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July/August 2007

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VOLUME 64 NUMBER 6

Proposed developments on Colusa Circle





Before and after renderings, looking south on Colusa Avenue, as envisoned by Berkeley site architect Alex Korn of Catamount Design

Plans approved by KMAC now head to Martinez

The plans for building in and around the Colusa Circle continue to be hotly debated, as the plans grow and progress. Recently the owners of the vacant lot on the Circle decided to forgo the approval of Kensington Municipal Advisory Council (KMAC) and progress directly to the county to ask for permission to build. The architect of the owners had been

before KMAC several times, each time with new or modified plans, and never getting the approval they desired. KMAC is an advisory body, and all applicants can decide to go to the county planners without endorsement. Having KMAC's stamp of approval can greatly speed up the county permitting process.

Also in process is development of the block that contains Semifreddi's and the dry cleaner. This block, at 401 Colusa Ave., owned by Ed Hammonds, of Colusa Circle Investments One, has been before the KMAC board six times in the past three years, each time with modified building plans. At the May meeting

Hammonds finally got approval for his proposed three-story building, by a four-to-one vote, and it now goes on to the next stage with the planning department. Many community members have attended these meetings, often vociferously stating that the shops and attendant parking and traffic issues that this building will bring about are not sustainable by the neighborhood. The plans now have more than adequate on- and off-street parking.

"I wish the locals who have strong feelings about this project would have sought me out to discuss the project," said Ed Hammonds. "Nobody from the community has approached me personally. If they had, they would have had a chance to help shape this project. But complaining after my architect, Alex Korn, has drawn up six sets of detailed plans is a little too late." Hammonds has an office at 401 Colusa Ave.

A petition started by 11 people in the neighborhood states that both of these projects should be scaled back to minimize the impacts in the Colusa Circle area on traffic, parking, safety, and views. The petitioners are asking for the buildings to be limited to two stories, to provide more parking, to protect views and light, and more. In addition they are asking for a traffic study, See Colusa on page 7

The Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District directors have been working on their budget for some months now. And they have found themselves passing a deficit budget for 2007–2008. The fiscal year runs July through June. Total expenditures have been allocated at \$2,330,452, while income is expected to be \$2,109,521, making for a difference of \$220,931. While there are sufficient funds to more than cover this difference, Board Director Bill Wright said he did not like deficit budgets and proposed a motion to make it policy to never pass a deficit budget more than once in any four-year period. His motion was disallowed, as it was not on the agenda, but it will be included in the July

The estimated carryover of available funds is \$1,664,243, but with such needs as mandated contingency set-asides, vacation liabilities, retirees' medical expenses, bond payments, and park

building replacements, this figure is reduced to \$698,506. Salaries and employee benefits amount to \$1,589,608, compared to income from property taxes, which amounts to \$1,167,071.

At a recent KPPCSD meeting, Wright stated that the only realistic solutions to the deficit are either to reduce the size of the police force or raise property taxes with an assessment. The board is reluctant to recommend a tax increase right now, in light of the failure of proposed tax increases in Orinda and Lafayette in June.

In Orinda, a \$58.6 million bond issue for roads failed to receive the required two-thirds majority, getting 63.4 percent of the vote. The additional tax would have added



KPPCSD board directors, left to right: Cindy Kimball, Joan Gallegos, Pat McLaughlin, Bill Wright, and Paul Haxo

KPPCSD budgeting for a deficit

Wright stated...reduce the size of the police force or raise property taxes...

approximately \$30 per \$100,000 of assessed value. For houses in Orinda, where property values are similar to Kensington's, this would have been a tax increase of \$700 to \$1,500. This was the second time in recent years that Orinda voters rejected a tax increase. In Lafayette, a \$150-a-year parcel tax to finance roads missed getting the two-thirds vote by 3.76 percent. Proponents spent weeks working to generate a yes vote, and there was no organized opposition. More than 10 years ago, Kensington residents

approved a special assessment of \$300 per household to help fund the police. There was no cost-of-living increase attached to this number, but if there had been a 5 percent per year addition, this amount would have more than covered the deficit.

The board and staff have spent many hours trying to find ways to reduce expenses, but with police and recreation salaries, benefits, and related expenses amounting to \$1,918,025, there is not much the board can do to reduce expenses.

Capital outlay for the coming year includes a new police car to replace the aging one with a leaking roof, building improvements, new radios, computers for patrol cars, and other minor expenses which amount to \$163,330. Other not-so-big-ticket district expenses include legal advice, insurance, accounting, and copier maintenance, amounting to \$172,862.

If nothing were done to reverse this trend, the reserves would expire in about three years. The Board plans to establish a sub-committee to oversee financial issues. The meetings of this committee will be open to the public, and one of their tasks will be to get a firmer grip on their five-year plan.

The KPPCSD staff, contractors, and Esther Hill, of KCC, have created a punch-list of infrastructure items that need to be addressed. This list is broken up into short, medium-, and long-term, with the last category presumably being moved to a back burner for the present.

The next meeting of the KPPCSD board will be at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 12, at the Kensington Community Center.



Select Listings



11 Camelot Court ~ Kensington

Architect-designed one-level home with lovely garden and spa. Dramatic living room with cathedral ceiling and redwood view. 2BRs. \$745,000. Celia Concus

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213 Arlington Avenue Celia Concus represented the Seller

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What I Envision for Colusa Circle

By Ed Hammonds

Now that KMAC recommended approval of my development plan modification at the meeting on May 29, 2007, I can begin to articulate how I envision making Colusa Circle more relevant and viable for the immediate neighbors. I intend to promote a more pedestrian-friendly environment, one in which neighbors will come, mingle, and spend a part of their day. I will bring new retailers, to which locals will want to walk, rather than drive across town to find elsewhere.

The first generation of shops were service oriented, and patrons tended to stop, drop off or pick up, and go. I want to give people a reason to linger. Angel Court (sans mural) is being restored, with more plants and new benches. The next phase of merchants has begun, with the recent opening of the Alchemy Skin Spa and the relocation of the Hendrickson Chiropractic Clinic. These stores were completely renovated and serve as showpieces of what is to come.

I sold 411 Colusa to Marianne Beacham, a certified muscular therapist, who moved her home business to the Circle after 10 years at El Cerrito Plaza. These three new businesses are emblematic of the future of the Circle as a center for health and healing. That theme will be kept in mind when prospecting for a business for the new storefront at 382 Colusa Circle.

Semifreddi's is considering a relocation into about 800 square feet in the new building adjacent to their current shop, and the remaining one or two storefronts will be leased to businesses that would be of interest to the over-60 crowd (which is a fast-growing demographic). The upper floor offices will be leased to psychotherapists, educational consultants, and other business professionals, much the same as the businesses on the second floors of 376 and 384 Colusa.

I plan to add more amenities, such as new streetlights and new trees on all three sides of the triangle parcel bounded by Colusa, Oak View, and Santa Fe, a garden/fountain area, and a new mural to help create a sense of place. There is the additional challenge of redoing 690 linear feet of sidewalk and finding a way for all this to pencil out.

After KMAC, there are still many hurdles to overcome, and in the most optimistic scenario completion is not slated until 2009. Considering the modest nature of the new buildings-an infill addition to the existing building at 384-88 and a new structure at 370 Colusa-it is just a beginning.

Until the other commercial properties on the Circle are upgraded, Colusa will remain a work in progress and will not come full circle. I am waiting with anticipation to see what the largest landowner on the Circle, Narsai David, has in mind for his properties. I look forward to working cooperatively with Carol Chisholm and Narsai to align our visions and create a synergy (the sum being greater than the parts) that will benefit everyone.

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Deadlines

Advertising deadline August 8 Editorial deadline August 10

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Petition to limit Colusa

Editor—Recent proposals for development on the Colusa Circle have spurred me and a growing group of concerned neighbors to organize, so our voices will be considered in the planning process. We favor reasonable development but are concerned that the large scope of projects by Ed Hammonds and Carol Chisolm could permanently alter the characteristics that currently make our neighborhood attractive and livable for business and residents alike. For that reason, we are gathering signatures on a petition that advocates what we feel is a commonsense approach to developing the Colusa Circle. We encourage all who seek to safeguard the special character of the Colusa Circle to make their voice heard. Please consider signing our petition and/ or writing a letter to Contra Costa County Planners Mike Henn and Ryan Hernandez, so your views will be considered. We are also in the process of forming a Neighborhood Association to bring people together. Those who are interested can contact us at ColusaCircle@gmail.com or call 526-8949.

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Kensington officer John Ty

Felony arrest on Grizzly Peak

On Friday, June 22nd at 9:44 a.m. police officer John Ty stopped to investigate a suspicious car and driver parked on the corner of Grizzly Peak Blvd. and Canyon Dr. He asked the driver who he was and why he was parked there. Checking on the driver, Ty discovered a suspended license, and while questioning him noticed that the car steering column showed signs of tampering. He called the on-duty police sergeant, Angela Escobar, to assist.

Ty asked for and received permission to search the car, where he found shaved keys for many of the major makes of automobiles. These shaved keys allow thieves to enter and start any car with the same speed and ease as a regular key. Also in the car were all the tools needed for making more shaved keys and other burglary-related implements. Additionally the officers found suspected methamphetamine and marijuana and pipes to smoke these drugs. The driver, who was found to have a previous criminal history, is now in prison.

This was Officer Ty's first felony arrest since joining the force in September.

Sergeant Escobar said there have been numerous crimes in the area, and she suggests that if you see unknown people or cars there, to report them to the police. If the cars or people turn out to be innocent, no harm is done.

The missing paths



The Kensington Improvement Club (KIC) is seeking to clarify the legality of the many public paths in Kensington. These paths were offered to Contra Costa County by the original developers of Kensington. The county declined the offer, and since that time there has been no clear title to any of the paths. The offer is irrevocable, and the county could decide to take ownership of the paths at any time. There were originally 12 such paths, although one has since been built over. The remaining paths are in various states of service. Some portions of the paths have been fenced in by homeowners, hoping to acquire title to the land by default; others are overgrown, and most are impassable. Once cleared and restored, these paths would constitute a valuable resource to the community and offer efficient routes in an east and west direction in times of emergency.

Debate over the paths has been going on for years. Most people would like to



Ardmore Path is the best maintained part of the Kensington path system.

have them open and usable, but it is unclear if the community wants this enough to take responsibility for their financing and upkeep.

KIC is proposing that Contra Costa County be persuaded to accept title to this land and is asking KPPCSD to go to the voters of Kensington requesting that they add the authority to KPPCSD to cover the maintenance of the paths. KIC further hopes that Kensington voters will agree to approve funding for the maintenance and insurance of the paths, probably by a new Paths Assessment District. Once this is voted on, the county would then be asked to transfer title to KPPCSD. Then KIC and others within the community would create a nonprofit corporation to support the improvements and maintenance of the paths. KIC is not going to proceed with this action if KPPCSD decides to not participate.

The paths are clearly mapped in Kensington Past and Present, published by the Kensington Improvement Club. One set of paths connects Cambridge, Stanford, Yale. Amherst, and Arlington; another connects Arlington, Ardmore, Coventry, and Stratford; and a third set connects Highland, Kenyon, St. Albans, Windsor, York, and Arlington.



Pet of the month

Chuck is a three-month-old Hotot rabbit who aspires to the 2008 International Rabbit Agility Games. He can clear hurdles up to 42" even though he only weighs 1 ½ pounds. Come visit Chuck at RabbitsEars seven days a week, 303 Arlington Ave. 625-6155.

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School board turnaround on Portola

Charles Ramsey says he may now be the third vote needed to approve K-8

At the West Contra Costa School Board meeting in June, the board cancelled their decision to move Portola Middle School to the Fairmont Elementary school site and voted to restart the whole process of looking for an alternative site. They acknowledged that they had not looked carefully enough at the Fairmont proposal, and, although they would not commit to saying that the site would not be considered in the future, they are now starting the search again, this time with the aid of a specialized consultant.

At the meeting were many people from El Cerrito and Kensington. Mark Woo, Catherine Mercurio, Tre Curran, and Cathy Garza, parents of children at Hilltop, spoke forcefully about the K-8 alternative, which would allow more kids to stay in elementary schools, thus reducing the possible size of a new or expanded middle school.

In his concluding address, Charles Ramsey, who had been the deciding vote against adopting a K-8 policy in the district, said that he was now open to the idea of K-8, as all other solutions seem not to have worked. He said he went to a K-8 school, and that he still did not think it was a good idea, but it may be the will of the people. He said he was elected to represent the community, and if the community decided that this was what they wanted, he would consider their desires. President of the board Karen Pfeifer suggested holding a special meeting in about six weeks, perhaps on a weekend, to once more solicit public opinion, followed by yet another meeting where all ideas could be assembled.

There was some discussion by the board and the public about the inadequate notices sent out about previous meetings. It was decided that in addition to mailing notices in the future, notices would be posted on the front doors of all schools in the catchment area of Portola, and on the middle school itself.

Ramsey said that there were already 500 children at Hilltop School, and with a third kindergarten class now being added, the inclusion of the Neighborhood School on the site, and the extra children from two new grades 7 and 8, this would bring the school's population up to about 1,000. Ramsey is the parent of a Hilltop pupil.

Pfeifer said it was her fervent desire to increase the pay of teachers in the district, but she thinks the only way to do this would be to close some of the smaller schools. She considers small schools to be those with fewer than 300 pupils. Schools in this category include some with at-risk student populations, and it is unlikely that these would be closed. Fairmont and Castro are two of the regular schools that have fewer than 300 attendees. Pfeifer said that this would also not necessarily be a wise or popular decision.

Library hosting Jewish literature talks



For the second year, Kensington Library is hosting a free series of readings and discussions titled Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature—Identity and Imagination. This fivepart reading and discussion series explores Jewish literature and culture through scholar-led discussions of contemporary and classic books on the theme of A Mind of Her Own: Fathers and Daughters in a Changing World. Once again, Dr. Naomi Seidman, of the Graduate Theological Union, leads the series.

The very engaging Seidman brings her own unique humor and keen insights to the discussions, as she did last

year. The events are always lively and well attended. On July 14 the book to be discussed will be Tevye the Dairyman, by Sholem Aleichem. This story about a Jewish peasant in prerevolutionary Russia was the basis for Fiddler on the Roof. Other works to be discussed include:

Bread Givers, by Anzia Yezierska (August 11) O My America!, by Johanna Kaplan (September 8)

American Pastoral, by Philip Roth (October 6) Bee Season, by Myla Goldberg (November 3).

The library is one of over 250 libraries nationwide receiving grants to host the series developed by Nextbook and the American Library Association (ALA). Local support for the series is provided by the Jewish Community Center of the East Bay. All programs are held at the Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. on Saturdays at 2 p.m. For details or to register, please contact Liz Ruhland at 524-3043 or lruhland@ccclib.org.

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When: Monday–Friday, 1–3 p.m. Session 3, July 9–13 Session 4, July 16–20 Session 5, August 6–10 Session 6, August 13–17

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Instructor Nicole Becker, a registered yoga teacher, was trained in Anusara Yoga and has studied acupressure and Qi Gong. She describes her teaching style as lighthearted and welcoming and strives to make each student feel cared for in his or her practice of yoga.

For information about the class, please contact Nicole at 527-6443.

To register call 525-0292.

When: Tuesday 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Fees: Residents \$12 for drop-in, \$50/5 for 5 classes. Nonresidents please add 10% (\$13.20/class; \$55 for 5 classes)

Where: Community Center

Hatha Yoga

Enjoy a hatha yoga practice to calm, restore, and revitalize you each Monday and Thursday. Classic yoga postures and quiet attention to the nuance of movement help create a satisfying personal practice. This class draws on the instructor's knowledge of dynamic yoga styles (such as ashtanga and vinyasa) and subtly challenging yoga styles (like Iyengar, Integral, and Yin Yoga) to help students find their own perfect balance. Yoga postures, breathing techniques, and philosophy are covered. All levels of

Instructor Claire Lavery has been practicing and teaching yoga since 1988. She focuses on breathing, alignment, and adjustment to help students enjoy the journey.

experience welcome.

To speak with Claire, call 681-3077.

To register, call the KCC office at 525-0292.

When: Thursdays, 6-7 p.m. Fees: Residents—\$12 for drop-in. One-month pass (4 classes) \$40. Nonresidents—please add 10% (\$13.20 per class-\$44 for onemonth pass)

Where: Recreation Building, Room A (Building E).

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Instructor Beth Hird has been studying yoga since 1975. She is a certified yoga instructor, a graduate of the 2004 Piedmont Yoga Studio Advanced Studies Program. She studied extensively with Rodney Yee, Claire Finn, and Richard Rosen, and enjoys bringing patience, compassion and humor to the practice.

When: Tuesdays, 7:30 - 8:45 pmFees: Residents, \$15 for drop in \$50/4 weeks (1 class/week) \$100/8 weeks (2 classes/week) Nonresidents add 10% (\$16.50/class; \$55 or \$110)

Where: Kensington Recreation Building, Room A (Building E).

KCC SUMMER CAMP

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KASEP Fall registration — Tuesday, September 11

Classes will begin — Monday, September 24.

Open House — Thursday, September 6, 6:30 p.m., in the

the Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District, 526-4141. some of our KASEP teachers and talk about our classes. For a sample schedule (Spring 2007) of classes, please visit www.aboutkensington.com.

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Can't we all just talk to each other?

The East Bay Regional Communications System is evaluating a system of organizing the emergency communications systems in Alameda and Contra Costa counties to make sure that all agencies will be able to communicate with each other in times of need. During the 1991 Oakland fire, there were problems with agencies not being able to communicate with each other, as they used different radio frequencies. There were similar circumstances during hurricane Katrina.

The two combined counties represent 1,457 square miles, about 2.5 million people, in 33 cities, 70 special districts, and many high-risk areas, such as Tilden Park.

Different communities operate on different wavelengths. Richmond, UC Berkeley, and the state parks are on 800 MHz, while East Bay Parks are on Low Band, Pinole is on VHF, and Berkeley is on UHF. None of these frequencies can communicate with the others.

Contra Costa County radios are overcrowded, with over 8,000 users communicating on only 21 channels; this means that there can be only 21 conversations at any one time. They also get a lot of interference from outside the area. Alameda County also has an oldfashioned system, with similar problems. Both communications systems are nearing the end of their useful lives. Significant cost savings could be realized by organizing a regional system, without sacrificing local autonomy.

The KPPCSD board was asked by their staff to allocate \$1,600 as a good-faith investment to fund the system. This amount is calculated at \$100 per radio within the organization. If the system fails to get funding, then Kensington would be refunded its investment. KPPCSD declined to agree to participate, as they had insufficient information on which to base their vote. Interim General Manager Taylor has agreed to get representatives of the organization to come and make a PowerPoint presentation about the system at the next meeting.

Fire department news

The El Cerrito and Kensington Fire Department have recently purchased a new Holmatro rescue tool, commonly called the jaws of life. This amazing device can cut through any part of an automobile or truck, just like scissors through paper. It can also separate compressed pieces of metal with equal ease, making it much easier to rescue people trapped within their cars as a result of accidents. It can also easily get through security gates, doors, window bars, and fences, when other forms of rescue are needed. Fire Captain Michael Pigoni, said, "This tool can make the difference between life and death by being able to mitigate an access problem quickly." He said ideally there should be one of these devices on every first-response fire truck. They cost nearly \$9,000.

In a recent report, new fire chief, Lance Maples, said that by the end of July, the department should

again be fully staffed, at 36 people. He also warned that the

> The fire department recommends the following vegetation management standards, designed to reduce the threat of wildfire:

- 1. Maintain a 30-foot firebreak from any building or to the property line. Only well-tended, properly irrigated ornamental vegetation is allowed. Remove all dead, diseased, or otherwise, flammable material.
- 2. Trim trees 10 feet from the ground, and remove dead and dying branches, loose or peeling bark, and fallen branches.
- 3. Cut trees back 10 feet from chimney openings.

fire season would probably be longer this year, partially because of all the freezekilled vegetation.

Maples suggested everyone be extra careful with fire. Ninety percent of the wildfires in California are started by people, using some sort of equipment. He suggested using weed eaters, chainsaws, and such during cool and moist times of day, and to use lawnmowers only to cut lawns; they can cause fire if used on long grass.

In May, the Kensington fire station responded to two outdoor fires, 10 EMS events, one downed power line, one gas leak, four service calls, and three calls that were either cancelled or false calls.

Kensington is rated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Fire District ordinance and state law require all property owners and renters to remove

> flammable vegetation around their homes. The Kensington Fire Protection District is

Fuel Break requesting voluntary compliance. Fire Break House 100' 4. Install spark arrester on chimneys.

- 5. Keep roof and decks free of leaves, needles, or other dead vegetation.
- 6. If you have property that is more than 30 to 100 feet from your house, reduce height of flammable vegetation (dry grass and weeds to 6 inches or less, and brush to 18 inches or less from the ground).
- 7. Place address numbers where they can be seen easily from the street to ensure quick emergency response.

Colusa

Continued from page 1 which has been done, but which the petitioners find unacceptable.

The petition is being circulated in Kensington, El Cerrito, Albany, and Berkeley, and it will be submitted to the county planning department and Supervisor John Gioia. Already more than 50 people have signed, and the petitioners are hoping for 500 names.

The whole area has received building permission for several developments as part of a PUD that was passed in 1983.

Since the KMAC approval of the 401 Colusa Circle project, we have heard that Narsai David is planning to return to KMAC with new plans for the Porto Brazil building, opposite 401 Colusa Circle. The proposal includes two businesses,

an optometrist and a physical fitness consultant, in the former restaurant, and the construction of a new apartment unit on the second level at the back of the building on Berkeley Park Blvd. There is also mention of new ADA and life safety improvements and changed landscaping. The plans are on file in the Kensington Library. The matter will be discussed at the July 31 meeting at the Community Center.

Agendas for KMAC meetings are posted on the kiosk at the pharmacy, in the library, on the notice board at the police station, and in the window of Kensington Veterinary Hospital at 400 Colusa Ave. KMAC meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month at the Kensington Community Center, at 7:00 pm.

See the letter on page 2 regarding the petition, and an article on page 2 written by Ed Hammonds.

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Market Update For Kensington

Prices for the first half (1/1 to 6/24) of each of the last three years:

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Hilltop principal Jon Stokes

Stokes resigns

In a surprise move, Hilltop students were given a letter to take home in the last week of school informing parents and children that Hilltop principal Jon Stokes will be leaving his position in the summer.

Stokes, who became principal in December of 2004, is moving to a school that is closer to his home in Santa Clara.

School Superintendent Bruce Harter called a meeting of parents to discover their concerns about finding a replacement for Stokes. Harter created a list of characteristics and qualities that

teachers and parents would like to see in their new headmaster. The teachers' requests started out with two relating to handling discipline issues; also mentioned were communications, trust, creating boundaries, commitment to the community, and respect for teachers. The parents' list included good decision-making abilities, outreach and collaboration with parents and organizations, becoming more involved, intelligence, and being an advocate

The students asked that the head be nice, have a sense of humor, and get involved in school activities.

Stokes took the job two and a half years ago, when former principal Nancy Kawata resigned after less than a year at the school.

Stokes, a former captain in the U.S. Army, previously worked in the Oak Grove Unified School District, where he was an administrator for four years. He has taught in elementary and secondary schools. He holds a B.A. in liberal studies and an M.A. in elementary

Both Stokes and Kawata stated that they resigned to take a position closer to home. Both departures surprised teachers and parents.

The West Contra Costa Unified School District spokesperson, Paul Ehara, said they hope to have a replacement in place before school starts on August 28.

Hopefully the next principal will live locally and will not be tempted to move because of the commute and will meet many of the desired qualities on Harter's list.

KPPCSD and KCC in agreement

KPPCSD and KCC have been working on renewing their agreement for recreation and educational programs and facilities maintenance.

According to the agreement, KPPCSD will maintain the Community Center, Building E, tennis courts, and the park. This includes general maintenance, janitorial services, and gardening; KPPCSD also agreed to provide insurance coverage for the improvements to the park and recreational property. KPPCSD also receives all income from rental and use fees.

For its part, KCC provides a program of recreational and educational activities in

the park and in the associated buildings. KCC agreed to pay KPPCSD \$12,000 a year for the use of the Community Center, tennis courts, park grounds, and other facilities. KCC also pays \$1 a year for the use of Building E for educational and administrative uses. KCC is responsible for the interior and exterior maintenance and janitorial services for Building E. The two organizations also agreed to work with one another under the KCC 501 (c3) status for fund raising and procuring grants. This agreement is due to run for at least the next three years. It replaces one that was set many years ago. Although both organizations came together to agree on terms, when it came to the KPPCSD board for ratification, it was discovered that the Community Services District staff had furnished the board with a different version of the agreement, so they were unable to finalize the agreement, which should be completed during their July meeting.



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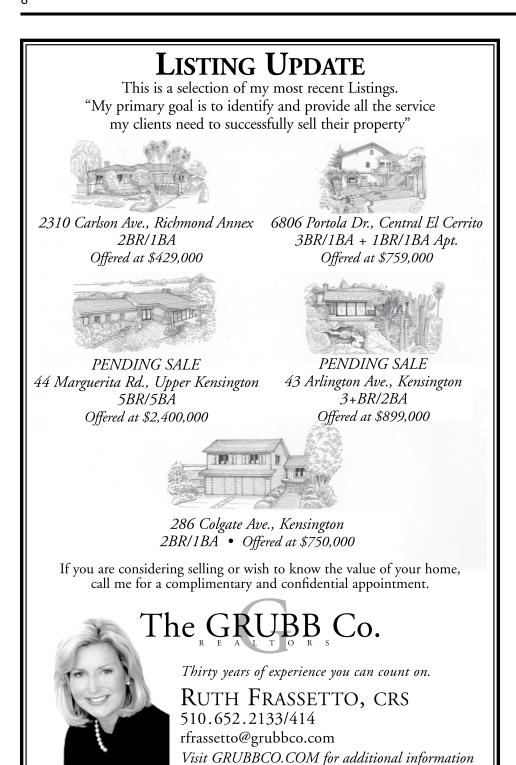
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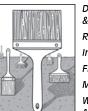
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Neighborhood Notes

New police chief and police officer selection

The search for the new police chief is in its final stages. The list of candidates has been whittled down from 71 to just 3. These finalists were interviewed by the full board in June, and the chosen person will enter into contract negotiations with an ad-hoc committee composed of board president Pat McLaughlin and director Cindy Kimball.

Doug Medina will be joining the Kensington Police Department as a new officer. Medina has over 23 years as a police officer and was once a cadet in Contra Costa County. He is proud of his Italian ancestry and loves his mother's home cooking. He lives in El Cerrito and enjoys many aspects of outdoor recreation, including camping, fishing, RVing, and biking. He has a brother who is a sergeant in the Richmond Police Force.

Sidewalk getting done

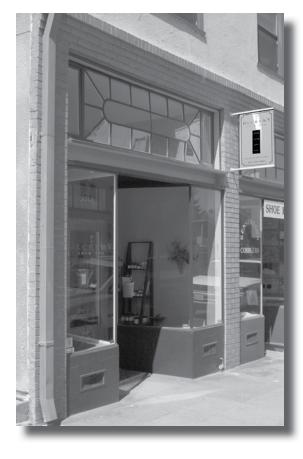


The Arlington Ave. sidewalk reconstruction started in the middle of June. The sound of jackhammers is echoing along the street, and large piles of broken concrete are being loaded onto trucks. One resident said, "I am sure it will be beautiful when it is done, but right now everything seems a little chaotic." With many people including their driveways and paths in the renovation, the work is going slower than some residents expected, but most people seem keen to see the completed project. AT&T has come out and marked the areas they will be responsible for, and PG&E are supplying new concrete boxes for the contractors to use wherever needed.

No one wants the lots

The Los Altos Neighborhood Group (LANG) continues to try to find an entity to purchase or receive as a gift the two lots on Los Altos Dr. facing Tilden Park that are for sale. The lots are sliding down hill, making them prohibitively expensive to develop. The owner, the Stone Living Trust, wants to pass them on, so LANG, which wants them to stay undeveloped, has talked with Kensington KPPCSD and East Bay Regional Park District, neither of whom wants to take on ownership. LANG is still investigating other nonprofit groups that might take responsibility for the lots and is also considering getting the county to designate the lots as unbuildable. It is still possible that LANG will buy the lots and undertake to maintain them.

Skin Alchemy



Francesca Cavanaugh has opened the Alchemy Skin Spa on Colusa Ave. Alchemy specializes in facials and waxing. Sessions involve deep skin cleaning, clearing clogged pores, exfoliating dry skin, gentle massages, and applying nourishing moisturizers. A licensed esthetician, Cavanaugh previously owned a spa at Walnut Square in Berkeley, but found herself spending too much time managing staff and not enough time with clients. So in May she opened Alchemy in Kensington, where she is a one-person business. "I love what I do; it doesn't seem like work to me. Many people think that I am always closed, but I am so busy, I am usually with a client," said Cavanaugh, who lives nearby. Cavanaugh has established a close relationship with many of her clients during her 10 years as an esthetician. She also supplies a limited line of makeup and other beauty products, selected for being organic and healthful for the skin and the environment.

"I work on letting people express their own natural beauty," Cavanaugh said. "It's in there, it just needs to be let out." Appointments can last anywhere from 15 minutes to two hours, with many people coming back every couple of months, and some only on their birthdays. Alchemy is booked ahead for two to three months for weekday appointments, five to six months for weekends. Alchemy is located at 3810 Colusa Circle, 558-9885.

Kensington family feast

The KCC Family Pasta Extravaganza will be held at the Kensington Community Center, July 14 at 6 p.m. There will be plenty of delicious food for the whole family. The price of admission—\$5 for adults, \$3 for those under 12—includes spaghetti, a green salad, baguette, dessert, and a drink. Wine and beer will be sold separately. A family-oriented movie will be shown after the film. Bring cushions and blankets for young kids. The whole affair should be over by 9:30 p.m.

There are a limited number of seats, although tickets will probably be available at the door. Tickets are available at the KCC office, in Building E in the park, or from Laurie Ushigusa at 559-8825. This is a very informal family-style meal and a wonderful opportunity to meet members of our varied community.

Young's goes organic

Have you been to Young's Market recently? If not, you might be pleasantly surprised. A few months ago, the Khalid owners, Sultan and Nazeen Khalid, placed a large suggestion



box in the center of the store, and they took the responses seriously. Shoppers asked for more fresh fruit and vegetables and more organic and healthful foods, with many requesting specific brands. So now there is a good mix of organic and nonorganic produce. On the shelves and in the fridges you will find organic and healthy alternatives next to more familiar products. Among the best sellers are the artisanal breads, organic pasta, yogurt, cereals, coffees, and butter. There are now bulk foods, such as nuts and dried fruit, and more will be arriving soon. These changes have not meant excluding any foods from the market, but increasing the variety of choices, which has brought more local residents into

"The Farmers' Market has not had a serious impact on our business," said Sultan. "People shop in both places. There is enough business for everyone." But he said it has made people want more choices. "Some people have asked for Clover milk, but if we were to stock Clover products, then Berkeley Farms would stop doing business with us. We don't have a big enough turnover for them to allow both companies. Many people want Berkeley Farms products too."

Over at the meat counter, Larry Lefebvre, of Kensington Fine Foods, now in his third year of business, has fresh beef and pork from Vande Rose Farms, Rosie Organic Chickens, and regular shipments of fish. Lefebvre says he is expanding his prepared salads and is now carrying FraMani salami, made by famed Berkeley chef Paul Bertolli. "We are kept busy with our many lunch sandwich orders and a constant need to roast more rotisserie chickens."

Summer camp a success

The almost soldout KCC Summer Camp is in full swing, with kids participating in a variety of activities. KCC administrator, camp organizer, and coordinator Esther Hill said, "The counselors are terrific, and as usual



Counseler Sandy Thacker and kids busy with carpentry.

we have a wonderful bunch of kids attending the camp. I just wish we could have more kids involved, but we are limited by the capacity of the busses that take the campers on their weekly field trips." The first two weeks featured carpentry led by Sandy Thacker, who has the ability to get even the most awkward kid to construct fun objects. Future activities include dance, gymnastics, golf, tennis, and other sports. Additionally there are hiking, arts and crafts, games, and lots of other fun activities with many camp counselors. As usual, there is a long waiting list for children to attend for most weeks.

Something to feel good about

The folks who brought you the Save and Green day at a recent Farmers' Market are at it again. This time they are gathering items that maybe could be used by those less fortunate.

The week before the annual Kensington Clean-up, from September 17 to 21, Goodwill will be collecting gently worn clothing, small appliances, housewares, toys, tools, and

jewelry. Organizers suggest that you ask yourself if the items are good enough for a friend or relative. If they are, bring them to the Farmers' Market on September 16. Please don't bring things that are broken. dirty, or useless; leave these items at the curb for the refuse pick-up. There will be a raffle for all donators, with a chance to win a Deluxe Red Cross Emergency Preparedness Kit. All donations are eligible for a tax deduction. So it's time to start cleaning out those cupboards.





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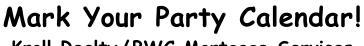
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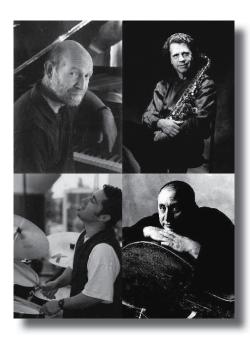
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JULY

Sunday July 1

Social Action Forum. Eric Mills talks on animal rights. 9:30–10:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

Peach tasting and music by Gift Horse. Kensington Farmers' Market 10 a.m.–2 p.m. 303 Arlington Ave..



The Art Lande /Bruce Williamson **Quartet** in concert. Jazz legends: Art Lande—piano, Bruce Williamson—sax & woodwinds, Alan Hall—drums, Peter Barshay—bass. \$15 (\$10 seniors) The Hillside Club 2286 Cedar St. at Arch, Berkeley, Info: 845-1350



Paul Lewin: Experiments in Sleep **Depravation**. July 6–31. Eclectix Gallery, 7523 Fairmount Ave., El Cerrito. 364-7261.

Monday July 2

Family Story Time. Garden Puzzles. 7 p.m. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. 526-7512.



Castoffs Knitting Group. 7 p.m. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

Kensington Community Council

meeting. 7:30 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave. 525-0292.

Tuesday July 3

Family Storytime. Preschool and up. 7 p.m. Free. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

Wednesday July 4

El Cerrito Rotary Club 4th of July Fair. Arts and crafts, carnival games, music and stage entertainment, dancing, and lots of food. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Portola School track and Cerrito Vista Park. Portola Dive.

Thursday July 5

Lapsit Storytimes, for babies and toddlers up to age 3. 10:15 and 11 a.m. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave.

Babies & Toddlers Storytime. Preschool and up. 10:30 a.m. Free. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

Saturday July 7



Kensington Police Program. Sergeant Angela Escobar tells what police officers do. Learn crime-solving tips and "tools of the trade." 2 p.m. Appropriate for ages 3 and up. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043. Sponsored by Friends of the Kensington Library.

Sunday July 8



Social Action Forum. Jacques

Verduin, of the Insight Prison Foundation. 9:30-10:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

KENSINGTON

Monday July 9

Family Story Time. Things That Go! 7 p.m. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. 526-7512.

Tuesday July 10

Baby-friendly Book Club. Parents and their babies, and other baby-friendly people, daytime book club. 10 a.m. Free. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

Family Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 3.

Wednesday July 11

Kensington Fire Protection District.

7:30 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave. 527-8395.

Thursday July 12

Kensington Police Protection and Community Service District board meeting. 7:30 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave. 526-4141.

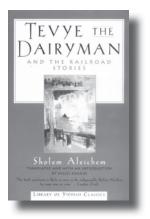
Babies & Toddlers Storytime.

Kensington Library. See July 5.

Lapsit Storytimes. El Cerrito Library. See July 5.

Saturday July 14

KCC Pasta feast. 6 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave.



Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature— Identity and Imagination. Dr. Naomi Seidman, Graduate Theological Union, discusses Tevye the Dairyman

by Sholem Aleichem. Kensington Library 61 Arlington Ave. Registration recommended. 524-3043.

Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature, a reading and discussion series, has been made possible through a grant from Nextbook and the American Library Association

Sunday July 15

Social Action Forum. Eric Moon discusses American Friends Service Committee and the death penalty. 9:30-10:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

Homemade Pet Foods. 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Kensington Farmers' Market, 303 Arlington

Bridge to Sakai: Japanese Arts and Crafts of Today. Reception. 2–4 p.m. Live Oak Park, Berkeley. 644-6893.

Monday July 16

Family Storytime. Fishy Adventures. 7 p.m. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. 526-7512.

Tuesday July 17

Family Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 3.

Thursday July 19

Babies & Toddlers Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 5.

Lapsit Storytimes. El Cerrito Library. See July 5.

Saturday July 21

The Joy of Rats. Caring for rats. 2:30-4 p.m. RabbitEars, 303 Arlington Ave. 525-6155.

Sunday July 22

Social Action Forum. Dr. Seaborg will present Global Environment: Threats & Solutions. 9:30-10:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.



Limes, peaches and pears. 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Kensington Farmers' Market, 303 Arlington Ave.





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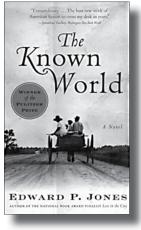


CALENDAR

Monday July 23



Family Story Time. Train Stories. 7 p.m. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. 526-7512.



Library Book Club. *The Known World*, by

Kensington

The Known World, by Edward P. Jones. 7 p.m. Free. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

Tuesday July 24

Family Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 3.

El Cerrito Democratic Club. Dessert potluck, brief talk from elected officials, community activists, and club members. 7:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall, United Methodist Church, 6830 Stockton Ave., El Cerrito. 375-5647.

Thursday July 26

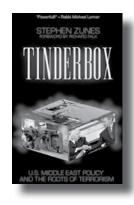
Babies & Toddlers Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 5.

Lapsit Storytimes. El Cerrito Library. See July 5.

Saturday July 28

La Honda **Guinea Pig Adoption**. 1–4 p.m. RabbitEars, 303 Arlington Ave. 525-6155.

Sunday July 29



Social Action
Forum. Stephen
Zunes, Professor of
Political Science:
Terrorism, the
Middle East. 9:30–
10:30 a.m. Unitarian
Universalist Church
of Berkeley,
1 Lawson Rd.
525-0302.

Kids Day. Artwork, handicrafts, and homegrown produce. 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Kensington Farmers' Market, 303 Arlington Ave.

Monday July 30

Family Story Time. Dog Detectives. 7 p.m. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. El Cerrito. 526-7512.

Tuesday July 31

Kensington Municipal Advisory Council.

7 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave. 273-9926.

Family Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 3.

A U G U S T

Thursday August 2

Babies & Toddlers Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 5.

Saturday August 4

The Bubblicious Bubble Lady featuring Baby Bubbles, Momma & Poppa Bubbles, a bubble space ship, and more. 2 p.m. Appropriate for ages 3 and up. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043. Sponsored by the Friends of the Kensington Library.

Sunday August 5

Donna Schaper, minister, author, and activist, will preach and host a book signing for her new book, **Grass Roots Gardening: Rituals to Sustain Activism.**10–12 p.m. Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave. 526-9146.

${\bf Holistic\ Pet\ Wellness\ Consultation}.$

1–4 p.m. RabbitEars, 303 Arlington Ave. 525-6155.

Monday August 6



Castoffs Knitting Group. 7 p.m. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

Family Storytime. Bathtime! 7 p.m. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. El Cerrito. 526-7512.

Kensington Community Council.

7:30 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave. 525-0292.

Tuesday August 7

Family Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 3.

Wednesday August 8

Kensington Fire Protection District.

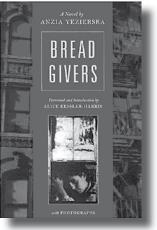
7:30 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave. 527-8395.

Thursday August 9

Kensington Police Protection and Community Service District board meeting. 7:30 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave. 526-4141.

Lapsit Storytimes. El Cerrito Library. See July 5.

Saturday August 11



Let's Talk
About It:
Jewish
Literature
—Identity
and
Imagination. Dr.
Naomi
Seidman,
Graduate
Theological Union,
discusses

Bread

Givers by Anzia Yezierska. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. Registration recommended. 524-3043. Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature, a reading and discussion series, has been made possible through a grant from Nextbook and the American Library Association.

Monday August 13

Family Storytime. Mysteries at the Zoo. 7 p.m. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. 526-7512.

Peace Child. Runs through Aug 25, ends with public performances. Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave. 526-9146.

Tuesday August 14

Family Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 3.

Baby-friendly Book Club. Kensington Library. See July 10.

Thursday August 16

Lapsit Storytimes. El Cerrito Library. See July 5.

Tuesday August 21

Puppet Show & Summer Reading Prize Party. Tommy's Space Adventure. Fun prizes. 6:30 p.m. Appropriate for ages 3 and up. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043. Sponsored by the Friends of the Kensington Library.

Family Storytime: Hide and Seek / Lost and Found. All ages. 11 a.m. followed by a library scavenger hunt to win prizes! El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. 526-7512.

Thursday August 23

Babies & Toddlers Storytime. Preschool and up. 10:15 and 11:15 a.m. Free. Kensington Library. 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

Art Workshop. Create a drawing to enter in the West County READS! Contest. Drawing materials provided. Appropriate for ages 5 and up. 3 p.m. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043. Sponsored by the Friends of the Kensington Library.

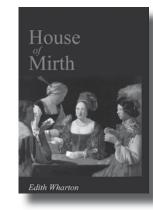
Friday August 24

Peace Child Performance. 7 p.m. Arlington See August 13.

Saturday August 25

Peace Child. See August 24.

Monday August 27



Kensington Library Book Club. **The House of Mirth**, by Edith Wharton. 7 p.m. Free. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

Tuesday August 28

First day of school.

Kensington Municipal Advisory Council. 7 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave. 273-9926.

Family Storytime. Kensington Library. See July 3.

Thursday August 30

Babies & Toddlers Storytime.

Preschool and up. 10:15 and 11:15. a.m. Free. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

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From the case files of the KPD

This report is based on the many reports in the police logs of the Kensington Police Department. The Outloook is solely responsible for the writing and editing of this report.

Events in May

■ A man selling meat door-to-door on Arlington Ct. was reported. This is against the law, but the reporter waited a day before calling the police, so nothing could be done.

■ Ten African American men. wearing suits and ties, on Coventry Rd., were reported to police, who discovered they were Jehovah's Witnesses, spreading the word of God. As they were not selling anything or asking for money, they were allowed to go on their way. Proselytizing is not against the law.

- A distraught woman called the police to report her missing 10-year-old son. Upon investigation it was discovered that he was staying with the estranged father, and the mother had forgotten.
- Two adult sons living with their mother on Kingston Rd. were not getting along, and one called the police to complain. They have had many altercations in the past.
- A distraught wife who was suffering from a recently encountered economic downturn in her lifestyle agreed to commit herself for psychiatric evaluation.
- An inattentive robber broke the window of an Accord on Highgate Rd., but a previous burglar had already stolen the radio. Another thief then stole the car and crashed it two times. Later it was recovered in Oakland.
- A driver on Colgate Ave. reported that a person on a bicycle hit her car. The cyclist made off at speed and was not seen again.
- A 39-year-old man on Los Altos Dr. called police complaining of heart palpitations. Apparently he was under the influence of some illegal substance and was taken to the hospital.
- A young student driving his parent's Toyota Highlander reached for his ringing cell phone while driving on Colgate Ave. He then looked down to read a text message and hit and destroyed investigation, the police turned up the missing a Mercedes. He said he never saw the car. Could be because he was too busy looking at his phone.
- A resident of Edgecroft Rd. called to report a Hispanic man carrying a bottle and hitchhiking. When they arrived, police found no sign of him. Seems he must have found a passing motorist to give him ride. On Edgecroft?
- A woman living on Purdue Ave. complained to the police that her neighbor's tree was obstructing her view. Apparently the owner of the view had been topping the tree for years, but the owner of the house had given the house and tree to her daughter, who refused to let the neighbor cut the tree. Civil law suits are being threatened.
- Heat from a pottery kiln left on overnight at Hilltop School set off a fire alarm. Some days later a science teacher heating something in the school science lab triggered a smoke alarm.
- A woman on Norwood Ave. complained to police that neighbors had a catering van in their driveway. The complainer did not want a van parked near her house.
- The night before the Hilltop School Carnival, a surfeit of balloons bouncing around the Multi-Purpose Room ceiling set off alarms.
- A husky-mix dog on Marchant Ct. entered a neighbor's yard, terrorized her cat, and the police were called, as the cat owner is handicapped and could not catch the dog. The police caught the dog, a repeat offender, and returned it to its home. • A resident complained when *The Journal* was
- Someone living on Willamette Ave. called the police to complain of a man who had been standing near her home the day before. Again, the police advise calling them immediately if you feel uncomfortable or threatened. Calling the next day is too late.
- A Honda Accord had a rear window broken, and the thieves stole a \$210 Kenwood CD player.
- An architect taking pictures of a house on Yale Ave. accidentally put his hand into a neighbor's yard. The neighbor called the police to complain.
- Five or six local girls and boys were seen smoking cigarettes on the roof of Hilltop School. When police arrived, there were only four, and they said they had never done this before and would never do it again. Right.
- An auto thief drove a stolen Honda to Arlington Ave. and stole another Honda parked nearby.

■ Someone called police about house lights that had been on for

three days in a property on Windsor Ave. Police had been informed the residents were on vacation.

■ Broken sprinklers flooded a garden on Purdue Ave. When the police and fire department arrived to turn off the water,

portions of the house were under water.

- Someone sprayed black graffiti on a storage shed on Purdue Ave.
- An unlocked minivan parked in a driveway on Columbia Ave. was entered by a thief who removed a wallet left in the car. The wallet contained several credit cards, a \$60 Home Depot gift card, and \$140 in cash.
- A suspected stalker was questioned on Ardmore Rd. He had come to the Bay Area to see his exgirlfriend, who he didn't consider an ex. Police talked to the man in his white Toyota Camry; he assured them that he would not return to the area.
- An elderly person on Yale Cir. took a nap with her emergency call device around her neck. Of course, it went off and the police responded. She
- An aspiring teenage all-girl rock band on Yale Ave. was asked to take their rehearsal into the house, as they were disturbing neighbors.
- A watchful neighbor reported suspicious men removing items from a home on Edgecroft Rd. Police found that one was a resident, and they were removing garbage.
- A resident on Ardmore was awoken a little after 3 a.m. when she heard two males talking next to her bedroom window and then checking her back door. KPD and the El Cerrito PD attended the call but found nothing.
- A member of the church on top of Squirrel Hill reported losing a wallet at a service. Upon reticule in the woman's car.
- A man was seen carrying two children on his shoulders in front of the stores on Arlington. A passerby reported it as a possible kidnapping, but
- School staff noticed a stranger in the bathrooms at Hilltop School. Police found the lady somewhat confused; at first she thought she was a member of a police SWAT team, but then she decided she wasn't. Police gave her a ride to BART, so she could get home.
- Four men were seen going door-to-door on Cowper Ave., attempting to recruit people to their faith. This was reported in the KPD police log as "Jehovah going door to door."
- A resident on Marchant Ct. reported that animals were opening a door to their crawl space and never closing it. Police recommended using a lock, as the animals would not be able to manage a key unless they had opposing thumbs.
- A woman driving at an inordinate speed while trying to make the turn from Arlington Ave. to Rincon Rd. took out the light pole by the Arlington Community Church. Her car was damaged, but it will probably be fixed before the pole will.
- A driver of a BMW convertible heard a flapping noise as he was driving along. Upon investigation he discovered that several long cuts had been made in the cloth top of his car.
- delivered to their door. They had called and asked for the paper not to be delivered, but delivery continued, and the householder called the police to report it as dumping of trash. Wisely, the resident has not called for delivery cancellation of the Outlook.
- A hit-and-run accident on Lam Ct. was reported to police. It was entered by a literary KPD wit in the log as "Unknown miscreant runs into parked car and flees back under a rock."
- A Honda Pilot was piloted into a deer on Arlington Ave. The Honda fared better than the deer.

Kensington Police Department Police dispatch Non Emergency office (daytime)

Kensington Fire Department Non Emergency office (daytime) 527 8369

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