccer League team.

Dispose Unwanted Medicine at CVS Pharmacy's Rx Drop Boxes

Contra Costa residents with unwanted prescription medicines can safely dispose of them at 27 CVS Pharmacy locations in the county thanks to new, secure drop boxes added through the county's Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance.

The ordinance, passed in 2016, requires pharmaceutical drug manufacturers to provide collection services for unused drugs, to protect the environment and prevent accidental poisonings or intentional misuse of drugs such as prescription opioids.

The drop-box service is free, secure and confidential. The medications can be disposed of at the sites even if they weren't purchased at CVS.

New, Improved Parking Meters Installed Downtown Walnut Creek

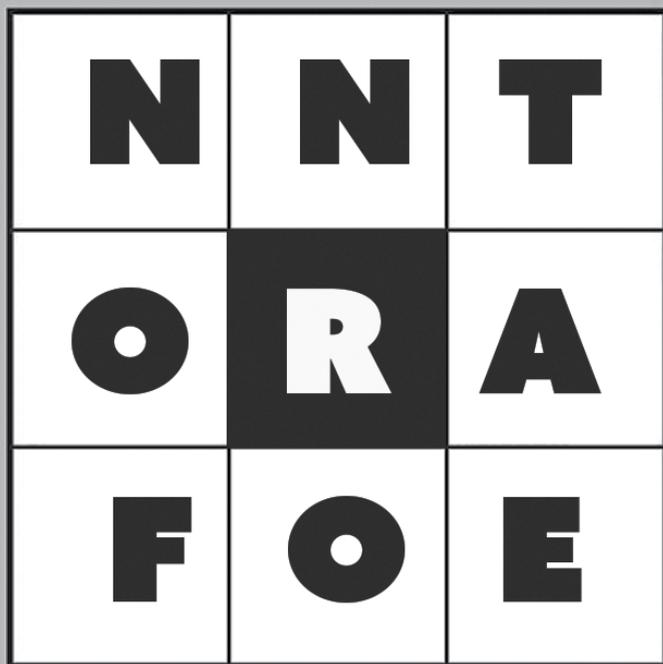
The City of Walnut Creek is in the process of installing new, easier to use and read parking meters.

The Downtown Walnut Creek city-operated meters had met its useful lifespan.

The new parking meters will have a taller contemporary design with an easy to view interface, feature a large solar panel allowing for fewer battery replacements and will accept coins, credit cards and ParkMobile mobile phone payments. Rates and time limits will remain the same.

PLAY A GAME?

HOW MANY WORDS CAN YOU FIND?



Find as many words (four or more letters) as you can BUT, your words MUST INCLUDE the MIDDLE LETTER. There are over 51 possible words. Check your answers on page 19 of this issue, or visit www.BooksNPieces.com for more puzzles.

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the concordian

by **Edi Birsan**, Email me: Put EDI in subject
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Transgressions of Transparency

Transparency is one of the great buzz words in local politics: open government, accessible to review, functioning in the broad daylight of media. The flagship legislation called the Brown Act was born in that vision. Naturally, of course, those who imposed it (the State Legislature) exempted themselves from most of it putting it only on the cities, counties, and local districts. As in nearly all government laws, the details of its enforcement can be quite a deviation from its intention.

Let us take the issue of Agenda items. It would appear reasonable that the Council should not only be able to discuss the matter amongst themselves in public but also engage in a discussion with the public. In the functioning of that, what we often see at Council is a presentation by staff, a question of the details as presented, and then a series of salvos from the public in public comment albeit with limited interaction from the Council, usually restricted to 'clarifications'. I have been severely criticized internally for actually talking to the speakers and seeking discussion during public comment on an item.

After public comments, the Council discusses the item amongst themselves in the public. Hopefully, the questions raised by the public are noted and responded to at that time, though the public is not allowed to rebut the comments of the Council. This has moderately worked when the Council is diligent in addressing the public's concerns, yet hardly done engaging the public in a back and forth discussion matter. The major objection has been that it would take a lot of time to include them in the discussion.

However, a real awkward transgression occurs when there is an attempt to introduce Future Agenda Items. During the first part of a meeting, while people may bring up items to the Council not on the agenda, they are specifically banned by the Brown Act from discussing it further with them. The Council would be held in violation of the law if they try to discuss the item as a future agenda item or take any council action at that time. Why? Because the topic is not aggrandized.

At best, at the end of the meeting during Council Reports, a Council Member can make a short request to put something on a future agenda item and ask for 'consensus' of the members to do so. However, Council can only say yes or no and may not engage on a discussion of what the value is and scope of the future agenda item. It takes a majority nodding of heads to form that consensus. The public is not given a reason of the acceptance or rejection of the topic.

If the public wants to approach a member outside of a meeting to get an item on a future agenda, that is considered not transparent since it is private discussion. Further, under the Brown Act, the Council Member is restricted to discussing the request with only one other Council Member. Note it takes three votes to get it on the agenda and the two cannot talk to a third member privately. Since it is not on the agenda to be talked about in the first place, they cannot try to convince a third to join them in a public meeting.

One approach that I have suggested is to have a standing agenda item that says: Future Agenda items so that the Council and the public can engage in discussion not on the merits of a specific item, but the merits of having a future discussion on it.

This has been opposed by both legal beagles and Councilmembers on the grounds that: Future Agenda items is not specific, and it will take too long. To me, this process is a transgression against the very concept of open transparent government. In other words, being transparent is a transgression on transparency.

Apparently, unless there is a citizen's petition to force the placement of say a 15-minute period of discussion of future agenda items, there will remain a lack of transparency regarding such items. It takes 7,000 signatures and probably a few thousand dollars to succeed.

So, are you willing to fight over this, or is this not enough of a transgression? In the end, our willingness to accept the shadows in the net of transparency may be our greater transgression.

KPFA Radio + The Nation Magazine present
**Katrina vanden Heuvel
+ Stephen Cohen**



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hosted by Mitch Jeserich

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Senior Living Advocates Find the Right Level of Care

by Christine Sevier

As a senior living advocate, I find myself extremely troubled by the number of times I have reported unethical behavior and unlicensed facilities to the department of social services' community care licensing division. When placing a loved one you must choose the facility that matches the level of care, comfort, and most importantly, has good licensing history.

Far too often families are rushed and overwhelmed during the care and placement process. Nursing rehabilitation centers may only give families 2-3 days of notice before discharge. At times, discharges occur even when the patient is unfit to be home alone. This time constraint can lead to patient and care facility mismatch. Families in this predicament may fail to take that extra step and check the facilities licensing history. Sadly, in 2018 the California Long-Term Care Ombudsman (CLTCOA) reported 39,346 complaints. Of those complaints 12,822 were coded as elder abuse, gross neglect, and exploitation.

One option for care is 24-hour in-home care, provided by a licensed home care organization. The cost ranges from \$25-\$35 per hour. For many families this level of care is expensive and unsustainable. A well run, experienced and good licensed board and care facility can be the best option for families and their loved ones. Small, but care-driven six-bed facilities can provide a high level of care because of the high patient to caregiver ratio.

Unfortunately, In January, I reported another facility to the department of social services for operating without



licensing. Some facilities can operate without a RCFE license when residents are completely independent. Residents dependent on facilities for assisted living, assistance with medication, bathing, etc; a license is required.

There is a big difference between independent living, assisted living, continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs), and residential care for elderly facilities. Independent living does not offer care and requires no license. Assisted living requires RCFE licensing. CCRCs provide a continuum of care under an array of licensing. While it's impossible for any facility to have an impeccable record, we can identify facilities with repeated citations and complaints thus pointing to poor management and oversight. If you suspect neglect or elder abuse call your local Ombudsman or reach out to CCLD complaint hotline at 1-844-LET-US-NO.

I am a senior living advocate with Creating New Hope which provides seniors with complementary advocacy, education, placement, and community resources. Our advocates are RCFE Administrators who share unbiased insights and recommendations. We personally tour facilities to ensure health and safety standards are in line with CCLD, OSHA, Federal, and State regulations. We match seniors with appropriate care communities. www.creatingnewhope.org.

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“As Is,” Paint It, or Stage It?

Can I sell my home “as is” without updates or staging? Absolutely. As a listing agent, I will typically give a price range to a seller, the “as is” price vs. the “staged” list price. There are many reasons some folks can’t or don’t want to put any money into a home prior to a sale. They don’t “see” it, because they have grown used to how it is, they may not be physically able to move or have a disruption in their space, or it could be an inherited home and there is no money to do the actual updating or fixing up.

Even a bucket of paint level of preparing for a home sale can make a big difference in perception of the buyer. If all you can afford is a bucket of paint, start with the outside. Curb appeal is the number one thing that will bring buyers into an open house, guaranteed. You can’t sell it if they can’t see it!

The front door, the door knob, ease of opening the door, the trim on the entry, cleanliness of the porch, and an inviting look that makes them want to step inside all affect how they see things when they enter the home. So, if you only have enough for a bucket of paint, paint the front door. This year, did you know that a black or dark grey door in good condition can net a seller up to \$6000 more in sale price?

HGTV and home improvement shows have changed the way buyers view homes. It also helps sellers to understand the value of the improvements and increased equity they can obtain by doing some simple things. Staging can transform the home you’ve taken for granted and make it one buyer’s dream home.

If you have a budget of \$1500 or less, you might do pre-sale inspections in order to know what the deficits are, if any. This will save you time and negotiation later. You can then plan some of these items in the project budget if you decide to go that route, but even if you do nothing about them, the buyer offers knowing what they are buying and there is less chance of buyer remorse later down the road.

The 2017 Profile of Home Staging tells us that 77% of buyers find it easier to visualize a staged property as their future home. Comparing the staged home to a similar unstaged home, the percentage of change in dollar value the seller’s received is as follows. When staged, 29% of seller’s agents reported an increase of 1-5% of the offer price. Another 29% of seller’s agents reported an increase of 6-20% in offer price. That means 58% of seller’s agents report an increase in value to the seller’s offer price for having a staged home on the market vs. unstaged. In addition, 62% of seller’s agents stated that the time on market decreased for the staged home.

In any event, it makes sense to have an expert help you analyze the pros and cons of all of this. How much or how little you do is up to you.

Terrylynn Fisher Broker Associate, Dudum Real Estate (DRE#01882902), Awarded 2018 - 5 Star Professional, Senior Real Estate Specialist, Reach Terrylynn at 925 876 0966 or Terrylynn@BuyStageSell.com (DRE#00615420).

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Zombie Film Shot in Concord

by David King

Quietly, writer/director Jason Ragosta, producer Marissa Garay, and a crew of special effects professionals came into Concord for two days to shoot a movie trailer promoting their feature film project "ZTV: The Prezerve". Why Concord? Mostly because much of the production crew are connected to the area.

Marissa Garay, who now lives in LA, grew up in Walnut Creek and went to Northgate. Jason now lives in San Francisco. The two met roughly 10 years ago at the San Francisco Art Academy.



They hit it off but went their own ways. Then two years ago, they reconnected and realized they share the same vision in the film industry, and their areas of knowledge and expertise complimented each other. Thus, the ZTV project was underway. Jason has big budget film making experience. He worked as a production assistant on Disney's "John Carter" movie.

Also working at the Concord shoot was East Bay's finest Special Effects creature makeup professionals from Pandora FX (Oakland), owned by Margaret Caragan Aldrich. Her husband Tony Aldrich works as the Set Carpenter and Blood Master. Tony is from Concord.

You wouldn't know it unless you were in the film industry, but we've all seen much of Pandora FX's makeup work in movies, TV, networks, magazine, etc.

The reason the shoot came and went without much fanfare is because it was shot on private property in the backyard and inside the home. By being on private party, they didn't need to go through the city for various permits, security, and other city services. It was shot at Tony Aldrich's father's house.

"Concord was really cool. He gave us use of his house with all our blood. We were there all day and into the evening

for two days. And the neighbors were into it as well." Marissa said. "No police were called in for our bright lights, noise or other disturbances. "Everybody was really cool."

"We enjoyed shooting in Concord," Jason said. "When we start shooting on the feature film, we expect to come back to Concord to shoot some outdoor scenes."

Marissa and Jason have been working on this project for a year laying the foundation for their zombie enterprise.

"In the last year, I have also had the

good fortune to take a one-on-one film business course with Franco Sama of Samaco Films, "Jason added. Samaco Films boasts a remarkable history in independent film development, production, and financing. "This taught me how to properly approach packaging, financing, and distributing a feature film. This

has allowed Marissa and I to build our feature horror film with an eye towards distribution from the start."

In order to make a feature film they must raise enough money. To do that, they decided to make a "Proof of Concept" short film. This is where they show off their visual talents, filmmaking acumen, and the dramatic tensions between characters. It is a demonstration to excite potential investors and distribution companies who can put enough money in for them to shoot the feature. This is what was filmed in Concord.

"What we shot in Concord is amazing," Jason announced. "It was the dramatic part of the film." Jason hopes to raise as much as \$250,000 to shoot the feature, but on a low end, \$80,000 could work.

While the goal is to be in theaters, Marissa states that they can make their money with distribution through Amazon and similar channels. They feel they've laid the foundation for a lucrative enterprise. Not only did Jason write the script for the trailer, and the feature film, but they have developed a Zombie universe that includes comic book spin off and potential for a series of sequels.

Their team of collaborators brings an extraordinary amount of weight to the production value. For example, Director

of Photography, Pascal Combes-Knoke, used his own equipment including a \$40,000ish lens that gives it that major film feel.

"ZTV: The Prezerve" is a horror film featuring, what else, zombies. The storyline centers around a capital punishment reality television game show in a post-apocalyptic world after a zombie war. The TV show captures and tortures war criminals, people who preyed upon other humans during the zombie war. The central character, seen in the short "ZTV: Sympathy for the Devil" is faced with tragedy. His daughter is captured, tortured and killed on the TV show as a way for its producer to exact vengeance upon him for the things he had done to the producer's family during the war. The storyline becomes a bloody vengeance tale where violence begets violence which begets more violence.

Jason says the film is not a shallow slasher flick of all blood and gore. "There are a lot of layers to the characters adding dramatic and emotional elements the audience will relate to."

To raise funding, they will start with crowd source funding such as Indiegogo while seeking for a co-production company, distribution company, or equity investor. Jason says there has been a lot of interest in the project. The proof of concept short will help land investors and could attract recognizable actors, which in turn helps make it a more marketable and a larger film.

Marissa is very comfortable with Jason. "I have complete trust in Jason. He's super talented and I believe this film will do well because there is a market for it."



The trailer is not yet complete, but you can check out several set photos on their Instagram and Facebook accounts. Go to Facebook.com/ ZTVthePrezerve and follow their journey to making a feature film featuring Concord.

If that happens, Jason stated that they expect to return to shoot some outdoor scenes. There will be opportunities for extras to work on the film.

We wish them success. Oh, I did let Jason and Marissa know that Concord is home to Patti's Original Cheese Zombies. Perhaps they can work them in the script, too.

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Hemp Farming Good for California Water Supply

by Dr. Roberta DeLuca

Economic Value of Hemp CBD following the 2018 Farm Bill

Since the Cannabis Act passed in Ontario, Canada, on October 17, 2018, and the US Federal Farm Bill passed on December 20, 2018, the cannabis market has all but exploded.

The Hemp Bill was passed by the Senate on December 11, 2018 and was signed by McConnell using a hemp pen.

The Farm Bill of 2018 legally authorized the cultivation of Hemp. Hemp as compared with other crops, requires half as much water as other crops, thrives in poor soil and temperatures, requires no pesticides, grows in very tight spaces that crowd out weeds and has a deep, soil-aerating root system. Hemp also grows extremely fast and can be grown to harvest in 100 days.

If hemp eventually replaces large acreage crops, it could free up precious water supplies in California for other uses.

In addition, it could replace the loss of the tobacco cash crops of the South. The legal cultivation of hemp could further become important if projected climate change decreased Western mountain snow packs used in rivers for irrigation.

The American Agriculturist states "The 2018 Farm Bill will allow hemp to be regulated by the USDA, and will allow the labeling of American-grown hemp as certified organic"

In addition, hemp commerce will be legalized; financing and research opportunities will open up, hemp farmers will be guaranteed water rights and the definition of hemp will be altered to make it a non-drug commodity.

According to Pacific Standard, hemp has hundreds of uses and others may be discovered due to the availability of research funds. The explosive growth in hemp-based consumer products estimates the global hemp market is expected to jump to 10.6 billion by 2025. Other entities have predicted larger estimates. Future products made from hemp may be used in housing materials, clothing, medicine, and cars. Lives can be affected by cannabis-based products.

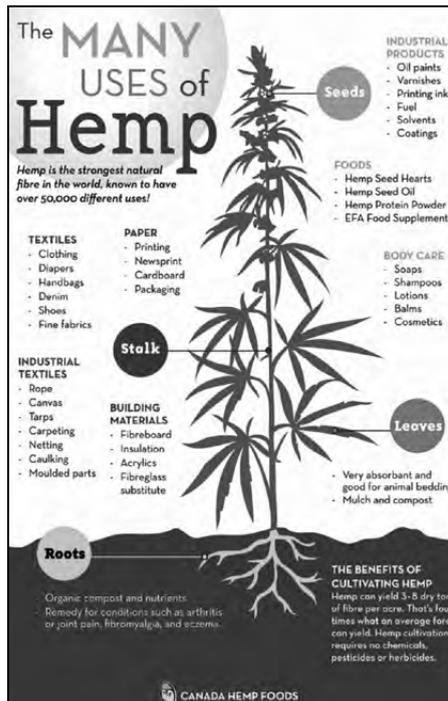
One of the most exciting applications of hemp lies in the extraction of cannabinoids in the form of CBD oil. Cannabidiol (CBD) oil has become the hot new product and darling of states that have legalized medical marijuana. CBD from Hemp is a sister plant to the Cannabis "marijuana" plant without the high levels of THC, which makes marijuana a psychoactive drug that gives people the feeling of being "high."

Cannabidiol extracted from the whole hemp plant with its associated clinically proven benefits for the reduction of pain, inflammation, anxiety and epilepsy could soon become the most valued cannabinoid.

The best form of CBD, in my opinion, is a "full spectrum" product. It does not produce intoxication as does marijuana's tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). Furthermore, Full Spectrum CBD includes all of the other cannabinoids which together add synergistic benefits resulting in a complementary "entourage" effect".

The non-intoxicating marijuana extract, CBD, is being credited with helping treat a host of medical problems -- everything from epileptic seizures to anxiety to inflammation to chronic pain. The Washington Post, stated "dozens of studies have found evidence that the compound can potentially treat a range of other illnesses." Clinical studies for several other conditions are currently planned or underway.

With the legalization of hemp, CBD can be regulated and researched much more than before to understand medical efficacy for a wide range of diseases. In most states, CBD, is produced without



any regulation. (Note: A model exception is in California, where as of July 1, 2018, all Cannabis was mandated to go through the process of a USDA food grade product certification of analysis. Any product not meeting the calibrated quantification standards was given the option of a second pass (test), or else be destroyed.

Another concern is that CBD products vary widely in quality, according to Marcel Bonn-Miller, an adjunct assistant professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. Bonn-Miller stated. "It really is the Wild West, Joe Bob who starts up a CBD company can say whatever the hell he wants on a label and sell it to people."

Bonn-Miller's study in 2017 found that nearly 7 of 10 CBD products didn't contain the amount of marijuana extract promised on the label. Nearly 43 percent of the products contained too little CBD, while about 26 percent contained too much and about 1 in 5 CBD products contained the intoxicating pot chemical, THC. Some test results reflected a lack of CBD altogether.

It is, however, encouraging that the benefit to farmers has early commercial growers reporting \$100 per-acre more profit on hemp than corn. Hemp grown for CBD oil, on the other hand, can take in \$8000 per acre versus \$600 per acre for corn. Hemp can be the savior for drought-riddled western states. (Particularly, the Central Valley of California which has suffered from drought the last several years).

Hemp is, thereby, profitable and sustainable, a consequence that has eluded many U.S. farmers as of late. Hemp cultivation could provide much-needed relief as farmers struggle to find markets for millions of bushels of crops during the trade wars. Instead, an estimated \$100 million of hemp products every year will go to American farmers and entrepreneurs.

Forbes magazine estimated in its December 2017, that by the year 2020 CBD consumer sales will total around 1.15 billion U.S. dollars.

Dr. Roberta DeLuca is a Cannabis expert. She is the owner of RADical Relief and Wellness, a CBD company, www.radicalreliefandwellness.wordpress.com.

Dr. DeLuca is a published author and has been educating physicians, naturopaths and consumers. She is a frequent guest on radio, podcasts and was a panelist on the 2018 CBDWestExpo "Jocks and Docs" educational event in Anaheim, California.



Adventures and Ales

by Elaine Schroth, Executive Director of Visit Concord.



Concord offers residents and visitors alike a satisfying blend of urban vitality and rugged nature.

One of the best ways to experience Concord is to spend a day exploring the city's abundant outdoor spaces, capped off with thirst-quenching craft brews and tasty bites at one of its lively alehouses. Visit Concord has put together four outdoor adventure and ale pairings that give you a good taste of what makes Concord so special.

Adventure: Lime Ridge Open Space/Alehouse: Epidemic Ales

Ask anyone for trail recommendations in Concord and they'll point you to the ultimate outdoor playground, Lime Ridge Open Space. Spanning 1,226 acres with 25 miles of trails, Lime Ridge features distinct hiking and mountain biking areas including the Jane Buhlman Grove Overlook and Rearing Horse Hill, North Loop Trail and South Loop Trail.

After your ride or hike, reward yourself at Concord's Epidemic Ales, an apocalyptic-themed brewery. Trek several miles then finish with a yardstick-length flight to sample the full range of styles. If you worked up an appetite, order from the local food trucks parked outside. 150 Mason Circle.

Adventure: Contra Costa Trail /Alehouse: The Hop Grenade Taproom & Bottleshop

For a relaxing pace on mostly paved pathways, take a stroll or bike ride on the Contra Costa Canal Trail which features a horseshoe-shaped route through the urban and suburban landscapes of Concord and neighboring towns. Skirting the eastern edge of Lime Ridge, the trail officially ends at Willow Pass Community Park. Entering the park, you can take a left on Salvio Street and follow that about a mile to Todos Santos Plaza.

This adventure pairs nicely with The Hop Grenade Taproom & Bottleshop, also the headquarters of The Brewing Network, a multimedia resource for brewers and beer lovers. You'll often find rare kegs on the 21-tap system hooked up to taproom TVs to let you know what's available to pair with beer-injected bites. 2151 Salvio St.

Adventure: BART Linear Park/ Alehouse: E.J. Phair Brewing Company

Another urban/suburban trail is

BART Linear Park. As its name suggests this trail starts at the North Concord BART Station and ends at the downtown Concord BART Station. This flat, easy trail suitable for walking, biking, or jogging runs along Port Chicago Highway. Along the way is 18-acre John Baldwin Park, enjoyed by many for its children's play area, dog park, basketball and bocce courts, softball field, and more. At Salvio Street, turn right and you'll run into Todos Santos Plaza.

End at E.J. Phair Brewing Company. The Concord taproom and brewpub boasts more than 15 drafts split between its Pittsburg-brewed beers and top picks from both local and national favorites, with a food menu featuring elevated pub grub options. 2151 Salvio St.

Adventure: Mount Diablo/ Alehouse: Concord Tap House

Mount Diablo State Park offers the ultimate adventure. Climb from its base to summit via the 7.3-mile trail starting at the Mitchell Canyon Staging Area in Clayton. At the peak stop in at the visitor center and enjoy the breathtaking views, one of the best in West. On a clear day the Sierra Nevada is plainly visible. The best views are after a winter storm; a snowy Sierra shows up better, even Yosemite National Park is visible.

From breathtaking to taking a breather, complete the adventure with a drive to the Concord Tap House, a midtown funky gathering place for sipping from 24 rotating taps focused on local and West Coast breweries, with beer flights for the indecisive, and sampling from a menu of bar-food favorites with a global twist. 3513 Clayton Road.

Carry Your Beer Trail Passport

Visit Concord and the four alehouses have collaborated to create the Visit Concord Beer Trail Passport, your guide to explore the craft beer scene in Concord.

Participation is Simple: Pick up a beer bundle which is a beer trail passport, reusable cup and sticker at one of Concord's four alehouses. Take your passport to each alehouse and receive a stamp (no purchase necessary). Once you receive all four stamps, go to VisitConcordCA.com/BeerSweepstakes, submit a photo, and enter a monthly drawing for cool prizes. For more information, go to VisitConcordCA.com/BeerPassport.

Puzzle Answers from page 15

9 letter word:	forte	fore	root
afternoon	front	fort	rota
fronton	orate	frae	rote
atoner	tenor	frat	tare
enroot	toner	fret	tarn
foetor	trona	froe	taro
footer	aero	near	tear
natron	earn	raft	tern
ornate	fare	rant	tora
ratoon	faro	rate	tore
tanner	fart	ref	torn
afore	fear	rent	tref
after	fern	roan	
antre	fora	roof	



CVCHS Teacher Exposes Students to a New Language



First year Clayton Valley Charter High School teacher Samantha “Sam” Johnson had all the best reasons to start learning American Sign Language (ASL) when she was in high school. Her step-mom had Deaf family members and Sam desired to communicate with them. She stopped taking Spanish at Concord High School and began an interpretive course at

Ohlone College.

After just one year, however, the course was cut. But Sam wasn’t deterred. She continued her sign language education at Diablo Valley College and eventually became a professional interpreter (proudly supported by her parents, of course).

Sam has interpreted at countless events including educational settings, medical

situations and more. And now she’s teaching ASL to the next generation of CVCHS students.

“I never thought I would come back home and teach,” Sam said. “The eagerness from the students has sparked a new passion and it makes me want to create greater awareness and importance of knowing ASL.”

In the first year of bringing ASL to the CVCHS campus, Sam is nearly at capacity for all five of her classes. She teaches more than 180 students. Stepping into Sam’s classroom reveals the engagement she brings to her students. It’s amazing to feel the energy in a silent classroom.

Teaching has reinforced Sam’s joy for the language she has come to love. “I can express myself more clearly with ASL than in my own native language,” she said. “There is so much expression and detail that goes into sign language. Seeing a facial expression sends a whole other message that tone can’t fully express.”

Clearly her students agree. They will be making their first interpreter appearance at the Winter Rally on February 8 to sign the National Anthem.

There is also a new ASL club on campus embarking on its first fundraiser. Stu-

dents are selling pins handcrafted from ByMara that has the sign for “I love you” for personalized Valentine’s Day cards. The club’s profits will go to a local charity, DeafHope, which helps Deaf women and children recover from domestic and sexual violence.

Sam said there are several factors driving student interest and involvement with ASL.

“Technology and pop culture have definitely put a spotlight on the Deaf community with contestants on Dancing with the Stars, America’s Next Top Model and the Netflix series Switched at Birth,” Sam said. “There are now interpreters at music events and people perceive it as being ‘cool’. But, being within the community and learning ASL is even cooler. It’s also popular because most colleges offer courses and high schools are following along.”

Sam teaches so our students can share and better communicate in our local community. Once a month at a local Starbucks, members of the Deaf community gather to socialize. CVCHS students are part of that experience and can carry on a conversation. Sam has more plans on how to get our students further immersed in the Deaf community and CVCHS is hiring a second ASL teacher for the next school year.

Few things are more amazing than seeing the next generation of students learn a new communication skill to reach more people. I am definitely going to need to learn how to sign that!

FAMED OLYMPIAN CLINIC ATTRACTED TO CONCORD/WALNUT CREEK IN 2020

by Mike Wood, SportStars

The 32nd James Logan Willie Davenport Olympian Track and Field Clinic will be held on Saturday Feb. 9th at James Logan High School in Union City and is open to the public. Student athletes will be getting hands-on training from the best in the world.

Over 70 renowned past and present world-record holders will be there, including Tommie Smith and John Carlos who gained fame in the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico where they raised their fists in a Black Power salute. Scheduled guests include 1992 Olympian Kevin Young-World Record Holder 400 Hurdles; 1988, 1992 Olympian Mike Powell – World Record Holder Long Jump; Olympian Stephanie Brown-Trafton –2008 Gold Medalist Discus; Eddie Hart – World’s fastest human, 1972.

This Olympian clinic resumes after a three-year hiatus.

“It’s always a challenge as it is costly to bring in so many Olympians, it’s quite costly to put on,” organizer and retired James Logan Coach Lee Webb stated. Nevertheless, he is interested in expanding the clinics into other areas with Concord and Walnut Creek being of high interest. As it should be for Contra Costa is blessed with Olympic talent.

In choosing a theme and honorees for his upcoming Olympians Week, Lee Webb looked toward one specific year. One tumultuous yet momentous year. 1968.

The Willie Davenport Olympian Track and Field Clinic will be the culmination of a week full of events featuring 10 Bay Area school visits by some of the greatest U.S. Olympians. All of it organized once again by Webb.

The clinic at James Logan will be dedicated to the 1968 Olympic Team,



Andre Lamar Phillips 400 meters Hurdles Gold Medalist in 1988 Olympics.

Speed City – the legendary San Jose State program intertwined with the track and field success in Mexico City and beyond – and 1968 gold medalist Dick Fosbury, innovator and legend of the high jump.

More than a dozen athletes from the ’68 Games will take part in Webb’s clinic. They will work with youth and adult athletes as well as Special Olympians, whose involvement Webb has always made a focal point of the event.

Those Olympics are regarded by many as one of the best performances by the U.S., especially in track and field competitions. In all, the U.S. racked up 45 gold medals. That included 15 in track and field events (12 in men’s events). Legends in the sport were created and others furthered their fame, names

like Dick Fosbury, Jim Hines, Willie Davenport, Tommie Smith, John Carlos, Bob Beamon, Al Oerter and Wyomia Tyus.

Several of those Olympians representing have been regular attendees of Webb’s event. And they will be back this year.

“I feel really fortunate to be able to do this, and it is because they come,” Webb said. “They competed because they love to do it, and they do this not for money. These are genuine, nice people.”

One of those was Davenport, who won the gold in the 110-meter hurdles in 1968 and the bronze in 1976. He died in 2002 of a heart attack but his inspiration burns brightly. Webb said that Davenport was a driving force in this event becoming what is today.

“He exemplified everything we were looking for ... he served this country in the military, he worked with Special Olympics. It was a pretty easy one when it came to naming it after him.”

At those Summer Games in Mexico City. Who doesn’t remember Fosbury revolutionizing the high jump with his innovative back-first technique, dubbed the “Fosbury Flop”? Bob Beamon set the world record in the long jump. Hines did the same in the 100 meters, breaking 10 seconds for the first time.

It all came in a year that was one of the most tumultuous in U.S. History. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and presidential candidate Senator Robert F. Kennedy each were assassinated. The Vietnam War protests raged on. The country was in turmoil.

Social activism was on the rise, leading to one infamous image during the Mexico City Games. After Tommie Smith won gold and John Carlos the



Dick Fosbury

bronze in the 200 meters, each raised a black gloved fist in protest on the medal podium during the U.S. national anthem. Their Black Power salute was widely controversial, but as time went on, the two have received numerous honors for their activism. Both Smith and Carlos will be in attendance, along with fellow Speed City teammate and ’68 Olympian Lee Evans.

The clinic at 1800 H St. in Union City, will run from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The cost is \$10 for youth and \$20 for adults. Lunch on campus is \$5. For \$25, participants get an information bag. The clinic will be followed by a Champions dinner from 6:30-10 p.m. with a silent auction to benefit Olympians in need.

Sponsorship is critical. It will be interesting to see which school will be first to host these clinics in this county.