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Garden Party ...from front page

reading and math intervention, computer lab, science lab, P.E., art and music classes, a librarian, even supplies for the teachers.

Check out silent-auction items like a black-and-white photo session with local portraitist Nan Phelps and fine art

donated by Masterworks Fine Art. Jump into the bidding on live-auction items like a private tour of Pixar or a tour above the Bay Area in a private plane. And do some early holiday shopping at the online auction, www.kensington.schoolauction.net/gp2016; choose certificates to favorite restaurants, theaters, and museums. The

online auction opens for bidding on October 19 and closes October 25.

Buy your tickets at kensingtonhilltop.org/gardenparty and get ready to celebrate with friends at the open bar, taste local wines and beers, try your luck at winning great prizes, and dance the night away to a live band.

OUTLOOK

Bringing the Community Together

KENSINGTON

Available Online at www.KensingtonOutlook.com

OCTOBER 2016

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VOLUME 74 NUMBER 8

Prepare for Parade, Picnic, and Pie

By Anne Forrest

As has been the tradition in Kensington for so many years, the Kensington Community Council will sponsor this year's parade and picnic Sunday, October 23 from noon to 3:30pm. This year we'll again be adding an extra "P" into the festivities—Parade, Picnic and Pie! Last year's winner, Karen Veitch, won the Golden Rolling Pin and a \$25 gift certificate for her amazing meyer lemon meringue pie. First-place winners in the fruit pie category, Laurel and Natalie Gawlikowski, shared the winner's circle with dad, Daniel Gawlikowski, in the nut pie category. For an entry form, go to kensingtoncommunitycenter.org. Entry forms can also be picked up at the KCC Office in Building E.

Parade participants will gather at the ACE Hardware parking lot at Amherst and Arlington at 11:30am. As a token of appreciation for years of service to our community, our Grand Marshals will be Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia and associate Kate Rauch. Local organizations and groups are invited to participate in the parade. This parade and picnic is one week closer to Halloween than in previous years, so wear your Halloween costume and join the crowd as the parade makes its way up the Arlington to the Kensington Community Center!



Then stay for the delicious BBQ lunch and music. Tickets can be purchased for sausage, hamburger, hot dog, or vegetarian burger lunches. The Fred T. Korematsu Middle School band will provide music, followed by prizes for the coloring contest, pumpkin decorating, and face painting for the children. To enter the Mechanics Bank Coloring Contest, drop by the Kensington branch of Mechanics Bank to pick up your coloring sheet after October 1. The deadline to return your masterpiece to the bank is Friday, October 21. A \$25 gift card will be awarded to winners in each age group: 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12.

Don't forget the Marvin Gardens' Pumpkin Decorating! Marvin Gardens has turned its Kensington office into a pumpkin patch every year since 1994. You can pick up your pumpkin from Marvin Gardens on or after Monday October 17 (there is a suggested \$2

See Parade, page 11

Ready for the Garden Party?

By Lisa Trottier

The Garden Party, Kensington's biggest social event of the year, is slated for Saturday, October 29, from 5 to 11pm at Mira Vista Country Club. It's a masquerade ball this year, so feel free to wear a mask or buy a handcrafted one when you arrive.



The band Coyotes Interrupt Us, made up primarily of Kensington Hilltop parents, entertains the crowd at last year's Garden Party; the group plays at this year's grand affair. Photo by Doug Diego.

This is the major fundraiser for Kensington Hilltop Elementary, and parents with kids at the school show up in force. But so does the larger community, eager for a good party with neighbors and ready to show their support for a school that bolsters our town (and our property values) in a major way.

In this one evening, the Garden Party raises half the funds needed each year to give Hilltop Elementary a real boost:

See Garden Party, back page



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Letters to the editor

Brother and Sister on a Stroll

Dear Neighbors,
Please join me in congratulating lifelong Kensington residents William (PJ) and Sydney (Mei Mei) Bowden on the completion of their recent walk from the Golden Gate Bridge to the Point Reyes Lighthouse. The brother and sister team covered the 50 miles in 8 days in April and June of this year, all by foot, except two water crossings that required a pack-raft. They were accompanied on the trip by their Mom and Dad. Currently studying at Hilltop Elementary, kindergarten for Sydney and 3rd grade for William, the duo is looking forward to their next adventure.

Proud Mom and Dad

Time for a Change

Dear Editor:
For many years the KPPCSD has been caught up in an unending series of disputes involving police behavior, contract negotiations and general governance issues. During this time, little attention has been paid to the long-term costs that will impact district finances and the possible ways to save costs while essentially delivering the same amount of services.

It is unfortunate that certain current and past board members have consistently voted to maintain the status quo, by letting the GM/COP make all of the decisions on expenditures and police organizational structure. This has resulted in a bloated police department, costing Kensington taxpayers about \$2.7 million annually for 10 officers, or about \$270,000 per officer. This per-officer expenditure on police services is significantly above that of comparable small communities and especially for a quiet town like Kensington, which ranks as the 13th safest community in California. Until now this issue was ignored because Kensington's budget was generally in balance thanks to rising property taxes. However, in the next 3 to 5 years we will likely run large deficits because of mounting benefit obligations for police officers and the need to contribute to the seismic upgrades of the Community Center and the fire/police station. Unless we tackle the costs of our police operations now the board will need to ask the taxpayers for a property tax increase.

The solution will be the election of board members who are committed to making organizational changes to the police department and negotiating a labor contract with the police that reduces Kensington's long-term benefit obligations. If a reasonable agreement cannot be reached with the officers, then outsourcing police services may be the best option, but consolidation with the Fire District does not address the problem.

Please look beyond the generalities that candidates typically promise and see if they have specific recommendations to address the financial issues facing the community.

Jim Watt

Three Wrongs Don't Make Right

Dear Editor:
I wholeheartedly agree with Greg Tananbaum's letter to the *Outlook* (9/2016) that we in Kensington should focus on civility, transparency and communication. I would also add accountability and a clear-eyed economic and moral cost/benefit assessment. We in Kensington are a privileged group, who are well-educated and live on a beautiful hill overlooking the San Francisco Bay; who, normally, are not subjected to the same profiled police procedures as other classes and ethnic groups, and who do not allow ourselves to be consumed by polarization and the heated rhetoric of small, vocal core/base groups. In a democracy, both our professional public servants and our elected officials are subject to a higher level of scrutiny and accountability in their personal and private lives (whether in Nevada or Berkeley/Albany), and to suggest that some should be shielded from such accountability and transparency by "confidentiality" is a bogus issue. Three wrongs do not make a right: to drive 22 months without a valid vehicle registration is wrong; to not stop such an individual because that person may become an elected public official is wrong; to stop such an individual because he or she is an elected official

See Letters, page 3

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

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

The opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are those of the contributors, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Outlook, its editor, or the publisher, the Kensington Community Council. Residents are invited to submit letters on matters of interest to the community. Letters must be signed and include the author's address and phone number (address and phone will not be published). Publication is subject to space limitations and the editor's discretion. Letters of 250 or fewer words are preferred. One letter per person, per issue. Obituaries for Kensington residents are published at no charge. E-mail preferred to Editor@KensingtonOutlook.com

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

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KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

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November Advertising Deadline Oct. 8
November Editorial Deadline Oct. 10

Letters

...from page 2

is empathically wrong.

In the same issue of the *Outlook*, Jim Watt stated that the current annual cost of police services provided to our community is approximately \$2.7 million. If this is correct, the per capita cost of these services to Kensington’s 5,077 residents is \$532. By contrast, the per capita cost of the \$11.3 million in police services provided to El Cerrito’s 24,316 residents is approximately \$465. In Kensington, there is one police officer for every 508 residents (10 for 5,077); in El Cerrito, there is one police officer for every 434 residents (56 for 24,316).

I, personally, would prefer to pay the extra \$67 in my taxes for the benefit of a small, community-based police force. I had assumed that I and my fellow citizens had voted and decided on this issue fairly recently, but if a majority of my fellow citizens now feel otherwise, I would happily accept their decision with equanimity and good fellowship.

Bill Tilden

What Is the Cost?

Dear Editor

KPPCSD directors refused to provide cost data to the ad hoc committee on the current combined District Manager/Police Chief office vs. other forms of structuring police services. Directors refused to obtain bids from the 5 interested departments for the costs of duplicating services, refused to provide costs from employee lawsuits against the department because there was no one outside police chain of command to whom employees could report abuse, and refused to provide the costs for the outside contractors deemed necessary because the chief hadn’t those skills.

No cost data was provided for outsourced investigations deemed necessary because the chief couldn’t investigate himself or his own department. Additionally KPPCSD directors specifically prevented their ad hoc committee from making any recommendations, including that the KPPCSD obey the law and hire an independent general manager, as should have happened in 2007, after the California Attorney General ruled a combined police chief/general manager is an incompatible office and thus unlawful.

Anna Shane

Why the “Reform” Label Is Meaningless

Dear Editor:

Some KPPCSD candidates are giving themselves the “reform” label; sometimes others are doing it, with or without their consent. But what does “reform” mean in this election? The term was used in the November 2014 election. The issues facing the community were quite different then, and it is hard for newcomers to understand what was at stake.

In that election and later months, a small group of Kensington residents worked to get two new people on the board; get Joel Koosed out as editor of the *Outlook*; get rid of GM/COP Harman and hire a substantially better interim; force more transparency in board activities; and get the board to construct an ad hoc committee so that citizens could gather data and assemble analyses to address the main questions facing our district. We have come a long way, and if this is not “reform,” at least it is change for the better.

However, NONE of the people on NextDoor “Local Issues” who style themselves and others as “reformers” had anything to do with these advances, as I recall. Nor were the people that they label “reform” candidates in the upcoming election (except Simon Brafman) extensively involved. This makes their current label of “reformer” hollow. It means exactly nothing. Except, perhaps, that a candidate is not the incumbent, Chuck Toombs. The bottom line: drop the labels. Let candidates say what they think. Evaluate them as individuals. If they can’t explain themselves to your satisfaction, don’t vote for them.

Kevin Padian

Thank you, Mr. Toombs, But You have Done Enough

Dear Editor,

I first bought a home in Kensington 42 years ago. My two children grew up here. It was a community in which one sought to raise a family. Our community is managed in part by the KPPCSD board. I have examined the board’s history over the past eight years. During that time, we have been subjected to financial mismanagement and community embarrassment, with the press referring to Kensington as “lawless.”

There has been one continuing influence on the board over those years—Mr. Charles Toombs, first elected to the board in 2008, who after eight years of directorship, is running again. Over the course of Mr. Toombs’ leadership, a great many residents have lost confidence in the board’s ability to manage the responsibilities the community entrusted to them. Decorum, civility, transparency, and trust have been replaced by mean-spiritedness, disrespect, obfuscation, and suspicion.

Under eight years of Mr. Toombs’ leadership, many residents have lost trust in the board’s ability or even its will to exercise sound moral and financial judgment and oversight to make certain that those we trust and pay to keep the community safe, do so. This failure culminated in an officer being disgraced, in the police chief being terminated, and in the community being embarrassed. This history, including the legal expenses forced upon the community, disqualifies Mr. Toombs from any legitimate claim to be worthy of the community’s consideration of him as an elected public official. Mr. Toombs’ defeat in the upcoming election can give our community a fresh start enabling new voices and fresh ideas to improve our governance. Thank you, Mr. Toombs, but you have served long enough.

A. Jan Behrsin

State-of-the-Art?

Dear Editor,

As he once more seeks reelection to the KPPCSD board, incumbent Chuck Toombs is claiming that he “Supported state-of-the-art franchise agreement with our solid waste provider.” Well, that’s a nice way to gloss over a rather trashy story that few should consider state-of-the-art. But first a little background for new residents or those who haven’t looked under the lid of their weekly refuse pickup.

Kensington has contracted with the same refuse collection company, Bay View Refuse (BVR) for over 70 years. Because of the topographical characteristics of Kensington—small, winding streets through hilly terrain—Kensington is not an inviting community for refuse haulers. We require special, small trucks that do not equate into large profits. Our contract with Bay View stipulates a 12 percent annual profit over

expenses. If actual expenses escalate above projections, the hauler may request a rate increase

In a 2010 letter to residents, Bay View reported that they were projecting losses starting in 2011 based primarily on the decision of more Kensington households to use smaller cans at a higher rate than was anticipated. After opening their books to all KPPCSD board members (I believe I was the only board member who took Bay View up on its offer to review) Bay View requested a 6 percent rate increase.

After considerable discussion, the KPPCSD board approved that increase by a 4 to 1 vote with board member Linda Lipscomb dissenting, and the rest of the board, including Chuck Toombs, voting in favor. This vote triggered Proposition 218, a state mandate that requires jurisdictions increasing fees to notify residents and provide a specific time for protest—50 percent plus 1 defeats the increase. However, the 6 percent Bay View increase was protested by only 3 percent of Kensington residents.

Then politics began to take over. Rather than the board sending the refuse hauler an official notification that the increase is approved, as stipulated by Prop 218, nothing happened. Throughout 2012, as Chuck Toombs again became president of the board and began his reelection campaign, the letter was put off. Chuck Toombs was able to run for reelection claiming that he was protecting the interest of the community by not allowing the 6 percent rate increase to move forward.

Meanwhile, Kensington was not paying Bay View enough for hauling our trash, and the company’s owner, Lewis Figone, was making payroll with his personal funds. Following the process spelled out in the contract, Figone took the case to arbitration. To make a long story short, in November 2012 Chuck Toombs was reelected, and in early 2013 the arbitration judge ruled in favor of Bay View and awarded them not the 6 percent originally requested but a whopping 21 percent increase, which immediately spiked the payments of all Kensington residents.

Throughout this process, the KPPCSD spent over \$146,000 in legal fees to defend the board’s delay of the rate increase plus an additional \$28,000 for a consultant to audit Bay View’s books to determine future rates. Just those fees, totaling \$174,000, translated to approximately \$79 per resident.

Playing politics with our trash collection is costly and hardly state-of-the-art.

Cathie Kosel

Absentee Voters, Listen Up

If you’ve voted absentee in the past, you should receive your absentee (or “mail-in”) ballot in the mail. Most voters duly mail in those ballots, but a few spot them sitting on the kitchen counter on Election Day. If you are registered absentee and you come to your polling place to vote, you must bring your ballot with you. Otherwise, you’ll be suspected of voting twice. The poll worker will write “Surrendered” on your absentee ballot, and you’ll be allowed to vote. There are no exceptions—unless your puppy ate that mail-in ballot, for example. In that case, you can come to the polling place and vote with a provisional ballot, meaning the county will search for your write-in ballot to make certain you aren’t trying to teleport to Cook County.

Police Log Online at www.kensingtonoutlook.com



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Meet the Candidates

Candidate Statement: Simon Brafman

My family and I have lived in Kensington for 3 ½ years. As you might remember, I was a candidate for the KPPCSD board in 2014. I am a candidate again because I believe we still need to improve our board's operational approach to managing our finances and services. In addition, board members should take a stronger lead in improving the tone and tenor at board meetings. I believe this positive change will improve the manner in which we interact with each other and will increase what we can accomplish politically within our community.

Even though I did not win a board seat in the 2014 election, I remain actively committed to improving our quality of life in Kensington, as well as increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the KPPCSD board and other Kensington community organizations. I continued my direct involvement in our community by applying for and being selected to serve as a member of the KPPCSD Finance Committee, the Ad Hoc Committee for Governance and Operations Structure, and the Kensington Community Council.

Based on my involvement with those committees and regularly attending KPPCSD board and special meetings, as well attending KFPD board, KIC and KPOA meetings, I am well acquainted with key critical challenges facing our district: Our board continues to operate without a sustainable, financial plan; and has chosen litigation over common sense or community-oriented solutions and openness. This has increased the negative tone of our political discussions as well as adding large legal costs which negatively impact our budget.

As a director, I won't just talk about problems. I will work to increase our community's involvement in board decisions. I will listen to our community members' ideas and work with them to deliver pragmatic, community-focused solutions that address our current and future needs with accountability, creativity and, most importantly, openness and respect. Thus making our board a more effective and efficient governing body.

I believe we must focus on reasonable governing, rather than on controlling via majority rule. In order to best safeguard Kensington's future, we must increase opportunities for public feedback and ensure open dialogue about critical events, plans, policies and expenditures. To accomplish this, we must also acknowledge and act accordingly with the principle that the freedom to criticize goes hand-in-hand with the responsibility to acknowledge positive actions.

I will apply my MBA education and extensive business experience to ensure our community obtains quality services, as well as to maintain long-term, financial stability. I will work to ensure a sustainable balanced budget, including a five-year financial plan, a viable reserves policy, and strategies to address all unfunded liabilities threatening Kensington's long-term financial health I will apply reasonable and transparent pragmatism to manage our community-oriented police services, our community's assets, as well as our garbage service contracts and labor negotiations. In order to promote community involvement, and to better understand our community's major key concerns, I have created a group on Nextdoor, inviting all Kensington residents to share their top priorities for our board.

Thank you very much and I hope to gain your support in our upcoming 2016 election.

Candidate Statement: Sylvia Hacaj

I am running to restore trust in the KPPCSD board and to address Kensington's long-term governance and fiscal challenges. I moved to Kensington in 2008 because it is a great place to raise a family: vibrant local businesses, wonderful walking trails and a top-rated elementary school, which my two daughters attend.

I faithfully began reading the *Outlook* to keep up on local issues and was increasingly dismayed by the accounts of acrimonious board meetings. In 2010 I voted for Measure G, the special permanent tax proposed by the board to support police services and stabilize the finances of the district.

In 2014, I began to pay closer attention to the KPPCSD board's management of budget and services. That year, the board proposed a new contract with the police that offered a salary increase to subsidize the employee contributions toward benefits. A thorough financial analysis by the Kensington Property Owners Association (KPOA) showed the terms of the contract weren't sustainable with Kensington's projected revenues.

I joined the board of the KPOA and am proud of the role its membership played in galvanizing the community to convince the KPPCSD board to start over and renegotiate. As a result of that renegotiation, police officers, for the first time, are contributing a small amount toward their health and retirement benefits.

Then there was Renogate in which a Kensington police officer lost possession of his gun, badge and handcuffs to an illegal prostitute (likely a victim of sex trafficking). The incident only came to light after an investigative reporter with the *Contra Costa Times* wrote about it. Disciplinary action by the chief of police, which should have been immediate, only came after the story broke—9 months after the fact.

Like everyone else, I was embarrassed for our community. But more importantly, it exposed a pattern of failed board oversight stemming from an uncritical eye toward police services. If there was a silver lining, it was the manner in which the community came together and demanded change. By a 4-1 vote, the board took decisive action and did not renew the chief's contract.

The community insisted that the board examine ways to change how the KPPCSD operates. An ad hoc committee was formed to present the board with fundamental policy choices on how we manage police services and improve Kensington's governance structure.

If elected I will work to rebuild trust and work constructively with board members and residents to minimize fiscal and legal risk. I will address the inherent conflict of interest in having a combined Chief of Police and General Manager. It's also important that we obtain bids for contracting police services so the community can evaluate this option.

For 25 years I have been shaping public policy, leading advocacy efforts and developing strategic priorities for nonprofits, foundations and progressive businesses. I have an ability to foster collaboration and rally others in a common endeavor. I thrive on

empowering people by connecting them to each other and to the information they need to create change.

Kensington is a community of friends and neighbors who look out for one another. It is this caring spirit that makes it one of the safest and most desirable towns in the Bay Area and the state. We have deeply held shared values. We should build on these to forge permanent consensus-based solutions. I know there are many residents who are ready for change, and I am ready to give my time, talents and enthusiasm to serve our community.

I respectfully ask for your thoughtful consideration of my candidacy and for your vote on November 8.

Candidate Statement: Eileen Nottoli

As a longtime Kensington resident, I care deeply about strengthening our community in the face of shrinking reserves and growing long-term debt. Like many of my neighbors, I'm eager to work together to restore sound community policing, transparency, and exemplary administrative practices.

For almost thirty years, I have been an environmental attorney at law firms in San Francisco helping companies comply with complex environmental laws. Before that, I was a research chemist developing improved fuel and lube oil additives. I have learned to evaluate relevant information, arrive at sound conclusions, and work with diverse people with divergent opinions to find mutually agreeable solutions.

KPPCSD's problems begin with a budget in which approximately two-thirds of the funds go toward police salaries, medical benefits and pension contributions for active and retired police. The rest of the funds go for other operations with little accumulation of reserves. Yet, like many California communities, our police department's unfunded pension liabilities loom as a major problem.

Kensington is also facing a short-term need for major capital investments. For the safety of our children and other users, the Community Center—a responsibility of the KPPCSD—must comply with seismic and ADA codes. Though planning has begun, the district's current financial plans are not focused on meeting this essential investment. Since the Public Safety Building also must be rebuilt to meet current seismic codes, the police department needs to plan for interim relocation costs. The new board needs to quickly develop a financial plan that addresses these needs.

My positions on the three questions of governance examined by the Ad Hoc Committee are as follows:

- I oppose eliminating the Kensington Fire District and integrating fire and emergency medical responsibilities into the KPPCSD. The State of California has designated Kensington as a high fire hazard area. Wildcat Canyon, which runs along the eastern edge of Kensington, has not burned in over 100 years. It is a tinderbox after years of drought and insect damage to trees. This is not the time for the KPPCSD to make hostile moves against our well-run fire district.

- The Ad Hoc Committee identified several agencies interested in providing contracted police services. We now need to get bids from these agencies. Moving forward to request bids for police services will be one of my top priorities because only then will we know if contracting will meet Kensington's needs in a cost-effective manner.

- Having the same person serve as General Manager and Chief of Police presents an inherent conflict of interest. I will work to make sure that the conflict of interest we currently have will be corrected regardless of which scenario Kensington chooses for police services.

I have the time, temperament, and dedication to help our board become better problem-solvers. I want to serve as one of your elected directors on the KPPCSD board, using my experience to help our community work together. My community services include working as an active volunteer with the American Chemical Society, heading a committee to help high school chemistry teachers and students. In addition, I have been volunteering with Guide Dogs for the Blind and often foster dogs "on vacation." I moved to Kensington in 1990 and have enjoyed converting my backyard into a habitat for butterflies and birds with native plants. And in my free time, I like to quilt.

Candidate Statement: David Spath

I am running for the KPPCSD board because critical governance and operational decisions are before our community, and I believe that I have the requisite leadership skills, temperament, and detailed understanding of local government processes that are needed for successful outcomes.

My vision for Kensington is to make sure it continues to be one of the safest communities in California with a balanced budget into the future. I spent more than three decades in the public sector managing programs with large multifaceted budgets that provided essential public and environment services to California citizens, the most important of which was ensuring that all Californians received safe drinking water. So I understand the importance of meeting people's expectation of providing quality service while managing budgets in a fiscally sound way to ensure those services are maintained. Similarly, residents of Kensington should expect to receive exceptional services from the district in an efficient and cost-effective way, getting the best value for the taxes that they pay. I will apply my management experience and skills to ensure that those expectations are met.

A board director must be willing to engage colleagues and the community in a manner that is respectful of other's points of view and opinions without demeaning other's intentions or positions. I will strive for consensus and be open to new ideas and solutions to determine the best course forward. I have strong communication skills and have demonstrated the temperament to work with people of diverse opinions in an open public process. For example, I've chaired the US Environmental Protection Agency, National Drinking Water Advisory Council, which worked to ensure the nation's drinking water met the highest quality standards.

Most recently, I chaired the KPPCSD's Ad Hoc Committee on Governance and Operations Structure, which studied the pros and cons of critical issues that will be facing Kensington governance in the years ahead: bifurcation of the GM/COP, contracting out

police services and consolidation with the fire district. The committee's work has demonstrated the importance of applying facts and research to develop options that address these subject areas. My participation on the committee gives me an in-depth understanding of the issues, and I am uniquely prepared to help our community move forward.

I am a 33-year resident of Kensington. I have taken the time and made the effort to be involved in our town for many years because I care deeply about our community. I have been an active participant in Kensington's local government including regular attendance at KPPCSD board meetings as well as finance and park and recreation committee meetings. I am deeply committed to helping develop a sustainable future that best meets the values and ideals of the community. My experience and my ability to work cooperatively and effectively with others make me well suited to serve on the board. KPPCSD and the community are facing important decisions going forward, and I hope that you will allow me to help lead that process.

**Candidate Statement:
Chuck Toombs**

My name is Chuck Toombs. I have had the privilege of serving on the KPPCSD board for the past 8 years and I'm running for re-election to continue work on building a sustainable and constructive future for our town.

My experience and in-depth knowledge of the district allows me to hit the ground running and work with the community and the board to provide realistic, pragmatic, affordable solutions to many of the decisions before us, especially those related to governance, public safety, leadership, and community facilities.

During my term I have:

- Worked on the negotiation team for a fair police contract with no substantial increased cost - all raises were offset by officer contributions to health and pension benefits.
- Advocated for zero tolerance traffic law enforcement. Please drive safely—we all live here.
- Supported a state-of-the-art franchise agreement with our solid waste provider which keeps in place a service we all appreciate at a fair and reasonable cost.
- Served as one of two principle architects of board's Ad Hoc Committee, bringing diverse citizens into governmental affairs.

I'm dedicated to this community, living here for 23 years. I served as KPPCSD board president for 3 1/2 years, served on its finance committee for 6 years (3 years as chair), and chaired its parks committee for 2 years. And my leadership in the Kensington Education Foundation as a past president and as past chair of four of its Garden Parties exemplifies my personal commitment to public service in Kensington.

Thanks for letting me serve you and I hope to continue my public service on your behalf. I want your vote!



Business consultant **Simon Brafman** moved to Kensington with his wife Paula in 2013. Their daughter soon joined, moving in until "she could find a place"—which turned out to be in a split-level arrangement with her parents. Brafman serves on the Kensington Community Council, the KPPCSD finance committee, and the ad hoc committee—and he also plays tennis. "I played at the park every morning," he says. "But now I play competitively at a club in El Cerrito." He and his wife are often seen with Lucy, the dog they adopted through Arlington Community Church's Blessing of the Animals: "My daughter and wife and I have learned a lot about patience and love from Lucy."

Soon after **Sylvia Hacaj** (HAW-sigh) graduated from college, she went to work on Capitol Hill. Thus began a two-pronged career: working with national service programs such as Americorps and for philanthropic entities. "I was director of policy and advocacy at Save the Children," she says. "Then I began arranging forums with a focus on global philanthropy." She and her husband moved to Kensington in 2008; their two daughters, ages 6-1/2 and 8-1/2, attend Hilltop Elementary. Her consultancy practice is geared to leadership training, policy analysis, and developing new styles of philanthropy. "I'm kind of an open book," she says when asked what people might not know about her. "I'm trying to talk less and listen more."



Chemist and lawyer **Eileen Nottoli** combined two specialties into a long-term career as an environmental attorney. "I've had a very busy, successful career that is winding down," says Nottoli. She finds the combination of a highly educated community and a seemingly dysfunctional board baffling. Spot her around town with guide dogs—Nottoli has long worked as a puppy socializer and now as a foster for Guide Dogs for the Blind

Longtime Kensington resident **Dave Spath** managed a state division that regulated public water systems among other tasks. "My program worked with the two companies that operated nuclear power plants," Spath says. "We had to ensure that evacuation plans for employees and the community made sense." He and wife Linda have been married since 1970 and have one son. Spath may be retired, but that gives him time to road-bike like mad—"I try to get in about 120-150 miles per week," he says. "I go up Mt. Diablo every week with an old college chum."



A longtime public servant, tax attorney **Chuck Toombs** chaired four Garden Party fundraisers for the Kensington Education Foundation before taking his KPPCSD director's chair in 2008. Toombs and his wife, Nancy, who celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary this year, raised two children, now 28 and 25. Something few know? Berkeley native Toombs worked as a union stagehand right out of college: "I worked lots of concerts, rock bands, lots of shows at the Greek Theater."

Market Update

◆ *Featured Kensington Homes* ◆

214 Arlington Avenue
Stunning renovation. Traditional architecture
Five bedrooms and three baths. Expansive property with glorious views.
Offered at: \$1,650,000

90 Stratford Road
Magical Mediterranean. Four bedrooms, three baths, surrounded by lush gardens and Bay views.
Offered at: \$1,298,000

Sold! 212 Yale Avenue
French inspired architecture with panoramic views. Four bedrooms and four baths.
Originally offered at: \$1,298,000
Sold substantially above the offered price.
Represented the seller

Whether your home is Grand or Petite, I take the same approach in the preparation, marketing and strategic planning for each home, as all homes are unique and deserving of the utmost care. I envision and create my marketing plan, imagining who our buyers will be, to attract the greatest audience and achieve the best results.

Thinking of selling or just wish to know the value of the home in this market? Call me the appointment is complimentary and confidential.

RUTH FRASSETTO, CRS
Over thirty-five years of experience you can count on.
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rfrassetto@grubbco.com

Visit GRUBBCO.COM for additional information about current listings.

Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed. Data provided by East Bay Regional Data - MLS.

All Board Candidates Sign Pledge

Each candidate for board seats up for election has agreed to reject political contributions from the district's police officers association, the United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa Local 1230, its membership or any agent of the membership, and any KPPCSD or El Cerrito Fire Department employees, including donations offered prior to or following the November 8 election. The Kensington Property Owners Association asked candidates to sign such a pledge in mid-August.

Following years of structural deficits, the KPPCSD undertook a study to evaluate options for contracting out police services, consolidating Kensington's two special districts into one, and separating the General Manager and Police Chief position. That discussion is just beginning as we approach the next election. Newly elected or re-elected KPPCSD and KFPD board members must approach these issues in a manner fair to our officers and firefighters and to our community.

Property Owners Association President Gail Feldman said, "In asking candidates not to accept political contributions from the police and firefighters, the KPOA seeks to eliminate the uncertainty about financial influence when money is contributed to the same people who will negotiate salaries and benefits and the future direction of how these services are provided."

Q&A with the Candidates

What in your view are the tasks and role of a KPPCSD director?

David Spath: The role of a KPPCSD director is to provide leadership and work collaboratively with the board to give policy direction to the General Manager that ensures the services desired and paid for by the residents of the district are provided at the highest level while maintaining financial stability. To achieve this end, the director must work in a cooperative and collegial manner and strive to achieve consensus on issues before the board and the community. The tasks of a KPPCSD director are to: 1) develop clear district policies; 2) select and evaluate the General Manager (who implements those policies); 3) review and adopt district budgets that allocate funds to best meet objectives; 4) develop strategic plans with concrete actions to improve our community, and; 5) communicate effectively with the community.

Eileen Nottoli: The role of a KPPCSD director is to set policy, manage the budget, provide oversight for police services, and actively manage and oversee the activities of the General Manager/Chief of Police. KPPCSD also owns and is responsible for managing the park and the Community Center Building (Youth Hut), the Annex, and Building E.

Simon Brafman: Simply put, the KPPCSD director's key role and tasks are to lead by example, with respect and civility; and to engage our entire community in order to better understand their needs and then, deliver the KPPCSD-managed budget and services that will meet or exceed those needs.

Sylvia Hacaj: The most important role of a director is to be aware of our community's needs, concerns and values, and ensure that they are reflected in the district's priorities and budget. The directors are responsible for the formulation and evaluation of policy with regard to the provision of police, recreation and solid waste removal services. Directors set the goals and priorities for the General Manager who proposes a budget that the board must review, modify and adopt as final.

Chuck Toombs: Directors need to listen to the majority of their constituents about the kind of community those constituents want. We are entitled to our personal opinions, but we owe it to our community to examine objective and honest facts on public issues before the board, take the pulse of community stakeholders, and do our best to make reasoned, fair decisions that are in the best interests of the entire community. Directors must absolutely collaborate with their colleagues and their community in a fair, reasoned and honest fashion and with mutual respect for everyone. Each director must follow the law. No director is above it nor is any citizen. Directors who follow these imperatives will always get my vote.

How have past and present boards succeeded or failed at that role and tasks?

Simon Brafman: My experience is limited to the last 3 ½ years. During that time, I believe that our board has started the process of improving the management of our police services by removing the previous COP/GM. In addition, they have begun looking at possible future governmental alternatives by creating and enlisting the community to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee for Governance and Operations Structure. However, I have found our board has still not taken the critical lead in reducing the negative tone and tenor when interacting with both other board members and attendees during board meetings nor have they managed their budget to ensure a sustainable fiscal plan; thus failing to meet the key tasks and roles of a KPPCSD board director.

Eileen Nottoli: The past boards have not provided sufficient oversight of the police, have allowed unnecessary expenses, and have not engaged in long-term financial planning to meet substantial future expenses to upgrade the Community Service Building to meet seismic and ADA codes and fund long-term pension and health benefits for retirees. For example, the police contract provides significantly better benefits than other jurisdictions, there is excessive police overtime, the garbage contract renewals were mismanaged resulting in higher costs, and legal costs have soared.

Sylvia Hacaj: Since at least 2008, as long as I've lived in Kensington, the boards have collectively failed to address our government's inherent structural weakness created by having the Chief of Police serve as our General Manager. The boards have been too passive and uncritical in controlling expenses for police services. This imbalance and deference to the Chief of Police favors police services at the expense of other community needs and long-term fiscal prudence. To compound matters, directors have failed to de-escalate conflicts among themselves and with the community. Some residents haven't felt respected or heard, others have been vilified, and the silent majority of residents have been utterly repelled by the discord.

David Spath: There certainly has not been a consistent spirit of cooperation and collegiality within the board for a number of years. That has led to a lack of consensus-building on some critical issues and a lack of clear policy direction. In addition, historically, the board has not engaged in strategic planning that would provide a blueprint for addressing critical issues going forward. The board has worked hard to maintain district services such as police, recreation programs, park maintenance and refuse collection. Areas I would focus on include police services to best meet community needs, park maintenance, and needed capital improvements for the aging community center/youth hut. The board has kept the district financially solvent while maintaining a reserve; however, legal fees have been much larger than budgeted and must be controlled and reduced.

Chuck Toombs: Our own board has successfully included as many residents as possible in the democratic process. The current board has created an Ad Hoc Committee specifically designed to engage residents in our local government. Our board has for the most part done its best to stay out of the way of this committee, to avoid injecting its personal bias into this group's work, and instead allow the Ad Hoc Committee to use the talents of its members to develop facts for the board and the public. If I am re-elected, I will work to insure that the new board continues to obtain vital necessary public input on key issues from its stakeholders.

Currently the board has work to do on all sides to insure that civility and collaboration become the rule and not the exception. Democracy is robust and it has sharp elbows—that is healthy, but there is no room for disrespect or disingenuous behavior anywhere in local government—we have too many issues to resolve and that requires cooperation. Those other issues are distractions that affect the wheels of government and do not belong in it.

I firmly believe the majority of the directors past and present have a healthy respect for due process and the requirements of the law. In the past, our district successfully defended the constitutional First Amendment rights of the individual board members to vote as they saw fit without fearing retaliation in the face of a lawsuit that lacked any merit. We fought for fairness over our waste hauler agreement and achieved a state-of-

the-art agreement we are all proud of.

And I took a very unpopular position when I voted against severing relations with our former chief of police because I felt it was crucial to conduct a full investigation and hearing on his actions involving officer misconduct, before passing judgment on him, rather than succumb to the inflamed passions of public opinion that called for his immediate resignation. To me, it was crucial to preserve the fundamental notions of due process and fair play regardless of the tenor of the times, and I would do the same for other citizens and board members.

Boards are imperfect because they are human—however if the individuals do their best to follow the law and their sense of justice and fair play, and engage fairly with each other and other members of the community, they cannot be faulted. By and large our boards have successfully served their community well.

How would you go about healing animosities and engaging residents to work with the board?

Chuck Toombs: Our community needs to be engaged in the work of the board at all levels. I have repeatedly stated that we must come together to determine what our residents want and expect out of public service and thrash through some very thorny issues, to come out on the other end with a future we all can embrace. To that end, I was one of two board members who were the prime architects of the district's Ad Hoc Committee, which we created to do fact finding on key issues of community concern. This ten-member committee represents incredibly diverse points of view, and it has worked well and fairly with each other on its assigned tasks to create a report that we can all be proud of. Similarly, the Finance Committee that I co-chair has 14 citizens also of diverse points of view and we have worked together collaboratively and respectfully to wrestle with key financial issues facing Kensington. Meaningful community involvement is the best way to heal divisive wounds. We are working on it and making great progress.

Eileen Nottoli: I would ask that all sides agree to civil discourse and to accept that there will be differences of opinion. We need to find the common ground that can enable us to move forward and begin to address the significant challenges that we face. I would engage residents by listening and responding to their ideas and concerns. We are fortunate to have an informed community who are willing to participate in making their community better. I would also improve the website to provide better information to residents.

Simon Brafman: I will act to increase our community's involvement in board decisions by engaging our community to share their concerns about and solutions for our community, by listening to their ideas and working with them to deliver transparent and pragmatic, community-focused solutions which will address our current and future needs with accountability, creativity and, most importantly, openness and respect, thus making our board a more effective and efficient governing body. I believe that the Ad Hoc Committee for Governance and Operations Structure is an example of a positive model for increasing our community's involvement.

Sylvia Hacaj: Kensington has a rich tradition of an engaged citizenry. We established our library, literally built our community youth center, and created our park. Our town also has a reputation for self-sufficiency. Independence and engagement are interdependent. We cannot do all that we must without the time and expertise contributed by residents. It is vitally important to listen, acknowledge and explore opposing views and to understand the underlying concern and the desired outcome. If I am elected I will work constructively with the board and bring in new voices that broadly represent the diversity of views and wealth of experience of our community. I bring an ability to unite people around a common goal, listen to all points of view with respect, and build consensus to move forward. Consensus doesn't mean everyone agrees, but it does mean that everyone feels they have been truly heard and part of the process.

David Spath: I have had considerable experience working with groups with diverse opinions including chairing a federal agency advisory council to ensure safe drinking water for the nation and also chairing the district's Ad Hoc Committee on Governance and Operations Structure. To avoid conflict that can turn acrimonious one must be respectful of other's points of view and opinions. Discussions must be carried out without demeaning other's intentions or positions. And one must strive for consensus and avoid imposing one's position as the only solution to an issue.

Engaging residents can be challenging. Many residents have multiple pressures on their daily lives and, as a result, attending board meetings is difficult. My proposal to improve engagement: 1) Continue to improve the district's web site for ease of use and posting of relevant documents; 2) Push out information from the board or the General Manager on a regular basis via the web and articles in the *Outlook*, and; 3) Conduct public forums on key issues that can be video taped and added to the website library.

What are your views (be specific) on (a) bifurcation of GM/COP position?

Eileen Nottoli: It is essential that we split the position. The combined position presents an inherent conflict of interest and has not worked well for our community.

David Spath: I believe, as many do, that having separate positions provides another level of leadership, skillsets and internal review for our district and is the preferred approach. The main concern is cost, which could be significant. As evidenced by the Ad Hoc Committee's findings, experienced, full time general managers in the Bay Area command compensation packages well in excess of what the district's Interim GM/COP is provided and we would still need a full time Police Chief. The district's FY2016-2017 budget, even with lower projected legal costs, has little flexibility and shows a slight deficit. We will have to responsibly look at what costs can be reduced and how to pay for the separate GM position and consider various options such as a part-time GM or a retired GM to achieve this goal. This will require creative thinking both on the budget analysis and on the criteria and skillset for the position.

Simon Brafman: I believe that the combined positions of GM and COP are vulnerable to conflicts of interest. I will work to separate those two positions and to ensure the right person is hired for each position.

Chuck Toombs: Before anyone adopts a hard and fast position on these issues, we must ask our community stakeholders what they want, either with a poll or with an advisory vote. And we must obtain sufficient market-driven data on what alternate



models of service will cost from other agencies. Only then can the board and the community make some very tough choices. With that in mind here are my personal views. Bifurcation of the GM/COP is admirable and I would love to see it occur. Practically speaking however the district has had one GM/COP for the past 60 years primarily because of the cost savings achieved by having that one person perform two separate job descriptions. The board does have ultimate authority over the combined role and is not afraid to terminate the GM/COP if it thinks that person is failing at the task.

Sylvia Hacaj: In talking with fellow residents, their top concern is the combined Chief of Police/General Manager position. They agree with the Ad Hoc Committee's draft report findings that separation of the roles is "the preferred organizational structure." At the most basic level, they understand that having one person serve in both roles creates a conflict of interest, especially in matters related to police complaints and budgetary priorities. It is a glaring structural weakness, no matter who is in the role. The Ad Hoc committee has identified several alternatives for separating the positions. The board and community will have to consider the best one to serve our needs and budget. One can always find obstacles to change, but the community has demonstrated its will and the board must find the way!

(b) contracting out police services to another agency

Chuck Toombs: I do not believe that contracting out is a reasonable solution. The cost savings may be illusory because adjacent agencies have a higher cost per officer than we do, and they face the same volatility in pension and health benefits costs. We will probably remain liable for the costs of vehicles and other police equipment used by any new agency, just as the Fire District remains liable for its own equipment costs. We have continuing pension plan liabilities for past officers that will not go away. We will lose control over future costs and be forced to accept price increases imposed by any new agency as and when they occur. And any cost savings will likely come at the expense of a reduction in service-- that is a political question for the community to answer.

While we will certainly benefit by having a larger HR capacity to manage employment issues, the potential loss of service may not make the tradeoff worthwhile. Finally it is possible to get a decent level of service by hiring the right person to serve as GM/COP, while retaining local control over both police and their costs—something we will lose if we contract out.

Simon Brafman: I am in favor of contracting out our police services, but only if we can negotiate a contract that will be both more effective and more efficient than our current contract with the Kensington Police Officers Association.

Sylvia Hacaj: The incoming board must maintain the momentum of the Ad Hoc Committee's work and facilitate our community's ability to fully explore contracting some or all elements of police services. An analysis of the police services data and a thorough understanding of our town's budget constraints is necessary to put together a Request For Proposals. Only then can the community have a robust conversation that both clarifies the numbers, but more importantly explores the values that we as a community hold dear. The new board will then be empowered to decide how contracting could meet our community policing needs in a fiscally sustainable way.

Eileen Nottoli: We need to obtain bids from the agencies that have expressed interest in providing contract services. As policing has become more complex, Kensington has struggled to provide the support services (human resources, resource management, crime labs, contract negotiations) that police require. We are a very small entity and other small jurisdictions that have contracted for police services have found good services and better cost containment. By contracting with another organization, we would be able to provide more services at a lower cost (e.g., crime lab, human resources, contract negotiations).

David Spath: Many residents feel more secure with a dedicated police force; others feel that, with a small department, problems can be magnified. The evidence gathered by the Ad Hoc Committee suggests that there is good reason to explore this idea further with professional assistance by specialists with expertise in the provision of police services. First, the residents of Kensington need to decide what services they want and what coverage. Only then can we decide what a successful "request for proposal" should look like, and assess which agencies might provide reasonable proposals. Once we have realistic services and costs, we need to reach out to the Kensington community to determine their thoughts about contracting out police services. This decision would be a long-term commitment that cannot easily be undone. I will do everything I can to assess all of these factors and options to provide the best solution for the district.

(c) restructuring Kensington's two special districts so that the fire district is dissolved and fire and EMT services come under the KPPCSD

Simon Brafman: I do not believe we are ready to restructure our two districts at this time nor in the near future. Prior to any such action, we must first improve the KPPCSD board's operational approach and financial plan. Secondly, we need to better understand how and when such an action could take place, as the Ad Hoc Committee for Governance and Operations Structure report is not totally clear on how such a restructure would take place.

Sylvia Hacaj: I do not consider a takeover of the fire district to be a priority. Initiating a takeover of the district may be an interesting tax policy discussion, but the KPPCSD needs to get its own house in order first. The greatest threat to our homes and personal safety in Kensington is wildfire and earthquake. Scientists with the US Geological Survey describe the Hayward fault as a "tectonic time bomb, due anytime for another magnitude 6.8 to 7.0 earthquake." On August 16 of last year an early-morning brushfire near the Steam Train in Tilden Park grew to one acre before it was extinguished. This summer's wildfires were a devastating reminder that life can change in an instant. The KPPCSD board should work cooperatively with our fire district to continuously improve our residents' preparedness for a certain future quake and on a clear evacuation plan to get us to safety in minutes should a small brush fire grow out of control.

David Spath: Dissolving the fire district and bringing the district under the KPPCSD is an issue that should be deferred for future consideration. A unified governance structure is the model under which virtually all communities operate regardless of size including community services districts that provide multiple services. It allows the community to decide the best use of resources to address all service needs. However, at this time, both districts have critical issues that must be addressed. The fire district has

a critical decision to make regarding the Public Safety Building and the KPPCSD must address its long-range budget and management concerns. Until these issues are resolved it would be premature to ask the community to consider restructuring the districts.

Chuck Toombs: Unification of the two special districts is crucial. It is important to unify all public services (police, fire and emergency services) under one roof to better manage both our tax revenues, and to establish community wide priorities on how that board spends the community's tax dollars. It is unconscionable for the Fire District to have over \$5 million in taxpayer funds set aside on deposit, while the Police District only has less than \$1.5 million in reserves--this reflects a structural inequity in how each district is allocated tax dollars that affects the value of services delivered to the community. Finally, every adjacent community manages police and fire services under the control of a single city council, and city mayor or city manager and we should too.

Eileen Nottoli: The Fire District is a highly successful entity that has well managed its finances and has greatly improved infrastructure to be better prepared for fires. In addition, it has one of the lowest response times for EMT services. The KPPCSD has not managed their finances well, has not engaged in long term planning, and should not be allowed to take away from needed emergency response efforts.

5. To what goal would you assign highest priority upon taking your seat as a director?

David Spath: There are two goals that need immediate attention that can be done simultaneously. One is to establish a climate of civility on the board in which positions and opinions on issues are respectfully presented and debated with the ultimate goal of achieving consensus decisions. The second is a decision on the bifurcation of the GM/COP position. The Interim GM/COP's contract ends in February. The board will have to decide whether to separate the position and, if so, whether the GM position will be full time or part-time. Should that happen, the COP position will have to be filled as well. Resolving this issue and providing leadership stability for the management of the district is one of my highest priorities.

Eileen Nottoli: Finding a general manager who can develop a realistic budget, identify areas where we can cut costs, and provide greater oversight of police services.

Chuck Toombs: Provide public structures that are safe and which the community can afford, such as upgrades to our community center that make it safe and usable to our residents and creation of a new public safety building. We need to implement these safety changes, all within the current financial constraints of our community or look for alternative available public and private financing.

Sylvia Hacaj: The highest policy priority is to remove the inherent conflict of interest in having the Chief of Police act as Kensington's General Manager and to take the next steps needed to evaluate the option of contracting for police services.

Simon Brafman: As a director, I will work to ensure that our board transparently and respectfully conducts its business and safeguards Kensington's financial future by implementing and maintaining a sustainable financial plan; while also providing affordable and effective police and garbage services, as well as maintaining Kensington's public facilities. I will also work to bifurcate the GM/COP position and to ensure that our police services meet the needs of our community.

What do you believe is the board's greatest near-term challenge? Long-term?

Eileen Nottoli: The greatest near-term challenge is funding for the temporary location for police services when the public service building is rebuilt and funding to bring the Community Service Building in compliance with current seismic and ADA requirements. The greatest long-term challenge is meeting our pension and health benefits for our retirees.

Simon Brafman: I believe our KPPCSD board continues to operate without a sustainable, fiscal plan, and often accepts legal turmoil over common sense or community-oriented problem solving. Unless that is changed, our short-term challenges will be there in the future.

Chuck Toombs: Near-term challenge is to develop a sense of collaboration within the board and with the community that allows everyone a say in our community governance that is honest, fair and based on mutual respect for each other and on an abiding sense of personal integrity from those serving on our governing board. Long-term challenge is to obtain community consensus on the type of public and police services they wish to have and what they are prepared to pay for them--the decisions are theirs to make. We must find a sustainable model of police services and benefits that does not require us to abandon other imperatives for our community yet continues to provide a vital public service.

David Spath: The greatest near-term challenge is addressing the GM/COP position and, if the position is to be bifurcated, how the new GM and COP positions will affect the FY2016-2017 budget. The FY 2016-2017 budget is very tight and the board needs to maintain a fiscally sound district without a deficit now or into the future. The long-term challenge centers around maintaining fiscal solvency of the KPPCSD. The district has significant fiscal issues going forward. The police department is approximately 85% of the annual budget and those costs are primarily for staff. Clearly, police pay and benefits are the most critical cost element. The cost of pension and health benefits must be addressed in the next Memorandum of Understanding negotiations with the Kensington Police Officers Association, which will presumably begin soon. In addition, the park and the Community Center are our greatest physical and social assets, and it is our duty to make sure these assets are maintained and preserved into the future. Finding funds to maintain and make physical improvements will be a long-term challenge.

Sylvia Hacaj: The board's greatest near-term challenge is rebuilding the wider community's trust in its ability to provide services that reflect the community's values and are fiscally sustainable. This trust is crucial so that Kensington can have a community-wide values-based conversation to find common ground in transitioning to a better governing and operating structure. In the long-term, the board must take a leadership role in ensuring that our budget is managed for a fiscally sustainable future. Our district has to consider underfunded pension and medical trust fund liabilities and the impacts of required seismic upgrades to the public safety building and community youth center.

If we want to maintain Kensington's tradition of independence, and make it an even better place to live, the board has to proactively educate residents and facilitate their involvement in Kensington's civic affairs, not tune them out and turn them off! We have the talent and resources to face these near- and long-term challenges if we commit ourselves to mutual respect, civility and transparency.

KENSINGTON Community Education

KASEP

On-line fall KASEP registration exploded on September 6th and over 400 seats were filled in less than an hour! Thank you to our supportive community for embracing our KASEP program. There are 55 classes offered this fall, with five new teachers and four new classes, including pastel art, hip-hop/cheerleading, environmental science and book-making.

We have a very creative group of KASEP teachers who are always coming up with innovative projects to spark the creativity of our students. This fall, on Thursdays, you can jive to hip hop and learn routines in cheerleading, try your hand learning to sew or be inspired to create 3-D books from Altoid boxes. On Tuesdays, you can experiment with pastel art or stretch your muscles in gymnastics. Circus returns for another full year of fun with stilt-walking and juggling on Wednesdays. On Mondays you can conduct hands-on experiments to increase environmental awareness or cook scrumptious creations. Sports are always popular and you can bounce a ball in basketball or hit a ball in lacrosse. We have something for just about everyone!

The new challenge for us this year was all-day kindergarten that runs until 1:30. Our KASEP teachers didn't hesitate, but simply modified their curriculum to fit the shorter class time, and on September 6th our kinder parents flocked to sign up for KASEP classes. Currently all of our kinder classes are full and going strong. Thank you parents!

As in the past, KASEP teachers are picking up kinders directly from their classrooms and bringing them to the KASEP world for instruction. **NEW THIS YEAR:** when KASEP class is over, kinders enrolled in Neighborhood School (NS), will be escorted up to NS by KCC staff.

Our KASEP classes started on September 19th and run through December 16th. If you are still looking for an after-school enrichment class, there are a precious few spaces left--contact the KCC office at 525-0292 to register.

Save the Date!

KEEP THE TRADITION ALIVE- KCC FALL PARADE AND PICNIC, Sunday, October 23rd. March in the parade and join the family fun festivities.

Want to march in the parade? Then give the KCC office a call at 510-525-0292.

Jazzercise

OCTOBER SPECIAL DEAL!

If you come to Jazzercise and/or Body Sculpting and sign-up for one year, then the month of October is FREE; you will be charged a monthly fee of just \$50 per month, starting in November. The processing fee of \$49.00 is waived. Enjoy a savings of \$98!

8:15am - 9:15am, Monday - Friday at the Community Center. Drop-ins are welcome!

Rock it out with Kevin to Lite versions of Dance, Fusion and Core. With foot stomping beats and modified movements, lower intensity cardio plus strength classes work it where you need it.

BODY SCULPTING

9:15-10:15am Tuesdays and Thursdays, Ongoing; Community Center

Come join the fun and get healthy, just bring a mat and weights. Register at class. Questions? Call Kevin at 486-2728; Location for both classes: Kensington Community Center.

Acrylic Artists

Our Acrylic Artists paint, dab & gab in the Community Center Wednesdays from 9:45- 12:30pm.

Positive Posture-New Class

9:30-11:00am Mondays, on-going, Community Center, \$10

Straighten THEN strengthen. This class teaches postural alignment and helps recognize and correct imbalances in your body. The Instructor is Amy Aldrich.

Tai Chi-New Class

9:30-10:30am Fridays, on-going, Community Center, \$10

A gentle martial art, tai chi is a safe, rewarding activity for people of all ages and all levels of health.

Tai chi incorporates both mind and body. Nobuo Nishi, instructor, has been teaching for 18 years.

Meet some of our incredibly talented KASEP teachers.



Jane Webber's kind approach to teaching music makes everyone want to play



Elaine Chu knows just how to draw creativity out and let magic happen



Dayana Claghorn has a wealth of tools to make each pottery lesson unique



Pascale Roger-McKeever, an actor herself, makes drama playful and focused at the same time



Vicky Brodt has a way with children—she truly sees how special each one of them is



Bindy Baker (Judy's daughter) has inherited the family gymnastics business—welcome Bindy!



Sandy Thacker returns to teach carpentry this Fall—welcome back! Jan Jones' talent turns beginners into budding musicians.



Curt Jones' curiosity makes science come alive for children. Kim Roots is a masterful tennis player. Walmaria Caldas teaches hand-knitting, stitching and weaving with simple materials.

Important KASEP Dates

KASEP is closed on the following holidays:
October 10, November 1, November 24, 25

Kensington Calendar

Low Impact Jazzercise, ongoing, 8:15-9:15am Mon-Fri, Community Center.
Power Posture, ongoing, 9:30-11am, Mondays, Community Center.
Body Sculpting, ongoing, 9:15-10:15am, Tues and Thurs, Community Center.
Acrylic Artists, ongoing, 9:45am-1pm, Weds, Community Center.
Tai Chi, ongoing, 9:30-10:30am, Fridays, Community Center.

October 2 Beverly Allen in conversation with Frank Ferrante. Beverly is a visiting professor at Stanford and author; Frank is an award-winning author of *May I Be Frank*. "Forgiveness." 9:30am. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org.

October 2 Sing Along to "The Sound of Music" 1pm, Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Road, Kensington. Bring your children to sing along with the film, then join in a refec-tion on tough questions raised when political turmoil turns the world upside down.

October 3 Knitting Club "The Cast-offs" All levels welcome. Please bring your own needles and yarn. We will provide support, encouragement and help. Learn new stitches, share your talents, and meet new friends. Meets on the first Monday of the month. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., 6:30pm. Free. 524-3043.

October 4, 11, 18 and 25 Family Storytime Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome. Kensington Library, 6:30pm. Free.

October 7, 8, 9. Art Then and Now—A Thread that Connects Us. J-SEI Building, 1285 66th St., Emeryville. See story on page 11.

October 8 Charged Particles Jazz Trio. 11am, El Cerrito Library. Enjoy an hour of fun, funky Latin jazz with Bay Area trio Charged Particles. All ages welcome. Free.

October 9 Ronald Nakasone, Senior Lecturer in Buddhist Art and Culture, faculty member at Graduate Theological Union. "Spiritual Genealogy." 9:30am. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org.

October 10 Artwork of Ed Ruscha. Fine Arts Museums docent Marsha Holm will talk about the artwork of Ed Ruscha at the El Cerrito Art Association meeting at 7pm at the El Cerrito Community Center. Ruscha's work appeared in the Wild West exhibit at the Legion of Honor. 7007 Moeser Lane, El Cerrito.

October 10 and 24 Kensington Library's Digital Docent will answer eReader and digital library questions every other Monday by appointment at 1 & 1:30pm. This one-on-one 30-minute appointment is intended for people seeking assistance with eBooks and eReaders. Sign up at Info Desk. Please bring your device. Kensington Library, 1pm. Free.

October 13, 20 & 27 Baby & Toddler Storytime Stories, songs & action rhymes for young children and their caregivers. Kensington Library. Two identical sessions 10:15am & 11:15am. Free. 524-3043.

October 15 Ana Fortes, Department of Labor Program Analyst, will speak about women in the work force at the American Association of University Women (AAUW) at Christ Lutheran Church, 780 Ashbury Ave., El Cerrito. 10am.

October 16 Elizabeth Fisher, author of the UU Course "Rise Up and Call Her Name." "Gifts Goddesses Offer." 9:30am. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org.

October 16, 21, 22, 23 "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" Tickets for all shows at brownpapertickets.com. Sun-

days at 2pm, October 21, 22 8pm. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Road, Kensington. Theater of the Blue Moon.

October 18 Berkeley Garden Club Lecture Program, Albany Community Center, 1249 Marin Avenue. Propagation from Seeds and Cuttings: Lawrence Lee, Instructor of Horticulture, Merritt College. 12:30-1 Plant Exchange, 1-2 General Meeting, 2-3 Lecture.

October 23 Charles Tart, author, researcher on consciousness and para-psychology. "In Search of Enlightenment and Knowledge; Highlights from the Life Journey of a Transpersonal Para(Neuro) psychologist." 9:30am. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org.

October 23 KCC Fall Parade and Picnic. Join the family fun festivities. Want to march? Give the KCC office a call at 510-525-0292.

October 24 Bat Craft Kids of all ages are invited to join Kensington Library for a spooky after school craft activity. Come and make a spooky bat to go along with your Halloween-themed decorations. Best for ages 5 and up. 3pm. Free.

October 24 Kensington Library Book Club Discussion of *Barchester Towers*, by Anthony Trollope. Book Club normally meets on the 4th Monday of the month. 6:30pm. Free.

October 25 Bat Show! Come get spooky with us at Kensington Library. Prepare yourself for a fun-filled show celebrating bats and the Halloween season. The program is educational, very exciting, and perfectly safe. Best for ages 5 and up. Sponsored by the Friends of the Kensington Library. 6:30pm. Free. 524-3043.

October 30 Shahara Godfrey, Buddhist teacher, mixed-media artist, "Social Responsibility and Spirituality: A Bud-

dhist Perspective." 9:30am. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org.

October 30 Halloween Dinner-Dance Party with live music by SOUL Rising, '60s-'70s rock band. 6pm potluck dinner, 7-9:30pm dance. Adults: Donation \$15 (\$10 if you bring a dish to share). Free childcare (reserve by Oct. 18). Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Road, Kensington.

Town Meetings

Kensington Community Center
59 Arlington Ave., Kensington

KCC-October 3, Kensington Community Council 1st Mondays, 7:30pm. 525-0292

FKL-October 4, Friends of the Kensington Library, 7pm (at the Library) 1st Tuesdays

KPSC-Oct. 10, Kensington Public Safety Council Earthquake/Disaster Preparedness 2nd Mondays, 6pm. 501-8165

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

KFPD-October. 12, Fire Protection District 2nd Wednesdays, 7pm. 527-8395

KPPCSD-October 13, Police Protection and Community Services District 2nd Thursdays 7:30pm. 526-4141

KIC-Oct. 24, Kensington Improvement Club 4th Mondays, 7:30pm. 524-7514.

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

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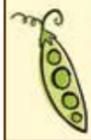
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The Thread that Connects Us

By Linnea Due

Longtime Kensington resident Keiki Fujita creates one-of-a-kind wearable art—and she also curates unique exhibits. On October 8 and 9, Fujita hosts an exhibit and benefit sale of paintings, artwear, jewelry, antiques and more, called Art Then & Now—A Thread that Connects Us, featuring works by internationally known Japanese American artists from the past and today. The show benefits the February show at the National Museum of American History, “Executive Order 9066,” an exhibit of artifacts from the camps that interned Japanese American citizens during World War II.

The “then” of Fujita’s exhibit include such beloved artists as Ruth Asawa, Chiura Obata, Arthur Okamura, and Fumiko Ukai, all camp internees. As Fujita says, the “now” of the exhibit “are offspring of those who were in the camps.” Fujita’s mother and father met and were married at Topaz: “I was going to have my own show and then I thought, ‘Well, I could have a few more artists.’ Then I realized that we could honor these people who came before us. Obata’s granddaughter is bringing books to sell, and we’re also going to have a few of his paintings. There will be catalogues and a piece of Ruth’s and about thirteen watercolors of Arthur’s.”

Present-day artists include Vicky Mihara Avery, the owner of Miki’s Paper on 4th Street; Ellen Bepp, a mixed-media and textile artist; Guillerma Lafever, exhibiting Japanese “mingei” and tansu; Kay Sekimachi, well known fiber artist and jeweler, and of course Fujita herself. “I studied in Kyoto in kimono painting as an artist-in-residence, using the musen technique. I’ll be exhibiting my kimono that I made with the original technique, using dyes and brushes from Kyoto.”

Fujita’s parents built their house on the Arlington in 1962, and Fujita attended Kensington Hilltop, Portola, and El Cerrito High. She moved back to the house when her parents became ill, and now her children live there with Fujita and her husband. Her father volunteered to deliver food in a Meals on Wheels program through the Japanese Senior Services Center—“and then he got food delivered to him,” Fujita says. The center is housed in a new building on 66th Street in Emeryville—with the exhibit held in the upstairs atrium. “This honors my parents, honors my ancestors,” says Fujita. “It’s a message for everyone who has gone through wartime hardship and misgivings. I’ve always tried to communicate peace and beauty and nature through my art. I put a message on the invitation: ‘Now is the time to unify, to open our hearts and minds and join our hands to work together and create peace for all of humanity and the new world.’”

The exhibit is held at the J-SEI Building, 2nd floor Atrium, 1285 66th Street, Emeryville, October 8-9, from 11am-5pm, with an opening reception Friday, October 7, from 5-7pm.



Unique asymmetrical silk/spandex jacket, “Purple Passion” by Keiki Fujita

Parade

...from front page

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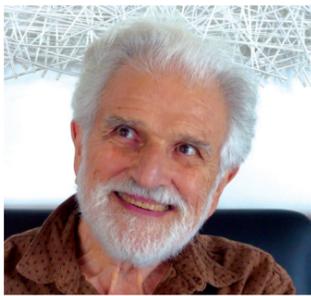
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Neighborhood Notes

Passing of Dr. Hercules Morphopoulos, DDS

Hercules Demosthenes Morphopoulos was born December 5, 1933, and lived a long productive life until August 13, 2016, ten days after he was admitted at the John Muir Hospital. He graduated from UCSF's Dental School in 1958 and continued on as a faculty member until 1975.



His commitment to the community lasted throughout his lifetime. He was a member of Physicians for Social Responsibility, co-founded the dental section of the Berkeley Free Clinic, and supported many other community clinics including Peres Elementary School's dental clinic in Richmond, CA. Hercules also volunteered his services internationally, in Nepal and in Africa.

He established his dental practice at 267 Arlington Ave. in 1960 and continued practice until 2015, serving a large community of loyal patients. His former associate, Dr. Zarrin Ferdowsi, carries on the fine dentistry tradition at the same location.

He was surrounded by his wife Yoshiko, his sister Christine, his children, Lisa, Thomas and wife Ana, grandchildren Miles and Marcus, Nicholas and spouse Malicia Basta, grandson Nicola Hercules, stepson Adee Wada, his wife Lisa and their children Reed, Cal, and Maxine, in life and as he finished his time on earth.

In loving memory, a website <http://herculesmorphopoulos.com> was built by his wife who welcomes people to share comments and images pertaining to Herc as he was called by all. Herc's Celebration of Life gathering will be held at the Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave on December 4, 11am to 4pm. More news will be posted on his website, including how to donate in his honor.

Music Teacher Loretta McNulty Is Up to Challenge

By Linnea Due

Kensington resident Loretta McNulty always played music—in the orchestra at Portola and the orchestra and marching band at El Cerrito High. She received her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the Indiana University School of Music and began her career teaching music in a school district outside Chicago. Last month, McNulty assumed the presidency of the California chapter of the American String Teachers Association. "I've primarily taught in public schools," McNulty says. She now teaches in middle schools in the Mt. Diablo and Lafayette school districts—and she has firm opinions on the importance of music in the classroom.



"Every music teacher association deals with advocacy because it's a part of life," she says. "We have to constantly educate parents and the public how important it is for children to have a complete education—including music." There are a myriad of reasons to support music programs, not least of which is that early musical training is vital. "I long ago advised teaching beginners," she says. "If you don't have a good foundation, sometimes it can never be cleaned up." Then there are the important associations that music brings. "All the things that the business community is clamoring for in their employees, creativity and critical thinking, come through the arts," she says. "The arts are important to how people develop totally. There's a move to get past STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) to STEAM to get the arts in there."

Managing the California chapter is challenging: "Unlike other states, we have a long list of sections—San Diego, Sacramento, and many others. Sometimes they get together and discuss various pedagogies. Sometimes they have chamber music workshops for students or do fundraising that leads to offering scholarships to music camps."

McNulty says that ASTA is unique among music associations in that it includes everybody: studio teachers, performers, public and private school teachers from elementary through college. ASTA conducts competitions and also offers certificates of advanced performance. "It's an opportunity to perform for an adjudicator," she says. "The youngest is six or seven up through age 25. They play scales, etudes, solo repertoires, and they're expected to sight-read. It's good for the kids and good for teachers, who have an opportunity to see different ways of assessing and teaching to strengths and weaknesses."

She considers California schools grossly underfunded. "In our society we devalue the arts," she says. "We can't measure success in the same way that we can if we get all those math problems right. But studies show that kids who have this experience, in either band or orchestra, are able to succeed in a number of ways. For instance, Georgia Tech discovered that kids who did well in the engineering program had significant orchestral experience. They changed their admissions policy to reflect that."

McNulty has lived through shortsighted attempts to balance budgets by cutting out music and art. "You have a lot of kids in arts and music programs. Every time school districts cut those programs, they have to hire more teachers [to adjust the student/teacher ratio]. Ultimately you end up spending more than you save, and it can happen very, very fast."

ASTA has been around for seventy years, supporting teachers and helping fledgling musicians. McNulty embraces the struggle. "Music teachers are really tight, and we've worked really hard together, and we know what needs to be done," she says. "Sometimes we just go and do what we need to do. Parents want what we're doing. The school board catches up at the end."

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TOURS:

Monday, October 24, 2016 at 1:15 p.m.
Thursday, December 1, 2016 at 8:30 a.m. • Tuesday, January 10, 2017 at 1:15 p.m.

INFORMATION NIGHTS:

Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, January 12, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

Kensington Police Log for July and August

July 8

HIT AND RUN COLLISION, Lenox Rd. at Beverly Rd. Vehicle collided with parked vehicle and fled scene. Suspect identified.

July 14

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY, Ardmore Ave. Unknown suspect(s) forcefully entered victim's residence and removed property.
FOUND PROPERTY, Cambridge Ave. Misc. items left on sidewalk.

July 18

VANDALISM, Coventry Rd. Wine sprayed in open car door window.

July 21

IDENTITY THEFT, Arlington Ave. Resident came to KPD to report account opened in his name without his consent.
SECURITY CHECK, Colusa Ave. Caller requested security check while visiting cemetery due to ongoing threats.

July 23

ALARM, Highland Blvd. Resident wanted alarm reset while they were out of town. Used key that was on file with the PD and reset it without incident. No signs of foul play.
MISCELLANEOUS, Kingston Rd. Concerned citizen reported potential fire hazard in neighbor's yard. ECFD Captain assisted.
PETTY THEFT, Purdue Ave. Items taken from unlocked vehicle.

July 24

EXTRA PATROL, Lexington Dr. Resident reported someone tried to break into her home but did not want PD to come over during the night. Advised she would make report during the day. No signs of foul play.
SECURITY CHECK, Lexington Dr. Resident reported someone was on her roof. Officer found no one on the roof. No signs of foul play.

July 29

BURGLARY, Lenox Rd. Items taken from residence.

July 31

BURGLARY, Avon Rd. Residence was burglarized, one item taken, pending investigation.

August 1

NON-INJURY TRAFFIC COLLISION, Arlmont Dr. Vehicle into one parked vehicle and that vehicle struck another parked vehicle.

August 3

FOUND PROPERTY, Beverly Rd. Resident found a bag on her back porch that is possibly related to a burglary.

August 5

THEFT, Kensington Ct. Unknown suspect(s) entered victim's car and removed property.

August 6

MISCELLANEOUS, Colusa Ave. Person was locked inside of the cemetery. Gone prior to arrival.

August 7

DISTURBANCE, Beverly Rd. Responded to two males fighting. One of the involved parties was arrested for battery.

BURGLARY, Beverly Rd. Residence was burglarized during a party and fight. A subject identified in other Kensington burglaries was arrested.

August 8

BURGLARY, Coventry Rd. Resident returned home and found the home in disarray but did not realize that they had been burglarized until the next day. Their teenage son was home at the time but thought the man was a construction worker. The man left the home without incident. Two suspects: Black male adult with short hair, wearing a reflective work vest, white male adult with short hair, wearing a reflective work vest. Both suspects in forties or early fifties.

August 11

ANIMAL, Yale Ave. Three deer in side and rear yard. Resident thought it was a burglar.
SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Kenilworth Ct. Unable to locate.

August 12

THEFT, Norwood Ave. Amazon delivery stolen.

August 14

SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Coventry/Stratford rds. The vehicle belonged to an Amazon delivery driver.

August 15

BURGLARY, Highland Blvd. Residence was burglarized, pending investigation.

THEFT, Kenyon Ave. Package stolen from front porch, pending investigation.

ANIMAL, Richardson Dr. Resident wanted help with foxes in his backyard. As we were talking, they jumped over his fence.

August 18

MISC., Trinity Ave. Resident misplaced laptop. Laptop located under pillow.

DISTURBANCE, Colgate Ave. Unknown suspect(s) placed dog poop bags with dog poop in victim's vehicle.

ARREST, Kenilworth Dr./Arlington Ave. Traffic stop results in arrest for obstruct/delay officer performing duties. An adult Hispanic female, Mariaelena Mariscal of Richmond was arrested for a DUI warrant that she could be released from custody with her signature. Mariscal chose not to sign her name but a Sovereign Citizen code instead. Mariscal was booked at county jail and her vehicle was towed. (Members of the Sovereign Citizens movement believe that governmental authority, including record-keeping, is a scam to collect money; they may choose not to answer questions about identity or other matters.)

August 20

ARREST, Yale Ave. Domestic violence resulted in arrest.

August 21

SEARCH WARRANT, Yale Ave. A search warrant was conducted related to a domestic violence case 8/20. Resident was arrested on several charges including assault with deadly weapon, narcotics for sale, gun, and drug paraphernalia related crimes. The suspect was booked into county jail.

MISCELLANEOUS, Berkeley Park Blvd. Residents had areas of the street blocked for a party. They had already removed blockages and were advised to get a permit.

August 22

OPEN DOOR, Yale Ave. Renters moved out of the residence, and left the front door open. Residence was secured, no signs of foul play.

BURGLARY, Yale Ave. Resident walked in on burglary in progress, pending investigation.

MISCELLANEOUS, Arlington Ave. Passer-by saw fire and smoke. It turned out to be a resident's heat lamp.

ANIMAL, York Ave. Checked on a dog in a vehicle. Was fine and then the owner left with dog.

August 23

BURGLARY, Yale Ave. Entry via smash to the kitchen window. Jewelry and electronics taken.

August 25

MISCELLANEOUS, Arlington Ave. Front license plate missing from vehicle unknown if lost or stolen.

August 26

VANDALISM, Rincon Rd. Vehicle window smashed nothing stolen.

August 27

MISCELLANEOUS, Rincon Rd. Mail from an El Cerrito resident found in Kensington. Mail turned over to El Cerrito Police Department.

MISCELLANEOUS, Arlington Ave. Disturbance at a Kensington business, unable to locate subjects responsible.

August 28

ARREST, Yale Ave. Adult female arrested for violating an Emergency Protective Order.

SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Ocean View. Ave. Unknown subject possible selling door to door. Gone upon arrival and unable to locate.

August 29

AUTO BURGLARY, Canon Dr. Smash to front passenger side window. Loss of items in a shopping bag by unknown suspect

August 30

IDENTITY THEFT, Arlington Ave. Resident received notices from banks, report to follow.

August 31

SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Yale Ave. During patrol I contacted two subject who were on the porch of residence where they did not live. Both FI'd (field-interviewed) and released.