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Sabra Chee  
...from front page

“Many girls are told they can’t play baseball because they are girls,” Justine Siegal said at last year’s tournament. Siegal is the first female coach to be hired by a major league team—the Oakland A’s. “I worry if you tell a girl she can’t play baseball, what else will she think she can’t do?” The tournament will take place in the original stadium of the Rockford Peaches, chronicled in the 1992 film *A League of Their Own*.

Chee is a whiz at fielding. Batting? “I’m a good hitter,” Chee admitted. “On the boys’ team I bat lead-off or second.” Chee listened to a story about a high school girl who loved baseball and

scored a full-ride scholarship to an excellent college. “For baseball?” Chee pressed.

“No, for softball. They didn’t have a women’s baseball team.”  
“Did she take it?”  
“Yes, she did.”

Disappointment flowed through the phone line. Chee is adamant that she wants to play baseball, not softball. And unlike her sisters, Chee is likely to stick with the sport she loves. Now we’ll see if the nation can adapt to Chee and her teammates rather than baseball-loving girls submitting to pressure to switch sports.



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MAY 2017

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VOLUME 75 NUMBER 4



She’d Rather Fight than Switch

By Linnea Due  
Kensington Hilltop sixth-grader Sabra Chee is a baseball phenom, though she’s already mastered the modest touch with the media. That’s baseball, with a “b,” formerly the province of boys. Chee has been playing ball since she was four or five. The youngest of four, she is now 11 and plays in two leagues, one with boys and one all girls. “My brother played first,” she reported during a phone interview. “Then my older sister played with my brother, but she didn’t like it anymore.” The next oldest sister also played baseball before she decided it was too boring. Chee allowed that her sister might still be playing if she could have played with girls. “Some of the boys were kinda rude to her,” Chee said. “They said stuff like, ‘You’re a girl, you can’t play.’”

Chee is an all-around whiz: “For the coed team, I play catcher, pitcher, first base, and right field. For the girls’ team I play catcher and short.”  
“You must be a good fielder.”  
“Well, I guess they *think* I’m a good fielder.”

Chee must be a very good fielder indeed, as she was one of a hundred girls nationwide invited to attend USA Baseball’s Trailblazer Series in Compton, CA over Easter weekend. The four-day event included instruction from women’s Team USA players, a tournament, a visit to Dodgers stadium, and a meet with major league players. All expenses were covered for the lucky few.

Chee’s all-girls’ team is called the East Bay Oaks, after the Oakland Oaks, a minor league team in the Pacific Coast League. The East Bay Oaks have a goal: to play in the Baseball for All tournament in Rockford, IL from July 27-August 1. Baseball for All is a nonprofit that seeks to help girls play the National Pastime.

Photos: Susie Ashworth Bader

See Sabra Chee, Back Page

KPPCSD Board  
Hires New  
General Counsel

By Linnea Due  
On the evening of March 23, following the departure of KPPCSD general counsel Amara Morrison, the board voted to replace her with Ann Danforth. Danforth had been a candidate during the interviews following Public Law Group’s decision to withdraw as general counsel; she had been first choice of a couple of directors, but the board chose to hire Morrison of law firm Wendel Rosen rather than an individual working alone. Morrison terminated her employment “effective immediately” on March 2 via an email message that offered no explanation. At the board meeting, Danforth was voted in 4-0 (Vanessa Cordova was absent).


Danforth comes out of a two-year semi-retirement to take on the position: “I wanted to keep my hand in,” she explained to the audience at the board meeting. She was the sole attorney for the city of Tiburon for twenty years and worked for San Jose before that.

The day before, the finance committee had discussed Danforth’s likely appointment. As a means of saving money, they asked that she not attend every board meeting. As Karl Kruger pointed out, now that there are two meetings and most begin with a closed session, that adds up to a full eight hours per month of public meetings. Director Len Welsh said that Danforth should attend a few meetings to become familiar with the issues and that then, “hopefully we can handle these meetings without an attor-


See Counsel, page 5

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# Letters to the Editor

**Say What?!**  
Dear Editor:  
I am bewildered by a letter in the April *Outlook* (“Job Split Behind Closed Doors”). Contrary to what was opined, splitting the KPPCSD GM/COP position has been one of the most openly and thoroughly discussed issues in Kensington history.

The district’s original function was police protection (only). After becoming a community services district, KCC was created to oversee new Park & Rec activities, with the police chief assuming the required general manager role. Later, the Youth Hut was enlarged and became the multifunctional, rentable Community Center, more parkland and buildings were purchased, and garbage service was added, then expanded to “waste management” with recycling.

These and other changes, including more complex policing, have made the dual role of chief of police *and* general manager, increasingly more complicated and problematic.

Two years ago, after the board announced termination of GM/COP Greg Harman’s employment, discussions returned to an old theme—alternative organization structures for KPPCSD. Kevin Hart was hired as *Interim* GM/COP and when his contract was extended (twice, to nearly two years total) it still said “Interim.” One task of the Ad Hoc Committee for Governance was to research splitting the position. For one year it met openly each month, gave updates at board meetings, held public forums, conducted surveys, posted everything, and concluded with a town hall presentation describing a separate GM as the preferred model used by other agencies. Meanwhile, two candidates for director seats campaigned on platforms that included splitting the position. A large voter turnout overwhelmingly elected them over two who favored the status quo. “Bifurcation” discussions intensified after IGM/COP Hart quit last October and again after IGM/COP Kevin Kyle quit in November!

Separate GM and COP positions have been openly and extensively discussed during meetings and throughout Kensington. It is time to see if that will work better than the combined GM/COP.

**A. Stevens Delk**

**Contracting Out Police Needs Deliberation**  
Dear Editor:  
Contracting police services to another agency is an issue that has both supporters and opponents within the community. However, regardless of one’s view, consideration of the issue will require a deliberative process beginning with an understanding of the nature of police services that are important to residents of Kensington and the cost that residents are willing to bear for these services. As the Ad Hoc Committee for Governance and Operations Structure found, agencies that expressed interest in providing police services for Kensington indicated that the type and extent of police services and the monetary limits were essential requirements to be able to put together a credible and/or accurate cost estimate.

It is incumbent on the KPPCSD board to set up a public process that engages the community and identifies the police services most important to residents before moving forward on putting out a request to contract out. In addition, a fiscal analysis should

See Letters, page 5

**Editor’s Note:** *Astute readers may have noticed that the letters, despite a stated word limit, grow like that beanstalk Jack wanted to climb. Beginning in April, the Outlook institutes a new policy: Letters 350 words or under will appear in the print edition (space permitting). Any letter over 350 words will be printed in the online edition only. If letters are online, because of length or space limitations, readers will be directed to the online edition. If there is no notice of additional letters online, our correspondents managed to keep to the limit. Write on, folks.*

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

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

*The opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are those of the contributors, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Outlook, its editor, or the publisher, the Kensington Community Council. Residents are invited to submit letters on matters of interest to the community. Letters must be signed and include the author's address and phone number (address and phone will not be published). Publication is subject to space limitations and the editor's discretion. Letters of 350 or fewer words are preferred. One letter per person, per issue. Obituaries for Kensington residents are published at no charge. E-mail preferred to Editor@KensingtonOutlook.com*

**PLEASE NOTE: Modern digital customs call for one space, rather than the traditional two, after all periods.**

# K E N S I N G T O N OUTLOOK

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**June Advertising Deadline May 8**  
**June Editorial Deadline May 10**



K E N S I N G T O N

Community Education

KASEP

We have hit the jackpot! Our new Jewelry teacher, April Schlanger, is an amazingly talented, creative person who inspires her students to try new and different techniques and to use jewelry as a way to express their own unique personality. Using “found” objects such as tin cans, feathers, beads, stones and more, April encourages students to use real tools to hammer metal, punch holes in leather and apply resin to pictures. Her innovative ideas are amazing and have captured the imagination of all of us.

We’re lucky enough to have April join us as our Specialty teacher this summer for week 7, July 24-28. We still have a few spots available for that week, so register soon!

Our Cartooning class on late Friday afternoons has also been very busy. Students have been making their own board games, creating comic strips and learning the art of telling a joke. Sometimes the room simply roars with laughter! Jamie Aberegg is the cartooning teacher and she can work magic.

Hip Hop class continues to draw a crowd, and with the dynamic Tara Steihler as their teacher, every class is a whole lotta fun. Some students even finish class and then sing and dance all the way home. They definitely have some “sunshine in their pockets!”



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Drama!

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**Acrylic Artists** Wednesdays, 9:45am - 12:30pm, Community Center Come paint with us! Bring your creativity and we’ll provide the easels. After painting we eat lunch & offer friendly critiques of each other’s work.

**Tai Chi Chuan** 9:30-10:30am Fridays, Community Center, \$10 Gentle Tai Chi exercises strengthen the body while also helping to calm the mind. When you have a calm mind, your body relaxes, which then reduces stress. Less stress is good!



Jazzercise and Body Sculpting Enthusiasts

KCC Summer Camp 2017

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Week 2	June 19-June 23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specialty: Ceramics - handbuilding</li><li>• <i>Field Trip: Berkeley Lawrence Hall of Science</i></li></ul>	Week 7	July 24-July 28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specialty: Talisman Jewelry</li><li>• <i>Field Trip: The Jungle</i></li></ul>
Week 3	June 26- June 30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specialty: SkyHawk Sports</li><li>• <i>Field Trip: Oakland Zoo</i></li></ul>	Week 8	July 31-August 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OLYMPIC WEEK</li><li>• <i>Field Trip: Adventure Play-ground</i></li></ul>
Week 4	July 3-July 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Closed July 4/Short Wk.</li><li>• Specialty: Cooking with Vicky!</li></ul>	Week 9	August 7-August 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specialty: Ceramics air dry clay with Jeanne</li><li>• <i>Field Trip: El Cerrito Pool Party</i></li></ul>
Week 5	July 10-July 14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SPIRIT WEEK</li><li>• Specialty: Cooking Part II with Vicky</li><li>• <i>Field Trip: Lake Anza</i></li></ul>	Week 10	August 14-August 18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specialty: Legos -Playwell Technologies</li><li>• End of Summer Air Bouncer and Jousting Tents &amp; Home-made ice</li></ul>

Summer Camp Registration is Online and On-going

Register on the KCC Website or call KCC at 510-525-0292



Field trip to LHS is June 21st

Field trip to El Cerrito pool is August 9th

KCC Camp rules!

Important Dates

Sunday, May 7th 3:00-4:30pm, KCC Office Graduating High School Senior High Picture Please help us spread the word!

Spring KASEP ends May 26th. KCC Summer Camp begins June 12th and runs through August 18th. Weeks are filling fast--register TODAY! Please help us spread the word

**KCC/KASEP Office:** 59 Arlington Ave., Bldg E (Across the grassy field above the tennis courts in Kensington Park), Kensington CA 94707. E-mail: kccrec@yahoo.com, or call 525-0292. M-F, 11am-4pm.

**Tennis Court Reservations:** For weekends and holidays only, beginning at 9am. Call the KCC office for info. Court Fees: 45-min. singles reservation: Residents: \$2; Nonresidents: \$5.


**Kensington Community Center Rental Info:** Please call Andrea at the KPPCSD (Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District) at 510-526-4141.

KCC ANNUAL FUND DRIVE STILL GOING STRONG


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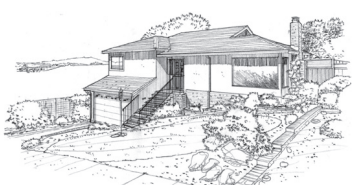





# Market Update



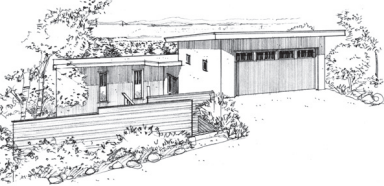
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## Passings:

**Elaine Hamill Draher**, who lived in Kensington for 77 years, died March 8 at the age of 96. Per her wishes, no services will be held.



**John James Vlahos**, January 4, 1936-February 9, 2017

John Vlahos, wearing tennis whites and carrying a racket, bounded into a rehearsal for the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta *The Gondoliers*. Seeing Martha Bybee for the first time in his life, he thought, “What a babe!” This was back in the summer of 1962, and Martha had a different take. “She thought I was the biggest jerk in the world,” John would later recall. But Martha, who would marry John in 1965 and remain his wife for the next 52 years, was won over by the same traits that endeared John to everyone who met him over the course of his life: phenomenal intelligence, humor, selflessness, and warmth.

The son of Greek immigrants, Dimitrios and Eleni Vlahos, John grew up in Tracy and Oakland, and eventually settled in Kensington. He attended the University of California, graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a degree in economics in 1957, and was the sports editor of *The Daily Cal*. “Every Cal sports fan knows the meaning of suffering,” John would say, and he certainly suffered a lot. From 1948 through 2015, John personally attended all but seven Cal football games; for five decades, he served as the internal press box announcer at Memorial Stadium. In 2007, backed by fundraising from the Class of 1957, he edited and produced a new Cal Songbook.

After earning a law degree from Hastings, John clerked for Justice Raymond Sullivan at the California Court of Appeal. In 1962, he was the eighth person hired at the firm that became Hanson Bridgett. In the early years he represented everyone from a bank robber to the maker of *Star Trek*-themed wine bottles. As the firm grew, he became the managing partner and also represented the Golden Gate Bridge District, the League of California Milk Producers, SamTrans, and BART. On multiple occasions John announced his retirement, but it never quite took, and he finished his last major case in 2016.

Outside of work, Gilbert and Sullivan remained one of John’s lifelong passions. As a member of the Lamplighters theater company along with his wife, Martha, John’s starring patter baritone roles included the Lord Chancellor in *Iolanthe*, Sir Joseph Porter in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and the Learned Judge in *Trial by Jury*. He served as a Lamplighters board member for nearly five decades and was president of the theater company for 35 years. Current president Jim MacIlvaine says of John, “He has quite literally saved the company with his leadership and fundraising abilities, garnering well over three-quarters of a million dollars in revenue.”

A resident of Kensington since 1967, John served for many years on the board of the KCC. He could regularly be found perusing the aisles at Ace Hardware or executing his drop shot at the Kensington tennis courts. John’s other interests included baseball and travel; he spoke English and Greek as well as passable Spanish and Italian. He led architecture tours with City Guides along Market Street and was president of the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum. He and Martha sang with the UC Alumni Chorus and Chora Nova. John was both a stickler for proper grammar and a teller of uproarious, often inappropriate jokes.

John died in his sleep from lung cancer, at home, with his family around him. He is survived by his wife, Martha; his sisters Betty Christian and Marie Petris; his children, Jennifer, James, and Jonathan; and seven grandchildren.

## Be of Service to Kensington

Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia is looking for interested, motivated Kensington residents to serve on the Kensington Municipal Advisory Council (KMAC). The KMAC is a volunteer citizen advisory group that primarily advises the Board of Supervisors on matters pertaining to building and zoning in Kensington. KMAC recommendations are an important part of the county’s building permit application process. The KMAC meets monthly on the last Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the Kensington Community Center. For more information contact Kate Rauch in Supervisor Gioia’s office at 510-231-8691 or [kate.rauch@bos.cccounty.us](mailto:kate.rauch@bos.cccounty.us).

## Contact and Rental Information

KCC/KASEP Office: 59 Arlington Ave., Bldg E (Across the grassy field in Kensington Park), [kccrec@yahoo.com](mailto:kccrec@yahoo.com) or call 525-0292. M-F, 11am-4pm.  
Tennis Court Reservations: For weekends and holidays only, beginning at 9am. Call KCC office. Court Fees: 45-min. singles reservation: Residents: \$2; Nonresidents: \$5.  
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Letters

...from page 2

be undertaken that identifies the transition costs of contracting; the residual costs associated with maintaining our CalPERS pension obligations and district medical benefits to retired officers; and the level of expenditures that can be sustained given the district’s limited revenue sources into the future. This is particularly critical given that contracting with a third-party agency will result in a loss of financial control over union contracts and the bulk of the expenses, which are officer salary and benefits. The district may want to look at the fire district contract as an example. Over the length of the contract (22 years), the average annual increase in cost has been approximately 5 percent. The increase for this budget year is 7.74 percent. See [www.kensingtonfire.org/downloads/finance\\_053116.pdf](http://www.kensingtonfire.org/downloads/finance_053116.pdf).

Perhaps the most important issue in any contract will be the level of service and how it will be provided by another police agency, including the number of officers assigned and stationed in Kensington and the police response times throughout our community.

Contracting of police services is likely an irreversible action. Therefore, it must be considered carefully and with proper deliberation and community involvement before any decision is made.

Dave Spath

Why Contract Out?

Dear Editor:

Towns contract for police services due to the rising costs of having a department and due to misconduct and resulting legal costs. Overall, it’s primarily the rising costs of services in a high-tech, high-personnel-cost era. News articles documented the process of how San Carlos had community meetings, got RFPs on costs, which came to a savings of over \$2 million, and then had a vote by its board.

In the 2013 San Mateo County Grand Jury Report, five towns that contracted for services reported *savings*—and also reported that services are better than they were before, this via customer service polls conducted after contracting started. No regrets.

Let’s keep in mind that California pioneered contracting fifty years ago, perfecting it as a nationwide model. This is why you see a town’s logo on cars, uniforms, coordination with the town providing the services, and consistent reliable staffing. We would not pay out huge sums for lawsuits, workers comp insurance, technical equipment and administrative staffing costs, or fund a chief of police full time. In other words, contracting could return money to the bottom line of our town, and we could surely use the funds.

Do towns return to having their own departments? This is rare in California and nationally as well. Oakley ended its contract with the sheriff and hired the ex-sheriffs for their staff. However, most importantly, the town’s population grew, and thus it had a larger tax base. Whether Oakley is successful remains to be seen.

I encourage you to become familiar with the facts and myths of contracting. Rather than losing control, we would have more control. The Renogate cops would be long gone, as the contracting agency would have dealt with it quickly. And don’t even ask how much in legal fees has been spent, and is *currently* being spent on this and other police issues.

Marilyn Stollon

Counsel

...from front page

ney present.” Rachele Sherris-Watt was empowered by the board to make a few contract adjustments and sign on Danforth as general counsel.

Danforth has lived in Berkeley since 1996, a couple of blocks from the Kensington border. In a phone interview March 24, Danforth said that she was pleased with the meeting. “I am concerned when I see real rancor,” she said. “I didn’t see that. I saw people with common and rational concerns about money and efficiency. That’s entirely appropriate.” She said that she understood why people might feel more comfortable with a full firm but said, “I made it work for so long with Tiburon that I’m not worried about making it work for Kensington.”

How will she start? “My first order of business will be meeting with the chief and his administrative aide,” she said. “The dispatch contract is hot on the agenda. I’ll go to those first few meetings and also review minutes from past meetings. That should give me a good grounding.”

Danforth never fully retired, though she left Tiburon’s employment in 2015. “A friend asked me to be special counsel for a code enforcement hearing,” she said. “That was kind of fun to do. You discover that when you don’t have to drive an hour each way and work thirty to forty hours a week, that what you’re doing is actually fun and interesting. And doing it from my house is quite pleasurable. I’m looking forward to working with Kensington and the board.”

Artists Listen Up!

The El Cerrito Arts and Culture Commission is accepting proposals for the newly created El Cerrito Creative ReUse Artist Residency. The residency will provide the selected artist with access to materials at the city’s Recycling + Environmental Resource Center for use in artistic projects, an on-site storage bin for materials, a small stipend and support for an exhibition at the end of the residency.

The program, funded by Art in Public Places, is intended to support local artists in Contra Costa or Alameda counties who work with recycled materials, encouraging environmental stewardship through art that inspires people to think about sustainability and consumption.

“Local artists passionate about upcycling and creative reuse are encouraged to apply, including painters, textile artists, photographers, printmakers, as well as musicians, performers, those working in film and video, and conceptual and installation artists,” explained Suzanne Iarla of the Arts and Culture Commission. Artists must apply for a six- to twelve-month residency by May 18. More information at [www.el-cerrito.org/ECCRU](http://www.el-cerrito.org/ECCRU) or contact Iarla at 510-215-4318 or [siarla@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:siarla@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us)

Come to the Carnival

By Serena Heaslip, Kate Verhoef, and Nicole Whiting

Spring is here, and that means fun times at this year’s 70th Annual Spring Carnival at Kensington Hilltop Elementary School on Saturday, May 13 from 11am-3pm. Bring the whole family to enjoy carnival games and prizes, delicious food, White Elephant sale, “Deals on Wheels” bargains, and our lovely plant sale!

**Games, Activities and Treats** Have a blast playing games and enjoying activities for all ages. Start the fun at the face painting and hair feathers booths—then it’s onto Water Balloon Catapult, Cheese Toss, and Sleeping Pirate. Our Plasma Car Speedway was so popular last year that we’re bringing it back for this year’s fun, and new this year, Pick My Nose and Five Little Monkeys! You’ll also have a chance to win a delicious cake from the kids’ favorite, Cake Walk. Thank you to realtor Ruth Frassetto for her thirteen-year sponsorship of the Cake Walk, and her generous donation of sixty cakes.

**Feeling Hungry?** Count on enjoying your lunch for the day at our Dads’ Club Grill, since you don’t want to miss out on their famous tri-tip sandwiches, as well as sausages, hamburgers, veggie burgers, and hot dogs. We will have your carnival fare favorites too, like popcorn, snocones, root beer floats, and cotton candy. And new this year, we will offer a Bake Sale, with treats to enjoy after your meal, or take home. Rice crispy treats, chocolate chip cookies, or brownies anyone?

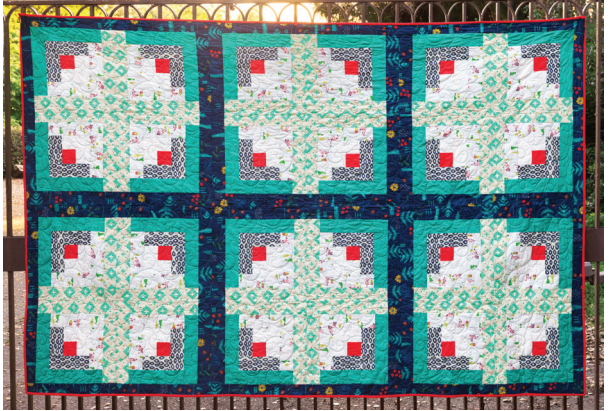
**Shopping** Whether it’s for Mother’s Day, or just taking advantage of fantastic bargains, Carnival is the place to shop. Donate gently used items for our popular White Elephant Sale. Items will be accepted 9am-6pm May 12, at the front entrance of Hilltop (no computers, electronics, or large furniture, please). Stop by the White Elephant Sale on Carnival day for seriously great bargains! Great deals on kids’ bicycles can be had at the Carnival’s “Deals on Wheels” bike sale. Free up garage space and give your old bike new life. Donated bikes can be dropped off at Hilltop behind the MPR on Friday, May 12.

**Lovely Plants** What do birdcage gardens, “punny” painted pots, tomato seedlings, striking succulents, and pollinator plants have in common? They’re all available to purchase at this year’s Plant Sale! Browse our tables for the perfect gift for Mother’s Day. While you’re at it, pick up some herbs or veggie starts. Most are grown and made by our own Kensington kids, so be sure to drop by!

**Raffle** Be sure to purchase your raffle tickets before and during the Carnival! Grand prize for the 35th annual raffle is the beautiful “Mesa at Dawn” quilt. This gorgeous quilt is destined to be some lucky winner’s new family heirloom, and was lovingly created by school parents Sherry Garcia, Cathy Lo, Kin Foong Perry, and Jennifer Ritter. Tickets are just \$5 each, so purchase a pack to increase your chances at winning the quilt or one of four wonderful runner-up prizes of shopping sprees at Kensington businesses; each shopping spree is worth several hundred dollars!

We are so grateful to the wonderful local businesses that have contributed to these prizes! Arlington Avenue businesses: The Arlington, Country Cheese Coffee Market, Inca Designs, Kensington Fine Foods, Kensington Home & Hardware, Kensington Smog, Repair & Fuel, Inn Kensington, and Young’s Market. Colusa Circle businesses: Benchmark Pizza, Colusa Market, Circle Salon, The Fuse Fitness, Kensington Vet Hospital, and Semifreddi’s. And thanks to Realtor Mark Choi of Marvin Gardens Real Estate for again helping to underwrite the costs of running of the raffle.

Kensington Hilltop School’s Spring Carnival and raffle proceeds are used to fund PTA and Dads’ Club projects such as Dads’ Club work parties, earthquake readiness supplies, recreation equipment for the kids, school assemblies, Art Night and Movie Night. Spring Carnival is a celebration of our school community, and we can’t wait to see you and your family there!



Win this beautiful quilt, "Mesa at Dawn," at the carnival raffle.

FKL Spring Book Sale

Twins with Carnival

By Jim Fisher

The Friends of the Kensington Library will hold its annual Spring Book Sale on Saturday, May 13 from 9am–5pm in the Kensington Community Center. The sale coincides with the Spring Carnival at Kensington Hilltop Elementary.

This year the book sale will be a Saturday-only event. Revelers and readers of all ages are encouraged to drop by the book sale tables. Children will be thrilled at the selection of titles for young readers—and might browse the adult tables for a Mother’s Day gift that fits a young person’s budget.

Purchased books may be left with sale volunteers for post-carnival pickup. The popular \$3/bag offer runs from 3pm–5pm. Browsers who join the Friends as a new member will receive a sturdy canvas bag for their books.

Through membership donations and book sale earnings, the Friends provide the library with funds to purchase roughly a quarter of its books. It also provides children’s and cultural programs for the community. Contributions to the FKL are tax-deductible and eligible for corporate matching gifts.

The FKL seeks volunteers. Those interested should contact Jim Fisher at [fishjim.FKL@gmail.com](mailto:fishjim.FKL@gmail.com) or join us at our regular board meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the library.



# CERT Volunteers Accomplish Long-Term Goal

By Linnea Due

Residents of lower Kensington (Baja to sun-lovers, Kensington Area 6 to the Community Emergency Response Network, or CERT) are safer today because of the just-do-it persistence of several CERT volunteers. When Leonard Schwartzburd joined CERT a couple of years ago, he heard about the shed program offered by the Kensington Fire Protection District and the Kensington Fire Department. The KFPD works with volunteers to site a shed that it then fills with emergency equipment such as tools, generators, first aid equipment, and radios. Most sheds are in people’s backyards. Schwartzburd and others wanted a shed at Colusa Circle: “The Circle is such an absolutely pivotal point,” said Schwartzburd, “the entry point for all kinds of aid and an exit point for residents. It’s the base of Kensington. We realized early on that we couldn’t have just a flimsy Rubbermade box. For us to put it in a place that has such public access is just inviting burglary.”

Schwartzburd and CERT volunteer John Gaccione tried to figure out ways to armor the future shed so it was impregnable. “Which led to us concluding that we’d have to build a shed within a shed,” laughs Schwartzburd. “The cost and time involved made it absurd.” The pair ended up negotiating for a Tuff Shed from Home Depot, one much larger and sturdier than backyard models. That led to a second potential problem, solved by another volunteer.

Chris Hall, the farmers’ market manager, had been talking to Narsai David about where to site the shed; David owns the building that houses the Circus Pub and the long-shuttered restaurant next door. The original intention was to site the shed in the back parking lot off Berkeley Park Blvd, behind the Circus Pub. David and his son Danny studied Gaccione’s drawings of the future shed and approved the location. But once the idea of a larger (and taller) shed was introduced, father and son worried about the impact on neighbors’ views. Hall determined the Tuff Shed’s dimensions (8’x10’x10’7” tall) and met with Danny David. The two men decided to switch gears to the Colusa Ave. lot next to the restaurant. “It turned out to be more advantageous because it’s on ground level, so that if someone needs to drive in to unload or load materials, they can do it easily rather than trying to maneuver on the hillside,” Hall said. “This site turned out to be the best in the bunch.”

And there was a fun aftermath. Gaccione tells the story: “Strangely enough, Narsai



It took a village to bring a Community Emergency Response Team shed to lower Kensington. Pictured are (left to right): John Gaccione, Chris Hall, Danny David, and Leonard Schwartzburd. Photo by Larry Nagel

liked the drawings so much of the smaller shed that he bought one and placed it on the back lot.”

Schwartzburd said that the shed, which was delivered by Home Depot on April 12, with the Kensington Police Department managing traffic, holds about \$2,000 worth of material supplied by the fire district. Several volunteers have keys. “We’re not calling it the command center, but it’s going to be a focal point for a lot of activities for this area,” Gaccione said. “It’s flat and it has access to all the roads out of here. And it’s surrounded by beneficial commercial businesses, such as the grocery. The only place similar is up on the Arlington, but that’s more fragile in an earthquake scenario. In a fire, who knows? We’re planning for something that you can’t know what it is.”

The next order of business is to organize Area 6’s neighborhoods. Area 6, which includes all of Kensington below the Arlington, is divided in three sections, lower, middle, upper. Each section contains about the same number of people: 245 in the upper, 202 in the middle, and 217 in the lower. “I’m trying to get the lower end organized,” Gaccione said. “The blocks aren’t organized at all. There should be a sort of block captain. That’s the bigger goal for all of this.”

For Chris Hall, working with CERT on the shed has led to fellowship. “Up until I got involved with CERT, the farmers’ market has been my community,” Hall said. “This has been another opportunity for people to feel connected with each other.”

On that front, Schwartzburd, who worked out the financing with the fire district’s Larry Nagle, plans to involve Kensington’s Boy Scouts in helping to maintain the shed and train with equipment. Contact 510-215-4450 to register for free CERT training though the El Cerrito Fire Department and the Kensington Fire Protection District.



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# Kensington Calendar

**Locations:**  
Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave., 526-9146  
Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave., 525-0292  
Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., 524-3043  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley (UUCB), 1 Lawson Rd., Kensington, 525-0302, [www.uucb.org](http://www.uucb.org)

**Ongoing:**  
**Jazzercise**, 8:15-9:15am, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Community Center.  
**Body Sculpting**, 8:45-9:45am, Tuesday and Thursday, Community Center.  
**Acrylic Artists**, Wednesdays 9:45-12:30pm, Community Center. Open Studio to paint with easels provided.  
**Tai Chi Chuan**, 9:30-10:30am Fridays, Community Center, \$10

**May 1 Kensington Library Knitting Club** “The Castoffs” All levels welcome. Please bring your own needles and yarn. We will provide support, encouragement and help. Learn new stitches, share your talents, and meet new friends. Normally meets on the 1st Monday of the month. 6:30pm. Free.  
**May 2, 9, 23, & 30 Family Storytime** Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome. Kensington Library, 6:30pm. Free.  
**May 3 Kensington Unit of League of Women Voters** All are welcome to meet and discuss burning issues of the day. 1:15pm at Parkside Court. 527-1266.  
**May 4, 11, 18 & 25 Baby & Toddler Storytime** Stories, songs & action rhymes for young children and their caregivers. Kensington Library. Two identical sessions 10:15am & 11:15am. Free. 524-3043  
**May 4 Women’s Fellowship.** Arlington Community Church, 6pm.  
**May 7 Amy Ream Sings.** Arlington Community Church, 2pm.  
**May 8 & 22 Kensington Library’s Digital Docent** will answer your eReader and digital library questions every other Monday by appointment at 1pm. This one-on-one 60-minute appointment is intended for people seeking assistance with eBooks and

eReaders. Sign up at Info Desk. Please bring your device. This appointment is free. 524-3043.

**May 11 El Cerrito Garden Club** How can you, and the way you garden, save the pollinators in your community? Victoria Rocha, who has been landscaping for the City of Oakland for 30 years, will discuss how she and the “Pollinator Posse” are changing landscape practices to save local pollinators. Meet at the El Cerrito Community Center on Thursday, May 11 at 7007 Moeser Lane at 9:30 a.m. The program begins after a short general meeting and a refreshment break. Members are free. Guests cost \$3. For questions visit [www.elcerritogardenclub.org](http://www.elcerritogardenclub.org) or call Bonnie (510) 237-4654.

**May 13 Friends of the Kensington Library Book Sale** Friends of the Kensington Library annual Spring Book Sale. Kensington Community Center, 9am-5pm.

**May 13 70th Annual Spring Carnival** at Kensington Hilltop Elementary School 11am-3pm. Family fun, games/activities, food, shopping, plant sale and raffle/prizes. See page five for details. [www.kensingtonhilltop.org/carnival](http://www.kensingtonhilltop.org/carnival)

**May 13 & 27 Saturday Drop-in Craft** Kids and parents are welcome to come in and make simple crafts and drawings. Kensington Library. Available all day (10am-4:30pm) while supplies last. Free. 524-3043.

**May 15 Memoir Group.** Arlington Community Church, 10am.

**May 16 Berkeley Garden Club Lecture Program**, Albany Community Center, 1249 Marin Avenue. Growing and Cooking with Herbs, Rose Loveall-Sale, owner, Morningsun Herb Farm. Display Table: Herbs and Spices. 12:30-1 Plant Exchange, 1-2 General Meeting, 2-3 Lecture.

**May 16 Storyteller Extraordinaire**

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**May 21 4th Annual El Cerrito Hillside Festival** Come explore El Cerrito’s 100-acre Hillside Natural Area. Learn about our area’s nature, history, geology. Wildlife bingo, poetry readings, folk music, metal detecting, rock displays. Friends of Five Creeks (including Kensington’s Cerritos Creek), garden giveaways, early evening meditation and more. Presented by the El Cerrito Trail Trekkers, El Cerrito’s Environmental Quality Committee, and Parks and Recreation Commission. Entry on Schmidt Lane near the EC Recycling Center, 10am-5pm.

**May 22 Kensington Library Book Club** Discussion of *Lord Jim* by Joseph Conrad. Book Club normally meets on the 4th Monday of the month. 6:30pm. Free.

**May 26 Bridge Night** Arlington Community Church, 6pm.

**Save the Date!**  
**June 10 Kensington Property Owners’ Association (KPOA) Annual Membership & Town Hall Meeting** + Info Fair. Featuring: Expert Panel

on Disaster and Evacuation Plans. Also Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia, Rachele Sherris-Watt, KPPCSD president and Don Dommer, KPFD president, information tables

Town Meetings

**Kensington Community Center 59 Arlington Ave., Kensington**

**KCC-May 1** Kensington Community Council 1st Mondays, 7:30pm. 525-0292

**FKL-May 2, Friends of the Kensington Library**, 7pm (at the Library) 1st Tuesdays

**KPSC-May 8, Kensington Public Safety Council** Earthquake/Disaster Preparedness 2nd Mondays, 6pm. 501-8165

**KARO/ECHO-Amateur Radio Operators** 2nd Mondays of odd months, 7:30pm. 524-9815

**KFPD-May 10**, Fire Protection District 2nd Wednesdays, 7pm. 527-8395

**KPPCSD-May 11 & 25**. Police Protection and Community Services District 2nd & 4th Thursdays 7:30pm. 526-4141

**KIC-May 22**, Kensington Improvement Club 4th Mondays, 7:30pm. 524-7514.

**KMAC (Tent.)-Apr. 25, Municipal Advisory Council** Last Tues. 7pm. (Call Supe. Gioia’s office to confirm: 231-8691)

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March Kensington Police Log

March 2

VANDALISM, Coventry Rd. Vehicle’s exterior damaged “Keyed.”  
ID THEFT, Coventry Rd. Unknown suspect(s) using victims information w/  
out permission.

March 3

RECOVERED STOLEN VEHICLE, Cowper Ave. Suspect(s) left  
stolen vehicle running.  
STOLEN VEHICLE, Kensington Rd. Victim out of town will return to KPD to  
make stolen vehicle report.  
THEFT, Lawson Dr. Suspect(s) stole victim’s purse from unlocked vehicle  
and used credit cards w/out permission.  
VANDALISM, Ocean View Ave. Vehicle’s exterior damaged “Keyed.”

March 5

OUTAIDED, Central Ave., El Cerrito. ECPD was involved in another  
call and could not respond to a masked subject taking food from behind a  
counter of a restaurant. I arrived and placed the subject on a 5150 W&I hold.

OUTAIDED, San Pablo Ave., Albany. Albany Police asked for an ECPD unit  
to cover one of their officers but ECPD was not able to respond. I arrived  
and covered the officer while he was investigating a subject who had been  
involved in a fight.

MISC., Arlington Ave.: Resident heard someone calling for help in the store  
group area. Unable to locate.

March 8

SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Arlington Ave. Subject seen on video look-  
ing into vehicle windows. Was scared away by an alarm. No damage / loss.

March 18

OUTAIDED, San Pablo Ave. Albany Police asking for assistance  
with fight at bar. Situation under control prior to arrival.

TRAFFIC, Coventry Rd. Recovered stolen vehicle out of Albany.

THEFT, Eagle Hill Rd. Resident hosted a St Patrick’s Day party and realized  
two laptops were missing the next day.

March 19

SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Sunset Dr. Driver reported older male  
had hid when they drove by. Searched, unable to locate subject.

March 22

THEFT, Colusa Ave. Change taken from an unlocked car

March 23

IDENTITY THEFT, Arlington Ave. Suspects used victim’s personal/  
financial information w/out victims consent.

March 30

VEHICLE BURGLARY, Rincon Ave. Vehicle window smashed and  
laptop taken.

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