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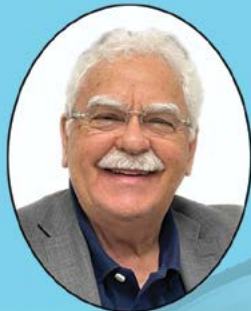
Faith enjoying chalk art at Todos Santos Park in Concord

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# Council Rejects Concord First Partners Term Sheet, Ends Exclusive Negotiating Agreement.

by David King

## “If You don’t Want Us, You Gotta Set Us Free” – Albert Seeno III

At the continued special council meeting on Saturday, January 28, the Concord City Council rejected the Concord First Partners’ (CFP) Term Sheet for developing the former Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS) and directed staff to let the Exclusive Negotiating Agreement with CFP expire on Jan. 31, 2023.

Obringer began the day by asking about Concord First Partners’ experience with Superfund Cleanup. But it was her question regarding statements made by Louis Parsons, President of Discovery Builders regarding claims in an East Bay times article suggesting the internal family litigation between Albert Seeno, Jr. and Albert Seeno III has disrupted the business of Discovery Builders.

Albert Seeno III approached the podium to intercept that line of questioning.

He stated he cannot talk about ongoing litigation, but Discovery Builders business is not affected by the lawsuit. “Everything’s good,” he assured, then interjected his directive to the Council to fish or cut bait.

“We have a wonderful term sheet here... We all agree. We never had a bad word with each other, we worked together... If you don’t want us, you gotta set us free. That’s it, it’s that simple. We worked our tails off. We worked our buns to the grindstone....

“We love the City. You gotta love us and let us go. We gotta know our destiny. I want nothing more, and I

think my group wants nothing more than to plan the project.... (By dragging this out) It’s just not fair for us. We spent a lot of money to get to this point....

“We’re gonna do a great job for you guys. We’ve listened to everybody. Hundreds of meetings, 500 in-person meetings with stakeholders, all the different groups, LRA, Guy, company, thousands of phone calls, and probably 10,000 manhours of effort.

“I have a lot of respect for the City Council. I’ve known some of you for 25 years. I’d rather you tell us what you want to do, and what the intentions are. And I can go to a picnic with my wife, go see my kids. I got a birthday party I can be at. I’m sure a lot of people here would rather be somewhere else than probably sitting here. I say that with all due respect. Just let us know our destiny so we can move on and deploy our \$20 or \$30 million somewhere else over the next couple of years. We would really appreciate it.”

The tone was sincere but intimidated his frustration.

Here is a summary breakdown of the Council’s comments:

Lobbying in favor of the Term Sheet, Aliano emphasized that it was the Council that created an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) process that was unanimously approved which determined the policy of certain things Council wanted to see and mandated requirements and sent that out to developers. Staff selected three candidates who could meet

those policies. The Staff recommends accepting the Term Sheet that is offering the City everything it asked for: jobs, affordable housing, education, parks, open space, and at a lesser ROI guarantee to the developer. He also stated his preference to work with a Main Street company rather than a Wall Street company. (referring to the choice of selecting CFP over Brookfield).

Vice Mayor Birsan spent his time dispelling many of the accusations concerning Albert Seeno III, as well as the unfairness of holding one generation of a family business accountable for a previous generation’s malfeasance. He also spent time disparaging Brookfield’s history as well. His point being that there are no perfect operators from which to choose, nor will there be.

But Mayor Hoffmeister and Councilmembers Obringer and Nakamura found issues with the Term Sheet.

Hoffmeister stated that the JADU proposal, while creative, does not offer the city concrete affordable housing that it can count on since there are no deed restrictions in place to force individual homeowners to rent it out at affordable levels or at all.

She also questioned the viability of adding additional units.



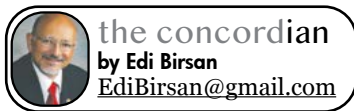
Albert Seeno III making comments at the Concord City Council meeting.

There was concern that as issues are addressed when developing a specific plan, each change would trigger ongoing financial impacts to the project including potential environmental, clean-up, traffic, and added costs.

The Master developer team missed the importance of the area plan’s elements including creating a buffer area from existing homes, connectivity to cluster villages, integrating GoMomentum’s need for an Autonomous Vehicle testing site.

Obringer voiced concern that no one informed the City of pending litigation when it involved a significant player of the CFP partnership.

Continues on Page 8



### Going Forward After Going Backwards

On January 28, the Concord Council voted 3-2 to terminate the Exclusive Negotiation Agreement with Concord First Partners. As note, I was one of the “2” who accepted the Term Sheet. The question that remains is what next?

In listening to all the discussions up to this point, the following appears to be what is being asked going forward from the various sides.

1. Accessory Dwelling Units (Mother-in-Law units) separate or attached are not acceptable as affordable housing.
2. Additional housing over the approximately 12,500 originally suggested is a No-go.
3. Affordable housing needs millions more direct aid from the Development to further subsidize the free land and utilities along with some guarantee of being built. No number was given but likely to be in the ballpark of \$50m and \$100 million.
4. A Union Agreement, probably in the form of a wall-to-wall agreement.
5. In all cases of privately held companies, conduct an investigation into the family including an intense scrutiny of secession, and of the family dynamics as it relates to ownership.
6. Especially for privately held companies’ investigation, a statement of the actions of the prior generations and family members in the business.
7. Disclosure and discussion of all accusations, not just court cases. Not only present but also past generations of private companies and corporate, probably going back at least 40 years given what was brought up on one private company minority owner. Whether Wall Street Companies would be given a different treatment is unknown or how to deal with investor groups of stockholders. What would we do if the Trump

- Family owned 10% of a Corporation?
8. Ongoing disclosure and investigation of all accusations with or without court actions that could potentially impact the business. For international Wall Street Companies this may have to extend to all worldwide operations.
  9. Detailed arrangements with GoMentum A.I. vehicle testing.
  10. Detailed methodology in the Return-on-Investment calculations.
  11. Possible reconfiguration to start the first phase at the area just beyond the North Concord BART Station and a discussion again about a buffer there.
  12. Upfront indications of a traffic impact plan (since there is opposition based upon the impacts on Highway 4), but not as part of the Environmental Impact Report.
- Personally, what I would add from my perspective is what I had been advocating (but is up to the City and not the Developer): an independent and accepted environmental oversight and advisory body to work with not against the Developer and their sub-contractors: a community advisory body composed with design experts in construction/ development to work with the Developer and the community directly to get things moving smoothly without constant interaction with the City Council.
- Going forward, the Navy continues to be a supporter of the Area Plan and a partner with the City/Local Reuse Authority, and want to work to find ways to expedite property transfer.
- I should hope we can make this a top priority and get going.
- This represents the personal views of me, Edi Birsan, (Brown Act be damned /or damned/. If you want to talk about it, let me know. EdiBirsan@gmail.com*

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## Chocolate and Wine Controversy

Every Valentine's Day folks ask me if wine and chocolate go together. Chocolate is too sweet for dry wine. Test it for yourself but taste the wine first. After you have a good sense of what it tastes like, take a bite of the chocolate. With the chocolate in your mouth, taste the wine again. Ask the question, "Does the wine really taste better after eating the chocolate?"

Saving the chocolate for last, here is a menu for a complete Valentine's Day celebration. Start with a creamy yet tart Marinated Artichoke Dip. To pair, splurge on a Meursault from the Burgundy region of France. Meursault is made from 100% chardonnay grapes. Its buttery flavor, full body, and touch of toasted oak is delicious with the rich dip.

Additionally, like most French wines, it is grown in a cool region that allows the grapes to maintain their natural acidity. This allows it to cleanse the palate of the cream and stand up to the vinegar in the marinated artichokes.

If you prefer to buy locally, choose a California Chardonnay grown in a cool region such as the Sonoma coastal region or the Carneros region where the acid is similarly retained.



Follow up the white wine starter with a classic red wine entree, prime rib. Many butcher shops offer pre-seasoned, bone-in and boneless roasts cut to serve just the right number. They even give you cooking instructions when you buy. Accompany with Sautéed Green Beans and Potatoes. With it you have both starch and vegetable represented and have added beautiful colors of red, white, and green to the plate. A red wine blend from Bordeaux France has the body to stand up to the fat in the meat, and the tannins in the wine are tamed by the salt of the dish. If Bordeaux is not available, any Cabernet-based wine would be an excellent choice.

Finally, we have reached the chocolate course. While any chocolate will do, Scharffen Berger makes chocolate tasting squares perfect for experimentation which you can order [Online at https://www.scharffenberger.com](https://www.scharffenberger.com).

Choose one milk, one semi-sweet, and one dark chocolate selection. Does the dry red wine that you had at dinner taste better with the chocolate or was it better with the meat? Now try the chocolate with a port or late-harvest red wine. Again, is the wine better or worse after the chocolate? When you have reached your conclusion, send me an email. Tell me which pairing you liked best; I would love to hear from you. (lasommeliere@gmail.com)

So, go on. Pair Up!

Maria Terry is a Certified Sommelier and Wine Educator in Northern California. [www.LaSommeliere.com](http://www.LaSommeliere.com)

### Marinated Artichoke Dip

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 c. breadcrumbs
- 1 tbsp. butter, melted
- 2 (6 1/2 oz.) jars marinated artichoke hearts, drained, and chopped
- 6 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1 c. freshly shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 c. mayonnaise
- 2 large garlic cloves, pressed
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice

#### DIRECTIONS

Mix breadcrumbs and butter for the topping. Combine remaining ingredients. Spoon into a lightly greased baking dish. Sprinkle with breadcrumbs. Bake uncovered, at 375°F for 25 minutes. Serve with crackers, chips, or bread.

Yield: 2 cups

### Sautéed Green Beans and Potatoes

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup onion, 1/2" dice
- 1/2 tsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp butter
- 1 cup white rose potatoes, cooked tender
- 1 cup fresh green beans, cut into 2 "pieces, cooked to your liking
- 1 Roma tomato, 1/2" dice
- 1 tsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Paprika to garnish

#### DIRECTIONS

In a pan large enough to hold all ingredients, sauté onion in olive oil. Add butter to pan and melt. Add cooked potatoes and beans to pan and coat with onion mixture. When all vegetables are heated through, gently incorporate tomato and parsley. Season to taste and garnish with paprika.

Yield: 2 one-cup servings

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# Relax, It's Just F---n' Parkinson's

by David King



The 5K athletes of Oakmont of Montecito support fellow tenant Dan Cochrane's while at Walt Disney Worlds' Marathon Weekend.

"Relax, It's Just F---n' Parkinson's is printed on his t-shirt. That's the saying you will hear from Dan Cochrane, 78, if he catches you feeling sorry for him.

In Concord, now an Oakmont of Montecito resident, Cochrane used to run in the annual Bay to Breakers race in San Francisco, until a Parkinson's diagnosis made him hang up his running shoes 21 years ago.

But with the help of his son, Robert Cochrane, Dan has found a way to return to big race events.



Dan Cochrane rides in a runner's chair pushed by his son, Robert Cochrane.

He just completed a 26.2 mile marathon at Walt Disney World Marathon Weekend, a fundraiser for the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research on January 7 and 8 with full spirited support from his tenant neighbors and Montecito staff.

"I was a distance runner," says Cochrane. "It was good to get out and clear out the mind and just let go," Cochrane stated in a KPIX News 5 interview after completing the Bay to Breakers event.

Cochrane's running in the Bay to Breakers was a yearly tradition for him until his Parkinson's diagnosis. In May 2022, he returned to cross the finish line again.

"The doctor told me... that I would be in a wheelchair eventually," he said. "I decided that I didn't want to take that laying down."

Still young at heart, Cochrane has a strict diet and sticks to routine exercise. He says this has helped him stay out of a wheelchair.

"You begin to realize that you don't have the control that you used to have of your movements," said Cochrane. "I think I am ahead of the game. We are 20 years into it and I'm still doing okay."

"It's just f---n Parkinson's," said Cochrane about the quote he wears proudly on his shirt that he wears on race day. "It is a reaction to people's reaction to me. They look at me like I'm dying or something. They see the wheelchair or pushcart and they have a terrible look on their face and so I say, 'Don't worry, it's just f---n Parkinson's.'"

However, for Cochrane, hitting the pavement for a distance run is no longer an option. "It's just too hard on my back," states Cochrane.



The run is on as tenants and staff run/walk 5k through the halls of Montecito. Barbara, (in blue) also has Parkinson's.

Cochrane's son, Robert, figured out a way to get his dad to cross the Bay to Breakers finish line one more time.

"He wants to be just regular Dan," explained Robert Cochrane. "I want dad to know there is still hope."

The father-son duo successfully completed the Bay to Breakers 7-mile run with the help of a running chair. That feat was not unnoticed. In addition to a news segments, Dan was invited to join Team Fox to participate in the 2023 Walt Disney World Marathon Weekend.

Meanwhile, back home, the staff and tenants of Oakmont Montecito offered their support by hosting their own internal 5K event, running through the halls of the senior community while others ran outdoors.

The Cochranes trained for a month in his running chair, practicing from Newhall Park to Montecito, to prepare for the marathon.

The marathon was conquered. Cochrane is back on the road again and Team Fox has raised over \$115K for the Parkinson's research.

As Cochrane says, "It's just f---n' Parkinson's."



Margaret and her daughter Sandi cross the finish line after 12 laps in her scooter completing the 5K.

Portions of this article are edited from KPIX News 5 May 2022 interview.

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# Buying Now Still Makes Sense

Have you been a little nervous about jumping into the real estate market? Buying a home now is certainly different than it was during the pandemic. But just because the market has shifted does not mean that now is not a good time to buy a home. If you are not sure whether a home purchase is the right move for you, then consider these reasons why buying now actually makes sense.

### There are more homes from which to choose.

One thing that characterized the housing market over the last two years was a lack of inventory. Many serious homebuyers were unable to purchase a home simply because demand was so high, but supply was low. With the recent rise in mortgage rates, fewer people are in the market for a house.

In addition, homes are staying on the market longer. That means there are more homes on the market to choose from and you are more likely to have your offer accepted.

### Home prices are forecast to stay steady.

Are you worried that housing prices will crash after you have already purchased your home? Fortunately, this is not 2008 and most experts agree that home prices will remain steady. Local factors will certainly influence this, and some markets may see a slight increase or decrease. But overall, you can feel confident that your home will retain its value.

### Housing increases in value over time.

Real estate continues to be the favorite investment of Americans because it always increases over time. While the

market can fluctuate in the short term, over the long haul, home prices go up.

### Mortgage rates should moderate.

Many potential homebuyers have been scared away from the market in recent months because of skyrocketing interest rates. However, rates have steadied over the past several weeks as inflation eases.

Inflation does have a significant impact on mortgage rates, so if inflation continues to decline, then you can bet that rates will come down, too. For those that are in the market for a mortgage, it pays to shop around. Different lenders offer different rates, so be sure to check out all of your options before deciding.

### Refinancing is always an option.

On the flip side, if inflation does not ease in 2023 and mortgage rates stay high, then remember that you always have the option to refinance at a later date. Mortgage rates fluctuate over time, and you are not locked into your rate forever. This works best if you are planning to stay in your home for more than five years as there are closing costs associated with refinancing your loan.

### You are building your net worth.

Are you tired of throwing your money away on rent? Then it is always a suitable time to buy a home. When you purchase a home, the payments you make help you to build your net worth instead of your landlord's. Every payment you make helps you build equity, which is the difference between what you owe on your loan and the value of your home. Equity is a powerful financial tool that you can leverage to purchase a second home, make renovations on your current home, or even finance an education.

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### Market Update - Clayton

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
214 Jeffrey Ranch Pl	\$830,000	2017	4/2.5	11/23/2022
51 La Honda Ct	\$1,195,000	2390	4/2.5	11/30/2022
515 Hamburg Cir	\$1,250,000	2445	5/3	12/1/2022
68 Weatherly Dr	\$1,090,000	2032	4/2.5	12/2/2022
5971 Cardinet Dr	\$1,361,000	2388	4/2.5	12/8/2022
3050 Miwok Way	\$1,050,000	2505	4/2	12/16/2022
1025 Kenston Dr	\$950,000	2253	5/2.5	12/28/2022

### Market Update - Concord

Address	Sales Price	SF	Bed/Bath	Sales Date
5143 Sutherland Dr	\$899,000	2171	4/2.5	12/1/2022
1868 Laurelview Ct	\$845,000	1748	3/2	12/6/2022
3934 Mulberry Dr #A	\$429,000	914	2/1	12/8/2022
1282 Kestrel Ct	\$1,300,000	2981	5/3	12/20/2022
5209 Jomar Dr	\$945,000	2008	4/2	12/22/2022
5555 Michigan Blvd	\$685,000	1018	3/1	12/28/2022
1028 Bermuda Dr	\$839,000	1563	4/2	12/30/2022



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

## Council Appoints Interim City Manager Pushes State for Local Control On Housing Matters

I am pleased to announce that we have appointed Ron Bernal as Interim City Manager to serve while we continue our search to replace the current City Manager who is leaving at the beginning of February.

When I learned that our current City Manager was leaving, I reached out to colleagues and inquired if they knew anyone who would be qualified for the interim role. I received a recommendation for Mr. Bernal and set up meetings to discuss the opportunity.

In talking about the role, it was clear that Mr. Bernal was well qualified and brought extensive experience in local government, most recently retiring from the City of Antioch as their City Manager.

As Interim City Manager, Mr. Bernal will be able to manage day-to-day operations while we continue our search for a candidate to take on the permanent role. Mr. Bernal has already begun meeting with city staff in order to effect the smoothest transition possible. I look forward to working with him.

At our last meeting, the Council approved Clayton's updated Housing Element (HE) as required by law. This is the product of over a year of effort from our Community Development Director, as well as the rest of the city staff. Because of their diligence, outreach, and community engagement, the process went smoothly, and our Community Development Director is to be commended.

While the HE has many required elements, the main point is to provide zoning sufficient to meet our allocated Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) units of 570 across all income



Interim City Manager, Ron Bernal takes the helm February

levels. Our updated HE will actually provide for 796 units.

We need the additional units to allow for a buffer should any units be disallowed by HCD, or future projects come in at a lower density than we anticipated. By having this buffer, it allows the City more flexibility in approving projects, and decreases the chance Clayton would have to go back to seek approval from HCD all over again.

Details of the updated HE can be found at the City's website. The next step is to gain approval from California HCD.

Some aspects of the HE, as well as many other state mandates, are looked at unfavorably by many. So, while the city was required to approve the HE to remain in compliance with state law, I brought forward a resolution during the same meeting to send the message that while we are approving the HE, Clayton does not agree with the State's one size fits all approach to housing and zoning requirements.

Accordingly, on a 3-2 vote, the city adopted a resolution in support of Our Neighborhood Voices (www.ourneighborhoodvoices.com) - an organization that is trying to advance a ballot measure in 2024 as a constitutional amendment taking back local control over housing matters.

This ballot measure advances a straightforward idea; if there is a conflict between state law and local law regarding housing related matters, then local law should prevail. This is an idea that unequivocally supports, and cements local control and I am glad that Clayton is able to join with others in voicing that support.

## Opinion:

### It is Time to Address Unfair Healthcare Costs by Dr. Gerald Felando

There is no debate that Americans spend more on prescription drugs than the citizens of any other country in the world.

As a former state lawmaker who sat on key policy committees thirty years ago, I would have hoped that policymakers on both sides of the table would have found an equitable and effective solution to addressing healthcare costs.

But in the absence of a legislative solution, charitable foundations, patient advocacy groups and pharmaceutical manufacturers have developed assistance programs to help reduce patients' out-of-pocket payments for medication and treatment.

The funds provided by these programs are supposed to go towards a patient's deductible, allowing them to hit their deductible maximum, and have insurance cover the rest of the cost. But insurers and Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) who help to negotiate drug prices, took umbrage with patients participating in cost sharing programs. So, they developed a new mechanism that allowed them to take the assistance funds and continue to make patients pay.

They have done this by inserting "copay accumulator" language into health plans, which says that if a drug is classified "non-essential," they do not have to count third party assistance in payment for the treatment towards a patient's deductible. And wouldn't you know it, a lot of the newest and most effective drugs for chronic diseases have been classified as "non-essential."

To hear PBM's explain it, the financial assistance programs were simply about pushing the newest drug vs. a generic alternative. And I would accept that claim, were it not for the fact that a USC study found that 79% of drugs affected by the new program had no branded or generic alternative.

This new scheme is simply unfair and unjust. But it has not received the attention it deserves because most people affected don't know that their health plan has a co-pay accumulator or maximizer language included until they get hit with an unexpected bill.

Many of my former constituents experienced chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and cystic fibrosis. Fortunately, they are living longer and more comfortably thanks to innovative therapeutic medicines



created within the past few years.

For example, in addition to being key to development of COVID vaccines, mRNA technology is now being developed to treat patients with amyloidosis and cystic fibrosis. And we have seen scientists discover new treatments for Alzheimer's, ALS and even find a cure for Hepatitis C.

As a cancer survivor twice, I recognize how lucky I am to be alive due to these remarkable scientific breakthroughs as well as passionate and skilled doctors and nurses. Which could only lead one to believe that there is hope for patients suffering from chronic disease in our country.

The good news is that lawmakers in Congress have taken notice of this issue - and state lawmakers here in California are now considering fixes to this imperfect policy.

Sixteen state legislatures from around the country have come up with a solution; by banning this practice and ensuring financial assistance meant to help pay for medication and reduce the financial burden on patients accomplishes both of those goals.

We need to raise awareness to give Congressional leaders the support to continue their efforts and speak out in California about reducing the cost of living with a chronic illness and ending copay accumulator programs. We owe it to our families, friends, and neighbors who have been harmed by this unfair and unjust practice.

*About the Author: Dr. Gerald Felando is a former State Legislator and Member of the Assembly Health & Aging Committees (1978-1992). Retired from public office, Felando now spends time advocating for patient rights and access to affordable prescription medicines.*

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# Today's Learning Environment: Schools Must Create The Demand

January was a busy month at Clayton Valley Charter High School, including the conclusion of our much-anticipated open enrollment period. Each year, hundreds of Bay Area students, incoming freshmen as well as transfer students, seek a coveted spot to attend our tuition-free, public charter high school. Because CVCHS receives more student applications than there are classroom seats available, State law requires us to hold a public random drawing.

On January 6, CVCHS held its open enrollment lottery welcoming over 500 students to enroll in the 2023-24 academic year. And for those students not selected, we provided an alternative solution. We created EAGLEi which provides new students with a robust, independent, Online-learning curriculum, along with the opportunity to engage in our award-winning extracurricular activities including Sports Teams, Bands, Clubs, and so much more.

Students receive personalized, one-on-one attention from certificated teachers who work with our students to create



Technology Academy students specialize in the development of devices and software that impact our society.

individualized plans tailored to their learning. Our Online EAGLEi courses are offered in all core disciplines such as Math, English, Science, and Social Science. AP courses are available as well. And best of all – graduating students receive a full CVCHS diploma including the opportunity to attend senior events and graduation ceremonies.

CVCHS goes to great lengths to educate a student who desires to be an Ugly Eagle.

Also in January, CVCHS hosted a series of in-person and virtual Academy Open Houses for the Class of 2027. Families heard presentations about the new enhancements and expansions of our Academies – small school pathways within CVCHS which prepare students for college and careers in Arts, Technology, Engineering and Design, Medical Careers, and Public Service.

As educators, we recognize that core curriculum areas are extremely important for our students. However, we also need to engage our students to explore possible career paths, interests, or skill sets needed after their high school experience. Academies are yet another reason students want to become Ugly Eagles and garner that advantage.

### Tailored Pathways Offer Career Connections

**Clayton Arts Academy** provides an artistic avenue for students to fulfill their academic requirements while also providing them with intensive, in-depth training in their area of artistic interest. CAA students enroll in a variety of arts-integrated pathways including design,

visual arts, digital arts, performing arts, music, content production and media. Career connections include vocations in the arts, media, and entertainment industries.

**Technology Academy** is composed of imaginative students seeking a career in game development or computer science industries. Pathway courses focus on ranging fields of graphic design, animation, game design, coding, and web design. Students specialize in the development of technologies that impact society through the creation of devices or software powered by data.

**Engineering & Design Academy (EDA)** provides a firm educational foundation in the areas of math and science enhanced by problem-solving and engineering applications. EDA emphasizes the critical thinking, collaboration, and teamwork skills necessary in our increasingly technological world. Career connections include vocations in the engineering, architectural and transportation industries.

**Medical Careers Academy** prepares students for biomedical careers in the 21st century by providing an educational foundation, professional mentorships, leadership training and hands-on skills. MCA students learn the principles of biomedical science including medical investigation, problem-solving innovation, clinical care, as well as outbreaks and emergencies. Career connections include vocations in the healthcare, medical research and technology and sports medicine industries.



Clayton Arts Academy provides an artistic avenue for our talented music students.

**Public Service Academy (PSA)** engages students in topical matters and careers related to governance, public safety, community service, education, and social services. PSA teaches the principles of leadership, service, public speaking, written communication, goal setting, group dynamics and presentation skills. Pathway courses are designed work to engage PSA students to positively impact their school and associated communities.

We thrive to maintain a positive, learning-centered environment which challenges all students academically and develops the skills and mindsets to graduate as successful, lifelong learners and become productive, responsible citizens in a diverse society.

Schools today must be innovative and create enthusiasm for students. I am proud that our school is unique, and our educators recognize the ever-growing demand from families seeking a better public education.

## Clayton Valley Athletic Hall of Fame: Back in Business

Clayton Valley Athletic Hall of Fame: Back in Business

The Clayton Valley Athletic Hall of Fame conducted its last induction ceremony in May of 2019. Due to the epidemic, the Hall of Fame missed a cycle but, is now announcing a new class of athletes and community members that will be inducted **May 19**. The induction banquet will be held at the **Centre Concord, 5298 Clayton Rd. in Concord**, behind the Clayton Bowl. The event will start at **5:00 p.m.** with a (beer and wine) social, followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. and the induction ceremony at 7:00 p.m.

Family, friends and CVHS sports fans are invited to attend. Tickets will be available after Monday, March 6, 2023, through the Clayton Valley Charter High School web site or via US mail. Further information on how to purchase will be sent out in the next few weeks. Ticket prices are \$50 for Adults and \$25 for kids 12 and under.

The induction ceremony will include short three-minute introduction and acceptance speeches. Our written program will include biographies on all of our inductees.

This year's individual inductees will include:

**Jim Henderson** ('60) multi-sport athlete, football, basketball and tennis. Later a Clayton Valley teacher and coach.

**Gene Montori** ('64) Varsity football, wrestling and baseball teams. All league honors and State placer in wrestling.

**Brian Stroock** ('77) DVAL, North



Jim Henderson



Coast and California CIF State wrestling champion. Member of '77 team that were crowned state champions.

**Suzanne Bohner-Miladin** ('77) Track and fencing athlete. Multiple DVAL, North Coast and State medal winner. Named Oakland Tribune Prep Track and Field Athlete of the year.

**Kip Vaughn** ('88) All DVAL and East Bay baseball player. Threw a perfect game in 1987. Went to Arizona State University on scholarship and was drafted to MLB by Florida Marlins.



Eugene Montori



**Jason Nolting** ('95) Won ten varsity letters in swimming, water polo and basketball. All DVAL and Nor-Cal sections. Went to the US Air Force Academy where he was an All-Conference and Academic All-American.

**Dana Lawson** ('97) League and North Coast Track and Field Champion. Two-time CIF performer. Outstanding volleyball and basketball player. Went to UC Berkeley where she became Track and Field All-American. Went to the US Nationals and Olympic Trials (2004).

**Jennifer Coddington** ('99) CVHS

Athlete of the Year. Cross country and soccer. BVAL three-year soccer All-League performer. Leading scorer. Selected to the National Coaches of America and All Far West soccer teams.

**Laura Davis** ('02) Four-year CVHS most valuable swimmer and high school All-American. Multiple league and sectional titles. League and National record holder. 4.0 GPA. US National, Academic and All-American Team member at Stanford.

**Sean Riley** ('08) four-year varsity swimmer and BVAL champion. Three-year CVHS most valuable swimmer. Four gold medals at the 2008 North Coast Section meet. 4.00 GPA. Attended University of Hawaii on scholarship. Conference champion at U of H and competed at US Olympic Trials.

Coaches, Teams, and Community inductees:

**Dee Billeter** joined the Clayton Valley staff as teacher and coach in 1967 and taught at school for over thirty years. Athletic Director. Pioneering force in the development of girl's athletics and the CVHS Athletic Hall of Fame.



Dee Billeter

Clayton Business Community Association (CBCA)

- 1976 and 1977 Girl's Gymnastic Team
- 1985 Varsity Football Team
- 1988 Baseball Team
- 1996 Girl's Track Team

### Council...Continued from page 2

"My main job is to protect the City from Legal and financial risk and to listen to People of Concord," Obringer stated. "There is deep distrust about moving forward."

Nakamura challenged the level of transparency and Integrity. "There is insufficient information to evaluate either fairness or feasibility, from a financial perspective. Asserting the right to confidentiality is a choice. And it is not one that reputation for transparency can be built. Without the ability to compare directly who gets what under the financial model, community benefits can't be adequately evaluated," stated Nakamura.

Hoffmeister summed it by stating that the master developer has too many distractions that have divided the community based on the hundreds

of emails and comments sent to the Council. "I'm looking for a partner that can unify the community," Mayor Hoffmeister said casting the deciding 3-2 vote.

Hoffmeister, Nakamura and Obringer voted not to approve the Term sheet and end the Exclusive Negotiating Agreement with Concord First Partners. Aliano and Birsan voted to accept the Term Sheet.

In a phone meeting with the Navy and Staff on Monday, January 30, the Navy reassured the City that they are still interested in helping Concord execute an Area plan.

Bjerke stated the staff will return to Council with recommendations for next steps for the Base Reuse Project in the coming weeks.





# Explore Concord's Connection with Historical and World-Renowned Architecture



Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Spain, was named as one of the most important works completed since 1980 in the 2010 World Architecture Survey among architecture experts

Angeles).

Gehry designed our own Concord Pavilion with landscape architect Peter Walker. The venue opened in 1975. Gehry also designed the renovations to the amphitheater in the 1990s with architect Randy Jefferson. The changes took the venue from 8,000 plus seats to a seating capacity of 12,500. Those renovations also included installing one of the largest stages in the country, allowing the Concord Pavilion to book artists that

required something more. Think Sting, Gloria Estefan and the just announced Beck and Phoenix show coming this summer.

The Concord Pavilion is one of only two Bay Area outdoor amphitheaters offering an exclusive under the stars experience. Locals and visitors love seeing their favorite musical and comedic performers here. Summer nights guarantee the perfect weather to be outdoors on the lawn or in seats surrounded by delicious food and refreshing beverages. Check out the upcoming season at [livenation.com](http://livenation.com).

American real estate developer and advocate for modern architecture, Joseph Eichler has homes in three different areas of Concord. Rancho Del Diablo, Rancho de Los Santos and Parkwood Estates were built between 1963 and 1964.

We love sharing stories of Concord's robust and fascinating history. The people, places and culture that built our town are important to today's residents, visitors and future generations. From the home of John Muir to one of the oldest former wineries in northern California, Concord and its surrounding cities are full of fascinating places with historical significance.

In Concord you can take in some of the most eye-catching architecture including designs from two very famous faces, Frank Gehry and Joseph Eichler.

Canadian-born American designer and architect Frank Gehry has been called "the most important architect of our age". The buildings he has designed are numerous and all over the world. Some of his notable designs include the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (Spain), Foundation Louis Vuitton (Paris), and the Walt Disney Concert Hall (Los



Eichler Home in Concord, CA. Eichler's homes are recognized for their glass facades, open spaces, strong natural light, and a serene connection with nature.

With over 175 homes, Concord has one of the most significant concentrations of Eichler homes in Concord. Something that mid-century enthusiasts love to look out for when visiting these neighborhoods.

Influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright, Eichler's homes are quickly recognized for their glass facades, open spaces, strong natural light, and a serene connection with nature. Those clean, modern lines of Eichler homes are complimented by underground utilities and no overhead power lines. Eichler enthusiasts look for distinctive post and beam construction, radiant floor heating, and a range of floor plans, many featured here in Concord.

The Concord Historical Society, which is dedicated to preserving and sharing the history of Concord and the surrounding area, offers a Concord

Historic Walking Tour to visit the sights and explore important historic buildings. From Todos Santos Plaza, established in 1869 to the original County Fire House, you can see 28 locations highlighted on the tour, each with its own architectural story that contributed to the building of the original town of Todos Santos which we now call Concord.

Do something special and invest a weekend or two to take in any of these iconic pieces of architecture and then share with family and friends during their next visit. Concord has a unique vibe with hidden gems like these that make it a destination perfect for so many.

For more about the many experiences in Concord, visit [www.visitconcordca.com](http://www.visitconcordca.com).



## Retrain Your Vestibular System for Balance and Injury Prevention

I'm about to make you smarter than 98% of the population.

Ok, I totally made up that number... but that is about the percentage of people who have never heard of the vestibular system before I introduce it to them.

By the end of this article, you will know the basics of how the vestibular system functions, how to train it, and you will then be light years ahead of most of the fitness industry that still thinks standing on an unstable surface is a great way to improve your balance. (Hint: It's not.)

Just inside your ears lives a network of tiny organs that is in charge of your balance as you move through the world. This is your vestibular system.

The Vestibular System answers two questions:

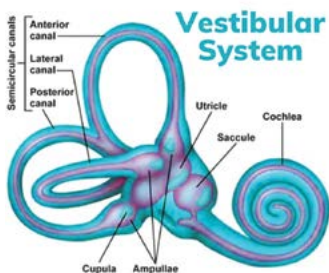
Which way is up? Which way am I going?

Each tiny organ signals movement in a particular direction:

Sacculle: Vertical Movement (Ex. Riding in an elevator)

Utricule: Lateral movements (Ex. Riding in a car on a straight highway)

Canals: 3D Rotational movements (Ex spinning in an office chair)



To keep your vestibular system healthy, your head needs to move in each of these planes on a regular basis. Kids do this organically in play. They run, jump, twirl, fall, roll, etc. all over the place. Sports such as gymnastics, martial arts, and some forms of dance are excellent sources of high-dose vestibular stimulation.

We all know good balance is essential for injury prevention, but it does a lot more than just keep us upright. Your vestibular system also helps keep your vision clear while you are moving, assists in posture, and even impacts your breathing and blood pressure.

Deficits in any of these vestibular organs can cause issues like vertigo and motion sickness. If left uncorrected, it can lead to an array of problems including anxiety, depression, ADHD, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, scoliosis, osteoporosis, etc. But with some simple assessments, we can determine where the problem is in the vestibular system and retrain it specifically to get you back to feeling great.

So, get back out there and play.

Jessica Raaum Foster is a Neuro Performance Coach. For more information: [www.NeurologyofPresence.com](http://www.NeurologyofPresence.com) IG: @JessicaRaaumFoster, FB: @NeurologyofPresence

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Image courtesy of sciencedirect.com



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Master Gardener

## Add Wild Birds to Your Garden



February marks the start of spring in Contra Costa. If you live near water, Pacific chorus frogs croak in unison to noisily signal their intent to spawn. Daytimes are full of bird calls and songs as these wonderful residents become more eager to enter their breeding season.

All-natural gardening is not just about veggies and fruit trees. Being kind to other creatures that share your slice of paradise is important also. Visible and sometimes spectacular native birds add joy and entertainment to our gardens. I gaze out my windows at their springtime antics, and I tend to my feeders and water sources to encourage more sightings. If you are among the millions who enjoy watching and caring for wild birds, here are some guidelines to protect their health and natural home.

Put up a feeder. Feeding wild birds is an age-old practice. Nature product stores offer a wide array of effective and inexpensive bird feeders to attract colorful and acrobatic birds within viewing range. Differing seed mix options draw in more unusual varieties. Clean up overspill under your feeders to discourage unwelcome critters such as rats, mice, and voles. And remember, wild birds know how to find food sources without your help. Don't worry about feeding birds to keep them alive, only to attract them closer to view.

Provide fresh water. We all need clean water and so do the birds. A bird bath, splashy fountain, or just a shallow pie pan can add hours of viewing fun to your garden. Birds vigorously splash in shallow water sources (around an inch of clean water) to knock off dirt, excess oils, and pests from their feathers. Check the water quality at times and replace dirty water with fresh.

Install a Bird House. It is fun to put up a bird house or two to view their spring nesting season up close. If you are fortunate, a breeding pair of chickadees, nuthatches, wrens, or even bluebirds will adopt your bird house. Native birds can reward you with great views of chicks. But even if nesting fails to produce offspring, their courtship and nest-building activities are fascinating to watch. Clean out your bird house after each breeding season is over.

Protect them. You cannot protect wild birds from natural predators, such as hawks, owls, egg-stealing jays, or tree-climbing foxes. But if you have a

water feature, such as a bird bath or fountain near your feeder, change out its water every few days. The birds will naturally use it as bathing water – and also for drinking water. If you see signs of excess algae growth, use a wire brush to scrub it out, then rinse it with fresh water before refilling.

Avoid bleach as it is not natural and can be overkill for algae. If you read about a local bird disease threat, drain water features and empty your feeders for a few weeks. Sunshine on a clean dry surface will destroy viruses and harmful bacteria. After the threat has passed, wild birds will return to your yard.

Enjoy your views. Eyes and ears are a good start, but to witness wild bird colors and shapes clearly, you should pick up a good set of birding glasses. These are usually low magnification lenses, 10x or so, but they work well for identification or appreciation of our many native species. A higher magnitude scope can be linked with a smartphone for spectacular photos. To view our native night birds such as owls and nightjars, night vision scopes are the right choice. Many birders rely on calls and songs to ID hidden birds. Cornell University's Bird Lab offers a super [web site for identifying birds](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/) by both sight and sound at: <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/>.

If you are a bird-watching novice and would like to learn more about this popular hobby, join the local Mt. Diablo Audubon Society chapter. Their information can be found at: <https://mtdiabloudubon.org/>.

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

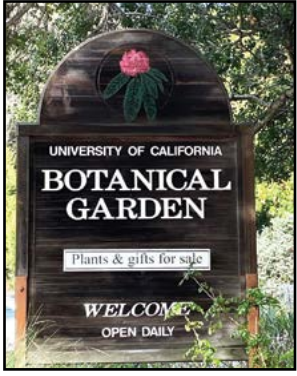


Listen for native chickadee's 'chick-a-dee-dee'

# JOURNEY-MAN'S JOURNAL

by Jill Hedgecock

# UC Botanical Garden Showcases the Weird World of Plants



In February 2022, I visited the UC Botanical Gardens (UCBG) at Berkeley with my sister. We were completely fascinated. We marveled at the amazing newts, birds, and colorful blooms as we meandered through the outdoor collections. We lingered in the greenhouses, mouths agape at the weirdness of plant life.

Established in 1925 and housing plants that have been gathered from nearly every continent, including nearly one-quarter of California's native species, UCBG's 34-acre garden is considered to be one of the largest and most diverse plant collections in the United States.

Fortunately for local residents, the UCBG is only about a 30-minute drive away. It is incredible to realize that such a short distance from large metropolitan city, this vast landscape of plant life exists, almost a world apart and yet so close. There was so much to see that I knew then that I would be back.

Last month, I returned and brought my husband, Eric, to show him some of the wonders of this world-class garden. After being housebound by constant rain for several weeks, we were both in need of an outdoor experience.

Once through the main entrance, it was like arriving at an amusement park and choosing which ride to take. Here, I had to select which of the world's natural habitats to explore first. The gardens are divided into nine regions, including California, Eastern North America, Mexico/Central America, South America, Mediterranean, Asia, Australasia, South Africa, and Deserts of the Americas.

In addition, two greenhouses are located near the entrance. One supports a collection of arid plants, cacti and succulents, and the other contains orchids, ferns, and carnivorous plants.

Eric and I headed to the Arid house, which had been a high point during my previous visit. The Madagascar palm with its elephant-like configuration, is a personal favorite. It will intrigue anyone unfamiliar with this uniquely designed succulent. Despite its name, it is actually not related to palms. Also, the lithops are marvelous to see. Commonly called flowering stones, they look exactly as their common name implies.

The Deserts of the Americas was originally established as an extensive rock garden by James West (aka Prince Egon von Ratibor) in 1932, and the California outdoor area contains one of the largest species collections of California native plants in the world. Cacti enthusiasts will want to check out the brilliant yellow Coast Cholla, a native of Santa Cruz Island in Santa Barbara.

A visit to the Cycad and Palm Garden near the Conference center and the Australasia section feels like a journey back into the Jurassic era. It amazes me to see the variety of plants thriving here, which only demonstrates how the Bay Area's Mediterranean climate can support a diversity of species.



Desert of the Americas



CA Towhee

There is a special collection of over 100 herbal plants commonly used in the practice of traditional Chinese medicine in the southern area of the Asia collection.

The Japanese Pond is also the area where two newt species, the California and rough-skin newts, are known to breed. The newts emerge from hiding after the rainy season to reproduce, so mid-to-late February is an ideal time to visit UCBG.

The Garden of Old Roses, located at the eastern end of the grounds near the South American area, documents the history of rose cultivation. On clear days, views of view of San Francisco and Golden Gate Bridges are possible, making the uphill trek to get there worthwhile. There's also a sphere sundial here that was created by Frank Cheney, a UC Berkeley graduate, Class of 1941.

The Orchid, Fern and Carnivorous House contains many specimens that would be the equivalent of a plant version of a sideshow in a traveling circus. Fascinating details about orchids and other plants can be found on the information plaques. For example, did you know that about one-third of orchid species do not provide nectar and instead use odors to attract pollinators? These flowering plants lure male insect pollinators by producing chemicals similar to the pheromones of females.

Venus fly traps are a mesmerizing specimen, but I had a "laugh out loud" moment when I spotted a tiny plastic human toy figurine placed among them.

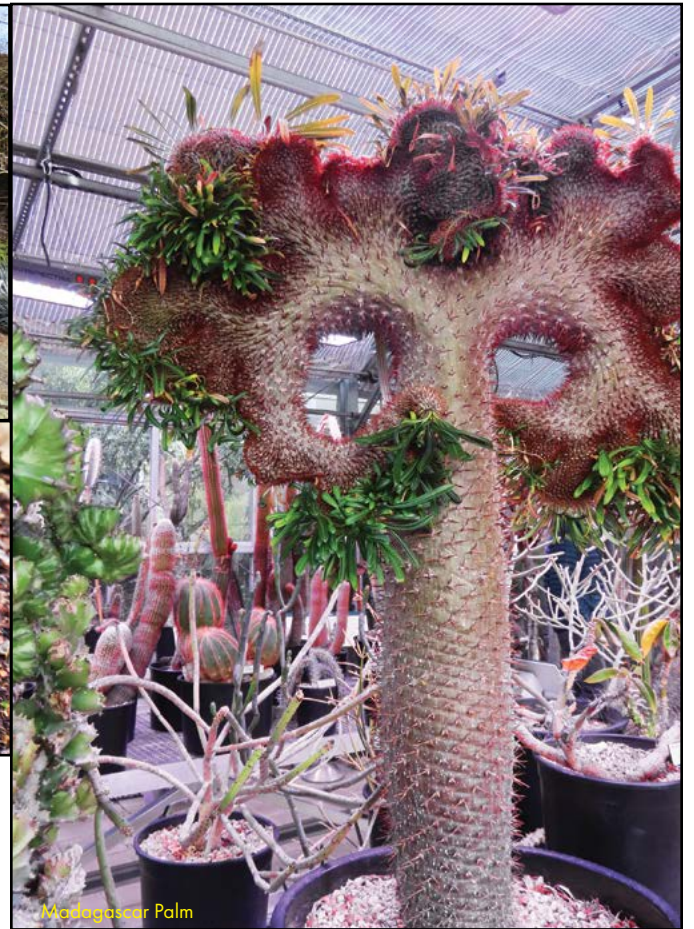
Humans aren't the only ones who come to enjoy the gardens. Birders will delight in the avian life that inhabits UCBG. Anna's hummingbirds, thrushes, sparrows, and California towhee are just a few of the feathered species that can be found on the grounds.

I recommend you explore the gardens at a leisurely pace by setting aside two to three hours. Bring along a picnic lunch, take your time to enjoy the beauty of UCBG, reconnect with your inner peace, and allow life's stresses to float away.

The gardens are located at 200 Centennial Dr. in Berkeley and are open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Entrance fees apply. Limited parking is available at the UCBG parking lot (\$1.50/hour). Gardening enthusiasts can find plants for sale and a gift shop.

Reservations are required, and visitors must arrive within a half hour of reservation entry time. ([botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu/the-garden](http://botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu/the-garden)).

*Jill Hedgecock has a master's degree in Environmental Management and a bachelor's degree in Biology. Her love of nature inspired her to write the award-winning novel, "Rhino in the Room" and the sequel, "Queen of the Rhino."*



Madagascar Palm



Coastal Cholla located in the California Section



Orchids



Tropical Pitcher Plant



A silly figure humorously placed among venus fly traps



Bedstraw flower



Jill Hedgecock at the Japanese Pond



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Raspberry Eclairs



Valentine Cookies



Gingerbread Hearts



Cupcakes



Strawberry Macarons

## Clayton Valley Athletic Association's Cheerleading Team Are National Champions Once Again

Clayton Valley Athletic Association went to JAMZ Youth Nationals in Las Vegas, Nevada on January 21 to compete on the National Level of Youth Cheer. Teams must receive a bid from a previous competition in order to compete at JAMZ Nationals. Clayton Valley Nationals Team competed in Division 13, Level 1 Sideline Performance Cheer and Division 13, Level 2 Show Cheer.

Clayton Valley competed against nine teams in Sideline Performance Cheer and 10 teams in Show Cheer.

Clayton Valley took the stage with force. After the performance, the team was notified that Clayton Valley's National Team "Hit Zero." This means that there were no deductions or

penalties throughout the entire routine.

This is extremely rare in the competitive cheer world. The team was awarded first place "National Champions" in Division 13 Level 2 Show Cheer with a score of 93.2.

The team was also awarded the "High Point" award with another bid to the YCADA (Youth Cheer and Dance Alliance) Nationals in Atlantic City, New Jersey at the end of February. The High Point award is the highest score out of all Division 13 teams. Regardless of the level, Clayton Valley had the highest score of Division 13.

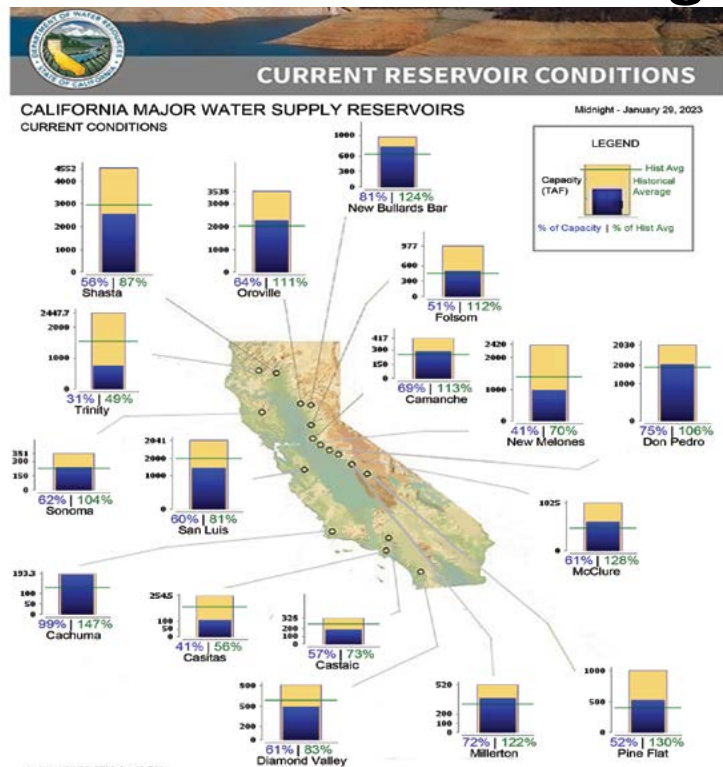
Congratulations to all the girls and coaches on being crowned National Champions.

Coaches: Head Coach—Francesca Stolarz (aka Frenchy), Angelina Drolette, Angela Rodriguez, Rebecca Pandelis,

Cheerleaders: Aryana Aleali, Becca Adent, Maya Carrea, Izabella Hurley, Lexi Howarter, Haley Jones, Eva Leaver, Nikolett Pandelis, Victoria Rice, Destiny Rodriguez, Catalina Stolarz, Gianna Stolarz, Gwenevere Stolarz, Tatum Vitarisi



## Rains Filling Reservoirs Above Historical Averages



Together through our 12th Annual Give Back Program, we're making our largest donation! Thank you to all our customers who signed up for autopay and EFT in 2022.

With your help, and the Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano, we'll provide more than 20,000 meals throughout the community.

**Trusted.  
Proven.  
Essential.**

MDRR takes great pride in being a good neighbor and a dependable community partner.



# calendar of events

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**GREATER**



**CONCORD**

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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kcabral@concordchamber.com

## CLUBS

**June 10, Classic Car Show presented by Walnut Creek Elks Lodge.** Participants and Sponsors register now. Sponsorship call Judy Godar 925-937-8995. Registration fee \$40 includes meal. Awards for Best in Show, 1st & 2nd place and more. A portion of proceeds to benefit Elks charity projects.



Register Online at <https://bpoe1811.square.site/>. (See our ad page 9.)  
**Concord NorCal Helping Hands Lion's Club.**  
<https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/start-our-approach/club-locator/details?id=148928>

**Rotary Club of Concord.**  
<http://www.concordcarotary.org>

## FARMERS' MARKETS

**Pacific Coast Farmers Market Concord** Todos Santos Plaza  
Tuesdays 9:00am to 2:00pm.  
Thursdays 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
**Martinez** Sundays, 9:00am to 2:00pm, 700 Main St.  
**Walnut Creek** Kaiser 1425 South Main 10 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
Fridays 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.,  
**Rossmoor** Golden Rain Rd.  
Saturdays 9:00am.-1:00 pm.  
**Shadeands** North Wiget Ln. and Mitchell Dr., Sunday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. 1799 Locust St.

## EVENTS

**February 5, Super Valentine's Boutique**, 11 AM. - 3 PM. 5th Valentine's shopping experience with unique holiday gifts. Free Red Carpet photo op, raffle and free kid's crafts and balloon art. Benefiting Food Bank of Contra Costa. Free admission and free parking. Hilton Concord Hotel, 1970 Diamond Blvd., Concord, 2 blocks off Interstate 680. [www.SuperValentinesBoutique.com](http://www.SuperValentinesBoutique.com).



**February 11, Diablo View Orchid Society Orchid Show and Sale.** Sat, Feb 11, 10 AM - 4 PM PST  
Displays of beautiful orchids, orchids and native plants for sale, educational talks on orchid care and culture, hourly raffle, AOS judging. First Lutheran Church, 4000 Concord Blvd, Concord



**February 11, Luncheon**

**California Writers Club, Mt. Diablo Branch** Kevin Fisher-Paulson, author and weekly columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle, will be the featured speaker to discuss how to harness your creativity. Check-in is at 11 a.m. at Zio Fraedo's restaurant in Pleasant Hill. Guests are welcome. Register at the meeting or online at <https://cwemtdiablo.org/meetings-and-workshops>.



**February 11, Wine & Chocolate Stroll 2023:** Downtown Martinez, 1PM - 4 PM Grab your sweetie, gal pals, family and friends and head downtown for a fun afternoon strolling from business to business sampling 20+ wines and chocolate treats! Main Street, Martinez  
Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/downtown-martinez-wine-chocolate-stroll-2023-tickets-494267807317>



**February 11, Concord Preschools Open House** for families with young children. 10 a.m. - noon. Participants will tour classrooms, meet the teachers, and learn more about registering for the 2023-2024 school year, which opens to the public on Wednesday, March 1 at 10 a.m. at [www.cityofconcord.org/preschool](http://www.cityofconcord.org/preschool). 2790 Parkside Circle and Centre Concord, 5298 Clayton Road

**February 12, Birding by Kayak Dow Wetlands Tour.** 11:30 PM - Mon, Feb 13, 1:30 AM. Let's get on the water and see which migratory birds have arrived in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. We'll also look for birds that call the Delta home year round. We may view Great Blue Heron., Antioch Marina Harbor, 1 Marina Plz, Antioch



**February 18, The Knights of Columbus are hosting a Community Blood Drive for the American Red Cross,** 10am to 4pm in the Large Hall of the Church. 5562 Clayton Rd., Concord.

**February 19, Walnut Creek Wedding Fair** 12 - 4 PM. You could walk out as the winner of a \$10,000 WEDDING PACKAGE GRAND PRIZE. Walnut Creek Marriott, 2355 N Main St, Walnut Creek, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/concord-wedding-fair-tickets-453452959007?aff=erelexpmlt>



**February 25, 26 Eastbay Sports Card & Collectors Show,** 12:30 - 2:30 PM, Concord Hotel, 45 John Glenn Dr, Concord

**February 25, Tri-Valley Camp & School Fair,** 11 AM - 2 PM, - Sponsored by Stanford Medicine Children's Health, 10th free event with booths for camps, schools, preschool, STEM and STEAM programs, sports, cooking, enrichment, performing arts. Free admission & free parking. Benefiting Food Bank of Contra Costa. Pine Valley Middle School Auditorium, 3000 Pine Valley Rd., San Ramon. [www.TriValleyCampFair.com](http://www.TriValleyCampFair.com)

com

**February 25, 26, Vallejo Gem Show,** 10. AM - 5PM, Solano County Fairgrounds, McCormack Hall, 900 Fairgrounds Drive, Vallejo, <https://www.vallejochamber.com/events/details/vallejo-gem-and-mineral-show-2023-15887>

**February 26, , Contra Costa Camp & School Fair.** 11 AM - 2 PM - Sponsored by Stanford Medicine Children's Health, 10th free event with booths for camps, schools, preschool, STEM and STEAM programs, sports, cooking, enrichment, performing arts. Benefiting Food Bank of Contra Costa. Free admission & free parking. Benefiting Food Bank of Contra Costa. Acalanes High School, 1200 Pleasant Hill Rd., Lafayette.  
[www.ContraCostaCampFair.com](http://www.ContraCostaCampFair.com)

**March 12, Contra Costa Con 5 - Celebrating 40th Anniversary of Return of the Jedi,** 10 AM - 4 PM, featuring actors and behind the scenes Star Wars creators. Everything pop culture with toys, apparel, new and vintage collectibles, art, anime, comics and more. Benefiting Food Bank of Contra Costa. Free parking. Tickets at [www.ContraCostaCon.com](http://www.ContraCostaCon.com) with a \$2 Toy Buck included with each advance sale. Kids 9 and under free. Hilton Concord Hotel, 1970 Diamond Blvd., Concord, 2 blocks off Interstate 680.



**March 19, Concord Wedding Fair,** 12:00 PM, You could walk out as the winner of a \$10,000 WEDDING PACKAGE GRAND PRIZE! Concord Crowne Plaza 45 John Glenn Drive Concord. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/concord-wedding-fair-tickets-453452959007>



## CRAB FEEDS

**Center Concord, 5298 Clayton Rd, Concord**



**February 10 , DVW Crab Feed - Diablo Valley Wolves Soccer Club 3rd Annual Crab Feed** "All-You-Can-Eat Crab Feed is Adults Only 21 & over. Great Food, Music, Dancing, Drinks, Great Memories, Raffles, Tickets: \$100 singles; \$90 ea. for two or more; Table of 10 \$850 <https://www.diablovalleywolves.com/>

**February 18, DVEHA Crab and Go!** Support Diablo Valley Equestrian Heritage Association . Curbside Pick-up only. 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Includes 1.5 lbs of succulent Dungeness Crab, Tri-tip, Pasta with Marinara, Garden Salad, Dinner roll and butter. All meals delivered to your vehicle. \$68 per meal, plus tax. <https://diabloequestrianheritage.org/>

**February 25, Walnut Festival Association 17th Annual Crab Feed and Tri-tip.** Includes salad, pasta, and bread. Raffle and Silent Auction 50/50 raffle, and Unlock the Cash. 6PM. Adults \$70, Children 8 and under \$30 (sold at door only). Tickets purchased at

[www.thewalnutfestival.org](http://www.thewalnutfestival.org).

**March 03, California Waterfowl's 36th Annual Contra Costa Crab Feed.** 5:30pm. Reservations required. Contact: Kevin Confetti at 925-889-9769. Ticket packages can be purchased Online at <https://calwaterfowl.org/events/>

**March 04, Blue Devils Performing Arts Crab Feed.** Funds raised benefit community arts programs of BD Performing Arts. Silent Auction, music and dancing. \$60 each, table of 10: \$550. Doors open 5PM. Dinner 6PM, Music and Dancing 8PM. For tickets, go to <https://www.bluedevils.org/>. (See our ad on page 17)

## ARTS/THEATRE/MUSIC

**February 7, \$6 Drive-In Movie Night in Concord** 8:30 - 11:59 PM, West Wind Solano Drive-In, Family Night every Tuesday 1611 Solano Way, Concord <https://www.westwinddi.com/Locations/Solano>

**February 11, House Of Floyd, Pink Floyd Tribute,** 8 - 11 PM, Vinnie's Bar & Grill, 2045 Mt Diablo St, Concord

Clayton Theatre Company

**THE MOUSETRAP** Agatha Christie's

MARCH 17 THRU APRIL 1

ADULTS: \$29 / SENIORS: \$25 (62+) STUDENTS: \$22  
Tickets: [www.ClaytonTheatreCompany.com](http://www.ClaytonTheatreCompany.com) or 925-334-0880  
ENDEAVOR HALL - 6008 CENTER ST. - CLAYTON, CA  
Please visit our website for COVID protocols and updates.  
The Mousetrap is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. [www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)

**March 17-April 1, Clayton Theatre Company presents "The Mousetrap" by Agatha Christie,** Endeavor Hall 6008 Center St., Clayton. Visit [claytontheatrecompany.com](http://claytontheatrecompany.com) or call 925-334-0880 for tickets.

## Lescher Center for the Arts:

**February 10-11, Diablo Ballet's Swan Lake Suite** Presented by Diablo Ballet. Featuring selections from "Swan Lake," the poetry of this timeless ballet and majestic score by Tchaikovsky will showcase the Diablo Ballet dancer's stamina and artistry in this breathtaking tale.

**February 25: Carpenters Legacy:** 8PM A Re-creation of the 1976 UK Tour starring Sally Olson and Ned Mills, Presented by West Coast Performing Arts.



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

# In Case You Missed It...

Local News Items from [Claycord.com](http://Claycord.com) and Other Sources

## Tesla Charging Stations Installed Near The Old Nob Hill Foods In Citrus Plaza On Oak Grove Rd. In Walnut Creek



About 10 Tesla charging stations were surprisingly installed in the Citrus Plaza shopping center on Oak Grove Rd. (just north of Ygnacio) in Walnut Creek.

The shopping center was home to Nob Hill Foods before they closed early last year.

The charging stations are along the Citrus Ave. part of the center, closer to the old Nob Hill.

The old Nob Hill Foods building, which is about 38,000-square-feet, is still for lease.

## Annual Count Of Homeless Contra Costa Residents

Contra Costa conducted its annual Point-in-Time (PIT) count, documenting homeless residents throughout the county on January 25.

Data from the PIT Count helps government, service providers and community advocates develop effective responses to the needs of local people. The information is also a required part of the county's requests for federal and state funding for homeless services.

During the 2020 count, the last year for which we have reliable data, there were about 2,277 homeless people in Contra Costa County.

Data gathered during this year's count will not be available for several months.

## Volunteers Needed For Contra Costa County's Search And Rescue Team



The Contra Costa County Sheriff's Search and Rescue team is starting recruitment for its September academy.

To get an application, anyone who is interested has to go through an orientation. Those are scheduled on the first Thursday of each month from February until June. To register to attend the orientation please fill out an interest form on the Contra Costa Search and Rescue website.

An oral interview and background check are required before training for the academy.

The deadline to apply is June 9.

Find more information on the search and rescue team's website. <https://www.contracostasar.org/join-the-team/>

## Claycord Is Now Offering FREE Online Obituaries for Local Residents

Since Claycord.com reaches hundreds of thousands of people, they figured this would be a nice thing to do for those who recently lost loved ones. They believe dying shouldn't cost a boatload of money.

There is a "FREE OBITUARIES" link on the top of the page. All you have to do is fill out the info, attach a picture, and click "submit obituary." There's not even a word limit.

May your loved ones Rest In Peace.

## Spotted mountain lion cubs play on camera at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park.



Yes, puma kittens do have spots, which help them blend in with grass, brush, and dappled sunlight for safety. The District maintains hundreds of wildlife cameras throughout Contra Costa and Alameda counties as part of an effort to evaluate the ecological health of the East Bay region.

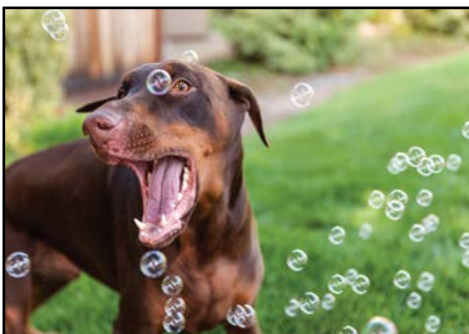
In 2022, the Park District released NatureCheck, a report that documents the conditions and trends of indicator species within East Bay Stewardship Network lands. In keeping with their mission to preserve a rich heritage of natural and cultural resources, the Park District manages large swaths of habitat for the myriad of plants and animals that inhabit these lands, including these apex predators caught on camera at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park.

## Starbucks To Open On Monument Blvd., Concord



Starbucks is getting closer to opening on Monument Blvd. in Concord. The site was previously home to Kentucky Fried Chicken. This Starbucks will have an extra long drive-thru, and won't block traffic on the main road.

## Concord Dog Parks to Close for Annual Maintenance.



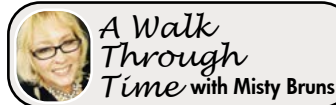
The City of Concord's two dog parks are scheduled to be closed for annual turf renovation and general maintenance.

Newhall Dog Park will be closed from Monday, February 6 through Monday, March 13, 2023.

The City's Baldwin Dog Park will be closed beginning on Tuesday, March 14 and will reopen on Monday, April 17, 2023.

Renovations will include aeration, re-seeding, and fertilizing of the park's natural turf. The City's consistent maintenance and renovations help maintain the quality of the parks for Concord residents and their canine companions.

For more local stories visit [Claycord.com](http://Claycord.com).



# Was it Because of a Cow? 160 years ago

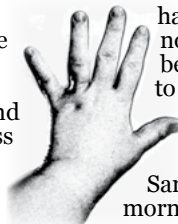
Samuel Helstrom 1823-1862. The death of Samuel Helstrom is of a peculiar nature.

Samuel was a well-known and highly respected citizen of Contra Costa County. He came from Sweden and created a life for himself in this county.

At the end of September in 1862, a cow belonging to him died of some malignant disease, and he proceeded to remove its hide.

In doing so it is believed he probably communicated some of the poison to a scratch on his wrist, which soon became infected. His whole arm finally became fearfully swollen. Medical aid was obtained, but he probably neglected the scratch and area on his wrist too long and was beyond the reach of human skill.

He must have known things were his favor proceeded together and his business calmly end. the next



not going in because he to put his will arranged matters and awaited his Samuel died early morning.

His remains were followed to the Martinez Cemetery by a large number of his friends and relatives, who respected him while living, and sincerely mourned his untimely death.

He was a believer of the doctrine of the New Church, and to the principles of the sublime faith he owed the calmness and fortitude to which his last hours bore witness in the midst of danger so appalling. "In the midst of life, we are death"

**DEATH OF S. M. HELSTROM.**—It is with feelings of unusual sadness that we this week record the death of Mr. S. M. Helstrom, a well known and highly respected citizen of Contra Costa. The circumstances of his death were of a peculiarly melancholy character. On the 29th ult. a cow belonging to him died of some malignant disease, and he proceeded to remove the hide. In doing this he probably communicated some of the poison to a scratch on his wrist, which soon became affected, and finally his whole arm became fearfully swollen. Medical aid was obtained, but he had probably neglected it too long, and was beyond the reach of human skill.

On Tuesday morning he made his will arranged his business matters, and calmly awaited his end. He died early on Wednesday morning, and his remains were followed to the cemetery in Martinez by a large number of his friends and neighbors, who respected him while living, and sincerely mourned his untimely death. Deceased was a native of Sweden, and although not a member was a professed believer in the doctrine of the New Church, and to the principles of that sublime faith he owed the calmness and fortitude to which his last hours bore witness in the midst of danger so appalling. "In the midst of life we are in death."

His death was so odd it was reported in the Petaluma Argus paper and the Sacramento Bee in addition to the Contra Costa Gazette.

Source: Contra Costa Gazette

S. M. Helstrom, of Contra Costa County, has died of infection from a diseased cow.—The poison was conveyed to his system through a scratch on his wrist while he was skinning the animal, and killed him in two days.

Source: Petaluma Argus

S. M. HELSTROM, of Contra Costa, removed, on September 29th, the hide from a cow which died of disease, and a scratch on his wrist became inflamed and increased till he died on the 1st instant.

Source: Sacramento Bee.

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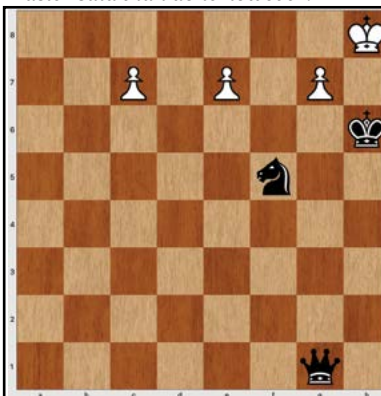
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Stump Grinding    Firewood Delivery    Emergency Services

**FREE ESTIMATES**

**Chess with Yoo**  
by Christopher Yoo, 16, Grandmaster, Dublin, CA.

White to move and draw.

Hint: Just avoid checkmate!  
Easier said than done however.



### SOLUTION

1.e8=N!

White must promote to a knight to prevent mate.

1.g8=N+ Kg5 2.e8=Q Qd4++  
With forced checkmate.

1...Ne7 2.c8=Q Qh1!

Black has a serious threat of checkmate in a few moves with Kg6 or Kg5.

2...Nxc8 3.g8=Q=

3.Qf5!

The only way to stop mate!

3.g8=Q Ng6+! 4.Qxg6+ Kxg6+  
5.Kg8 Qh7+ 6.Kf8 Qf7#

3...Nxf5 4.g8=Q Qa1+ 5.Ng7=

# The Cauliflower Craze

by Deb Morris, Pacific Coast Farmers Market

Cauliflower has recently become the trendy, go-to vegetable since keto and other low-carb diets have taken over the diet-crazed world. Its low-carb versatility is what sets it apart from other cruciferous veggies because it can be turned into any number of dishes and prepared much as a potato or other starchy vegetable would. The reason cauliflower works so well is that, even though it is incredibly low in calories and high in fiber, it also contains its own starch, which is why it holds up well as a replacement for other carbs. You can roast, steam, fry, sauté, or grill this versatile vegetable.



Cauliflower is a cruciferous vegetable, part of the mustard family of plants. Included in this family are broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and kale. They are available in a variety of gorgeous colors, from pale orange and off-white, to purple and green. Romanesco is a stunning pale green cauliflower with a spike-like growth pattern.

Even though cauliflower grows in assorted colors, the flavor remains basically the same, with minor nutty sweet differentiations. All varieties have a mild neutral flavor that blends with almost everything. You will often find assorted colors of cauliflower at your local farmers' market than those generally available at the grocery store.

This amazing vegetable is best when harvested during the winter months, bringing out its subtle but sweet flavor. Cauliflower can get bitter when the weather warms up.

Here are some great ideas for using cauliflower:

**Cauliflower steaks:** Cut one-inch-thick slabs of cauliflower, drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper, and a bit of heat like cayenne pepper if you like, and grill or broil for about 5 to 7 minutes on each side, cook longer if you like it a bit softer.

**Cauliflower rice:** Grab a ricer, grater, or process cauliflower florets in a blender or food processor until broken into small pieces about the size of rice. Microwave it to heat it up, or add any number of veggies to make fried 'rice,' Mexican 'rice,' etc.

**Cauliflower 'potato' salad:** Cook cauliflower gently until al dente and use the same way you would potatoes.

**Cauliflower bites:** Batter cauliflower florets, bake. Season.

**Roasted Mashed Cauliflower:** Toss cauliflower florets with olive oil, salt, and pepper, roast at 450 for 20 minutes. Then mash with a potato masher or blender. Add butter, and voila! You have mashed "potatoes!"

When purchasing look for white or cream-colored heads that feel heavy for their size. The deeply ribbed green leaves

that envelop a head of cauliflower should look fresh, not wilted or yellowing or dry. Keep it loosely wrapped in the refrigerator and it can last up to two weeks. Be sure not to wash your cauliflower until you are ready to prepare and cook it.

You will find cauliflower at most local farmers' markets from vegetable growers like J&M Farms, Happy Boy Farms, Fifth Crow Farms, Blue House Farms, and many others offering the fresh produce straight from the farm to your table.

### Purple Cauliflower Rice

- 1 large head purple cauliflower, quartered
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, butter, or bacon drippings

- 1 medium onion, leek, or 2 shallots
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley
- Juice of 1/4 to 1/2 lemon, to taste
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Trim the cauliflower by quartering it, laying a flat side on your cutting board, and making a diagonal cut to separate the florets from the core. In four batches, break up the florets into a food processor and pulse until the mixture resembles pebbles.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions, shallots, or leeks, and stir to coat. Continue cooking, stirring frequently, until the onions are golden brown at the edges and have softened for about 8 minutes. If using leeks, cook for 5 minutes. If using shallots, cook for 2 minutes. Add cauliflower and stir to combine. Add 1 teaspoon salt, and continue to cook, stirring frequently, until the cauliflower has softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Spoon the cauliflower into a large serving bowl, garnish with parsley, sprinkle with the lemon juice, and season to taste with salt. Serve warm

**theRIGHTmove**  
By Terrylynn Fisher, Broker Associate  
www.BuyStageSell.com



## Preapproval for a Loan Can Help Get Your Offer Accepted

Last month we spoke about how to use Gift Funds when purchasing a home. A large percentage of buyers, especially in California, use this method to beef up their down payment and purchase more home.

One of the first steps in your homebuying journey is getting preapproved by a lender. To understand why it is such an important step, benefitting buyer and seller, you need to understand what preapproval is and what it does for you.

Business Insider explains: "In a preapproval [sic], the lender tells you which types of loans you may be eligible to take out, how much you may be approved to borrow, and what your rate could be."

Basically, preapproval gives you critical information about the homebuying process that will help you understand your options and what you may be able to borrow. It can take a few days up to two weeks, but that is time well spent. This can make it easier when you set out to search for homes because you will know your overall numbers. With higher mortgage rates impacting affordability for many buyers today, a solid understanding of your numbers is even more important and gives you confidence about making an offer.

How does preapproval work? A lender will look at your finances to determine what they would be willing to loan you. From there, your lender will give you a preapproval letter to help you understand how much money you can borrow. This process takes an application and lender who has vetted your data, ran a credit report, verified employment and assets, and gives a written preapproval letter to help you convince the seller of your ability to purchase. It shows you are a serious buyer.

A recent article from Forbes notes: "From the seller's perspective, a preapproval [sic] letter from a reputable local lender often can make the difference between accepting and rejecting an offer."

This goes to show, even though you may not face the intense bidding wars you saw if you tried to buy during the pandemic, preapproval is still an important part

### What's Really Happening with HOME PRICES?

If you're thinking about selling your house, recent headlines about home prices may have you second guessing your decision. Here's the context those headlines are missing.

**Home Price Growth Since January 2019**  
Year-Over-Year Percent Change in Home Prices

While moderating in recent months, the percent of price appreciation year-over-year is still well above more normal years in the market.

- More Normal Years (Jan 2019-mid-2020): 3-4% appreciation
- Latest Data: Almost 10% appreciation

### What This Means if You're Thinking of Selling Your House

In most markets, your home's value, on average, is up almost 10% over last year – and a 10% gain is still dramatic compared to a more normal level of appreciation (3-4%). That gives you equity you can use to power a move.

Potential home sellers gained significant amounts of equity over the pandemic, so even as affordability-constrained buyer demand spurs price declines in some markets, potential sellers are unlikely to lose all that they have gained.

Mark Fleming  
Chief Economist, First American

Don't let the headlines get in the way of your plans to sell. Let's connect to find out how much equity you have in your current home and how you can use it to fuel your next purchase.

Sources: S&P Case-Shiller, First American

If you are thinking about selling your house, recent headlines about home prices falling month-over-month may have you second guessing your decision, but perspective matters.

While home prices are down slightly month-over-month in some markets, home values are still up almost 10% nationally on a year-over-year basis. A nearly 10% gain is still dramatic compared to the more normal level of appreciation, which is 3-4%.

Find out how much equity you have in your current home and how you can use it to fuel your next purchase by consulting your local Realtor®.

of making a strong offer. Some buyers whose offer was not accepted will ask why? One reason can be lack of a preapproval.

Christy Bieber, Personal Finance Writer at "The Motley Fool", explains that it may be the most important part of making an offer: "Preapproval maximizes the chances you'll be able to actually close the deal – and sellers want to see that vs. a prequalify letter which means that you filled out an application and nothing has been verified. Believe me, the seller and the Realtor know the difference. The fact that a preapproval gives you a better chance of getting your offer accepted is undoubtedly the most important reason to complete this step . . ."

The bottom line, it adds confidence in your ability to purchase and gives confidence to the seller that you are solid and serious.

Ask your Realtor for a recommendation to a good, local lender.

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

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



## Confessions of a Middle-Aged Runaway

### by Heidi Eliason

In honor of Valentine's Day, this month's book selection is "Confessions of a Middle-Aged Runaway; An RV Travel Adventure" (2019, paperback, 272 pages, Runaway Publishing, \$13.49) by Heidi Eliason. This inspirational memoir is about escaping the rat race, jumping into the travel adventure of a lifetime, and surviving the ups and downs of a long-distance relationship. It is also a book about overcoming fear and doing the hard work of self-discovery.

When Heidi, a single mom and recent empty-nester, looked in the mirror one day and saw a future of loneliness, loss of purpose, and a romance-starved existence, she knew she had to make a change. Her life had become so bleak that she became envious of a homeless person's comparative freedom next to the drudgery of her current job. So, at 45 years old, Heidi sold her house, quit her job, and bought "The Green Monster", her affectionate name for her new motor home. Her goal was to take a yearlong road trip with her border collie, Rylie. Little did she know that her twelve month adventure would extend into five years, lead her to romance, and transform her life.

Heidi's RV adventure began with her daughter, Cammie, as a sidekick and head navigator, as they drove across the country to her parents' home. Heidi was so green at maneuvering the Green Monster with a car in tow that she would only stop at pull-through campsites where she could avoid unhooking her towed car and having to back in.

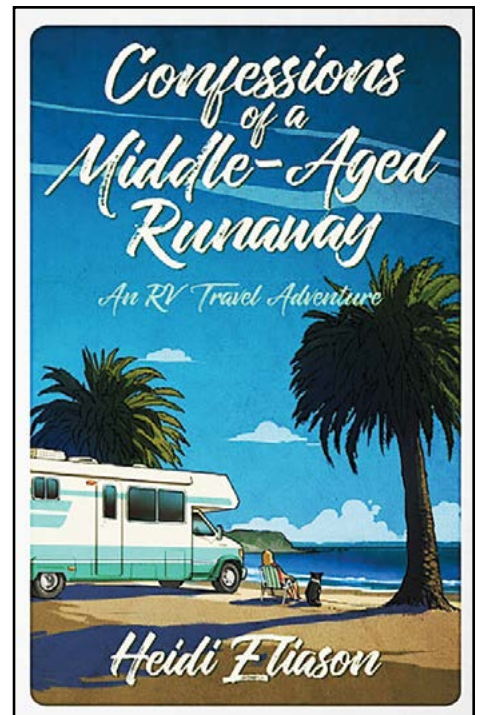
Her first solo traveler experience came soon after, when she drove to Albuquerque, New Mexico for a hot-air balloon festival. Here, she connected with a new RV acquaintance, Cindy, who she had met at an RV education event. As Heidi settled into her first adventure, she experienced a joy and a connectedness with the RV community that had been sorely missing from her life. Her newfound friends encouraged her to accompany them across the U.S. border and into Baja, and it is in Mexico where her life takes an unexpected turn.

Heidi wasn't looking for a soul mate, preferring to find her "Mr. Right Now". She met him, a fellow traveler, in Mexico outside her RV one day when the temperamental Green Monster needed maintenance. The Canadian made her laugh and his flirting soon charmed

Heidi into believing he was her Mr. Right Now. After a whirlwind few days, it was time to part ways with him. But a subsequent email launched Heidi into a long-distance romance.

"Confessions of a Middle-Aged Runaway" transports readers on a journey filled with white knuckle moments, tender love scenes, episodes of betrayal, and deep sighs of relief. Each chapter starts with an inspirational quote that sets the tone for the upcoming events. There is a "tell-all" honesty to the book that will resonate with readers. And people, especially women, who have let fear stop them, will applaud and perhaps be inspired by Heidi's courage. Fans of Cheryl Strayed's "Wild," "Love with a Chance of Drowning" by Torre DeRoche, and "Travels with Charley" by John Steinbeck will likely enjoy this book.

Heidi Eliason is a freelance writer and editor. She has written for an RV adventure company, where she produced over 50 RV travel articles for an online news source. "Confessions of a Middle-Aged Runaway" is her first book. It was a 2022 Readers' Favorite Travel Book Award finalist. She currently lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. Visit her



website: [HeidiEliason.com](http://HeidiEliason.com).



## In Theaters

### Babylon

Set in the 1920's, "Babylon" shows the rise of Hollywood and the pivotal transition from the silent era to sound. It also depicts a hedonistic world full of sex, drugs and depravity.

Watching this film is like being on a rollercoaster that is all loops. It is an exhausting three plus hours of decadence and exploration into a world filled with dreams and the high price tags that come with them.

The film centers around three characters: the up-for-anything Nellie (Margot Robbie), the leading man (Brad Pitt) and the dreamer, Manny (Diego Calva). Nellie exudes confidence and she is not quite sure what Hollywood has in store for her, but she knows she has what it takes, and she is ready to take it all in and party as hard as she can. Jack is already a leading man in silent films, but the transition to sound has his confidence rattled. Manny is tired of being an errand boy and wants desperately to be on a level field with the Hollywood big shots.

The technical filmmaking scenes are very intriguing. One scene, involving a studio's first use of sound, goes on for a painfully long time and will have you forever appreciating the sound engineers on all future movies you watch.

The title "Babylon" is not to be taken lightly. This film is filled with excessive drug use and orgy scenes. In one particularly disturbing scene, a character is led through a cavern so depraved and deeply underground that



the viewer has to wonder if it is Hell. And anyone who has ever written off Tobey Maguire as a milquetoast will have to rethink that opinion, because he will make your skin crawl.

While all the major characters are intriguing, the minor characters of nightclub singer Lady Fay Zhu (Li Jun Li) and trumpeter Sidney Palmer (Jovan Adepo) are so fascinating and excellently portrayed, it is tempting to think a far more interesting film could have been centered around their journeys.

It is unrealistic to think Hollywood was this out of control. There have always been stories of excess and the occasional lurid tale. This is more of an allegory for a Hollywood life that can chew you up, spit you out and take you on a wild ride. Some will endure and others will be gobbled up. The stakes have always been high and whereas director Damien Chazelle's last film, "La La Land," showed us the things people are willing to sacrifice for fame, his latest shows us the consequences of that quest.

Rated R

## Now Streaming

### Petite Maman



When 8-year-old Nelly (Josephine Sanz) loses her grandmother, she accompanies her parents to the abandoned home where Nelly's mom was raised. Nelly heard stories of the home where her mother grew up and how at her same age, built herself a house composed mostly of branches and twigs in the woods. Nelly's mom, having sunk into a deep depression since the grandmother's death, has little motivation to explore and seek out the makeshift house with Nelly.

Nelly is surprised to wake up the next morning and find only her father. Her mother's sadness was so great that she returned to their home alone, leaving Nelly and her father to clear out grandma's house without her. Troubled and uneasy, Nelly finds comfort in exploring the nearby woods. She not only finds her mother's long ago "house" under construction, but also a girl her same age. Her new friend Marion (Gabrielle Sanz), who looks just like Nelly, collects branches to build the house Nelly's mother built when she was a girl.

As the plot unfolds quietly, we see this is not science fiction or even fantasy. Instead, we watch the girls play, learn about each other, and develop a strong bond. We are led down a meandering

path to find a rumination about our relationships with our parents. Throughout our lives, we are told stories about our parents' youth, but we never really experience what it would be like to spend time with their younger versions. Conversely, no matter how old they get, we are never quite prepared to lose them.

As Nelly worries whether her mother will return and Marion is concerned about an upcoming operation, the two girls spend a brief but essential time together. They are portrayed, not too wise or precocious. Their play sessions are simple and sweet, and you will find yourself smiling as you observe their make-believe world.

"Petite Maman" translates into "small mom." Many things are small about this film. Its running time is a mere seventy-two minutes, the main characters are in their youth and the story is about a tiny amount of time in these girls' lives, yet this unassuming film will have you reflecting long after its brief viewing.

Rated PG

In French with subtitles

Currently streaming on Hulu





# Native American Influenced Exhibit at aRt Cottage

Timothy Aguino will be the featured artist for aRt Cottages February exhibit, "A TOUCH OF NATIVE ART."

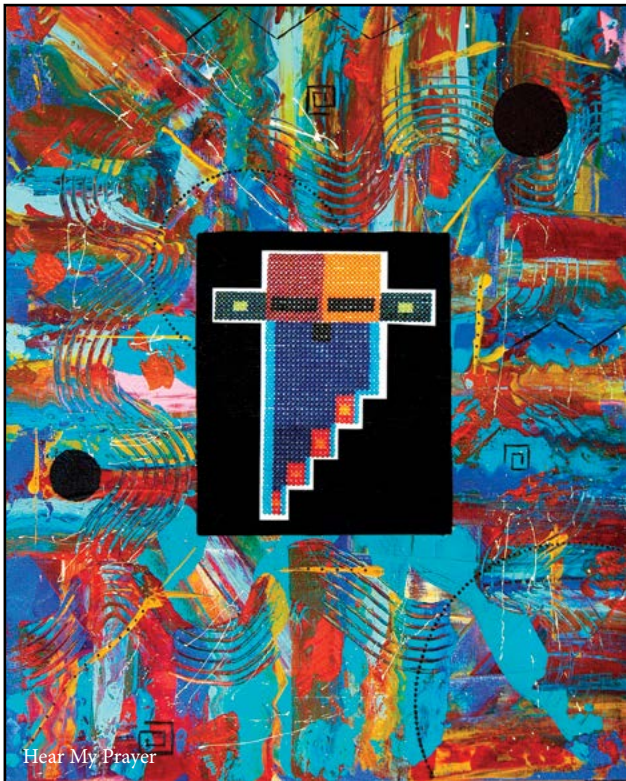
Timothy James Aguino, whose Native American name is Oye-Tseda (Ice Bird), is a member of the Tewa tribe and grew up on the San Juan Pueblo reservation, 30 miles north of Santa Fe, New Mexico. He currently resides in Contra Costa County. He is proud to be part Hopi, which provides a great deal of influence for his style. Proud of his roots and even being many miles away from home, he continues to hold on to tradition and express himself through art.

Mr. Aguino has a unique way of expressing himself with beads as tiny as seeds incorporated into his paintings. He uses a small needle to meticulously place each individual bead within his painting.

How many beads, you may wonder? You will have to ask the artist at the artist reception, Saturday, February 11 or on February 18, when he will be working as artist in residence that day.

The beads are a unique touch, adding texture and bright color to each creation.

aRt Cottage is proud to have the opportunity to show this unique style



Hear My Prayer

of craftsmanship and painting. When viewing, one will immediately be drawn to the precision and patience this artist uses. The colors are the brightest as the walls come alive with emotion. In addition to beads, you may also find feathers in some of his works.

Aguino first started taking an interest in art at an incredibly early age. He did beadwork in first and second grade. He made his own loom, and the weaving and beading began. Looming designs were done as projects in art classes. He says that he is self-taught, mostly

learning from Native American art books and by just doing.

"Each person has the gift of creativity and the ability to produce wonderful art," he stated. "It is an expression of our life experiences and beliefs."

The backgrounds in Aguino's work are bright colors and abstract, while many times, the centerpiece is a Native American symbol. "The abstract painting of the background represents the life around us," he explained. "while the symbols are a part of Native American history."

Aguino is on a journey. "Art is my passion in which I am able to share my Native American heritage with the world. This is my journey, to attempt to preserve symbols used by the Tewa / Hopi tribes and many other tribes, and to create my own personal symbols of expression."

This exhibit, "A TOUCH OF NATIVE ART," will present symbols which viewers are familiar, perhaps used in a

different way, to express the feelings of one Native American to the world.

**Artist Reception and Open House** is a free event, **Saturday, February 11, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.** The artist will be available on February 18, 11 AM to 5 PM as artist in residence at aRt Cottage, 2238 Mt. Diablo Street in Concord.



Four Seasons



Enchanted



Fearless One

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**5:00 PM - DOORS OPEN**

**6:00 PM - CRAB DINNER**  
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**8:00 PM - MUSIC & DANCING**

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**For the Love of Pets**  
By Jill Hedgecock, [jillhedgecock.com](http://jillhedgecock.com)

**Bonded Cats Need a Fur-Ever Home**



Abby



Mango

Abby and Mango (aka the Garfield look alike) are 3- or 4-year-old domesticated feral cats being fostered by Community Concern for Cats (CC4C). Abby has become a total lap cat, and Mango enjoys sitting on the foster's lap. Both purr when happy, enjoy cat toys, and faithfully use their litter box. These kitties would be so grateful to find a forever home in a quiet, loving, indoor environment without other cats, kids, or dogs. **They must be adopted together.** Mango has minor digestive issues that require one teaspoon of probiotic in a small amount of wet food daily and a gastrointestinal kibble.

Abby eats what Mango eats. Both are on the heavy side and need to lose weight. Both have been spayed, dewormed, are up to date on vaccinations, microchipped, and have been FELV tested. The adoption fee for both is \$175. Contact Angela ([takeakittenhome@gmail.com](mailto:takeakittenhome@gmail.com)) or (510) 909-6737 to meet these sweeties.

CC4C is an all-volunteer, non-profit cat rescue organization in Contra Costa County that offers abandoned and homeless cats' medical rehabilitation, spay and neuter services, and foster care. They work to reduce the overpopulation of feral cats through an effective trap-neuter-return program. CC4C is supported entirely through donations from the public and fund-raising, and grants.

**Beware: Poisonous Mushrooms are Sprouting.**



aminitamuscario, Western Destroying Angel

All these atmospheric river storms mean mushrooms are flourishing. The appropriately named death cap (*Amanita phalloides*) and western destroying angel (*Amanita ocreata*) are two of the most toxic forms of mushrooms. Both deadly fungi occur in the San Francisco Bay Area and can pose a threat to your pet if it eats them.

The medium-sized death cap is distinguished by a whitish-green cap with a bulbous sac at the base. Similarly, the western destroying angel is mostly white and resembles edible mushrooms. Because identification of these nondescript mushrooms is complex, it is best to let the experts decide if your dog has eaten a toxic species. According to local mushroom expert, Alan Rockefeller, both species grow under oak trees, but the death cap emerges in the fall and winter, while the destroying angel appears in spring. The toxic component of these two mushrooms is called amatoxins.

If you catch your dog eating any white



aminitaphalloides, death cap

or whitish-green mushroom under an oak tree during these seasons, make an emergency trip to your veterinarian. Be aware that western destroying angel can also grow in lawns. If possible, bring a sample of the mushroom with you to the clinic. The sooner you treat your dog the better. Even if the dog seems fine, be advised that the adverse effects from the poison typically will not appear until 12 hours after consumption. Symptoms can include bloody diarrhea, vomiting, lethargy, and even coma. The dog may appear to get better a day later, then relapse three to four days after initially eating the mushrooms. The poison can cause lethal liver, and/or kidney failure.

Because it is difficult to know if the mushrooms that appear in your backyard are dangerous, it is advisable to remove any that appear. The best technique is to grasp the mushrooms low on the stalk and extract both the body and roots. Wearing gloves is advisable because even though you cannot be poisoned through skin contact, covering your hands prevents accidental ingestion if the toxin gets on your fingers.

Uprooted fungi should be secured in plastic bags and discarded in the trash. Do not compost.

If you suspect that your dog has been poisoned, the Animal Poison Control Center (ASPCA) can potentially provide life-saving information at 888-426-4435. Put this number into your cell phone contacts. It could mean the difference between life and death for your pet.

**ARF ADOPTION STARS**  
Looking for a furry friend? Visit [arflife.org](http://arflife.org) to view all of ARF's adoptable animals.

**Harlequin**



One-year-old Harlequin is an incredible young lady with a disposition beyond her age. This bubbly gal is like sunshine on four legs, and her soothing warmth is a joy to be around. She will endearingly and gently request pets and attention, and the soft, soulful look in her eyes will tell you how much she loves and appreciates you. She is also a fun little lady who enjoys an energetic romp with doggy pal, and she would appreciate an adopter who will provide her with plenty of play and adventure to accompany all the loves.

Harlequin has a positive history with other dogs and currently weighs 43 pounds. Truly, Harlequin is a total gem of a dog.

**Bo**



Two-year-old Bo is a handsome, active, and super charming guy looking for a home where he can continue working on mastering his basic commands. He has been making excellent progress and would love to continue learning and showing off his smarts, especially to earn some delicious treats. Bo loves his treats.

He has also been working on learning loose-leash walking and is a happy player with other canine buddies. This sweetheart is looking for someone with whom he can share his goofy and cuddly side. Will you be the one to get to know and enjoy all the facets of the incredible Bo? Bo has a positive history with other dogs and currently weighs 69 pounds. **Bonus: Bo's adoption fee has been prepaid by a generous donor.**

**ARF Dog adoption fees:** \$250 for an adult dog, \$375 for a puppy (<6 months), \$150 for a special-needs dog, \$200 for a special-needs puppy (<6 months), and \$150 for a senior dog (7+ years). **ARF Cat adoption fees:** \$125 for an adult cat, \$175 for a kitten (<6 months), \$200 for two adult cats, \$300 for two kittens, \$75 for a special-needs cat, \$100 for a special-needs kitten (<6 months), and \$75 for a senior cat (7+ years). Adoption fees are waived for US military Veterans.



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## Satinder Malhi Appointed to Martinez Council

by Craig Lazerreti

In a milestone appointment for diversity, the City Council unanimously appointed Satinder Malhi to fill the remaining two years of the District 3 council term. Malhi, a 40-year city resident and graduate of Alhambra High School, is the son of immigrant Sikh parents and currently chairs the city's Anti-Racism & Discrimination and Pro-Inclusion and Equity (ARDPIE) Task Force.



Former Congressman George Miller, right, prepares to swear in Satinder S. Malhi to the Martinez City Council. Photo by Jonathan Bash.

Wearing the full beard and turban that are emblematic of the Sikh faith, Malhi focused on his diverse background, public policy experience and Martinez roots during his opening statement to the council. "Despite looking a little different on the outside — I know, it's the glasses — I'm very much a local kid at heart," he said, before recounting his years of schooling in the Martinez school district and community involvement.

His professional career has included nearly 20 years as a public policy and community relations professional, including as an adviser for two university presidents and four state legislators, and he currently serves as a legislative advocate at the state Capitol for the California State University system.

He pledged to work with the rest of the council to further enhance the quality of life for all residents while taking a pragmatic approach to the role through a public policy-oriented and diversity lens. "I would just respectfully submit to you that experience matters, diversity matters and, yes, representation matters," he told the council.

Courtesy of Martinez News and Views. Article updated from its original version, <https://lazeretti.substack.com/>

A month after swearing in its first directly elected female mayor, the city has now added a person of color to its City Council. In addition to serving as chair of ARDPIE, Malhi brings a wealth of other civic and community experience to the role. He has been a member of the Parks, Recreation, Marina and Cultural Commission since 2016 and has served on the Measure D Citizens Oversight Committee since 2017. He got his first taste of city government experience as an intern in the City Manager's Office way back in 2004 and was the student representative on the Martinez Unified School District Board of Trustees as an Alhambra student in 1996-97.

He also received an outpouring of support from members of the public at the meeting.

## Martinez Chamber Events

**Ribbon Cutting: JP's Bistro**, February 9, 5:30 PM  
522 Center Avenue, Martinez

**Ribbon Cutting: Alhambra Donut & Deli**,  
February 23, 7:30 AM, 4025 Alhambra Ave, Martinez

**Chamber Mixer: Good to the Bone 'Business Networking'** March 2, 5:30 - 7 PM 825 Ferry Street, Ste B, Martinez



Couple enjoying Shuck It at Market and Main, Indoor Public Market, 610 Main St, Martinez



## Martinez Chamber Seeking Nominees for Citizen and Business of the Year

Since 1973, the Martinez Chamber of Commerce has been proud to partner with local service clubs to honor those individuals who exemplify the concepts of community and altruistic spirit. Celebrating the 49th year of this partnership, the Martinez Chamber of

Commerce is now accepting letters of nomination for the 2022 Citizen of the Year Awards.

The Citizen of the Year Awards recognizes people for their outstanding volunteerism and commitment to the community. These prestigious awards are presented in the following categories: Man of the Year, Woman of the Year, Young Man of the Year, Young Woman of the Year, Lifetime Achievement Award, Service Without Borders, and Educator/Teacher of the Year.

Nominating a candidate will require you to write a letter stating why you believe the person deserves the award.

To nominate a candidate for an award in any of these categories, please visit [martinezchamber.com/annual-awards/](http://martinezchamber.com/annual-awards/)

Award Categories and Nomination Guidelines

### Lifetime Achievement

The recipient of this award will be an individual who has given volunteer community service to the Martinez community as well as recognized for their work in other communities in which the recipient has been involved throughout their lifetime.

### Woman and Man of the Year

The recipient of this award will be someone who has given volunteer community service to the Martinez community during the past year.

### Young Woman and Young Man of the Year

The recipient of this award will be judged as a significantly contributing member of our community: Religious, Educational, Athletic, School Activities, Musical, Environmental, Social Responsibility, etc.

### Service Without Borders

The recipient of this award is an individual who does not live in Martinez but has given volunteer service to the Martinez community as a whole throughout their lifetime.

### Educator/Teacher of the Year

The recipient of this award must be an educator or teacher in the Martinez Unified School District or in the Mt. Diablo School District, serving Martinez residents. This person does not have to live in Martinez but must work in one of the two school districts.

### Business of the Year

The nominee must be an active business located or operating in the Martinez area for at least three years and is a member in good standing with the Martinez Chamber of Commerce.

The nominee must have demonstrated two or more of the following characteristics:

- Exceptional growth through additional creation of jobs
- Revenue growth
- Innovative products or services
- Involved in workforce development and supports education
- Provides exemplary customer service
- Volunteers in the Martinez Community
- Demonstrates economic support of the Martinez area business community

Your contact information and nominee's contact information, including address and telephone number in the letter, is required for the nomination to be accepted.

The deadline for all nominations is Wednesday, March 1, 2023, at 5:00 pm.

Award recipients will be announced at the Citizen of the Year Banquet later in March at a date to be announced.

Send letters of nomination to the Martinez Chamber of Commerce, 603 Marina Vista Avenue, Martinez, CA 94553 or e-mailed to Lisa@martinezchamber.com .

Please include 'Citizen of the Year Nomination' in the subject line and specify which award you are nominating them for.



# Waterfront Project: Martinez Marina is a Jewel in the Rough

by Tom Lochner

Concord Naval Weapons Station is not the only major development project undergoing due diligence in the county. In Martinez, the Marina is in dire need of repairs, but the community of Martinez is entertaining a much bigger waterfront development vision.

The Martinez Marina currently consists of 135 acres of a recreational network of parkland, playing fields, recreational facilities, a dog park, a playground, an amphitheater, a bait shop, a yacht club and some parking spaces.

In a council study session on January 18, consultants SWA, Anchor QEA and HR&A referred to the marina as a jewel in the rough. While currently a drain on the city's economy, it has huge potential to become a future magnet for local and regional visitors to enjoy a wide assortment of waterfront-centered activities including cultural, educational, athletic, recreational, entertainment-related as well as culinary.

Community workshops have provided valuable direction and goals for such development. "The Martinez Waterfront will be a recreational asset for the city of Martinez and a destination for the Contra Costa County and the East Bay," reads, in part, a vision statement hammered out during an initial waterfront virtual workshop on Oct. 26.

But before that can fully happen, some daunting problems must be resolved, notably repair or replacement of damaged docks and seawalls riddled with gaps that allow sediment to pass through and settle in the dock area, wiping out the benefits of some recent dredging. A priority is the eastern seawall, which lacks sufficient height, barely visible above the water line at regular high tide.

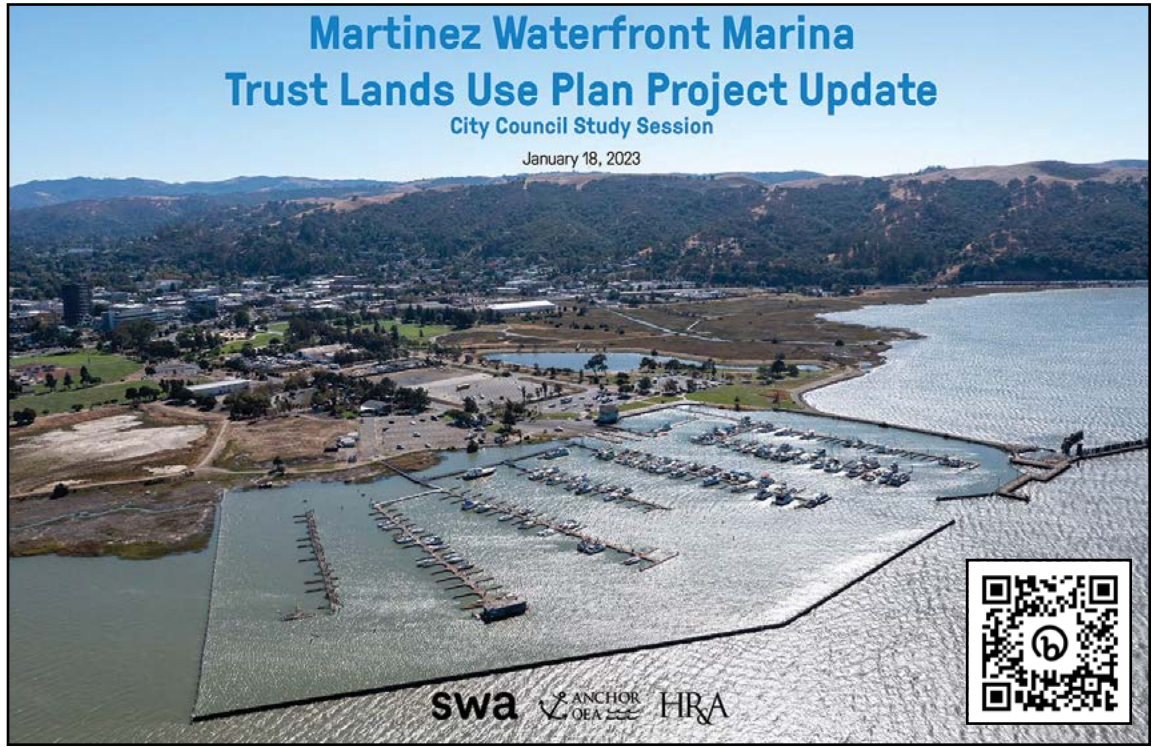
The Marina Services Enterprise Trust Fund, which rakes in lease payments, charges for services, property taxes and government grants for capital improvements, had a cumulative deficit over an approximately 20-year period of just over \$3 million as of 2021, according to the consultants. The fund moreover is saddled with almost \$4.4 million in outstanding state loans.

Overhauling the entire breakwater system – repairing some parts and

## Martinez Waterfront Marina Trust Lands Use Plan Project Update

City Council Study Session

January 18, 2023



replacing others – could cost \$7 million to \$9 million, including \$3 million for the eastern wall, the consultants estimated. Replacing the current marina and installing concrete docks could cost \$14 million to \$17 million, they estimated.

renovation of the Municipal Fishing Pier.

A second virtual workshop took place on Dec. 14, and a third workshop has been scheduled for 6 to 8 p.m. on Feb. 22.

To view the presentation of The Jan. 18 waterfront presentation, scan the QR code. The Waterfront Project website is at [www.martinezwaterfront.com](http://www.martinezwaterfront.com).

Diablo Gazette has updated this article from its original version at Martinez News and Views newsletter, <https://lazeretti.substack.com/>

### IDEAS WALL - USES WITH WIDESPREAD COMMUNITY SUPPORT

#### Active and Passive Recreational Uses



REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTIONS

132 10



BOCCIE

134 12



NATURE INSPIRED PLAYGROUND

131 12



LARGE KITE DISPLAY

126 12



SOCCER FIELDS

123 13



SAND VOLLEYBALL

130 11

### IDEAS WALL - USES WITH WIDESPREAD COMMUNITY SUPPORT

#### Small & Non-motorized watercraft uses



ACCESSIBLE KAYAK DOCK

143 10



KAYAKING

143 10

#### Waterfront Dining



RESTAURANT WITH VIEWS

127 10



WATERFRONT RESTAURANT

147 13



STAND-UP PADDLEBOARDING

138 10



SAILING RENTALS & LESSONS

134 10



CASUAL WATERFRONT DINING

145 13



SCENIC WATERFRONT DINING

147 12

## Martinez-SF Bay Trail Project Construction to Start in 2024

by Tom Lochner



In an update given to the Martinez Council on January 18 Council session,

East Bay Regional Park District officials, Grants Manager Katy Hornbeck and Trails Program Manager Sean Dougan project a 2024 construction start of the San Francisco Bay Trail Gap Closure to Martinez Intermodal Station project, also known as the Martinez-SF Bay Trail Project.

It envisions a half-mile segment that would include a new, shielded path along the Union Pacific railroad tracks and safety improvements at

the Berrellesa Street grade crossing.

This is assuming the project receives full funding for its estimated \$3.7 million cost, much of which has been applied for but has yet to be granted.

The project's main purpose is to safely connect to each other the Carquinez Strait Regional Park, the Martinez Regional Shoreline, the Amtrak/intermodal station and downtown.

Article Courtesy of Martinez News and Views, <https://lazeretti.substack.com/>.