

APRIL 2021  
PRICELESS

# The Hybrid School Experience pg.2



Zach, Nick, and Tyler Gourlay each exercise their Hybrid School options. It's all good to them.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Shouldn't Jean Yokotobi be angry? pg.12
- **The Right Stuff: The Making of Diabetic Alert Dogs** pg.5
- Legal briefs: Be Careful What You Post pg.10
- **Point Lobos: Nature Reserve, the Crown Jewel of State Parks** pg.14
- Women's History Month: Salute to Concord Women Standouts pg.15

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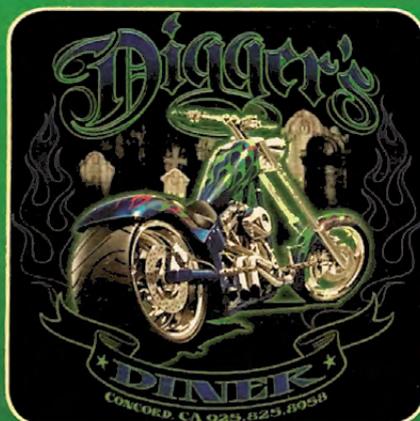
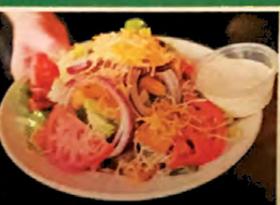
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# Hybrid school brings relief for many families

Families are expressing lots of relief to anxieties on schooling options. On the cover, brothers Zack, Nick and Tyler Gourlay present their plans for the next hurdle of their education, hybrid school, which was rolled out at the end of March. They each like their options which are:

Preschool through 2nd grade and SDC classes will have an option to return to their school to attend in-person Learning Support sessions.

Students in grades 3-12 will have an option to return to their school to attend In-person Learning Support sessions. Families should look for daily scheduling information to come from their school's leadership.

A 100% distance learning model will continue to be an option for all families.

It is called a "hybrid" because the District is offering students Distance Learning and In-person, on-campus learning. Some students will remain Distance Learning students. Other students will become "Hybrid Learning students."

Bargaining units (employees) will communicate to the District their preference of the following and the District shall assign them to one model or the other:

1. Preference for In-Person Learning
2. Open to either model
3. Preference for Distance Learning
4. Strong preference for Distance Learning - If assigned as a Hybrid Educator, may request unpaid leave.
5. Request for reasonable accommodations under American Disabilities Act (ADA) for Distance

Learning due to high-risk health condition of self or request due to the high-risk health condition of a household member has been granted or temporarily granted.

It appears that most staff members will be fully vaccinated by the end of April, and California recently announced that all people sixteen and older can begin getting vaccinated. So, things are rapidly looking up.

All students and staff arriving on campus will be confirmed daily to have no symptoms or exposure. On campus, masks and physical distancing will be required, in alignment with health authorities' recommendations. Despite authorities' announcements that distance only needs to be three feet, the safety protocols for Mt. Diablo Unified School District will remain at 6 feet per their agreement and planning with the teacher's union.

School administration have been busy preparing school sites to be as safe as possible for staff and students. Boxes upon boxes of personal protection equipment (PPE) have been shipped to schools, ready for use. Sanitary supplies are stocked, campuses have installed safety signage, protocols are in place, and classrooms have been properly arranged for physical distancing.

MERV-13 air filters have been installed at all possible locations at all school sites district-wide. All in all, a combination of health-conscious behavior, well-defined safety protocols, and a strong cleaning regimen gives one confidence about campuses' health safety.

Getting back to classrooms for in-person support is a relief for just about all parties involved. For those thinking ahead to the Fall 2021, (next school year), an in-person learning option will be offered to families and schools will continue to follow public health authorities' recommendations.

**MDUSD and Teachers Union: Planning Efforts Underway for Full-Time Reopening in Fall 2021**

In a joint statement to district families, Mt. Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD) and Mt. Diablo Education Association (MDEA) leaders offered assurance, describing planning efforts for a return to full time in-person instruction in the fall, with distance learning as a continuing option. More details on this option and the application process will be provided later this spring.

"While we truly hope that we are putting the worst of the pandemic behind us...be vigilant. We encourage everyone to wash your hands frequently, continue to wear masks in public, stay home if you have symptoms, and avoid close contact where possible," Superintendent Dr. Adam Clark & MDEA President Anita Johnson stated in a press release regarding 2021-2022 school year.



Courtesy of Mount Diablo Unified School District

# City offers \$1 million in rent relief for small businesses

The Concord City Council has approved \$1 million in funding to create a commercial rent relief program for local businesses. The Measure V Commercial Rent Relief Program will provide one-time grants of \$10,000 to local small businesses that have experienced considerable financial challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funded by Measure V sales tax revenue, the program will provide a total of \$1 million in commercial rent relief for up to 95 small businesses within the city. The City of Concord and Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce are working together to administer the program.

To apply to the program, small businesses must have at least \$10,000 in commercial rent arrears accumulated due to the pandemic and meet the eligibility requirements listed below. Priority will be given to retail businesses, restaurants and personal service establishments, specifically hair salons and barber shops, nail salons, day spas and fitness studios. Grant recipients will receive a commercial rent relief grant of \$10,000, paid directly to the landlord. The grant does not have to be paid back. However, both tenants and landlords are required to participate in the grant application. All businesses that meet the eligibility requirements are welcome to apply. Chamber members will not receive priority.

Applications open Monday, April 26 at 8 a.m. and close on Friday, May 14 at 5 p.m. Applicants will receive a status notification by email on Friday, May 21.

On Wednesday, April 21 at 2 p.m., the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce will host a webinar to help small business owners and landlords better understand the program and complete their applications.



To be eligible for the program, businesses must have:

- A physical location within Concord city limits;
- An active Concord business license issued no later than June 30, 2020;
- No more than 25 employees as of June 30, 2020;
- At least \$10,000 in commercial rent arrears from March 31, 2020 to March 31, 2021, consistent with the Concord Eviction Moratorium; and
- A commercial lease showing the business as the master tenant.

To receive funding through the program, landlords must:

- Apply grant funds to applicant's rent arrears immediately upon request;
- Declare intent to continue leasing tenant in current space through 2021;
- Attest that reported rent arrears are deferred payments consistent with the Concord Eviction Moratorium;
- Attest the applicant is a master leased tenant at the business address provided;
- Provide the Concord business license number; and
- Sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) confirming all the above information at the time of application.

For more information on the program and to stay up to date on all the latest news and resources available, visit the Commercial Rent Relief Program page on the City of Concord's website: <https://concordfirst.com/>.

## Letter to the City of Concord

# Loved, Known, and Not Alone

The experiences I have are just a different perspective, and is a valid perspective. I have been encouraged to hear some of the Council speaking of the Homeless by their names, Robert, Mikey, etc. What I do is a choice to make Homeless persons know that someone cares and is not going to give up on them.

Property our homeless neighbors sleep and live on is often private, public i.e. state, city, county, Bart, PG&E, etc.

What we need to do is make clear where the homeless can live and /or sleep. It is in the public's interest to find multiple places where the homeless can rest peacefully and securely; places that might have public help in clean up also.

Making choices to help the homeless people does not have to be something that harms others or hurts neighborhoods. So many buildings in Concord are vacant, can you help us? We could have multiple drop-in centers around Concord; places to get out of the weather, drink a cup of coffee, wash their hands and face and a place to connect with professional help. (They

need) places where they know they are not alone.

So very many homeless persons are getting sick under the stress of being kicked around from place to place. Not only are they getting sick, but some are getting hurt, hands, feet and face. Many have battle wounds from living on the street, and will continue to find themselves handicapped for life until the day they die.

Everybody wants a solution for the homeless population. I believe we should have a drop-in clinic for Concord's homeless, mentally ill, alcohol abusers, and drug abusers, to help them on fast track for recovery. The sweeps aren't the solution, (and) are stressing the unsheltered even more, making the situation of homelessness more unbearable for all.

I will meet with you. Tomorrow I meet with a private party with a vision of help like my own. Hope to learn new ideas to help.

It Never is the Wrong Time to do the Right Thing.

Thank you, - Jack Fliehmann

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## the concordian

by Edi Birsan, [EdiBirsan@gmail.com](mailto:EdiBirsan@gmail.com)

### \$58.4 million winning bid for Coast Guard's two Concord villages

Sitting opposite the Willow Pass Park (more commonly identified with Pixie Land) is the former Coast Guard 2 housing villages, Quinault Village and Victory Village. The two were built outside of California code by the military and comprise a total of 286 apartments,



Quinault Village and Victory Village are two abandoned Coast Guard properties recently purchased at auction. The winning unnamed bidder plans to refurbish and lease the units rather than rebuild.

mostly three and four bedroom units spread over 56 acres. The attempt to have the property conveyed under a Community Benefit Arrangement failed when the local team in combination with the city could not come to terms with the General Service Administration which oversees the disbursement of Coast Guard properties (as opposed to the Department of the Navy which deals with the Concord Naval Weapons Base). The Benefit agreement had provisions for Veteran Housing including affordable new houses as well as apartments and sidewalks down to Willow Pass and improvements in the Willow Pass Park area itself. The break point was between \$10 million-\$15 million on one side and the Federal Government wanting \$40 million.

With the failure the property went out to bid in October 2020 with a minimum bid of \$15 million. Of the bidders there came an intense bidding war between two of the bidders. The system was that once the high bidder was announced everyone else had 24 hours to make a higher counter bid. This went on for months between those two bidders. The actual bidders were unknown, but the city was kept informed of the process with astounding regularity. The price went up and up to over \$54 million to a partnership out of Las Vegas.

The property is zoned by the City for 'Military' use and has to be rezoned in accordance with California General Plan regulations to detail what can be built there under the usual reasonableness measures.

The initial lack of building codes in government construction presented challenges on the property such as one of the villages was built with lead paint and asbestos with dubious routing of utilities.

These were considerations in the original local team bid which envisi-

oned the villages being leveled and a combination of single family, duplex and apartments to be built on the property. There was also a challenge caused by the burning of three apartments by transients who penetrated the fencing.

In the first meeting with the new buyers the week of March 22. The initial lack of building codes in government construction presented challenges on the property. For example, one of the villages was built with lead paint and asbestos with dubious routing of utilities. I was shocked to learn that the new buyers intend to refurbish the 286 units and to lease them out as soon as possible. This is an immediate gain of 286 units to our housing needs. The number of affordable units would be between six and 10 percent as proposed. Of course, for Concord there can never be enough affordable housing, nor do I suspect any place in the Bay Area.

Nevertheless, the neighbors may celebrate that there is not going to be massive development above what was previously occupied. Though, since one cannot build a single Mother-in-Law unit without an outrage over parking and traffic from some quarters, the general mass of the neighbors may consider this a major win.

As for zoning, the vogue in higher density housing and the nearness to the BART property (it is adjacent) may provide an attraction for future development quite a few years from now, but there is at least a possible win-win in the making.

*The above represents the personal perspective of Edi Birsan and is not reflective of any government position either here or in Myanmar which such opinions could be hazardous to the health of the readers. (This was written with a mask on to protect the guilty).*



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## Common Home-Buying Contingencies

When you are buying a home, it is common practice to include “contingencies” in your sales contract. These are conditions that need to occur for your purchase to move forward. Many different contingencies can be included depending on your unique situation. Here are the most common contingencies you’ll encounter when buying a home.

**Financing contingency** - If you are planning to finance your home purchase with a mortgage, then your contract can contain a financing contingency. This allows you the time you need to apply and get approved for a home loan before you close on the house. With a financing contingency, you can get out of the contract if you are unable to secure financing for the home. Remember, just because you are pre-approved for a mortgage does not mean you will ultimately qualify. You will still need to go through the underwriting process to be approved.

**Inspection contingency** - Getting a home inspection can be a crucial part of the home buying process. After all, you want to have a clear picture of the condition of the home before you agree to buy it. A home inspection will reveal any issues there may be with the home, and you will receive a written report on the home’s condition and recommendations about repairs. The inspection contingency gives you the right to negotiate with the seller about these repairs. If you cannot come to an agreement, you can walk away from the deal.

**Appraisal contingency** - When you apply for a mortgage, the lender will order an appraisal of the home. An appraisal determines the fair market value of the property. If your contract includes an appraisal contingency, then you are protected

should the home appraise for less than the agreed-upon price. The mortgage company can only lend you the amount of the fair market price, so an appraisal contingency lets you negotiate with the seller, find additional financing, or back out of the deal if no compromise can be found.

**Title contingency** - A title contingency refers to the record of ownership for a property. It also includes any existing liens or judgments against the home. The title is reviewed during the closing process and steps are taken to resolve any issues if they come up. However, a title contingency can give you the option to cancel the contract should a title issue remain unsolved before closing. This way, you do not have to pay off someone else’s debts or have ownership of the home contested down the line.

**Home sale contingency** - This contingency gives you a certain amount of time to sell your current home. If you are unable to find a buyer for your home in that time, then you can back out of the deal and get your earnest money deposit back. Sellers are less enthusiastic about home sale contingencies, so including one can make your offer weaker than others.

In our current market, many buyers are waiving some or all the above contingencies to make their offer more attractive and competitive. Be aware that if you waive all contingencies with your offer, your deposit is in jeopardy should you cancel.

To protect your investment, it is wise to have contingencies in place when making an offer to buy a home. You should discuss different options for making your offer attractive to a seller with your chosen real estate agent, but be sure to understand the risks if you do decide to offer with no contingencies.

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# The Making of the First Diabetic Alert Dog Program

By Jill Hedgecock Photos by Mary Hooker, Yellow Neener Photography

Clayton's Mark Ruefenacht's unique background as a self-described science nerd with expertise in criminal forensics, a diabetic, and a man with expertise in training guide dogs combined with Jeannie Hickey, a diabetes specialist from Kaiser who is also a diabetic, led to the discovery of a life-altering breakthrough of the decade for diabetics: diabetic alert dogs.

Dogs4Diabetics (D4D) was established in October 2004 and provided the first accredited service dog for insulin-dependent diabetics under Assistance Dogs International. Little did Mark Ruefenacht know that 11 years later, he and his dog, Armstrong, would be recognized in the Guinness Book of World Records as the first scientifically trained diabetic alert team.

Ruefenacht, a Clayton native, is an insulin-dependent diabetic with a family history of blindness because of diabetic retinopathy. It makes sense that he would volunteer to raise puppies for Guide Dogs for the Blind of San Rafael, California. Mark's career, which entails quality assurance of precision measurements, involved testing breath analyzers to ensure the devices gave accurate readings for alcohol content back in 2000. During a business trip around this time, Mark's blood sugar dropped and his Guide-Dog-In-Training sensed something was wrong. This was a moment of inspiration for Ruefenacht when a simple question arose: I wonder what a dog can smell on a diabetic's breath?

Mark didn't let this musing slide away as idle curiosity. Four years of research ensued.

"We were interested in training the dogs on low blood sugar because that is the most debilitating," Ruefenacht explains. "Within 30 minutes you can be unconscious, within an hour to two hours, you can be dead."

Insulin therapy triples the risk of hypoglycemia or low blood sugar. Because all insulin-dependent diabetics are guaranteed to have hypoglycemic episodes, and 2 to 4 percent of diabetic deaths are due to hypoglycemia, a D4D dog can save lives. In fact, 55 percent of hypoglycemic episodes occur at night and most diabetics do not awaken, so an alert from a D4D dog can be crucial.

Ruefenacht and Hickey were able to prove that dogs could indeed smell a change in diabetics when their blood sugar changes in both their breath and their sweat. But Mark had another hurdle in his quest to train diabetic detection dogs.

"The question we were pursuing was if we trained a dog on my odor would it be universal to another diabetic?" Mark explains.

The opportunity arose to test this hypothesis when Jeannie had a hypoglycemic or low blood sugar event. She dotted her sweat on a paper towel and brought it to Mark. Jeannie marked it with a small x and buried the scented towel in a trash can in his bathroom with other towels. Then he told his dog, Armstrong, to find the scent. When Armstrong picked out the correct paper towel and brought it to Mark, he knew that he was on the path to establishing his first diabetic detection dog.

But there was yet another obstacle to solve. How would he train the dog to alert its human that there was a problem? Barking was not an option because service dogs are not permitted to make noise in indoor public places. Natural behaviors such as sitting or pawing could be misinterpreted. A bell or buzzer would not be available when the human partner was performing day-to-day activities such as



Dogs4Diabetics founder Mark Ruefenacht and Jesse

grocery shopping. An object on a belt also wouldn't work if the human was in bed. Mark landed on a bringsel, a soft canvas stuffed sleeve that hangs from the dog collar. When the dog senses a problem, it puts the bringsel in its mouth and makes physical contact with his human.



Gallagher demonstrating an alert with a bringsel

While technological advances such as insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors are now available, D4D's scent-trained dogs can detect changes in blood sugar 20 to 30 minutes before the newest medical devices. Once a diabetic receives a D4D dog (at no cost), the organization supports the team for life. To date, D4D has placed about 200 dogs with qualified diabetics. One client, Kim Denton, described how life changing her D4D dog has been.

"I cannot tell you how exciting it was



Kim Denton and Troy

to once again be able to take day-long drives into the country with my camera (and now dog) in tow, to go for hikes along the Berkeley Marina/Bay Trail, and even to just be able to exercise - all without having to worry about my blood glucose tanking just as I got started!" says Denton.

Kim went on to describe how special her relationship with her D4D canine partner is.

"Troy always has my back," she says. "When home alone, Troy sits in my lap and won't get up until he knows my glucose has reached a safe level again. Plus, if I ask him to, Troy brings me my glucose tablets as soon as he alerts me to my rapid drop. The worry of being alone with a dangerous low is next to nil with Troy by my side. We have a trust that is amazing, and I love this guy tremendously."

Ruefenacht understood early on how critical it is for the dog to be accurate for the sake of the diabetic. While many Medical-Alert Service Dogs only perform at 50 percent detection, D4D dogs are trained to detect changes in blood sugar at a minimum of 90 percent accuracy and a reliability as high as 99.73 percent. They strive for this high standard of performance to ensure the safety of the diabetic.

The dogs are "career change" dogs that are repurposed from their trusted partners, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Canine Companions for Independence. Professional trainers train the dogs using humane practices, like positive-reinforcement, marker-based training, and food rewards. It isn't all work for the dogs, D4D take them on adventures that expose them to a wide range of life experiences.

D4D has evolved and is now the National Institute of Canine Service and Training (NICST). A trailblazer in medical and wellness service dogs, they also support First Responders dealing with post-traumatic injuries and are working on cancer detection. First Response trained dogs provide stability to those who serve us during times of crisis and emergency. NICST and UC Davis are currently conducting a study to determine if dogs can detect head and neck cancer. These cancer types can be very hard to diagnose, and the goal is to train dogs that are able to screen for this disease, for

early diagnosis and treatment.

Ruefenacht has received many accolades for his pioneering work. In addition to being listed in the 2015 Guinness Book of World Records, in 2010, Bark Magazine recognized Mark as one of the 100 most innovative dog trainers in the world.

D4D spearheaded the concept of medical assistance service dog. Prior to Mark's innovative use of dogs to help diabetics, except for seizure response dogs, the concept of medical assistance dogs didn't exist. Mark describes a defining moment in his endeavor when the American Diabetes Association described his discovery as the breakthrough of the decade. But Mark added that wasn't the most important outcome of his work.

"There's a child walking today because of the dog," Mark says. "And it's not just a child. I've heard this story several times from adults. 'The dog saved me.' That's the pleasure in the whole thing."

Mark laments that demand for diabetic service dogs can often outweigh community needs. Fortunately, a new arrival to D4D, Captain America, an 8-week old puppy will soon mature and learn the ropes. Because of this pup and many other dedicated dogs, the lives of more diabetics will be forever enriched, and perhaps, saved. To learn more about NICST and D4D or make a donation, visit <https://ourdogssavelives.org>.



Captain America sitting below its framed hero and founding D4D dog, Armstrong. This pup and other dogs in training require hours of training before they're ready to meet their diabetic human partner.

Jill Hedgecock writes Diablo Gazette's dog rescue column, *Ruby-dooby...do to the Rescue* and is the author of two dog inspired novels, *Between Shadow's Eyes* and *From Shadow's Perspective*.

Holdng its bringsel



# At a distance, student leadership thrives at CVCHS

By Jim Scheible



One thing that COVID has taught our students is to be resilient – especially as it applies to leadership and helping their fellow classmates succeed.

Link Crew is a high school transition program that welcomes freshmen and makes them feel comfortable throughout the first year of their Ugly Eagle high school experience. It is built on the belief that students can help students succeed.

For the past five years, Sarah Lovick has been leading our Link Crew program to train members of the junior and senior class to be mentors for incoming freshmen. As positive role models, Link Crew Leaders are motivators who guide freshmen to discover what it takes to be successful at CVCHS and help facilitate their academic achievement. Link Crew's goal is to provide a structure in which students form authentic connections. Through this program, students learn that peers at CVCHS care about them and are trusted connection points for the high school experience.

"Studies show that if students have a positive experience their first year in high school, their chance for success increases dramatically," said Lovick, CVCHS' AVID teacher, in addition to being a Clayton Valley alum and board member. "Link Crew provides the structure for freshmen to receive support and guidance from our juniors and seniors who have been through the challenges that high school poses and understand the transition to a larger school can sometimes be overwhelming."

Lovick admits this school year has brought challenges to the program and her students. "COVID has hit our program hard because Link Crew is an interactive student experience that includes relationship building activities and face to face events. We have made a good effort with students sharing individual perspectives during Zoom meetings and engaging each other through our Cope with Hope segment, which is more inspirational than ever."

Prior to COVID and distance learning, students experienced traditional anxiety focused on social dynamics. Now, there are a host of other issues causing stress for our teens. Lovick emphasizes to students that they matter, they are loved and that they have multiple coping strategies at their fingertips to put into practice -- even when they are on their own.

"The real struggles for students are losing their personal connection in class. Much of

their tireless efforts come in the form of trying to bond with their fellow students via Zoom. However, that connection is not the same as in years past. We miss each other. I am so proud of my students and how they have stepped up. My 120 Link Crew Leaders have come together, learned everything about technology, organized amazing lessons and sponsored events for our freshmen."

For example, Link Crew Leaders hosted several drive-thru campus events over the academic year to recognize fellow students. Freshmen were provided a CVCHS semester planner, backpacks, COVID masks and a commemorative Class of 2023 t-shirt. A final event is being planned in May for those remaining students unable to participate. And because they missed their traditional



Link Crew leaders Leah Lopez and Meredith Edmonston join CVCHS teacher Sarah Lovick at recent campus drive-thru.

"welcome to high school" event in August of 2020, Link Crew will also host a "driving into 10th grade" event for them.

Many of Lovick's Link Crew Leaders have been involved in the program for the past three years. She has observed them grow from 9th grade students into the leaders helping plan those welcoming events.

Two seniors, Keara Comfort and Hailee Lam, highlighted by Lovick for their energy and positive attitudes are part of the CVCHS Link Crew Commissioner Team and serve as inspirational mentors for our incoming students.

As graduation approaches, I want to thank Sarah Lovick and all our CVCHS student Link Crew leaders – especially those who are members of the Class of 2021. I am thrilled with the resilience of our Link Crew students during the COVID pandemic as well as the development of such great individual leaders. I am confident that the character traits learned now will remain with them through their life-after-high-school-journey and beyond.

**computer corner**  
by William Claney, Tech Writer, Computers USA

**Tech in English**

## Rip Van Winkle Awakens to File History

I must admit, I fell asleep one night like Rip Van Winkle, and when I woke, there was a new realization, more of an epiphany, waiting for me. Things change so fast and sometimes great ideas and techniques wiz past me. That happened to me with File History.

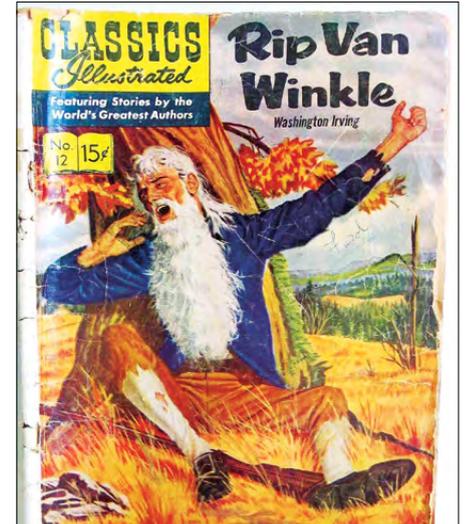
File backups applications today are better than any time in the past. I am a fan, and have been, of backing up one's work. Not a week passes when someone comes to me and has lost all his or her personal data. Perhaps years of effort lost – and it may be gone forever. Most recovery attempts are expensive.

Windows has a backup procedure and in the past, it has not been so great. So, I ignored Windows backup and recommended various other 3rd party applications to do the job. However, because I am constantly curious about new software features I decided to give Windows backup one more chance at backing up valuable files.

About three months ago, I tested File History as a backup, and then fell asleep again. When I woke this time, my backup schedule reminded me it was time to check up on my latest attempt. I'll be darned, I think Microsoft File History finally works. I did another test, you know just to be sure that the software really passes my tests, and it does what it is intended to do. It passed with flying colors. (15th -17th century, winning ships in port would fly their colors [flags] to signify success in battle.)

### Activating File History:

Have a blank freshly formatted large USB flash drive (64GB or larger recommended) or backup drive handy. Right



click the Windows Logo (usually the lower left of your screen) and select Run. In the Run box type "Control Panel" and enter. In the new Window, click System and Security (first settings entry), then find File History and click it. If File History shows it is off, turn it on. Attach and point to the external USB drive/USB Flash or another media you just attached. Click Run Now. If you need assistance, call your local computer expert.

File History will collect and backup all the usual folders like Documents, Pictures, Music, etc. It will not backup your Windows operating system. There is no need for that unless you use a server.

Now you have files backed, one can open the backup media and grab any file you like and restore it. Easy-Peazy, now I am awake.

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## In case you missed it...

### Steam train reopening at Tilden Regional Park



The Redwood Valley Railway in Tilden Regional Park in the Berkeley hills has reopened after being closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Operating hours for the miniature steam train, a popular family attraction for almost 70 years, are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays. Masks and observation of social distancing protocols are required. The steam train is located at 2481 Grizzly Peak Blvd.

For more information, including hours and ticket prices, people can call (510) 548-6100.

### Concord Police Officer Revives Toddler



On the night of March 26, Concord police officer Aaron Khamosh's quick action revived a 2-year old toddler he found unresponsive in the back seat of a vehicle.

A driver frantically flagged officer Khamosh on Salvio Street asking for help. The toddler had stopped breathing and Khamosh began CPR. When the toddler remained unresponsive, the mother revealed that the child "got ahold of some fentanyl" and needed Narcan, the drug used to reverse an opiate overdose, police said.

Khamosh administered two doses of Narcan, and the toddler regained consciousness. Medics took the child to a hospital in Concord and eventually to UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland, while the mother has been arrested on suspicion of child endangerment and possession of a narcotic.

"We are grateful the baby will survive this ordeal and for Officer Khamosh's quick thinking," Concord police said.

### Monterey Bay Aquarium to reopen May 15



The Monterey Bay Aquarium will reopen May 15 following an unprecedented 13-month closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. New rules will be in effect for visitors age 3 and older including online-only ticket sales, required face coverings, timed-entry and appropriate physical distancing.

The aquarium will also direct all foot traffic through the exhibit galleries along one-way paths, and it will no longer allow guests to reenter after they leave the aquarium following their visit.

Reservations can only be made through the aquarium's website at <https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/>.

Online reservations will be available beginning at 9 a.m. for the following dates: April 26 for member reservations for

visits between May 1 and June 30

May 5 for general admission tickets for visits between May 15 and June 30

June 1 for general admission tickets and member reservations for visits through July 15

June 30 for general admission tickets and member reservations for visits through Sept. 6.

For the first two weeks, the aquarium will be open Thursdays through Mondays, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and will be closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Seven-day-a-week operations will resume starting Memorial Day Weekend.

### Contra Costa County Public Works to begin construction on the Bailey Road/Hwy.4 Interchange Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvement Project

The Contra Costa County Public Works Department has begun construction on the Bailey Road/State Route 4 (SR4) Interchange Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvement Project. It is expected to continue through October 2021.

Construction will occur Monday through Friday, between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., weather permitting, to minimize impacts to commute traffic. Drivers should expect delays and detours during construction.

The work will consist of removing the SR4 westbound loop off-ramp and pedestrian tunnel, as well as squaring-up the intersections of SR4 eastbound on and off-ramps and removing the free right turns. Work also includes widening the SR4 westbound diagonal off-ramp, installing a traffic signal for traffic to go north and south bound on Bailey Road, modifying existing traffic signals, installing storm drain modifications, installing sidewalk along Bailey Road, and overlaying the pavement on Bailey Road within the interchange area.

### Concord Police Department in drive-by birthday salute to centenarian veteran



Concord Police Department wished a huge happy birthday to WWII vet Marino Duchi, who turned 100 years young on March 29. The officers took part in Mr. Duchi's drive-by birthday celebration. thanks to the The "Rolling 9s" of the American Legion Riders. During WWII, he was one of the brave soldiers who landed on the beaches of Normandy, June 6, 1944. "We are grateful to Mr. Duchi for his service and bravery. Happy birthday, sir!"

### 2020 Tax Filing Deadline Extended To May 17

Both the federal government and California announced that it is extending the 2020 tax filing due date from April 15 to May 17 including payments without penalties or interest.

The extension does not apply to those making quarterly estimated tax payments on 2021 income that isn't subject to tax withholding. Those first-quarter payments will still be due April 15.

Anyone who needs an extension beyond May 17 can file to request an extension until Oct. 15, but any taxes due would still need to be paid by May 17.

Those in California who are eligible to receive a \$600 Golden State Stimulus payment will receive that check after filing their 2020 tax returns this year.

The \$600 checks are part of a coronavirus relief package approved by the state Legislature in late February.



by Elaine Schroth, CEO & President



## Discover Concord's Visitor Center – Rediscover Concord

Along with these gloriously warmer days, there is more reason to be optimistic as we continue to make progress in our battle against the COVID-19 virus. It feels like our much-tested resolve is beginning to pay off and the return to normal life seems not only possible, but within reach.

As the non-profit destination marketing organization (DMO) for Concord, Visit Concord's objectives shifted to community and local business support during the pandemic, but we are now starting to look ahead to the return of travel in 2021. We are excited to once again welcome visitors and business travelers (safely, of course,) and to promote the Concord businesses, attractions, and lodging partners that will get our local economy on the road to recovery.

One of our first initiatives to launch this month is "Calling All Californians," a Visit California campaign designed to promote in-state travel to California residents. For this effort, Concord has also partnered with our neighbors in Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, and the Tri-Valley to promote the Mount Diablo Region as a complete destination for travelers seeking outdoor adventure along with the all the great food, beer, wine, shopping and entertainment the area has to offer. You can find more information about it at the Visit Concord and Visit California websites.

Most people at this point probably feel the urge to get out of their COVID-

bubbles for a change of scenery, even if just a short road trip. As such, we encourage everyone to keep the Concord Visitor Center in mind for your travel needs or when welcoming family and friends back to Concord. We are open and ready to help with free advice, maps, visitor guides, attraction brochures and historical walking tour guides. We are also a retail shop for fun Concord wearables and memorabilia that you will not find anywhere else, like our popular Beer Trail, Taco Trail and I Heart Concord shirts and hats, so stop by next time you are in Todos Santos Plaza and check it out.

As always, Concord is all about community and supporting local businesses just goes with the territory. Now more than ever, shopping, dining, staying, and playing locally means taking care of our own first. Our hotels and restaurants are the backbone of Concord's tourism economy and they have had an especially tough year. Please be sure to keep them top of mind for your travel plans or those of your family and friends. Just as they are here for us, we are here for them, too. Stay safe, stay positive and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

The Concord Visitor Center is located at 2151 Salvio Street, Suite T in Concord. Call us at 925-685-1182 or email: [info@visitconcordca.com](mailto:info@visitconcordca.com).

Website: [www.visitconcordca.com](http://www.visitconcordca.com).

## Residents flock to Concord's first drive-through mass vaccination at Hurricane Harbor



Contra Costa County officials celebrated the opening of the county's first mass vaccination site, which will eventually have the capacity to administer some 15,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses per week.

The drive-thru vaccination site at Six Flags Hurricane Harbor in Concord opened March 30 after the county's vaccination supply swelled enough to open vaccination eligibility to all residents and people who work in the county who are age 16 and older.

Contra Costa County is operating the vaccination site in collaboration with Kaiser Permanente and the National Guard.

KP and CCHS staff will offer appointments Tuesday through Saturday at the drive-through clinic, with Kaiser contacting and scheduling its own members. KP, which receives its own supply of COVID-19 vaccine directly from the state, will have the capacity to provide as many as 2,000 daily appointments at the clinic once the site is fully operational.

Tzvieli said the county has been inundated with requests for vaccine appointments since opening them to all adult residents.

The county received some 30,000 requests within the first 24 hours of opening eligibility to the roughly 375,000 county residents between the ages of 16 and 49

that have yet to be vaccinated.

As of March 30, roughly 663,000 vaccine doses have been administered countywide, according to Contra Costa Health Services. Nearly a quarter of a million residents have been fully vaccinated, either with two doses of the vaccines developed by Pfizer and Moderna or one dose of the vaccine developed by Johnson & Johnson.

Appointments will be required to get a vaccine. Eligible county residents can sign up for a vaccine appointment at [www.coronavirus.cchealth.org](http://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org) or by calling (833) 829-2626.

County officials noted that eligibility for residents ages 16-49 is only in effect at county-operated vaccination sites and does not apply to retail pharmacies like CVS and Walgreens, which will open vaccine eligibility to all adults in accordance with the state on April 15.

The clinic is located in the lot of the Six Flags Hurricane Harbor park in central Concord, between Interstate 680 and Highway 242 at 1950 Waterworld Parkway.

Tzvieli said he was confident that the county will meet its Memorial Day deadline for 1 million administered doses and could even do so earlier than the end of May.

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## Kiteman of Martinez's Free Amazing Night Shows



April is National Kite month. Usually, that is, when there is no pandemic, we would start seeing kite events announcements about now.

On May 1, Fairfield will host its 13th Annual Lynch Canyon Kite Festival from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Lynch Canyon Open Space Park, but that's about it.

The Berkeley Kite Festival and West Coast Kite Championship, which is the largest such festival in the West, is generally held the last weekend in July; however, the City of Berkeley has yet to approve a permit for this year's event.

So, if you really wish to enjoy kites, I suggest you head to the Martinez Marina. You just may find Tony Jetland, aka the "Kiteman of Martinez," piloting his extraordinary kites.

Tony has recently and frequently been seen in local news. His kite-flying days were on pause due to a work injury. Once he recovered and started to reappear, local

news was there to welcome him back. That should give you some indication of the amount of joy his kites bring to families.

In fact, communities across the world invite Tony to fly his kites as a feature attraction in their festivals. While his kites are fascinating to watch in the day, wait till you see them at night. Many of his kites are beautifully lit.

This is just a hobby for Tony even though some of his kites cost in the thousands and some are custom made. Whether it is the giant dragon, a beaver, Dory, a trilobite, or any number of creatures and dazzling shapes, all will prove to be an enjoyable show.

Tony generally posts on his Facebook page or the Facebook group Martinez Rants and Raves when he will be flying his kites.

If you are kite novices, you can join Highline Kites on weekends at Berkeley Marina from 1:30p.m. - 6:30p.m. Kites and kite kits can be purchased there starting at around \$12.



## Chess with Yoo

Composed by Christopher Yoo, 14, International Master, Dublin, Calif.

I composed this puzzle especially for my Diablo Gazette readers.

**White to move and mate in two.** If you get stuck you can take a look at the Hint.



**Hint:** Think "quiet" move, which means a move that doesn't attack or capture anything directly.

### Solution:

1. Nc1! In a position with a lot of checks this quiet move is the only way to mate in 2!

1. Na5? Bf3!

1...Be2

1...Re3 2. Qd4# Now the Rook blocks the Bishop from taking the Queen.

1...Bxf5 2. Rxf5#

1...Rxc1 2. Qe4#

2. Qe4# The Bishop blocks the Rook from taking the Queen.



Six Flags Discovery Kingdom in Vallejo, CA Getty images

## Six Flags Discovery Kingdom is open

Six Flags Discovery Kingdom in Vallejo is now open to the general public.

"We are thrilled to be able to offer our full selection of rides and attractions for the first time in over a year," said Park President Janine Durette.

Attendance caps are in place to allow for proper social distancing. All guests must schedule their visit using the Six Flags online reservation system. Guests can make reservations for single-day tickets as part of the online purchase process.

Proof of residency may be required upon entrance as current state guidelines prohibit anyone other than California residents from purchasing tickets and/or making reservations.

Six Flags prohibits park entry if guests have recently been exposed to or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Contactless IR thermal imaging is used to screen temperatures of guests and employees prior to entry, and bags are screened using touchless technology.

All persons 2 years or older must wear a face mask, including on rides. Masks are available at Guest Relations.

Only card and mobile payments are accepted at this time.

As for Six Flags Hurricane Harbor in Concord, an exact reopening date has not been set but it is expected to be late this spring which subject to change based on local, state and federal coronavirus-related guidelines.

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- ALOE
- APPLES
- BASIL
- BEANS
- BEEF
- BOKCHOY
- BROCCOLI
- CABBAGE
- CARROTS
- CELERY
- CHERRIES
- CORN
- GRAPES
- HONEY
- LEEK
- LEMONS
- LOCAL
- ONIONS
- PEAS
- PEACHES
- PEARS
- PEPPERS
- RADISHES
- ROMAINE
- SNAP PEAS
- SPINACH
- SPROUTS
- SQUASH
- THYME



## Spring Fruits and Vegetables

## Word Search Plus

### Let's Go Fly a Kite

For more fun, we made our word search a wee more challenging. We've hidden a code that will reveal the name of a popular person from Martinez.

### Clue:

This local pseudo-celebrity can often be seen out at the Martinez Marina. He's a pilot, yet planes are not what he flies.

We are looking for his celebrity moniker, one that local media will refer to when reporting on his activities.

There are other clues for you on this page.

### Hint:

Circle all the words from the list in the puzzle. The remaining unused letters form an anagram. Unscramble those letters to reveal the answer. Solution on page 16.



**David George**  
**THE NAKED GARDENER**

# Plant your Veggies by Earth Day!



Veggie produce courtesy CCMG

Happy "Earth Month"! I know the calendar dedicates only one day in April to Earth Day, April 22. The Naked Gardener sets aside each day in this beautiful month to celebrate the planet and its fauna and flora. April is when Mother Nature puts on her best show of wildflowers, greenery, and baby chicks – no, not fuzzy Easter chicks, but turkey, quail, and songbirds. Go outside and stroll through your neighborhood. You may see a natural sight you've never noticed before.

April is the ideal time to plant your new crop of vegetables for harvest in summer. By April 15, the threat of severe cold is past and radiation from the sun is warming veggie beds. The warming soil speeds up the awesome microbe biome that feeds nutrients to your seedling roots. Make sure you add rich homemade compost into the beds or planters to feed the microbes or add organic compost from your favorite garden center. Check your watering system for leaks or other winter damage. Then plant the best quality vegetable seedlings you can find. Better yet, save your favorite plant's seeds from year to year and grow your own seedlings from scratch.

Remember to avoid herbicides such as Roundup, pesticides, and toxic fungicides. These kill innocent insects and ground-dwellers and sicken pets and children. Rely on Mother Earth to add beneficial predators to protect your vegetable garden or patio. Provide only enough water



Plant in april for summer harvest



Chemical-free table harvest

to keep your seedlings upright. Most young plants wilt in midday sun but will recover overnight. Overwatering is the biggest cause of seedling death as soggy soil damps off stems at soil level.

What are my favorite warm season vegetables for Central Contra Costa? Most varieties of tomatoes grow and produce well in our hot summer climate. I add them to salads and veggie dishes or blend them into homemade marinara sauces and salsas. Hot peppers also enjoy our climate and are critical ingredients for spicy salsas. Bush and pole beans are popular and heavy producers. Cucumbers, carrots, and both zucchini and summer squashes are easy to grow and delicious in baked or sautéed dishes. My final favorites are eggplants to cook into mouth-watering eggplant parmesan casseroles.

I have found that annual vegetable growing is fun for the whole family. Put dad to work preparing the beds or pots. The kids love the planting process, and they can be a great resource for watering if your system is manual. Plant your naturally-grown veggies into their pots or into the ground in April and your family will feel rewarded for their efforts by a bountiful harvest this summer.

Email your comments and questions to: [NakedGardener@diablogazette.com](mailto:NakedGardener@diablogazette.com). In some cases these may appear in future columns.

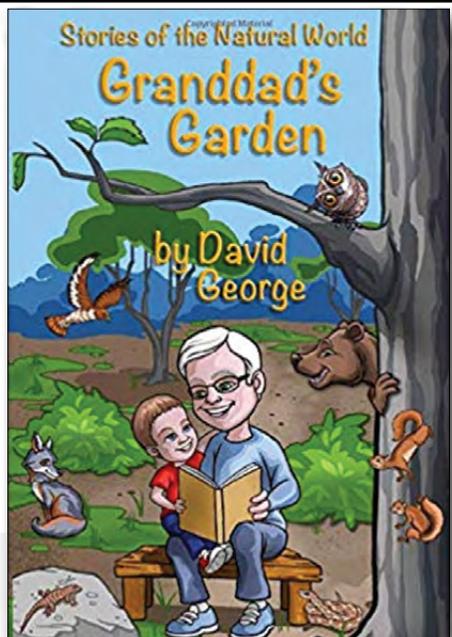


The Master Gardeners of Contra Costa have announced that their popular Great Tomato (and other veggies) Plant Sale is happening this year. Last year the event was cancelled due to COVID.

For the first time, ordering takes place online, with the order window opening on April 6th and continuing while inventory lasts. Proceeds from the sale fund community outreach programs of the Contra Costa Master Gardeners.

Ordered plants will be available for pickup at the Walnut Creek Shadelands MG garden parking lot located near the corner of N. Wiget and Shadelands Dr.

For more information visit: [ccmg.ucanr.edu/EdibleGardening/GreatTomatoPlantSale/](http://ccmg.ucanr.edu/EdibleGardening/GreatTomatoPlantSale/)



"Granddad's Garden: Stories of the Natural World" by Naked Gardener columnist David George is his debut book of feel-good stories for troubling times. [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).



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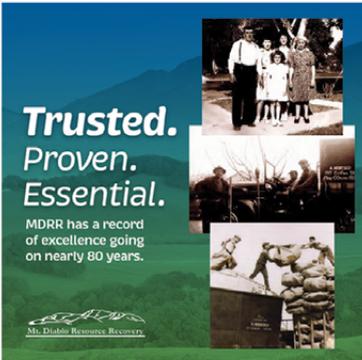
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Be creative and have fun, like your local garbage and recycling company loves to do. **#BeResourcefulOnEarthDay2021**



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# The unfortunate way the fitness industry works

By Carmela Lieras, NASM-CPT



The fitness industry is wrecking people, in my opinion.

It overwhelms with options and employs marketing tactics that influence consumers to do too much

too soon.

There are so many programs available to us (marathons, Orangetheory, Soul Cycle, Peloton, CrossFit, Spartan Races, Boot Camps galore, Pilates, Yoga, Barre, etc.)

I think it is great to have variety and to try some of these, but please, do so for the right reasons. How often have we done it solely because everyone else we know was doing it and seemed to be enjoying it? How often have we been sucked in by marketing tactics and tried something because it looked fun, only to find out it was the most unbearable hour of our life? I once took a Bikram Yoga class (you know, the hot room yoga) because it was all the rage and it literally left me never wanting to go back--and I have not.

I have heard countless experiences from people who had great intentions of starting a new exercise routine, but because they were influenced by oodles of fitness marketing ads, they jumped into something that was way too challenging for them. Not surprisingly, they immediately quit or got injured.

It is important to try out different types of exercise to see what we actually

like and enjoy. How will we know if we don't try, right? The problem we run into is when we stick with something that makes our bodies constantly hurt (and I am not talking about muscle fatigue), leaves us cranky and tired all the time, or causes injuries/tweaks with every workout. Or we do something just because "everyone else is doing it so it must be good."

In both scenarios, the common theme I have heard from people is that it made them feel like they just were not cut out to do that type of exercise.

My advice? Find something that you really enjoy and stick with it for a while. Exercise or movement does not only mean you have to lift weights, especially after you reach the age of 40 or beyond.

Did you ever play sports? Have you ever thought about getting back into that sport? Maybe you played tennis, soccer, or enjoy swimming but refrain now because you believe that your exercise routine must include some sort of calorie-burning/weight-lifting component.

Weight-bearing exercise is important, and I encourage all of you to do some type of it throughout the week, but you are not limited to only that. You would be surprised to know that many clients respond well to play or skill-building more than a simple set of bicep curls. So, grab that tennis racket or soccer ball and go out and practice some sport-related skills (serving, volleying, dribbling, etc.), even if it is just 20-30 minutes per day.

## Concord passes hazard pay ordinance

On March 30, 2021, the Concord City Council passed an urgency ordinance (on a 5-0 vote) requiring large grocery stores to pay an additional \$5 per hour of hazard pay to grocery retail workers in Concord, effective immediately. "Large Grocery Stores" refers to grocery stores with more than 300 employees nationwide.

The mandate will last for 120 days from the effective date or until Contra Costa County moves into the Yellow Tier of California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy, whichever is later.

Large grocery stores or covered employers who are already providing a premium hourly rate to compensate their employees for working during the COVID-19 pandemic shall be allowed to



credit those payments against the hazard pay required under the ordinance. For example, if Store X is already paying a \$2 per hour premium to their employees, the hazard pay required by this ordinance will be reduced by \$3 per hour.



legalbriefs

by Douglas A. Prutton, Attorney  
[Doug@PruttonLaw.com](mailto:Doug@PruttonLaw.com)

## LASHING OUT ON THE INTERNET: BE CAREFUL!

One of the most boring classes in law school is entitled "Civil Procedure," and perhaps the most boring part of that class is a topic entitled "personal jurisdiction." This topic addresses the question of whether a person or company from one state can be sued in another state. Or, to put it another way, does a court in one state have "personal jurisdiction" over a person or company from another state?

See, you're already bored. I can still remember, almost 40 years ago now, my eyelids drooping and my head nodding when my civil procedure professor discussed this titillating topic.

But... if a process server pounds on your front door and hands you a lawsuit from a court in, say, Tennessee, suddenly you become very interested in civil procedure and personal jurisdiction.

I remember a client who operated his own business in Contra Costa County repairing dents in vehicles. He had worked for a similar company that was headquartered in Missouri. He was served with a lawsuit filed in Missouri by this other company claiming that he had violated a non-compete contract he had signed. I had to give him the bad news that even though I thought the Missouri courts did not have "personal jurisdiction" over him (because he had very few contacts with Missouri) he would need to hire a Missouri lawyer to fight the lawsuit there. I did send a nasty letter to the other company explaining that Missouri courts had no personal jurisdiction over my client, but that was the extent of my involvement.

What really got me writing this column though is an interesting opinion issued yesterday by the First District Court of Appeal in San Francisco in a case originally filed in Contra Costa County. This case, Yue v. Yang, involves two competing "Chinese language online community" websites operated by California residents. One of the defendants, Mr. Yang, a long-time resident of Canada, made many posts on both of the websites that were critical of Mr. Yue (who operates one of the websites). For example, Mr. Yang made

"sexually explicit, violent, and insulting" posts, posted that he was going to bully Mr. Yang in California, that he was coming to a meeting in San Francisco and that his "collaborators" should also come to the meeting, and that Mr. Yue had stolen information using a "Trojan horse virus."

Mr. Yang filed his lawsuit in Contra Costa County claiming that Mr. Yue had damaged his website and reputation. Mr. Yue, the Canadian resident, responded by arguing that the court in Contra Costa County did not have "personal jurisdiction" over him because he had no contacts with California.



The Judge in Martinez agreed with Mr. Yue and dismissed the lawsuit concluding that the interactions took place over the internet and posting information on websites does not constitute "minimum contacts" with

California.

The appeals court in San Francisco though reversed this decision. The appeals court recognized that simply posting defamatory comments on the internet about someone in California does not give California courts personal jurisdiction over someone in another state or country. However, California courts can exercise personal jurisdiction over someone from another state or country where that person sends "California-focused" social media messages "directly" to California residents with knowledge the recipients are California residents for the purpose of causing reputational injury in California. The appeals court summarized its decision as follows: "Plaintiff has thus shown more than a mere posting on the Internet combined with a defendant's awareness that his conduct might cause injury in California. Rather, he has shown that Yang targeted his postings at plaintiff, emphasized the California connection, and threatened to come to California, with an awareness that Californians would be in the audience."

The moral of the story? Be very careful what you post on the internet critical of other people. You could be on the receiving end of a lawsuit filed in another state or country.



## COVID-19 VACCINE SCAMS

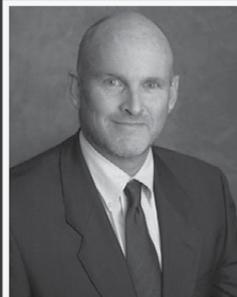
- » You likely will not need to pay anything out of pocket to get the vaccine during this public health emergency.
- » You cannot pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine.
- » You cannot pay to get early access to the vaccine.
- » No one from Medicare or the Health Department will contact you.
- » No one from a vaccine distribution site or health care payer, like a private insurance company, will call you asking for your Social Security number or your credit card or bank account information to sign you up to get the vaccine.

Check with your health care provider before paying for or receiving any COVID-19-related treatment.

Report fraud:  
**855-613-7080**



This project was supported, in part, by grant 90MPPG0019-05-00 from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201.



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**theRIGHT** move  
by Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate  
[www.BuyStageSell.com](http://www.BuyStageSell.com)

# WHERE is everyone going?

Everyone has heard there is a shortage of inventory in real estate. In many cases, this is causing overbidding of not just thousands over asking price, but sometimes hundreds of thousands. I am serious about this. There are sales happening right in your neighborhood with similar stories. But before you put the For Sale sign up, understand that while selling your home is going to be easy right now, it's where do you go that is the dilemma.

Once your house sells, the buyer will want you to move. Having had this conversation with many clients recently who are not planning to move out of the area, they quickly realize they have to pay more to get something "better", "larger", "different" than what they have. Whether it is a lateral move, a move up, move down or move into a specific school district or closer to the freeway, it is important to be realistic about giving up what you have for what you want.

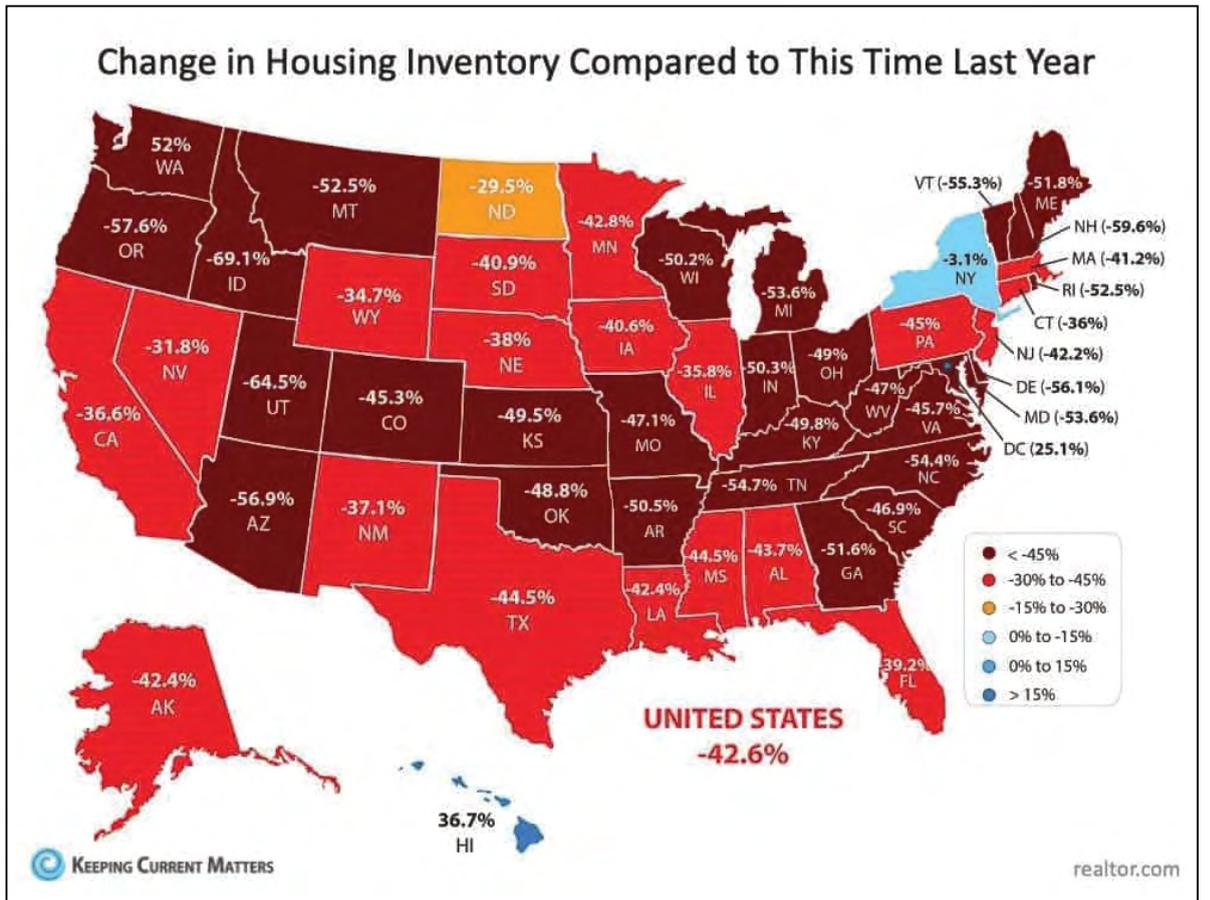
If you are moving out of the area or state, you might find this graphic interesting. We sometimes think we in California and the Bay Area are in a bubble. This shows that the situation in some states is the same or worse than it is here. Of course, their prices are different, but the overbidding and fighting for homes is present and you may end up paying more than you intended, even in Idaho, Montana, Georgia or Arizona. You do not have to leave the state to get your next home. You just have to have the help of an astute Realtor and be diligent and ready for what the market conditions are. (Hand raised!)

What is driving those who leave or move? Covid consequences play a large part causing people to want and need more space as they home school, provide childcare and the kitchen table or corner of the bedroom no longer cut it. In the cases of some of our retirees, they say the state income tax is a driving factor and they pick areas with lower or no state income tax to move to. If they are on fixed income, they chose areas based on cost of living. Some folks young and old move

back to their states of origin, nearer to family and friends. These are circumstances, wants and needs, and we were maybe to busy to think about until Covid lockdowns changed our realities and our ability to visit our out of area relatives and friends. Buyers, their move is your opportunity.

So, what are buyers looking for? I see a lot of people looking for the home like the one they grew up in. Maybe they want to move from an apartment to a condo. Or, they are looking to move from condo to house, starter house to larger house. There is an expanded need for homeschool and work-from-home spaces as many companies are allowing flex time these days even as we resume going back to work. People are combining households and doubling up and want accessory dwelling units or room to put a separate office.

As prices continue to climb, your home will sell to buyers just like those mentioned, and you will find the home that fits your future needs. It takes some coordinating, but for all those homes for sale, there is a buyer. Maybe your next home is right around the corner.



# Brighten up your meals with spring's soft herbs

by Deb Morris, PCFMA.org

Spring's soft herbs are soon to appear. Soft herbs are some of the most flavorful available. They are leafy and tender and most often used fresh, rather than dried. Basil, parsley, chervil, chives, cilantro, tarragon, coriander, mint, and dill are examples of soft herbs, whereas hard herbs are the ones with woody stems, like rosemary, oregano, marjoram and thyme.



Cilantro

In many cultures herbs are respected for their medicinal properties as well as their culinary uses. Herbal remedies include mint for digestive issues, parsley for kidney and bladder problems, dill for digestive difficulties, and oregano for respiratory issues. These herbs are usually used in hot teas and essential oils to be most effective.

In the culinary world, soft herbs are easily recognized and available. They are also the most reliable source for adding depth and flavor to your recipes. They're a cook's secret weapon when it comes to changing a dull dish to an extraordinary one, full of freshness and vitality.

Common uses for fresh spring herbs

- Parsley:** As a garnish for color, added to soups, or made into pesto or chimichurri sauce. Parsley pairs perfectly with lemon, butter, pasta, and eggs.

- Chives:** Wonderful in quiche, sautéed dishes, potato salad, and blue cheese dressing or dip because of its mild, garlicky-onion flavor. Also good for chive butter and on garlic bread.

- Dill:** Make your own dill pickles, add to sauces for salmon, creamy dips, and tzatziki sauce. Used widely in both Scandinavian and German cuisine. Good for poultry and a complement to lemon, yogurt and seafood dishes.

- Cilantro (coriander leaf):** Add to Mexican dishes, tomato sauce, Asian soups like pho, and salsa.

- Mint:** Use in fresh fruit salads, cucumber salad, teas, desserts, or a mojito! Mint works well in beverages, with spring vegetables, and in cocktails.

Once purchased, treat soft herbs as you would a vase of fresh flowers.

Snip the base of the stems and put them in a glass of fresh water, changing out the water every day or two if it starts to cloud. Store them in the refrigerator. When these herbs are cooked, add at the end of the cooking process so they don't lose their delicate flavor. Use as garnishes and toppings.

The fresher the herbs, the better the flavor which is why the farmers' market is the best place to pick them up.

## Blueberry Lemonade with Mint

2 cups blueberries (plus a handful frozen for garnish)

1 mint sprig (plus 4 more for garnish)

¼ cup honey

½ cup lemon juice (juice from 3-4 small lemons)

3 cups water (or sparkling water)

A generous pinch of salt



Muddle berries, honey, salt and mint until all the blueberries are squashed. Scrape the mixture through a fine mesh strainer with a rubber spatula, leaving only the skins and mint sprig. Be sure to scrape the underside of the strainer.

Combine the blueberry juice mixture, lemon juice, and water and stir.

Serve over ice and garnish with a mint sprig and some frozen blueberries in each of four glasses. For an adult beverage, add 1 jigger of gin per glass. Serves 4.

# Shouldn't Jean Yokotobi be angry?

by Richard Eber



As news of violence against Asians in the Bay Area occupies the headlines today, March quietly marked the 75th anniversary of the final closure of the Japanese internment camps and release of prisoners.

In 1942 approximately 120,000 Japanese, over two-thirds of whom were U.S. citizens, were forced to leave their homes and move into one of 10 camps that were established along the West Coast by the War Relocation Authority (WRA). The most controversial camp that housed the largest number of internees was Tule Lake.



1942 Japanese-Americans transplanting celery at the Tule Lake Relocation Center during the Second World War. Photo wikicommons.

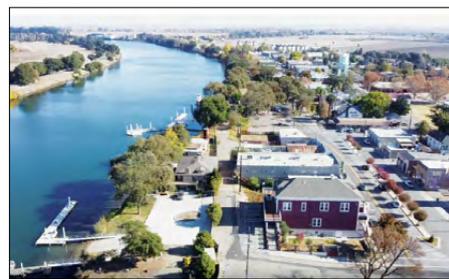
The last camp to release its prisoners, it did not close until March 20, 1946, seven months after the end of World War II.

At the end of World War II, Japanese Americans faced rebuilding their lives.

The Issei (first generation) had lost almost everything and forced to completely restart. In the 1960's, Sansei (third generation) joined other people of color in the Civil Rights movement and the quest to learn of their suppressed histories through ethnic studies. Many Sansei learned their families had spent WWII in American concentration camps.

As awareness of the wrongfulness of the incarceration grew, Japanese American community activism succeeded in getting the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 (CLA) passed, and survivors received an official apology, token \$20,000 payments, and a promise to fund education about the incarceration to deter future violations.

So, shouldn't Jean Yokotobi be angry? Her mother and father found themselves incarcerated for national security reasons, rounded up by Federal Agents following Pearl Harbor in 1942 by order of President Franklin Roosevelt. They spent almost four years at Tule Lake. Yokotobi was born in Camp Tule Lake in 1945. She now lives in a small delta community of Isleton. A town whose Asian-American history is so rich, it has been designated a National Historical site.



Isleton is a city in Sacramento County with a population of about 840.

Surprisingly, Yokotobi harbors no ill will. Growing up in the Central Valley town of Gridley, Yokotobi's parents never discussed their imprisonment with her, nor did they blame Roosevelt for his actions.

"Mom and dad were loyal patriotic Americans who spoke proudly about the highly decorated Japanese military battalions that fought bravely in Europe that helped liberate the extermination camp at Dachau from the Nazis. They never complained about the Alien Land Law of 1913 or other forms of discrimination Asians faced," she says.

Instead, she recalls learning toleration attending Buddhist Sunday School as a child. "My parents taught us honor and respect for others."

Yokotobi was not even aware of her parents' internment at Camp Tule Lake until she attended college at San Francisco State in the mid 1960's.

While at SFS, she visited a boyfriend in the tiny Sacramento River Delta town of Isleton and fell in love with it. She eventually settled there, opened a deli and restarted the Isleton Chamber of Commerce, becoming its president. She is also a past president of the Isleton Historical Society and is working on building a museum celebrating the Japanese and Chinese heritage that has resulted in Isleton being designated to be a National Historic Landmark.

As head of the Chamber and a leading citizen of Isleton, Yokotobi's has dedicated her heart and soul and devoted her retirement to promoting her adopted community of Isleton and preserving its Chinese- and Japanese-American heritage. Even Sen. Bill Dodd named her Sacramento County Woman of the Year.

Sitting in the historic Isleton building she owns, replete with pictures and artifacts from the town's colorful past, Yokotobi is eager to pass on this rich Asian heritage to others.

Next door to her is the restored structure which was once the headquarters to the Tong. Chinese immigrants, having few civil rights, congregated in this gathering place to settle disputes, socialize, and preserve their Eastern heritage. This summer a new museum is expected to open.

Just down the street is Iva Walton's Mei Wah Beer Room. It too is a relic of Isleton's past that includes a replica of an Opium Den. This is a great place to drink a local draft beer after scoring homemade sandwiches from the nearby McBoodery Café.

My passion for Isleton will always remain," Yokotobi said. "It has given me a sense of worth, a sense of peace, and a sense of hope for the future. I sincerely hope when the Asian-American Heritage Park is completed, people can reflect and feel good about what they are taking away from their experience in Isleton."

# Out to Lunch

by Richard Eber

## What's a Barzzeria?

I took a road trip to explore the tiny delta town of Isleton, population 840ish, a colorful community located five miles beyond Rio Vista on Hwy 160. It offers visitors a glimpse of Asian-American history and some pretty decent food. I can attest to this, as I was lured into an Italian eatery called Manny's Barzzeria.

Now, Isleton was once widely known for its "The Isleton Crawdad Festival" which



ended in 2013. For three decades this festival would bring in tens of thousands of visitors to the town in one weekend to eat 25,000 pounds of crawdads.

Now a national historical landmark, it was once a booming town where large populations of Chinese and Japanese workers were involved with the operations of three canneries and a thriving tourist trade. In the late 19th century, folks ventured there on paddle boats from San Francisco to fill hotels that offered gambling, prostitution, and even an opium den. While those amenities are long gone, there are a few eclectic antique stores, a fishing pier, and a couple of marijuana dispensaries to fill out the landscape along with several restaurants, including an alluring barzzeria. "What's a barzzeria?" I pondered.

Manny's Barzzeria is one of those places people say, "I wish it were located closer to

where we live." But the 18-mile trek across the Antioch Bridge is worth the journey. Owners Jaime and Esther Wence have created an Italian eatery where virtually every item on the menu seems special. It is no coincidence. Jaime's uncle is none other than Gerardo Wence of Wence's in Pleasant Hill.

Just for starters, their garlic bread is a derivation of their pizza dough and baked to a crisp and delicious masterpiece. Manny's pizzas rests



on a unique thin crust which is crispy on the bottom and soft on top.

This is exceptional Italian dining. Their menu of pizzas, calzones, Italian pasta specialties, and lasagna rival anywhere locally. It was amazing.

As you may have guessed by now, Manny's also has a full bar that can be enjoyed inside or out on their beautiful appointed patio area; hence, the name Barzzeria. It is worth remembering.

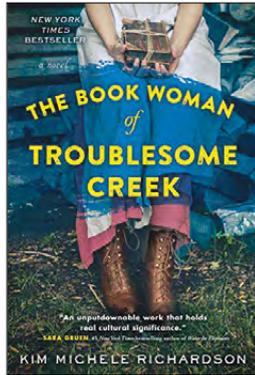
Indeed, I returned to Manny's for another visit, and I look forward to coming back to visit this gem again.



**Jill Hedgecock's bookends**  
 Program Coordinator, Mount Diablo branch of the California  
**Author of From Shadow's Perspective**  
[www.jillhedgecock.com](http://www.jillhedgecock.com)

# The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek

"The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek" (2019, paperback, Sourcebooks Landmark, 322 pages, \$7.99) by Kim Michele Richardson, was inspired by the real life "blue people" of Kentucky, and a little-known literacy program. The Packhorse Librarians of the Appalachians was a unique program funded by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal during the Great Depression. The narrator is 19-year-old Cussy Mary Carter, a woman whose skin turns blue when she is agitated or excited. She is considered colored and suffers the prejudices of a small coal mining town in the 1930s Kentucky. Cussy lives with her ailing father who works in the local coal mine. Cussy was named after the village in France where her family originated, but most people call her Bluet or Book Woman.



She doesn't mind being called Book Woman. She loves riding her mule into the backwoods to hand-deliver library materials to her patrons. Her father, however, wants to marry her off. Cussy's blue coloration resulted in marriage to an unsavory man. Her husband's untimely death results in her inheriting a sure-footed mule named Junia. Junia is a cantankerous animal and, like Cussy, a survivor. The pack horse's fierce loyalty to Cussy makes the creature an endearing character.

The historical details on the library materials, which are donated, offer an interesting sidebar, particularly the scrapbooks created by the Packhorse Librarians. These books contained recipes, fabric swatches, and practical guidance from the local community.

Cussy's grit and determination to reach her library patrons under extreme hardships will endear readers, and the bigotry she endures makes her a sympathetic protagonist. The extreme poverty and hunger she and her book patrons endure is startling and reeks of realism.

Cussy is both despised and feared for her condition, which is eventually diagnosed as methemoglobinemia, a rare genetic blood disorder. After the discovery, Cussy takes methylene blue pills which make her extremely sick and doesn't result in community acceptance.

While some characters in this book display ignorance, many of the country-folk are kind. As the mountain people overcome their reluctance and suspicion of the library materials, their lives are enhanced as they embrace the knowledge in them.

"The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek" has earned a 2019 LibraryReads Best Book, a 2019 Forbes Best Historical Novel, 2020 PBS Readers' Choice, an Oprah's Buzziest Books pick and a Women's National Book Association Great Group Reads selection.

Kim Michele Richardson is a New York Times, Los Angeles Times, and USA Today bestselling author. She has written four works of historical fiction, and a bestselling memoir, "Unbreakable Child." Richardson was born in Kentucky and lives in the northern part of the state, she rented a cabin near the Appalachian Mountains in South Carolina for a year to conduct research for the novel. She is a book critic for the New York Journal of Book. Her novels include: "Liar's Bench," "GodPretty in the Tobacco Field," and "The Sisters of Glass Ferry." To learn more, visit [www.kimmichelerichardson.com](http://www.kimmichelerichardson.com).

Fans of "The Book of Lost Names" by Lisa Wyngate, "Where the Crawdad's Sing" by Delia Owens and "The Secret Life of Bees" by Sue Monk Kidd should enjoy this novel. Infused with meticulous research, inspirational prose, and compelling characters, this novel ranks one of the best novels I have read in a long time.

# Views of the Valley



With restrictions loosening, Concord Tap House off Clayton Rd. wasted no time with launching its Sunday Sessions Concerts in the parking lot, here with Audio Mynde Band. Photo by Micah



creeklife 20



You can get a glimpse of Martinez wildlife around the clock on Friends of Alhambra Creek Facebook page. This small volunteer group working to protect the health of the creek and surrounding community posted cameras along the creek to candidly capture its diverse wildlife activity. The videos are quite entertaining.



Two cranes tower above Downtown Concord at 1776 Grant Street constructing 228 apartment units plus 4600 square feet of retail space in two adjacent sites. The complex will be a mix of studio, one- and two-bedrooms apartments ranging in size from 506 to 1211 square feet and is expected to be completed in 2022. Development by Hines.



Cousins Maine Lobster truck of ABC's "Shark Tank" fame made a visit to Lucky store in Concord and Dan's Irish Sports Bar in Walnut Creek on St. Patrick's Day serving their popular lobster rolls, lobster bisque, and lobster tail and tots. Shark Barbara Corcoran invested \$55,000 and Cousins business rocketed, now with 30 trucks nationwide, one franchise being here in the East Bay.

**If you have an interesting photo to share, email it to [diablogazette@gmail.com](mailto:diablogazette@gmail.com) along with a brief description.**

## Mt. Diablo branch California Writers Club workshop with historical novelist Alan Brennert

Alan Brennert will present "Researching Your Novel: Reality Matters" at the virtual meeting of the Diablo branch of the California Writers Club on Saturday, April 10 9:30a.m.-12:15p.m.

Author of "Daughter of Moloka'i" and multiple historical novels, Brennert will cover the many techniques he has used to ensure his award-winning novels conform with historical records, including using archives and other resources to create the past, ferreting out legal matters and facts surrounding infamous cases, and interviewing subject matter experts.

He has won many awards, including a Bookie, and a One Book, One San Diego selection. He has developed screenplays for major studios, as well as miniseries, pilots, and television movies. He won an Emmy and a People's Choice Award for



his work as a writer-producer on the TV series "L.A. Law." His short story, "Ma Qui" won a Nebula Award.

Once registered, you will receive a link to join the Zoom meeting. Cost: \$5 for members, \$10 for guests. Register at: <http://cwcmtdiablowriters.org>.

## County Supervisors to hire Four M for large Walnut Creek wetland project

By Tony Hicks, BCN

WALNUT CREEK, CA — The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors have agreed to move forward in extending Four M Contracting, Inc. in a deal worth \$11.285 million for the sweeping Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project that aims to improve both flood control and conditions for wildlife and recreation.

Lower Walnut Creek covers the northernmost area of where Walnut Creek meets Suisun Bay. The watershed is the largest in Contra Costa County, draining more than 150 square miles in eight cities containing more than 300,000 residents, according to the project's website.

The channel is heavily impacted by sediment from the surrounding valley, effecting its flood-control capacity. The goal is to remove sediment without harming the local ecology. The project, decades in the making, would open the area and increase tidal wetlands, improving access for wildlife, including Chinook salmon and steelhead.

The Winters-based civil engineering firm specializes in wetland enhancement projects and the creation of wildlife habitat. The company has done more than 100 projects in California and Oregon, and recently finished the Lower Yolo Restoration Project in the northern section



Pacheco Marsh. (Courtesy of Stephen Joseph Photography, [stephenjosephphotos.com](http://stephenjosephphotos.com))

of the Delta, transforming cattle land into wetland habitat for endangered Delta smelt and other wildlife.

Another goal of the plan to is increase human recreational opportunities in the channel. The Contra Costa County Flood District and East Bay Regional Park District have discussed extending the Iron Horse Trail from its current ends near state Highway 4 at Marsh Drive another three miles along Lower Walnut Creek to the park district's Waterbird Regional Preserve, east of Interstate Highway 680 near Martinez.

The project would add levees to establish the trail extension. The plan would also add public access to Pacheco Marsh, including 2.4 miles of new trails, staging area, elevated vistas, bird-watching blinds, and restrooms. There could also be at least one bridge over the channel and a launch area for small watercraft.

## Pleasanton Art League Presents an Introduction to Cartooning

You might be surprised to learn that many successful cartoonists do not draw well. Cartooning depends on ideas more than on drawing ability.

Four M hired author/illustrator Elaine Drew will introduce art-ists and writers to the benefits and fun of cartooning at a Pleasanton Art League Zoom meeting on Monday, April 12 at 7:30 pm.

"We've all got a story to tell, whether

we tell it with words or pictures or both." says Drew. The Zoom link for the free meeting is published on the PAL website <https://www.pal-art.com>.





**aRt Cottage**

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

# Lindsey Wells featured at

## "All Creatures Great and Small" exhibit

aRt Cottage is proud to feature work by Lindsey Wells, one of our youngest artists to exhibit and sell. Her grandmother, Livia Sargent, encouraged her to visit the gallery about six years ago. "My grandma was always very supportive of my art," she says.

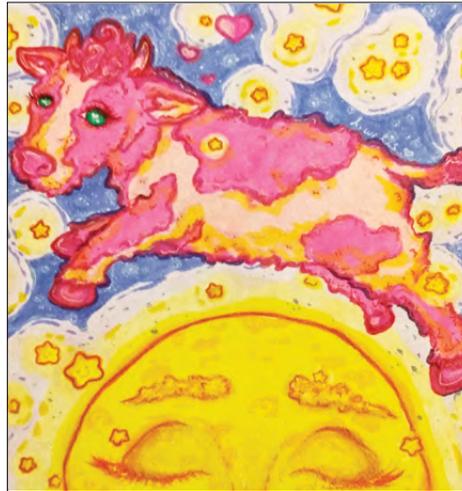
At that time, I was planning our first Student Art Exhibit. Lindsey was a high school student at Clayton Valley Charter School and came in for some advice on how to improve her art so she could enter a show. She ended up entering several pieces in our exhibit (which sold!) and her "Cheshire Cat" was featured on our show poster. While chatting with her recently, we pulled out the old poster to see how her work has evolved. A smile as big as her cat's was on my face as I thought about the wonderful journey she has taken as an emerging artist. She's now building her own online business on Etsy, where she sells her original work as well as colorful stickers featuring her whimsical illustrations. Lindsey has four pieces in our current "All Creatures Great and Small" show which runs through April 23. So far one of her pieces has sold, titled "Prince's Peaceful Evening."

After a year of virtual celebrations, we



Lindsey's smiling like her cat behind her mask

are excited to host an Artist Reception on Saturday, April 17 (2-4pm). All are welcome to mask up and join us for this fun opportunity to see and shop nearly 100 works of art. Animals of all shapes and sizes are waiting to meet you. Enjoy a little wine and music with your social distance on our



Over the Moon (8x8" marker and ink on paper)

outdoor patios. aRt Cottage is located at 2238 Mt. Diablo St. Concord. The gallery hours are Tues - Fri 11am-5pm and Sat 1-5pm. Visit [artcottage.info](http://artcottage.info) for details.



Midnight Quest (12x18" watercolor and gouache on paper)



Luna's Rest (6x6" watercolor and gouache on paper)



### JOurnEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

by Jill Hedgecock

## POINT LOBOS NATURE RESERVE: THE CROWN JEWEL OF THE STATE PARK SYSTEM

As an avid hiker and wildlife enthusiast, I thoroughly enjoyed my trip to Point Lobos State Natural Reserve. It is a great destination for picnicking, SCUBA diving, and jogging. The two-hour drive to get there from Concord is well-worth the effort. The park was called "the greatest meeting of land and sea in the world" by landscape artist Francis McComas, and it lives up to its reputation.

Point Lobos is a natural reserve, not a park, and afforded the highest level of statewide protection of its unique natural beauty and ecological significance.

Perhaps no one knows this area better than Monica Hudson, co-author of the book "Images of America - Point Lobos." She also leads tours through California Legacy Tours - whenever there is no pandemic. She offered plenty of information to guide my sightseeing expedition.



Sea Otters

The diversity of outdoor activities available at Point Lobos is outstanding. With its variety of habitats, a wealth of marine mammals and a variety of birds can be seen. Sea lions, harbor seals, elephant seals, sea otters, and sometimes orcas can be spotted year-round while gray whales migrate past this area from December to April.

One of the more magical opportunities Point Lobos offers for marine mammal lovers is harbor seal pupping season in April and May. Expectant moms congregate at the same beaches where they were born. Born swimmers, their pups will weigh about 20 pounds at birth. They will nurse for about four weeks before becoming fully independent.

"We have a couple of great spots to watch harbor seal pupping areas," Hudson told me. One, from the road at Whalers Cove and the other from the China Cove trail."

Whalers Cove parking lot is the best



Harbor Seal viewing area off Granite Peak Trail. Photo courtesy Monica Hudson

access to Granite Point Trail, but it fills early. China Cove beach is closed during pupping season, but the trail above offers a bird's-eye view with other attractions nearby. These locations can be reached on foot from the entrance on Highway 1.

Seals are protected and disturbing them is against the law so remain 150 feet away and avoid loud noises. Squealing children, clapping, waving your arms, and slamming car doors can cause mothers to abandon their pups. Also, you should put your cell phone on mute and watch quietly.



Cormorants are one of the more entertaining birds to watch at Whale's Cove.

If you cannot fit a visit to see the seals this spring, summer is also a good option. Mating season occurs June through August. The males gather near rookeries to compete with other males. To attract females, the boys slap the water with their flippers, which can be quite entertaining. Not to worry, parents the show is rated G since mating occurs underwater.

Birdwatchers will delight in the feathered sightings to be had. From smaller land birds such as the chestnut-backed chickadee, dark-eyed junco, and the pygmy nuthatch, to the seabirds.

of human behavior and can keep you entertained for hours.

In addition to Brandt's cormorants, birding enthusiasts are likely to find brown pelicans, black oystercatchers, western gulls, and great blue and black-crowned night herons. In inland areas, keep your ears open for the "bouncing ball" trill of a wren-tit or the "Chi-ca-go" call of a California quail. A lucky birder might even spot a Saw whet owl near the Carmelo Meadows Trail.

The hiking trails vary from easy to moderate. All are popular. Parents with children in strollers can easily navigate the flat terrain of the Lace Lichen Trail. The 0.5-mile path is named for the gray-green filament plants that hang from the branches of the Monterey pines.

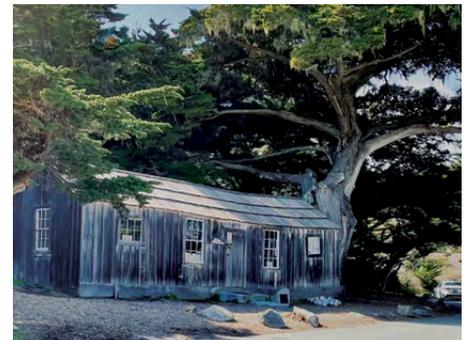
Sea Lion Point offers 0.4-miles of panoramic views of the ocean. The reserve's Cypress Grove Trail winds through one of the two naturally growing stands of Monterey cypress trees remaining on the planet.

The more adventurous hiker may want to tackle the 6.7-mile loop that skirts the shoreline of the entire reserve. This hike has the potential to offer views of wildflowers, turquoise beaches, and natural arches along craggy shorelines.

Weston Beach, known to have some of the richest and most diverse intertidal habitats in the world, is always a fun exploration for all ages. You can download a brochure to bring to help identify the creatures you will see from the Point Lobos website.

"In the springtime, the loop to Bird Rock affords a fabulous closeup view of cormorants nesting," says Hudson. Their courting, nest building, thievery and squabbles will remind you much

History buffs might enjoy visiting the Whalers Cabin Museum, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Although the museum has been closed because of COVID, the skeleton of a whale, old "try pots" used to boil down whale blubber, and historic wagon wheels can be viewed on the ground. The cabin



Whalers Cabin

was inhabited by Japanese and Chinese fishermen in the 1850s.

The entrance fee is \$10. California Legacy Tours offers two-hour walking tours for \$30.

Point Lobos truly has something for everyone. I recommend you plan your visit on the Point Lobos Foundation website that provides itineraries for one to three-hour visits: [www.pointlobos.org](http://www.pointlobos.org).



Jill Hedgecock has degrees in the Biological Sciences and Environmental Management. She is the author of *Rhino in the Room*.

# Women's History Month

## Councilmember Carlyn Obringer highlights Concord women leaders

By David King

Since her time chairing the Contra Costa Commission on the Status of Women, from 2008-2013, Concord City Councilmember Carlyn Obringer has viewed March, Women's History Month, as the time to lift up ordinary women doing extraordinary things. While this was no official City recognition (due mostly to COVID), Obringer campaigned on social media to give these leaders the notoriety they deserve. (in no particular order.)



Councilmember Carlyn Obringer and Blue Star Mom Loretta Masnada stand next to a memorial for the fallen soldiers that were former Concord High students

### Loretta Masnada, Blue Star Mom.

Thanks to Loretta's vision and leadership, over the past four years, Contra Costa Blue Star Moms CA Chapter 20 has partnered with all the high schools in Concord to install and dedicate granite memorials honoring former students who died in combat fighting the Global War on Terrorism. Fundraising for additional memorials continues for high schools in East County: <http://cbluestarmoms.org/>

### Chef/Teacher Cindy Gershen -

Cindy created and facilitates the renowned



Carlyn with Chef/Teacher Cindy Gershen of Mt. Diablo High School

Sustainable Hospitality Program at Mt. Diablo High School. Her focus on the science of food through culinary, hydroponics, and nutrition education is an integral part of the curriculum. Cindy prepares students for employment as professionals in the healthy food service industry which includes promoting "state of the art" growing techniques utilizing controlled environment agriculture via vertical tower gardens. During COVID-19, Cindy and her students are preparing healthy meals and keeping a food pantry stocked for students and their families in need.

### Meet Gigi Crowder, Executive Director of NAMI Contra Costa.



Obringer with Gigi Crowder, Executive Director of Nami Contra Costa. Gigi Crowder, of Nami

Gigi is dedicated to advocating for improving health outcomes and support for individuals and families impacted by mental illness.

She is currently working to build a 24/7 countywide non-police response to calls involving a mentally ill person in partnership with the Justice for Miles Hall: The Miles Hall Foundation. Gigi has also partnered with Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan on AB 988, the Miles Hall Lifeline Act, to transform the way California responds to mental health emergencies.

### Erin Schally and Holly Wang, co-owners of Epidemic Ales



Erin Schally and Holly Wang, co-owners of Epidemic Ales in Concord, enjoy a Lady Boss with Councilmember Carlyn Obringer.

Also, they are the brewers of the new Lady Boss IPA. These ladies have helped to put Concord on the map with their award-winning beers and commitment to community, participating in over 30 charitable events annually.

### Principal Lysie Castellano.

Thanks to Principal Castellano's dedicated efforts, and focus on student mental health, relationship building, and flexibility, Olympic was one of only four schools in the Bay Area, and 27 in California, recognized as model continuation high school. This is no small feat, especially in the middle of COVID-19!



### Mary Tota, owner of Parma Delicatessen

Mary not only operates this popular business, serving up delicious soups, sandwiches, salads, and other favorites, but has raised her family here



in town and is always happy to support a local cause. For example, Mary is supported the St. Agnes School March Dine Out by donating 15% of all Parma Deli sales to benefit St. Agnes School. Thank you to Mary and her sons for being an important part of our Concord Community!

### Janet Frazier, The Network Care

Meet Janet Armstrong Frazier Founder and Executive Director of The Network of Care.



Born out of Janet's own life experience, this nonprofit provides in-hospital meal bags for families who are keeping vigil over a sick or injured child. Because these families may not have the time, energy,

or presence of mind to look after their own needs while they are concerned about their child. For more information and to support The Network of Care's annual fundraiser: <https://thenetworkofcare.org/>

Obringer plans to continue this annual recognition as a Councilmember and hopes that it will one day be supported by the City as an annual initiative.

Congratulations ladies. Thank you, Councilmember Carlyn Obringer for putting a spotlight on these extraordinary women.



## A WALK THROUGH TIME

with Misty Bruns

146  
Years  
Ago

### The Death of Shoemaker John Engler

Through the last twenty plus years, John Engler has come to mind dozens of times. I often wondered about the simplicity of the coal mining days in which he lived and working in the Black Diamond Mine communities of Nortonville, West Hartley, Somersville, and Stewartville, making a living with a skill and trade to provide for his family. My family are descendants of John Engler via his daughter Margaret (Maggie). I feel his story needs to be told once again.

John Engler was born in Baden, Germany, on March 3, 1834. He came to America at the age of 20 in 1854 with his family. He resided in Rochester, New York, for a few years. In or around 1858 he made his way to Baltimore, Maryland, where he met and married Anna Mary Heisler (Hausler) that December.

Their first child was born in 1860. In



August of 1862, he joined Company C 107th Regiment, Ohio Infantry of the Union Army and fought in the Civil War.

He developed typhoid fever later that year and was honorably discharged from service.

He was a master boot maker and the son of a master boot maker. John and Anna Mary lived in Richland, Ohio, for about five years and had three daughters, Maggie, May and Kate. They made their way west in about 1865 with their three little girls. They lived in Springfield Missouri, for about three years where John W. Engler and his older brother George

were born.

In 1872 the family moved to Nortonville, California, with the hope of making a good living wage for his growing family, selling boots to the miners of the Diamond Mine in Nortonville, California.

Another daughter was born in 1872. Their son Charles was born in May of 1873 and died in October of 1874.

John Engler had a large boot order to fill for the miners of the Diamond Mine in September of 1874. With a large family to support the proceeds from the sale of these boots had to be a downright necessity.

When John Engler delivered the boots to the Diamond Mine, on September 4, 1874, the owner handed him \$1 and said, "There is no money."

John went to the saloon that was located next to his boot shop, sat down and ordered a drink. He laced it with poison (strychnine from a bottle he had in his pocket) and drank it down bidding his friends and family goodbye. He refused medical treatment (presumably tannic acid) and died within a couple of hours.

John Engler is buried at Rose Hill Cemetery, which is within East Bay Regional parks district in Antioch California-Black Diamond Mines.

Information is from Charles and Jennifer Kerr descendants of John Engler and Find A Grave website.

SUICIDE AT NORTONVILLE—John Engler, a German, aged about forty five years committed suicide at Nortonville on Saturday last under the following circumstances. He was a shoemaker by occupation and had been to Black Diamond Landing to collect a bill, but succeeded in obtaining only one dollar. On returning to Nortonville, he entered Sharp's saloon, called for a glass of beer, took from his pocket a bottle of strychnine, emptied the contents into the beer, said "good bye boys," swallowed the mixture and in two hours was a corpse. Medical aid was called and an effort made to save his life, but he refused to swallow an emetic and seemed desirous of ending his life. He leaves a wife and large family of children.

Antioch Ledger  
September 11, 1875



Rose Hill Cemetery



## 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.

Red is the ultimate couch potato and snuggle bug. This 60-lb, 3-year-old pit bull terrier-basset mix loves lounging in the sun and belly rubs. Red has some special needs. He not only has stranger danger (stressed around humans he does not know), but he also has injuries to his hind legs. His rescue has committed to invest \$7000 in double TPLO knee surgery. He will need daily supplements to strengthen his joints and a lot of patience. Red is:

- Extremely dog friendly
- Okay with cats
- Housebroken
- Wicked smart
- Not suitable in a home with children

Red's ideal home is a quiet, low traffic situation, with doggy parents that have experience with bully breeds. He'd love to have a doggie sibling but would do fine as a single dog. His adoption fee is \$300.

Red is being fostered through Underdog Animal Rescue, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Underdog's mission is to save shelter dogs that are out of time or that require rehabilitation prior to adoption.

It operates on donations which can be made on its website. Donations toward his surgery would be much appreciated. Underdog also maintains a wish list of needed items with Amazon that you may purchase and donate. Go to [www.underdogca.com](http://www.underdogca.com).

If you are ready to show this sweet boy the kindness and patience, he needs to overcome his stranger danger, contact Underdog at [adopt@underdogca.com](mailto:adopt@underdogca.com).

### Pawsitive Patter



Holly



Aria

**Three-legged Love** - Congratulations to sweet three-legged Holly (featured in Ruby Column March 2020) who has just had her one-year adoptiversary!

Aria, the mini-aussie mix that was featured in the September 2020 column has found her forever home with her foster mom. This lovable dog had been shot and had to have her right front leg amputated. Now, the three-legged diva can live out her life nestled in the kindness of loving humans.

### Walk for Paws

On Saturday May 15-Sunday May 16, head outside and find your favorite trail or neighborhood walk and enjoy a nice outing sporting your Walk



## Red

for Paws t-shirt\*.

Show your support for Contra Costa Humane Society and help raise \$20,000 to help homeless cats and dogs in your community find forever homes.

\$35 registration fee on or before April 30th; \$40 registration fee after May 1st

\*Register by May 1st to be guaranteed your t-shirt

### Family Pack :

\$100 registration fee on or before April 30th; \$125 registration fee after May 1st

\*Register by May 1st to be guaranteed your t-shirt by day of event. The Family Pack will

include registrations and T shirts for up to 4 members of a family.

### A Bone to Pick

**Dangerous Flea Collars** - Flea and tick collars can be dangerous. Approximately 75,000 incidences of dogs, cats and humans harmed by the use or handling of seresto collars have been reported. Complaints have included 1,698 pet deaths and 1,000 documented instances of harm to people. The company warns to keep the collar away from children, which could be difficult for kids that love animals. One of the active ingredients, imidacloprid, affects the central nervous system of fleas, and is a member of the neonicotinoid class of insecticide. Neonicotinoids have been found to harm honeybees.

**Pesky Dog Fur** - Nobody wants their clothes covered in fur, but for those that suffer from dog allergies, there are ways to manage the problem. Regular brushing and bathing can help. But if your dog is excessively shedding, a trip to the vet may be warranted. Skin allergies, nutritional or vitamin deficiencies, and other metabolic disorders can cause hair loss. Changing foods or a fatty acid supplement might help your dog shed less. But before starting a new dog food or using supplements, consult your veterinarian.

**Dog Food Recall** - Raw Performance Dog and Ground Beef frozen 2-pound and 5-pound sleeves have been recalled due to listeria and salmonella contamination. Pets suffering from Salmonella poisoning may be lethargic and suffer from vomiting, diarrhea, or bloody diarrhea. Call Bravo Packing at 856-299-1044, between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. EST weekdays for more information.

[Ruby Dooby Do is Concord's international social media celebrity with more than 191K followers at [Instagram.com/rubydooby\\_do](https://www.instagram.com/rubydooby_do). She has 119,000 Facebook followers and on TikTok with 1.5 M followers. Special thanks to Jill Hedgecock, author of "Between Shadow's Eyes", "From Shadow's Perspective" and this column to help rescue at-risk animals. [www.jillhedgecock.com](http://www.jillhedgecock.com).

## ARF Adoption Stars Aidy & Barqs

by Cole Kuiper

Looking for a furry friend during this trying time? Good news — ARF is now offering a no-contact virtual adoption process! If you see an animal you're interested in on our website ([arlife.org](http://arlife.org)), just fill out an online inquiry form. Once your inquiry has been received, you will be added to our virtual adoption queue. 925-256-1273. [reception@arlife.org](mailto:reception@arlife.org). 2890 Mitchell Dr. Walnut Creek.

### Aidy



One-year-old Aidy is a beautiful, sweet and playful girl. She likes to get attention from her favorite people, leaning into them and giving kisses. Aidy would do well in any home where she can get some quality exercise and all the love in the world. Aidy has a positive history with other dogs, but there's nothing he loves more than a cozy bed

The adoption fee for puppies (<6 months) is \$350, for adult dogs is \$250, and senior dogs (7+ years) and special needs dogs are 50% off the adoption fee.

### Barqs



Two-year-old Barqs is a handsome cat who is looking for a quiet low-key forever home where he'll have time to adjust to a new environment as well as different people. Once he develops his confidence, he's a very friendly fellow who just wants to be loved. Barqs is hoping that his new home has some sunny windows he can settle next to for some serious sunbathing.

The adoption fee for kittens (<6 months) is \$150, for adult cats is \$100, \$25 off each for multiple cats/kittens, and senior cats (7+ years) and special needs cats are 50% off the adoption fee.

### Answer from pg. 8

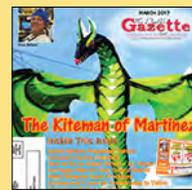
### WORD SEARCH PLUS: KiteMan of Martinez



Tony Jetland is an internationally recognized kite flyer. His kites will wow you day or night, and is often seen flying many of his extraordinary kites out at the Martinez Marina.

Diablo Gazette featured

Tony in an article in March of 2017. That's when we named him "KiteMan Of Martinez". The name stuck. In fact, some now refer to him as KMOM in social media text language.



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