

JULY 2021

ART CLASSES, CONCERTS, CAMPS & EVENTS - NORMAL IS ROARING BACK



Naile Lazarin, Concord, works the pottery wheel during an aRt Cottage class

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JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

Tales from the Trail that Ales

By David King

Intrigued by Visit Concord's Contra Costa Beer Trail, I decided to embark on this expedition of uncharted watering holes to support our local businesses. The goal, visit 40 destinations from Brentwood to Richmond of the county's premier breweries and tap rooms. It would be an adventure like no other -the kind of adventure Lewis and Clark would have taken, or perhaps Otis Campbell and Foster Brooks.

I downloaded the Contra Costa Beer Trail app from Visit Concord's website that would track and record each stop I make on the trail. Not until the end did I realize it is not the destinations that make this trail special, but the people you meet or invite along the way and the many interesting stories you hear.

I chose Jack's Taps to be my trailhead. My wife came along to see me off and share what could be our last meal together. Jack's was already busy on this warm Saturday afternoon. The restaurant had a 30-minute wait. Fortunately, they were serving outside, and so my beer hike begins with a Pilsner on the plaza.

That evening I invited In-laws to BJ's Brewhouse in Concord. Like many restaurants, they were eager to get back to old norms, yet still not at full staff. So, I used the longer than usual service times to admire a three-generational conversation of a 24-year-old mechanical engineering graduate speaking of his pending internship to improve the efficiency of a robotic strawberry harvester with the old-school 81-year grandfather who reminisced his youthful days handpicking strawberries in Tennessee fields. "Some days you pick them with the tops on, those went to markets, other days you pick them with the top off, those went to canneries," he lectured. They were both drinking BJ's gold award beer, Light Switch.



A dog walks into the No-name bar in Sausalito on June 15th without a mask. The Sausalito 'No Name Bar' has a colorful history at: 757 Bridgeway. This Sausalito neighborhood hang-out has been in the same location since 1959. Throughout the 1960s and 70s, this location was one of the favorite watering holes for famed musicians to stop at, when in town on business or vacations. Photo by Carrie Lyn Souza.

The next day, I stopped in at Concord Tap House. I met Thomas M., but he preferred, or should I say insisted, that I call him the "Bassmaster."

Bassmaster claims to have caught the largest freshwater bass in all of Contra Costa County right here in Concord. Where is there such a fishing hole in Concord? While there are likely no records to dispute his self-proclaimed title, he did present to me a photo of him holding a 12-pound pregnant large-mouth bass that he caught in March at New Hall Park!

cont'd page 8

In case you missed it...



Eviction Moratorium Extended

At a Board meeting on June 22, 2021, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors unanimously passed Urgency Ordinance No. 2021-20 that continues a temporary eviction moratorium for certain residential tenants and a moratorium on certain residential rent increases through September 30, 2021. The Urgency Ordinance also continues a temporary eviction moratorium for certain commercial tenants through September 30, 2021. Urgency Ordinance No. 2021-20 supersedes Ordinance No. 2021-11 and takes effect immediately.

"Our County is reopening and ready to bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic, yet my colleagues and I recognize that many residents and small businesses are still struggling to regain their stability," said Supervisor Diane Burgis, Board Chair. "Extending eviction protections will help residents and small businesses get back on the road to recovery and a stronger, brighter future."

Walnut Creek COVID-19 recovery in full swing downtown

by Tony Hicks



Walnut Creek Mayor Kevin Wilk walked down Main Street, watching sidewalk revelers who all seemingly believe it was their birthday.

A large, glowing, thumping party truck carrying open-air celebrants rolled down the street. People shouted to continue conversations over the distorted stereo. After more than a year of either being closed, or tip-toeing around ever-changing rules and health mandates, Walnut Creek's nightlife was stretching its party muscles again after a 15-month COVID-19 nap.

Walnut Creek has changed since early 2020. Some mainstays, like old favorite party bar Tiki Tom's near Broadway Plaza, didn't survive. Others, like Havana restaurant on Bonanza Street adapted and are now closer to thriving than just surviving.

Walnut Creek holds a unique place in Contra Costa County. Though technically a small city, its thriving web of downtown bars, restaurants and clubs attract people from all over the region and provide about 30 percent of the city's tax base.

Wilk said residents like their new downtown. "The surveys are overwhelming," Wilk said. "People want to keep outdoor dining. People say 'I want to keep the European-style dining.'"

If the two Lamborghinis parked in front of the Broadway Club are a good indicator, then city nightlife is already healthy again. The club's atmosphere could be mistaken for a San Francisco venue; the music moved, as did the dance floor.

Like much of downtown Walnut Creek, the place was alive again.

State launches digital COVID-19 vaccine records to be used in lieu of paper cards

Vaccinated state residents can now access their vaccine record digitally through a tool introduced last week by the

state's Department of Public Health and Department of Technology.

The digital record can be accessed at <https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov> and requires residents to input their name, date of birth, phone number or email address and a four-digit PIN.

Users will then receive a link to their digital record, which has the same information as the physical Centers for Disease Control and Prevention vaccination record card given out when people receive their shots, as well as a QR code that can be scanned to show the same information.

Officials with the two departments stressed that the digital record would not be used as a so-called vaccine passport and is an alternative way for vaccinated residents to confirm their status when entering a business or event.

32K vehicle tolls overcharged at Golden Gate Bridge since early April

The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District is providing refunds to tens of thousands of people who were overcharged at the bridge in the past couple of months, a district spokesman said.

The issue involved people in two-axle vehicles like a standard vehicle or pickup truck being overcharged at the toll rate for multi-axle vehicles like a car towing a trailer. The district has identified about 32,000 such transactions since early April, which spokesman Paolo Cosulich-Schwartz said is less than 1 percent of all transactions over that time period.

The bridge district said people who were charged the incorrect toll should expect to see a refund within four to six weeks. FasTrak customers will receive a refund credit to their account, while customers who already paid the overcharged toll via invoice will receive a refund in their original form of payment.

The district recommends that people contact FasTrak only if they do not see their refund arrive within four to six weeks since its customer service is experiencing higher than usual call volumes.

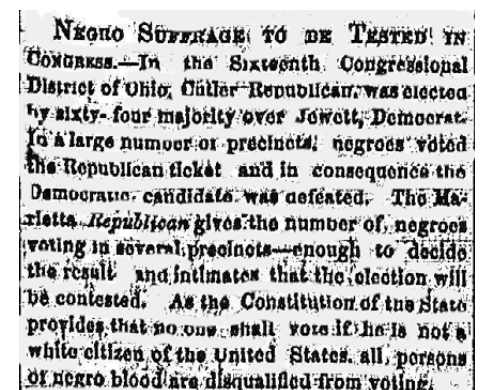
Juneteenth, celebrated across the Bay Area

Juneteenth celebrates the day in 1865 that African Americans in Galveston, Texas, finally learned that President Abraham Lincoln had declared them free two years earlier.

"Today, it is unconscionable to think this happened," said state Sen. Bill Dodd. "And, like a lot of African American history, including the Tulsa Race Massacre a half-century later, it remains largely unrecognized outside the African American community."

Local historian Misty Bruns found this clipping from local papers' archives from those days giving credence why there needs to be a Juneteenth recognition.

Here is a clipping from Contra Costa Gazette on December 15, 1860, challenging Lincoln's election. Was this the original "Stop the Steal"?



To emulate Walter Cronkite, "And that's the way it was." SMH (shaking my head).

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Reimagined Concord Shelter and Service Center Reopens

Story and photos by Nik Wojcik

Life on the streets is an uncertain and dangerous experience, and while traditional homeless shelters offer a bed and a roof, most do little to quell anxieties in dormitory-like settings packed in with strangers.

The “reimagined” Concord Shelter and Service Center has taken those concerns to heart in a thoughtful facility remodel that focuses on privacy, dignity and resource access. The sprawling building on Arnold Industrial that was once a sea of exposed cots reopened its doors on June 24 to serve homeless clients for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic forced its closure. In place of cots are now well-appointed individual ‘rooms’ that provide a sense of security and privacy.

Jenny Robbins, who serves as chief of programs for the Contra Costa Health Services’ Health, Housing and Homeless Services division, is celebrating the shift made necessary and in large part possible by the pandemic itself. As COVID-19 cases began to surge in spring of 2020, congregate settings were found to be a hotspot for virus transmission and residents were relocated; many people were housed in motels under the state’s Project Roomkey program.

Robbins said the facility’s transformation was a response to both the health crisis and feedback from clients. As the building remained unoccupied for more than a year, Robbins said serious thought was given to how they could transform the space to meet both health and basic human needs.

“How do we come back into our shelter safely? And how can we reconfigure things here so folks can come here safely, as well (give) folks...the privacy that we’ve heard that they’ve been wanting and needing, and that being in a dorm setting has been a barrier for folks coming to shelters. ... COVID really prompted this, but it’s something we’ve been wanting to do for a long time.”

In addition to the 64 individual rooms, the space has been configured to allow for couples, adult families and special needs clients in larger rooms that accommodate those unique requirements. The shelter is also service pet-friendly and now boasts kennel space in the new outdoor “pocket park.”

The remodeled space will function



Sixty-four individual rooms for single occupancy includes cot, and private entrance, withd small table. Additional larger rooms accomodate couples, families and special needs tenants.

as a one-stop resource hub with case management, physical and mental healthcare, as well as housing assistance to help on the road to permanent shelter. The onsite service center fully reopens in August, extending non-shelter residents access to a 24-hour bathroom, showers, laundry and mail pickup.

In a negative turned positive, it was federal CARES Act funding in response to the pandemic that allowed CCHS to re-envision what homeless care looks and feels like. The change in the space is an amazing accomplishment and could make all the difference in success for the clients it serves.



Travel is back and if you have friends or family planning a trip to Concord, be sure to tell them about Visit Concord’s “Stay & Play” hotel packages.

With seven different packages to choose from, there’s sure to be one that they will enjoy.

The gift packs are designed to add some personalized fun and adventure for Concord visitors and include things like gift cards for local businesses, beer and wine vouchers, attraction tickets and exclusive Concord swag. Visitors simply need to send us their confirmation number when they book a room at any of Concord’s nine hotels, and the gift pack of their choice will be waiting for them when they check in.

Currently, we are offering packages with themes like Outdoor Adventure for hikers, bikers and nature lovers, Sip & Savor for wine enthusiasts, The Beer Trail for craft brew fans, Taco Trail for spice cravers, Shop & Dine for everybody (who doesn’t love shopping and great food?).

Our Family Entertainment and Family Fun & Sun adventures at Westwind Drive-In and Six Flags Hurricane Harbor is a must.

Stay and Play in Concord This Summer

It is the perfect time to get out and re-discover everything we have been missing, like picnics in the park, climbing Rock City, thrill rides at the waterpark, golfing, hiking, biking, camping, swimming, shopping, dining and even live concerts at the Concord Pavilion and the Music & Market Series in Todos Santos Plaza.

Concord is also a proactively ADA accessible city. Check our website for a directory that includes ADA lodging amenities, accessible parks & trails, attractions, transportation, services and more.

The Concord Visitor Center is ready to help with free advice, maps, visitor guides, brochures, and fun Concord wearables, so be sure to stop in and see us at 2151 Salvio Street, Suite T, in Concord. We hope to see you soon and look forward to you sharing your adventures at #visitconcordca and #concordlove!

For more information about Visit Concord’s Stay & Play packages, visit <https://www.visitconcordca.com/hotels/specials-deals/stay-play-hotel-packages/>.

Or contact us info@visitconcordca.com or 925-685-1182.

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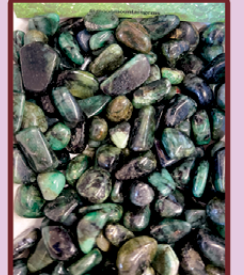
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Jennifer Stojanovich

Realtor, Better Homes Realty

Common Repairs Needed After a Home Inspection

The home inspection is a critical part of the real estate process. Once a home is under contract, the buyer hires a home inspector who will assess the condition of the home and document their findings. Sometimes the home inspection turns up no major issues and the home is declared sale-ready. Other times, the home inspector will discover problems that may need to be addressed before the sale can proceed. These are the most common repairs that are needed after a home inspection.

Appliance and HVAC repairs - During your home inspection, the inspector will examine some (but not all) of the major appliances to make sure they are in working order and not dangerous. This includes the stove, garbage disposal, dishwasher, and stove hood. They may also check to make sure the refrigerator and freezer are cooling properly. They will also look at the heating and cooling elements of the home as well as fireplaces and sprinkler systems. If any problems are found, they may need to be repaired before closing.

Electrical system repairs - In addition to having a typical home inspection, some may also opt to have the electrical systems checked by an electrician. This is to ensure that all electrical equipment is safe and up to code. Some common problems that may need to be repaired include three-pronged outlets that aren't grounded, flickering lights, wires that are taped together and not in a junction box, circuit breakers with more than one live wire attached, and GFCI outlets that are missing or don't work.

Removal of dead trees - Dead trees, especially large ones, can be a serious threat to a home and its occupants. Dead trees can easily fall on the house, in the yard, or on

power lines, causing extensive and expensive damage or injury. You may want to have large dead trees removed as a stipulation for closing on the home.

Plumbing and sewage repairs - Your home inspector will check for leaks around doors and windows, rusty or broken pipes, and water damage around plumbing and hookups. They will also look for mold and mildew which could cause serious health problems. If there are any problems with the plumbing, septic, or sewage systems, then these will need to be addressed.

Removal of infestations - Your home inspection will include looking for signs of infestations, such as insects or wildlife. However, the inspector will likely not go deep into the home to find out if there are any issues. If you are concerned there may be an infestation such as raccoons living in the attic or termites in the walls, you may want to hire a pest inspector. They can help you determine if immediate mitigation strategies are needed before closing.

Removal of hazardous materials - Your home inspection may uncover the presence of asbestos, lead paint, or radon. These can all cause serious health problems and should be addressed before you move in.

Structural or roof repairs - Finally, your home inspector will examine the roof for broken or missing shingles, clogged gutters, or tilting. They will also walk the perimeter to look for foundation cracks and drainage issues. These are repairs that may need to be made before closing on your home.

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legalbriefs

by Douglas A. Prutton, Attorney
Personal Injury Labor & Employment Law
email: Doug@PruttonLaw.com

Guns, the Elderly, and Home Health Care, Oh My

One of the things I like the most about being a personal injury attorney is that I never know what the next case will be like. Just in the last week or so, for example, I received calls about a woman who was beat up by a family member while they were on vacation, about a man whose truck stalled on the road and who was rear-ended, about a woman electrocuted plugging in a Halloween toy, and about a woman who claimed to have head lice from shopping at Walmart. No, I do not accept every case that is presented to me for representation.

I thought it would be fun this month to present to you a situation in a real California case (not mine) recently decided by a jury and see how you would have ruled if you had been a juror.

Fernando and Josefina, both 87 years old, were married and lived in a house in the City of Commerce. The house had been broken into in the past and Fernando kept some guns at the home including a rifle, a BB gun, and a handgun. Josefina suffered from dementia and was bedridden. Fernando was too old and feeble to take care of his wife by himself.

Fernando and Josefina had an adult daughter Maria who lived in Santa Maria (about three hours drive from her parents) and who visited them about one time per month. Maria contracted with a company to provide a home healthcare aide to care for her mother. Maria then hired another home healthcare aide, Tonya, to also help care for her mother and to perform light housekeeping and cooking for her parents.

About one year later tragedy struck. Tonya and the aide provided by the company, Annet, were working together at the home of Fernando and Josefina. Annet was bathing Josefina in the bedroom. Fernando told Tonya that he felt short of breath, so she went into the bedroom to retrieve an oxygen tank in the closet. Fernando's rifle was behind the tank in the closet. When Tonya moved the oxygen tank, the rifle fell and ... it discharged. The bullet struck Annet who suffered serious injuries including a fractured pelvis and perforated intestine.

Annet sued Fernando, Maria and Maria's

brother John who had seen a rifle in the closet but had not told anyone. Maria argued that she could not be held responsible for Annet's injuries as it was not her house where the incident happened, the rifle was not hers, and she did not even know about the rifle in the closet.

Under the law if more than one person is responsible for an incident, the fault must be divided between the responsible parties. In other words, the jury must take 100% of

the fault and divide it up. (For instance, if two people are equally responsible for an incident the fault would be divided 50/50.)

So, my dear reader, would you find anyone responsible for Annet's injuries, and if more than one person was responsible, how would you divide up

the fault?

(Jeopardy music plays).

The actual jury found as follows: Fernando 15%, John 20% and Maria 65%. The amount of the verdict was \$3.61 million.

You may be surprised about the 65% allocated to Maria, but I must confess I did not tell you about all the facts regarding Maria. The evidence showed that although Maria did not know about the particular rifle involved, before the shooting Maria knew that her father had handguns and rifles in the house, including a handgun and a BB gun in his nightstand. She knew that her father was "a little crazy when it came to guns." Maria's husband had actually unloaded two of Fernando's guns.

Do these facts change your mind?

Maria filed an appeal arguing to the appeals court that she should not be held responsible for the accident, since she did not own her parent's home, did not own the rifle, and did not even know about that particular rifle in the closet. She lost her appeal.

The appeals court concluded that "Despite Maria's knowledge that her father kept firearms in the house and that Annet and Tonya's job duties required them to work throughout much of the residence, Maria neither secured the firearms nor warned Annet and Tonya of their presence."



photo courtesy seniorsmatters.com

Digital tools keep small businesses competing

by Sheri Nelson, The Local Shop



Small business owners have a number of digital marketing tools available to them: websites, blogs, online reviews, Google My Business, and an abundance of social media platforms. The problem is these new tools are adding to an already lengthy to-do list. Since not all digital platforms are right for every product or target audience, the business that focuses on those that are truly effective for their market will not become overwhelmed and enjoy faster results.

Even small businesses should have a website. It is today's business card, validating the existence of your product or service. Customers will visit your site to window shop, check location and hours and to contact you. It does not need to be a large, multi-page website. You can have a simple site with pertinent information that allows customers to get exactly what they need. It is not the size of your website that makes it interesting to consumers, it is the eye-catching images, clear and concise product information, and answers to frequently asked questions that will satisfy their needs.

Local businesses should have a presence on social media. But it is not necessary to be on all social platforms. It is better to be strong on one channel before moving onto others. Ideally, that should be the social media that the customers frequent. This allows businesses to speak with shoppers just as if they were walking into their location informing them about products and services, special store events or responding to their comments. A simple "thank you for following" goes a long way in building customer loyalty.

Businesses should be politely personal

Online. This may include wishing customers/followers a great weekend, a Happy 4th of July, offering ideas how to stay cool during our East Bay summers, or listing fun happenings around town. These engagements help localize and humanize the business for building stronger bonds with customers.

The staff should be involved. A Dropbox account or Google folder for the staff to share photos and thoughts for future posts will help keep ideas for content flowing.

Businesses should encourage reviews on multiple sites and respond to all of them, good and bad. Sites like Yelp, Google and Facebook are each unique in how they share content with customers.

While it is hard to please everyone, a proper response should address not only the reviewer but also consider prospective shoppers who will read your responses, including any unhappy customers.

Shoppers use Google to look for products and services more than any other search engine. It is vastly important that Google finds you. It takes mere minutes to add a business storefront picture, hours and contact info into a Google My Business account. And best of all, it is free.

These digital tools will help a business remain relevant and better compete in today's marketplace. They are accessible to small businesses as most require minimal effort and expense, if any.

Sheri Nelson, founder of The Local Shop, is a passionate marketer helping local businesses make a connection with consumers. Follow her on Instagram for more tips at the_local_shop_bay_area or email her your questions at sheri@welcometotheshop.com

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Natural Sage Advice

Is your naked garden having trouble attracting the “Three-B’s”: Bees, Butterflies, and Birds? Are you looking for colorful flower displays but less overall water use? Would you love to have trouble-free plants that return year after year despite our harsh summer heat? Look no further than the 900+ varieties of sage (genus *Salvia*) to brighten your garden and spirit.

Sages do splendidly in our climate and have been cherished by people throughout history for their aromatic leaves, colorful displays of flowers in every hue of the rainbow, and drought-tolerant toughness. Although the edible herb called “sage” (*Salvia officinalis*) owns the most ancient relationship with humanity, flowering sages can solve all sorts of problems in your naked garden, and reward you with color while they work. You can even propagate them from cuttings to fill large spaces.



Above: Hot Lips alongside Mexican Sage
Below: Hummingbird Sage, courtesy Shutterstock.com

Before we explore some great *salvia* varieties for Contra Costa gardens, I would like to share some “sage advice” about our climate.

Coastal California has been called a “Mediterranean climate”. But anyone who has traveled in the Mediterranean region knows that our climate is different. The Mediterranean region is generally more humid and receives more rainfall during summer months than coastal California. This distinction makes a difference when it comes to selecting the right *salvias* for our gardens.

Many commercially available sages require regular and deep watering during our dry summer months, just like they would receive naturally in central Italy or southern France. Choosing one of those varieties is a common mistake in our region. Don’t assume that sages can just grow on their own with little or no irrigation. Nearly all require a regular water source.

Here is a list of my favorite sage varieties for central Contra Costa, grouped by common goals:

For attracting hummingbirds, butterflies, honeybees, and other beneficial insects:

Salvia mexicana “Mexican Sage (lavender flowers)”, *S. leucophylla* “Bee’s Bliss”, or *S. apiana* “Bee Sage”.

For drought-tolerance (small amounts of occasional water), check out:

Salvia spathacea “Hummingbird Sage” (red-flowering), *S. chamaedryoides* “Germander Sage” (blue flowers), *S. microphylla* “Hot Lips”, or *S. clevelandii* “Cleveland Sage” (blue flowers)



Pozo Blue Salvia is a tough survivor - Courtesy Shutterstock Below: White-flowering Bee Sage



If you are looking for super tough survivors that do well in dry shade, hardpacked clay, or colder zones, consider:

Salvia “Dara’s Choice” (a pinkish hybrid), *S. clevelandii* “Pozo Blue”, or *S. spathacea* “Mix Canyon”

If you’d like to stick with California natives, there are about 90 native *salvia* species, with these doing well in Contra Costa:

Previously mentioned *Salvia apiana*, *S. spathacea*, and *S. clevelandii*. Also *S. mellifera* “Black Sage” (pale-lavender flowers), and *S. sonomensis* “John Farmer Bowers” (creamy white flowers).

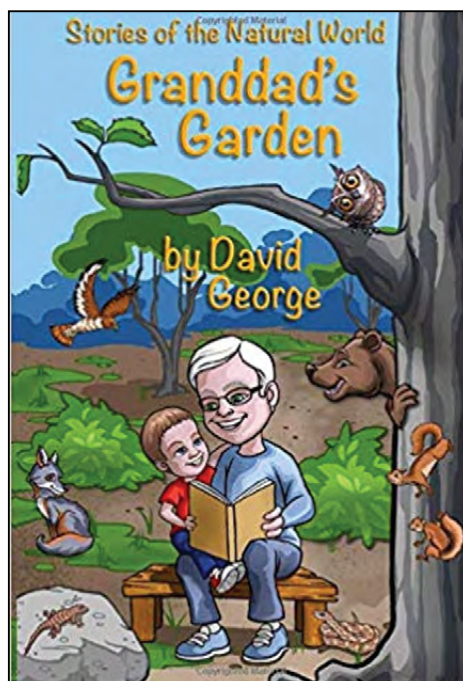
And if you are feeling patriotic this 4th of July, you can plant RED (*Salvia microphylla*/grahamii hybrid “Maraschino”), WHITE (*S. nemorosa* “Snow Hill”), and BLUE (*S. dorrii* “Blue Sage”) in the shape of the American flag!

For more information about *salvias*, check out a fine discussion on GardenDesign.com/perennials.

For natural methods of *salvia* pest control, click here:

<http://ipm.ucanr.edu> then Navigate > Homes, Gardens, Landscapes, and Turf > Trees and Shrubs > *Salvia*

Email your comments and questions to: NakedGardener@diablogazette.com. In some cases, these may appear in future columns.



“Grandad’s Garden: Stories of the Natural World” by Naked Gardener columnist David George. Amazon.com.



27th Annual
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Boys & Girls Club Launches Free Weekly Summer Camps in Concord

The Boys and Girls Club of Contra Costa has introduced its new free summer pop-up camps at Cambridge Park in Concord. Every Friday from 9A-11AM, boys and girls from ages 6-18 can enjoy outdoor activities involving art projects, science programs, and sports.

The camp launched on June 25 with approximately 48 registered campers. Activities included making tie dye masks, soccer, and for science, building solar smores ovens. (Ovens made of a cardboard box, aluminum foil and wax paper that actually melts marshmallows on the graham cracker.)

“Parents have been very appreciative,” says Concord Vice Mayor Dominic Aliano who spearheaded the project.

“There is not enough community services that serve kids ages 5-18. After seeing what the Boys and Girls Club do in Martinez, I knew that I should work with them to come to Concord to provide those service to the Monument District.”

Aliano said when growing up in Concord, he was always aware that there was not enough after school programs and during the summer not enough day programs for the youth.

“In the Monument, you have parents working two and three jobs to make ends meet, and the kids have nothing to do, and no safe place to be. This program provides a child an opportunity to decide who he wants to be in life. And give them the tools to

break through some of the barriers they are born into.”

The pop-up camps are an interim plan. Aliano and the Boys and Girls Club are in the process of looking for a store front or place to establish a home in the Monument community. “We hope we can find that location by January of 2022.”

Concord Police Officers Association and Marathon Petroleum are initial donors that funded the Pop-up Summer camps. Fundraising will be ongoing as they look for grants and donations to continue the program beyond the summer.

Donors need to let the Boys and Girls Club know that any donation is specifically for Concord services; otherwise, the donation will fall into a general fund.

“I’m not exaggerating when I say, we will change kids lives with these programs,” Aliano emphasized.

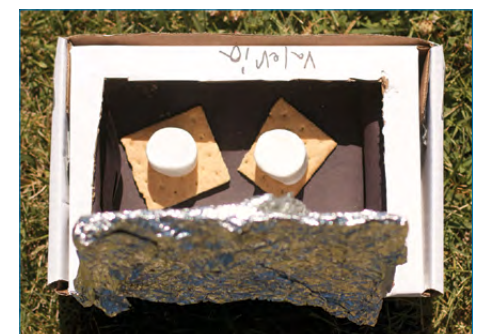
Boys and Girls club has been operating in Martinez since 1955, but never in Concord. Director of Operations, Keirstan Faulkner grew up in the Martinez Boys and Girls Club from age 9 through High School.

“Boys and Girls Club changes lives, and it definitely changed mine,” she confirmed.

The camp is free. Register Online at: www.bgcccontracosta.org/summer2021



Photos by Rebecca Barrett, Director of Development Boys & Girls Club. Clockwise: Scenes from the inaugural Summer Pop-Up Camp on June 25. Campers tie dyed masks while Staff Alicia teaches her kids how to build a solar oven for making smores. The marshmallows are ready to be baked. Vice Mayor Dominic Aliano with Concord Police Officers Jim Nielsen and Joe Higby. What’s a summer camp without soccer?





the concordian

by Edi Birsan, EdiBirsan@gmail.com

Homelessness: sometimes there is a solution that works.

Homelessness is not 'a' problem. It is many problems and sometimes there is 'a' solution that works. I personally interview some of our homeless and get involved to see the process by which city, county and residents of good will combine to occasionally lead a homeless person off the streets. Here is a recent example. (The names and some details have been omitted to protect individual privacies.)

Bobby was staying in a tent camped across from the City Council Chambers when a friendly Councilmember, me, approached and engaged him in a discussion. I wrote up the following report and sent it to Contra Costa County Health, Housing, and Homeless program, C.O.R.E. (Coordinated Outreach Referral, Engagement).

1. Date March 23, 2021 at 2PM
2. AT: 1950 Parkside, Concord opposite the IT wing of City Hall against the Armory wall.
3. He has been unsheltered for 17 years
4. Originally from Hayward, CA. Went to Logan High School
5. Came to Concord three months ago from Antioch
6. Left Antioch because he claims his ID was stolen
7. Prior to being at City Hall, he was at Baldwin Park. He left Baldwin because the Concord PD told him to move.
8. Cannot remember what job he had before he was homeless
9. Claims to not have any physical or other disabilities
10. 56 years old
11. Was married and divorced (possibly in Antioch or Pittsburg) but has no contact
12. Spent nine months at a mental Hospital and released 9/21/20.
13. Will not go to a shelter. No reason given.
14. When I asked what will get him from living in a tent, he said he would need to get his ID to get a job to make some money. He has no idea what kind of job he wants to do or even capable of doing.
15. He had contact with C.O.R.E. several weeks ago about his ID, and that is still needed.

By the way, he mentioned that he has a brother up in Eureka, CA. He gave me his brother's phone number and wanted someone to call him. When I asked if his brother would take him in, he said he thinks so.

This report goes to C.O.R.E. who responded the next morning that they will contact Bobby and work on an ID and getting in touch with the brother.

Meanwhile, Bobby had been getting some food from the twice daily rounds of Concord's posse of "Feeding the Homeless" fame.

C.O.R.E. tries to contact Bobby's brother and finds out the number Bobby offered is no good. So, C.O.R.E. contacts a local equivalent in Eureka who has an investigator. The brother is located.

Meanwhile, a local couple, who I will call simply, a Kinder Couple, rides along with the posse and also makes contact with Bobby.

The correct number of the brother is worked down the contact list and communication commences. The Kinder Couple steps up and arranges to buy Bobby a bus ticket and gets him on board to brother land.

It should be noted that C.O.R.E. has money for exactly this sort of thing and would have done the same, but you have to applaud the efforts of the local heroes all round.

In every case that I encounter a homeless, I write up a similar report and include the various wants by the individual as well as their 'Asks' which often vary from a haircut, getting an expired Driver's license renewed, a phone bill paid, a hernia looked at, as well as their positions on going to shelter, or a mass encampment, as well as Covid Vaccines.

In all cases, C.O.R.E. has responded the very next day. Some of the contacts have chronic problems and will not leave the streets or accept housing. But C.O.R.E. is there swinging away offering the help they can, along with the community, trying to make a difference.

(Above report is by Edi Birsan and any attempt to extract further details would have to involve Water Boarding and/or Super Bowl tickets when the 49ers are going to WIN.)

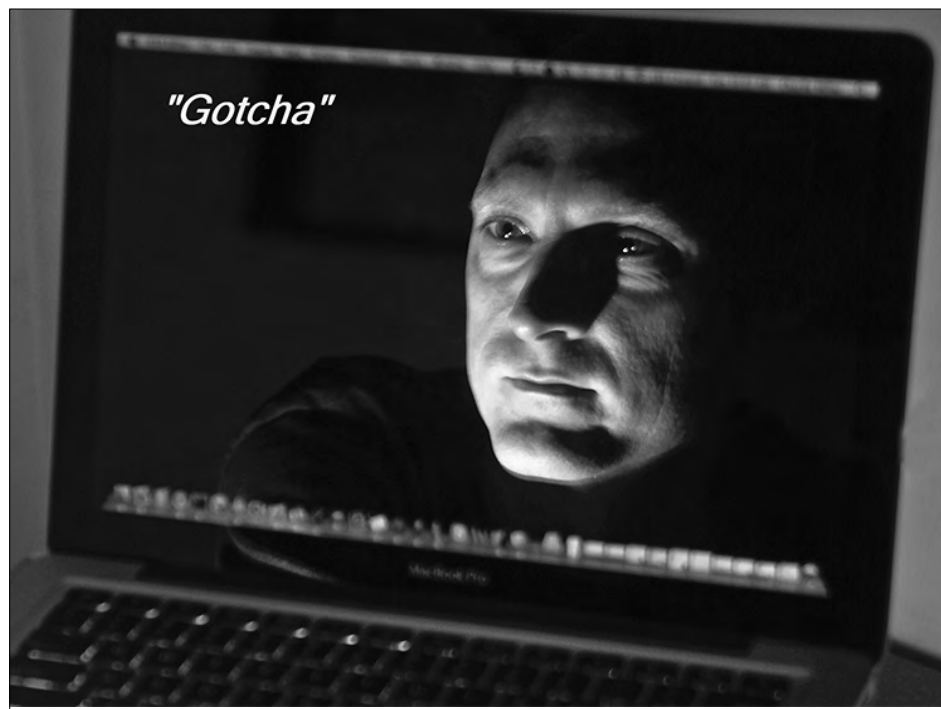


computercorner

by William Claney, Tech Writer, Computers USA

Tech in English

Smile, you're on hacked webcam



My wife sometimes accuses me of not listening to her, or something like that. She decided it was time for me to talk about her webcam. As she put it, while visiting a website, a window popped up that she did not expect. In the window was a box with a large black box where the webcam image of her would appear... but didn't.

Since she has a piece of tape over the webcam, the image was blocked, and the window was black. The caption read, "Gotcha". I am sure if her camera was not covered with a piece of tape her image would have been in the box.

Her question was a good one, "If I put my bank account code in (login credentials), would the person hacking her computer be able to see the code?"

I am embarrassed to say that I told her yes, they could. It is possible the hacker could see her "code" but with the anti-hacking software she has installed, the real answer should have been no. (Sorry, honey.)

That brings up a great point. Can it be that easy to steal your identity? The simple answer is yes, you should be aware that could happen. However, if you have good cyber security protection, they may be able to monitor your camera but not get access to anything else. This hack is an old, old trick used with CD Rom drives. A hacker would send a command to your computer to eject (open) your CD tray and say something like, "drink holder." Harmless prank?

To keep safe, "The best strategy is to unplug or cover up your webcam and microphone with a tape after video calls and uncover it only when you need it, you can also buy a webcam cover for under \$10," according to Hackingloops.com.

"The second thing you should do is to install a good antivirus and anti-malware software solution. Also, do not

open and click on suspicious or malicious links or files, and change your devices' passwords regularly." [Edited for brevity.]

By the way, a concerned citizen, I'll call her Nancy, came by the office and took offense to my article "Hacking for Fun and Profit." "Why are you telling people how to hack?" she asked.

Well, because I want you to be aware of how easy it is and to get protection before it is too late. Should I not tell you about the "remote hack to view your webcam" search I did?

To all my friends, including Nancy, please take precaution when using your computer. Do not open emails from the IRS (they will never email you), from Microsoft (they will never email you), from the Social Security Administration (they will never email you). See a pattern here? Now go do the right thing.



Carl "CW" Wolfe
Mayor, Clayton, CA
cw Wolfe@ci.clayton.ca.us

It takes a village...

Clayton is a small town, with small town values at its core. Our residents enjoy a quiet, family-oriented, safe life here separated from the hustle and bustle of surrounding cities.

However, lately there has been a crack in our armor with a disturbing increase in vandalism.

Graffiti, the removal and defacing of letters on subdivision signs, the theft of the Pride Flag from the Hoyer flagpole in The Grove, and the seemingly endless breakage of railings and woodwork at The Grove gazebo, to name just a few.

The city simply cannot afford to bear constant repair and replacement costs. These events also create a struggle for our shorthanded Maintenance Staff to get to regularly scheduled projects.

Why is this happening? There are questions to explore.

Who are these vandals? Are they home-grown, or do they target Clayton from the outside, knowing that our Police Department is small, and they perceive little risk of being caught? Are these actions somehow protest related? Does this look to be an on-going trend? Are these events connected in any way? Finally, what can be

done about this?

Clayton PD is working diligently trying to find those responsible for these actions. While they have had some success, it is a tedious process and takes a great deal of effort.

Technology might help, but it is expensive and a hit-or-miss proposition.

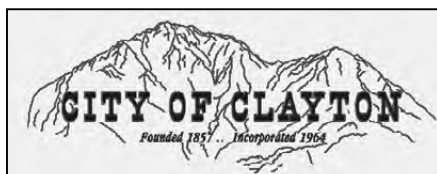
I believe that the solution could lie somewhere in between law enforcement and citizen awareness.

You may wish to help to get the word out via your social media channels about these events. Talk with your neighbors,

friends, and family about the value of property and ask that they keep a lookout for any unusual activity in town and listen for those that may have important information that could assist our Police in their investigations.

All Claytonians take pride in our charming community and your efforts could go a long way in helping to stem criminal activities and save the city time and money as well.

We love it here. After all, that is why we live nine miles from the nearest freeway.



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JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

Cont'd from page 2

Tales from the Trail that Ales



Calicraft Brewing Company, Walnut Creek



Firehouse Brew & Grill, Martinez (formerly Creek Monkey)



First Father-Daughter beer at Armistice Brewing Co., Richmond



44 Beers on Tap, 800 spirits on the Wall, Hops & Scotch, Walnut Creek

He catches and releases, so this monster is still in that pond. According to the Bassmaster, bass gain a about a pound a year. He hopes he can catch her again in three years for a 15-pound record. Good luck Bassmaster.

Concord Tap House is an open-air tap room with an outdoor deck. They have 24 rotating beers on tap, most focusing on local and coastal brews. Owner Keith is an accomplished southern-style chef. You can get some tasty comfort food bites here to pair with your beer choice.

I released the Bassmaster back to his pond and eased Downtown to Hop Grenade where I met up with owner Justin Crossley.

Hop Grenade rotates all their 21 beers on tap every month except for one. What makes Hop Grenade interesting besides its convenient location at Todos Santos, is that it was born out of a craft beer making podcast.

We sat in the on-site recording studio as I learned the history of Hop Grenade. Crossley, a Communications Major at San Francisco State in the 90s followed the warnings of his instructors of the coming internet age.

He launched his Craft Beer show 16 years ago in his garage and it is still going strong to this day with over 75,000 international listeners. Crossley claims through sponsorships, the show is a more profitable venture than the tap room. Who knew?

The next day, I invited Scott Feuer to meet me at Epidemic Ales in Concord.

Scott is one of the area's most experienced hikers. He has hiked every Mt. Diablo Trail, and the 239-mile John Muir Trail. He is the kind of adventurer who could make the Contra Costa Beer Trail a thru-hike, especially since he

likes craft beer.

Scott brought his Mount Diablo map with every trail that he has hiked marked, all 1170 miles of them, two-thirds of them during Covid.

While I was inspired by his hiking achievements, I learned that it was the Journey-man's Journal column that inspired him to take up the activity.

Epidemic Ales brews their own and has become quite popular in Concord and Martinez. They also feature food trucks regularly. On this afternoon, we ordered off the Cousins Lobster truck.

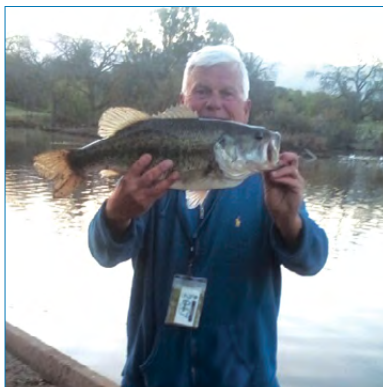
My next stop on the Beer Trail was Lazy Dog Restaurant.

There I met up with Randy Vincent and his bomb-sniffing yellow labrador, Goldie. Randy is a retired Lieutenant in the Navy Reserves for which he spent 20 years. He now protects all of us at San Francisco Giants home games and any special events at Oracle Park. Goldie is trained on over 300 explosive odors.

Goldie is sweet and patient who works for reward.

Lazy Dog features its own beer club at just \$35 per quarter. Amenities include discounts, upgrades, beer samplers and kits for those who like to vary their craft beer intake.

In Martinez I decided to invite a couple of endearing socialites, Carl and Barbara Harper, to join me at the Firehouse Brew and Grill. Barbara, 87, reads the Diablo Gazette and makes sure the Concord Elks Lodge



Thomas M., the Bassmaster, proudly displays his record 12 lb. large mouth bass caught at Newhall Park. She was pregnant and released back into the pond.



Scott Feuer unfolds his map of all the Mount Diablo Trails he has hiked, which is all of them.



Randy Vincent and his bomb-sniffing dog, Goldie.

gets their monthly stack for the members, and her husband Carl, 93, is a WWII veteran.

Firehouse features mostly brews from Del Cielo Brewing Company which is just a couple of blocks down the street. Both are quite popular venues in the Martinez community. Over lunch and a brew, Carl shared a couple of his WWII experiences and Barbara prompted me to promote and participate in the upcoming Red Cross Blood Drive hosted by the Elks on July 31. The Harpers are great people.

I ventured down the street to Del Cielo Brewing Co. Unfortunately, they do not open until 4 pm and it was only 2:30 pm when I arrived. Nevertheless, I was allowed inside to look at their large brew tanks and was offered a couple of cans of their products to take with me. Del Cielo Brewing Co. is a Latino/Latina owned business founded by Luis and Cielomar in May of 2018. Winners of several awards, from light ales and lagers,

stouts, IPAs and sours, this is a place I will have to return to fully appreciate its contribution to the craft beer community.

In Walnut Creek, I met up with Kevin King (no relations) at the Stadium Pub. I know Kevin from his soccer refereeing days years ago. I always fancied Kevin as some sort of beer expert judging from his waistline. I was right, he is a beer aficionado. However, he has lost 50 pounds since I last saw him. I was worried that Kevin had retired his beer-loving ways for thinner days, but it turns out he kept the beer and dumped breakfasts. (No need to Google this, I am sure it is not a recommended diet plan - but hey, 50 pounds with beer).

I was in the presence of a true consumer. Kevin met his wife of many years, at this very pub. They even held their wedding reception there. Having learned of the Contra Costa Beer Trail, Kevin decided he would also take the challenge since he is already familiar with beer apps.

Kevin uses an app called UNTAPPD. On this, he logs all the different beers he has sampled, which he said is 3799 unique beers in all. The app alerts him when a new beer appears in his vicinity. Our meeting outside was cut short as the wind was blowing our umbrella over and our Walnut Creek parking time was expiring. So, I said good-bye to my

professor of beer. If I were a betting man, I say I just spent two enjoyable hours with the 2021 Contra Costa Beer Trail Champion.

On a Monday, I decided it was a good time to visit a Richmond brewery. Although my daughter turned 21, we had not yet enacted the rite-of-passage, the father-daughter first beer. I suggested we visit the Rosie the Riveter Memorial Park and Visitor Center followed by lunch and the ceremonial brew at Armistice Brewing Company.

They do not serve food at Armistice, but there are places across the street you can order and bring back, which we did and ate on their patio for our special beer moment.

When not in pandemic mode, Armistice has quite a library of classic board games for patrons to play while enjoying their brew. That was a fine afternoon outing.

Two days later and back to Walnut Creek, I met up with Eric Enos, the former Secret Service Agent, at Calicraft Brewing Company. Their brews are quite unique ranging from IPAs to their Spritzers, a beverage category of its own that infuses various fruits into the brew. Calicraft is constantly experimenting with new flavor combinations that will end up on tap each time you return.

Also in Walnut Creek, I targeted Hops & Scotch. For this location, I invited Brian who is a Scotch connoisseur; so much so, that while in Scotland, he made a point to tour the scotch distilleries.

Hops & Scotch is an upscale tap room with 44 rotating beers, a whiskey bar with over 800 spirits towering above the bar, a wine bar and a fine craft food menu. Our server brought us their drink menu, which he referred to as the "Bible". It was a rugged-looking bound book with pages and pages of all their spirits. Brian perused the vast list of scotches noticing the price per shot. He found one that went for over \$500 for a 1.5 oz. pour. The barkeep said they offer one that is over \$1000 per shot!

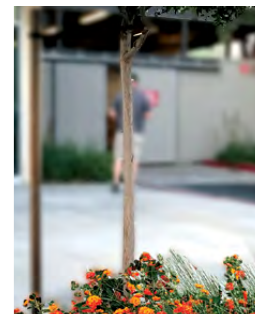
Holy S-cotch! Somewhere in this "Bible", there must be a commandment that says, "Thou shalt not order that scotch."

We stuck with beer, tasting several, and enjoyed crafty small plates of Naan tacos and flatbread.

My final oasis on this quest was to Mike Hess Brewing in Walnut Creek. This was my 16th watering hole in 10 days. While at Hess, I saw what appeared to be the anonymous Mayor of Claycord, a sighting as rare as Big Foot itself. I grabbed my camera and caught the iconic shot to prove he truly exists!

The Contra Costa Beer Trail is a clever way to support our local businesses. But it is more than that. It is a fun way to get out and reconnect with family, friends, neighbors and associates to share a beer or two and catch some fascinating stories. Each location was unique and accommodating and the company spectacular.

While the Contra Costa Beer Trail contest has ended, the Trail continues. You can still register and download the app at www.visitconcordca.com and track your visits on the trail, earn prizes along the way and enjoy your own private journey among your friends.



Claycord Mayor revealed?

Views of the Valley



Eden is ready to serve at the new gourmet cookie shop, Crmbl Cookies, located in the Veranda Shopping Center. Photo by Micah



A beautiful bobcat made a visit to the patio of a Crystyl Ranch home before wandering off into open space.



Do you remember the Fossams, the longtime Clayton residents who have been touring the country in a motorhome throughout the pandemic? They encountered a chance meeting with President Biden and First Lady at the Arlington Cemetery on Memorial Day. Pretty impressive Mike. Photo, courtesy of Rueters.



A new kite made an appearance out of the Martinez marina being flown piloted by the Kite man of Martinez, Tony Jetland.



Jill Hedgecock's bookends
Program Coordinator, Mount Diablo branch of the California
Author of From Shadow's Perspective
www.jillhedgecock.com

THE RIVER

"The River" (Vintage, 2020, paperback, 272 pages, \$10.67) by Peter Heller is the survivalist story of two college friends on a canoeing trip that goes horribly wrong. Both young men are skilled naturalists who are adept at fishing and foraging off the land. They also share a love of reading Western novels. But the biggest thing they have in common is a desire to be off the grid. So much so, that they don't bring a satellite phone on their big adventure on the Maskwa River in northern Canada, a decision that they come to regret.

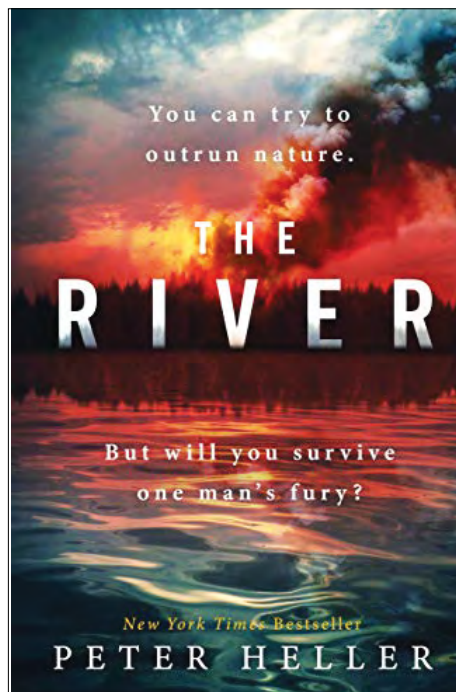
Wynn, a Vermont native, has a big heart and gives everyone the benefit of the doubt. Jack, who grew up on a Colorado ranch sleeping under the stars, is more pragmatic and skeptical. So it is not surprising that it is Jack whose hair stands on end and gets goosebumps after seeing the distant orange glow of a massive forest fire.

The duo's encounter with two rough-around-the-edges men camping and drinking heavily also sets Jack on edge. But the weirdest experience of all happens as they paddle along a severely, fogged-in stretch of water and overhear a couple engaged a serious fight. Both the people and the shoreline are invisible in the humid, thick air. Jack has a bad feeling about proceeding with their grand adventure, but without a means to contact civilization and abort their trip, the two friends continue heading downriver.

Because two young men worry that the arguing couple might not understand how quickly fire can travel, it is not long before their consciences get the best of them. They turn and paddle back upstream to warn the man and woman. When they can't find them though, Wynn and Jack return to their adventure.

The next day at a pullout at the headwaters of a waterfall, a man appears paddling alone. He tells them that his wife has disappeared. What happens next will change the boys' lives forever. The novel is more than a wildlife survival story. It's the story of friendship, it's a story of family, and a story of loss.

"The River" is a national bestseller, an Edgar Award Nominee, and an Indie Next Pick. It made the 2019 Forbes Recommended Books list, was described by the



New York Times as a book to look for and lauded as one of the best books of the year in 2019 by both Amazon and Apple.

Peter Heller is the national bestselling author of "Celine" and "The Painter". His breakout bestseller debut, "The Dog Stars", has been published in twenty-two languages. Heller is a longtime contributor to NPR, a contributing editor at Outside Magazine and Men's Journal, and his work frequently appears in Businessweek. He was also part of the film crew in the Academy award winning film, "The Cove", participating in a clandestine filming mission into the guarded dolphin-killing cove in Taiji, Japan. His memoir, "Kook: What Surfing Taught Me about Love, Life, and Catching the Perfect Wave" won the National Outdoor Book Award for Literature. He holds an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop in poetry and fiction and lives in Denver, Colorado.

"The River" is a page turner and the perfect summer read to lose yourself in for a long airplane ride or on a relaxing day at the beach.

Soul Box Display at aRt Cottage headed for DC Capital to protest gun violence.

aRt Cottage has amassed over 800 "Soul Boxes" to serve as a temporary display as they will all be going to Washington DC later in the year along with approximately 200,000 others in an effort to send a demonstrative message at the Capital regarding gun violence.

Each box is made by an individual who is thinking about someone who has died from gun violence. This includes suicide, accidental shooting, children playing with guns, murder, mass shootings, etc.

"I have dedicated the backroom gallery for this as an installation project," says Fro, owner of the aRt Gallery. Artists from the Concord Art Association assisted with the display effort to give them impact.

"I think this is important and a worthy cause for the City of Concord. I am hoping that the Soul Box project will get recognition and support from Concord and be well attended at our reception on July 10 from 2-4. Visitors will have the opportunity to make their own Soul Box and leave it as part of the display at the reception.

The project was started by Portland artist, Leslie Lee, who wanted to take action after the 2017 mass shooting in Las Vegas. She wanted everyone to really see the statistics in a visceral way by creating massive displays of Soul Boxes, one for every US gunfire victim. "When people come face to face with thousands and thousands of handmade Soul Boxes, maybe they'll understand the enormity of the problem and take action," says Lee. "Those actions may impact a wide range of issues, from gun safety and education to legislation and mental health. Those actions will help cause a shift in our nation's gun culture."



The Beat of Diablo

Local Perspectives on The Vinyl Boom

By Dave Hughes

There's no debate about it: vinyl records are back. While the "record boom" has been underway for a decade or longer, depending on who you talk to, it was just last year that the Recording Industry Association of America® (RIAA) reported that vinyl outsold all other physical formats for the first time since the 1980s.

So what's driving the vinyl boom? Is it happening everywhere, or just in hip areas near major metropolis areas? Why are some records so pricey and why is pressing a record so much more expensive for the artist than cutting a CD? Is record collecting a "rich man's game"? Having recently taken to record collecting myself, I've pondered some of these questions and thought it would be interesting to explore this with some local record authorities.

Nic Taylor opened Up the Creek Records in Walnut Creek four years ago. While he acknowledges there are a multitude of reasons vinyl has lived on as it has, Nic believes the boom is largely attributed to the consequence of the somewhat impersonal nature of the digital music age. "Yes, we now have access to every song ever, but when was the last time you asked a friend to scroll through their playlists on their phone? But if I walk into someone's house and they have records on the shelf, I head straight over and flip through and suddenly we are connecting around music: 'Cool, you have a Beastie Boys record! Oh man, I saw them live during the Licensed to Ill tour!' It's a beautiful way to connect both to the music and the people in your life."

Local musician Stewart Patrick points to another compromise of the digital music age: "With streaming services today, the experience of listening to an entire album front-to-back with the song order being as the artist intended is somewhat lost." His band Radiokeys ponied up the costs of releasing their debut record on vinyl during the pandemic, an ambitious endeavor for a DIY band during "normal times."

When asked if the vinyl investment was worthwhile from a business standpoint, Stewart expressed optimism, "The few shows we have been able to play since the release of our vinyl we've sold quite a few! I think a full schedule of touring would tip the scales in our favor." In the meantime, fans can purchase the album online or at a number of local record shops, usually for about \$30.



one. Rob has amassed a mostly used record collection in the thousands. He believes anyone willing to spend the time can build a great collection without spending an unreasonable amount of money, especially here in the Bay Area.

"The available pool of records in local stores is dependent on what people were buying twenty or thirty years ago. There are a ton of colleges here and an ever-churning base of young people who will eventually move and will drop their heavier stuff off at Goodwill or Amoeba. The area has tremendous ethnic diversity as well. That leads to a lot of different genres selling well," Rob explained.

Used records make up nearly the entire inventory at Tone Army Records, which opened in Concord at the end of 2019. Owner Michael Sessions ("Sesh") explains that "So many groups and artists came from the Bay and those records are still circulating or waiting to be discovered in a box in grandma's closet. Used vinyl records are a historical record of the culture here and I enjoy helping keep that spirit alive."

"Overall, vinyl collecting is not exclusive to yacht-owning elitists; it's meant for everyone. There are loads of inexpensive records and stereo gear to do the game justice," Sesh stressed. He added that while you don't need to buy the most expensive gear available to enjoy records, he recommends starting out with something decent that "makes you want to listen to your music on vinyl. Audio Technica LP 120

and U-turn Orbit are the two new [affordable] tables I recommend to people just starting out," adding, "It's no fun buying a new record that costs \$30 and when you play it on your system it sounds like a turd."

I can attest to Sesh's advice. I purchased the Audio Technica LP 120 just before the pandemic, and have since

amassed a modest collection of mostly used records, largely purchased locally at reasonable prices. Yes, I still listen to streaming services here and there, but having a record spinning on the turntable just adds one more enjoyable layer of comfort when relaxing at home. Sitting with an album "front-to-back" is indeed a richer listening experience than whatever it is we have become used to doing these last couple of decades. If you miss connecting with music in this more intimate way, sitting down and listening to an album front to back, or just thumbing through some crates looking for a good find, perhaps it is time to start building your collection.



Considering that thirty dollars is more than twice the cost of purchasing a new CD, what is it about records, both new and used, that leads to such a high price for the consumer?

Nic explains, "...the average price in the shop for a new record is around \$24. You have to pay the artist, the label, the folks who made the sleeves, the people running the presses, the recording studio, the person who mastered it, and the shop has to pay rent too, so it all adds up." Nic added that record collecting is not a hobby exclusive to the wealthy and encourages people to dig through a store's used bins for some great records.

Concord resident Rob Ferrier agrees that the hobby can absolutely be an affordable

calendar of events

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OUTDOORS

Farmers' Markets

Concord Tuesdays, 9am to 2pm, year-round, rain or shine. Todos Santos Plaza, Concord

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

Walnut Creek

Rossmoor - Fridays 9:30Am to 1pm, Golden Rain Rd.

Shadelands - Saturdays 9am-1pm. North Wiget Ln & Mitchell Dr.

Sunday 9am - 1 p.m. North Locust St between Cole and Lacassie St. (925) 431-8361 <http://www.cccfm.org>

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

August 7

Sunrise Hike - Save Mount

Diablo 6A-9A 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 000 Peacock Creek Drive in Clayton

RUTH BANCROFT GARDEN July 8, 22

27th Annual Sculpture Show and Sale.

Evening Stroll 5pm-6:30pm. See the works of 24 area artists poised among beautiful garden plants. Live music beer & wine. Also two strolls on July 22 5pm-6:30pm & 6:30 pm-8pm.

July 13



PLANT-ASTIC POTS:POND

FRIENDS 9:30 A- 10:30A Paint a pot and plant a succulent; all supplies are provided in this workshop. Garden staff and volunteers will be on hand to guide you through the painting and decorating of your pot. Learn how to plant your succulent and take care of it. For ages 6 and up. No drop-offs; parent/guardian must accompany child(ren). \$9.50 925-944-9352 RuthBancroftGarden.org. 1552 bancroft Rd. Walnut Creek

July 23

The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society

Enjoy several running model trains running through miniature cities and mountainous terrain. 8PM Located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave. Walnut Creek. (Admission): \$3.00 Adults - \$2.00 Children (6-12) / Seniors. FREE for kids 5 years and younger.

VISUAL ARTS/ THEATRE/MUSIC

DOWNTOWN PLEASANT HILL - LIVE MUSIC

July 9 - Brian Skinner, Country

July 10 Luv Planet, Rock N Roll

July 16 Rob Nordvik Trio, 80s/90s

July 17 Easy Street, Country

July 23 E.P. Sax, Jazz

July 24 Echo trail, Country

July 30 Bad Boy Bruce, Blues

105 Crescent Drive, Pleasant Hill

July 15 - September 30

MUSIC AND MARKET SERIES

Thursdays, Todos Santos Concord. Bands to be announced.

July 31

Concord Elks Lodge 1994 Hosts Blood Drive



American Red Cross Blood Drive

Save a Life, Give Blood

The Red Cross has been making a humanitarian impact for more than 130 years, and has been collecting blood for over 70 of those years. The Concord Elks feel that by hosting The Red Cross we are helping to strengthen the blood supply and give back to our community. For every donation given they can save up to three lives.

To make a Donation Appointment Call 1-800-733-2767 or go online to www.redcrossblood.org

Type your zip code in the red "Find a Blood Drive" box in the upper right corner

Scroll to the July 31, 2021, Blood Drive and click on the red "See Times" box. Select your appointment time.

To give your blood, go to Concord Elks Lodge #1994, 3565 Clayton Road in Concord. Donations will be scheduled from 9am - 3pm. Walk-ins are welcome.

LESHER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

SUMMER SOUNDS CONCERT SERIES Free

July 15 Taylor Iman Jones (Broadway star)

July 22 Tom Rigney and Flambeau

SUMMER "POPS" CONCERT

July 20 - Wanut Creek Concer

tBand. theme is California Dreamin'. 7:30P-9:15P

July 24 Comedy : Maks & Val Stripped Down Tour 8:30P-9:30P, Hoffman Theater

Phone and Online Tickets include additional fees. Leshartcenter.org 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek

July 10

Main Street Arts 5 Year Anniversary

Visit us in July and help us celebrate 5 years in business! We are going BIG!

Following our clients many requests, the gallery will be filled with LARGE paintings, sculptures, and ceramics. Come to our celebratory reception on July 10th from noon to 6 and receive a free gift from one of our 12 artists. We are open Friday and Saturday from 10 to 6 and Sunday 10 to 5. 613 Main Street, Martinez. 925-269-8049.

mainstreetarts.net

VERANDA UNPLUGGED

Wednesday's from 8PM-7:30 PM July 7 - Schuman Brothers (acoustic Duo)

July 14 Stung (Police Tribute)

July 21 The Uninvited (Alt rock)

July 28 - Chicken Tenders (acoustic)

YOGA IN THE PARK

First Friday of the month. FREE. At the Veranda Pavilion Fountain Park. 9:30A-10:30A

Loded 2001 Diamond Blvd. Concord.

July 6-August 27

aRT Cottage

Land, Air, & Sea Scapes. Artist Reception July 10 from 2P-4P. Meet our 20 local artists. Visit aRtcottage.com. info to register.

July 18

Contra Costa Con

10A-4P at the Concord Hilton, Golden Gate Ballroom. 1970 Diamond Blvd. Concord

July 7-August 9



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Camps. Registration now open. Ballet, Jazz, Hip Hop, Contemporary, Musical theater, Cheer, Tap, Pointe, Adult/pre-school Combo, competition. Age 3-Adult. Clayton Valley Dance Academy. 5416 Ygnacio Valley Rd. Ste. #60 Concord. www.claytonvalleydance.com

JULY 25

Jinx Jones & the King Tones

at slow Hand BBQ 1P. 601 Main St. Martinez

CONCORD PAVILION

Sunday July 18 4PM - Spirit West Coast 2021 with Chris Tomlin & More


Thursday August 5 - King Crimson with the Zappa Band and the California Guitar Trio

The City of Clayton Proudly Presents

Concerts in The Grove 2021

Saturdays 6:00pm to 8:30pm

Downtown Clayton



Welcome Back!

July 17 CARNIVAL - The Santana Tribute	CARNIVAL - The Santana Tribute - This outstanding Santana tribute band meticulously re-enacts the wide repertoire of Santana material that includes well-known songs as well as some of the more obscure B-sides that never made the charts. Dance along as Leo Herrera does the honors on guitar, while a full band, including horn section, completes the Latin rock sound we've come to know and love. @camavalsantanatribute
July 31 Aja Vu - The Music of Steely Dan & Chicago	Aja Vu - The Music of Steely Dan & Chicago celebrates the best of Steely Dan and Chicago from "Reelin' in the Years" and "Hey 19" to "Saturday in the Park" and "25 or 6 to 4," performing the music with pure love for the harmonies and classic horns of the original recordings. www.ajavu.com
August 14 The Cocktail Monkeys	The Cocktail Monkeys bring high energy and serious fun to each and every performance playing classic rock, modern pop & R&B covering artists such as: Blondie, David Bowie, Rolling Stones, Heart, No Doubt, Maroon 5, Queen, Pink, Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin, Bruno Mars, Elle King, Katy Perry, Joan Jett and many more. It's no doubt there is something for everyone—a memorable experience. www.thecocktailmonkeys.com
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

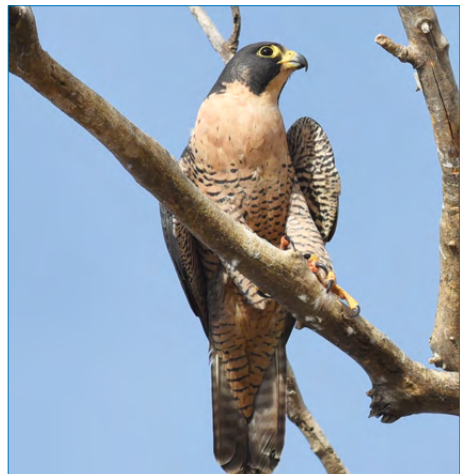
Walking to The Grove is recommended as parking is limited in the downtown area.

Mount Diablo peregrines stooping their way back from the cliff of extinction

By Jill Hedgecock

If you ask most people what the fastest animal is, they'll say the cheetah. And that would be true for land mammals, but the animal with the "Ferrari F40" title is the peregrine, a bird of prey about the size of a crow with a wingspan of 2 to 3 feet.

During an aerial dive, this bird can reach over 200 miles an hour. Peregrines need for speed comes from their unique mode of hunting on the wing called stooping, which requires them to generate high aerodynamic forces that enable them to perform precision maneuvers to catch airborne prey, mostly other birds and bats.



Peregrine is the fastest animal on earth reaching speeds up to 200 miles an hour. Photo by Jerry Bitten.

Researchers at the University of Oxford have discovered that peregrine falcons engaged in stooping use the same steering mechanisms as guided missiles. In essence, the birds remain on target with their prey by tracking changes in their line-of-sight. Interestingly, high-speed stoops do not require faster reaction times than slower attacks.

Unfortunately, populations of these marvels of the sky plummeted in California after World War II. Dating back to the late 1800s, peregrine falcons had nested locally in specific rockfaces in the Pine Canyon area of Mount Diablo. But breeding peregrines disappeared by the 1950s due to a variety of human interferences.

Doug Bell, a Bay Area native, long-time birder, and the Wildlife Program Manager for East Bay Regional Park District since 2005, indicated that historically, the rust-colored peregrine eggs produced at this nest were highly sought after.

"Oologists, or egg collectors," says Bell, "could sell these eggs to collectors worldwide for a high price. Historical records indicate that competition was so fierce for falcon eggs that two oologists had a shootout over peregrine eggs at Pine Canyon in the 1800s. Fortunately, no one was hurt."

Up until the 1940s, private individuals in the U.S. could legally collect and sell birds' eggs without a permit. It is now illegal in most countries, but the problem persists in England.

Bell indicated that confiscated eggs have been put to good use. To support research and education, many oologist's collections have landed in museums and universities, including the California Academy of Sciences and U. C. Berkeley.

Egg collection resulted in the reduction of peregrine populations over time, but it didn't explain the dramatic declines in the late 1940s. Scientists soon discovered the culprit to be the pesticide DDT.

When peregrines ate birds that had eaten DDT-laden insects, the breakdown product, DDE, accumulated in the falcons' tissues.

The elevated DDE concentrations altered the female falcon's calcium metabolism, which resulted in thin eggshells that cracked during incubation, preventing the fertilized eggs from developing into chicks.

By 1965, the peregrine was extinct east of the Mississippi and there were only 39 known pairs west of the Mississippi. The decimation of their populations also took the birds to the brink of extinction in California.

Only one nest could be found in our sunny state in 1970.

Bell remembers riding his bike to Castle Rock as a kid and looking for the nesting peregrines. "One of the saddest things was going to the cliff site, looking at the beauty, and not finding the peregrines. I had this feeling like something was missing. The silence was deafening."

DDT was banned in 1972. This action, along with captive-breeding, and the bird's adaptability to utilize manmade buildings as nest sites, allowed peregrine populations to bounce back.

Peregrines were removed from the Endangered Species List on August 25, 1999. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife report that there are now about 400 breeding pairs across the Golden State. Nonetheless, peregrines remain a fully protected species in California.

In the 1990s, the East Bay Regional Park District and Save Mount Diablo teamed up to plant captive-bred peregrines into the nests of the more common prairie falcons. Rock climbers added peregrine chicks to these nests and the prairie falcons fed them as their own. The prairie falcons occupied the peregrine's former nesting grounds at Pine Canyon at the foothills of Mount Diablo and the hope was that the peregrines raised in these nests would return to mate someday.

Peregrines have specific breeding requirements. At about 2 years of age, the male, called a tiercel (only females are technically called falcons) will perform aerial courtship displays. If the female chooses him, they will generally mate for life, often using the same nest site. The nest is typically a depression in a cliff ledge so nest-building is essentially nonexistent.

The female will lay three to five eggs and the incubation period is about a month. At about six weeks of age, peregrine chicks will learn to fly and about four weeks later can hunt their own prey.

Life is precarious for young peregrines in the wild and only about four in ten will live to one year of age. The survivors that beat the odds can live to be up to 15 years old.

At the Mount Diablo breeding site, it was found that the birds were highly sensitive to human disturbance during their nesting season. As a result, since 2015, a section of Pine Canyon on Mount Diablo is closed to all access from February 1st to July 31st, giving the birds time to select a nest site, lay eggs, hatch their young, and then raise them until their offspring become independent.



Photo by Wally De Young



Peregrine feeds her chick. Photo by Wally De Young

To keep people away from the nests, volunteers in a program called The Peregrine Team, are stationed near trailheads to divert rock-climbers and hikers from the area. The Peregrine Team was formed and is currently led by Staci Hobbit, a natural history docent for Mount Diablo Interpretive Association.

One member of the team, Rosita Ortega Harvey, has been volunteering since 2016. The experience has been life changing for her.

Harvey has learned a lot about peregrines

since she started volunteering. She and her Peregrine Team partner use a spotting scope to monitor the bird's behavior. She was curious about where the adults stay at night. She learned that when the chicks have enough feathers, the adults sleep in different cavities from the chicks. This year there were four chicks on the nest. The female, who does all the incubating, left the chicks at night after a week.

"The learning comes from observation," says Harvey. "I never learned this in books, only from watching."



Rosita Ortega Harvey, a Peregrine Team volunteer, uses a spotting scope to monitor peregrine's behavior on Mt. Diablo. Photo by Jill Hedgecock.

In 2020 two breeding pairs of falcons were observed in Pine Canyon. Unfortunately, no chicks were hatched. This year four chicks appeared in the nest. Let's hope this trend continues in 2022.

The area closures, along with volunteers

have clearly helped the breeding pairs on Mount Diablo. To learn more about peregrines at Mount Diablo, watch the You-Tube film called "Return of the Pine Canyon Peregrines."

To become part of the Peregrine Team in 2022, visit www.mdia.org/peregrine-team.

The Peregrine Team banded 7 chicks on Mt. Diablo this month. Only two pairs existed in CA about 50 years ago, now there are 400. The remarkable recovery of an endangered species is a testament to the resilience of wildlife and the dedication of many biologists and concerned volunteers. Out of this amazing success story, one can only wonder what else is possible. Will our Bay Area skies someday hold soaring California condors again?



Photo by Jerry Bitten

Jill Hedgecock has a M.S. degree in Environmental Management and a passion for wildlife conservation. She is the author of the novel, "Rhino in the Room."



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Contra Costa Con 2 helps re-open local events July 18

By Jay Bedecarre



Contra Costa Con 2 returns to Concord on Sunday, July 19, at the Hilton Concord Hotel as one of the first public events since the pandemic shut things down over 16 months ago.

Comics, LEGO, toys, art and much more will be featured at the family-friendly show hosted by Bay Area Festivals and American Brick Builders. Contra Costa Con 2 will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with free parking at the Hilton.

Contra Costa Con's inaugural show was held in November 2019 and was a big hit with attendees, prompting the move this year to the larger Hilton Golden Gate Ballroom, which will be setup with plenty of space for social distancing. Face coverings are encouraged to be worn by attendees. Elephant (aka Gerald) and Piggie will be on hand all day to meet and greet fans with free photo opportunities. Other special guests will be announced soon at www.ContraCostaCon.com.



Contra Costa Con Comic Con Costume Contest 2019

exhibitors at the show. Posters, anime, art, prints, t-shirts, hats, books, buttons, classic video games, jewelry and cards are featured too.

The Hilton is located at 1970 Diamond Blvd, two blocks off Interstate 680 in Concord.

Exhibitor spaces for Contra Costa Con 2 are still available on the website.

Kids under 10 are free. Advance tickets can be purchased at www.ContraCostaCon.com with a \$2 Toy Buck included with each advance sale. Tickets will be on sale at the Hilton on July 18.



A free, family-friendly Cosplay Costume Contest for attendees will feature cash prizes for creative characters in different age groups. Contest registration will be taken during the day with contest judging at 2:30.

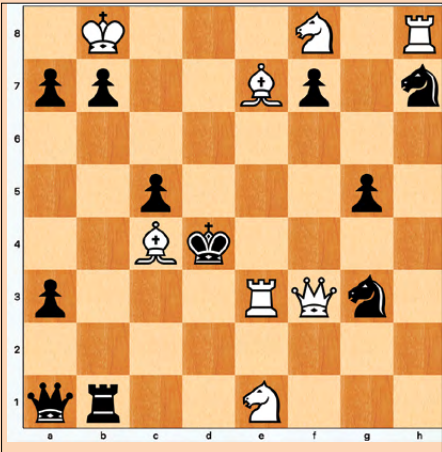
New items and collectibles from Disney, Transformers, Funko Pop, LEGO, Pokémon, G.I. Joe, Marvel, DC, Dragon Ball Z, My Hero Academia, Hot Wheels and much more will be available from the wide variety of



Chess with Yoo

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

White to move and mate in 3.



Hint: Sometimes you must give in order to receive.

WATER AWARENESS YOUTH ART CONTEST

Congratulations to the 13 winners of this year's Water Awareness Youth Art Calendar Contest!

Halia, Pleasant Hill
Ethan, Oakley
Olive, Martinez
Emma, Brentwood
Shayne, Brentwood
Melani, Antioch
Ryann, Concord
allison, Concord
Annabella, Pittsburg
Anulika, Walnut Creek
Ariadna, Concord
Akshita, Walnut Creek
Anna, Concord

Thank you to everyone who entered this year's contest! More than 1,000 ballots were cast during the voting. Prizes will be awarded in the fall, when calendars are available. To see winning entries go to: <https://www.ccwater.com/999/Water-Awareness-Youth-Art-Contest>



Solution:

1. Bb5!
1. Be2? Qa2! 2. Rd3+
2. Ne6+ fxe6 3. Rd8+ Qd5
2... Kc4 (Rook on d3 blocking Bishop on e2)
1. Bxf7? Qc3! 2. Ne6+ Kc4 (Knight on e6 blocking Bishop on f7)
1. Qd5+? Kxe3 2. Ng2+
2. Bxc5+ Kf4 (no mate)
2... Kf2 3. Bxc5+ Qd4 (no mate)
1. Nc2+? Kxc4 2. Qxf7+ Kb5
1. Bb3? Rxb3! 2. Nc2+ Kc4 3. Qxf7+ Kb5 (no mate)
1... Rxb5
1... Qc3 2. Ne6+ 2... fxe6 3. Rd8#
1... Qa2 2. Rd3+ 2... Ke5 3. Bd6#
2. Nc2+ Kc4 3. Qxf7# (Rook on b5 blocking b5 square)

21-WORD SALUTE TO JULY

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

APPLE PIE
BAKED BEANS
BARBECUE
BASEBALL
BONFIRE
BEER
CORN ON THE COB
EATING
CONTEST
FESTIVAL
FIREWORKS
FLAG
HOLIDAY
HOT DOGS
PARADE
PICNIC
POTATO
SALAD
RIBS
SHORTS
SPARKLERS
SUMMER
WINE

Word Search Plus

For more fun, we made our word search a wee more challenging. We have hidden a code that will reveal the name of a renowned location in the Bay Area.

Clue:

Designed by revered architect Frank Gehry and opened in 1975. Although it has had several names, today it goes by its original name and is one of the Bay Area's favorite entertainment destinations.

Hint:

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

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

Handling the stress of selling requires trusted teamwork

It is a surprise to many sellers when readying their home for sale that they have such strong emotions about some of the steps in the process. Change is stressful even when you want the change. Often folks are surprised when emotions or anger sneak up on them. We have been taught that that knot in the pit of the stomach is telling us to flee or that we are making a wrong decision. I tell buyers and sellers to expect when making a big decision of the magnitude of buying or selling a home, that they will have moments of uncertainty and stress. If they were not a little worried or contemplative on a big decision such as buying or selling a home, there would be something wrong with them, right?

Some folks dig in or cannot make a decision when they hit the wall. It can be while purging, packing or the move day itself. It can be helpful to have a second in command who steps in and keeps things going according to plan. Talk to them ahead of time so they know the plan and the players. It can be invaluable to take a break and trust that someone has your back for the details when that feeling hits.

The Realtor can be a good resource for the planning portion as they know the steps to get the home ready. Rely on them and

trust their wisdom and resources. They have a track record of trust with their vendors and helpers and know who provides reliable service.

Understand that you may not like everything going on, i.e., the landscape that the stager or Realtor recommends, the door mat they put on the porch, the lights they change or the knobs on the cabinets or doors. Those who have been in their homes a long time have a hard time seeing it through new eyes. When you do not like change and it does not feel you are in your house (which is the goal), staging changes can be difficult. Staging is about a demographic and a process to lead the eye through the home to show the best use of each room, etc. It is designed to make the prospective buyers feel at home in this home. If that happens, mission accomplished.

Relax into the process. Understand it is stressful so build in breaks and stress relievers, and trust your Realtor, the vendors and helpers to get their part done. Trust your team, step back and let them make magic. The result will be that someone else will fall in love with your home the way you did when you bought it.

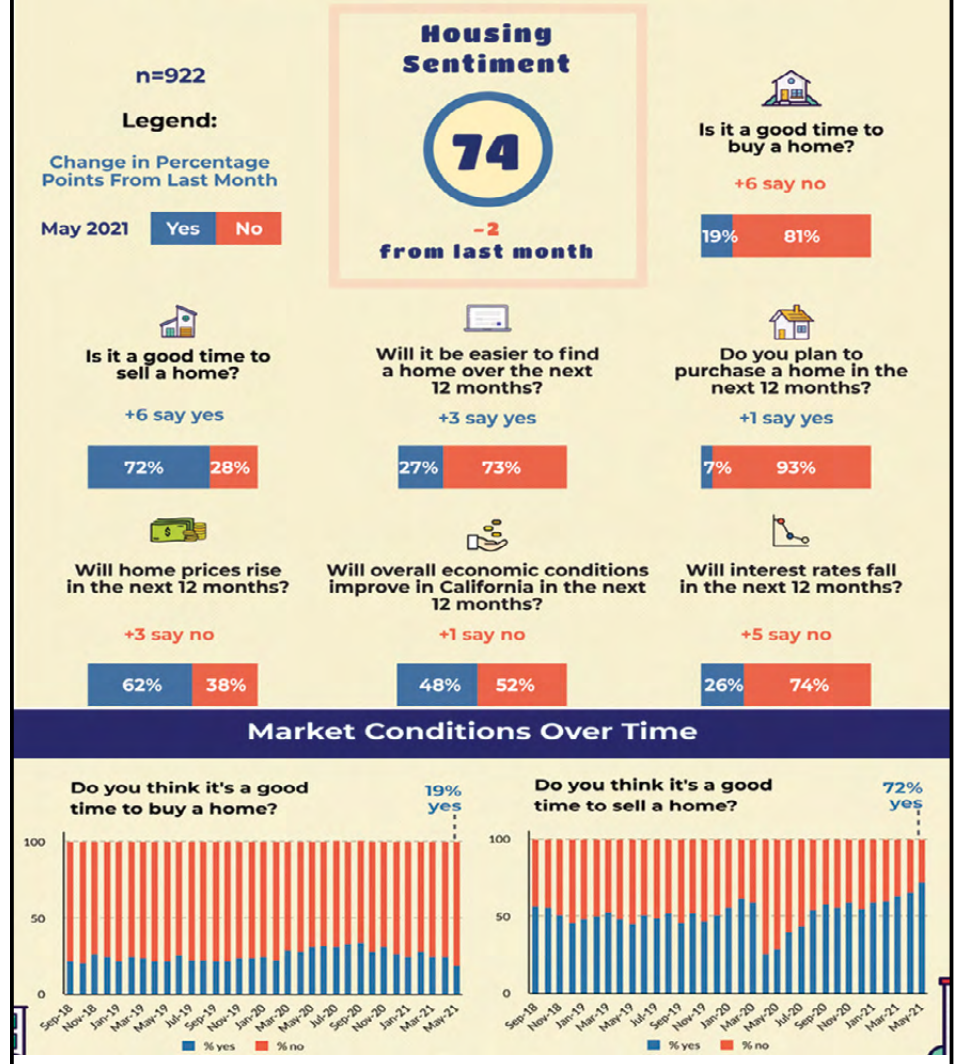
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Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery
www.mdrdrr.com

MDRR is a trusted partner to the communities we serve. We made a promise to support them by participating in events, educating our children, and making our communities a better place to live.



MAY 2021 CALIFORNIA HOUSING SENTIMENT INDEX



Each month C>A>R> surveys 1,000 California consumers regarding their sentiments about various aspects of the housing market or the economy that directly impact housing to create a California Housing Sentiment Index. The results of the individual indicators are combined into an equally-weighted diffusion index (where anything over 100 represents a new positive sentiment across the indicators, and anything below 100 represents a net negative sentiment).

A Link to the Past – Heirloom Fruits & Vegetables

By Deb Morris, PCFMA

The flavor of a ripe heirloom tomato in mid-summer cannot be surpassed. Their superior quality and taste is something we look forward to every year. A big slab of Cherokee Purple or Brandywine tomato in a sandwich or on a salad tops the list of summer favorites. And an heirloom Charentais melon with a bit of prosciutto is a flavor bomb!

Heirloom plants have been designated as those that are at least 50 years old, but many are much older. For centuries, farmers have collected seeds from their best-performing and most delicious crops and saved them for future planting, thus preserving their quality, flavor, and hardiness.

These fruits and vegetables differ from hybrid (or conventionally-grown) plants by their age and their method of pollination. Unlike hybrid varieties, heirloom plants rely on open-pollination by insects, birds and the wind to produce seeds. This type of pollination ensures that heirloom seeds produce plants that are true-to-type: Each plant will have the same size, growth habit, color, and flavor as its predecessor.

Heirlooms are also desired for their amazing flavor. They come from seeds that have been selected for intense flavor, tenderness, and visual appeal. Heirlooms are also harvested at peak ripeness, rather than under-ripe for transport. As a result, they are more perishable – but in exchange for great flavor.

Tomatoes: Common types with long histories include Brandywine (pinkish red), Cherokee Purple (deep reddish-purple), Green Zebra (striped light and dark green), Jubilee (yellow).

Summer Squash: Patissons (rippled edges), Fordhook Zucchini (medium green), Eight Ball or Globe (round), and Yellow Crookneck (bulbous yellow with narrow neck) are actually old varieties.

Eggplant: Black Beauty (deep purple), Rosa Bianca (mottled pink/white), Long Purple (long narrow purple), and Casper White

(white and narrow) are some of the colorful heirloom eggplants.

Melons: Netted Gem (netted rind), Charentais (cantaloupe-like) and Garden Lemon (bright yellow oval) varieties of heirloom melons offer amazing sweet flavor and gorgeous colors.

At your Concord Farmers' Market, your local growers can offer a wider range of heirloom varieties because they pick them at peak ripeness. They also offer a range of varieties not found elsewhere. Bautista Ranch coming from Stockton has amazing heirloom tomatoes like Green Zebra, German Pink, Brandywine, Cherokee Purple, and others. J&J Ramos from Hughson will have Charentais, Ambrosia, and Juan Canary heirloom melons to enjoy. FT Fresh out of Fresno offers a lovely heirloom eggplant called Black Beauty and heirloom summer squash such as eight ball and pattypan.

Heirloom fruits and vegetables have become treasured links to the past, a glimpse into a time when crops were grown for flavor and valued for their hardiness. Visit your local farmers' market and find a taste of summer's past.

Simply Delicious Caprese Salad

-2 large heirloom tomatoes, different colors*

- 6 to 8 slices mozzarella cheese
- Balsamic vinegar and extra virgin olive oil
- Fresh basil leaves
- Salt and pepper

Slice tomatoes thickly and plate alternately with mozzarella cheese slices. Sprinkle basil leaves over the tomatoes and cheese, more or less to taste. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar and olive oil, add salt and pepper. Enjoy!

Visit pcfma.org/eat for more great recipes.

*Never refrigerate tomatoes because it diminishes the texture and flavor.

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aRt Cottage

by FROgard www.aRtCottage.info

Are we “normal” yet?

July is here and life is slowly coming back with more activity around us. I hesitate to say we are “getting back to normal,” because it feels weird to not even remember what normal felt like. “New normal” doesn’t sound right to me either.

aRt Cottage tried to keep things as normal as possible during the pandemic by being open and continuing exhibits and art classes. Class attendance had diminished by half in the last year, but the students are back. We are offering plein air painting classes and pottery wheel classes for the first time ever. What fun to have both children and adults in the garden learning how to use a French easel to paint outside like the Impressionists did. Just setting up the easel is a lesson in itself - upside down, right side up, with tripod legs collapsing and a paint palette balancing on your hand. Is it art camp or boot camp? Either way, it really gives you an appreciation for what the Impressionists went through to create something beautiful.

As for pottery class, sitting at a potter’s wheel with a big lump of clay might feel daunting, but when it starts spinning and you get things centered, then you turn out

a cute coffee cup or lovely bowl, it’s a great experience. Even with the occasional muddy splash. You can’t worry about getting messy when you’re making a masterpiece.

In our back gallery, we’re hosting a special mini-exhibit for The Soul Box Project through July 21. Right hundred small, handmade paper origami boxes are displayed to make a strong, visual statement about gun violence in our country. Each Soul Box represents a person who has died from gun violence (homicide, suicide or accidental). Supplies will be on hand for people to make their own Soul Box to add to the exhibit, which will travel to Portland in August and then to Washington DC in the fall to be part of a huge national exhibit of 200,000 boxes. (see story on page 9)

Our main gallery exhibit is “Land, Air & Sea Scapes”, which runs July 6 through August 27, featuring over 20 local artists. Chat with them and meet new friends at our Artist Reception on Saturday, July 10 from 2-4pm with ukulele music and refreshments.

aRt Cottage is located at 2238 Mt. Diablo Street in Concord. Visit artcottage.info for details.



Your Return to “Normal”: A Guide to Safe Social Reintegration

By Dr. James Mittelberger

Since March 2020, we stayed at home, stayed away from friends and family, and stayed away from people in general. We did it to survive the COVID-19 virus and we did it to keep ourselves and loved ones healthy and alive. But vaccines do make a dramatic difference and provide strong protection against all the known variants of the coronavirus. When you are vaccinated, it is time to strongly consider getting back out into the world, to shed the loneliness, and get reengaged with what you love.



Stock photo

Prolonged Loneliness is Equivalent to Smoking 15 Cigarettes a Day

Social distancing and isolation have greatly impacted our lives and may have been especially devastating for seniors. Numerous studies show prolonged or chronic loneliness affects health as much as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. It also increases the risk of early death by 50 percent.

Social isolation and loneliness are linked to higher risks for a variety of physical and mental conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, frailty, cognitive decline, dementia, suicide, poor sleep, lowered immune function, and lowered self-esteem. Social isolation increases the risk of depression

social face-to-face interactions?

Journal writing can really help clarify your emotions and thoughts. Spend the time understanding yourself. Figure out what your baseline is and go from there.

If you are older and this past year has taken a big toll on you, think about which type of loneliness you would like to address first. If social loneliness, consider re-integrating with a book club, a recreational sports team or enjoying an outdoor lunch with a small group of friends. If emotional loneliness, reach out to your most important relationships and start setting up get-togethers. Many seniors deeply missed seeing and hugging their grandchildren. Inviting them over for an afternoon would be a wonderful way to reintegrate.

Invite one person you would love to visit, even if it is for an hour or two. Take advantage of the beautiful summer weather by meeting outdoors if that feels safer to you. By addressing a certain type of loneliness first, you can slowly rebuild your social muscles.

Set Your Own Pace

You get to decide what your pace is and having control over that will calm the anxiety. It’s okay to be selective about which social invitations to extend, accept or negotiate. Even if you had a full calendar before the pandemic, you may find having less is actually more. Think about which social interactions make you smile and which ones you dread. Choose those activities that enrich you, fulfill your soul, and bring you joy.

Show Yourself and Others Grace and Respect

Now more than ever, it is vital to show grace and respect for yourself and for others. Questions about your pace of reintegration might feel like criticism but consider the person asking is probably more curious than anything. Ask why they are questioning before answering. By showing curiosity, grace, and respect, it’s likely to be an engaging conversation instead of an argument.

It’s perfectly alright to take your time; there is no rush or a deadline to meet. Even 10-minute conversations will make a difference in rebuilding those social muscles. And soon, you will find yourself enjoying being with people once again.

James Mittelberger, MD, MPH, is a Clinical Professor of Medicine at UCSF School of Medicine and is board certified in Internal Medicine, Geriatrics, and Hospice & Palliative Medicine. He is the Chief Medical Officer at Center for Elders’ Independence, which offers all-inclusive PACE senior healthcare at its newest location in Concord.



Stock photo

and anxiety, which can be difficult to overcome, especially for older adults.

There are two types of loneliness. Social loneliness is missing a wider social network. Emotional loneliness is missing an intimate relationship. Both can result in feeling distressed or anxious due to a lack of connection with others when you need or want that connection. During the pandemic, it is very possible you felt both types of loneliness much of the time.

Many people are feeling high levels of anxiety as they think about returning to a pre- COVID-19 life. It is important to assess our personal comfort levels to be social again. Seniors might be afraid of crowded places, careless behavior, or insensitive remarks about still wearing a face mask. While your friends might be jumping for joy to hug you again, you might want to keep doing elbow bumps.

Take Baby Steps, But See Vaccinated Friends in Person Again

It is vital to become social again for many aspects of our health and well-being. Psychology experts recommend taking baby steps as you think about reintegrating back into social situations and gatherings. Baby steps start with acknowledging fears and anxiety. Explore what specifically is causing the anxiety. Is it fear of being overwhelmed, or feeling rusty at

Do “healthy” foods make you feel worse?

By Carmela Lieras, NASM-CPT



I am a health professional that rarely eats salad anymore because too many leafy greens wreck my digestion. Broccoli makes me feel horrible; even though I enjoy the taste of it. I used to devour almonds and peanuts but now avoid them because the PUFA content (polyunsaturated fatty acid) gives me migraines occasionally.

The point I am making here is just because a food is deemed healthy does not mean it is healthy for you.

Have you ever been on a health-kick where you only ate vegetables and salads, or green smoothies daily for a consistent amount of time? Did you stop either because you started to not feel good, or you just could not maintain it any longer?

You are not alone, so have many others.

The issue really comes down to who you believe when it comes to the nutrition your unique body needs. There are countless blogs, magazines, Pinterest boards, Facebook posts and YouTube videos glorifying the next big health food that is going to boost your energy, keep you healthy and help you trim your waist. Think back to when quinoa and kale got really popular, and now most health gurus claim they are “super healthy.”

What does “healthy” mean?

One problem is these kind of statements imply a certain type of food is healthy for everybody, when in fact, it can make a lot of people feel rather awful.



Here are some indicators that certain “healthy” foods you are eating might be making you feel worse:

- Brain fog
- Migraine or headache immediately after consuming
- Basal body temperature drops, and you feel cold suddenly
- Trouble falling asleep or consistently waking up at 2am
- Bloating, flatulence, constipation

These are only a handful of common symptoms that suggest you may need to add or remove certain foods from your diet.

So, how do you figure out if certain “healthy” foods are not so good for you?

Start by writing down when you experience the symptom(s) and what you had to eat right before it started.

Keep a food log for 1-2 weeks. Having a symptom once is not enough to validate that a certain food is causing issues for you. It could be related to something completely different. The more tracking you do, the better. Then check your food log for patterns of symptoms and types of foods. Remove any food from your diet correlating to your symptom.

I recommend that you eliminate only one food at a time to see if the symptoms go away. Then look for alternatives in the same food group that might suit you better. I do not eat broccoli, but I love cucumbers and zucchini; I do not eat much salmon but love halibut and seabass.

Health is different for everyone—the same goes for food!



EMOTIONAL HEALTH

By Dr. Holly Holmes-Meredith, D. Min., MFT, Board Certified
Bil Yarborough, CHT and Certified EFT Practitioner
hypnotherapytraining.com billyarborough.com

Reiki, a healing therapy for thousands of years, is growing in popularity



In Reiki, the practitioner transfers energy by placing their hands over or on the patient. courtesy Medical News Today.

As COVID infection levels recede and the economy opens up, many people are struggling to overcome the emotional and physical toll of the pandemic. They may be suffering from anxiety, grief, or depression from the isolation and hardships of the pandemic or have sudden apprehensions about returning to a normal life. Others maybe contending with weight issues or aches and pains because of a less active lifestyle. Of course, most people are more than ready to return to life as usual. In which category do you find yourself?

If you need help, there are a variety of healing options to address emotional and physical issues, but one you may not have considered is the energy-based therapy of Reiki that balances the body's chakra.

In Sanskrit, the word “chakra” means “disk” or “wheel” and refers to the energy centers in your body. These wheels or disks of spinning energy each correspond to certain nerve bundles and major organs.

Emotional and physical well-being may be influenced by the conditions of our chakras, which can be thrown out-of-balance by traumas and other difficult life experiences. Reiki is a powerful therapy to balance and realign the chakra energy centers by drawing on the ever-flowing life force of the universe.

Many spiritual traditions are aware of this universal life force and acknowledge it by various names, such as Chi by the Buddhists, Prana by Hindus, Light or Holy Ghost by Christians, and Mana by Hawaiian shamans. Even the entertainment industry references it, such as “The Force” in Star Wars.

Support for Reiki's healing power found in ancient spiritual traditions and popular culture also exists in the scientific and medical community. According to the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine published in December 2019, over 800 hospitals in the United States currently offer Reiki to patients.

The article also summarized the results of a large-scale effectiveness trial of Reiki for physical and psychological health. The study took place at the private Reiki practices of 99 practitioners and included 1,411 Reiki sessions. Statistically significant improvements were observed for all measured outcomes, including pain, drowsiness, tiredness, nausea, appetite, shortness of breath, anxiety, depression, and overall well-being.

Holly and I know Reiki is effective because both of us are Reiki Masters and have used it extensively for years having experienced and witnessed its potent healing powers.

Reiki involves the placing of hands on or above the body chakras and on the limbs and head. Reiki practitioners perform Reiki by channeling the life force energy to create a harmonious balance with the client's energy system.

You may feel warmth from the hands of the practitioner along with inner sensations of tingling, pulsing, lightening up, relaxation, or bliss. You may even fall into a deep, restful sleep. Depending on your issue, you could notice the release of disruptive emotional patterns, tensions, and physical pains. These changes may be immediate or gradual. Like physical exercise, the more you practice Reiki the more likely you are to gain its benefits. Reiki is also an excellent complement to other ongoing therapies.

You can receive Reiki treatments either at a physical site or virtually (online) to have yourself balanced. The pandemic re-enforced that energy therapies such as Reiki can be done virtually.

Holly offers free Reiki clinics. These include an online clinic every Tuesday at 7:00 PM, and beginning this July, an on-site clinic on the third Friday of the month at 1:00 PM. If you would like to register in Holly's free class, go to hypnotherapytraining.com. Click on free and low-cost services at the top of the web page to find the free reiki clinic registration. When you attend a clinic, you will learn the hand placements, equipping you to perform Reiki on yourself or others.

Those wishing to become Reiki practitioners, must go through a training program. Reiki Masters are required to complete three levels of training before they can then train others in Reiki.

Although most people use Reiki to release anxiety and tension, it can be used with no intention, other than a desire to become more balanced. People with chronic pain often get off the table feeling relief. Especially, people going through medical treatments for illnesses such as cancer.

If you would like to seek professional help from a Reiki practitioner, it is important to choose someone with whom you are comfortable. You should also ask about a practitioner's training level and experience.



A WALK THROUGH TIME

with Misty Bruns

“The Tuolumne Picnic” –150 years ago

“As many residents in California in early days lived in Tuolumne County, it is proposed to have a social reunion of all such, on the 17th instant at Martinez. Last year the picnic was held near Oakland, at which gathering there were some fifteen hundred persons. A large number is anticipated at Martinez. Many businessmen in San Francisco and Oakland, formerly spent there early years in California in old Tuolumne, and arrangements have been made for the boat to leave San Francisco for Martinez, on the arrival of the eight o'clock boat from Oakland. A pleasant time is expected.”

While searching digital records Online, I came across this title and announcement in “The Antioch Ledger” dated June 3rd, 1871.

This truly got me thinking of how people in the past spent their time outside of work, home, and the fields. Time spent would be gatherings outside, such as this picnic, engaging in conversations, playing games, and enjoying music. This was a way to meet new people with the same interest and history of oneself.

I can only image that Centenarian Sarah Holland and her family were part of this picnic gathering.



Rogers Ranch, Pleasant Hill

Sarah Holland was born in county Antrim, Ireland in 1785 (86), and came to America in 1846. Sarah came to California in 1862 and lived in Tuolumne County several years. This is where Sarah's daughter Mary Ann meets Patrick Rodgers.

Mary Ann and Patrick were married in the town of Columbia in 1862. By 1868 Mary Ann and Patrick had three children, John Francis, James Edward, and Rose Mary. This is when Patrick and Mary Ann decided to leave the gold fields in Tuolumne County and ventured to Contra Costa County. This is where they purchased 149-acre wheat farm in what is now called Pleasant Hill.

Sarah Jane Rodgers was born in 1870, Patrick, Mary Ann and family called her by her nickname which was Sadie.

Sarah Holland and the Rodgers were prominent in Martinez/Pleasant Hill, Contra Costa County. Mary Ann and Patrick's children married well and established their own lives within Contra Costa County and beyond.

As of today, Rodgers Ranch is a historical and still stands. On a smaller parcel, but beautiful kept and maintained. With many different happenings.

I would like to thank, Joseph and Judie Palmer (Martinez History) and Denise Koro-slev, past President of Rogers Ranch Heritage Center, for helping me put some of the pieces together.



Patrick passed away January 6, 1891. Mary A. Rodgers died in Martinez Feb. 3, 1903. She was the wife of the late P.F. Rodgers and mother of John F. and James E. Rodgers, Mrs. J.G. Duane and Mrs. T.S. Duane, a native of County Antrim, Ireland, aged 73. (from H.J. Curry Funeral notice.) Sarah Holland she died in 1889 at the wonderful age of 103.



Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue

Colleen

Colleen is a 74 pound, 3-year-old black-and-white Siberian husky. Because of an entropion eyelid that never healed, she has only one (and very beautiful blue) eye. One-eyed dogs usually live long, healthy lives and Colleen navigates her new reality without any hiccups, although she chases her tail in one direction only. She loves wading in rivers.

Colleen:

- Loves, loves, loves people
- Is housetrained and good in cars
- Is not good with cats
- Is good with children
- Needs moderate grooming and exercise

Colleen will need an owner willing to work with her reactivity to other dogs. She is very strong and would make a good watchdog. Her adoption fee is \$400.

NorCal Sled Dog Rescue is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization funded by donations. The goal of NorCal Sled Dog is to rescue, rehabilitate, foster and find homes for unwanted, abandoned and abused Northern breed dogs: Siberian Huskies, Alaskan Malamutes, Samoyeds, and mixes of these breeds.

A Bone to Pick

Household Dangers. Many common household items can pose a danger to your dogs. Human medicines can be toxic, string products such as yarn could cause intestinal blockage in your pet and small toys with moving parts can be choking hazards for pets. If you use aerosol sprays or self-cleaning oven products, keep pets away from the fumes as they are toxic. Insect repellents and rodent poisons are also highly dangerous for pets.

Dog Owner Liability. California has "strict liability" dog-bite laws that make pet owners responsible for most dog-bite injuries that occur in a public place or "lawfully in a private place," including the dog owner's property.

Even if the dog does not have a history of biting, a "bite" could be when a dog grabs someone with its teeth but does not break the skin. This means an owner could be sued if a dog playing catch accidentally nips the ball thrower in the owner's backyard. Fortunately, the dog owner can argue that the victim took the risk voluntarily.

Bites by working police or military



dogs are exempted.

Nonetheless, Joseph Malott, who was protesting the police killing of George Floyd during a June 1, 2020 demonstration in Walnut Creek, filed a lawsuit in federal court, in part because police dogs bit and severely scratched him before he was arrested.

Pawsitive Patter

Emergency Preparedness for Dogs.

Fire season is around the corner. If you must evacuate your home, the

ASPCA recommends that you plan for the worst-case scenario. Never leave your pets behind. If you cannot identify a friend or relative to take your pets, make sure you have a backup plan by identifying hotels or motels outside of your immediate area that accept pets. Assume that you may not be allowed to return to your house for several weeks.

Here are some suggestions: Store an emergency kit and leashes as close to an exit as possible. The kit should include food and water dishes, at least a week's worth of food and bottled water and two weeks' worth of medicine, a sturdy crate or carrier for each pet, a blanket, flashlight, as well as garbage bags, dish detergent and paper towels for cleanup. It's also a good idea to have recent photos of your pets in case you get separated.

Fastest Agility Dog at Westminster.

Verb, a border collie, is now a two-time Westminster Masters Agility Champion. He annihilated his 2019 time of 32.05 seconds by racing through a course of 20 tunnels, jumps, weaves and more in 31.3 seconds in Tarrytown, New York on June 12th. Congratulations, Verb and owner Perry DeWitt!!

Make Your Dog a Blog Star. DogTrekker.com is interested in hearing about your doggie adventures. Send them places to take your pup along with a photo and they will post it on the Dog Tales section of their blog.

[Ruby 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 1.6 M Tik Tok followers. Special thanks to Jill Hedgecock, author of this column and "Between Shadow's Eyes" and "From Shadow's Perspective" whose book covers feature Ruby. www.jillhedgecock.com.]

ARF Adoption Stars Bobby & Sarah

by Cole Kuiper

Looking for a furry friend? Visit arlife.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!

Honey



Thirteen-year-old Honey is a sweet senior lady who will bring some sunshine into your day. This little velcro gal is looking for a perfect companion she can stick with forever. Honey loves hanging out while watching TV with her people, taking naps and taking a stroll around the block. Honey has a positive history with other dogs and currently weighs 13 pounds.

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).

Horton



Seven-month-old Horton is looking for a home that will help him come out of his shell. He's a curious young guy but can be sensitive to sounds and quick movements. Horton has been getting braver each day and is hoping that finding his forever home will give him that extra boost of confidence. Horton has a positive history with other cats and his adoption fee has been prepaid by a generous donor.

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).

Answer from pg. 16

WORD SEARCH PLUS

Concord Pavilion

The Pavilion has a capacity of 12,500 people. Once run by Bill Graham Presents, it is now run by Live Nation. It officially opened in 1975 with a benefit concert featuring world-renowned jazz singer Sarah Vaughan and conductor Henry Mancini. Over the years, it has hosted some of the biggest names in music. Located at 2000 Kirker Pass Rd., Concord. After a long Covid-19 hiatus, concerts have returned to the Concord Pavilion. View a list upcoming performances on page 10.



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