

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
OAKLAND CA
PERMIT NO. 8058

PSB

...from page 1

are about where we predicted, we have some money set aside for change orders. At this point, we’re only over the \$4 million by about \$70,000, so this is good news.”

The appraisal has to gain approval from the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development, which now includes building, planning, inspection, and public works. Mallory Cusenbery of RossDrulisCusenbery Architecture will take the lead on shepherding the appraisal through the county. During that process, Dommer and the architects hope to restrict ADA upgrades to the first floor, arguing that firefighters, the only ones allowed to access the private second floor, must be able-bodied. If successful, that would eliminate an elevator, its shaft and mechanicals, as well as a platform lift on the second floor to a mezzanine. That change would add around 300 square feet on the first floor in addition to lowering the cost by about \$300,000.

Adding square footage might house a shift of police, though likely not either district’s administrative functions. “Taking a second look at the elevator might give us enough space,” Dommer said. “And if we gave [the police] the conference room, that’s about [another] 300 square feet. And they could put some things in the parking lot in a steel container. What we didn’t want to do is to choose one of the possible solutions: police in, police out. We didn’t want to take a position on that.” Dommer feels that the KPPCSD directors have been remiss in not addressing the possibility that the police would lose their home in the PSB: “Don’t you think that you’d do something if you were going to get kicked out of your house?”

On that note, fire board president Julie Stein presented a letter to the KPPCSD board of directors at its January 9 meeting. The letter asks the directors to participate in a joint committee of two directors from each district to publicly discuss options for the police and the PSB. The Kensington Property Owners Association requested this approach so the community could participate in decision-making. (KPPCSD hosted a community meeting January 25 to consider housing options for the police; a report on that meeting will be in the March *Outlook*.)

Said fire board director Kevin Padian in a phone interview January 9, “I suggested doing this [2x2 committee] to let the public know that we are trying to do this. We’re talking about the biggest public expenditures we’ll make for twenty or thirty years. Frankly, the fire district has the money, and they [the police district] don’t.”

Padian believes that the park option is still on the table. “We want the talks to be public and transparent. This is everybody’s money and everybody’s services. There is no evidence that this community is against building in the park. Nobody has any idea

what the pulse of this community is.”

It was pointed out that trying to build in the park, which was bought with a bond measure to protect open space, would likely be delayed or nixed by a lawsuit, subjecting the firefighters to more years in a building that all agree is now not safe but that can be made to be. Padian noted that the firefighters could move to a temporary structure (which will happen when the PSB is renovated under the current plan—the temporary quarters is in the side parking lot of the Unitarian church on Lawson Road). However, part of the argument for the park option has been that the district could save money by not moving the firefighters to a temporary structure; they would remain at the PSB while a new, much larger, structure was being built next to the library.

“Right now we’re going ahead with the building [PSB renovation],” Padian continued. “That’s not going to solve where the police are going to be housed.” As for the 2x2 committee, Padian said that because of the Brown Act, the meetings need to be irregularly scheduled (otherwise it would be considered a standing committee), and would be noticed to the public. “One would hope they’d be frequent enough to get things done,” he said.

But the directors from each district might find they have different goals: the police district to carve out enough space in the renovated PSB for a police shift, the fire district to try to reopen the park option. Such a committee, however, would give the public a chance to participate with directors on hand from both districts.

Town Meetings

KCC-Feb. 3, Kensington Community Council, 6:30pm. 525-0292 Building E
KPSC-Feb. 10, Kensington Public Safety Council Earthquake/Disaster Preparedness 2nd Mondays, 6pm. 501-8165
KARO/ECHO-Feb. 10, Amateur Radio Operators, 2nd Mondays, 7pm. 524-9815
KFPD-Feb. 12, Fire Protection District 2nd Wed., 7pm Building E, 527-8395
KIC-Feb. 24 Kensington Improvement Club 4th Mondays, 7:30. 524-7415
KPPCSD-Feb. 3, 27, Police Protection and Community Services District 7:30pm. ACC. Check website for updates 526-4141
KPOA-February 3, Kensington Property Owners Association. 1st Mondays, 7pm ACC. 325-1401.
Kensington Farmers’ Market Live produce & live music every Sunday, 10am-2pm, Colusa Circle



TM

Bringing the Community Together

KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

Available Online at www.KensingtonOutlook.com

FEBRUARY 2020

PUBLICATION OF THE KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

VOLUME 78 NUMBER 1



Longtime quilter and Kensington resident Mabry Benson made this stunning quilt to raise funds for renovating the Community Center, now in its final phase. See story below for a construction update. Then turn to page four to find out how you can contribute—and how you can win this beautiful quilt. Photo by Esther Hill

Community Center Renovation End in Sight

By Sylvia Hacaj

It may only be the beginning of 2020, but the end of the community center renovation is coming into focus. The contractor, KCK Builders, expects to complete work in time for the Kensington After School Enrichment Program (KASEP) to return for all or most of its spring session, which begins March 16.

The biggest factor in firming up the completion date involves the delivery and installation of the NanaWall and new clerestory windows. The NanaWall is manufactured in Germany and will not be delivered until mid-February. The clere-

story windows, made in Los Angeles, also arrive this month. Scheduling inspections and obtaining final permits for occupancy also impact when we can all see the results of so many years of planning.

Since the last update was published in the November issue, significant progress has been made on the exterior aspects of the renovation, especially re-grading and widening paths required for improved access for those with mobility challenges. New asphalt has been installed, and there were three concrete pours lasting several hours each in late November.

Architect and project manager Farhat Daud, a Kensington resident,

worked with Hilltop School principal Judy Sanders, Kensington Community Council President Anne Forrest, and Kensington Library staff to ensure that children, parents, and library patrons all knew about the pour so were safe while the cement trucks were at the site.

The Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District will submit documents to Contra Costa County to request reimbursement for the \$158,000 that remains under the terms of its WW grant for the ADA improvements.

While hindsight is always 20/20, we’re hoping that the forecast for the community center is also 20/20!

PSB: One Hurdle Cleared, More to Go

By Linnea Due

Optimistic news came in over the holidays, when appraisers estimated the replacement value of the Public Safety Building at nearly \$8 million. This is important because the building, due to nearby earthquake faults, cannot be torn down and rebuilt—it can only be renovated at a cost not exceeding half its value. The estimated cost of remodeling was around \$4.4 million, so with some whittling, it appears that it will be possible to renovate the existing building to make it seismically safe and functionally sound.

Said Kensington Fire Protection District board director Don Dommer, who has been superintending the project for years, “We went over areas that we could take a hit on. The HVAC system is old, but we could leave that. That gains a couple hundred thousand. Of course, this is very rough, as we don’t have complete drawings. And as you go through the process, there’s more information. It could go up or down, usually up.” Helping the whittling process is that the \$4 million are the hard costs of renovation—that figure does not include site work, architect’s fees, permits, and more.

At the January 8 fire board meeting, when someone asked what happens if you spend an extra dollar over that magical 50 percent threshold, Dommer was stumped. “Maybe the inspectors have some good faith, and they’d let you go with a little bit,” he said in a phone interview the following day. “I don’t know. If the bids

See PSB, Back page

RED OAK'S TOP 4
KENSINGTON HOMES SOLD IN 2019



86 NORWOOD AVENUE, KENSINGTON
SOLD FOR \$1,825,000
4 bd / 3 ba · Quintessential Mid-century modern features expansive views, mature gardens and elegant details throughout
Celia Concus
#1141519 · 510.527.0211



60 1/2 HIGHGATE, KENSINGTON
SOLD FOR \$1,495,000
5 bd / 3 ba · This contemporary home is surrounded by trees and Bay views with space perfect for entertaining
Laurie Capitelli
#634236 · 510.593.9178



272 COVENTRY ROAD, KENSINGTON
SOLD FOR \$1,429,000
3+ bd / 2 ba · Delightful Mid-century with lovely Bay views, beautifully landscaped gardens and plenty of space to spare
Barbara Kaplan
#1045686 · 510.559.2910



1621 OCEAN VIEW, KENSINGTON
SOLD FOR \$1,338,000
3 bd / 2 ba · This wonderful bungalow is ideally located near Colusa Circle with an spacious kitchen and sunny backyard
Ruth Goldstone & Cathy Foppoli
#1300164 & 1953316 · 510.418.7191



 **#1 IN KENSINGTON** · redoakrealty.com

Every
year
counts.



Our students learn by doing.

Apply for Fall 2020
TK-8th Grade



Letters to the Editor

Fire Board Proposes Joint Meeting with Police Board

Dear Editor:

The paragraphs below represent a request from Kensington’s fire board (KFPD) to the police board (KPPCSD) to hold public meetings about the future housing of the police and fire departments. The fire board approved the request at its January meeting and transmitted it to the police board January 9. We think the community should be apprised of it.

“Almost a year ago, the Kensington Property Owners Association urged both our boards to form a joint committee and to meet publicly to try to craft solutions to the problems that confront us regarding the future homes of the Police and Fire Departments and their staffs.

“Because the KPPCSD Board did not allow any investigation of building a new, joint-purpose Public Safety Building (PSB) in Kensington Park (which they own on behalf of Kensington residents), the KFPD saw no choice but to elect to try to renovate the existing PSB at 217 Arlington (which they similarly own). It is not yet clear from KFPD’s architects how much space can be available for various functions, but we expect the necessary footprints of both units to expand based on new building codes, Federal and County requirements, and best practices.

“KPPCSD Directors have repeatedly voiced their commitment to a full working Police facility in Kensington, regardless of how the force and its staff are employed (independent, full contract out, or hybrid model). The KFPD Board feels that the financial and logistic resources of both districts are owned by our citizens, and our obligation is to deliver the best facilities possible with the optimal use of tax dollars. But the condition of the PSB is poor, and our employees who live and work there are endangered, so time is of the essence.

“We invite you to form with us a 2x2 joint committee to hold publicly noticed meetings, as developing circumstances dictate, to address the future housing of the Fire and Police departments and the best ways to fund these projects, beginning in February 2020. We ask that you put this item for action on your February 2020 agenda. Thank you.”

Julie Stein, KFPD Board President
Kevin Padian, KFPD Board Vice President

We Need to Come Together Now

Dear Editor,

The debate over the future of our Kensington Police Department has been spirited, but I hope that we don’t tear ourselves apart in the process. We need to work together to address significant financial hurdles.

As a resident for over twenty years and a member of KPPCSD’s finance committee, I predict that we will be entering a period soon that will require us to request another tax increase. What size of an increase is unknown, but I would characterize the choices as big, bigger, and really big. I say this because there are several balls in the air and not all are in our control.

First, Kensington must contribute \$4 million to the CalPERS unfunded liability. This is money that we already owe. Second, we have the regular CalPERS payments for our police officers. The amount needed is budgeted but any CalPERS returns that fall short of obligations have to be made up. In short, when a market correction occurs, we will see an increase in our CalPERS obligations. Third, I believe we need to raise our investment in a police force. All of the scenarios regarding the KPD proposed in the Matrix report (Independent, 100 percent Contracted, and Hybrid) require us to spend more.

See Letters, page 7

MARCH 2020 DEADLINES:

Advertising Deadline ❖ FEBRUARY 8

Editorial Deadline ❖ FEBRUARY 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.

K E N S I N G T O N
O U T L O O K

EDITOR
LINNEA DUE

ADVERTISING MANAGER
ALMA KEY

PUBLISHER
KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
59 Arlington Ave.
Kensington, CA 94707-1307

Published ten times a year by the nonprofit Kensington Community Council. (Monthly, except for the combined July/August and December/January issues.) Available online at www.KensingtonOutlook.com, courtesy of AboutKensington.com.

Editorial.....
editor@KensingtonOutlook.com
Advertising.....510-508-3241
advertising@KensingtonOutlook.com

Classified Advertising
Classified ad rates are \$7 a line (45 spaces or characters), with a 2-line minimum. Online ad forms are available after the back issues listings at: www.KensingtonOutlook.com.

Mail: For display and classified advertising, please contact our advertising manager by phone or email. Other mail to: 59 Arlington Ave., Kensington, CA 94707. Thank you!

K E N S I N G T O N

Community Education

Our KASEP Winter session is at the halfway mark. It started the first week of January and continues all the way to Friday, March 13th. We have been watching with growing excitement as the renovation of Kensington’s Community Center is getting closer and closer to completion! KASEP expects to be able to move back in by the beginning of the Spring KASEP Session. Until then many of our larger classes are held at the Arlington Community Church. We continue to look after our students’ safety with additional crossing guard hours and with our wonderful walkers who take the kids back and forth from Kensington School to the church and Building E each day. Thanks to a grant from the Elizabeth E. Bettelheim Family Foundation, KCC was finally able to fulfill the wishes of many of our families by offering two coding classes for our students. Coding classes will be offered again spring session for those who have not yet had the opportunity to enroll in these engaging classes. Spring KASEP Brochures will go home in student’s backpacks the last week of February.



Spring KASEP Online Registration is on Tuesday, March 3rd at 7:00 pm for Kindergarten and 7:30 for Grades 1-6.

Reminder: Please take the time to double check that everything is ready before the site goes live on Tuesday, March 3rd. The easiest way to get to the Curacubby registration site is if you have already created an account, with a unique email and password. To login to Curacubby go to: https://kccrec.curacubby.com/users/sign_in.

When you are updating your profile, please be mindful that we particularly need any medical information that might be important to your child’s safety, such as any allergies they have. We also need to know where each child will be going each day, even if they do not attend KASEP that day. We understand that daily routines vary during the week and we want to ensure the safe delivery of each child.

The KASEP staff and the Kensington Community Council Board continue to work with the Curacubby team to update and improve the performance of the registration site.

Important Dates

Presidents’ Week Break is February 17th – 21st and there are NO KASEP classes that week.

Summer Camp Registration: Starts Tuesday, February 25th at 10.00am and is ongoing.

Spring Registration: Tuesday, March 3rd, 7:00pm for kinder and 7:30pm for grades 1-6th.

THANK YOU!
KASEP FUND DRIVE DONORS 2019

Donations of \$100 or more

John and Monica Sullivan
June Browne
Egon Hoyer
Carl and Lis Brodsky
Amy Resner and
William Lee

Donations of up to \$100

John and Margret Griffith
Joseph deVille
Cecile and Kirk Weaver
Edward Spiller
Judith Pam-Bycel
Ken Hempel
Lita Fries
Ms. Karen Rosenbaum and Ben McClinton



KCC Summer Camp 2020

KCC staff are already planning a terrific KCC Summer Camp 2020! KCC Summer Camp is for children entering first grade in FALL 2020 up through 6th grade. The theme of this year’s summer camp is all about getting to know and getting involved in our community! Field trips will include exploring the Kensington Paths with Rodney Paul, hiking the Golden Gate Bridge, as well as the tried and true trips to the Jungle, Oakland Zoo, Lake Anza, and miniature golf.



Camp starts Monday, June 8th and goes until Friday, August 14th. You may enroll by the week. KCC camp offers tennis lessons, daily arts and crafts with an afternoon of sports & games along with a themed activity such as carpentry, Legos, Story Telling, and cooking, a different activity is planned for each week of camp. Online enrollment starts February 25th and is on-going. Visit the KCC website at Kensington-CommunityCouncil.Org for a complete list of weekly activities and field trips.

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

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: kccrec@yahoo.com, or call 525-0292. M-F, 1:00-5pm.

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.

KASEP

Kensington Afterschool Enrichment Program

The GRUBB Co.

REALTORS



Happy New Year!

Thank you for choosing me as your
Real Estate professional in Kensington.

With unmatched expertise in the market combined with a
personal approach, I can provide you with proven buying and
selling strategies and services.

-Beautifully Staged
-Artfully Marketed
-Skillfully Represented
-and Client Focused

Contact me to get your home ready for the market in 2020!

RUTH FRASSETTO, CRS

CalDRE Lic. #00779030
510.697.8606 | 510.652.2133/414
rfrassetto@grubbco.com

Over 36 years of experience you can count on!



NAN PHELPS

PHOTOGRAPHY

• WORKSHOPS •

THE INTENTIONAL PORTRAIT

NAN PHELPS

Photographing people can be really fun. What are the elements that make for a good portrait? How can you set up the situation for the greatest possibility of success? Nan Phelps loves photographing people and animals of all ages. Come hear how a lifelong portrait photographer approaches her subject.

Saturday, March 7, 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. • \$95

iPhone PHOTOGRAPHY IN DEPTH

MARK ALTENBERG

The iPhone is the camera you always have with you. This amazing camera continues to improve and add new features every year. This time around is no exception. In this class you'll learn the basics and the new features and how to take advantage of them to take better and more interesting pictures and videos. You'll also learn how to edit, organize and share your favorite pictures.

Sunday, March 15, 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. • \$95

DARKROOM WEEKEND

NAN PHELPS

Working in the darkroom can be calming, challenging, and nourishing all at once! There's nothing like creating your own beautiful, quality print. The quiet of the darkroom is the antidote to the noise of our busy modern world. You leave it all outside the door. Paper will be available for purchase. Bring a couple of your favorite negatives and a lunch. Space is limited.

A. Beginners:

This class focuses on setting up the darkroom, choosing a good negative, testing for contrast, cropping, dodging and burning. Day 1, you'll watch me print my negative, Day 2, you'll learn how to print your own.

Saturday, February 22, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m., Sunday, February 23, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. • \$375

B. Advanced:

This two-day intensive workshop focuses on really Looking; visualizing the picture you want, fine tuning the print, bleaching trouble spots, finishing the print for long term life.

Saturday, March 21, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m., Sunday, March 22, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. • \$375

Ongoing instruction available: 3 hours: \$180

Visit nanphelps.com/classes to sign up or email Nan:
nan@nanphelps.com
398 Colusa Ave. (on Colusa Circle) Kensington, CA • 510-528-8845

Lighting Up the Holidays at Colusa Circle

By Lisa Chase

The Colusa Circle Merchants Association (CCMA) celebrated Colusa Circle's brand-new electricity with its third annual Tree Lighting event on December 1. The rain held off just long enough for over 200 community members to enjoy festive music, free hot chocolate generously provided by the Kensington Circus Pub, and the lighting of the beautiful oak tree at the center of Colusa Circle.

The electricity was a gift to the community from the community. Last fall, the CCMA launched a fundraising campaign, Light Up Colusa Circle, to help extend electrical service to the median. With the help of neighbors, local businesses, and supporters, the CCMA raised more than \$20,000 in donations, over \$6,000 of which was made in Julie Moore's name. Moore was the owner of the Circle Salon, a Colusa Circle mainstay; she passed away unexpectedly in March. A plaque of remembrance was placed in the median, in her honor, during the event.

The CCMA would like to thank the community for its support of the lights and looks forward to bringing the community together for events in 2020. Visit ColusaCircleMerchants.org for more information about the CCMA and upcoming events and news.

Quilt Raffle Raises Funds for Community Center Renovation

By Esther Hill

Community members have the chance to win a beautiful handmade quilt while helping fund the renovation of the Kensington Community Center. Kensington 360°, a group of active volunteers, is raising funds to help defray the cost of renovating the much-used and much-beloved Youth Hut by raffling off a 72" x 72" all-cotton quilt in blues and whites with red accents. Mabry Benson, longtime Kensington resident and active member of the East Bay Heritage Quilters since its founding in 1978, spent many hours making the quilt as her contribution to the fundraising effort. Benson's quilts have been exhibited at the East Bay Heritage Quilter annual shows, and she organized the construction of the Kensington Hilltop School Carnival quilts for the first six years the raffles were held.

Raffle tickets are a suggested donation of \$5 for one ticket and \$20 for five tickets. Raffle tickets are available at the Zip Code East Bay office at 380 Colusa Circle; at Raxakoul Coffee and Cheese Market at 299 Arlington Avenue; and by contacting Esther Hill at ejhill13@yahoo.com. The quilt will be raffled off at the grand reopening of the Community Center this spring. You need not be present to win.

Passings

Constance Jeanne Caldwell (July 9, 1956-November 19, 2019) grew up in Kensington. She befriended her future wife and soulmate, Sharon McCorkell, in junior high school. She graduated from John F. Kennedy High School, and attended UC Santa Cruz along with Sharon. She and Sharon began a lifelong committed relationship in 1976 and became known as activists in the LGBTQ communities of Santa Cruz and the Bay Area.



Connie earned her MD and MS degrees from the UC Berkeley-UCSF Joint Medical Program in 1988. She worked as a pediatrician at La Clinica de la Raza in Oakland and later at Ukiah Valley Medical Center in Ukiah.

Sharon held Connie's hand as Connie gave birth to Maya, their daughter, in 1986. Connie and Sharon were among the pioneers of openly LGBTQ parents. The family moved to Mendocino County in 1993, to a small parcel of land where they grew vegetables, tended fruit trees, and raised many animals. Connie became involved in the local fiber arts community, using wool from their own sheep to create handmade garments. For Connie, hand-spinning wool into yarn was a meditation.

In 2016, Connie and Sharon retired and moved into a 1930s redwood cabin in Boulder Creek, which they restored by hand. They became active members of Temple Beth El in Aptos. Connie was an immensely generous person who touched many lives in her long career as an activist, pediatrician, and health officer. Central to her work was a commitment to increasing the accessibility of healthcare services for those most in need. Her family was her greatest joy.

Marilyn Moore Reynolds, longtime resident of Kensington and Berkeley, died December 12, 2019 at the Immanuel Lutheran Communities in Kalispell, Montana following a two-year struggle with ALS. She was born on September 14, 1935 in Kalispell to Dr. Thomas B. Moore and Miriam Wayman Moore and attended Flathead County High School where she was a member of National Honor Society. She graduated summa cum laude from the University of Montana in 1957 with a B.S. degree in chemistry.



Marilyn married Leonard F. Reynolds, a native of Missoula and a Naval Academy graduate, in 1958. As a test pilot for the US Air Force, Pete was killed in a flight accident in 1964 at Edwards Air Force Base in Southern California.

She had a 25-year career with the Metropolitan Planning Commission, a transportation, planning, financing and coordinating agency for the Bay Area. Marilyn married Vince Bacon in 1984. Vince passed away in 1998, and she married Bruce Harris in 2001. Bruce passed away on September 15, 2019.

She is survived by her son Thomas Reynolds of Livermore, CA, daughter Laura Reynolds of Kalispell, grandson Lucas Reynolds of Portland, OR, sister Suzanne Moore Crocker of Palo Alto, nephew Patrick Crocker of Hillsborough, and niece Kathleen Crocker Storey of Burlingame. A joint memorial service for Bruce and Marilyn will be held Saturday, Feb 1, 2020 at the Unitarian Church at 1 Lawson Road in Kensington.



Power Pole Rings in the New Year

A power pole at Cowper and Kenilworth Drive began sparking the evening of January 1. According to neighbors, the sparking had occurred several times before, and PG&E had been notified. This time the sparking was more severe. Said neighbor Barbara Jacobitti, "I noticed the bright blue and white light and sparks, some shooting out from the pole. I was just looking for PG&E's number when I saw the red lights of the police car flashing below." She and others, including Ford Whitefield-Brewer, worried that in a different season the results could have been tragic. "Had this been in the past summer," said Whitefield-Brewer, "this could have turned into another deadly wildfire. We are very lucky that the sparks falling from the pole did not catch any brush on fire this time around."

Celebrate the ones you love with
Flowers from D'four Floral of
Kensington for Valentine's Day.

Ready-made floral bouquets are available every day
at COLUSA MARKET, 406 Colusa Avenue, Kensington.

To arrange for fresh floral arrangements
to be delivered on Valentine's Day, call Judy at (510) 525-7232.
Valentine local deliveries are available (please book in advance).

To place a floral order online for local delivery or throughout the U.S.
you may go directly to my website www.elcerritoflowershop.com

The
Music
Man

YMTC

March 7-15, 2020

El Cerrito Performing Arts Theater
ymtcbayarea.org

Sunset view

MORTUARY • CEMETERY • CREMATORY
CHAPEL & URN GARDEN

Traditional Services & Cremation Specialists
One Location Serves All Your Needs
Eliminates Lengthy Cross Town Processions

CENTRALLY LOCATED IN
THE EL CERRITO HILLS,
OVERLOOKING SAN FRANCISCO BAY

BEFORE YOU DECIDE, COMPARE OUR PRICES,
SERVICES AND FACILITIES

101 COLUSA AVE.
Located At The Top Of
Fairmount Ave.

• EL CERRITO •

F.D. Lic. #1079
525-5111
Locally Owned & Operated

SEMIFREDDI'S

CAFÉ & BAKERY
FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED

372 COLUSA AVE
KENSINGTON CA 94707
(510) 596-9935

M-F: 7AM - 5PM WEEKENDS: 8AM - 4PM

VISIT US ON THE WEB @ WWW.SEMIFREDDIS.COM
OR AT OUR STORE IN BERKELEY, 3084 CLAREMONT AVE.

BAKING WITH PRIDE SINCE 1984

ZIP CODE EAST BAY

growing community through real estate

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM ZCEB

As we begin 2020, we are excited about what we accomplished in 2019 thanks to the support of our vibrant community. Below are a few of our proudest moments:

Our 2nd Annual Colusa Circle 5K raised \$5k for homeless families.

ZCEB Broker Josh & family

ZCEB agents closed 39 transactions totaling over \$36M in sales (data as of 12/31/19).

We donated funds from every closing to help build homes for families in need.

Two new agents joined the ZCEB team! Bottom: Zoe, Lisa, Kathie, Rae. Top: Nishi, Terri, Rebecca, Liana, Camden, Josh.

Named a 2019 "Best for the World" Community Honoree.

We led donation drives for B.O.S.S. and the Food Bank of Solano and Contra Costa Counties.

THANKS FOR MAKING 2019 A SUCCESS. SWING BY IN 2020 TO HEAR ABOUT WHAT WE ARE UP TO NEXT!

ZIPCODEEASTBAY.COM • a certified B Corporation & Green Business • 380 COLUSA AVE, KENSINGTON • 510.323.3669

Kensington Calendar

Locations:

Arlington Community Church (ACC), 52 Arlington Ave., 526-9146
Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave., 525-0292 (closed)
Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., 524-3043
Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley (UUCB), 1 Lawson Rd., Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Ongoing:

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

Kundalini Meditation, Mondays, 7-8 pm, (1st-timers: req'd intro by appt at 6:30. [RSVP amrita@heartofc.org](mailto:amrita@heartofc.org)). \$15 per class, \$10 sr/std. ACC.

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

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30am, Building E at the park, \$10

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

Tai Chi Chuan Fridays, 9:30-10:30am, Building E at the park, \$10

February Events

Feb. 1 Film Screening of The Pieces I Am, a film about the author Toni Morrison, followed by a brief discussion. Noon, free, ACC.

Feb. 1, 2 Love Songs & Chocolate! A full buffet of songs and delicious desserts in a bright array from Broadway to opera to jazz, all in a casual cabaret setting. Chocolate treats to satisfy the most fervent chocoholic. 7:30pm, Saturday and pm Sunday. Tickets are \$15 in advance at brownpapertickets.com and \$20 at the door. UUCB. No one turned away for lack of funds.

Feb. 2 Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt, UUCB Senior Co-Minister, will give a talk, "Eyes Wide Open: Courage in the Face of the Climate Crisis." UUCB, 9:30am, free.

Feb. 3 Kensington Library Knitting Club "The Castoffs" All levels welcome. Please bring your own needles and yarn. Learn new stitches, share your talents, and meet new friends. 6:30pm. Free.

Feb. 3 Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power Celebrating the works that African American artists created during two pivotal decades in American history (1963-1983),

the exhibition—organized by Tate Modern, London—examines the very purpose of art and the role of artists in society. Featuring more than 150 works by over 60 artists, the de Young museum presentation will uniquely include works closely connected to the San Francisco Bay Area. "Soul of a Nation" is on exhibit until March 15 at the de Young. This program is offered as part of the celebration of African American History Month at the library. Kensington Library, 6:30pm. Free.

Feb. 4 Unique Derique Clown and Comedian You won't want to miss this hilarious show! For all ages, free. 6:30pm.

Feb. 5 Kensington Unit of the League of Women Voters will meet to discuss local issues at 1:15pm at 44 Beverly Road. [RSVP 510-524-6071](tel:510-524-6071).

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

Feb. 6, 13, & 27 Read to Dogs! Each week one to three calm & gentle therapy dogs will be at the 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. Kensington Library, 2:30-3:30pm, free.

Feb. 6 First Thursday Community Potluck Monthly potluck supper and program, always free and open to all who would like to join. 6pm. ACC.

Feb. 9 Catherine Boyle, UUCB Acting Director of Family Ministry, soon to be ordained as a Unitarian Universalist minister, will speak on "Ancient Practices, Modern Illumination," discussing how ancient Pagan and Christian practices influence her modern spiritual practice and highlighting the early February celebration of Imbolc and Candlemas. UUCB, 9:30am. Free.

Feb. 10 Dot Painting Picture Frames Using a Q-tip for each color of paint, kids can paint wooden frames in geometric or freeform dot designs. Take your frame home to hold a 4"x 6" photo or drawing. (Psst—these would make great Valentine's Day gifts.) Probably best for ages 5 and up. Kensington Library, 3-4pm. Free.

Feb. 10 Papermaking and printmaking presentation The El Cerrito Art Association will present papermaker

and printmaker Michelle Wilson at 7pm at the El Cerrito Community Center, 7007 Moeser Lane. Michelle will talk about her work, and how print and paper history, as well as environmental concerns, inform her practice. Speaker at about 7:45.

Feb. 11, 18 & 25 Family Storytime Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome. Kensington Library, 6:30pm. Free.

Feb. 13 Painting with Flowers Art historian Michael Stehr will speak about Monet's art and gardens. The El Cerrito Garden Club meets at 9:30am in the El Cerrito Community Center, 7007 Moeser Lane. Members free, visitors \$3.

Feb. 15 Sisters in Crime Faye Snowden's newest release, *A Killing Fire*, is a psychological thriller set in Louisiana. Gayle Feyrer, aka Yves Fey, is author of historical and romantic mysteries. AAUW West Contra Costa, Christ Lutheran Church, 780 Ashbury Ave., El Cerrito. 10am. Free. All welcome.

Feb. 15 Neighbors Get Together at CommUniTea Come join your neighbors and taste new treats and fine teas at Raxakoul Coffee and Cheese Market on the Arlington.

Keiki Fujita runs these monthly community events that feature musicians, handmade goods, ceramics, new products, and tastings of all sorts. 4-6pm.

Feb. 16 Rev. Dr. Matthew Fox, world-renowned theologian, founder of the University of Creation Spirituality, author and recipient of numerous awards, will discuss "The Tao of

Thomas Aquinas." UUCB, 9:30am. Free.

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

Feb. 20 Bridge Monthly potluck and bridge play at all levels for ACC'ers and new guests. 6pm, donation. ACC.

Feb. 23 An Introduction to Toni Morrison's literary themes and writing style, led by Rev. Nate Klug. 11:30am, free, ACC.

Feb. 24 Kensington Library Book Club Join the discussion! This month's selection is *Middlemarch* by George Eliot. 6:30pm. Free.

Feb. 26 Ash Wednesday Join us as we observe the beginning of Lent, the Christian season of renewal. Music, silence, and the anointing of ashes. 7pm, free, ACC.

Feb. 29 Mini-Film Festival... All About Dogs. Co-sponsored with Dog Scouts of America and ACC. Free community event. Humans only. Films are: Red Flag Alert: Dog Parks; The Bite-o-meter – how to know when a dog is going to bite long before there is a growl. These are excellent training advice films. And Sit, Stay, Ride – America's Sidecar and Motorcycle Dogs, a documentary. 10am, ACC.

Feb. 29 Kensington Symphony Orchestra Beethoven concert. UUCB, 7:30pm. \$25/20.

Feb. 29 Chat with COP Steve Simpkins Come to a Meet and Greet with Kensington's interim chief. 2-4pm, Bldg. E at Kensington Park above the tennis courts.



JOHN DEY,
Owner
13 Years Experience
Excellent References
JohnCDey@Gmail.com

DEY & NIGHT HOUSESITTING
Days: 610-4638 Evenings: 233-1848

**The Professional Tree Care Company**

Caring for trees since 1978.
Our services range from consultation through all aspects of tree health care and removal. We have a 100% recycle policy for all materials generated by our activities. Certified arborists, licensed/insured. www.professionaltreecare.com

510-549-3954 or 888-335-TREE

ADAM JORDAN
Construction & Plumbing
Lic# 1011216

Home Repairs • Remodels • Painting
Kitchen • Bath • Plumbing Repairs
Faucets • Toilets • Water Heaters

High quality, reliable work.
Twenty years experience,
no job too big or too small!

Cell: (925) 212-2364
Office: (925) 285-7908

GARDEN CARE, CLEANUP & MAINTENANCE



EXPERIENCED TEAM OF TWO DEDICATED TO THE ART OF GARDENING.

- GARDEN RESTORATION •
- PRUNING •
- VEGGIE BED INSTALLATION •
- AFFORDABLE RATES •

CALL CHRIS AT 510-655-0157 OR EMAIL: YOURGREENGARDENERS@GMAIL.COM

CHECK US OUT AT: YOURGREENGARDENERS.COM

CENTRAL KENSINGTON COMMERCIAL SPACE

What would **YOU** like to see here?
289 Arlington, Next to Young's Market.



- Tutoring? - Art Gallery?

- Gym/Fitness? - Specialty Medical?

- Urgent Care? - P.O. Box & Mailing?

- Boutique? - Another Realty?

Well maintained ±1,175 Sq. Ft. Space Available Now!
Contact Peter McNally 510-848-6007 or peter@mcnra.com
Lic. # 982919



Classified Ads

ACKLEY PROFESSIONAL PAINT-ING SERVICES 40 years experience makes a difference! We strive for clear communica- tion and follow-through. Free estimates. License#528381. 510-232-8896, cell: 510-220-4021 larryackley1953@yahoo.com

AURORA PAINTING & DECORATING. Interior, exterior, waterproof coatings, wood resto- ration, color consultation. License #721226. Kens- ington references. 510-655-9267 for free estimate.

BRIDGE PAINTING paints houses! Top quality, int/ext, A-1 prep. for lasting finish, Sr. discount, fully ins., Lic. 639300, free est., see display ad inside. 510-232-3340

COLLECTIONS OF U.S. & WORLD- WIDE STAMPS & STAMP COLLECTIONS WANTED. Revenues & Locals. New & used. Smaller & larger quantities. Please contact to arrange a meeting and/or viewing. Call 510-529-9033 or e-mail: donaldsellis@yahoo.com

DAN LYNCH CO, INC. - Window & Door Sales and Installation. Featuring Marvin Windows And Doors. Waterproofing experts. 510-524-4044. dan@danlynchco.com

DESIGN-BUILD-CONTRACTOR - Kens- ington area resident with 40+ yrs experience in residential remodeling/renovation, specializing in handicap accessibility. New kitchen? Add a second bathroom? ADU/Tiny house? Lots of local references. Learn more at: Yelp or www.bay- woodbuilding.com - Call Robert at 510-798-5808.

FURNITURE: Repairs Refinish Retrofit. Sensible, lasting workmanship by 3rd gen- eration fine furniture maker, Huttonio Brooks. 510-526-4749. www.huttonio.com

GARDEN CARE, CLEANUP & MAINTENANCE – Experienced team of 2 dedicated to the art of gardening. Garden restoration, pruning, veggie bed installation at affordable rates. Call Chris at 510-655-0157 or email: yourgreengardeners@gmail. com - Check us out at: yourgreengardeners.com

HANDYMAN BRUCE, Small jobs and repairs, fences, decks, painting, and around the House repairs. Also replace locks and locksmith repair. 510-528-3419

KENSINGTON CONTRACTOR – Kitch- ens & baths, expert home repairs, painting, waterproofing. Reliable. Lic#606634 Thomas Cuniff Construction 415-378-2007

LOVE IS IN THE AIR! - VALENTINE FLOWERS – Let your sweethearts know how special they are! Call Judy at 510-525-7232 to arrange for fresh floral arrange- ments to be delivered on Valentine’s Day

PETER the PAINTER–Winter Special! Get a free estimate from a Kensington favorite. Int/Ext Lic. Ins. 510 575-3913

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHER - Quality Headshots to Family Portraits. Nan Phelps Photography located at 398 Colusa Ave. Learn more at nanphelps. com or YELP. Contact: nan@nan- phelps.com or phone 510-528-8845.

SKILLED CARPENTER – Local contractor since 1975 – small jobs: doors, windows, drywall, interior or exterior, framing or finish.Lic.#330626. Senior discount. Jim Allen 510-526-4399

WINDOW CLEANING – 30 years in the biz. Homes or commercial. Free estimate. References avail- able. Call Cathe at 510-524-9185 or email:cathed@sbcglobal.net

CLASSIFIED ADS Monthly Rates \$7.00 per line (\$14.00 minimum). There are 45 spaces per line. Count each letter, punctuation mark, and space between words. Classified ad form avail- able online at: kensingtonoutlook.com or email: advertising@kensingtonoutlook.com. Completed classified ads must be prepaid (payable to KCC) and received by the 10th of the month preceding publication. Mail to: Kensington Outlook PO Box 2212 El Cerrito, CA 94530



BRIDGE PAINTING

RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL
Interior • Exterior



Careful Preparation
for a Lasting Finish!

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE ESTIMATE

232-3340

Insured PL & PD • State Lic. #639300

Police logs for
December and January
are online at
kensingtonoutlook.com



IronWOOD
ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION
Design/Build

Earthquake Strengthening
Foundation Repairs
Retaining Walls
Drainage • Remodels • Additions
Leak Investigations
Property Purchase Inspections

510.524.8058
www.IronwoodEngineering.com
License B444427



TRASH PATROL

YOUR LOCAL FAMILY-OWNED ALTERNATIVE
FOR ALL YOUR HAULING NEEDS.
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • TRASH REMOVAL
OVERGROWN VEGETATION CLEARING • QUALITY WORK
(510) 367-5695
WWW.TRASHPATROL.COM
or dial **510 HAULING**
4 2 8 - 5 4 6 4



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Church of Berkeley

Growing in love and justice

SUNDAY MORNINGS
Adult faith development at 9:30
Worship at 11:00
Children’s classes at 11:00
www.uucb.org 525-0302
1 Lawson Road in Kensington
(follow the signs from Arlington & Moeser)

D. A. FLOWERS
& COMPANY, LLC

Comprehensive
Personal Financial Planning
&
Investment Management

fee-only
call for a free initial consultation

David A. Flowers, CFP®
Kensington Resident
(510) 868-2648

2213 5th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710
info@daflowersandcompany.com

www.daflowersandcompany.com

KENSINGTON DEYLIVERY

• A New Community Service •

- A delivery service for community residents.
- Sponsored by community-based businesses.
- Customized same-day deliveries to your doorstep.
- Single and/or multiple orders for only \$7.



FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CALL (510) 610-4638.
~Brought to you by John Dey & Night Housesitting~

Police Department Stats Stellar

By Linnea Due

At the January 9 KPPCSD meeting, Interim Police Chief Steve Simpkins distributed the department’s 2019 annual report. The brochure is one of Simpkins’ innovations—he said he believes it important that residents know how their department is performing.

In all, the news is excellent: from 2009-19, there were few violent crimes in Kensington: a high of five in 2013, a low of one in 2015, and two in 2018-19. Property crimes reached a high of 110 in 2010 and have since sunk to a low of 46 in 2019—these crimes, decreasing by 52 percent from 2009-19, appear, as Simpkins wrote, “to be trending downward.”

An important marker of police performance is response time. Simpkins explained that calls for service are divided into several categories, of which Priority 1 is the most important: these calls, which include emergency medical calls, constitute in-progress threats to life and safety. The average response time by the KPD for Priority 1 calls was 4 minutes, 40 seconds. The average response time for all calls for service was 8 minutes, 29 seconds. In 2019, the KPD handled 6,520 calls for service (this included traffic stops, foot patrols, and security checks). That number is slightly down from 2018, when there were 7,181 calls for service. The brochure is available at the Public Safety Building. On its back cover are phone numbers with extensions.

Simpkins also announced that longtime sergeant Rodney Martinez has resigned, transferring laterally to BART police. This brings the force back down to seven officers, though a new recruit is almost through the background check process.

Letters

...from page 2

And fourth, but maybe most important, there may not be a site to house a police department if the Public Safety Building renovation/retrofit cannot accommodate the KPD. A new location, if one even exists, would undoubtedly be more expensive. I hope that the KFPD and the KPPCSD can work cooperatively being that we are all in this together, and the two districts have shared space for decades.

I’m concerned that Kensington will need a tax increase so large that it may not even pass a public vote. That would make all of our debating moot because no matter what we want for police services, we won’t be able to afford it. I ask that all of us take a deep breath and look at how we can come together to solve these issues. Otherwise, we may have no good choices.

Mike Logan

See Letters, page 8

February is
National Dental Health Month
for pets.

\$60 off
full dental cleaning
procedure



Mon - Fri | 8:30am - 6:00pm Sat | 8:00am - 1:00pm

Call **510.528.0797**
today to make your appointment.

kensingtonvethospital.com
400 COLUSA AVENUE | KENSINGTON CA | 94707



Serving Kensington
For Over 15 Years

web development
online marketing website management
hosting seo social media
domain name management
wordpress database programming

www.pagepoint.com 510.558.1534

LICENSE #721226

AURORA PAINTING & DECORATING
Serving Bay Area Customers for 20 Years

INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR
WATERPROOF COATINGS
WOOD RESTORATION
COLOR CONSULTATION
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL
SENIOR DISCOUNT
BONDED • INSURED
KENSINGTON REFERENCES

CALL TODAY FOR A
FREE ESTIMATE

510•655•9267
www.aurora-painting.com



PAINTING & WATERPROOFING Inc.
COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL

- Interior and exterior
- Waterproofing
- Renovation and restoration
- EPA certified painters
- All work guaranteed

510.654.3339
www.omnipainting.com

Letters

...from page 7

Fire Board Follies

Dear Editor:

Kensington citizens should be concerned about the fire district’s expenditure of over \$125,000 on plans to convert the Public Safety Building (PSB), which houses both fire and police, to fire services only. It makes no sense that when Kensingtonians combined fire and police services in the PSB fifty years ago that today’s fire board can expel the police on thirty days’ notice. Moreover, how many taxpayers think it is necessary, or even appropriate, to proceed with a plan that increases the existing 1,500 sq. ft. of second floor firefighter living space to 2,500 sq. ft. for three on-duty well paid firefighters? Why is it reasonable to ask Kensington residents to support such largesse?

What is the need for this extravagance? In the last fiscal year the Kensington fire department (Station 65) had only 690 calls for service versus 2,256 calls at the main El Cerrito fire station. Moreover, 310 of Station 65 calls were to El Cerrito residents, yet El Cerrito is not paying for any upgrade, and the El Cerrito fire chief feels the current space is adequate. While certain Kensington fire board members seem to feel displacing the police is their right, there is no California city that would allow one essential service to displace the other.

The Public Safety Building was built for use by both fire and police, and even though owned by the fire district, historic shared use cannot be changed by a vote of a five-member fire board. Rather, if the fire directors believe a single use is essential, they need to explain why, set forth the full costs of converting the building plus relocating police services. This should then go to Kensington voters for approval, or, more likely, disapproval.

Jim Watt

Measure R an Equity Issue

Dear Neighbors,

When you go to the polls in March, you’ll find Measure R. The West Contra Costa Unified School District is placing a \$575M bond measure on the ballot to repair and upgrade schools.

We are fortunate to live in a community with vibrant, diverse, overenrolled!! award-winning schools. The Kensington and El Cerrito communities have benefited tremendously from this investment: If you drive around Kensington and El Cerrito and see our beautiful schools, you wouldn’t know there are others in the district that need rebuilding.

Significant progress has been made in upgrading and modernizing: 44 of 53 have been rebuilt/renovated. However, substantial work remains. These schools are located in very underserved areas—especially Richmond. This is a major equity issue.

We implore the Kensington community to vote “Yes on R” to allow more West County students to have safe, secure, modern schools.

The maximum estimated property tax is \$.06 per \$100 assessed value. The bond is subject to strict fiscal accountability: an independent citizens’ oversight committee and annual third party audits confirm funds are spent properly. The district board continues to implement responsible management practices to ensure projects are completed on time and budget. Investment priorities are established by a facilities master plan.

Quality schools are an excellent investment: they prepare our community’s children to be successful members of society, improve quality of life, increase property values. This community has faithfully supported public education. Every child in our district—regardless of neighborhood or zip code—deserves a safe and modern facility in which to learn. Join us in supporting Measure R. See www.wccusd.net/domain/3342 for more.

Leslie Reckler, Kensington, President, Bayside Council of PTAs

Cameron Moore, Kensington, Secretary, WCCUSD Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee

Amy Cantu, Kensington, President, West County Mandarin School PTA

Derek Suring, Kensington, Secretary, Site Council, Kensington Elementary

Su Jin Jez, PhD, Kensington, Parliamentarian, West County Mandarin School PTA

Carolyn Day Flowers, Kensington, Site Council, El Cerrito High

Trish McDermott, Kensington, Secretary, El Cerrito High PTSA

Opportunity to Chart a Future

Dear Editor:

The KPPCSD board’s 3-2 vote to authorize hiring Steve Simpkins as our interim Chief of Police gives us an opportunity to make a fresh start on improving our police department. Board president Eileen Nottoli and directors Sylvia Hacaj and Cyrus Modavi deserve thanks for their courageous votes.

Chief Simpkins, a captain in the Contra Costa Sheriff’s office, brings extensive senior level law enforcement experience to Kensington, including seven very successful years as Danville’s chief, as well as a network of contacts to facilitate recruiting. The plan is for him to be with us for three to six months to assess what needs to be done and take the necessary steps to bring our department up to full strength and put it on the right track for the future.

The contract with the sheriff is expensive, which is to be expected considering Chief Simpkins’ experience and expertise. In order to recruit qualified officers and a permanent police chief, Chief Simpkins has all the tools he needs to get the job done, except one: the community’s commitment to keep a stable, permanent and independent police department. Without the prospect of job security, recruiting—especially for a permanent chief—will continue to be difficult.

The board’s focus now should be on taking every possible advantage of this opportunity by working closely with the chief while he is with us to chart a path forward for our independent police department’s future.

Vida Dorroh

Simpkins Hire Could Be a Model

Dear Editor:

Congratulations to our KPPCSD for retaining Steve Simpkins as its new interim police chief. Having met with him, I was very impressed. The steps he is taking in terms of running and supervising the department seem very much in line with the better departments I have worked with during my career.

There was mention at the last board meeting that Chief Simpkins may not be serving as our chief for much longer; in my view this would be a real step backward. Regardless, I think it would be a wonderful ongoing model to have the Contra Costa Sheriff’s Department provide its professionalism to our officers as that would allow a continuum of leadership and policies and access to a greater array of support services than we would have otherwise. Additionally with this model, as opposed to fully contracting out our department, we would retain our own officers and maintain budgetary control through

our own MOU.

Richard Karlsson

Wild Fears

Dear Editor:

Not only are we at risk from wildfires, but now it seems from wild fears as well. This is the notion that once the camel’s nose is into the tent—El Cerrito into our policing—annexation will surely follow.

This notion was clearly and emphatically rejected by the EC City Manager at a forum where EC Police Chief Keith outlined his proposed response to our Request for Proposal, in which he listed the benefits to both communities. Moreover, any proposed annexation must follow comprehensive LAFCO rules. These include a protest period where annexation is terminated if a majority of Kensington voters file a written protest; an election is called if at least 25 percent protest in writing. To switch animal metaphors, fearing annexation is crying wolf.

Bill Benson

Join a Walking Tour on Kensington’s Paths

Dear Editor:

The Kensington Pathkeepers will be leading another paths tour on Sunday, March 8 at 10am. This time, we will start by Raxakoul Coffee & Cheese and visit paths above Arlington Ave. before descending to Colusa Circle in time for lunch at the Kensington Farmers’ Market.

We suggest participants wear hiking boots and be ready for some uphill trekking. Hiking poles are a good idea, particularly on some of the less developed paths. A steady rain will cancel this event but we’ll plan to hike in anything less.

Our route through the upper areas of Kensington will go near two paths that are currently blocked. Because Kensington’s paths have no ownership, securing them for the public is important for maintaining access. The paths are a unique and enjoyable way to get around Kensington on foot. In addition to their health and recreational benefits, they could be essential safety corridors in the event of a wildfire or other disaster.

You can learn more about our plans to secure public ownership at kensingtonpathkeepers.org. Our website provides an option to sign up for email updates. We also have a terrific pamphlet that includes a map of the paths and is available free at Raxakoul, the Kensington Farmers’ Market, and Zip Code East Bay on Colusa.

Rodney Paul

Meet and Greet Steve Simpkins
Chat with Kensington's Interim Police Chief Steve Simpkins
February 29, 2-4pm, Bldg. E, Kensington Park
(building at far end of grassy area above tennis courts)

Passings

Longtime Kensington advocate John Sullivan died on January 1, surrounded by his family. He was 75. John, his wife Monica, and their two children moved to Kensington in 1986 and became active in the community. John cared deeply about Kensington and led efforts in the mid-’90s to secure and preserve the last open space as part of Kensington Park. He helped create a campaign to rally residents to approve two bond measures to buy the land and thus prevent the sale of Kensington’s

last open space to a developer. John remained devoted to keeping Kensington Park as open space. At numerous meetings, he used his communication skills and quick wit to bring consensus to diverse and at times divisive groups.

John immersed himself in Kensington’s finances and was dedicated to creating a police department that the community could be proud of and afford. He voiced concerns about potential commercialization of the Kensington Community Center, arguing instead for a much needed safety-oriented remodel. He served on the board of the Kensington Property Owners Association where he was instrumental in developing cogent communications. He was generous with his time and skills, and he championed and encouraged women in leadership.

John was born in San Francisco on November 17, 1944. He grew up in Pasadena and Garden Grove and received a bachelor’s degree from USC in Public Administration. After working on the campaigns of Governor Edmund G. Brown Sr. and Senator Alan Cranston, he embarked on a career at the intersection of communication and the arts.

For several years he lived in Lander, Wyoming where he co-authored *The National Outdoor Leadership School’s Wilderness Guide*, a comprehensive outdoor manual that expanded awareness of minimal impact camping technique. He subsequently had a distinguished career in arts administration and leadership. He served as deputy director of the California Arts Council and then became managing director of the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. John and his family moved to New York where he spent several years as publisher of American Theatre magazine and executive director of Theater Communications Group before returning permanently to Kensington. As senior vice-president of Winner/Wagner and Associates and president of the Producing Group he created outdoor music festivals at major venues. At the time of his death he was consulting with Golden Gate University on communication and leadership strategies.

John is survived by his wife Monica, children Peter (Christa) and Elly (Joe), beloved granddaughters Naomi and Liana, and by his brother Charles of Puyallup, WA. A celebration of John’s life will be held in late summer at the newly renovated Community Center.



John Sullivan trips the light fantastic with his daughter Elly at her wedding. Photo by Alex Akamine.