

APRIL 2019

GRAY WOLVES RETURNING TO CALIFORNIA!

Wolf-Daddy laughing with wolves Quinn and Lyca.
Photo by Diane Walsh

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from the Publisher

David King

Wrong Time to Quit Being Charitable

The success of Concord's Spring Brews Festival may be an indication that we are done with this rainy thing and ready to get outdoors for some fun! How many of us realize how much we go out of our way to help our local community non-profit organizations? Event organizers seem to have captured a common theme to motivate our charitable senses. See if you can pick up what that theme is.

Bay Area Craft Beer Festival

April 20 Another 4-hour drinking dash...I mean sampling. If you missed the Concord's Brews Festival, here's your second chance. Waterfront Park, Martinez

Clayton Art and Wine Festival

April 27-28. Much, much fun here.

AAUW Art and Wine (and beer!)

Walk -Stroll Downtown Concord May 11

First Wednesday's Street Festival

On the first Wednesday of every month, May-September, Downtown Association hosts this street festival of Wine, Music, food trucks on cypress Street. Way to go Walnut Creek.

Summer Wine Stroll --Walk along main street for a sampling of various local wines. Martinez June 8

King of the County BBQ

Challenge with beer and bands June, Father's Day. Perfect!

Clayton BBQ Cookoff - Beer and Wine and the best BBQ July 13

Blues and Brew Festival - Pleasant Hill July 19-20.

Lafayette Art and Wine Festival

This is the granddaddy of Art and Wine Festivals. This two-day event is so large

it has its own map. Downtown Lafayette, September 21.

Martinez Martinis on the Plaza - Martinez September

Oktoberfest - Clayton, Concord, and Walnut Creek each have their own on separate weeks. Clayton's lasts two-days! October

Creek Monkey Zombie Brew

Crawl - Enjoy craft beer in your zombie suit. Downtown Martinez October.

Santa Crawl - Enjoy craft beer in your Santa suit. Martinez December

Do you recognize the theme? All these events have plenty of fun activities for non-drinkers as well and raise beaucoup funds for a bevy of community non-profit organizations. So get out and be charitable.



Lloyd Bridges, scene from Airplane! 1980



concord mayor

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

Fixing Roads Key to Community Growth

As Mayor, I recognize the urgent need to improve the condition of Concord's roads. For this reason, at our February 26 meeting, the City Council voted to earmark the \$400,000 budget surplus from last fiscal year towards addressing pot holes created by the heavy rains this winter. We are well aware that the condition of the pavement and pot holes provide a first impression when someone drives into our community to consider purchasing a home, lease office or commercial space, or open or patronize a business.

I was relieved to see SB 1 transportation funds preserved in the November 2018 election, as that allocates \$2 million annually for Concord roads. By adding SB 1 revenue to Measure Q half-cent sales tax dollars, Concord leverages these funds for regional and federal dollars to get as much bang for our roadwork buck as possible. Concord's deferred infrastructure maintenance comprises the lion's share of our city's unfunded liabilities, a situation faced by many California cities.

To help ensure that Concord receives its fair share of transportation dollars, I serve as the Concord representative on the Transportation Partnership and Cooperation Regional Committee (TRANSPAC) and as an alternate to the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) Board. Both bodies meet monthly. TRANSPAC comprises elected representatives, planning commissioners, and technical staff from the cities of Clayton, Concord, Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated area of Central Contra Costa County.

TRANSPAC is responsible for the development of transportation plans, projects, and programs for Central County. CCTA comprises 11 Commissioners who administer the Authority's Expenditure Plan, Growth Management and Congestion Management Programs, and determine the use of local transportation sales tax revenue in accordance with the parameters outlined in Measures C and J. The CCTA Board also has final approval over the county's Congestion Management Plan and the Countywide Transportation Plan.

By serving on these bodies, to cite a couple of examples, I have succeeded in securing funding to keep the free shuttle running for the Monument Community for another year and to build sidewalks and crosswalk improvements along Willow Pass Road.

Recently, I was invited to participate on the CCTA's Steering Committee to guide the development of a Community-Based Transportation Plan (CBTP) for the Monument Community. Since the Monument Community falls within District 3, I appointed Councilmember Aliano to serve with me since he represents that district. The CBTP will identify projects and programs to create affordable transportation options for disadvantaged individuals who live and work in the Monument. Our goal is to develop a transportation plan that includes new mobility projects within the Monument Community and is responsive to the needs of the businesses and residents, with the assistance of new technology.

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AKC Surprises with Free Kitchen

American Kitchen Company (AKC) of Concord has donated another kitchen remodel to a household in dire need of good news and a break in life. This is the premise of Kyle McClay, owner of AKC when he approached KRON4 to produce and carry his TV show/contest idea, "Heart of the Home."

"The show is about helping those families within our community who may be going through hard times," Kyle explained. Johanna Rauhala, Richmond, a 17-year teacher with Valley View Middle School in Pleasant Hill, was one of the winning selections. Johanna has been battling cancer for the past three years. In 2016 she was diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer and had surgery, chemo, and radiation. In 2017, it went into remission but a year later, the cancer had returned. Doctors tried chemo again but this time it failed. She underwent a more serious surgery. Her recovery has been very slow. Although she is in remission again, the doctors say there is a high likelihood of recurrence.

"We're just taking it one day at a time," Johanna says tearfully.

She was completely surprised when it was announced that she was selected.

"Steve from KRON4 came over with his camera crew under the guise that they were still vetting contestants and wanted to come over and ask a few more questions. We talked briefly, and said they would let us know. As they were leaving Kyle walks up with another camera crew and announced 'You Just Won!'."

"I'm like 'oh my god, my hair, my house is a mess!' I was super surprised," she admitted.

Over a weekend in March, AKC demolished her old kitchen and made several design choices for her.

"We were quite happy they took some of those big decisions off our plate. The kitchen is so beautiful. We are forever grateful."

Our thoughts are with Johanna and her family and hope she has a full recovery. We commend American Kitchen Company for their wonderful community spirit, and bravo to KRON4's "Heart of the Home". Nicely done.



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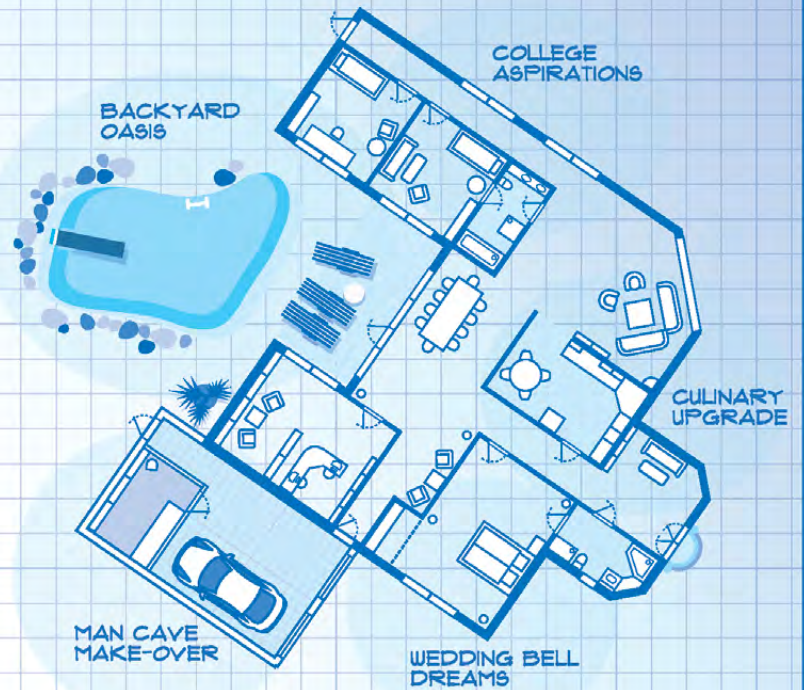
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Realtor, Better Homes Realty

Spruce Up Your Home for Spring

Spring is finally here! If you're ready to shed those winter blues, start by giving your home a spring refresher. By doing a little spring cleaning, updating your décor, and getting your outdoor space in order, you'll be ready to welcome those warmer and longer spring days ahead. Here are some of the best tips we've found to spruce up your home for spring.

Air it out. When was the last time you opened your windows? Chances are it's been months since you've had any real fresh air in your home. Choose a day where the temperatures will be moderate and open your windows to let in the cool breeze. It will recharge all the stale air in your home, remove dust, and even help to inhibit the growth of mold. It's also good for your health.

Clean up the fireplace. If you have a wood-burning fireplace, then it's time to put it to rest for the season. Clean up the ash and close the damper and consider having it professionally cleaned now instead of in the fall. Your chimney sweep will be less busy and give you a break on the price.

Add some fresh decorative touches to your home with houseplants, forced bulbs, or cut flowers. Plants and flowers will help to clean the air and make your home smell fresh.

Change out heavy winter drapes with lighter versions for spring and let some of that lovely sunshine in. It's also time to

switch out your bedding for lighter sheets and blankets. Remember to clean and rotate your mattress as well.

Update your entryway. Your home's exterior provides the first impression to visitors or potential buyers. Make your home stand out in a positive way by getting the entryway ready for spring. On the outside, consider painting your front door a distinctive color and decorate with a tasteful spring wreath. Weather permitting, you can add some pots of spring flowers on your stoop next to the door and switch out your doormat. Inside, empty the coat closet of your winter jackets and shoes and make room for lighter spring jackets.

Embrace the spring season with pops of color around your home. You can do this very simply with the addition of colorful pillows and throw blankets. Think about ways to use what you already have – whether it's a colorful vase full of spring flowers or a stack of books with vibrant colors on the coffee table.

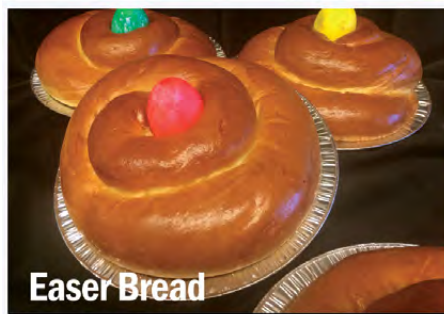
Finally, set the tone by setting your table with some pretty spring place mats and napkins. Add some lightly scented candles and a colorful table runner. Then, invite friends and family over to help you celebrate the coming of the spring season.

Courtesy of www.Virtualresults.net.

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Could Gray Wolves Return to the Bay Area?

by Jill Hedgecock, Bestselling Author, *Rhino in the Room*, www.jillhedgecock.com

California is making history by bringing an endangered species back from the brink. For the first time in nearly a century, a pack of gray wolves is reclaiming California as their home.

On June 13, 1924, the last California gray wolf was killed by a California trapper. Wolves had not been seen again in the wild in California until 2011 when a lone male wolf crossed the California state line from Oregon. Recognizing the potential for gray wolf populations to re-establish themselves if provided



protection, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service quickly listed CA gray wolves as State Endangered. This proved to be fortuitous, because a mated pair entered Siskiyou County in 2015 and produced a litter of five pups. Almost a year later, a second pair (one of them a Siskiyou County pup) was sighted in Lassen County. As of January 2019, this new pack now includes two yearlings, and five pups. The species is definitely making a comeback.

Wolves are a much-maligned species even though attacks on people are rare. Most human-wolf conflicts occur when the pack is starving, cornered or rabid. Perhaps no one knows the heart of the wolf more than Leydon Jay Cougar, Executive Director of Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary (WSWS) in Santa Fe, New Mexico which houses confiscated or surrendered "pet" wolves and wolf-dog mixes. He has helped rescue nearly four hundred wolves and other exotic dog-like breeds over the past two decades and has earned the moniker, Wolf Daddy. He has his own reality TV show called *Wolf Daddy's Pack Life* which airs on the Fido TV Channel. He's been on Animal Planet Network's *Wild Rescues* and NatGeo's *America the Wild*, to name a few. He even has his own cookbook, *Hungry as a Wolf*. Photographer Diane Walsh and I visited WSWS in late February as part of an article on "Game of Thrones" George R.R. Martin for Books 'N Pieces Magazine, a big supporter of WSWS.

"The most dangerous wolf is one that isn't afraid of humans," said Wolf Daddy during the tour.

At WSWS though, there are a few wolves that are as domesticated as dogs. Flurry, a bottle-fed Arctic wolf, is one of those exceptions. This special animal is tame enough to accompany George R.R. Martin on book signings.

As Diane tried to get a shot of Flurry's face she said, "Wolves are just like

dogs, they always have their nose to the ground."

"Actually, dogs are just like wolves," Wolf Daddy corrected her.

He explained that while dogs have descended from wolves, wolves seldom bark but rather offer a warning howl, and while dogs still have the same vocalization pattern, their alarm call has evolved into a bark. The wolf alarm proved advantageous for early humans which is probably what led to domestication. The two species are genetically 98.8 percent identical. However, wolves tend to be bigger (e.g., larger brains, longer legs, bigger feet, longer muzzles and broader skulls). Also, while dogs tend to lick, wolves rarely give kisses. It was doubly special for me to be honored by Flurry with a rare display of this type of affection.

Not everyone is celebrating the wolf's return to California. Because predation on livestock is a concern, one of the main missions of the California Wolf Center located in Southern California is to work with affected ranchers on nonlethal solutions. Research has found that the standard practice of shooting wolves to manage the problem may not be the best solution. A 2014 study published in the scientific journal *PLOS One* looked at 25 years of data and found that livestock predation increased after a rogue wolf was shot. This may be because wolf packs are led by a male and female breeding pair. If one or both of these alpha wolves are killed, the pack can disband resulting in more breeding pairs and thus an increase in wolves. It can take up to a 25% reduction in the wolf population to reduce livestock predation. Other predator control methods such as increased number of guard dogs or stringing wire with fabric such as small red flags called "fladry" are much more effective management tools.

Do Bay Area livestock ranchers need to worry? A 2011 report on Gray Wolves prepared by the California Department of Fish and Game, suggests that while wolves were widely-distributed in California, they were never abundant. Although anecdotal evidence suggests that wolves historically roamed California coastal areas, their populations were likely focused around the northern reaches of California and the Sierra Nevada. So, while wolves may migrate and establish themselves deeper into new California territories, the likelihood that a Bay Area resident will hear one howling at the moon anytime soon is very low.

To discover how you can help California wolves, visit California Wolf Center (<https://www.californiawolfcenter.org/>) and to learn more about Wolf Daddy, visit (www.wolfdaddy.dog).






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THE LEGAL PAGE

Informed Decisions

by Joe Wolch, Attorney at Law

I think we can all agree that having choices and options is a blessing in life. However, if not well made, the choices we make may feel like anything but a blessing. When it comes to legal matters, consulting a legal professional can be a critical factor in making good decisions.

I have practiced law in California for 26 years and handled thousands of cases. Each one challenging in its own way, and each presenting unique and personal circumstances requiring different ideas, thoughts, and strategies.

Seeking professional legal counsel should be as common as getting advice from any other professional. When you have a question pertaining to taxes, ask a CPA and follow his/her advice; if your car is making a strange noise, take it to a mechanic for a diagnostic and then follow their repair recommendations. If you have legal questions, get professional legal advice.

Clients who come to my office are in the same position as I am when I reach out to my CPA or mechanic; they want to know more about their situation and learn their rights and responsibilities relative to their legal position.

Sometimes I have the distinct displeasure of letting clients know things are not exactly as they had hoped. Regardless, they are appreciative of the fact and recognize that knowing is better than not knowing. Knowledge is empowering. It allows us the opportunity to make good decisions (based on solid advice and counsel) in our lives.

The Contra Costa County Lawyer Referral and Information Service (a public service from the Contra Costa County Bar Association, (925) 825-5700) exists to connect consumers with attorneys who practice in the specific legal field for which they have an issue. When consumers contact the LRIS, they are directed to a pre-vetted attorney for a consultation wherein they can learn more about their situation, get candid and accurate advice, and make informed decisions.

Joe Wolch has practiced Family Law in Walnut Creek since 1993. His firm (www.joewolch.com) represents individuals in all aspects of divorce and related Family Law issues.



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a Conservatorship

If you are presented with loved ones who are not able to care for themselves without help, there are a few legal tools you can use in caring for them. For example, your loved one may have dementia, stroke, autism or Downs' Syndrome. As an estate planning attorney, I frequently meet with clients who are worried about how to manage the finances, medical care, or social life of a parent who has had a stroke or a child with autism.

Maybe Mom can no longer sign her own name, do her own banking and needs help taking her medications. In the ideal situation, Mom would have signed a Power of Attorney before she had the stroke, naming you as the person who could take over if she became incapacitated. Advance planning would be priceless in this case. You could seamlessly go to the bank with the Power of Attorney and sign and deposit her pension checks for her.

But what if Mom doesn't have a signed Power of Attorney? The next alternative is going to court and setting up a general conservatorship. General conservatorships are for people, like Mom, who can no longer care for themselves because of diminished physical or mental abilities caused by aging, sickness or accident. Conservatorships are court orders that give authority to a "conservator" (you) to make choices for an adult "conservatee" (Mom). Once appointed, you will be able to make decisions about Mom's ongoing financial and medical care.

Although straightforward, setting up

a conservatorship is a long and complex process. Before asking the court to appoint a conservator, the person asking for the conservatorship should be sure this is an appropriate arrangement for the proposed conservatee.

There are two categories of care in a general conservatorship. You may decide to ask the court for authority to care for the person or the estate of your loved one, or both. A Conservator of the Person is responsible for physical care and protection of the conservatee when the judge decides that the person cannot do it. The conservator is responsible for making sure that the conservatee has proper food, clothing, shelter, and health care. Depending on the conservatee's ability to understand and make decisions, the conservator may need to make important medical choices for him or her.

A Conservator of the Estate handles the conservatee's financial matters — like paying bills and collecting the person's income — if the judge decides the conservatee cannot do it. Other duties include managing the conservatee's finances; finding, controlling and accounting for all the conservatee's assets; and responsibly investing the conservatee's money. You do not have to do all this alone- you may seek the help of advisors on all these tasks.

Rita A. Holder practices family law, tax law and wills, trusts and probate. Her office is in Walnut Creek. She offers a free 60-minute consultation. Give her a call at 925-482-8910 or at rita@ritaholderlaw.com

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The lawyers in this program have generously volunteered their time to help you, and you will have the opportunity of meeting with a lawyer for twenty (20) minutes. However, these attorneys should not be considered as personal lawyers. You will be required to sign a waiver before speaking to an attorney that states that no attorney-client relationship is being created with this free service. The lawyers are there to provide general guidance and advice only. Upcoming Lawyers in the Library Program schedule.

April 9, 2019, 1:30 pm
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by Elaine Schroth,
Executive Director

**VISIT
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Music & Art are Thriving in Concord

The pairing of music and art with tourism offers residents and visitors alike a satisfying sense of harmony. The Visit Concord team is collaborating with key stakeholders throughout the city to keep music and art thriving in Concord.

JAZZ — The first jazz festival was the vision of jazz enthusiast and music producer, Carl Jefferson with support from the City of Concord. That inaugural event attracted 17,000 fans to what is now known appropriately as Dave Brubeck Park in Concord. The festival's success established the locals' love for jazz making way for an annual festival. Soaring crowds and popularity moved the concert to the Concord Pavilion.

This year Concord is celebrating 50 years of jazz with a multi-day, multi-faceted celebration so fans can immerse in Concord's long-term connection with jazz throughout the summer. You can get in the mood now with music to go by listening to an exclusive jazz playlist prepared by Visit Concord on Spotify available at [Bit.ly/VisitConcord](https://bit.ly/VisitConcord).

Here's a behind the scenes look at the calendar of events with more specifics coming soon:

TAKE 10 — Mark your calendar for these 10 days of unprecedented jazz events.

- August 1: Jazz at Concord's popular annual summer event, Music & Market at Todos Santos Plaza.
- August 2: An exclusive jazz performance at a Concord hotel
- August 3: Today's popular jazz artists will take the biggest stage of the festival, the Concord Pavilion.
- August 4: Something special still under wraps and soon to be announced.
- August 5: Because they pair so nicely, a jazz cocktail mixologist competition.
- August 6: Always fun, a trivia event all about jazz.
- August 7: Jazz concert at Diablo Valley College.
- August 8: Because once is not enough, a second evening of jazz at Music & Market.
- August 9: A jazz inspired cupcake bake-off for adults (18+) and kids (5-17). Local foodies will make up a panel of judges to award winners for this delicious event.
- August 10: The award winning Blue Devils Viewing Party at Todos Santos Plaza.

In addition, the Concord Historical Society will host "Java and Jazz", a three-part Java and Jazz series from 10 am to 12 noon on the following Saturdays: June 22nd, July 27th and August 24th. Each will spotlight Concord's authentic relationship with jazz.

Visit Concord selected Wren Avenue Elementary: School of the Arts as the featured school for a jazz inspired art



"A Splash of Humanity" Photo by Kerry Rowland-Avrech

program. Wren's 300+ students will create artwork inspired by the history of Jazz in Concord and it will be displayed for the community to view this summer.

Up-to-date details are announced at VisitConcordCA.com/Jazz. Those from outside the area can book rooms at one of the nine Concord Hotels. For hotel information, go to VisitConcordCA.com

ART — Art is important to any community. When you think of some of the most culturally diverse and renowned cities in the world, they all have at least one thing in common: art. From local galleries to life-size wall murals, a community full of art is a community full of culture. The distinctiveness of Concord can be advanced through

an engagement with the arts—in turn increasing visitation by creating a unique vibe that people will be drawn towards.

You'll find a blooming art community in Concord.

Visit the aRt Cottage for artwork by local artists or attend one of their many events and

classes throughout the year. The owner, FROgard Schmidt, has studied art around the globe and now shares what she has learned with other artists.

The Concord Center for the Visual Arts was founded by Elizabeth Wentworth Roberts, an American Impressionist and philanthropist whose mission—to promote and advance the visual arts, artists and to sustain our cultural community. With more than 850 members, Concord Art provides a place for contemporary art exhibitions, art education and a variety of topically relevant programming for everyone.

The Red Ox Studio appeals to the burgeoning artist engaging in a wheel-throwing workshop to the seasoned art collector looking for the perfect authentic piece of art.

The Visit Concord team, in conjunction with the City of Concord, is currently building an inventory of all the public art throughout the city and would like your input. Where are your favorite public art pieces in Concord? Where would you like to see new art placements in the city? Please email your responses to info@VisitConcordCA.com.



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A cartoon illustration of two brown rabbits on a yellow background. The rabbit on the left is facing right and has a speech bubble that says "MY BUTT HURTS". The rabbit on the right is facing left and has a speech bubble that says "WHAT?". Both rabbits are sitting and looking at each other.

calendar of events

APRIL 15 TAX RETURNS APRIL 21 EASTER

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>

APRIL 13 STRONGER TOGETHER Gala hosted by Monument Impact. The Gala will celebrate how volunteers, local businesses, unions, and community members have stepped up in the last year to support and affirm the importance of immigrants to this diverse region. Local leaders will be honored whose contributions to the community are an inspiration. Rob Andrews: A former MLB baseball player, has taught ESL to Career Track students for over five years. John Muir Health has been an instrumental partner of Monument Impact's mental health services.

OUTDOORS

Farmers' Markets

Concord Tuesdays: Year-round, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Thursdays: April 18 – October 24, 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Martinez Sundays, 10am to 2pm, year-round, Main St. and Estudillo.
Walnut Creek Diablo Valley Farmers Market Saturday 9a.m. - 1 p.m. Shadelands Business Park, N. Wigett Lane and Mitchell Dr. Also, from **Contra Costa Certified Farmers Market** - North Locust St between Giamona and Lacassie St. Sundays 9 am - 1 pm, Year Round, (925) 431-8361 <http://www.cccfm.org>

RUTH BANCROFT GARDEN

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/>

APRIL 13 Elizabeth Stark, author "Shy Girl", will discuss "The Essence of Storytelling". Mt. Diablo branch of the California Writers Club oat Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. 11:00AM. Registration is \$25 for CWC members, \$30 for guests. Reservations deadline: noon, April 10. To reserve, go to the CWC Mt. Diablo website at : <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/current-cwc-mt-diablo-meeting/>.

APRIL 13-14 SPRING CONTRA COSTA CRYSTAL FAIR - Saturday 10am-6pm; Sunday 10am-4pm. Admission: \$12 (good for both days) (under 12 free) and free parking. (415) 383-7837; email jerry@crystalfair.com. Civic Park Community Center 1375 Civic Drive @ Broadway, Walnut Creek

APRIL 27-28 CLAYTON ART & WINE FESTIVAL
Saturday 10:00am – 7:00pm
Sunday 10:00am – 5:00pm
•Premium Wine & Beer
•Beautiful Arts & Crafts
•Fantastic Food Court
•Continuous Live Music
•Kids Fun Land
Hosted by the Clayton Business and Community Association.
FREE Admission and Parking!
MUSIC SCHEDULE:
SATURDAY 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM CVCHS Jazz Ensemble
12:30 PM – 2:30 PM The Jesters (Rock)
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM The Relyks (Country/Rock)
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM Noisebar (Rock)
SUNDAY 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM THE PASTEL SIX+ (R&B/50-60's R'nR)
12:30 PM – 2:30 PM KETA BILL & THE BAY AREA ALLSTARS (Rock/Jazz)
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM The PhD's Band – Pittsburg CA (R&B/Rock & Roll)

APRIL 21 Easter Egg Hunt --Unity of Walnut Creek's Youth and Family Ministry will host an Easter Egg Hunt with all the trimmings – games, a bouncy house, and a visit from the Easter bunny. You'll want to equip your youngsters with an Easter basket to carry home their goodies. Please register interested children Sundays on the patio, or email Michelle@unityofwalnutcreek.org. \$5 per child.

APRIL 28 ECO-FEST 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Lindsay Wildlife Experience. Worm composting mini-workshop, sustainable food choices and "Old Survivor," The award-winning film of the only remaining old-growth redwood in the East Bay Hills. Enjoy an electric car showcase and presentations from Sustainable Contra Costa as they launch their Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge! FREE for Lindsay Wildlife Members. Included with cost of general admission. No pre-registration necessary

CLUB/SUPPORT GROUPS' NEWS AND EVENTS

April 20 Bay Area Craft Beer Festival
12pm - 4pm Martinez Waterfront. Over 50 local breweries and over 100 beers to sample including Home Brew! Live music delicious food, and more!
Price is \$40 in advance, \$50 at the door if not sold out. Designated Driver tickets available for \$5 or \$10 day of event.



MAY 4 GET RATTLED - Keep your dog safe. Rattlesnake avoidance training at an agility facility (Star K 9 agility) \$85 for initial training or \$60 for reinforcement training if previously trained by Get Rattled or Natural Solutions. 925-933-8774 Mt. Diablo Dog Training Club 1027 Detroit Ave. Concord Suite A www.mddtc.org/

VISUAL ARTS/ THEATRE/MUSIC

March 28 - April 13 'The Savannah Sipping Society' Comedy Show Clayton Theatre Company. Endeavor Hall, 6008 Center St., Clayton, Tickets: Purchase \$20-\$25, online at www.ClaytonTheatreCompany.com or www.brownpapertickets.com

April 19 Call for Artists! Main Street Arts Gallery Looking Out My Backdoor, A Plein Air Exhibition at Main Street Arts Gallery, May 3 – May 31, 2019
Entry deadline: April 19. Awards: 1st \$100, 2nd \$50, 3rd \$25, People's Choice \$25. To enter, go to mainstreetarts.net, 613 Main Street, Martinez

VINNIES BAR AND GRILL
LIVE COMEDY NIGHTS, 3rd Mondays every month. 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM
Top Bay Area comics. Free show -- No cover, no minimum. 21+. Full bar and restaurant. Mean Dave hosts, 3rd Monday every month. 2045 Mt. Diablo St. Concord April 15; May 20; June 17; July 15; August 19

April 4-22 PINNED BUTTERFLY by Adam Esquenzi Douglas. Admission: \$15 - \$22. B8 Theater Company. 2:00 PM to 8:00 PM. This Peet Cocke directed play discusses when members of BKPRIDE decide to hold the very first Brooklyn Gay Pride March, a handful of secrets ignite, turning a celebration of self into a scathing dissection of bisexual erasure, prejudice within the LGBT community. 2292 Concord Blvd. Concord.

APRIL 14 Show Tunes and Old Standards Concert 3:00 PM Stacey Street, Erica D'Ambrosio. Tickets at the door \$15. Clayton Valley Presbyterian Church, 1578 Kirker Pass Road. www.cvpresby.org or call 925-672-4848.

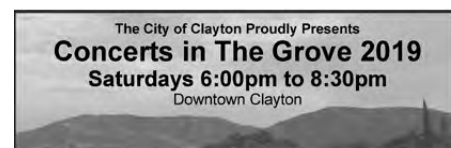
MAY 3-5 "Tapestry Ringers and Singers" as they perform their Spring Concert featuring your favorite "Names"! From Danny Boy to Barb'ra Ann, this talented group of 26 singers and 12 Handbell Ringers will brighten

your day! FREE admission. Donations benefit Donor Network West and Northern Valley Community Foundation (fire victims)
Friday, May 3 - 7:00 PM at Walnut Creek United Methodist Church
Saturday, May 4 - 7 PM at Hillcrest Congregational, Pleasant Hill
Sunday, May 5 - 4:00 PM at St John's Episcopal, Clayton
Tapestryringersandsingers.org for more information

MAY 19 "Better Together - Songs of Strength and Friendship" -Diablo

Women's Chorale 3:00 p
Songs from Paul Simon, Cyndi Lauper, Keb' Mo', Queen, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Emily King, and many others. Purchase advance tickets by calling 1-800-838-3006 or online at www.DiabloWomensChorale.org. \$25.00 General Admission, \$22.00 Senior, and \$15.00 Child/Student. If available, tickets are \$30.00 at the door. at Temple Isaiah, 945 Risa Road, in Lafayette

JAZZ ON TUESDAYS
Malcom Hunter. Don't cook dinner on Tuesdays. Recurring event through July 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM. The Vineyards Restaurant. Crowne Plaza, 45 John Glenn Dr. Concord



May 14 BOSTON ROCKS Music from the city of Boston www.aerorocks.net
May 25 Brickhouse Hits from 80s, 90s, and beyond. brickhouserocks.com.
June 8 Mixed Nuts variety from 50's to today. mixednutsband.com.
June 22 The Boys of Summer. Eagles tribute band. boysofsummertribute.com
July 6 Pride and Joy Pop/soul Motown hits. pridejoy.com
July 20 Club 90 Dance music of 90's club90band.com
August 3 Apple Z Dance and rock classics facebook.com/applezbands
August 17 Night Moves/Creedence Classic Revival ccseger.com
August 31 Cut Loose Rockin' blues, R&B rockin' country. cutlooseband.com.
September 14 VYBE Society 10 piece band of musicians from major label bands. vybesocietyband.com

CONCORD PAVILION

April 20 SAMMY HAGAR at Concord Pavilion. 7:30 pm.

MAY 15 Florence and the Machine at Concord Pavilion. 7:30 pm.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, April 6, 2019

Caregivers Retreat

A relaxing day of massage therapy, creativity, and meditation for caregiving families and friends.



CHOICE
IN AGING

WHEN: Saturday, April 6, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

WHERE: The Bedford Center
1811 "C" Street, Antioch 94509

RSVP: Evie Christou at echristou@choiceinaging.com, or call 925-778-4171

RSVP required. Respite available.



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Views of the Valley

Photos by Micah



Concord Spring Brews Festival at Todos Santos on Saturday, March 30. I would call this a huge success!



A blue-ribbon exhibit, "Rainbow Walking", at the MDUSD STEM Showcase/Fair on March 16 at the Willow Creek Center



aRt Cottage guests pose during the closing reception for the "Landscapes of the Mind" art exhibit.



The Easter Bunny was spotted at Sun Valley Mall

Tomizaki's Champions Kung Fu Institute 15th Annual Kung Fu Tournament



Master Dan Tomizaki demonstrates with martial arts weapons



Contestants were judged on form and in sparring



Beer with Concord Mayor Carlyn Obringer at Epidemic Ales

RUTH BANCROFT GARDEN & NURSERY

Spring Plant Sale

Friday, 4/5: Members Only Preview 5:30-7:30pm
Saturday & Sunday 4/6 -4/7: 10am - 5pm Open to all

20% off for members, 10% off for non-members
ruthbancroftgarden.org

1552 Bancroft Rd. Walnut Creek

Family Earth Day at Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery

Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery, a Garaventa Company, is hosting its 7th Annual Family Earth Day event from 10 am-1 pm on Saturday, April 13. The always popular event will include bounce houses, cart races, food as well as tours, trucks, and art activities where you can bring home your own craft created from recyclable items. The event is free for the whole family.

Arrive at 10:15 am to tour of the 90,000 square feet recycling facility. You will learn about "Big Blue" and "Big Wall-e" recycling machines, the 5 R's (Reduce-Reuse-Recycle-Respect-Recover) and then go on a walking tour.

Art activities include creating a craft out of recyclable items.

"There is no better time than Earth Day to share our passion for recycling and recovery with the entire com-



munity," said Ronald Proto, MDRR's Chief Executive Officer. "Participating in our Earth Day Celebration is a great way for families to explore the many ways they can make a real difference in the quality of our environment."

To reserve a space today, contact Adriana Medina at 925-771-2721 or email RecyclingCoordinator@Garaventa.com. Mt. Diablo Recycling is located at 1300 Loveridge Road in Pittsburg.

SPRING CONTRA COSTA CRYSTAL FAIR

The Spring Contra Costa Crystal Fair is returning to the Civic Park Community Center in Walnut Creek on April 13-14.

Crystal Fair is a magical mix of crystals, minerals, beads, jewelry, and metaphysical healing arts. This year's fair will include over 35 dealers including Jasper Mountain Lapidary, Janu Gems, Vision Within, Altar Space, Pure Source Crystals, Kim Harmon, Le Plue Studios, Amahok Designs, CrystalVibration, TheStone Muse, Angel Blue, Elegant Crystals, Crystalline Essence, Occult1776, Indigo Cruz Creations, Solaris Modalis, Crystals with Purpose, Amethyst from Uruguay, Walela, Ev-

everything Tibetan, Jaya Moksha, Eagles Nest Jewelry, Readings by Destiny, Imagine Peace, The Sacred Well, Healing with Sima, Glow Forth Reiki, Om Sai Minerals, Soul Purpose Jewelry, West County Wonders, Cyn-darella's Kitchen, Buddha Gems & Minerals, Love Harmony, Earth Rock & Gem, Royal Oil, and Consciously Connected.

Doors open at 10am Saturday until 6pm and on Sunday from 10am until 4pm. Admission is \$12 and is good for both days, under 12 can enter for free. Located at 1375 Civic Drive at Broadway. Parking is free. More information can be found at crystalfair.com.

RESERVE YOUR AD SPACE TODAY!

Call Today for more information

(925) 298-9990

info@diablogazette.com

Diablo Ballet to Open Ballet School

Diablo Ballet announced today that it will be opening its own ballet school at the end of summer at Performing Academy's Diablo location in Pleasant Hill. Classes will be offered to students ages three through adult for both recreational and career professionals.

The Diablo Ballet School will be run under the leadership of Lauren Jonas, Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Diablo Ballet and School Principal and company dancer, Raymond Tilton.

The school will be located at the Performing Academy Diablo location in Pleasant Hill. "We are absolutely thrilled to be opening the school, which has been a part of our long-range plans for almost a decade. A ballet school goes hand in hand with Diablo Ballet's mission and PEEK Outreach Program," states Jonas. Classes will range from Pre-Ballet to



Adult Ballet classes. Students will have performance opportunities each year and Intermediate and Advanced Ballet students will be given the opportunity to perform with Diablo Ballet in one program during the Company's regular season.

Registration will begin in May on the company's website www.diabloballet.org.

Dancer: Jackie McConnell Photo by: Aris Bernales

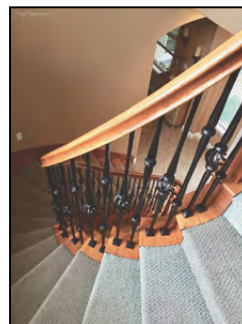


frugelegance

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

DIY Staircase Makeover

There's something about the springtime that inspires one to tackle a cleaning or home improvement project. For me, the staircase looked outdated. I put new carpet on order, and before it gets installed, this was the best time to stain and paint the banister and give the trim a fresh update. This is a larger task than our usual "quick & easy" projects. But when we got estimates of \$3,500 to \$4,800 (Yikes!) to do a staircase makeover, we decided to



do it ourselves (with the help of Carol's husband Randy). It is not a complicated, but it is work. Here are the supplies that we needed: medium grit sandpaper sheets, FrogTape Painters Tape, disposable gloves, lint-free rags, gel stain, Helmsman Clear Semi-Gloss

Sealer, paint (we chose Swiss Coffee Premium Paint for the baseboard), assorted paintbrushes for stain and paint, clear sealer. Optional Items: stain stripper and scraper, ladder.

The most labor-intensive part of this project is sanding down the existing finish. If we did this project again, we would not use the stripper. Although it seemed to get into the wood stain "deeper" for easier sanding, it's a bit difficult to get completely off. Any missed spots become obvious once you paint over them.

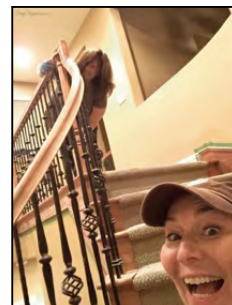
We sanded using the medium grit sandpaper. The most important thing to know about sanding wood- only sand in the direction of the wood's grain. At times this is very difficult, especially with smaller areas or around the spindles.

After sanding, it is important to clean the area thoroughly of all dust. Otherwise, remaining specks and dots will become bumps and blemishes when ap-

plying the new stain. We chose gel stain over regular stain because it is very thick and easier to apply. We painted on the gel stain thick like paint. (You can wipe off for a lighter shade.)

It took two days for the gel stain to dry with the house temperature kept at 72°. Once the gel stain was thoroughly dry (no tackiness), we applied a clear coat of sealer.

It's worth repeating, this is a very labor-intensive job. The supplies are minimal and reasonably priced. So, if you can handle the amount of time to do the work, you will save a lot of money, in our case thousands of dollars. If you remember to sand in the direction of the grain and follow the manufacturer's directions on each product used, your



makeover will come out beautifully. You can read many more details with step-by-step images on our blog for this project. You will also find other home improvement projects to help keep your home up to date and beautiful.



SUMMER CLASS SCHEDULE 2019

Summer Session Dates: July 8th – August 17th

Sign up TODAY for our **6-week** summer dance class session. Keep your dancers moving and grooving this summer with our fun-filled dance classes for all ages and levels. No recital, no costumes, just fun and learning! Priority registration for Fall classes to all enrolled summer students! Make sure you get the classes you want in September!

Register online. MULTIPLE CLASS & FAMILY DISCOUNTS APPLY!!

SUMMER DANCE CAMPS 2019

Seven 4-Day Camps: July 8th – August 22nd

Summer Dance Camps are a fun and creative summer activity offered in a variety of dance styles, from classical ballet to hip hop, and appeal to children of all ages and levels. Keep your dancers moving this summer with our amazing instructors and awesome curriculum.

Please see website for all tuition, class & camp descriptions, schedules, and studio policies.

925.524.0180

claytonvalleydance.com

For more information call or visit our website or email us at: 5678@claytonvalleydance.com

Clayton Valley Dance Academy 5416 Ygnacio Valley Blvd. Ste 60, Concord



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Jill Hedgecock's bookends
Author of *Rhino in the Room* www.jillhedgecock.com

DAUGHTER OF MOLOKA'I

by Alan Brennert

"Daughter of Moloka'i" (2019, St. Martin's Press, hardcover, 308 pages, \$18.29) by Alan Brennert is the highly anticipated sequel to the national bestseller, *Moloka'i*. For those that haven't read "Moloka'i", the two-book series is on Amazon for \$24.98. However, *Daughter of Moloka'i* reads equally well as a stand-alone story.

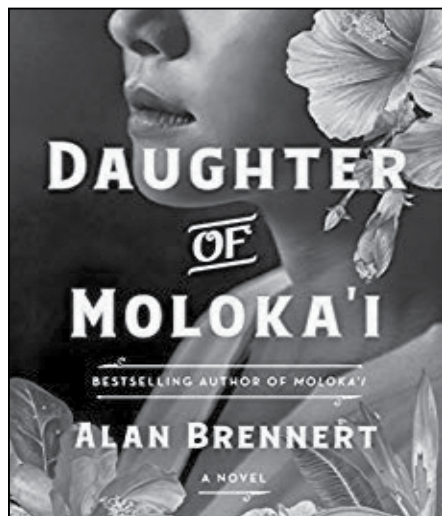
In his new novel, Brennert tells the story of Rachel Kalama's daughter, Ruth. Rachel's story in a leper colony was the focus of "Moloka'i". "Daughter of Moloka'i" launches with Ruth separated from her mother and living with nuns on Oahu, but readers soon journey to the south Sacramento area when Ruth is adopted by a kind Japanese family. Ruth's adopted mother and father, Etsuko and Taizo, decided to immigrate to California after Ruth's new father's brother, Jiro, asked for help with his struggling farm.

Ruth muddles her way through her teen years often experiencing racist comments and soldiering through adolescence with the added challenge of being mixed race. Her "hapa" heritage of half Hawaiian and half Japanese makes her feel like she doesn't fit anywhere. But amidst the Great Depression, Ruth's chance encounter while searching for employment after graduating High School leads to marriage.

However, her happiness with her husband, Frank, and two children is short-lived after the bombing of Pearl Harbor unleashes a wave of paranoia in the U.S. Government and American citizens alike. Practically overnight, Frank and Ruth are stripped of their belongings and are forced to sell their business at a loss when they are shipped off to an internment camp. After their release, Rachel and Ruth are reunited and the novel segues into an exploration of 1950s Hawaiian history and culture.

According to Brennert, "This new novel is the first novel that I have written that is not both the history of a person and a history of a place."

Through Brennert's mastery of



weaving story and historical accuracy, the unconscionable acts of our government that rushed to incarcerate law-abiding citizens on the basis of race is revealed. It is appropriate that the book was released on February 19th, 2019, 77 years to the day of President Roosevelt's Executive Order No. 9066 that initiated the exclusion and internment of all Japanese people living in America. "Daughter of Moloka'i" explores a dark time in American history, yet somehow the novel ultimately transforms into an uplifting read with a satisfying conclusion. The novel is more than a history lesson in racism and war, it is the story of love and of culture and coming to terms with unjust hardship. I cannot recommend it enough.

Alan Brennert is the author of the best-selling Hawaiian-based historical novels "Moloka'i" and "Honolulu". He earned an Emmy Award in 1991 as a screenwriter on the television series "L.A. Law". "Daughter of Moloka'i" is a #1 New York Times Bestseller and was named "A Best/Most Anticipated Book" by USA Today. Fans of historical fiction, especially Jamie Ford's "Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet" and "Snow Falling on Cedars" by David Guterson, will likely enjoy the book.

movie review

Movie review by Jeffrey M. Anderson,
Common Sense Media



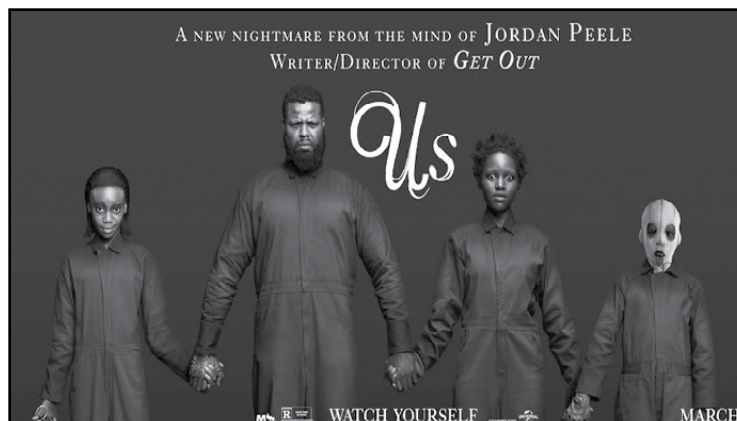
Us

4 of 5 STARS

This horror shocker by director Jordan Peele can't compete with its sensational predecessor "Get Out", but it doesn't have to.

Made with precision, intelligence, and humor, "Us" is totally bonkers and wildly entertaining in its own right. It can be said that "Us" has something to do with doppelgangers, but just how far the story goes and what it all means is best left to individual discussion. It's like a carnival ride of crazy ideas -- it's startling and also actually sometimes funny. While "Get Out" had little pockets of comic relief inserted into strategic places, the laughs in "Us", based both on ironic jokes and on the happy feel of relief and release, are scattered throughout. Any character in this film can earn a laugh.

"US" begins with young Adelaide enjoying the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk with her parents in 1986. While her father is distracted, she wanders off and winds up in a house of mirrors. The power winks off, and she finds herself standing next to what looks like her own reflection ... except that it's not a reflection. Flash forward to the present: Grown-up Adelaide (Lupita Nyong'o) is now married to Gabe (Winston Duke), with a teen daughter, Zora (Shahadi Wright Joseph), and a young son, Jason (Evan Alex). While the family vacations at their summer home, Gabe suggests going back to Santa Cruz; though the idea terrifies Adelaide,



she reluctantly agrees. Jason is briefly missing, but otherwise the day goes well. But when they get home, they discover a strange family of four standing in their driveway. And they look a lot like the Wilsons ... except that they don't seem friendly.

Since Peele -- well known as part of the comedy team Key & Peele -- understands the primal, bodily sensations of both laughter and fear, he approaches the filmmaking in *Us* with supreme confidence. His camera never shakes but rather moves in such a way to hide or reveal information for maximum impact. He's as precise here as Hitchcock or Kubrick. He also understands the use of music and sound, merging back and forth between a chilling, chanting orchestral score and pop songs, each adjusted at just the right volume or tone. It's an undeniably well-crafted and brutally effective movie, but where "Get Out" created a sharp, satirical commentary on race relations, this one very simply presents a positive portrayal of an African American family.

Cast: Lupita Nyong'o, Winston Duke, Elisabeth Moss. Director: Jordan Peele. 116 minutes Rated R, violence/terror, and language



theater review

Spontaneous Brothers Grimm: The Improvised Collection.

Synergy Theater returns to the Leshner Center for the Arts with the world premiere of their brand-new show, "Spontaneous Brothers Grimm: The Improvised Collection", an improvised evening of one-act plays in the style of a Brothers Grimm fairy tale.

"The original stories are not like the Disney movies," says veteran member Lynn Shields. "They're filled with murder, violence and bloodshed. They were really very grim!"

Artistic Director Kenn Adams, explains how it works: "The audience will make up the title and the first line of a Grimm-sounding fairy tale, and we'll start improvising from there. Since the fairy tales were originally published as collections, we'll improvise several different one-act fairy tales throughout the course of the show."

"We're doing the show in a really fun style called 'Story-Theatre'," explains veteran member Julie Stein. "The actors not only play all of the characters, but we also play all of the set-pieces and props. It's super-fun working with the ensemble to spontaneously become part of a mountain range or a haunted forest. Or, to suddenly have your arm turned into a sword for a giant-slayer."

"Story-Theatre" style of presenting fairy tales was created by Paul Sills, a co-founder of Chicago's The Second City, back in the 70's, using improvisational techniques that he learned from his mother, Viola Spolin. Sills is one of the creators of modern improvisational sketch comedy. Spolin was an early pioneer of improvisational theater here in the United States.

"It'll be funny, and exciting and maybe a bit gruesome", says Adams. "But there will always be a happy ending."

Synergy Theater brings "Spontaneous Brothers Grimm: The Improvised Collection" to the George and Vukasin Theatre at Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek.

Showtimes:
Thursday, April 18, 2019 – Saturday, April 20, 2019, at 8:15 pm and Sunday, April 21, 2019 at 3:15 pm. Tickets are available online for \$20 at www.lesherartscenter.org or call (925) 943-7469.



Out to Lunch

Giant Chef, A Culinary Trip to Yesteryear

by Richard Eber

Wearing a tattered baseball cap that proudly commemorates military service in Vietnam, Joe strolls into the Giant Chef Burger in Pleasant Hill to partake in his main meal of the day. Even before he can be seated, a waitress greets him by first name and places a glass of iced tea on the table to be enjoyed before his order is placed.

Like most of the regulars, Joe does not need a menu as it was memorized years ago. Any questions can be answered by a list of specials which are hand written on a chalkboard above the counter where the rolls are stacked.

Giant Chef is Pleasant Hill's oldest diner. Set your time machine back to the 1950's when this iconic restaurant was founded. In an era before the fast food took hold, customers relied on the



homemade biscuits and gravy.

The restaurant is also famous for their tasty burgers, which are cooked to your preference from rare to well done. The bacon cheeseburger is a delightful meat-generous meal. Burgers come with your choice of one additional item: fries, onion rings, or a cup of soup.

The Giant Chef under the guidance of longtime Chef Isidro makes stand-alone salads that are a meal in themselves. Their black and bleu with steak and chef salads are especially noteworthy.

You have a choice of two soups which change daily. Among the best I tasted were the Butternut Squash, Manhattan Fish Chowder, and Split Pea, which was filled with chunks of ham.

You may believe you're in comfort food kingdom until you go for dessert. Giant Chef's dessert menu compares to those fancy restaurants that describe their creations using complicated foreign words such as Crème Brûlée Cheesecake and Limoncello Mascarpone cake. As for me, the banana pudding with a hint of caramel hit the spot. It was a difficult choice between that and the cherry pie with a buttery crust topped by a generous scoop of vanilla ice cream.

A word to the wise, it is best to get your dessert fix early as they often run out by the early afternoon.

Bring cash. Cash is king here as the owners believe this helps keep prices down and quality high.

While the food at the Giant Chef Burger is in a class of its own, the best attribute of this restaurant is the friendliness and attentiveness shown to customers. Most of the servers

have been working there for over a decade. Led by Lila, who has been a fixture from its original ownership nearly 30 years ago. As the owners' proudly state, "a tradition of providing great food in a family atmosphere", the staff makes folks feel at home from the moment they step through the doors.

But don't take my word for it, the Internet is filled with raving reviews of this understated dining gem. Giant Chef is located at 10 Golf Course Road across from Sun Valley Mall.



Giant Chef to provide economical-heartily dining to satisfy their hunger after a long shift at the nearby oil refineries.

A day begins with breakfast, but here breakfast is served at all hours. The Giant Chef is open 24/7, closing only for a limited amount of time over the weekends.

Most notable is their hearty Eggs Benedict. This includes an English muffin which is buried under four pieces of Canadian bacon and two large poached eggs, topped by a perfect Hollandaise creation, served with a large portion of crispy hash brown potatoes. Like all their sauces and soups, their Hollandaise is made from scratch. No soup base can be found on the premises.

Omelets are prominent on the breakfast menu with a variety of around a dozen these huge 3-egg stuffed offerings. The French toast is remarkable with its blended flavors of cinnamon, butter, vanilla and maple syrup. Breakfast meats of thick cut bacon, sausage or ham are served in large portions.

When it comes to lunch and dinner, the specials change daily. They are all home cooked originals. These dishes vary from meat loaf, spaghetti and meatballs to pork chop Thursdays. Prime rib, served with creamy horse radish sauce and a baked potato, is offered bi-weekly. These specials are a throwback to the times when meat and potatoes dominated the dinner table.

The Giant Chef's signature dish is their chicken fried steak, an American classic. They tenderize their meat and season with spices then fry it with a special coating. The meal is served hot with mashed potatoes along with

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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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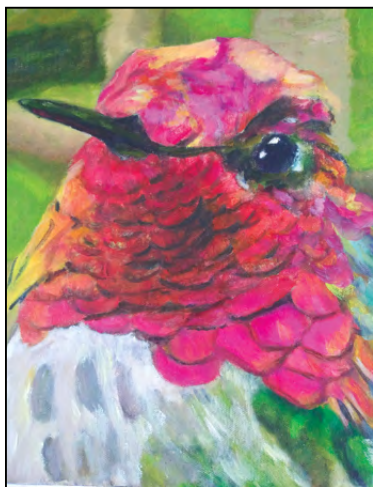
What is CC14? 14 Contra Costa Artists.

by Lisa Fulmer & Fro

Once upon a time, there were some mature adults who were hungry for learning and experiencing art classes in a serious environment. Some were beginners and some were already professional artists showing in exhibits and selling their work. So, these adventure seeking adults, some in their senior years and retired, went to a wonderful college with a fantastic art department where they felt welcomed. Diablo Valley College (DVC), our community college provided us with a world of opportunity, professional teachers, working studio space and wonderful critiques to make us better artists and help us develop our own styles. I am using "us" because I am one of these artists. Many times, these artists would cross paths by taking the same classes.



Spring Run by Jim Jordan



Hummingbird by FROgard

on a monthly basis as they rotated from one artists home to another. We would bring our work to a monthly critique session for advice and feedback. Our work continued to improve, our confidence grew, and we found our way in the "art world". Many of us have our own studios, away from home, and our own art businesses, ranging from web site building, art selling, gallery owning, curating and exhibiting in juried shows. When

asked, "What has CC14 meant to you?" Jim Jordan, a fellow CC14 artist, replied, "CC14 has given me a great opportunity to compare notes, get critiques, and show our work together."

Places CC14 has shown are the DVC Art Department Gallery, thanks to Scott Arthur King, director of that gallery, the DVC Library where many of us are now in their permanent collection, the Orinda Library, John Muir Hospital in Walnut Creek and the aRt Cottage. This group was "born" in the early 2000's with the suggestion and encouragement of one of our teachers, Lynette Montgomery and it is still in existence to date. We have grown to more than the original 14 but have kept the CC14 name.

'Mash-Up' Patsy Taylor Exhibit at Main Street Arts

This show will be the works of Patsy Taylor, Bay Area artist and teacher, and her students. The show is titled "Mash-Up", meaning a creative mixture of content from different sources. The show will run from April 3 to 30th. The gallery is hosting a wine and appetizer reception on April 6th from 4 to 7.

Patsy Taylor is an artist living in the East Bay. She has a Master of Fine Art degree from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco and has been teaching for over 10 years both privately and in community programs as well as workshops in other states. She paints both in the studio and en plein air.



As a teacher, Ms. Taylor is a firm believer in establishing foundations, and from there allowing creativity to flow. With this in mind, she teaches with the focus of individual development and exploration.

As an artist, she is mostly, although not solely, focused on landscape. She continues to strive to express the space between abstract and realism that allows the viewer to share in her love of the natural world.

Learn more about Patsy Taylor and her works at www.patsytaylor.com.

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



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Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue

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

Scotty is being fostered by NorCalPoodleRescue, Inc (NCPR). He is a white, 4 year-old 17-pound poodle/Bichon Frise mix. This exceptionally fun-loving dog is considered special needs because of a seizure disorder. He has a prescription that almost completely controls his disease as long as he gets his easy to deliver "liver-wurst ball" medicine twice a day (about \$40 a month). His medical condition does not interfere with one of his favorite activities: walks!

He is also a snuggle-bunny with a positive history with other dogs and isn't interested in cats. While he loves people, he can easily become overly attached to one family member. Therefore, he needs an experienced dog owner willing to set boundaries. He will have moderate grooming needs.

His adoption fee is \$300. If interested in Scotty, please fill out an adoption interest form: <http://www.norcalpoodlere-scue.net/adoptioninterestform.html>. NCPR hosts adoption events in Walnut Creek.

NCPR is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3). In addition to tax-deductible donations, you can support their rescue efforts by donating your car, sponsoring a poodle, or buying a calendar. Another option is to be a volunteer that answers their hotline (which can be done from home) or be someone who acts as driver to get dogs to appointments or from one foster home or from the kennel to another location. For more information email them at norcalpoodlere-scueinc@gmail.com.

Scotty



Dog Bites

"Pawsitive" News: Mt. Diablo Dog Training Club, Inc. is offering Rattle-snake Avoidance Training on Saturday, May 4. Keep your dog safe by avoiding snakes. Fees are \$85 for initial training or \$60 for reinforcement training if previously trained by Get Rattled or Natural Solutions. For more information go to www.mdtcc.org.

Concord dog owners and their furry friends can return to the Newhall Dog Park. The work there has been completed and it has reopened. Look for brand new turf for your pups to enjoy. The City thanks everyone "fur" your patience.

A Bone to Pick: Baldwin Park Dog Park will be closed until May 13 for turf maintenance.

[Ruby Dooby Do is Concord's Instagram celebrity with more than 78,000 followers. [Instagram.com/rubydooby_do](https://www.instagram.com/rubydooby_do). Special thanks to Jill Hedgecock, Program Coordinator, Mount Diablo Branch of the California Writers Club for her help in translating caninese for this article. www.jillhedgecock.com.]



David George THE NAKED GARDENER

NATURAL INSECT CONTROL

Night and day, the spring air is alive with the sounds of nature. Our bird friends call for a nesting mate. Pacific tree frogs (who don't live in trees) fill gardens with croaking - one starts up and they all join in. But birds and frogs do more than just create noise. They are important contributors to your garden's natural balance and pest control.

Insects by the millions awaken this time of year. Many species are beneficial to the health of our plants and some are vital. But others are downright annoying, especially the

biting or stinging bugs. Bites can become infected, and those bites can transmit diseases to humans and pets. Over the years, the chemical industry has brought to market many toxic insecticides sprays and fogs to kill off unwelcome insects in our yards and gardens.

What's wrong with this approach? Insecticides are proven to be toxic not only to annoying insects but to pets, children, beneficial insects, and most other wildlife. They generally fall into the category of neurotoxins, which means they can harm in sufficient quantity all nervous systems, including birds and mammals (us!). Even if you are not spraying your yard with neurotoxins, your neighbor's fog may be harming you. Even small

amounts can have an effect, especially on birds, small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians.

Let nature's creatures control annoying or harmful insects in your garden. Song birds eat tons of mosquitos, biting flies, gnats, and stinging bugs such as red centipedes. Turkeys and other ground-graz-

ing birds love to eat ticks. Frogs devour ants, flies, and mosquito larvae. Lady bugs and other predator bugs thrive on aphids. Western fence lizards consume flies, ticks, ants, and insect larvae. Lizards even have enzymes in their stomachs that kill the Lyme disease germ. At-

tract birds with feeders, frogs with water features, and lizards with leaf clutter and stick piles.

Avoid poisoning all of these beneficial garden creatures. All we need to do to stay safe and bite-free is to apply insect repellent before you go outdoors. The long-time favorite is DEET, but citronella and eucalyptus-based products are also effective. Numerous studies show applied repellents are not toxic to us, our kids, pets, or your garden's creatures. Throw out your insecticides and go naked!

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



farmerfresh

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

LOCAL HIVES HARVESTED FOR PURE HONEY

We don't think much about bees, except when we get bothered by them buzzing around us, but you couldn't have a handful of almonds or a bowl of sweet cherries without them.

Bees are a very important link between fresh fruits and you. They provide the pollination for orchard trees and vegetables which results in fertilization so fruit can develop.

Through that process they produce honey. Honey starts as flower nectar collected by thousands of bees. This nectar is taken back to the hive where it is passed to other bees. This liquid nectar is broken down into simple sugars as it is regurgitated by the bees several times and finally placed in the honeycomb. Then many bees set to work fanning the honeycomb with their wings to speed up the process of evaporation to make the thick liquid honey we put in our tea. The honeycomb itself is made as bees consume the nectar/honey. As they digest it, the honey is converted into wax through a series of glands on the bee's abdomen.

Honey's color and flavor varies based on the nectar collected by the bees. For example, honey made from orange blossom nectar might be light in color, whereas honey from the avocado tree or from wildflowers might have a dark amber color.

A hive can produce a surplus of honey each year of over 60 pounds. Beekeepers harvest it by collecting the honeycomb frames and remove it.

After the honey is extracted, it's strained to remove any remaining wax and other particles. Some beekeepers and bottlers might heat the honey to make this process easier, but that doesn't alter the

liquid's natural composition.

After straining, they bottle, label and bring it to you. If the ingredient label says "pure honey," it means that nothing was added from the bee to the bottle.

You'll find honey from Alvarado Apiary whose bees pollinate from Oakland to Brentwood and Concord's MarElla Honey Bees which gather their nectar from the surrounding area at a local Farmer's Market. You can be assured that these beekeepers bring you only pure local honey with no added ingredients.

Easy Honey Mustard Vinaigrette Salad Dressing
4 tablespoons honey
3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1/3 cup olive oil
1 lemon, juiced about 1/4 cup
Salt and pepper to taste

Place all ingredients in a re-sealable glass jar and shake well. Check for seasoning and adjust accordingly. Serve over salad greens immediately or store in an air-tight refrigerated container for up to 10 days. Recipe: Debra Morris, PCFMA



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Managing Hard Conversations Over Long-Term Care

by Christine Sevier

As a Senior Living Advocate, I often meet many family caregivers on the verge of a nervous breakdown. These amazing people are doing their best to juggle family, life and work. All while taking on the loving, yet exhausting duty of managing their aging loved one's care needs. This is more than one person can handle without a support network.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports 70 percent of seniors aged 65 years and older will require some form of long-term care. The reality is, we (the family), need to pick up the pieces and manage our loved one's care needs as they age. So, it is best to have the discussion regarding the next level of care for your loved one sooner rather than later. I am continuously asked for tips on how to have this tough discussion.

Here is my advice:

Honesty is always best, even when it is uncomfortable.

Be empathic, listen actively and take concerns seriously.

Include the whole family. Involve your loved ones, someone may be willing to step up and share caregiving duties, you won't know until you ask.

Be honest in what you are willing to take on and what you are not.

Put your emotions aside.

Go into this conversation prepared.

Research prices of in-home care and assisted living communities in your area.

Involve your loved one in the process. Ask what they would prefer. How would they feel with having a caregiver in their home? Take them to lunch at your local assisted living community.

You may be surprised at how engaged and happy the residents are, in some of these assisted living communities. Many places have a great selection of activities and scheduled outings. Assisted living communities are no longer operated with the institutional settings we have seen in the past. In fact, you might be surprised at how wonderful these communities are. Image the Ritz Carlton meets nursing care. Some communities have fine dining, libraries, theaters, craft rooms, ted talks, the great course lectures, book signings, day trips and so much more.

Don't put off the evitable and have a family discussion on what your loved one's long term care should look like. If you need further assistance with exploring this topic Join Creating New Hope May 7th at 6:00pm to Atria Assisted Living 1400 Montego, Walnut Creek, CA to continue the conversation.

Hillendale Home Care Receives 2019 Leader in Excellence Award

For the second time, Walnut Creek's Hillendale Home Care has received the Leader in Excellence Award by Home Care Pulse. Home Care Pulse is the home care industry's leading firm in performance benchmarking and quality satisfaction management, serving hundreds of home care business across North America. It is the industry's top resource for education, business development, agency certification, and proof of quality, including the prestigious Best of Home Care Awards.

This award was granted to 123 home care providers in the United States, and Hillendale Home Care is the lone home care agency in the Bay Area to receive this award.

The title of "Leader in Excellence" is awarded annually to select providers have achieved top scores based on client and caregiver satisfaction ratings throughout the year. To qualify for this award, 10% of Hillendale's clients and caregivers were interviewed each month by Home Care Pulse. Over a 12-month period, Hillendale Home Care received high ratings in client satisfaction in areas of caregiver training, compassion of caregivers, communication, response to problems, overall quality of care.

In addition to the Leader in Excellence Award, Hillendale also received the Provider of Choice and Employer of Choice award for 2019. These awards place Hillendale Home Care among the best in the nation as rated by their clients and caregivers.

Hillendale Home Care was founded by Bridget Waller, RN in 2002 when she opened the Walnut Creek office. In 2007, Waller recognized a need for well-trained caregivers and established the Hillendale Home Care Certified Nurse Aide Training school.

Since the school's inception, Hillendale has trained over 800 students to prepare them to take the State of California's CNA certification test, and to date, they have a 98% pass rate! Because of the success of the school training program and their strong commitment towards caregiving excellence, Hillendale Home Care is considered to have the best trained team of caregivers in the area by many.

Hillendale Home Care's mission is committed to maximizing the independence and autonomy of their clients while remaining in the comfort of their home.



computercorner

by William Claney, Tech Writer, Computers USA

Tech in English

Shoddy Tech Reveal at Office Depot

And if it wasn't bad enough that Scams proliferate the Internet with ransomware, fake alerts, pop-ups and virus, now the very people one depends upon for help have gone rogue and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) have busted them.

Welcome to my World.

Headline from the FTC web site, "Office Depot and Tech Support Firm Will Pay \$35 Million to Settle FTC Allegations That They Tricked Consumers into Buying Costly Computer Repair Services."

If you are not a Cyber Security subscriber you're in for a big hurt. Most users have experienced fake anti-virus scans while visiting some web pages. A window pops open with a very quick and official looking scan which takes place in the window and quickly the conclusion is you are infected. Call the 800-number provided and be connected to a tech who will fix your issue. If you don't act now, they are going to disable your computer so you can't infect the network any longer. What a load of BS, but people fall for it. So, in my view, the fix-it people have invented their own scam. Let me say it again, unless you have a first rate anti-virus checker like the one ComputersUSA recommends you will get scammed.*

According to the FTC, "The complaint alleges that Office Depot and Support.com (Office Depot's computer tech co.) configured the [their] PC Health Check Program to report that the scan found malware symptoms or infections whenever consumers answered yes to at least one of these four questions, despite

the fact that the scan had no connection to the 'malware symptoms' results."

"Is your computer running slow?" was one of the questions asked on their survey. If you answered yes, they would inform you that you had been infected then charged \$300.00 to fix it. They never really ran a virus program to officially determine a threat existed.

This is wrong in so many ways starting with a gross violation of trust between the company and their customers to suggest that any slowdown in computer performance is automatically a virus or malware attack. The sheer ignorance of the techs involved not to consider hard drive issues like the drive is too full or failing, lack of resources (computer power i.e. RAM or CPU) to run a program, or user perception of what is or what isn't "fast". Not to mention the outright rip-off of charging so damn much and not actually checking for a virus.

So much for trusting the big guys, perhaps a smaller, local, more reliable company would be better, one where the customer actually meets the techs?

*Shameless plug: This is what real protection looks like, visit www.shopcusa.com or www.mycyberguards.com for real protection for under ten dollars a month. If you use our product and get infected with a real virus, malware, or any other malicious code, we will fix it for free. Better than Office Depot, err, Depot, better than Norton, better than McAfee, Nod, Kaspersky, and any other you can come up with.

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Bridget Waller (right) photo Hillendale.net

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by Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate
www.BuyStageSell.com

6 Things a Buyer Never Asks for in a Home

Popcorn ceilings (acoustic ceilings). NEVER has a buyer asked to have this type ceiling. This type ceiling was typically installed in the 60's and 70's meaning that they are now 50-60 years old, and usually full of dust and dirt and smoke and/or whatever else that has accumulated over that long period of time. Often discolored and/or painted over, they are not on any buyer list of must-haves. Some may contain a percentage of asbestos, although many do not. Regardless they cause worry for buyers and detract from the other features of the home. Fortunately, although a bit messy to remove, it can be done in the course of a week.

Wallpaper borders. Typically, they are very personalized to your furniture or décor (except for kids' bedrooms) and new buyers have their own theme which your favorite wallpaper does not match. Buyers are also skeptical that removing them is more work than a simple paint job and it may discourage them from wanting to take it on.

Formica. Formica anywhere, counters, cabinets, floors, etc., is unpopular. Once a great invention 50 years ago, the newer varieties and lower cost of products such as, granite, quartz, marble, and water-proof engineered wood, laminate and other flooring have upgraded the look and feel of surfaces formerly of Formica.

Mirror wall tiles – What can I say, mirror tiles date the look of a home, and the 50-year-old wood paneling has also been replaced by shiplap and other wall surfaces which are a more modern iteration of the originals.

Heavy drapes and cornices – Same as

above, the newer favored window coverings are typically wood blinds, plantation shutters, light draperies if any, or fabric and other decorator shades that disappear into their header.

Fake brick fireplaces or on any walls. Just don't do it. There are many fireplace rehab ideas on places like Houzz and Pinterest.

I have a list of vendors that can help with any or all of the changes that will modernize a home when removing any of these items. Most of the above are remnants of the good old 60's, 70's and maybe 80's or most commonly "grandma's" house. Depending on the buyer, many of these products may not even be familiar to them. However, even the Boomers and in between generations are among those buyers who want a more updated home that is move-in ready. Many of these things are in the category of "if it's not broken, why fix it".

If you are thinking about selling your home, making improvements in these areas over time will earn you more when you sell your home. You can do it now, do it over time, or do it later. At some point "just do it" will be the mantra as your home becomes your biggest asset. The value added by doing one or all of them will come back to you as you move on to the next home purchase. Call a realtor who knows.

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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COBBLE YOUR SPRING

Spring always brings us the best selection of berries. Fresh, sweet and tart, they are so versatile for baking...or to just pop in our mouths. Blackberries can be a little on the tart side sometimes, but they make a fabulous cobbler, especially when served warm with either heavy cream poured on top or whipping cream. Most people stick with making apple or peach cobblers, but it's fun to branch out with a berry one. Try this beauty out to the delight of your Easter gathering (also delicious on all other days).

Blackberry Cobbler

- 1 cup flour (you can use Gluten free also)
- 1 ¼ sugar
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 6 TBSP cold butter
- ¼ boiling water
- 2 TBSP cornstarch
- ¼ cup cold water
- 1 TBSP lemon juice
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 4 cups fresh blackberries (rinsed and drained well)

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Lightly spray an 8x8 baking dish with



cooking spray. In a large bowl, mix the flour, ½ cup of sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut in the butter until it resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in the ¼ cup of boiling water until it's mixed evenly.

In a separate bowl, dissolve the cornstarch in the ¼ cup cold water, mix in the lemon juice, vanilla and cinnamon. Mix in the remaining ½ cup of sugar and the blackberries. Transfer the berry mixture to your baking dish, place in the oven for 8 minutes. Remove and drop your dough by spoonfuls. Place your dish on a baking sheet (to prevent spills) and bake for 22-25 mins, until the dough is golden brown. Enjoy!

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JOURNEYMAN'S JOURNAL

by Scott Feuer

TALES FROM THE TRAIL

Point Reyes National Seashore

Who wouldn't enjoy the unique experience of spending time in a scenic backcountry wilderness hiking amongst wildflowers, dense forests, and indigenous wildlife with the bonus of sleeping under the stars? I know I certainly would.

Point Reyes National Seashore is an incredible natural sanctuary managed by the National Park Service. With over 150 miles of coastal hiking trails and a variety of backcountry hike-in campsites, Point Reyes National Seashore is a perfect destination for first-time backpackers as well as seasoned hikers. The diverse network of trails offers endless routes tailored to your liking from short jaunts to full multi-day overnights.

A year ago, I googled the park map and charted a 61-mile loop hike through fern forests, sandy beaches, and open meadows over three fun-filled days. Read along for a virtual hike as I narrate my backpacking route and share a few tales from the trail as if you were there with me. I hope it inspires you to create a backpacking adventure of your own this spring.

Day 1 – I ditched the car at the Bear Valley Visitor Center parking lot and picked up a reserved backcountry permit. For starters, I eased into the first day by looping around the interpretive Earthquake Trail and learn about the rich geological history of the San Andreas Fault directly beneath my feet.

The path along the Rift Zone Trail runs along the fault line. This leads to two separated fences, the epicenter of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. The Pacific plate land mass had moved 16 feet to the north in a matter of seconds. Looking at the displaced fence line, I can't fathom the immense power of that!

Hoping the fault doesn't slip again, I meandered along the narrow footpath through the shaded forests, open fields, and cow pastures (yes, I was walking among the cows) and connect with Olema Valley Trail at the Five Brooks trailhead.



Montbretia Flowers, a naturalized hybrid from France, punctuate the thin ribbon of trail



16 foot fence displacement from the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake. San Andreas Fault-amazing.

Pine Gulch is a beautiful tree-lined creek. When I arrived, I replenished my water supply using a filter. It is always recommended to bring a water filter. This was a good spot to enjoy lunch before the steep ascent

up Teixeira Trail.

Huffing and puffing up the single-track path, you might experience sharp stinging sensations on lower extremities. I certainly did. While hiking through this slightly overgrown trail, I was being injected with what felt like many small hypodermic needles shooting into my legs from the offensive stinging nettle plant. It's a harmless plant, but painful nonetheless, so I recommend wearing hiking pants or slip on your rain gear on this leg of your journey.

Once to the top of the incline, I followed the Ridge Trail north under the dense forest canopy through the ferns catching occasional views of the Pacific Ocean.

I had my headlamp and jacket ready. The sun goes down fast and with the breezy coastal air, conditions change abruptly... to dark and cold. I stumbled onward to the day's planned destination, Glen Camp, for a well-deserved night of relaxation and a dehydrated hot meal which have become so popular among outdoor enthusiasts. I particularly recommend Mountain House's Homestyle Turkey Dinner Casserole. The rehydrated tryptophan infused turkey is guaranteed to make you sleepy after a day's lengthy hike of 20.7 miles and 2,910 ft. of elevation gain.

Day 2 – This stretch required a full day's effort. So, I woke up early and hit the dew-covered Glen Trail to Stewart Trail and headed downhill to Wildcat Camp for a water break. However, rather than hanging out at the unprotected and windy campsite tables, a better option was to go down to the ocean for a spectacular beachcombing experience.

Strolling up and down the shoreline along the sandy beach, watching the powerful crashing waves and admiring wind-eroded sandstone bluffs was quite satisfying to experience. It was breezy so I rolled out my sleeping pad to warm in the sun and heated up a cup of instant coffee and absorb the tranquility of the seashore and its majestic beauty.

But there is a lot of ground to cover still, so I didn't stay long.

I picked up the Coast Trail via the Ocean Lake Loop and headed south along the vibrant orange California poppy covered bluffs.

In about 1.5 miles, I reached Alamere Falls trail junction. I scrambled down to the bluff edge to observe the spilling pools of water feeding the renowned Alamere Falls cascading 30 feet over the cliff to the beach below. Waterfalls are such a hiker's panacea. I took it all in and then returned to the Coast Trail.

The trail led me past a few freshwater lakes before taking me seaside for another break at Palomarin Beach. This was a fantastic spot to enjoy a seashore lunch. I brought bag tuna, cheese sticks, and mayo wrapped in a spinach tortilla



topped off with beef jerky for dessert (a traditional backpacking fare!). These were calories needed for the remainder of the day.

From Palomarin Beach, I backtracked a bit via the Coast Trail to Wildcat Camp. The wildflowers and ocean views were worth the return trek. This was a good spot to top off your water supply before the hot afternoon climb up and over the ridge to the Bear Valley/Baldy trail junction. Baldy Trail is steep, but thankfully no stinging nettle plants to navigate through there, at least during this trip.

Once again, I got caught at sundown while still on the trail, but I experienced an amazing sunset. By the time I reached

the end of Baldy Trail, the forest was completely dark, yet I still had three miles of hiking to reach camp. Alone and headlamp on full power beaming through the developing fog, I was a little jumpy making my way along the creepy ink-black forest trail. Scanning side to side, the reflective light from my headlamp illuminated only the silvery white eyes of critters that were staring me down as I passed. I repeatedly kept telling myself "it's only deer, it's only deer, only deer."

I reached Sky Camp unscathed and found the perfect pine needled covered open area and decided to cowboy camp (a backpacker's term for sleeping without a tent in the open night air). After a quick dinner of rehydrated Chicken Fajitas and Oreo cookies for dessert, I tucked myself into my sleeping quilt and fell asleep under the brilliant star-filled night sky. This day's feat was a formidable 25.0 miles and 4,800 ft. of elevation gain.

Day 3 – This day was not as demanding, so I took some time to savor the morning, leisurely sipping hot coffee and enjoying breakfast as the sun slowly warms the morning air. On this day, I headed north on Sky Trail to Bayview Trail and then swung around southwest along the Laguna Trail.

This took me through the spectacular open meadow at the Clem Miller Environmental Education Center. On the way to Coast Camp, there were plenty of exposed rock formations to appreciate.

Young trees, and sporadic tree snags tell the tale of a forest slowly recovering from the devastating 1995 Mount Vision fire. Birds and wildflowers are abundant

on this segment of trail and there is little shade. Sunscreen and sunglasses are a must, but the downhill ascent is truly gratifying.

Coast Camp is tucked behind the bluffs, but it does have beach access for another opportunity to beachcomb and take a seaside coffee break. Coast Camp was also an ideal place to fill up on water before heading southeast where it winds in and out of the hillside ravines for 3.8 miles.

Upon reaching Bear Valley Trail, I visit Arch Rock (or should I call it the collapsed Arch Rock). Regrettably, back in May of 2015, Arch Rock crumbled to the ground taking the life of one hiker and critically injuring another who were

on the top of the arch at the time. Although the trail to Arch Rock is closed, you can still see the amazing jagged rock sea cliffs and pounding surf from Coast Trail just south of Bear Valley Trail.

There is a perfect place to gather with fellow hikers just off the path to break for lunch and socialize

a bit. The views are simply incredible.

The last four-mile stretch back to the car on Bear Valley Trail, in my opinion, was more of a reentry stage back to civilization. You will pass many day-hikers of all ages and a few bicyclists along this wide portion of trail as you complete the final day's 15.1 miles and 1,270 elevation gain journey home.

I savored this time to reflect on my adventurous three days exploring this wonderful coastal National Park.

I invite you to experience the beauty of Point Reyes National Seashore on foot. Map out your own backpacking route this spring, pack your gear, and ditch your car. Adventure awaits you! More detailed information on Point Reyes National Seashore can be found on the National Park Service's website <https://www.nps.gov/pore/index.htm>



CLAYCORD® NEWS & TALK

In case you missed it...

DMV Introduces Self-Service Kiosk in Concord Office

DMV has introduced self-service terminals (SST) at many local grocery stores around the state of California, but unfortunately, the only SST in central Contra Costa County is at the DMV field office on Diamond Blvd. in Concord.

You can pay your vehicle registration and get your registration sticker printed in minutes at the SST.

Look for the kiosk nearest you: <http://bit.ly/2xuh21D>



No Professional Baseball Will Be Played in Martinez This Year

There will be no professional baseball in Martinez in 2019, as efforts to find a new owner for the Martinez Clippers were unsuccessful, city officials said.

This comes after the owners of the Clippers, which had played in the Pacific Association of Professional Baseball Clubs for one season in 2018, filed for bankruptcy. Benicia-based DC Solar Inc., owned by Jeff and Paulette Carpoof of Martinez, was the Clippers' owner this past season.

DC Solar has even larger problems. The FBI raided the Carpoofs' home and business in December in connection with an \$800 million Ponzi scheme in which the FBI alleges the Carpoofs took money from investors in solar generators, allegedly investing some of that money for personal use and using new investors' money to repay earlier investors.

The city said in February the license agreement with the Clippers was terminated because DC Solar didn't pay fees for using city-owned Field 3 at Waterfront Park, the Clippers' home field for the 2018 season.

"...we are optimistic for the future of

pro baseball in Martinez and expect the topic to be revisited in the fall," Martinez Mayor Rob Schroder said in a statement.

The Pacific Association of Professional Baseball Clubs still has teams in Napa, Pittsburg, San Rafael, Sonoma and Vallejo.

Lindsay Wildlife Rehabilitation Hospital Will No Longer Take Wild Turkeys

After a reported case of Virulent Newcastle Disease (vND) on March 13 in Redwood City, Lindsay Wildlife Rehabilitation Hospital will no

longer accept injured or baby wild turkeys at the accession hospital desk.

Any member of the public who brings in turkeys will be stopped at the front door to protect both Lindsay's avian animal ambassadors as well as birds in care at the hospital, according to hospital officials.

Anyone who sees or finds an injured turkey should call their county animal services department.

Newcastle Disease is a nearly-always fatal respiratory infection in poultry that can spread to other birds. There is no cure, and the only way to stop the virus and eradicate the disease is to euthanize birds, according to medical professionals. Chickens are the most commonly associated bird with this disease, but other birds, such as turkeys, pheasants, quail, parrots and parakeets may be at a higher risk of developing and transmitting the disease.

The California Department of Fish & Wildlife issued a warning and protocol recommendations to all wildlife rehabilitators on March 19.

Building a Better View of Moorhen Marsh

Otters, birds, and turtles might be the last animals you would expect to find living next door to the Interstate 680 toll-plaza. But, tucked between the freeway, an oil refinery and a wastewater facility hides an oasis on the mend.

"This marsh is really rare to even be here sustaining life," said California Conservation Corpsmember Sarai Ayala.

She's one of a few dozen Corpsmembers from the California Conservation Corps who camped for several weeks, on-site, at Mt. View Sanitary District's Moorhen Marsh in Martinez to help develop public access to the marsh.

"We're building this viewing platform to help people get closer to the habitat, to the otters and turtles that swim around



and installed the walking deck and handrails. The crews worked so quickly they finished construction several weeks ahead of schedule.

The boardwalk allows visitors, especially elementary school students, to get out over the water and closer to the newly constructed islands where birds nest and turtles bask in the sun on strategically placed logs.

"We usually have between 1,400 and 1,600 school kids come out each year to explore Moorhen Marsh," Davidson said. "We really wanted to create something of a destination for students and the general public to view native wildlife in Martinez."

Ayala added, "The platforms give you another perspective to see the marsh. It's another way to admire the ponds and all the natural habitats that are here."

The project didn't just build a viewing platform and boardwalk. It also created a partnership between MVSD and the CCC's Delta Center in Stockton. The district is exploring the possibility of contracting with the CCC to do regular maintenance on the newly enhanced wetland.

"We were just so impressed with how efficient the crews were, how professional they were," Davidson said. "The CCC provides a real 'bang for your buck', which is important to our rate-payers. And, we fully support the mission of the CCC."

And the Corpsmembers enjoyed the opportunity to not just experience the wildlife up close, but to contribute to the Contra Costa County community while learning new work skills.

"You definitely don't expect to do the kind of work you do here," Ayala said. "But you're growing and getting knowledge that will lead to a good job after the CCC."



here," Ayala said.

The 21-acre constructed wetland is in the middle of an industrial zone and is part of the Mt. View Sanitary District Wastewater Treatment Plant.

"It's the very first wetland on the west coast to use treated wastewater to create wetlands," explained MVSD District Biologist Kelly Davidson. "This is the first significant enhancement of the marsh since it was built in the 1970s."

The enhancement project included the rebuilding of levees, improving the habitat for the western pond turtle and several bird species, and upgrading visitor amenities. Equipped with measuring tapes, saw blades, and drills, CCC Delta Center Corpsmembers focused on building a new ADA boardwalk and viewing platform.

"We started off a little slow to make sure we had our measurements and cuts all done the right way," said Ayala.

Then over the course of several weeks, a rotating cadre of Corpsmembers sawed boards, anchored them to the pillars,



Now complete, the boardwalk and viewing platform allow visitors and school children to easily cross the marsh and watch the wildlife

Concord Community Pool Reopens

Grab your bathing suit, towel and goggles – the Concord Community Pool (3501 Cowell Road) is now open! Thanks to a recent replastering project, which was completed in March – a month ahead of schedule – and a pool deck renovation that was done in spring of 2018, Concord swimmers have their pool back and it's better than ever!

The recent Pool Plaster Replacement project fully replaced the plaster, pool tile, and perimeter drain grate. The pool has been closed to the public since December of 2018.

The useful life of pool plaster is approximately 10 to 15 years. The Community Pool's old plaster was installed in 2004 and was showing signs of aging.

Serving approximately 124,000 swimmers per year, the Community Pool is Concord's only public swimming pool and offers a variety of programs throughout the year, such as swimming lessons, lap and recreation swimming, deep water workouts, water polo, life-guard training, and more. The pool also hosts the Terrapins Swim Team and various swim competitions.



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Clayton Valley Charter School Scheible Says...

Clayton Valley Charter High School Executive Director

The recent college admissions scandal was a shock to the country – a stark reminder of the obstacles and competitiveness high school students face as they pursue higher education opportunities beyond the 12th grade.

Here at Clayton Valley Charter High School, our students are gaining their college acceptance the right way – by earning it. We have an amazing team, including a college and career counselor, who are dedicated to helping our students be the most prepared candidates for college.

The criteria for acceptance into four-year universities is higher than ever. In order for Clayton Valley students to access these schools, College and Career Counselor Cindy Edwards realized our school had to be proactive.

“Students aren’t getting into the top-tier colleges as easy as they used to,” Edwards said. “It’s not simply about your GPA anymore. College admission exams are now more prevalent, and our kids need a competitive approach.”

In response, the CVCHS Governing Board of Directors instituted several initiatives to improve access for students.

CVCHS is underwriting the cost of Advanced Placement (AP) exams for

students in need of financial assistance. These tests are the culmination of year-long AP college-level courses taken at CVCHS. By subsidizing the cost of AP exams, we are expanding the number of opportunities our students have to earn college credit or advanced placement in their college courses. This year, CVCHS students have signed up for over 1,200 exams – an increase of 42% from 2018. Of the 652 students who will take the exam, 167 applied for financial assistance through the school totaling \$26,174.

CVCHS hosted our first-time Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) workshop. All interested students and families received support completing their FAFSA paperwork. While free, it is not necessarily easy. Having this workshop on campus, staffed with volunteers from the California Student Aid Commission, allowed our families access to all of the federal and state financial aid they are qualified for, and thus making college more affordable.

CVCHS is giving all sophomores the opportunity to take the Pre-ACT test at no cost. This practice test will give our students insight into a potential score for the official ACT. In addition, CVCHS has now been designated as an ACT test site.

Studies prove that students test better in the comfort of their home campus.

CVCHS launched SAT and ACT test preparation courses for all interested juniors. The multi-course program will take place over several months and be offered to more students, with a focus on those who are academically underperforming. The SAT and ACT test scores are used for college admissions decisions and awarding merit-based scholarships.

Studies demonstrate the more time students spend preparing for college admissions exams, the better they’ll do. It’s our responsibility to convince students to start preparing early. We want all of our graduates to be eligible for college and these new initiatives will help our students succeed.

“The college admission process is incredibly competitive,” said Edwards. “I’m



thrilled we are putting our resources toward opportunities that will open doors by removing obstacles and allowing our students to showcase their brilliance. I believe this support will allow more students to demonstrate just how much they can achieve.”

Photo: CVCHS students, Tien Tran and Rachel Dong, preparing for SAT exams.

Clayton Valley Woman's Club Reads to Silverwood Elementary School Students



Pictured from L to R: Aleta Huck, Priscilla Manlove, Connie Weimar, Betsy Rafal, Linda Garden, Patty Parodi and Maggie Gardner

National Education Association’s (NEA) Read Across America was born in May of 1997. It is an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading on March 2, the birthday of beloved children’s author Dr. Seuss. The Purpose of Read Across America is to motivate children to read. Research has shown that children who spend more time reading do better in school.

In cities and towns across the nation, teachers, teenagers, librarians, politicians, actors, athletes, parents, grandparents, and others develop NEA’s Read Across America activities to bring reading excitement to children of all ages.

Here, on Monday, March 4, members of the Clayton Valley Woman’s Club participated in the “Read Across

America” event by donating and reading books to Silverwood Elementary students. CVWC shared their love of reading with students in grades 1-3, an annual celebration both members and the students enjoy.

Clayton Valley Woman’s Club is a nonprofit organization of community-minded women who volunteer and raise funds for community organizations and scholarships at Diablo Valley College. Guests are invited to Club meetings the second Tuesday of each month, except July and August, at St. John’s Episcopal Church at 5555 Clayton Road in Clayton. Call Linda at 415-652-3503 or Sheila at 925-672-7947 to learn how much fun these ladies have helping others. You can also go to www.claytonvalleywomensclub.org for more information about the club.

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