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Incendiary

...from front page

Martinez did not know if there was anything inside the tape-wrapped object. “We won’t know until the crime lab gets back to us,” he said, which could take as long as a month. “If they get anything from the device, fingerprints or DNA, then that goes into the system. That person or persons might not be in the system. It can take time before a match comes in. If it does, the law enforcement agency that put the print in gets a call that there’s a match.”

Martinez praised everyone who participated in the incident. “Once our officers evaluated the scene, they saw it was a serious situation and called for additional resources,” he said. “The school handled it really well. They helped with all our needs and got their own security group out there. The principal was really involved. I think she did a wonderful job.”

He cautioned that so far, no one knows what the device was. “We don’t even know if it was real or not. We don’t know what’s inside. It could have been a prank. But the professionalism between school, law enforcement, and parents made it all work out really well.”



ZCEB 2018 YEAR IN REVIEW

Here at Zip Code East Bay (ZCEB), we are excited about all we have accomplished in 2018 and could not have done it without our beloved neighbors! We remain true to our mission—growing community through real estate—and wanted to share a few of our proudest moments from this past year:

ENVIRONMENT

- First real estate brokerage in California certified as a B Corporation, meeting the highest standards for social and environmental performance.
- Joined the California Green Business Network, certified as a green business with Contra Costa County, and all agents certified as National Assn. of Realtors *Green Designation*.
- Led a Graywater Workshop, educating community members about the importance of residential water conservation.

COMMUNITY

- Hosted the inaugural Colusa Circle 5K community fun run to raise funds for safe and secure housing for families in need.
- Named a Giveback Homes Advocate and Brokerage Partner, donated with each closed escrow and helped renovate a house for a Berkeley veteran and his family.
- Led the formation of the Colusa Circle Merchants Association and contributed time and resources to important community events.

REAL ESTATE

- Sold 18 listings with an average sales price of ~\$1.06M.
- On average, our listings sold for \$200,000 or 19% over the list price!
- Closed over 45 transactions throughout the East Bay.

THANKS FOR MAKING 2018 A SUCCESS & SWING BY IN 2019
TO SEE WHAT WE WILL BE DOING NEXT!

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Possible Incendiary Device Roils Kensington Hilltop



Photo by Ford Whitefield-Brewer

By Linnea Due

On the afternoon of November 1, a parent advised Judith Sanders, principal of Kensington Hilltop Elementary, that an odd object was resting on the hillside adjacent to the school parking lot. Sanders took a look—and called the Kensington Police. They took a look—and called in UC Berkeley campus police’s bomb squad.

The UC Police determined that the cylindrical object, wrapped in deteriorated duct tape, could be an incendiary device. Soon teams from East Bay Regional Parks and BART, Cal Fire, and a bomb-sniffing dog descended on the school. Sanders wrote in a press release to families, “No other devices or additional threats were found. Every space on our campus was checked, as were the park, the fire trail, and surrounding areas.”

When reached on November 7, Sanders described the object as shaped like a soda bottle and covered completely with packing or duct tape. “You couldn’t see past the tape,” she said. She said that the campus police identified it as an incendiary device, not a bomb. “There was no threat that it would explode,” she said. “And there was nothing there to ignite it.”

Once the campus police made that assessment, it became a police

situation. The school was cleared—luckily there were no students on campus since it was a parent/teacher conference day. Specialty units from other agencies were brought in. Though there was no indication that the device was directed at the school, the decision was made to sweep the school and surrounding areas.

Sanders returned to the school at 9:30pm to turn off the alarm, and the school, park, trail, and parking areas were thoroughly examined. “Shortly after 1am they said it was all-clear,” Sanders said. “We had originally contacted parents to say that school would be closed [the following day], and then we had to put something else out at 6:30am that school would be open. Because the school had been cleared, we didn’t want to miss a day of school.

“My primary job is to make sure that all kids in our community are safe,” she continued. “And I don’t take that job lightly. Once I had been reassured by the police that it was safe, there was no reason for me not to open the school.”

Kensington Police Detective Rodney Martinez, now in charge of the investigation, hasn’t seen the device as he was not working that day. He agreed with the assessment, from several, that the device might have been there for some time—“days, weeks, even months”—before anyone noticed it. He explained that goats had been engaged to browse that hillside, and it’s very possible that the device, hidden by tall grass, only then came into view. He said that it didn’t appear that the device was directed at the school or anyone at the school.

[See Incendiary, back page](#)

Election Results Still Pending

As of press-time, the count for Kensington’s special district elections is not final. According to Rosa Mena, Contra Costa County’s candidate services manager, the county has thirty days to certify the election—and she says that it will not be finalized or certified until December 6. Incoming directors will be sworn in either before or during the KFPD meeting December 12 and the KPPCSD meeting December 13. Latest totals are below (three directors to be elected in each district).

KFPD: Julie Stein 1,814; Kevin Padian 1,588; Janice Kosel 1,461; Paul Dorroh 1,349; Joe deVille 840.

KPPCSD: Rachele Sherris-Watt 1,598; Chris Deppe 1,261; Cyrus Modavi 1,259; Mike Logan 1,218; Dave Spath 1,218; Dakota McKenzie 1,213.

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PENDING ~ LP \$995,000

SOLD~500 Ramona Ave, Albany
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SOLD~209 Stanford Ave, Kensington
LP \$1,198,000 ~ SP \$1,400,000

SOLD~24 Eldridge Ct, Kensington
LP \$949,000 ~ SP \$1,150,000

SOLD~601 Euclid Ave, Berkeley
LP \$1,395,000 ~ SP \$1,600,000

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Letters to the Editor

Come Together

To the Editor,

What are we to make of the results of the election for police board? While the clear winner was incumbent and board president Rachelle Sherris-Watt, with 20-plus percent of the vote, the challenger slate and incumbent Chris Deppe are bunched up with .4 percent separating them. As of this writing, it seems likely that challenger Cyrus Modavi has secured the second position. Does this mean conflict for the next two years?

It doesn't have to be. While the campaign had several flashpoints, there are outlines of agreement between both sides. On the main issue of contracting for police services, Mr. Modavi voiced support for a hybrid model where certain functions are contracted for with neighboring jurisdictions. Will we see comity in the advancement of an RFP to test those waters? Or will we go down the rabbit hole of insisting on a Kensington referendum before any such contract is considered?

There was also a dust-up about a shortfall in funding for the community center renovation. Will the board squabble for the next six months over sources of new funding? Or will allocated funds be enough to break ground this spring so the town will have a safer, more accessible structure in use by the end of the year?

Adding composting to our solid waste service will be another indicator of progress. And interagency cooperation between the county and Kensington's fire and police boards on emergency preparedness with tangible outcomes would be another sign that our community can come together.

With the election behind, residents can hope that all sides assume good intent and a shared desire to deliver services in a professional and cost-effective manner so that Kensington can continue to move forward.

David Tuft

Independent Review Desirable

Dear Editor,

The Kensington Fire Board needs to immediately change its strategy for addressing the next contract negotiation for emergency medical and fire services with the City of El Cerrito. The \$3.0 million contract, funded through property taxes, has not been reviewed in 23 years by independent professional analysts to determine whether the cost-sharing

See Letters, page 4



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Advertising Deadline ❖ JANUARY 8
Editorial Deadline ❖ JANUARY 10

The Kensington Community Council is dedicated to the improvement, development, and education of the community, and to the promotion of social welfare in Kensington. It enriches the community by providing educational and recreational programs for all ages and by publishing the Outlook, a monthly newsletter that covers local events and issues.

KCC also provides a forum for all Kensington community groups to meet and coordinate their respective efforts toward the common good of the community.

Opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are those of the writers and do not reflect the opinion of the Outlook, its editor, or the Kensington Community Council. Letters must be signed and include the resident's phone number and address (which will not be printed). Letters 350 words or under will appear in the print edition (space permitting). Any letter over 350 words will be printed in the online edition only. Publication of letters and articles is subject to space and the editor's discretion. Obituaries of Kensington residents are printed without charge. All material must be received by the 10th of the month preceding issue date; submit by email to editor@kensingtonoutlook.com. No press releases or PDFs; Word documents or text in the body of an email are acceptable. Use one space, not two, after all periods.

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O U T L O O K

EDITOR
LINNEA DUE

ADVERTISING MANAGER
ALMA KEY

PUBLISHER
KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
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Kensington, CA 94707-1307

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October Police Log

Oct 2 PETTY THEFT, Grizzly Peak Blvd.
PETTY THEFT, Santa Fe Ave. Wife’s gold class ring stolen.

Oct 3 COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING. Coffee with a Cop.

Oct 4 INCIDENT, Grizzly Peak Blvd. Campaign signs reported stolen.

Oct 6 HIT AND RUN, Arlington Ave. Vehicle took off after hitting parked car.

DISTURBANCE OF PEACE, Columbia Ave. Loud noise. He runs a planer and table saw regularly, possibly running a business.

Oct 7 VANDALISM, Grizzly Peak Blvd. Back windshield shattered.

DISTURBANCE OF PEACE, Lawson Rd. Verbal. Male subject looking into RP’s property. RP knows subject and believes he’s been drinking. Subj yelling at RP.

Oct 9 ANIMAL CALL, Richardson Rd. Deer stuck in fence.

VEHICLE ACCIDENT, Arlington Ave. RP’s parked vehicle hit by black Toyota Solara.

PETTY THEFT, Columbia Ave. Package theft, possibly never delivered.

Oct 10 **DISTURBANCE OF PEACE**, Arlington Ave. WMA, WFA with 7 year old child yelling at one another. Unable to locate.

Oct 14 **PEEPING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY**, Ocean View Ave. Violation of restraining order. Yelling at RP.

ANIMAL CALL, Oak View Ave. Deer with antlers found in backyard.

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCE, Trinity Ave. RP’s 8yo daughter saw female neighbor take pictures of their backyard and felt uncomfortable so reported it to her mom. RP believes neighbor is unhappy about shed that RP installed in her yard.

Oct 18 **HAZARD**, Highland Blvd. Power line down lying across street. KPD arrived on scene determined it was cable wire. ECFD 65 arrived cut the low-hanging wire to free the roadway for traffic. It is unknown how this occurred.

Oct 19 **SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCE**, Highland Blvd. Resident wants to speak to officer regarding a potential threat, which involves a firearm.

PETTY THEFT, Willamette Ave. Resident found open box on her driveway with a different delivery address.

SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Arlmont Ave. Subj seen peering into homes and stopping in front of certain addresses. Subj described as BMA wearing white shirt and blue jeans.

DISTURBANCE OF PEACE, Ocean View Ave. Resident WMA out of control, swinging and trying to fight RP, no weapons other than book bag, may be under influence of drugs.

Oct 20 **PERSON SEEKING ADVICE**, Highland Blvd. Worried that neighbor’s dog is too aggressive. Says neighbor walks dogs on leash but does not have control of them, they pull her and her dogs almost attacked his dog.

Oct 24 **MISSING PERSON REPORT**, Arlington Lane. Last contact was 2000 hrs last night via phone call and text after being in an accident near John Hinkle Park in Berkeley. MP’s phone is pinging in El Cerrito Plaza. Saunders, Lucy 09/21/2000 last seen wearing gray leggings and a dark sweatshirt. Was supposed to catch a flight this morning at 0600 hrs. Black Subaru Impreza.

Oct 24 **VANDALISM**, Franciscan Way. Neighbor advised RP that windows were broken on multiple vehicles on the block.

Oct 25 **SUSPICIOUS PERSON**, Ocean View Ave. RP says subject was looking at multiple residences as well as her own open door but departed when he saw the RP, I/s heading towards Colusa. WMA 60s Slender build, khaki hat, khaki pants, RP says she has called in on this subject before. Unable to locate.

VANDALISM, Franciscan Way. Driver side window smashed.

Oct 28 **MISSING PERSON REPORT**, Lake Dr. Missing adult, WMA 54, 180, Miami Dolphins shirt.

Oct 31 **IDENTITY THEFT**, Los Altos Dr. Used debit card at Whole Foods in Cupertino for \$105.

Passings

Felicia Pinkwater AKA Sande Waters

Longtime Kensington resident Felicia Pinkwater, known to her friends as Sande Waters, passed away at home, her dog Paris by her side, at age 87. She was born in Boston, to a restaurant-owning family. At age three she was assigned the task of cleaning the big pots, as she could fit inside. She opened her first restaurant when she was sixteen, to “cater to the young.”

Waters moved to Manhattan when she was seventeen, where she lived “the high life with the love of (her) life,” until she was widowed at nineteen. She stayed in Manhattan, managing luxury apartments. Once a wealthy but scary tenant insisted she go on a blind date. She didn’t think she could refuse, and that’s how she crossed paths with Roy Cohn.

She next ran a charter airline based in Africa and Asia. But after the airline closed, no other airline wanted to hire “a girl.” She moved to Kensington to create the celebrated Balabosta, on University and 6th, where she fed and hobnobbed with Bay Area illuminati.

Waters had no children of her own, but she adopted two young children of a good friend who had died. She also adopted the young son of a restaurant worker, who had asked her to care for the boy. The fellow didn’t ask for him back, and Waters didn’t think she could bear returning him, so it worked out great for everyone. All three children attended Kensington Hilltop. Waters also raised Briards and Macaws, which gave her home a delightful zoo-like quality.

For more than a decade she was a part-time Berkeley cop. She quit right after the Oakland Hills fire; she had been unable to rescue a wheelchair-bound woman who kept calling for help until the fire took her. Waters never got over it.

After the Balabosta burned down, she went to work for BART as a ticket agent. She retired when she was 78, after 23 years on the job. She is survived by her three brilliant children, three granddaughters, her closest friends Jeff, Jay and Annie, goddaughter Candy, three chatty Macaws, and gentle Paris, her latest and bestest Briard. Kensington lost one of our brightest on September 2.



Photo by Anna Shane



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Changing Our Police Force

By Jim Watt

As a longtime KPPCSD finance committee member, I am concerned about Matrix Consulting Group’s recommended \$1 million annual cost increase for operating an independent police department. If this increase was justified to protect a threat to public safety, or because current officer salaries and benefits are well below the levels of other similar communities, there would be no dispute. However, as explained below, neither public safety nor current officer financial compensation requires the changes recommended by Matrix. Moreover, there are major errors in the Matrix draft report covering both the estimated costs for an in-house department vs. outsourcing police services to El Cerrito. Until these mistakes are corrected, we cannot know realistic costs for either expanding the department or contracting out.

The draft report suggests that Kensington should add additional police officers and increase wages with added benefits. This \$1 million annual increase will require voter approval for an annual property tax increase of \$500 per household, probably to include yearly CPI adjustments. The estimated cost for contracting out with El Cerrito is also expensive, but those costs are based on a lack of data and several erroneous assumptions. It is also concerning that Berkeley and Albany were not interested in contracting with Kensington, and El Cerrito “has reservations.” This suggests that our historic police personnel problems may be a deterrent.

Because of lack of interest in adjoining agencies, it appears that changing our existing police department is probably the only option. These changes must focus on staffing levels that are realistic for our low crime rate, and on setting salaries and benefits consistent with other communities.

Here are six reasons why the Matrix suggestion of adding staff does not make sense.

- Kensington has an extraordinarily low crime rate. A 2014 report of serious police crimes (violent and property) ranked Kensington the eighth safest of 443 California communities with a population over 2,500. This low crime rate is consistent year after year.
- Over the last three years, when the size of Kensington’s active force dropped from ten to seven, the crime rate did not change, suggesting that adding officers above a base level is not a crime deterrent.
- The Matrix Phase 1 Report shows the hourly schedule for nine officers by week. The number of calls in the six morning hours versus the six afternoon hours was almost the same, at 603 to 565, respectively. Yet morning hours had an average of 2-1/2 officers on duty versus 4-1/2 officers in the afternoon. This suggests hours are scheduled for personal convenience rather than need.
- Matrix estimated that 81 percent of the time Kensington officers had uncommitted hours (not engaged in calls or administrative tasks) versus a typical police average of 40 to 50 percent. This reflects Kensington’s low crime rate and supports why adding more officers is not necessary.
- When looking at calls for service over a 24-hour period, Matrix found there is an average of one call for service per day between 9pm to 9am (mostly disturbing the peace). This does not support the need for two officers during the late-night hours.
- Although El Cerrito’s police salaries are about 24 percent above Kensington’s, the difference is more than offset because El Cerrito requires its employees to contribute 8 percent more salary for pension contribution and does not offer health care benefits in retirement for officers and dependents.

Here’s how Kensington’s officer compensation compares with data for the town of Ross in Marin County.

Kensington and Ross have many similarities. Both have small populations, well-to-do residents, one main thoroughfare, and populations that are well educated and comparatively homogenous. Ross shares fire services and operates its own police department consisting of a chief, 2 sergeants and 5 officers. Here are some major cost differences. **Salaries:** Ross officers have a salary range that is about 10 percent higher than Kensington’s, costing Ross about \$80,000 more annually.

Pension costs: Ross officers contribute 12 percent of their salary for pension, and Kensington officers only 4 percent. The extra 8 percent costs Kensington about \$49,000 annually. CalPERS allows agencies to require officers to contribute 12 percent of their salaries to pensions. Until two years ago, Kensington officers paid nothing.

Overtime: Ross has budgeted \$30,000 whereas Kensington is tracking at about \$166,000, costing Kensington about \$135,000 more annually.

Retiree health care: Ross pays total minimum retiree health benefits of about \$25,000 annually, whereas Kensington pays \$151,000 and sets aside an additional \$247,000 to pay down \$3.1 million of unfunded medical liabilities. Kensington’s annual retiree health care costs are \$373,000 more than Ross’s.

The estimated salary and benefit costs for both communities for 2018-19 are Kensington \$1,955,000; Ross \$1,444,000. Kensington has seven officers while Ross has eight. The average cost per officer is \$279,000, while in Ross it’s \$181,00. Kensington’s average officer costs are about \$100,000 higher than Ross, driven primarily by higher medical retiree costs, higher pension costs, and larger overtime costs.

To provide a financially sustainable long-term police department, Kensington needs to adopt the Ross model of eight officers along with an increase in salary in return for the elimination of retiree medical benefits. In addition, officers must increase their share of pension costs to the allowable 12 percent.

Wildfire Safety on Our Minds

By Peter Guerrero

“Paradise is an old, wooded town with narrow surface streets...the ferocity and speed of the flames were breathtaking.”

Scott McLean, deputy chief of Cal Fire

Over the past two years, California has experienced more than 17,000 fires, including the most destructive wildfires in our history—Mendocino, Ventura, Malibu, Paradise, Wine Country, Redding, and Yosemite. Frightening harbingers of what Governor Brown has called “the new abnormal,” these fires are unparalleled in their severity and destructiveness. According to Cal Fire, the “fire season” is now 72 days longer than it was 30 years ago.

Kensington’s many “red flag alerts” this year are a sobering reminder that we at the urban-wildland interface are not immune to these events. The East Bay Hills have periodically experienced fires, some very destructive. In 1923, a fire that began in Wildcat Canyon, crested the ridge, destroying North Berkeley neighborhoods and threatening UC campus at Hearst Avenue. Another edge of the fire advanced on downtown Berkeley, east of Shattuck. Over 600 homes and structures were destroyed, many of them far from the park’s borders, illustrating the point that wildfire emanating from the park is a concern to all.

Most of Kensington was developed after that fire, but its lessons were soon lost. Houses were closely spaced, built of wood with easily ignited, non-fire-resistant roofs, and surrounded by vegetation. Roads were winding and narrow, making emergency evacuation difficult. In Tilden Park and Wildcat Canyon, open grasslands and chaparral quickly became overgrown due to fire suppression and highly flammable non-native eucalyptus plantations, mistakenly planted for their assumed potential lumber value, spread to cover vast areas of the canyon and its hillsides.

In October 1991, the Oakland Hills firestorm, which started with a grassfire in south-east Berkeley in Tilden Park, just above the Caldecott Tunnel, destroyed nearly 2,900 homes and 437 apartment and condo units. Following that fire, the East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) commissioned a study to develop a plan for reducing the overgrown vegetation that contributed to the fire load that made this wildfire so destructive. Park lands were catalogued for vegetation types, fire hazards, and proximity to residential and developed areas. Sensible priorities were set, funding obtained, and removal of fire hazards was begun in the Skyline area above Claremont Canyon and the University. Despite support from environmentalists, including the Sierra Club, these efforts were unfortunately slowed by a lawsuit, since settled, brought by individuals seeking to prevent the removal of eucalyptus trees.

Following last year’s Wine Country fires, several of us who live close to the Wildcat Canyon ridgeline created Kensington Neighbors for Wildfire Prevention to work with our community, EBRPD, and elected officials to accelerate the removal of flammable vegetation along the crest of Wildcat Canyon. We developed a petition that asks EBRPD to speed up removal and to partner with the community to advance fire safety. More than 70 neighbors have signed, and we begun fruitful conversations with EBRPD staff who welcomed our support and input. We recently learned that the EBRPD has obtained funding and permits to proceed this coming spring with fuel removal in three areas in Wildcat Canyon just east of Kensington. Unfortunately, the treatment areas in Wildcat and Tilden represent just over 1 percent of the area in those parks, falling far short of what is necessary to substantially reduce the fuels that have built up over the past 90 years. Kensington Neighbors is continuing to meet with elected officials and the EBRPD to advocate for increased funding and personnel to accelerate vegetative fuel load reductions.

It’s also time for our newly elected Fire Protection District members and other elected officials to revisit the excellent fire safety recommendations made by the Kensington Improvement Club, in 1992, in response to Oakland Hills fire. In addition to supporting the EBRPD’s efforts to reduce vegetative fire loads along the ridgeline, those recommendations included numerous other sensible actions such as reexamining current building codes to ensure structures incorporate fire-resistant materials and systems; creating emergency evacuation routes and eliminating overhead utilities that increase the probability of traffic obstruction on these routes; the use of a siren warning system (particularly relevant given Kensington’s poor cellular coverage and the disturbing propensity for Diablo winds to blow strongest during the night when people are asleep and may have their phones turned off); urging residents to maintain adequate firebreak clearances and properties free of debris.

Finally, please get involved with your neighbors. Participate in local fire extinguisher recharge and replacement events, emergency drills, and neighborhood safety events. Visit our blog at kensingtonwildfire.blogspot.com and sign our petition to EBRPD at ipetitions.com/petition/aking-ebrrpd-to-accelerate-fuel-load-reduction-in And, familiarize yourself with how to maintain a fire safe landscape at www.readyforwildfire.org/Fire-Safe-Landscaping/

Letters

...from page 2

terms are fair and reasonable for Kensington taxpayers. A review is not for the purpose of discontinuing the contract but rather to negotiate for any necessary changes for the benefit of Kensington.

Eighteen months remain until the contract expires; however, the current plan by President Kosel is to wrap up everything this January, which would not allow time to retain an independent firm to provide analysis. President Kosel appointed herself and Larry Nagel in October to serve as the board’s negotiators with El Cerrito. This leaves no opportunity for the two newly elected board members who will be seated December 12 to weigh in on who negotiates an agreement that will impact Kensington for the next ten years or longer. The December KFPD agenda must include action items to retain professional independent analysis of the contract and appointments to the negotiation committee.

Gail Feldman

Halloween Harvest

Dear Editor:

To all of our neighbors, thank you so much for your generosity. This was the eleventh year for Halloween for the Hungry food drive, and we filled four barrels of canned goods for the food bank. Typically in past years, the usual collection was three barrels, so this year was record-breaking.

Jan, Mollie, Simone, & David Hudson

Drone Takes Flight

By Janice Kosel

Captain Joe Gagne, the Kensington Fire Department’s chief pilot, conducted a demonstration of the KFD’s new drone in Kensington Park on Saturday, November 3. The drone is thermal-sensitive. It can fly over a fire and send back information to help our firefighters determine how to extinguish the fire. The drone can monitor an extinguished fire to ensure that it does not reignite. And it can help locate missing persons with its ability to detect body heat. We are training our firefighters so that each shift will have a capable drone operator. A video of the flight is on the district website



Photo by Brandon Mercer

Photography Show Highlights Democracy

By Linnea Due

Kensington residents Nancy Rubin and Holly Wallace are two of five curators of a new exhibit at Albany’s Abrams Claghorn Gallery from December 3 to January 29. Rubin describes how the show came about. “My photography teacher and mentor Becky Jaffe and I were talking about how all of us had been active in politics in various degrees, in marches and other work. We began talking about democracy and the democratic process.” They joined other artists to curate a photography exhibit focused on that process.

“We wanted to put together images that would stimulate conversation,” Rubin says. “We wanted diverse points of view, humor, a sense of history, where democracy is going.” The group sent out a call for submissions through camera clubs and other outlets. “We got several hundred images,” she says. “With five of us choosing, we had to get it down to 73.”



Photo by Nancy Rubin

The five curators are the two Kensington residents plus a democratic grouping of the others: from Oakland, Berkeley, and El Cerrito. The job of picking the images was new for Rubin: “I’ve only done solo shows before. It’s been a great piece of teamwork with a lot of laughter and a lot of big choices. Call it democracy in action. For awhile, because one person was traveling, it was two against two, with two arguing for a photo that was not chosen, but then that photo was brought back out of the pile. We wanted them to be good artistic images, but we also wanted them to tell a story on different levels. Some of us had completely different interpretations of what the artist was saying.”

Putting the show up has been a challenge: “It’s hard to coordinate that many people and get their images framed,” Rubin says. “We’re getting down to the wire now.” A reception will be held at the gallery (1251 Solano Avenue, Albany) on December 8 from 5-7pm.

Triumph of the Lambs

By Linnea Due

Longtime Kensington resident Sheila Kogan took a trip to the Hebrides in 2016 and came home with a wonderful present—a story for children that seemed to spring into her mind fully formed.

“I finished it on the plane back,” Kogan says. “I just couldn’t let it go. It’s a time-old story but with a different twist.”

The book, *Lambs of Fairy Glen*, asks a classic question: Can we combat evil and greed with gentleness? When Kogan returned, she read the story to her four-year-old grandson. “Without pictures or anything, he said it was a good story.” Kogan took it from there.

The protagonists are based on people she serendipitously met on the Isle of Skye. “My travel partner and I stopped there overnight to make a transfer,” she says. “The hotel people told us about a pretty place we could hike to, but they said it might be too steep for you gals. Well, we’re in good shape, so we went up, and we were in awe.” Kogan met a few people there, including two twin girls playing soccer—and the story just came to her.

When she returned, she went on a hunt for an illustrator. Through a friend of a friend, she met a man in Italy who turned out to be the perfect match. “At first I wasn’t sure,” she says. “I worried that the illustrations weren’t up to the story. Now I worry that the story isn’t up to the illustrations!” Twenty-two full-color paintings bring out the beauty of the story.

In her non-traveling life, Kogan is a dancer and dance instructor at the Shawn Anderson Center on Alcatraz and College in Berkeley. The center has offered its space for a book launch party December 1, between 4-8pm. “There’ll be refreshments, readings, and even entertainment,” she says. A group from Destiny Arts Center, an Oakland dance studio, will put on a hip-hop performance. If only the lambs could come!



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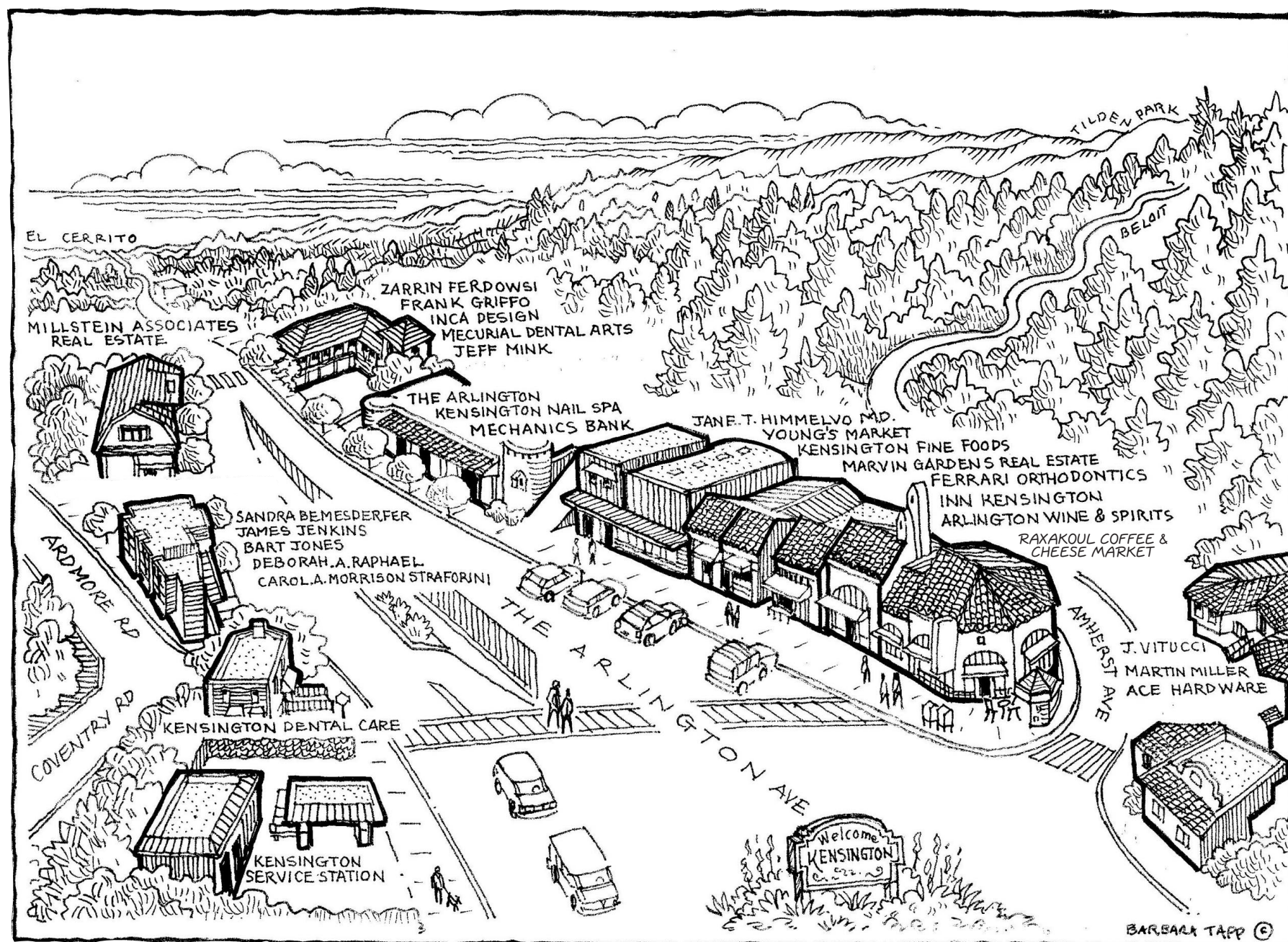
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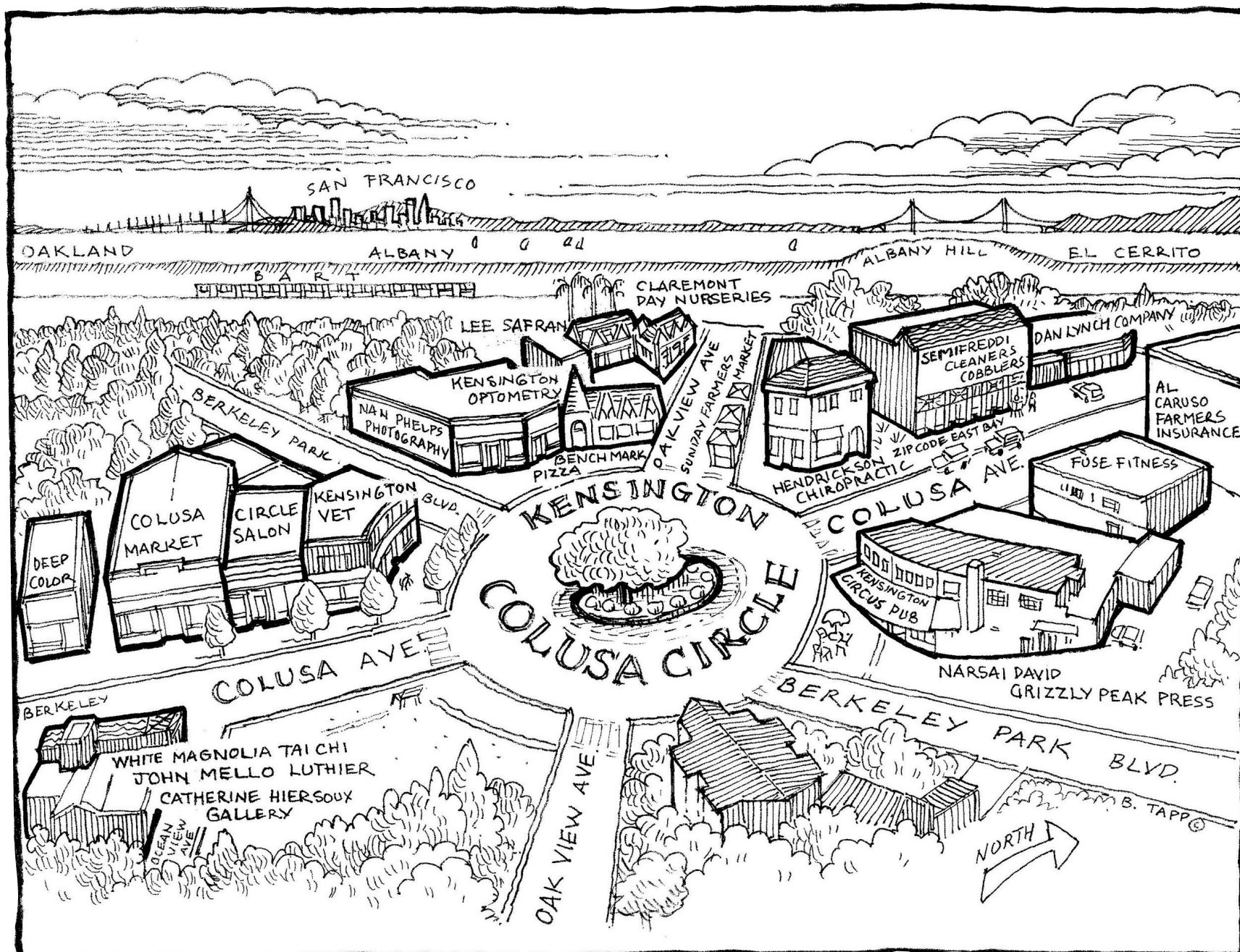
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KASEP Kensington Afterschool Enrichment Program

Happy Holidays Families! **Our Winter Online Registration is scheduled for Tuesday, December 4th at 7:00pm** for Kindergarten and 7:30pm for grades 1-6. Please make sure your account is up to date: #1 phone number should be the best contact number (usually a cell phone #), email address and your child's grade should be current. KASEP Winter Brochure and class schedule is on-line: www.KensingtonCommunityCouncil.org.

Staff will be in the KCC office the evening of registration to take walk-in registrations for families paying with cash or check and to provide support for anyone having difficulty online (525-0292).

Winter KASEP session starts the same day as Hilltop School, Tuesday, January 7, 2018 and continues for 9 weeks, ending Friday, March 15th. Your enthusiasm for our new Fall classes: Adventures in the Garden, Beginning Mandarin, Crafty Creations, and Skyhawk's Kinder Sports Medley will continue to the Winter session. We are excited to offer 4 new classes Coding for grades 4-6 (Mondays), Speech & Debate grades 4-6 (Tuesday,) GIRLS INC. Media Smarts and STEM grades 4-6 (Thursdays)

Fall KASEP session ends on Friday, December 21st. Our office will be closed for winter break, Monday, December 24, 2017 - Monday, January 7, 2018.

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Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention

Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30am, Community Center, \$10

In the United States, it has been recommended by the Arthritis Foundation and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention for its effectiveness in bringing pain relief, improving balance, and significantly reducing falls. This class is suitable for all people, regardless of physical condition. It is however, especially helpful for people who may be experiencing some health difficulties. The exercises incorporate all the health enhancing benefits of regular tai chi, but focuses on movements that are safe and relatively simple to do.

For further information, contact Nobuo at: nnishi50@gmail.com or 510-495-4860

Acrylic Artists

Wednesdays, 9:45 - 12:30pm, Community Center, \$9

Open Studio, lots of natural light. Come paint with other artists. Easels and tables are provided. Bring your canvas, paints, and creativity. Friendly group

Tai Chi Chuan

Fridays, 9:30-10:30am, Community Center, \$10

A gentle martial art, tai chi is a safe, rewarding activity for people of all ages and all levels of health. Tai chi incorporates both mind and body. Nobuo Nishi, instructor, has been teaching for 18 years.

KCC/KASEP Office: 59 Arlington Ave., Bldg. E (Across the grassy field above the tennis courts in Kensington Park), Kensington CA 94707. E-mail: kccec@yahoo.com, or call 525-0292. M-F, 11:30am-5pm.

Art For Adults

Art Journal Stew- Anyone can do this class – this workshop is open to beginners, artists, or non-artists alike. I believe we are all artists. We study and apply new techniques: make a piece of art or a fun and simple visual art journal. This class will give you a chance to try new materials: watercolors, colored pencils, markers, inks and papers. You will learn techniques; create wonderful backgrounds: resist painting, work with writing/fonts, tissue paper graffiti, gesso and lots of collaging. You will receive one on one instruction and you can create your book of dreams. You will leave each session feeling inspired to create art and make additional books on your own. Students need to bring a thin tip sharpie and a white sharpie pen. Also, any pictures, fine papers, or photocopies of your own to class. I have a material fee to cover supplies of \$20.00 paid to instructor the first meeting-less if you bring your own mixed media art journal pad. The class is payable to Kensington-@135.00 for 6 classes. Class is ongoing. Times:9:50-12:10pm.

Come join the fun with our local artist- Jamie Aberegg
Drop in \$30.00 materials included

What to bring
White sharpie, black fine tip sharpie, theme, imagination and \$20.00 material fee due at the first meeting. Pics, memorabilia, fine papers/collage mag. pieces, art bits for small embellishments, (optional). \$15.00 material charge if you bring your own mixed media art journal. Canson-XL mixed media pad.

Wednesdays- 6 weeks and on going. Sept.19,-Oct.24 2nd session-Oct. 31-Dec.7,

Art is in the Cards

It is Mail Art. This is a class to try out new art techniques and create postcards, artist trading cards or mini masterpieces. It is a way to put creating art in your life! You can do the index card challenge, or just send a cheery note to a friend. We use index cards and recycled materials to make postcards, journaling backgrounds, Mail art to be seen by others when sent. It is an easy and fun way to create and try new collage and mediums. Anyone can do this class – this workshop is open to beginners, artists, or non-artists alike. Put art into your life! The class is payable to Kensington-@125.00 for 6 classes. \$5.00 fee. is paid first day to instructor: Jamie Aberegg. Times: 9:30-10:45 am

Mondays- 6 weeks ongoing. Sept. 24-Oct. 29th 2nd session Nov. 5-Dec. 10
Jamie Aberegg is also teaching "Art techniques & Mixed Media Workshop" in Albany Comm. Center. (Tues.)



KCC/KASEP Office: 59 Arlington Ave., Bldg. E (Across the grassy field above the tennis courts in Kensington Park), Kensington CA 94707. E-mail: kccec@yahoo.com, or call 525-0292. M-F, 11:30am-5pm.
Tennis Court Reservations: For weekends and holidays only, beginning at 9am. Call the KCC office for info. Court Fees: 45-min. singles reservation: Residents: \$2; Nonresidents: \$5.
Kensington Community Center Rental Info: Please call Andrea at the KPPCSD (Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District) at 510-526-4141.

Kensington Calendar

Locations:

Arlington Community Church (ACC), 52 Arlington Ave., 526-9146
Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave., 525-0292
Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., 524-3043

Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley (UUCB), 1 Lawson Rd., Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Ongoing:

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30am, Community Center, \$10

Acrylic Artists Wednesdays, 9:45-12:30, Community Center, \$9. Self-directed artists come together to paint. Easels and tables provided. Friendly group.

Tai Chi Chuan Fridays, 9:30-10:30am, Community Center, \$10

Jazzercise with Kevin Knickerbocker Mondays-Fridays, 9am \$20 class or \$55 unlimited per month. ACC.

Mindful Yoga with Wendy Beckerman Tuesdays, 9:15am, bring yoga mat. \$18 drop-in or discount for series. ACC.

Israeli Folk Dance Wednesdays, \$6, lessons/beginners 8pm, request dance party starts at 9pm. ACC.

December

December 2 Rev. Dr. Jay Atkinson; writer, teacher. “500 Years of Protestant Reformation: What’s Left for Us to Do?” UUCB, 9:30am, free.

December 3 Kensington Library Knitting Club “The Castoffs” All levels welcome. Please bring your own needles and yarn. We will provide support, encouragement and help. 6:30pm. Free.

December 3 & 17 Kensington Library’s Digital Docent will answer your eReader and digital library questions every other Monday by appointment at 1pm. This one-on-one 60-minute appointment is intended for people seeking assistance with eBooks and eReaders. Sign up at Info Desk. Please bring your device. Free.

December 4 & 18 Family Storytime Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome. Kensington Library, 6:30 pm. Free.

December 5 Kensington Unit League of Women Voters will meet at 1:15pm at 44 Beverly Road to discuss local issues. Start the holidays with good conversation. 524-6071

December 6, 13, 20 & 27 Baby & Toddler Storytime Stories, songs, puppets, scarves, shaky eggs, and loads of fun! Kensington Library. Two identical sessions 10:15am & 11:15am.

December 6, 13, 20 & 27 Read to Dogs Each week one to three calm & gentle therapy dogs will be at the Kensington Library, waiting for kids to read to them (or parents of younger kids can do the reading). Call or come by to schedule an appointment. Drop-ins often also work. 2:30-3:30pm. Free. 524-3043.

December 8 & 22 Technology Tutoring for Seniors with Kensington Library’s New Teen Tech Expert Aliya. Aliya will provide answers to all of your Apple brand device questions every 2nd & 4th Saturday from 10am-1pm in the Adult Reading Area at the Kensington Library. Sign up in advance for a 1-hour one-on-one session. These sessions are intended for beginning to intermediate Apple brand product users. Please bring your questions, device(s) and necessary passwords along with you. Sign up at circulation desk or telephone for

assistance. Free. 524-3043.
December 9 James O’Hara, author of *In the Land of Shiva*, A Memoir. “A Tribute to Jeremy Taylor by Jim O’Hara: The Multiple Meanings in Dreams.” UUCB, 9am, free.

December 10 DIY Holiday Craft Workshop A green arts workshop just in time for last minute gifts and more. Make cards and ornaments from our provided upcycled materials. This program is for adults and teens, please leave small children at home. Come make something! Kensington Library, 6:30pm. Free.

December 11 Fratello Marionettes “The Vaudeville Follies” is a marionette variety show presented in the spirit of the old-time music hall. Our puppeteers perform in full view of the audience. Each performance is designed to engage and enthrall: an opera singer, a trapeze artist, Pierrot and his balloon, a trained dog, and a ballet dancing chicken are just a few of the acts you might see. Kensington Library, 6:30pm. Free.

December 14 Bridge Night 6pm, ACC. Free monthly potluck and bridge play at all levels for ACC’ers and new guests.

December 16 Jeanne Foster, professor emeritus at Saint Mary’s College, former minister. “Lessons from a Tuscan Grasshopper.” UUCB, 9:30am, free.

December 16 Sing-Along Messiah With a professional orchestra & vocal soloists, the audience joins in to sing the choruses of Handel’s glorious Messiah. All are welcome! Scores will be available for loan at the event. 6-9:15pm. \$15 general/\$10 students, no one turned away for lack of funds. UUCB.

December 17 Memoir Group 10am, ACC. Free Monthly Memoir Group led by Ruth Robinson in the Fireside Room.

December 17 Votive Candle Holder Craft Create something beautiful for your home or as a great gift! Using colored tissue paper & mod podge, decorate your own personalized glass candleholder, and take it and a battery candle home with you! Best for ages 5 and up. Kensington Library, 3pm. Free.

December 17 Kensington Library Book Club Discussion of *We Are Pirates* by Daniel Handler. Open to all. 6:30pm. Free.

December 18 Collapsible Ninja Throwing Stars Come and make your very own collapsible ninja throwing star with the librarian. It’s also good for Christmas trees. Kensington Library, 3pm. Free.

December 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Services. Family Service at 5pm and Lessons & Carols at 10pm. Free. UUCB.

January
January 2 Kensington Unit League of Women Voters will meet at 1:15pm at 631 Parkside Court to discuss local issues. Come one, come all! 527-1266
January 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31 Baby & Toddler Storytime See December 6.
January 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31 Read to Dogs See December 6.
January 3 First Thursday Fellowship 6PM, ACC. Free monthly potluck supper and program for ACC members and guests. Open to all.
January 6 Kit Hewitt, UUCB member, Facilitator for UUCB Write For Your Life Writing Group. “Joy: Galapagos Islands.” UUCB, 9:30am, free.
January 6 Person of the Planet Film Series Double feature: 1pm *Bag it. Is*

there too much plastic in your life? 2:30pm *A Plastic Ocean* an adventure documentary about our disposable lifestyle. ACC, free.

January 7 Kensington Library Knitting Club See December 3.

January 8 Dinosaurs Rock! Come for a fascinating presentation on dinosaurs with life-size fossils. It will include an interactive, hands-on activity that will allow kids to discover and take home genuine fossils! Kensington Library, 6:45pm. Free.

January 10 “Best Roses for the East Bay and How to Care for Them” will be presented by Martine Labelle of the East Bay Rose Society. In addition, club members will display their own floral designs themed “New Beginnings.” El Cerrito Community Center (7007 Moeser Lane), 9:30am. Members free; guests \$3.

January 10 New Venue: KPCCSD Board Meeting Board meetings are held twice monthly, on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Social Hall of Arlington Community Church. See meetings box for dates.

January 12 & 26 Technology Tutoring for Seniors See December 8.

January 13 Rev. Dr. Sue Magidson serves as a hospital chaplain at San Leandro Hospital. “Radical Listening as Spiritual Practice: The Transformative Power of Giving Someone Our Undivided Attention.” UUCB, 9:30am, free.

January 14 Dot Painting! Painting only with dots, fill in outlines of cars, robots, butterflies & more, or make your own design. It’s loads of fun, very colorful, and creative. Probably best for ages 5 and up. Kensington Library, 3pm, free.

January 15, 22 & 29 Family Storytime See December 4.

January 19 Immigration: Hot Topics Dustin Bankston will speak to the AAUW West Contra Costa Branch meeting. He is a member of the California State Bar, and an active member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Christ Lutheran Church, 780 Ashbury St., El Cerrito. 10am, free. All are welcome.

January 20 Hana Matt, teacher of world religions at GTU. “Ways to Cultivate Vibrancy and Flourishing: From The World’s Religions and Modern Scientific Studies.” UUCB, 9:30am, free.

January 20 Person of the Planet Film Series 1pm, ACC. Free. *Years of Dangerous Living*, a look at climate change across the planet and how it affected various cultures.

January 21 Memoir Group See December 17.

January 22 Marshmallow launchers! Come to Kensington Library to build your own air-powered marshmallow launcher to take home. For use OUT-

SIDE of the library only. 3pm. Free.
January 25 Bridge Night See December 14.

January 27 Hana Matt “Ways to Transform Stress and Cultivate Resilience: From The World’s Religions and Modern Scientific Studies.” UUCB, 9:30am, free.

January 28 Kensington Library’s Digital Docent See December 3.

January 28 Kensington Library Book Club Discussion of *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck. 6:30pm. Free.

Mondays in January 2019 CERT Training

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) teaches neighbors to help themselves and help each other. Through CERT, you will receive hands-on training in Disaster First Aid, Disaster Preparedness, Basic Firefighting, Light Search and Rescue, Damage Assessment, and How to Turn Off Utilities. 6:30pm, ACC. Free. Register with El Cerrito Fire Department (510) 215-4450 or email fire@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us



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Photos by Lyndon Chee

Keeping Girls’ Baseball in the Spotlight

By Susan Ashworth

When last we checked in with Kensington baseball phenom Sabra Chee, she was determined that she would play baseball no matter what. As her sport continues to grow, Chee has grown along with it—and she’s as committed as ever.

Girls’ baseball is now blooming big-time. Consider the explosion of new girls teams, the headlines on major outlets like ESPN, and the sizable national tournament that has seen the number of enrolled teams double from its inaugural year three years ago. Closer to home, just ask Chee.

Players like this Korematsu Middle School student are a reason that the sport has expanded in visibility and popularity. This summer, thirteen-year-old Chee made her



second trek to the Baseball for All National Tournament in Rockford, Ill. Even though the media and parents at that tournament gaped at its growing size—more than 280 girls from 24 teams—Chee wasn’t surprised. Baseball is awesome. Who wouldn’t want to play?

“I wasn’t that surprised because I know there are a lot of other girls playing baseball on boys teams or against boys teams,” she said. “It’s good to know that there are many others that play like me.”

Chee is an all-around star player. She’s a pitcher. She’s a catcher. She’s a versatile shortstop who regularly nails runners out with her throw to first.

Or as her coach more succinctly puts it: she’s like the Red Sox’s Mookie Betts. “She is one of our best athletes,” said Pat Noonan, coach of the East Bay Oaks thirteen-and-older girls’ team. “She can play multiple positions: catcher, shortstop, first base, pitcher and even center field. She is our most valuable player in that way.” Chee also has an uncanny knack of getting on base, her coach said, which is why she serves as the team’s lead-off hitter.

“Playing with the Oaks is more fun than any team I’ve played on because everyone pretty much gets each other,” Chee said. “I think that the best thing about playing for the Oaks is that no one puts you down because they are girls, and they know how it feels to be told ‘Why don’t you play softball?’”

Chee said that as soon as a game starts, no one is saying “Look at those girls go.” Rather, it’s “Look how good those players are.”

She has advice for any girl thinking of playing baseball: do it. “Never listen to what anyone says about you being a girl or you throw like a girl. I would tell them that you can prove them wrong,” she said.

She’s taking that mantra to heart in the rest of her life too, including her schoolwork at Korematsu. “No one can say that ‘You’re not good enough just because you’re a girl,’” she said. “Mainly I would tell girls to never quit, no matter what.”



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Town Meetings

KCC-DEC. 3, JAN 7, Kensington Community Council 1st Mondays, 6:30pm. 525-0292
KPSC-DEC. 10, JAN 14, Kensington Public Safety Council Earthquake/Disaster Preparedness 2nd Mondays, 6pm. 501-8165
KARO/ECHO-DEC. 10, JAN 14, Amateur Radio Operators, 2nd Mondays, 7:30pm. 524-9815
KFPD-DEC. 13, JAN 9, Fire Protection District 2nd Wed., 7pm. 527-8395

KIC-JAN. 28, (no December meeting), Kensington Improvement Club 4th Mondays, 7:30. 524-7415
KPPCSD-DEC. 13, JAN 10, 24, Police Protection and Community Services District 7:30pm. 526-4141
Kensington Farmers' Market Live produce & live music every Sunday, 10am-2pm, Colusa Circle

Arlington Community Church


United Church of Christ

52 ARLINGTON AVE. KENSINGTON

INTERIM PASTOR: REV. DENNIS ALGER

WWW.ARLINGTONCOMMUNITYCHURCHUCC.ORG

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
You are welcome here.



Prepare Ye the Way

Join us as we prepare to welcome the birth of Christ through Hope, Peace, Joy and Love this Advent Season.

Preparing the Way to Our Future ~ Sunday December 2, 10:00 am

Preparing the Way to Do Our Mission ~ Sunday December 9, 10:00 am

Preparing the Way For a New Pastor ~ Sunday December 16, 10:00 am

Preparing for Jesus ~ Sunday December 23, 10:00 am

Christmas Eve~ Monday December 24, 5:00 pm

Family Christmas Eve Service,
Children of all ages invited to participate

Called to be stewards of creation & to build a just society based upon the inspiration of our faith. ~ Arlington Community Church



Photos by Nan Phelps Photography

Colusa Circle Halloween Growing Tradition

By Karen Yencich

Colusa Circle Merchants Association and the Kensington Farmers’ Market hosted their biggest Halloween celebration yet on Sunday, October 28 at Colusa Circle. Kensington police goodnaturedly directed traffic for the hundreds of kids, sibs, parents, grandparents and pets who marched around the Circle in the annual Halloween costume parade led by T. Rex, the returning Grand Marshal. At the end of the parade, first, second and third place prizes were awarded for the best kids’ costumes, as well as prizes for the best family and best pet costumes.

After the parade, Colusa Circle Merchants Association sponsored the hands-on “Jungle James” animal show with two snakes, a monitor lizard and a scorpion, although no one got cozy with the scorpion for obvious reason. Returning paraders missed the traditional “Fur, Scales and Tails” show, due to a previous booking—but he’ll be back next year, so get it on your calendar.

At Nan Phelps Photography, more than 250 “Where’s the Witch” maps were passed

out to kids who visited 11 participating businesses located around the Circle to locate a hidden Halloween witch at each venue, collect a stamp, and exchange the completed map for a Straus soft-serve ice cream cone at Benchmark Pizzeria.

The (by now) traditional and keenly anticipated obstacle course at the Fuse Fitness was predictably mobbed, and Kensington Circus Pub had a great day supplying beer to the adults while Benchmark Pizzeria welcomed crowds with a very successful Halloween lunch. Business at the Kensington Farmers’ Market was also brisk, surpassing 1,500 shoppers, and market manager Chris Hall, who set up the popular hay-bale-and-pumpkin display again this year for Halloween selfies, passed out more than 235 free pumpkins to junior shoppers.

By the end of the day, families picked up lunches at Benchmark Pizzeria, Colusa Market, and the Kensington Farmers’ Market and were relaxing with picnics wherever they could find a spot to sit



Photo by Marvin Moser

Garden Party Great Success

By Brenda Lee & Joy Dey

A huge thank you goes out to parents, teachers and the community for supporting the 35th annual Garden Party at the Berkeley Country Club. It was a fun, festive night that could not have happened without the support of the entire community. While the goal of this event was to raise money for the enrichment programs at Kensington Hilltop Elementary School, enjoying good food, music and having a fun adult evening was a top priority. Guests were serenaded by live and vinyl spun music while bidding on the many auction items displayed, such as art projects made by Hilltop students, great getaways, photography sessions with local photographers, and fine art donated by Masterworks Fine Art.

Later, guests had a chance to raise their paddles in a show of fierce bidding for great dinner parties, spectacular trips, events like the annual Dads’ Club work party and a private tour at Pixar Studios. Dancing and more food rounded out the evening. Brenda Lee and Joy Dey co-chaired the event with countless school supporters working behind the scenes to make it all happen. For this night to remember, thanks to all of you!