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KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

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NOVEMBER 2025

A PUBLICATION OF THE KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

VOLUME 83 NUMBER 9

We Need Your Support to Keep KCC Thriving



The Cal Marching Band led the way up the Arlington on October 19 for the Kensington Community Council's parade. Photo by Leigh Schneider.

By Cathy Garza, Treasurer, Kensington Community Council

As the end of the year approaches, I have been reflecting on KCC's community impact and its success in creating programming for all members of our community. In this issue of the *Outlook*, you'll find a green envelope that we hope you will use to make your tax-deductible donation to KCC to sustain the work that we do. And what is that work?

Many of you know that KCC's main focus is educational and recreational programming for our elementary school-aged kids—a mostly self-sustaining endeavor. KASEP after school classes and KCC Summer Camp continue to be popular, and we are pleased to provide this enrichment for the kids in our community. Thanks to dedicated teachers, camp counselors and KCC's Recreational Director, Jenny Parks, class offerings remain fun and relevant (this year, a lacrosse class was offered for the first time!). Camp counselors and kids were excited and pleased with Jenny's pilot to return field trips to KCC's Summer Camp schedule. I'm happy to report that KCC will add more field trips for Summer Camp in 2026.

Jenny works diligently to provide recreation programs for adults as well. You can find offerings and registration information for our adult classes (e.g., yoga, tai chi, and jam-making) in the "Community Education" section of the *Outlook* or online at <https://kensingtoncommunitycouncil.org/>.

Did you know that the annual family-friendly events known to work in tandem with our beautiful "summer" weather (September and October!) are developed and hosted by KCC? Unlike our neighboring cities that have city councils and mayors to appropriate budgets to community events, Kensington relies on KCC to provide community-building activities. Movie Night on the Lawn in September (I hope you joined us for Pixar's *Up*), and the



Reverend Jen Chapman. Photo by Jill Stockwell.

Annual Blessing of the Animals Gets a New Venue and Vibe

By Jill Stockwell

The all-canine crowd (plus a few photos of cats) came with their people to be blessed on September 28. This year brought several innovations to one of Kensington's most-beloved events: the Blessing was uncoupled from Kensington Community Council's picnic, the setting changed to the Arlington Community Church.

From a feisty little Chihuahua to a regal Russian Wolfhound, dog breeds and mixes sniffed and wagged, and a few barks added a backbeat as the choir sang.

"The blessing service is special as it gives spiritual acknowledgement to how meaningful peoples' pets are to their lives," said Reverend Jen Chapman, recently called as the congregation's Settled Minister, which is similar to tenure. "And it's a way for the church to deepen its connection to the community."

The light drizzle didn't deter people and their pets from flocking to the chapel for the Blessing of the Animals, a longtime Kensington tradition. This year was the first time the event included a chapel service.

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See Blessing, Page 5



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it's important to track capital improvements—like roof replacements, electrical upgrades, and landscaping—that increase your home's cost basis. IRS Publication 523 explains the details, but the basic formula is:

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I often meet with clients before they sell to help them make smart improvements that maximize value and minimize taxes. If you're curious about your home's market value or what upgrades make the most sense, reach out—our meeting is complimentary and confidential.

To view my current listings and sales, visit: ruthfrassetto.com

This is the time of year to say Thank You! I'm incredibly grateful for the journey so far. Success doesn't happen alone—it's built on trust, support, and shared belief. To my clients, friends, colleagues, and family: thank you for being part of this. Your encouragement and referrals mean the world to me.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Ruth Frassetto



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Holidays Carolers! Start Practicing Now for Dec. 14 Event

By Kyra Millich

All singing levels are welcome at Kensington's for-fun caroling event. The performance takes place December 14 at the Kensington Farmers Market at Colusa Circle.

Rehearsals take place at 633 Coventry Road. Note that this site has several small sets of stairs with no handrails, as well as a friendly dog named Henry. Please bring socks (we're a shoeless household), your own water bottle, and leave your pets at home. If you are feeling sickly, we kindly request that you stay home.

Rehearsal 1: Monday, 10/27 from 6-8pm

Rehearsal 2: Monday, 11/10 from 6-8 pm.

Rehearsal 3: Monday, 12/08 from 6-8 pm.

Performance: Sunday, 12/14 from 9:30-10:30am at the Kensington Farmers Market.

Please arrive no later than 9am to gather in front of the band.

Please come to any or all of the rehearsals if you can and note that you are still welcome to join us at the Farmers Market if you can't make any of the rehearsals. Chris/El Jefe is working on getting musicians (including a tuba!).

Contact Kyra about rehearsals and songs: kmillich@gmail.com.

Contact Chris about the band/musicians: chris@kensingtonfarmersmarket.org.

Kensington Police Log September

Sept 1: Casualty/injury call.

Sept 9: Suspicious circumstance detail on Highgate Road.

Sept 9: Attempted credit card fraud reported on Highgate Court.

Sept 11: Vehicle impounded on Yale Avenue.

Sept 12: Non-injury traffic collision on Yale Avenue.

Sept 12: Stolen vehicle reported on Lawson Road. Officers leveraged the Flock community safety camera database to identify leads.

Sept 15: Traffic collision hit-and-run on Princeton Avenue.

Sept 17: Non-injury traffic collision on Grizzly Peak Blvd & Spruce Street.

Sept 18: Identity theft reported at the Police Department.

Sept 21: Property damage to vehicle reported on Vassar Avenue.

Sept 23: Vehicle impounded on Lake Drive.

In September, the Kensington Police Department handled 1,748 incidents, an increase from the 1,566 incidents reported in August. KPD officers initiated 1,432 incidents, including 190 traffic stops, resulting in 176 citations. Officers responded to 316 dispatched calls for service, an increase from the 154 calls in August. The department wrote 17 investigative reports, a decrease from 20 in the previous month. Key investigations included a felony motor vehicle theft, domestic battery, and an Adult Protective Services report. There were no misdemeanor or felony arrests made during the month.

KPOA Annual Meeting and Lunch November 1

By Jennifer Jacobs, KPOA board

The Kensington Property Owners Association (KPOA) is holding its annual Membership & Community Meeting on Saturday, November 1 from 11am-1pm at the Kensington Community Center. All Kensington residents are welcome.

This year's meeting will include a luncheon to celebrate the newly unified Kensington government districts. KPOA has been a longtime proponent of district consolidation due to its financial and operational efficiencies. The unified district offers residents a single government and board of directors, so planning, decision making and communications are now coordinated across all services.

Speakers at the KPOA annual meeting will offer an overview of the new Kensington Community Services District and be available for informal discussion with the community. We hope the event will be informative and friendly—a chance to connect with neighbors old and new — while enjoying some delicious food together.

KPOA is a membership-based organization that has been a trusted independent voice in the community since 1972. It provides analysis and insight on a range of civic issues that directly affect all Kensington citizens. For more information, visit our website www.kpoa.net.



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The Kensington Community Council is dedicated to the improvement, development, and education of the community, and to the promotion of social welfare in Kensington. It enriches the community by providing educational and recreational programs for all ages and by publishing the Outlook, a monthly newsletter that covers local events and issues. KCC also provides a forum for all Kensington community groups to meet and coordinate their respective efforts toward the common good of the community.

DECEMBER - 2025 DEADLINES

Advertising Deadline ❖ NOV. 8

Editorial Deadline ❖ NOV. 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

EDITOR
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ALMA KEY

PUBLISHER

KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
59 Arlington Ave, Kensington, CA 94707-1307
Published ten times a year by the nonprofit Kensington Community Council. (Monthly, except for the combined July/August and December/January issues.) Available online at www.KensingtonOutlook.com. Non-Kensington residents can subscribe by mail for \$10 annually.

Editorial.....editor@KensingtonOutlook.com

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

Page 3

Letters to the Editor

Deep Gutters a Disaster Waiting to Happen

Dear Editor:

The recent slurry work has highlighted the need to improve the deep gutters along many streets in Kensington and to install curb cuts at intersections. The slurry was added on top of existing asphalt and, in some cases, additional asphalt, adjacent to deep gutters. These gutters pose a safety risk to pedestrians and vehicles.

Vehicles driving on the same side of the street as parked cars drive over the median and often do not slow down to pass opposing traffic. Sedans have lower clearance than SUVs and crossovers and could bottom out if forced into one of the deep gutters. Should this happen in an emergency such as during an evacuation, this could lead to fatalities.

Pedestrians are at risk of injury while crossing a street with deep gutters and no curb cut in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Significant tax revenues flow to Contra Costa County from Kensington residents, and it's time to have the county improve safety of roads for Kensington residents before a foreseeable fatal disaster occurs.

Please contact Supervisor John Gioia at John.Gioia@bos.cccounty.us to get this essential safety work done as soon as possible.

Eileen Nottoli

Stacy Wayne Takes the Helm at El Cerrito High

By Westley Burnham

New El Cerrito High School principal Stacy Wayne is not new to education—far from it. She has over 29 years of experience, with 11 years in the classroom and 18 years as an administrator. She began her career in Pacifica, teaching English language arts and social studies. She was part of the teacher bargaining team where she got to know the district office and the priorities of school districts. Because of her work on the bargaining team, she was selected to go on special assignment to work at other schools as an advisor and outside educator. She resisted the role at first, but ultimately, she decided to go for it.

On special assignment she “learned a ton.” And while on assignment, she received her credential as an administrator as well as a master's degree in administration. But her heart was still set on teaching: “I still thought I would go back to the classroom,” she said.

Then she received as job as assistant principal at Orinda Intermediate School, where she served for seven years before becoming principal for another seven years. And that brings us to today, when she became principal of El Cerrito High this summer.

Wayne is determined to build a culture of inclusion at El Cerrito High. Her vision, she said, is “to build a culture and climate and to create a space that’s safe for everybody and that’s supportive of everybody.” In that “everybody,” she includes not just students but staff and faculty.

“We really want to adopt a growth mindset,” she said. She also outlined areas of growth for El Cerrito High. “We have some kids that not only aren’t reaching their potential—they’re not reaching grade level standards.” She says that meeting students’ needs is a key point in her goals.

As a principal, Wayne hopes to be more of an educator than an enforcer, helping kids to help themselves make more intelligent decisions. She also noted that she is “still fresh and new” in learning the ins and outs of El Cerrito High.

“It’s always about education for me,” she said. “I think that we cannot do enough. We cannot do enough educating.”

El Cerrito High School student Westley Burnham is an intern for the Outlook. He writes articles of interest to Kensington residents about community activities and school events.



Echols and Gioia Keynote KIC Annual Meeting Nov. 8

By Linda Lipscomb, KIC board president

The Kensington Improvement Club (KIC) will hold its annual Town Hall and membership meeting at the Kensington Community Center, featuring an exciting roster of speakers on informative subjects. All Kensington residents and property owners are invited!

Elizabeth Echols, Ward 1 representative of the East Bay Regional Parks District Board of Directors, will talk about fire issues, especially about the wildland/residential interface that our town, and neighboring cities, face with Tilden Regional Park.

John Gioia, our representative on the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors, will bring us up to date on recent county developments. Johnny Valenzuela, Kensington Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, will discuss the Firewise neighborhood process and what homeowners can do to harden their properties against wildfire. Police Chief Mike Gancasz and a Kensington/El Cerrito Fire Department battalion chief will share information from their respective departments, and Kensington branch Library Manager Jenny Rockwell will talk about the latest library happenings.

KIC has been a vital community advocate since its founding in 1921. With the help of many community volunteers, KIC has continued to advance and create public improvement projects.

Past projects have included advocating for public ownership of the Kensington paths, building the Colusa Circle public notice kiosk, landscaping and bringing light and elec-

tricity to the Colusa Circle, overseeing the Kensington signboard and Arlington medians, and creating Neilson Park at the Arlington and Coventry Road.

For many years, KIC advocated for the consolidation of our governing districts, which has now been achieved. If it improves Kensington, and if we and our volunteers can do it, we will! KIC welcomes membership of all Kensington residents and property owners, without whom KIC cannot pursue its missions of oversight and contribution to public needs and issues. And, as you may know, we wrote the book: *Kensington Past and Present!*

Please attend the KIC Town Hall meeting at the Community Center (59 Arlington Ave.).

Passings

Juanita Louise White, 96, the beloved matriarch of the White family, passed away on August 28, surrounded by the family that she cherished. Born on January 2, 1929, in a small town in Minnesota, and a resident of Kensington for more than 50 years, Juanita's greatest joy and achievement was her large, close-knit, music-loving family. She loved Kensington for the community, the small-town feel, and the friends she made.

As a mother of five, their spouses, grandmother of fifteen, and great-grandmother of fourteen, and many beloved family members in Alabama, Juanita was the heart and soul of the White family. Her University of Oklahoma degree in Music confirmed how important music was in her life, with this love of music being passed down through the generations and has stayed with them.

She loved family traditions and recipes (stollen, pfeffernusse, butterscotch rolls and sourdough among some of the favorites). She was a prankster and enjoyed surprising all with her sharp sense of humor. Many impromptu family meetings were held late nights watching the view of the Golden Gate Bridge and the Bay Area from her living room. She was never too tired to sit and chat, showing her children her grace, compassion, understanding, and love.

Her family was blessed by the strength and perseverance that Juanita showed for so many years, and we thank her for her steadfast support to all that knew her. Her family is thankful to her for her leadership, her devoted and loving support, as their rock, friend, anchor, and one of the world's kindest souls. She taught her family strength, integrity, dignity, and perseverance which they pledge to follow in her footsteps as best as possible. Juanita has now joined her husband Howard in Heaven and is survived by their children Howard III, Tim, Sandra, Charles, and Susan and their families. She will be missed beyond words but will remain forever in our hearts.



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Meet *James* Author Percival Everett, Art Exhibit on Palestine

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, Nov. 4, 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, Nov. 4, 6:30pm Castoff's Knitting Club Meets on the first Tuesday of each month. Open to all levels of knitters. Bring your own yarn!

Sat, Nov. 8, 2025 11am Read Contra Costa - A Conversation with Percival Everett. Join us online for a live conversation with Percival Everett as he discusses *James*, his novel that won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the National Book Award for Fiction. Everett's novel is a powerful retelling of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. The story is told from the perspective of Jim, an enslaved man who runs away after he discovers he's about to be sold and separated from his family.

Tuesdays, Nov. 4, 18, 25 6:30pm Family Storytime Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome.

Tues, Nov. 18, 2-5pm Cloth Produce Bag Sewing Circle Join the Kensington Seamsters Union, local 94707 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.

Tues, Nov. 18, 6:15 -7:45pm Kensington Library Book Club The club meets online via Zoom, this month will meet on the third Tuesday. The selection for November is *Eastbound* by Maylis de Kerangal.

Tues, Nov. 25, 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.

Art Exhibits at the library: To Nov. 15: artwork by **Amy Zheng:** www.amyzheng.net

Second half of November through mid-January 2026: **Forever Falastin** by Albany/El Cerrito for Palestine. This interactive exhibit honors the vibrant culture and heritage of Palestine. Engage with the mosaic of Palestinian peoples, their art, music, food, books, films, and textile traditions, with a special focus on local connections. Learn about the region's history from the perspective of one of the world's oldest olive trees starting as a seed 4,000 years ago. The exhibit celebrates the joy and resistance of queer Palestinian artists, poets, and performers.



Kathe Boyd, of the Kensington Seamsters Union, aka the Cloth Produce Bag Sewing Circle, holds a selection of beautiful cloth shopping bags the Seamsters create each month. Bags are given out free to shoppers at the Kensington Farmers Market. Photo by Jenny Rockwell.

Red Flag Ready Fest Showcases Safety and Community

By Lin Due

On a pristine Saturday in mid-October, the fledgling Kensington Community Services District (KCSO) put on a celebratory show for residents called the Red Flag Ready Fest. According to publicity, the event was meant to celebrate “the accomplishments of the Kensington Fire Protection District... [launching] a new chapter” with the KCSO, which now combines fire and police services under one district and one governing board. Often called consolidation around town but actually a reorganization, the new district dissolved the fire district, melding its services into the old Police Protection and Community Services District, which has since been renamed as the KCSO.

Little of that was in evidence beyond photos of past fire chiefs, engines, and an antique rescuscator from the old days of Kensington Fire as a volunteer force. Visitors were greeted by a fleet of vehicles: a CalFire truck, an engine from Kensington/El Cerrito Fire, and a Red Cross ambulance, with its back doors ajar to reveal stretchers and lifesaving material. The walk to the Community Center was festooned with tall maroon Red Flag Warning banners to be deployed throughout town during Red Flag days. Canopies from various groups lined the sidewalk and guarded the entrance, while inside Lindsay Wildlife Museum staff displayed a friendly king snake and a screech owl that was not pleased with the occasional canine.



Kensington Police Officer and president of the Kensington Police Officers Association Jose Fajardo stood behind a display of brightly colored T-shirts with a sunset view of Kensington taken at Kensington Park. Sales of the shirts benefit the KPOA. Fajardo was advertising an event on November 11, a fraud and scam awareness presentation put on by the KPOA in tandem with Mechanics Bank. Fajardo said the police union, with unpaid participation from officers, was putting on the event “out of the goodness of our hearts.” Fajardo expressed concern for the safety of Kensington residents, many of whom are elderly and more likely to not recognize scams. “The scammers are getting better and better,” Fajardo said. And with AI voice generators, just hearing your loved one's voice is no assurance of a trust-worthy call.

A canopy at the entrance housed the Contra Costa County Animal Response Team. The group serves many purposes, including sheltering animals in emergencies, but their presence at the Red Flag Ready Fest was to encourage people to think about how to evacuate their animals during a wildfire or earthquake. The primary motto is “Have a plan.” Trying to gather carriers or important medications and harnesses at the last minute is a recipe for failure that may cost a life. One of the volunteers, who has three dogs, recommended calling hotels or motels in the area to ascertain pet rules. “Lots of places won't take more than two dogs,” he said. He also recommended creating a go bag for pets that includes a copy of up-to-date vaccinations, which are required by kennels. Another suggestion was to help senior neighbors or those with disabilities who might need assistance hauling a heavy carrier to the car or rounding up a pet.

A small crowd surrounded Kensington baker Sara Jaffe as she unveiled a series of desserts for tastings. Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Johnny Valenzuela passed out slices of boysenberry pie, spice cake with lime glaze and other treats to grateful Cal Fire firefighters. Meanwhile, children (when they weren't angling for dessert tastes) were enjoying the colorful pumpkins strewn artfully across the Community Center lawn. A taco stand served delicious birria, steak, and chicken tacos to a line of residents, who loaded up on salsas, fresh onion and cilantro and grated cheese to top their creations.

About a hundred people attended the first hour of the event. The day was sparkling, and the crowd sparkled as well as they engaged in learning safety tips and celebrating the reorganization of Kensington's two districts into one entity.



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KCC ...from Front Page

Kensington Girl Scout Troop 31433 showed up big to march in the Kensington Community Council's parade, brought back this year after a five-year hiatus that included the pandemic years. Photo by Leigh Schneider.

Community Parade and Picnic in October (the parade brought back after a Covid hiatus!) are funded by your donations and revenue generated by KASEP and Summer Camp.

And maybe the most recognized service KCC provides is the local newspaper, the Kensington *Outlook*. Innovations over the years include an online edition and taking on a student intern to cover local news and interviews. The *Outlook* is delivered free of charge to every household and business in Kensington. KCC covers the financial gap between advertising funding and operating expenses (postage, printing, staffing). Your donation can help us cover this gap.

Looking forward, KCC plans to solve storage issues and improve outdoor classroom space. Storage has become an issue because of an increase in the number of inclement weather days. When it rains, all KASEP classes must operate in indoor classroom space only. KCC hopes to purchase and install a storage shed near the Recreational Building to house excess gear that will free up indoor classroom space. And KCC will develop an outdoor garden space that is sufficiently protected from local wildlife as an addition to KASEP and Summer Camp offerings. The KCC board of directors will look to 2025's annual fund as a primary funding source for these new projects.

KCC's 2025 annual fund donors will be acknowledged in the February 2026 *Outlook*. Please support KCC by using the green envelope, enclosed with this month's *Outlook*, to send us your check. Or make your online contribution of any size at <https://kensington-communitycouncil.org/support-kcc/>.

Happy Holidays from KCC!

The Bubble Man was a highlight for kids at the picnic. Photo by Byron Kawaichi.

Emergency Aid Doctrine Training

Kensington Police Sergeant Brian Lande attended a course on the Emergency Aid Doctrine. This doctrine provides an exception to the Fourth Amendment's warrant requirement, permitting officers to make warrantless entries into homes or other private areas when they reasonably believe that an individual inside is seriously injured or facing an imminent threat to life or safety.

The course emphasized that this exception applies only under urgent situations—medical emergencies, cries for help, or clear signs of violence—where immediate action is necessary to prevent harm. Courts evaluate these situations based on the objective reasonableness of the officer's belief in the existence of an emergency, rather than the officer's subjective intent. The scope of any entry is strictly limited to addressing the emergency at hand.

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Blessing ...from Front Page

Scott Robinson and Musso. Photo by Jill Stockwell.

Robinson said that Musso was a rescue fostered by Gore Vidal's housekeeper in L.A. and probably named after the Musso & Frank Grill in Hollywood where Vidal was a regular customer from the 1940s on.

The church supports the Alliance of Therapy Dogs, a national organization whose East Bay chapter was well represented at the Blessing of the Animals. Susan Francis was there with her Corgi companion therapy dog, Thatcher.

“The alliance's dogs visit schools, assisted living centers, hospitals, homes, and libraries,” Francis said, “including Kensington Public Library for the popular Read to a Dog sessions. Many Alliance members are retired working dogs and rescues whose new role is giving attention and affection.”

Everyone around the circle settled down as Reverend Chapman prayed a blessing for those gathered and for all wild and domestic creatures in the area. She wove in Ohlone history and reverence for animals, in celebration of American Indian Ministry Sunday, which coincided with the Blessing of the Animals. Her words amplified the importance of respect, dignity, and love for all creatures. She then sat to give individual blessings by request.

Robbi Cook and her whippet Charlie gave their review. “Charlie and I had a great time. It was a really nice event. And even though Charlie is not a churchgoer, he said he would come back for the treats!”

Carmela Manzano brought Zeus, her rescued blue-eyed Borzoi-Catahoula mix. “It's heartwarming to see all these pups have their moment,” she said. “Blending the ancient wisdom with modern vibes made the blessing seem sacred and inclusive. I loved how it honored our furry friends and cultural roots alike.”

Robbi Cook and Charlie. Photo by Jill Stockwell.

Kensington

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First New District Meeting Features Unity and Glitches

By Lin Due and Marilyn Stollon

According to reports from the 10 to 12 audience members at the first meeting of the Kensington Community Services District (KCSD), which absorbed the now dissolved fire district and renamed the police district, the nine directors on the board conducted an amiable and fruitful meeting. This was a relief to people who have followed the two districts for years and seen frosty relationship between the two boards. Now, after the county's Local Agency Formation Commission, which regulates special districts, allowed the two districts to reorganize into one, there is only one board, one pot of money, and presumably a single agenda—providing community services to residents.

The nine directors at the head of the table could have been 11, but with the resignation of Cassandra Duggan on October 1, the remaining directors made up an odd number required for voting. As terms expire, seats will drop off until the directors get down to five directors. According to current board president Dave Spath, next year five directors will be termed out: Alex Aquino-Fike, Sarah Gough, Daniel Levine, Jim Watt, and Rodney Paul. Paul, the newest director, assumed Julie Stein's seat after her resignation. In 2026, three seats are up for election, which will bring the number of directors to seven.

In 2028, four members are termed out: Dave Spath, Sylvia Hacaj, Rick Artis, and Danielle Madugo. That election will be for two board positions, which will bring the board to five members, the maximum allowed by California Special District law.

The meeting began with a public hearing on taking on an abatement project of the old fire district. Two lots had to be abated with district money, which will not come back to the new district until the lots are either sold or the property owner pays the fee added to the property tax bill. Then a representative from auditors Nigro & Nigro PC said the budget looked good and that they expected savings from the reorganization of the districts. Dave Spath read a resolution thanking Cass Duggan for her considerable services to the police district, which included spearheading the decision by the district to take on three of Kensington's paths.

At that point, a glitch arose—and the rest of this report is taken from Marilyn Stollon's excellent summary of the meeting. Due to a technical failure, there is no recording of the meeting past the Cass Duggan resolution, and I was removed from the Zoom webinar and unable to rejoin. It's unclear if this happened to any of the other 24 Zoom participants.

Kensington Community Council, at its board meeting October 6, had agreed to advance the money it pays the district for upkeep on the Recreation Building in the park. The entire repair project thus can be undertaken at once rather than piecemeal as money

comes in. This plan was approved by the district's board.

Two standing committees from the dissolved fire district and mandated to continue by LAFCO gained their requisite board directors: Artis and Gough will serve on the Finance Committee, while the four-director Emergency Preparedness Committee will include directors Madugo, Spath, Paul, and Watt. That committee will formulate a structure for its operation to bring back to the board for approval.

A committee to oversee Kensington Park was suggested, but this was tabled after discussion of whether a master plan should come before creating a standing committee.

Spath and Aquino-Fike will continue as president and vice president for the next two months until new officers are elected by the board in December.

The police reported on the Blue Envelope program. Disabled, autistic, and others who may have trouble communicating can give a blue envelope containing that information if stopped by the police. Kensington is the first department in Northern California to deploy this national program.

The helicopter that landed in the park during a training exercise was discussed. Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Johnny Valenzuela said that he had uploaded information on lithium battery storage to the district website. He reported that most of Kensington is now covered by Firewise groups. Marilyn Stollon reports that when she submitted the Firewise information and her efforts at vegetation mitigation to State Farm that she received a discount on her insurance premium—enough to make up for the annual increase.

The next board meeting is November 13. Hopefully glitches will be fixed by then and cooperation continue.

Kensington Police Make DUI Stops

KPD officers used a grant to conduct patrols focused on identifying impaired drivers. Officers conducted 72 traffic stops throughout Kensington, resulting in 60 citations for various violations. Additional patrols are scheduled monthly for the remainder of a California Highway Patrol grant cycle. Officers also provided education on traffic safety and DUI prevention. The department has expanded outreach on social media platforms, reinforcing that impaired driving will not be tolerated in Kensington.



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Q3 Kensington Market Update

Golden Gate | Sotheby's INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Property Address	BD/BA	Sqft	List Price	Sale Price	Tracy's Notes
Valley Rd (1500 Block)	2/2	1,020	\$995,000	\$1,305,000	4 offers
Stratford (60 Block)	2/1	990	\$999,000	\$1,175,000	3 offers, cash buyer, turnkey
Grizzly Peak Blvd (200 Block)	3/1	1,209	\$1,050,000	\$1,220,000	1 offer, softer mid-summer market
Ocean View (1600 Block)	2/2	1,589	\$1,095,000	\$1,260,000	2 offers, cash buyer
Purdue Ave (100 Block)	3/2	1,607	\$1,179,000	\$1,315,000	1 offer, view, turnkey
Kerr Ave (00 block)	3/2	1,743	\$1,265,000	\$1,400,000	1 offer, softer mid-summer market
Parkside Ct (600)	3/3	1,738	\$1,295,000	\$1,550,000	1 offer, updated & turnkey
Norwood Ave (00 Block)	4/2	1,954	\$1,298,000	\$1,975,000	6 offers, turnkey mid-century
Arlington Ave (00 Block)	4/2	1,904	\$1,370,000	\$1,300,000	2 offers, originally listed in May
Berkeley Park Blvd (300 Block)	3/2	1,701	\$1,590,000	\$1,490,000	1 offer, cash buyer below asking
Coventry Rd (500 Block)	4/4	2,975	\$1,648,000	\$1,800,000	Turnkey
Kerr Ave (00 Block)	4/4	3,308	\$1,795,000	\$2,300,000	3 offers, cash buyer
Purdue Ave (100 Block)	5/3	3,818	\$3,989,000	\$3,825,000	Custom built for Maybeck family

In Q3, only two homes in Kensington sold below asking price. Timing continues to play a major role in results. The best time to sell, of course, is whenever sellers are ready — but the softer season typically begins right after school ends. During summer, many buyers and agents are on vacation, so listings that come on the market in late June/ 4th of July often receive less attention. The two homes that sold below asking are good examples of this pattern — both were listed right after school ended, and their initial asking prices appeared to be on the higher side. As a result, they stayed on the market longer and ultimately sold for less than asking.

Thanksgiving is approaching, and I'm truly grateful for the wonderful Kensington community!

As your neighbor and a local resident, I'm thankful for all the support and connections we share. The fourth quarter is usually a quieter time in real estate, but it's when many homeowners start planning for the spring market. **If you're simply curious about how things are shaping up, I'm always happy to share what I know about our local market.** As always, all consultations are free and confidential.



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Kensington Community Education

Winter Schedule for Adult and Family Classes

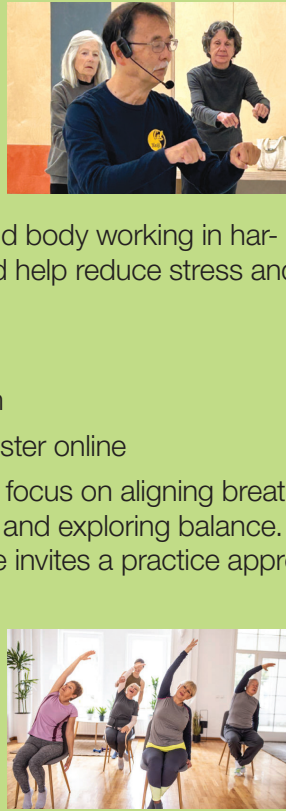
Tai Chi with Nobuo Nishi

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

Class teaches Tai Chi for better health, improving students' strength, balance, flexibility, and dexterity. A gentle martial art, Tai Chi is a safe, rewarding activity for people of all ages and levels of health. Tai chi emphasizes the mind and body working in harmony. Relaxing the body and calming the mind help reduce stress and increase the flow of energy.

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

Wake up with a sunny yoga practice, which will focus on aligning breath with movement, building strength and stamina, and exploring balance. With a knack for variations, Anja's inclusive style invites a practice appropriate for the individual.



Chair Yoga with Angi Love

Thursdays 10-11am
Community Center - Cost is \$15 drop in or register online

Chair Yoga is a gentle form of yoga practiced while sitting on a chair or using a chair for support. This class is designed especially for seniors but is accessible to all ages, fitness levels, and mobility levels. Enjoy the benefits of yoga—including improved flexibility, strength, balance, and relaxation—in a safe and supportive environment. No experience needed!



Drop-in Circus Arts

Thursdays 6-7:15pm
Recreation Building



Holiday Meal Ideas with April Schlanger

Tuesday, November 18th 6pm-8pm
Community Center Kitchen - Cost \$45

Get inspired for the holiday season with delicious, crowd-pleasing recipes that are perfect for entertaining or cozy family gatherings. In this hands-on class, you'll learn how to plan and prepare a festive meal from main course to sides, with tips on presentation, timing, and stress-free hosting. Bring your appetite and holiday spirit!



Holiday Party Ideas with April Schlanger

Tuesday, December 9th 6pm-8pm
Community Center Kitchen - Cost \$45

Learn how to host a memorable holiday party with style and ease! This class will cover creative appetizer and drink pairings, festive décor ideas, and simple entertaining tips to impress your guests without the stress. Perfect for anyone looking to add sparkle and fun to their seasonal celebrations.





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KASEP-Kensington After School Program

KASEP: Kids Learning and Having Fun After School

The Kensington After School Enrichment Program (KASEP) continues to provide exciting opportunities for kids to learn, create, and explore new interests. This fall, students have been having a blast in classes like Cooking Around the World, where they've explored global flavors and learned hands-on kitchen skills; Carpentry, where young builders measure, hammer, and create their own projects; and Pastels, where creativity shines through colorful artwork.

KASEP offers more than 70 classes each week for students in TK through 6th grade, with something for every interest—from Coding and sports to art, music, and beyond.

Winter registration opens December 9th, and the new session begins the week of January 5th, 2026. Don't miss the chance to join in on the fun and discovery that makes KASEP such a special part of the Kensington community!

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

Follow us on Instagram@KensingtonCommunityCouncil

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.

The Kensington Outlook can now be found at: KensingtonOutlook.com. Archive copies can also be found on our website dating back to 2003.





KENSINGTON EATS OUT

Kensington Eats Out at The Middle East Café

By Ittai Shiu

A Father’s Dream, a Son’s Vision, and a Community’s Table
By Ittai Shiu

On that lively stretch of San Pablo Avenue just past where it intersects University, you’ll find the beloved Middle East Market, a cornerstone of Persian culture and cuisine in the East Bay. Established in 1974, it was one of the first Persian markets in Northern California, and for generations, it’s been more than a place to shop—it’s where families rediscover the flavors of home and newcomers are introduced to the richness of Persian cooking. Among its most loyal patrons was Hossein, who immigrated from Iran in 1976. For nearly forty years, he returned week after week, often with his young son, Amir, by his side.

Hossein dreamed of creating a place where food and culture could bring people together—a vision that came full circle in 2015 when he and Amir assumed ownership of the business. Together, father and son have nurtured the market into something more than a grocery: a community hub filled with warmth, conversation, and the aroma of freshly baked bread.



Earlier this year, when the space next door became available, Amir and Hossein seized the opportunity to expand. Fueled by enthusiasm, ambition, and a deep sense of connection to their customers, they transformed it in less than a week into the Middle East Café—the natural next chapter of their family story.

Built on three guiding values—community, cuisine, culture—the café extends the market’s spirit into a welcoming gathering place. Where the market offers the ingredients, the café now serves the finished dishes; where the aisles once buzzed with friendly chatter, the café’s tables and garden invite guests to linger, connect, and share meals together.

Step inside and you’ll feel it immediately: the warmth of Persian hospitality. Whether you’re greeted by Amir himself or one of the friendly staff, you’re not just a customer—



you’re treated like family. Every detail reflects this philosophy, from the attentive service to the thoughtful menu that blends tradition with creativity.

Among the standouts is the Koo-bideh Plate, one of the café’s most popular dishes. Skewers of ground beef and lamb are grilled to perfection—juicy, tender, and full of smoky flavor. They’re served alongside fluffy saffron rice, a dollop of maast moosir (yogurt with shallots),

and slivered raw onions. At every table, a shaker of sumac adds a final, tangy touch for those who like another layer of flavor.

For something handheld, the Falafel Wrap is a crowd favorite—and enormous. It’s stuffed with crisp falafel, fresh cilantro, tomato, onion, lettuce, pickles, and shallots, all brought together with a generous drizzle of yogurt that makes every bite creamy, bright, and satisfying.

The café also features a full bar, a newer addition that reflects the team’s flair for innovation. Signature cocktails include the Persian Margarita, infused with hibiscus for a

floral twist, and the Pomegranate Ember, a vodka-based drink that balances sweetness with a subtle smoky depth.

If you prefer to dine outdoors, don’t miss the beautiful back patio, adorned with festive décor and string lights. It’s a serene space to enjoy fresh air, lively conversation, and the best of Persian hospitality—perfect for lingering over a meal or cocktail on a warm evening.

Middle East Café stands as a living testament to a father’s dream and a son’s determination. It’s a place where community and culture flourish over plates of lovingly prepared food and glasses raised in celebration. Though Hossein has now retired, his dream lives on through Amir, who continues to serve, sustain, and share—inviting every guest to become part of their family’s story.



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KPOA Takes on Frauds and Scams

By Lin Due

Members of the Kensington Police Officers Association, led by KPOA President Jose Fajardo, will present a lecture on common frauds and scams. The incidence of scams is ever-increasing, and scammers are more sophisticated than ever.

These valuable lessons could save your pocketbook and your credit rating. Trying to restore credit after a successful attack can take months of effort—and that’s after the sting of losing money. Don’t get tricked. Come to this presentation at the Community Center on November 11 at 7pm. Questions encouraged; the discussion will be wide-ranging.



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