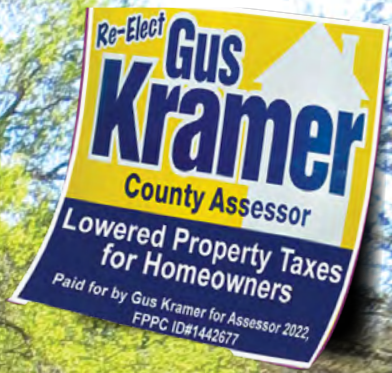


The Diablo Gazette

Arts, Entertainment and All That's *Good* in Our Communities
 Concord, Clayton, Walnut Creek, Martinez, Pleasant Hill
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APRIL 2022



Volunteers plant 40+ trees at New Hall Park in Concord as part of a statewide campaign to plant 2,000 urban forest trees.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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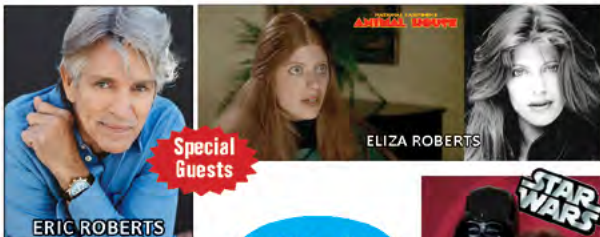
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www.ContraCostaCon.com

2:30 pm Family
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Clayton Business & Community Association Presents

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25th
 ANNIVERSARY

FESTIVAL IN DOWNTOWN CLAYTON

Saturday April 23rd 10am - 7pm
 Sunday April 24th 10am - 5pm



www.claytoncbca.org



Peter Cloven
Mayor, Clayton, CA
peter@claytonca.gov



Clayton Police Chief Moves on November Tax Initiative Under Consideration



Clayton Police Chief Elise Warren, 2018. Photo courtesy of Jane Tyska/Bay Area News Group

As any employer knows, finding good talent in this market is a challenge and can be expensive. The city of Clayton has learned that lesson on a few occasions in the past three years with the multiple changes in staff in the positions of City Manager, City Finance Director, and Community Development Director. After substantive search, Clayton has been fortunate to find hard working, diligent staff sitting in those positions currently. It appeared that staffing stability was finally something we could look forward to in the future.

Unfortunately, the City recently received news that Police Chief Warren is moving on to another position in Contra Costa County that will provide her with a better opportunity and resources. Chief Warren has been a constant in the significant staffing transition that has occurred during the past three years. She is well respected within our community and by the police staff. We thank her for her service. She will be missed.

As a City, Clayton needs to evaluate the cause of staff turnover and the associated costs. As Clayton's population grows, our staffing has remained constant, causing additional burdens on existing staff. Clayton has the same training, reporting, and technical requirements as moderate to larger cities in Contra Costa County. However, our pay scale is 20 to 30% lower than other cities in the County. Why would a prospective employee come

work in Clayton for the same effort than at another city at a lower pay rate? How important is it to our residents to have a consistent city staff that feels valued and fairly compensated?

The city council recently reviewed a 10-year financial forecast which shows that general fund revenue will be less than pending expenses in the Fiscal Year 2023.

There has never been a proposal to raise our General Fund revenues in the history of Clayton. Tax measures for specific projects (e.g., park, landscaping) have passed, but none for the general fund from which ~65% is used for labor.

There are many saying we should "just tighten our belts." I concur, we can, but at what costs?

Given that less than 7% of our property tax bill flow through to the city of Clayton, what avenues exist to create more revenue? We do not have the commercial base for an increase in sales tax to substantially impact potential needs. Clayton has some tough choices ahead of us.

As a council, we desire your input in upcoming budget discussions. Together, let's figure out what is important to us, who we want to be as a City, and what solutions make the best sense for all of Clayton.

Please contact Mayor Peter Cloven at peterc@claytonca.gov or 925-673-7320.

Publisher's Notes

By David King

Easter Dessert Down Memory Lane

With Easter comes Easter dinner. Surprisingly, I have no Easter specific recipes in this edition, so I decided to tap into Mrs. Butterbanks, (Sam Bowerbanks) dessert recipes. This was her last Easter submission, April 2019. Sam passed away in June 2019. We miss you Sam.

"Spring always brings us the best selection of berries. Fresh, sweet and tart, they are so versatile for baking...or to just pop in our mouths. Blackberries can be a little on the tart side sometimes, but they make a fabulous cobbler, especially when served warm with either heavy cream poured on top or whipping cream. Most people stick with making apple or peach cobbler, but it's fun to branch out with a berry one. Try this beauty out to the delight of your Easter gathering (also delicious on all other days)."

Blackberry Cobbler

1 cup flour (you can use Gluten free also)
1 1/4 sugar
1 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt
6 TBSP cold butter
1/4 boiling water
2 TBSP cornstarch
1/4 cup cold water
1 TBSP lemon juice
1/4 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp vanilla
4 cups fresh blackberries (rinsed and drained well)



Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Lightly spray an 8x8 baking dish with cooking spray. In a large bowl, mix the flour, 1/2 cup of sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut in the butter until it resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in the 1/4 cup of boiling water until it's mixed evenly.

In a separate bowl, dissolve the cornstarch in the 1/4 cup cold water, mix in the lemon juice, vanilla and cinnamon. Mix in the remaining 1/2 cup of sugar and the blackberries. Transfer the berry mixture to your baking dish, place in the oven for 8 minutes. Remove and drop your dough by spoonfuls. Place your dish on a baking sheet (to prevent spills) and bake for 22-25 mins, until the dough is golden brown. Enjoy! Happy Easter.

Concord Council Allocates Residual Funds to City Priorities

Concord City Council has decided how to allocate residual funds for the coming year.

To start, Council is funding the return of 17 essential positions across the City. These positions will stabilize City operations and allow for the return of certain services that were reduced during the pandemic, such as re-opening the police department lobby, returning some code enforcement and parks programs, and address maintenance needs of our parks, buildings, and roadways.

CAPITAL PROJECTS - Council also directed one-time dollars into the City's five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which is a robust plan to invest in the significant improvement of Concord's roads and infrastructure. Construction will kick-off Citywide in spring of 2023. The Fiscal Years 2022-23 and 2023-24 CIP will be reviewed by the community and Council in May and June of this year.

UNFUNDED PERSONNEL LIABILITIES - The Council voted to allocate \$2.6 million in one-time General Fund residual funds and an additional \$1.4 million annually from the General Fund to strengthen the City's long-term fiscal position. Unfunded personnel liabilities

create risk to the City's future if not addressed.

HOMELESS SERVICES - Homelessness has become an increasing priority for the Concord community. Council allocated \$2.4 million of the Measure V one-time funds into a holding account until they can figure out how to best utilize the funds to have a positive impact that addresses community concerns.

This funding is in addition to the funds already dedicated by Council to increasing services for the Coordinated Outreach Referral & Engagement (CORE) and Mental Health Evaluation Team (MHET) programs.

FEDERAL FUNDING -The City of Concord is fortunate to be granted \$27 million in one-time federal recovery dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Council previously allocated \$8 million to fund the City's COVID testing program for staff and to provide essential services when revenues fell short during the pandemic. For the remaining \$19 million. Council will receive a presentation to hear the community's feedback on spending priorities on April 26, and they are expected to allocate the funding in June of 2022.



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From Music to Murals, Concord Celebrates Its Creative Legacy



Spring is the season of new beginnings, and the perfect time to share some exciting news about special events and happenings coming soon to Concord.

On Friday, May 27th, the Concord Historical Society will officially dedicate the stage inside its historic event center to the late, great jazz legend and Concord native, Dave Brubeck. The gala event will celebrate Dave's life and musical career, along with a special live performance by his sons, Dan and Chris.

During his career, Dave performed on stage at the former Masonic Hall that is to be dedicated in his honor, as well as at the famed Concord Jazz Festival. The site of the festival's first location, Concord Boulevard Neighborhood Park, was later renamed Dave Brubeck Park. Dave also used his stature in the music world to oppose the social injustices at that time. Considering his many African American friends, fellow performers and band members, Dave refused to play venues and locations that supported segregation.

The dedication ceremony will be the first major musical event held at the venue since its recent restoration, and the organization's primary fundraiser for the year. Attendance is limited and expected to sell out, so don't miss out on your chance to be a part of this uniquely Concord, one night only, event.

Tickets sell for \$100-\$150 and are available for purchase at concordhistorical.org, in addition to a variety of sponsorship levels for businesses and individuals interested in supporting the event.

There's also great news for those who love the visual arts. Creative Concord, a comprehensive arts initiative is currently underway and will culminate with a month-long celebration in June. The program has commissioned top artists to create multiple, larger-than-life, contemporary Concord-centric murals at designated locations throughout the city. When completed, the murals will be an iconic community gift for generations to come and will significantly elevate Concord's image as a culturally vibrant, art experience destination.

The project is supported by Visit Concord, City of Concord, Concord Chamber of Commerce, and many others, in partnership with Local Edition. For information about Creative Concord sponsorship opportunities, contact Sage Loring at sage@localeditioncreative.com, or visit VC Creative Concord.

And, just a reminder that if you're planning to travel to Concord, or welcome family or friends in the coming weeks or months for any of these great events, now is the time to book your hotel stay. Please feel free to contact us if we can assist in any way.

The Concord Visitor Center is located at 2151 Salvio Street, Suite T, in Concord. Contact us at info@visitconcord.com or 925-685-1182. Website: www.visitconcordca.com.

We look forward to seeing you at these great Concord events soon!



L-R: Odyssey Coach Renee - Culp/5th Grade Teacher, Bailey McNeel - Caird, Kiera Caldwell, Hannah Laverick, Emma Forrester, Avica Bennett, Charlotte King, Carly Grover

Mt. Diablo Elementary Wins Odyssey of the Mind State Competition, Next Up, the World

Congratulations to Mt. Diablo Elementary's Odyssey of the Mind team who just won the state competition on March 26 for the 3rd-5th grade division. They will be advancing to World Finals May 25-28 at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa.

The competition is a thinking outside of the box challenge. Teams are given a choice of challenges of different disciplines: Technical/engineering, classical (literature), or performance.

The seven all-girl team chose performance with the theme, Life is a Circus. The task was to perform three circus acts with imaginary animals in an eight-minute skit. Sound easy? They had to brainstorm and perform a story plot, the circus acts, the imaginary animals, build costumes for the animals, design and

build a set. They were limited to a maximum budget of \$125.

The team came up with a candy-themed circus. "One of the animals imagined was a cotton candy animal," said team coach Renee Culp. "She glued cotton balls all over her body." Another animal was a red and black winged licorice villain. Acts included tightrope walking, juggling, balloons and Tic Tacs stunts.

Odyssey of the Mind (OM™) teaches students how to develop and use their natural creativity to become problem solvers. OM also emphasizes teamwork, budgeting, time management, public speaking, and so much more.

Congratulations! Good Luck in Iowa!



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DEADLINE: MAY 15, 2022
Winners notified by email & stories published in June issue of B&P

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Runner Up: \$100 CASH + \$25 Amazon Gift Card & Publication in Books 'N Pieces Magazine
2nd Runner Up: \$50 CASH & Publication in Books 'N Pieces Magazine

THEME: A fictionalized story using a current event. Don't retread an event, but use it as an idea upon which to build a great story—**ANY GENRE, Length 7000 words max.** No excessive sex, violence or discriminatory plots. **ENTRY FORM** and complete instructions on our website (SUBMISSIONS menu). Low entry fee \$7 to cover costs

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the concordian
by Edi Birsan, EdiBirsan@gmail.com

Crime and Punishment in Contra Costa

Petition to Return Local Courts



We are not doing enough to protect our families in their homes, on the street or while shopping. I am leading a petition drive to tell the Board of Supervisors we want local courts with power to adjudicate and enforce all laws (link below).

If crime is at our doorstep, we must also see justice from our doorstep.

The torments, justifications and consequences of crime and punishment would fill quite a tome and no compendium here would suffice.

We have seen a large increase in crimes, especially of low-level crimes, many of which go unreported. Our awareness of the disregard for our persons, our property, our homes, communities, and institutions is unprecedented in this century. From seeing Porch Pirates on our all-observant doorbells, smash and grabs in our malls, and video images of riots and people storming the Congress in session, the blatant breakdown of justice and any sense of guilt from the perpetrators wail through the community like a roadkill skunk on a cul-de-sac.

At the core of all this, there is a lack of simple civil respect for one another.

There is a failure to see offensive behavior corrected and new direction restored within the offenders. Without signs of any awareness of their impact on the victims, how can the victims feel that justice has been done? Criminality without consequence compounds itself in the eyes of the victims and allows the rot to fester in the soul of the offender.

Yet, to have punishment devoid of consideration of the turning the offender from their criminal path is to surrender to our emotional drive for revenge.

That is what is being played out now as we see a growing gap between those

that feel the criminal is unpunished and those that feel that there has not been enough done to reform/ remake/re-civilize the offender.

As gun sales surge, people are literally up in arms on the issue of crime and the retention of the criminal. In a recent running survey (www.PulseOfConcord.com) people report that while 27% believe that those ACCUSED of violent crimes should be allowed bail, 38% believe they should not and 28% think it is too complicated to decide.

As for someone who is arrested and accused of a similar crime while already out on bail, there is overwhelming support: 88% say that the accused should be held in jail awaiting trial without bail.

There is support for the return to local courts and a combined effort at restoring civilized conduct through the quick application of justice that tries to balance what the victim sees and what society hopes for in the criminal.

People believe that what we have is not working and a systemic change is needed with a view leaning towards the lower-level crimes being dealt with locally and allowing the central court to deal with the higher crimes.

As I often say, we must speak up. Government is either listening to us or to someone else.

<https://edibirsan.com/smash-and-grab-petition/>.

Views expressed are by EdiBirsan@gmail.com with great regard to Dostoevsky who spent hundreds of pages on the subject, but never lived in Contra Costa and had to deal with a Porch Pirate or a Catalytic Crook.

Concord PD's New Drone Finds Lost 6-Year-Old

On March 26, Concord P.D. shared their first deployment success of their new drone on the Concord Police Facebook page. That evening the Concord Police Department responded to a report of a missing 6-year-old juvenile with autism who had ran away from his house.

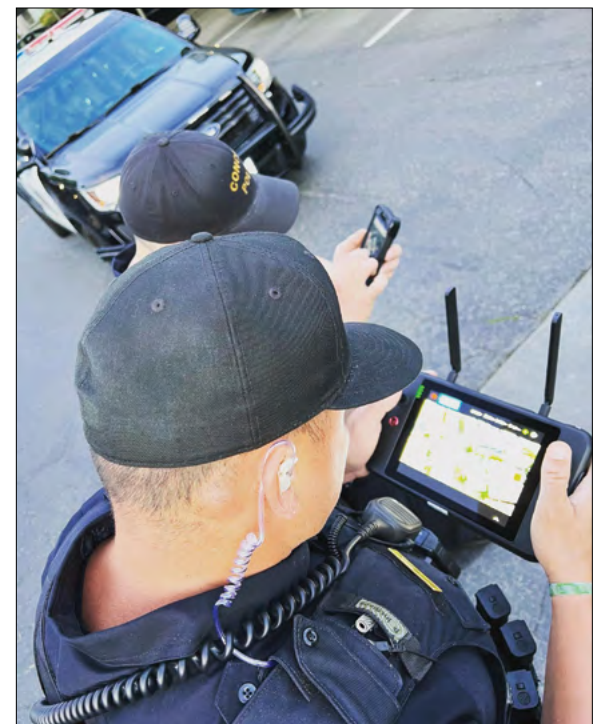
After checking the area, his mother called Concord Police for assistance. CPD. sent multiple Officers to the scene who began an intensive search for the juvenile. Pittsburg Police had also sent one of their K9 handlers and K9 partner to assist in the search.

Drone-certified operators deployed a drone and began a grid search for the child. In addition, multiple other Concord Police Officers from various districts and units joined in the search and a call out was made to the Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff's Search and Rescue team.

Within 20 minutes, the drone operator spotted the child in the quad area of an adjacent apartment complex which was not viewable from the street for officers driving by.

The drone operator notified the CPD officers who was able to retrieve the boy and return him unharmed to his mother.

This was the first CPD's official use of the new drone tool recently approved by



the City Council and Concord citizens. Not only did it quickly and safely locate the missing child, but it conserved resources by allowing the participating officers to promptly return to ongoing duties.

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

April 10 - 2nd installment of property taxes ara due.

April 15 - State and Federal income tax filing is due

April 17 - Easter

April 20 - 4/20 (Weed Day)

FUNDRAISERS



CONCORD ELKS HOSTS THE RED CROSS'S BLOOD DRIVE
 9am to 3pm **APRIL 9, 2022**
 Every donation of **\$3** Given can save **3** Lives

April 9 Red Cross Blood Drive hosted at Concord Elk Lodge, 3565 Clayton Rd. 9AM-3PM. By appointment. Call 1-800-733-2767 or Online at redcrossblood.org. Type in your zip code in the "find a Blood Drive" box in upper right corner. Scroll to April 9, 2022 Blood Drive and click on "see times". Select your time.

May 7 Bocce Tournament - Ipsen Family Bocce Park, Clayton. 16 teams, \$600 entry fee includes lunch. 1st Place \$1000, 2nd place \$600, 3rd Place \$400. Proceeds go to MDUSD Education Foundation. To register, email: middendorfpat@gmail.com or 1aaronlevy@gmail.com.



May 27 Dave Brubeck Stage Dedication Concord Historical Society - Celebrate Dave Brubeck's 102nd birthday and his performance on our stage in 1931, and stage dedication. special guest, Harold Jones. Sons, Dan and Chris Brubeck Quartet perform. Food & drinks in Galindo Gardens. Video screening of Dave Brubeck's musical life. 5:30 PM - 9:30 PM. Betty Barnes Hall. Tickets \$100- \$150. 1928 Clayton Rd. concordhistorical.org.

EVENTS

CLAYTON

APRIL 23-24 CBCA 25th Annual Art's And Wine Festival. Arts & Crafts, food court, carnival, Wine and beer, and live music. Downtown Clayton.

CONCORD

aRT Cottage Through April 28

"Watercolor - A Happy Medium" exhibit presenting the works from 15 of Bay Area's best Watercolor Association artists. Visitors vote on their favorite works for the "People's

Choice Awards" on April 23 artist reception. 2238 Mt. Diablo Street in Concord.

April 9 Mt. Diablo Branch California Writers Club -Stephanie Chandler will present "Advanced Book Marketing and Launch Strategies" 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM. Zoom meeting. Register online. Once registered, you will receive a link to the Zoom meeting. (\$10 members/ \$15 guests)

April 16 Tri-Valley Writers -Attorney Kelley Way will speak about "Lessons in Literary Law" at the Tri-Valley Writers meeting at 2:00 p.m. In Peson at Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard Rd. Pleasanton or by Zoom. Reserve and pay online by April 15. at www.trivalleywriters.org . Fees for CWC adult members are \$14; nonmembers, \$18. CWC student members (ages 14-



22), \$6; student nonmembers, \$10.

MARTINEZ

April 9 BAY AREA CRAFT BEER FEST Noon - 4PM The 2022 Bay Area Craft Beer Festival returns to Martinez Waterfront with over 50 local breweries and over 100 beers to sample including Home Brew! Local Breweries, live music, delicious food, vendors and more! The event is 21 years and over only. \$55

MAY 8 OPEN AIR MARKET 9AM-1PM featuring Vintage, Collectibles, Antiques, Arts & Crafts, and more. You will find us on the 800 block of Main St. during the Farmers' Market.

Farmers' Markets
Concord Tuesdays, 9:00am to 2:00pm, year-round, rain or shine. Todos Santos Plaza, Concord
Martinez Sundays, 9:00am to 2:00pm, year-round, 700 Main St.
Walnut Creek Kaiser 1425 South Main 10 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
 Rossmoor - Fridays 9:30am. to 1:00pm., Golden Rain Rd.
 Shadelands - Saturdays 9:00am.-1:00 pm. North Wiget Ln. and Mitchell Dr.
 Sunday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. North Locust St. between Cole and Lacassie St. (925) 431-8361 <http://www.cccfm.org>

WALNUT CREEK

April 22 The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society - 8PM - 10 PM Train show: The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society (WCMRS) operates the Diablo Valley Lines (DVL) model railroad, one of the most mountainous and one of the largest exclusively HO scale model railroads in the United States. Enjoy several running model trains running through miniature cities and mountainous terrain. 2751 Buena Vista Ave. Walnut Creek. (Admission): \$5 Adults, \$3. Children (6-12) / Seniors. FREE for kids 5 years and younger.

April 7 Sir Branch #19 Monthly Luncheon. Noon at the Greenery Restaurant in Walnut Creek. The guest speaker will be Deborah Allen, BART Director, Guests are welcome. SIR is a group of mature men who enjoy various activities and each other's company. All are welcome. Activities include weekly golf, bocce, bowling, wine tasting, dining out, day trips, and many others. If interested, visit us at www.sir19.org or call 925 338-1996.

ARTS/THEATRE/ MUSIC

CONCORD PAVILION
April 16 - 2 Cellos
May 25 - Steely Dan and Steve Winwood
May 29 Stone Soul Concert
 Ticket information @ livenation.com

May 1-2 Clayton Theatre Company will hold auditions for "Forbidden Broadway's Greatest Hits" May 1, 3-5pm, May 2, 7-9:30pm Endeavor Hall 6008 Center St., Clayton No appointment necessary. Proof of vaccination must be provided in order to audition. All ages over 18 are encouraged to audition. Please visit www.ClaytonTheatreCompany.com for audition information and to download the audition form. 925-334-0880

Clayton Theatre Company's Summer Stage 2022 will be held July 11-15, 18-22, 10am-1pm for children ages 6-16 at Endeavor Hall 6008 Center St., Clayton. The show will be Scenes from "You're A Good Man Charlie Brown". Please visit www.ClaytonTheatreCompany.com for camp information. 925-334-0880

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April 14-24 Spontaneous Charles Dickens, a completely improvised two-act comedy in the style of the inimitable novelist. Thursdays – Saturdays at 8:15 pm and Sundays at 3:15 pm. Buy Tickets Online at lesherartcenter.org or call 925-943-7469. \$25

April 15-May 7 "Our Town" - Thorton Wilder's 1938 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, remains one of the most enduring American plays of all time, reminding us to celebrate love, family, community, and the beauty in the ordinary.

Through June 19 Forced to Flee - By Studio Art Quilt Association. Thursday-Sundays, Bedford Gallery - A powerful and timely quilt exhibition illustrating the global challenges arising from the current refugee crisis affecting communities across the world. lesherartscenter.showare.com/

The City of Clayton Proudly Presents
Concerts in The Grove 2022
Saturdays 6:00pm to 8:30pm
 Downtown Clayton

May 7 Fundamentals	Fundamentals – A high-energy stage show with three dynamic lead vocalists, the hottest horn players around and a tight four-piece rhythm section, they have been performing their "Red Hot Rockin' Soul" for over 15 years. With songs by Michael Jackson, Earth Wind & Fire, Beyoncé to Journey and Bon Jovi, and your favorite R&B, rock, pop, and soul tunes. www.thefundamentals.com
May 21 Night Moves / Creedence Classic Revival	Night Moves/Creedence Classic Revival is a six-piece band with a high-energy performance of two amazing tribute bands in one. They will take you on a ride through the rock and roll classics of Seger and CCR that drives crowds of all ages to the dance floor. www.cseeger.com
June 4 Brickhouse	Brickhouse brings all the energetic, popular hits from the 80s, 90s and beyond. From Madonna and Lady Gaga, to Luke Bryan and Jason Aldean, to Journey and Bon Jovi, Brickhouse has your good-time, feel-good, dance-rock needs fully covered. www.brickhouserocks.com
June 18 Pride and Joy SF	Pride and Joy SF is a favorite pop/soul band in the Bay Area singing the sounds of Motown's greatest hits, including the best of the Temptations and the Supremes. Rhythm, perfect pitch and harmony from its four lead singers, backed by a five-piece band. This is a show not to miss! www.pridejoySF.com
July 2 The Boys of Summer	The Boys of Summer are deemed the best Eagles Tribute band this side of the Rockies, with spot on vocals, playing the true musical heart and sound of the Eagles. With a hit list too long to name, this is a true sing-a-long tribute band that will keep you singing and dancing in the park. www.boysosummertribute.com
July 16 Cut Loose	Cut Loose has dynamite vocals and searing leads backed by a solid rhythm section. Based in California's East Bay, Cut Loose will make you want to dance, swing and sway along to their Rockin' Blues, Rock 'n Roll, R&B, Rockin' Country and more. https://cutlooseband.com
July 30 Mixed Nuts	Mixed Nuts plays a wide variety of dance music from the 50s to today. Bill, the Pied Piper of music, will have you and your kids up doing the Hokie-Pokie, or joining the Conga Line around the park. This is going to be a get-up-and-dance concert . So be sure to bring your dancing shoes. www.mixednutsband.com
August 13 Houserockers	The Houserockers – This 10-piece powerhouse Rock and Soul band plays the greatest songs recorded. Their high energy gets everyone dancing to the music of the Rolling Stones, Earth Wind and Fire, Tower of Power, Springsteen and more. They bring together elements of Rock, Swing, Blues, 60s Soul and R & B. www.svhouserockers.com
August 27 The Sun Kings	The Sun Kings - Northern California's premier Beatles tribute band. For years, the Bay Area's Sun Kings have been thrilling packed houses and outdoor festivals with their musical tribute to The Beatles. Their energy is reminiscent of the joy and excitement of a Beatles concert with the tunes that changed rock & roll. www.thesunkings.com
September 10 East Bay Mudd	East Bay Mudd - This dynamic nine-piece band is a great finale for our concert season with their upbeat take on Classic Soul, Funk and R&B classics. This horn-heavy, funk-inflected, rhythm & blues ensemble with a soulful, dynamic lead vocalist, a tight four-piece horn section and a solid rhythm section will rock you with the best of Tower of Power, Chicago, Earth Wind and Fire, and more. www.eastbaymudd.com



8 Ways to Love Your Home

There are many ways that we can love and care for our homes so that they are a place of comfort and refuge for years to come. These are some of our favorites.

Donate unused items to charity. When you let things pile up, it can make your living space feel cramped and unloved. So, there is no better way to show your home how much you care about it than thinning out your possessions. Spend an afternoon going through a closet, drawer, or even a whole room. Find the items you no longer need or want and donate them to your favorite local charity.

Add plants or flowers to your home to make it feel cozier and more alive. If you do not want to spend money on fresh flowers regularly, then add a plant or two to your living space. Just be sure to choose plants that are non-toxic if you have dogs or cats at home.

Deep clean a room or area. Devote an afternoon to deep cleaning a room or area that you use frequently. Get in all the nooks and crannies while you dust, mop, vacuum, and clean from top to bottom.

Make dinner at home. Going out to eat is certainly one of life's small pleasures. But one way that you can love your home is to prepare meals in your own kitchen. It can make your house feel more like a home. Bust out the good china and light

some candles while you're at it.

Display your favorite possessions. Do you have a collection that you keep tucked away in a box or drawer? Why not display that collection instead? Whether you love buying vintage silk scarves or coffee mugs from your travels, devote some shelf or wall space to it so that you can admire it every day.

Make it smell good. We don't always notice what our home smells like from day to day. But adding a pleasant aroma to it can make it feel special. Treat yourself to a scented candle, diffuse your favorite essential oils, or mix up a batch of stovetop potpourri.

Show your home some love by switching things up a bit. When we look at the same things in the same places day after day it is easy to tune them out. You can go big by rearranging furniture or do it on a smaller scale by moving around some knick-knacks. It's almost like shopping, but you are not spending a single penny.

Invite people to your home. Nothing makes a house feel more like a home than filling it with the people you love. We have spent so much time in isolation over the last two years.

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In case you missed it...



photo credit: Marian Hale/San Francisco Zoo

San Francisco Zoo Mourns Death of Tiger

Officials with the San Francisco Zoo announced the passing of one of their longtime residents on March 24, Leanne, the 18-year-old Sumatran Tiger. She lived there for more than 15 years.

Her health had been declining as Leanne lived well past the life expectancy of her species, zoo officials said.

The official results of Leanne's death are pending a necropsy.

Sumatran tigers are native to Sumatra, Indonesia and are considered critically endangered, with just an estimated 400 to 600 left in the wild, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

"We truly are heartbroken over the loss of elegant Leanne, the matriarch of our Sumatran tiger breeding program," San Francisco Zoological Society CEO and Executive Director Tanya M. Peterson said. "She was ...a charismatic individual who captured the hearts of millions of SF Zoo visitors during her long tenure here. She will be sorely missed."

Leanne's offspring, three males and one female, have been placed at other zoos across the world, including the San Diego Wild Animal Park and the Berlin Zoo.

of Mexico's for producing the asparagus have had a major impact. (NAFTA was replaced in 2019 by the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement and has continued to exacerbate the problem.

MDUSD, Teachers Union Reach Tentative Agreement

A tentative agreement has been reached between the Mount Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD) and the teachers union (MDEA).

The agreement includes the following:

- Salary Schedule Increases:
- 2021 - 2022 4% on-schedule effective July 1, 2021
- 2022 - 2023 4% on-schedule effective July 1, 2022
- 2023 - 2024 2.5% on-schedule effective July 1, 2023

This totals a 10.5% salary increase over the three-year term of the contract.

Retroactive payments will be distributed within 60 days of when the Board approves the agreement.

Prep Time and Class Sizes:

The agreement also ensures the new state law regarding Transitional Kindergarten staffing ratios will be followed, and it limits class sizes at continuation high schools to 28.

There were many other changes to language which will be shared in the coming days.

Cal State University Ends Use of SAT, ACT Tests for Undergraduate Admissions



California State University will no longer use the SAT or ACT tests to help determine who gets admitted as an undergraduate. The university's Board of Trustees unanimously approved the change following a resolution by the Committee on Education Policy to amend Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

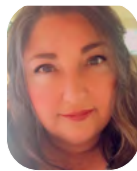
"In essence, we are eliminating our reliance on a high-stress, high-stakes test that has shown negligible benefit and providing our applicants with greater opportunities to demonstrate their drive, talents and potential for college success," Acting Chancellor Steve Relyea Relyea said in a statement.

A review a year ago found that the test provided very little value to the admissions process.

Two months ago, Cal State University's Admission Advisory Council recommended ending the use of SAT and ACT tests in admissions decisions.

pair up! Spring Thai

By Maria Terry



Thai food is a great winter-to-summer meal bridge. The flavors are fresh and bright, but a little spicy heat keeps you warm. A trip to a local sake manufacturer was the inspiration to pair cool, sake rice-wine with spicy Thai food.

Nama sake is draft sake that has a peanut taste. Unlike many other types of sake, it must be consumed within three days of opening because it is unpasteurized. Chicken Satay immediately came to mind when I tasted Nama sake for the first time. Satay is a perfect handheld appetizer because it is grilled on a skewer. Look for some delicious pre-made sauces with which to baste the chicken during grilling and serve with additional sauce for dipping.

By contrast, Nigori sake is quite different from Nama sake. It is unfiltered and the resulting wine is white and cloudy with a lovely weight on the palate. The nutty flavor and white color are reminiscent of fresh coconut. It has a fair amount of residual sugar so plan to pair it with a spicy dish like the coconut curry listed here.

Green papaya salad is an excellent side dish as it offers crunchy freshness. The nut garnish continues to echo the nuttiness in the wine and if you can endure the heat, make it spicy to perfectly balance the sweetness in the wine.

Heavy desserts are not a large part of Thai culture. Some fragrant hot tea and perhaps some grilled pineapple will keep this meal authentic and light.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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

Green Papaya Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large green papaya, peeled and shredded
- 1 large carrot, peeled and shredded
- 3 cloves of garlic, finely minced
- 1 scallion, finely minced
- 1/4 cup of high-quality fish sauce
- 1/4 cup of granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup of lime juice (or the juice from 2 to 3 limes)
- 1/4 teaspoon of lime zest
- 2 Thai bird chilies, sliced crosswise

(optional)

Garnishes: Roasted cashews or peanuts; basil or cilantro

DIRECTIONS

Combine the lime juice, lime zest, fish sauce, garlic, scallions, Thai bird chilies, and sugar. Toss with veggies and stir well to combine. Serve immediately or marinate in the fridge for an hour to allow the flavors to meld. The salad can keep in the refrigerator for up to a week. Strain away the excess dressing and garnish with cilantro or basil, and roasted cashews or peanuts just before serving.

Yield: 3-4 cups



Spicy Coconut Curry

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon red curry paste
- 1 chicken breast, bite size pieces
- 1/2 pound Japanese eggplant, cut in large chunks
- 3 cups water
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 3-5 sprigs Thai basil

DIRECTIONS

Pour half of the coconut milk into a large pot over low to medium low heat. Add the red curry paste. Break up the paste and mix it with coconut milk. Stir constantly. Add the chicken when you see red oil bubbling on top. Stir and coat the chicken with the sauce. Add the eggplant when the chicken starts to turn white. Add the rest of the coconut milk, water and the fish sauce. Let it boil until all the eggplant pieces turn dark and tender. Stir in the basil leaves just before you serve.

Yield: 2-4 servings

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The Man-of-Steel is Retired in Clayton—Who Knew?

By Michael J. Barrington, MA, MEd, PHD, author

We think we know our neighbors. Even though we may have been living in the neighborhood for many years, if we dig a little deeper, we might find things that will astonish us, or reveal heroes among us. I recently discovered that the real Man-of-Steel lives in Clayton.

Gary Boswell is a tall, grey-haired, soft-spoken man, but get Boswell talking about construction and he becomes a different person. With Superman-like hyperbole describing his life's work, there is not a bridge plus a few of the most iconic buildings in the Bay Area that Bowell has not help erect - feats so significant to our local infrastructure that it helped catapult the Bay Area into one of the world's greatest economies.



Gary Boswell

His eyes lit up as he told me about his family. His grandfather, father, two uncles and a cousin were all 'skeleton' steel erectors, and he continued the family tradition, almost straight out of high school. A building skeleton is a

steel frame constructed to support a large skyscraper or building made out of metal beams forming vertical columns crossed with steel girders for stability.

His first job was on the San Mateo Bridge, but later he worked on the Antioch Bridge, Bay Bridge, Benicia Bridge, Carquinez Bridge, Golden Gate Bridge and the Richmond Bridge.

After the Loma Prieta earthquake, he was a General Foreman on the Cypress Freeway working with UC Berkeley to stress test the remaining structure, and as he describes it, was one of the most nerve-racking experiences of his career.

Until recently, the Bank of America Building was the tallest skyscraper in San Francisco. Boswell worked on that also. However, his real claim to fame is that he was responsible for the topping out moment on the 853-foot Pyramid Building in the financial district. When the last steel beam was raised in place at the highest point of the building, a small evergreen tree (known as the construction "Christmas tree") was attached to the beam with an American flag put on the opposite end. The men working on it signed their names on the beam. In addition to having his name there for posterity, Boswell fastened the last piece of steel. Once a much-scorned project, the



Boswell looks down after installing a Christmas tree and the American flag to the last steel beam atop the Transamerica Pyramid in San Francisco. March, 1972. Below: Photo courtesy Kaiser Permmanente.org.

Pyramid is now a premier tourist attraction.

Boswell also worked on the massive structure at the NASA Ames Research Center in Sunnyvale. It is hard to miss as it is the largest of its kind in the USA. Its mouth sucks up air from across the Bay and spits it out with such force planes are not allowed to fly above it.



Yes, the real Man-of-Steel is our neighbor, a California native born in Pittsburg. He graduated from Pacifica High School in Bay Point where his football prowess as a wide receiver got him selected as All League.

Now enjoying retirement, when he is not playing golf with Branch 116 of the SIR Organization, open to all retirees (Social Activities for Retirees: <https://sirinc2.org/branch116>), he spends his time with his high school sweetheart - now wife of 57 years, Bonnie, two daughters and grandchildren.

Sometimes we think we know our neighbors and our neighborhoods. I love talking with people and getting to know a little of their background, their history, their interests and their dreams. I have found an amazing pot of gold, overflowing with riches of lives, of incredible experiences and a creativity after retirement that is off the richter scale.



Gary Boswell comfortably sitting on steel beam high above the city.



A WALK THROUGH TIME

with Misty Bruns

A Visit to Judsonville—144 Years Ago



Photo courtesy of the California Historical Society.

JUDSONVILLE.—Such is the new name given to the new mining town, heretofore known as Empire coal mines. R. S. Cross, the Washington dispatches inform us, has been appointed postmaster of Judsonville. The name is in honor of Egbert Judson, of San Francisco, one of the owners of the Empire coal mines, and well known citizen of the State. It is said a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, yet there is sometimes much in a name. We like the patronymic given to the new town and trust its future wealth and prosperity may be equal to that of its godfather.

Attached from Antioch Ledger April 27, 1878

The promising town of Judsonville was named after Egbert Judson, a businessman from San Francisco and one of the owners of the Empire coal mine in 1878. The town sat five miles south of Antioch, and three and a half miles from the town of Somersville. It boasted of two first-class hotels with reasonable rates and several private boarding houses. The general goods store housed the Post Office which operated from 1878 to 1883 with a brief closure in 1879. There was a schoolhouse for the local children, a lodge for the Good Templars, a Sabbath school, and a hall in which the traveling preacher would give his praise to God with the Judsonville townspeople.

Coal was discovered near Judsonville in 1852, but it was 23 years later that Judsonville embraced the coal business when the Judsonville Coal Company, which began its operation in 1875.

The company seemed to be financially sound and well maintained. The Judsonville Coal Company had the most up-to-date mining pumps and equipment. The mines had one standard steam pump, one Blake steam pump. These pumps were used to extract the water from the mine shafts. Due to the considerable amounts of water in the Diablo coal range, it was necessary to have the best pumps available.

There were also seven different size boilers. The coal bunker was 84 feet long by 20 feet wide. The company had constructed a narrow-gauge railroad from Antioch to the mine. The railroad had been equipped with one powerful locomotive and 40 iron carts with a 5-ton each capacity. The coal was shipped to Sacramento and Stockton and considerable quantities of coal were also used in San Francisco for domestic purposes. The company was shipping 200 tons per month.

The town and the Judsonville Coal Company employed two blacksmiths and a blacksmith helper, two carpenters, four engineers, four pumpmen, four firemen, fifty miners, nine carmen, and one intelligent Superintendent.

Judsonville peaked in 1878, a thriving community within the Mt. Diablo Coal Fields. In its heyday, Judsonville had just over 300 residents. But as quickly as it all began, it ended. By the early 1900s, the residents moved away.

The town's namesake made a name and a career for himself in the San Francisco Bay area. Born Egbert Judson on August 9, 1812, in Syracuse New York. He came to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1852 and established the Judson Manufacturing Company. He became a millionaire and never married. Judson died on January 9, 1893; 80 years old.

A MILLIONAIRE'S DEATH.

Egbert Judson, a Popular Businessman, Passes Away.

Egbert Judson, one the best-known and certainly one of the most popular businessmen in the city, died yesterday afternoon at his residence, on Fifteenth and Valencia streets, after a few weeks of illness. General debility was the cause of his demise, he being nearly 81 years of age.

The deceased was a great favorite among all with whom He came in contact, both socially and in a business way. A whole-souled, generous, liberal-minded, but shrewd man, Mr. Judson accumulated a large fortune since he arrived here in 1852 and founded the first assay works San Francisco ever had.

Later, he became interested in hydraulic and quartz mines in Sierra, Placer, Amador and other counties, and then he established the original giant powder works. Up to his death he was president of the Judson Manufacturing Company and of the California Paper Company.

Egbert Judson was never married, and his millions will go to the children of his late brother, who are four in number. They are Mrs. Michael Lynch (widow of the late Supervisor), Mrs. George H. Benedict, Charles Judson and Henry Judson.

Information from the Antioch Ledger 1878 & 1879



Peas Aplenty

By Deb Morris, Pacific Coast Farmers Market

“How luscious lies the pea within the pod.” - Emily Dickinson

Fresh peas are calling to us this spring with their gorgeous color and crisp sweet taste. The season for peas is upon us and that means snap peas, English peas, pea shoots and even snow peas.

To get the best flavor from your peas, freshness is important when selecting them. All peas develop sweetness as they grow to maturity, but if left on the plant for too long, those sugars are converted into starches, so the peas become fibrous and tough with less sweet flavor.

Peas are members of the legume family of plants and are divided into two categories, those with and those without edible pods. The peas we know as the garden pea or English pea fall into the latter category. They are also called shelling peas.

“Petit pois” is not a variety of pea, but merely green peas that have been picked before full maturity. Thus, they are smaller than fully ripe green peas – and just as sweet and tender.

Snap peas look like mini versions of the pods of green peas. The difference is that these pods are edible. Sugar Snap and Sugar Daddy are the two varieties of sugar

snap peas, the latter being a cross between the green pea and the snow pea. In addition, the Sugar Daddy is string-less. However, even sugar snaps with strings do not necessarily need to be stringed before cooking.

Snow peas used to be seen as part of Asian cuisine in stir fry and noodle dishes. Now they are more common and available everywhere. The pale green, edible pods are flat and wide with little bulges of the immature peas inside rippling throughout the pod. Snow peas are also called sugar peas, China peas, and in French, manget-out, meaning “eat all.”

Have you tried pea shoots? Sometimes called pea greens, these delicious stems, leaves, and curly tendrils of pea plants have a delicate texture and subtle flavor that make them a pleasant edible surprise. You won’t find these at a grocery store but generally they are sold at farmers’ markets where peas are sold.

You will find fresh green peas arriving from local farms J&M Farms out of Hollister, snap and English peas from Ventana Organic Produce, also from Hollister, and Super Duper Microgreens of Hercules with tiny pea shoots to enjoy



The Naked Gardener

David George, UC-certified Master Gardener

Spring Into Action

I strolled into my back yard in ideal naked gardener weather to enjoy the first day of spring and was greeted by not one but six leaks in my drip irrigation system. Yikes! My supposedly water-conserving irrigation system spewed geysers of “liquid gold” six feet into the air. This was a stern reminder that springtime is action time in the naked garden.

In April, the focus should be on three important tasks: 1) repair all irrigation line leaks, 2) add homemade compost to your planting beds, and 3) plant quality veggies for summer harvest season.



Plant in April for summer harvest.

Irrigation Lines

Dogs, winter storms, wildlife, and hired gardeners can be brutal to above-ground dripper systems. Major leaks can go undetected for months for several reasons. Inspect the length of the major (often 1/2”) lines for connector breaks, pinches, or gashes created by chewing rodents.

Inspect the smaller lines to your plants for missing or plugged up emitters/dripers. Check your valve controller to make sure your watering channels cycle on 2-3 times per week, and that the watering duration does not provide too much or too little water to your plantings. A handy tool for this is a ground moisture sensor available online or from your favorite garden center.

For lawn or large area above-ground sprayers, check for maximum pressure. If your sprayers seem weak or do not cover an area completely, you may have an underground line crack or break. Look for a soaking wet area or puddles of surface water. That is where you or a professional sprinkler repair person should first dig. If no puddling is found, inspect your valve for a clog, or call a sprinkler repair professional.

Soil Amendment

Successful all-natural gardening begins with rich, healthy all-natural compost. Our native Contra Costa soil tends to be rich in minerals but poor in organic elements. Organic compost or mulch feeds the microorganisms and earthworms, who generate higher nitrogen content which most plants love. Producing your own organic compost provides your garden plantings a head start to the growing season.

April is the time to harvest your rich compost, transport it to your planting beds, and mix it in with your native soil. Dig it in just a few inches, since worms and good bugs will climb to the surface to consume it. Plus, most vegetable root systems do not extend too much deeper.

Planting



April is veggie planting month.. Photo courtesy UCANR

Now the fun begins. Choose non-GMO or Heirloom varieties if available and note their sun requirements and days-to-maturity.

Now that our risk of serious frost is behind us, plant your new darlings into the ground or planter pots. Supplement

each with an added handful of homemade compost and thoroughly water the area by hand for the first week. Add supplemental hand-watering if your plants wilt in midday heat.

Seeds harvested from last season’s star producers can also be started in small starter pots or flats. Their growth will catch up to established plants with time.

Planting mix is the best soil for seed starts. Keep them moist with daily gentle hand watering.

Sprouts should be visible in 10-14 days. Transplant them into larger pots around four weeks, and into your garden when they are 8-16 inches tall, depending on the variety.

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

Eat the Ears First

By Julie Ross



Wondering when Easter is this year? There are two ways to figure this out.

The first method involves knowledge of the lunar calendar. Every year, Easter falls on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox.

The second method is with your regular paper calendar or datebook. Get it out and start flipping pages, beginning with March and continuing until you find a Sunday with “Easter Sunday” written in the little square for that day. If you come to May, you have gone too far. (To narrow your search a little, the earliest possible date for Easter is March 22 in any given year, and the latest date is April 25.)

To save you all some time, I already used the paper calendar method, and determined that Easter Sunday 2022 falls on April 17.

As we all know, determining the date is not the only confusing thing about the holiday. You know what I’m talking about – the blind acceptance by millions of an egg-laying rabbit.

Never mind that rabbits do not lay eggs. The vast majority of the population believes, likely based on its

proclivity to wear bow ties, that the Easter Bunny is male. Hmmm.

German immigrants to Pennsylvania in the 1700s brought with them the story of an egg-laying hare known as Osterhase or Oschter Haws. Children made nests for the hare to lay colored eggs. And as commercialism set in, nests were replaced by baskets and actual eggs with candy.

Just how much candy, you ask? In the U.S. each year, we buy 120 million pounds of Easter candy at a cost of \$2.3 billion. This includes the production of 16 billion jellybeans, which is enough to circle the globe nearly three times.

It also includes 90 million chocolate rabbits. The National Confectioners Association reports that 78% of Americans say people should eat the ears first on a chocolate rabbit. If this is a subject of debate in your household, I suggest you go with the majority and begin at the top.

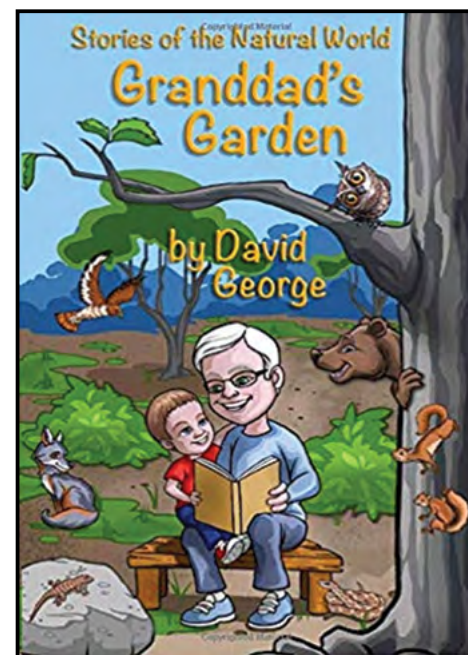
My own favorite Easter treat is the Cadbury Egg, laid by that fluffy white bunny in TV ads every spring. Sure hope he hops by soon.

Enjoy our beautiful spring weather and have a Happy Easter!



The Great Tomato (Online) Plant Sale is On! The Master Gardener volunteers of Contra Costa have announced that their popular Great Tomato Plant Sale (and other veggies) is Online again this year. The ordering website opens to the public at Noon on April 2nd and continues while inventories last.

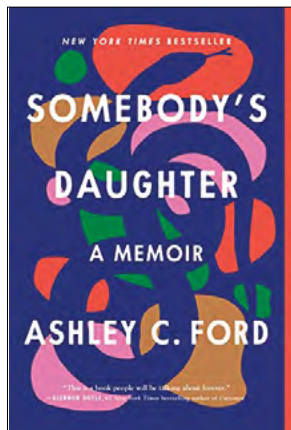
Proceeds from the sale fund community outreach and educational programs. For more information visit: cmg.ucanr.edu/EdibleGardening/GreatTomatoPlantSale/





Somebody's Daughter

"Somebody's Daughter" (Flatiron Books, 2021, hard cover, 216 pages \$13.99) by Ashley C. Ford is the tell-all coming-of-age memoir of a Black girl growing up poor in Indiana while her father serves a prison sentence. To say Ashley's childhood was rough would be an understatement. Her fractious relationship with her mother often resulted in physical abuse, her grandmother forced Ashley to watch her douse a nest of snakes with gasoline and burn them to death, she was French kissed at age 6 by an adult male family friend on New Year's Eve, and, worst of all, Ashley was raped by a possessive former boyfriend at age 13. The rape and the aftermath of the experience are made even more heart-wrenching because Ashley does not confide in anyone about what happened to her.



rape-related insomnia, her ability to forgive her father when she learns what he did to land in prison, her long-term friendship with Brett in high school, and her acceptance into college. Ashley's journey to develop a healthy relationship with her body should be an inspiration for all women.

"Somebody's Daughter" is unapologetic and brutally honest. But what holds this memoir together is Ashley's unflappable determination to be her own person. Ford's strength under adversity, her ability to rise above heart-break, and her capacity for forgiveness - even finding empathy for her rapist - make this memoir unforgettable.

"Someone's Daughter" was an Instant New York Times Bestseller, an Amazon Best Book of June 2021, and an NBCC John Leonard Prize Finalist.

At its core, the book explores Ashley's relationships. As a young child, Ashley has no idea why her father is incarcerated. His letters home to her and her brother are filled with fatherly pride, and she clings to a fantasy of what life would be like if he were with her. Her longing is understandable since she endures an unstable home life. She is carted off at a young age to live with her religious grandmother and, later, forced to tolerate her mother's obnoxious boyfriend. There is an evocative scene when, as a teen, she discovers the ugly truth about his crime, and an equally memorable and heart-warming depiction of reconnecting with her father after his release.

Like life, the memoir depicts the ups and downs of being human. There are hopeful moments when Ashley befriends a teacher who helps her deal with her

Ashley C. Ford has written, or guest edited, for The Guardian, ELLE Magazine, BuzzFeed, OUT Magazine, Teen Vogue, New York Magazine, Allure, Marie Claire, The New York Times, and various other web and print publications. She has taught creative nonfiction writing at The New School and Catapult.Co. She was also the host of the first season of Audible's literary interview series, "Authorized". She has been named among Forbes Magazine's 30 Under 30 in Media (2017), Brooklyn Magazine's Brooklyn 100 (2016), Time Out New York's New Yorkers of The Year (2017), and Variety's New Power of New York (2019). Ford lives in Indianapolis, Indiana with her husband Kelly Stacy, and their chocolate lab. Follow her at ashleyford.com.



Drive My Car

Streaming on HBOMax



This movie is perfect for streaming. To be honest, I wasn't too excited to see an almost three-hour film in the theater. One of my biggest complaints is that they no longer have intermissions, even though movies keep getting longer. When "Gandhi" came out in 1982, moviegoers were given a chance to stretch their legs and have a bathroom break...that movie was only nine minutes longer than "Drive My Car". Some would argue that this quiet film is best viewed if you are sequestered in a dark movie theater, but I would push back and say that once it grabs ahold of you, it does not matter if you are in the theater or on your sofa.

Ironically, this lengthy film is taken from a short story by Haruki Murakami. The film centers around a veteran stage actor and director, Yūsuke Kafuku (Hidetoshi Nishijima) and his TV writer wife, Oto Kafuku (Reika Kirishima). When Yūsuke accepts an offer to direct a stage production of "Uncle Vanya", he's assigned Misaki Watari (Tōko Miura) as his driver and is surprised to find Ko □ji Takatsuki (Masaki Okada), one of his wife's young TV stars, auditioning for a role in the play.

These characters spend a lot of time together and most of the movie is riding in a car or rehearsing the play. They are quite stoic and there are no screaming tirades or big dramatic gestures to signal what the

characters are going through. At one point, the actors in Yūsuke's play complain about him requiring them to learn their lines by rote and recite them without emotion. The same could be said for the movie in general. Yet, this film quietly worms its way around your emotions. The main characters are in a cocktail of regret and shame, and it is only as they talk, examine and reveal, that we piece together their experiences and pain.

I was happy to stream this movie from home because I was able to hit pause the numerous times my tears prevented me from reading the subtitles. This truly beautiful film clocks in as the longest of the Oscar nominated pictures of the year at 2 hours and 59 minutes and it is a well-deserved chunk of your movie viewing time.

Not Rated, Sexual Situations and Adult Themes

aRt Cottage

by FROgard



What an honor it is to have so many award-winning watercolor artists at aRt Cottage for our March-April exhibit, "Watercolor - A Happy Medium," curated by Samantha McNally, past president of the California Watercolor Association.

These fifteen artists are not only members of CWA who live right here in the Bay Area, but they also have achieved national and international recognition for their work. Quite a few have been published in well-known art magazines and have given workshops around the country and even globally.

Yes, this is a jaw-dropping exhibit, beautifully hung for display by longtime friend and curatorial genius, Jim Jordan. Instead of the usual opening reception, we are hosting a closing reception on Saturday, April 23rd from 2 to 4pm, with live music and a People's Choice Award will be presented to one artist by one of our publicly elected City of Concord officials.

When you visit the show, you will be given a ballot so you can choose your favorite from about fifty pieces on display. The award will go to the artist whose work received the most votes.

Another exciting part of this show is the partnership with the Benicia First Tuesday Poets group, led by Poet Laureate, Mary Susan Gast. They sent fifteen poets to view the exhibit, and each chose work from one of the fifteen artists to write a poem about - the artists and poets do not know each other. Their ekphrastic poetry and prose (ekphrasis is a Greek word, meaning a vivid description of a work of art) will be read at the closing reception.

Our favorite ukulele group, Kupuna Mele, will provide live music at the reception, plus refreshments will be served. As always, everyone is invited to this free public event. aRt Cottage is still playing it safe and requiring masks in the gallery.

There is plenty of room to relax and roam in the gardens, enjoy shopping in our Tiny House Gift Shop, or just sit on the patio and enjoy the music! aRt Cottage is located at 2238 Mt. Diablo Street in Concord. Visit artcottage.info for more details.



Left: "Sutra Heights" By Craig Moline. Above by Leslie Wilson

Watercolor Exhibit is "Jawdropping"



Cows in the Shade by Samantha McNally

"Vacaville"

Cow candy on slippery slopes bending and waving with the wind growing grand in glades and valleys Black bovine indulging in abundant amethyst such plentiful hors d'oeuvres slow cows with proud heads basking in the morning sun with long, lazy tongues that lick and linger over lavender lollipops and lilac snacks savoring the bon bons between blades of grass udderly delicious

By Genea Brice,

Inspired by Samantha McNally's "Cows in the Shade"



In Theaters



Peter Dinklage and Haley Bennett reprise their stage roles of Cyrano and Roxanne in the big screen adaptation from screenwriter Erica Schmidt.

Schmidt takes some liberties with the classic story, most prominently being that Cyrano's signature nose is replaced by dwarfism which of course caters to Dinklage. It works because it ups the ante.

Society may find Cyrano's nose unattractive, but as a dwarf he would need to prove himself in every area: the battlefield, society, and as a romantic consideration. Cyrano checks almost all the boxes. His swashbuckling skills, above-average intelligence and love for beautiful words all work in his favor, yet when it comes to expressing his love for Roxanne, the

otherwise fearless scribe is at a loss.

Enter the physically pleasing Christian (Kelvin Harrison Jr.), a soldier Roxanne is smitten with, who serves as the perfect vessel for Cyrano to express his true feelings.

"Cyrano" is also a musical. Although everyone's singing voice is up for the job, the songs do not stand out. I was personally unable to distinguish one song from another and no one will walk out of the theater humming. It may have been the intent, however, because the songs do seamlessly intertwine with the dialogue and action. Yet, I was still shocked to see so many separate song titles in the end credits.

The most powerful scene in the film is when the soldiers sing letters to their loved ones before going off to battle. Here the storyline, musicality and acting meet in a perfect symmetry. The emotion in this scene outshines that of Cyrano and Roxanne.

In the end, the question is not do we need another re-telling of the classic tale but is Peter Dinklage a capable leading man and the answer to that is a resounding YES!

PG-13 for violence



CCWD 2023 Calendar Contest

“Reliable Water for Today and Tomorrow” - Win \$75

Is your child a budding artist? Here's a fun and educational project for the kids that could earn them some prize money and a place in Contra Costa Water District's 2023 wall calendar. The theme of CCWD's annual Water Awareness Youth Art Contest is “Reliable Water for Today and Tomorrow.”

Help your child learn about this precious natural resource, why it's important to our community, and the many ways it is used. Have them illustrate what they learn on a horizontal 8.5” by 11” piece of paper and enter it online at ccwater.com/calendarcontest. Each submission must feature the phrase “Reliable Water for Today and Tomorrow” in any language the artist chooses.

There will be at least 12 winners, one for each month. Winning entries will be published for the 2023 calendar and each winning artist will receive a \$75 gift card.

HEY KIDS!

Challenge yourself to learn about your public drinking water system. The best entries will be those that that illustrate:

- Why you drink tap water
- How your community uses tap water
- How you use tap water efficiently
- Where your tap water comes from
- How your tap water is treated

THINK ABOUT IT... How would your life be different without tap water?

WATER FACTS

Did you know that Contra Costa Water District provides water for more than 500,000 people? On average, we treat nearly 40 million gallons of water per day to be used for drinking and washing, growing lawns and food, filling swimming pools and putting out fires.

Here are some water facts to help you get those creative ideas flowing for your calendar entry.

- Tap water promotes public health.
- Tap water is clean and safe to drink.

•Tap water costs about a penny per gallon.

•About half of all residential water use is outdoors in places like lawns.

You can get more fun water facts at the Contra Costa WEP Water Resource Corner Online. Go to www.cewater.com/568

CONTEST RULES

Complete contest rules are available at ccwater.com/calendarcontest. This year, every entry must include the phrase “Reliable Water for Today and Tomorrow” in the any language you choose. The contest is open to children ages 8 to 18 years who reside or attend school in the Contra Costa Water District service area, which includes Antioch, Bay Point, Brentwood, Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Martinez, Oakley, Pacheco, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Port Costa and Walnut Creek.

HOW TO ENTER

There are two easy ways to submit your artwork:

- Online at www.cewater.com/calendarcontest
- By mail or in person at: CCWD Calendar Contest 1331 Concord Avenue Concord, CA 94520

Entries must include the child's name, age, home address, a parent or guardian's name, email address, and a phone number.

Contra Costa Water District will screen all entries based on message, merit, creativity, and originality. Finalist entries will be posted online for voting. Contra Costa Water District, with community input, will select 12 winning entries.

For more information about this contest, visit: ccwater.com/calendarcontest

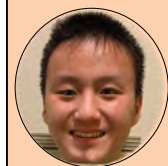
WATER AWARENESS YOUTH ART CONTEST

WIN \$75 12 WINNERS!



DETAILS

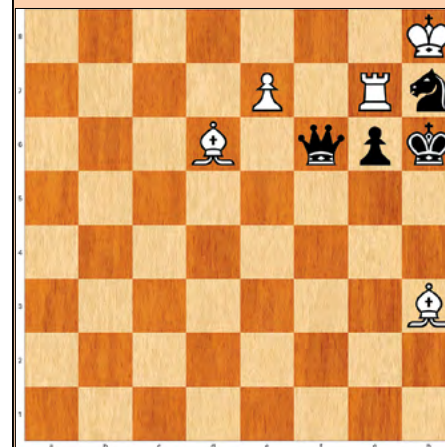
ccwater.com/calendarcontest



Chess with Yoo

Composed by Christopher Yoo, 15, Grandmaster, Dublin, Calif.

White to move and win.



Hint: Probably best solved move-by-move instead of all at once.

SOLUTION:

1. e8=N!
The only plausible way to prevent mate.
1... Qd4
This move prepares Nf6, but White can stop it.
2. Be7! Ng5 3. Bd7!
The only move that successfully coordinates the pieces.
3... Nf7+ 4. Kg8 Ng5 5. Nf6
5... Qc4+
This move would win the bishop on e8, but not d7.
6. Kh8 Nf7+ 7. Rxf7! Qxf7 8. Ng8+ Kh5 9. Bg4+! Kxg4 10. Nh6+ +-
White is finally victorious after this elegant tactic.

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

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APRIL
BASKET
BUFFET
BUNY
CHILDREN
CHOCOLATE
CHRISTIAN
CHURCH



DECORATE
DINNER
EGGS
ETERNAL
HAT
HEAVEN
HIDDEN
HOLY
HUNT

JELLY BEANS
JESUS
LOVE
MIRACLE
PASTEL
PEEPS
RISEN
SPRINGTIME
SUNRISE



HAPPY EASTER

Solution on page 15



Dave Fehte Selected as CVCHS Executive Director

Clayton Valley Charter has a new Executive Director...sort of.

In February, 2022, the CVCHS Governing Board of Directors selected Dave Fehte as the school's next Executive Director. Technically, this is a position he has served for the past twelve months at CVCHS.

Fehte was initially hired as the Interim Executive Director and tasked with overseeing day-to-day operations, providing support to Board members, and developing long-term planning with the goal of increasing student outcomes.

Fehte holds a bachelor's degree in Education from CSU Northridge and a master's degree in Education from California Lutheran University. He holds multiple clear credentials in California including Administrative Services, Multi-Subject, Special Education Learning Handicapped, and Special Education Severely Handicapped.

He began his professional career in 1986 as a Special Education teacher at Van Nuys High School in Los Angeles. In 1994, Fehte moved to El Camino Real High School in Woodland Hills and later became the Special Education department chair. In 2006, he was promoted to principal of El Camino Real High School

and led the conversion process from concept to implementation to become an independent charter school, while securing over 90% staff support for the charter.

Peers have described him as "a consensus builder who has the ability to bring people together to decide upon a course of action to improve student achievement" and who has "earned the respect of administrators, teachers, classified staff, and especially parents throughout the educational community."

As the permanent Executive Director, Fehte has some big plans for CVCHS - building on academic and athletic success during his tenure at El Camino Real. Highlights there include 10 National Academic Decathlon Championships, a World Championship title and four VEX Robotics National Championships, student films screened at the Cannes Film Festival, and more than twenty Los Angeles City, CIF, and State team and individual athletic championships.

Fehte has been a perfect fit. Board members, faculty and administrators describe him as "fair, decisive, and extremely supportive." He established an open-door policy for staff at all levels encouraging dialogue and allowing



Dave Fehte congratulates Jared Palega (Class of 2022) on National Signing Day for his commitment to Western Oregon Football

teachers the flexibility to set goals and achieve desired outcomes. He created a collaborative environment and streamlined the school's administrative team leading to reductions in redundancy and savings to the overall budget.

In his first two months as Interim Executive Director, CVCHS' graduation rate for the Class of 2021 increased to 98%. Not an easy task, especially during the pandemic transition to on-campus learning last Spring. CVCHS also made meaningful improvements to academic supports, student

interventions, and mental health resources. CVCHS saw significant decreases in Targeted Case Management enrollment by 45% and student Ds and Fs by 39%.

The reduction of potential fifth-year students resulted in a potential cost savings of approximately \$1 million to CVCHS in unfunded Average Daily Attendance. And to address emotional and social health issues, CVCHS hired a new licensed marriage and family therapist, provided counseling staff with enhanced resources, implemented a student behavior rewards program, and hosted monthly online parent seminars.

"I'm grateful for the Board's confidence in our collective accomplishments. Lots of hard work has been done by our faculty and staff members during this transitional period. While the pandemic presented some challenges with serving our students and day-to-day operations, our school successfully navigated COVID limitations to provide as many opportunities as possible for student success. I'm looking forward to setting down roots here in Concord and becoming a permanent member of the Ugly Eagle family."

Two Mt. Diablo High School Teachers Named Mt. Diablo Unified School District 2022-23 Teachers of the Year



Natasha Paul



Katalina Gallo

Mt. Diablo High School (MDHS) teachers Katalina Gallo and Natasha Paul have been selected as the two District Teachers of the Year for 2022-23. They will both represent the district as nominees for the Contra Costa County Teacher of the Year competition, which will announce its winners in September.

The pair were selected from five finalists that also included College Park High School teacher Laima Haider, Pine Hollow Middle School teacher Dr. Lizette Ortega Dolan and Bancroft Elementary School teacher Maria Sajjad. The finalists were selected from the more than 100 outstanding educators nominated throughout the district. The MDUSD School Board plans to recognize the District Teachers of the Year, finalists and nominees at its April 13 meeting.

Interestingly, both Gallo and Paul had both graduated from Mt. Diablo High (Gallo in 2007 and Paul in 1991). In fact, Gallo was Paul's student in the Digital Safari Academy that she now leads teaching multimedia to students in grades 10-12. Paul is now teaching 9th grade English in the school's Architecture, Construction, Manufacturing and Engineering (ACME) Academy, as well as English Language Development to students not yet fluent in English.

Gallo leads the WASC accreditation focus group on culture at MDHS looking at things like equity, community and parent involvement so students feel supported. She also plans "Academy Night," the school's open house, which was held on March 24.

Her approach to teaching is that she treats students as equals. "I'm not the center of the classroom," she said. "We all are and it's our interaction, which is what makes the instruction and the learning happen."

Having discussions with her students about their ideas and issues that are important to them is a key part of her role, she added. "Student voice is really important to me. I want students to feel that I listen to them and that what they say matters." Building trust with her students is also important, she said. They know they can trust me. I want them to feel that they can talk to me about the things going on outside of the class because it does affect them..."

Gallo said the primary reason she hoped to be selected as Teacher of the Year was for her students. "I wanted to show them I went to the school, look at what I can accomplish, and you can do anything you want to do."

Paul started teaching at MDHS 14 years ago. Like Gallo, she views building relationships with students as a key part of her job. Current and former students love to hang out in her classroom before school, at lunch and after school because of the warm and friendly atmosphere and the snacks she provides when they're hungry.

Student Asael Escalante said he knows Paul is concerned about students' mental health as well as their academics. "She really does care about her students very deeply, like a second family," he said. Student Nathaniel Leyva added: "She helps everybody and makes it fun."

Gallo and Paul are two of approximately 20 other educators who will be named Teachers of the Year for their school districts. Each of them becomes a nominee for the Contra Costa County Teacher of the Year program, which is coordinated by the Contra Costa County Office of Education. Four finalists will be announced in May. The winners of the County Teacher of the Year program will be announced Sept. 22 in a ceremony at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek, where all District Teachers of the Year will be honored.



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

Hmmm, Should I Buy Grandma's House?

Current demographic trends are causing the real estate and staging industry to adjust their services to remain effective for their clients.

In 2021, millennials made up 43% of buyers, up from 37% in 2020. Millennials are those now in their late 20s to 40-something, are more established in their careers and are ready to buy a home. Some are starting to have families which often lead to changing their focus and priorities.

Baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964 make up 42% of sellers. So, in essence, Millennials are perhaps purchasing grandparents' homes.

Millennials' priority list for a home includes convenience and amenities. They want ease of commute, and/or work from home spaces, reside near good schools, and all the amenities possible to enjoy everyday living. They look for move-in ready homes vs fixers, low maintenance homes and yards. They are a generation that will have considered roommates to offset their mortgage, and/or buy a home with an ADU or add one to the property.

On the other hand, Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, make up 42% of sellers. Many like to age in place, but there is also a pull to live near family and grandchildren who may be in other cities or states. Some move on to senior living that require less upkeep and provide more amenities.

If these two generations make up most buyers and sellers, then what does that say

to the seller who wants to move? It says that while you have maintained your home over time and have a quality property to sell, the buyers that are looking want updated homes and yards, with little deferred maintenance.

Enter the staging professional who has added Project Management to their services so that you can obtain inspections and make the necessary repairs as well as large and small updates that will appeal to that demographic. Knowing what buyers prefer is the stagers job. Most sellers would labor over how much to do, what to invest, and anguish over if they would even recoup these investments. Certified Staging Professionals (CSP's) are well versed in demographic staging and project management.

Because it is likely that some of your buyer offers will come from Millennials, providing more of what they are looking for will generate the overbids that result in more money for you when you sell.

Even with the rising interest rates, buyers are looking for the right home in good condition.

Historically, the updated staged home generates more than the "as is" sale. I have a resource list that I share with clients so they can make these decisions when we set our strategy. Sellers are smart enough to make their own decisions, we provide the information and resources to do so. You can count on your Realtor for that service.

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Monthly Market Report

Single Family Residence

City	Month	Existing SFR Home Sales	Existing SFR Median Price	Active Listings	Market Competition
Concord, California	February 2022	53 (+33.8%)	\$855K (+11.2%)	36 (-5.9%)	7 (110.7%)
Walnut Creek, California	February 2022	26 (-29.7%)	\$1.72M (+27.4%)	13 (-63.9%)	7 (114.5%)
Clayton, California	February 2022	8 (+0.0%)	\$1.29M (+45.9%)	6 (-50.0%)	2 (103.2%)
Pleasant Hill, California	February 2022	4 (-76.9%)	\$1.20M (+27.7%)	11 (-42.1%)	5 (111.6%)



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The Caregiver and the Million Dollar Case

Kind-hearted Charlie the Caregiver sheepishly entered the lawyer's office and relayed the following story: "For many years I have been a live-in caregiver at a home that has six mentally ill residents. Although my "shift" was during the day, I often had to assist residents round-the-clock, Monday through Friday. I was paid a lump sum salary of \$2,050.00 each month and provided with room and board. I'm thinking that I have been underpaid. Do you think I have a case?"

The lawyer nods his head in agreement, knowing full well that Charlie is about to be astounded at the size of his case, and fires up his calculator (on his smart phone of course).

The lawyer explains that under the law Charlie's lump sum salary only pays him for his regular non-overtime hours. Thus, Charlie has not been paid at all for his work outside of his regular 8-hour dayshift. Also, the lawyer explains, Charlie is entitled to time and half for hours when he worked more than 8 hours in a day (and double time for when he worked over 12 hours in a day).

Charlie then asks: "But I'm not paid by the hour, so how do you figure out what amount to multiply by time and a half or double?"

The lawyer thinks, hmmm, Charlie seems like a simple bumpkin, but perhaps he is a smart cookie after all.

The lawyer explains that to calculate a salaried person's hourly rate the law provides that you take the weekly salary and divide that by 40 hours. Since Charlie's weekly rate of pay was \$473.08 (\$2,050.00 X 12 months divided by 52 weeks), his hourly rate was \$11.83 (\$473.08 divided by 40 hours).

"But what about my room and board?" Charlie wonders aloud. (Dang, this guy really is smart, the lawyer concludes).

The lawyer responds that yes indeed the law requires that the reasonable value of room, board and lodging must be included in calculating a person's "regular rate of pay." He explains to Charlie that if the reasonable value of his room and board is only \$1,000.00 per month that equates to another \$5.77 per hour. Tacking that on to the \$11.83/hour calculated before, Charlie's "regular rate of pay" was \$17.60/hour. His time-and-a-half rate thus was \$26.40/hour and his double-time rate \$35.20/hour.

Charlie interrupts with another insightful question: "Okay, I understand what you're telling me about how to calculate my hourly rate, but since I'm basically on-call around-the-clock how do you figure out how many hours I have worked?"

The lawyer makes a mental note: I need to hire this guy when this case is over.

The lawyer explains that the law basically provides that Charlie is "working" all hours of the day since he is on duty, is required to respond to residents needs and rarely gets a full night's sleep. The lawyer mentions a federal case in Michigan where the court concluded: "work which requires an employee to 'sleep with one eye and one ear open' to ensure the safety and well-being of residents of a health care facility is clearly compensable labor." That court also concluded: "Whether or not the employees had active duties, the mere fact that they were required to be present at the employer's establishment in case of an emergency is enough to justify compensation." In another case, the court reasoned that employees working in a facility for the mentally ill were entitled to be paid for their sleep time because "the clients at each facility displayed behaviors which required the attention of staff during the night"

The lawyer continues: if an employee is entitled to 24 hours of compensation each day, like Charlie, the overtime compensation is calculated each day as 4 hours at the 1 1/2 X rate and 12 hours at the 2X rate. Since Charlie's 1 1/2X rate is \$26.40/hour and his 2X rate is \$35.20/hour, then his daily overtime owed is \$528.00 which equates to \$2,640.00 per week, or \$11,440.00 per month. The lawyer explains that there is essentially a four-year statute of limitations on wage claims and so he can sue for 48 months of lost overtime, or \$549,120.00.

The astute reader will now wonder, wait a minute I thought the caregiver had a million-dollar case and here is the kicker. Under federal law, Charlie is entitled to "liquidated damages" equal to the amount of the overtime owed (another \$549,120.00!) unless the employer can prove that it was acting in good faith and had reasonable grounds for believing that it was not violating the law.

Courts have ruled though that an employer cannot claim that it was ignorant of the law, that employers must investigate the requirements of the law regarding overtime, and that double damages are the norm, not the exception. In addition, Charlie is entitled to interest (10% per year) that runs from the date of each pay period and he can collect attorney's fees from the employer.

Ta da, the million-dollar case!

Marilyn's Weekly Calendar

by Natalie Archangel & Mark Montijo

Live music in our corner of the East Bay is set to explode like a confetti cannon. Just ask Marvellous Marilyn Carver, the keeper of "Marilyn's Weekly Calendar," an incredibly informative public Facebook group which has become the reliable guide to who is playing where and when in Contra Costa, Napa and Solano counties.



Marilyn, a music maven, started her calendar several years ago after the closure of a hugely popular music venue in Solano County left a lot of local music buffs stranded with no easy access to the next show. She wanted to provide an easy, user friendly guide to local events and figured – how hard could it be?

"I had no idea what I was getting into - it's a full-time job!" she laughs.

"I am at the computer at least 6 hours a day. I start at 6:30 AM with the updates I've received overnight and check back often throughout the day. Between my updates and researching new happenings, I think I average over six hours per day!"

"I want my readers to easily see what is happening in the (current week)". As musicians send in updates, the calendar is updated in an easy-to-read grid providing band, date of show and venue. She has helped countless local bands build followings and increase online presence. With over 4300 followers, Marilyn's diligence and dedication have proven to be a blessing for both musicians and fans.

"Many new bands look to The Calendar for possible places to play in their genres. It's wonderful to help bring talented musicians and awesome venues together."

"I keep the calendar clean and updated daily; providing only current shows and

events."

She anticipates a wonderfully busy Spring and Summer with the re-emergence of festivals, city sponsored outdoor shows and the long-awaited re-opening of many local clubs.

After two long years, Walnut Creek and Clayton will both hold their ever-popular Art and Wine festivals: Walnut creek in June and Clayton in late April. Clayton will resume its biweekly Saturday Concerts in The Grove which will go through September. Concord's Todos Santos Plaza will resume its weekly Thursday concert series in June.

Even if one is a local musician without a spot in a festival, it is still an auspicious time.

Marilyn notes happily that "Musicians playing smaller club gigs should remember to put out their tip jars! Fans are so happy and excited to have live music back that they are opening their wallets in appreciation!" One band recently reported a banner night of \$600 in tips alone! Yes, live music is back and the love and appreciation for it continues. Just check Marilyn's Weekly Calendar to see who's in your favorite venue.

facebook.com/groups/4385636339459

Nathalie Archangel and Mark Montijo's outlaw country band, Nineteen Hand Horse, will be performing every third Saturday at the Clayton Club Saloon Saturday from 9 PM - 1 AM.



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Ruby Dooby Do to the Rescue

Ruby Dooby Do is Concord's Online celebrity with approximately 1.8 M TikTok followers, 946K FB, and 282K followers on IG. @rubydooby_do. Column by Jill Hedgecock, jillhedgecock.com



NorCal Poodle Rescue Founder Patty Moulthrop Passes

The dog rescue community recently suffered an inestimable loss of a leader. Patty Moulthrop of NorCal Poodle Rescue (NCPR), who passed away in February, 2022.

Blue Skies Standard poodle breeder, Patty Moulthrop, considered poodles to be bright, beautiful, sensitive, and graceful dogs. At Blue Skies, Moulthrop successfully bred and produced award-winning black standard poodles throughout the west coast including five multiple all-breed Best in Show winners. In 2000, Moulthrop had the highest-ranking poodle in the U.S., with 52 all-breed Best in Show wins.

In 1985, she founded NorCal Poodle Rescue (NCPR) in 1985 because she couldn't justify breeding poodles when she knew there were poodles in shelters that needed homes.

Moulthrop became an advocate for homeless poodles. She printed announcements and distributed them to local vets, shelters, and groomers and soon began rescuing poodles. She initially rescued and rehomed poodles by herself and then enlisted the help of other poodle lovers. But when she began receiving 20-30 calls a day, she realized she couldn't do it alone. Moulthrop reached out to other poodle owners and established NCPR. Under her watch, about 3,000 poodles and poodle mixes have found their forever homes.

Through the dedication of two dozen volunteers, NCPR rescues all three varieties of poodles and poodle mixes from private individuals and shelters. They've recently seen an increase in surrenders from the ill or elderly who are no longer able to care for their dogs.

NorCal Poodle Rescue is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3). Most of their funds goes to veterinary care and only 3% of their budget is allotted to administrative costs. In addition to tax-deductible donations, you can support their rescue efforts by sponsoring a poodle, or volunteering to photograph the dogs. Fosters are needed in Concord and elsewhere in the Bay Area. Contact them at norcalpoodlerescueinc@gmail.com.

You will be missed Patty Moulthrop.

Diggin' It



Support Underdog Dog Rescue

The Walnut Creek restaurant 1515 is not only hosting Easter Bunny dog photos on Saturday April 9th, but they will donate 20% of proceeds from your dine-in meal on that day if you mention Underdog.

ARF Shred Day: Help ARF and get rid of clutter. On Saturday, April 16th from 10 am to noon (or earlier if truck fills), you can bring unwanted papers (no e-waste) to ARF at 890 Mitchell Drive, Walnut Creek. Proceeds from the \$10 per box fee (no oversized boxes) will support ARF. Mobile shredding is a secure process with the shredding occurring on site.

Bone to Pick

Possible Distemper Outbreak in Bay Area. According to SFGate.com, San Rafael rescue group WildCare has noticed an outbreak of the distemper virus over the past two years. Distemper is often fatal to dogs, and those that survive usually have permanent, irreparable nervous system damage. Fortunately, canine distemper is not transmissible to humans. Please make sure your dog is up to date on his/her vaccines. If you see skunks, raccoons, foxes, coyotes acting abnormally do not approach, but please call the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Bay Delta office at (707) 428-2002.

ARF ADOPTION STARS Biscuit & Lantern

Looking for a furry friend? Visit arflife.org to view all of ARF's adoptable animals or read more about ARF's adoption process. .

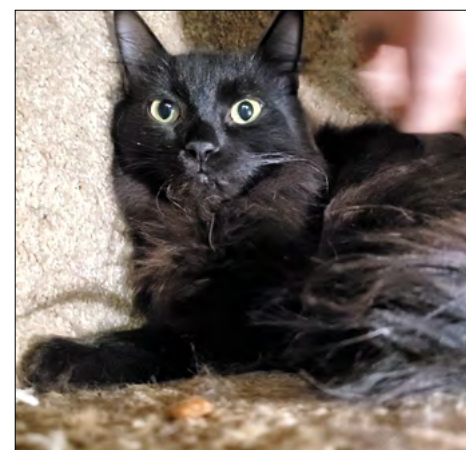
Biscuit



Five-year-old Biscuit is an active boy looking for that perfect family that loves to spend plenty of time outside on adventures such as embarking on long hikes or going to the beach. Biscuit enjoys playing with his toys independently, unless engaging in a game of two toy fetch. He'd make the perfect companion for a household that has been looking for a reason to get up off of the couch and out of the house more often. Biscuit has a positive history with other dogs and currently weighs 23 pounds.

ARF adoption fees: \$250 for an adult dog, \$350 for a puppy (<6 months), \$125 for a special-needs dog, \$175 for a special-needs puppy (<6 months), and \$125 for a senior dog (7+ years).

Lantern



Seven-month-old Lantern is a sweet and gentle fellow, who's putting his best paw forward! Once he makes a new friend, his playful personality is on full display. Lantern is a wonderful companion who will do best in a quiet paced home. Lantern has a positive history with other cats

ARF Adoption fees: \$100 for an adult cat, \$150 for a kitten (<6 months), \$150 for two adult cats, \$250 for two kittens, \$50 for a special-needs cat, \$75 for a special-needs kitten (<6 months), and \$50 for a senior cat (7+ years).

from page 11

WORD SEARCH SOLUTION

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

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MDRR plays a vital role in protecting our parks, streets and waterways. We help to create cleaner and healthier spaces for our neighbors to thrive in.



Each week, we service more than 200 parks, facilities, and street containers used by the public. Elias is one of our two city-can collection routes within Concord. Since Todos Santos Park, the bus, and street cans around the area require multiple pickups throughout the week, Elias empties these general-use containers more than 300 times weekly.



Tech in English

Do You Do 2FA?



What do web based password managers like those in Google Chrome, Firefox, Opera, Safari and Microsoft Edge all have in common? Well, they all store passwords, retrieve those stored passwords when visiting the appropriate websites, easy to use and are reasonably secure. Is this the end of the story, see you later, goodbye? Well, my friends, it is just the beginning of our story and here is what you might not know about browser password management.

Browser password managers are intentionally basic. Meaning they store the web address, username and password to let you login to the web address you visit. Manually, one can access a website by selecting the web address, typing your username, and a password. Password managers make this process automatic. Since it is automatic and the password manager stores and retrieves the password, many users forget they originally used it. One just clicks the site and the password that you initially setup is copied into the login form. Forgetting the original password can cause issues.

Information about browser passwords and how to activate them is available on the web. Search "browser password manager" for details on your specific browser.

What happens when you use 2FA? 2FA means two-factor authentication or two-step login. What happens when you are on the road and cannot get to your password manager on your computer browser? In a word, nothing.

FA is the method used by an ever-increasing group of security conscious Internet providers. The website wants to be sure that the person trying to login is who they say they are. They do that by sending you a numerical text message to your cell phone. One takes the numbers they send you and respond to the challenge sent by the web site.

As one can imagine it is a complicated, but logical, process. It is important to note that it is an increasingly complex world, and you will need two devices, your computer and your cell phone to access most secure sites. The solutions to your issues are available by a whole host of software makers.

Not only do third party software makers store passwords, retrieve and populate your website, they suggest passwords that are near impossible to crack, offer secure password sharing, storage in the cloud and more. I personally use mSecure, a simple (for simpletons like me) solution with excellent features and a low price.

What else could you ask for? Now go do the right thing.



Exercise is Medicine, Dose Matters

By Jessica Raaum Foster, NeurologyofPresence.com

If your exercise goals are simply to improve or maintain health and wellness, I am a huge fan of the "Do Less, More Often" philosophy. I know that I feel the best when I can exercise periodically throughout the day; just enough to challenge the body without depleting the resources I need to adult my way through the world. This method also does not require a gym membership, a huge block of time on my calendar, or even a change of clothes.



Here are some of my current favorite ways of moving:

Going for a quick walk, dancing with my daughter, jumping on the trampoline for a few minutes, running up and down the stairs, or lifting something heavy for a few reps. (I use my 40-pound child, but even a gallon of milk makes an excellent kettlebell.)

These can all be modified to any level of fitness. The goal is to keep moving. You should leave each "session" feeling more alert and energized for the next part of your day.

When there is time for a "workout," I love skill-building activities. Exploring new ranges of motion and trying new movements like handstands. Even coordinated efforts like throwing and catching a ball are all complex multi-sensorial movements that require use of multiple areas of the brain. Your brain thrives with novelty. Learning new things in a playful manner is usually a great pick-me-up in addition to improving strength and flexibility. It can also go a long way in injury prevention, unlike repetitive movements done with little thought or attention.

While there is merit in pushing your limits occasionally, regular exercise should not feel daunting. Our brains and bodies are designed to move, and it does not have to look like a "workout" to get the results. Movement is medicine; it needs to be taken regularly in appropriate doses.

Jessica Raaum Foster is a Neuro Performance Coach. For more information: www.NeurologyofPresence.com, IG: @JessicaRaaumFoster, FB: @NeurologyofPresence



JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

By Fran Cain

Scotia and Humboldt County - Who Needs to Fly?

Flying afar during the pandemic has not been easy or particularly appealing. Driving trips have provided an outlet, bringing me new experiences, and quenching my thirst for travel. Who needs to fly anyway?

I stumbled upon news that Humboldt County's historic Scotia Inn had reopened with new owners as the Scotia Lodge. This hotel was built in the 1920's by The Pacific Lumber Company which owned Scotia, a region developed to house staff. In 2008, The Pacific Lumber Company ceased to exist, and the Humboldt Redwood Company was formed. Scotia was rezoned and became a real town. I had been inside the lobby of the old Scotia Inn, but never stayed there. My image of a foggy, damp, and cold winter environment kept me away from Humboldt County except in summer, but I couldn't pass up this chance to stay in a 100-year-old reimagined hotel only five hours up Highway 101.



Wow. The beautiful lobby runs almost the length of the building designed in the manner of the grand resort hotels of the National Parks, but this one is entirely of redwood.

The friendly, informal staff greeted me and showed me to my two-bedroom suite. A small add-on fee covered a beverage of choice at check-in, a refrigerator stocked with juice and water, pour over coffee from Humboldt Bay Coffee Company, and a carafe of vodka and one of whiskey, enough for a couple of before-dinner cocktails. This updated hotel retains its old-world feel, but with very comfy beds.

The in-room information binder offered a menu of cannabis items available for delivery to the hotel. Humboldt County is, after all, part of the Emerald Triangle cannabis-producing region.

Hiking at Humboldt Redwoods State Park is always an option. Instead, I drove north and visited the Humboldt Botanical Gardens adjacent to College of the Redwoods. I could have spent an entire day wandering the 44 acres of extensive gardens and trails. As a special treat there, I found a short piece of the historical Bucksport-to-Goose Lake Prairie Wagon Road built in the 1850's to link the Eel River Valley and Humboldt Bay. The walk eventually ends at Peter Santino's "All Happy Now" earth sculpture, a delightful grassy mounded spiral labyrinth made of two quarter-mile walking paths.



I ventured to the Sequoia Park Zoo in Eureka. This charming, diminutive zoo is the oldest zoo in California, founded in 1907. The animals here are either born at the zoo, endangered, or no longer able to survive in the wild, but live in settings similar to their native environments. They consist of red pandas, flamingos, Patagonian cavy, crested screamers, black-headed and spider monkeys. In the petting barnyard, chickens run free, and children can get up close and personal to donkeys, alpacas, goats, and sheep. An aviary houses a variety of local and exotic birds.

But the most thrilling activity was the spectacular, world-class Redwood Sky Walk adjacent to the zoo. It climbs 100 feet into the canopy of the redwood forest for a 1/4-mile round trip including two rope bridges. I found this to be not only a beautiful adventure, but the serenity of walking high up in the trees I can't adequately describe. It must be experienced.

I stayed in Eureka for dinner. The locals all recommended the Sea Grill. The clam chowder followed by pan-seared sea scallops hit the spot.

To cap off my stay, after taking a wrong turn, I happened upon the Humboldt Bay Wildlife Refuge. This lovely wildlife and bird watcher's paradise with several miles of hiking trails is located off exit 696 just south of College of the Redwoods.

It turns out there is much to do and see in Humboldt County all year round. With the recent change of Humboldt State University to Cal Poly Humboldt, I expect to see more interesting additions to come to this region.

