

The Diablo Gazette™

Arts, Entertainment and All That's Good in Our Communities
 Concord, Clayton, Walnut Creek, Martinez, Pleasant Hill
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AUGUST 2018



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Photo: Backpackers Skippy, Sandals, Holes, TNT, and Worms



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from the Publisher

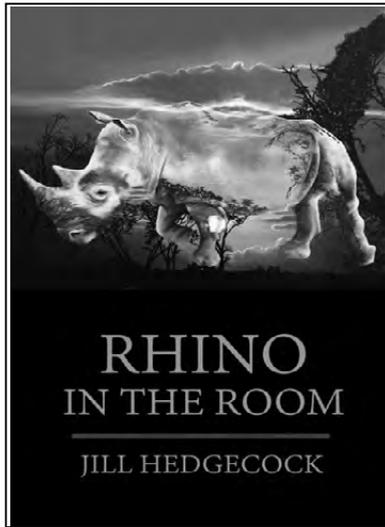
David King

About that, Let Me Just Say...

On page 16 and 17 of this issue you will notice an interesting conflict worthy of eyebrow raising. On page 16, an article discusses the recent announcement from California Health Department (July 6) that Hemp Oil is not to be sold as a food substance. It has issued warnings for retailers to remove all CBD products from its shelves. This is a very complicated development affecting millions of consumers and billions of dollars, and as the article explains, must get resolved very soon as FDA has approved an oral CBD drug, Epidiolex, which treats a specific form of epilepsy, can be permitted on the market.

Legal analysts think the ban will be rescinded as early as three months. So, for now, CBD hemp oil is designated as "not legal" to sell any longer. On page 17, you will see an ad of that very product. After reviewing several legal opinions on this situation, the advertiser and I suspect the lawyers are correct, and that things will return to the way they were very soon. Besides, capitalism seems to always find a way.

After much consideration, Diablo Gazette decided to let him advertise until we legal advice otherwise. So, for now, Cali Born Dreams is simply promoting his brand: Cali Born Dreams, formerly known as distributors of CBD hemp oil. Didn't that marketing strategy sort of work for Prince?



Congratulations to Jill Hedgecock on completing and publishing her new book "The Rhino in the Room." Above is a sneak peak of the cover which was borrowed from her website, www.jillhedgecock.com/book/rhino-in-the-room/.

Jill has been an ongoing contributor to the Diablo Gazette, author of "Ruby Doo to the Rescue", "Book Review" column, and a regular feature almost always involving animals in need of special care or available for local admiration in the wild. See her article on page 5 on local beekeepers.

We will review her book in next month's edition. I am very excited for Jill.



concordmayor

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

Money and Land: The BART GRAB



Over 150 years ago, the state of California decided that one of the two functions of Cities was to be Land Use Planning. Cities build communities. Cities are led by directly elected officials that live in the cities (with a few felonious exceptions here and there). Railroads were created to run trains.

The current bill in the State Legislature AB2923 that was passed in the Assembly intends to totally negate that function of cities and in effect allow five members of the BART Board living in San Francisco and Alameda to determine what gets built in Contra Costa on BART land regardless of the requirements of the existing zoning established by the elected officials of those cities. Remember those five are looking at the interests of San Francisco and Alameda, not you.

BUT wait there is more, not only can they decide what height, density, and use is put to them, it also strips all cities of any future zoning changes and allows the BART Board to make any rules they want. As if that was not enough of a stick in your eye, they also can totally disregard the parking requirements of the city construction code and the cities are FORCED to change the zoning to whatever the BART Board feels like defining not only now, but in the future as well if the whim moves them.

BART is a railroad, that needs to focus on providing a SAFE, clean, and efficient train system. Does their track record give anyone confidence that suddenly they will be able to make community plans? Are you willing to yield to their E.S.P. ((Extremely Small Prospects)) to delve into what the local community needs in terms of the balance of housing, jobs, traffic and the

supporting impacts on police, parks, schools, water etc?

So WHY?

Like many things in politics it comes down to MONEY and POWER. When a developer gets to build an apartment structure and gets to eliminate the structured parking, it puts \$40-50,000 into his pocket. Eliminate 100 spots and it is \$5 million in the bank. BART who wants to make more money on its land than its parking fees, which they already have jacked up, can get lease revenue from the construction trading away the zoning to put massive apartments where none would otherwise be allowed.

When BART obtained their land, they knew the zoning. When the commercial, retail and residential folks around the station invested their money into their land they knew the zoning. Everyone knew the road to change it is to go through the local Planning Commission and into the City Council Chamber in front of THEIR elected officials. This Bill is a gross violation of that social and political contract that defined the community and its related parts: the people, business, local elected officials and a focus on what is a community.

We should be standing united against this. If BART wants to subsidize and help housing construction, they can turn their land over to the cities. We know how to build communities and that will give them time to learn how to run a railroad.

In an emergency measure of opposition to the BART power land grab bill AB2923, all 17 Mayors attending the Conference of Contra Costa Mayors approved the measure unanimously.

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Happy 150th Anniversary Keep Celebrating

We are 150 Years Old! This page is dedicated to the continued recognition and celebration of Concord's Sesquicentennial. It's a gentle salute to the local businesses, organizations, local government, and citizens that gives Concord its unique standing among Bay Area communities - the largest city, in the fourth largest county, in the 5th largest county.

Hey, look! This page is chock full of Savings!

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MIN \$100



Jennifer Stojanovich
Realtor, Better Homes Realty

7 Homebuyer Turnoffs

While every buyer is looking for something different in a home, there are a few key things that are universal turnoffs. If you're selling your home, you'll disregard these issues at your own peril. Even in a competitive market, here are the things that potential buyers will have a hard time ignoring.

Bad smells. Is there a mysterious odor coming from somewhere in your home? You better find it, and fast. Buyers are often turned off by bad smells, including cigarette smoke, pet odors, mildew, or garbage. Identify the offending fragrance, and take steps to eliminate it.

Aggressive pets. Sure, you know your 100-pound dog is just being friendly. But to someone unfamiliar with your best friend, it can look like aggression. The same goes for territorial cats and loud birds. In fact, it's highly unlikely that your pet won't interfere in your home showing in some way, even if they are relaxed and sweet. When potential buyers are coming to your house, make arrangements to have your pets off the property.

Insects. Even if a potential buyer is an avid insect collector, he still won't want to see pests inside your home. If you see any evidence of an infestation, hire an exterminator and take care of the problem before you begin showing your home.

Wrong price. It doesn't matter how much a buyer loves your home – if it's priced too high, it's going to be a big turnoff. Remember, if the house doesn't appraise for the selling price, the buyer may have trouble with their financing. Work with a professional real estate agent who will use their expert

knowledge of your local market to help you determine the best listing price.

Dirty bathrooms. You know the feeling you get when everything around you feels dirty? Imagine a potential buyer having that feeling when they walk into your bathroom. Dirty bathrooms are one of the biggest turnoffs to buyers. Make sure you scrub your bathroom until it shines, remove all clutter, and invest in some brand new towels.

Dark rooms. Have you ever noticed that many home listings describe a home as being bright or filled with natural light? That's because most buyers want to live in homes that feel open and airy. When potential buyers are visiting your home, make sure all the lights are on. Open curtains to let in as much natural light as possible. If any rooms are painted dark colors, repaint them in a lighter shade. If tree limbs are blocking sunlight from outside, trim the branches until more light shines through.

Bad landscaping. First impressions are so important, and most buyers will make a snap judgment about your home in just a few seconds. For this reason, it is essential that you give some love to the outside of your home. Clean up the yard, mow the lawn, and spruce up your curb appeal. Make sure sidewalks, driveways, and decks are clean. Prune trees and shrubs and if needed power wash the exterior of the house. While it may seem like too much work, you'll be glad you did it.

Compliments of VirtualResults.com.

Jennifer Stojanovich is a broker associate at better Homes Realty in Clayton. Read more home buying and selling tips at www.jenniferstojanovich.com.

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Bee Kind: Beekeepers Give Nature a Boost

by Jill Hedgecock

In April 2016, researchers reported that beekeepers experienced a dramatic reduction in viable beehives (i.e., 42% increase in hive loss) compared to 2015. This unprecedented phenomenon was dubbed Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) and led to predictions that managed honey bees could disappear by 2035. However, the plummeting decline has been tempered somewhat by the intervention of dedicated beekeepers. In 2017, the number of commercial bees increased due to beekeepers adding more bees and hives to make up for previous years' rapid losses. An important intervention, because honeybees are critical to human food production. Between 75 and 90% of crops, including apples, almonds, onions, cherries, avocados, and oranges are pollinated by bees

One Walnut Creek beekeeper, Richard Grove, is doing his part—though his passion for bees spans more than two decades—well before the CCD epidemic. His backyard currently houses three hives that provides pollinators for his neighborhood.

According to Dr. Elina L. Niño who heads up the E.L. Niño Bee Lab at U.C. Davis where she provides support to California beekeepers, the number one reason for CCD is the Varroa mite. The mite is the host of over 20 viruses that affect bees. The Varroa mite became a major honey bee pest after its appearance in Florida in the mid-1980's. Grove checks his hives for mites every two weeks and regularly treats for mite infestations

"Oxalic acid or wood bleach, is a naturally-occurring compound that is lethal to



the mites but doesn't harm the adult bees. It's generally applied by vaporizing a few grams of crystals within the hive or by sprinkling a dilute solution over the frames," says Grove. "I use the vaporization method: It's quick, clean, and I don't have to disassemble the hive."

Dr. Niño also cautions beekeepers about the problem inadvertently created by commercial beekeepers who've propagated queens with no natural resistance against harmful viruses. Grove intentionally maintains biologically diverse hives—two different Western honey bee subspecies from commercial apiaries and one hive of feral "survivor stock" Italian bees.

Grove also avoids pesticide use wherever possible, especially Neonicotinoids



(AKA Neonics) by stocking his yard with natural predators such as praying mantis and ladybugs. Neonics became popular in the late 1990s but have since been found to harm bees, butterflies, and water-borne invertebrates. Neonics are mostly banned in the European Union due to research that suggests some formulations reduce all bees' resistance to viruses and interfere with the forager bees' ability to navigate back to the hive.

Gardeners can help bees by purchasing plants that have not been treated with systemic pesticides like Neonics. A systemic pesticide incorporated into the plant tissues, including the pollen which is fed to baby bees along with honey.

Home Depot provides Neonic treatment information on the plastic plant tag. Home Depot and Lowe's have pledged to stop selling Neonic-treated plants by the end of 2018 and 2019, respectively. Visit the Xerces Society website for up-to-date pest control product information: <https://xerces.org/wings-archive/Neonics-in-your-garden/>. It is important to read product labels, especially all-in-one rose plant foods, to avoid these pesticides: acetamiprid, clothianidin, dinotefuran, imidacloprid, nitenpyram, thiacloprid and thiamethoxam.

Embarking on beekeeping as a new

hobby is another anecdote to CCD, provided novices follow strict guidelines. While beekeeping may seem a potentially painful hobby, bees are not vengeful insects and rarely sting even when swarming according to Grove. Richard gently "smokes" the hive entrance to calm the bees, before carefully removing the hive lid and pulling frames, the vertical rectangular elements, that hold honeycomb within the hive box where the baby bees, pollen, and honey occur. By moving slowly and avoiding squashing bees, he says it's possible to tend a hive barehanded without getting stung. Another trick is to not breathe on bees as they equate carbon dioxide with predators, such as raccoons, sniffing around the hive.

"I've been stung hundreds of times," says Grove. "My worst experience was when a hive tipped over. While putting everything back together, I probably got 30 stings on each ankle."

Despite the occasional sting, Grove clearly enjoys his hobby. He affectionately referred to the bees buzzing around the hive entrances as "the girls". Drones have only one purpose—to fertilize the queen, whereas non-queen females serve as guards, nurse bees, foragers and mortuary bees.

Grove's goal as a beekeeper has never been to harvest honey, rather his interest has always been to help the environment. With the threat of CCD still looming over honeybee populations, the importance of dedicated beekeepers like Grove cannot be overstated. For more information about becoming a beekeeper or reporting a swarm, contact Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association, one of the largest beekeeping clubs in California (<http://diablobees.org/>) or Richard at Bees@RichardGrove.com.

photo credit: Diane Walsh and Endless Possibilities.





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Your 2018 Guide to Bay Area Events

The Diablo Gazette's

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

FUNDRAISERS

Pancake Breakfast - Supporting Veterans of Foreign Wars – 2nd and 4th Sundays includes eggs, pancakes, sausage, beverage. 8 – 11 a.m. Willow Pass Road, Concord \$5 buys a terrific breakfast. <http://www.vfwpost1525.org>

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

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

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

August 20



2018 Project Ready-to-Learn Backpack Drive VESTIA (Volunteer & Emergency Services Team in Action): These Drop-off locations will be accepting packed backpacks through August 20. East Bay Times - 175 Lennon Avenue, Suite 100, Walnut Creek; Diablo Valley Federal Credit Union, 1051 Detroit Ave., Suite A, Concord; Kaiperm Diablo Federal Credit Union, 1600 South Main St., Ground Floor, Walnut Creek; Rakestraw Books - 3 Railroad Avenue, Danville. For more information and specifics: call (925)521-5060 or visit: <http://vestiainc.org/cause/ready-to-learn>

September 9 The 7th Annual Delta Harvest Run Returns to Brentwood - Brentwood. All running levels: Half marathon, 10K, 5K, and 1-Mile Family Fun Run. Proceeds from this event will support East Contra Costa County food banks/pantries, shelters, and the funding of college scholarships for local high school

students. for more informatin and to registration go to: <https://deltaharvestrun.itsyourrace.com>

September 14 Local Hazing Awareness Non-Profit to Host Annual Monte Carlo Night
The AHA! Movement, a local non-profit advocating hazing awareness, will host their annual black tie masked ball Monte Carlo Night at the Pleasant Hill Recreation Center. 6:00 - 11:30pm 320 Civic Drive, Pleasant Hill.

OUTDOORS

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

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

August 11 Perseid Meteor Shower. View from atop Mt. Diablo. 7:30 -11p.m Mt. Diablo Astronomical Society Public Astronomy Program. Participate in hands-on astronomy activities followed by supervised observing through the many different telescopes of MDAS members. Bring snacks, water, binoculars, and warm clothes. If you bring a flashlight please cover it with red material. Only Mt. Diablo Astronomy Docents may set up telescopes on Public Nights. Meet at Mount Diablo - Lower Summit Parking Lot, Summit Rd, Clayton. Park entrance fees apply.

CLUB/SUPPORT GROUPS’ NEWS AND EVENTS

Aug 22 Visit Concord Tourism Breakfast. Experience our destination with new eyes and explore our assets from the stories of locals – making Concord a true Northern California Original. Learn more about California tourism trends and how Concord events and meetings provide a powerful economic impact to our region. 8:30 am-10:00 am at Veranda Luxe Cinema and IMAX Theatre. 2035 Diamond Boulevard, Concord. Register at Eventbrite.com. \$8

September 7 Disaster Preparedness 10:00am-3:00pm at Rossmoor Event Center 1021 Stanley Dollar Dr. Walnut Creek. RSVP by Aug 24 at nsalgado@mowdr.org or call 925-937-8311.

FREE.

VISUAL ARTS/ THEATRE/MUSIC

Concord Pavilion
August 11 Comedy Get Down
August 18 Steve Miller Band
August 24 Avenged Sevenfold with Prophets of Rage
August 28 Rob Zombie and Marilyn Manson

Clayton Concerts in the Grove
August 18th - Apple Z
September 1st - Steel ‘n’ Chicago
September 15th – East Bay Mudd

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

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

2018 Jazz at the Leshher Center
Aug 11 Marcus Roberts
Aug 18 Eliana Elias
Aug 25 Gerald Clayton Quintet
Sept 14 Sarah McKenzie
Tickets on sale now at lesherartscenter.org or call 925.943.SHOW(7469) Presented by Diablo Regional Arts Association at the Leshher Center for the Arts | 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek

MUSIC & MOVIES UNDER THE STARS



Bring your family and enjoy free Music & Movies Under the Stars on select Fridays in Walnut Creek parks. Movies begin at sunset. Live music begins approximately 1.5 hours prior to sunset.

August 17 Moana Civic Park
Music 6:30pm; Movie 8pm
Sept. 7 Lion King Tice Valley Park
Music 6pm; Movie 7:30pm
Sept. 28 The Jungle Book Civic Park
Music 5:30pm; Movie 7pm
Brought to you by the City of Walnut Creek, Walnut Creek Arts + Recreation and Walnut Creek Downtown.

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

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

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

August 25 ART Beat 5pm-8pm. Meet the artists; Brought to you by Main Street Arts, 613 Main Street, Martinez 925-269-8049 Art Brought to you by Artcelerator! <https://www.artcelerator.org/>

SEPTEMBER 17 AFTER SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM After School Music Program For children in Kindergarten through 6th Grad. (Older kids are welcome to come as helpers.) Every Monday – September 17th to November 12th 4 -5 PM. \$80 per child or \$150 per family. Scholarships available! To register or for more information, please call 672-4848. Classes to be held at Clayton Valley Presbyterian Church, 1578 Kirker Pass Rd., Clayton.

2018 Music Events at Todos Santos Plaza Concord

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

Out to Lunch

Brasas Do Brazil Churrascaria Steakhouse

by Richard Eber

There was a time some 35 years ago when I moved from San Francisco to Concord that this place was a culinary wasteland. In those days Emile Vilas was a gourmet experience; the number #4 at any Chinese restaurant always included oyster beef, and ladies broke out their curling irons before venturing over to the Sizzler.

Things have changed since then. A wide range of quality restaurants have opened. At last count, 25 different international cuisines can be found in Concord. Currently, the only component



missing has been a genuine steakhouse where meat reigns supreme. Until now that is. The recent opening of Brasas Do Brazil in Park and Shop at 1631 Willow Pass Road in Concord already has the community buzzing.

Under the guidance of Eduardo Alves and his three partners, this regional destination restaurant is a cultural and gastronomical adventure that pays tribute to a proud country some 5500 hundred miles South of the Walnut Creek border.

Upon entering the premises, diners are introduced to the culinary culture of Brazil featuring tropical fruits, exotic seasonings, and of course the churrascaria, meaning meats roasted on a charcoal grill.

A good way to start is imbibing in one of their authentic Brazilian cocktails utilizing fresh fruit and local fermented spirits. I especially liked the Caipirinha which features Cachaça rum, raw sugar, and a heavy dose of fresh lime juice.



They also make versions of this with pineapple and passion juices. Brasas do Brazil boasts a full bar, serving your choice of cocktails, craft beers and wines.

Prior to guests partaking in barbecued meats grilled on rotisseries over mesquite charcoal, the restaurant takes pride in a unique salad bar. Plentiful slabs of smoked salmon, and imported cheeses are provided. This gourmet salad bar's specialties include mango quinoa Hearts of Palm, and a respectable Caprese salad with a Brazilian touch, the restaurant entices patrons with fresh selections of vegetables not found elsewhere. I especially liked the vinaigrette salsa, and the hollowed-out block of parmesan cheese is a unique touch.

The hot station featured a delicious tomato soup, (which was more of a stew) and the Feijoada black beans infused with spicy Portuguese sausage.

Pacing is the key to this restaurant. It was difficult not to overindulge on these foods to leave sufficient room for the main event, the grilled meats.

The Gaucho clad servers brought by a wide array of meats on skewers, rodizio style, carved from a skewer at your table. This is an endless process as different carvers will entice you with 15 or more different cuts of grilled meat for you to enjoy.

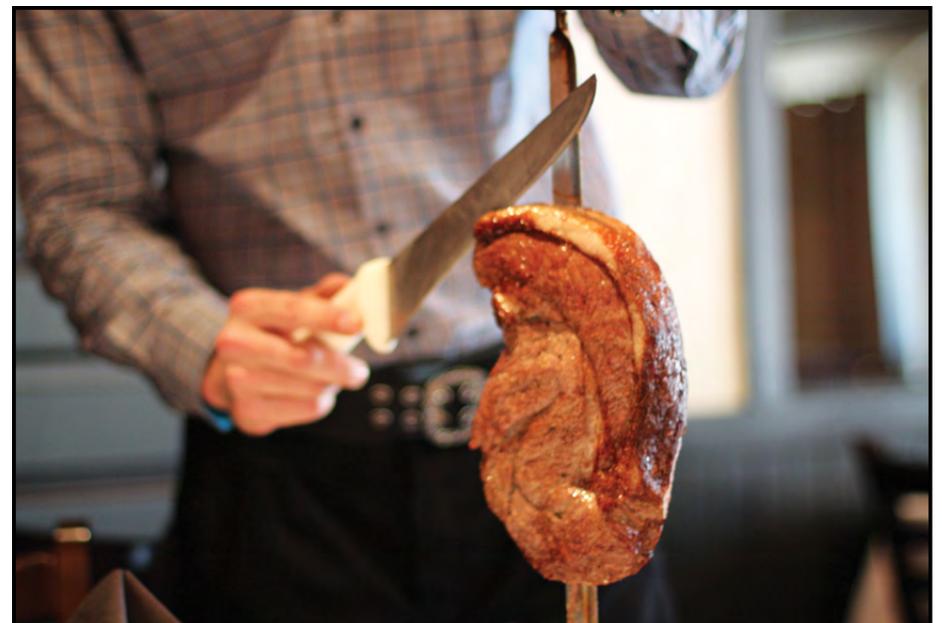
However, beef is king at Brasas de Brazil. I tried several selections from marinated sirloin to large cubes of rib eye steak. The Fraldinha (Flap Steak) and the Fife Com Alho, steak with a garlic rub could be a meal in themselves. However, there were several more options with other kinds of meats to be tried.

The Cordeiro roasted leg of lamb was of melt in your mouth quality. One could also sample a delicious marinated lamb chop sliced off the skewer. I also tried the Lombo com Queijo which consisted of pork loin grilled with bacon wrapped parmesan cheese. I dipped my cuts in an array of tasty homemade sauces.

There just wasn't much room left for chicken dishes (including the chicken hearts) which will be tried the next time I go there. All the meat and the smoked salmon is too tempting. Dinner comes with creamy mashed potatoes, fried banana and freshly grilled pineapple slices in brown sugar and cinnamon which are brought fresh to each table.

After attempting to sample all of it, I was presented with dessert. The Papaya Cream which consists of a generous bowl of pureed fruit blended into a rich vanilla ice cream with a touch of cassis liquor, seems to be a great way to top off your meal. They also offer an awesome key lime pie, crème brulee, and several other treats including out of this world chocolate truffles, all of these are housemade.

Here, the service is endless unless you flip a table card from green to red. That means stop. Brasas Do Brazil utilizes fixed pricing for this feast of \$29.95 for lunch, and \$54.95, salad bar only is less. Drinks and desserts are extra. It is a dining experience like no other in the East Bay. This destination restaurant offers a culinary experience not to be found anywhere else in the region, a giant step up for Concord diners. Reservations are recommended.



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Santa Claus Melons

A melon by any other name would be just as sweet! This melon with the unique name is now available at your farmers' market, along with other amazing melon varieties.

The Santa Claus melon, also called the Christmas melon or the piel de sapo (skin of a toad), looks like a green to yellow mottled striped football with a thick skin and pale greenish yellow flesh. The Santa Claus melon tastes similar to a honeydew melon, but is a lot sweeter and juicier. This melon used to be principally imported from South America, where they would ripen around December, hence the name.

The Santa Claus melon is a casaba-type melon, botanically classified as Cucumis melo inodorus. It is a winter melon variety along with honeydew, Crenshaw, Casaba and Canary. Melons of the winter or inodorus group require a longer time on the vine to fully ripen and are also known for their thick rinds. These characteristics allow the melons of this group to keep until the early winter months.



The ripest Santa Claus melon will have a soft blossom end that yields to gentle pressure and its skin will be a medium to vibrant yellow hue.

Melons are cholesterol-free, fat free, low in sodium, and an excellent source of vitamin C and potassium. The Santa Claus can be used as you would any of the other melons available this month. Pair with crisp white wines, mild cheeses or various cured meats like prosciutto and other cured meats. Use for mixed melon salads, sorbet, smoothies, or cold soups. You can find this luscious melon at your local farmers' market from Resendiz Farms out of Hughson, where you'll find many just-picked melons, including the Santa Claus melon. Their melons offer the best flavor, the widest variety, and the freshest melons you'll find anywhere!

Perseid Meteor Shower Should Dazzle

The Perseids are one of the brightest meteor showers of the year, and experts expect that this summer's celestial fireworks show will be more dazzling than most. That's because the peak of the shower coincides with the new moon phase, meaning there will be very little light from the moon interfering with your view.

Named after the Perseus constellation, this spectacle occurs when the Earth moves through the trail of material left behind by the comet Swift-Tuttle every August. Astronomers love Perseids for being one of the most active and reliable meteor showers. Around Mt. Diablo, you are particularly fortunate as bad weather or fog seldom interferes with visibility.

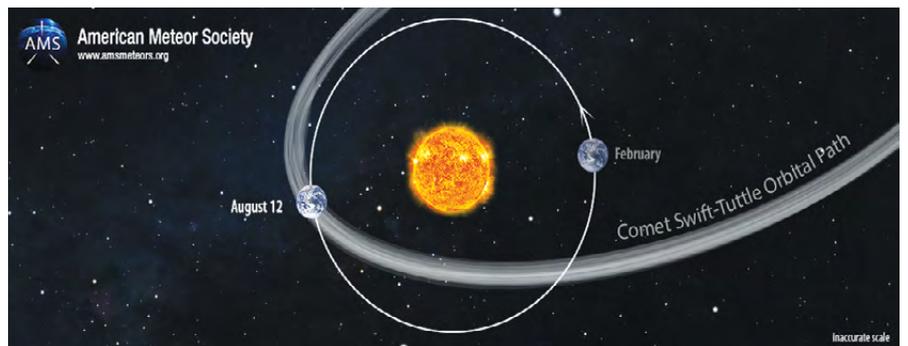
The Perseid meteor shower is one of the more impressive showers over the course of the year, as it peaks with a rate up to 100 meteors per hour, according to Royal Observatory astronomer Gregory.

The shower will last for most of August, but for optimal viewing, look up at the sky when the Perseids reach their peak



Perseid Meteors over Mount Shasta
 Image Credit & Copyright: Brad Goldpaint (Goldpaint Photography)

on the nights of 12th and 13th in August. You won't need a telescope, or any other equipment, but stargazers will need to find a dark sky location and be prepared to be patient - it takes around half an hour for eyes to adjust to the dark. Find a spot away from city lights and fill your view with as much of the sky as possible. Lying down or using a deckchair is a fantastic way to look up at the sky comfortably.



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computercorner

by William Claney, Tech Writer, Computers USA

Tech in English

TRADITIONAL BACKUPS ARE LIKE SITCOM RE-RUNS

Most existing backup methods are so old and out of date you could relate them to a 50's sitcom like "I Love Lucy" where Ricky says to Lucy she's got some "splainin" to do. Those old re-runs are fun to watch but point out the age and failure of most backup methods.

We just had a customer whose hard disk drive (HDD) just took a dump (a technical term for crashed) and his backup wasn't working. We tried recovering the data but quickly determined this was beyond our scope and sent the job to Drive Savers in Novato, CA. They are world renowned at recovering data no one else can. Sadly, no luck. The HDD had a physical crash, meaning the read/write device that normally "floats" over the media actually came in contact with it causing a scratch that destroyed the data.

Perhaps you have heard the headache stories of data going "poof", gone, lost. In fact, a famous radio host Rush Limbaugh, opined "I don't know a single person who hasn't lost something on their computer." That's a powerful message. If you value your data, photos, documents, drawings, plans, school work, etc., ignore this message at your own peril.

The reason I mention these things is most users think they are safe from computer failure, or a whoops moment. It's an event most never contemplate. Perhaps the industry failure rate of 25%, according to Gartner Newsroom, doesn't impress the importance of a backup to

you, but it should.

I see the pain people experience when they lose all their data. The hours, days and weeks of time spent rebuilding their business, their family memories, reloading software, setting up your computer all over again. Many times valuable contact information is gone forever.

Are you managing your backups yourself? "Splain" to me, when did you last run your backup, for that matter when did you check if the backup was successful? Is a backup bothersome or technical for you to perform it? Most people think backup is a pain-in-the, um, arithmetic.

There is a way to beat the odds which doesn't require you, the user, to purchase backup drives, set them up, install and learn new software, run the backups, monitor their progress and if failure does occur you don't need to figure out how to restore your computer.

Take a moment to explore managed services whereby your backup is done for you by professionals. A simple phone call is all one needs to get started. Sound expensive? Well, it's not. For about 33 cents a day you get the protection you really want without the requirement for you to be a computer geek, or learn more software.

Nostalgia is great for "I Love Lucy" black and white re-runs, but hardly a formula for success. I am telling you to seek help and see how easy it is to protect yourself.



WC Senior Bus and Lyft Provide Free Local Transportation Convenience

The City of Walnut Creek has partnered with the ride sharing app Lyft to expand its transportation services. In addition to the Senior Mini Bus program, the Lyft pilot program will provide rides outside of regular mini bus hours, allowing members the freedom to get where they need to be within the borders of Walnut Creek.

Lyft rides are free of charge for qualifying Senior Club members, made possible by a generous two-year grant from TRANSPAC, the Transportation Partnership and Cooperation for Contra Costa County.

To schedule rides with the City of Walnut Creek's Expanded Transportation Program, you must

Be 60 years or older and a current member of the Walnut Creek Seniors Club.

This program is best suited for those who are comfortable entering and exiting vehicles (including SUVs and vans) with-

out assistance.

Although it is not required, it is recommended that passengers have a smart phone with text messaging capabilities to receive updates on their ride.

Reservations can be made by phone from 9:00 am -10:00 am the day before your ride. For a Monday or weekend ride, please call on Friday. If you need to cancel a ride, please call before 4:00 pm the day before your ride, or on Friday for Monday or weekend rides. Reservation Line: (925) 933-1434

933-1434

If passengers are comfortable using the Lyft app on their smart phones, they may schedule rides at any time.

For more information on the program, visit the Civic Park Community Center front desk, call (925) 943-5852 or visit: <http://www.walnut-creek.org/departments/arts-and-recreation/recreation-parks/adults-50/expanded-transportation-program>.



Dan Ashley to Speak at Clayton Valley Woman's Club

The Clayton Valley Woman's Club (CVWC) invites guests to attend their monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 11. ABC7 Newsanchor Dan Ashley will be the guest speaker.

Ashley has enjoyed his 30 years on television as anchor and being a reporter. He has reported on a wide range of stories over the Bay Area, the country and the world. Some were joyful, some tragic, but all meaningful for him both professionally and personally.

Dan's distinguished career has been recognized by many industry-related organizations including Associated Press, United Press International and the Press Club of Atlantic City. He has also received awards from the Society of Professional Journalists and the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Dan is a very active member of the community. He serves on the boards of many organizations including The Bay Area Red Cross, The California Symphony, The Contra Costa County Crisis Center and CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates). He created the non-profit

"Rock the CASA Foundation" to raise money through an annual concert to benefit the CASA organization and other charities. He enjoys singing classic and original rock-n-roll at various events around the Bay Area with his band PUSH. Somehow, he still finds the time to opine to write his commentary "What Really Matters" for the Diablo Gazette and ABC7.

The CVWC is a local non-profit organization of women serving our local communities. They have been active since 1973 giving both

time and monies to many local organizations plus scholarships to students. Monthly meetings are held at St. John's Episcopal Church, 5555 Clayton Road, Clayton. After a 10:00 am business meeting, there is a break and then our speaker at 11:00 am. Join the Clayton Valley Woman's Club on September 11 and catch up with Dan and his activities.

For more information, call Linda at 415-652-3503 or Sheila at 925-672-7947 or visit us at www.claytonvalleywomanclub.org

Photo-Dan Ashley (courtesy of Dan Ashley)



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Views of the Valley

with Tillie Turner Photos by Micah



Brook offered Ice cream sandwiches for a penny to celebrate National Ice Cream Day at Cream in downtown Concord.



Storyteller, Patrick Remer & Arthur, entertains during Summer Fun Thursdays at Sun Valley Mall.



Walnut Creek's Music and Movies Under the Stars series at Tice Valley Park launched with Pixar's "COCO". Check our Calendar listings on page 6 for more upcoming movies in August and September.



Award winning author Seanan Mcguire, Martinez, visited Flying Colors in Concord to sign her first X-Men story (X-Men Gold Annual #2) comic which debuted on Wednesday August 1, 2018.



Franco Harris, of the famed Pittsburgh Steelers was in the Bay Area recently for a golf fundraiser and bumped into his teammate, offensive tackle, Gordon Gravelle up in Silverado. -Tillie Turner photo

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frugelegance

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

We often hear from our friends and clients that they don't enjoy decorating. They say they don't know which they struggle with more -- shopping for home decor or how and where and what to do with it. They use phrases such as "Overwhelming", "Too confusing", "Don't know how to arrange it" to mention a few. Let's simplify things with one super easy decor item that gives a lot for so little. Decorative pillows are like the cherry on top of a sundae.

Did you ever think that pillows could make such a huge decorating statement? Don't overlook the power of pillows. They can be formal, cozy, fun, sparkly even fuzzy. Though they can be expensive, there are tons of affordable options available at our favorite retail stores and online.

Then the question becomes, where to store the seasonal pillows when you aren't using them. No worries, if you live in an apartment or small space where storage can be limited, all you really need are the pillow covers. Reuse the same pillow insert and change the covers for the seasons and holidays. Many stores sell pillow covers and the inserts separately. Three of our favorites are Pottery Barn, Amazon and Wayfair. We also can't help but



walk through our Homegoods (they do not carry covers).

Here's a good tip. You can find some awesome discounts on high-end pillows if you shop right after a holiday or season. Pottery Barn has gorgeous pillow covers for Christmas and Hanukkah.

Easy Home Decorating with Pillows



So, shop January for the discounts on these. Prices are higher right before and the beginning of the season.

If you need a FrugElegant style pillow during the height of a season, you can find fabulous inexpensive selections at several of your favorite discount retailers.

We hope you will be inspired to get creative with your pillow decor, inside and out. The pillow potential is endless. If you are looking for additional easy pillow inspiration, come to the blog where we have a lot more pillow and decorating images and ideas at www.frugelegance.com.

Carol and Randi, the FruGirls, are local home stagers and decorators. You can also find them blogging about many other ways to live an elegant life for less at www.frugelegance.com. FrugElegance is where Frugal and Elegance come together.



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Make Your Own Ice Cream Topping



thicken. This should take about 15 minutes. Place half of the mixture in your blender (or use your immersion blender) and puree. If you have no blender, a potato masher will work just fine. Combine with the remaining 1/2 mixture and refrigerate until serving.



August is all about frozen desserts, Popsicle's, Shaved Ice, Push-pops and yes.... ICE CREAM! These hot summer days, no one in their right mind wants to come home from work and turn on their oven and bake anything. If we could just have ice cream for dinner for the entire month of August, I happen to think that would be an awesome idea. Of course, one can't have a dinner of just ice cream, no, there must be toppings too. So here are two of my favorite homemade ice cream toppings recipes. Try it. I bet you'll like it better than those store-bought jars with preservatives.

Strawberry Sauce
1 pint fresh strawberries
1/3 cup sugar
2 tsp vanilla

Wash, remove stems and cut the strawberries into fourths. Combine all three ingredients in a saucepan and cook over med heat, stirring often. Cook until sauce

Dark Caramel Sauce
1/2 cup butter
3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 tsp vanilla

Bring the sugar, butter and cream to a gentle boil and cook until thickened, about 7-8 minutes. Remove from heat and add the vanilla. Cool and store in an airtight container. When serving, warm in the microwave for 30-40 seconds, until it becomes nice and pourable.

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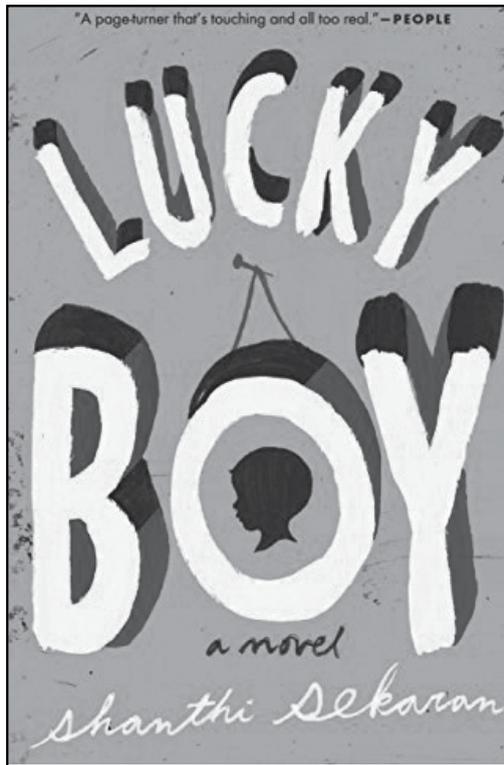
Lucky Boy

Lucky Boy (2017, G.P. Putnam's Sons, paperback, 477 pages \$9.84), a novel by Shanthi Sekaran that tackles the difficult subject of immigration. It is a timely read in light of the current controversial political climate regarding the United States zero tolerance border policy.

In the novel, readers follow Solimar (Soli) Valdez's journey from Popocalco, Mexico to the United States. Naive 18-year-old Soli enters the United States illegally at considerable cost. After a harrowing train ride, her life transforms into a nightmare when she is separated from her newfound love interest, Checo. Forced to continue her travels hidden in the back of a pickup truck with other refugees, she enters the U.S. only to be abused by American thugs. Despite multiple setbacks, Soli's perseverance prevails, and she eventually arrives at her cousin's home in Berkeley.

Owing money to the 'coyote' that arranged her transportation into the United States, Soli takes a position as a nanny for a kind, wealthy couple. However, she soon discovers that she is pregnant. Fortunately, she has a healthy baby boy, despite being unable to seek health care during her pregnancy due to her illegal status. Having sympathetic employers, Soli works through the challenges of being an undocumented worker and a single mother. But then a series of unfortunate events result in Soli's identity coming to light and her life is turned upside down.

Soli's life is juxtaposed against Kavya Reddy's, a second-generation immigrant from India and her husband, Rishi. Kavya has a comfortable life, but her heart's desire is to have a baby. After several miscarriages, she and a reluctant Rishi apply to be foster parents. Therein lies the grit of this story where two mothers love the same "lucky boy" and where heartbreak is certain for one of them. The lengths people will go for what they believe is in the best interests of an innocent child, the failure of United States social services, and the moral



obligations of foster care providers are all explored in this novel.

Shanthi Sekaran, a California native, is a creative writing teacher at California College of the Arts. She is a member of the San Francisco Writers' Grotto. Her writing has appeared in the New York Times, Best New American Voices and Canteen, as well as online at Zyzzyva and Mutha Magazine. Her first novel, The Prayer Room, was published in 2016. She lives in Berkeley with her husband and two children. Because of her familiarity with her hometown, Sekaran perfectly captures the uniqueness of the Berkeley experience, particularly Berkeley's Gourmet Ghetto, and the book is sure to provide local appeal for Bay Area residents.

Lucky Boy was an Amazon Best Book of January 2017 and was named a Best Book of The Year by NPR, The San Francisco Chronicle, and Library Journal. Regardless of a reader's position on the U.S. policy on illegal immigrants, this story is bound to provide new insights on such a complex issue.

movie review

by Sandie Angulo Chen, Common Sense Media



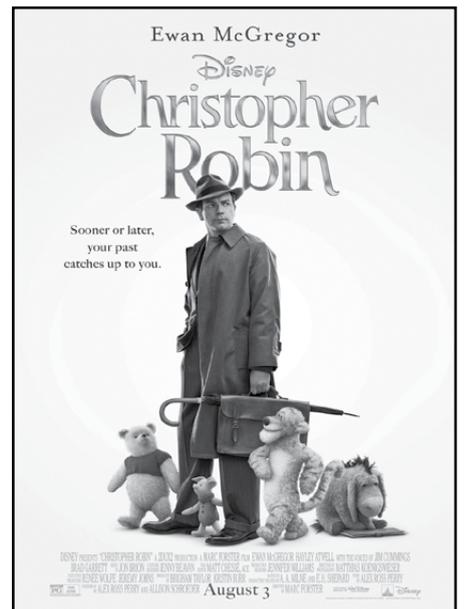
Christopher Robin

3 of 5 stars

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN is a live-action sequel to A.A. Milne's classic Winnie-the-Pooh stories, following a grown-up Christopher Robin (Ewan McGregor) who hasn't thought about his friends from the Hundred Acre Wood in decades. When Winnie (voiced by Jim Cummings) mysteriously shows up in London asking Christopher for help finding Tigger (Cummings), Kanga (Sophie Okonedo), Roo (Sara Sheen), Owl (Toby Jones), Piglet (Nick Mohammed), Rabbit (Peter Capaldi), and Eeyore (Brad Garrett) -- all of whom seem to have disappeared from the Hundred Acre Wood, the adventure begins. Christopher Robin realizes that he must return him to the Hundred Acre Wood and somehow make it back to London in time for an important meeting. It's clear that Christopher hasn't been very playful in ages. He's too busy trying to save the luggage company he manages to spend time with his wife, Evelyn (Hayley Atwell), and their young daughter, Madeline (Bronte Carmichael). The reunion between adult Christopher Robin and his childhood pals is life-changing, as well as humorously chaotic.

Like Pooh himself, this family dramedy is cozy, cuddly, and sweet, if not particularly nuanced or brisk. Entertaining voice performances bolster the live-action cast's take on the grown-up Christopher Robin, who's too tightly wound in his adult responsibilities to see that his wife and daughter are desperate for his laughter and presence. The plot takes a while to kick into gear, but once it does, audiences will surely enjoy the parts featuring Pooh and the rest of the gang, who are all each as we remember them from the books/movies. Earnest and kind, Pooh might call himself "a bear of very little brain," but viewers know that what counts isn't his smarts but his tremendous heart, which is full of love, joy, curiosity, and compassion. Director Marc Forster emphasizes the idea that not a lot has to happen for you to feel something, deeply, in a character-driven movie. The movie is fairly simple, and that seems to be the point (though you'll be forgiven if you catch yourself wondering exactly when the story is going to really kick in).

There's a lesson for all overworked moviegoers as Christopher returns to his childhood play space and rediscovers his close friends, who've missed him for



decades. (Though if it takes a fuzzy bear to make you realize that stressing about work without a break will negatively impact your personal/family life, you really need some paid time off.) For a movie set in England shortly after World War II, Christopher Robin is notably diverse, without comment; it's gratifying -- and important -- to see supporting characters played by people of color. Cummings, Okonedo, Capaldi, and the rest of the voice actors are all in sync with their characters; Garrett is particularly well cast as the grumpy Eeyore. But ultimately the movie belongs to McGregor and Cummings, who, as Christopher Robin and Pooh, form the bonded duo of boy and bear that fans will be eager to see back together again.

This heartwarming, family-friendly story serves as a sequel to the beloved Winnie-the-Pooh tales that have entertained generations. It's about as clean and sweet as movies get these days.

Run time, 104 minutes. Cast: Ewan McGregor, Hayley Atwell, Jim Cummings; Director: Marc Forster; Studio: Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures; MPAA rating: PG

Common Sense Media is an independent nonprofit organization offering unbiased ratings and trusted advice to help families make smart media and technology choices. www.commonsensemedia.org

Readers Rants & Raves

I was vacationing at Lake Tahoe and noticed a copy of the Diablo Gazette. I found it to be very interesting. **Howard B., Alameda**

I ride the train to visit my daughter in Martinez about once a month. I always pick up a copy of the Diablo Gazette at the train station. I love your paper! **April C. - Santa Ana, CA**

There's no need to run the help wanted ad again this month, we are completely staffed. Thank you Diablo Gazette. -- **Elizabeth Sanchez, Director, Diamond Terrace, Clayton**

Regarding Richard Eber's "The Best Pizza in Town" column (July 2018). The pizza in Concord sounds great. But I'm sticking with Lou Malnatti's (real Chicago deep dish) and Edwardo's (stuffed pizza) both of Chicago...at least when I'm not in California. The imposters of Chicago pizza are often worse than the regular chains. **Gary E., Milwaukee, WI**

I stopped my ads in May and my sales slowed down. So, I started it back up in June, and we're hitting all our monthly goals again. Keep up the good work. **Hugh Phillips, UPS Store-Treat, Concord**

"A March copy of your Diablo Gazette is in my collection of keepsakes, as it includes two articles by CA Writer's Club, Mt. Diablo members Frank and Robin and an advertisement for our new book. I am impressed with the wide variety of engaging articles." -- **Ceci P., Pleasant Hill**

My husband picked up a copy of Diablo Gazette while in Concord. I read it and I like it. It's really quite interesting. I didn't realize all that was going on around here" -- **Barbara H., Martinez**

DIABLO GAZETTE FUN ZONE

The Great Vallejo Race

by Robin Gigoux

Sailing on San Francisco Bay sounded like the ticket to a life I imagined when I moved to California. So, when friends invited me to a party at the Tiburon Yacht Club, I eagerly accepted. At that party, I learned about the Great Vallejo Race.

The annual two-day race from Berkeley to Vallejo and back again is among the largest inland regattas in the United States. The race began around 1925, attracts 150-200 boats, and marks the official opening of the San Francisco Bay racing season.

Friends convinced me to try my hand at crewing. Images of sailing under the blue California sky with fun-loving people, spending overnight in mysterious Vallejo, and returning the next day under similar circumstances filled my head. Hours on the water. What fun. How chic.

I studied my brains out from a paperback training guide and received that coveted invitation from someone in the Club I didn't know. Still, I was thrilled.

High on my morning caffeine and envisioning an idyllic day, I arrived at the dock in Berkeley with friends, each raring to board his or her craft. Mine turned out to be a 24-foot-long, skinny old, poorly painted, wood craft with no "facilities." The unfinished interior was barely big enough to shelter two or three people from a storm, if necessary, and was far from the kind of party cabin I had expected.

Once aboard, I discovered that I was to serve as ballast, standing in the narrow hold, mid-ship, holding my arms out to each side. Period.

Salt, wind and cold water whipped my face and hair as we sliced through the water. Long sleeves and trousers protected me from the sun and cold, but I hadn't brought a cap or tied up my hair. My face, crusted with salt by the time we got to Vallejo, was red and raw. My longish hair, also crusted with salt, remained horizontal behind my head and brittle until I hosed my head off. It took weeks for my skin and hair to get back to normal. I'm such a girl.

Something to eat, a hot shower and a soft bed sounded like the best reward for a hard day's sailing. But noooo. It may be a false memory (considering advertised festivities), but as I recall, there was no



Credit: 123rf.com-Leighton O'Connor

shower, only pre-made sandwiches, bottled water and no bed.

My captain, co-crew and I slept in our clothes on a wooden floor in a gymnasium of sorts. Then back on the sailboat to do it again in reverse. Sailors are tough. Afterwards, I couldn't get home fast enough to take that hot shower, eat and sleep in a bed I never appreciated so much.

I must have passed some unspoken test because I was later invited to sail on a luxurious, sparkling white sailboat with gleaming wood trim. My kind of sailing, I thought. The day was pleasant, sunny and warm. Everything I could have wished for. Until the wind picked up and the boat heeled dramatically.

We all rushed to starboard side, now high above the water. Port side was running inches below the surface. I was sure the boat was about to flip over and we would all drown. I later learned that the boat's great keel kept it from overturning. Others seemed to be having the time of their lives. Not their first sail. Me? I hung on for dear life, my heart racing with a weirdly delicious mix of excitement and terror.

I live my life. I enjoy new experiences. Mother, were she still alive, would blame her gray hair on me. And so, much as I like the idea of sailing, in fact it's not for me. I leave the Great Vallejo Race and sailing on San Francisco Bay to those heartier and braver than I. Give me a cabin cruiser any day.

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

What's Not Next for Concord's Growing International Cuisine

by David King

Concord continues to expand its array of international cuisine with some very fine restaurants. With 25 countries represented, that's quite the dining diversity. However, here is our list of a few countries with a prized specialty we suspect Concord City New Business is in no hurry to land.

Mexico (Aztec): Escamole. Delicately put, it's insect caviar. Bluntly put, it's fried ant larvae. It is an ancient dish that was enjoyed as a delicacy by the Aztecs. Today, it makes for a fancy taco topping, a tasty omelette addition, and is even served alone with guacamole and tortillas for a make-your-own ant larvae burrito! Usually pan-fried with butter and spices, these eggs have a crunchy texture, and a light, nutty flavor.

Peru: Cuy, fried or roasted Guinea

Pig, is a Peruvian delicacy usually eaten on special occasions. This pet-on-a-plate is native to the Andean region and have been feeding Peru's population for the last 5,000 years. Cooked whole — head, teeth, ears, and all, expect cuy to be crispy on the outside and with very little meat. The taste is similar to dark chicken meat (what isn't?) or duck and is considered the healthiest meat you can consume.

Cambodia: A-ping, a deep-fried tarantula. A dish developed during Pol Pot's oppressive rule over Cambodia when people were forced to eat anything they could to survive, A-ping is now sealed as a staple food. At only 12 cents a pop, these crunchy critters are a cheap snack and rich in protein.

Sweden: Surstromming. You might wonder, how something that smells so off-putting can be a delicacy. Surstromming is a fermented Baltic Sea herring. The fish is gutted, doused in salt, and left in open containers to ferment for several months in temperatures between 60 – 68° F. Due to the strong odor, it is not allowed in enclosed spaces like apartment buildings, (or Clayton.) Hence, it is



usually consumed outdoors during summer, normally on thin bread as part of sandwich which can include dill, cheese, potatoes, sour cream, and diced onions.

England: Black Pudding -- Fancy a sausage stuffed with pig blood and pork fat. that dates back to the 15th century.

The recipe is pretty simple, too. Boil the blood along with spices and a little pig fat. Add oatmeal or barley to thicken. Then pour into a sausage casing where it dries and hardens, creating a sausage. The pudding can be boiled, baked, fried, grilled, or even eaten cold. It's typically served in slices as part of a traditional breakfast.

Armenia: Khash - During holidays, festivals, and other worthy occasions, locals reach for Khash. Made from cow's feet, its smell is very strong, and the broth becomes very thick and gelatinous from hours on the stove. It is an out-of-the-ordinary dish, but one that is a must try! The meat around the hooves is tender and incredibly tasty.

Scotland: Haggis has been around for hundreds of years. It is a type of pudding composed of sheep's liver, heart, and lungs mixed with minced beef, that is stuffed into the sheep's stomach and boiled. Known as a rural dish because it was inexpensive to make, nowadays, it's consumed because of its savory

taste and nutritious value. The taste is very similar to minced beef and if you didn't know what you were eating, you'd certainly think there was nothing unusual about it.

Did I whet your appetite? You can find more strange delicacies from around the world at <https://www.bookmundi.com/t/20-weirdest-foods-around-the-world>



Welcome Baby

Congratulations to Desire Medlen of Clean Air HVAC for successfully bringing in a new baby girl to the area. Desire is the designer of each month's Word Search puzzle in the Diablo Gazette.



On 7/27 at 4:27am, Alice Mae Medlen busted into the world weighing 8lbs 11oz and 21 inches. She is a happy and healthy baby girl. This month's puzzle was created by co-worker, Claudia Szeliga in honor of Miss Alice Mae Medlen.

A	Z	F	K	N	V	E	R	I	F	D	B
V	L	R	O	P	I	T	C	H	B	E	E
C	H	I	L	D	O	S	L	F	T	S	A
Z	L	D	C	G	L	U	R	U	C	I	U
Y	B	A	B	E	A	G	I	L	E	R	T
C	R	Y	H	J	M	U	G	L	F	E	I
O	Q	S	U	N	X	A	B	O	R	N	F
T	W	E	N	T	Y	S	E	V	E	N	U
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L	O	V	E	S	A	N	D	R	A	F	Z
P	K	C	A	R	A	B	M	A	E	R	D
J	E	N	N	I	F	E	R	G	N	I	S

Alice Mae		Leo		Dream
Born		Lion		Sing
August		Fire		Cry
Twenty seven		Sun		
Beautiful		Pluto		
Perfect		Jennifer		
Baby		Sandra		
Girl		Viola		
Full		Mila		
Moon		Desire'		
Fridays		Barack		
Child		Love		

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aRt Cottage

by FROgard www.aRtCottage.info

Psychological Abstraction

Now showing through August 24th

This exhibit is something completely different. Tom Quinlavin and Kareem Assab have filled the walls with large abstract pieces that scream with color and texture. It is easy for one to choose a favorite. The images pull the viewer in to take a closer look. Living in Yellow, by Tom Quinlavin and Blue by Kareem Assab are two that make the viewer look twice. In many of the pieces, both Quinlavin and Assab have used complimentary colors to make things pop. The largest piece measures 48" X 72" and the smallest 22" X 22".

The paintings are acrylic on canvas and some on paper. There will be no labels on the wall for the work that is on display. The artists will have title, price and medium information on a numbered sheet as you come in. This gives the viewer a chance to make up his or her own title for the abstract piece on display and one will not have any influence from what the artists have named their pieces. It may mean or be something completely different to the viewer. Abstract paintings can be interpreted in many different individual ways.

This is a family friendly show and free. It is currently open and running through August 24th. There will be a reception and open house on Saturday, August 11 from 2 - 4 pm. Refreshments



and drinks will be served. Live music will liven things up for those who want to sing along or dance. All are welcome.



Tasha is happy leaving Flying Colors Comics, Concord, with a treasure; two autographed copies of Martinez Seanan McGuire's, first X-men Comic story and July's Diablo Gazette. Wow!

150 Years of Elks



If you were at the July 4th parade in Concord, the Concord Elks Lodge's covered wagon stood out as the one entry that represented life 150 years ago to a time when not only Concord began as a town, but Elks began as an organization. Although, it was 90 years later before Concord was issued its local Elks Charter #1994.

The 60-year-old lodge has built quite the resume of contributions to our community worthy of recognition.

25 years ago, Concord Elks sponsored a special needs Boy Scout Troop #1994 that has produced 22 Eagle scouts.

Elks gives \$1500 to the Holbrook School to send all 5th graders to science camp.

Each month since the hurricane, the Elks have sent supplies to Puerto Rico and have committed to continue to send aid until it gets back on its feet.

"There are so many projects that we work on all year that it's hard to name them all," said member Barbara Harper. "Our story is long; our work is humble; our history is proud. As long as there are those who need our help, the Elks will be there to give aid and comfort."

Currently, The Elks are collecting coffee cans for the Mosquito Abatement project in Contra Costa County to help control West Nile Virus disease. This is a project Harper spearheaded after reading about the need for coffee cans in June's Diablo Gazette.

Fran Shockley, the Exalted Ruler of the Concord Lodge, announced that they recently received two grants, one is to help Concord Parks and Recreation beautify its parks and to continue its support of Holbrook School. The other is to support East Bay Stand Down, a 4-day camp in the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton, to aid homeless veterans September 13-16.

Shockley, a transfer from the Alameda Elks lodge, says she wants to energize the Concord Lodge. "I'd like to see our community effort rise to new heights. We have many senior members and we are really interested in the next generation of Elks to join us," she said. Their Junior Elks program, Antlers, is for members ages 12-20.

Elks was founded by an Englishman named Charles Algernon Sidney Vivian, a successful entertainer from London. Vivian arrived in New York in 1867

where his magnetic personality attracted other actors and entertainers. They began meeting regularly just for their own entertainment and under Vivian's leadership, they called themselves the Jolly Corks.

The Jolly Corks decided that in addition to good fellowship, they needed to also serve those in need. So, on February 16, 1868, they established the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks with Vivian elected to head it.

The order grew in popularity as word spread to other cities. The New York State legislature granted Elks a charter authorizing the establishment of a Grand Lodge with the power to establish local Lodges anywhere in the United States.

In addition to aiding members in distress, the Elks raise money for children with disabilities, college scholarships, youth projects, and recreational programs for patients in veteran's hospital.

Elks founded Flag Day, declared a national holiday by President Harry Truman.

During World War I, the Elks funded and equipped the first two field hospitals in France, built a 72-room community house in Camp Sherman, Ohio, and a 700-bed rehabilitation hospital in Boston which they turned over to the War Department.

Their loans to 40,000 returning veterans for college, rehabilitation, and vocational education were the precursor of the GI Bill.

When World War II broke out, The Elks also contributed more than half a million books to the Merchant Marines.

Elks donated more than half million pints of blood to help wounded soldiers in the Korean War.

Elks purchased 24 air-condition units for Tripler Medical Center in Hawaii so the wounded Vietnam soldiers could recuperate in some degree of comfort.

The Elks donated over \$1 million to the Ellis Island Foundation for the renovation and preservation of the Statue of Liberty.

As Harper said, the Elks have a long, proud history.

To join, a member Elk must sponsor you, but that shouldn't cause one to hesitate. "Anyone interested in becoming a member can sign up online. We have sponsors available for them," Shockley says.

Local Authors Featured in Writing Magazine Offer Diablo's Best Talent

Books 'N Pieces Magazine, featuring short stories, interviews and writing tips, includes several local authors and writers in the last few issues.

Jill Hedgecock, who also pens our book reviews, has book reviews and articles. Short stories by local author Jim Hasse, as well as an interview with former Bay Area bestselling author, Joanne Pence, is included.

The magazine, which accepts submissions, and pays for publication rights for fiction, was founded in 2016 by the former publisher of The Concordian.

The August issue features an exclusive interview with international bestselling crime author, Peter James, one of seven interviews.

Interviews with bestselling authors have dominated the covers for the past year, and the magazine has garnered an international following across the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom,



Europe, Australia and parts of Asia.

Recently, the magazine decided to forego any advertising revenue by switching to a subscription model only.

"The choice was easy," said William André Gensburger, publisher. "We've offered exceptional interviews and short stories since we started, and the idea of cramming advertising in the

pages seemed unappealing."

Subscriptions are available on an annual basis for both print and digital formats, with an extensive sampling of past issues and current content available on its website www.BooksNPieces.com. Authors are encouraged to contact the publication for interviews, or to submit work. Writer's guidelines are available Online.

District Elections

by Dominic Aliano

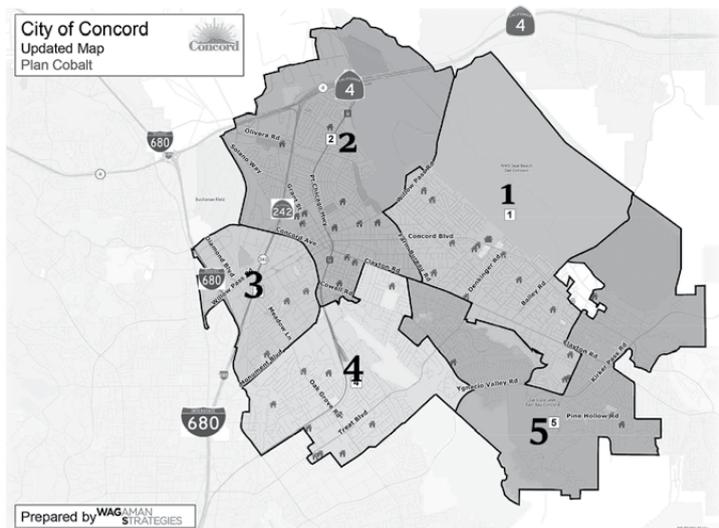
Earlier this year, the Concord City Council made the decision to move from at-large elections to district elections. Elections at-large meant that anybody living anywhere in the City of Concord could run for Concord City Council, but now the District Elections only allow for residents to run for city council in the district they live in. The Concord City Council decided to proceed with five districts on a five-member council, so every councilmember represents their own district.

Many residents of Concord still do not know that we now have these District Elections. I received the results of Edi Birsan's Pulse of Concord Survey and one of the questions was, "Do you know what District you are in under the new Districts and if and which Council member is the incumbent for your area." The results to that question: 48.6% no idea, 8.1% no idea and do not care, 22.3% yes know district and incumbent, 20.9% yes and know district only. The results to these questions show that almost 50% of the residents do not even know about the Districts.

As a disclaimer, the Pulse of Concord Survey is not a scientific survey nor is it a survey conducted by the City of Concord. No tax dollars are spent on this survey. It is a survey that is put together and distributed by Edi Birsan in his own capacity.

I am afraid that many residents of Concord are going to be shocked to see that they can no longer vote for the whole Concord City Council. Yes, we need to continue to educate the public about our District Elections, but at the same time the City of Concord has done public

outreach and the Diablo Gazette, Claycord.com, East Bay Times, and Concord Pioneer have all done articles about Concord's District Elections. With the 2018



Election just a couple of months away, it is important that all voting residents be aware of their new District.

District 1 includes the portion of Concord from Willow Pass Road, all the way up Clayton Road, to Ayers Road. It includes a huge portion of the Concord Naval Weapons Station.

District 2 is made up of Concord's Downtown and Northern side of the City. From Cowell Road, all the way up Port Chicago Hwy, and into the industrial part of Concord.

District 3 includes half of the Monument, a portion of Concord's Downtown, and much of Concord's commercial and retail areas.

District 4 is made up of the Monument on the Oak Grove side and includes all of Treat Boulevard.

District 5 is made up from Clayton Road to Pine Hollow Road and out to the Concord Pavilion.

These descriptions of the new Districts are not exact but represent the general area that they cover. Visit the www.cityofconcord.org and look for District Elections and click on Cobalt Plan map. The Cobalt Plan map (see photo) will give you the exact layout of the new Districts.

AHA! Monte Carlo Night

On Friday September 14, 2018, The AHA! Movement, a local non-profit advocating hazing awareness, will host their annual Monte Carlo Night fundraiser at the Pleasant Hill Recreation Center located at 320 Civic Drive. AHA!'s Monte Carlo night is a black-tie masked ball affair emceed by the city of Brentwood's popular improv personality, Bart Schneider. The event will run from 6-11:30 PM local time. Guests will enjoy an elegant buffet, cocktails, dancing, a silent and live auction, and professional gaming. Sponsorships and event tickets are available via AHA!'s website (ahamovement.org).

All proceeds benefit the AHA! Movement and their mission to increase awareness, accountability, and responsibility towards eradicating hazing. "We are excited to once again this year offer the community an entertaining evening of gaming, dinner, and dancing while actively making a difference in the lives of our young people," said event coordinator Jeremy Carlson. The AHA! Movement is a national non-profit founded in 2015 and run by Debbie Smith in loving memory of her son, Matt Carrington who was tragically killed in a water hazing while pledging a fraternity at California State University, Chico. Working closely with then State Senator Tom Torlakson, Smith was the catalyst in passing a California law amending the California Education Code, and California Penal Code allowing felony charges for some hazing rituals, and for the first time, gave prosecutors the ability to seek hazing



charges against nonstudents. The bill was signed into law on September 29, 2006, by then California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and named Matt's Law after Smith's son.

The AHA! Movement's goal is to prevent injury and death by changing the culture of those organizations who participate in the humiliating, degrading, torturous and potentially deadly acts of hazing.

"We are blessed to have a community of supportive individuals who want to see change, said Smith, "I'm ecstatic to mix fun with raising awareness and financial support for a mission essential to the health and wellbeing of our society," For more information about Matt's story, please visit www.wemissyoumatt.com and to donate to the AHA! Movement, please visit www.ahamovement.org.

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by Dr. Dan Peters www.DrDanPeters.com

Who Has Time to Meditate? You Do!

I am often asked what is the single most effective way to manage worry and anxiety. My experience, and those of my clients, is to stay in the present. You see, we often don't realize that everything that is in the past is gone, with very little or nothing we can do about it. Thus, those that tend to ruminate about the past or "live in the past" tend toward sadness and depression. On the other hand, everything we are worried, anxious, or scared of, hasn't happened yet. It is all in the future and based on things yet to come ("What if I lose my job? What if my child doesn't get on the team? What if the economy turns for the worst?"). These things could happen, and if and when they do, you will deal with them. But how does worrying about them now help? It doesn't.

As a psychologist and student of the human mind and behavior, I have been drawn towards Eastern philosophies of thinking and meditative techniques associated with present moment living. These Buddhist and Zen philosophies espouse staying present, detaching from outcomes (i.e., getting the promotion), and cultivating loving kindness and gratitude. A primary method for achieving the aforementioned is to engage in a daily meditation practice. For years, I read all the books, but kept waiting for the time to start a regular practice and attend a weekend retreat to kick things off. Like any good perfectionist, I needed to do it right. I tried getting up early—earlier than my usual early to answer email before the kids got up, but that didn't last long. I tried setting time aside to meditate in the evening after the kids went to bed—but found myself falling asleep. I then tried setting time aside during the work day, but found it often got lost in the need to fit a client in, return client calls and answer emails (so I wouldn't need to get up so early).

At last I learned about what some call informal or real time meditation. This involves being present in your daily tasks—truly focusing on what you are doing. This can be done while you drive, do the dishes, fold the laundry, and even walk to the bathroom on a quick break. Finally, something I had time for! And so do you. It is really very simple. You practice focusing on the immediate task at hand. I never thought that doing the dishes and folding laundry could be peaceful and rejuvenating. I focus on taking the clothes from the basket, each step of the folding process, and then placing them in the right pile. I focus on rinsing the dishes, putting them in the dishwasher, scrubbing the pots and seeing every little piece of food that needs to be removed before the final rinse and placement on the drying towel. I focus on the road, the car in front of me, and the streets being passed. I feel my foot press the accelerator and the slow press down on the brake.

The result of this? I am present in my life when I am focused on the small tasks that make up a day. My mind is calm, yet alert. I am refreshed rather than depleted. And, I am not worried or anxious when I am in the present. All of the things I typically worry about are still there somewhere, and still exist in the yet to be future, but I am fine in the moment. I still plan on cultivating a formal daily practice at some point, but for now, I have found a way to meditate in a way that fits my current life. The beautiful thing about real time meditation is that you always have time for it because you are doing it while you are living your regular life. Most importantly, you will feel less worried and anxious when you stay in the present whenever possible throughout your day.

Who has time to meditate? You do!

CBD Setback in California

by David King

California's booming cannabidiol (CBD) industry is in disarray after the state Department of Public Health (CDPH) clarified its position earlier this month that CBD cannot be added to food, even if it comes from hemp.

The agency's Food and Drug Branch (FDB), which regulates human and pet foods, including foods sold in restaurants and at retail locations, made the announcement July 6, in an FAQ stating: CBD cannot be added to "food, drink, confection, condiment or chewing gum by man or other animal. Whether CBD comes from marijuana or industrial hemp, does not matter. CBD must come from people with "commercial cannabis licenses." Marijuana retailers must use marijuana-derived CBD in their products. Hemp-derived CBD is specifically banned in manufactured cannabis products. The state health department says its following guidance from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

This declaration is wrought with conflicts. CBD products have been selling openly for several years already including in mass retailers like Target and Pet Food Express.

Some lawyers are saying it's not time to panic just yet. The Hoban Law Group of San Francisco believes California's CBD rule contradicts the definition of hemp elsewhere in state law.

An FAQ on the California Industrial Hemp Program website specifies that hemp is legal, including "every ... preparation of the plant."

Indiana, Wisconsin and Texas have all either reversed or put on hold their stated CBD limitations. The belief is that enforcement would invite litigation. The FDA admitted that parts of the cannabis plant have a place in the treatment of patients suffering from

severe forms of epilepsy. Just a few weeks ago the FDA gave GW Pharmaceuticals permission to start offering Epidiolex, a CBD oral solution which has been shown effective in reducing seizures in children with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome and Dravet syndrome. It will soon be available with a prescription through all major pharmacy chains from Walgreens to CVS.

This is significant because the federal government still considers any derivative of the cannabis plant a Schedule I dangerous drug – a substance that resides on the same level as heroin.

But now that the FDA considers Epidiolex a "safe and effective" treatment option for certain forms of epilepsy, CBD must be downgraded to a Schedule II or III on the DEA's Controlled Substances Act. Barbara Carreno, a public affairs representative for the DEA, recently told Business Insider that the agency has 90 days to put CBD into a lower classification. It is a prerequisite to the launch of Epidiolex.

"It absolutely has to become Schedule 2 or 3," she said.

A Schedule I drug suggests that it has "no known medicinal value," the FDA cannot allow Epidiolex to go to market without making a change.

A CBD reschedule will do nothing to alleviate the conflict between state and federal law. For a situation like that to open, members of the cannabis industry would have to pull together some mega-bucks to seek FDA-approval for their respective products. It is a process that costs billions of dollars to bring to fruition. The FDA says it is open to it if they want to give it a try.

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theRIGHTmove
by Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate
www.BuyStageSell.com

You Have

Questions: I Have Answers

Question – Realtors talk about a “tour”. What is it and why do I care if Realtors tour my home, if there is no buyer with them? Carol D., Clayton

Answer - First let's talk about the benefits of touring, for Realtors and their clients. As part of the Realtor's job, they should know the competition for their listed properties and know the inventory for buyers who are looking for homes. Tours are a valuable marketing tool. Think about it. IF the Realtor sees a home matching your described “dream home”, they are more likely to put it on the list of homes to show you. The easier it is for Realtors to view a property, the more likely they are to do so, and they can see more homes in a shorter period. On tour day, they can visit without an appointment, and if they are caravanning, they visit homes they might not have otherwise seen. More Realtors = More potential showings = More buyers = More offers.

There are two types of touring covering most homes in this area (Concord, Clayton, Pleasant Hill, Martinez, Walnut Creek, Rossmoor). One is called Broker Tour, which is a set day and time where Realtors put their listings on a list and choose that day which they want to go to on their own, and without an appointment. Caravan Tour happens after a marketing meeting where Realtors meet to “pitch” their listed properties and Buyer Wants and Needs in hopes of hearing about new properties coming up and

answer questions about their new listings. The addition of the marketing meeting adds another level of interaction between Realtors and allows them to talk about your listed home and/or buyer needs to be matched with other Realtor listed properties. The caravan tour usually results in more Realtors viewing your home if you are in Clayton or Concord and/or gated communities like Rossmoor, as Realtors view all the listings on tour, not just those closer to the freeway. It exposes more Realtors to more properties in a shorter period of time. On Caravan they tour all the homes on the tour that day, so 18-35 Realtors come by, making Caravan tour a valuable add on to a Realtor's marketing of your home. Sometimes buyers also tour on tour day, given the list by their Realtor.

If you have a question or real estate topic of interest regarding buying or selling a home, email them to me at info@BuyStageSell.com. You will receive a lottery ticket for each question chosen to be answered in my column.

Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate, Dudum Real Estate, is a local Real Estate Broker, 5 Star Professional, Senior Real Estate Specialist (for active seniors and boomers), Certified Staging Professional-Realtor, and author for Staging Standard, a magazine for stagers and their clients. 925-876-0966, info@BuyStageSell.com

Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue

DAISY

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



Daisy, a fawn-colored purebred pug, is August's “pawsitively special dawg.” At nearly 15 years, this 16 lb, senior girl is in her sunset years. She is a beautiful, petite girl with luxurious fur and an infectious spirit. She gets along great with other pugs, kids and cats. Daisy loves to cuddle. She's pretty active as a result of two daily medicines that counteract her spinal arthritis. This sweet girl just had a dental cleaning and is current on vaccines. Daisy is partially stool incontinent (only because she can't get to the door fast enough), so having an owner that is home a lot and can keep a sharp eye on her would be ideal. Her adoption fee is \$150.

Despite the name of Daisy's foster organization, Pug Rescue of Sacramento (PROS), the group rescues from the Bay Area and most of their adoptions are more than 50 miles out of Sacramento. Daisy is being fostered in Benicia, but the foster is willing to bring her to the Concord/Danville area for a meet-and-greet (Fill out an adoption form to meet Daisy: <https://www.pugpros.org/adoption-process/>). PROS (<https://www.pugpros.org/>) is a non-profit organization that takes in pugs and pug mixes. In addition to direct tax-deductible donations, it's possible to sponsor a specific pug, or make direct donations of dog food, flea control, and/or postage

stamps through Amazon (www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/2O9F7KDH-GC4oH).

UPDATES:

Toby: (Diablo Gazette, July 2018) “Thank you for posting Toby in your column. It turns out, we think Toby is 8 years old. Toby is now adopted. He went to a wonderful home. Let everyone know in your next column that we are very excited with the new adopters.” – Mary Ann, Shake Wiggle 'N' Roll Foundation (SWRF), Lafayette

Editors Note: Ruby Dooby Do is Concord's Instagram celebrity with more than 61,000 followers. [Instagram.com/rubydoo-by_Do](https://www.instagram.com/rubydoo-by_Do). Column written by Jill Hedgecock, Program Coordinator, Mount Diablo branch of the California Writers Club, www.jill-hedgecock.com.

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Journey-man's Journal
by Scott Freuer

Tales from the Trail-Backpacking Desolation Wilderness

John Muir correctly observed that in every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks. What better way to spend an extended weekend than backpacking with my son and his three teenage friends completely removed from today's social media-based society? Our anticipated trip to the Desolation Wilderness near South Lake Tahoe was upon us. My garage floor was covered with gear. Backpacks, headlamps, sleeping bags, camp stoves, fishing poles, tents, and of course food: enough meals for four 15-year-olds and a dad for three days. Checklist in hand, I verified that each piece of equipment was accounted for, finalizing the packing effort in anticipation of our 4:30 am morning departure to the wilderness.

Surprisingly, the boys jumped right out of bed at the sound of their alarm clocks only after a few hours of sleep. Under the cover of darkness, we threw our backpacks into the car, piled in, rolled down the windows, and blared the radio to Norman Greenbaum's "Spirt in The Sky" as we left the hustle and bustle of daily life behind. With our ears ringing to vintage classic rock songs and full stomachs of McD's McGriddles, we arrived at the Lower Echo Lake trailhead three hours later near the southeastern edge of the Desolation Wilderness Basin.

The morning mountain air was fresh



Skippy, Sandals, Holes, TNT, and Worms - The Crew

To shorten our planned 4.8-mile hike, I chartered a water taxi to ferry us across Lower and Upper Echo Lakes, shaving 2.5 miles off the Pacific Crest Trail. The



boat ride over the crystal, clear lakes was a unique experience for the boys and added another leg to the adventure. The remaining 2.3-mile uphill hike to Ralston Lake sobered up the kids a bit as the air thinned and temperatures rose. Holes saved the day by playing a little Johnny Cash to keep the pace up while I allocated rations of homemade beef jerky to the crew. Once atop the steep incline, hiker hunger set in. We immediately stopped for lunch before continuing our "short" trek to the lake.

Cresting yet another hill, we passed through the "Pearly Gate", two significantly old majestic Sierra Juniper Trees, the gateway to our destination. We found the perfect spot by the lake to pitch our tents and unwind to the beauty and solitude of the wilderness. Distracted from texting, tweeting, and video games, the boys explored our new playground of

granite rock outcroppings, swam in the fridge snow-melt lake, and devoured every snack I rationed out to them as eagerly as seagulls on a pier.

Dinner was exceptionally delicious. We scarfed down Mac & Cheese and homemade dehydrated Hawaiian Shrimp and Rice (justifying my recent purchase of a food dehydrator). Exhausted and satisfied, we all slipped into our tents and fell asleep before the sun completely set.

Morning presented a full day of aimless exploring in the great outdoors. Collectively, we agreed that our campsite by the lake was perfect and decided to scrap our plans to relocate. Energized after

a casual breakfast of instant oatmeal, granola, coconut flakes, and dried strawberries, we soon found ourselves wandering the exposed granite slopes climbing up and down car-sized rocks and precarious cliff edges to reach the top of an incredible waterfall emerging from the side of Mt. Ralston. At 8,500 feet of elevation and a belly, I fought to keep up with the indefatigable youngsters. I made my way on all fours up through the granite talus and loose scree as the kids

cheered me on from above. Once I reached the top and rejoined the boys, I felt reinvigorated like a kid again. We played in the stream, built some temporary rock dams, and snacked on salami and cheese sticks wrapped in tortillas before cooling off in the melting snow fields and descending the waterfall.

The afternoon pleasantly progressed. We swam, fished, and relaxed around the lake. Not once did I hear "I'm bored" or "there's nothing to do", however the "I'm hungry" proclamation was alive and well. Thankfully, we packed plenty of food, so genuine group happiness prevailed. In fact, by evening we were so relaxed and in tune to the freedom of the outdoors, that I too was laughing and acting like a goofy teenager. After enjoying another outdoor meal of dehydrated cheesy lasagna, instant garlic mashed potatoes, and Top Ramen, we were sapped from the day's activities. Early to bed, early to rise.... that's the best way to enjoy the peaceful mornings, I thought.

Morning. There is something special about brewing coffee over the camp stove and watching the sun rise above the horizon while the others sleep. In contrast to a sunset, the stillness of an earlier morning aligns the sole for the day ahead. I perched myself on the granite outcrop in anticipation of the sunrise and reflected on the last couple of days backpacking with the kids. The minimalist approach



The Ralston Challenge

(food and shelter) associated with backpacking allows one to truly appreciate all aspects of life under Mother Nature's terms, and most importantly provide opportunities to simply talk and enjoy each other's company. I find relief from the distractions of daily life to be essential in maintaining the flow of happiness. We all spend a significant amount of time trying to teach our kids all about life, but in fact, it's our children that teach us what life is about.

As the kids emerged from their tents, I pondered the fact that I need to follow their lead more often. I had a new perspective on life, to enjoy the simple things we often take for granted. After breaking camp that morning, I deliberately followed the lead of the boys along the



4.8-mile hike back to civilization.

The Hungry Teenager Backpacking Menu

- Day One:
- Breakfast - McDonald's drive-thru (by popular demand)
 - Snacks - homemade beef jerky, assorted energy bars
 - Lunch - P & J sandwiches, Babybels Cheese, trail mix
 - Snacks - cheese and peanut butter crackers
 - Dinner - Mac & Cheese, dehydrated homemade Hawaiian Shrimp and Rice
 - Dessert - Oreos and Nutter Butter cookies
- Day Two:
- Breakfast - instant oatmeal, granola, coconut flakes, dried strawberries, powdered milk, hot chocolate, and coffee
 - Snacks - Pop Tarts, assorted energy bars
 - Lunch - dry salami, cheese sticks, mayo, tortillas, and flavored electrolyte water
 - Snacks - homemade beef jerky and trail mix
 - Dinner - homemade dehydrated cheesy lasagna and sweet potato bark, instant garlic mashed potatoes, and Top Ramen noodles.
 - Dessert - Snickers candy bars
- Day Three:
- Breakfast - homemade dehydrated green grits and ham (grits, ham, peas and Gold Fish crackers), Frosted Flakes cereal, Carnation Instant Breakfast packs, powdered milk, and coffee
 - Snacks - assorted energy bars and more beef jerky
 - Lunch - StarKist Tuna Packs, mayo, flour tortillas, and flavored electrolyte water
 - Dinner - giant super burritos at Cinco De Mayo, Clayton location (worth the wait!)



and skies ridiculously clear; a stark contrast to the hot and smoky summer weather plaguing the East Bay back home. The boys' energy escalated as we shouldered our packs and made our way down to the lake towards our first night's campsite destination. I fed on their enthusiasm. The teenage vitality began to take me back to my younger years. We all assumed our "trail names" thoughtfully selected during a past trip: Worms, TNT, Sandals, Holes, and Skippy. The welcoming wilderness supplanted the daily grind of work obligations and to-do lists with the emerging sense of freedom.

MOSQUITOES INVASION

Contra Costa County is home to twenty-three mosquito species and the Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District have been put on alert to prevent two more that are coming this way.

Just two counties now stand between Contra Costa County and mosquitoes capable of transmitting Zika, dengue fever, yellow fever, and chikungunya viruses.

The Asian Tiger mosquito was found in Southern California in 2011. It is capable of transmitting dengue fever, chikungunya, and yellow fever viruses. It has also been found to carry West Nile virus in nature.

Just two years later, the Yellow Fever mosquito, was found in the Central Valley. It can transmit dengue fever, chikungunya, yellow fever, and Zika viruses.

In the years since these two invasive mosquito species were first located in California, they have quickly spread to neighboring counties. In September 2017, Yellow Fever mosquitoes were found in Merced County for the first time. Now, only Stanislaus County and San Joaquin County stand between us and these mosquitoes.

Both mosquito species are aggressive daytime biting mosquitoes, typically biting people and animals in early morning and late afternoon, indoors or outdoors, usually below the knee as they tend to stay low to the ground. Their eggs can survive on dry surfaces for six months or more. Because of their short flight range, they are often active near water sources.

Specially designed traps provide prevention and control in public areas, but residents can also help on their own property by dumping out all types of standing water on a regular basis. Mosquitoes need very little water to complete their life cycle. Even things like bottle caps, empty cans and bottles lying around your own yard can become sources of mosquitoes.

If you are still being bitten by any mosquito while on your own property, you are advised to swat a mosquito and stick it in a clear plastic bag or use clear tape and tape it to a piece of paper. Then contact

the District to request service for mosquitoes. Tape the mosquito sample (dead mosquito in a bag or on a piece of paper) to your front door or gate so that when a District employee arrives, he can identify the type of mosquito that has been biting you and look for the potential source of the mosquitoes.

Three chickens from the District's sentinel chicken flock in Martinez have tested positive for antibodies against West Nile virus according to the District.

"This is the first evidence of West

Nile virus activity in the central part of our county this summer and should serve as a reminder that all Contra



Aedes aegypti, the yellow fever mosquito

Costa County residents should take precautions to prevent mosquito bites," states District's Scientific Programs Manager, Steve Schutz, Ph.D.

To Defending yourself, use repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus.

Avoid the outdoors when mosquitoes are present which is typically dawn and dusk.

Be sure to report any dead birds that you see to the district by calling the hotline (877) WNV-BIRD (968-2473). Ravens, jays, crows, and magpies can be susceptible to the virus, and may die if infected. Dead birds can be important evidence of West Nile virus



Aedes albopictus, (Asian) tiger mosquito

in the county and help the District determine locations for prevention and control efforts.

For a list of Contra Costa County's 2018 West Nile virus activity and locations, visit the District's website <https://www.contracostamosquito.com>

Visit the district office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to get FREE mosquito fish for ornamental ponds, horse troughs or neglected swimming pools at 155 Mason Circle in Concord.

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NEWS & TALK

In case you missed it...

Old Sports Authority Building to Become Enterprise Rent-A-Car

The old Sports Authority building on Concord Ave. in Concord (near Sam's Club) will become an Enterprise Rent-A-Car. The business will include car rentals, services, and wash. Car service will be limited to tire changing, tire balancing and vehicle oil change.

American Medical Response Contra Costa County Receives American Heart Association's Mission: 2018 Lifeline EMS Gold Plus Recognition Award

American Medical Response in Contra Costa County was officially presented the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline EMS Gold Plus Award for implementing quality improvement measures for the treatment of patients who experience severe heart attacks.

From 2015-2017, Contra Costa County Paramedics and EMTs responded to more than 1,500 calls of this nature and treated patients experiencing an ST elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI), the deadliest type of heart attack caused by a blockage of blood flow to the heart. "Every day this program is saving lives across Contra Costa County..." said Michael Johnson - Regional Director, Contra Costa County American Medical Response.

Martinez City Manager Retires After Two Years

Brad Kilger, who has spent the last two

years as the city manager for Martinez, said he will retire at the end of December.

"I have spent most of my career away from my family, and after discussing it with my wife, we decided it was time," Kilger said in a statement. Under Kilger's hand, the city started a long process of filling key positions that had long been vacant, and of improving technology to enable city employees better do their jobs and help local citizens. Kilger said he gave the city 5-months notice of his retirement so a successor can be found in time for a smooth transition. Such transitions haven't been the norm in Martinez in recent years. Since September 2013, Martinez has had five city managers. Kilger made a \$215,000 annual base salary, plus benefits.

Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project Gets \$459 Million from Prop. 1

On July 24, the California Water Commission announced that \$459 million of Proposition 1 funding will be slated for expanding Los Vaqueros Reservoir in eastern Contra Costa County.

Through the Water Storage Investment Program, agencies statewide applied for voter approved funds of \$2.7 billion from Proposition 1 for water storage projects that provide public benefits.

Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion was one of the projects that qualified for state funding with benefits including water to wildlife refuges for environmental purposes and water to cities and farms for human consumption and food production. Los Vaqueros Reservoir is currently owned and operated by Contra Costa Water District. Phased construction could start as early as 2020.

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Pickleball Success!

Concord may be on its way to adding a marquee event to its Visit Concord resume. The 2nd annual Engage Golden State Pickleball Tournament, July 27-29, at the Willow Pass Community Park attracted over 500 players coming from several western states.

The tournament featured men's, women, and mixed doubles and more than doubled last year's total participants with age divisions of 19+, 35+ 50+ and 65+. The pros and Senior pros were competing



Jordan and Katrina Briones

for a pot of \$10,500.

The event is the brainstorm of Jordan and Katrina Briones. Jordan, a former Clayton Valley High student started playing pickleball three years ago. He and wife Katrina were avid tennis players. Katrina had played on the DVC tennis team. After seeing Jordan's passion for pickleball, she too became a convert.

"I played through two pregnancies. It's a great exercise if you're pregnant," Katrina said.

"Jordan sees a future in Pickleball. It's such a new sport and so fun for him to compete at the highest level with the pros. He couldn't do that with tennis, he would have to train for a lifetime to play at that (pro) level."

They loved the sport enough that they decided to throw a tournament. "We chose Concord because we play at those courts often, and the Willow Pass Park has the most courts available."

Jordan now has training videos. He met up with former Cal Berkeley women's tennis player Nicole Havlicek at the Oakland Hills Tennis Club. Once pickleball was introduced there, the two embarked on a YouTube channel on pickleball training called "Primetime Pickleball."

Pickleball looks and sounds like a large ping pong game played on a tennis court. Although the court is slightly smaller than that of tennis and you use paddles instead of racquets, and the ball is plastic.

We look forward to an even greater 3rd annual tournament.



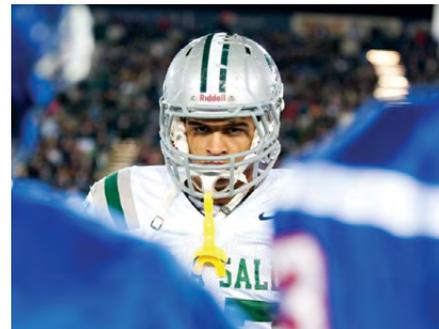
Supreme Showdown – Folsom Opens at De La Salle

by Steven Wilson



photos: De La Salle-Jhasi Wilson: Senior linebacker Jhasi Wilson (31) (photo by Ben Enos)

DLS/Folsom 2012-DJ Moffitt: De La Salle linebacker DJ Moffitt stares down a pair of Folsom captains during the coin flip of the two teams' first meeting in 2012. (photo by James K. Leash)



For the first time, Folsom High and De La Salle will meet on the gridiron in a regular-season matchup on August 17. "The winner of this game will most likely put themselves in position to play for the Open (Division) state championship," Folsom coach Kris Richardson stated. "It's still a long season, but this game will be a great example of the best Northern California football has to offer."

Winners of six CIF State Bowl titles in the last decade, the Spartans have played in the CIF Open Division finale for nine consecutive years. If they want to reach No. 10, they'll have to go through the three-time state bowl champs from Folsom. This match-up has been in talks for years. Folsom went 16-0 in 2014 and 2017, resulting in State bowl titles.

"When you come off a 16-0 undefeated season, and with a majority of the group coming back, you want to find that game that's going to motivate your guys in the offseason," Richardson said. "And if you're not motivated to play De La Salle, you probably shouldn't be playing high school football."

If Folsom were to emerge with a victory, it would become the first NorCal team to defeat the Spartans since Pittsburg did it in the 1991 North Coast Section 3A final. Since that loss, De La Salle has crafted a 291-game unbeaten streak against NorCal teams.

Prior to 2014, Folsom and De La Salle met twice, both times in the CIF regional playoff, both convincing wins for the Spartans (2012 and 2013).

An expanded version of this article can be read at SportStarsMag.com.

Concord's Noh Wins Girls Junior PGA Championship

Yealimi Noh, 16, from Concord won the 43rd Girls Junior PGA Championship at Kearney Hill Golf Links in Lexington, Kentucky, July 9-12. Yealimi Noh finished with a 24-under 264 for the win beating Rose Zhang last year's champion, by 4 strokes at 20-under 268. Ty Akabine of Danville finished 9th at 12-under 276.

Noh's score of 195, 21-under-par through three rounds, is a tournament record. Her victory earns her a berth on the 2018 U.S. Junior Ryder Cup team, which will

play at Disneyland Paris on Sept. 24 and 25, according to PGA of America officials.

photo photo credit: PGA.com



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