

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

MARCH 2007

A PUBLICATION OF THE KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

VOLUME 64 NUMBER 2

## School Board discusses Kensington

### Neighborhood School expansion

Many parents with children at Hilltop School rely heavily upon the Neighborhood School to take care of their children before and after regular school hours and as a preschool for children too young to enter regular kindergarten classes. The former group comprises children who are already attending the Hilltop School, who have to either come early or stay late to accommodate their parents' schedules. It is estimated that almost half of the 520 children attending Hilltop spend some time each week at the Neighborhood School, some for a couple of sessions a week, some every day.

The Neighborhood School used to occupy the building in the park known as the Annex, but due to the building flooding and becoming contaminated with mold, it had to move. The West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) leased part of Hilltop School to the Neighborhood School and since that time it has had a very symbiotic relationship with Hilltop. Last year the Neighborhood School applied to WCCUSD to add a temporary classroom in the kindergarten area. WCCUSD has done this with other for-profit and nonprofit organizations at other schools. Now, after the Neighborhood School's application has been in for many months, the WCCUSD Facilities Subcommittee has decided that it wants to have a policy in place before giving permission for

the additional space. WCCUSD board member Charles Ramsey asked in the February meeting if the school board wanted to be in the business of providing facilities and space on district property to third-party service providers. He stressed that whatever rent was charged would not cover the total expenses. School board president Karen Pfeifer stated that she wanted an Excel chart listing all the schools in the district, with details of any facilities connected with after-school care and the charges and costs associated with each.

Ramsey said he wanted all the stakeholders—the head, staff, outside company, and parents—to be in agreement before decisions were made.

Then Ramsey opened the floor to public comments. A Hilltop teacher told the board that the majority of the faculty were very much in favor of the Neighborhood School. Parent Amy Kruzer told the board that the staff was composed of dedicated professionals with a diverse

age, gender, and ethnicity. Catherine Mercurio of the PTA said the service provided by the Neighborhood School was an essential element in the daily lives of many Kensingtonians. At a previous meeting, a nonfaculty staff member from Hilltop told the board that not all the staff was aware of the application and some were not in favor of granting the Neighborhood School the additional space. Ramsey said he wanted all the stakeholders—the head, staff, outside company, and parents—to be in agreement before decisions were made. Ramsey ended by saying that he did not want the process to be capricious, and that the subcommittee would consider the matter further.

### Relocating Portola Middle School

The relocation of the Portola Middle School was also discussed at the subcommittee meeting. The school must be relocated because it is impossible to retrofit the school. The West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) has retained a consultant to assist them in looking at non-district-owned land for the school.

At present, three options are being considered. In order of preference, these are a search for new land, building on the site of the Fairmont Elementary School, and building the new school at El Cerrito High School. The Fairmont site entails moving the elementary students elsewhere, probably to the Alvarado adult school campus, and assimilating the adjacent senior center and library as well as some private homes for the site. Ramsey said that any analysis would involve total costs, layout, environmental feasibility studies, and research on neighborhood impacts. The subject will probably be discussed at the next WCCUSD board meeting on March 14, and again in April.

In the public comments section, Catherine Mercurio a parent of a child at Hilltop asked if the board was sure that the 600-pupil school being planned was large enough. She said they should consider trying to get back the many children who had been transferred to private schools when they finished sixth grade. An El Cerrito resident asked that they consider building two middle schools, one in the south of the county for the predominantly "high-achieving Caucasian and Asian children", and another farther north for the African-American and Latinos. Another person said we should not consider the NIMBY considerations of some El Cerrito landowners and instead should look at what is best for the kids. The board asked that people with opinions on the matter email them to the District Engineering Officer, Bill Savidge, at [bill.savidge@gw.wccusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:bill.savidge@gw.wccusd.k12.ca.us)

most of the sets, Jan Jones provided the musical accompaniment, and Jay Jurisich rewrote some of the lyrics.

The story concerns two Boston women in the 1890s who were outraged by the fashion of women embellishing their hats with bird feathers. From their organization came the Massachusetts Audubon Society, and the women went on to campaign for women's suffrage.

The benefits from the sold-out performances were sent to the Hilltop sister school, Progress Elementary, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Hilltop has been raising money for the school since the 2005 Katrina disaster.

## Spring Celebration

Evening of food, fun, fund raising and community spirit



People enjoying last year's Spring Celebration

This year will be the 19th anniversary of Spring Celebration, the yearly party and fund raiser organized by the Kensington Community Council. Once again it will feature a silent auction of works of art, many excellent collectables, and many other fun items. Included in the donations are a junior tennis racket and classes from tennis pro Alex Brown, clay art from Patty and Leo Carrousel, a painting from Barbara Fracchia, jewelry from Dena Fredric, knitted items from Helen Horowitz, a color etching from Elizabeth Kavalier, a night's bed and breakfast from Mitch Lucio, a complete financial report by Merrill Lynch, delicious monthly pies for a year from Nation's Foodservice, a photograph by Ted Osmundson, pottery and wooden puzzles from Anne and Doug Stewart, a painting from Barbara Tapp, a painting from Carla Van Slyke, college admission counseling from Jim and Dorothy Walker, and a free week of summer day camp from the Kensington Community Council.

Apart from all the great food and auction items, the Spring Celebration is a wonderful opportunity to meet your neighbors and other Kensington residents in an informal setting while enjoying good food. The KCC Spring Celebration will start at 6:30 p.m., at the Community Center on March 17. Refreshments will be served from an appetizer buffet, along with beer, wines, and soft drinks. The silent auction will close at 9 p.m. During the event, there will be free childcare for the children of attendees (age three and older). Their party includes pizza and a movie. Sponsorship has been provided by the Kensington office of Marvin Gardens Real Estate and Andronico's Market. The event has been underwritten by the Mechanics Bank on Arlington Avenue. The proceeds from the night will benefit Kensington Community Council's many education and recreation programs.

Tickets are \$25 per person and will be available at the door. Advance tickets can be purchased from the KCC office, or call Esther Hill at 525-0292. It is requested people bringing children make reservations in advance.

KCC will gladly accept donations of art, books, jewelry, and other items up to the day before the auction. To donate, please call Danielle Power at 524-6737.



### Second graders sell out the house

Janet McKnight's second grade class has once again performed a first-class musical, "She's Wearing a Dead Bird on Her Head," based on a play by Kathryn Lasky. Many parents helped in staging the two performances in February. Mark Streshinsky directed, Patty Coluse and Carmen Lozano made





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## LETTERS

### Portola Middle School replacement campus

*Editor*—*Outlook* readers and Kensington residents should be aware of the WCCUSD site selection process for relocating Portola Middle School. Presently, the Board is considering a decision to relocate the new middle school on the current Fairmont Elementary School campus on Stockton Street in El Cerrito. The Fairmont campus is undersized for the anticipated 600+ students projected to attend the new school. The student population will be significantly above State recommendations for middle school carrying capacity and will be overcrowded before its doors open. In addition, the proposed Fairmont site is adjacent to the BART tracks and the Ohlone Greenway trail. The proposed campus would house overcrowded students next to the constant noise from BART trains. Studies have correlated both overcrowding and distracting urban noise with poor student reading comprehension. This would also create poor working conditions for teachers, and these studies cite the same factors as being detrimental to teacher effectiveness. In addition, the Ohlone Greenway is one of El Cerrito's crime hotspots, as is reflected in the El Cerrito Police Department's crime statistics. There are all too frequent robberies, assaults, other crimes of violence, and drug use along this pathway, and WCCUSD proposes to house middle school students immediately adjacent to an area where they might linger before and after school and find themselves in dangerous and harmful situations—innocent victims of bad decision-making by those entrusted with their well-being. This reflects poorly on the WCCUSD, our elected Board members, and our community. This community can and must do better than the choices WCCUSD is currently peddling.

Gary Wolinsky

# KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

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KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
59 Arlington Avenue  
Kensington, CA 94707-1307

The *Kensington Outlook* is published ten times a year by the nonprofit Kensington Community Council. It is published monthly except for the combined Dec./Jan. and July/Aug. issues and is available online in PDF format at [www.kensingtonoutlook.com](http://www.kensingtonoutlook.com) courtesy of [www.aboutkensington.com](http://www.aboutkensington.com)

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**Deadlines**  
Advertising deadline March 8  
Editorial deadline March 10

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## Police recognition

*Editor*—I am writing because I wanted to recognize the exceptional measures that Kensington's team of officers have taken to ensure the safety of the staff at The Mechanics Bank.

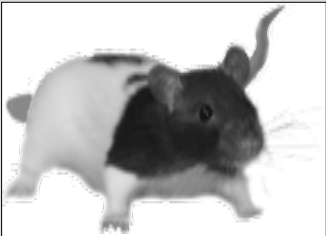
On the morning of January 13, 2007, a suspicious-looking male walked into the bank. There were two tellers and myself working that Saturday. From the second he walked in, he caught our attention because he looked so much like one of the men who took over and robbed our Point Richmond office back in November. The only question that this man asked when he walked in was "What time do you close today?" We called the dispatch number and Officer Keith Barrow and Officer Rickey Hull responded immediately. They searched the area to see if there was anyone who matched our description. When Officer Hull returned, he was dressed in civilian clothing and sat in the bank with us until we closed.

From that point on, we have had Officer Barrow, Officer Hull, Officer Eric Stegman, and Officer John Ty come to our bank on a daily basis to make sure we felt safe. In particular, over the last two weeks, Officers Hull and Ty spent at least the last hour of our workday in the bank with us.

Last week, the two men in the Point Richmond robbery were caught. We are all extremely relieved to hear this great news. I would personally like to thank the Kensington police officers for their dedication to keeping Kensington a safe place to live and work.

Nancy Zhang, Office Manager  
The Mechanics Bank, Kensington Office

## Pet of the month



Baby Sprout's taste in music is decidedly Oakland, where he was found in a nest of baby squirrels. His squirrely personality has made him a favorite of the after-school gang. He's very smart and likes to watch American Idol. He loves English peas, tofu and Harry Potter books. Visit him any day at RabbitEars, 303 Arlington Ave. (behind Ace Hardware) 525-6155 and consider taking him home with you. Adoptions are free.



# 60th Hilltop Spring Carnival set for May 5



Hilltoppers of old: Jane Hardin, Dick Lee, Bill Hardin, Susan Hardin, and Julie Lee.

The Kensington Hilltop Dads' Club and Parent Teachers Association would like to especially invite former Dads' Club and PTA officers to this year's 60th Kensington Hilltop Carnival, which will be held at the School on May 5 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. This year marks the Diamond Anniversary of the carnival and the Dads' Club, and former Dads' Club and PTA officers will be given a special recognition at the carnival. The Hilltop Carnival was first held on May 11, 1947, and has been a fixture in the community since that time, so the current parents are very excited about hosting alumni parent volunteers at this year's event. It will also be a great opportunity for Hilltop alumni to see the recently renovated school grounds. Former parents who were either

Dads' Club or PTA Officers can contact Walt Gill at 527-6378 or [wwgill335@comcast.net](mailto:wwgill335@comcast.net) for details.

When Kensington Hilltop School held its first Spring Carnival in May 1947, the Chicago Cardinals were the NFL champions, there were 44,000 TV sets in the U.S. and 40 million radios, and the average annual salary was \$3,500. The inaugural carnival raised an impressive \$969.05 for the Dads' Club and PTA activities. Proceeds included \$38.40 from the rat race, \$3 from character analysis, and \$62.25 from needlework.

If you haven't been to a carnival in the past few years, there is something for everyone. A great white elephant sale of donated items offers items ranging from computers, furniture, appliances, and bicycles to jigsaw puzzles and books. Some of the food will be cooked on the barbecue made last year by the Dads' Club. There will be lots of fun games for the kids, a bake sale, a cake walk, and visits from the police and fire departments. And of course there will be the wonderful quilt raffle, a tradition for 23 years. This year the quilt was designed and made by Sarah Ray and is called Crazy Quilt. Typically the raffle has been responsible for about half the money raised by the carnival, which is used for educational programs. The quilt will be hung in the school lobby prior to the carnival.

For details about the event or the raffle, contact Alison Roberts of the PTA at [alisonroberts@aol.com](mailto:alisonroberts@aol.com).

## School registration throughout March

Registration for 1st through 6th grade for new students at the Hillside School is being conducted starting March 1 and continuing for the whole month. You are encouraged to register your child soon, rather than toward the end of the month, as enrollment does fill up. The kindergarten is already filled, with some names on a waiting list. Occasionally parents place their children's name on the Hilltop list and then apply for private schools for their children, using Hilltop as a backup in case the private school is full. Many of these parents forget to tell Hilltop that their children will not be attending, and so waiting lists occur. So far, however, all kids who have wanted to attend Hilltop as well as the kindergarten have been able to. When you go to the school to register, please take a copy of your child's birth certificate, two forms of ID, one of which must be a PG&E bill to show residence in Kensington, and an up-to-date immunization record.

For further details, call 231-1415. If your child is on the list for new attendees or is already a student at Hilltop and will not be attending in September, please call the school and let them know.



## Community mourns Kevin Reed

The funeral for Kevin Reed, a lieutenant at the Oakland Fire Department, drew a crowd of more than 1,000 to St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church in Berkeley. Reed, 47, died January 20 after collapsing while working out at the gym. An honor guard played bagpipes and drums, and a fire truck with a black wreath on its grill delivered the flag-draped casket. Fire truck ladders were extended to hold a large American flag

above the church entrance. The crowd was so large that it more than filled the church.

Reed, an active member of the Dad's Club, was a parent of Jessica, a pupil at Hilltop School. A trust fund has been set up for Jessica. Donations to the Jessica Reed Trust Fund may be sent to Jim Whitty, Firefighters Union, 414 13th St., Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94612.

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## KCC Summer Camp Special Activities and Field Trip Schedule


The Kensington Community Council (KCC) Summer Day Camp for children entering first through sixth grades in the Fall 2007 runs from June 18 to August 24, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Each week the campers will enjoy:

- Field trips by private bus to points of interest around the Bay Area such as Scandia, Water World, the Exploratorium and the Jungle (no field trip Week 3 due to July 4)\*
- Special activities such as carpentry, gymnastics, dance, drama, and golf\*
- Hiking, games, arts and crafts, and lots of fun!\*
- Tennis with Alex Brown, three days a week\*

See 2007 KCC Summer Day Camp on page 5 for information about registration and cost.


SPECIAL ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE*	FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE*
<b>WEEK 1:</b> June 18–22 Carpentry with Sandy Thacker	June 20 The Jungle
<b>WEEK 2:</b> June 25– 29 Carpentry	June 27 Lake Temescal
<b>WEEK 3:</b> July 2–6 Drama with Kelly Donahue	No field trip due to 4 <sup>th</sup> of July
<b>WEEK 4:</b> July 9–13 Gymnastics with Judy Baker	July 11 The Exploratorium
<b>WEEK 5:</b> July 16–20 Gymnastics	July 18 Pier 39/Alcatraz
<b>WEEK 6:</b> July 23–27 Golf with Alex Brown	July 25 Lake Temescal
<b>WEEK 7:</b> July 30–Aug. 3 Golf with Alex Brown	Aug. 1 Scandia
<b>WEEK 8:</b> Aug. 6–10 Hip Hop with Jackie, Jenna, and Hillary	Aug. 8 Waterworld
<b>WEEK 9:</b> Aug. 13–17 Sports & Games with Kim Roots	Aug 15 Chabot Space and Science Center
<b>WEEK 10:</b> Aug. 20–24 Sports & Games	Aug 22 The Jungle

*\*Changes in the schedule may be made for unexpected circumstances*



### Babies and Toddler Storytime

The Storytime for Babies and Toddlers is a wonderful weekly event held at the Kensington Library. Many young children and their mothers or care-givers gather on the floor of the children’s Reading Room each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. to listen to stories, songs, and fun action-activities led by a librarian. The storytime happens each week for six sessions, from March 8 through April 12. Another six-week series will run from May 3 through June 7. Each week the stories are the basis of songs, games, nursery rhymes, and other activities. Older children spend time in the library reading books.



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### FKL thanks contributors


The Friends of the Kensington Library Board recognize with heartfelt appreciation the supportive FKL members and local businesses for their generous donations of more than \$14,500 during their 2006 spring and winter campaign drives. They are also

pleased to announce that new members have taken their membership to over 300. All FKL donations, no matter the amount, help to improve the library by funding programs for adults, teens, and children, as well as providing library furnishings, books, media, and supplies.





### Amy Kurzer

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### 2006 Fire department wrap up

The El Cerrito and Kensington Fire Department conducted fire safety inspections on all 58 businesses in Kensington last year. Of these, 95% were in compliance, and the names of the remaining businesses were forwarded to the Fire Prevention Officer for completion. Interim Fire Chief Lance Maples said that as a result of these detailed inspections of all businesses, the district could report one of the lowest fire losses in commercial occupancies in the state. The El Cerrito and Kensington fire department made 84 reviews of new building plans and conducted 150 on-site construction inspections, making sure that new buildings were up to the latest fire codes. The Weed Abatement Program sent out 321 notices of vegetation management violations to residents in El Cerrito and Kensington. Getting compliance involved hundreds of phone calls and dozens of site visits. All but one property was cleared voluntarily. The noncompliant property, in Kensington, was unoccupied and in probate. This voluntary weed abatement enabled firefighters to quickly control a fire on Arlington Blvd. where the

fire blazed up the hill, and was contained by the lack of fuel surrounding local houses. The department demonstrated their commitment to servicing the community by conducting 17,050 hours of training in 2006.

This January, Helmut Blaschczyk was appointed to the board of directors of the Kensington Fire Protection District. Director Don Dommer was elected president of the board, taking over from Nina Ramsey. Janice Kosel was elected vice president, and Leslie Michael was chosen to be secretary.

### Water cistern update

Plans for the underground water cisterns on Kensington Road are still being evaluated. The estimated costs have risen from about \$150,000 to over \$700,000. Residents have serious concerns about the cisterns impacting their property; there are still geological concerns about the proximity of the Hayward Fault. The department is considering alternatives, including above-ground tanks and improving the flow from existing pipes. In the meantime, controlling the surrounding wildland vegetation will be actively addressed, with funds from the district and East Bay Regional Park District.



K E N S I N G T O N  
COMMUNITY EDUCATION

YOUTH CLASSES

Tennis

Instructor: Alex Brown (524-5495). In this class for students in grades 6, 7, and 8, Alex Brown teaches the fundamentals of tennis, including strokes, tactics, and sportsmanship. Classes consist of instruction, drills, and play, and continue through the school year. Students must register by the month for one or two days a week.

**When:** Tuesday and/or Thursday 3:40–5:20 p.m.  
**Fees:** (payable monthly): residents \$10/class; non-resident \$11/class  
**Where:** At the Kensington Tennis Courts

Gymnastics

Instructors: Jean Jay and Judy Baker. Students should wear loose clothing such as leotards, sweatpants, or shorts. Long hair must be tied in a ponytail. To enroll, call Judy Baker at 233-1833.

**When:** *Morning Kindergartners:* 11:45 a.m.–1 p.m.  
*Advanced Beginners Grades 1–3:* 2:30 p.m.–3:30 p.m.  
*Advanced Beginners Grades 4–6:* 2:50 p.m.–3:50 p.m.  
**Where:** At the Community Center

ADULT CLASSES

Tennis

Alex Brown, USPTA tennis pro, offers classes to a minimum of four students. To register, call Brown at 524-5495.  
**When:** Tuesday and Thursday, 9–10 a.m.  
**Fees:** 5 classes: \$40 per resident/\$45 non-resident  
**Where:** At the Tennis Courts (West court)

Hatha Yoga

Enjoy a hatha yoga practice to calm, restore, and revitalize, each Monday. 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 experience welcome. Instructor Claire Lavery has been practicing and teaching yoga since 1988. She focuses on breathing, alignment, and adjustment to help students enjoy the journey. To speak with Claire, call 681-3077. To register, call 525-0292.

**When:** Monday, 6:15–7:15 p.m.  
Thursday, 5:30–6:30 p.m.  
**Fees:** Residents—\$12 for drop-in. One-month pass (4 classes) for \$40. Nonresidents—add 10% (\$13.20 per class—\$44 or \$88 for monthly pass)  
**Where:** At the Recreation Building, Room A (Building E).

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To register call 525-0292.

**When:** Tuesday 9:15–10:15 a.m.  
**Fees:** Residents \$12 for drop-in, \$40/4 weeks (1 class/week), \$80/4 weeks (2 classes/week) Nonresidents add 10% (\$13.20/class; \$44 or \$88)  
**Where:** At the Community Center

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Swing Dance

East Coast swing is one of the most popular and easiest to learn of all swing styles. Instructor Nick Lawrence will start with the basic steps and have everyone dancing by the end of the first class. The classes will build on the basics to create a repertoire of steps by the end of the session. Nick Lawrence started swing dancing 22 years ago and has been teaching for the past 15 years. He teaches at Ashkenaz in Berkeley and is committed to making dance accessible to everybody. Please call Nick at 524-2546 for more information about the class.  
**When:** Session runs 4 weeks, Fridays, March 2, 9, 16, and 23, 8–9 p.m.  
**Fees:** \$48 for the four classes. Nonresidents please add 10% No partner is needed to sign up for the session.  
**Where:** At the Community Center.



Art for the Closet Artist *new*

Have you always wished that you had the “artistic gene?” Have you always thought that art was for other, more talented folks, but wished it wasn’t so? Then these adult art workshops are for you. Instructor Carolyn Holm is a collage and assemblage artist and the author of *Everyday Art for Kids*, a book that has inspired both children and adults to roll up their sleeves and “do art.” She has been teaching KASEP classes for twelve years and has taught at the Richmond Art Center. Over the years, Carolyn has worked with many children, teens, and adults who didn’t consider themselves artists, helping them find their personal path to creativity and artistic satisfaction.

The Art of Collage *new*

In two 1½ hour sessions create two beautiful collage pieces, including a self portrait, using tissue papers, gift wrap, art papers, photocopies of photos and documents, fabric scraps, shells, leaves, and more. Bring to the first class: a clean, large bottle with an appealing shape (wine bottle, square olive oil bottle, etc.) and label removed.  
**When:** February 26 and March 5, 7:30–9 p.m.  
**Fees:** \$30 (non-residents, \$33)  
**Where:** Room B, Kensington Recreation Building (Building E)

The Art of Drawing *new*

In two 1½ hour sessions gain tangible drawing skills, learn about color, and create a colorful piece you’ll want to frame and hang in your home. Bring to the first class: One or more of your favorite shoes.  
**When:** March 19 and 26, 7:30–9 p.m.  
**Fees:** \$30 (nonresidents, \$33)  
**Where:** Room B, Kensington Recreation Building (Building E)

Acrylic Painting *new*

Stan Cohen leads this informal but professional workshop for established and serious beginning artists. Mornings are devoted to developing painting, with assistance available. Afternoons are reserved for class critique. Enrollment is limited. Instructor approval required. Instructor: Stan Cohen (533-3003)  
**When:** Wednesdays, 9:45 a.m.–1:30 p.m.  
**Fees:** \$32/month (\$36 for nonresidents)  
**Where:** At the Community Center

2007 KCC SUMMER DAY CAMP

JUNE 18–AUGUST 24  
MONDAY–FRIDAY 9 A.M.–5 P.M.

The Kensington Community Council (KCC) Summer Day Camp is for children entering first through sixth grades in the Fall 2007. To ensure the best experience for each child, the camp has a maximum of 62 children per week on each field trip. There is one director, a head counselor, eight counselors, and a “specialty consultant” each week to work with the campers. Campers may enroll on a weekly basis. Drop-ins are not permitted.

**REGISTRATION FOR RESIDENTS AND CAMP ALUMNI** begins Thursday, March 1, 7 p.m., at the Community Center.

**REGISTRATION FOR NONRESIDENTS AND CAMP ALUMNI** begins Monday, March 5, at the KCC office.

**COST**—The Summer Day Camp is \$200 per week (with the exception of the 4th of July week at \$150). This covers all transportation costs, snacks, entrance fees, activities, and a KCC Summer Camp T-shirt for field trips. A limited number of partial scholarships will be available.

Camp brochures will be available late February at the KCC office.

**SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AND FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE**—See page 4.

PLEASE REGISTER FOR THE CLASSES AT THE KCC OFFICE, 59 ARLINGTON AVENUE, KENSINGTON, 525-0292

K C C KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Monday–Friday 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Esther Hill, Administrator, 525-0292

**To register for class:** Please call the office unless otherwise specified. Some classes have enrollment limits; those registering will be notified if they cannot be enrolled.  
**Tennis court reservations:** Reservations are for weekends and holidays only; the earliest is 9 a.m. Call Esther Hill (525-0292) for tennis court reservation information.  
**Tennis court fees:** Kensington residents—\$2/45-minute reservation (singles); Non-residents—\$5.  
**Community Center rental:** For information on renting the Community Center, call Helen Horowitz at the Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District, 526-4141.

K A S E P KENSINGTON AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Monday–Friday 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

**Office hours:** Esther Hill, *Director* (525-0292), 10 a.m.–3 p.m.  
Elma Conley, *On-Site Supervisor* (525-0292) during class hours  
Sandy Thacker, *Curriculum Coordinator* (482-1258)  
**Sessions:** Registration for the spring session of KASEP will take place on Tuesday, March 6, starting at 6:45 p.m. for kindergarten families and 7:15 p.m. for families of 1st–6th graders. The spring session begins on Monday, March 26. Please visit [www.aboutkensington.com](http://www.aboutkensington.com) for more information about our after school classes.



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## Kitchen Democracy and Kensington

Last year the Web site Kitchen Democracy invited Kensington residents to offer their views on various political matters. Since then, many locals have voiced their opinions there. Kitchen Democracy works by asking questions about local events and decisions and allowing people to vote on an issue—yes, no, or undecided. Voters can also post comments. It is an opportunity for people to have a voice they never had before.

When the first posting went up, about the internal investigation of the police department, the KPPCSD board consulted their attorneys about the wisdom of their voicing an opinion on the site, as their decisions were central to the debate. It was advised that for any member of the board to voice an opinion on the Kitchen Democracy site would be a possible infraction of the Brown Act, which limits board members ability to discuss board issues outside of a scheduled public meeting.

The current question, “Should the Kensington Chief of Police continue to be the General Manager?” was posed by KPPCSD new member Bill Wright. In his statement, he posed the question from both positive and negative perspectives, asking residents to give their opinions. The board is now well into the process of recruiting one person as the new chief of police and general manager.

The founder of Kitchen Democracy, Robert Vogel, emailed the people who had voted on the question and asked if they felt it was worthwhile to continue to pose questions about Kensington, since the board had been warned about

participating. Vogel also came to a recent KPPCSD board meeting and, in the public comments section, asked the same question. There was some debate between Vogel and the board, and some disagreements about the law. Berkeley and Oakland have had elected officials participating in debates on Kitchen Democracy about topics in their communities. According to Vogel, these jurisdictions, and Kitchen Democracy, have obtained contrary legal opinions to those provided by the law firm that represent KPPCSD. Several letters and other opinions about Kitchen Democracy were also given during public comments.

Some days after the meeting, Berkeley council member Gordon Wozniak was advised by legal counsel that he may have to recuse himself from matters he had addressed on Kitchen Democracy. Counsel told him that if the matter came to an appeal he should not take part in the discussion or voting because of his public statements on Kitchen Democracy. Berkeley council member Dona Spring said she thought members should keep an open mind until it was time to make decisions. Wozniak said he had voiced his opinions on Kitchen Democracy to inform his constituents of his position.

After the discussion at KPPCSD, where board president McLaughlin and Vogel agreed to disagree over the legalities (there were no lawyers speaking on the subject), Vogel expressed his intention of continuing to give Kensingtonians a voice through the Web site.



## Building E is a myster-E

*By Erin Olivella-Wright*

KENSINGTON OUTLOOK  
YOUTH CORRESPONDENT

As a junior member of the Kensington community, I am too young to remember the origins of Building E. However, I am not too young to get thoroughly lost in the confusion between Building E and the Annex. For starters, what percentage of Kensington residents can even determine which building is which, let alone what their functions are? Probably not very many. Plus, according to my handy-dandy Oxford American Dictionary, the name “annex” is a confusing misnomer, since the dictionary defines an annex as “a building attached to a larger one or forming a subordinate part of a main building.” Our so-called Annex is much more of a forgotten little sibling of the community center than an annex.

While the name Annex is a forgivable error, Building E is a serious issue. Where are buildings A, B, C, and D? I was told by more senior community members that all five lettered buildings were once a part of Kensington Hilltop School,

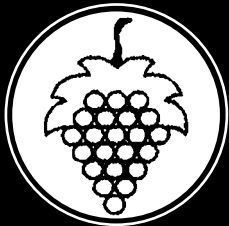
but as of now the four buildings of yesteryear might as well stand for Absent, Bye-Bye, Ciao, and the Dearly Departed. Nevertheless, regardless of its past life, Building E needs a new name and luckily, there are many solutions to the problem. First off, there is the “Let’s Not Change the Letterhead” approach of calling it “Building Excellent.” Or title it “The (insert corporate sponsor here) Building” and pay for undergrounding those power lines residents have been complaining about for ages. Finally, there is always the informative style: “Building-with-a-clean-public-bathroom-during-the-daytime Building.”

Even so, if the above names are simply too exciting for Kensington residents, can we at least call the Annex and Building E the Park Building North and Park Building South respectively? While the names wouldn’t add any splendor, at least all the confusion about locations could be cleared up once and for all.

*Erin Olivella-Wright is a seventeen-year old “longtime” Kensington resident.*

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FROM COUNTY SUPERVISOR JOHN GIOIA



# Bay area leadership to address climate change

The news on global warming is sobering, leaving communities small and large looking for ways to respond. The good news is that practical steps to reduce warming are emerging from the bleak predictions. I'm excited to be involved in some of the Bay Area's cutting-edge initiatives to address what can be done now and soon to halt the trend.

Two Bay Area regional agencies, on which I serve as a board member, have made climate protection a top priority. The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) have launched new initiatives designed to study the impact of global warming and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

According to a recent study conducted by the Air District, half of the greenhouse gas emissions in the Bay Area is from transportation, 25% is from industrial/commercial sources, 11% is from residential, 7% is from local electricity generation, and 6% is from oil refineries.

Against this backdrop, the Air District's current initiatives include: a \$3 million grant program for climate protection activities in the Bay Area; funding for a comprehensive study of greenhouse gas emission control technology which could be used to control emissions from industrial sources; and a green school's program to develop strategies to reduce the carbon footprint of schools, while

educating students on climate protection.

BCDC is studying the impacts of climate change on S.F. Bay and is developing a regional task force to work with local governments and stakeholders regarding the issue. While sea levels in S.F. Bay have risen 7 inches over the past 150 years, it is estimated they will rise between 12 and 36 inches by 2100. A 12-inch rise would cause the Bay Area to lose important real estate (including most of S.F. and Oakland Airports), public infrastructure, and natural resources, and would make 100-year flood events happen every 10 years.

Our regional initiatives are consistent with Californians' sentiments. In a statewide poll last year, two-thirds of Californians said global warming is so important that they want the state to address this issue, independently of the federal government—a process that's begun. They also segue with the recent news of UC-Berkeley receiving a substantial grant from British Petroleum to establish a new Energy Biosciences Institute for the study of clean energy, making Berkeley a global leader in the field.

I'm energized by these home-front efforts to tackle this enormous problem, and I look forward to working with other agencies, supporting and expanding their response.

If you are interested in learning more about these efforts, please contact my office at 374-3231 or check out [www.bcdc.ca.gov](http://www.bcdc.ca.gov) and [www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov).

## St. Patrick's Day Bazaar

The Arlington Community Church will hold a benefit concert and bazaar on St. Patrick's Day, March 17. The event is jointly organized with the music department of Prospect Sierra School to support Child Shelter International, a nonprofit organization that raises funds for shelter, clothing, food, education, and health care for needy children in the developing world.

The affair will also include the school's jazz band and two orchestras, good food, and a program of multicultural music, dance, and drama that begins at 1 p.m. The bazaar runs from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

CSI projects include building orphanages, buying school and medical supplies, and aiding institutions serving needy children. The bazaar is free; the concert has a suggested donation of \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. For more information, call 526-9146.

## OBITUARY

### Remembering Robert M. Bell

Bob Bell, who passed away on January 30, at the age of 81, was well known in Kensington and Berkeley, where many residents drove cars that were bought from Bob's Ford dealership.

Bob and Margie lived in Kensington for 40 years and raised five kids here—Mike, Jon, Glen, Dale, and Kris who still lives in Kensington.

Bob devoted many years to sponsoring



University of California sports programs, coaching AAU basketball, and later coaching the men's golf team. Bob also found time to be a mentor, and often surrogate father, to many young people who blended in with the large Bell family. Bob is also survived by his two brothers, eight grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

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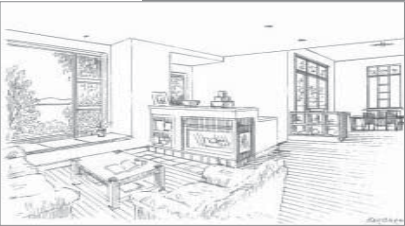
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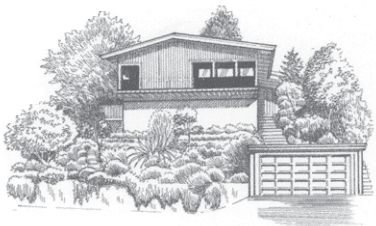
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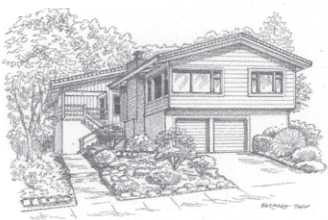
LISTING UPDATE



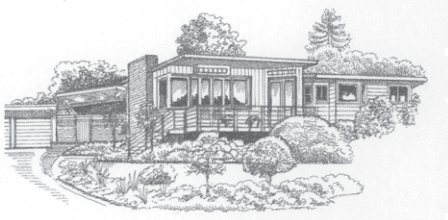
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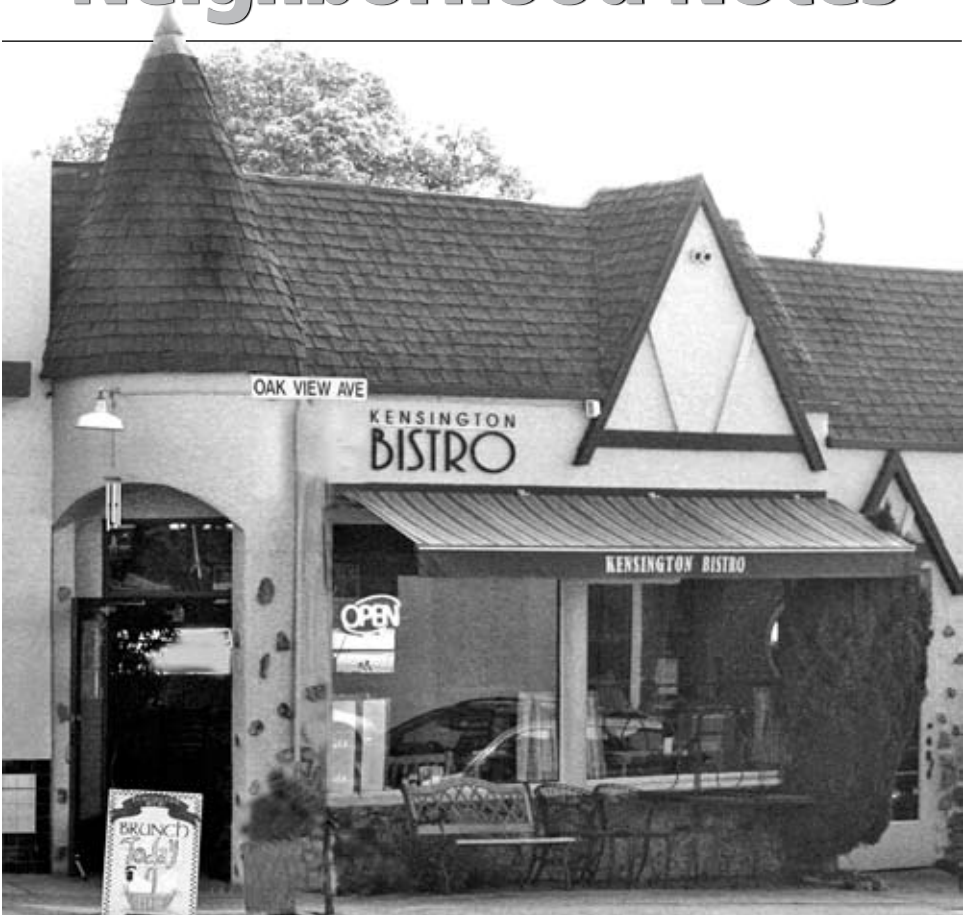
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Neighborhood Notes



French cuisine comes to Kensington

Robin Low has years of experience as a Cordon Bleu chef, having honed her skill by cooking for three years in some of the finest kitchens in Paris. A graduate of UC Santa Cruz, Low is now bringing her skills to Kensington by doing an evening menu at the Kensington Bistro. The Bistro is a Kensington favorite for breakfast and lunch, and now it has a completely new face for dinner. From 6 to 10 p.m. Low and her expert staff will be pleasing palates with a regular prix fixe menu as well as á la carte items. She is stocking the Kensington Bistro cellar with a sophisticated collection of wines and will be serving tasting flights of selected and paired wines. Low expects to attract people from Berkeley, Albany, and El Cerrito, as do her daytime counterparts, Lynn and Quinn Sullivan, who have made Kensington Bistro a favorite of many in neighboring communities as well as in Kensington. The Kensington Bistro is located at Colusa Circle, 525 1350.

Meditative service

The Arlington Community Church has a new Sunday music and meditative walking service, featuring compositions of pianist Carolyn Margrete and an opportunity to walk meditatively in a labyrinth-style setting. Margrete is a classically trained pianist who composes and improvises music inspired by a wide range of influences, from European classical forms and world folk music to Oriental melodies. Arlington Community Church is located at 52 Arlington Avenue. The service will begin at 6 p.m. on Sundays during March. For more information, call 526-9146.

Kensington history

Do you have historical photos of Kensington, showing the community in earlier years or interesting events in our past? The Outlook would like digital copies of these photos to post on the About Kensington Web site ([www.aboutkensington.com](http://www.aboutkensington.com)). If possible, photos should include the year they were taken and any other pertinent information, such as names, streets, or points of interest. We are not able to pay for these photos, and by submitting them you give us permission to place them on the Web site and possibly publish them in the *Outlook*. They will not be sold or distributed in any other manner.

Spell for success

This year the Kensington Hilltop School is trying to break all previous records for money raised in its annual Spell-A-Thon. This year the event will be on March 6, 7, and 8. The format is the same as usual: each child is given 100 words to spell, and each grade has appropriately difficult words. Kindergartners get simple word and sound recognition questions. The Spell-A-Thon is a fundraiser for the Kensington Educational Foundation, whose primary mission is to provide educational enrichment programs for the students of Hilltop. These programs include science, art, primary grade vocal music, and primary grade computer lab, as well as the Read Naturally program. Additionally KEF helps the teachers by providing funds to purchase classroom supplies and by giving financial support to the school library. For the past five years, the Spell-A-Thon has been organized by Nette Barry, and over the past few years, the competition has raised between \$18,000 and \$20,000 annually. If you know a school child at Hilltop, why not offer to sponsor them? If you don't know a child at the school, call Nette (527-7898), and she will work with the teachers to find someone in need of sponsorship.

Adding color to Kensington

Loraine Osmundson and Janet Hittle, members of Kensington Improvement Club, have planted 1,000 daffodils around Kensington, Look for them in the coming weeks along the Arlington Avenue median on Colusa Circle, and in the park.

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Lunch and yard duty monitors needed

There are still openings on campus at Kensington Hilltop School for lunch and yard monitors. Lunch duty is daily from 11:30–12:50. Daily duty is preferred; flexible scheduling may be possible. Contact the school office for details.

College grants

In need of financial help for college? Check out the list of grants available at [www.wccusd.k12.ca.us/scholarship%20info/index.shtml](http://www.wccusd.k12.ca.us/scholarship%20info/index.shtml).

Computer games at the library

The El Sobrante Library has a new program for kids aged 10 through 15. They will be projecting computer games onto a large screen, and kids will get a chance to test their skill with DDR and Wii tennis, bowling, boxing, and more—all this to some cool sounds. Free tickets will be handed out starting at 10 a.m. on March 3, and the games go from 1 to 4 p.m. Only 25 people will be admitted at a time. When one person leaves, another person can go in. There will be no in-and-out privileges. If the event is popular, expect to see it become a regular offering. If you don’t know what DDR or Wii are, you are definitely too old for this program. El Sobrante Library, 4191 Appian Way, El Sobrante. 374-3991.

Recycle plastic bags

Last month we reported the Plastic Bag Recycling Challenge. Ms. Ruff, a 4th grade teacher at Hilltop School, is spearheading the recycling drive with WalMart stores. For every large gallon bag filled with plastic shopping bags, plastic grocery bags, or the like, WalMart will donate \$5 to the school. The drive ends March 31 and the school’s goal is to raise \$8,000. The whole community is extremely grateful for Ms. Ruff’s dedication to a worthy cause.

The Wall Street Journal estimates that 100 billion plastic bags are used in the United States per year. Next time you are in a supermarket and they ask the paper/plastic question, remember that making a paper bag emits 70% more global warming gasses than making a plastic bag, and the energy used to make a paper bag is approximately 350 times as making a plastic bag. Only 0.6% of plastic bags are recycled. One solution is to reuse your bags or carry a cloth bag when you shop.

Dr. Seuss turns 103



The Kensington Library is once again celebrating Dr. Seuss’s birthday with a large party at the Community Center on March 3 at 11 a.m. The party will feature a dramatization of Green Eggs and Ham, games with

prizes, and real green eggs and ham to eat. This event is so popular that the library will be issuing a limited number of free tickets, available now at the library. *The Cat in the Hat* was written 50 years ago, and *Green Eggs and Ham* was written 47 years ago. Seuss’s publisher asked him to write a book using only 220 words. It took him nine months to do it.

All ages are welcome at the party. The event is sponsored by the Friends of the Kensington Library. The Kensington Community Center is at 61 Arlington Ave.

Garden Party sets a new record

Now that all the funds are in and all expenses have been accounted for, the Garden Party raised over \$97,000 for programs that the district can’t afford, such as earthquake preparedness, updating library books, school assemblies, the 6th grade student yearbook, and teachers’ luncheons. The previous high raised was just over \$92,000.

Kensington Marmalade

Did you know there is a marmalade company in Kensington? The Kensington Marmalade Company has been wowing people at the Farmers’ Market for some months now. They have a delicious assortment of tasty products including a new flavor, Bergamot and Meyer Lemon Marmalade.

Bergamot orange is the flavoring of Earl Grey tea.

“We are thrilled with the results! I think we found a delicate balance between two unique flavors,” said Kensington Marmalade Company president Alexandra Eisler.

They have managed to obtain a good supply of Seville oranges despite the widespread shortages due to the unexpected frosts. Most saved Seville’s were almost all green, having been picked just before the freeze.

They will be launching their Web site, and a new logo in April, but for now you will find them at each Farmers’ Market, where they have samples of all their flavors. The new logo, again featuring a bee, will be displayed by the artist, Cici Conmy at the Farmers’ Market, with the artist leading children in an art workshop.

Eisler, a veteran of the food industry was a trade advisor to the British government when she decided to give it up and bring fresh marmalade to Northern California.

“I’m shortening the journey from field to table, while retaining the artisanal tradition of small-batch jam making, using local citrus and berries,” said Eisler, who works with her husband Tim producing small batches with old-fashioned methods. Until their new Web site is launched, marmalades can be bought at the Kensington Farmers’ Market and by phone at 524 5604.

Local lawyer honored

Richard Waxman was recently awarded the Distinguished Service Award for Individual Lawyer of the Year by the Alameda County Bar Association (ACBA). A Kensington resident, Waxman works for Wendel, Rosen, Black

& Dean LLP in Oakland. His award was in part for his service to the community and the ACBA, of which he is a past president. He was also president of Volunteer Legal Services Corporation which provides free legal assistance for various noncriminal issues to low-income residents in Alameda County. ACBA volunteer attorneys provide all the legal work on a pro bono basis.



Baby Julian



Julian Nicholas Falk was born in Minneapolis last November 22. Julian’s parents are Cheryl Rossi Falk, an ex-Kensingtonian, and her husband Wayne. Julian weighed in at 7 lbs. 3oz. and is being doted on, from afar, by his grandmother, Sheila Beeman, of Norwood Court.

PHOTOGRAPH: ELIJAH NOUVELAGE



Local art on show

Elijah Nouvelage, who works at the Arlington Ave. office of Marvin Gardens, has an exciting exhibition of photographs called Eye-to-Eye: Forging a Bond through Photography. Nouvelage has won many awards for his photography, and UNESCO recently selected one of his images for a publication this fall. The exhibition is at XZIBTit Hercules Gallery, 500 Alfred Nobel Drive, Suite 255B, Hercules, through April 29. Private showings are also available by calling 799-6775.

Susan Liroff, an artist from Oakland, is showing her digital watercolors at the Kensington Library. All her art is digitally printed on archival paper. The exhibit will be up through the end of April. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 261-5323.

An exhibit called “Places,” featuring abstract paintings by local artist Madeline Ibrahim is on view through June 30 at the Bank of America, 10422 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito.

Takane Eshima has some striking photographs at the Arlington Ave. offices of Marvin Gardens, which will be on show until mid-May.

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# CALENDAR

**Greece Travel Talk.** Lonely Planet author Michael Stamatios Clark. Slides and talk. 7 p.m. Free. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave., El Cerrito. 526-7512.

**Spirit of life:** Practices for modern life. Rev. Barbara Hamilton-Holway and others. 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

**Healing for Animal Companions.** See March 1.

**Youth Dance–Theater for Peace Rehearsal.** See March 1.

**Circle Dance and Ballroom Dancing.** See March 1.

### Saturday March 17



**Just Kidding Music.** Listen and sing along as Lynn Quinones and Jill Cruey present music,

party games, story songs, and more! 11 a.m. Free. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. Sponsored by Friends of the El Cerrito Library.

**Non-anesthetic Teeth Cleaning for cats and dogs.** 11 a.m.–2 p.m. RabbitEars, 303 Arlington Ave. (behind Ace Hardware). Call 525-6155 for an appointment.

**Child Shelter International Benefit Concert and Bazaar.** 11 a.m.–4 p.m. Concert donation \$10/adult and \$5/children under 12. Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave. 526-9146.

**Youth Dance–Theater for Peace performance.** 1 p.m. Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave. 526-9146.

### Sunday March 18

**Personal Theology.** Dancing Through My Spiritual Journey. Roger Dillahunty. 9:30–10:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

**Biblical Drama Troupe.** See March 18.

**Music and Walking Meditation Service.** See March 4.

### Monday March 19

**Beginning Computer Classes.** See March 5.

### Tuesday March 20

**El Cerrito Library Native Garden.** Dr. Richard Beidleman gives a slide talk on the histories of the plants. 7 p.m. Free. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave., El Cerrito. 526-7512.

**Family Storytime.** See March 6.

### Wednesday March 21

**Youth Arts Festival** Exhibition of artwork from Berkeley K–8 public school students. Opening reception 4–6 p.m. Berkeley Art Center, 1275 Walnut St., Berkeley.

**Souper Bible Study.** See March 7.

### Thursday March 22

**Storytime for Babies & Toddlers.** See March 1.

**Unitarian Universalist roots and branches.** Rev. Barbara Hamilton-Holway. 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

**Healing for Animal Companions.** See March 1.

### Friday March 23

**The Apple Tree and Other Forbidden Fruits.** Musical and dramatic story of Eden. 8 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

**Fred Randolph Group** CD release party for local bass player. \$15, \$10 seniors, 8 p.m. Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar St., Berkeley. 845-1350.

### Saturday March 24

**CPR/First-Aid Class.** Hosted by the Kensington-El Cerrito Fire Department. \$20 for CPR and \$20 for First Aid (prior CPR training required). CPR class begins at 9 a.m. Call 215-4450 to make a reservation or for questions. Space is limited. Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave.

**The Apple Tree and Other Forbidden Fruits.** See March 23.

**Starlight Cruise** formal dance. \$80 couple. 6 p.m. Hillside Dance Assembly, 2286 Cedar St., Berkeley, 655-6976.

### Sunday March 25

**Personal Theology.** Rumi: Preposterous Paths to Joy, Service and Facing Death Without Fear. Victoria Lee. 9:30-10:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

**The Great UUCB Soul Poetry Gathering.** Victoria Lee. 1-3 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

**The Apple Tree and Other Forbidden Fruits.** Musical and dramatic story of Eden. 1 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

**Biblical Drama Troupe.** See March 18.

**Music and Walking Meditation Service.** See March 4.

### Monday March 26

**KASEP** spring session starts.

**Beginning Computer Classes.** See March 5.

### Tuesday March 27

**Storytime for Babies & Toddlers.** See March 1.

**KMAC meeting** (Kensington Municipal Advisory Council). 7 p.m. Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave. 273-9926.

**Kensington Library Book Club.** *God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy. 7 p.m. Kensington Public Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

**Family Storytime.** See March 6.

### Wednesday March 28

**Kensington Area Republican Women's Club meeting.** Laressa Carmichael of the California Federation of Republican Women's Legislative Advocate. Mira Vista Country Club, 7901 Cutting Blvd. \$15 includes lunch. 1 p.m. Reservations by March 24. 524-5689.

**El Cerrito Democratic Club.** 7:30 p.m. Free. Makemie Hall, Northminster Presbyterian Church, 545 Ashbury St. between Lincoln and Central.

**Souper Bible Study.** See March 7.

### Thursday March 29

**Reaching In, Reaching Out: Paths to the Holy.** 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302.

Author **Richard Schwartz** gives Berkeley Assoc. of Realtors President's Lecture Series: Berkeley: Her Land, Her Gift of Early Neighborhoods. 7:30 p.m. Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar St., Berkeley. \$20.

**Healing for Animal Companions.** See March 1.

### Friday March 30

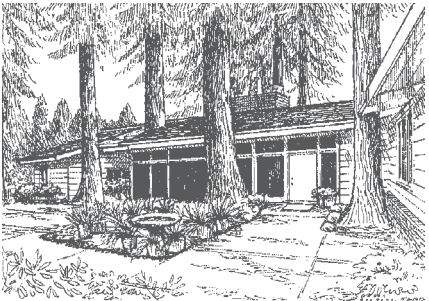
**Programs for Teens.** After School Movies. *The Secret of NIMH* (82 minutes, rated G). 3 p.m. Free. Kensington Public Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 524-3043.

**Almost Famous,** jazz musical by Cathi Walkup and Shana Carlson. 8 p.m., \$15, \$10 seniors. Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar St. Berkeley. 845-1350.

### Saturday March 31

**Pema Chödrön Workshop With Betsy Coggins.** 10 a.m.–1 p.m. Bring your journal and/or art supplies and comfort food to share. Suggested donation \$20. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd. 525-0302 to register.

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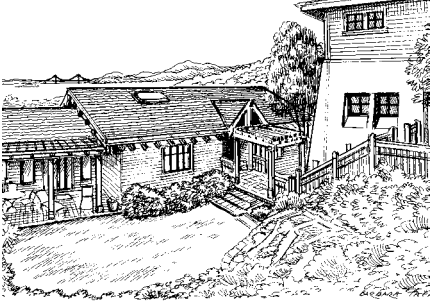


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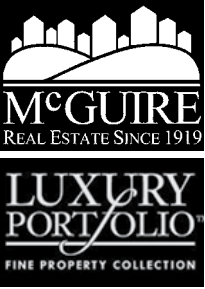
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# From the case files of the KPD

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

### Events in January

■ Someone took 30 antidepressant prescription pills in what police thought was a suicide attempt. The very peaceful pill-popper said suicide was not an issue. She was taken to Doctors Hospital for treatment.

■ Someone on Beloit Ave. thought they heard gunshots in Tilden at night. Instead of calling the park authorities, they called KPD to report the matter. The police looked around the property and surrounding streets and could find nothing.

■ A driver was stopped for having a cracked windshield. After talking with the driver, police discovered the person had no license, although he did have an Oregon ID card. The driver said he was just running errands for his mother. The car was towed, and the son was cited.

■ The police were called to many locations to investigate suspicious noises during the high winds of January. One time they were called to Grizzly Peak Blvd. because a trailer that is parked there had the door open. Nothing was reportedly missing, and once again the wind was assumed to be the troublemaker.

■ A person on Arlmont Rd. summoned police when they discovered potting soil had been thrown in their yard. Evidently it was not someone wishing to nurture the plants, as they also they also threw the garbage can and another waste container into the pool.

■ A Trinity Ave. family watching television in their front room saw a red laser pointer traversing their ceiling. Fearing it might be an aiming device from a gun, and scared they could become victims of what might be Kensington’s first drive-by shooting, certainly the first Trinity Ave. drive-by shooting, the family dropped to the floor and called the police. No weapon, gunslinger gang members, or laser-pointing individual could be found.

■ A Lake Dr. resident was concerned when they were approached by two teenagers asking for directions to Trinity Ave. The pointed them in the wrong direction, towards Grizzly Peak, and then called the police.

■ A teenager living on Amherst Ave., thinking she was home alone, called the police when she heard a noise in the basement. It turns out her brother had come home early.

■ A branch from a tree on Arlington Ave. fell on a passing car. No one was hurt, although the car suffered some discomfort. The driver and the police were unable to ascertain which tree had dropped the offending limb.

■ A driver on Highland Blvd. found that someone had placed two tampons on their car. The police recorded it as a suspicious event.

■ The sound of a handle being turned on a locked back door aroused the suspicions, and presumably quickened the heart rate, of a resident on Amherst Ave. Police found no traces of an intruder.

■ A thief or thieves went on a spree on Trinity Ave. They encountered several unlocked cars and removed a box of tools worth \$300 from one car, a \$200 stereo from another, and a \$1500 laptop computer from yet another car, which was also unlocked. Locked cars were not victimized. An unlocked Saturn on Westminster also had tools stolen from it. The police recommend that you lock your car overnight.

■ A resident on Windsor Ave. found their hood open on their locked car. No parts of the engine or contents of the automobile were believed to be missing, but the back window was smashed.

■ While an abandoned vehicle was being towed from Highgate Ct., the driver showed up claiming the car. The driver, a resident of Emeryville, was cited for having no registration since 2004 and an outstanding warrant from Marin.

■ A home on the first block of Arlmont Rd. was burgled, the robber taking a pearl, and a silver necklace, a gold bangle, and other jewelry valued at about \$4000. The thieves did not find a .22 pistol, which the homeowner later turned in to the police for disposal. The police decided to keep it for training purposes.

■ Police recovered a Honda Accord stolen from a home in Hercules.



■ A Kenyon Ave. resident was informed by their bank that a fraudulent check was written to their account. The check was made out to Macy’s for \$968.

■ A mother on Coventry Rd. complained to the police that her son’s exfiancé was making multiple unwanted calls to their home. The attending officer called the talkative exfriend and asked he to stop calling. The officer was told that there were unresolved issues between the couple, and he advised the caller to take the matter to a lawyer.

■ A resident complained to the police about gardeners making unnecessary noise with machines while working in the cemetery. They were working at 8:30 p.m. on a Friday evening.

■ An unlocked Subaru was broken into on the 100 block of Ardmore Rd. The thief made off with a battery charger, a jack, a first aid kit, and \$90.

■ A woman called police to her home on Amherst Ave. when the adult son of the landlord was making verbal threats, and she felt unsafe. The young man had made holes in the bedroom door with his fists. The attending officer persuaded the young man to commit himself into the hospital for a mental evaluation. This is the same man who threw an uncooked chicken at his father, which we reported previously.

■ A Beloit Ave. resident reported that an unknown assailant had thrown an egg at their house. There was no physical damage, and the miscreants were gone when police arrived.

■ Two people on Columbia Ave. got into an argument about the quality of a language translation of a children’s book, which one had done for the other. Police informed them that this was a civil dispute and advised them to settle it amicably or to seek legal counsel.

■ A white Celica was involved in several hit-and-run incidents on Oberlin Ave. A witness was only able to get a partial ID on the license plate.

■ Someone living on Purdue Ave. reported to the police that they had paid an online travel agency \$1700 for airline tickets some months ago. The tickets never arrived. Police called the agency, which offered to refund the person’s money.

■ A person living on Arlington Ave., who has an ongoing feud with a neighbor, found a short length of string tied to a nail on her house. The police informed her that this was not evidence of a crime, even with strings attached.

■ Someone babysitting his exwife’s dog on Grizzly Peak Blvd. reported the dog missing, perhaps stolen. The dog was found wandering around the neighborhood, apparently having got out of an open gate.

■ Police responded to a call about the smell of marijuana on the northern end of Arlington Ave. The smell had gone with the wind by the time the police arrived.

■ An occupant of a house on Lake Ave. complained to the police that a tree trimmer had thrown a branch into Tilden Park instead of taking it away.

■ A “chubby” woman was reported to have stolen a Fed Ex package from a front porch on Kensington Rd. The package contained three wooden carvings.

■ An exfiancé called police when the other ex failed to show up for a scheduled property exchange. The officer explained this was not a police matter and told them to call an attorney.

■ Police assisted a resident of Cowper Ave. with a power issue, as their elevator, designed for the disabled, was not working.

■ There was a burglary on the 500 block of Coventry Rd. Thieves broke into the locked house and stole a camera, loudspeakers, a TV remote controller, and \$25 in change.

■ Police checking on a white Saturn parked in a no-parking zone discovered the car had been stolen from a garage. The car was towed home.

■ Someone on Kingston Dr. called police because a company trimming trees at a neighboring house was using a large crane to transport large limbs over the caller’s home. The crane was also blocking traffic and had not applied for permission to do so.

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