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KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

Available Online at www.KensingtonOutlook.com

JULY-AUGUST 2026

A PUBLICATION OF THE KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

VOLUME 84 NUMBER 6



Red Flag Parking Ban Approved on Certain Streets

By Lin Due
Contra Costa County Board Supervisor John Gioia attended the June 11 meeting of the Kensington Community Services District in person, partially to congratulate the retiring Dave Spath, but also to discuss the proposed parking ban on Red Flag Days on Westminster, Kenyon and Purdue avenues, all key evacuation routes. It turns out there was plenty to discuss.

First off, who declares a Red Flag Day and who sets in motion the parking restrictions? While the National Weather Service declares Red Flag Days, El Cerrito-Kensington Fire Chief Eric Saylor wanted more flexibility so he could mandate no parking on hot and windy days no matter what the NWS does.

Gioia showed a map of Kensington, denoting very high, high, and moderate fire zones. He explained that almost all of Kensington above the Arlington is in the very high fire zone, and it's vital that parked cars not impede residents evacuating or fire engines racing to the fire. He explained that the county would provide and maintain the signs announcing the parking restrictions, while the police department would put up temporary signs on the actual days, perhaps a sandwich board in the street or some other signage.

"All of you as a board would decide on streets and the police department would enforce it," Gioia said. "We want to get it done this fire season."

Director Danielle Madugo, who served on the Emergency Preparedness Committee

See Red Flag Days, page 8

Dave Spath Resigns as KCSD Director, Heads Out of Town

By Lin Due
The June 11 meeting of the Kensington Community Services District turned into a celebratory good-bye to director Dave Spath, who is moving to San Diego to live with his son. A large bouquet and an even larger cake marked the occasion during a break in the meeting.

But first, directors praised the outsized role Spath took on during his 43 years in Kensington. As director Daniel Levine said, Spath has had "a tremendous impact on this town."

Spath served in numerous roles, including with the Kensington Property Owners Association, with the old police board, the fire board's Emergency Preparedness Committee, and on the newly formed coalition board of the KCSD.

But perhaps most memorably—a fact brought up by director Rick Artis—Spath was the chair of 2016-17's all-citizen ad hoc committee, which laid a foundation for policy decisions. The committee tackled separating the general manager and chief of police functions, consolidation, and options for delivering police services.

There are many around town who feel that the ad hoc committee was one of Kensington government's finest efforts. The three subcommittees conducted interviews, examined nearby communities, crunched numbers and in the end produced extensively researched reports that still inform decisions today.

As chair, Spath had to herd cats—or possibly lions. Asked how he'd managed to oversee sometimes bitterly conflicting viewpoints, Spath said that it was important to demonstrate that he was willing to listen. "You have to take into account everybody's point of view," he said. "It's important to be transparent.... Then once a decision is made, you have to accept it."

Before retiring, Spath was in charge of overseeing a state public health program that regulated public water systems to ensure drinking water quality. Now his house is for sale, and he's off to San Diego.

Spath's resignation brings the board to eight seats. After the consolidation of the

See KCSD, Page 8

Kensington & Beyond Update

Local Market Snapshot: 5/1/2026 - 6/6/2026

What is the hottest market in the East Bay?

City	Median % Sale Price	Median Square Feet	Median % Above The List Price
Kensington	\$1,798,000	2,190 sq ft.	33%
El Cerrito	\$1,279,000	1,616 sq ft.	38%
N. Berkeley	\$1,495,000	2,162 sq ft.	20%
Albany	\$1,765,000	1,790 sq ft.	20%

Kensington Market: 5/1/2026 - 6/6/2026:

Address	List Price	Sale Price	BR/BA	Sqft.	DOM
● 37 Kenyon Ave	\$1,098,000	\$1,410,000	2/2	1,316	13
260 Grizzly Peak Blvd	\$1,249,000	\$2,200,000	4/2	2,162	13
● 212 Yale Ave	\$1,698,000	\$2,145,000	4/4	2,218	10
● 22 Windsor Ave	\$1,395,000	\$1,395,000	3/2	2,514	56
● 205 Lake Dr	\$1,295,000	\$1,650,000	2/3	2,240	27
49 Windsor Ave	\$1,095,000	\$1,625,000	3/2	1,412	15
36 Highgate Rd	\$1,995,000	\$2,551,000	4/3	3,157	14
● 4 Estates Dr	\$1,395,000	\$1,928,888	3/2	1,932	13

Properties shown with a black dot were transactions in which Compass represented either the Buyer or the Seller. Compass participated in over 62% of all sales in Kensington during this period.

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COMPASS

Trivia Junkie? Pizza and Prizes at Team Trivia August 11

By Sara Laferte

If you're someone who knows all the answers, or if you just know the person who knows all the answers, be sure to come to Tuesday Trivia Night on August 11. Bring your best team (three to five people recommended) or join a team when you arrive. Trivia Host John Chapman will have great questions to test your grasp of trivia.

Adults, teens, and older children are welcome. There will be pizza, beverages, snacks, and prizes. There's easy parking across the street.

Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave., August 11, 7-9pm.



Pictured: Susan Yourd, Ron Yourd, Joe Pratt, Vanessa Pratt, Angie Nelson

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May Police Log

May 29, Colusa Ave., vehicle theft. The stolen vehicle was later located and recovered.

May 28, Amherst Ave., vandalism and property damage. Glass window on vehicle broken, no leads.

May 28, Lake Dr., grand theft: money/labor/property. Theft of two e-bikes. An investigation is ongoing among multiple agencies.

May 27, Yale Ave., reported dog bite. The victim declined medical treatment, and the matter was referred to the appropriate animal control agency.

May 27, Norwood Ave., collision report, non-injury.

May 23, Arlington Ave., elder care cause of injury investigated involving potential caregiver neglect. The situation was resolved informally with no criminal findings.

May 23, Purdue Ave. Misdemeanor hit and run with property damage. Suspect identified, investigation ongoing.

May 23, Kensington Ct. Identity theft involving unauthorized credit card use. Victim declined prosecution, case suspended.

May 19, Edgemoor Rd. Accident, no injuries.

May 17, Arlington Ave. Casualty report of an injury caused by a falling concert speaker. Injury treated by medical personnel, no crime.

May 17 Rincon Rd. Disorderly conduct. An intoxicated individual was contacted and an arrest made for public intoxication.

May 15, Kingston Rd. Petty theft. A report of online fraud involving false pretenses and theft was reported. Investigation suspended due to lack of actionable leads.

May 13, Highland Blvd. Child-on-child injury incident, determined to be a non-criminal matter handled by the school.

May 12, Berkeley Park Blvd., report of property damage. Investigation suspended with all leads exhausted.

May 11, Lawson Rd. Missing juvenile reported, located by family prior to official search, and no further police action was required.

May 9, Arlington Ave. Collision report, no injuries.

May 9, Kenyon Ave. Collision report, no injuries.

May 7, Stanford Ave. Battery on person. Police responded to a civil dispute involving a battery allegation. No injuries or criminal charges were made.

Kensington Book Club Heads to India and Japan Through Fiction

By Debbie Hamati

Book lovers, you are invited to join the Kensington Book Group on July 28 to discuss *Sea of Poppies* by Amitav Ghosh. The book was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2008 and received many other awards. Set in 1838 prior to the Opium Wars, this first novel of the Ibis Trilogy begins on the banks of the Ganges and in Calcutta, then follows the journey of the crew of Indians and Westerners aboard the *Ibis* bound for Mauritius. The novel explores the theme of imperialism.

On August 25, the group will discuss *Snow Country*, published in 1948. Considered a classic by Nobel recipient Yasunari Kawabata, this novel is a powerful tale of wasted love set amid the desolate beauty of western Japan.

The Kensington Book Group meets monthly on Zoom the 4th Tuesday of the month from 6:15 to 7:45pm. Email Kensingtonbookgroup2026@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

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

SEPTEMBER - 2026 DEADLINES

Advertising Deadline ❖ AUG 8
Editorial Deadline ❖ AUG 10

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

Use one space, not two, after all periods.

KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

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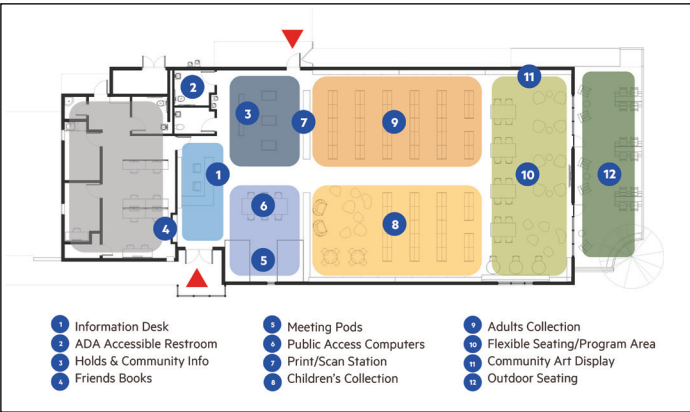
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A New Chapter: Kensington Library Set for Major \$5.3 Million Renovation

By County Supervisor John Gioia and County Librarian Alison McKee

Contra Costa County is investing \$5.3 million to modernize and expand the Kensington Library to improve services to residents. Starting July 23, the more than 60-year-old building will close for at least a full year to undergo a complete top-to-bottom transformation.



As part of Contra Costa County Library's broader facilities improvement initiative, this ambitious project will tackle years of deferred maintenance while completely reimagining the space to better serve the community well into the future.

To ensure the library's longevity, the extensive renovation will feature both vital infrastructure updates and exciting new user amenities, including a modernized infrastructure: A completely new HVAC system, alongside comprehensive electrical and lighting upgrades. Enhanced accessibility: New ADA-compliant bathrooms for the public and staff, and other general ADA parking and facility improvements. Refreshed interiors: Fresh carpeting and paint, brand-new shelving, and energy-efficient windows. Better spaces: An expanded staff area and the addition of two dedicated study pods for focused work. Outdoor expansion: The construction of a beautiful new exterior deck behind the library, offering the public a brand-new way to read, work, and enjoy the space.

The project's funding is made possible by the county's Measure X half-cent sales tax passed by voters in 2020, dedicated county library funds, and support from the Friends of the Kensington Library.

While the long closure is a significant adjustment for the community, the wait will be well worth it. When the doors reopen, the public will be welcomed into a completely modernized, fully accessible, and deeply refreshed space designed to better serve Kensington into the future.

During the closure, Kensington patrons can still check out books at the nearby El Cerrito and San Pablo libraries or online at ccclib.org.

Q&A about Giving Shuumi with ACC's Reverend Jen Chapman

By Natalie Blackmur

In 2025, Arlington Community Church (ACC) decided to give Shuumi for the first time. Shuumi, which means "gift" in Chochenyo, the language of the Lisjan Nation, is a financial contribution that non-Indigenous people living on Lisjan Nation land can give to acknowledge their presence as guests living on stolen land and provide material support to Lisjan Nation.

ACC joins a growing number of local institutions, including the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley and Zip Code East Bay, in giving Shuumi. As a member of Good Guest Kensington, I sat down with Reverend Jen Chapman to talk about ACC's decision and the journey they took to get there.

Why is giving Shuumi important to the congregation at ACC?

We believe that we were called to be people of repair and restoration, always restoring relationships, our relationship to the earth and to one another, and understanding this great, wide connection that we have with people and the planet. We see Shuumi as a small way to repair damage that has been done, of recognizing that the land that we are on, that we love as a church, and that we benefit from once belonged to someone else and was taken from them. Even though it's not a huge amount, I think that being aware and doing something rather than nothing can go a long way in how we think about what it means to be a part of this wider community, as people who live on this planet, as neighbors, as human beings.

What was ACC's journey that brought you to this decision?

For a long time, there have been people within the congregation who have been learning and caring about what it means to be people of the planet. As we read books like Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* and learned over time, we built a foundation of understanding among our congregation about what that meant and how it intersects with the Indigenous people who live and who have lived here.

At the same time, we were inspired by the invitation of Good Guest Kensington and saw that other faith communities and institutions were contributing Shuumi. If those with fewer resources than we could contribute, then we certainly could too.

We are looking for ways to cut our budget every year, not add to it, so the idea of adding a voluntary gift was a big ask. We started with a small amount, matching other kinds of giving that we do, and after some discussions around it with our Board of Mission and Social Justice, they made a proposal to our church council, and that was accepted into the church budget for 2025.

What advice would you give to others considering giving Shuumi?

Start with learning: read books, listen to speakers, and spend time in conversation with each other about what you're learning. If giving Shuumi is something you're drawn to, start with an amount that feels both meaningful to you as well as doable. It's important that it's more than just a line item in your budget—talk about it so everyone across your organization understands what it means.

To learn more about Shuumi, visit sogoreate-landtrust.org. To plug into ways of being a good guest here in Kensington, visit goodguestkensington.org. To learn more about Arlington Community Church, visit arlingtoncommunitychurch.org.

Passages

UC Berkeley Emeritus Professor **Andrew Paul Gutierrez**, age 86, passed away on June 7. In 1987, he and his wife, Marina, bought their Kensington home and completely remodeled it themselves on weekends. As a teen, he worked in his father's gas station on Route 66 and graduated from high school in Winslow, Arizona. He received a BS in Zoology from Arizona State, entered graduate school at UC Berkeley and earned a MSc and in Ecology/Entomology under Prof. R. van den Bosch, also a Kensington resident.

During his career, Andy was a research scientist in Canberra, Australia, Asst. Professor at Purdue University, Post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of British Columbia, and Asst. Professor at UC Davis before he returned to the Division of Biological Control at UC Berkeley in 1976 as Professor I. His major area of study became agroecosystem analysis and bio-economics of invasive species. He retired in 2008.

He consulted in several African countries as well as in Nicaragua and Brazil. He was an advisor to 23 distinguished PhD students, as well as many others. He published more than 300 scientific papers, co-authored with CB Huffaker the book *Applied Population Ecology* (1996), and published several papers with his wife Marina A. Pizzamiglio-Gutierrez, also a UC Berkeley entomologist.

After retirement, he continued his research activities, founding and serving as CEO of the NGO CASAS (Center for Sustainable Agricultural Systems) and collaborating with a global consortium of researchers working on weather-driven analyses of alfalfa, coffee, cotton, grapes, and olives. His work with colleagues and former students on system analysis of cassava pests in sub-Saharan Africa is notable for its scale, importance, and success by minimizing starvation for over 200 million sub-Saharan Africans.

After learning of his passing, his associate, Manuele Tamo, from IITA Benin, Africa, wrote: "Le Baobab est tombe."

Locally, Andy and Marina volunteered cleaning Kensington's paths, supporting the election campaigns of several supervisors of the former KPCCSD, current KCSD, and Fix Our KPD.

He was a strong proponent of Palestinian rights and member of Friends of Sabeel North America, an organization of Palestinian Christians working for justice and reconciliation in the Holy Land.

He is survived by his wife, Marina, sons Paul and Barry, daughter Lorrie (Steve Williams), grandchildren Nicholas and Riley (Alyssa), two sisters and a brother.

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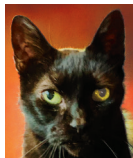
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KENSINGTON CATS

From Bees to Bovines to Boo-Boo the Ragdoll

By Jill Stockwell

Diane Daly moved to Kensington with her parents in 1965. Her mother, Barbara, still lives in their house in the hills, where Diane visits regularly from Carmichael, near Sacramento, with Sitka, her Ragdoll cat. Growing up, the family dog was Stutz von Bess, a German shorthair pointer that refused to hunt, so enjoyed a life of leisure at the Daly’s.

Diane went to Kensington Hilltop and graduated from El Cerrito High after skipping 10th grade when her family went on sabbatical to Africa so that her dad, Dr. Howell V. Daly, UC Berkeley professor of entomology, could further his research on bees, his specialty.

Barbara illustrated Howell’s writings with intricately drawn images of the bees and accompanied him in the field. While exploring Africa for bees, she slipped from the trail, slid down a muddy hill, then grabbed a bunch of twigs to break her fall, unhurt. That bush not only contained the type of bees her husband was looking for, it was a new species that he named after her. She likes to say that it was nice to finally be recognized for her clumsiness.

Peninsula Wildlife

Diane studied at UC Berkeley, then graduated from UC Davis, married, moved to Silicon Valley and had two children. There were many house pets: dogs, cats, parakeets, fish, mice, lizards, hamsters, plus whatever her son Curtis would bring home, like a crawdad, a salamander, or a snake. Then for 10 years her kids were in 4-H where they cared for a wide array of animals, including rabbits, pigs, goats, sheep, horses, and cattle.

The family lived in an apartment, so kept their livestock where the local 4-H had barns and stables at McLellan Ranch Preserve in Cupertino. At one point, they had about 30 goats, and sometimes brought the young ones home to hand-feed them, until they got a little too big for the apartment, so went back to the barn, And as Diane says, overall it was a lot of trips for hay.

Time to Downsize

“After my kids had aged out of 4-H and moved on to other things, one day my horse stepped on my foot, and I realized that I’d kind of had it with large, heavy livestock, and that I should sell the horse and get something much smaller, like a cat.”

Diane searched the internet to learn about different cat breeds. “I thought, you know, I deserve a fancy pet. I really laid it out for all those other animals. I found a photo of a Lynx Point Ragdoll, and it was just the most gorgeous thing I’d ever seen.”

Ragdolls have pointed coloration, or points, meaning that their bodies are lighter than the face, ears, legs, and tail. The main colors of Ragdolls are seal, chocolate, blue, lilac, red, cream, cinnamon, and fawn. They can be solid or shaded with lynx (tabby) markings, tortie, or a combination of both, known as tortie-lynx.

Ragdolls are known for big, round blue eyes and long, soft hair, and are one of the largest domestic cats, weighing in at 12-20 pounds for males and 8-15 pounds for females. And they have longevity on their side, with a lifespan of 12-17 years. An American breeder developed them in the 1960s in Riverside, CA, and they’re now popular worldwide.



Enter Merlin

Diane sourced a breeder in San Diego and ordered a male kitten. One came available sooner than expected, and the breeder shipped the eight-week old kitten via cargo to the San Jose Airport where Diane picked him up.

“He walked right out of the crate, like, ‘Hello, how are you?’ I decided his name was Merlin. He was with me for 17 years.”

Ragdolls are ideal indoor pets because they are calm, affectionate, and friendly. They bond closely with their owners and like to stay near them. Also, they are good with children and other pets and don’t mind being handled. The name comes from their characteristic to relax and go limp when picked up.

“Merlin was that way,” said Diane, “When I’d scoop him up, he’d just hang there.” Diane went on a cruise to Alaska with her mom right after her son got married and Merlin had passed away.

“Lots of changes,” says Diane. “ We got back from Alaska on a Wednesday, and on Thursday, I started looking for a new cat. But I didn’t want to spend thousands on a breed cat because Ragdolls had become very expensive in the years since I got Merlin.

Then Came Boo-Boo

“I wanted to see what there might be in the rescue world, even though it’s rare to find Ragdolls there. But lo and behold, a gal right there in Sacramento had a small cat rescue, and she posted a seven-month-old cat that was a Seal Point. She claimed it was something else, but I saw a Ragdoll.”

Diane applied, and the woman contacted her to ask for a veterinarian’s reference. “The vet sang my praises,” said Diane, “and that Saturday I went to get him.”

Diane named the young male Sitka, after one of the towns on the Alaska cruise that she particularly liked.

“I picked the name before I got the cat. Sitka is his formal name for the vet, but I call him Boo.”

When she picked him up at the rescue, the first thing she said was, “Oh, you’re such a

cute little Boo-Boo.”

She got the idea to call him Boo because she thought he was cute like Boo-Boo Bear, Yogi Bear’s cartoon sidekick. She’s not sure if he knows he has two surnames, Sitka and Boo. It may be that he simply reacts to her voice, whatever she calls him.

Diane was pleased to find a male with a different coat pattern than Merlin. Merlin and Sitka both are Seal Points, but Merlin’s pattern was Lynx, with striped legs and face. Sitka is a darker colored Seal Point with no stripes, more like a Siamese.



Sitka’s Evolution

At first Sitka’s behavior was less than stellar. Diane learned from the rescue that she was his sixth person in seven months. The family who bought Sitka gave him to their landlord because they were moving. Then the landlord didn’t want the kitten and gave it to a man who already had a cat, who also didn’t want him, so he surrendered him to the rescue..

“He was passed around,” Diane said, “and not getting any secure sense of being cherished and loved.”

He was challenging for Diane, with behaviors that needed gentle redirection. “But he’s very smart, and he fell into line,” she said. “He learns fast. You want him to do something, he’s got it.”

Diane was surprised to see how quickly he bonded to her. When she put him in the crate to take him home the first time, the rescue woman warned her that he hated crates, but in he went, and then settled right down.

“A cat that doesn’t know you, that’s been stuffed in a crate and taken somewhere, is going to have something to say about it,” said Diane. “ But he just lay down on his side and looked up at me as if to say, ‘Oh, this is nice.’ It was different. And he’s still very bonded to me even after seven years. I bring him back and forth to my mom’s. He’s my travel buddy.”



When Diane visits Kensington, Sitka stays in the den because the rest of the house is a minefield of cat whackables. Barbara has souvenirs and art from a lifetime of travel and collecting.

A Room of One’s Own

In Sitka’s den are picture windows that serve as wildlife TV. He finds birds and squirrels mildly interesting, but when a raccoon or possum wanders through the yard, he runs in zig-zags between the windows to keep tabs on the intruder. Diane and her mom can always tell when he spots a critter because he springs into action.

When Diane leaves the room, even if her mom is still in it, he waits by the door for her return, even though he’s accompanied Diane on so many visits to Kensington throughout his life.

Diane says, “He still has that sense of insecurity. It’s not a problem at my apartment, because he knows that’s home, and I’m usually there with him. But here, here he knows we come and go, running errands, doing doctor visits, shopping and dining out.”

Diane crate-trained him, which is unusual for a cat, and she’d never tried it before. He has a large dog crate that she uses to transport him in the car, and when he’s in Kensington, he sleeps in it at night, naps in it during the day, and Diane puts his food bowls in it so he feels safe.

“I think here it’s his connection to home, because there, he’s not interested in it,” said Diane.

And if he feels that he’s not getting enough attention while Diane and Barbara are in and out, he hides behind the TV. Sometimes he comes out on his own, and sometimes he needs coaxing. And then once he’s out, he makes it clear that he needs pets, treats, and a good brushing. He still won’t sit on laps, and Diane says it was a long time before he’d let her carry him.

“He’s smart to be careful because of his checkered past,” says Diane. “Merlin wasn’t like that, he didn’t hide, didn’t have that past. But Boo-Boo seems to have it lurking in the back of his mind.”

But little by little, Sitka has learned to relax into enjoying being a part-time Kensington cat and a full-time beloved companion to Diane.

Did you adopt a rescue kitten? Email your story to Editor@KensingtonOutlook.com for the upcoming kitten season feature.



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KMAC Appointees Sought for Needed Roles

By Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia

Supervisor John Gioia’s Office is seeking Kensington residents to serve on the Kensington Municipal Advisory Council (KMAC). A Municipal Advisory Council (MACO) is an official body appointed by the Board of Supervisors to represent the interests of an unincorporated area and advise county government on local issues such as land-use planning. While they have no official decision-making power, their recommendations are taken seriously by the county.

For Kensington, KMAC has two roles: (1) it makes advisory recommendations to the County Planning Department on planning, landuse, and design review issues related to new development under its MAC authority, and (2) it also serves as the designated Tree Arbitration Board, where it has binding authority on view obstruction claims under the county’s recently revised Tree Obstruction of Views Ordinance (Chapter 816-2 of the County Ordinance Code), and it also makes advisory opinions that can be used in civil court lawsuits regarding tree obstruction.

KMAC meets monthly in the evening in Kensington. Serving on KMAC is a meaningful way to be engaged, influence local decision-making, and contribute to maintaining the character, safety, and longterm vision that define Kensington.

Kensington residents are encouraged to apply at: www.contracosta.ca.gov/6408/Boards-and-Commissions-Database. For more information, contact Joanna.Steen@bos.cccounty.us

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News of Kensington’s Paths, Walking Tour August 15

By Rodney Paul

Summer is a popular time to enjoy the Kensington Paths, and I have a path tour scheduled for Sat., Aug. 15 at 10am, beginning and ending at Raxakoul Coffee & Cheese (299 Arlington).

I’ll lead the tour and discuss the history of the paths and other points of interest. Hiking sticks and suitable shoes are recommended. Note that while some of the paths are paved, others are more rugged. The group will walk at a moderate pace.

In June, a path cleanup took place on the Ardmore Path. The Path-keepers now work with the Kensington Community Services District to maintain the Ardmore, Beloit and Coventry paths that were acquired for public use last year. Another path cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, October 17.

We have a group email list we use to send out updates about the paths. If you’d like to receive these communications, please email me at rodneypaul510@gmail.com and I’ll be happy to add you.

The Pathkeepers are discussing next steps for the paths. We will be making recommendations to the KCSD board for improvements to the three paths now owned by the district. We will also be suggesting a new round of path acquisitions among the seven that still lack public ownership. Our long-term goal is to eventually acquire all the paths.

The Princess Bride Comes to Kensington Park

By Lin Due

Each fall, the Kensington Community Council provides a free family-friendly movie on a big screen in the park. A crowd gathers with deck chairs and blankets, picnic baskets and coolers, and sets up shop on the lawn. It’s become a cherished local tradition where neighbors gather under the stars to enjoy popcorn, theater snacks, and a beloved film. This year, KCC will show the timeless classic *The Princess Bride* on Saturday, September 26.

“We’re especially excited to have finally secured the screening rights for *The Princess Bride*, after several attempts over the years,” says KCC board member Carolyn Day Flowers. “A true nostalgic favorite from acclaimed producer and director Rob Reiner, *The Princess Bride* broadly appeals across ages and generations, telling a captivating story of adventure and romance, with witty dialogue and charming characters.”

Showtime kicks off at dusk (approximately 7:30pm), with concessions opening at 6:30pm. Please arrive early to claim your spot on the main lawn. Remember to bring blankets, low-profile fold-up chairs, and layers to stay comfortable as the evening cools down. KCC will have popcorn, non-alcoholic drinks, and after-dinner treats available for purchase.

KCC offers a special shout-out to the generous Movie Night sponsors who make this event possible: Mechanics Bank, Nation’s Giant Hamburgers, and the TTL Team at Red Oak Realty.

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Anya’s Tech Corner: The Software Rebellion

By Anya Sophe Behn

Are you sick of changes to your software every day? Software, the programmed applications (apps) that run on computers and mobile devices such as cellular phones and tablets, is getting worse and worse, and it's driving us crazy.

Here's how it used to work: You'd go to a computer store and buy a compact disc with a software program and an instruction booklet, load the CD into your computer, and install the software program you wanted to use. If you heard about improvements a year or two later, you'd go to the computer store and buy another CD to update your program.

Needing another version was rare. Why could you wait that long? In those days, companies did extensive testing to find and fix any bugs before CDs were sold.

After the US government's taxpayer-funded internet was made public, you could find a website with software you wanted to try. At first, the internet had only a few boring websites, and it was slow.

Fast forward to faster bandwidth speeds, cheaper disk space, faster processors, more websites. Now it's possible to do an "over-the-air update." Your entire computer operating system can be downloaded onto your machine to update it, same for cell phones, and every app.

So why would a company pay for extensive quality control testing when it can simply push a fix the next day? Ensuring basic functionality is not a priority. Here are problems our Kensington neighbors ran into just in the past couple months.

The united.com website was broken last week in such a way that due to a developer's typo, you could not purchase the ticket you had selected.

For close to three months, Microsoft's login and verification screens would not work if you had a hotmail account.

A new Medicare website signup was broken because of a calendar picker form field conflict: 03/09/66 vs 03-09-66. This meant no one could create the required login.

This is nonsense.

Do you ever wake up to an update disturbing your workflow with no notice or guidance, and mysterious new icons someone made up that they think are "obvious" and "intuitive" but have no explanation?

Problems? Talk to the "chatbot." This is not an improvement over human operators in the same country answering the phones.

More: now everything comes with "AI." Did you want that? They don't care.

How about this: If it works don't mess with it.

The tech monopolies have destroyed the inventive, open, exciting 1990s internet.

The possibilities were endless and were about freely sharing information with one another, opensource (free software), and privacy. Now it's about monopolies locking us into their systems, driving profits at our expense.

If someone happens to make a better product, the monopolies buy and crush them, winning teams down to fewer people. It's cheaper.

We do not need everything to be digital or to become software. That is an uncreative and frankly idiotic idea. Who wants to replace every human interaction with a screen?

Go meet your neighbors. Go on a walk, a hike. Make new friends and dream of the world you want to live in.

Then make it happen.

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2026 numbers are telling a clear story: **Kensington remains in high demand.**

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AVG DAYS ON MARKET

2025: 22 DAYS

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AVG LIST \$ VS. SALE \$

2025: 19%

\$1.75M

AVG SOLD PRICE

2025: \$1.42M

*Source: MLS, single family homes sold, Jan-May 2026 vs. Jan-May 2025

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Library News and Last Programs

By Jenny Rockwell

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

Tues, July 7, 6:30pm Castoff's Knitting Club Open to all levels of knitters. Bring your own yarn!

Tuesdays, July 7, 14, 21, 6:30pm Family Storytime Lots of picture book fun with Mr. Charles!

Thurs, July 9, 2pm Family Game Fun Come join us for summer game fun. We will have kid-friendly games, along with staff to explain the rules. Games will be geared towards elementary school age, but we will also have some games for older patrons.

Through July 14: Art Exhibit SPECTRUM, abstract light paintings capturing the intangible and transforming the fleeting into the eternal by Duane Conliffe. Artist website: www.dcfoto.co, IG & FB: @dcfoto.co

How to Handle the Closure

Beginning Friday, July 24, the library will close for an extensive infrastructure upgrade and remodeling project. It is expected to last at least 18 months.

During the closure, the exterior book drop will be locked. Library materials should be returned to the nearby El Cerrito, Orinda or San Pablo libraries or any other Contra Costa County Library location (ccclib.org).

All holds not picked up by the end of business on Thursday, July 23, will be moved to the El Cerrito Library. To change your pickup location for library holds, log into your library account at ccclib.org using your barcode and pin (6-digit birthday: MM/DD/YY). On the settings page, choose "holds and pickup location."

For information while the library is closed, please call (800) 984-4636.

Nearby local storytimes will be posted outside the main entrance.

Though not sponsored by the library, during closure, the Cloth Produce Bag Sewing Circle will continue to meet at Arlington Church starting July 21, on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, 2-5pm. The online Book Club will continue to meet independently, via Zoom on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:15pm. For info on titles and how to join, contact: kensingtonbookclub2026@gmail.com.

No Book Donations

The Friends of Kensington Library are not accepting book donations until further notice, though they will continue to accept donations of funds to support the library. See https://ccclib.org/ken-friends for contact info. The Friends are working hard to relocate their book shed, to allow for more ADA-accessible spaces in the parking lot. Donations from the community help pay for their expenses. Their dedication and contribution to the library are vital to what we offer. Thank you, Friends of Kensington Library!

We'll Miss You!

Library staff will miss serving the wonderful patrons of this community, and look forward to seeing you all again, when we return to the new, shiny, remodeled library.



The stuffles have a long wait for another sleepover. Photo courtesy of the Kensington Library.

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Kensington Community Education

Photo by Sindy Süßengut/Unsplash

KASEP- Kensington After School Program

KCC Summer Camp

Summer is underway, and Kensington Park is once again filled with the laughter, creativity, and excitement of KCC Summer Camp. Running through August 14, the camp welcomes elementary school students for nine weeks of outdoor fun, friendship, and adventure.

So far this summer, campers have enjoyed a variety of activities, including tennis lessons, arts and crafts, sports and games, cooking, a wild animal show, and a field trip to the Oakland Zoo.

Located at the Kensington Community Center and Park, KCC Summer Camp provides a safe, welcoming environment where children can stay active, make new friends, and create lasting summer memories. Whether exploring a new hobby, participating in team games, or simply enjoying time outdoors, campers experience the best of summer right here in Kensington.



KASEP

Be sure to mark your calendars for the **Fall KASEP Registration on Tuesday, September 1st, 2026 at 7pm for TK & Kindergarten and 7:30 for Grades 1-6.** Classes begin Monday, September 14th, 2026.



Summer Schedule for Adult and Family Classes

New Classes

Introductory Mindfulness Meditation Class (drop-in)
Tuesday July 14th from 10-11 am in The Community Center

You will learn practical techniques to quiet your mind, reduce stress, and cultivate present moment awareness. This class is well suited for absolute beginners and experienced meditators alike.

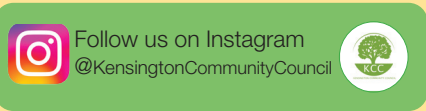
4 Part Mindful Meditation Series (register online)

Four Tuesdays in September (9/1, 9/8, 9/15, and 9/22) from 10-11 am in The Community Center,

Escape the daily routine and anchor yourself in the present moment. Join our upcoming four-week mindfulness journey designed to help you reduce stress, build mental resilience, and cultivate inner peace. Each 60 minute session builds upon the last, taking you progressively deeper into the foundations of mindfulness.

Learn the Exciting Game of American Mahjongg This Summer

Adults interested in learning Mahjongg are invited to enroll in a Beginning Mahjongg class at the Kensington Community Center. This four-week course is designed specifically for newcomers and will provide a fun, supportive introduction to one of America's most popular tile games.



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



KENSINGTON EATS OUT

Great Food, Entertainment, and Local Gatherings

By Ittai Shiu

One of the best things about summer in our area is that local restaurants do much more than serve great food—they create places for neighbors to gather, relax, and enjoy live entertainment. There’s something happening nearby all season long. If you’re looking for ways to enjoy the season, here are a few tips.

Kensington Food Trucks, 1 Kensington Park Rd. (www.kensingtonfoodtrucks.com). The newest additions to the local summer scene are the Kensington Food Trucks, launched by local moms Rachel Wood and Meghan Murphy in partnership with the Kensington Community Services District. Held on the second Friday of each month at Kensington Park, the event brings together a rotating lineup of food trucks, music, and neighbors looking to enjoy a summer evening outdoors. Upcoming performers include Shivan Luca on July 10, the Landlines on August 14, and Great Space Coaster on September 11. With different food trucks expected each month, every event offers something new.



Kensington Circus Pub, 389 Colusa Ave. (www.kensingtoncircuspub.com)

With its welcoming atmosphere and great food, the pub is known for its commitment to supporting musicians, with no cover charge for performances. It’s a great place to discover some of the Bay Area’s best local bands while enjoying a pint with friends. There’s live music every Friday and Saturday evening from 8pm until close, with occasional performances on Thursdays and Sundays as well.



Overlook at Tilden, 10 Golf Course Dr., Berkeley (www.overlookattilden.com)

The Overlook continues to host a variety of family-friendly events. With no entry fee or RSVP required, visitors can enjoy live music and patio entertainment on July 10 and 17, as well as August 14 and 29, with local musicians and DJs helping create a lively atmosphere from late afternoon into the evening. On July 18, Cacklemore Comedy brings laughs to the patio with a comedy show from 5-6:30pm. Don’t miss Family Night on August 21, featuring back-to-school supply giveaways, face painting by East Bay Face Painters, and activities for all ages from 5-7pm.



Sailing Goat, 1900 Stenmark Dr., Richmond (www.sailinggoatrestaurant.com)

Few venues can match the setting of Sailing Goat at Point San Pablo Harbor. Throughout the summer, guests can enjoy waterfront performances every Friday, Saturday and Sunday against a scenic harbor backdrop. Musicians perform regularly, making it an ideal destination for an afternoon or evening by the water. Check their event calendar for upcoming performances.



Natural Grocery Company’s Prepared Food Annex, 10387 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito (www.naturalgrocery.com)

For a more casual midweek outing, the Prepared Food Annex at the El Cerrito Natural Grocery Company hosts an eclectic lineup ranging from jazz and hip-hop to folk and world music every Wednesday evening from 6-8:30pm. Combined with access to the café and bar, it’s an easy way to break up the week while supporting local musicians and enjoying fresh, locally focused food.



Benchmark Pizzeria, 1568 Oak View Ave., Kensington (www.benchmarkpizzeria.com)

Benchmark Pizzeria will be participating in a special community arts event on July 25 from 1-3pm. The restaurant will be open for drinks and quarter-slices while several businesses around Colusa Circle showcase local artists and their work. It’s a wonderful opportunity to enjoy great pizza, support local businesses, and experience the creativity that makes our community unique.

Dolly’s, 10172 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito

Our favorite Italian tavern—and home of the famous cheese wheel—will launch Dolly’s

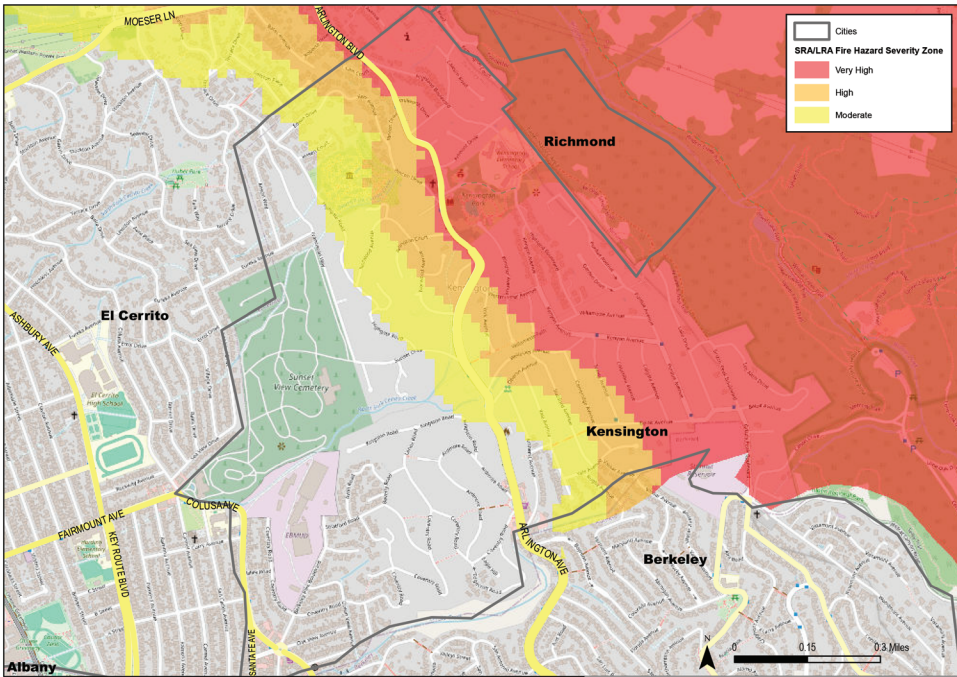
Wine Club this summer, featuring hand-selected wines, exclusive discounts, and member perks, including special events and tasting experiences. A late summer launch event will take place August 28 from 6-9pm with dinner specials and a wine tasting.

Enjoy the Season

Summer offers plenty of opportunities to connect with neighbors, discover Bay Area talent, and enjoy the vibrant restaurant scene right here in our community. Whether you’re listening to live music by the bay, laughing through a comedy show, or sharing a meal with friends on a patio, these local spots are helping make the season memorable.

Red Flag Days

...from Front Page



before she became a director of the then-fire district, agreed that it was important to get the parking initiative moving along and wanted the ability to designate any street that’s necessary with the advice of the fire and police departments.

Gioia assured the board that it could determine the streets, and more streets can be identified if the board desires. He explained that the signs that say no parking on Red Flag Days would be permanent. “There are signs that can be flipped to say no parking on those days, or you can use an A-frame sign or whatever you want.”

He noted that there are exceptions for government vehicles, but not delivery vehicles. The proposed parts of streets subject to the restrictions are about four blocks long. “Only the board can add additional streets,” he said, “but the fire chief can add additional days.”

During public comment on this agenda item, Gail Feldman argued that Sunset Drive needed to be included in the resolution that would name streets. “It’s an evacuation route,” she said. “And I also suggest the upper part of Beloit that connects to Purdue.”

Interim General Manager David Aranda said that the county’s public works department had suggested no parking on Sunset but met with protest from residents. “I also want to highlight something to the board,” he said. “We can’t bite off more than we can chew. For just three streets, we’re going to need a lot of communication. We need to see how it works out. And then we can gradually start growing. If I get requests for additional streets, we’re going to lose the fight.”

A memorandum of understanding will be prepared by the county, and the board agreed that Aranda could sign it when it came back to the district.

KCSD

...from Front Page

two special districts into the KCSD, director Cass Duggan resigned so there would be an odd number of directors. During a special meeting on June 22, the board determined how to deal with an even number. Eventually, the board must get down to five directors.

Board counsel Joshua Nelson gave the board three choices: extinguish the seat, appoint someone until the November election, in which case that seat would be balloted as a two-year term, or choose neither to extinguish nor fill the seat, which, he said, “would disappear in the election.”

Jim Watt favored extinguishing the seat: “Because, as we know, several existing board members are not planning on running for office.”

Sylvia Hacaj jumped in to say that there’s been no public discussion of what board members plan to do. Sarah Gough pointed out that the majority of the work is done by staff. “I think we need to eliminate the unnecessary busywork of organizing a large board.”

In the end, however, the majority decided not to extinguish the seat and instead to appoint someone to a four-month term. A two-year seat will then join three four-year seats in November. Five directors’ terms end: Rodney Paul, Gough, Alex Aquino-Fike, Levine, and Watt. A candidate will be appointed on August 13 after a July application process.



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