

Bringing the Community Together

KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

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Even pirates took a break last year at the Kensington Hilltop Elementary School Carnival.
Photo by Linda Cleary.

Counting Down to the Spring Carnival

By Laura Vogt

With just a few weeks to go, excitement is building for a cherished tradition—the 77th Annual Kensington Hilltop Elementary School Carnival, on Saturday, May 17, from 11am-3pm.

This year’s carnival is classic fun with fresh twists. That means we’re doubling down on the time-honored activities everyone loves—think Dunk Tank, Musical Cakes, and the legendary Water Balloon Catapult—while adding brand-new experiences. This year’s two new booths, Marble Run Races and Backyard Game Challenges, bring the perfect mix of speed, strategy, and silliness as kids go head-to-head with their friends for bragging rights.

Don’t forget to come hungry. The Auxiliary Grill will be firing up your favorites—hot dogs, hamburgers, veggie burgers, and our mouthwatering tri-tip sandwiches. But be sure to save room for sweets—the Bake Sale Booth is shaking things up this year with a fresh lineup of treats. Try the brand-new Strawberry Lemonade Cupcakes, a zesty, pink-hued twist that’s perfect for spring, alongside returning favorites like Oreo and Vanilla Fun-fetti. And back by popular demand: the irresistible krispy squares, in three bold flavors—

See Carnival, Page 4

Survey Results In: Residents Like Police, Bay View, Parks, Hate Bickering

By Linnea Due

On January 6, the Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District (KPPCSD) launched a survey using SurveyMonkey, with hard copies also available at the Kensington Library. The deadline was pushed back twice, until finally March 31 was settled upon. The goal was to get 500 respondents, a number almost achieved: 498 Kensington residents took the survey.

At the regular board meeting on April 10, the survey was briefly discussed. Board director Sarah Gough, who spearheaded the effort, could not be at that meeting, though she submitted an executive summary, which, along with every long-form answer, is posted on the KPPCSD site under the survey agenda item for April 10.

The demographics of survey-takers veered towards older residents: 57 percent were over 65 years old, and 21 percent over 55. 82 percent were white, over half female, and 65 percent had incomes over \$150,000 per year.

In terms of satisfaction with district services, the district itself came in third, with 48 percent saying they are satisfied with KPPCSD governance. The police did better, with 33 percent saying they are very satisfied and 52 percent marking “satisfied.” Bay View Refuse and Recycling (KPPCSD contracts with the garbage company) did best in the

See Survey, page 6

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RUTH FRASSETTO



I'M EXCITED TO SHARE THAT I'VE MOVED TO A NEW BROKERAGE!

You can now find me at **1600 Hopkins Street** in Berkeley's charming Northbrae neighborhood, right next to the beloved Berkeley Horticultural Nursery (dangerously close, since I love plants the way some people love chocolate!)

This move feels deeply personal—like coming home. It's just steps from Monterey Market , King Middle School , and the neighborhood shops that have shaped so many meaningful memories for me and my family over the years. The new space is fresh, modern, and inspiring—with a beautifully designed interior and a peaceful al fresco garden meeting area. It's the kind of environment that sparks creativity and supports truly thoughtful work.

I'm also proud to be growing with Vanguard Properties , established in 1986—a locally owned, boutique brokerage known for innovative marketing, cutting-edge technology, and authentic client care. I'm excited to continue doing what I love most: helping you reach your real estate goals with care, intention, and integrity.

This new location allows me to serve clients in Berkeley, Kensington, El Cerrito, Albany, and beyond—with even more ease and personal attention.

Please come by and say hello—I'd love to welcome you to the new space!

RUTH FRASSETTO | 510.697.8606
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If you have any questions, feel free to call. Our conversation is always complimentary and completely confidential. My Goal is to achieve yours.

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Hillside Festival Takes to the Hills

By Dave Weinstein

Enjoy the 11th annual Hillside Festival Saturday and Sunday, May 3 and 4, with more than a dozen hikes and other events scheduled throughout El Cerrito's 100-acre natural wonderland, the Hillside Natural Area. The festival, put on by El Cerrito Trail Trekkers and co-sponsored by the city's Environmental Quality Committee, is free.

Hikes and other events start from trail-heads throughout the Hillside and touch on such subjects as native flora and fauna, insects, trees, geology, history and habitat restoration.

Our leaders are experts and raconteurs as well. Learn the natural history of our East Bay hillsides. All events are family-friendly and a great day for kids of all ages. See the schedule at www.ectrailtrekkers.org/hillside-festival.html



March Patrol Log

Mar 2: Theft from a vehicle on Amherst Ave.
Mar 3: Grand theft from building on Cov-entry Rd.
Mar 3: Stolen vehicle on Purdue Ave.
Mar 6: Forgery reported on Camelot Ct.
Mar 11: Hit & Run reported on Colusa Ave.
Mar 16: Outside assist detail for California Highway Patrol.
Mar 17: Suspicious circumstance at Kenyon Ave.

Mar 18: Traffic stop on Colusa Ave.; driver cited and vehicle impounded.
Mar 18: Grand theft from vehicle on Colusa Ave.
Mar 19: Non-injury vehicle accident on Sunset Dr.
Mar 20: Obtaining money by false pretense reported at police station.
Mar 25: Suspicious circumstance at High-land Blvd.
Mar 28: Report taken at KPD regarding criminal threats.

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.

JUNE - 2025
DEADLINES
Advertising Deadline ❖ MAY 8
Editorial Deadline ❖ MAY 10

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

Use one space, not two, after all periods.

KENSINGTON
OUTLOOK

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Letters to the Editor

Costs Versus Benefits

Dear Editor,

Among Contra Costa County communities Kensington has the highest median age (51 years) and ranks slightly behind Orinda for adults with college degrees at 82 percent. Kensington also has one of the lowest crime rates in California and an exceptionally low incident of structural fires. We are fortunate to have such benefits, which are largely attributable to our geographic location and single-family housing.

Typically benefits and costs have an inverse correlation, with favorable benefits resulting in lower costs. Not in Kensington, where benefits result in greater costs.

Consider the \$10 million just spent on the Public Safety Building (PSB) to house a fire department (with 40 percent of Kensington's response calls going into El Cerrito), and eliminating police use of the PSB. Kensington police are now located adjacent to the El Cerrito police department. To house them in Kensington the KPPCSD is contemplating a \$10.0+ million police station in Kensington Park with the need to secure a costly long-term loan with interest paid for by a \$400 annual property tax increase.

At its April meeting, the KPPCSD board was informed about the fact the property adjacent to the PSB will be available for sale on April 12 at an asking price of \$795,000. The board agreed to consider this location at a future closed session on a date that was not established. Since Kensington properties typically sell within two weeks of listing, it is unlikely the board will be able to acquire the property before it is sold. This delay could jeopardize a golden opportunity for a police location in Kensington at half the cost of locating in Kensington Park. Some expressed concerns about a possible earthquake fault near this home, but that seems most unlikely. On the off chance that a fault exists at the back of the property the adjacent home would still be useable and could be sold at little loss in price.

It's time we started focusing on costs.

Jim Watt

Kensington Doesn't Need a Shiny New Toy

Dear Editor,

I'm a director on the KPPCSD board, though here I write for myself only. For two years we've been trying to solve an urgent problem: finding an affordable home in Kensington for the police department.

Some favor a new police building in Kensington Park. Because that would require a huge retaining wall, new utilities and a traffic light, it's currently estimated to cost upwards of \$10 million—a number that will probably grow, as seen with the newly remodeled Kensington Fire Station. Kensington taxpayers would have to approve an increase in their property taxes—which I think they're unlikely to do. But we could waste a whole lot of time, as we have already wasted time, coming to that realization—and we need the police department in town now! Many citizens are very frustrated.

I see history repeating itself here. Didn't the Fire Board directors just fall for a Pied Piper (former general manager Bill Hansell) leading them to kick the police out of the Public Safety Building and make an expensive large new building just for the fire department? This is "the shiny toy syndrome." Political leaders often want to spend a lot of public money on a big shiny building that they can attach their reputation to. But is another big expensive building what's best for Kensington? Especially when Los Angeles just exploded in wildfires? That could happen here next. Shouldn't our priority be wildfire prevention? Let's get this police problem solved quickly and less expensively.

I think the board should convert an existing structure in Kensington for use by the police department. We could keep the price tag under \$5 million. This would also save beautiful Kensington Park for recreation and hopefully avoid raising taxes. It would take less time, because there would be less construction involved, there wouldn't be much opposition, and we wouldn't need a large property tax increase.

Please email the directors or attend the KPPCSD meeting on Thursday May 8. Be ready to speak during opening public comments at 7pm sharp. See www.kppcsd.org for links and email addresses.

Cassandra Duggan, LCSW

Establishing Firewise Communities Is Vital

Dear Editor:

Kensington's Fire Department has an active Emergency Preparedness Committee, and one of its initiatives is encouraging the establishment of Firewise Communities within Kensington. KFD's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Johnny Valenzuela, recently met with us and a group of our neighbors on a weekend day to explain the process of becoming an officially recognized Firewise Community. On a later weekend day, we had an opportunity to participate in a walk with a nearby neighborhood group that is further along in the process of establishing a Firewise Community. Johnny organized the walk, which was led by Fire Marshal Chase Beckman, and attended by about 30 neighbors interested in supporting a Firewise Community for their neighborhood.

Both Johnny and Chief Beckman deserve Kensington's thanks for their dedication of their weekends and continuous hard work to improve Kensington's fire safety and emergency preparedness. Chief Beckman pointed out numerous risk factors in the construction and maintenance of the houses we surveyed and in the surrounding and nearby vegetation. He also offered many insights into how residents can take practical, cost-efficient steps to protect their homes and neighborhoods. Importantly, the neighbors forming the FireWise Community had an opportunity to establish and strengthen relationships with their neighbors that will be invaluable if a fire should occur.

Kensington is a town of densely packed houses on narrow, winding streets surrounded by abundant trees and other vegetation. Chances of survival of lives and property in a wildfire improve as more neighbors become aware and involved, and take steps toward hardening their homes. For more information contact Johnny Valenzuela, jvalenzuela@kensingtonfire.org

Vida and Paul Dorrohh

Kensington Al-Anon Meeting Wednesdays

Are you affected by someone else's drinking? Al-Anon is here for you! For over 65 years, Al-Anon has been offering strength and hope for friends and families of problem drinkers. All who have been affected by someone else's drinking, past or present, can find solutions that lead to serenity in the Al-Anon fellowship.

Anonymity is an important principle of the Al-Anon program: everything that is said in the group meeting and member to member must be held in strict confidence. We strive to maintain a safe space for all who are seeking help.

There are online and in-person meetings, and a Kensington meeting is held online every Wednesday at 7am. Information about this meeting and others in the area, as well as about Al-Anon in general, can be found at <https://alanonbythebay.org>

Celebrate Wildfire Preparedness Day May 3

By Johnny Valenzuela

This year, Kensington is proud to participate in Wildfire Community Preparedness Day on Saturday, May 3. This national campaign encourages communities nationwide to come together to take action to reduce their wildfire risk. Wildfire Community Preparedness Day is the perfect opportunity to do one thing—big or small—that contributes to Kensington's wildfire safety. Here are a few meaningful ways to engage:

Talk with your neighbors. Wildfire preparedness starts at home. Take the time to connect with your neighbors. Kensington takes a community-wide approach to wildfire preparedness. To learn how to get started on steps below, contact Kensington Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Johnny Valenzuela at prepare@kensingtonfire.org.

Consider forming a Firewise Community. Firewise USA® sites empower neighbors to work together to reduce risk and improve evacuation readiness. Kensington already has several Firewise groups, and more are forming.

Plan a neighborhood chipping day. Removing overgrown and hazardous vegetation is an important step in creating a defensible space around your home. Contra Costa County's Measure X Wildfire Mitigation Program offers free chipping days for neighborhoods that organize together. Kensington has already hosted three in the last two years.

Plan a Block Party with me! Bring neighbors together for a fun, informative gathering centered around community emergency preparedness. Invite the fire board's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Johnny Valenzuela, to share tips and important resources.

Attend a local event—namely the Kensington Paper Shredding & WUI Walk on Saturday, May 3, from 10am-noon. Bring your sensitive documents to shred and pick up wildfire preparedness resources. Representatives from Kensington's existing Firewise Communities will be on-site with information on how to reduce risk around your home. Shredding is at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley at 1 Lawson Road in the north parking lot.

Then join a guided walk with Alan Siegel, Wildcat Firewise Lead, to explore the Wild-land-Urban Interface (WUI) firsthand. See real examples of defensible space and learn about the coordinated work being done by East Bay Regional Parks and Kensington residents. The tour departs from the shredding site, and the walk will last approximately one hour. A walk session will leave at 10am and a second at 11am. Wear comfortable shoes and dogs are welcome! RSVP at: www.kensingtonfire.org/WCPD25

A few days later, attend a presentation at the Red Oak Realty office at 7502 Fairmount, El Cerrito. Berkeley Fire Department interim assistant chief Colin Arnold will present "Living in a Fire Landscape and What to Do" on Thursday, May 8, from 6-7:30pm. Learn how fire risk is evolving, what steps residents should be taking, and how you can be part of a more fire-adapted East Bay. To RSVP, visit <https://tinyurl.com/mr35z42w>

Whether you host a block gathering, join a Firewise group, or stop by the shredding event—your participation matters. Together, we can build a safer, more wildfire-resilient community, one household at a time. For more information and event details, visit www.kensingtonfire.org.

SOAR hosts Free May 4 Family Event with Pizza, Music, Bubbles

Last year's SOAR event featured this students-made paper art piece of soaring birds. Photo by Jennifer Stark.



By Jennifer Stark

On May 4, SOAR-Kensington and Classroom Matters will cohost a "Celebrating Diverse Minds, Celebrating Inclusion" community event, from 1:30-3:30pm at the Kensington Community Center (59 Arlington Ave). The event is free, kid-friendly, and open to the public.

The goal is to build community, celebrate neurodiversity, especially in children, and foster meaningful inclusion. There will be lots of fun entertainment (big bubbles, face painting, hula hoops, a collective art project, a Kensington fire truck, etc.), delicious food for purchase from Mozzarella, a deaf-owned and -operated pizza truck, and live music (including a DJ and a live performance by Call Waiting). Service providers are available to share resources and information.

SOAR-Kensington is a Kensington Hilltop Elementary School parent group dedicated to sharing Support, Opportunities and Resources so that each child can feel included in school and can reach his or her full potential. Classroom Matters offers in-person learning, coaching, and mentoring to support the emotional, social, and cognitive aspects of academic life in order to help people in grades K through 12 and beyond excel in school and develop executive function skills.



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FREE RED OAK COMMUNITY EVENT

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY?

Wildfire season is nearly year-round now in the East Bay, a reminder that homeowners should always be on alert. Many East Bay residents remember, or even experienced, the devastating Oakland Hills fire of 1991. While some things are beyond our control, we can still prepare for the best outcome by building a resilient community.

As your neighbor, we'd love for you to join us!
Let's proactively keep our East Bay communities safe.




LIVING IN A FIRE LANDSCAPE & WHAT TO DO

Thursday, May 8th · 6–7:30 pm
@ Red Oak El Cerrito Office
7502 Fairmount Ave, El Cerrito
RSVP to this FREE event at rore.me/berkeleyfirehardening5-8-25new

Our special guest Colin Arnold, Interim Assistant Chief with Berkeley Fire Department will be covering:

- Living in a fire dependent landscape
- How to prevent loss from wildfire
- The science behind vegetation management and modern construction codes
- Bringing older housing stock up to code





Buy before Selling or Sell before Buying?

Does the thought of moving have you running around in circles, at a loss as to what step to take first? Moving from one home to another is often a balancing act, especially when deciding whether to buy your next home before selling your current one. You've been to open houses and have seen how they are presented: newly updated, vacant and staged, and thought, "how do I do that?" Have no fear! It is possible. Over the past 35+ years, and through many different market conditions, our team has guided countless people like you through the process of transitioning from one home to another. We bring our years of expertise to the table to serve you. Let's talk about what we can do for you and your home, so you can focus on what's ahead.

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ACC to Host Second Annual Food Truck Fundraiser

By Susan Russell

Arlington Community Church will host its second annual food truck fundraiser to benefit the Black Wealth Builders Fund on Thursday, May 8, 4:30-6:30pm. The fundraiser will feature live music and two food trucks: Curbside Kitchen and Southern Jazz Kitchen, a favorite from last year. The trucks will contribute 20 percent of their proceeds to the fund. In addition, anyone contributing to the fund gets free ice cream.

"This event was such a success last year, with more than 100 people in attendance, that we wanted to repeat it this year," says ACC pastor Jen Chapman. "Also, our church just voted to officially become a Black Wealth Builders Church, making an ongoing commitment to this work of reparations in our community, so we're excited to celebrate!"

The Black Wealth Builders Fund provides zero-interest loans for first-time Black homebuyers. Launched in 2021, the fund has provided 43 loans across the East Bay, from Antioch and Oakland to Richmond and Vallejo. The loans don't have to be paid back until the property is refinanced or sold.

The fund is housed at the Richmond Community Foundation. Fund recipients come through Richmond Neighborhood Housing Services. Both organizations are leaders in providing access to housing for East Bay citizens.

ACC and other local congregations have contributed to the fund, along with many individuals and organizations, including the California Association of Realtors and US Bank. Almost a million dollars has been raised so far, with \$673,000 in loans made or committed.

"We hope our friends and neighbors will stop by to learn more, listen to music, hear inspiring speakers, and have some great food," says Chapman.

Carnival

...from Front Page



quilt titled "Picnic in the Park"—a cozy, colorful creation that perfectly captures the warmth of our school community. Other prizes include gift cards, bottles of wine, family experiences, and goodies donated by our incredible local businesses and neighbors. Every ticket you buy helps fund PTA and Auxiliary programs that directly support our students and staff.

Beyond the food and games, there's so much more to explore. Swing by Deals on Wheels to find your next set of wheels, stop in at Hilltop Blooms to pick up vibrant plants for your spring garden, and visit the Face Painting Station to turn into a butterfly, tiger, or even a superhero for the day.

Whether you're a Hilltop veteran or a first-time attendee, this event is all about coming together as a community. It's a day to make memories, celebrate our students, and enjoy the special spirit that makes Kensington Hilltop Elementary so unique.

Mark your calendars, gather your friends and family, and get ready for a day of fun. We can't wait to see you at the 77th Annual Carnival—rain or shine, it's going to be a blast!

We would be remiss if we didn't take time to thank our amazing sponsors who are supporting the day and our students: Drs. Claire Ferrari and Allie Larios, Ferrari-Larios Orthodontics; Anastasia Levitansky, The Grubb Company; Alissa Custer, MAJ Realtors; Dr. Nicholas Ching, Children's Dentistry; and Tracy Zhou, Sotheby's.



Brown Butter, Cinnamon Churro, and Fruity Rainbow. Also by popular demand: Preorder your tickets and food starting May 1 at www.khsparentgroups.org/carnival, so you can plan your feast in advance and skip the lines on the big day. Planning ahead will give you way more time for games and fun.

The annual raffle is back with a lineup of prizes sure to thrill. This year's Grand Prize is a stunning, hand-crafted

Homebound? You Can Still Access the Library

By Jenny Rockwell

Enjoy free programs offered by the Kensington Library at 61 Arlington Avenue. Call 510-524-3043 with questions. Thank you to the Friends of Kensington Library for making library programs possible.

Tues, May 6, 6:30pm Friends of the Kensington Library Friends of the Kensington Library, a 501c (3) nonprofit organization, has worked to improve and financially support library services in Kensington since 1959. Open to all Kensington residents.

Tues, May 6, 6:30pm Castoff's Knitting Club Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month. Open to all levels of knitters. Bring your own yarn!

Tuesdays, May 6, 13, 20, 27 6:30pm Family Storytime Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome.

Tues, May 13, 6:30pm Jack London, Photographer Within Jack London's prolific life, photography was a lesser-known aspect of his prodigious activity. From 1900-1916, London took some 12,000 photos, forming a fascinating record of a world unknown to most of his contemporaries. London displayed sharp composition, an unerring sense of drama, and sympathetic respect for his subjects. Presented by educator Avril Angevine.

Tues, May 20, 2-5pm Cloth Produce Bag Sewing Circle Join the Kensington Seamsters Union in transforming donated natural fiber fabric into bags, which will be given out for free at the Kensington Farmers Market. We need you to help measure, cut, iron sew and thread drawstrings, and create community.

Sat, May 24, 2pm Yesteryears: a Golden State History Book Club. The selection for this meeting is Ramona by Helen Hunt Jackson.

Tuesday, May 27, 6:15pm Kensington Library Book Club The club meets online via Zoom, usually on the fourth Tuesday. The selection for May is *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas.

Tues, May 27, Read to a Dog Join us and a licensed therapy dog for a 15-minute reading session every fourth Tuesday afternoon, 3-4pm. Same day, drop in sign up starts 15 minutes before the read session.

Saturday, May 31, 2pm Kensington Fire Department Truck Visit Come see the Kensington fire truck in the parking lot and learn about fire safety.

May 2025, Little Free Garden & Seed library The Kensington Library seed library is always being restocked with free seeds of seasonal varieties. We also welcome any seed donations from half-used seed packets or seeds saved from your personal garden. Donate or take from the "Little Free Garden" table (cuttings, houseplants, crop harvests, bulbs, and garden supplies).

Art Exhibit

First half of May: Artwork by Duane Conliffe: www.dcfoto.co, satellite art show of Art of the African Diaspora, in partnership with the Richmond Art Center.

Second half of May: Paintings by S. Newman: www.newmanesque.net

Books for the Homebound A free delivery program for people who cannot come into the library on their own. All homebound library patrons who reside in Contra Costa County are eligible for the service, regardless of disability. Participants are matched with a volunteer who will deliver and return library materials. Matches depend on residency address and available certified volunteers.



KENSINGTON K-9s

Cali: A Dose of Canine Sunshine
By Winston Churchill, Bulldog

I meet so many nice dogs around town, but they just don't come any sweeter than Cali. She is pure sunshine.

She's often playing at Kensington Park, eagerly bringing her ball to other dogs, inviting them to play. Cali repeatedly brought her precious ball over and dropped it at my feet, encouraging me to steal, happily chew and squeak, and share in her fun.

Cali is a special girl, very dog-focused and encouraging other pups at the park to play. She is a large, athletic dog with lots of energy to burn; you'll often find Cali with her mom, Christy, hiking along Ye Olde School Trail or in El Cerrito's Hillside Natural Area, as well as chasing her ball around Kensington and Arlington parks.



Nearly four years ago, Cali was abandoned as a puppy at the top of Signal Hill in Long Beach. Christy's daughter found the frightened pup, only about one month old. Christy planned to foster Cali until they found her a permanent home. But as is often the case, the grateful rescue pup found her way into everybody's hearts, and Cali became a family member.

The tiny puppy quickly grew into a large, strong, athletic dog. DNA testing revealed Cali to be half Doberman Pinscher and half Boxer. Both are intelligent, playful, high-energy breeds. Despite her size, Cali prefers playing with small dogs and has a quirky fear of Doodles.

When Cali isn't playing in the park, sharing her ball and coaxing others to play, she relaxes at home with her cat sister, Kitty Purry, and her small, white Bolognese dog sister, Bella, or plays with her stuffed animals and her human family.

Christy and family are firm believers in adopting rescue dogs. After their beloved rescue bulldog, Winston, passed away, they planned to adopt a senior dog from a rescue organization. Senior dogs are calm and loving, but they're frequently passed over and have fewer opportunities to find a loving family.

But despite intending to rescue a golden oldie, fate brought the family a silly, energetic, exceptionally friendly puppy. And that's OK. Because adorable puppies

deserve loving homes, too!

If you meet Cali around town, her happy nature and sunny smile will brighten your day.



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Police Board, May 8, 7pm
Fire Board, May 21, 7 pm
Kensington Community Center



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Q1 Kensington Market Update

It's been a steady start to the year in Kensington real estate, with many multiple-offer cash sales. I had the pleasure of representing the buyer at 466 Beloit, and I just listed a gorgeous new construction home at 158 Lawson with my colleague, Herman Chan. Stay tuned for more to come! In the meantime, see below for details on Kensington's Q1 sales.

Address	BD/BA	Sqft	List Price	Sale Price	Tracy's Notes
14 Garden Dr	2/1	1,070	\$738,000	\$918,000	Cash - 2 offers. Fixer w. view
69 Stratford Rd	2/1	990	\$899,000	\$1,208,000	Cash - 2 offers. Updated single-level
30 Franciscan Way	3/2	1,546	\$899,000	\$755,000	Cash - 8 offers. Fixer w. view
218 Purdue AVE	2/1	1,371	\$939,000	\$1,325,000	Loan - 3 offers. Lightly updated
744 Coventry Rd	4/2	2,168	\$979,000	\$1,225,000	Cash - 6 offers. Needs updating, w. view
211 Cambridge Ave	3/2	1,181	\$1,149,000	\$1,200,000	Cash. With view, lots of stairs to house
8 Kerr Ave	3/2	1,615	\$1,195,000	\$1,195,000	Loan - 4 offers. Updated, no view
18 Kerr Avenue	3/2	2,122	\$1,248,000	\$1,410,000	Loan - 4 offers. Cosmetic updates
242 Trinity Ave	4/2	1,841	\$1,249,000	\$1,785,000	Cash - 3 offers. Turnkey w. view
17 Arlington Ave	4/3	2,716	\$1,395,000	\$1,600,000	Loan - 3 offers. Turnkey w. view
21 Highland Blvd	4/3	2,205	\$1,495,000	\$2,000,000	Loan - 7 offers. Updated w. view
143 Arlington Ave	4/3	2,387	\$1,495,000	\$1,800,000	Loan - 1 offer. Busy location, no bay view
466 Beloit Ave	3/2	1,769	\$1,498,000	\$1,950,000	Cash - 3 offers. Turnkey w. partial view
201 Amherst Ave	4/2	2,178	\$1,549,000	\$1,325,000	Cash - 6 offers. Fixer, lots of stairs
50 Marguerita Rd	5/4	4,287	\$2,198,000	\$3,300,000	Cash - 3 offers. Turnkey mid-century w. view
9 Avon Rd	3/2	2,923	\$2,489,000	\$2,550,000	Loan - 3 offers. Turnkey storybook w. view

As a Kensington resident since 2013 and an active member of the Hilltop community, I'm proud to once again sponsor the upcoming Hilltop School Carnival—I hope to see many of you there!

All consultations and meetings are always free and confidential. If you or someone you know is considering buying or selling, I'd love to help.

Proud Kensington resident for over 10 years.



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Passings

We are saddened to announce the passing of Mary Lou Wainwright, who died peacefully in Kensington on April 2, 2023. Born June 19, 1930 in Marvell, Arkansas to Coli and Hezzie Carr, she moved to California in 1951.



Mary began teaching in Berkeley Unified School District's Head-start program in 1968 and earned degrees in Education and Child Development from Cal State Hayward and Sonoma State. Her teaching career spanned over 20 years

Encouraged by community leaders to run for City Council, she was elected to the Berkeley City Council, serving two terms from 1988 to 1996.

A fierce advocate for education, equity, and opportunity, Mary was a lifelong supporter of the NAACP. She also served with Berkeley Youth Alternatives, the Juneteenth Festival, League of Women Voters and Berkeley Democratic Club. A devoted Trustee of Star Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, her faith and leadership left a lasting impact.

Survey

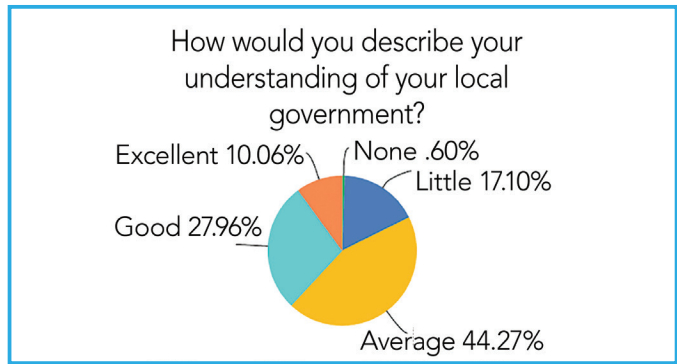
...from Front Page

satisfaction department: 54 percent of respondents are very satisfied with their garbage service.

KPPCSD also manages Kensington and Elsie Neilson parks. 59 percent are satisfied with the parks, while 20 percent are very satisfied. Most people knew that spaces at the Community Center are available for rent.

The police often communicate by Facebook, which the survey found was not the preferred method of relaying information to residents. Email was residents' first choice, followed by the US mail and the *Outlook*. The district's website came in fourth, followed by NextDoor, Instagram and lastly, Facebook.

Two questions concerned the district's efforts to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). A survey question formulated in January could look very different in March. The first question asked if the district was providing programming to foster a diverse community, and the second asked if residents believe the district has a commitment to DEI. In both cases, the majority of respondents checked that they neither agreed nor disagreed with each statement.



Speaking of diversity, answers to the open-ended comments varied greatly and proved the stars of the show. Only a few will be highlighted here, but every response can be read at the district website, and it's well worth reading. In addition, as Sarah Gough writes in her

summary, "Some responses also reveal gaps in the community's understanding of the role, responsibility, and purview of the KPPCSD, which suggests the KPPCSD should prioritize communication efforts and novel ways of increasing community engagement."

Board director Cass Duggan spent hours synthesizing the 245 replies to question 21: "Please share any additional thoughts you have about KPPCSD operations, services, or governance." She noted that some "hot button" topics received more than 20 comments, such as 27 residents noting they were unhappy with past district boards, specifically how much they fought and how decisions caused problems. Perhaps that's why 62 respondents said they are happy about the two districts consolidating into one district that would be responsible for delivering all Kensington services (police, fire, emergency medical, solid waste, the parks, recreation). 28 residents mentioned the dangers of wildfire and felt that the KPPCSD needs to do more to prepare for a possible wildfire in Kensington (the police are responsible for evacuation). Nearly 40 people want the police back in Kensington, with 18 wanting them in the Public Safety Building, 21 worried about overspending on a new police building, 10 saying they don't want a new building for the police in Kensington, and seven saying they don't want a police building in the park.

Some comment highlights: "The fire department has a positive presence in the community. I still don't understand why the police can't share the new building. Have drugs and a holding cell at another location as it is done now. Why are the police not getting along with the fire department?"

"We need to get the police back in town. Everyone, to a person, says the same thing."

"Our systems of governance are too complex for such a small town. My experience of living here the past nine years has been KPPCSD hires expensive consultants over and over for questions [that] are not that difficult to answer. I would rather our money go to (1) community events and programs; (2) Re-invigorate unused buildings in the park; (3) Bury the power lines. Simplify the governance of Kensington & stop spending so much on consultants."

"Need to find a location that does not disrupt parks and cost does not affect my retirement budget."

"Please recognize that many residents will never have accounts on privately owned social media sites like Facebook, Instagram and Nextdoor. They cannot responsibly be used as a primary form of communication with the community. All I've seen about KPPCSD since I moved here 20 years ago has been constant infighting. I'm sure that's an incomplete view of things, but that's what it looks like from the outside. Not that I'm doing anything to help, so thanks you for your service."

"I don't know why we have El Cerrito fire in a new house we pay for while our police are in El Cerrito in trailers but something had to be rotten in Denmark."

Wish lists mentioned in these comments are undergirding all lines, especially electrical (KPPCSD has no authority over PG&E), dealing with street repair, water runoff and flooding (another area in which KPPCSD has no jurisdiction), establishing a senior center in Kensington (which the district could do with the unused Annex building if it has the funds), establish a dog park (on the district's own wish list), manage unmaintained vegetation in backyards (not in the district's purview), lowering rental rates for the park and the Community Center, and much more.

The survey revealed confusion about governance: each special district is in charge of its own mandates and is not a "town" government that advocates for citizens against the county, for example. And finally, one didn't like the survey at all. "Stop sending surveys," said the respondent. "And start working."

You can see the survey for yourself (and see how much work board directors put in) at www.kppcsd.org/files/967817373/Item+16+Community+Wide+Survey.pdf

Contra Costa Chorale Celebrates Life and Love over 5 Centuries

By Kathryn Sibley

With a program titled "Living, Laughing, Loving," the Contra Costa Chorale, led by Artistic Director Dr. Brad Schultz and accompanied by Martin Morley, returns to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Friday, May 9 to present a celebration of the best that life has to offer. This concert provides a welcome respite in our current turbulent times.

The program includes a five-century span of compositions from some of the best known to those more recently entering the pantheon of great choral composers, including Aaron Copland, Eric Whitacre, Gwyneth Walker, Andrea Ramsey, Joan Szymko, Johannes Brahms, and others. With a mix of new and old music and texts, the chorale invites its audiences to consider the many ways music can be used as a tool to express the ineffable in today's world.

At the center of the program, a 2023 work by composer Alex Berko titled "Sacred Place" calls us to consider the environment as a living place of safety, comfort, and solace. Combining old and new, the composer based the six-movement piece on the Jewish service, using the writings of several American environmentalists, among them Wendell Berry and John Muir. Berko and the chorale invite listeners to come together to contemplate the earth and our place in it.

Tacking in a different direction, Eric Whitacre draws out laughs by teaming his music

See Chorale, page 8

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Photo: Seele An/Unsplash

KASEP-Kensington After School Program

Last day of Spring KASEP is May 30th
Mark your calendars for the Fall KASEP Registration on Tuesday, September 2nd, 2025.
Classes begin Monday, September 8th.



Kensington High School Senior 2025 Photo

Let the tradition continue! Calling all high school seniors who live(d) in Kensington, or who attended Hilltop Elementary School for all or part of their elementary school years – you are invited to join other alumni for the annual Kensington High School Senior Photo.

The photo is scheduled for Sunday, May 4th at 3:30pm. Location: KCC Office /Recreation Building. Come early to catch-up with old friends! The photo will appear on the cover of the June Outlook. If you are unable to attend you can send a photo to kccseniorphotos@gmail.com along with students name, High School attended and college plans, gap year, undecided, etc.

Spring Schedule for Adult and Family Classes



Mothers Day Calligraphy Workshop w/Irina Zhivotovskaia

Kensington Recreation Building
Saturday, May 3rd
10:00am-1:00pm
\$45 register online

Cardio Dance with Karma Smart

Fridays 11:30am-12:30
Community Center

Cost \$15 drop in or register online

Tai Chi with Nobuo Nishi

Wednesdays & Fridays from 9:30-11:00am
Drop-in fee is \$15

Yoga with Anja Borgstrom

Strength & Balance Yoga -Tuesdays at 8:30am
Cost is \$20 drop in or register online

Slim Chance Circus School - All-Ages Unicycle & Juggling Class

Thursday evenings, 6:00 PM - 7:15 PM
Recreation Building Classroom A (Kensington Park near the flat upper lawn)
Cost: \$20 per person (drop-in). Family discounts available

Family Yoga in the Park with Lori Hess

Family Yoga will take place on rotating weekend days @ 10:00-10:45 (kids aged 2 to 5) on the grassy lawn outside the KCC Office/Recreation Building (past the tennis courts).

If possible, please bring a waterproof blanket/tarp, two yoga mats (we will have extra mats available), warm layers, and a water bottle.

Spring dates: Saturday 5/3, Sunday 5/11, Saturday 5/17 and Sunday 5/31. Suggested cost: \$25 per class; Please contact Lori Hess waytoglowkidsyoga@gmail.com with questions about the class.

Register at KensingtonCommunityCouncil.org/adult-and-family-classes

The Kensington Outlook can now be found at: KensingtonOutlook.com

Archive copies can also be found on our website dating back to 2003. KCC/KASEP Office: 59 Arlington Ave., Recreation Building Kensington CA 94707 E-mail: Info@KensingtonCommunityCouncil.org, or call 510-525-0292. Our website is: www.kensingtoncommunitycouncil.org.



Follow us on Instagram
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KENSINGTON EATS OUT

Kensington Eats Out at the Gilman Wine Block
By Ittai Shiu

First Fridays: A Toast to Community, Flavor, and Natural Wines

In the heart of Berkeley’s Gilman district, the First Friday Block Party, on 5th Street between Camellia and Gilman streets, has become a monthly ritual for locals and visitors. Held on the first Friday of each month from 3-8pm, this event combines natural wines, inventive food, live music, and a joyous neighborhood scene welcoming the warmth of the summer.

The Gilman Wine Block is home to a quartet of natural wineries: Hammerling Wines, Donkey & Goat, Broc Cellars, and Tessier Winery. Each brings its unique flair and personality, offering attendees a diverse tasting experience. Whether you’re a seasoned wine enthusiast or a curious newcomer, the array of bottles and glasses available for purchase promises something to delight every palate.



Beyond wine, First Fridays features a rotating lineup of local pop-up food vendors offering everything from savory snacks to indulgent desserts. During my last visit, I started with one of the elaborate pretzels from Squabisch, a Kensington Farmers Market regular. After some exploring, I followed up with a baja-style fish taco from Dos Raicez, then took a bite out of my daughter’s slice of Oakland’s Citizen Pizza, and finished with a sweet treat from Edith’s Pies.

I know I only scratched the surface, having passed up Indonesian Food Truck D’Groback, Tutuli Coyatas, which featured an array of hand-crafted Mexican pastries, and Tita



Ammy’s Lumpia, which offers a taste of the Philippines.

Live music is also a staple of the evening, creating a laid-back, celebratory experience. While I was there, DJ Yerstrooly set an upbeat and funky mood as I wandered between wineries and soaked up the scene. Families, couples, and dogs (yay, dogs!) are all welcome, making this soiree feel more like an open house for the whole community than your typical wine tasting.

Outside of the event itself, the Gilman district is brimming with neighborhood gems worth exploring. Just a short stroll away, you’ll find the Trumer Taproom, where you can sip crisp, locally brewed pilsner in a sleek, modern setting. Picante serves up vibrant Mexican dishes with house-made salsas and warm tortillas that draw a loyal crowd. For something cozy and eclectic, Lama Beans offers a global-inspired menu in a relaxed cafe atmosphere. With colorful murals, artisan storefronts, and spontaneous pop-up markets

dotting the streets, the area invites wandering and discovery before the music starts.

First Fridays provides a rare blend of intimacy and energy. You’ll meet the winemakers, chat with chefs, and maybe even dance a little. It’s the kind of place where community comes first, and everyone is invited. Grab a friend, bring your pup, and don’t miss out on one of the East Bay’s most delicious and down-to-earth monthly traditions. The next block party is May 2. Admission is free, and with so much to explore—flavors to sample, bottles to take home, and people to meet—it’s an unbeatable way to kick off the month.



Hammerling Wines, 1350 5th St, Berkeley, California 94710
<https://www.hammerlingwines.co/> <https://www.instagram.com/hammerlingwines>

Chorale

...from Page 6

with the poetry of Ogden Nash. Rossino Mantovano, whose music still resonates five centuries later, pens a fun frottola focusing, of course, on love requited and perhaps unrequited.

The theme of love is manifested in a diversity of music, some of which recognizes that this concert takes place on Mother’s Day Weekend. Jennifer Lucy Cook serenades Mother Earth in a powerful hymn, and Gwyneth Walker delivers a frothy musical toast based on Shakespeare’s famous line, “If music be the food of love sing on.”

Rounding out the concert are several Liebeslieder Walzes from Johannes Brahms; a composition showcasing humanist and socialist Helen Keller’s words; and a rousing “Promise of Living” by Aaron Copland. Love—of our partners, of pleasures, of the earth, and of our community—abounds in this concert.

Closing the program will be “We Are All Bound Up Together” by Joan Szymko, who wrote a piece commissioned to honor former artistic director Cindy Beitmen, which premiered under Szymko’s baton at the chorale’s concert last May.

“This is a program that speaks to the power of music, both as a language of a wide range of emotions and as a vehicle for expressing big ideas,” says Schultz. “Participating in choral music is a great way to help make sense of the world. It’s also a great way to escape the world, and I think this program is an opportunity for both.”

Make plans now—and invite someone you love—to join the Contra Costa Chorale in celebrating “Living, Laughing, Loving” on Mother’s Day Weekend, Friday, May 9 at 7:30pm in a live performance and livestreamed. For tickets (both live and livestream): <https://ticketstripe.com/cocochorale> For more, contact cocochorale@gmail.com or call 510-730-0202.

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SPRING UPDATES
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Spring's in full swing, and we've been busy in Kensington: doubling-down on community, bringing houses to market, and helping buyers find their home. Here are a few updates!

COLUSA CIRCLE 5K

Thanks to all who came to the 7th annual Colusa Circle 5K! We raised over \$4K for The Watershed Project to support their restoration activities. Check out photos at zipcodeeastbay.com/events.

SPRING LISTINGS

With listings in Kensington and surrounding communities from here to wine country, email josh@zipcodeeastbay.com to get the scoop on the homes next to hit the market or how to list yours!

GROWING OUR FAMILY

Welcome to ZCEB, Aileen Summers! Aileen splits her time between Sonoma and the East Bay and has helped clients since 2014. Ask her about her latest DIY project or her 19 chickens! aileen@zipcodeeastbay.com

If you're interested in buying, selling or your home's value, get in touch!

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