

Bringing The Community Together

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

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VOLUME 69 NUMBER 1



Everyday Art Class • Self-Designed Portfolios to Hold Students' Own Drawings, Collages, and Paintings Presented by Kensington After School Enrichment Program (KASEP). More Classes on Page 3. Photo: Marty Westby

Kensington Hilltop School Tile Project

Express Your Creativity While Supporting Your Local School and Read-Across-America

What is your favorite book from childhood? Which story sparked your imagination and love for reading? This February, in anticipation of *Read Across America* (March 2nd), join Kensington Hilltop School families in decorating a tile to honor your favorite book.

If you've ever visited the Hilltop School campus, you may have noticed the beautiful mosaics and hand-painted tiles on the patio outside the school's multi-purpose room. This project was created by retired KEF art teacher, Karla Clement, and school families during the 2010-2011 school year.

Last year the artists worked with a garden theme. This year they'll decorate tiles with imagery inspired by their favorite books, for placement near the school library.

Hilltop families and Kensington residents are invited to participate in what will be a fun and lasting project. Families can select from three different tile sizes: 1) An 8-square inch tile that can also include your family name at \$100 per tile; 2) a 6-square inch tile

see Tile, Page 13...

THE INTERVIEW

Zehra Whyte, New Mechanics Bank Mgr

Mechanics Bank operates 34 offices across Alameda, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Marin, Napa, Placer, Sacramento and San Francisco counties.

Mechanics has been a big civic booster here in Kensington, underwriting the Fall Festival and Parade and other local events, and the sponsor of – and provider of prizes for – the annual fall Kids Coloring Contest. Effective last month, Kimberly Wilkens, the Financial Service Manager, became a member of the Kensington Community Council (KCC) Board.

Recently, we sat down with Zehra Whyte, the effervescent new manager of the Kensington office.

KO: What does a bank manager do?

ZW: Good question. I'm still learning. In a nutshell, I guess I'd say taking care of the employees, who take care of the clients.

see Interview, Page 9...

INSIDE

**Rashomon –
The Driveway**

Page 9

MARVIN GARDENS REAL ESTATE

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SELECT LISTINGS

639 Grizzly Peak Blvd. Berkeley

NEW! Elegant Monterey Colonial with beautiful bay views. 5+ brs arranged in suites. Family room, 3.5 baths, au-pair potential. Lovely level rear yard. Price upon request.

Listing agent: Candace Hyde-Wang



255 Yale Avenue Kensington

PENDING! Majestic 4+-bedroom, 3-bath Brown Shingle home with large master suite, remodeled kitchen, den, and separate guest room. Huge storage, fabulous yard.

Listing agent: Melissa Eizenberg



1715 Sacramento St. Berkeley

SOLD! Sweet home with an urban garden. Two bedrooms, one bath, cheerful eat-in kitchen, enclosed front porch and a plus room for office or laundry.

Listing agent: Celia Concus



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Again with the Civility?

Editor,

At the January 12 KPPCSD meeting, there were again more reminders that some in our community have forgotten the need for, and value of, civility and common good manners in conducting our business. There were repeated outbursts from one member of the audience, who did not ask to be recognized or advance to the podium to speak, and interrupted Board discussion with contentious and disruptive comments. Some other audience members hopped on the bandwagon. This can make it difficult for the Board to conduct business in an orderly and efficient manner, and often extends meetings far beyond the time that would be needed to complete the agenda if business were conducted in an orderly manner.

Participation in our civic life entails a duty on the part of Board members and citizen commentators to practice civility, decency and common courtesy in their statements and behavior. This is especially true of Board members, and applies whether they are conducting business in public session or an executive session behind closed doors. There are substantial costs to the public for repeated disruptive, abusive speech and behavior. Those costs range from inefficiencies in the conduct of business, to unnecessary legal fees resolving issues created by Board member conduct.

Kensington deserves a local government conducted in a manner that we would not be ashamed to let our young children see.

Vida Dorroh, Paul Dorroh,
Anthony Knight, Elena Carruthers

ances the rights of dog owners (and their dogs) with the rights of victims of dog attacks.

Contrary to the author's description, the ordinance actually takes a graduated approach. Summarized, a dog may be designated a "potentially dangerous animal" if, unprovoked, it (1) on two occasions within a 36-month period engages in behavior that requires defensive action by a person to prevent injury; (2) bites a person causing a minor injury; (3) kills, bites, inflicts or causes injury to another animal; or (4) engages in any behavior that constitutes a physical threat of bodily harm to a person or domestic animal, or poses an immediate threat to public safety. (Ords. 2005-24 § 2, 87-74 § 2.)

An animal can be designated a "dangerous animal" if, unprovoked: (1) it inflicts severe injury or kills a human being; or (2) if, after having been designated a "potentially dangerous animal" and after its owner has been notified of this designation, it engages in any of the conduct that caused it to be designated "potentially dangerous." (Ords. 2005-24 § 2, 97-74 § 3.)

Thus, far from treating dog attacks against humans and dogs equally, as the author maintains, the ordinance makes careful distinctions and treats dog attacks on humans as more serious than attacks on another dog. Even if a dog kills another dog, the attacking dog is only designated "potentially dangerous."

If there is probable cause for an Animal Services Officer to believe that an animal may be either potentially dangerous or dangerous, a public hearing is required to formally designate a dog as within either category. Once such a determination has been made, a permit is required and dogs must be maintained subject to specified conditions, including displaying a warning sign on the property and securely maintaining the dog at all times. In addition, a potentially dangerous dog must complete an approved obedience course.

Dog owners should also be aware that state law makes it a misdemeanor or felony if an owner, knowing an animal's propensities, willfully allows it to "go at large" or keeps it without ordinary care and the animal causes serious injury or kills a person.

The author of the article admitted that he or she found it difficult to confine the dog (a Husky) to the yard and excused the

see Letters, Page 7...

Correction

In the last edition of *The Outlook* (Dec 2011/Jan 2012), Laurie Ushigusa was mistakenly credited with the good work of Debbie Hayakawa at November's Garden Party benefit. *The Outlook* regrets the error. Laurie and Debbie are both civic-minded residents, serving on the KCC board and donating their time and energy to many community endeavors. *The Outlook* thanks them for their service, and, in this case, sends a hearty thank you to Debbie Hayakawa-Wing for her hard work at the recent KEF benefit. Our apologies to both parties for the discrepancy.

'Dangerous Animal' Ordinance

To the Editor:

I write to offer another perspective on the recent article concerning the Contra Costa County canine ordinance – that of the victim. It was disturbing that the article's author showed so little regard for the suffering of canine victims and that the author was seemingly oblivious to the anguish their owner/caretakers can feel during and after an unprovoked and sudden attack by another dog. From personal experience, I know that such attacks are nothing short of terrifying and that the aftermath can be heartbreaking. Moreover, because of the abundant wildlife here in Kensington, when an attacking dog cannot be identified, a series of costly and uncomfortable rabies shots is likely to be recommended for humans who are bitten during the course of such an attack, as rabies is virtually always fatal.

The author of the article omitted important information about the ordinance that provides much needed context. Equally significant, the author was silent about the likely serious nature of her/his dog's conduct that presumably prompted the action by the Animal Services Officer. In fact, the Contra Costa County "Dangerous Animals" Ordinance (Article 416-12.4) is designed to reduce the number and severity of dog bite injuries. It reasonably bal-

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March Editorial Deadline.....Feb 10

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The opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are those of the contributors. They 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 telephone number. Publication is subject to space limitations. Letters of 250 or fewer words are preferred. (Please note that modern digital customs call for one space, rather than the traditional two, after periods.)

K E N S I N G T O N C O M M U N I T Y E D U C A T I O N

KIDS AFTER SCHOOL

Located in the East Bay hills at 59 Arlington Avenue, the Kensington Community Council's After School Enrichment Program (KASEP) winter session began January 3rd and continues thru March 18th.

Save the Date: Spring Registration is scheduled for Wednesday, March 7th, 6:45pm for kindergarten and 7:15pm for grades 1-6. Lottery slips are due Monday, March 5th.

KASEP brochures are available on the website www.aboutkensington.com.

KCC office hours are Monday – Friday, 10am – 4pm. We can be reached at kccrec@yahoo.com or by calling 525-0292.

KASEP will be closed during President's Week break, Feb.21-24th. However we are introducing a Robotics Camp during this vacation break.

I'm From

*I'm from a little sister
who mumbled at night.
I'm from the ticking clock
that helped me go to sleep.
I'm from the multi-colored rug
that will always remind me of home.
I'm from the closet that
kept all my clothes.
I'm from the special drawer that
held lots of goodies and junk.
I'm from me.*

– Georgia Thomsen, 5th grade

I Can Write With...

*my eyes... my ears... my mind... my imagination... my mouth... my heart... hope... a ray of light...
a lighting bolt... the chirping of a morning bird... the energy of the universe... a desire...
or the mysteries.*

– Kyra Love Bankead Nguyen, grade 6



LEGO MINDSTORM 2.0 ROBOTICS

½ DAY CAMP

**Presidents' Week
Holiday:
Feb. 21 – Feb. 24
Grades 3- 6**

Session #1: 9am – Noon
Session #2: 1pm – 4pm

Maximum: 8-10 students/session.
Minimum: 6 students/session

Cost per session is \$175.00 for 4 days (3 hours a day of robot building and simple programming). To register, call KCC at 525-0292.

This is an opportunity to build robots and program them to move, race, and compete. Each team of 2 students will use a laptop computer running LEGO Mindstorms 2.0 software. Students explore concepts in science, technology, and math by building and programming a self-designed project. No prior experience is necessary.

As an experienced, credentialed teacher, Peter Margolis provides hand-on instruction for beginners and students new to robotics and programming. Peter presently teaches LEGO Robotics in the after-school programs at both Harding and Fairmont Elementary Schools, located in WCCUSD. He holds a California secondary teaching credential for English, Social Science, and Business. For the past 10 years, Peter has taught middle- and high school students. Last summer he participated in a teacher's robotics training course for LEGO Robotics through Carnegie Mellon University.

ADULT RECREATION CLASSES

HOOP POWER IS BACK!

Drops-in welcome for remaining February classes: Feb. 2nd, 9th and 16th.

Hoop Power:

**Thursday Morning Hoop Dance Class
Thursdays, 8:45 – 9:45 am**

**5-student minimum; maximum of 10.
Located in the Kensington Community
Center (Youth Hut)**

Fun and fitness, movement and meditation are all found in hoop-dance. We will start with basic waist hooping, moving on to more intermediate moves both on and off the body, all while discovering your own dance in a hoola-hoop and the soothing, meditative aspects of hooping.



Instructor, Amy Torgeson, taught the Fall Poetry KASEP Class, inspiring her student's voices.

**Tennis Court Reservations:
For weekends and holidays only, beginning at 9am.
Call the KCC office for information.
Court Fees: Residents – \$2 for a 45-min. singles reservation. Non-resident: \$5.**

Kensington Community Center Rental Information: Please call KPPCSD (Kensington Police Protection & Community Services District) at 526-4141.

ACRYLIC PAINTING

**Wednesdays, 9:45am - 1:30pm
\$32/month (\$36/nonresidents)
Community Center**

Stan Cohen (533-3003) leads this informal but professional workshop for established and serious beginning adult artists. Mornings are devoted to developing painting, with assistance available. Afternoons are reserved for class critique. Enrollment is limited. Instructor approval required. To join this creative group, contact Stan directly.

BEGINNING WATERCOLOR

**Marge Essel, Instructor
Thursday Evenings, 7-9pm
Recreation Building, Room A
\$50.00 per month for Kensington residents, or \$54.00 for non-residents.
Drop-ins are welcome.**

No experience is necessary. To register, send a check made out to KCC at 59 Arlington Ave., Kensington, CA 94707 or call 525-0292 for more info.



CLASS REGISTRATION

KCC/KASEP Office: 59 Arlington Ave., Building E (Across the grassy field above the tennis courts in Kensington Park), Kensington CA 94707. Email: kccrec@yahoo.com. Telephone: 510-525-0292.

Many Thanks to More of Our Generous KCC Annual Fund Drive Donors!

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Kensington Real Estate Market Update



Jan 1, 2011-year to date

53 properties sold per MLS.
Average Listing Price Per Sq. Ft. :\$375.
Average Selling Price Per Square Ft.:\$375.
Average days on the market: 44

Four Bedroom Homes:

9 Sold
Average Listing Price:\$985,000.
Average Selling Price: \$978,000.
High:\$1,350,000 - Low:\$715,000
Average days on market: 22

Three Bedroom Homes

31 Sold
Average Listing Price: \$652,000.
Average Selling Price: \$644,000.
High: \$880,000 - Low: \$399,000
Average days on the market: 47

Two Bedroom Homes

13 Sold.
Ave. List Price: \$568,000.
Average Selling Price: \$558,000.
High: \$719,000 - Low: \$295,000.
Average days on the market: 52

January 1, 2010 - December 31, 2010 for comparison.

58 properties sold per MLS
Average Listing Price Per Sq. Ft. : \$381.
Average Selling Price Per Square Ft.: \$379.
Average days on the market: 32.

* Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed. Source: East Bay Regional Data Services.

In summary home values have remained stable. How does your value compare in today's market? Call me. I would be happy to meet you and discuss the value of your property today's economy. The meeting is confidential and complimentary.

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• GATEWAY TO KENSINGTON •

Neighborhood Notes

Local Filmmaker Addresses Coral Reef Decline

Kensington filmmaker, Marcy Cravat, is directing a documentary film about the creation of artificial coral reefs and the protection and restoration of coral reefs that are suffering. Narrated by actor/activist Peter Coyote, this documentary follows the work of two dedicated environmentalists: Artist Jason deCaires Taylor, who creates artificial reefs from statues he's cast from live human models, and then installs them on the ocean floor; and The Nature Conservancy's Dr. Rod Salm, who works with marine managers to protect endangered reefs and help revive those that are impacted by the effects of pollution, over-fishing, and rising sea temperatures. The film is being made to address the urgent need for action to prevent catastrophic loss of the world's coral reefs. (Scientists have estimated that 70% of coral reefs face potential extinction by the year 2050, which would cause the collapse of an entire ecosystem.) Marcy anticipates completion of filming in late spring, with editing and scoring during the summer of 2012. Donations are most welcome, and can be made via their website through their fiscal sponsor, The International Documentary Association. www.angelazulthemovie.com.



Jason deCaires Taylor creates artificial reefs from statues he's cast from live human models, and then installs them on the ocean floor.

Nathaniel Fish Wins National Art Contest

As part of its 60th Anniversary Celebration this month, Colorforms® announced the winners of its first-ever Kids Fine Arts Camp contest, including, in the 9-12 year age category, Nathaniel Fish of Kensington. Nathaniel received a scholarship to attend an art camp to help take his creative talent to the next level. Founded in 1951, Colorforms is one of the oldest brands in the toy industry – the first plastic-based creative toy, and one of the first toys ever advertised on television. *Congrats, Nathaniel – way to go!*



Betsy Strome, Constance Clare, Toni Silver and Robin Nasatir. Photo: Dorothy Brown Photography

Ruth Botchan Dance Co.

Some Things Old, Some Things New: Celebrating 30 Years of Making Dances in the Bay Area Western Sky Studio, 2525 Eighth Street, Berkeley, CA. Saturday and Sunday, February 25 & 26, 2012 at 8pm... The Ruth Botchan Dance Company celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2012 with an evening of dances choreographed by artistic director Ruth Botchan. See *Calendar*, Page 11, for details.

Safety Orange is the New Black! X-Walk Safety Flags

According to Leslie Reckler of the Kensington Hilltop PTA, select Kensington crosswalks are now equipped with florescent orange crossing flags. The hope is to increase the visibility of children when they are crossing streets, and to make our community more walkable. The idea is simple – place a container of flags at each end of a crosswalk and suggest pedestrians carry a flag while crossing. The brightly colored flags benefit pedestrians by making them more visible to drivers, and the simple act of holding a flag alerts drivers that the pedestrian has a desire and intent to cross the street. (Admit it, we've all done it – you see a pedestrian standing by the side of the street and you you're not sure if – or when – they're going to cross, and you drive on by without yielding. With a flag in the pedestrian's hand there will hopefully be less confusion – drivers will know the person wants to cross because s/he is holding a crossing flag!)... While primarily aimed at our student population, anyone crossing a street is welcome to carry a flag... The project is modeled after the very successful crosswalk flag program in Salt Lake City. The city has over 80 crosswalks flagged, and the Salt Lake City Police Department reported a citywide pedestrian accident rate reduction of 16% in 2002 – and a 20% reduction within the Central Business District as compared with 2001... Our local project is paid for by Kensington Hilltop PTA, and is spearheaded by the PTA's Safe Routes to School Committee... Not all intersections close to the school can be flagged. Intersections have to have both county sign poles already installed close to crosswalks, and they have to have crosswalks. (There are numerous intersections in Kensington that are flanked by county pole installations, but have no crosswalks)... You'll find flag holders at: Highland at Kenyon, Kenyon at Westminster, Kenyon at Trinity, Arlington at Westminster, northern direction, Arlington at Kensington Library, Arlington at Rincon, Arlington at Oberlin, Arlington at Sunset, and Arlington between town and Oberlin... Two additional crosswalks at Arlmont & Highland and Westminster & Windsor have also been identified, but additional permissions must be secured from PG&E and Kensington School... It is important that children know the flags are for crossing only, and not for swatting, hitting, or sword fighting. If children take flags home, please return them to the flag holders for others to use... *The Kensington Hilltop PTA sends a big thanks to Kensington Home and Hardware (ACE) owner, Brian Odell, for the discount on supplies for this project!*



Neighborhood Notes

Bruce Morrow Passes Baton at KCC

After presiding over the Kensington Community Council as president for 5 years, Bruce Morrow has turned over the position to the newly elected president, Anne Forrest. The committee recognized and thanked Bruce for his years of service to the community at the January KCC meeting. While he will continue on as a board member, this change coincides with his recent retirement, and will allow him even more time to indulge in the travel he has already begun to enjoy. Bruce is pictured at right, seated center, with KCC Board members and staff (left to right): Vida Sarrafan and incoming President, Anne Forrest (both also seated); Deborah Hayakawa-Wing, Ted Blanckenburg, KASEP administrator, Marty Westby, Outlook advertising manager, Alma Key, Todd Hodson, bookkeeper Vida Dorroh, and Joan Gallegos (seated). *Thank you Bruce!*



Kensington Neighborhood Watch Update #11

Neighborhood Watch Coordinator, Officer Doug Wilson, would like to bring to your attention Contra Costa County Ordinance #2008-24 – a regulation of importance for local property owners. Though some may not be aware of it, each property owner is responsible for maintaining a safe sidewalk in front of his or her property; the ordinance explains the concomitant liability. Many of our neighbor disputes involve residents who don't realize that it is, indeed, their responsibility to trim trees back and keep the weeds, grass and other vegetation from impeding a pedestrian's free use of all sidewalks. Download a copy of the ordinance at <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=488>.

Robert Connick Battles Scotch Broom, Litter – Wins!

We are all aware that Kensington is an outstanding community and a grand place to live. However, many may not be aware of the efforts of some of our neighbors who routinely perform acts that benefit our community with no expectation of recognition. They do the right thing because of who they are. One such individual is Mr. Robert Connick. For many years Mr. Connick has routinely picked up all manner of litter on several of the streets and trails of Kensington. Additionally, he has taken it upon himself to do battle with invasive plants, such as Scotch Broom. I find it refreshing that Mr. Connick, now in his 90s, continues to contribute to his community. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for his good work. – Submitted by Dan O'Brien



News from Kensington Public Safety Council (KPSC)

KPSC member, Lindy Hough, would like everyone to know the “newest K Group on the block” meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30pm in the Community Center, 59 Arlington Avenue. Directed by Peter Lidell, this group of block captains, Neighborhood Watch reps, and others involved in emergency preparedness for earthquake, fire and wildfire, hazardous material spills, and crime prevention, has been getting together monthly for approximately two years. One of the group's functions is to work with Dave Gibson and the CERT emergency preparedness classes. Dave is currently looking for volunteer Area Coordinators to represent different local neighborhood groups and to work with first responders. . KPSC is refining information about gas turn-off valves, and looking for referrals to plumbers who give a good rate to neighborhood groups for installing them. Most agree that these valves are the best idea for preventing wide-spread fires in the event of a 7.0+ earthquake. KARO/ECHO, the amateur radio operators group, is a strong member of KPSC, and meets in odd-numbered months, directly after KPSC meetings, at 7:30pm. Volunteer ham radio operators – or those who are interested in such things (some radio operator training is available) – are needed to help cover all of Kensington. For more information about KARO/ECHO call 524-9815; For information about KPSC, contact Peter at 501-8165 or peterlidell@yahoo.com.

The Fix is In – Well, Almost: The Kenyon to Highland Path

It ain't pretty, but it IS temporary. The County replaced a leaking, mostly underground pipe carrying water from Highland to Kenyon, with this huge, black plastic, above-ground pipe that, while making the path difficult to traverse, does solve the drainage problem that was eroding the path and flooding neighbors' properties and Kenyon Avenue. Last month, KPPCSD agreed to take ownership of this path as a pilot project with an eye toward taking ownership of all the Kensington paths. Once ownership of the land has been finalized, the County has said it will feel more comfortable installing a permanent fix at this location.



KPPCSD Set to Acquire Kensington Paths

At the January meeting, in a rare display of unanimity, the KPPCSD Board voted 5 to 0 in favor of this motion, put forward by Cathie Kosel: *Whereas public safety requires our action, whereas the cost is modest, whereas we have an offer of clear title from the County, and whereas it makes sense to honor the tradition of paths in the town of Kensington, I move that we accept the report of the paths committee, move to acquire the Kenyon path first, with the intention of acquiring all the paths as soon as possible, maintain the paths in their current condition, and hold a town hall meeting to see how residents may want to improve any of the paths.* Later on, the screaming began. But that's Kensington for you – our little town! (At least it was in closed session, after most folks had gone home. *We take improvements where we can find them!*)

• Experience Matters •



- Alexandra Crisafulli
- Vivian Fendel
- Linda Gerson
- Jennifer Jonak
- Estelle Kent
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Citizens' Police Academy – First Class Graduates

The First Kensington Police Department's Citizens' Police Academy graduates received their Certificates of Completion this past November. All twelve students, including Kensington Fire District Board Member, Nina Harmon, participated in two hours of classes for eight Tuesdays. Subjects included ethics, community policing, officer safety, use of force, emergency management, crime scene investigation, laws of arrest, and traffic enforcement.

The Arlington Cafe provided refreshments as the group discussed such topics as constitutional rights, collecting latent fingerprints, and how to talk with an irate citizen. *(No shortage of candidates for that position!)*

On graduation day, the students were involved in two different scenarios where they were able to get out of the classroom and experience what it's like to be on patrol. In addition, each graduate was invited to a four-hour ride-a-long with the KPD.

Because of budget cuts, most agencies have had to let go of these sorts of events, but Chief Harman and Officer Doug Wilson agreed to make it happen here in Kensington for a few reasons. Doug said, "Citizens' Academy is one time where the officers can take off the uniform, and, in

a classroom setting, educate the public it serves in what the police do, and why they do it. *(OK guys, now put those uniforms back on before you go back out on patrol!)*

"When some members of a community like Kensington routinely and aggressively ask questions, and second-guess what its police department does, I thought they would jump at the chance to ask meaningful questions and receive thoughtful answers in a productive and educational setting; a dozen residents did."

Doug said the students were delightful, and he felt that an atmosphere of team spirit with the KPD was established in the course of the seminar. He said, "The officers really embraced the Citizens' Academy, and every member of the Police Department participated in some way to make it happen."

According to Doug, the class was a big success and he wants to present another in 2012, assuming there is enough interest on the part of residents. More information on the next Citizens' Academy is available at www.kensingtoncalifornia.org, or by contacting Officer Wilson at 526-4141 x38 or dwilson@kensingtoncalifornia.org.



Kensington's First Citizens' Academy Graduates – Class of 2011, including KPSC President, Peter Liddell and KARO/ECHO President, Marion Glade, with Officer Doug Wilson (top), Officer Chris Turner, Det. Keith Barrow, and Chief Greg Harman

Arlington Community Church Celebrates 'The Procession of Lights'

This past Dec. 14th, more than 30 children, parents, and neighbors from the ACCUCC Spirit and the Arts Children's Choir and Theater program, led by directors, Rev. Dr. Michael Mansfield and Shanti Moorjani, proceeded along Arlington Avenue, celebrating the Mexican tradition of Las Posadas – a ritual reenactment of Mary and Joseph's search for a lodging in Bethlehem. Dressed as shepherds and angels, the children carried candles and sang and danced to music from Islamic, Native American, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, and Christian faith traditions. Forming a tableau around the children, parents carried 6-foot puppets made by the children and local artist, Lisa Klein.

The story also commemorates the struggles faced daily by those around the world with no work, food, homes, justice nor in many cases, even a country of their own.

The procession stopped at businesses, homes, and the Public Safety Building, where, in a reenactment of the fabled (and ultimately, stabled) rejection, the

suplicants were told there was no room for them. The children sang and danced at each stop and as they walked through the town. The procession ended at the church with a traditional Mexican dinner, complete with flan, buñuelos and a pinata spilling candy and pennies.

Kensington businesses and homes were excited to participate and welcomed the procession, although everyone said it was hard to tell the children they could not come in. The firefighters and police officers said they were particularly distressed since they always open their doors to children and families.

Those participating included: ACE Hardware, Sugar Cone Café, Arlington Café, the Kensington/El Cerrito Fire Department, the Kensington Police Department, Carol and Tony Lloyd, and Barbara Brasfield.

Submitted by Nina Harmon

Community Design Review Results

On December 3rd, the second of three Community Design Review Meetings was held at the Community Center. Andrew Reed, a member of the KPPCSD building committee introduced consultants, Rosemary Muller of Muller & Caulfield and Ron Golem of BAE Urban Economics, Inc. Muller & Caulfield were retained by KPPCSD to evaluate potential repairs and future uses of three buildings located in Kensington Park. (The library is owned by Contra Costa County, not by the community, and was not included in the study.)

The consultants had been asked to evaluate the condition of the buildings, assess potential uses of the buildings, recommend renovations to meet community needs, assess construction costs of various alternatives, and evaluate projected revenue for the various potential uses.

At the previous community meeting, ideas, suggestions, and requests from Kensington residents were invited. At this meeting, the consultants were reporting back on what they'd heard from the community, reporting on the condition of the buildings, presenting some design alternatives, and offering a brief discussion of preliminary cost and potential revenue estimates.

The consultants reported having heard these responses from community:

Buildings should be functional and community oriented, with durable surfaces and more spaces for teen, adult, and senior activities; The Annex should be available for community use; Large spaces should remain flexible for a variety of uses; After-school programs in the community center should be kept there; Buildings should not be "glitzy;" There should be at least one nice space that residents could reserve for mitzvahs, weddings, etc. for their families.

Rosemary Muller said they tried to define two options at each end of the spectrum: 1) Do as little as possible to each building to bring to code, etc; or 2) Do as much as is reasonable. Their findings and recommendations include:

Community Center: Restrooms are no longer ADA compliant; the kitchen doesn't meet county health dept. standards, so it would be prudent to renovate it and bring it up to code, which would require a professional kitchen designer. The west wall is not earthquake-reinforced, and is

a danger at this time. Drainage problems need to be solved. Acoustics might be improved. The roof may need to be resurfaced or replaced.

- **Option 1** (as above): Changes to seismic capacity and accessibility needed; Heaters to be updated with current models; Address drainage problems; Remodel kitchen to bring to code.

- **Option 2:** Renovate for improved community and public use; Suggest renovating Annex first to move some existing Community Center events during remodel.

Install new suspended lights; Install new glass doors replacing west wall; Create new focal point for north wall; install linear skylight along ceiling above north wall, eliminate existing skylight to provide for daytime AV use; Replace fireplace with an alcove; Plaster over concrete blocks; Thicken east wall to hold new ducted heating system; Install drapes below thickened wall; Combine rooms 2 & 3 so they can be used as one large, or two small rooms, with one folding wall between them; Install door between room 1 & 2, to have access between rooms and improved, but not perfect access to bathroom. Create a new main entrance for the building.

The Annex: Originally used and currently coded for classrooms. It may have no seismic capacity – needs further research. Restrooms are not ADA compliant. Change of occupancy would require bringing the building to code. New stairs are needed; drainage issues extant.

- **Option 1:** Renovate for use as day care facility or demolish. Existing pad could be used for a new building, up to 3200sf.

- **Option 2:** Renovate for public and community use; Install new restrooms, entry stairs, and new kitchenette; Re-do roof, add installation and new windows; Address drainage problems; Build an addition for new restrooms with possible exterior door – three new fixtures for each gender would be required; Replace wall between existing rooms with folding wall; Install new kitchenettes and storage at each end of the building.

Questions that arose from residents included, would more parking be needed if the Annex had a change of occupancy

see Design, Page 7...



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...Design, from Page 6

and/or use? And, would it be possible to use annex as community drop-in center instead of wedding/room rental?

Amphitheatre: Afternoon sun and glare from the Community Center roof make its use problematic. A wall could be added to block the view of the roof to make the amphitheatre more usable. Amphitheatre access is not ADA compliant – a relatively minor problem that could be repaired.

Economic Analysis

Consultant, Ron Golem compared other community centers in the East Bay – how they operate, what they charge, etc.

The primary take away from his presentation is that earned revenues from rental centers reduce costs but typically do not result in break-even operations. The question he suggests asking is, “What does the investment do to help the community provide a better quality of life for its residents?” rather than, “How much revenue is it going to generate?”

Findings include:

Previously, KPPCSD has received from \$8-17K annually in rental revenue. The net cost to operate Kensington Park facilities is approximately \$35K annually.

The Community Center is not currently competitive with other centers – especially in its lack of access to outdoors, its institutional feel, lack of updated facilities, less staff, and lack of flexibility to make space available as requested. More weekend access for rentals is also needed.

Currently, the highest rental charged by Kensington for weekend events for non-residents is \$100/hr – the lowest of all compared centers (There is a 25% discount for residents.)

A maximum of \$160/hr could be charged after improvements, and would still be competitive with other similar centers. Current paid usage in Kensington is twenty-two events per year, as compared to 98-150 events at other centers.

It is estimated that 60 events per year could be expected after a remodel to bring facilities to a standard competitive with other centers. 60 paid events might triple current revenue.

Mr. Golem projected an approximate 50% increase in costs to support increased rentals, including additional staff and maintenance. Net costs would rise first, then decrease after the rental business got going and word spread.

Having The Annex available would provide more scheduling flexibility to rent the Community Center, as well as provide additional potential rental income.

The estimated potential gross for a remodeled Community Center is \$68K, with net operating costs after income of \$16K, as compared to net operating costs of \$35K now. So the total cost to operate the center would be essentially cut in half by remodeling and expanding rental operations of park buildings.

According to KPPCSD President, Chuck Toombs, current District financial resources include a \$300K capital budget, up to \$250K previously offered toward the Community Center remodel by KCC, and \$150K in Measure WW funds, which may be available for facility improvement, depending on how the buildings are going to be used. (There is seven years left to decide how to use those funds.)

Consultants, Muller & Caulfield will present their next report at the KPPCSD meeting on March 8th at the Community Ctr.

...Letters, from Page 2

dog’s behavior with the statement that it will attack only if “pestered” by another dog, although no specifics were provided. This statement seems to indicate that her/his dog had attacked other dogs on prior occasions, yet even with this knowledge, the author still took insufficient care to keep the dog from escaping. While dogs may be acting out of instinct and lack of proper training or socialization, dog owners must assume responsibility for

their animal’s conduct. County residents, their children, and their animals deserve to be protected from unprovoked dog attacks. The Canine Ordinance attempts to do just that. Amendment of the ordinance to weaken these protections, as urged by the author of the article, is a terrible idea and should be soundly rejected.

Judith Anderson

Flooring it on Car Fines

Some Huge California Traffic Fines in Effect, as of January 2012

VC 27315	\$ 148	Driving without wearing a seat belt
VC 23123.5	\$ 148	Driving while using a wireless device to send, read or write text
VC 23123(A)	\$ 148	Driving while using a wireless phone not hands-free, first offense
VC 23123(B)	\$ 256	Driving while using a wireless phone not hands-free, each subsequent offense
VC 26708	\$ 178	Unlawful material on vehicle windows
VC 27150	\$ 178	Adequate muffler required
VC 27400	\$ 178	Headsets or earplugs covering both ears
VC 22450	\$ 214	Failure to stop at a stop sign
VC 12814.6	\$ 214	Failure to obey license provisions.
VC 14600(A)	\$ 214	Failure to notify DMV of address change w/in 10 days (Fine may be reduced with valid proof of correction.)
VC 22349	\$ 214	Unsafe speed, 1 to 15 miles over the limit
VC 22350	\$ 328	Unsafe speed, 16 to 25 miles over the limit
VC 21453(A)	\$ 436	Failure to stop at a red signal
VC 27360	\$ 436	Mandatory use of passenger child restraints (Fine may be reduced by completing a child seat diversion program)
VC 22454(A)	\$ 616	Passing a school bus with flashing red signals
VC 16028(A)	\$ 796	Failure to provide evidence of insurance
VC 22500	\$ 976	Parking in a bus loading area
VC 22507(A)	\$ 976	Violation of disabled parking provisions, 1st offense
VC 22507(B)	\$1876	Violation of disabled parking provisions, 2nd offense

“Hey Chief!”

A Cautionary Tale on the Advisability of Carbon Monoxide Detectors

– A ‘Purloined’ E-Mail From the Files of Officer Doug Wilson (Printed w/Permission)

Last night I went on an alarm call over on Coventry. A resident was home alone and called PD because her fire alarm was sounding, and she could not get it to shut off. She told dispatch there was no fire, but she wanted an officer to come over and get it to shut off. That’s what I thought I was going over to do.

I was the only person dispatched and the source of the sound turned out to be a carbon monoxide detector. The resident told me that her son had just bought it and it was probably not working right, or had a bad battery. I got the unit to re-set and could have left it at that, but just to be safe I called the fire station and told Damian, one of the firemen, about it. He suggested they come out and use their carbon monoxide detector on the rig, and see if their detector picked anything up.

They did, and there was a problem. They were getting high readings and, after really taking our time to try and see if the unit was malfunctioning or not, and/or what was the source of the carbon monoxide, we decided to call PG&E. A tech was there within minutes and the tech did a good job. He discovered the problem, and told us that the carbon monoxide readings on his unit, “maxed out the unit,” and as a

result he “capped the furnace” so it could not be used until it was repaired.

The PG&E tech guy was pretty clear when he stated that if we had not called him, the outcome could have been very bad. He also said the family was lucky they bought the carbon monoxide unit when they did. The amount of carbon monoxide was extremely high when the furnace was turned on, and the resident stated she had planned on leaving it on all night.

We got hold of the resident’s son and got him to come over, and we aired the house out. He and his mother left for a few hours and I kept an eye on the house since all the windows were now open and the house was unsecured. The fire guys and I all felt the effects of the carbon monoxide later (a bit of a headache, light-headedness, and a metal type taste in our mouths), though we monitored ourselves and each other closely. We are all fine.

This had a good outcome, but it could have been deadly. It is one of the times where I feel I really may have saved a life.

I’m bringing this call (12-500) to your attention primarily because I think it’s good information to pass onto anyone, on the advisability of having a carbon monoxide detector in their home. It’s also a good example of the care we give to our residents. You and I both know that may not always be the case in other areas, but it is in Kensington, and I’m proud of that.

Officer Doug Wilson

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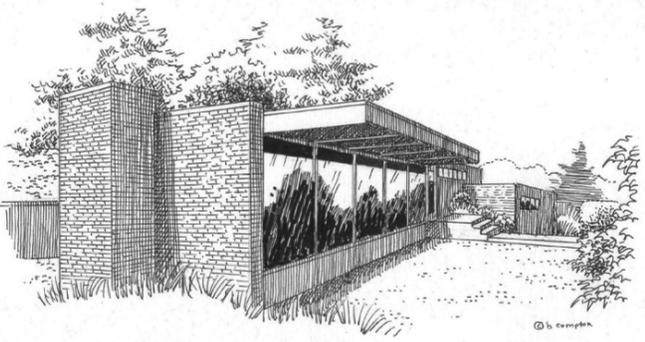
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From the Files of the KPD

Excerpt From December 2011

- 2011-8476 – On 12/04/2011, Officer Turner responded to the 300 blk of Colusa Ave. on a report of an assault.
- 2011-8624 – On 12/11/2011, Officer Turner responded to a disturbance/harassment by a former resident in the unit blk of Arlington Ave.
- 2011-8637 – On 12/12/2011, Officer Stegman responded to the unit blk of Stratford Rd. on a report of a vehicle theft.
- 2011-8657 – On 12/12/2011, Sgt. Hull logged a Temporary Conduct Order filed against a business owner and neighbor in the 300 blk of Colusa Ave.
- 2011-8720 – On 12/14/2011, Sergeant Hull responded to the unit blk of Kensington Ct. on a report of a vehicle theft.
- 2011-8827 – On 12/19/2011, Officer Stegman responded to the 400 blk of Ocean View Ave. on a report of a grand theft.
- 2011-8836 – On 12/20/2011, Officer Turner and Officer Ramos responded to the unit blk of Kerr Ave. on a report of vandalism.
- 2011-9061 – On 12/28/2011, Sergeant Hull responded to the 100 blk of Kensington Rd. on a report of a grand theft.
- 2011-8443 – On 12/02/2011, Officer



- Ramos responded to the 300 blk of Colusa Ave. on a report of a commercial burglary.
- 2011-8574 – On 12/09/2011, Officer Martinez responded to the 200 blk of Yale Ave. on a report of a grand theft.
- 2011-8718 – On 12/14/2011, Officer Ramos responded to the 200 blk of Purdue Ave on a report of a hit and run collision.
- 2011-8742 – On 12/15/2011, Officer Wilson responded to the unit blk of Edgcroft Rd. on a report of a grand theft.
- 2011-8745– On 12/16/2011, Officer Martinez responded to the unit blk of Franciscan Way on a report of a vehicle theft.
- 2011-8848 – On 12/20/2011, Officer Ramos responded to the 400 blk of Beloit Ave. on a report of a hit and run collision.
- 2011-8877 – On 12/21/2011, Officer Martinez responded to the 100 blk of Ardmore Dr. on a report of an identity theft.
- 2011-8932 – On 12/23/2011, Acting Sergeant Hui responded to the unit blk of Kerr Ave. on a report of a grand theft.
- 2011-9074 – On 12/29/2011, Acting Sergeant Hui responded to the unit blk of Franciscan Way on a report of an interrupted residential burglary.

NOTE: The extension of the MOU (through 6/30/2013) between the Kensington Police Protection and Community Service District (KPPCSD) and the Kensington Police Officers' Association (KPOA) on similar terms to those in the previous MOU (through 7/1/2010) was passed by the KPPCSD Board at the January meeting, and will be sent to the POA for expected ratification. Along with other, relatively minor changes, the District has agreed to fund the entire disability premium for officers, and add two classifications to the current salary structure (Master Sergeant starting at \$7,614.05/mo., and Corporal starting at \$6576.71/mo.) For the duration of the agreement, there will be no general wage increase.

Property Crime Stats & Award

At the KPPCSD's January 12th meeting, Police Chief Greg Harman, whose employment with the District began September, 2007, awarded Kensington's police officers a *Unit Commendation* for their success in reducing property crimes in Kensington. Upon presentation of the award, the officers received a standing ovation from those in attendance.



Officers Manny Ramirez, Rodney Martinez, Kevin Hui, and Doug Wilson; Front right: Det. Keith Barrow, Sgt. Rickie Hull, Chief Greg Harman

For the past four years, property crime statistics were as follows:

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of Property Crimes	195	162	130	74
Year-over-year % decrease		17%	20%	43%

The number of property crimes declined in each of the past three years, and the overall decline between 2008 and 2011 was an impressive 62%.

Other commendable Kensington Police Department statistics were revealed in the Contra Costa County Local Agency Formation Commission's (LAFCO) recently completed Municipal Services Review, which covers the past three years. Of the 21 law enforcement agencies covered for this period, Kensington had the best Violent Crime Clearance Rate (65%), the best Property Crime Clearance Rate (17%), and the 4th-best Priority One Response Time of two minutes and forty-five seconds. (This number was "handicapped" to compensate for other agencies' larger geographic areas – in absolute terms, Kensington ranked best.)

Congratulations to Chief Greg Harman and Contra Costa's Finest – the Kensington Police Department!

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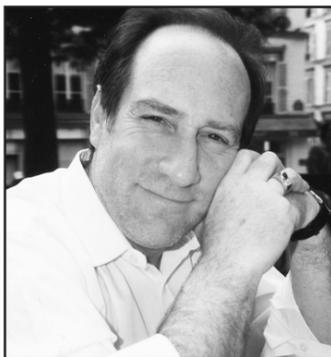
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Obituaries



Raymond Shonholtz
 June 8, 1943 - Jan. 7, 2012

Raymond was born in Los Angeles, and was a graduate of UCLA and UC Berkeley School of Law. In 1976, Raymond founded Community Boards of San Francisco, one of the first neighborhood and school mediation programs in the United States. He then moved into the international arena, founding Partners for Democratic Change, dedicated to the advancement of civil society and the culture of nonviolent dispute resolu-

tion, with centers established in 20 countries around the globe, run by local nationals.

He is survived by his wife, Anne Devero; daughter Kelley and son-in-law Drake; son Patrick; grandson James; brother Barton and sister-in-law Marlene; nephew Charles, Charles' wife, Michelle, and their children, Maddie and Sophia; niece Jenifer and Jenifer's husband, Andy, and their children, Griffin and Amelia; and Raymond's much-loved dog, Morgan.

A celebration of Raymond's life was held in Piedmont on January 19, 2012. For those who are so inclined, donations may be made to Community Boards of San Francisco or Partners for Democratic Change.

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Rashomon – The Driveway

The property at 257 Arlington Avenue has caught the attention of many Kensington residents since construction of a new driveway began mid-2009 – including that of the former next-door neighbor at 259 Arlington, Kevin Cadogan.

According to Senior Contra Costa County Planner, Ryan Hernandez, it appears that, in the course of attempting to improve his property – and, incidentally, bring it up to code – by installing a driveway and off-street parking, the owner of 257 Arlington made an estimated 7-foot deep cut in the hillside between his property and that of his neighbors, the Cadogan's. Typically a wall higher than the 3-ft height limit, constructed in such a space, would require not only a permit, but also a variance. It appears that no such permit or variance was obtained prior to the preparatory cut between the two properties, nor prior to construction of the 6- to 7-ft wall that exceeded the height limit by 3-4 feet.

While Rauri O'Sullivan, the co-owner of 257 Arlington, refused to comment on the details of the project or the dispute, according to Hernandez, in July of 2009, Rauri applied for a Kensington Design Review of his plans to construct what was described as a planter box and some changes to the deck and his residence, in order to put in a driveway. The County provided notice to neighbors, as required, and no request for a hearing on the matter was received within the 34-day period for comment. The property owner got permits for what was on the plan, but, said Hernandez, "constructed beyond the scope of the work for which he had permits."

"Then," Hernandez continued, "he came back to the Planning Dept. and applied for a variance to correct the violations. He took this variance application – to allow a retaining wall over three feet in height in the side yard setback along the property line – to the Kensington Municipal Advisory Council (KMAC). The result of the meeting was not what he apparently had hoped for, and he withdrew the application for the variance."

KMAC is appointed by the Board of Supervisors as advisors to the Board – it

provides comments for consideration by the decision makers – the first level being the County Zoning Administrator, whose decisions are appealable to the County Planning Commission, whose decisions are appealable to the Board of Supervisors, which has the final say.

The Zoning Administrator is a part of the Planning Section of the Community Development Division of the Department of Conservation and Development. (Ryan Hernandez, quoted herein, is in the Planning Section. Chief County Building Inspector, Jason Crapo, also referenced herein, is in the Building Inspection Division, which is also a division of the Dept. of Conservation and Development. The County Planning Commission is an entirely different entity.)

KMAC helps to ensure compliance with the Kensington Design Review Planning Ordinance (the Kensington Combining District Chapter 84-74 of the Contra Costa Zoning Code), which regulates renovations and new construction, providing guidelines for such things as size, privacy, light, and view protection. According to President Patrick Tahara, KMAC's recommendations to the County Zoning Administrator are adopted in approximately 90% of the cases.

KMAC also provides an opportunity for local residents to ensure they have sufficient documentation to support their requests for appropriate building permits, and, if needed, variances, including neighborhood approval – or at minimum, an understanding of neighbor objections to a project proposal. KMAC gives residents the chance to have their projects reviewed locally, which, in many – though not all – cases, prevents applicants from having to travel to Martinez, the county seat, to have their proposals ruled upon. KMAC is not an enforcement agency, however, and can only make recommendations to the County.

"In May of 2011, (the property owner)

then came back and applied for a modified Kensington Design Review," Hernandez continued, "that included both the 7-ft wall on the property line and a 3-ft wall (paralleling the 7-ft wall, to create a terraced affect, and built solely on the owner's property).

"When that was noticed to the public, the County received three requests for a public hearing on the matter – which is now being planned; KMAC comments are included as part of the report to the Zoning Administrator to ensure a fully informed decision." The earliest – and most likely hearing date is expected to be February 22nd – to take place in Martinez.

According to Hernandez, "Whenever someone builds something without a permit, if a code enforcement case is initiated (as it has been in this case), the work



New driveway construction at 257 Arlington Avenue in progress, November, 2010

is subject to a penalty fee – double the amount of the permit. This property owner had to pay penalties when he obtained the permit for the wall between his property and his neighbor's. My understanding is that he obtained a building permit for the retaining wall to shore up the 7-ft cut. That's the extent of the building permit. He didn't (originally) need a permit for the 3-ft retaining wall."

According to Chief County Building Inspector, Jason Crapo, there were two separate building permits for the project, each with a penalty – one penalty in the amount of \$574.50 and the other for \$199.50, amounting to a total penalty of \$774 to the homeowner.

Neighbor, Kevin Cadogan maintains that he never received a copy of the original Notice of Opportunity to Request a Hearing regarding the impending construction at 257 Arlington. Unable to prevent continued work on the project through appeals to KMAC, the County Building Department, and Supervisor John Gioia's office, Kevin eventually filed suit against Rauri, alleging that the work was unpermitted, that the foundation of his house was undermined by the 7-ft cut into the hillside and removal of the earth adjacent to the two properties, and that the value of his home – since sold at what he maintains was a steep discount – was negatively impacted by the work that was done.

The suit also alleges that a major public drain pipe for the hillside above the two homes was destroyed. (According to Kevin, when he asked County building inspectors present on the construction site why they would not issue a red tag to stop the unpermitted work, the head inspector said that, among other things, doing so would "cause liability issues for the County.")

According to Patrick Tahara, at the October 2011 KMAC meeting, the board was presented with a request for a permit for the now-constructed 3-ft. wall on the property – a request that was recommended by the board for approval by the Zoning Administrator. (Whether or not you need a permit for a 3-ft wall is dependent on what the wall is supporting. A permit was required in this case because there was a revision to the original design review approval.)

Ray Barazza, who, in addition to being a past president of KMAC, also happens to live on the hill above the O'Sullivan and Cadogan homes, said, "Mr. O'Sullivan has gone backwards in how he approached things, by building first and then begging forgiveness. I'm not sure if he had gone through the zoning and planning chan-

nels that the results would have been any different...There is (however) a fine for building and then asking forgiveness.

"When 257 Arlington was built, there was no driveway and no off-street parking space," Ray continued. "There was a variance provided to have no off-street parking. The owner is attempting to bring the property up to code in regard to parking – most neighbors have off-street parking."

Today, the 7-ft retaining wall along the property line remains, as does the 3-ft wall (which creates a terrace affect and makes the 7-ft wall appear, in the context of the grade, as a 3-ft wall. (According to Hernandez, depending on the nature of the natural grade, the Planning Department doesn't require a variance for walls that appear to be three feet in height or less, once the project is complete). The Cadogan suit against the owner of 257 Arlington was scheduled to have been heard on January 31st, but has been pushed back several months. A County hearing on the May 2011 request for approval for the development proposal (for the deck, the retaining wall underneath the deck, and two retaining walls with a maximum height of three feet – for the purpose of determining compatibility with the Kensington Design Review Ordinance) is expected to be held on or after February 22nd, in Martinez. The O'Sullivan's were fined \$774, and have a new driveway and off-street parking. The Cadogan home was sold last year.

Considering the scope of the unpermitted construction, the fines issued to the homeowner may be considered by some as relatively small; that, and the almost 3-year time frame for the wheels of justice to turn has some Kensington residents wondering if the penalties for unpermitted work are stiff enough, swift enough, and public enough to dissuade other residents from acting on their own when they want to make improvements to their homes. Others question whether the role of KMAC in upholding the Kensington Design Ordinance has been weakened by what appears to many to have been a lax response by that body and by the County Building Department (claims disputed by both KMAC President, Tahara, and Chief County Building Inspector, Crapo).

Tahara says KMAC considered the permit and variance applications that were presented to the board, excepting that which was withdrawn, and recommended for approval that which was within the scope of applicable codes.

Crapo says the intention of the building department is to try and work with homeowners to bring about code compliance, and in this particular case prevent possible erosion caused by the actions of a homeowner. When compliance is not forthcoming, appropriate fines are assessed, he maintains, as they were in this case; and yes, he agrees, the process is less than ideal, and takes time to work.

...Interview, from Page 1

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Zehra Whyte, New Mechanics Bank Manager

Being a bank manager is like running a small business – the manager needs to make sure the bank generates enough revenue to support the costs of running the bank. I was previously in Richmond, and on Solano Avenue. I like being here in Kensington. I'm looking forward to getting more involved in the community. The bank is very involved in supporting

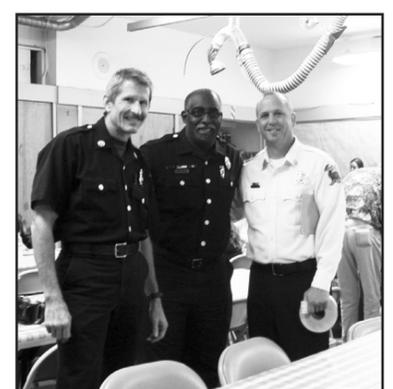
the community of Kensington.

We have a website – <MechanicsBankcares.com> – that allows non-profits to request volunteers and donations. Each Mechanics Bank employee has a profile that describes his or her strengths, talents, and knowledge. It connects employees that are interested in helping community organizations with their projects.

Mechanics Bank has "offices," rather than "branches." Each office is run differently.

KO: What's the difference that surprised you the most between being a financial

see Interview, Page 12...



Kensington Holiday Pasta Feed at the Public Service Building - Capt. Tom McCullagh (EC), Firefighter Rod Woods (Richmond), EC/Kensington Fire Chief, Lance Maples. The KFD garnered 6 barrels of toys and \$550 in donations for the needy. Good pasta too!

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Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Potluck Community Dinner and Spirit and the Arts Program at the Arlington Community Church. Families welcome. 5:30pm. Spirit and the Arts Program for children from 6-9pm. Children's Choir with Shanti Moorjani, dance and theater with Rev. Dr. Michael Mansfield. \$50 for the semester. 526-9146

Feb. 1 The Power of Myth at the Movies: Amelie (2001). View this movie before class, then come to the discussion led by Richard Stromer from 7-9 pm. \$7 or \$30 for the series: first Wednesdays: Feb. 1 - June 6. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Yoga at the Arlington Community Church. All ages. 4:45-6pm. Bring balance to mind, body and spirit. Drop-ins welcome; small fee. Call Antonia Fokken at 381-0997.

Feb. 2 & 9 Baby & Toddler Story Time. Stories, songs & action rhymes for young children and their caregivers. Kensington Library. Duplicate sessions 10:15am & 11:15am. Free. 524-3043.

Feb. 4 Celebrate Chinese New Year – Stories with acclaimed Bay Area storyteller, Clara Yen, sharing childhood stories and traditional Chinese folk and fairy tales. 11am. All ages. Free. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave.

No road is long with good company.
~Turkish Proverb

Feb. 5 Personal Theology Seminar: Charles Tart, author, researcher on consciousness and parapsychology, core faculty at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology. "The End of Materialism: How evidence of the paranormal is bringing science and spirit together." 10-11am. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26 Farmers' Market, every Sunday, rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Colusa Circle at Oak View Ave. Live music and live produce. 847-0801 or KensingtonFarmersMarket.org

Feb. 6 "Castoffs" Knitting Group. All levels welcome; some help provided. (Usually 1st Mondays.) Kensington Library. 6:30pm. Free. 524-3043.

Feb. 7-28: You Know What to Do and You are Doing It, led by philosopher, Bay Manning. 7-9pm. Suggested fee: \$40/4wks. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Feb. 7, 14, 21 New! Family Story Time. Fun stories, songs & rhymes for young children and their families. Come meet the new children's librarian, Jackie Overlid. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 6:30 pm. Free. 524-3043.

Feb. 9 Chinese Brush Painting. Local artist, Susan Ji demonstrates the ancient art of brush painting, then you try. Ages 5 & up. 3pm. Free (space allowing). Reg. at ccclib.org, or call EC Library: 526-7512. 6510 Stockton Ave.

Feb. 9 Women's Fellowship at the Arlington Community Church 6:15pm. Potluck with wine and good conversation followed by a presentation from the Kensington/EC Fire Dept on medical emergencies. 526-9146

Feb. 9 El Cerrito Garden Club meets, 9:30am-noon at the Community Center, 7007 Moeser Lane. Joan Morris of West County Times, speaks on community gardening. Visitors \$3. Info: 233-9365

Feb. 11 Valentine's Day Craft and Stories. Ages 3 and up. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 11:15am. Free. 524-3043.

Feb. 11 Books and Bunnies Book Club. *No Bunny Left Behind* sponsors a monthly reading group to explore the bunnification of rabbits in classical and children's literature and pop culture. This month: celebrating *Rabbit*, in *Winnie the Pooh*. 1-2pm, RabbitEARS, 7523 Fairmount, EC. 356-4233

Feb. 11 Jeremy Taylor Dreamwork Workshop led by internationally recognized innovator of group process in dreamwork. 9:30am-4:30pm. \$45 suggested. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd., Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Feb. 11 Funny Bunny Valentine Adoption Fair. Meet rescued rabbits and find a special bunny buddy to sponsor or volunteer on behalf of the rescued bunnies. 2-4pm, RabbitEARS, 7523 Fairmount, EC. 356-4233

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How did Kensington perform in 2011?

Our one square mile community had:

- 53 home sales
- \$290,000 lowest priced sale
- \$1,295,000 highest priced sale

Most homes had:

- 3 bedrooms or more
- 2 baths or more
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Kensington retains its small town ambience and continues to be a favored place to live.



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Feb. 12 Knitting at the Arlington Community Church. 11:30am. Knit shawls, hats, scarves and mittens for those in need. We pray over each item before giving it away. Info 526-9146.

Feb. 12 Personal Theology Seminar: Martin Verhoeven, ex-monk, Adjunct Professor of Comparative Religions, on "Wrestling with Doubt." 10-11am. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Feb. 12 BSA's Troop 104 Annual Spaghetti Feed Fundraiser. \$10/door; \$7/Active and alumni scout leaders in uniform (Alekas, Den Mothers, Den Fathers, Scout Masters or ASM's). 5-7pm, the Lodge at Camp Herms, 1100 James Place, EC, behind Arlington Park. Info: 612-1671

Feb. 13 Author Talk. Marisa Handler, author, poet and songwriter, discusses her works. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., 7 pm. Free. 524-3043.

Feb. 13 Mira M. White, at the El Cerrito Art Association. Garden Room, EC Community Ctr, 7007 Moeser Lane. 7:30pm. Free. 526-6241

Feb. 18 Write for Your Life – Never Alone: The Power of Staying Connected, led by minister and author, Beth Glick-Riemen. 9:30am-4pm. \$40 suggested. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Feb. 18 Love Your Camera with Michael Mejia – a hands-on workshop. 10am-2pm. \$95 at Nan Phelps Photography. Details at nanphelps.com

Feb. 19 Tilden Park Hike. Climb to one of the highest points in Tilden, Vollmer Peak. Carpool/meet at 10am sharp, in the EC BART Station parking lot; meet next to Fairmount and Liberty St., corner of lot. w/Jordan Herrmann, 520-9782 or herrmann48@comcast.net.

Feb. 19 Personal Theology Seminar: Marcus Liefert, Intern Minister at UUCB, on "Living Nonviolence, Listening to the Soul." 10-11am. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Feb. 19 Presentation on the Ashby Village Program at the Arlington Community Church, 11:30am. This program delivers nominally priced services – ranging from driving, gardening, computer help, home repairs, and shopping to just listening – to help seniors stay in their own homes. Info: 526-9146

Feb. 21 - Mar. 27 Jeremy Taylor Dreamwork: 7:30-9:30pm. Suggested: \$120/6 wks. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Feb. 21 Berkeley Garden Club meets at the Albany Community Center, 1249 Marin Ave. 12:30pm plant exchange; 1pm business meeting; 2pm guest speaker, April Herring of Pacific Plug & Liner on "New Plants for Mediterranean Gardens."

Feb. 24 Bridge at the Arlington Community Church. 5:30pm. Potluck before. No experience necessary. All are welcome. Info: 526-9146.

Feb. 25 I-Photo Plus, (1st Class) with Mark Altenberg. Includes two classes and a separate two-hour private tutoring. 11am-1pm. \$225 at Nan Phelps Photography. Details at nanphelps.com

Feb. 25 & 26 "Some Things Old, Some Things New." The Ruth Botchan Dance Company celebrates its 30th anniversary. 8pm, Western Sky, 2525-8th St. at Dwight Way. \$17 advance at www.brownpapertickets.com or \$20/door. www.berkeleymovingarts.com

Feb. 26 Personal Theology Seminar: Rabbi Harry Manhoff, Temple Beth Sholom, San Leandro, on "Sixty Years of Converting to Judaism Every Day: a Personal Theology." 10-11am. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Rd, Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Feb. 27 Book Club. Discussion of The Trial by Franz Kafka. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., 7pm. Free. 524-3043. (4th Mondays.)

Feb. 28 Pop-Up Party. Get in on the fun of Pop-Up books, songs & rhymes about popping & bubble gum...with a treat. Ages 3 and up. Kensington Library, 6:30 pm. Free. 524-3043.

Feb. 29 The Kensington Unit of the League of Women Voters meets at 21 Camelot Court to discuss local issues. 1:15pm. Guests welcome. Please confirm at 527-1332.

Town Meetings

Kensington Community Center
59 Arlington Ave., Kensington

**KCC - February 6th
Kensington Community Council**
7:30pm • 525-0292 • 1st Mondays

**FKL - February 7th
Friends of the Kensington Library,** 7pm at the Library, 61 Arlington Avenue. 1st Tuesdays.

**KFPD - February 8th
Fire Protection District**
2nd Wednesdays 7:30pm. 527-8395

**KPPCSD - February 9th
Police Protection and Community Services District**
2nd Thursdays 7pm. 526-4141

**KPSC - February 13th
Kensington Public Safety Council**
EQ & Disaster Preparedness
2nd Mondays 6:30pm. 501-8165

**KIC - February 27th
Kensington Improvement Club**
4th Mondays 7:30pm. 527-3062

**KMAC - February 28th
Municipal Advisory Council**
Last Tuesdays 7pm.

**KARO/ECHO - March 12th
Amateur Radio Operators**
2nd Mondays of odd months.
7:30pm. 524-9815

**KPOA
Property Owners Association**
Meets quarterly. 559-8232

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Man is a knot into which relationships are tied. ~Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

...Interview, from Page 9

services manager and a bank manager?

ZW: The bank manager has an opportunity to oversee other employees - I have to make sure that everyone is doing their job and that they're happy; dealing with personnel issues. We haven't had any problems, but I did receive training in things such as sexual harassment.

We have seven employees total, as compared with fourteen at the Hilltop office, where I was financial service manager. This is a good size to start with.

On my first day, one of our clients brought me a plate of tamales and a welcome card. I don't think you get that at a lot of places. Kensington is definitely different.

My sister used to work here about 5 years ago, so a lot of people recognize me, because we look alike.

I was born in Pakistan, but never lived there. We moved to Oman for about four years before we moved to the states. I've been here since I was 4-1/2. I lived in Michigan for a year, then we moved to Connecticut and I was raised there. I attended the University of Connecticut for 2 years, then we decided to move to California; eventually I graduated from UC Davis. I majored in psychology. Everyone thinks that psych is far away from banking. It's not. Money is a very emotional subject for a lot of people.

I've been w/Mechanics Bank for 8 years. I started off as a teller, eventually entering into the management training program - a 6-8 month program where you visit all the offices and departments within the bank, learning all the ins and outs of each department. You get an overview of the bank operations. It's great to get to meet all these people and make a lot of connections that you can call on to help you help other people.

KO: If you were to do another job and money was not an object, what would it be?

ZW: I've always had a passion for dance, so I'd like to be a dance instructor and have a studio. Banking is a little bit on the structured side and a little stressful due to the economy.

I plan to go on back to school to get my MBA. I love to learn and I love to help

people, so this is a perfect job for me. There's always something new.

Welcome to Kensington, Zehra!

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• There are 45 units in a line. Count each letter, punctuation mark, and space between words. Print legibly and use upper and lower case letters; capitalize and hyphenate words properly, and leave space at the end of line if word does not fit.
• Ads cannot be accepted over the phone.
• We reserve the right to reject any ad.

Please enclose:

- Completed form (or separate page).
• Payment payable to KCC for \$6 a line or part thereof. (\$12 minimum a month.) All ads must be pre-paid.

Deadline:

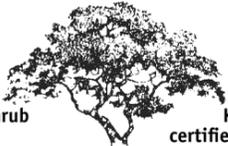
- On or before the 8th of the month preceding month of issue. Published 10 times a year: February, March, April, May, June, July/August, September, October, November, December/January.

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...Tile, from Page 1

that can also include your family name at \$65 per tile; or 3) a 4-square inch tile at \$25. All proceeds will go to support the myriad programs funded by the Kensington Education Foundation, including art, music, science, and library programs.

Tiles will be painted on two nights – Tuesday, February 7th and Friday, February 10th, in the multi-purpose room on the school campus (front entrance on the south side of campus at 90 Highland Blvd.). Hilltop School art teacher, Winoka Turin, and her skilled parent- and alumni volunteers will be on hand to assist with the tiles, and later fire them in the school kiln. Once the mosaic is complete, members of the Dads' Club will assist with installation prior to the unveiling at the Hilltop Carnival on May 12th.

The final creation will be enjoyed by many generations for years to come, and proceeds will support KEF programs. Please join them in welcoming the New Year with a new artistic contribution to the school campus – be a part of this lasting enhancement to the school.

Contact Hilltop Tile Project coordinator, Kristen Zaremba at kristen.tom@sbc-global.net.

*Submitted by Kristen Zaremba,
Kensington Education Foundation.*



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