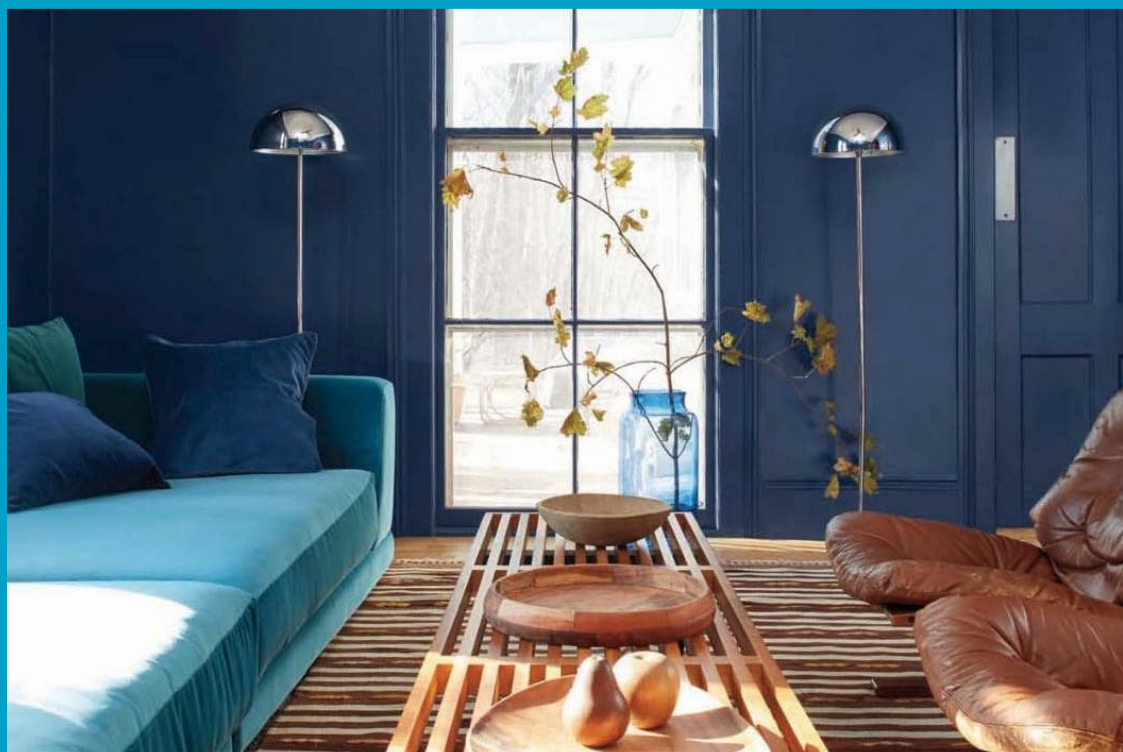


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NOVEMBER 2023 A PUBLICATION OF THE KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL VOLUME 81 NUMBER 9



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Photo by Jenny Parks

By Sylvia Elsbury, KCC board president

In this issue of the *Kensington Outlook* you will find a green envelope. That means it is time for you to join me in making a tax-deductible donation to KCC's Annual Fund Drive—and for me to offer you a snapshot of KCC's activities in 2023.

For generations, the Kensington Community Council (KCC) has provided recreation programs to Kensington under contract with the KPPCSD. This year KCC offered a record number of KASEP classes, with an always-changing roster of after-school classes. These include the perennially popular carpentry, plus gymnastics and other sports, but also coding, circus arts, American Sign Lan-

guage, "Unicorns and Rainbows" and so many more...brought to you by KCC's dynamic and creative teaching staff and our recreation director, Jenny Parks. With 50 classes per week this fall, the KASEP program is serving more children than ever.

Adult KCC classes include yoga and tai chi. Family yoga, for adults and their children, is offered on Sunday mornings at 10. Evening classes included the popular Mediterranean cooking classes and jewelry-making workshop.

KCC's summer camp in Kensington Park remains an enduring

See KCC Creates Community, page 5

The fire board raises its estimate for renovation and the police board debates options for housing the KPD. Stories on page 4.

Kensington and Beyond Update

October 2023



NEW LISTING | 262 Amherst Ave Kensington | 3 BR | 1+ BA
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OFFERED AT: \$989,000



ACTIVE | 8315 Terrace Dr El Cerrito Hills | 5 BR | 3 BA
Classic 60's Modern with stellar views! Vintage character in tact.
OFFERED AT: \$1,188,000



ACTIVE | 928 Arlington Blvd El Cerrito Hills | 5 BR | 3 BA
Gorgeous Mid-Century with stunning views spectacular garden. Beautifully updated!
OFFERED AT: \$2,488,000



ACTIVE | 33 Avon Rd Kensington | 4 BR | 3 BA
Tastefully renovated home, combines comfort, practicality, and style. Blocks to Colusa Circle
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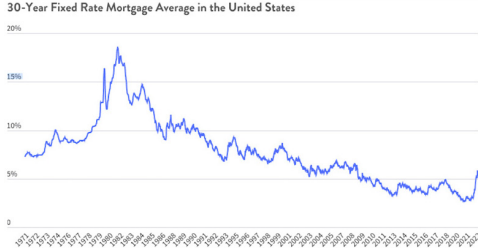
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Kensington Market Update

September 2023 to Present



The current interest rates seem high when compared to their low's of 2020-2022. But when viewed over the past several decades you see a very different perspective. (rates are a little higher than in this graph, but I think you get the picture!):



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Letters to the Editor

No Sensible Alternative

Dear Editor:

After reading the letter in the October *Outlook* from Tess Snook O'Riva, the executive director of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley (UUCB), I urge the board of the Kensington Police Protection Community Services District (KPPCSD) to please reconsider placing the police back into the public safety building. The letter was written on August 8 and appeared in the *Outlook* after it was included in the September KPPCSD board meeting packet. The letter thanked Sarah Gough and Alexandra Aquino-Fike for representing the KPPCSD interest in having the police lease space on the UUCB site and went on to say that the board of trustees at UUCB decided against having the police department on-site.

In the recent November election there were six slate candidates for the fire and police boards voted in to solve the issue of finding an acceptable location for the police department. Many of us voted for the slate believing they supported placing the police back in the Public Safety Building. There had already been an exhaustive one-to-two-year search for an alternate site. Regardless of the many reasons why it may not be ideal to house both departments in the same building, there is no sensible alternative location in Kensington or one that would be more cost-effective than keeping the police in the public safety building.

I urge the board to use its time wisely and make preparations to place the police department back where it has successfully served our small community for many decades.

Deborah Lane

Reconsidering Options

Dear Editor:

We learned last month that the Unitarian Church is not interested in leasing space to house the KPPCSD police department when the fire department vacates the space. This simply means that our options become more limited: buying property is very expensive, funding we don't have, there are few if any open lots in town, and the property we do own needs to be back on the table for consideration. Those properties are the parking lot on the Arlington (not the Arlington church section) and property along the Arlington near the library.

It's time to be realistic, support problem-solving options and be open to reconsidering options that were considered anathema at one point. We need to move towards developing short- and long-term plans and support the board in doing so.

There will be objections to any proposal; no proposal will please everyone. If we want our police located in Kensington, we have to find the best option available, even if it means utilizing space at the edges of the park.

Mabry Benson

Following the Brown Act Is Vital

Dear Editor,

Our community has come a long way from a period where shortcuts were taken by the Kensington Police Protection Community Services District (KPPCSD) board's approach to conducting business. We had sloppy governance for years. We also had numerous lawsuits.

At the recent KPPCSD board meeting, concerns were raised about a new legal firm hired on short notice. The hasty decision raised questions if the Brown Act was being followed. Where was the public discussion of understanding and comparing the cost impacts of changing legal counsel over the long- and short-term? Was there a public meeting following contract hiring procedures to review the law firm's brochures, interviews by board members, and debates of pros and cons?

It is imperative the KPPCSD board continues to observe the model of recent boards where they adhered to the Brown Act, and where the general counsel attended every meeting to ensure compliance. New board members learned through procedural examples: data and materials were provided to the board and residents prior to every meeting, and all items discussed were agendaized. The board and GM must act in accordance with the Policy & Procedures Manual.

Adherence to the Brown Act means the board is required to discuss issues in public before making a decision. The board gives direction to the GM: the board makes policy, while the GM implements it.

An experienced GM can provide input on how to do something within the law, following the Brown Act, but a GM is not the president. A great GM gets this, and steps back to guide a new board to make sound policy decisions and provide direction. This is good governance.

Taxpayers, on the other hand, need to be watchdogs, attend meetings, stay informed and hold both the board and the GM accountable either at meetings, in public comments, letters or with PRAs to gather information when the board goes sideways, or cuts corners. Without adherence to the Brown Act, we will be back to governing in the gray areas, which in the past has proven to be very costly to Kensington taxpayers.

John Gaccione

Marilyn Stollon

Cooperate on Consolidation Analysis Now

Dear Editor:

It is a positive step that the KPPCSD has created an RFP along with edits from the KFPD to hire an expert to analyze financial and efficiency effects of merging our separate services districts into a single community services district. It is time for the two existing districts to cooperate to select an experienced consolidation/reorganization expert to provide the community with an independent analysis.

This analysis is a first step required by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to determine whether a single services district in Kensington will be more efficient and more professional in providing all services now provided under the two districts. KPOA's research over the last two years into consolidation/ reorganization indicates this is the case.

KPOA is not persuaded by arguments that future costs, such as a new police station, cannot be determined and that an independent analysis would be premature to do now. The range of possible costs of a new police station will be included in a consolidation analysis by a selected professional who has conducted others. Existing uncertainties arise in practically all such analyses and will not disappear if the analysis is delayed. That one consolidated district might provide a better financial position for funding Kensington's community services is a strong possibility; certainly this is something Kensington taxpayers would want evaluated immediately. Two of many advantages are that unified services districts are in stronger positions to attract grant funding and to have more professional staffing than more narrowly defined services districts, according to KPOA annual meeting keynote expert Richard Berkson. He emphasized the importance of both financial and nonfinancial advantages.

The independent financial and services analysis is the first action step in the consolidation process. We continue to support cooperation between the two district boards to evaluate district consolidation/reorganization and to be expedient and efficient in getting it done. The community deserves to see the results of this initial step.

KPOA President Rob Firmin and Board of Directors

September Patrol Log

Sept. 1, at 1306, officers responded to the zero hundred block of Highgate Road and took a report of a residential burglary with a loss of approximately \$725. The investigation is ongoing.

Sept. 1, at 1553, officers were dispatched to Arlington and Westminster avenues for possible child abduction. After a thorough investigation in Contra Costa and Solano counties, it was determined a child abduction did not occur.

Sept. 3, at 0820, officers responded to the Sunset View Cemetery for a trespassing call. Officers located the suspect, who was arrested for an outstanding felony warrant from Alameda County. The suspect was transported to Contra Costa County Jail.

Sept. 3, at 1630, officers responded to an at-risk 81-year-old missing person. After a thorough investigation, the missing person was found unharmed in another city.

Sept. 4, at 2050, officers responded to a non-injury collision on Arlington at Oberlin Avenues.

Sept. 6, at 0951, officers responded to the 200 block of Yale Avenue and took a report of theft of funds.

Sept. 11, at 2240, officers responded to the one hundred block of St. Albans for a vehicle vandalism report.

Sept. 12, at 0714, officers responded to an auto burglary in the four hundred block of Beloit Avenue.

Sept. 17, at 1452, officers responded to a stolen vehicle report in the one hundred block of Purdue Avenue.

Sept. 20, at 1106, officers responded to Mechanics Bank, where staff reported a person was trying to cash fraudulent checks. Officers arrested a 58-year-old female suspect engaged in multiple crimes along with several outstanding warrants for similar crimes in other states. The suspect was booked into the County Jail in Martinez.

Sept. 28, at 1653, officers took a report of an auto burglary in the one hundred block of Ardmore Avenue. The loss was approximately \$3,100.00. The investigation is ongoing.



Encanto Draws a Crowd

By Sylvia Elsbury

An estimated 400 people turned out for KCC's Movie Night in Kensington Park. Old-timers cannot recall a larger turnout for this annual event. The weather was just perfect on the evening of September 23, which is precisely why we hold our outdoor Movie Night at this relatively busy time of year. Movie fans of all ages nearly filled the lawn outside the Recreation Building. The film screened, Disney's *Encanto*, inspired many to sing along. KCC's picnic dinners sold out completely, as did dairy-free ice creams from our newest sponsor, Mr. Dewie's Cashew Creamery. Not surprisingly, the treat in highest demand was popcorn, which was feverishly and cheerfully popped and served by the good people of Red Oak Realty: Tania Balazs, Todd Hodson and Leigh Schneider.

Movie Night was underwritten by our longtime sponsor, Mechanics Bank. The wonderful turnout was very gratifying for all of us on KCC's board who, along with our Recreation Director Jenny Parks and a small handful of volunteers, were pleased to put on this event for the enjoyment of all in our community. To join us and ensure the return of Movie Night year after year, please contact me at president@kensington-communitycouncil.org.

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Wildcat Firewise Receives Funds for Wildfire Prevention

By Johnny Valenzuela, Kensington Preparedness Coordinator

Measure X funds for the Wildfire Mitigation Program approved and managed by the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District have been awarded to Wildcat Firewise. The funds will be allocated for chipping services to remove vegetative fuel to reduce wildfire risk. Homeowners in the Wildcat Firewise community are preparing to clear around their properties to have the vegetative material chipped and removed.

Wildcat Firewise's consistent activity is increasing public awareness and making the community safer by bringing resources like the Measure X-funded chipping services to Kensington. The Firewise community was formed and recognized by the National Fire Protection Association in May, just a few months ago, and is already paving the way for additional Firewise communities in Kensington. A second Firewise community is under review adjacent to Wildcat Firewise's boundaries, encompassing the northernmost part of Purdue Avenue, Garden Drive, and Dewey Road.

Measure X is a 20-year, ½ cent sales tax approved by Contra Costa County voters in 2020. It funds essential services, including regional hospital support, community health centers, emergency response, safety-net services, early childhood services, and assistance for vulnerable populations. Oversight is provided by a Community Advisory Board, which assesses community needs annually and recommends funding priorities based on a Needs Assessment. The Board of Supervisors allocates funds based on these recommendations. Extensive presentations and discussions have informed the allocation process.

The Wildfire Mitigation Program aims to reduce wildfire risks county-wide. It supports community chipping days, evacuation route cleanups, Firewise USA initiatives, home hardening outreach, low-income hazard control, dead tree removal, shaded fuel breaks, and vegetation management for fire prevention.

To learn more about Kensington's emergency preparedness opportunities, visit www.kensingtonfire.org/volunteer.

HEALTH ALERT

Wildfires from hundreds of miles away can directly impact your health. Poor air quality poses risks to everyone, with seniors particularly vulnerable. As we age, our lungs become less efficient at filtering pollutants, and our immune system weakens. This can lead to acute respiratory problems, such as shortness of breath, bronchial spasms, and respiratory tract infections such as pneumonia. Make it a habit to check air quality. Refrain from strenuous activity when air quality is poor and wear an N95 mask if you go outside. Go to www.baaqmd.gov for local air quality readings.

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.

DECEMBER 2023
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Advertising Deadline ❖ NOV. 8
Editorial Deadline ❖ NOV. 10

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Public Safety Building Renovation Costs Revised

By Linnea Due

The September 20 fire board meeting featured several newsworthy events: former interim general manager Mary Morris-Mayorga begins a two-year contract as general manager. Morris-Mayorga said in a September 26 interview that she took the job to prevent the district from upheaval. “I hate to see them go through too much transition,” she said. When she took the job as interim, she worried that living above Sacramento would create a problem for the district. “But my being far away has not been an issue,” she said, “so I’m happy to continue doing it.”

The “it” Morris-Mayorga refers to is a complicated process that involves her wearing multiple hats. She oversees aspects of the Public Safety Building’s renovation while managing the finances of the district. She tries to plan for problems down the road, which with construction are an all-too-frequent occurrence. Such planning was the impetus behind the budget revision presented at the meeting, which raised the PSB’s potential costs to a hair under 9M from the last iteration of a little under 8M. (These figures include the temporary fire station design and construction of around 925K.) The biggest revised ticket items on the Public Safety Building itself were change orders amounting to \$400K, legal fees, and project management costs upping the bill another \$400K.

So far \$42K has been spent on legal fees, and the revised budget the board voted in at the meeting authorizes a total of \$130K. What would generate \$88K more? “This is probably on the high end,” Morris-Mayorga said. “Basically it’s renewing documents, change orders, correspondence with the contractor. We’re authorizing that much as a precautionary measure. I’m assuming we’ll conclude the project on time. And there will be the final documents to review when we close out.”

Most of the budget revisions appear precautionary, with the exception of the change orders. There was the \$100K hit from asbestos abatement that most thought had already been abated during previous remodels. “And then we ran into unforeseen conditions,” Morris-Mayorga explained. “For instance, the drainage system was unusable and needed to be completely replaced. There were conditions in the soil and underneath the pad that had to be corrected. They [estimators and contractor] wouldn’t know that by just looking at the building.”

In terms of the project management costs, Morris-Mayorga explained, “Everybody has a different function. Everybody’s working within the project. Mack5 is the construction manager. They’re the go-between between us and the contractor and the design team. I have a general construction background, but we try to keep my position part-time. And MarJang is the architect. There are geotechnical engineers. We’ve had a little bit of help from [former GM] Bill Hansell. He’s busy now so we aren’t going to have too much more help from him.”

If needed, the 1.1M added to the revised budget would come out of capital reserves.

See Fire Board, page 9


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Police Board Divides Relocation Options into Yay or Nay

By Linnea Due

In a PowerPoint presentation on October 12, Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District board president Alexandra Aquino-Fike and Sarah Gough, the two directors guiding the board’s search for a permanent location for the police and district offices, laid out the current lay of the land. Aquino-Fike and Gough said that they were leaving “no stone unturned,” and have been investigating the many suggestions made by the community members.

Aquino-Fike first listed the “no-gos,” that is, properties no longer being considered by the relocation committee. These include any property outside Kensington, the Public Safety Building itself, the parking lot or lots at the Unitarian Church (UUCB), a possible 1.2 acres at Sunset View Cemetery (deemed unaffordable), various properties owned by Ed Hammond at Colusa Circle, several commercial properties for sale or lease on the Arlington (too small for KPD), and listed residential properties.

Gough explained that listed residential properties are likely impossible for the district to buy, because properties are sold in an average of fifteen days and about eighteen percent above asking. The district, bound by laws regarding public notice of action items, could not move quickly enough to purchase a listed property. And there are other issues. “Rezoning would have to happen if [the property] nestles in among homes,” Gough said. “You’d be asking someone to wait for the government process. It would have to be an off-market situation with a very patient seller.”

The next slide on the presentation listed real estate properties suggested by the community and still being considered. These include two possibilities the district owns: the lot south of the library, which will need a geotechnical study for fault lines and has other issues and the district’s portion of the parking lot across from Arlington Community Church. Other properties still under consideration are 303 Arlington (back again!), the Narsai David property at Colusa Circle, 219 Arlington (residential property next door to the Public Safety Building), properties owned by the county within Kensington, and properties owned by East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), also within Kensington.

Aquino-Fike said that the owner of 303 Arlington “is now open to selling.” However, the owner wants to sell the entire set of properties, including the parking lot, the house on the parking lot, and the commercial property the district had initially been interested in two years back. “It’s probably completely unaffordable,” Aquino-Fike said.

Narsai David’s property at Colusa Circle is an unknown, waiting for David’s son Daniel David to respond. County board supervisor John Gioia is investigating other ideas and perhaps helping with EBMUD to reach higher-level officials. (EBMUD has said that they are very aware of the police relocation problem but are so involved in their construction projects that “there is just no way we can talk about selling” now.)

The next slide talked about possible funding. “Since we’re talking about new construction wherever we land, we’re looking at possible state funding,” Aquino-Fike said. Later in the meeting, director Dave Spath mentioned that he was investigating FEMA funding. “We have a reasonable opportunity to seek funding from FEMA,” Spath said. “It’s called a hazard mitigation program and funds projects dealing with essential services such as fire and police. We face hazards here, particularly fire and earthquakes. All FEMA grants go through Cal OES [California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services]. They are more than willing to sit down and talk to potential applicants. I think we should take advantage of that. FEMA might fund 75 percent of the project cost, including project management.” Both he and the committee’s two directors reiterated that this research must start now.

Director Sylvia Hacaj was president of the board during much of the previous search for properties. “We have been through many of these options,” she said during board comments. “We had talked for a long time about moving the portable. If there’s a site identified, we need to appoint a negotiator.” She suggested that it might be possible to buy the whole of 303 Arlington and then subdivide the property and sell the part unneeded by the police.

Spath noted that, “303 Arlington sits right next to the Hayward fault. It would take a lot of work to bring that up to the standards of an essential services building.”

Towards the end of the discussion, Aquino-Fike said that while options are limited, the board is committed to bringing the police back to Kensington.

In other district news, the KPPCSD accepted the resignation of longtime general counsel Ann Danforth. Best Best & Krieger LLP (BBK), a law firm headquartered in Walnut Creek, replaces her.

ACC Wednesday Film Series

By Sara Laferte

All are welcome on Wednesday, November 1, when Arlington Community Church presents the film *Ordinary People*. Say the website Spirituality and Practice: Resources for Spiritual Journeys, “*Ordinary People* [1980] is a film that works on several levels. It is a sensitive portrait of a young man struggling to regain his equilibrium after caving in to grief and guilt following his brother’s death. The story also works as an incisive portrait of a hurting family—one in which surface calm conceals a real lack of communication, self-esteem, and mutual understanding. Finally, the drama presents an edifying example of humanistic psychology at its best.”

Please plan to arrive at or before 1:30pm to get settled in to watch the two-hour film, which starts at 1:45. The film will be shown in the Fireside Room. There will be the traditional popcorn and lemon water to enjoy during the film and an after-film discussion of its content.ool, library, skilled nursing facility or other location. See you at the Community Center!

Save the Date: Handmade Gifts at St. Jerome’s Christmas Sale

By Mary D. Ghidella

The crafters of Saint Jerome Church, located at 308 Carmel Avenue, El Cerrito, meet weekly to make hand-knit and other home-sewn items for the annual Christmas sale December 2, 3-6:30pm and December 3, 9am to 1pm. The hand-knit items range from sweaters and blankets for baby, scarves and fingerless gloves, hats and shawls for adults, and colorful Christmas ornaments. Other holiday items and hand-crafted gifts are also offered.

An Enchanted Celebration Awaits at the Garden Party

By Rae Quigley

The Kensington community is gearing up for the pinnacle of its social calendar—the 39th Annual Garden Party on Saturday, November 3. This much-anticipated event serves as a significant fundraiser for the Kensington Education Foundation (KEF), which provides hands-on enrichment programs for students at Kensington Hilltop Elementary.

What’s particularly exciting about this year’s extravaganza is the theme, fittingly titled “Enchanted Garden.” Expect an evening filled with elegance and community spirit as Kensington residents, local businesses, and Hilltop alumni gather to support education. The Garden Party has become synonymous with the generosity of local businesses and individuals, including Abbey Pet Hospital, Anastasia Levitansky from The Grubb Co., Arlington Wine and Spirits, Campbell Green LLP, Dr. Nicholas Ching from Children’s Dentistry, Josh Dickinson from Zip Code East Bay, Tracy Zhou from Golden Gate Sotheby’s, and Yun Tong from Golden Gate Sotheby’s. Arlington Wine and Spirits has been a longtime supporter and has also provided wine for the event.



A tradition that warms the heart is the participation of Hilltop’s newest alumni, now navigating seventh grade. These young individuals play an active role in the event—serving hors d’oeuvres, selling raffle tickets, and experiencing firsthand the magic of the Garden Party.

The night unfolds with the silent auction, where bids heat up for coveted items such as priceless artwork, special outings, and experiences for the whole family. Teacher Treasures, generously donated by Hilltop’s beloved teachers, draw competitive bids. As anticipation builds, the spotlight turns to the live auction, featuring exclusive giveaways and the coveted “Principal for a Day” opportunity, where the child of the winning bidder shadows new Hilltop principal Kim Jordan for a behind-the-scenes school day. The mighty Auxiliary work party, a team of handy Hilltop parents tackling home or yard projects for the winning bidder, is another hotly contested item.

Don’t miss out on this unforgettable evening! Secure your tickets now at tinyurl.com/2023-garden-party.

Leading up to the main event is the online auction, which runs until October 30, offering a diverse array of goods and services donated by local businesses. Whether it’s beauty treatments, exercise classes, home services, movie passes, or restaurant and store gift certificates, there’s something for everyone. Even if you can’t make it to the Garden Party, you can still participate in the online auction or contribute directly at tinyurl.com/2023-garden-party.

Join us for a night where philanthropy meets fun, and together we make a difference in the lives of our local students!



Hot Cocoa, Live Music, Local Crafts Anchor Colusa Circle Holiday Fair

By Rae Quigley

The Colusa Circle Holiday Fair is set to usher in the holiday season with a renewed spirit on Sunday, November 25 from 4:45-6pm. Thanks to recent enhancements, the beautiful oak tree at the center of Colusa Circle now radiates its twinkling lights year-round. At the Holiday Fair, residents and visitors alike will see the tree adorned with some additional sparkle for the season.

The Colusa Circle Merchants Association, in the true spirit of community, is blending beloved traditions with new offerings. Live music will fill the air, spreading joy to all who gather, while Benchmark Pizzeria will provide freshly made hot cocoa to attendees right outside, adding a touch of warmth to the winter evening.

Last year, Zip Code East Bay introduced a mini-market, offering a platform for local artists to showcase their talents and unique, handmade treasures—a perfect fit for holiday gifts. Artists, artisans, and makers interested in securing a table for this year’s event can email hello@zipcodeeastbay.com. So mark your calendars and bring your loved ones to the circle on November 25 for a holiday celebration like no other. The Colusa Circle Holiday Fair is sure to be a magical evening of lights, music, art, and delectable treats. See you there!

KCC Creates Community

...from front page



Photos by Jenny Parks

success, with enrollment at maximum capacity once again this past summer. Each week of camp has a theme, but for the most part KCC Camp is about fun and friendship, play, and pure enjoyment of the summer break. I believe the relaxed vibe of our camp sets it apart from other summer programs, and keeps families coming back year after year.

One trend we have observed in both KASEP and summer camps is the increased need for scholarships. Thanks to the generosity of donors, including Annual Fund donors and KASEP families, KCC continues to meet the demand for scholarships, expanding access to more and more members of our community.

It is KCC’s tradition to put on community-wide family events, and in 2023 we presented Movie Night in September and the Fall Picnic in October. Both were held in Kensington Park. These gatherings fill me with gratitude for my Kensington neighbors and friends, old and new, and for this beautiful place we call home.

KCC also publishes the Kensington *Outlook*, delivered free to every home in Kensington and available online. The *Outlook* features local news and views, the police activity log and letters to the editor, and serves as a guide to businesses in the local marketplace.

Contributions to KCC’s Annual Fund Drive make all of this possible, and we urge you to use the green envelope enclosed in this *Outlook*, or donate online at kensingtoncommunitycouncil.org. Donors will be acknowledged in the February 2024 *Outlook*.



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PAGE 4

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

NOVEMBER 2023



KCC Picnic sponsor Mechanics Bank held a costume contest at their table inside the Community Center. Photo by Lin Due.



Dads' Club grillers weren't deterred by the downpour. Photo by Byron Kawaichi

Rain Doesn't Spoil a Perfect Day



Pooches greet each other before being blessed by Reverend Jen Chapman of Arlington Community Church at the annual Blessing of the Animals. Photo by Rev. Jen Chapman.



Reverend Jen Chapman cooked up hand made dog treats for very good dogs. She even provided a recipe if you want to try this at home. Photo by Rev. Jen Chapman.



Band members from The Great Space Coaster adjust sound levels under the awning outside the Community Center on October 22 at the KCC Picnic. Photo by Lin Due.



The Kensington Education Foundation invites you to the 39th Annual Kensington Hilltop Elementary

GARDEN Party

Join us for a magical evening of celebration and giving back! We cordially invite you to a night of elegance, merrymaking, and charitable giving, all for a great cause! Indulge in delicious food and wine, enjoy enchanting musical performances, and browse and bid on exquisite artwork. Proceeds directly benefit Kensington students.



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Tashi's humans, Alisha and Stephen, enjoy the rain before the Blessing of the Animals. Photo by Sacha Meyer Kawaichi.



KCC President Sylvia Elsbury worked for months to put on a successful picnic. Photo by Lin Due.



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K E N S I N G T O N

Community Education



KASEP: Kensington After School Enrichment Program

At KASEP, we believe in the power of exploration and skill-building, and our diverse range of after-school classes reflects just that. From the thrill of sports like Tennis, Soccer and Basketball to the creative wonders of becoming a Master Artist, our offerings span the spectrum of interests. Dive into the world of languages with Mandarin through Art, crack the code with Coding, or let imaginations run wild with LEGO adventures.

As KASEP evolves and grows, we remain dedicated to the Kensington community, fostering the growth and development of the next generation.

Registration for our winter session opens on **December 5th at 7:00 pm for kindergarten and 7:30 pm for grades 1-6**. Don't miss out – secure your spot for a winter session with learning, laughter, and limitless possibilities. Winter session begins the week of January 2nd, 2024.

Adult and Family Classes

Mediterranean Cooking

Every week, April Schlanger embarks on a culinary adventure throughout the Mediterranean, delving into a different region each time. You're welcome to join us every week or simply drop in for your preferred choice. We provide all the necessities, and you can relish a delectable feast while gaining the skills to replicate it on your own.

When: Every Tuesday evening in the Community Center

Time: 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

Location: Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave, Kensington

Price: \$45 per class, which includes all materials needed for the class.

Flexible Attendance: Join us each week for a comprehensive culinary journey or drop in when your schedule permits

Nov 7th Slovenian Cuisine

Nov 14th Tunisian Cuisine

Nov 21st No class

Nov 28th Israeli Cuisine Part 1

Dec 5th Israeli Cuisine Part 2

Dec 12th: Mediterranean

Inspired Party Cuisine

Dec 19th -Dec 26th No Class

Jewelry Making

April Schlanger is returning with another fantastic jewelry workshop. Come and join us on Friday, November 17th, between 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM for an enjoyable evening of artistic expression. Whether you're making jewelry for your own collection or aiming to craft unique, personalized gifts, this class will equip you with the knowledge and inspiration necessary to create exquisite pieces.

Date: Friday, November 17th

Time: 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Location: Kensington Recreation Building Room B- 59 Arlington Ave, Kensington

Cost: \$35 per person (includes basic supplies and tool usage)



*New Class Coming in December
Cardio Dance

Karma Smart who used to teacher our KASEP Dance fitness class is back to dance with adults.

Cardio Dance with Karma is a one-hour dance class experience that features a variety of dance styles. This class incorporates the genres of dance Karma has studied throughout her career including but not limited to Afro-Brazilian, Samba, Congolese, Zumba, Jazz, and more. Each class starts with a warm up and ends with a cool down. This class will make you sweat while having a lot of fun dancing to music from all over the world.

Starting December 1st, every Friday

11:15-12:15 Community Center

Cost \$20 drop in or register online

Adult Yoga Class at the Community Center

Strength & Balance Yoga -Tuesdays at 8:30am

Strength & Balance Yoga -Thursdays at 11:30

Teacher Anja Borgstrom **Cost** is \$20 drop in or register online

Tai Chi with Nobuo Nishi

Wednesdays & Fridays 9:30-11:00am

Drop-in fee is \$15

Family Toddler Yoga in the Park

Sundays in November 5th, 11th, 19th

10:00-10:45 (kids aged 2 to 5) & 11:00-11:45 (kids aged 5 to 10)

on the grassy lawn outside the KCC Office/Recreation Building about the class.

Suggested cost: \$25 per person

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

Keep checking our website for updated adult class schedules.

Weekend Tennis court reservations can now be made online at KPPCSD.org/tennis-court

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.



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Fire Board

...from Page 4

“We’re still putting the set-aside for rolling stock,” she said. “We add \$200K every year for rolling stock replacement” along with the holdback amount for the contract with El Cerrito for providing fire services.

All in all, Morris-Mayorga hopes these added authorizations provide “a comfortable cushion. We’ve budgeted for the what-if, but not an excessive amount, and we’re hoping we come in under that.”

So how much will the new fire station cost? Despite two requests, Morris-Mayorga has not supplied figures for the loan and debt service. Information is scattered among documents on the district website. To the best of my knowledge, the initial loan amount was 2.167M for a 25-year term at 4.07 percent. But the loan contributes only about 1.9M to renovation costs after processing fees. Interest payments average over \$142K annually. This comes to a loan total cost of over 3.5M. Total project cost of loan plus construction comes to around 12.5M, way above initial estimates. This includes the temporary station, a necessary part of the project. Most of that money is coming from fire district revenue and reserves, about 10.6M, also significantly above earlier estimates.

Districts Still at Odds

Much of the rest of September 20 meeting centered around authorizing a request for proposals (RFP) to hire an analyst to conduct a financial deep-dive into the two districts—the Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District (KPPCSD) and the Kensington Fire Protection District (KFPD)—to assess the consequences of combining the two districts into one. Not only would an analysis of both districts answer long-standing questions about whether combining the districts would really save money, it is also a required step from LAFCO, the Local Agency Formation Commission that would OK such a reorganization. (At an earlier meeting, LAFCO Executive Officer Lou Ann Texeira explained that Kensington’s oft-cited “consolidation” was actually considered a reorganization.)

The RFP in question was a carefully honed product of a two-by-two committee: fire board directors Daniel Levine and Larry Nagel and police board directors Sylvia Hacaaj and Dave Spath. Levine explained that Dave Spath took the first stab at the RFP’s language, and then the committee convened several meetings to refine it. It then went to both general managers to vet and then to legal counsel. Those hammered-out terms were adopted unanimously at the September 14 police board meeting, with the proviso that the RFP was also acceptable to the fire board. That proved a false hope: director Don Dommer was absent for health reasons, and the remaining four fire board directors were split on the notion.

Director Jim Watt noted that while the RFP was well-written, “there are issues I cannot support.” Watt said that the fire board has spent considerable time putting together a five-year projection as part of the PSB renovation, while the police board “is just starting out on trying to find a location to build a separate police department.” He mentioned that the Unitarian Church had turned down leasing a portion of its parking lot to the police, and that before the districts hire a consultant to try to make estimates based on unknowns, the KPPCSD needed to figure out a location and its associated costs.

“A new station could run way over five million, which that district does not have,” he said. “So either this will be paid for by Kensington taxpayers or by loan obligations. The KPPCSD should hire its own consultant to do an analysis first.” He had other qualms: “We’d be picking up CalPERS obligations in a consolidation... and inheriting the potential costs of the KPPCSD—we need to know a lot more before we accept that. And KPPCSD has to figure out costs on their nickel.”

Board president Julie Stein agreed. “I’m assuming that this kind of analysis will be performed by an economist,” she said. “I don’t see how an economist could come up with an estimate for finding a new home for the police. [The fire board is] a million dollars over the estimated budget [for the PSB] even with all these professional consultants. I don’t see how this individual can come up with something that won’t be challenged.”

She was also concerned about CalPERS. “The fire district is not a CalPERS agency, whereas the police district is. CalPERS employees are extremely expensive. I would like to have it fully laid out what the KPPCSD’s CalPERS obligations are.

We may want to consider a ten-year analysis rather than a five-year analysis.”

She floated another reorganization idea: “We could consider merging with other West County fire agencies. The trend on fire agencies is to go bigger... Dissolving the fire district is an irrevocable move... I think it’s premature, and I would like to see this board exploring other options with other fire agencies.”

A motion was made to delay voting on the RFP and to send it back to the two-by-two committee to be more specific about the issues Stein and Watt want addressed—the CalPERS question, for one. Stein also noted that past analyses of the KPPCSD reported that the police rented from the fire district at a nominal charge: “And that’s one of the factors that determines that they’re financially viable. We need to look at the present.”

Levine tried to counter some of these arguments. “Does [reorganization] make any financial sense or not? That is the simple question. I don’t think it makes sense to not do an RFP because you don’t have the answers to questions that the RFP [analysis] would answer.”

Public comment was more pointed. Kensington Property Owners’ president Rob Firmin said that the community needed answers, and that a vote not to cooperate or to delay was bad governance. Vida Dorroh groused, “As an old Kensington resident, I’d like to make a sophomoric comment. We worked very hard to get six people on these boards. Three of them screwed us out of the PSB, and now we’re getting screwed out of consolidation.”

Garen Corbett said, “We have to be looking at all of these services and our parks in one lens, as a community.” David Fike agreed, saying, “Seven of ten elected directors want to go forward to deepen the conversation about an important topic. As a Kensington resident and voter, I am surprised and disappointed that this is not going forward.”

Watt and Stein addressed some remarks. Stein said, “Fire board members did vote 4-1 to house fire only [in the PSB]. Upon being elected, director Watt and I spent several months trying to rectify that decision. They [police board directors] themselves made the independent decision not to return to the public safety building.”

“When the six of us won the election,” Watt said, “we ran on the basis that we wanted to put the police back into the public safety building... But... the [KPPCSD board changed direction without even talking to us. One day at their meeting they said that they didn’t want to be in the PSB because the chief didn’t want to be there. So I am very disappointed with some of the comments this evening that we are not going forward with goals that were part of our agenda. Of course I’m in favor of consolidation. I’m not in favor of it with two separate buildings and the cost of two separate buildings.” (For a

fuller discussion of the decision of the KPPCSD police relocation committee to abandon efforts to move back into the Public Safety Building, see the *Outlook’s* June 2023 issue online.)

Nagel made the motion to delay the decision on issuing an RFP so that Stein and Watt could discuss their issues with the two-by-two ad hoc committee, even though, he said, they could be opening “Pandora’s box,” given that so many had already vetted the current RFP and that the KPPCSD board had voted to approve that version. Stein charged that [the KPPCSD board] “just vote on things without giving us a chance to discuss it. If the cornerstone of consolidation is collaboration, then I’d like to see more collaboration.”

At that point, KPPCSD director David Spath was called on from Zoom. “I don’t think that it was disingenuous for us to vote to approve the proposed RFP with the condition that you had to approve it as well. We went through a process that we all understood, with two directors from each board, and with Mary [Morris-Mayorga] and [interim KPPCSD GM] David Aranda. We weren’t thrusting this on your board, and personally I’m more than happy to work through this and bring this back to both boards. I would like to see a fiscal analysis done, but I want you to be comfortable with what the RFP says.”

The board voted 4-0 to delay action on the RFP.

At the October 18 meeting, director Don Dommer resigned after 25 years of service. Tributes followed; a photograph will appear in the next *Outlook*. His seat will be filled after a procedure to do so is determined.

Contra Costa Chorale to Perform
Mozart’s *Requiem* at UUCB

By Kathryn Sibley

On Saturday, December 2, 5pm, the Contra Costa Chorale will present the Mozart *Requiem* at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley (UUCB) at 1 Lawson Road in Kensington. The Contra Costa Chorale is a community chorus established 57 years ago as the Richmond Symphony Chorus. After the Richmond Symphony Orchestra disbanded, the chorus members continued singing, and have been doing so ever since, through thick and thin. Under the direction of Cindy Beitmen, the group has now grown to 80 members, who rehearse weekly and perform at UUCB for two concert sets each year (May and December).

Director Beitmen has been planning to do this particular concert ever since the Chorale was, like every other chorus in the world, shuttered by the pandemic. “I knew that as soon as we could safely sing without masks, we would present this *Requiem* as a tribute to those who died from Covid-19, as well as to those who worked so courageously to keep so many alive. This tribute is very important for us.”

The *Requiem* by Joannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart (more familiarly known as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart) is a classic in the choral literature, revered by choral singers and audience members alike.

But did you know that Mozart only wrote about one half to two thirds of his famed *Requiem* before he died? Even though the entire work is attributed to Wolfgang, the last three movements were written by, shall we say, lesser composers, since he did not survive to finish it in its entirety.

Mozart was approached by a man described as an “unknown gray stranger” claiming to represent a man of great importance who requested a requiem. One of the requirements was that Mozart must not attempt to uncover the identity of the person making the request. Mozart died before the completion of the Requiem and his widow desperately needed the money promised by the patron upon presentation of the completed work. She allegedly turned to Franz Süssmayr, one of Mozart’s students, who finished about one third of the total *Requiem*. Since that time, and particularly beginning in the 20th century, many composers have challenged Süssmayr’s completion. Since 1941 there have been four partial completions, and no less than 16 full completions from various composers. Still, to this time, the most frequently presented version is the Süssmayr edition.

In an exciting break from tradition, the Contra Costa Chorale will be performing the newly published 2022 Bärenreiter edition of the Mozart *Requiem*, which was completed and edited by Michael Ostrzyga. What may set this edition apart is that Ostrzyga has done an enormous amount of historical research in considering valid possibilities for the last three movements, for which Mozart left no sketches. Ostrzyga states, “I do not see my edition as being a substitute for Süssmayr’s completion, but rather as an alternative as perhaps Mozart could have composed in 1791.” Although any of these 16 completions in the last 82 years may be valid in one way or another, Ostrzyga comes to his completion with much historical evidence to back up his musical decisions.

Beitmen and Chorale members will take the opportunity to show the audience some of the differences between the Süssmayr completion and Michael Ostrzyga’s new completion. Those who are familiar with the Contra Costa Chorale’s concerts, which have taken place at UUCB for many years now, know that Cindy Beitmen always has interesting information about the music performed. This concert will be no different. As Beitmen says, “We look forward to presenting Mozart’s *Requiem* from a fresh perspective that, nonetheless, is closely tied to the well-known masterpiece of choral literature.”

Accompanying the singers will be two pianists, Martin Morley (the Chorale’s regular accompanist) and Chun Mei Wilson, and a string chamber orchestra. Soloists will be Rita Lilly, soprano; Gabriela Estephanie Solis, alto; Mitch Ashley, tenor; and Liam Daley, bass.

The concert begins at 5pm, and tickets will be available for both in-person attendance and livestream. General attendance tickets are \$20, and the price is \$15 for students with ID and seniors over 60. See www.cchorale.org. For further information, please contact cocochorale@gmail.com, or call 510-730-0202.



November Fun at the Library

Enjoy free programs offered by the Kensington Library at 61 Arlington Avenue. Call 510-524-3043 with questions.

Fridays, Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24 Baby and Toddler Storytime Fun stories, songs, action rhymes, and more! Great for increasing early literacy skills and making friends. Two identical sessions. 10 & 11am.

Sat. Nov. 4, Make a Fun & Cute Bumble Bee Bag Puppet! Come create a puppet all your own. Great for practicing cutting and gluing skills. Best for ages three and up. 3pm.

Tues. Nov. 7, Castoff's Knitting Club 1st Tuesday of each month. Open to all levels of knitters. We share ideas, tips, and favorite resources and patterns. Bring your own yarn! 6:30pm.

Tuesdays, Nov. 7, 21, 28 Family Storytime Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome. 6:30pm.

Tues. Nov. 14, Fratello Marionettes: Jack and the Beanstalk A mysterious peddler trades Jack five magic beans for his cow, and next thing you know, a huge beanstalk grows high into the sky. 6:30pm.

Mon. Nov. 27, Kensington Library Book Club The club meets online via Zoom, usually on the fourth Monday of each month. The selection for November is *Lucy by the Sea* by Elizabeth Strout. 6:30-8pm.

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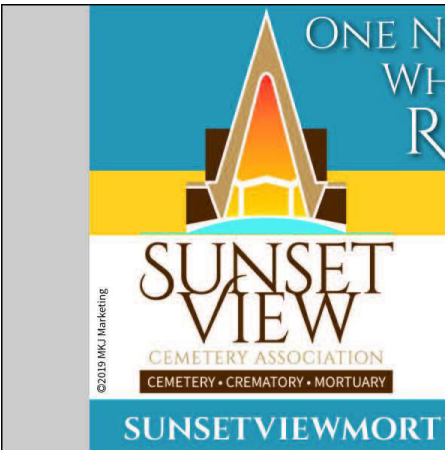
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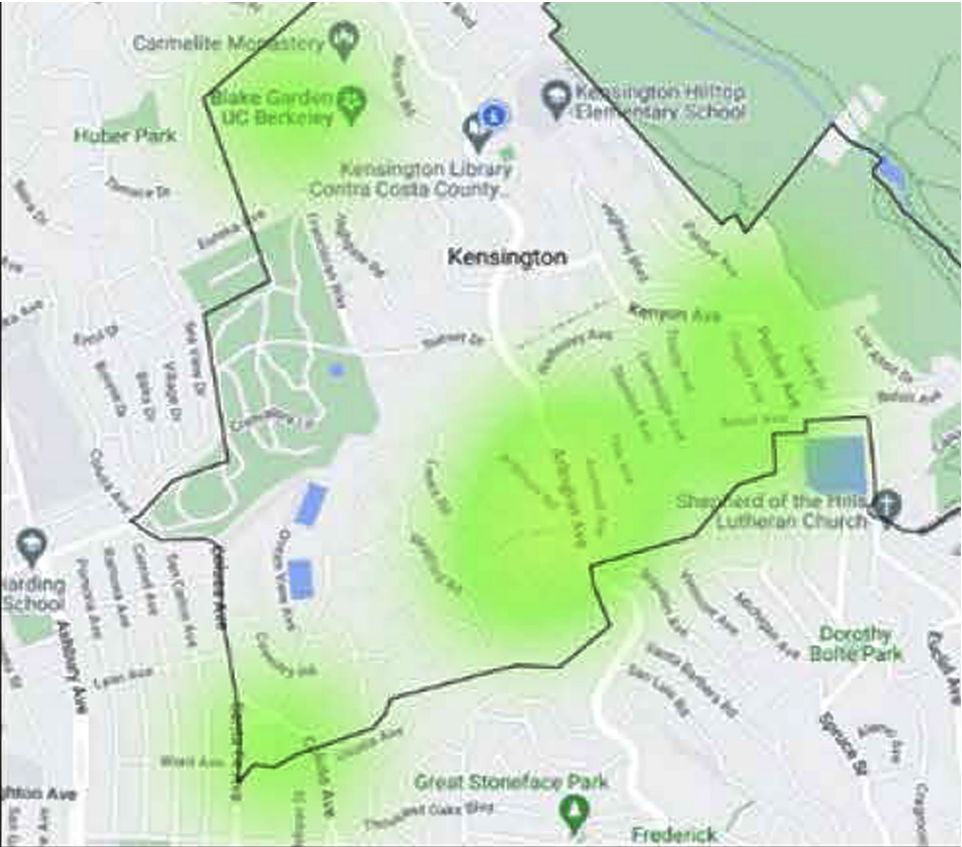
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Kensington Police Officers Train Across Categories of Care

By Chief of Police Mike Gancasz

The majority of September training was focused on preserving and improving perishable skills. Sgt. Brian Lande taught several Advanced Arrest and Control/De-Escalation courses during September. Officer Megan Farley attended an eight-hour patrol rifle course. Officer David Payne attended a four-hour Drug Abuse Recognition course. Sgt. Lande completed a four-hour update on Elder and Dependent Abuse, a Use of Force update, and an AB392 Use of Force Standards update. All patrol personnel attended a four-hour Crypto Currency Crime Investigations class provided by a financial crime detective from the Pleasant Hill Police Department.

Is Your Street Hot or Cold? New Software Adds Data and Advice



This heat map prepared by the Kensington Police Department demonstrates where property crimes occurred during the month of September. Lieutenant Amit Nath wrote in an email: "[The heat map] is from a new software program we are using called Geolitics. Geolitics was founded in 2012 with the goal of bringing greater transparency and accountability to policing through the use of objective data. Geolitics operates a cloud-based, software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform that delivers patrol guidance and measures officer performance in real time. Geolitics uses data from departmental records management systems as well as computer-aided dispatch systems to prepare and deliver missions and patrol recommendations." The *Outlook* will delve into this more fully soon.



KENSINGTON K-9s

Rolling With Minnie
By Winston Churchill, Bulldog

Many neighbors have noticed a white dog zooming along Arlington Ave and around Kensington Park. She's Minnie, a 12-year-old rescue dog with unique mobility challenges and an unstoppable spirit.

Minnie is a Shar Pei, bull terrier, and pit bull mix adopted from a shelter ten years ago. In her former life, she was bred and then abandoned at age two. She ended up on the euthanasia list but was rescued by her family in the nick of time. She lives in Kensington with her dog brother, Odie, sisters, Beatrice (10 years) and Stella (13 years), and parents, Jennifer and Justin.

For most of her life, Minnie was active, despite some limping caused by intervertebral disc disease. Three years ago, however, she awoke unable to stand. Minnie had acquired a spinal cord infection. Since then, she has undergone a lengthy course of antibiotics, spinal decompression surgery, and physical rehabilitation.

She can no longer stand on her hind legs and rolls through life thanks to her wheelchair and supportive family. Minnie knows she's fortunate because caring for her special needs requires a lot of work.

She's carried up and down stairs and in and out of the car, which is challenging since she's 50 pounds. She spends most of her day relaxing at home or in the yard, gently playing with Odie and her sisters. And Minnie loves getting into her wheelchair for socializing and exercising!

It's a daunting task caring for a special needs senior, but her family feels it's worth the effort when they see her smiling, zooming, and turning her face up towards the sun. Her family feels strongly about elderly dogs being loved, cared for, and kept happy and comfortable through their golden years. When you see Minnie happily rolling along, come say Hi!



Kensington's Watershed Explored on Indigenous Peoples' Day

By Linnea Due

Educator Dr. Beverly Ortiz painted a picture of the East Bay in centuries past, when marshes stretching out from the hills teemed with life. The bay was larger then, before decades of fill gradually diminished its size. Ortiz' main point was that the Indian tribes surrounding the bay were not opportunistic hunters and gatherers as is often depicted—and taught—in classrooms and histories. Rather, the hills, marshes and bay were carefully tended throughout the seasons to produce food, material for tools and objects such as water containers and baskets, browse for deer and other animals, and clean water for drinking. Much of that management was done through periodic burns; our present method of fire prevention has resulted in the dangerous build-up of dead trees and downed branches, a condition that would never have been seen during Native management.

Ortiz and her co-presenter, horticulturist Timothy Cole, brought maps and links to websites that explore East Bay watersheds. Both spoke for about 45 minutes each to a rapt crowd of over 40 people who came to Blake Garden on that Monday morning of Indigenous Peoples' Day. We learned that almost the entirety of Kensington lies within the Cerrito Creek watershed, with part of the creek running through Blake Garden. This confused me, as I grew up on Cerrito Creek, on the county line between Contra Costa and Alameda counties. How could the same creek run through Blake Garden? The answer (which should have been obvious) is that Cerrito Creek has a north fork that runs through Blake Garden.

Cole demonstrated how watersheds work by using a large pile of compost in the Blake Garden parking lot as a model. He showed how valleys and canyons collect and direct water, where it eventually ends up in the bay. Cole led the group around the garden, pointing out water features such as sinks to collect rainfall and swales. It's worth it to incorporate water-catchment in your own yard, no matter how small; Cole pointed out that the very best way to store water is in soil, as we're surrounded by cement, asphalt, and roofing, all of which cause excessive runoff and flooding.

Good Guest: Kensington organized the event, which was also supported by the Honoring Indigenous Peoples' Group of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley. A potluck featuring roasted bay nuts, acorn soup, and more provided a time for questions and discussion. Good Guest: Kensington invites all to pay a voluntary contribution (Shuumi land tax) through the work of the Sogorea Te' Land Trust. Find out more at <https://sogoreate-landtrust.org/>.



Anne Forrest studies the map brought by Dr. Beverly Ortiz. Photos by Brad Marshland.

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KENSINGTON EATS OUT

The San Pablo Avenue Taco Truck Tour

By Ittai Shiu

Whether you find yourself in a busy city or a quaint town, it's difficult not to notice the presence of a taco truck. Not only do these rolling kitchens serve up delicious and affordable bites, they possess the unique ability to uplift businesses and neighborhoods around them. As a celebration of food and culture, they draw in hungry patrons from all walks of life and organically foster a community atmosphere.

It would be impossible for even the most ambitious food writer to try every taco in the area, but as luck would have it, within a two-mile radius of Kensington, there's a taco truck trifecta conveniently located along San Pablo Avenue.

In closest proximity to our city center, you'll find Taqueria La Estrella. With its straightforward and traditional menu, Kensington resident Pierre DuMont, wine writer for the Piedmont Post, believes their Al Pastor Burrito is the “best in the area!” Translating to “shepherd style,” al pastor is seasoned and marinated pork that is a tangy-sweet, spicy, smoky Mexican staple. Pierre wasn’t lying—in a burrito format it’s hearty and satisfying.

With Taqueria La Estrella parked next to McBear’s Social Club and Beer Garden, diners are welcome to bring their food into McBear’s and enjoy their impressive lineup of 15 beers on tap and full bar. Catch a game on McBear’s large TV screens or partake in a game of pool, but the real gem is its beautifully renovated, tropical-inspired, outdoor beer garden. Combining great Mexican food and cold drinks guarantees a fun, memorable experience.

Just a few blocks away is Emilianos Tacos, nestled in an unlikely spot—an empty auto lot. As you approach, you might notice a faded awning that reads “Rob’s Automotive,” a testament to the lot’s previous life. What captures your attention are the lively elements that have transformed what could have been an urban eyesore into a vibrant and inviting outdoor dining area. Picnic tables provide communal seating, tents offer cozy shelter, and string lights beckon both locals and visitors alike to savor meals in this unexpected and charming oasis.

While Emilianos Tacos honors the clas-



sics, they also embrace a more experimental approach to their cuisine. Their creativity shines through in dishes like the Pizza Birria and Birria Ramen, playful twists on the traditional adobo-based stew that slow-cooks their meat. One standout we couldn’t resist was the more traditional Quesabirria, where succulent beef is folded into a tortilla with melted cheese and accompanied by a side of flavorful broth for dipping.

Finally, the Hotsy Totsy is a cherished local bar, known for its quirky, fun, and hip vibe, complemented by an excellent

cocktail menu, shuffleboard, a free jukebox, and warm, welcoming service. Established in 1939, the ambiance at Albany’s oldest running bar has always been incredible, but when Tacos El Autlense set up shop as a permanent fixture just outside the bar, we became regulars. Since then every one of our out-of-town guests has been treated to this iconic bar/taco combo.

No matter if enjoying the summer heat or the winter chill, a cocktail at the Hotsy Totsy and a bite from Tacos El Autlense is always a treat. Among our favorites is the refreshing and light ceviche, and their diverse range of tacos never disappoints. Personally, I've sampled carne asada tacos at numerous places, but I keep returning to Tacos El Autlense for their flavor, quality, and proximity to my favorite bar!

Taqueria La Estrella (next to McBear’s) 10458 San Pablo Ave
Emilianos Tacos (San Pablo & Lincoln) 10192 San Pablo Ave
Tacos El Autlense (next to Hotsy Totsy) 601 San Pablo Ave

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ANNUAL COLUSA CIRCLE HOLIDAY FAIR

Enjoy music, hot chocolate, festive lights and an artisan mini-market with your Colusa Circle neighbors and friends. The event is on Sunday, November 26th and starts at 4.45pm. We hope to see you there!

BE A GOOD GUEST

Zip Code East Bay is located on unceded Lisjan Ohlone land in the territory of Huchiuñ. One way we work to be a good guest on this land is by collaborating with Good Guest: Kensington and paying a Shuumi voluntary land tax. Contact us to learn more.





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