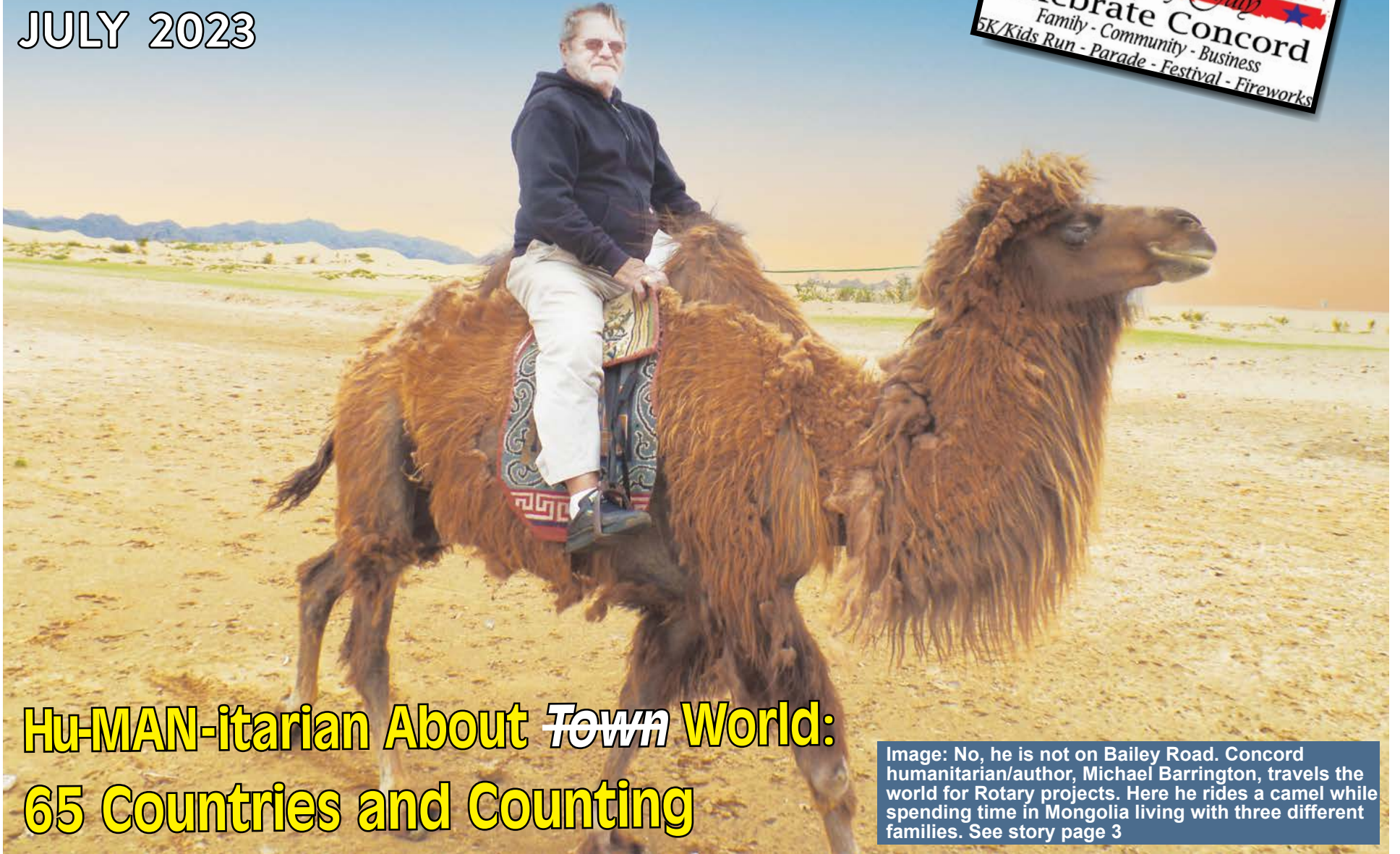


The Diablo Gazette

Arts, Entertainment and All That's *Good* in Our Communities
 Concord, Clayton, Walnut Creek, Martinez, Pleasant Hill
www.diablogazette.com | [www.fb.com/diablogazette](https://www.facebook.com/diablogazette) | (925) 298-9990

JULY 2023



Hu-MAN-itarian About ~~Town~~ World: 65 Countries and Counting

Image: No, he is not on Bailey Road. Concord humanitarian/author, Michael Barrington, travels the world for Rotary projects. Here he rides a camel while spending time in Mongolia living with three different families. See story page 3

PRSR STD
 ECRWSS
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 EDDM RETAIL

Local Postal Customer

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Hong Kong – Still a Gem in Asia pg. 9
- Naked Gardener: Garden Plants that Repel Mosquitos pg. 10
- Wine and Recipes for Summer Picnics pg. 8 & 11
- Martinez Soil Deemed Safe After Refinery Fallout pg. 17

• Summer Calendar of July Events, Contests, Movie and Book Reviews

SWS
 Federal Credit Union

AUTO LOANS

4.00%* APR New
 4.50%* APR Used

Loan Amount and Terms Subject to Approval. Membership eligibility requirements apply. see details on page 20

CONTRA COSTA CON 16
 POP CULTURE, TOYS & MORE

Advance Discount Tickets now on sale

Tickets now on sale
 Pre-sale tickets Eventbrite.com
 Get \$2 Shopping Buck with each pre-sale ticket.

KIDS under 9 FREE. Tickets also available at the door July 16

1st 250 Families Get FREE Toy Bag!

Contra Costa Con is THE Pop Culture, Toy, Comics and Collectibles Show for the entire family in the San Francisco Bay Area!

Sunday, July 16 • 10am - 4pm
 Hilton Concord Hotel Ballroom

www.ContraCostaCon.com

Produced by BAY AREA FESTIVALS & American Brick Builders

3:00pm Family Friendly Cosplay Costume Contest Cash Prizes!

the bar method

Scan Here To Redeem

Summer Is Here! Get 30 Days of Unlimited Classes for \$99!

5416 Ygnacio Valley Rd. #30 Concord, CA 94521
 925-338-1366 claytonvalley@barmethod.com

Outstanding Students Awarded Scholarships by the Rotary Club of Walnut Creek

The Rotary Club of Walnut Creek received thirty-four student applications from Northgate and Las Lomas high schools. The scholarship committee reviewed the applications and conducted interviews before selecting their final two recipients, one from each school.

Rotary awarded Meera Chakradeo from Northgate and Justine Simons from Las Lomas each a \$5000 scholarship. Both students were invited to the Rotary Club meeting on June 13 and were presented the scholarship certificates by Cindy Silva, the mayor of Walnut Creek.



Walnut Creek Mayor, Cindy Silva, awards \$5,000 scholarships to Northgate student, Meera Chakradeo and Justine Simons for Las Lomas High School.

The Rotary Club of Walnut Creek (RCWA) is a group of local civic and business leaders representing different professions, experiences and perspectives with a shared desire to address the challenges affecting our community and communities around the world.

Merit Scholarship Winners

Three Contra Costa County students are among more than 3,000 recipients of National Merit Scholarships financed by U.S. colleges and universities, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation announced.

These awards provide between \$500 and \$2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study at the institution financing the scholarship. Some 153 higher education institutions are underwriting Merit Scholarship awards through the National Merit Scholarship Program.

The following Contra Costa County students were named National Merit Scholarship recipients: Kian Kasad, California High School, San Ramon – National Merit Purdue University Scholarship

Riyanka Narasimhan, Dougherty Valley

High School, San Ramon – National Merit Vanderbilt University Scholarship

Matthew Lee, Berean Christian High School, Walnut Creek – National Merit Florida State University Scholarship

“We are very proud of these three academic scholars for representing our County as National Merit Scholarship winners,” Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools Lynn Mackey said. “These scholarships are extremely competitive and require a lot more than just high-test scores.”

Kasad, Narasimhan, and Lee join eight other Contra Costa County seniors who were named National Merit Corporate-Sponsored Scholarship Winners in May.

Each award recipient submitted a detailed scholarship application, which included writing an essay and providing information about extracurricular activities, awards, and leadership positions. SAT or ACT scores were also factored into the judging, along with academic records, and recommendations from high school officials.

Congratulations to all.

Residents’ Archives Needed to Complete Historical Books on Concord

Residents in or from Concord are asked to comb through their old albums and memorabilia to be part of two new books currently being developed on Concord’s history.

When Joel Harris owned Clayton Books, at the corner of Ygnacio and Clayton Road, he wrote “Images of America - Concord” for Arcadia Press. It covers Concord from its founding through World War II in pictures and stories. The book was well received and is still available at Berkshire Books, the Concord Historical Society, and other places in Concord.

The success of the first book, followed by Concord being named “Happiest City in America” several months ago, prompted Arcadia/History Press to reach out to Harris. The dialogue resulted in a two-book contract for more Concord history.

The first book will be “Concord Then & Now”, featuring historical places and sites about town, with historic photographs and memorabilia, together with current pictures of the most popular and historic places in Concord.

The second book will be “Concord After



World War II”, a direct sequel to the first book, taking us from World War II through the 1990s in words and photos.

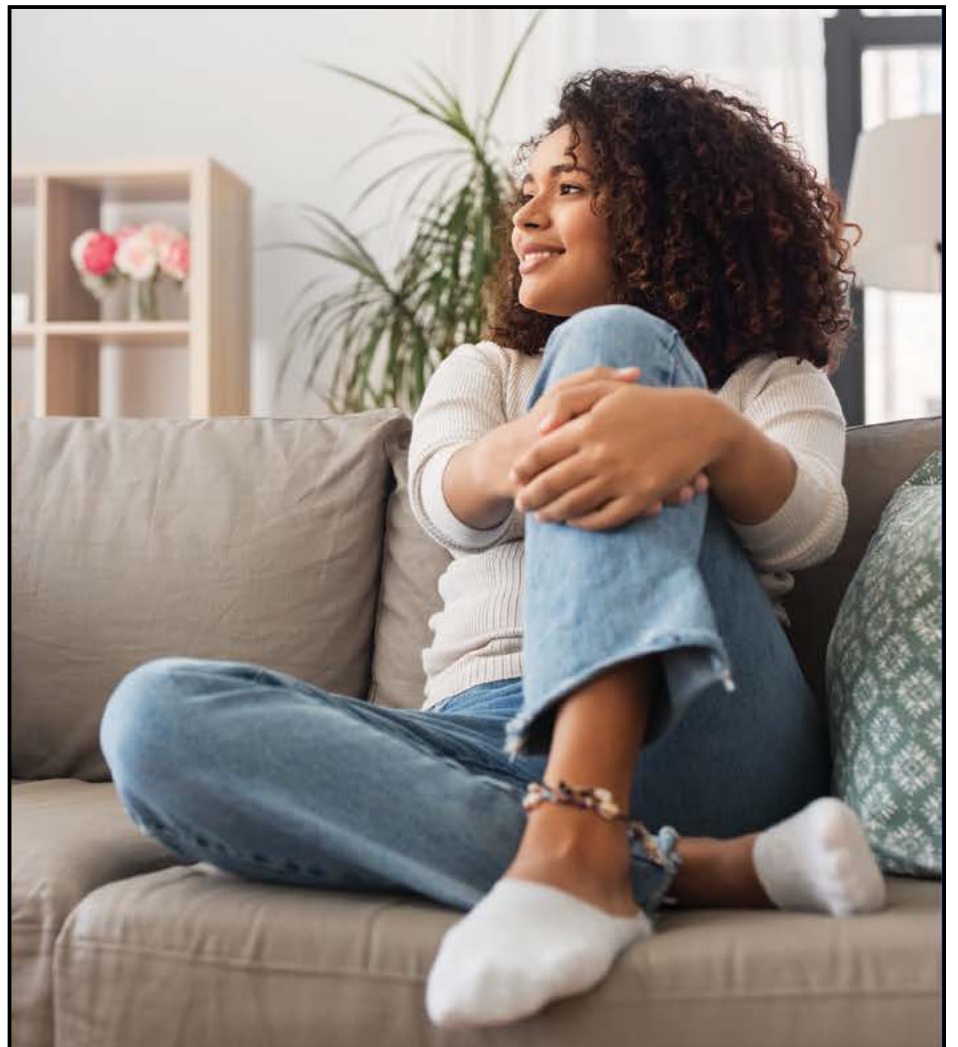
If you would like to submit pictures, memorabilia or stories for the new books, please contact Harris at joelharris@aol.com.

Harris will be writing live and taking submissions at Berkshire Books on Clayton Road July 15, 1-5 p.m.,

July 20 1-5 p.m., and July 23 1-5 p.m.. Anyone with

submissions that are published will receive full credit in the book.

Harris originally lived in Concord, and now lives in Clayton. He is a State Bar Certified Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law. His website is www.joelharrislaw.com. He attends many Giants games, travels extensively, and collects rare books, stamps and tin toys.



14 month certificate

5.00% APY

Let your money work for You.

For current rates or to open your account, visit safeamerica.com.



APY (Annual Percentage Yield) as of 6/5/23 and is subject to change without notice. 14 month certificate requires a minimum balance of \$10,000, new money only and rolls into a 12 month certificate upon maturity. Any money deposited at SafeAmerica within the last 30 days qualifies as "new money". Early withdrawal penalties apply. See website for full details.

YOUR NEIGHBOR'S SHOES

by David King, Photos: Michael Barrington

Concord Rotarian, Extraordinary Humanitarian to 65 Countries and Counting

As he daily walks his rescued Tibetan terrier through the neighborhood of east Concord, few people if any would know the short grey-haired man with an impish smile, is a published writer and author, with a most unusual but extraordinary life history.

Michael Barrington was born in Manchester England, and at age thirteen went to boarding school in the Lake District, ("not a fun Harry Potter place," he remarks,) but a boys only strict, spartan, physically and intellectually demanding environment.

"We had 6:00 AM cross country runs, only cold water for washing and classes six days a week," Barrington points out. "After graduation I joined a French religious Order of missionary priests and was assigned to Nigeria where I landed at the start of a civil war."

Stood up to be shot by a group of drunken soldiers, his ability to speak the local language saved his life. This is one of the many terrifying experiences described in his first book, an autobiography, "The Bishop Wears No Drawers". Poor demobilization systems and lack of disarmament led to soldiers taking their weapons home which resulted in an outbreak of armed robberies. To stem this, public executions were held in a soccer stadium which he had to attend.

"After ten years of living in the jungle, and surviving several bouts of malaria fever, I needed to spiritually 'recharge my batteries'." He took a year off and lived as hermit attached to a Trappist monastery in Northern Ireland.

Five years in Scotland followed by eighteen months teaching in Spain, led him to Puerto Rico where he was assigned as rector of an international seminary for Latin American students. Periodically, he struggled with his role as a priest, "it was like wearing a suit that didn't fit, and each time I considered leaving, I got promoted." After three years, he resigned and moved to the Bay Area.

Here, he became a technical advisor for Rotary International and began traveling all over the world reviewing and evaluating humanitarian projects. In addition, he



"Goats for Girls", a Rotary project that he spearheaded in Burkina Faso to help fund their education.



In Senegal, presented with a cock for installing a well, Rotary project

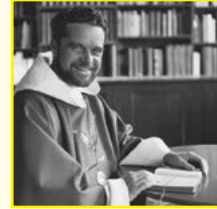
initiated international projects for the Rotary Club of Concord, inviting clubs from Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, and Clayton, to join participate.

With the help of Rotary and a friend, they developed an orphanage for teen-aged, sexually abused girls in Ethiopia and made it self-sufficient by creating an egg-producing farm. All the girls are supported through four years of university. Two graduated in Business studies and together with five others with degrees in education and psychology, they now completely run all operations.

In Burkina Faso, he worked for six years drilling water wells on the edge of the Sahara Desert and building schools. In one area where parents were refusing to have small girls enrolled, he started a "Goat for Girls" program. A goat is given to a family and then bred. With the sale of the young goat the family could buy the girl a uniform and essential materials. "It worked well as goats are notorious for producing twins.



With an Ethiopian Monk, Barrington was allowed to visit the Monestary Lake Tanna. Visitors are not generally allowed, but because of his former priesthood was given access.



Michael's early days as a priest



Michael Barrington Missionary work spent three years in remote Nigeria during civil war, nearly cost him his life.



In El Salvador at a burn center for children, Rotary project added specialized equipment for burns.

only as a Government Program."

In Mexico, he was instrumental in twinning the Concord Rotary with that of Zacoalco de Torres and over a ten-year period developed many projects. "The most

challenging yet visually satisfying was the delivery of 1,000 wheelchairs and seeing many people, for the first time in their lives, gaining some mobility."

They also obtained an ambulance and drove 3,000 miles from Concord, to donate it to the Mexican Red Cross of Coatzacoalcos followed later by a 2,000-mile drive to Zacoalco de Torres with a bus for handicapped children.



Water well finished in Burkina Faso at the edge of Sahara Dessert

So far, more than three hundred young girls have benefited from the program," Barrington proudly states.

In northern Ecuador, with Rotary funding, he helped establish a cottage industry for manufacturing prosthetics and start a rehabilitation clinic where no such facility existed. After four years it was handed over to a Non-Profit organization to guarantee its sustainability.

He spent two weeks in Eastern Russia including the island of Sakhalin, the country's most eastern limit where equipment was provided for the main hospital. In Vladivostok, an immunization program planned to give children shots for mumps, measles, and rubella became fraught with issues and delays.

The Russians refused to allow the vaccine through customs since they were from a country they didn't trade with, and it sat on the docks for months until it expired. The Russians refused the use of new vaccines until they had been tested by a laboratory in Moscow. A two-year project turned into five. The plan was to use local clinics throughout the area and immunize 150,000 children.

"The Rotary Clubs announced it via radio and TV, and it started well, even receiving international coverage. Thirty-six hours later a cease-and-desist order came down from Moscow. The world now knew that Russia was not immunizing all its children.

"I was involved in negotiating a solution. Since there were two shots, the Rotarians agreed to give one and the Russian government the other, but it would be announced publicly

65 Countries and Counting

In all, Barrington estimates he has been to 65 countries and lived in eight of them.

In Senegal, he monitored a massive multi-national tree planting project, to hold back the south shifting sands from the Sahara Desert which has expanded by 10 percent in the last 100 years.

In India, I spent time outside of Mumbai, reviewing an emergency housing project funded by Rotary International after the area had been leveled by a monsoon.

"In the Andes of Bolivia, our Rotary group built four bridges where during the rainy season whole villages were cutoff; famers couldn't move produce to market, and there was no direct access to medical care or schools."

Most recently, he headed a five-year, COVID-delayed project in Honduras, putting water into thirty-four schools, building new bathrooms and training almost 1,000 teachers in a new hygiene syllabus. (This is an article published in Diablo Gazette, October 2018, "Wash Project", available at diablogazette.com)

With all the travel to third world countries, Barrington has lived in some pretty remote areas.

"I stayed with three different families living in Yurts in Mongolia and with a group of Tuaregs sharing their tents somewhere in the Sahara Desert."

In Nigeria, he lived in a mud hut with a grass roof for three years and in the Andes shared a bedroom with a pen full of guinea pigs in an adobe-built house with a dirt roof.

Barrington has written eight books. "I often draw on my global experiences, expertise and having undergone acculturation eight times for much of my background material. My newest historical novel 'No Room for Heroes' will be available in August and is about the French Resistance in World War II."

Barrington speaks two foreign languages fluently and can converse in five. He lives in Concord with his French wife, Annie, a painter who designs the covers of his books. Generally, Barrington is also the author of this column in the Diablo Gazette.

This remarkable man is your neighbor.

School Supply & Backpack Giveaway!

Saturday, July 22, 2023
9 am - 11 am

MDRR Education Room
1300 Loveridge Road, Pittsburg

Pick-up gently used school supplies for FREE!



mdrr.com/school-supply-giveaway



Five Questions for Beth Javens, Visit Concord's New Executive Director

Welcome, Beth Javens, the newly appointed Executive Director of Visit Concord. In her new role, Beth will lead a dedicated team that works towards creating awareness of all the wonderful aspects of Concord including its businesses while promoting leisure travel to the area.

We took this opportunity to get to know Beth and learn more about her passion for travel and her commitment to promoting Concord as a destination for travelers.

Tell us about your background and what motivated you to pursue a career in destination marketing?

"I am originally from Western Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh and got my degree in Ohio. Early on, I developed a deep fascination for exploring the unique characteristics and histories of different towns. Engaging with various communities and sharing their remarkable attributes became a true passion."

You are coming to Concord by way of Washington. Can you tell us about your experience there?

"Absolutely. I spent over four years as Executive Director of Visit Issaquah and Visit Kitsap Peninsula, two remarkable locations in Washington. These regions offer abundant outdoor activities such as mountain biking and hiking, as well as vibrant festivals, museums, zoos, and more. My role involved promoting and showcasing the wealth of experiences these destinations had to offer travelers."

What inspired you to take on the role of Executive Director at Visit Concord?

"I have always had a special affinity for the Bay Area. Previously, I had the privilege of serving as the Executive Director of the Richmond Convention and Visitors Bureau in historic Richmond, California, from 2013 to 2016. There, I developed strategies that elevated the organization's position within the

community while increasing visibility among travelers. Now that I'm back in the Bay Area and embarking on this new role, I couldn't be more thrilled to highlight the incredible assets of the City of Concord to those visiting for business, conferences or connecting with friends and family."

How do you envision your work making a positive impact on the community?

"The team at Visit Concord has already done an outstanding job of putting Concord on the map and capturing the attention of travelers. I am eager to build upon their excellent foundation and take that awareness to the next level. By developing strategies that present Concord as a welcoming destination with exceptional dining options, shopping experiences and entertainment choices, we will encourage regional and local tourism, enticing visitors from all corners. Through this advocacy, we see significant opportunities for cultural and economic growth."

Now that you're back in the Bay Area, what are you looking forward to doing right away?

"With regard to my new position, I am excited to hit the ground running."

High on my list is to continue to introduce the Concord Visitor Center to locals and travelers. It is an exceptional resource for anyone traveling or hosting guests in Concord. If you have family or friends visiting Concord, please make sure to stop by the Concord Visitor's Center, open Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Our knowledgeable staff will provide ideas and resources to enhance their stay."

Additionally, I will attend and speak about Concord at travel conferences across the country."

On a personal note, I am eagerly looking forward to reconnecting with friends and taking my first trip along Concord's famous Taco Trail!"

We wish Ms. Javens success in her new responsibilities at Visit Concord.

Jazz Around Town

Each year, Concord pays tribute to its deep roots in jazz. Coming up in August, that tradition continues with a three-day musical tribute to celebrate Concord's jazz legacy. Consider this your invitation to "Jazz Around Town", August 2 - 4.

On Wednesday, August 2 - Jinx Jones performs at The Veranda, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, August 3 - Jean Fineberg and JAZZphoria take the stage at Music & Market, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Friday, August 4 - Charged Particles will perform a special event at the Concord Historical Society, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Full details are on the Visit Concord website at visitconcordca.com and on Visit Concord Facebook and Instagram.


**CONCORD JAZZ
AROUND TOWN**
 EST. 1969

AUGUST 2 - 4, 2023
**3 DAYS OF LIVE EVENTS CELEBRATING
CONCORD'S JAZZ HERITAGE**



VISITCONCORDCA.COM



Saving for a Down Payment? Here's What You Need To Know

If you are planning to buy your first home, then you are probably focused on saving for all the costs involved in such a big purchase. One of the expenses that may be at the top of your mind is your down payment. If you are intimidated by how much you need to save for that, it may be because you believe you must put 20% down. Maybe not.

The National Association of Realtors (NAR) notes: "One of the biggest misconceptions among housing consumers is what the typical down payment is and what amount is needed to enter homeownership."

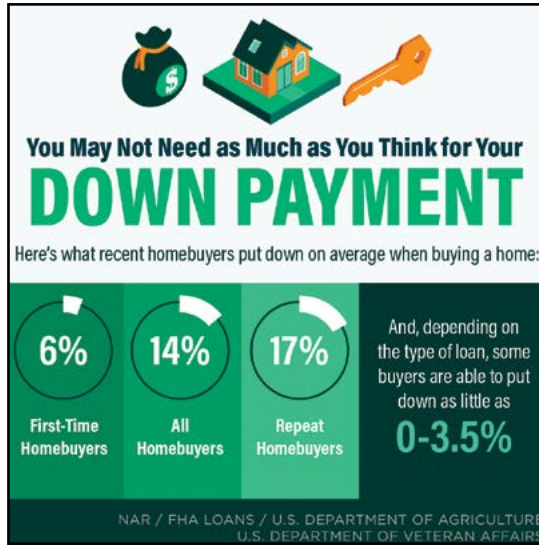
A recent Freddie Mac survey finds: "... nearly a third of prospective homebuyers think they need a down payment of 20% or more to buy a home. This myth remains one of the largest perceived barriers to achieving homeownership."

Unless specified by your loan type or lender, it is typically not required to put 20% down. This means you could be closer to your homebuying dream than you realize.

According to NAR, the median down payment has not been over 20% since 2005. In fact, the median down payment for all homebuyers today is only 14%. And it is even lower for first-time homebuyers at just 6%. What does this mean for you? It means you may not need to save as much as you originally thought.

Options That Can Help You Toward Your Goal - According to www.DownPaymentResource.com there are 304 down payment assistance

programs in California, and the majority are intended to help with down payments.



Many people believe there is only assistance available for first-time homebuyers, but for repeat buyers 38% of the programs are for folks that have owned a home in the last three years. Additionally, for any buyer who qualifies, there are FHA loans with down payments as low as 3.5%; and, options like VA loans and USDA loans with no down payment requirements for qualified applicants.

If you are interested in learning more about down payment assistance programs, partner with a trusted lender to learn what you qualify for on your homebuying journey. I have a few I recommend that have high success rates due to their knowledge of the California programs.



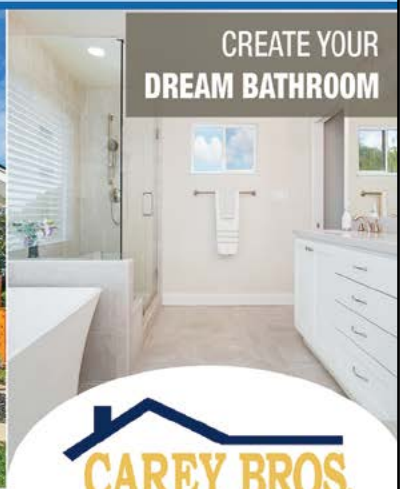
ENTERTAIN FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN A KITCHEN YOU LOVE

Transform Your Home:

- Complete design service - concept through construction drawings
- Personalized material and product selection
- Top quality craftsmanship
- Firm start and finish dates
- 5-Year Written Guarantee



Call **877.734.6404** or visit CareyBros.com to schedule your virtual or in-home design consultation



CREATE YOUR DREAM BATHROOM

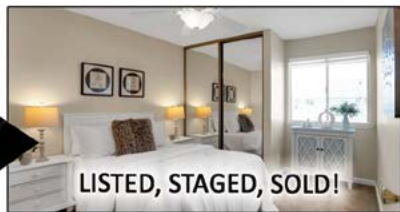
CAREY BROS. REMODELING

CA State License #442880



DRESSING UP HOMES WITH DESIGN AND PURPOSE

Dressed To Sell LLC has its own fleet of moving trucks, a fully stocked furniture, art and accessory warehouse, allowing a quick response and lead times. Our passion is turning spaces into showplaces!



LISTED, STAGED, SOLD!



LISTED, STAGED, SOLD!

Collaboration gets results for our clients!

No one understands my client needs, the theory of staging, demographics, and style like **Dressed To Sell**.



Terrylynn Fisher

REALTOR® | CRS, SRES, CSP Elite Agent
925.876.0966 | DRE# 00615420
Info@BuyStageSell.com | BuyStageSell.com



Consult with me Early, so we can Plan, Budget, and Strategize!

I have not and will not verify or investigate information provided or supplied by third parties.

Have You Read the Authors Who Also Write for *The Diablo Gazette*



Michael Barrington 'Your Neighbor's Shoes' Column



David George 'Naked Gardener' Column



William Gensburger Editorials



Jill Hedgecock 'BookEnds' Column

Available on Amazon Books & Kindle

Perry's Knife and Tactical

The County's Largest Cutlery Store

The Coolest Gifts for Grads & Dads

NEW!
JP Bladeworks
Custom Kitchen Knives

Knife Sharpening!

3 for \$15.00!

With this ad, maximum value \$28
Single Knives \$7 - \$11 each.
One coupon per customer.



925-270-3812

1815 Broadway St.
Concord, CA

www.knifeandtactical.com



The Boogeyman

Recently widowed father Will (Chris Messina) is having a tough time connecting with his two daughters and their shared grief. Although he is a therapist, he has shut down emotionally when his children need him most.

Teenager Sadie (Sophie Thatcher) is struggling with assimilating back into high school life as she notices other kids do not know how to act around her. Making matters worse, while she was away, Sadie's best friend started hanging out with a vapid group of girls that find her strange.

Young Sawyer (Vivien Lyra Blair) is unable to sleep without her lighted ball, string lights and nightly checks by her father to make sure there are no monsters under her bed or in the closet.

Will works out of the home and one day, a strange man begs to talk to him, even though he is not a regular patient. This is when we learn that some people believe the boogeyman is real. This man claims to have seen it and that it preys on emotionally vulnerable children.

This film is adapted from a Stephen King short story and viewers can expect the traditional King tropes. Large

monsters lurk around corners and what seems ordinary turns creepy. A lack of gratuitous gore adds up to a good old-fashioned scare fest.

Most of the movie is set in darkness. Even when lights are operable, no one seems to turn them on. There are also a lot of characters who venture into rooms alone, which always seems unlikely when you think someone or something in that room wants to harm you. Still, the characters are interesting enough to move the plot along and there are some genuine scares that will keep you on your toes.

If you like horror films that stay away from torture and high kill counts, this is a solid edge-of-your-seat thriller that just may have you leave the lights on.

Rated PG-13 In Theaters



Flamin' Hot

If you wonder if it is possible to make an entertaining movie about the creation of Flamin' Hot Cheetos, let yourself be pleasantly surprised by this humorous and inspiring flick.

Director Eva Longoria chronicles the story of Richard Montanez (Jesse Garcia), the man responsible for the hot flavor profile trends in the early 1990s. As a young adult in Southern California, Montanez lacks an education and falls into gang life and drug dealing. With the culmination of his childhood sweetheart becoming pregnant and the miraculous leniency of a judge who does not put him in jail for auto theft, Montanez decides to turn his life around.

Getting a job as a janitor at the Frito-Lay factory in Rancho Cucamonga allows him to provide legitimately for his family, but the now family of four struggles to keep their heads above water.

Montanez longs for more and when it seems like he will never get an interview for a machinist position, he takes his dreams in a different direction. Frito-Lay is struggling and Montanez sees an untapped Latino market. His idea



is to make snacks that "burn good" and appeal to the Hispanic community. With the help of his family, he tests many flavor combinations before hitting the perfect blend.

Things do not happen overnight, and it is refreshing to see that this man's story took years of patience

and dedication.

The fine cast elevates this film. Garcia in the lead role is likable and funny, and Annie Gonzalez as his supportive wife, Judy, really shines. The always reliable Tony Shalhoub turns in a stoic yet endearing performance as CEO Roger Enrico. Lastly, Brice Gonzalez, as the youngest member of the Montanez family, is adorable and commands every scene he is in.

If you are looking to beat the heat of summer but not the heat of your snack foods, staying indoors to watch "Flamin' Hot" is well worth your streaming time.

Rated PG-13 Currently streaming on Hulu and Disney +



The Lindbergh Nanny

by Mariah Fredericks

"The Lindbergh Nanny" (Minotaur Books, November 2022, hardcover, 320 pages, \$18.29) by Mariah Fredericks is a fictionalized version of one of the most notorious child kidnapping cases of all time. The novel offers a unique point of view by making the nanny the narrator. "The Lindbergh Nanny" accurately describes how in the middle of the night in 1932, one (or more) kidnapers climbed a ladder to the second story nursery in the home of famous aviator, Charles Lindbergh, and abducted his son, Charlie. The ransom of \$50,000 was paid but Charlie was not returned and was later found dead.

Several facts are undisputed: Betty Gow, the boy's nanny, was the last person to see the little boy alive and she was the one to identify his body. However, Fredrick's narrative mixes factual events with a bit of imagination to bring Gow's ordinary life to the page. Fredrick also tackles how Gow's life changed because of the kidnapping. Reminiscent of "Downtown Abbey", the novel provides insight into how life might have been like for the servants of the Lindbergh family before and after Charlie's disappearance.

In real life, Gow, was a young Scots woman who had worked for the family for about a year before the kidnapping. Throughout the police investigation, the authorities believed Charlie's abduction was an inside job. Gow was a suspect, as was her boyfriend, a Norwegian sailor, Henrik "Red" Johnson.

Fredricks does an excellent job of transforming this historical fiction novel into a compelling "who-dun-it", revealing just enough information to make various staff and their acquaintances have credible motives to conspire to kidnap the boy. Fredricks also deftly weaves known facts into the narrative with an appropriate deference to the people who were affected by the tragic death of the beloved little boy.

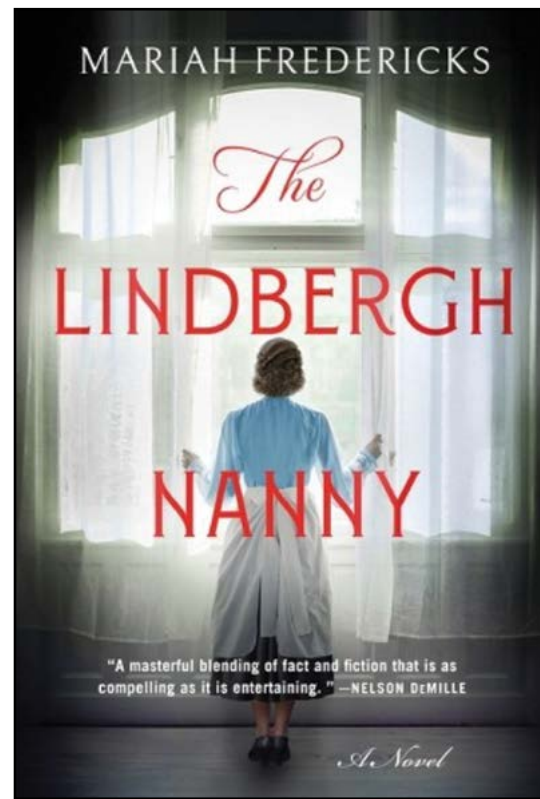
Fans of historical fiction and true crime will appreciate this page-turner. "The Lindbergh Nanny" is a standout in the contemporary historical fiction genre. I highly recommend this novel.

"The Lindbergh Nanny" was an Agatha Award nominee for Best Historical Novel. It was a Crimereads "Most Anticipated Book of Fall 2022", a Book Bub "Best Historical Fiction of Fall 2022",

An Indie Next Pick for December 2022, and was listed as "8 Fiction Books for the History Buff" by "Canadian Living".

Mariah Fredericks recounts her inspiration for writing the novel was the 1974 film, "Murder on the Orient Express". The author was intrigued by a scene in the movie where the nanny is tied to a chair. Fredrick's degree in history from Vassar College lends a lot of credibility to the historical accuracy of the novel. She endeavored to keep true to actual events out of respect for the people affected by the tragedy.

Fredricks is the author of the Jane Prescott mystery series, which has twice been nominated for the Mary Higgins Clark Award, as well as several YA novels. Fredericks lives in New York City where she was born and raised. She can be reached through her website at mariah-fredericksbooks.com/.



Patriotic Pastries and more!

July 4th Cakes, Cookies and Pies

Alpine Pastry & Cakes

Order Early!
925-689-7220

Closed July 3 & 4
Monday - Sunday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
1848 Willow Pass Rd. Concord

alpinepastry.com

calendar of events

CLAYTON

CONCERTS/MUSIC



CLAYTON CONCERTS IN THE GROVE

Every other Saturday, 6PM-8:30PM
July 8, Foreverland, Michael Jackson Tribute Band.
July 22, Chicago Tribute Authority

Schedule: claytonca.gov/our-city/annual-events/concerts-in-the-grove/

CLUBS

Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club.

<https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/start-our-approach/club-locator/details?id=148928>

Rotary Club of Concord.

<http://www.concordcarotary.org>

Cars 2nd Chance, vehicle / car donation programs turning vehicle donations into cash for charities administered by the Clayton Valley Concord Sunrise Rotary Charitable Fund. <https://cars2ndchance.com>

EVENTS

JULY 4th: CLAYTON'S FAMOUS 4TH OF JULY PARADE and celebration is coming quickly. Let's celebrate our great community and country together as well as enjoy our local time-honored tradition. We want the Parade to be the best ever and enjoyable for all. Pancake Breakfast: 7 a.m. Endeavor Hall, 6008 Center St., Clayton. Parade & Kiddie Parade: 10 a.m. Main Street, Clayton.

July 21, Common Poorwill Twilight Hike, 7:00 – 10:30 PM, \$5 – \$6. You'll start the evening at Mitchell Canyon listening for bird calls. As twilight approaches plan to be in the upper portion of White Canyon looking for bats flying low overhead. The hike is about 3 miles round trip, with some elevation gain. Mitchell Canyon, 96 Mitchell Canyon Fire Rd, Clayton. <https://baynature.org/event/common-poorwill-twilight-hike-july/>. (925) 837-2525

LIBRARY

July 5, Camp Clayton: Arts & Crafts,

2-3PM. Join us for STEAM focused events, drop-in programs, and take home activities! No registration required.

July 6, Tai Chi, 12-1PM. Enjoy a gentle, energizing class with Tai Chi movements. Classes are taught by Carolyn Lee in the style of Professor Cheng Man-Ch'ing.

July 15, Clayton Memory Cafe. 10-11:30 AM. Participate in cognitive activities designed to perk up memory. These gatherings are free and open to all older adults with or without current memory concerns. A small snack will be provided.

July 19, The Lawrence Hall of Science will be presenting their

science show Solids, Liquids, and Gases. 2 - 2:45PM.

"Find Your Voice!" Readers of all ages can visit ccclib.org/summer for ac Next Year We'll be Laughing' by Jacqueline Winspear.

Clayton Library, 6125 Clayton Rd. For more information please call 925-673-0659. <https://ccclib.org>

CONCORD

ARTS

aRt Cottage. 2238 Mt. Diablo Street Concord. (925) 956-3342 www.artcottage.info

CLUBS

Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club.

<https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/start-our-approach/club-locator/details?id=148928>

Rotary Club of Concord.

<http://www.concordcarotary.org>

CONCERTS/MUSIC

Concord Music & Market Series Todos Santos Plaza on Thursdays 6:30 PM.

Farmers' Market and free music concerts in the Park with a great line-up of wonderful Bay Area musicians playing Salsa, jazz, zydeco, blues, and more.

Todos Santos Plaza, 2175 Willow Pass Rd. Concord

July 6 THE UNORIGINA Locals night: 90's beat

July 13 PURPLE ONES Tribute to Prince

July 20 SIDE NOTE 12 piece Rock-a-Capella

July 27 THE CAROUSEL COWBOYS Country favorites

EVENTS

JULY 4th: CONCORD 4TH OF JULY PARADE, FESTIVAL & FIREWORKS. The day begins at Todos Santos Park with The Concord-Diablo Rotary Club pancake breakfast available for \$5 from 7:30 AM until 11:00 AM. Then at 8 AM a kid's fun run and 5k. After the race, stay for Concord's famous and fantastic 4th of July Parade at 10:00 AM complete with floats, bands, equestrian & dance teams and more! At 4 PM at Mt. Diablo High School the Festival will include Live Music, a Kids Carnival, local food, and vendor booths, and finally at 9 PM will be a Fireworks Spectacular over Concord. Todos Santos Plaza, 2175 Willow Pass Rd. & Mt. Diablo High School, 2450 Grant St.

Thru July 9, Galindo Home and Gardens Sundays 1PM - 4PM. Admission: \$5 Come take a tour. No reservation is required and starting now through September the Concord Historical Society has organized a quilt display throughout the rooms of the Galindo home! 1721 Amador Ave, Concord.

July 8, Summer Show & Shine Car Show, 8 AM - 4PM, We C3 Bay Area and Concord Auto Service invite you to our 1st annual Summer Show and Shine Car show. Mount Diablo High School, 2450 Grant St. Concord.

YOUR PARTNER IN BUSINESS

GREATER



CONCORD

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

concordchamber.com | (925) 685-1181
kcabral@concordchamber.com

July 11, Concord Chamber: Women's Networking Group, 4:00pm - 6:00pm, 2015 Diamond Blvd Suite 100, Concord

July 15, Family & Friends Barbecue 1-4 PM, A day of fun with exciting prizes! Concord Community Park, 3501 Cowell Rd, Concord. <https://www.wardboyproject.org/event-details/family-friends-picnic>

July 15, 20, 23, Joel Harris,

author of Images of America Concord, is working on 2 new books: 'Concord Then & Now,' and 'Concord After WWII.' If you would like to submit pictures, memorabilia or stories for the new books, please contact Joel at joelharris@aol.com.

He will be writing live and taking submissions at Berkshire Books 3480 Clayton Rd, Concord, 1-5 PM

July 2023, LEGENDS AT DIABLO CREEK: SUMMER CONCERT SERIES! July 6 Free Agents, July 8 Tamsen Donner, July 13 Blues Healers, July 20 Dad Co., July 22, Hi Water Blues, July 27 Groovy Judy. www.legenddiablocreek.com for times. Legends at Diablo Creek, 4050 Port Chicago Hwy. Concord

July 8, We C3 Bay Area and Concord Auto Service 1st annual Summer Show and Shine

Car show. 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Admission: \$30 – \$35. All Makes and Models are welcomed. Low-riders, Hotrods, Muscle cars, JDM, Trucks, Motocycles, Custom Show Bicycles. We will have vendors, Raffle prizes and 70+ Trophies \$35. Bicycle Reg \$15 at the door Walk ins will be charged at the door \$3 by the Mt Diablo Football team. Mount Diablo High School, 2450 Grant St, Concord

FARMERS MARKETS

Pacific Coast Farmers Market

<https://www.pcfma.org>
 Todos Santos Plaza.
 Tuesdays, 10AM- 2PM Year Round
 Thursdays 4PM - 8PM June 1-Sept 28

LIBRARY

July 5, BYOB (Bring Your Own Baby) Book Club 10:15-11:15 AM. Want to talk about books written for adults and meet in a baby-friendly setting? Please join us! Copies of the monthly book are available at the Concord library.

July 11, Computer Help, 6-8PM, Do you have basic computer and technology questions? Need help with eBooks, emailing, printing, or basic web searching? Drop in to the Concord Library for help from one of our tech volunteers!

July 18, Concord Library Pen & Ink Society, 4-6PM, Collaborate and

learn more about writing with creative writing instructor Rayshell Clapper. Writers, you can get tips on how to develop your craft

Concord Library, 2900 Salvio Street Concord. For full list <https://ccclib.org>

MARTINEZ

EVENTS

JULY 4th: Martinez Flag-Raising Ceremony, Downtown Parade and Fireworks Show: Flag-raising ceremony: 9 AM. Veterans Memorial Building, 930 Ward St., Martinez. Annual Downtown Martinez 4th of July Parade, 10 AM Main Street, Martinez. Parade begins at Court St. & Main St. Ends at Alhambra Ave. & Main St. The Kids Decorated Bike Parade will meet at the beginning of the parade. Come with a decorated bike. Meet at the designated location, Main Street and Court Street. No parade application needed. Local businesses, organization, car clubs and more are encouraged to participate in the parade. 4th Of July Fireworks Show 2023: Marina, Martinez 9 PM.

July 8 Tri-Cities Horsemen's Assoc. is hosting a Gymkhana! Join us in fun, fast barrel racing and pole bending events at the Waterfront Arena in Radke Martinez Shoreline!. Open to any rider and lead-liner. Starts at 9:00 am. For more info and to register check out our website at <https://tri-citieshorsemen.org/gym/tcgym.html>

July 13, Feet First Car Show. 6 - 8PM. FREE. The Feet First Car Show on Main Street is Thursday from 6pm to 9pm on Main Street from Alhambra to Court Streets in Downtown Martinez. Also August 10, September 14, October 12. <https://norcalcarculture.com/events/feet-first-car-show/>

July 15, MICHAEL RAPPA - Master Magician – California Magic Club. 7:30 – 10:30 PM. From appearances on National TV, to the Magic Castle in Hollywood to theaters all over the USA, this talented magician comes to the Cal Magic stage. California Magic Club, 514 Main St, Martinez

July 21, Music at Viano Vineyards feat. Midnight Flyer, an Eagles Tribute, 5:30 – 8:30 PM. Midnight Flyer is back for Music at Viano Vineyards! About this Event \$30 ticket includes: a souvenir wine glass and glass of wine 21+ only event & no pets allowed Food Truck: Viano Winery & Vineyards, 150 Morello Ave, Martinez.

FARMERS MARKETS

Pacific Coast Farmers Market

<https://www.pcfma.org>
 Sundays, 9AM-1PM, Year Round. 700 Main St. Martinez.

PLEASANT HILL

CLUBS

Rotary Club of Pleasant Hill, meets Thursdays 12:15 PM. Pleasant Hill Community Center, 320 Civic Drive. Pleasant Hill. <https://pleasanthillrotary.org/>

CONCERTS/MUSIC

Sunset by the Lake every other Thursdays, 6PM at City Hall, 100 Gregory Lane.

July 9 - TOM RIGNEY & BANFLAMBEAU -Cajun, Blues,

arts /concerts/music /clubs /events farmers markets /theatre & more

Boogie Woogie.

July 23 - Jinx Jones & the Kingtones EVENTS

JULY 4th: Party in the Park at Pleasant Hill Park. Join the City of Pleasant Hill for a 4th of July Celebration with a 5k run, parade, park event and fireworks. 7:45 am – 5k Run, 9:30 am – Downtown Parade, 10:30 am – Park Event (until 1:30 pm), 8:45 pm – Fireworks. The party begins after the parade at 10:30am and ends at 1:30pm. After the parade walk over to Pleasant Hill Park for food, kid's games and activities National Anthem after 11:30 AM. Pleasant Hill Park, 147 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill.

July 14, Pleasant Hill Blues and Brews Festival, Fri, Jul 14, 10 PM – Sat, Jul 15, 10 PM. This annual festival combines live entertainment and beer tasting. Proceeds support local organizations. <http://www.pleasanthillrec.com/Facilities/Facility/Details/Pleasant-Hill-Park-13>

WALNUT CREEK

ARTS



July 8 - September 17, Sight Unseen: International Photography by Blind Artists.

12 – 2 pm. Bedford Gallery. The featured artists, whether completely or legally blind, all perceive an image of the physical world in varying degrees. With photography as their medium, each artist brings their inner visions into the seeing world, revealing a visually rich and emotionally complex blend of physical and conceptual artworks.

Leshar Center for the Arts 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, <https://www.lesherartscenter.org> Tickets: (925)943-7469 Wed-Sun Noon to 6:00 p.m.

EVENTS

July 2. Hops & Creek Brewfest 2023: Noon. With 20+ breweries on hand from all over Nor Cal, we will pour from 12-4pm—rain or shine. Civic Park, Walnut Creek

JULY 4th: Family Day in The Park. 10 AM. Come gather with the family and socialize. There is swimming \$10 for day pass. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets, swim suits & towels. Also, it's pot luck style. Heather Farm Park, 301 N San Carlos Dr, Walnut Creek.

July 18, Rotary Means Business networking event, 5:30 to 7:30 PM at Bourbon Highway Country Bar and Grill 1677 N Main St, Walnut Creek.

July 9, All you need is LOVE | The music of the Beatles, 4:00 – 7:30 PM, Don't miss the Oakland Gay Men's Chorus performing The Beatles' classics this summer, including "Come Together," "Let It Be," and "Hey Jude. This concert features many of The Fab Four's greatest hits based on the band's original arrangements, including "Come Together,"

"Blackbird," "With a Little Help From My Friends," "A Hard Day's Night," "Let It Be," and "Hey Jude" – sung by OGMC's Fab Fifty! Del Valle Theater, 1963 Tice Valley Blvd, Walnut Creek. Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/all-you-need-is-love-the-music-of-the-beatles-tickets-639493080017>

July 11, Prehistoric Pals Full-Day Camp, Ages 5-7, 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM. Grab your binoculars! In Prehistoric Pals Camp, participants will explore the world of dinosaurs, mammoths, and other prehistoric animals. We will learn about the fascinating creatures Lindsay Wildlife Experience. Lindsay Wildlife Experience, 1931 1st Ave, Walnut Creek, CA

July 15, Open Air Artisan Faire 11 AM – 5 PM Broadway Plaza. Come to lovely Broadway Plaza to enjoy our Makers Market Fair! We are rounding up the Best Local Makers and Great Vibes! Stop by and enjoy live music, great food, and incredible products. 1275 Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek.

FARMERS MARKETS

Contra Costa Certified Farmers Market

<http://www.cccfm.org>

Sundays 9AM-1PM, Year Round. Locust Street between Cole and Lacassie St <http://www.cccfm.org/walnut-creek-market/>

Kaiser Permanente 1425 South Main St.

Diablo Valley Farmers Market

North Wiget Ln. and Mitchell Dr. Shadelands, Walnut Creek, Saturdays 9AM-1PM Year Round 1799 Locust St. <http://www.cafarmersmkt.com/diablo-valley-farmers-market>

Rossmoor Farmers Market

Opens May 19. Rossmoor residents and their families only. Fridays 9AM-1PM, Golden Rain Rd. <http://www.cafarmersmkt.com/rossmoor-farmers-market>

LESHER THEATRE

July 13-23, A Roll of the Dice:

An Improvised Play at the Mercy of Chance, Presented by Synergy Theater, Some say life is determined by fate. But Synergy Theater knows better! Each new scene in this hysterical improvised play is decided by the roll of the dice. Who will chance throw together? Where will they find themselves? And who will walk in to discover them there? Find out at A Roll of the Dice: An Improvised Play at the Mercy of Chance!



July 13, Summer Sounds: Tom Rigney and Flambeau, FREE CONCERT, 5:30 PM- 7 PM, Rigney's band of all stars simmers and cooks with musical intelligence. Their high energy live show features tight ensemble playing, deeply infectious grooves, and rich soloing.

July 18, Summer "Pops" Concert 2023, Presented by Walnut Creek Concert Band, 7:30 PM - 9:15 PM, Walnut Creek Concert Band's annual "Pops" Concert has something for every musical taste. New works, patriotic songs, march favorites, Broadway and movie classics, plus much more.

July 20: Summer Sounds: Mads

Pick a Pack of Perfect Peppers

by Deb Morris, PACIFIC COAST FARMERS' MARKET ASSOCIATION

Everything from sweet bell peppers to the hottest habaneros are now arriving. They are delicious when tossed on the grill, sliced and diced in salads, stuffed with cheese and rice or sweet Brentwood corn, or canned into sweet pepper jelly. The spicy ones will liven up bland food.



then change progressively from yellow to orange to red, getting sweeter as they ripen further. The longer they stay on the vine, the sweeter they get.

Look for peppers from these nearby farms. J&M Farms from Gilroy, FT Fresh Produce out of Fresno, and Rudy Bungcayao Farm in Stockton. Enjoy them in a fresh batch of homemade pepper jelly.

Peppers are low in calories and rich in antioxidants and other nutrition to keep you healthy and full of energy.

"The crops look very good this year," says Chong Thao of FT Fresh Produce in Fresno. Thao's family grows chili peppers including cayenne, habanero and jalapeño. "The chili peppers are doing well and should be ready at the end of June, about a week later than normal because it has been cool."

Hotness in peppers is determined by the amount of capsaicin present. Capsaicin, an acrid, volatile alkaloid, is a general irritant that attacks any tissue it contacts. So, why many people love to eat 'hot' peppers?

Eating chili peppers releases neurotransmitters. These proteins cause the sensations of burning or pain. The body responds by increasing heart rate, increasing the metabolism, and by increasing salivation. Also, the body produces endorphins in response to capsaicin, which may account for the feeling of pleasure and well-being.

Sweet bell peppers, on the other hand, are cultivars of the species of plant called Capsicum annuum. Jalapeño, pimiento, eggplant, potatoes, and tomatoes are all members of this nightshade family. Colors range from green, red, yellow, and orange.

Why the assorted colors? It depends on when they were harvested. Because they are unripe, green peppers are less sweet and slightly bitter than the reds, oranges, and yellows. The colors

Pepper Jelly

- 1 cup red bell peppers, finely chopped
- 1 cup green bell peppers, finely chopped
- 1 to 2 jalapeño peppers, seeded, minced
- 1-1/2 cups apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper flakes
- 6-1/2 cups sugar
- 2 pouches liquid pectin

In a large pot, stir together chopped bell peppers and jalapeño peppers, vinegar, pepper flakes, and sugar. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Gradually add pectin, put back on heat, stirring constantly. Return jelly to vigorous boil, stirring constantly; boil 1 to 2 minutes. Mixture will thicken slightly. Remove from heat. Fill sterilized jars, add lids and rings; process 15 minutes. Remove from water bath and let cool on the counter, listening for lids to "pop" to ensure seal. As the jars cool, turn jars upside down, and then right side up every half hour or so to ensure peppers do not float and are evenly mixed in the jelly.

Tolling and the Mads Men, 5:30

PM - 7:00 PM, Mads Tolling is a two-time Grammy Award-Winning violinist and composer originally from Copenhagen, Denmark, now living in the San Francisco Bay Area. Mads now leads his own band, Mads Tolling & The Mads Men. In it he celebrates the music of 1960s TV-shows, film, and radio hits with his own distinctive style and innovative flair.

soundtrack.

Leshar Center for the Arts 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, <https://www.lesherartscenter.org> Tickets: (925)943-7469 Wed-Sun Noon to 6:00 p.m.

Other Cities

EVENTS

Thru September 1, PITTSBURG FIRST FRIDAY'S. 5:30 PM - 9:00 PM. Live music, great wine, craft beer, local art, and Marina views. \$10 for the first pour and a souvenir glass; each additional pour is \$5.

July 16, Benicia-Martinez Toy-Anime-Comic Con. This is a kiddo friendly event! Kids 10 and under are FREE! DRESS TO IMPRESS! The Cosplay (Costume) Contest is promptly at 2:30pm! \$8. Benicia Veterans Memorial Hall, 1150 1st St, Benicia

August 3, SIR Branch 19 will hold its Monthly Luncheon on 11 AM with a social hour and lunch served at noon. It will be at the Pittsburg Elks' Lodge, 200 Marina Blvd., Pittsburg. www.sirinc2.org/branch19 or call: 925 338-1996

SUBMIT YOUR CALENDAR ENTRIES by the 20th of the month before Issue month.



July 28, Dianne Reeves, 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM, Five-time Grammy winner DIANNE REEVES is the pre-eminent jazz vocalist in the world. Her breathtaking virtuosity, improvisational prowess, and unique jazz and R&B stylings, earned her the Grammy for Best Jazz Vocal Performance for three consecutive recordings – a Grammy first in any vocal category. Featured in George Clooney's six-time Academy Award nominated Good Night, and Good Luck, Reeves won the Best Jazz Vocal Grammy for the film's

JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

Article and photos by William Gensburger

Hong Kong: Still a Gem in Asia

Hong Kong Island seen from the Kowloon peninsula

Despite glaring headlines demanding freedom in Hong Kong, a communist enclave since the handover of the former British Crown Colony in 1997, Hong Kong has remained a vibrant and productive city, filled with global residents, almost ten percent of the population, who work or have retired there.

I was born in Hong Kong, a Eurasian by descent, in the late 1950s, when the tallest buildings of this former swampy fishing village, were less than 12 storeys high.

Before that, in 1841 when Great Britain obtained Hong Kong along with four other trading ports as the spoils from the Opium War with China, it was considered unimportant, a swampland riddled with mosquitos that many considered useless.

Hong Kong, which translates to 'Fragrant Harbor,' had just that, a spectacular harbor insulated from the wrath of the seasonal typhoons, that would make it a world-famous port for exports, and later imports, for the rest of the world.

Hong Kong is divided into three parts: Hong Kong Island, just over 30 square miles, the Kowloon Peninsula on the other side of the harbor, just over 18 square miles, and the New Territories, 368 square miles, as well as the Outlying Islands, leading right to the border with China.

Together over seven million people live here, mostly in the former two locations, a dense urban sprawl crammed with endless high-rise buildings reaching for the sky and glowing like a geode at night, the lights producing a constant glow off the clouds.

The city businesses awaken around 10 in the morning, and don't close until very late. Restaurants of all sorts, from all countries, coffee shops, and vast shopping malls that appear futuristic. It's a playground for the imagination, catering to every tourist whim, while still retaining some of its colonial past. Old British buildings still stand, buried between massive high-rise fingers reaching over fifty floors.

With the thick humidity that can range from 70 percent to 100 percent, the tropical greenery clings to every older building adding a charm that breaks up the modern jungle. And people are generally happy here.

"What do I have to protest about?" asks Evelyn Talbot, a former Shanghai resident who moved to Hong Kong in 1949. "It's a life that's been good to me. Hong Kong is an exciting, vibrant city with very little crime."

"What about the poor people forced to live in cages?" a passenger next to me on the flight in asked. "It's criminal." And while true that cage apartments exist, usually small apartments subdivided to allow many people to live there, which given the exorbitant rents, are hardly imprisonment; rather it allows the occupants to secure their few belongings against theft.

The only other alternative for many would be living on the street, which for Hong Kong means sleeping in walkways that pass beneath busy streets, or in the

city parks where areas are designated for shelter.

Unlike America, most city parks have many bathrooms that are always attended and include showers. They close around 11 p.m. and open again at dawn. Rent for a 600 square foot apartment in the mid-levels goes for \$15,000 (USD) per month. Companies bringing employees to work in



The view from the 55th floor of the IFC Building offers splendid views

since it is almost impossible for high speed driving in the cities.

You really do not need a car here. The license fees are high, the price of gasoline (petrol) much higher than what Americans recently experienced, and only those living up the island's mountainous region, mid-levels and above, The Peak, where the affluent live, might require the convenience, one they certainly could afford. For everyone else there is an abundance of public transportation, taxis and Ubers. Trams which run from one end of the island to the other, always available without much waiting, cost \$0.70 (USD) for an adult, and less for children and seniors. A taxi ride would cost under \$10 (USD) from one side to The Peak, a 15- to 20- minute ride depending on traffic. The Airport Express, a luxury BART-like train from the airport on neighboring Lantau Island to Central Hong Kong, takes 25 minutes and costs around \$15 (USD). The distance is akin to SFO to Concord.

If you had to describe the



Central District Downtown Hong Kong looks like any modern American city



Across the street from glitzy Times Square, contrasting older buildings reflect the earlier days of Hong Kong



Back alleys are vibrant places of gathering.



Street vendor selling Chinese Pork sausage, eggs, chestnuts, herbs and more



HK Police are helpful and friendly, although they do ticket you for parking incorrectly.

Hong Kong need to pay for their housing or the whole reason for coming would not be economical.

The Chinese are also a family-oriented culture, often living together with aging parents who are revered. Ancestor worship is also common, with rituals that include leaving food and paper goods for the deceased at the cemeteries.

The other class of people seldom mentioned in the foreign media are the many wealthy Chinese. Hong Kong has almost 130,000 millionaires 290 cent-millionaires (those with net worth of more than US\$100 million) and 32 billionaires*. China has 43 billionaires by comparison. Wealthy Chinese families often send their children (usually sons) to study in America and England at the best universities.

You also find a high number of expensive automobiles. Rolls Royce used to hold the title as the highest per capita vehicle. These days the cars include McLarens, Maserati, Lamborghini and more, slightly amusing

city in a word, it would be 'efficiency'. An example of this, they built the massive 500-plus-gate new airport after reclaiming the land from the water, built the tunnel for the Airport Express, three large bridges joining Lantau to Hong Kong, including the necessary roadways in under seven years.

And while many Americans discount the manufacturing of buildings and the like as substandard and shoddy, the simple truth is that in its life only one skyscraper ever had an issue after a major typhoon eroded the land beneath it. One of over 653 skyscrapers over the last half-century.

To describe life here to Americans is often a challenge. Used to the urban sprawl of suburbs, the concept of high-rise living in a concrete apartment, complete with a Filipino maid, would be foreign and odd. Here it has always been normal.

And aside from new buildings and new technology, Hong Kong has retained the flavor of its former days with perhaps the exception of the ability to protest the government. This is, after all, not a

democracy, and the CCP takes offense to such things. But as Talbot pointed out, she has little to protest. The city is efficient, safe and friendly. The concept of protesting seems foreign to her.

As a boy I would wander back-alley streets alone, quite safely. I have always felt safe in Hong Kong. Even now, a late-night walk through Victoria Park, I have no concerns. The place was still busy with late night soccer games and couples strolling. Off to the side in a podium by one restroom, about fifteen homeless people were setting up sleeping bags and coverings for the night. Even they mingled, chatted, smoked a cigarette — Chinese still are avid smokers despite the health concerns — essentially minding their own business and bothering no one.

As a US Citizen, I wondered about the safety of this trip; after all the news items about the CCP and Hong Kong, as well as a dire warning from the State Department discouraging travel because, in their words, it was not uncommon for Americans to be detained upon exit, for no reason, and unaided by the US Government, if that might be a problem. It was not. In fact, most Police I chatted with were friendly, many with relatives in the States. It is a small world, after all.

I always enjoy walking down the back-alley streets, away from the tourists. Here, a multitude of vendors have stalls hawking everything from food to knock-off designer handbags. It's crowded, but very alive and interesting, offering a variety we do not see anymore in the States. It would be akin to mom-and-pop shops, and the variety of items available is endless.

Food stalls are peppered throughout, most likely not passing OSHA standards, but seemingly safe enough given the masses choosing to eat from them. Char Sui, a barbecue pork with a slightly sweet taste is my favorite. It hangs at the stall and for a few dollars the vendor will chop it into bite size pieces and wrap it in paper. You eat as you walk.

The names of stores and restaurants demonstrate the Chinese mimicry to appeal to Westerners. Spicy Crab Under Bridge is one restaurant well known here. A restaurant menu might offer many misspellings or odd nomenclature like 'Dropped Coffee' or "After-birth (facial) peel' that might make you laugh or cringe or both.

The Chinese read from right to left. In Colonial days when they were hired to paint road signs, care had to be taken. Generally, this was fine but for one mistake that became a cultural landmark: Rednaxela Street, that was supposed to be Alexander Street. It was decided to leave it alone and now many-a-tourist seek it out for a photo opportunity.

If you really want to see the place, get on a tram, get to the upper deck and ride it from one end of the island to the other. You will see wealth and poverty, tourism and real life. And anywhere you look you will find a treasure of things to see and do.

If you go to Hong Kong, do so the first few months of the year or after late October to avoid high humidity, and the typhoon season. You do not need a visa, vaccines or any PCR testing. The doors are open and welcoming.

For more information visit: <https://www.willflyforfood.net/first-timers-travel-guide-to-hong-kong/>

William Gensburger is an award-winning author, and publisher of Books & Pieces Magazine, as well as a former Concord resident. www.MisterWriter.com



The Naked Gardener
David George, UC-Certified
Master Gardener

Mosquitos Will Avoid Backyards with These Plants

July is a prime season for challenging your naked gardening skills to prepare for outdoor entertaining. Outside gatherings on warm July evenings are some of my most vivid neighborly memories. Will you be gathering outdoors at dusk to enjoy good wine, beers, and BBQ burgers with your friends and neighbors? If so, protect yourself from irritating, disease-spreading mosquito bites with DEET repellent, and with colorful backyard plantings shown to protect against those “skeeters.”

Really? Plants can ward off mosquitos, you ask? Although not scientifically proven, many folks say that nature provides us with plants that can help control the number of unwelcome biting insects at your next outdoor party. Some, like the lemony-fragrant varieties are most effective when rubbed on the skin. Other plants emit a strong scent into the air that helps prevent large numbers of mosquitos and flies. Here are some



The scent from French Marigolds wards off bugs.

popular varieties you can try in your naked garden.

Citronella geranium, Citronella grass, and Lemongrass.

These lemony-scented delights are both an attractive and useful addition to backyards. Citronella geraniums (*pelargonium citrosum*) emit a strong lemon fragrance when bumped into along your garden paths. They produce continuous violet-white flowers during warm months. You can rub its leaves on your arms and legs to protect against mosquitos.

True citronella grass from Sri Lanka (*Cymbopogon nardus*) is used to produce citronella oil-based products that naturally repel mosquitos. You can plant and harvest its oils right from your own backyard. Its cousin, lemon grass

(*Cymbopogon citratus*) can also be grown in gathering areas to reduce insects and is also edible. You can harvest it for teas and meals.

Strong-scented Herbs and Sages.

Peppermint and spearmint (*mentha* family) are strong-scented ground covers that can spread quickly to fill a blank space in your backyard.

They both have mosquito-repellent qualities and are edible. Catnip is another mint that repels mosquitos, as well as a great treat for your family cat. Basil and sage herbs, if grown in larger clumps can serve both as insect repellents and food additives, as can lemon balm.

Lavenders and Marigolds.

French marigolds (*tagetes patula*) with beautiful yellow blossoms fringed in red have been grown for centuries among vegetables to ward off harmful bugs. It produces a spicy aerosol that permeates the surrounding air, which bugs hate. Mosquitos use their sense of smell to locate humans and animals, but marigolds confuse their senses.

Although all lovely flowering lavender species emit fragrances that can ward off bad bugs, an especially effective species is lavandin (*lavandula*

x intermedia), sometimes called hybrid lavender. It contains a high percentage of intense smelling camphor, ten times more than standard lavenders, and mosquitos want nothing of it. A soothing skin oil can be extracted from lavandin as well for better biting insect



Citronella Geraniums have a strong Lemon Scent.



Lavandin Contains high amounts of camphor that mosquitos hate.

protection.

Your backyard will be the envy of the block with one or more of these mosquito repelling garden plants protecting you the all-natural way.

For more information about insect repelling garden plants, follow this online link: <https://ucanr.edu/sites/mgfresno/files/304585.pdf>. Email your comments and questions to: NakedGardener@diablogazette.com. In some cases, these may appear in future columns.

All photos courtesy of Shutterstock.

COME SEE THE WORLD CHAMPION CONCORD BLUE DEVILS

AT

DCI WEST

STANFORD STADIUM

JULY 9, 2023

[HTTPS://WWW.BLUEDEVILS.ORG/TICKETS](https://www.bluedevils.org/tickets)



SCAN ME





Wines and Recipes for a Summer Picnic

Picnicking is an inexpensive warm-weather getaway. Fill your basket with fresh produce and a couple of crisp wines to pair with the food and you will experience the height of summer fun.

Caprese salad made with ripe tomatoes is a vibrant way to start a mobile feast. Choose a wine with med to high acid to counterbalance the natural acidity found in tomatoes.

A rosé will provide acidity and a pretty pink color to complement the red tomato. Look for rosés from colder regions of the world as they will be naturally higher in acid. Northern Italy, southern France and US wine regions that are close to the ocean are all reliable sources.

Next, chicken is a picnic-friendly protein that can be served hot, cold or at room temperature. I use boneless, skinless chicken breasts to be health conscious and reduce waste.

A citrus-based marinade will echo similar flavors in the rosé wine opened with the salad. Or, if you have enough people to warrant opening another wine, how about a chenin blanc? This crisp white wine offers a fresh floral note that will pick-up on the herbs in the marinade. As a bonus, the Lemon Dressed Cole Slaw recipe is one of my favorite pairings with chenin blanc.

Cherry-Apricot Crumble is a brilliant ending to your meal. Stash a small bottle of German trockenbeerenauslese (TBA) riesling deep at the bottom of the ice chest. The designation, TBA, can be better understood by breaking down the word into its three components: trocken = dry, beeren = berry, auslese = select harvest. Made from the selected harvest of dried berries, it is one of the most intensely flavored wines I have ever tasted. Look for flavors like apricot, papaya, and honey. Additionally, TBA is one of the few dessert wines with enough acidity to stand up to fruit desserts.

So, go on. Pair Up!



Maria Terry is a Certified Sommelier and Wine Educator in Northern California. www.LaSommellerie.com

Citrus Caprese Salad

INGREDIENTS

Two large beefsteak tomatoes

1 lb. fresh mozzarella

10-15 fresh basil leaves, torn

2 tsp. balsamic vinegar

3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil

1 tsp. fresh orange zest

Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper

DIRECTIONS

Slice the cheese and tomatoes, wrap and store separately. Mix olive oil and balsamic vinegar, place in leak proof container. Zest the orange and wrap in plastic wrap to make a little packet.

To assemble for service: alternate layers of tomato and cheese; shake-up then drizzle balsamic-olive oil dressing; sprinkle with salt, pepper, and orange zest. Toss fresh basil leaves on top.

Yield: 4 servings

Lemon Dressed Cole Slaw

INGREDIENTS

1 cup mayonnaise

3 tbsp. lemon juice

2 tbsp. sugar

1 tsp. salt

6 cups cabbage or one package ready-pak slaw

DIRECTIONS

Mix dressing, pour over the slaw and toss. Chill for 1 hour or more.

Yield: 12 servings

Herb Marinated Chicken

INGREDIENTS

1 tbsp. olive oil

1 clove garlic, minced

½ tsp. ground pepper

2 tsp. minced fresh herbs: thyme, rosemary, and marjoram

2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp. soy sauce

1 lemon or lime, juiced

1 tsp. grated lemon or lime peel

2½ lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts

DIRECTIONS

Mix together marinade, toss with chicken and seal in airtight container. Best marinated overnight in refrigerator, but a few hours will do.

Bake at 450° for 30 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Yield: About 5-6 servings

Cherry-Apricot Crumble

INGREDIENTS

Fruit

2 pounds of apricots

¾ pound Bing cherries



2 tablespoons sugar, or more to taste

1½ tablespoons tapioca

Topping

1 cup unbleached flour

½ cup brown sugar

Pinch of salt

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the fruit; then slice the apricots in half and remove the pits. Cut the halves into thick slices or chunks. Apricots often ripen unevenly, but do not hesitate to include those parts that are soft to the point of being mushy. They will cook into a sauce as the crumble bakes. Pit the cherries or slice them in two and pull out the seeds. Combine the fruit and toss them with the sugar and tapioca. If they are especially tart, add more sugar to taste.

Combine the flour, sugar, and salt in a bowl; then add the butter. Work the ingredients together with your fingers until they are blended.

Preheat the oven to 400°. Pour the fruit into a pie plate or gratin dish with a six-cup capacity. Cover it with the topping and bake for 45 minutes, or until the top is browned and there is a thick juice around the edge. Remove the crumble from the oven and let it rest; serve warm or at room temperature.

Yield: 6-8 servings

Concord City Council Votes to Become MCE's Newest "Deep Green" Partner

On June 13, the Concord City Council voted unanimously to opt the City's facilities into MCE's Deep Green 100% renewable energy service option. With this action, the City is expected to eliminate 2,729 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually, equivalent to taking 607 cars off the road.

The City's accounts currently served by MCE's 60% renewable Light Green service will convert to 100% renewable Deep Green service, currently powered by 50% wind and 50% solar.

MCE invests half of the Deep Green premium collected in local projects and programs that benefit the community, such as rebates for newly purchased and leased EVs, EV charging ports, and electric heat pump water heaters.

"We're taking bold actions to fight climate change by increasing our commitment to renewable energy," said Concord Vice Mayor and MCE Board Director Edi Birsan. "... we look forward to adding more steps to a better future."

"Choosing 100% renewable energy for city facilities is an incremental, yet important, step towards care for our common home," said Concord City Councilmember Laura Nakamura.

"Concord joins eight other cities

in Contra Costa County who are choosing to power their facilities with 100% renewable energy, significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and investing millions of dollars toward an equitable clean energy transition," said MCE CEO, Dawn Weisz. "With MCE's Deep Green service, everyone in our service area can take tangible steps to confront the climate crisis, and we're proud that Concord is leading the effort to 'think globally and act locally' with their example."

The transition to Deep Green Service will begin on July 1, 2023. It will cost 10% more annually than the City's current energy bills and add to a growing list of the City's sustainability initiatives including replacing streetlight fixtures and traffic signals with energy efficient lighting, receiving SolSmart Gold designation for solar projects, improving bike lane design in the downtown corridor, and installing a stormwater capture system at Hillcrest Park and a bioretention system along Salvio Street.

MCE is a not-for-profit public agency electricity provider. For more information about MCE's Deep Green 100% renewable energy option, visit <https://www.mcecleanenergy.org/100-renewable>.

Hate Sending Items to the Landfill? Help a Neighbor Instead Using the Buy Nothing Project

by Jill Hedgecock, jillhedgecock.com

Is there a pile of unwanted, but perfectly usable items, cluttering your garage? Although some objects may be donatable to charity, many might be destined for landfill because many charities will not take furniture, mattresses, and other items. Facebook's Buy Nothing Project (BNP) group offers an alternative.

Buy Nothing groups are where people share things for free for others to pick up. It is especially helpful for parents since kids outgrow stuff quickly.

It is much more than a "recycling program." One can also offer or donate gifts of services, skills, or assistance such as walking their dog, mowing their lawn, or getting a ride to medical appointments through Buy Nothing to anyone looking for help.

Unlike other community-based groups such as Nextdoor, Market Place or even Craig's List, Buy Nothing does not allow the sale of goods or services.

The process is straightforward. Your zip code is used to identify the regional Buy Nothing Facebook Group you must join. If you have something you want to give, you create a post to your Group describing it or photo documenting the item and its condition.

Posts generally state their neighborhood, and once a recipient is selected, the giver will request the individual to "personal message" them to arrange for a porch pick-up. This helps minimize information sharing on a public platform. Givers who prefer not to give out their address can arrange for a different location to hand off the item. To receive items or services, you can scroll through posts and indicate your interest in a

comment box or create an ISO (in search of post) for an item or service you seek.

"There are so many ways that our members help each other out," says Nerissa Wetherell, an administrator of the Buy Nothing Concord (Southeast)/The Crossings group. "This group is not just about getting free stuff, but also 'asking' if you are in need. I think it's great that most items posted on the group find a home. It's nice to see the cycle of items is not just straight to the trash."

For more information, visit buynothingproject.org/guidelines.

Now Accepting
New Patients!

Dr. Shrijana Shakya, DDS

925-825-1130

www.drkentdavis.com

Offering preventative,
restorative and cosmetic
dentistry.

sm:)e

Family Dentistry

5100 Clayton
Road, Ste. A19
Concord, CA



HOLIDAY SALE

\$100 CREDIT REWARD
BRING YOUR COSTCO, *HOME DEPOT, LOWE'S OR OTHER CARPET OR FLOORING ESTIMATE IN AND RECEIVE A \$100 CREDIT TOWARDS YOUR FLOORING PURCHASE FROM US. (SEE OUR FLOORING)

OVERSTOCK REMNANTS PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

DISCOUNTS & BARGAIN PRICES

CARPETS, HARDWOODS, LVT FLOORING, TILE FLOORING, WPC FLOORING, HYBRID FLOORING, LAMINATE FLOORING, WATERPROOF FLOORING

SAVE UP TO 50% ON CARPET INSTALLATION

McCurley's
Carpets • Hardwood • Laminate • Stone

2395-J Monument Blvd., Concord (Next door to Harvest House Shaw Carpet) 925-680-4433

3191-J Crow Canyon Place, San Ramon (Next to Sprouts in the Crow Canyon Plaza) 925-866-2200

Serving the Bay Area with honesty and integrity since 1973

Email: info@macfloor.com
www.MacFloor.com

Jennifer Stojanovich
Realtor, Better Homes Realty

Budgeting for Unexpected Expenses When Buying a Home

Buying a home is an exciting time. You have found the perfect house, gone through the process of obtaining a mortgage, and have everything set for closing day. Yet even having done your due diligence, unexpected expenses can still arise. Here are some tips for budgeting for unexpected expenses when buying a home.

Factor in closing costs. When budgeting for unexpected expenses, it is important to remember to factor in closing costs. These costs can include things like attorney fees, title fees, appraisal fees, and more. Depending on your area and the cost of your home, closing costs can range anywhere from 2% to 5% of the purchase price.

Set aside funds for repairs. Repair expenses can catch homebuyers off guard. Even if the house has passed inspection, there may be hidden issues that pop up after you move in. It is important to set aside funds for repairs and maintenance, especially if you are buying an older home. Experts suggest budgeting 1% to 2% of the home's value per year for maintenance and repairs.

Consider homeowners insurance. The cost of California homeowner's insurance is another expense that can catch homebuyers off guard. With a mortgage, lenders will require it. Shop around and compare policies to find one that fits your budget.

Remember to budget for property taxes. Property taxes can vary significantly depending on the area, so it will be important to research the tax

rates in your desired location. Experts suggest budgeting 1% of the home's value per year for property taxes.

Be prepared for unexpected emergencies. Plan an emergency fund that can cover three to six months of living expenses. Whether it is a broken pipe, a leaky roof, or a tree falling on your house, unexpected emergencies can happen at any time and can be costly.

Moving expenses are another cost that homebuyers need to budget for. Whether you are hiring movers or doing it yourself, there will be expenses for packing materials, rental trucks, and more.

Consider the cost of upgrades. It could be new appliances, updated flooring, or a fresh coat of paint, upgrades can quickly add up. You may need to prioritize upgrades based on your needs and budget.

Do not forget about the cost of utilities when buying a home. The cost of electricity, gas, water, and sewage depends on the size of your home and your energy consumption habits and can add up quickly. Research the average utility costs for the area and factor them into your budget. Additionally, you may want to consider making energy-efficient upgrades to your home to help reduce these costs over time.

Compliments of Virtual Results.

NO FEES UNLESS WE WIN!

LAW OFFICE OF DOUGLAS A. PRUTTON
Personal Injury
Labor & Employment Law

Former insurance company and corporate lawyer, representing only employees and injured persons since 1982.

CALL US FOR A FREE CONSULTATION

925-677-5080

pruttonlaw.com
1985 Bonifacio Street Suite 101 Concord email:doug@pruttonlaw.com

BETTER HOMES REALTY
6160 Center St., Suite E, Clayton

COMING SOON \$1,595,000
1137 Peacock Creek Dr. Clayton
Spectacular Two-Story Residence in Peacock Creek on a sprawling lot with views. 5 bedrooms, 3 baths, approx. 3236sf on an approx. .24 acre lot with an attached 3-car garage. Backyard oasis with in-ground pool, spa, outdoor kitchen and sports court.

COMING SOON \$799,000
5586 Yosemite Ct. Clayton
Charming Single Story Rancher nestled in a Court Setting. 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, approx. 1404sf on an approx. .25 acre lot with an attached 2-car garage and pool.

\$1,395,000
102 Forest Hill Dr. Clayton
Fantastic "Nantucket" Model in Peacock Creek. 5 bedrooms plus den and primary bedroom retreat, 3 baths, approx. 3820sf on an approx. .24 acre level lot with inside laundry and 3-car garage. Downstairs full bedroom and bath.

SOLD OVER LIST \$430,000
2032 Sierra Rd. #8 Concord
Updated Condo in Desirable Comstock Garden. 2 bedrooms, 1.5 baths, approx. 880sf. Huge patio area features a deck, artificial "lawn rug" area, big storage shed & paver patio seating area. Centrally located.

Market Update - Clayton

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
5826 Diablo Meadows Ct	\$1,049,900	1582	3/2	5/19/2023
5953 Cardinet Dr	\$1,050,000	1773	3/2	5/24/2023
1774 Indian Wells Way	\$860,000	1797	2/2.5	5/24/2023
5569 Morningside Dr	\$1,035,000	1770	3/2	5/31/2023
5838 Verna Way E	\$1,148,000	2169	5/3	6/1/2023
1045 Pebble Beach Dr	\$1,550,000	4018	5/4.5	6/7/2023
5527 Southbrook Dr	\$1,025,000	1568	3/2	6/13/2023

Market Update - Concord

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
3124 Windsor Pl	\$760,000	1143	3/2	5/16/2023
4106 Wilson Ln	\$1,306,000	1795	4/2	5/22/2023
2770 Wilmore Ct	\$1,050,000	1482	4/2	5/31/2023
737 Ygnacio Woods Ct	\$1,365,000	3117	5/3	6/2/2023
5542 Alabama Dr	\$940,000	1576	4/2	6/5/2023
3955 Cottonwood Dr	\$890,000	1416	4/2	6/6/2023
2032 Sierra Rd #8	\$430,000	880	2/1.5	6/16/2023

Jennifer Stojanovich
Broker
(925)672-4433
925-567-6170 - cell
DRE #01446062
jennifer@bhrbroker.com
www.jenniferstojanovich.com

MT. DIABLO SELF STORAGE
4901 Ygnacio Valley Rd Concord, CA 94521
Self-Storage Made Easy & Affordable

Happy 4th of July!

WE BUY & SELL BOXES

(925) 685-2222
Fax: (925) 288-0669

From walk-in closet to a large house. How much storage do you need?

Limited Units Available

CHECK WEBSITE for Rates on All Sizes

*50% off first month, while supplies last.

mtdiablostorage.com

Small Units 5x5	Medium Units 10x10	Large Units 10x15
Starting at \$95 \$47.50*	Starting at \$240 \$120.00*	Starting at \$300 \$150.00*



Bike Concord Receives “Compassion in the Community” Award

by Laura Hoffmeister,
Concord Mayor

The family that rides together, thrives together. Congrats to Bike Concord for receiving the Contra Costa Regional Health Foundation “Compassion in the Community” Award. This group was founded and organized and still led by Smitty Ardrey of Concord.



Ardrey is amazing. Starting with a simple idea to help people who bike and to encourage more and safer bicycling, he now has a bike program in conjunction with his Olympic High School profession. There he teaches bicycle building, repairs and tune ups with the Bike Concord Community Bike Shop at 2730 Salvio Street. The students also get to learn business skills as well as technical skills, including record keeping, media and community communications and outreach.

Bike Concord creates bike-centered social events for the public as well as educating and equipping bicycle users to maintain safety on the road. On May 18, it supplied refreshment stations on Bike to Wherever Day (formerly Bike to Work Day) along the Iron Horse Trail.

Bike Concord is a grassroots organization that started in 2014 through a collaboration between Concord residents and Bike East Bay, a regional bicycle advocacy organization that covers Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Although Bike Concord is now a distinct organization with its own projects and leaders, it works in partnership with Bike East Bay.

Bike Concord consists entirely of volunteer residents with day jobs and families. Any good-willed Concordian who wants to work for a bike-friendly future is welcome

to get involved. To learn more go to: bikeconcord.wordpress.com/tag/volunteer/

Bike Concord also offers free bicycle information and bike tune ups at Todos Santos Plaza on Thursday evenings during the Concerts, 6:30 pm to 8 pm. Come ride your bike, drop it off at their secure parking and bicycle tune up and repair booth at the corner of Willow Pass Road and Grant Street while enjoying the music or shopping the Farmer’s Market.

Concord July 4th Celebration

July 4th is also coming up and remember, all fireworks are illegal in all of Concord — actually, all of Contra Costa County. Please, the weeds are dry, and we do not need fires, accidental injuries in our emergency rooms, and nor animals spooked by loud noises.

The Fourth of July celebration in Concord will start at 8 a.m. with a Pancake Breakfast at Todos Santos, and the 5K run. The Parade around Todos Santos begins at 10 a.m. Then head over to Mt Diablo High School at 4 p.m. for music, kids’ activities and food booths. Fireworks Show will begin at 9 p.m. Go to www.concordjuly4th.com for more information.

You can reach me on any concerns or questions at Laura.Hoffmeister@cityofconcord.org



Happy Pride! Pride Month is Not Just Declared Locally, but Nationally.

I am lucky to live in a community where I can be my authentic self, and everyone deserves that right.

In June 1969, protesters convened for six days in New York after police raided a gay bar known as the Stonewall Inn. This protest became known as the Stonewall Uprising. The following year, the first Pride marches began to commemorate the Stonewall Uprising and advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights.

For me, Pride is personal. I have worked as a public servant for the last 35 years and when I started my career as a Concord Police Officer in 1988, there was not a lot of support for the LGBTQIA+ community.

I came out in 2002. As the first openly gay member of the Pleasant Hill City Council, I established June as Pride Month within the City. I also authored the Inclusive City Resolution, which promotes the protection of human rights, social justice, equality, diversity, and social well-being.

Six months ago, as I was sworn in as the first openly gay Contra Costa County Supervisor, I stood in the Board chambers with my husband, Jeremy, by my side.

While the fight for our rights continues, the County does provide programs to support the LGBTQIA+ community.

The Contra Costa County Library has the LGBT+ DeLoach and Troy Trust Special Collection. This collection includes books for all ages that relate to gender identity and sexual orientation. While the collection is kept at the El Cerrito Library, these books can be placed on hold and picked up from your local library.

Contra Costa Health (CCH) has a Pride Initiative, with the mission to integrate practices and policies that foster a safe and inclusive environment, equal access and quality health care as well as awareness, acceptance, and respect for lesbian, gay, transgender,



As Grand Marshall leads Supervisor Ken Carlson leads the Clayton Pride Parade.



I had the pleasure of meeting Retired U.S. Navy Commander Zoe Dunning at the Contra Costa Special Districts Association’s 30th Anniversary earlier this year. Zoe Dunning is the first openly gay person who served in the military and successfully fought against “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”. She spent 30 months fighting a legal battle to not be discharged and won. Commander Dunning’s hard work has contributed to today’s community where everyone is accepted.

queer, and nonbinary employees and the people they serve.

CCH also provides an HIV/AIDS & STD Program to reduce transmission, provide services and treatment, and raise awareness of HIV and STDs.

In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from Claycord.com and Other Sources

Clayton Featured On Good Morning America



June 22 - Clayton made the National news today. Here’s the scoop from Tami, who saw the quick report:

“Clayton was on the national news today on Good Morning America to show how bad the pollen season is.”

Walnut Creek City Council Discussion On Seven Hills Ranch Property

Last November, the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors approved a controversial Spieker Senior Development residential care facility in the Seven Hills Ranch area of unincorporated Walnut Creek, just west of Heather Farm Park.

But they couldn’t approve the route by which the developer wants to get there, which includes a small slice of land off Kinross Drive that belongs to the City of Walnut Creek.

The Walnut Creek City Council discussed the matter in closed session June 20. The council discussed whether they want to sell the land to Spieker and, if so, at what price and what other terms they may want. There likely won’t be a public announcement of what their conditions may be until a later date.

Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery Garbage Rates Increasing In July

If you’re a customer of Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery (formerly Concord Disposal), you might notice a rate increase starting with your July bill.

The garbage rates are increasing to the following, according to MDRR:

- 32-gallon garbage can for \$43.80
- 64-gallon garbage can for \$59.22

96-gallon garbage can for \$72.62

ConFire Announces Return Of Expanded Wildfire Responses

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District today announced return to full fire responses for all grass, vegetation, and wildland fires across the district because of the arrival of seasonal fire weather.

Full responses include a minimum of five firefighting apparatus and crews.

Since November 16, 2022, such responses had been limited to a single engine based on the reduced threat during winter months.

Con Fire also reminds of the now passed June 4 deadline for completion of all weed abatement and urges residents to protect their families, homes and neighbors by doing this important work if not already completed. These are the single most important things owners can do to ensure firefighters have the time and ability to better defend their properties from wildfires. If not already done, now is the time to ensure properties meet or exceed – and continue to meet or exceed throughout seasonal fire danger weather – all weed abatement and defensible space requirements. “Seasonal fire danger is once again upon us, later than in recent years, but potentially more dangerous with what will clearly be an abundant crop of dried fuels resulting from winter rains,” said Fire Chief Lewis Broschard, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District. “I urge all residents to prepare for wildfires now by practicing weed abatement and defensible space creation and reviewing plans for evacuation, including learning your new evacuation zone.”

“Experience shows the resident who abates weeds, creates defensible space, and hardens structures to resist wind blown embers today can make a difference. Owner preparation of properties is the single most effective thing that can be done to save homes and businesses from wildfire threats,” said Assistant Chief and Fire Marshal Chris Bachman, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District. “Investment in fire safe preparation today can buy the time tomorrow for firefighters to arrive and protect homes and businesses from wildfire loss.”

For more breaking news, visit claycord.com



the concordian
by Edi Birsan
EdiBirsan@gmail.com

Homeless/ Unsheltered Updates

I have some happy news on the homeless front to share. CoCo Farms, who operates a cannabis business has completed one of their goals to employ 10 unsheltered people and assist in getting them on the path off the street.

One of the individuals reported to Concord's Homeless Strategic Plan Working Group and is now in a shelter and is making \$22 an hour and looking forward to transitioning out to their own housing.

CoCo Farms has also done a similar project in Antioch where they operate one of the largest dispensaries. This was a unique aspect of their application to run a dispensary in addition to providing volunteer hours monthly in the community by paying their own employees or others to do community work.

The concept of business stepping up to directly support redirecting the homeless is being explored by various folks in discussion with the Strategic Plan Working Group. In certain cities across the country, there have been civic plans to have the homeless provide clean up services with payments in vouchers or even cash, other paths still need to be considered.

The Working Group is providing an early update to the Concord City Council on its progress for its first three months of operation. There will be a data presentation in various forms, as well as a report on a public meeting of residents, business, service providers and homeless individuals currently or with previous experience.

They are also currently in the process of a survey of businesses and the unsheltered on impacts, perceived barriers, and the like.

They are also planning to survey residents for their perceptions, interactions, various approaches, and priorities for the limited funds available. Concord's budget includes one-time money of \$5.2 million plus any

sustainable resources we are able and willing to extend beyond that.

Here are a few of the findings from the survey.

The majority of Concord unsheltered are from Concord.

Concord has a higher percentage of long-term unhoused compared to the county.

Fifty percent of the people are 45 years and older.

Demographics seem to reflect Concord demographics from 30 years ago.

A major factor in the loss of housing relates to the cost of housing.

Dysfunctional factors of mental health and addiction play into as other major factors.

There is a significant lack of organized shelters.

There is no one access point on the totality of services needed to address homelessness.

You can access the initial report at the City Agenda Website:

<https://stream.ci.concord.ca.us/OnBaseAgendaOnline/Meetings/ViewMeeting?id=950&doctype=1>

As we move forward in the Working Group, we will provide more updates. In the meantime, if you would like to attend, it meets the fourth Monday of the Month at the Concord Senior Center at Baldwin Park.

If you want to meet one on one with me, email me at:

EdiBirsan@Gmail.com or
Text me: 510 812 8180.

This is provided by Edi Birsan whose sleep patterns have continued to deteriorate with concern for the homeless. He reminds us that every night people are in pain out there.



Jeff Wan
Mayor, Clayton
Jeff.wan@claytonca.gov

CLAYTON NEWS

City of Clayton's Fiscal Picture Clearer

When the current year FY23 budget was approved, it was done so with an approximate \$127K deficit. Based on current projections we will end FY23 with an operating surplus of approximately \$408K - representing a favorable swing of \$535K. This is due to a combination of greater than expected revenues, staff vacancies, and other savings. Much of the discussion leading up to the current budget being adopted was around structural deficits, with negative projections for every year available going forward. This negative outlook has been utilized to support a narrative that taxes need to be increased. As we can see with the current fiscal year, this significant deficit did not materialize for a variety of reasons calling into question prior predictions.

The latest FY24 budget reflects a balanced General Fund which was inclusive of a transfer from the Pension Rate Stabilization fund of approximately \$100K. Pension expense has increased significantly this year and this fund was established for this purpose. Largely the draft budget holds the line as the City has a number of complexities primarily around vacant and new staff, and it will take time to work through onboarding before a realistic steady state baseline can be determined. Establishing a baseline is critical before any significant changes to structure or operations can be made. The budget also does not include any amounts that may be earned from Special Event fees.

Much has been said about fees and the rules around fees. When Prop 26 and 218 were passed, they created rules around what types of fees could be charged, and how much those fees could be. Fees for service (those fees that may be charged for a specific person), like a building or tree removal permit, are limited to the cost of performing that service. The City has not performed an analysis of its fees in many years, so long that no one can remember when it was last done. We know costs have risen over time in both materials, and the compensation for those performing the work. Without an actual analysis it is likely that the City was not recouping the full costs of performing various services.

For certain fees, those for entrance to or use of local government property, or the purchase, rental, or lease of local government property, the same prop 26 and 218 limitations do not apply. These

types of fees are set on a market basis - an agreed upon price between a willing seller and a willing buyer. Many special events that are held in town would fall in this category.

In order to assess the adequacy of our Master Fee Schedule, the City engaged a consultant for approximately \$15K to assess and make recommendations on any potential updates to the Master Fee Schedule. Their assessment was designed to ensure the fees were based on a full recovery method and to bring forward a proposal for fees for Special Events. As such a new category of fees for Special Events was created that would be applicable for a large event that would require streets to be closed, such as Oktoberfest or a parade.

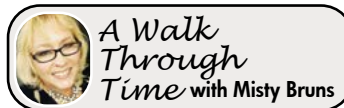
For those types of events with 100 participants or greater, a daily Special Event Fee was proposed that would be based on the number of participants, with the smallest tier at \$700 for up to 499 participants, and \$10K for events with 5,000 participants or greater.

Historically the majority of events that would be subject to the proposed Special Event Fee were those sponsored by the CBCA. Under a Master Use Agreement that ends at the beginning of July, the fees for the Grove rental, temporary use permit, noise permit, special event permit, amplified sound equipment use permit, and the street closure fee were all waived, and the only costs recovered by the City were for some but not all direct labor for police and maintenance, and materials usage.

For Art and Wine 2022, BBQ 2022, Oktoberfest 2022, and Art and Wine 2023, this portion of direct staff charges were \$9,888, \$6,676, \$10,369, and \$9,075, respectively. The fees waived for each event represented approximately \$5K - \$7K. In comparison, the revenue for the first three events were \$284K, \$95K, and \$281K, and after associated expenses inclusive of the staff time noted above, net income of \$137K, \$24K, and \$115K.

The Council and City Staff continue to assess where we may make strategic investments to increase operational efficiency, reduce costs, and ensure that we are using the taxpayer dollar as effectively as possible.

Contact Mayor Jeff Wan at jeff.wan@clayton.ci.gov.



A Walk Through Time with Misty Bruns

Hanging in Martinez 156 years ago

"You have been convicted almost entirely upon circumstantial evidence, but the circumstances, in the opinion of the jury and the court, point it to your guilt as directly and positively as if the murder had been witnessed and testified to by competent and credible witnesses. The court condemns you to prepare for the other world, to make confession of your sins, and to rely solely upon your God. The judgment of the court is, that you, Manuel Juarez, be reprimanded to the custody of the Sheriff of the county of Contra Costa, and be by him confined in the county jail, and be there kept until Friday, the 28th day of June next, and on that day, by the proper officer appointed by law, between the hours of 12:00 o'clock noon and 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, you be hanged by the neck until you are dead. May God have mercy on your soul!"



Mrs. Elizabeth Robinson lived alone about one-fourth of a mile from Martinez, an older lady in her early to mid-70s of age. Elizabeth appears in the 1860 census. She was aged 75, her occupation is a "wash woman", the value of her real estate was \$200.00, value of her personal estate was \$50.00 and she was born in Scotland.

Elizabeth was found murdered.

The body of the deceased was discovered lying upon the floor by the child of a neighbor, sometime during or before noon on Thursday, and upon this information a number of persons immediately repaired to the premise and found the lady in a night dress, upon the floor of the rear room, with the head, face, arms and hands horribly cut and gashed, and several stabs in the breast and throat, one of the latter being entirely through the neck, from front to back, near the body was a piece of candle and a candle stick;

And it is believed from the appearance, that the deceased arose by the noises made in entering the house, had arisen from bed, lighted the candle, and in

DREADFUL MURDER AT MARTINEZ—The residents of Martinez were shocked to learn, on Thursday morning last, that Mrs. Robinson, an aged woman dwelling alone, near the Catholic Church, had been found dead in her house, with every evidence that she had been most cruelly and brutally murdered. So shocking an occurrence, on being reported, necessarily occasioned an intense feeling of horror and much excitement in the village, from which come reports, disagreeing in some minor particulars, but agreeing as to material facts; and they may, in the absence of special information, be summed up as follows:

Excerpt: Contra Costa Gazette, December 29, 1866

entering the rear room from which the noises proceeded, received a severe blow upon the forehead, followed up by assault with the knife, against which, the gashes upon the hands and arms show that she made a protracted but unavailing struggle.

The floors of the house show blood tracks and upon one of the partitions, is the full print of a bloody hand, place there probably by the murderer, in groping his way through the dark;

There is also a mark of bloody fingers upon the sliding window, showing that

THE DEATH PENALTY—Preparations for the execution of Manuel, the murderer of Mrs. Robinson, on Friday the 28th inst, according to the terms of the sentence, were all made by the Sheriff, and unless some reprieve was received from the Governor, the execution was not probably delayed. But it is possible that, on account of an appeal for new trial some reprieve may have been granted, though no word of any had reached us at the hour of going to press on Friday.

Excerpt: Contra Costa Gazette, June 29, 1867

THE EXECUTION OF MANUEL—The execution of the half-breed Manuel, for the murder of Mrs. Robinson in December last, took place at the jail in Martinez, in compliance with the terms of the sentence, on Friday the 28th ult. The preparations had all been made under direction of Sheriff Classen, with view of avoiding any unnecessary publicity or any chance of painful delay that might protract the sufferings of the condemned victim. The

Excerpt: Contra Costa Gazette, July 06 1867

it was carefully drawn in, on his retreat from the premises. This object of the murderer was, undoubtedly money, as the deceased, who was about 70 plus

Continues on page 19



Neuroplasticity
by Jessica Raam Foster,
NeurologyofPresence.com

Stiff Neck?

Here's what may be happening, and why it matters.

The neck is a big deal. It connects your brain to your body, and everything that travels through it is required to keep you alive.

With all the important stuff inside it, you would think it would make sense to encapsulate our neck in a thick sheath of armor to keep it safe. And yet, the neck is this oddly vulnerable, thin, exposed, highly mobile hinge connecting our 11-pound head to our torso.

We give up stability and safety in order to have the flexibility to move our heads around (Being able to see is apparently more advantageous to survival), provided our brain feels safe.

If something goes wrong with anything above the neck (the head, the eyes, the tongue, ears, etc.,) or below the neck (your viscera, your pelvic floor, back, abs, shoulders, etc.,) the brain will lock that neck down with tension and/or pain in an effort to keep it safe. The brain will demand more stability, and our ability to move the neck freely will decrease.

Why does this matter? Neck pain aside, the reverse of what I said about everything impacting the neck is also true. Anything that hinders the neck has

the potential to negatively impact your vision, your breathing, your digestion, your balance, etc. A tight or painful neck can wreak havoc on the way you move and the way you feel.

But here's the good news: We can relieve neck tension by working on all of those things listed above. Cleaning up functional deficits in the eyes, the ears (balance), the tongue, the skull, your guts, the pelvic floor, "core work," etc., can all help literally get (and keep) your head on straight. Here are three suggestions for you to try:



1. Look up and look out. If you work on screens, this can be a big one. I recommend looking out a window for 20 seconds every 20 minutes.

2. Try pressing your tongue up to the roof of the mouth (it's supposed to be there).

3. Breathe low into your belly and

slowly exhale.

Try these suggestions for a few days and see if it improves your neck tension. And yes, a little awareness can go a long way. Think long thoughts with your neck as you try and carry that bowling ball around gracefully and gallantly through this crazy world.

Turning 65

Feeling overwhelmed with Medicare choices? Let me guide you! As your dedicated Medicare Insurance Broker, I provide expert advice tailored to your unique needs

Why Choose Me?

- ✓ In-depth Medicare Expertise ✓ Personalized Care
- ✓ Access to Various Insurance Plans ✓ Unbiased, Honest Advice
- ✓ FREE Consultation

Transition smoothly into your golden years with the right coverage.

Call today Walter Collazos 925-308-6898

We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all of your options. CA Lic #4154847



Professional Mobile Dental Hygiene Service that Caters to Home-Bound and Senior Living Communities.



SERVICES

- Dental Cleanings
- Topical Fluoride
- Blood Pressure
- Oral Assessment
- Periodontal Assessment
- Arresting Decay Treatment
- Oral Cancer Screening
- Hygiene Instruction
- Nutritional Counseling
- Saliva pH
- Dental Referrals as needed.
- and more...

State of the art portable equipment allows us to bring Travel To You Dental care directly to you.

Before beginning treatment, a free consultation is performed. Digital x-ray images are taken conservatively.

**Call for Appointment
(925) 474-4402**

www.travel2youdental.com

RDH# 22460
RDHAP # 919
NPI # 1558080994
julie@travel2youdental.com

CEI PACE Care for Every Part of You.



CENTER FOR ELDER'S
independence

Your life just got better

At the **Center For Elders' Independence (CEI)**, seniors aged 55 and above receive all their medical services through a personalized PACE program that adapts to their needs.

We provide transportation to their doctor's appointments and to our health centers, where they can get help with their daily routines, exercise, and even make new friends. Most importantly, our program provides home care so seniors can stay where they feel their best: at home.

Because caring for every aspect of our seniors' health means taking good care of the little things that make them whole.



Visit **Elders.org**
or call **844.326.1150**

For the Love of Pets
by Jill Hedgecock, Jillhedgecock.com

Summer Foods You Should Not Give Your Dog

Are you bringing Fido on your picnics? Be careful with what you share. Fruits might seem like a nice treat to a dog's diet, but some fruits can be deadly. Grapes and raisins are extremely toxic to canines. If your dog sneaks these off your picnic plate, the after-effects can go beyond vomiting and diarrhea, your pup can even have kidney failure. The pits of cherries, peaches, and plums contain a type of cyanide that can wreak havoc on a dog's intestines. Plus, larger pits can pose a choking hazard or result in intestinal blockage. Lemons and limes contain psoralens that are harmful to dogs.

Many humans cannot fathom life without chocolate, but chocolate contains caffeine and a chemical called theobromine, both of which can be harmful. In general, dark chocolate, like the kind in baking squares and gourmet dark chocolate, is the most dangerous type for our canine companions. If your dog is vomiting, has diarrhea, and making frequent trips to the water bowl, you should visit the veterinarian. In severe situations, muscle tremors, seizures, and heart failure are possible.

Even some meats can be problematic for dogs if they are high in salt and fat such as bacon, ham, and trimmed fat. The salt content of bacon can be high enough to cause pancreatitis. Bones that splinter like ribs and chicken wings can be a choking hazard and cause mouth wounds. Onions and garlic might bring great flavors into your barbeque meats, but these foods can cause anemia, which may prove fatal.

Macadamia nuts can cause vomiting, muscle tremors, and clumsiness because they affect a dog's nervous system and body temperature. Other nuts that can harm your dog include black walnuts, raw cashews, and pistachio nuts.



Photo from 2022 Dog Surfing World Championship, Pacifica CA, 6 August 2022. Photo by Jack Owicki.

welcome on board The Redwood Valley Railway, also known as the Tilden Steam Train at 2481 Grizzly Peak Blvd, in Orinda. The rail cars are open air with benches. This steam railway navigates a 15-minute loop through a coastal redwood forest, across a bridge, and into a tunnel. On clear days, a view of the Bay is possible. Open Saturday, Sunday, and holidays from 11 am - 6 pm year-round, and from 11 am - 5 pm on weekdays during summer. The cost is \$4 per person. Kids under 2 are free. A five-ride ticket costs \$16.

World Championships for Dog Surfing.

The World Championships for Dog Surfing will take place in Pacifica at Linda Mar Beach on August 5. This fun event will feature the world's top dog surfers as they compete for the Golden Surfie Award. During the event, there will be a dog beach fashion contest, dog adoptions, partner tents and activities, and much more. This event is free to attend.

All Aboard! Take Your Dog on a Train Ride.

Leashed dogs of any size are

Jill Hedgecock, author "Between Shadow's Eyes," "From Shadow's Perspective," "Rhino in the Room," and the sequel "Queen of the Rhino."

aRt Cottage
by FROgard
www.artcottage.info

Best Gallery, aRt Cottage, Hosts "60 Years of Art" Celebration

The art Cottage was just recognized for the second time in the July edition of Diablo Magazine as the Readers Pick, Best East Bay Gallery 2023. It was also recognized in 2021. JOR Fine Art Gallery in Clayton is named runner up gallery. One and two, well done to both of them.

The Concord Art Association (CAA) is celebrating 60 years of art at none other than the aRt Cottage. Paintings from local CAA artists will be on exhibit (and for sale) until August 25.

Meet the artists at the open house and artist reception on Saturday July 8, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. There will be live music by Concord's own Roy Gonzales as he plays 60s songs on his 12-string guitar. Drinks and refreshments will be served. Mix and mingle with the crowd and dress like the 60s if you like. This is a free public event and all are welcome.

"CAA has successfully worked in collaboration with the aRt Cottage for many years putting on high quality shows and generating significant sales," states Sharon Peterson, vice president and show chair.

CAA is the oldest art association in Contra Costa county. It has been active in public art with the utility boxes which can be seen throughout Concord. CAA also has venues throughout the city at libraries, the Visit Concord Center, the Galindo House, and pop-ups in the Todos Santos Park. It also participates in Concord's Fourth of



Linda Curtis

July parade while an upcoming show at Studio 55 on Howe Avenue in Martinez is planned for August.

Founded in 1963, CAA is a 501c3 non-profit organization that "works to cultivate and enrich the creative lives of local artists and Concord area residents through exhibits, education, public art and community giving." Members include artists, crafters, makers, enthusiasts and supporters of the arts."

This is certainly an active group with lots of opportunities. To join or volunteer or



Linda Curtis

arf **ARF ADOPTION STARS**
Looking for a furry friend? Visit arflife.org to view all of ARF's adoptable animals.

Ginger



Two-year-old Ginger has lived the life of a pampered pup since her adventures on the island.

She traded in her coconuts for plush beds and gourmet treats. Ginger may have left the island, but she brings her adventurous spirit with her wherever she goes.

Wouldn't you like to travel to a sun-soaked location with Ginger by your side? Ginger has a positive history with other dogs.

She currently weighs 37 pounds.

ARF Dog adoption fees: \$250 for an adult dog, \$375 for a puppy (<6 months), \$150 for a special-needs dog, \$200 for a special-needs puppy (<6 months), and \$150 for a senior dog (7+ years).

ARF Cat adoption fees: \$125 for an adult cat, \$175 for a kitten (<6 months), \$200 for two adult cats, \$300 for two kittens, \$75 for a special-needs cat, \$100 for a special-needs kitten (<6 months), and \$75 for a senior cat (7+ years). Adoption fees are waived for US military Veterans.

Noel



Eight-year-old Noel is a cutie with beautiful blue eyes who takes a little while to warm up. Once she does, she is a cuddle bug! Noel's affectionate nature extends beyond just physical affection. She enjoys being involved in her human's daily activities and will often find a cozy spot nearby to observe and offer silent companionship! Take her home and make her your best friend! Noel has a positive history with other cats. She may do well with cat-friendly dogs. Noel is being cared for in a foster home, so is available by appointment only. Please email ambassador@arflife.org if you are interested in adopting her.

to view CAA's member gallery and works online, go to: concordartassociation.org/gallery.

aRt Cottage is located at 2238

Mount Diablo Street in Concord. Open Wednesday through Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m..

Around Martinez



Brianne Zorn,
Martinez Mayor
bzorn@cityofmartinez.org

Martinez Soil

Safe to Eat Home-Grown Vegetables

At the much-anticipated meeting on June 8 of the Martinez Refining Company (MRC) Oversight Committee, the toxicologist reported on the results of the soil sampling and the risk assessment. The main takeaway?

It is safe to eat vegetables grown in Martinez soil.

The toxicologist hired by Contra Costa Health determined that the spent catalyst released from MRC in November 2022 did not increase risk to public health from exposure to hazardous metals in the soil. The associated health advisory has also been lifted.

The toxicologist collected 14 soil samples in Martinez based on dust fallout mapping by the Air District. Metals detected in the soil samples were within an expected range of levels typically found in the state. Further, metals detected did not appear in similar ratios or quantities to spent catalyst dust

samples collected shortly after dust was reported in Martinez over Thanksgiving weekend 2022.



Shutterstock

While there has been frustration with the time that has passed to receive the results of this sampling, we all were relieved at this outcome. Members of the public have been clear they do not want it to stop there and I want to reassure everyone that

it will not. While these results end this phase of the investigation, county officials are now moving forward with the root cause analysis to identify what went wrong and how to prevent these types of releases in the future.

The Martinez city government is improving relationships with refinery leadership to advocate for the citizens and neighbors of Martinez. We are also moving forward on Martinez-specific alerts and other policy actions to protect the health and well-being of our community.

Dam Hero: Give the Beaver a Name Contest

In 2006, a pair of beavers arrived at Alhambra Creek in Martinez and became the center of attention with their impressive engineering skills. These industrious creatures quickly captured the hearts of the community and were responsible for the famous "Give a Dam" campaign. A new Beaver Mascot made a surprise appearance at the Annual King of the County Festival this year and needs a name!

Join the "Dam Hero: Give a Beaver a Name Contest!" and play a part in commemorating the beavers' of Alhambra Creek in Martinez. Let's celebrate their contribution to the community and their inspiring dam-building skills.

Contest Terms

Submit your Name Suggestions. Come up with creative, fun, and fitting names for the newest Beaver in the City of Martinez.

Submit as many names as you like! Each name should reflect the beaver's personality, their impact on the community, or any other clever idea you have in mind.

Submit your name suggestions by visiting our official contest website or sending an email to info@martinezchamber.com. Make sure to include your contact

information along with your name suggestions. Enter your email address in comments section after submitting your NAME entry so that we can notify you via email if you are chosen as the winner.

Share the contest with your friends, family, and the community, so they can join in the fun! Encourage them to participate and submit their own name suggestions.

A panel of judges, including a representative of the John Muir Historical Site, select community members, and representatives from the Martinez Chamber Board of Directors will carefully review all the entries.

They will consider factors such as creativity, relevance, and the connection between the name and the beavers' story.

Prizes

First Place: The winning name will be officially adopted for our Martinez Chamber Beaver Mascot. The Winner will receive a certificate of recognition, a gift basket filled with beaver themed goodies and a \$500 Hotel Savings Card (Must be 21 to enter) Winner will be announced on our Facebook Page after judging is complete and contacted shortly thereafter.

Contest Ends: July 31, 2023

Enter online: namecontests.com/ciewipge



CA Lic #FD1006

OUIMET BROS.



CONCORD FUNERAL CHAPEL

Burial | Cremation | Catering

Providing funeral home, burial, and cremation services for Concord for over 60 years. Our friendly and professional staff is at your service - 24/7.

Call Us: 925-682-4242

Keith Collins - Managing Partner
Founders
John & Sharon Ouimet
Don & Bea Ouimet

4125 Clayton Road
Concord
925-682-4242
fax 925-682-4281

ouimetbrothers.com



You don't need A-Lotto \$ to afford a new AUTO!

There's no better time than **NOW** to get approved. Best of all, we've got you covered!

Check out the APR's on New and Used!!

www.SWSFCU.org or Call 925-228-4545



*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Rates of 4% and 4.5% reflect the as low as rate. Current and new members eligible. Loan amount and terms subject to approval; your rate may be different depending on loan amount, term, credit score and other factors. Rates are subject to change. Membership eligibility requirements apply.

Plans to Expand, Enhance Mt. Wanda Begin to Take Shape

Park site set for new trail connections and amenities in coming years

by Craig Lazzeretti, Martinez News and Views

The City Council recently received an update on comprehensive plans for upgrades to Mt. Wanda, which was named after Muir's daughter, whom he would take on hikes of the mountain during his years living in Martinez.

As many of you likely know, Mt. Wanda is located just south of Highway 4 off Alhambra Avenue, a proverbial hop, skip and jump from the historic Muir home just north of the highway.

John Muir National Historic Site Superintendent K. Lynn Berry presented the plan to the council at its June 7 meeting. The planning process began back in 2018 but has been delayed by staffing turnover and shortages and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key elements of the plan include acquisition by the National Park Service (NPS) of the 44-acre West Hills Farm parcel through a donation from the John Muir Land Trust, and development of the Strentzel Valley trailhead that will include several new trail connections and amenities.

Berry explained that the trailhead will provide new access to Mt. Wanda with 10 to 15 parking spaces, a bus entry point to allow for the NPS to host school groups, a picnic area, and a pavilion that will host education programs and "command lovely views" of the park.

"This is the only relatively flat area within all of Mt. Wanda, and so within this valley we are able to propose a new accessible trail loop that goes through the valley," Berry said.

Berry also noted that the trailhead

plan calls for an "administrative campsite."

"We'd like to host trails crews, invasive-plant management crews...or even researchers that might come," Berry said.

A previous iteration of the plan had envisioned a science and education center at the site, it was decided to dedicate the space to natural resource staff and equipment, Berry said.

Implementation of the entire plan is expected to take 15 to 20 years, Berry said. While the plan itself falls under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, Berry expressed a desire to work with the city on connecting Mt. Wanda to the city's newly acquired Alhambra Highlands. She noted that the NPS has received numerous requests from the community to explore such a connection.

Berry also expressed interest in working with the city on improving the city-owned dirt parking lot off Alhambra Avenue that serves as the primary entry point to Mt. Wanda, including the possibility of paving and increasing the lot's capacity.

Read the entire article at martineznewsandviews.substack.com/



Wanda Muir-Hannah, for whom Mt. Wanda was named. Photo courtesy of National Park Service

Armando's Founder Recognized for Contributions

The Martinez Arts Association (MAA) presented the fourth annual Community Arts Award to Roy Jeans on Monday, June 5, at Luigi's Deli in Martinez.

Roy is the founder of Armando's, a local music venue in Martinez that enjoyed great popularity until closing a couple of years ago. He has since been scouting new locations and in the meantime, has set up a robust schedule of music at Luigi's Deli in Martinez. Roy received a \$500 check in recognition of his contribution to the local music scene.

In 2020, the MAA Board of Directors decided to create a Community Arts Award to recognize and support an innovative contributor to community arts, as well as offset lost income due to the pandemic lockdowns. Beginning in 2020, MAA had to cancel Art in the Park for two years in a row, their



Dorrie Langley, president, Martinez Arts Association awards Roy Jeans a \$500 check in recognition of his contribution to the local music scene

biggest annual fundraising event. This event typically supports over 60 local artists and several local bands. Although life has mostly returned to normal, the MAA will continue funding a Community Arts Award going forward.

The MAA funds this award through events, grants, and membership dues. Founded in 1968 as a nonprofit organization, the MAA organizes and participates in many community events throughout the year. MAA's goal is to

encourage art culture and education for the local community. Fundraising proceeds provide scholarships to graduating seniors as well as art grants for elementary through high school teachers.

For more details about MAA, please visit www.martinezarts.org.

Makers Market Comes to Main Street July 15

Whether you are looking for your next piece of home decor or in search of great dining options, the Downtown Makers Market, July 15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. is the place to be.

Featuring 100 plus local vendors including the Makers Movement will be offering their wares of locally-made, vintage and antique goods. Shoppers can always expect to discover something special at this unique event.

In addition, talented chalk artists will present spectacular themed artwork at the Main Street Plaza while live music keeps you entertained.

Admission is FREE. Bring the kids, dogs are okay, too.

JULY 15 | DOWNTOWN
10AM - 4PM | MARTINEZ

DOWNTOWN MARTINEZ
MAKERS MARKET

SHOP SMALL BUSINESS & LOCAL MAKERS
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT & CHALK ARTISTS
DOWNTOWNMARTINEZ.ORG

DOWNTOWN
Martinez & CO.

Finding a Home: Is It Luck or Your Mindset?

by Courtney Ayers, Breaking Ground Real Estate, Dre #02121181

Have you ever been in the market to buy a home struggling to get an offer accepted? It is beyond frustrating when trying to find a home and it is not working out, especially knowing some people find a home right away. You may feel like it is all just the luck of the draw; however, there could be many factors in play and mindset and attitude are huge ones. Here are a couple examples of how mindset and attitude aided in successful transactions.

Client 1 and I just closed escrow (meaning the house sold) on a home here in Martinez. We found the house in our first week searching. It is a charming and well cared for home. Although it could use some updates, a concession Client was willing to make, it was their first and only offer. I could not be happier for them.

Client 2 was looking for a home expecting to use the DREAM program for their 20% down — but that program collapsed.

Undeterred and determined, they began searching for homes at a lower price point. However, we were looking in a city priced out of their budget just hoping that something would eventually come up. That area was not going to work out for them and so they adjusted their criteria again.

I brought them here in Martinez where we found a home after one week of looking. The sale is now pending and we are all extremely excited for them to move into their new home.

What lucky dogs clients 1 and 2 are,

right? No, not really. They both shared some similarities that helped them successfully secure their homes.

Both clients were highly motivated, decisive, open and flexible. Client 1 was very flexible about size and finishes while client 2 was very flexible about adjusting their expectations and open to exploring a new location. They were both pulled the trigger immediately when they found a good match. And they were also both very realistic in terms of their expectations of what their money would be able to purchase in a given area.

Often, expectations do not match reality. Many buyers are genuinely shocked that \$1 million was not going to get them their dream home or even a home free of any work.

The area you are looking in largely determines what your money will buy in a home. If you are not getting what you want in a particular area, then be open to either adjusting your criteria or looking in a new location.

If you dig your feet in the ground and refuse to adjust any criteria, you are likely to be unsuccessful and disappointed. Being flexible really is key.

It all comes back to mindset. Do not try to fight the market or dwell on what you should have bought five years ago. Keep your focus on the present, be flexible, be ready to decide and be realistic. With an open mind, the entire process will be easier and more fun.

Main Street Arts: Releasing my Super Nova

Main Street Arts Presents Lana Fly "Releasing my Super Nova" July 7 to July 30, 2023.

Born in 1975, Lana Fly grew up in Ontario, Canada. Passionate and creative as a young adult, Lana received a BA in Visual Arts in 1997 from the University of Western Ontario, Canada. She went on to a successful career in software engineering which she abandoned in 2019 to follow her heart. Lana now resides with her three children and husband in Northern California.

"I love creating large scale paintings because it enables me access to a full range of movement and provides a space to hold my intensity. I access my raw unfiltered emotions and thoughts to drive my dance on the canvas.

Free from my logical mind I explode through color and movement - unshackled, aggressive, spontaneous, vibrant, intense, playful, curious and uninhibited.

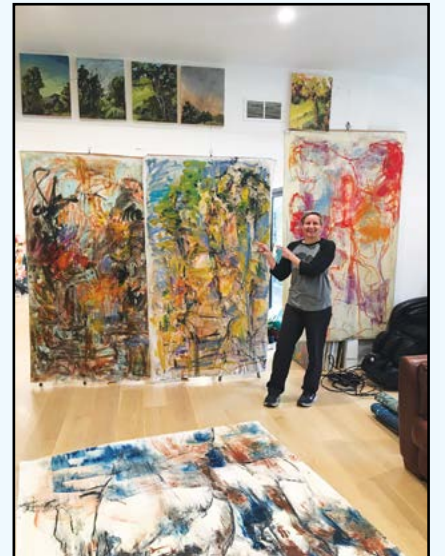
Painting allows me to tap into my primal self and it leaves me feeling exhilarated and euphoric."

All are invited to meet Lana and view her works at the Artist's Reception on July 8, 4 – 6 p.m.

Scan the qr code to preview the show.



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



"My Backyard" by Lana Fly 30" x 40" Oil on Canvas



Hanging, Continued from page 14

years of age but, by a long life of toil, had accumulated some property, and may have been supposed to have money with her in the house, which appears to have undergone a search after the life of the owner had been taken;

Whether he found any money does not appear to be known but it is believed a bank book showing deposits, to the amount of about \$1000.00 was taken away.

Mrs. Elizabeth Robinson was buried at Alhambra Cemetery in Martinez, California.

The Execution of Manuel

The execution of the half-breed Manuel, for the murder of Mrs. Robinson in December last took place at the jail in Martinez, and compliance with the terms of the sentence, on Friday the 29th (of June, 1867).

The preparations had all been made under the direction of Sheriff Classen with a view of avoiding any unnecessary publicity or any chance of painful delay that might protract the suffering of the condemned victim. The prisoner's spiritual advisors, Reverend Fathers Vicente and Arden, spent the morning and a portion of the previous night with him and attended him to the scaffold.

The jail yard fence was carried up to a height that concealed the platform and beam from view on the outside, and a number of citizens were present within, by invitation of upper sheriff, as witnesses of the execution of the laws sentence, while a very small number were gathered

upon the outside.

The prisoner was led out from his cell at 1:00 o'clock PM and having been placed on the platform, the death warrant was read by the Sheriff and interpreted to him by Mr. Matthews, through whom he was told that he was at liberty to say anything he might have a desire to say before execution of the sentence; whereupon he said in substance in a few minutes.

"I shall be in the presence of my God, and now declare that I am innocent of the crime for which I have been condemned to die; And what I have previously confessed, I did in hope of escaping punishment."

Signifying, that he had nothing more to say, the cap, and rope were adjusted, and all being ready, the signal was given by the sheriff, and he dropped fell at 13 minutes after 1:00 o'clock and two minutes later by the watch, the body was examined by the surgeon, doctor C.A. Ruggles and life was found to be extinct and this death is believed to have been instantaneous, as no movement of the limbs was observed after the fall. - Contra Costa Gazette July 6, 1867

[There is no record of where Manuel Jaurez was buried, so he has been lost in time for all these 100-plus years. The burning question now was this a shoddy investigation because Manuel was a "half-breed"?? Or did he really do it? We may never know!]

Sources: Contra Costa Gazette - December 1866, June and July 1867

Find a Grave

Your Local Real Estate Agents

Serving Buyers and Sellers with Expertise, Honesty and Passion



We aren't just Agents we are proud members of the community. We love to host fun community Events and hope to see you at one soon!

Events

- FREE Movie Nights
- FREE Wine Tastings
- Monthly Giveaways
- Community Events

Full Service

- Sellers and Buyers agents
- Consultations
- Marketing
- Light staging
- FREE Home Valuations

Walks

- Join us Wednesdays for walks around the region

FREE Home Valuations!

For your Current and Future Real Estate Needs

925-818-9649



Angelica Martinez



Courtney Ayers



(925) 705-3135
angelica@BreakingGroundRE.com
License DRE #01716724
Broker, SRES, MRP, epro

(925) 818-9649
courtney@BreakingGroundRE.com
License DRE #02121181
Real Estate Buyer and Seller Agent

Views of the Valley

Photos by Micah



Concord's World Famous Blue Devils entertained opening night of Thursday's Music and Market Concert Series at Todos Santos Park June 1. Above, scenes from a well-attended Career Exposition at Martinez Adult Education on May 3.



The 14th Beaver Festival recognizes the beaver as an environmental superhero. This popular nature festival featured live animals, live music, education, art, and a lot of fun for kids.

Upper left, a participant in Clayton's 2nd annual Pride Parade has a simple message for all. Top: Martinez car Show "Passion to the Streets" at Allhambra High School. Left: Walnut Creek Art and Wine Festival at Heather Farms. Above: Pleasant Hill Art and Wine Festival downtown.



King of the County BBQ over Fathers Day Weekend at Martinez Waterfront Park. featured delicious food, crafts, live music, rides, beer and wine and of course BBQ Contest.

Co Co Farms™

CONCORD

2366 STANWELL CIRCLE
CONCORD, CA 94520

CELEBRATING OUR

1 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

ENJOYTHEFARM.COM

MUST BE 21+ State License #C 12-0000444-LIC