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Arts, Entertainment and All That's *Good* in Our Communities

Concord, Clayton, Walnut Creek, Martinez, Pleasant Hill

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AUGUST 2021



TEETERING ON SUCCESS

Locals on the world stage of Olympics, Chess, Emmys and Guinness records

Jan Spieth uses smokers to calm the bees prior to handling the hive. Inset: Jan Spieth and Jaci Kildare of Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association. Photo by Diane Walsh.

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Publisher's Notes

By David King

Teetering On Success

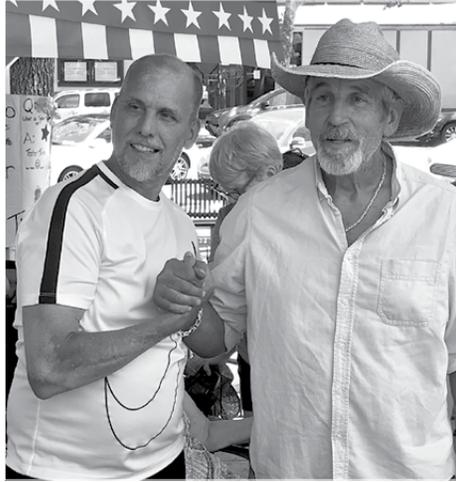
Downtown Concord appears to be getting back to its robust self. EJ Phair is being remodeled and will reopen. All the empty storefronts on Salvio Street are leased out and going through the permit process and improvements. Coming are: Serenity Nail Salon (Formerly Post Net), Aung Burma (Formerly Leisure Desserts & T4), Beard Papa's (Formerly Loard's Ice Cream), Teaspoon (Formerly Poke Salad), Uncle Jay's Burgers (Formerly Hot Dog Palace), according to Councilmember Edi Birsan's Facebook page,

Speaking of the council, they have an unenviable duty coming up this month to interview three developers to complete the Naval Weapons Station Development. According to Mercury News, those bidding are Concord-based Seeno Companies including Seeno, Discovery Builders, Inc., Lewis Group of Companies and California Capital Investment Group in a joint application; City Ventures, an Irvine-based multi-national group; and Brookfield Development, another multi-national group. On page 7, Birsan offers an overview of what is in consideration during this process. The stakes are huge, and this is no doubt going to get volatile, but at least it is moving forward.

Congratulations to Chuck Walker, Concord, and Michael Hartshorn for setting a new Guinness World Record by teeter-tottering for nine days, July 1-July 10. That is 216 hours straight - long enough that they developed sea legs and struggled when walking on bathroom breaks.

The stunt took place on the stage at Todos Santos and was certainly popular on social media, and local media, but also garnered a smattering of national press for Concord.

The new record marked the 50th anniversary of the old record which Walker



Michael Hartshorn and Chuck Walker congratulate each other after setting new teeter-totter record while letting their legs get accustomed to solid ground. Sea legs? They had seesaw legs.

had set in 1971. His seesaw partner then, Stan Johnson, has since passed, so friend Hartshorn sat in for the challenge.

Walker had custom built this teeter-totter to include a counter, counterweights, and brakes. For bathroom breaks, they would ask for persons to sit in, which I volunteered to do for an entire two- to three-minute break.

Originally, Walker had targeted to go 10 days and 240 hours, but 10 minutes after breaking the record on the ninth day, they both agreed to claim the feat accomplished. As per the counter, the total teeter-totter count was 213,813.

They were grateful and appreciated all who showed up to support the final countdown to the record.

Whether it is Guinness Records, Olympic medals, World Cups, or an Emmy nomination, I am always amazed at the output of achievers this area produces given what little population the county represents of the whole country.

Kudos to Kara Kohler of Clayton, Maggie Steffens of Danville, Ruth Winder, Lafayette; to Grandmaster Sam Shankland, Walnut Creek who went deep in the rounds of the FIDE World Cup Chess Tournament in Sochi, Russia; and Sarah Williams, Clayton (Emmy nomination) - I applaud you all.

In case you missed it...

Three Olympic athletes come from Contra Costa

Three of the 87 Bay Area athletes competing in the Tokyo Olympics are from Contra Costa County. They are rowing team member Kara Kohler of Clayton; water polo team member Maggie Steffens of Danville, road cyclist Ruth Winder of Lafayette.



photo from Kohler's Facebook page.

Kohler competed in the Single Sculls event but did not medal. In 2012 Olympics, she was a 2012 Bronze medal winner in quadruple sculls.



Steffens Instagram photo

Steffens, who was born in San Ramon, is a two-time Gold medal winner at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics. At the 2016 games in Rio, she was named MVP, and tied the Olympic record for most goals scored at 21.

The Americans were handed their first loss at the Olympics since 2008 when they fell 10-9 to Hungary in group play, but are still in the knockout round as of this writing. The team had been 19-0 this year.

Ruth Winder, who cycles professionally in Europe, also competed on the medal-winning cycling team in Rio in 2016.

Record 1.6M people enrolled in Covered California for 2022

A record 1.6 million residents have enrolled in health insurance coverage through the state's marketplace, due in part to financial help from the most recent federal pandemic relief bill, according to Covered California officials.

They also stated that subsidization from tax credits in the American Rescue Plan Act is expected to save Covered California enrollees an average of \$700 per month in health care premiums.

Bel Air Shopping Center on Treat Blvd. at Clayton Rd. to get makeover

It appears the Bel Air Shopping Center on Treat Blvd. at Clayton Rd. in Concord will be getting a makeover sometime within the next two years.

Plans have been posted online by Lockhouse Retail Group in Walnut Creek, showing what they envision to be the future of the shopping center.

The plans show Staples leaving the shopping center in 2023. Other stores and businesses that appear to be leaving are Dollar Daze (they'll be moving across the street next to Little Caesars), the U.S. Post Office, and the smog station on the corner.

The middle of the center, in between what is now Staples and CVS, will be constructed into a space for a grocery store, and the location of the smog station will be a potential spot for a new drive-thru restaurant according to the plans.

Chipotle moving into the old

Dickey's/Bert's location on Ygnacio Valley Rd. in Concord

Chipotle has leased the location where Dickey's was located in the Clayton Valley shopping center on Ygnacio Valley Rd. in Concord (next to the Dollar Tree).

Opening date has not been provided. This will be Chipotle's third restaurant in Concord.

BART ahead of schedule on infrastructure projects

More than one-quarter of the infrastructure projects on which BART is working with Measure RR funding have now been completed, exceeding the agency's timeline projections from when the measure went before voters in 2016.

The agency is currently working on more than 120 infrastructure repair and improvement projects and has already invested roughly \$866 million from Measure RR, which authorized BART to issue bonds totaling \$3.5 billion to replace aging rail and track components, some of which are more than 40 years old, and modernize the transit system's stations.

BART officials credited the COVID-19 pandemic as the agency's opportunity to hasten its infrastructure improvements, as BART's track workers were able to do more than they otherwise would have over the last year while the system's hours and ridership were reduced.

Southbound I-680 Express Lane from Martinez to Walnut Creek to begin tolls Aug. 20

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission announced that an express lane along an 11-mile stretch of southbound Interstate Highway 680 from Martinez through Walnut Creek will begin charging tolls at 5 a.m. on Aug. 20 and will connect with the existing 11-mile express lane from Rudgear Road in Walnut Creek to Alcosta Boulevard in San Ramon.

To use the express lane, drivers must have a FasTrak toll tag with carpoolers needing a FasTrak Flex toll tag set to the 2 or 3+ position. People driving solo can pay half-price toll if they have eligible clean-air vehicles and have a FasTrak CAV toll tag.

The express lane operates from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. and tolls fluctuate depending on the level of traffic on the highway.

People can visit 511.org to learn more about the express lanes or to sign up for FasTrak.

Owners of Clayton Valley Pumpkin Farm announce retirement

The owners of the Clayton Valley Pumpkin Farm on Marsh Creek Rd. in Clayton announced their retirement after 40-years in business. This excerpt is from a message posted on their website.

"It is with a heavy heart that we have made the decision to retire the farm in its present form. Now that we are in our mid 70's, we have found that the physical toll of the day-to-day operations has become overwhelming.... We will never forget our many employees and customers who have faithfully worked and visited us over the years. We will be forever grateful having had the privilege to share so many wonderful family memories on our farm with so many of you over the past four decades."

They will continue to operate online by selling unique seasonal items and on Instagram and Facebook with nature and gardening activities for kids.

Thank you David and Sharon Osteen and Deborah Osteen-Munch. CVpumpkinfarm.com.

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A Little Summer Jazz Sounds Good

Concord's jazz roots go all the way back to 1969 when a local businessman, Carl Jefferson, initiated a small, outdoor music event called "Jazz in the Park Festival." The event drew many of the popular jazz musicians of the day: Vince Guaraldi, Carmen McRae, Mel Torme, the Buddy Rich Band and more. To everyone's surprise, more than 17,000 people showed up, and Concord's legacy as a haven for jazz was on its way. Over the past 50 years, Concord and jazz music have become forever intertwined.

The 2021 Concord Jazz Festival comes alive with five special events being dubbed "Take 5", in honor of Concord native and Jazz legend, Dave Brubeck, who claims the top-selling jazz single of all time, "Take Five". These music-filled events are certain to engage and connect with the casual or passionate jazz fan.

The free events run Wednesday, August 4 - 7, and feature live performances at The Veranda, Music & Market at Todos Santos Plaza, the Concord Tap House, and Galindo Home & Gardens. A special open house at the Concord Visitor Center on Saturday, August 7 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. will feature Dave Brubeck's cool "Summer Sounds."

The can't-miss "Java & Jazz" Throwback celebration happens on Sunday, August 8 from 1-4 p.m. Presented by the Concord Historical Society, the event features the Matt Zebly Jazz Quartet performing live at the Galindo Home grounds. The \$15 ticket price includes the show, a collectible cup and bottomless iced coffee and tea. Additional memorabilia and vendor booths will be on site. All proceeds benefit the Historical Society



and tickets can be purchased in advance through Eventbrite.

The Concord Visitor Center offers exclusive Jazz Fest merchandise including a variety of t-shirts, pins and more. Plus, new this year, a collectible, illustrated Concord Jazz Landmarks poster is also available for sale. Proceeds from merchandise sales go to the Mount Diablo Music Education Foundation.

Visit Concord is also offering a special jazz-themed Stay & Play package for a limited time. Guests that book a hotel room in Concord will receive a fun gift pack filled with Concord jazz merchandise, or the package of their choice.

Go to Visitconcordca.com for more information.

If you are visiting Concord or welcoming visitors, be sure to stop by the Concord Visitor Center located at 2151 Salvio Street, Suite T, in Todos Santos Plaza. Our staff is ready to help with free advice, maps, guides, brochures, Concord merchandise and more. Go to VisitConcordCA.com or call 925-685-1182 for more information.

King (of beer) and Hop Grenade Win in Contra Costa County Beer Trail

Concord, CA – The launch of the Contra Costa County Beer Trail has been a rousing success, thanks to the many craft beer lovers who took time to explore the 40+ local breweries, tap houses and beer bar restaurants. Beer fans signed up for the mobile-exclusive Beer Trail Passport at

VisitConcordCA.com, then checked in at participating locations to score points for fun prizes.

Congratulations to The Hop Grenade in Concord, voted by fans as the Beer Trail Favorite after receiving the most check-ins during the launch. Visit Concord presented the taproom's

Justin Crossley and Kevin Callahan with a beer-themed trophy at The Hop Grenade's 7th Anniversary "We Couldn't Have Done it Without You" Party on July 24.

Kevin King, of Concord, has been dubbed the Beer Trail's Biggest Craft Brew fan after checking in at the most locations on the trail. Kevin received a special medallion to honor the occasion.

"The CCC Beer Trail motivated me to explore local breweries and other craft beer spots that I might not have traveled to. I dedicated different weekend days to differ-

ent areas so I could hit almost every spot. I am very thankful for my understanding wife as I pursue my beer hobby!

"I enjoy trying new beers and am constantly searching for the next great beer. We have great brewers in our county,...

When you couple that with bottle shops like The Hop Grenade, Concord Tap House and Brentwood Craft Beer and Cider, the possibilities are endless. I have met several good friends thanks to the places on the trail and have always believed that people need these local hangouts to develop a true community identity!"

As the Contra Costa Beer Trail officially becomes a year-round attraction, Visit Concord CEO and President, Elaine Schroth invites all travelers to explore the Beer Trail as well as stay, dine and enjoy the many local flavors Concord has to offer.

"The best place to start your adventure is at our Concord Visitor Center," she offers. "At the center you can take in displays, gather information for the entire Mt. Diablo Region and even purchase tickets to local spots, sometimes at a discount!"



L-R: Kevin King, Justin Crossley, and Kevin Callahan accept their awards.

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Eight Advantages of Owning Vs. Renting

We understand that the market is competitive for buyers right now. But do not let the competition stop you. There are many distinct advantages to owning a home instead of renting. Remembering these benefits can help give you the confidence to pursue the purchase of a home in today's market. Let's take a closer look.

Owning is an excellent long-term investment. When you rent, you pay money to your landlord and never see it again. But when you make your mortgage payments, you are investing in yourself. Once your mortgage is paid off, you will have a house that you can sell. And over the years, your home will appreciate in value. It is like a forced savings account.

Interest rates are historically low. Because of the pandemic, interest rates are at historic lows. You can get a great deal on a home loan with low interest rates if you qualify. Locking into a low 30-year rate can save you hundreds of dollars a month for many, many years to come.

You build equity as home prices rise. While the real estate market may fluctuate in the short term, in the long term, real estate always increases in value. As you pay down your mortgage and as home prices rise, you build equity. You can then use that equity in a variety of ways, whether it is funding a down payment on your next home or using it to make improvements on your current home.

Homeowners gets certain tax breaks. Homeowner tax breaks are not available to renters. These include mortgage interest deductions and property tax deductions. This can lead to significant savings in your tax bill

each year.

Monthly payments remain steady. Unless you live in a rent-controlled property, you do not know how much your rent will increase from year to year. Your landlord can increase your monthly rent whenever your lease expires. But when you own your home, you know what to expect each month for the payment from now to perhaps 30 years from now.

Zero down payments are available. One of the obstacles that may be preventing you from considering homeownership is saving for a down payment. But did you know that some home loans require no down payment? There are many loan programs out there (especially for first-time buyers) that let you pay nothing for your down payment if you meet certain requirements.

Homeowners receive more privacy. Financial benefits are not the only advantages to owning vs. renting a home. When you rent, you may have little privacy, especially if you live in an apartment building with thin walls. But when you own your home, you can enjoy a greater sense of privacy. Maybe your new home has a big yard or is built with higher-quality materials that let you feel like you have your own private space.

You can make it your own. Finally, one of the biggest advantages of owning your home is having the freedom to make it your own. You don't have to worry about getting permission from your landlord to paint, plant a garden, or even hang pictures on the walls. Your space can truly reflect your personal tastes and style, turning a simple house into a home.

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Meal and rest period nightmare for employers

Most people are aware that California law requires employers to provide meal and rest periods for their employees. In general, employers must provide a 10-minute paid rest period for every four hours worked. Meal breaks of at least 30 minutes must be provided to employees who work more than five hours. A second meal break must be provided to employees who work more than 10 hours.



hour and was not provided with one rest period the employer properly paid that employee \$17.00. Ms. Ferra appealed to a three-judge panel (Court of Appeal).

The appeals court ruled in a 2-1 decision that the first judge was correct – they rejected Ms. Ferra's claim.

Undaunted, Ms. Ferra sought review in the California Supreme Court which accepted her case and in a unanimous decision, as noted

above, accepted Ms. Ferra's argument that an hour of pay should be based on more than just her hourly wage rate – that her bonuses needed to be considered in calculating that amount. The Court, among other things, noted that the same calculation must be made when determining how much is owed for overtime hours worked. If employees work more than eight hours per day, they are entitled to 1½ times their "regular rate of pay." If employees receive bonuses and commissions, in addition to an hourly wage, those bonuses and commissions must be considered in determining the "regular rate of pay."

To make matters worse for employers, the employer of Ms. Ferra tried to convince the California Supreme Court not to make its ruling retroactive. In other words, the employer argued that it would be unfair to impose this requirement on employers who for years had calculated missed breaks based solely on hourly wage rates. After all, three of the four judges who first heard Ms. Ferra's case (before it reached the Supreme Court) had ruled that employers were correct in calculating missed breaks in this manner. Mr. Ferra's employer argued that this new rule should only apply to future cases.

This argument was rejected by the Supreme Court which means that employees can pursue these cases based on not being paid the proper amount for missed meal and rest periods. Since the statute of limitations for these types of cases is three years, employees can go back three years in pursuing these claims.

Employers beware.

California law provides that an employer must pay a full hour of pay for each meal or rest period that is not provided. While any individual employee will typically have only a relatively small claim against an employer for failing to provide meal and rest breaks, all employees can combine their claims in a class action, or in a PAGA (Private Attorney General Act) claim. This greatly increases the potential liability employers face and creates an incentive for lawyers (like me) to pursue the claims. California law also provides for the recovery of attorney's fees, so that in successful claims brought for failure to provide meal and rest breaks, the employer must pay the lawyers who represented the employees.

The California Supreme Court recently (July 15, 2021) decided a case that may prove to be a nightmare for many employers. In *Ferra v. Loew's Hollywood Hotel, Inc.*, a bartender brought a lawsuit against her employer alleging that her employer had not paid her the correct amount for each missed meal or rest period. The employer had paid its bartenders one hour of pay based on the employees' hourly wage rate. However, since bartenders also received every three months a non-discretionary incentive payment (a bonus), Ms. Ferra argued that to calculate one hour of pay, the employer should have factored in the bonus payments.

The first judge to hear the case (a Superior Court judge in Los Angeles County) ruled against Ms. Ferra. The judge decided that the employer properly paid Ms. Ferra (and all other employees) an hour for each missed meal and rest period based on their hourly wage rate. For example, if an employee was paid \$17.00 per

OPINION

Who Is REALLY for High Density Housing in Clayton?

I do not personally know any Clayton residents that are high-density housing advocates. Nobody desires to convert downtown into wall-to-wall apartments like some areas of Concord and Walnut Creek.

Sacramento continues to react to a housing crisis and rising homelessness. Scarcity in housing inventory, rising rents and housing costs are challenging. Sacramento continues to entertain "one-size-fits-all" legislation that limits local city control. Dozens of bills are being reviewed annually which impact Clayton's ability to control growth and maintain our historical character.

As a councilmember, I make a significant effort to stay on top of legislation that impacts our city. I get updates from a myriad of sources including our legal team, CalCities, ABAG, Livable California, and others. Attending CalCities, the Mayor's Conference, and Transpac allows me to interact with other officials who face similar mandates from California to zone 10-20% more housing than their existing housing stock.

As the smallest city in Contra Costa County, I am conscious of our limitations. I am very much "fighting" for local control and the preservation of our small town's character in every conversation I have with other elected officials both inside and outside the county. I actively seek other elected city officials with analogous concerns and ask about their efforts to fight state housing mandates and ill-advised legislation. The majority of Clayton's City Council is acting in a similar manner. We contact congressional representatives opposing bills of impact. We send letters in opposition to specific concern (e.g., SB9).

For Clayton, we are being asked to zone 570 additional units to our 4,000 existing units, a part of the 6th Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) cycle. The last RHNA cycle in 2014 (141 units) resulted in zoning for the first apartment building near downtown, The Olivia. How and where will 570 units go? How will it impact the future character our town?

The 570 units are mandated by the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) department. This is a portion of the 441,000 units distributed among ABAG entities (101 cities, 9 counties). Clayton is appealing the number (lack of space, proximity to transportation/job centers). However, data indicates our appeal will likely fall on deaf ears and we will need to plan accordingly.

So, I ask the question again ... Who is really in favor of high-density housing? Who really wants to go through the exercise of zoning housing numbers we do not want? Not I, nor anybody I know (elected or otherwise). So, how can I or any others be labeled as a High-Density advocate? Let's lose the labels and get to work!

Join us in the planning process. Clayton needs quality people with historic perspective, vision, and a passionate, civil voice to get involved. Together, let's plan our housing numbers to conserve Clayton's downtown, western charm and small-town character. If you have any questions, please reach out to me personally at (925) 673-7320 or pcloven@ci.clayton.ca.us

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Oh, Rats!

August is the month of full-throttle produce production. If you planted veggie seedlings in the spring, such as tomatoes, peppers, squashes, beans, or cucumbers, they all should be ripening now by the basketful. I love my fresh-grown salsa, made with our own peppers, tomatoes, and spices. What is your favorite summertime homegrown veggie or fruit?

But veggie-destroying creatures are now also at their peak in terms of numbers and hunger. Rodents are at the top of my natural enemies list. Every summer, my garden is besieged by gophers, voles, mice, rats, and tree squirrels. Fortunately, last year my handyman and I physically excluded the majority of these rodents from my fenced-in orchard and raised vegetable beds. But Norway rats still plague the rest of my yard, including right near my house.

Rats are real survivors, have large appetites, reproduce like crazy, and are naturally destructive. Their diet extends far beyond delicious veggies to citrus, plums, pears, berries, leaves from landscape plantings, succulents, and even car wire insulation.

When Norway rats get into your garage or storage space, they shred your cardboard boxes and mementos into confetti for nests, relocate wall insulation, and generally poop and pee anywhere they want. What's left is a dirty and unsanitary mess.

The most common rat you will find in Contra Costa gardens are Norway rats. They are quite large with up to 10-inch-

will be exploited by these crafty creatures. Fill any large cracks, holes, or voids with expandable filling material (available at your local hardware store), or close the voids with boards, mortar or cement.



Anywhere that you find entrance holes near your home or in your den are also great spots to control Norway rats with box traps.

Safe and eco-friendly box traps are available at garden centers and online. My favorite is the Protecta Heavy Duty Rat Bait Station available on Amazon.com for about \$25. You can purchase non-toxic attractants or place chunky peanut butter in the trap to lure rodents. Set a large snap trap (2-pack of Trapper T-Rex Rat Traps for \$17) in the center compartment of the box trap.

Late at night, the rat will follow the food scent and the snap trap will kill it. Check your box every morning and remove freshly dead rats. Dispose of them in a recycled plastic bag and place them inside your landfill trash bin. I have caught 37 Norway



Protecta large rat bait station with T-Rex trap is safe and effective.

rats in my box trap since January 1st! I know that rodent control is a cringe-worthy garden topic, but they are part of our all-natural garden. If you live in suburban Contra Costa and think you do not have rodents scurrying around at night, you just have not found them yet. Email your comments and questions to: NakedGardener@diablogazette.com. In some cases these may appear in future columns.



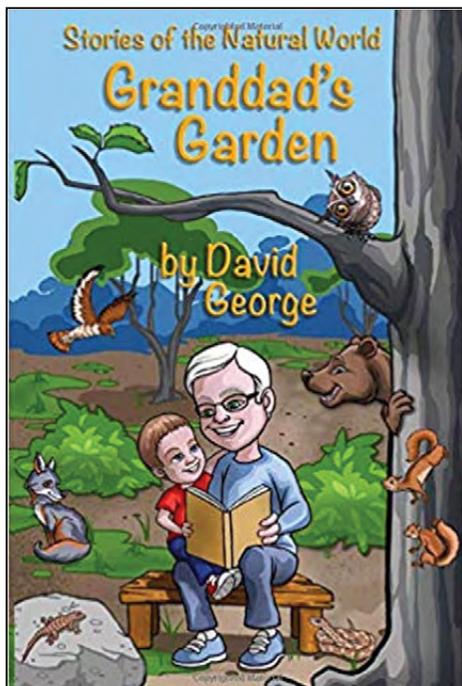
Look for entrance holes to rat nests near your foundation. Photo courtesy Shutterstock.

long bodies and another 9-10 inches of naked tail. They prefer to live underground and so you will see one or more entrance holes to their nest around your home's perimeter or around the bases of large rocks, retaining wall blocks, or storage sheds in your garden. Rats will work their way into home subfloors and basements when the weather turns cold. They never hibernate and so remain active at night throughout the year.

Norway rats can raise 4-6 litters of 9-12 pups each during warm months. Multiple generations can create major damage in a single year.

If you are plagued by Norway rats and need to control their population, resist the temptation to apply poisonous rodenticides. They pollute and destroy nature's food chain. Rodenticides annually kill hawks, owls, cats, dogs, and even kids. What are some eco-friendly alternatives to control these destructive rodents?

Most pest control experts will state that the most effective and eco-friendly way to defend your home and garden is to physically exclude rats. Any crack or hole in your foundation larger than a quarter, or voids between your foundation and siding



"Granddad's Garden: Stories of the Natural World" by Naked Gardener columnist David George. Amazon.com.

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the concordian

by Edi Birsan, EdiBirsan@gmail.com

Council prepares to interview three developers to take over Naval Weapons Station Development



The Concord City Council will be doing interviews of three developers that want to make the plans that the people and the city made for the Concord Naval Weapons Station come to life.

As we move forward, here are some things to be noted in this process:

1. The "Village Plan" was approved 10 years ago and calls for approximately 13,000 dwelling units and about 6 million square feet of space for commercial/retail/industrial, etc. This plan also included additional parks and places for a university and tournament fields.

2. The developer is not expected to trash a plan that the community fought itself for years to get. The idea that the developer will chuck that and start at scratch is hardly likely to happen as there are too many community scars out there to risk opening those wounds. (For the record, I was on the side of the smaller, denser plan - about one half the size of the above but lost. However, I feel committed to respect the decision made by the majority.)

3. The city will be getting funds from the sale of the land as it progresses and garner community benefits such as new parks and more affordable housing. Twenty-five percent of the proposed housing is being deemed "Affordable." The terms regarding the composition of very low, low, and medium affordable housing and respective building types remain to be worked out.

The funds that the city was required to advance to get to a faster turnaround will

be paid back this way. Accusations that the money spent was wasted is baseless.

4. The details will be worked out with the initial developer, and we do not expect to see a great variation from what our requests are; however, there may be some minor things going into the final Specific Plan. For example, we already went over the grading issue brought up by Lennar several years ago.

5. Once again, there will be a lot of noise by all sorts of organizations and individuals with private interests on one aspect or another of the base or who will have their own political, economic and emotional issues to settle to leverage other actions that may not be so apparent.

The City Council must decide what is in the best interest of the city and how to proceed to make sure that those interests are carefully and dutifully protected. The reality is that this is a 30-year project and the structure of the deal and its safeguards need to be able to withstand all challenges that may come forward.

It is going to get noisy; however, we must stay focused on the goal of a development for our future generations.

The above is the opinion and perspective of Edi Birsan and is not reflective of any member of my family; past, present and possibly to come regardless of what other organizations may say.

[photo courtesy USA Today]



Carl "CW" Wolfe
Mayor, Clayton, CA
cw@claytonca.gov



Clayton's New Principals, In-Person

Clayton's "Do the Right Thing" program restarted in March 2021 giving select students from both Mt. Diablo Elementary and Diablo View Middle Schools the opportunity to be "officially" recognized by their teachers, Principals, and the City Council for achievements demonstrating leadership qualities in the seven-character traits: Integrity, Responsibility, Courage, Kindness, Self-Discipline, Respect, and Inclusion.

Students are selected for recognition by their teachers and Principals and are honored at a City Council meeting with a certificate signed by all Council Members.

While most of the 2020/2021 school year was virtual, and both school Principals new to their positions, they were excited to help revive the program to give some incentive to their students during the pandemic.

I thought that it would be nice for our community to hear from each of our new Principals as they gear-up for their first full, in-person, school year.

From Mt. Diablo Elementary, Ms. Katie Sanchez:

"I grew up in this area and attended Pleasant Hill Elementary, Sequoia Middle and Acalanes High School. I grew up an athlete, playing soccer, softball, and swimming on the Bonnie Brae Swim Team, as well as trying to play basketball. I am an avid shopper and I love being outside and enjoy going to local venues for sports and concerts. My family and I reside in Martinez.

"I have two young sons, Kyle (7) going into 2nd grade, and Dylan (5) going into Kindergarten. We also have a dog named Max. They certainly keep my husband and I on our toes!

"I have been the Vice Principal at Martinez Junior High School and prior to that, an elementary school teacher for 8-years, teaching 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades. My heart is really in elementary school, and I am over the moon to be here!"

Now, Mr. Peter Fong from Diablo Valley Middle School:

"I am a proud Bay Area native. Born in Berkeley, lived briefly in Oakland, but ultimately raised in Moraga, CA for most of my life. I graduated from Campolindo High School and attended college at UC Davis and St. Mary's College, CA.

"I have been a career educator for over 28 years. I was a teacher for 15 years and have been a principal for 13.

"Almost two years ago my family (wife and 4 kids) relocated to the Clayton Valley Highlands. When the Principalship at DVMS opened, it provided me with the rare and exciting opportunity to work in and serve my local community."

Clayton is incredibly lucky to have such dedicated educators in our community. We welcome them both and wish them well as they teach our students to do the right thing!

Justin Ezell named Concord's Assistant City Manager

Concord, CA -- Concord's Public Works Director Justin Ezell has been named the new Assistant City Manager for the City of Concord. In his new role, Ezell will assist City Manager Valerie Barone and he will specifically oversee three departments, including the City Manager's Office, Parks and Recreation, and Information Technology.

Ezell began his career with the City of Concord in 2012, serving as the Director of Public Works. In this role, he led the management, operation and implementation of all five operating divisions within the department, including administration, infrastructure, park maintenance, fleet operations and facilities maintenance.

As Assistant City Manager, Ezell will also lead several major projects including efforts to seek community input related to redrawing district boundaries based on 2020 Census data, advocating to state lawmakers in support of City priorities, updating the City's solid waste regulations, and continuing the

City's work to help the community recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I have tremendous respect for the Concord employees, my colleagues and our City Council. I am grateful

for the opportunity to help advance our city priorities and continue making Concord a city of the highest quality," Ezell said.

Ezell is a graduate of the University of San Francisco where he earned his bachelor's degree in organizational behavior and leadership. He is currently enrolled in an executive MBA program through California State University, Sacramento.

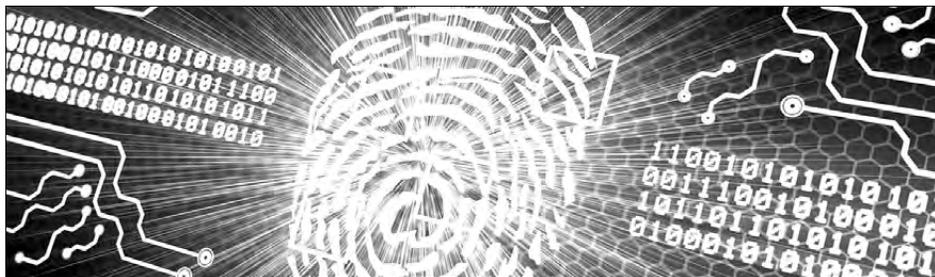


computercorner

by William Claney, Tech Writer, Computers USA

Tech in English

Cellphone Menace - Enter the Clones



A long, long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, smartphones were free from viruses, phishing and hacking attacks, but fast forward about three years and things have really changed. Just a few years back, which is a long time ago in computer years, smartphone users rarely were concerned about losing their data. The biggest concern in the "olden" days was a broken screen.

Today we have a variety of issues smartphone users face and a whole host of fast evolving security measures designed to combat them. Be aware, your phone is under attack.

First, the no virus myth on a smartphones has been debunked. Smartphones do get viruses. Yes, even Apple phones. Enter the SIM card attack. What is a SIM card and why would you attack it? A SIM is a tiny plug-in chip that activates your phone. The simple explanation comes from Bing, "a smart card inside a mobile phone, carrying an identification number unique to the owner, storing personal data, and preventing operation if removed."

SIM (Subscriber Identity Module) card swap attack. "A SIM swap attack happens when a bad actor has your SIM card information transferred from your phone onto theirs. Although this can happen if they have stolen your phone and removed the SIM card, more often this is done remotely," according to Crypto-

pedia. Remotely meaning they send you a phishing message, you reply, they then have access to your SIM card. SIM ID theft only requires a simple copy and paste-like procedure once they have access.

This brings us to protecting your phone by not answering any personal questions from an email inquiry. That is phishing. Say your accountant sends you an email asking for your social security number. DO NOT REPLY. If it is a legitimate request, voice call the accountant and relay the information that way. DO NOT REPLY TO THEIR EMAIL.

Current security is Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) that can add "extra account protection by requiring two or more credentials to log in," according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). (Credentials are your username and password.) MFA requires two verifications of who you are. First are the regular credentials (username and password), then the web site sends a code that is entered during the log-in process. Others use biometric scans of your thumbprint or retina scans.

But wait, there is more. Already compromised are all the current modern security methods. It is a crazy Internet world. Enter 2FA authentication a two-factor authenticator that will protect you. Do you want to know more? Come back next issue for the Clone Wars sequel.

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Views of the Valley



A crowd of supporters witnessed the record breaking moment when Chuck Walker and Mike Harts-horn set a new Guinness record of 216 hours on a teeter-totter. That is nine days of ups and downs. The event brought quite a bit of media attention across the country for Concord.

Take it from Chuck Walker, when you are stuck on a teeter-totter for 216 hours, you need something to help pass the time away, like the Diablo Gazette.

Right: Justin Crossley sits behind the control board in his Brewing Network's studio inside Hop Grenade, Concord.



Carnaval, the Santana tribute band, packed the park for the opening performance of Clayton's free Concert in the Grove series. Exuberant fans donated a record of over \$4300 to support future series, according to Mayor Wolfe.



There was much dancing to Zydeco Flames at the season's first concert at Todos Santos in Concord. Music and Market Series has returned to Thursdays, 6:30pm-9:00pm. Photo by Micah.

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frugelegance

by Carol and Randi
frugelegance.com

Outdoor Summer Entertaining



Entertaining outdoors has always been a favorite of ours. And after this past year, we look forward to it more than ever. From small casual summer get-togethers to larger family celebrations, we have some favorite special tips and tricks for making any gathering beautiful.



The pictures we are sharing with you are from a backyard baby shower. There are little details throughout the food, beverages and decorations that all come together so nicely. Best of all, everything is easy to do and very affordable. These ideas can be used for just about any occasion. It only takes a few tweaks and changes to match your celebration and suit your preferences.



Obviously, a table centerpiece is a perfect area to add something special. Why not add to those centerpieces using books, flowers, and plants? Complement the table setting by adding things like stems, ribbons, hair clips, and treat bags.

Place little framed messages on the table settings and near the food platters. Try to use a theme throughout the decor and food items.

The list of themes is endless. You can find great party theme ideas online at Pinterest.com, Instagram and just about any

other social media site. Frugelegance.com posts many great entertaining ideas that are all beautiful and on a budget. For the baby shower, our theme was story books.

If you do lots of entertaining, it is easy to reuse items and change things up. Some of the items we reuse often are:

- Chalkboard with a welcome message at the entrance
- Menu on a stand
- Lanterns
- Stands or frames naming a food item or platter
- Small flowerpots
- Jars that we fill with candy
- Beverage buckets and drink dispensers (tip: adding fruit to your water dispenser looks as gorgeous as it tastes)

If there is a specific celebration that requires some bonus decorations, like a



graduation or birthday, take a trip to local dollar store for

a few new goodies. We loved the rubber ducks we found and placed around the pool. They were inexpensive and a perfectly cute decoration for a baby shower. Whatever your gathering is, you can go big with truly little.

We hope you get some ideas from our Story Book Baby Shower. Happy Summer Entertaining!



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.fruagelegance.com. FrugaElegance is where Frugal and Elegance come together.



Jill Hedgecock's bookends
 Author *Between Shadow's Eyes* and *Rhino in the Room*.
www.jillhedgecock.com

TEXAS DEAD

Texas Dead (Alt Publish, 2021, 273 pages, \$12.99) by William Gensburger, is the first novel in the Mackenzie (Maxie) Michaels Mystery series.

In "Texas Dead," people are being murdered in Corpus Christi, Texas. Lots of people. And there is a pattern. All the victims were shot in the back of the head except for the latest death. Mackenzie 'Maxie' Michaels, who has the intuition of a top-notch detective, is convinced the anomalous death of a prominent financial guru, Curtis Delaney, is related to all the others.

To solve the mystery, Maxie joins forces with Devin Parker, an investigative reporter who has a special interest in the case because he is Curtis' cousin. Curtis' office had been tossed and Curtis' business partner, Rob, can not understand why the business was targeted.

Devin suspects Curtis' killers think he might have had critical information related to the murder when he returns home to find it ransacked. He notifies Maxie, who worries that Devin is a target.

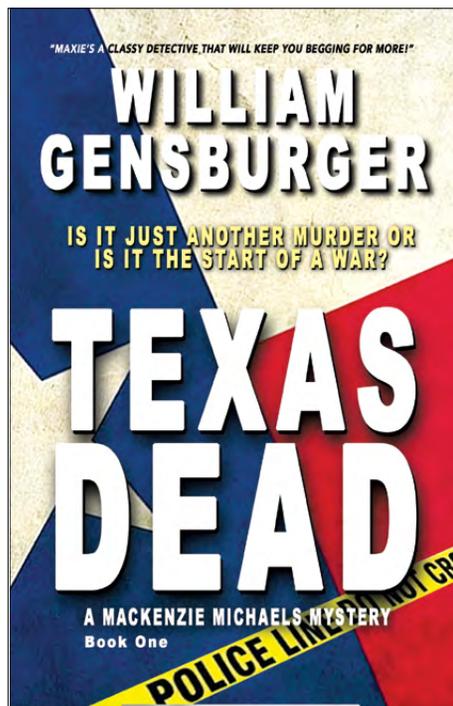
A panicked call from Tia, Rob's girlfriend, has Devin rushing to meet with her. When she rushes away from their rendezvous spot, Devin follows her, and a chase scene ensues with an unmarked van.

The pursuit causes Devin to get in a motorcycle accident. His injuries are serious enough to land him in the hospital and the brush with death changes his outlook on life forever.

Meanwhile, Maxie frequently visits Devin as he convalesces in the hospital, and it soon becomes apparent that her feelings run deeper than a professional relationship with him.

Maxie's partner, Kobe Jameson, has the utmost respect for his partner and is an all-around good cop and an all-around good person. Kobe spends his days helping at-risk teens at a local gym. Their humor and good-natured banter solidify a formidable team committed to catching the "bad guys." Other notable characters include Hank, Devin's boss, and Cochran, Maxie's police chief.

As Devin sleuths a possible connection between Curtis' death and his business partner's dealings, Maxie's admiration grows deeper. After Devin is discharged from the hospital, Maxie invites him to stay with her. As they continue to work the case, the two find themselves drawn to each other as they ultimately uncover the extent of the political scandal coverup that



led to Curtis' death.

Fans of Marcia Muller's Sharon McCone series and readers who enjoy Ray Bradbury's style of writing will most likely enjoy this book. Without giving away too much, one of the things that I really enjoyed about this novel was that it showed that sometimes when a hero puts themselves in danger, there can be consequences. It was Devin's unique predicament that made this novel a fabulous page turner.

William Gensburger has been a writer most of his life. He is the author of "Distant Rumors," an anthology of 16 stories about life and death, and "Homo Idiotus," a collection of published newspaper editorials.

He was the publisher of The Concordian until 2015, but now lives in Texas with his wife and children. He is currently working on the second novel in the Mackenzie Michaels series "The Extremist", due to be released in late September 2021. It will pick up with Maxie, Devin, and Kobe facing a threat, not just to themselves, but to Los Angeles, as the one called The Extremist sets out to destroy them all.

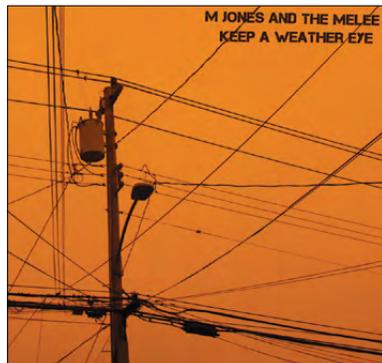
To learn more about William Gensburger, visit <http://www.misterwriter.com/>.

The Beat of Diablo

RECENT RELEASES

By Dave Hughes

Periodically, this column will spotlight a handful of recent local music releases. All music mentioned can be found on all major streaming platforms and online music retailers. To find quick links to these recent releases and more, visit ConcordRockCity.com



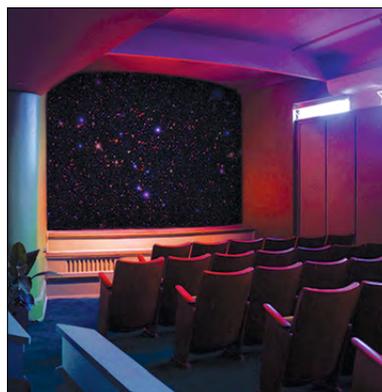
NEW ALBUM: (July 30, 2021)

Keep a Weather Eye
 M Jones and the Melee

It's not common these days for local independent artists to release a full-on front-to-back album, but that's exactly what Oakland-based M Jones and the Melee have done with *Keep a Weather Eye*.

The debut release carries the listener through over 40 minutes of rich songwriting from Margaret Jones, delivered both ferociously and tenderly through the no-frills rock band that she's assembled. The band's sound is largely driven by distorted guitar, bass guitar, and tom-heavy drums, though acoustic guitar, synthesizer, violin, and cello all play important roles.

Keep a Weather Eye is a gritty unapologetic rock record with notable range and gravity. There's a bold sense of urgency, anxious suspense, and sincere assuredness throughout the 10-song journey. Expect elements of Misfits, David Bowie, Fugazi, and Queen.



NEW EP: (June 30, 2021)

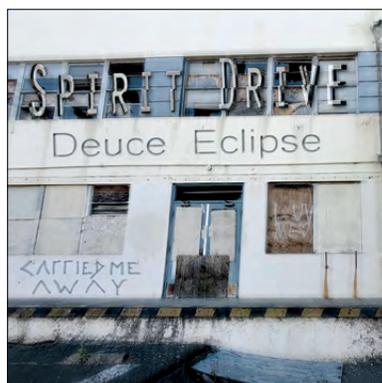
New Sense
 New Sense

Concord-based artist New Sense recently dropped a self-titled EP featuring guest appearances by Hear in Color, Uncle Eli, TJ McCarty, Valente McNamer, Faith Donithan, and Austin.

Appropriately released in late June, *New Sense* is rich with "summer jam" vibes. All five tracks will have you bobbing your head to the luscious funky beats, catchy hooks, and slick lyrical flow.

Several of these tracks would work well on the dance floor of a nightclub, but there's something very shiny and bright about the overall sound that makes for a great soundtrack to a care-free time with friends on

one of those memorable summer days you never forget. Or maybe it's some of the elements from the opening track's beat and guest vocals that conjure up the nostalgic feel of Banarama's "Cruel Summer." Who knows? To quote the song "Lavender" (track 3) "I don't know how you do it, but you do it so gracefully."



NEW SINGLE: (August 9, 2021)

"Carried Me Away"
 Spirit Drive & Deuce Eclipse

The new single from Spirit Drive is a re-imagining of his own 2020 rock song from the album X, featuring Deuce Eclipse (of Bang Data).

Xavier Guerrero's new version of "Carried Me Away" is built upon a reggae beat. The more open landscape of this framework allows for some fun production, which Guerrero takes advantage of with some disciplined textural layering to help emulate some of the emotion and tension found in its original rock format.

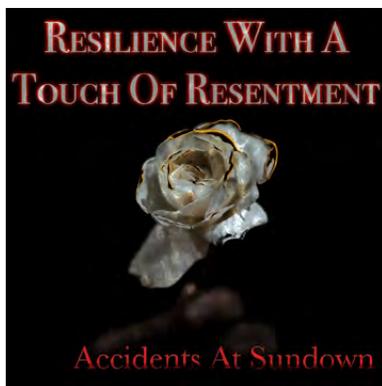
Moreover, this beat-driven version sets the table perfectly for singer/emcee Deuce Eclipse to spit an

exquisite guest verse. Deuce's faster-paced rapping momentarily snaps the listener out of the hypnotic trance set by Spirit Drive to further build on the theme of friendship abandonment.

The combination of Spirit Drive and Deuce Eclipse feels like a very natural complimentary fit, as if each artist knows the other inside and out, which makes sense considering these two Concord artists are literally brothers.

NEW SINGLE: (August 7, 2021)

"Resilience With A Touch Of Resentment"
 Accidents at Sundown



The new single from the fairly recently formed East Bay rock group Accidents at Sundown opens with a somewhat misleading sense of optimism and hope. The intro's synthetic soundscape and electronic beat seem to be setting up a motivational power ballad. That all gets up-ended in just half a minute, slowing to a halt, not unlike pulling the plug on a turntable at a life-coaching seminar to announce that the building is on fire.

A melancholy piano and naked electric guitar emerge to give the listener some guidance. The epic nature of this "secondary intro" feels somewhat like the opening act of a rock opera that takes place in a

haunted house. We, the audience, are figuratively led down the hall and eventually handed off to our host, singer Tyler McClellan, who urgently informs "What we need is to break out!"

From here on, "Resilience with a Touch of Resentment" takes consistent shape. A chugging distorted rhythm and driving drums support McClellan's shouted declarations, which sound kinda like a really upset Joe Strummer in a good way. The haunting piano overlay adds a nice element of continuity to the earlier introduction. The new single fits well with Accidents at Sundown's growing catalog.

Catch Accidents At Sundown on August 7th at Toot's Tavern in Crockett, Calif.



SUMMER CAMP

The Clayton Theatre Company (CTC) held their Summer Stage Camp for the first time in two years. The theme was food.

The children performed "Food Glorious Food" and "Be Our Guest" as well as short monologues in front of their families.

Roxanne Pardi and La Tonya Watts were the directors for Summer Stage.

Roxanne Pardi stated, "It was somewhat of a challenge to observe all of the changing Covid19 protocols for camp, but everyone stayed happy, healthy and the kids learned a lot in one week. We are hoping to have a 2-week camp in 2022".

CTC will finally perform their next show, "The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940" in Oct. 2021. The show is a funny whodunit with most of the cast getting



"whacked". Please visit Claytontheatre-company.com for ticket information.

calendar of events

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August 5
84th Annual Board of Directors Installations Award
 11:00am-12:00pm. Presented by Concord Chamber of Commerce. Zoom and



Facebook Live. \$5 donation to Community Alliance for the Future to welcome 202-2022 Chair of the Board, Marc Maier of Mechanics Bank.

OUTDOORS

Farmers' Markets

Concord Tuesdays, 9:00am to 2:00pm, year-round, rain or shine. Todos Santos Plaza, Concord
Thursdays 6:30pm. - 8:00pm., Todos Santos Plaza

Martinez Sundays, 9:00am to 2:00pm, year-round, 700 Main St.

Walnut Creek Rossmoor - Fridays 9:30am. to 1:00pm., Golden Rain Rd. Shadelands - Saturdays 9:00am.-1:00 pm. North Wiget Ln & Mitchell Dr. Sunday 9:00am. - 1:00pm. North Locust St between Cole and Lacassie St. (925) 431-8361 <http://www.cccfm.org>

Orinda Saturdays 9:00am.-1:00 pm. Orinda Way in front of Community Park

WALNUT CREEK

August 4 & September 1
First Wednesdays -Walnut Creek Street Festival. 5:30pm. - 8:30pm. Food, drinks, music, and vendors. Vybe Society will play Aug. 4, and Diablo Fugitives will play Sept. 1. Downtown on Cypress Street between Main and Locust streets. Free parking after 5:00pm. Admission free.

August 5, 12, 19, 26

Family Chalk Art Days Showcase your talents on downtown Walnut creek sidewalks. Three locations, Waterlight Plaza, 1501 Locust St., City Hall, corner of Civic Dr. and N. Main St., and Olympia Place 1201 Locust St. Every Thursdays.

RUTH BANCROFT GARDEN
 1552 Bancroft Rd. Walnut Creek
RuthBancroftGarden.org.

August 12
27th Annual Sculpture Show and Sale. Join the After Hours Evening Sculpture Stroll 6:30pm.- 8:00pm. See the works of 24 area artists poised among beautiful garden plants. Live music, beer & wine. Sculpture in the Garden runs through August 29.

August 14 Pollinators and Friends Day - 10:00am-11:30am & 11:30am - 1:00pm. A celebration of pollinators and friends. Find out what we can do to protect them and their habitat. Event is free with Garden admission of \$10 for non-member age 13 and up, \$8 for seniors and children under and members are free. RSVP ticket required.



August 7
Sunrise Hike - Save Mount Diablo 6:00am.-9:00am. Enjoy cooler morning weather and discover Curry Canyon Ranch. Limited to 30 persons. Moderate, 3 miles, Elevation: 300'. Under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. No dogs. Meet at 1000 Peacock Creek Drive in Clayton

September 4
Mitchell Canyon Tarantula Hike 5:00pm - 7:30pm. A nature walk through Mitchell Canyon that will dispel any malicious rumors you might have heard about Mount Diablo's misunderstood eight-legged creatures.

July 17-August 24

Perseid Meteor Shower



Annually, the best meteor show of the year. Best viewing is between midnight and sunrise away from city lights. Peak viewing August 11-12. Roughly 50 meteors per hour.

MARTINEZ
AUGUST 8 OPEN AIR MARKET, 9:00am-2:00pm Downtown. featuring Vintage, Collectibles, and antiques.

August 21
Downtown Martinez Makers Market 10:00am-5:00pm. Small business shopping, local makers, antiques, in and outdoor dining and live entertainment. Over 60 vendor booths and the Makers Movement.

August 27

The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society

Enjoy several running model trains running through miniature cities and mountainous terrain. 8:00pm Located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave. Walnut Creek. (Admission): \$3 Adults, \$2. Children (6-12) / Seniors. FREE for kids 5 years and younger.

VISUAL ARTS/ THEATRE/MUSIC

Concord Jazz Festival -Take 5 Events

August 4 - Jinz Jones Unplugged at the Veranda 6:00pm-7:30pm.

August 5 - An opening tribute to the legacy of Jazz in Concord, followed by The Big Jangle at Todos Santos Park. 6:30pm-8:00pm

August 6 Jazz Trio Glib Rig performs at Concord Tap House 5:00pm-7:00pm.

August 7 - Open House at Concord Visitor Center at Todos Santos Plaza from 12:00pm-4:00pm. Shop memorabilia while listening to the summer sounds of concord jazz Legend Dave Brubeck. Free

August 8 - Java and Jazz with Matt Zebley and Organ Trio at theconcord Historical Society from 1:00pm-4:00pm. \$15

MUSIC AND MARKET SERIES Thursdays, Todos Santos Concord. 6:30pm-8:00pm

August 5 - The Big Jangle, Tom Petty Tribute

August 12 - Carlos Xavier Salso Band

August 19 - The 925 Band

August 26 - Roy Rogers with Carlos Reyes

September 2 - Local Music Night: Momma Foxy & The Gypsy Rebels, KAT van Morgan, Nancy Lake & The Ripple Effect

September 9 - The Purple Ones (Prince tribute)

September 16 - Zeparella, Led Zepelin Tribute

September 23 - Local Music Night: the Unoriginals, Sabertooth Unicorn

September 30 - Native Elements

LESHER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

August 6-14. Footloose the Musical. Presented by Poison Apple Productions featuring Youth Performers

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August 21 - The Black Crowes

September 2 - Megadeth and Lamb of God

September 3 - Lindsey Stirling-Artemis Tour North America

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August 28 Forever Rod	Forever Rod From southern California. It doesn't get any better than this. Pitch perfect, flashy Rod, backed by acoustical, nylon-stringed classical guitars and mandolin replicates Rod Stewart's sound and is fronted by a lead singer that looks like and delivers like only Rod Stewart. Bring your dancing shoes! www.foreverrod.com
September 11 East Bay Mudd	East Bay Mudd - This dynamic nine-piece band has been thrilling audiences for years with their upbeat, powerful take on Classic Soul, Funk and R&B classics. This horn-heavy, funk-inflected, rhythm & blues ensemble will rock you back to the best of Tower of Power, Chicago, Earth, Wind, & Fire, and more. With a soulful, dynamic lead vocalist, a tight four-piece horn section and a solid rhythm section, this band is a great finale for our concert season. www.eastbaymudd.com

Walking to The Grove is recommended as parking is limited in the downtown area.

Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association is all about the bees

By Jill Hedgecock

Anyone can become a beekeeper, but it is critical for beginners to find mentors and understand the intricacies of bee behavior.

This is precisely the role of Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association (MDBA). Founded in 2014, MDBA is dedicated to teaching newbies the complex art of beekeeping.

One of the most surprising things I learned upon meeting Jan Spieth, the current president of Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association (MDBA) and Jaci Kildare, their newsletter editor and communications specialist, was neither of them became beekeepers for the honey.

In fact, Spieth never really enjoyed eating store-bought honey, though she has now come to appreciate the golden nectar her hives produce.

Kildare often gifts her honey to friends and family because there is usually plenty. A single hive box can generate up to 75 pounds of honey, though beekeepers usually leave up to seven frames across the boxes in their hives so the bees can sustain the hive through the winter.

Knowledge of bees' social structure and behavior is crucial for successful hive management and both Spieth and Kildare have found MDBA to be invaluable.

MDBA educates the public in the crucial role of bees in food production and tries to alleviate their fear of the insect through outreach. They also perform community service by assisting with swarm removal.

Spieth became a beekeeper back in 2007 because of a wine barrel.

"I was adopted by a swarm of bees," Spieth says. "It was March, and I couldn't understand why there were so many bees when it was shady, and there were no flowers. Then I discovered that a swarm had found my wine barrel, the perfect environment if you are a honeybee."

Because her first attempt at beekeeping did not go so well, her bees are now housed in traditional beehive boxes.

"I was so ignorant," she says. "Some people go into beekeeping completely naïve, thinking it is simple, and I was one of those. They died. I felt so remorseful that I joined the Beekeepers Association."

She has found the organization of about 450 members to be filled with kind, generous and smart people who live in Contra Costa County. Their mission is to promote beekeeping while educating the public about the vital role of bees in our environment.

Kildare's journey into the fascinating world of bees was more intentional. "I wanted to get into beekeeping about 15 years ago, but it just wasn't the right time. And then a couple of years ago, I decided that now was the time."

Kildare's sister introduced her to an MDBA member. She joined and met a woman there who took her along to inspect her various hives.

"Then one day, I get a call about a swarm in Clayton," says Kildare. "I was told these could be your bees. And it was really fortuitous, because a couple of weeks earlier I had driven up to Woodland where there's a supply house, and I had gotten everything for a hive. It was really great!" she grinned.

That is one of the community services MDBA provides, the humane removal of swarms. Several members volunteer to trap the bees. Swarm season is typically March through June.

Prior to the swarm behavior, the worker bees choose larvae to become queens, bathe them in royal jelly and then create special, elongated 'queen cells' for them. These supersedure cells have a mottled surface and form the shape of a peanut shell. The worker bees will also put the old queen on a diet, so she is able to fly, and ready her for departure. As these changes occur in the hive, scout bees will explore the area for a new home for the old queen.

"If a colony gets too crowded, the old queen and approximately 40% of the hive will leave," says Spieth.

Spieth describes the swarming bees as only

focused on finding a home. Swarms are not typically aggressive. If a swarm becomes a nuisance to a business or a residence, she recommends visiting the MDBA website and finding a volunteer to come get them.

The volunteer, who has been a MDBA member for a minimum of two years, will ask about the size of the hive, and how long it has been there. Usually, the swarm is collected in the afternoon or evening when the scouts will have returned to the cluster.

Bee collection from a swarm that inhabits a tree trunk is far more difficult to capture. Sometimes a vacuum cleaner is used. Getting the queen is essential. If the bees are hanging from a branch, the process is relatively easy. Kildare's swarm was in this type of formation.

"A painter's 5-gallon bucket on a long pole was placed under the bees, and when they were bumped, they automatically dropped. Like boom-boom," Kildare says of the process. The captured bees are typically given to a MDBA member who wants to start a hive, like Kildare, or someone who wants to expand their population. There is no fee to the caller, but a donation to the organization is requested.

"There's a whole learning process," says Kildare. "Everything looks the same when you first start. I have learned the bees can tell that I'm stressed. If I'm relaxed, I can go into the hive with no gloves on. I know what my emotional state is by what kind of gloves I have to wear."

During the pandemic, Kildare became focused on planting her garden for pollination. A lot more native bees, such as bumblebees, now visit her yard. Most flowers pollinated by bees are yellow, violet, or blue. They also often have ultraviolet markings. White flowers also attract bees, possibly because bees see the flowers as blue-green rather than white. Some bee-friendly plants include lavender, rosemary, an annual herb called borage, as well as plants in the aster, pea, and mint families.

"One out of every three bites of human food is the direct result of honeybee pollination," Spieth explains. "California's almond industry, an important part of the State's economy, is 100% pollinated by bees."

Both women showed a deep appreciation for the complexity of a bee's society. Each bee has a specific role, and their jobs define their lifespan. Unlike worker bees that can expect to live six weeks, queens can live up to three years. The queen will specify gender in the larvae she produces, and as winter approaches, she stops laying drones (male bees).

Drones leave the hive in late fall to form a drone congregation area. All drones from all the hives in the neighborhood will fly up into the sky around 10 or 11 in the morning waiting for a virgin queen to pass by. If she does not show, they return to their respective hives in the late afternoon and start the process again the next morning. A new queen



Jan Spieth (in pink) and Jaci Kildare investigate a hive frame with bare hands. Photo by Diane Walsh

will mate once in her lifetime with nine to 13 drones over the course of a few days.

"The most interesting aspect of bee behavior is in all the different ways that they communicate to one another," says Kildare. Last summer she observed 'washboarding'. "They were all up on the box, about 300 bees with their heads pointed down and they were going down and going up. Going down, going up. It happened for at least 10 minutes." She laughs and describes it as a bee's version of a flash mob. "Researchers still don't know the purpose. It was the most fascinating thing I've ever observed in my life."

Spieth is also interested in hive behavior. "Each type of bee gives off pheromones," she explains. "These chemicals can spark action, or reaction or direction."

MDBA is actively involved in community education and will bring an observation hive (encased in glass) to classrooms or to special events at local venues, such as the John Muir House. Usually, these events are successful in engaging even the most frightened children and adults.

"Something changes when they can just



The queen is often marked with a colored dot for ease of identification. Supersedure 'queen' cells have a mottled, surface texture and are often shaped like a peanut shell. Photo by Diane Walsh.

look and watch and see," Spieth says. "Once we tell them that they are herbivores, and will never be attracted to your hamburger, the wall of fear comes down."

Spieth opened several of her hive boxes and manipulated the frames with her bare hands without being stung. Though both women have experienced the occasional sting while checking or caring for their hives, both report when they are calm and move slowly, the bees are not bothered by their presence.

She emphasized that honeybees have no interest in stinging you. It is a suicide mission for them because when they plant their stinger, they die.

Honeybees prefer to bump you as a warning to back off, usually because they fear for their queen's safety. If you stand still, the pheromone will dissipate, and the threat of getting stung goes away. But if they perceive you are a danger, they are very protective of their mistress, and will die for her.

Most honeybee stings come from being stepped on in the grass or being swatted at. If a bee lands on you, the best thing for you to do is to freeze like a statue. Swatting at a bee, not only aggravates it, but it might send off a pheromone to invite other bees to join it in attacking what it perceives as a threat.

"I have a fascination for the insect itself," Spieth explains of her interest in bees.

"99.9% are female. Watching them is very serene and Zen-like. And when you know what they're doing inside, it's pretty remarkable."

Kildare also described her experience as a hobbyist as Zen-like. Watching the women work around the hives, surrounded by the hum of industrious bees with absolutely no interest in me, really was strangely calming.

To learn more about MDBA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and their events and services, visit www.diablobees.org.

[Jill Hedgecock has a Master's degree in Environmental Management and is the author of the award-winning "Rhino in the Room," a novel inspired by her interest in helping endangered animals.]



If a bee lands on you, the best thing for you to do is to freeze like a statue. Photo by Diane Walsh

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Clayton's Sarah Williams nominated for an Emmy



Clayton Valley High School graduate, Class of 2015, Sarah Williams, was recently nominated for an Emmy in the category of "Outstanding Casting for a Daytime Animated Program" for Nickelode-

on's "Baby Shark's Big Show!"

Williams began at Nickelodeon Animation Studio in Burbank, Calif., as an intern in 2018 while studying at UCLA.

In 2019 she graduated with a Communications degree with a film and media minor. She is now an animation casting associate for Baby Shark's Big Show! which features a sensational lineup of voice actors: Kimiko Glenn (Orange is the New

Black), as Baby Shark; Luke Youngblood (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone), as William; Natasha Rothwell (Insecure), as Mommy Shark; Eric Edelstein (We Bare Bears), as Daddy Shark; Debra Wilson (MADtv), as Grandma Shark; and Patrick Warburton (Seinfeld), as Grandpa Shark.

Baby Shark's Big Show! currently ranks as the number-two show with Kids 2-5 for 2Q 21 across all TV, only behind PAW Patrol and has been renewed for a second season. The series production is overseen by Eryk Casemiro, Senior Vice President, Nickelodeon Preschool.

Williams and her casting associates will be up against "Baba Yaga", "Bubble Guppies", "Duck Tales", and "Elena of Avalor".



The 73rd Emmy Awards will air on Sunday, September 19 on CBS, hosted by Cedric the Entertainer.

We wish her the best of luck. What a fantastic way to start a career!



GM Sam Shankland knocks out Russian GM Peter Svidler to reach quarter finals. Photo courtesy FIDE),

Walnut Creek's Sam Shankland quarter finalist in FIDE Chess World Cup

July 30, 2021 - Grandmaster (GM) Sam Shankland of Walnut Creek advanced to the quarter finals of the FIDE World Cup Chess Tournament in Sochi, Russia. Shankland entered as the United States #5 rated player (now 2709).

To be one of eight contestants still remaining in the 206-players single - elimination tournament is quite the accomplishment. After taking the first game in the quarterfinals, he lost the second and then lost in the tiebreaker of rapid games, 4-2.

The loss means Shankland narrowly missed qualifying for the Candidates Tournament 2022 which is a tournament to decide the next challenger for the World Championship.

"I lost an incredibly painful match to Sergey Karjakin, and my World Cup campaign ended in the quarterfinal. In the short term, it's much more painful knowing that I had it within my power to advance and failed to do so. I won the first game, but let him back in game 2. Then I won the first tiebreak game, but let him back again in game 4. But in the longrun, losing a heartbreaking match that could have gone either way is better than losing by being totally outplayed and outclassed, and it says a lot about how far I've come that a guy as strong as Sergey basically was my peer," he posted on his Facebook page.

"It's a tragedy of knockout events that no matter how well you played, you always go home unhappy because the last match was the most important one. In my case, it was the most important match of my life. But there's still a lot to be proud of, and if I can keep up the same level of play I showed here and in Prague, I expect I'll be able to make another deep run at future World Cups to come.

"Thanks to all of my fans for the support you showed during the event. Flying the US Flag and making a deep run at the most premier event in the world was the greatest honor of my life."

Shankland also coaches Dublin's 14-year-old Christopher Yoo, International Master who graces us with his chess puzzles on this page.

We are extremely proud of our local "Queen's Gambit" prodigies.

SENIOR SUMMER GAMES

Tokyo is not the only location for Summer Olympics. Montecito in Concord held its own games within its courtyard. While the staff dressed in colors representing the the iconic Olympic rings, residents participated in Scooter Races, Cornhole, Bucket Pong and Ring Toss hoping to earn those enviable medals. "Everyone's a gold medal winner at Montecito," says Michaela Olson, Marketing Director.



L-R: Marci Banerstrom, Fita Manoa, Elaine Wong, Vanessa Gonzalez, Michaela Olson. BELOW: Scooter races. Winner Bev Mullen sports her gold medal.



Chess with Yoo



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

This month, it's an "endgame study" which tend to be hard to solve. This study is no exception. A hint is in the next column. White is down tons of material, but white can draw! White to move.



SUMMER OLYMPIC GAMES

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

- Archery
- Badminton
- Baseball
- Basketball
- BMX
- Boxing
- Diving
- Equestrian
- Fencing
- Golf
- Gym
- Judo
- Karate
- Polo
- Rowing
- Rugby



- Beach (volleyball)
- Soccer (football)
- Slalom (Kayak)
- Softball
- Swimming
- Track (events)
- Tennis
- Volleyball

Chess with Yoo

Hint: Underpromotion and stalemate are the important ideas.

Solution:

1. **cxd8=N+!!**= White needs to promote with check.
 1. **cxd8=Q?? Nxg7!** Black prevents possible stalemate ideas and wins.
- 1... **Rxd8+**
 - 1... **Kf6?? 2.g8=N#!** This is one of the key points! White would be losing after Kf6 if not for this.
2. **g8=B+!!** White stalemates himself with this promotion!
 2. **g8=Q+?? Kf6 3. Qxd6 Nd6!** White has nothing to do about Nf7+, followed by g1=Q.
- 2... **Kd6=** Stalemate! *



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

Real Estate THINGS you might not know

Have you heard of Curbio? This home improvements service is available to all Realtors, sellers and all real estate companies.

You might think a real estate company advertising this feature means that only they can provide the service. Wrong. You can contact Curbio directly, or many others that offer similar services for that fact.

Curbio says, "Curbio helps sellers reap the rewards of presale renovation without the hassle or upfront costs of working with a traditional home improvement company...We streamline the entire renovation process so that homes can be renovated quickly, get on the market ASAP and sell for the best possible price."

Yes, there are strings attached, but if you are looking to get your home ready to sell, are short on funds, and expect to price your home to sell quickly, this may be an option. www.Curbio.com.

Know that there are some downsides. Most notably, if the market changes, they contractually require you to lower your price to sell so they can be paid for their work. After all, they have paid the vendors and need to recoup their funds.

Realistically, it could be a good fit even though you may lose some control over whom you use and on some staging type decisions. Understand that they are there to help you get the most money. Read the reviews and know their pluses

and minuses.

While this is not for everyone, the major advantage is you can use the Realtor of your choice and retain the same opportunity as all other real estate companies offer. Happy Selling.

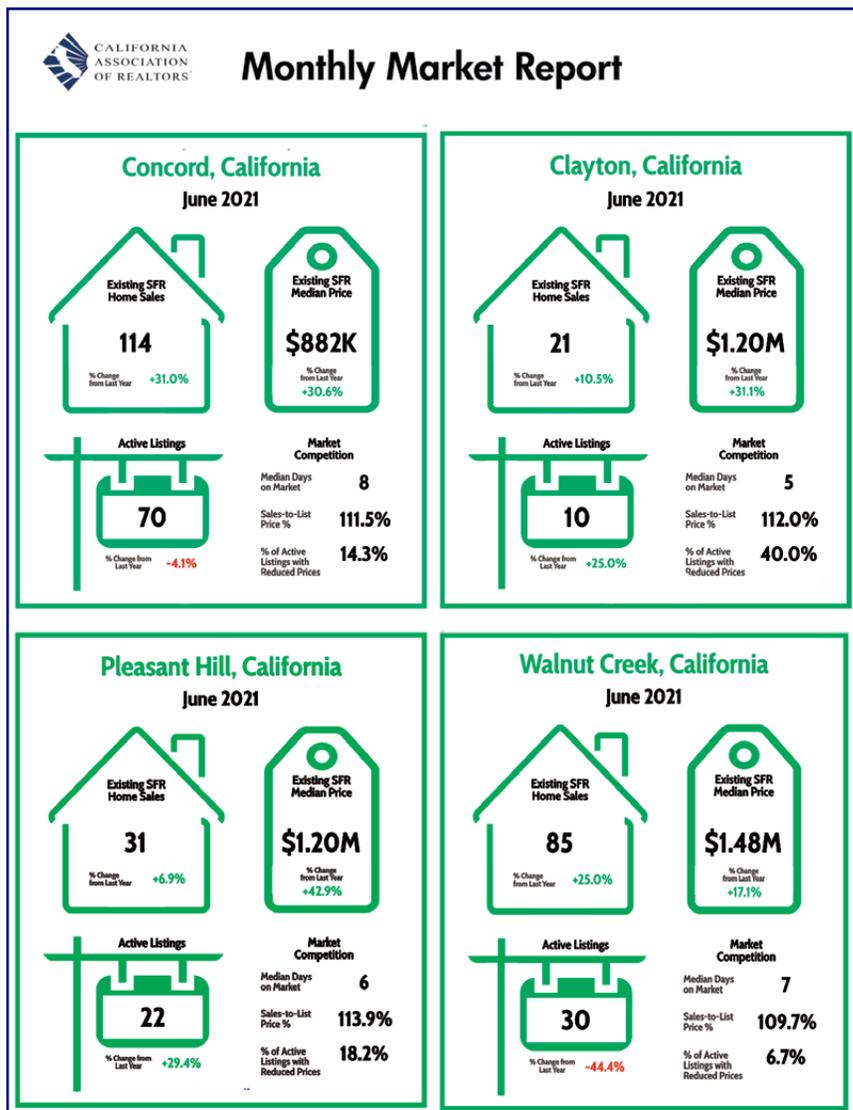
Recently a customer said they talked with a realtor who recommended they list with their real estate company and let the company agents sell the home within their company rather than go on mls. Was this a good idea?

I will answer this with a question.

Most sellers worry that if they do not expose their property on the internet to hundreds of thousands of Realtors and potential buyers, that they might not get a higher bid, or higher price.

Additionally, a Seller's agent as defined in the Disclosure regarding Real Estate Agency Relationship says, "The seller's agent under a listing agreement with the seller acts as the agent for the seller only with the following affirmative obligations. To the seller: A fiduciary duty of utmost care, integrity, honesty and loyalty in all dealings with the seller."

So, my answer question is this: If I am representing you, the seller, and am to hold your interest above all others, including mine, then why would I recommend to use only the limited group of one company?




Terrylynn Fisher
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Melons featured during Farmers' Market Month

By Deb Morris, PCFMA

Now that the state of California has re-opened, farmers are planting crops and delivering their produce to farmers' markets. Customers have returned in greater numbers than before. Throughout the Bay Area, communities have strengthened their relationships with farmers and farmers' markets, now making them a more essential part of their community than ever. The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in California.

This month melons and corn are both at their peak of deliciousness. There are many varieties of melons available at your local farmers' market. Cantaloupe, watermelon, and honeydew are the most familiar, but uncommon varieties such as bitter melon, Korean melon, and winter melon are equally tasty. Other delicious varieties are Golden dew, Hami and Golden Hami, Gallia, Orange Dew, and Canary. Discover something new to add to your recipe repertoire.

This month, farmers' markets will feature luscious melons from J&J Ramos and Resendiz Farms of Hughson and sweet Brentwood corn from G&S Farms. Be sure to thank these farmers for persevering.

The resilience of small farmers during this past year of pandemic, drought, and farmers' market closures has been truly remarkable. Their commitment to bringing fresh wholesome produce to their local community, their inherent love of farming, and their can-do spirit have been inspiring.

During the pandemic, it was made clear that local food systems with short supply chains are a necessity and can adapt to change. Local small farmers altered their methods or growing patterns as they adjusted to the "new normal." However, corporate food systems were not nearly as flexible

when it came to supplying the public with their products because of lack of transportation and product availability.

Farmers' markets provide one of the few direct-to-consumer entry points for new farmers, ranchers, and other local products allowing them to start small and grow their business. Growers who sell locally and



Farmers' market have flourished in Concord at Todos Santos Park.

directly were able to hire more workers and grow their crops more sustainably this past year, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation.

This past year farmers' markets saw a large increase in the use of EBT benefits and Market Match programs. With the loss of many jobs due to pandemic closures, the need for fresh

produce increased exponentially.

Last year over \$1,000,000 in benefits were distributed at PCFMA markets with over \$900,000 in EBT/Market Match/WIC benefits to more than 6,800 participants. The Market Match program doubles the value of EBT purchases; the need for these programs is evident.

Now for a simple summer melon refreshment.

Honeydew Melon Smoothies

- 1 cup baby spinach
- 1/2 cup mint
- Juice of one lime
- 3 cups water or coconut water
- 3 cups honeydew, cubed and frozen, from a small, ripe honeydew

Cube and freeze honeydew. Combined ingredients in a blender and purée until smooth. Also delicious with a jigger of gin or white rum.

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 **aRt Cottage**
by FROgard

Classes, exhibits, love make aRt Cottage East Bay's Best Gallery

aRt Cottage is in full swing again with a variety of classes, both private and semi-private, for students of all ages - from 5 to 75 years old. Here you can learn several different techniques using watercolors for plein air painting in the beautiful garden, as well as create frame-worthy pet portraits in acrylic paint. Or use the potter's wheel, slab roller and an extruder to form unique plates and pots.

The current exhibit "Land, Air & Seascapes", is open to the public until the end of August.

Stroll through each gallery to see this collection of beautiful paintings in a variety of mediums from local artists. Some of my favorites are of Mount Diablo, our Pacific Coast, and the giant trees of the Sierras. Four pieces from this exhibit have already been sold.

In other news, aRt Cottage was just selected by Diablo Magazine readers as the *Best Art Gallery in the East Bay for 2021!*



This is truly an honor for the aRt Cottage and all the artists it represents. Thank you to all who voted.

The magazine quoted Concord artist Kara Bonsteel's kind words, "The atmosphere is

so welcoming, as is Fro, the owner of the aRt Cottage. There is no snootiness, no discomfort, and so much love in the space. Positive energy radiates through it. There is also the recent addition of the free mini art gallery out front where passersby and other artists can take and exchange art. It's the only thing like that locally that I know of, and I love it."

The aRt Cottage proudly represents local artists and shines a light on their work. All artists are welcome to exhibit here. aRt Cottage is truly "R" (our) cottage, where beginner creatives and professional artists both feel comfortable and confident with their work side by side.

The professionals are silently teaching each beginner, who learns by viewing and studying their work. When a beginner sells a piece, it is the professional who pats them on the back and celebrates with them. I love when that happens.

This is my happy place, teaching and helping promote the arts. Concord has been good to me, and I am grateful. aRt Cottage is located at 2238 Mt. Diablo Street.



Raven's Roost by Colin Hall

Walnut Creek City Council supports special permits for Micro Houses

The Walnut Creek City Council wants to proceed with at least one six-home development of micro-houses through a special permitting process instead of creating a new zoning designation, to give the concept a test drive.

The council took no formal action on a proposal to build a half dozen home for low-income residents in the parking lot of Tice Valley's Grace Presbyterian Church just outside Rossmoor, as no official application has been filed with the city.

More cities are turning toward micro-housing, including Oakland,

Each unit would shelter one or two people. Monthly rents would not exceed rents that are affordable to households earning up to 50 percent of area median income. Con-

struction costs typically come from a mixture of private and public sources.

All five council members endorsed the idea of the city using a special permitting process, rather than creating a new zoning classification. Cindy Darling said nearby residents had similar concerns when the city approved a winter shelter in the armory downtown, which the city addressed by scheduling regular meetings to hear



Vesta Modular micro home. Courtesy Vestamodular.com

from neighbors.

"It ended up being something that really worked ... nobody goes to that meeting anymore because nobody thinks it's a problem," Darling said.

The staff report said, if everything proceeds as planned, the project could officially apply for a development application this fall.

Walnut Creek hires new Police Chief

WALNUT CREEK, CA — Walnut Creek has hired San Leandro Police Capt. Jamie Knox to be its new police chief.

Knox began his duties July 26. He takes over for interim chief Dan Pratt, who's been on the job since April. Walnut Creek's last permanent chief, Tom Chaplin, retired in late 2020.

Knox grew up in Roseville, where he started his law enforcement career as a police explorer, then as a dispatcher. Rocklin hired him to be an officer in 1996, where he moved up the ranks before moving on in 2015 to serve as a captain in Novato. He joined the San Leandro department in 2017, overseeing its service bureau and, most recently, its operations bureau.



"I want to thank our City Manager, Dan Buckshi, for giving me this amazing opportunity," Knox said, in a statement. "Walnut Creek has been on my radar for years as a great place to visit... I'm excited to meet the women and men of Walnut Creek PD, and to get to know our residents."

Knox has a bachelor's degree in emergency management and a master's degree in organizational leadership. He graduated from the FBI National Academy and

the Senior Management Institute for Police in Boston. Knox and his husband Scott live with two Chihuahuas, Maddie and Rudy.

The city said it will announce a formal swearing-in ceremony soon.

How do you define being fit?

By Carmela Lieras, NASM-CPT



The word “fitness” makes me cringe most days.

I used to love everything fitness related when I was in my twenties and had all the time in the world to work out, but as I got older, had a child and way more responsibilities, I have realized that fitness does not mean as much to me anymore, but health does.

For some people, “true fitness” can mean any of the following:

- Shredded abs and bulging biceps
- The ability to lift a certain amount of weight
- Being able to do X-amount of pull-ups
- Eating super clean all the time
- Getting drenched with sweat after a strenuous workout
- Running a full or half marathon a few times per year
- Competing in Spartan races

While there is nothing inherently wrong with any of these, it has to be said that one person’s meaning of fitness is not the same as another’s.

So, Person A believes they are fit because of their 6-pack abs, while Person B might believe they are fit if they can walk two miles without being in pain. Unfortunately, industry marketing leads Person B to believe that they are unfit if do not meet any of the bullet points above.

Fitness does not have to mean any of those points if you do not want them to.

Your fitness level is not indicative of how many push-ups you can do or whether you can run a mile under ten minutes.

Look at the actual definition (from Miriam Webster) of ‘fitness’, which is: the quality or state of being fit. Looking at one of the many definitions of “fit” gives us: (adj) adapted to the environment so as to be capable of surviving; sound physically and mentally: healthy.

I choose to look at the definition of “fit”, because that one has to do with survival.

Fitness does not have to be horrible. You do not have to kill yourself in the gym every day in order to get the body you want, and you most certainly do not have to buy in to all the marketing tactics out there telling you true fitness is being able to do 50 burpees non-stop.

Hold onto whatever fitness means to you. If being fit means being able to survive your current environment, then walking around your house without knee pain means you are fit.

Doing a yoga class a few times per week so you can decompress from life’s stressors means you are fit.

Waking up in the morning and doing a workout class on your tv or computer (because you are not ready to go back to your gym) consistently throughout the week means you are fit.

Keep doing those activities that you enjoy, that bring you joy (even if they make you work harder than you might want) and that make you feel good and healthy; especially the ones that keep you thriving and surviving!

East Bay Parks receive \$13.5M to clear dying trees

The East Bay Regional Park District has received \$13.5 million from the state to improve its ability to fight wildfires and remove fuels like dead and dying trees, district officials said.

The district will use \$10 million of the direct appropriation to remove potential fuels from parks around the region while the remaining \$3.5 million will be used to buy and replace fire-combating equipment like the district’s aging helicopter.

“EBRPD has more than 1,500 acres of dead or dying trees affected by drought and climate change conditions that need immediate attention,” district Fire Chief Aileen Theile said in a statement.

Park district officials first noticed the sudden tree die-off in October 2020 and estimate that it will cost roughly \$30 million on top of the \$20.5 million the district has spent over the last decade to remove the stricken trees from all district’s parks.

According to the district, Anthony Chabot and Reinhardt Redwood regional parks in Oakland, Miller Knox Regional Shoreline in Richmond and Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley and Orinda are most in need of forest management to reduce the risk of wildfires in the region.



A worker in Reinhardt Redwood Regional Park in May cuts the limb off of a pine tree affected by a new pattern of mass tree death. The East Bay Regional Park District received a \$10 million appropriation to remove dead and dying trees. Credit: EBRPD

“The East Bay Regional Park District ... is not immune from these dangerous conditions,” Wieckowski said. “By removing dead trees and other sources that fuel wildfires, the district is proactively working to reduce risks and improve safety, and these funds will help accelerate the process.”

To further reduce the risk of wildfires, the district has prohibited smoking in any district-operated park and also banned building fires outside of designated areas for the remainder of the fire season.



A WALK THROUGH TIME

with Misty Bruns

The Society page, as it was commonly called in the 1800’s, and eventually referred to as the Gossip Column in later years, was important news that served small communities. But regardless of what it was called, I suspect that from 1860 to 1920, it was all about prestige and popularity.

When an announcement was put in the paper of who is coming to town, who is

staying with whom, and who is traveling to and from places near or far, this would show popularity.

People, especially women of that time would love to see their names in these columns. Hopeful that they were shown in these columns several times, would certainly mean they were the catch of the area for any visitor coming to town. Of course, this would give ladies conversations for hours.

Was that a bad thing? No, absolutely not. In that era, Contra Costa County was comprised mostly of farms. Having your name out there would bring new friendships, or an opportunity to know your neighbor, and of course, a bit of popularity.

As for men, it may show the skills they have, and when shown in print may help then with work they may seek, or with orchards and farming they may own, possibly helping with income.

I found one such announcement in the Contra Costa Gazette (Martinez)-September 8, 1860: praising Mr. Strentzel’s peaches-

“A Generous Present – We received yesterday morning from Dr. Strentzel, whose liberality is proverbial, a basket of most delicious peaches, for which liberal donation and kindly remembrance of the printers, he has our thanks. Dr. S. has the largest and finest orchard and vineyard in the county – in fact, we believe that there are but few in the State, if any, of the same size and age, that are superior in point of variety and value of fruit. He spares no expense in procuring the best varieties, and the general arrangement of his grounds and excellence of his fruit give evidence of the labor and skill bestowed upon them.”

While reading several old newspapers, I kept coming back to the society-personals page. I began to see a trend with several women, and how many people came to

The Society Page - 161 years ago

Contra Costa Gazette (Martinez) September 8, 1860

A GENEROUS PRESENT. — We received yesterday morning from Dr. Strentzel, whose liberality is proverbial, a basket of most delicious peaches, for which liberal donation and kindly remembrance of the printers, he has our thanks. Dr. S. has the largest and finest orchard and vineyard in the county — in fact, we believe there are but few in the State, if any, of the same size and age, that are superior in point of variety and value of fruit. He spares no expense in procuring the best varieties, and the general arrangement of his grounds and excellence of his fruit, give evidence of the labor and skill bestowed upon them.

“visit” them throughout a month. This must have been the highlight for some women to have so many “friends” come and visit and then be put into the local paper.

I dug up a “Personals” column listed in the in the Byron Times July 26, 1907, which shows who is where and when someone has visited or taken an employment position.

I imagine them to be as gossipy as Mrs. Racheal Lynd from “Anne of Green Gables” and it makes me smile. Life was simple in so many ways back then. And yet, the need for popularity and recognition still exists today. What has changed is how.

There were also the worldly “tidbits” in these columns.

Tidbits is all they were, just a few lines of what was happening outside the United States, such as what I found in the Antioch Ledger, January 7, 1861.

We are pleasantly reminded even with

THE ANTIOCH LEDGER

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1861.

The finest kind of apples are raised Salinas Valley. News to us.

The Turkish Sultan and Khedive Egypt are again on angry terms.

The running time “across the continent” is now six days and twenty hours.

At Troy, N. Y., they manufacture paper boats, and will shortly commence making paper barrels and washtubs.

Additional artillery is on the way to Paris. The number of siege guns of a caliber now in front of Paris is 1,500.

The Alvarado Beet Sugar Factory has a ready turned out 350 barrels of their sugar, and the article is in demand.

Sunday afternoon, the wife of J. H. Tibbin, merchant tailor, of San Francisco was thrown from a buggy and killed.

A corps of 12,000 patriots has been organized in Paris, sworn to cut their way through the Prussian lines.

A woman in La Crosse took a hot road to bed with her, to warm her feet, and burned up a \$3,000 house with it.

these little writings from so long ago, there was a thirst for reading, and being up to date with activities, worldly news and current affair. But in a way, it was simple, eloquent, and intriguing to the reader.



Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue

Moon

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

Moon is a sweet, 15-20 pound female 1-year-old Shiba Inu being fostered by Love & Second Chances. Moon is missing her left rear leg. She has special needs that require her bladder to be expressed at least three times a day and will need to wear diapers. Moon is:

- Crazy in love with people
- Good with kids
- Good with other dogs
- Working on crate-training
- Is leash trained and loves to go outdoors



quito population. If you are on a hike, then spraying areas of your dog with low fur such as the ears, belly and face (be sure to avoid the eyes) with a mixture of apple cider vinegar and water diluted in equal parts, can act as a natural repellent. If you live in any area with a high incidence of heartworm, your veterinarian may want your dog to take preventative medication.

International ban on rescue dogs.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a ban on July 14, 2021 on the importation of dogs from designated high-risk rabies countries (including China, Russia, Vietnam, Columbia, and the Dominican Republic) for at least a year.

The action was taken because of a sharp increase in the number of puppies imported into the country with fraudulent rabies vaccination certificates.

Dog rescue organizations such as No Dogs Left Behind are requesting the United States require a valid rabies titer showing adequate immunization of the dog rather than blanket banning the dogs from entry.

Pawsitive News

Give a Dog a Bone Week, August 10th to the 16th. Pets of the Homeless (www.petsofthehomeless.org) is asking communities to bring in pet food and supplies to assist the pets of the homeless or to make cash donations.

Dog-Friendly Outdoor Summer Adventures. Getaway Adventures (www.getawayadventures.com/kayaking/) offers dog-friendly guided kayak tours along the Russian River.

Snoopy Hits a Milestone. Everybody's favorite cartoon beagle, Snoopy, celebrates his birthday on August 10th. Snoopy's creator, Charles M. Schulz, has Bay Area roots. Snoopy first appeared in the "Peanuts" comic strip on Oct. 4, 1950, but the beagle's birthday was not announced until the August 10, 1968 strip. Assuming Snoopy was born in 1950, he would be 71 this year.

[Ruby Dooby Do is Concord's international social media celebrity with more than 195K followers at [Instagram.com/rubydooby__do](https://www.instagram.com/rubydooby__do), 127K Facebook followers and 1.6M followers on TikTok. Special thanks to Jill Hedgecock, author of this column and novels, "Between Shadow's Eyes" and "From Shadow's Perspective" whose covers feature Ruby. www.jillhedgecock.com]

Moon is vaccinated, and microchipped. She likes to follow people around and her ideal home is someone who works from home, who understands the responsibilities of owning and raising a dog as a member of their family. Her adoption fee is \$450. To meet this special girl and find out if you are a good match for each other, fill out an adoption application: <http://loveandsecondchances.org/applications/adoption-application/> (allow a few days for review).

The mission of San Ramon-based Love & Second Chances (LSC) is to help death-row, abused, and neglected dogs find forever homes. This foster-based rescue was founded in 2012 and operates both a local and international program. LSC is always looking for fosters who are interested in opening their homes to their rescues and they also welcome donations: <http://loveandsecondchances.org/donate/>.

A Bone to Pick

Don't use human mosquito repellents on your dog. There are 23 species of mosquitos in Contra Costa County and their bites can be as annoying to your dog as they are to you. But the biggest threat mosquitos pose to your pooch is the spread of heartworm.

Heartworm is a parasite that causes heart and lung infections in dogs and severe infections can be life-threatening. While it might be tempting to use insect repellent designed to reduce mosquito bites in humans, these chemicals can be toxic to dogs and cats, especially sprays and lotions that contain DEET.

A good way to keep mosquitos away from your pets is to eliminate standing water from your yard. Regular water changes of pet bowls, birdbaths, and reducing night lighting that attracts these pests can reduce the mos-

ARF Adoption Stars Randall & Oreo

by Erin Thompson

Looking for a furry friend? Visit arflife.org to view all of ARF's adoptable animals or read more about ARF's adoption process. If you see an animal you're interested in on our website, just fill out an online inquiry form!

Randall



Five-year-old Randall is a Bull Terrier mix who can be a bit shy in new environments but warms up nicely with gentle pets and plenty of treats. Once he is comfortable, he is a wiggly goof that loves to stick close by. Randall would do best in a home with lots of space and an active family who can provide lots of love and fun activities to keep him busy. Randall has a positive history with other dogs. He currently weighs 53 pounds.

Visit www.arflife.org/dogs for more information. ARF adoption fees: \$250 for an adult dog, \$350 for a puppy (<6 months), \$125 for a special-needs dog, \$175 for a special-needs puppy (<6 months), and \$125 for a senior dog (7+ years).

Oreo



Two-year-old Oreo is a handsome boy just waiting to bring more sweetness into your life. This laid-back gentleman prefers a quiet home where he can adjust to his new surroundings at a leisurely pace. A patient, cat-savvy guardian will be rewarded with Oreo's everlasting love and affection. He's looking forward to a home with lots of tasty treats to eat, cat toys to play with, and some sunny window sills where he can perch and watch the world outside. Oreo's adoption fee has been prepaid by one of his adoring fans.

Visit www.arflife.org/cats for more information. ARF adoption fees: \$100 for an adult cat, \$150 for a kitten (<6 months), \$150 for two adult cats, \$250 for two kittens, \$50 for a special-needs cat, \$75 for a special-needs kitten (<6 months), and \$50 for a senior cat (7+ years).

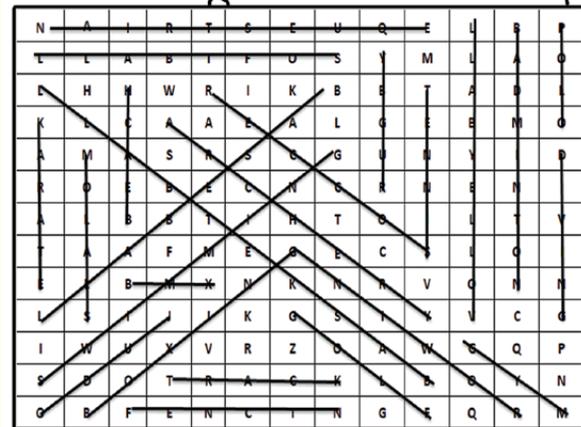
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from page 12.



Tokyo Opening Ceremony. Photo: USA Today

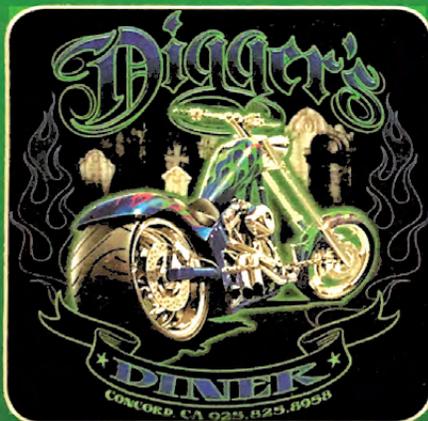
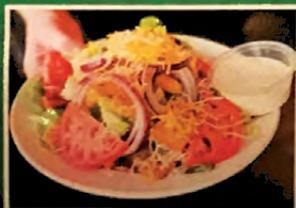
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