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KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

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KIC Volunteers Chill in the Sun at the Circle

Kensington Improvement Club (KIC) board members took time out Sunday, June 11, to beautify the roundabout at Colusa Circle. Not only did they clear the roses of weeds, they also enjoyed music and treats from the Farmers' Market. Left to right: Sarah Paul, Melissa Holmes Snyder, Gretchen Gillfillan, and Lisa Caronna. Photo by Russell Cotteral.

More Questions than Answers at Public Safety Building Meeting

By Linnea Due

On June 24, when the meeting to discuss the rebuild of the Public Safety Building began, over 120 people crowded the Community Center, with the overflow leaning against walls or sitting on the floor. The meeting was the first public outreach about a new 11,500 square foot structure, estimated at \$12 million, to be built on the existing site but scooped well into the hillside behind it to gain 6,000 square feet, over double the size of the current PSB, built in 1969.

Architect Mallory Cusenbery, of Ross-DrulisCusenbery, explained that his firm specializes in fire stations and other public buildings. "This is a very early stage of the project," he said, a warning repeated several times. "We have not begun the design process." He described challenges: "This is a beautiful community. It's built out, so there are not a lot of spaces to put a fire station. And it's very steep—and then we had the programmatic functions of mixing police and fire." The existing building, Cusenbery explained, has serious limitations: the stairs are used by both departments, engines are squeezed so tightly into their bays that if a vehicle door is open, fire personnel cannot move past until the door is closed, adding to response times.

The process to determine what, if anything, was feasible started with several options, including making the building seismically safe (which would do nothing

See Public Safety Building, page 7

Q&A with Kensington's New General Manager

By Linnea Due

After a lengthy local candidate search and interviews, helped by Public Management Group consultant Bob Deis, the Kensington Police and Protection Special District directors appointed Anthony Constantouros as general manager of the district at the KPPCSD meeting June 8. (At the same meeting, as part of the move to divide the general manager/chief of police position, GM/COP Rickey Hull was affirmed as interim COP from July 1 through December 31, 2017.)

Constantouros was most recently city manager of the town of Hillsborough from 1994-2012; before that he was assistant city manager of Milpitas. He's lived in Danville for the past three years, moving from a longtime residence in Lafayette where he and his wife raised their two children. We spoke by phone on Constantouros' first day, Monday, June 12.

You started today, yet you've been to the KPPCSD meeting Thursday, the solid waste subcommittee meeting Friday, and the KPOA meeting Saturday. Any first impressions? It's a very active and informed community, very knowledgeable about the issues. The meetings are well attended. All the meetings have been very substantive. Supervisor Gioia was at the KPOA meeting, with a very full agenda, and he delivered very good information. It's not always true that the meetings are so substantive. Some meetings are informational or related to



PR concerns. All these meetings elicited very good questions from the audience.

You mentioned at the KPPCSD meeting that you welcome criticism. Well, that's how you keep informed and improve, when people are open and express their opinions. I try very hard to listen to everybody. I don't make prejudgments about how things should go. I was told that Kensington is very participative, and I saw that first-hand.

You are a first-generation immigrant. How old were you when you came to the US from Greece? I was three years old. My parents wanted to leave their homeland. They were tired of all the years of war. There had not been even one year of their lives when there wasn't war. They left in 1951. After that, there weren't any wars, at least in Greece.

See New GM, page 3

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Letters to the Editor

Keeping a Promise

Dear Editor:

Last fall I spoke to several hundred Kensingtonians as I campaigned to represent and serve residents as a KPPCSD director. For a vast majority, one of the top priorities was the separation of the role of the district's general manager from the chief of police. Residents recognize that the difficulties that have at times roiled our town over the last eight to ten years stem in part from the inherent conflict of interest in combining the roles and granting the responsibilities of the two positions to one individual. The priorities and skill-set necessary for success are vastly different for each role. The foundation of good governance is structure, policy and process; it does not and should not rest on finding "the right person." As a special service district, we are required by statute to have a general manager, and as such an empowered general manager is most directly responsible for the smooth functioning of the district as a whole.

I promised to separate these positions and I was pleased to be able to fulfill that promise on June 8. It was with confidence that I voted yes to appoint Mr. Tony Constantouros as the KPPCSD's first independent general manager.

As a former city manager, Mr. Constantouros has years of providing civilian oversight of police departments, financing and overseeing capital improvement projects, soliciting community input, communicating with residents and improving the efficiency and quality of services among many other relevant experiences that he will bring to bear on behalf of Kensington. He has high standards and a quiet steadfastness about him that will positively impact the operations of the KPPCSD.

I am confident that Tony Constantouros has the right combination of skills and personal qualities that will make him successful in addressing the challenges facing, as well as the opportunities presented to, our district. He possesses the high level of experience and professionalism Kensington's residents expect and deserve.

Sylvia Hacaj

Back to the Drawing Board

Dear Editor:

The Public Safety Building was planned with end users (fire chief, police chief) who have no financial skin in the game. While their ideal size would be 15,000 sq. ft., about three times the current 5,800 sq. ft. facility, they've scaled this back to 11,800 sq. ft. This plan, presented in the June *Outlook*, comes with a \$10 million price tag. How to pay? Combine \$3.7 million in available funds and a loan for the balance. These costs will be borne 2/3 by the fire district and 1/3 by the police district. Total taxpayer costs, with interest, could total \$20 million. This is an incredible financial burden on both districts, leading to potential property tax increases.

Kensington taxpayers need to start asking questions before they are saddled with this long-term debt. Here are some obvious ones:

The two departments have functioned for years with 5,800 sq. ft. Why must we double the size? The El Cerrito fire station on the Arlington is 4,500, and the Kensington police facility is about 2,000. Less than 8,000 sq. ft. should be adequate.

The plan shows a huge glass enclosed stairwell. This is a waste of space, an incredible heat generator, and a seismic risk. The plan shows three service bays for fire trucks when only two trucks stay on site. The plan calls for a community meeting room on the second floor, which is not needed with the Community Center upgrade.

The plan says there will be parking for five cars. Why is there not a ramp to rooftop parking, which could meet all parking needs? If the building not occupied by the bays were 2-3 feet below grade, it would even out the roofline and allow rooftop parking.

With estimated hard construction costs of \$750/sq. ft., and soft costs of \$150/sq. ft., a 4,800 sq. ft. reduction could save taxpayers over \$4.3 million. Since 40 percent of Kensington fire calls are for El Cerrito, a larger station will add little benefit to us. It's time to go back to the drawing board.

Jim Watt

See Letters, page 3



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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.

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.

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DEADLINES:

September Advertising Deadline August 8 September Editorial Deadline August 10

Letters

...from page 2

Can We Reconsider?

Dear Editor:

For 41 years, we have lived next to the Public Safety Building on Arlington Avenue. We were shocked to learn of the changes being proposed to this building, especially since absolutely no active public outreach has happened before the June 24 showcase of the design. The community will suffer harm in many ways from this demolition and construction.

Asbestos exposure: The building is filled with asbestos. Asbestos and other toxic materials will be removed and trucked down the Arlington. Can we be assured that the highest level of planning and safety consciousness had gone into the KFPD's plan?

Congestion: Mammoth trucks and equipment will compete for space with citizens needing to park, including patrons of the shops. Traffic congestion on this main thoroughfare will be a nightmare. This will go on for a year and a half (estimated by the KFPD). Why so long? They plan to excavate the hillside behind the station, scattering dust and debris all over. Will traffic be re-routed to small streets adjacent to the Arlington?

Parking: Police and fire personnel will have less parking at the finished building, so they will be competing for parking in an already crowded neighborhood. Is there a plan to relieve the already difficult parking situation?

Questions abound. Should this monolithic, aggressive building be sited smack in a residential neighborhood? Do we know that the police and fire department are committed to sharing the building? Do we know the fate of local vs. contracted policing?

Why is there only one alternative in this plan? There was a second site to be considered but it was rejected, partly because neighbors complained. Can we reconsider this? We understand that the KFPD are hard-working volunteers, facing a difficult task. But they need to take our neighborhood into consideration before embarking on this major disruption.

Byron and Sacha Kawaichi

Not the Only Option

Dear Editor:

Herein a few modest suggestions: why are we considering spending \$10 million or more, money we don't have and probably can't borrow readily, to build a new police and fire complex that its designers admit will be not be fully adequate and is located smack dab on an earthquake fault? Common sense? Pick a new location, perhaps using part of the park, which is underused and has the extra space needed? More common sense? Use the existing building for police only. Let our fire services be handled by El Cerrito, which is financially more sensible and would answer the key problem: federally mandated fire station equipment requires a bigger site than the existing one allows.

Above all: please stop trying to depict the existing site as the best or only option. The fact is that one million dollars in upgrades were put into the structure a few years back, and now suddenly it is not adequate in terms of earthquake survivability. Experts were presumably asked the same questions a few years back when we poured a million into rebuilding, but now, voila, the upgrade is inadequate.

Franklin Huddle

Just Say No to Refuse

Dear Editor:

Following introduction of mixed recycling, Kensington achieved a landfill diversion rate of 60 percent, exceeding the California state mandate of 50 percent. However, there has been no significant change since. Kensington falls below the current statewide average of 65 percent and significantly below Albany at 84 percent, and many municipalities are aiming for "Zero Waste." Even worse, during the first 12 years of mini-can service, there was no significant decrease in our landfill disposal rate.

The "garbage gauge" has two dials. One is for diversion, the percent of material diverted from landfill by recycling and composting. The other is for disposal, the amount of material per capita disposed of in landfill.

I wondered how both dials could be stuck when recycling had been made easier and mini-can use had doubled since introduction. In 2000, 91 percent of customers used one or more regular cans. My estimate is they may have accounted for around 95 percent of Kensington's garbage; currently 80 percent of residents use large cans, probably accounting for around 90 percent of refuse. Statistically, the small number using mini-cans don't move either dial very much.

I'm not saying that most in Kensington don't recycle (in fact, Bay View's Nestor Contreras says that all customers put out recyclables). Furthermore, there has been a significant decrease in customers using 2 or more regular cans, indicating they have reduced their garbage substantially. An increase in the diversion rate and a decrease the disposal rate can be achieved by adding more to the recycle/compost list, especially food and food-soiled paper, which typically accounts for at least 20 percent of garbage. But the disposal rate won't change much without also addressing the first part of Kensington's "reduce, reuse, recycle" program—that is, reducing what is acquired, avoiding one-time-use items, things in non-recyclable packaging, and others that will end up in landfill. Maybe the mantra should be "Re-fuse Ref-use."

I wonder if Kensington can meet the new statewide goal of 75 percent diversion of material from landfill by 2020 and 75 percent reduction of organics in landfill by 2025.

A. Stevens Delk

Funds Needed For Girl Scout Camp

Dear Editor:

Many of us of an age still mourn the sale of White Meadows, which was our Berkeley/Albany/Kensington-owned Girl Scout camp above Placerville, before the consolidation of local Girl Scout Councils formed the San Francisco Bay Council. Whereas there was nothing that we could do to block or undo the sale of that property, because it happened without our even being aware that the sale was being contemplated, we can help the fundraising effort to help save Camp Hidden Falls in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Given that the Northern California Council of the Girl Scouts (which replaced the SFBay Council), has just sold Deer Lake, another high Sierra camp, their intention to sell Hidden Falls should not be discounted.

A fundraising effort to prevent the sale of Hidden Falls is underway. If the money can be raised, local Girl Scout organizers believe that the Council will do the necessary upgrades to save Hidden Falls. Current fundraising efforts have raised close to \$140,000 with something like \$350,000 in additional funds required by this August to save

Hidden Falls. Please join me in helping to save this wonderful camp. For information go to www.gsnorcal.org and click on Hidden Falls.

To make contributions online: <https://19890.thankyou4caring.org/pages/hidden-falls> If you are interested in making a pledge, as sustaining members do for KQED, please contact me and I can forward that information to you. Checks can be sent to Girl Scouts of Northern California, 1650 Harbor Bay Parkway, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94502.

Ciara Wood

New GM

...from front page

You retired in 2012 from Hillsborough. Why were you interested in taking this job? I had considered doing some things in retirement, such as writing and teaching. But I found I really missed working in local government. Yet I didn't want to work full-time. It was a horrendous commute to Hillsborough. From Danville to Kensington, I don't cross a bridge. I don't mind driving. I went to school in Berkeley, so I really kind of enjoy bringing back the memories.

What do you bring to the table? Experience. Working with the public and working with elected officials. I like addressing issues before they become problems. It's not always possible, but there is a point in time where an opportunity is presented, where if you can resolve an issue you can save resources and energy. I enjoy problem-solving, and I enjoy working on diverse problems.

Do you have a policy template or are you more free-form? I'm more free-form. I want the organization and the community to set the template. I want to form a template that fits the needs of the community. We can't superimpose another organization's way of working. I can use that as experience to assist me, but I want a unique template that fits what people want here.

Is it challenging to take on a job that has essentially not existed as a stand-alone position? There are more pros than cons to that, actually. You can establish the job without encumbrances of the past. You're not as locked-in. If the job existed, you have a standard starting point and a history. There isn't a standard starting point here. I look at that as an opportunity. You can have a positive influence and approach the job with creativity. You're not funneled into a particular perspective.

Have you been working with Chief Rickey Hull, the last GM/COP on record? I just had a meeting with him this morning. He's been very helpful to me, at the meetings and here. He's shown me around, and we'll be doing a lot more of that.

"I like addressing issues before they become problems."

What are you starting with? I would start with a list of issues and things that need to be done. Then I'd develop a priority to that list. I work for the board, so the board would develop those priorities. Timing-wise, some things must be done immediately. Also, the job is part-time. That affects the priorities. Everything can't be done on Day One. It has to be spread over a reasonable time period. And it has to work for the district and the community. When you start a new position, you can't be sure how it will work. You have to be really flexible. It will probably require me to work more at first. And then as things get accomplished, it'll fall into more of a routine. People want really good fast service, and cost-effective service, so it has to meet all those parameters.

Where is your office? Being part-time I don't need to take up a lot of office space. We're working on that. I don't even need a formal office, but I'm working out of the Public Safety Building. The idea is that I'll be working two days a week. So far it's not clear which two days. If there are meetings or events to attend, I'll work those days. But I'm always accessible. I'm just a phone call away. The point is that everyone wants the position to assist the community.

What do you say to criticisms that Hillsborough has a bloated police force, with a lot of ranking officers? Well, the community voted a public safety tax to fund the police department. The crime in Hillsborough is a little different. They have crimes that are not common to other cities. There are bandits from Europe that are highly trained in how to break into homes. And some of the crimes are international in scope. Trying to figure all that out is complex. The main thing is that people voted to fund the department, and that's the department they wanted. They wanted a large department. Residents know many of the officers by first name. It costs more to have that kind of department. They also do their own dispatching. Dispatchers know the residents, residents know the dispatchers.

Last thoughts? I'm very happy to be here and looking forward to it. This is exactly what I was looking for to get back in the work force. This is a great and unique community. I'm very interested in helping residents. It's challenging to build consensus. But it's better that people express their opinion than hold it and express it when it's too late.

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Beyond a Password?

By Liam Barker

Since 2017 began, the Kensington Police have dealt with identity theft of residents each and every month; sometimes several individuals have felt the sting of a stolen identity. Although it can happen many ways, often a scam is involved. Where once the postal service and telephones were the primary tools of criminals, now financially motivated hackers exploit modern email and web page technology, using increasingly sophisticated methods, including ransomware.

Ransomware is malicious software designed to extort payment from a user or group. A computer may be encrypted, locking it frozen, until payment is received. This May, ransomware became widespread, mostly in Europe and Asia. Businesses and corporations hire IT security specialists and train employees on best practices, but consumers are left on our own.

Each smartphone, tablet, laptop, or wireless device represents an "endpoint" potentially vulnerable to attack. This suggests that computer technology will continue profoundly impacting our privacy, identity, and security. Rapid changes leave safety, regulation, and law struggling to catch up. Our digital world remains a frontier in which emerging threats push the defensive reactions of security software vendors.

If hackers are so threatening, what might consumers do to stay safe? As a security professional familiar with the landscape of threats, I'd like to share three suggestions for relatively simple, yet critical, online practices. Becoming informed, precautionary password management, and using defensive software will add up to dramatically improved security. Habits for safer Internet use are not complex, but may require adapting our behaviors and finding resources on the web.

Update, again?!

Does it ever quit asking? Yet updates exist to address exposed security gaps. Most successful attacks utilize known security flaws: Verizon's 2016 data breach investigation states, "63 percent of confirmed data breaches involved leveraging weak/default or stolen passwords." When a software vulnerability is found, developers send out updates to fix flaws. Updates are sometimes called a "patch," which suggests the mending involved. Software code remains a work in progress; change continues over time. Mistakes or "bugs" are frequently only discovered later. This means your operating system and web browsers need regular updates to be less vulnerable!

Forgot Password?

Passwords remain fundamental in modern security, despite legitimate concern. As it turns out, humans are notoriously poor at making up random sequences of characters and then remembering them. People tend to choose predictable (poor) passwords. To help, users are instructed to change passwords frequently, and password requirements often mandate upper- and lower-case letters, numbers, or symbols such as = & ^ ! #. The goal is to create random, long and unpredictable strings of characters. To see password quality in action, with humor plus visuals, check out <https://password.kaspersky.com>, which demonstrates the relative difficulty of cracking a password.

Ideally we would all have unique randomized passwords like H4^d7!v5F\$b for each website. Fortunately a category of software known as "password managers" offers relief. Apple developed "Keychain" software designed to help users: It keeps needed usernames and passwords protected through encryption yet available to use by recalling needed details to insert when and where you need them.

Password managers boldly aim to guarantee data safety by secure encryption. Getting started is fairly quick, and the reward is often a wonderfully smooth login process! An

option for establishing a "master password" allows the user to access all accounts while only remembering one (hopefully strong) password. Popular options such as Lastpass or Dashlane use cloud storage and offer various smart features. Product reviews can be found at PC Magazine, The Best Password Managers of 2017.

Please note that in contrast to password managers, all web browsers (Chrome, Internet Explorer, Firefox, Opera and others), are not designed for secure password storage. To be cautious, never save passwords, credit cards or account numbers in any web browser!

A solution I like involves not a password, but rather a passphrase. Cheap but effective: what costs you only in time typing brings tremendous returns on security. Given relentless computer advances, cracking passwords moves ever quicker. For better protection, length is the best bet. "Really_h8itwhenthathappens!" or "Wh0doesntludaSFGiants?!" for instance, are both memorable and lengthy, easily exceeding typical requirements.

Pay for Protection?

Choosing security software is often worth the trouble. Products like McAfee or Norton were once common antivirus software. Much has changed, largely to the advantage of consumers. First, a new business model known as "Software as a Service" provides the application over the Internet rather than as installation disks. This makes deciding which security software to purchase less crucial. Many competing vendors showcase malware scanners that check your status, on

the spot, for free.

Second, Internet security for consumers often has many features. Modern "antivirus" protection has evolved in response to new threats. Modern hybrid threats combine malware types, engineered for attack. An example: a "rootkit" enters like a Trojan horse, then once inside establishes a key-logger that records typing for the hacker. To handle these new dangers, many vendors offer "next-generation" products: a suite of related security features packaged to handle complex malware.

Third, the number of vendors has increased recently. Venture capital funding for security during the last couple of years has led to major competition. A downside is that comparing security products to understand features and limitations can be tricky for an average consumer. On the plus, products are often free to try, but they are not equal in quality. For excellent help on evaluating differences in security products, please explore www.av-comparatives.org or www.av-test.org/ for independent assessments with rich guidance and explanations.

I hope this combination of tips helps Kensington residents identify preventative actions for online safety. Updates, while bothersome, close vulnerabilities that are otherwise exploited as a "way in" for hackers. Close the "backdoor" to your information! Passwords can be crafted poorly or well managed. An hour or so establishing a password management system is time well spent. Finally, security software is more available than ever before; peace of mind is always valuable. Wishing you safety online for 2017 and beyond!

"Ransomware is the fastest growing malware threat, targeting users of all types—from the home user to the corporate network. On average, more than 4,000 ransomware attacks have occurred daily since January 1, 2016. This is a 300 percent increase over the approximately 1,000 attacks per day seen in 2015."
—US Department of Justice

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How to Make Decks Ready for Wildfire

By Cheryl Miller, Diablo Fire Safe

In Kensington, we have the best of all worlds: beautiful weather, an urban/wild interface, areas for outdoor entertaining and relaxation. Decks can play an important role in our lives, whether we are celebrating with family and friends or stealing a quiet moment at the end of the day. What you do today for your deck could make the difference to your home surviving a wildfire.



To get your deck ready for fire season, look around, below, on top and inside. The area within 5 feet of your home should be a noncombustible zone. Your objectives are to reduce the chance an ignition will occur from flying embers and to reduce the amount of heat or direct flame contact with your home. This zone requires the most intensive management of vegetation and careful selection of construction materials. And of course, this area includes your deck.

Degree of slope can increase the danger of fire under decks.

Fire officials recommend that a relatively small amount of vegetation be present in the noncombustible zone. The goal is to prevent fire from climbing onto your deck or burning directly into your home. Plants in this area should be green and healthy. Eliminate dead plants and cut short any dry grasses. Remove or prune highly flammable plants that are full of resin or volatile oils, such as juniper, pine, or eucalyptus. You and your neighbors may be eligible for a cost-share funding to reduce the wildfire hazards from vegetation around your homes.

Be sure to remove flammable materials underneath your deck. Flying embers from nearby fires can pass through the gaps between the deck boards and ignite materials below. Regularly clean below your deck. Remove stored items such as firewood, lawn furniture, toys or other flammable materials. Your deck can capture and intensify the heat of a fire and more easily ignite anything stored below. The heat of a fire below the deck may be enough to break nearby windows and allow fire to enter the house. Consider enclosing this area to reduce the risk of damage from wildfire.

Clean the top of your deck. Be ember-aware. Sweep out the nooks and crannies where flying embers can easily ignite leaves and other materials. Brooms, doormats, chair cushions, and many types of children's toys and plastic furniture have low ignition points. Store furniture and flammable materials inside during red flag days (see www.diablofiresafe.org/red_flag.html). Pay special attention to your barbecue. Store your propane tank or charcoal away from your home.

As your deck ages, the ends of boards and smaller pieces of wood dry, cup and split, making it easier for fire to ignite the structure. Replace small parts. Pay attention to how the deck is attached to the house. A non-combustible metal flashing or stucco surface can reduce the chance of the deck serving as a fuse to light your house on fire.

If it is time to rebuild your deck, think twice about the materials you use. Some of the new plastic or wood-plastic composite materials can easily ignite or lose their structural integrity from the heat of a fire. An unsuspecting firefighter could step on your deck to save your house, only to fall through the deck boards. Check the building materials listing for decking in urban/wildland interfaces at http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/licensinglistings/licenselisting_bml_searchcotest.

The Institute for Building and Home Safety also provides information on improving the fire resistance of your home. And the California edition of "Protect Your Property from Wildfire" includes details of deck construction http://disastersafety.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/WF_California_IBHS.pdf

Your deck can actually help protect your home from wildfire. To learn more about wildfire and cost-share funding, visit the Diablo Fire Safe Council website www.diablofiresafe.org or contact me by email at DFSCMiller@comcast.net.

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Paul Hammarberg design. 1948-modern open feel w/stunning views. 3++BR/3BA. On a large private parcel with lawns, decks and solar heated pool.
Offered at \$1,298,000

Sale Pending 12 Sunset Dr., Kensington
This rare estate features a romantic 3BR+/3+BA Mediterranean home, guest cottage, pool & pool house. Gated driveway over a bridge to a private lush paradise.
Offered at \$2,989,000

SOLD 256 Lake Drive, Kensington
Enter through private courtyard to this tastefully updated 5BR/2BA home. Inviting and versatile layout with in-law potential. Inspiring Bay views.
Offered at \$1,188,000

SOLD 1507 Madera Circle, El Cerrito
Classic 4BR/3BA Traditional design with Modern influences. Beautifully maintained and updated. One block to Madera School. Excellent floor plan. Marvelous deck and garden.
Offered at \$1,200,000

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Photo © David Schiller

Shaner Pass, Elevation 872 feet, Proclaimed

By Richard Sutch

If you walk north on Purdue Avenue from its start at Beloit Avenue to its end, you will notice the road begins a slight climb after the intersection with Kenyon Avenue. A block beyond, just past the intersection with Garden Drive and near the top of Kensington hilltop, you will see a sign announcing that the rest of your walk will be within the Maybeck Estates. This corner of Kensington is named for the Bay Area's visionary architect, Bernard Maybeck (1862-1957), who had purchased the property at a bargain price in 1908. It is now a mecca for residents throughout Kensington looking for a peaceful stroll mostly free of cars and noise.

After entering the Estates, the first home you will encounter on the right, known as "Hilltop" for obvious reasons, was designed and built by O Maybeck for his son Wallen in 1937. What will not be obvious, is that from this point on, Purdue Avenue is not owned and maintained by the county as are most of the other streets and avenues of Kensington. Instead, the road is collectively maintained by the homeowners perched along both sides.

This anomaly is the consequence of Maybeck's decision after World War II to sub-divide the property he owned and sell to those willing to design and build their own houses in true DIY-style. All the lots were finally sold, but Maybeck himself was left owning the road. It was, according to Robert Shaner, the last original purchaser still living on Purdue, only a "cow trail."

Bob and his wife Ollie built their house in 1948. The road was not graded until 1950. Ever since then, Bob Shaner has served informally as "King of the Road." He championed its paving in 1995 and has organized countless repair crews staffed by residents to fill potholes and seal cracks. Although Bob is in his nineties, he

Photos by Flynn Cooper



was out just a few weeks ago with patching material and a volunteer gang of road warriors mending a troubling spot at the road's crest. In recognition and celebration of his tireless efforts the Maybeck Property Owners have proclaimed that high point Shaner Pass. Linger a moment there before continuing on your journey and celebrate the tireless community spirit Bob has shown year-in, year-out for almost 70 years.



ACC Kensington Animal Fair, Blessing of the Animals and Pet Adoption

By Nina Harmon

Mark your calendar for Saturday, August 26, 11am-2pm, at the Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave, for the Kensington Animal Fair. At 12 noon Arlington Community Church Pastor Tony Clark, M.Div., D.V.M., will offer a blessing of the animals for pets and owners.

The day will include demonstrations by Hazel Weiss and her service dog, K-9 Police Dogs, dog training, Friends of the Library, Dog Scouts of America, and a raffle. We'll have homeless cats, dogs, rabbits, guinea pigs, and birds needing adoption or fostering. Contra Costa County Animal Care and Control will provide low cost inoculations, microchipping, and registration with amnesty. Their veterinarian will talk with you

about the best health care for your pet. Our local Girl and Boy Scouts will be selling snacks and beverages.

Along with the raffle, you'll have an opportunity to donate money to the rescue organizations. Please send raffle items to the Arlington Community Church, and checks made out to ACC with Animal Fair on the memo line. All donations go to the rescue organizations—we will give you a donation letter for your tax deductions.

So bring your pets for a blessing, open your hearts to a homeless pet, and have a wonderful family day in the park. For more information see our link www.arlingtoncommunitychurchucc.org/all-creatures



Public Safety Building

...from page 1

to address the building's limitations and ADA noncompliance); remodeling and expanding; tearing down and starting anew on the same site; finding a new site. The expansion option was eliminated in April, the new site option last month, so that left starting anew. Cusenbery explained that thirteen schemes were studied, each an improvement on the last. Now, he said, the scheme meets departmental needs, is judged feasible, and has a defined budget. (See drawings on the Kensington Fire Protection District website.)

A spirited question period followed, handled by Cusenbery. Several themes emerged from the nearly hour and a half of audience questions. Some questioned the design—why were there three bays when there are only two engines? Why is a community room included when the Community Center exists (itself slated for remodeling)?

Fire Chief Lance Maples answered the three bays question: Although there are two engines, the third bay is used to stage and work on equipment. One El Cerrito station only has two bays, but Maples pointed out that an engine can be housed in back of the building, something impossible in Kensington's up-against-the-wall location.

Many asked why the remodel/expansion idea was shelved. Fire district board president Don Dommer explained that they needed to do a better job of communicating the complex reasons for its dismissal. It also emerged that a site-specific seismic study was the next item on the agenda, and those results might determine whether the building can be built anew. Resident Alan Code brought current USGS maps showing a fault trace directly under the building. According to state building code, a new structure cannot be built within 50 feet of a fault line or trace, though that building can be remodeled.

Neighbors who live across the street and next door to the PSB expressed concerns about parking (three spaces will be eliminated), asbestos removal, noise, and a nearly two-year disruption. Byron Kawaichi, who lives next door, noted that human costs of such a massive project have not been considered. Several asked that the park option be renewed. Cusenbery noted that the park option was easier, as staging could be done in the parking lot and neither department need move during construction. Yet the same seismic question remains, in addition to community opposition and the fact that the KPPCSD owns the property, not the fire district. Which brought up another question: were the police even going to participate in the project? That will be decided sometime in July, said Rachelle Sherris-Watt, president of the KPPCSD board.

Then there are funding issues. Several speakers, including Jim Watt, Karl Kruger and Paul Haxo, all on the KPPCSD finance committee, pointed out that the police district cannot afford one-third of the construction. If the fire district pays half-down from existing funds, that leaves six million to be financed, with that split approximately fifty-fifty between the two districts. Haxo pointed out that would be \$600,000 in new funds that the community must shoulder. He suggested a bond measure to finance the construction—which would end up being a referendum on the project as a whole.

Garen Corbett and another member of the finance committee, Rob Firmin, pointed out a more global concern: shifts at the PSB only include between two or three police officers and three firefighters. "We have so few public safety personnel," Corbett said. And in the event of a major earthquake, the Arlington might be unusable even if the PSB is functional. Firmin thought it made far more sense to put funds and energy into training and organizing people and neighborhoods into Community Emergency Response Teams, installing more sheds packed with emergency equipment around Kensington, and planning communication, evacuation routes, and meeting places in the event of catastrophe.

Gail Feldman of the Kensington Property Owners Association offered help in polling residents—and it is worth noting that not one person spoke in favor of the 11,500 sq. ft. Public Safety Building. The meeting ended with Dommer assuring the crowd that nothing would happen quickly: "Obviously," he said, "we're not going to do it if nobody wants the project." Stay tuned.



Proposed building



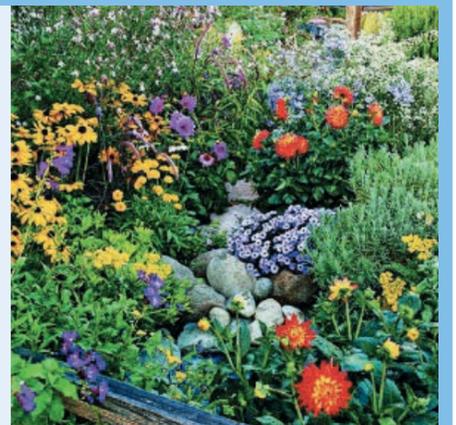
KFPD board president Don Dommer

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KENSINGTON Community Education

KASEP

In the midst of summer, we have already begun planning for Fall KASEP. Our Fall KASEP brochures will go home in student backpacks the 2nd week of school, August 28th - 31st and our website will be updated with the Fall schedule and classes by mid-August. www.kensingtoncommunitycouncil.org

Please make sure you already have an account created BEFORE September 5th because some classes fill up in the first 5-10 minutes of registration. If you've forgotten your password, please request a new one and do NOT create a new account. Families with multiple accounts create accounting woes.

Our office is always open on Registration nights to help families. We have been in touch with our software vendor and they will be standing by on September 5th to make sure everything goes smoothly.

Important Dates for Fall 2017

- September 5th 7:30pm Fall KASEP Registration
- September 18th Fall KASEP classes begin
- KCC office will be closed from August 21-September 4th
- Website will be updated by mid-August with Fall classes
- September 23rd KCC Family Movie Night
- October 29th Fall Parade and Picnic

Enjoy the long summer days and we look forward to welcoming you back in the Fall!

Welcome!

Kari Tindol is leaving KCC to go be with her family in Chico--we wish her the best of luck!

Fortunately another Kensington parent has stepped right in. We are proud to introduce you to Rowena Cerri as the new KCC/KASEP Director. Rowena has been working at KCC since early 2015 and just last year was the KASEP Art Explorations teacher--the kindergarteners loved her. A veteran Hilltop parent herself, she has a background in Early Childhood Education and loves to dabble in different art mediums. Some of her favorite projects have been making jewelry, designing collages, doing calligraphy and creating books out of art.

We are so lucky to have Rowena as our new KCC/KASEP Director! Extremely well-organized, friendly, with a positive "can do" attitude, she is a valuable addition to KCC. Stop by the office soon and say Hello to Rowena.



KCC Counselors-in-Training. Bottom row L to R, Rose, Jake, Bennett, Madison, Sophia, Maddie, Mary. Top row L to R, Ben H, Ben M, Kaden, Kaleb, Ethan, Cole, Emma, Will.



Happy Dad's Day!



All smiles!



Chalk art is always a blast

Jazzercise Monday-Wednesday-Friday 8:15-9:15am, Community Center Come jazz it up with friends--move your body to the groove, have some fun and get stronger.

Body Sculpting Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:45-9:45am; Community Center Jazzercise, Monday-Wednesday-Friday 8:15-9:15am, Community Center. Want a more toned, stronger body? If so, come try body sculpting--it really works! Questions? Call Kevin at 486-2728

Acrylic Artists Wednesdays, 9:45am - 12:30pm, Community Center The artists are seeking inspiration this summer and will resume painting in September.

Tai Chi Chuan 9:30-10:30am Fridays, Community Center, \$10 Gentle Tai Chi exercises strengthen the body while also helping to calm the mind. When you have a calm mind, your body relaxes, which then reduces stress. Less stress is good!

Jazzercise and Body Sculpting Enthusiasts

KCC Summer Camp 2017

\$285 per week July 4th-short week, only \$230

Top Five Reasons To Come to KCC Summer Camp

1. Your children's friends are already here.
2. We are open all day long.
3. It's affordable!
4. Every day campers do arts/crafts, tennis, sports plus still have time for legos, ping pong, lanyards, board games and more.
5. Our new Foosball table is awesome!

Camp days are filled with leisure, whether that's creating a lanyard, playing a fast game of foosball, improving your tennis stroke, tossing water balloons or just chatting with friends. It's a wonderful place to hang out, relax and have an old-fashioned kind of summer camp.

Our counselors love playing with children and it's a joy to see them all running around together having fun. Camp runs until August 18th and many of our weeks are already full. Register NOW before it's too late. See you soon!

Week 10 is SOLD OUT!

Week 4	July 3-July 7 Closed July 4/Short Wk. • Specialty: Cooking with Vicky!	Week 7	July 24-July 28 • Specialty: Talisman Jewelry • Field Trip: <i>The Jungle</i>
Week 5	July 10-July 14 • SPIRIT WEEK • Specialty: Cooking Part II with Vicky • Field Trip: <i>Lake Anza</i>	Week 8	July 31-August 4 • OLYMPIC WEEK • Field Trip: <i>Adventure Playground</i>
Week 6	July 17-July 21 • Specialty: Skyhawk Sports • Field Trip: <i>Scandia Miniature Golf/Laser Tag</i>	Week 9	August 7-August 11 • Specialty: Ceramics air dry clay with Jeanne • Field Trip: <i>El Cerrito Pool Party</i>

Summer Camp Registration is Online and On-going
Register on the KCC Website or call KCC at 510-525-0292



KCC Camp Counselors. Bottom row, L to R, Natalie, Sarah, Meggie, Anthony, Top row, L to R, Amara, Galen, Ethan, Nick, Kelly. Not pictured are Marshall, Kate, Daniel and Perry.

KCC/KASEP Office: 59 Arlington Ave., Bldg E (Across the grassy field above the tennis courts in Kensington Park), Kensington CA 94707. E-mail: kccrec@yahoo.com, or call 525-0292. M-F, 11am-4pm.

Tennis Court Reservations: For weekends and holidays only, beginning at 9am. Call the KCC office for info. Court Fees: 45-min. singles reservation: Residents: \$2; Nonresidents: \$5.

Kensington Community Center Rental Info: Please call Andrea at the KPPCSD (Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District) at 510-526-4141.

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KPPCSD Director Vanessa Cordova Resigns



On June 26, three-year veteran Vanessa Cordova resigned her KPPCSD directorship due to health concerns. Cordova has been conducting board business from Florence, Italy, since the fall of 2016, unable to return because of her health. In a letter to board president Rachelle Sherris-Watt, Cordova cited persistent complications from a collapse last October in Florence, where she was hospitalized to treat an autoimmune disorder.

Cordova moved to Kensington in 2000 and began serving as director in 2014. In October 2015, she was the driver in the infamous traffic stop that began months of turmoil. Prior to joining the KPPCSD, Cordova served on the Kensington Municipal Advisory Committee (KMAC) for six years and volunteered with the Friends of the Kensington Library. On June 24, she answered questions via email about the police department, the new GM, priorities moving forward, and her experience on the board.

You and now board president Rachelle Sherris-Watt bridged likely the most contentious KPPCSD board in Kensington's history to what is now a more amicable relationship among directors.

How do you frame the problems that led to the discord?

I think the Reno affair created a devastating breach of trust that has yet to heal. I also suspect it directly influenced the outcome of the recent election. The questionable statements and actions by the police chief and majority board directors only amplified concerns that the Kensington police were operating in the absence of oversight and accountability. Residents were further angered by the aggressive marginalization of Rachelle and me by the board and the district's lawyers—blocking us from counsel, ignoring requests for an emergency special meeting, telling us it was nothing but a “personnel rumor.” All of this only fueled suspicions of a cover-up.

A pimp was shot by one of our service weapons because a Kensington officer lost his gun to a prostitute while partying with half of our police personnel across the state line. How could any fiduciary, let alone five, fail to follow up on an internal affairs investigation of this magnitude?

See the rest of this story at KensingtonOutlook.com. Click on the PDF of the July/August edition and scroll to the extra page at the end of the regular edition.

KPOA Meeting Packed With People—and Information

By Gail Feldman and Kevin Padian

When planning for a disaster or emergency, “You can’t put plans in stone” said Fire Battalion Chief Kevin Jaynes, during a panel on disaster planning at the June 10 annual membership meeting of the Kensington Property Owners Association (KPOA). Nearly a hundred residents flooded into the Community Center to hear speakers address plans for emergency response and other key issues.

Residents were told that there are no preplanned evacuation routes in Kensington because each disaster is different. The unified command of the fire and police departments will determine how to safely get people out. Interim Police Chief Rickey Hull noted, “The responding personnel may be from other jurisdictions, such as Richmond, the regional parks district, and Berkeley.” Marcelle Indelicato from the county’s Office of Emergency Services, added, “It’s not what is on paper or process, but the people who get things done.”

Kensington resident Arrietta Chakos, of Urban Resilience Strategies, a public policy firm, countered, “There is a need for pre-planning and communication regarding things that can be done in advance,” including, she said, evacuation routes. Each panelist stressed that it is up to neighborhoods to plan for a disaster through CERT training, household preparedness, organizing neighborhood contacts, and looking out for each other.

Asked about whether sirens or an emergency phone notification system were possible, the officials noted that landlines will receive notification automatically from the county’s Community Warning System (CWS). Cell phone users need to sign up through the CWS website (www.cococws.us). Earthquake early warning systems are not ready for public use. Officials were open to plan for a community-wide emergency response exercise in 2018, but no one stepped forward to assume leadership of this initiative.

Supervisor John Gioia announced that MCE, a new electric energy provider, would take over service from PG&E, although people can opt back to PG&E. He provided a summary of a new county ordinance regarding Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) or second units. The county passed an ADU ordinance, which requires approval of permits for ADUs without some previous requirements, e.g. parking spaces (if within a half-mile of public transportation). When ADUs are sited within an existing house or preexisting detached structure, the county can issue an approval without neighbor review.

The county’s new ordinance sets specifics for Kensington, which has a planning ordinance protecting views, light, privacy, and size. For example, the maximum ADU

size in Kensington is 600 sq. ft. Construction of new detached units or expansion of the footprint of a house for an ADU may involve either a variance or is subject to the Kensington zoning ordinance. The Board of Supervisors may review the ADU ordinance, focusing on unit size on large lots over 20,000 sq. ft. Gioia promised that any proposed changes will first be reviewed by KMAC.

Fire district president Don Dommer explained that foundation problems are driving a fast-paced decision to rehab or build the public safety building. Even without the majority of the estimated \$10 million cost available or committed for a rebuild, Dommer indicated the fire district would settle on an option as early as July. He focused on what a new building would include: plans call for over 11,000 sq. feet compared to the current 5,800 sq. ft. Previous seismic retrofits done in 1998 and 2004 comply with the 2001 California Building Code. Additional piers were drilled in 2009. Due to limited time, questions from the audience were submitted to the fire district. KPOA requested that answers be posted on the district website.

KPPCSD vice president Eileen Nottoli stated that an architectural firm was working on plans for the Community Center; these focus on seismic safety and ADA improvements. She said that the solid waste subcommittee, which she chairs, examined state rules regarding organic waste but noted that Kensington households surveyed do not want to pay more for recycling food waste. She also introduced newly hired district general manager Anthony Constantouros. (See Q&A with Constantouros, page 1.)

Fostering Families in Jeopardy Volunteer Hosts Needed

Chuck Grant, Kensington resident since 1979, is now executive director of Safe Time, a new 501(c)(3) nonprofit that seeks to prevent homelessness by recruiting volunteer hosts to temporarily house families and individuals on the brink of homelessness due to financial calamity or other life-altering events. Safe Time is focusing on West Contra Costa County to get started, and hopes to expand throughout California.

Schools, churches, and community organizations refer the families to Safe Time. They are vetted and pre-screened, and then Safe Time verifies with interviews and reference checks. Clients are *not* already homeless—Safe Time’s mission is to *prevent* homelessness. Guests are sober and healthy, with no violence in their lives. Safe Time is recruiting volunteer hosts from West Contra Costa County. Contact safetimehost.org or you can call Chuck at 524-5525.



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Kensington Calendar

Locations:

Arlington Community Church (ACC), 52 Arlington Ave., 526-9146
 Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave., 525-0292
 Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., 524-3043
 Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley (UUCB), 1 Lawson Rd., Kensington, 525-0302, www.uucb.org

Ongoing:

Jazzercise, 8:15-9:15am, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Community Center.
Body Sculpting, 8:45-9:45am, Tuesday and Thursday, Community Center.
Acrylic Artists on break until September.
Tai Chi Chuan, 9:30-10:30am Fridays, Community Center, \$10

July

July 2 Documentary: 4.1 Miles. Viewing of the video about Syrian refugees escaping to Greece nominated for an Oscar, with Mac Lingo, Chaplain. 9:30am. Free. UUCB.
July 3 Kensington Library Knitting Club "The Castoffs" All levels welcome. Please bring your own needles and yarn. We provide encouragement and help. Learn new stitches, share your talents, and meet new friends. Normally meets on the 1st Monday of the month. 6:30pm. Free.
July 3, 17, & 31 Kensington Library's Digital Docent will answer your eReader and digital library questions every other Monday by appointment at 1pm. This one-on-one 60-minute appointment is intended for people seeking assistance with eBooks and eReaders. Sign up at Info Desk. Please bring your device. Free.
July 6 Science Thursdays for Kids Fort Building. Have fun snapping together poles & connectors to make a fort frame & cover it. Reading inside the fort might be nice. Kensington Library, 2-3pm. Free.
July 6, 13, 20, & 27 Baby & Toddler Storytime Stories, songs, puppets, egg-shakers and loads of fun! Kensington Library. Two identical sessions 10:15am & 11:15am. Free.
July 9 Rev. Craig Scott. "Viet Nam, 52 Years Late." 9:30am, free. UUCB.
July 11 & 18 Family Storytime Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome. Kensington Library, 6:30pm. Free.
July 13 Science Thursdays for Kids Marble Maze & Gravity Maze. Put together a mega 100-piece marble run with chutes, paddle wheels & more. The gravity maze includes towers, grids, marbles & card challenges. Kensington Library, 2-3 pm. Free.
July 16 Julie Rogers, therapist. "The Origins of Whiteness." 9:30am, free. UUCB.
July 20 Science Thursdays for Kids Sphero Robot Ball. Have an exciting time controlling this billiard-size ball with provided iPads. Send it up and down ramps and over the floor in your own configurations. Kensington Library, 2-3pm. Free.
July 22 & 23 Relay for Life Walkers go around the track to fight cancer, celebrate cancer survivors and remember lost loved ones. This unique event brings the community together to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. The

overnight relay at Cerrito Vista Park, 950 Pomona Ave., El Cerrito starts with cancer survivors walking the first lap at 10am Saturday morning. Live music, games, crafts, raffles, and other family fun activities are part of the spirited celebration. At 9pm is the Luminaria Ceremony.



July 23 Summer BBQ The Kensington Police Officers' Association cordially invites all Kensington residents to a KPOA-sponsored summer barbeque at the Community Center from 12-4pm. Come meet/chat with your officers and join us for lunch as we thank you for your support. If possible, please RSVP via email with Officer Wilkens at swilkens@kensingtoncalifornia.org. We hope to see you all there!!!
July 23 Edward Burgess, Senior Manager, Strategen Consulting, & Ellen Zuckerman, Senior Associate, Southwest Energy. "The Science of Climate Change and Progress Towards a Clean Environment." 9:30am, free. UUCB.
July 24 Kensington Library Book Club Discussion of *Dreams of My Russian Summer* by Andrei Makine. Book Club normally meets on the 4th Monday of the month. 6:30pm. Free.
July 25 The Paper Airplane Guy John Collins holds the world record for paper airplane distance! Exploring the science and mystery of flight, participants will learn to fold the world-record plane. Kensington Library, 6:30pm. Free.
July 27 Science Thursdays for Kids Polydron Set. Come construct many interesting shapes with these colorful snap-together squares, triangles, hexagons & more. Kensington Library, 2-3 pm. Free.
July 29 Saturday Drop-in Craft/Project Let's make paper airplanes! Come on in and make one or more interesting planes and decorate them. Kensington Library, 10am-4:30pm while supplies last. Free.
July 30 Dr. Frederick Shaw. "My Work in Chandagar, India." 9:30am, free. UUCB.

August

August 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 Family Storytime Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome. Kensington Library, 6:30pm. Free.
August 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31 Baby & Toddler Storytime Stories, songs, puppets, egg-shakers and loads of fun! Kensington Library, two identical sessions 10:15am & 11:15am. Free.
August 6 Dr. Gil Weisman, retired psychologist. "Mental Health Clinics." 9:30am, free. UUCB.
August 7 Kensington Library Knitting Club "The Castoffs" See July 3.
August 13 From A Silk Cocoon. Viewing with filmmaker Satsuki Ina about the Japanese internment in California. 9:30am, free. UUCB.
August 14 & 28 Kensington Library's Digital Docent will answer your eReader and digital library questions every other Monday by appointment at 1pm. See July 3.
August 20 From Selma to Soweto. Viewing with filmmaker Connie Field about the global anti-apartheid movement. 9:30am, free. UUCB.
August 26 Kensington Animal Fair, ACC Pastor Tony Clark blessing of the animals, demonstrations include service dogs, training dogs, K9 police dog, Friends of the Library. Fund-raiser, raffle, all donations go directly to animal rescue organizations. Pet adoptions and fostering, dogs, puppies, cats, kittens, rabbits, guinea pigs, birds and more. 11am-2pm. Kensington Community Center.
August 26 Saturday Drop-in Craft Paper Peacock Project. Make a fabulous tail from multi-colored strips of paper. Then cut out and add the body, feet, and beak, plus don't forget the googly eyes! Kensington Library, 10am-4:30pm while supplies last. Free.
August 27 Mister Philips, member of the Board of Education for the West Contra Costa Unified School District. "Current Plans for the School District." 9:30am, free. UUCB.
August 28 Kensington Library Book Club Discussion of *Doctor Thorne* by Anthony Trollope. 6:30pm. Free.

Town Meetings

Kensington Community Center 59 Arlington Ave., Kensington
KCC-July 10, Kensington Community Council 1st Mondays, 6:30pm. 525-0292
FKL-July 11, Aug. 1, Friends of the Kensington Library, 7pm (at the Library) 1st Tuesdays
KPSC-July 10, Aug 14, Kensington Public Safety Council Earthquake/Disaster Preparedness 2nd Mondays, 6pm. 501-8165
KARO/ECHO-Amateur Radio Operators 2nd Mondays of odd months, 7:30pm. 524-9815
KFPD-July 12, Aug 9, Fire Protection District 2nd Wednesdays, 7pm. 527-8395
KPPCSD-July 13, July 27, Aug 10, Aug 24. Police Protection and Community Services District 2nd & 4th Thursdays 7:30pm. 526-4141
KIC-July 24, Aug. 28, Kensington Improvement Club 4th Mondays, 7:30pm. 524-7514.
KMAC (Tent.)-July 26, Aug 29. Municipal Advisory Council Last Tues. 7pm. (Call Supe. Gioia's office to confirm: 231-8691)
Kensington Farmers' Market Live produce & live music every Sunday, 10am-2pm, Colusa Circle.

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Passings



Robert James Prowse

July 13, 1924-May 24, 2017

Bob died peacefully at home on Wednesday afternoon, May 24, 2017, while sitting in his chair next to Beverly, his wife of 71 years. Together, they were enjoying the view of their garden.

Robert was born in Minnesota on July 13, 1924 to Arthur and Keturah Prowse. As an infant he moved to Southern California with his family. In 1942, immediately after high school, Bob joined the Navy. He served for six years in the Pacific on the battleship *USS Pennsylvania*. It was during this time that Bob met Beverly in Oakland, California. They were married on November 11, 1945. Upon his honorable discharge from the Navy in 1948, Bob apprenticed in the printing industry. In 1954 he bought his first printing and bindery shop, which eventually became Consolidated Printers, Inc. in Berkeley, CA. Bob was a respected and successful business owner who was especially dedicated to mentoring young people. Also in 1954, Bob and Beverly purchased their beloved house in Kensington, CA. Their daughter Elise was born in 1956. In the early years, Bob loved working on his home; he enjoyed laying brick, building walkways, and gardening. Bob and Beverly eventually purchased a second home in Lake Tahoe, which became a home away from home for family and friends. Bob retired in 1992, and he and Beverly split their time between Lake Tahoe and Kensington. Bob and Beverly traveled the world together and even visited Elise in Africa when she was there studying baboons.

Bob had many passions in life. He was proud of his time in the Navy, and enjoyed sharing stories about his service. Working with his hands gave him great pleasure, whether at the bindery, at home, or helping others with repairs. He adored his dogs, and his love for animals was far reaching. Whether at home or in Tahoe, animals in the wild sensed his presence, and eagerly awaited the food he would offer them. He was a good friend to many, and loved to make people laugh with his wicked sense of humor. He was also known for his generosity, whether it was picking up the tab at dinner, or helping a young person with college tuition. He never expected anything in return. Bob and Elise learned to fly single engine airplanes together. His final wish was that his ashes be scattered from an airplane over Lake Tahoe.

Robert Prowse is survived by his wife Beverly, and his daughter Elise. Beverly and Elise wish to express gratitude to Bob's devoted caregivers Luz Rabun and Simon Bouhadana, who brought him great comfort over the past two years.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy may be made to the organizations below that Bob supported or to the organization of your choice.

Alaska Raptor Center, 1000 Raptor Way, Sitka, AK 99835
Berkeley Humane Society, 2700 Ninth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710
Pet Network Humane Society, 401 Village Boulevard, Incline Village, NV 89451

Charles Franklin Clark

February 28, 1925-April 15, 2017

Born in Calistoga, Charles Clark has been best known in this area as Mr. Clark, a career art teacher at Portola Junior High School where he loved and was loved by his students for his easygoing nature and love of people and art. He retired early to travel with his beloved wife, who preceded him in death in 2011.

Charlie married a Berkeley girl, Gloria Becker, in 1947, after serving in the army in the Pacific during WWII. After the war, he went on to teach and raise his family. They had two children, Tom and Christine, who benefitted from growing up in Kensington. Charlie had attended the then Oakland College of Arts and Crafts (as did Gloria), where he found his niche in modern painting and sculpting. He then went on to get a master's degree from UC Berkeley while teaching. Once Tom and Christine were grown, he and Gloria traveled the world together.

Charlie and Gloria designed and helped build their house on Lawson Road with the idea of selling it, but fell in love with it and lived there from 1960 on. Both filled the home with the art that they created as well as artifacts from their travels. Charlie was a loving and kind person who always had a heart for the underdog. He was generous to his family and others. He was a lifelong reader, painter, letter writer and traveler. He died peacefully at home at age 92 from complications of congestive heart failure and pneumonia, with his daughter by his side. He will be deeply missed.

May Police Log

May 2 MISSING PERSON, Edgcroft Rd. Unhappy adult female went on a bike ride to Point Isabelle and did not return.

May 3 FOLLOW UP, Edgcroft Rd. Missing person located.

SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Norwood Ave. Resident reported subjects selling windows in the area. Unable to locate.

May 4 MISCELLANEOUS, Arlington Ave. Resident reported hearing gunshots. I searched the area and was unable to find any signs of shots but did find a fallen tree that blocked Edgcroft Rd. Fire Engine 65 and I removed the tree from the roadway.

TRAFFIC, Kenyon Ave. Non-injury collision, both parties exchanged information.

SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Beloit Ave. Resident reported subject riding a bicycle with a car stereo attached to the back. I contacted the subject, who is a resident on Yale Ave. The "stereo" is actually a motor for the bicycle. No crime.

May 5 BURGLARY, Kerr Ave. Suspect(s) entered home through unlocked door, nothing taken.

May 6 SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE, Edgcroft Rd. Vehicle registered to Kensington resident.

OUTAIDED, Blake St. Assisted ECPD Officers with perimeter while search was conducted of home that had been broken into.

ALARM, Windsor Ave. Home was secure and I found no signs of forced entry. Dog was moving curtains and may have set off alarm.

May 9 WELFARE CHECK, Stratford Rd. Knocked on door, could not see through windows, I left a note on door for doctor. Checked key locker for spare key with negative results. Later made contact and subject was fine.

May 11 BURGLARY, Lawson Dr. Unknown suspect(s) entered residence by force, taking the victim's property.

CIVIL STANDBY, Edgcroft Rd. Civil standby while a renter moved out of residence. No crime.

May 12 911 HANG UP, Arlington Ave. Old unused telephone line keeps calling 911.

May 13 AUTO BURGLARY, Eureka Ave. Window smashed and property taken from vehicle.

May 15 ANIMAL, Cambridge Ave. Responded to a reported large raccoon that had entered a residence. The raccoon left with no issue.

MENTAL PATIENT, Coventry Rd. After physically fighting with friends a resident returned and barricaded self and mother inside residence. Several officers arrived. Subject taken to hospital for psych evaluation.

May 16 MISC., Cowper Ave. Resident was stuck in a bed frame. No crime.

May 18 VEHICLE TAMPERING, Coventry Rd. Vehicle tampered.

BARKING DOG, Cowper Ave. Resident reported dog barking for over an hour. Homeowner kept the dog in for the rest of the night.

May 20 DISTURBANCE, Colusa Ave. Subject yelling at apartment complex, gone on arrival.

May 21 ACCIDENT, Lake Dr. at Beloit. Non-injury accident, information exchanged.

NOISE, Arlington Ave. Resident wanted to speak with an officer about how to handle noisy neighbors.

May 22 MISC., Arlington Ave. Resident received threatening text.

MISC., Franciscan Way. Resident thought someone was in her vacant home. Turned out "stagers" left lights on, windows open.

SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Arlington Ave. Report of young adults on skateboards. Gone upon arrival and unable to locate.

May 23 AUTO BURGLARY, Anson Way. Smash to two vehicle windows. Three dollars in cash taken. Possibly related to next entry.

VANDALISM, Anson Way. Smash to vehicle window, nothing taken though property in plain view.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY / VANDALISM, Oberlin Ave. Window to vehicle smashed, report taken.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY / VANDALISM, Rincon Rd. Window to vehicle smashed, report taken.

VANDALISM, Los Altos Dr. Rear door to vacant/staged house kicked in. No evidence of entry being made.

May 27 DISTURBANCE, Kenilworth Dr. Loud party, contacted resident who said they would quiet down. No further action taken.

THEFT, Stratford Ave. Items taken from unlocked vehicle.

May 28, MISC., Coventry Rd. Baby deer caught in fence. I freed the deer, no crime.

May 31 AUTO BURGLARY, Wellesley Ave. Vehicle window smashed and interior ransacked. Nothing taken.

OUTAIDED, Rincon Dr. Two women locked in Blake Estate. UC Berkeley notified.

Continued from page 10 of regular edition***Do you feel you are a disruptor?***

Does publicly questioning the actions of the board and police chief make me a disruptor? I know it has certainly made me a target.

You and Chuck Toombs organized the ad hoc committee, defining the scope of the fact-finding project that the committee ended up working on for nearly a year.***Were you satisfied with that process? Do you think that the ad hoc committee accomplished what it set out to do?***

The ad hoc committee's scope was limited to presenting its research findings, not providing recommendations to the board. In that respect, they did a fine job in delivering a solid framework of the various issues the district needs to study further. But I'm disappointed the board has not initiated the cost-benefit analyses needed to move this effort forward. I know I'm not the only one frustrated to see the ad hoc report collecting dust on a shelf.

We now, as of June 12, have a general manager rather than the chief of police/general manager position that we had for years. What are the key priorities he will need to address, and what challenges will he face?

I think we'll look back at the bifurcation of the GM/COP position and selection of General Manager Tony Constantouros as two pivotal accomplishments for this board. Rachele and I have worked very hard for this since assuming office in 2014.

That we found someone of Tony's caliber is a reminder that good things come to those who wait. I feel the same way about our extraordinary general counsel, Ann Danforth. What a marvel! Together they have provided the board and Chief Hull with an excellent foundation for our new organizational model.

Under Tony's leadership, I think we'll finally see meaningful reforms in the management of the district. His first priority will likely be to assess our financial health, and I expect he'll begin to formulate a long-term plan to address our increasing liabilities. His recommendations will surely shape our capital planning for the community center and public safety building, as well as our long-term labor strategy as we look ahead to the next police contract.

The operation of the district is another area that will be served well by Tony's expertise. Some of the district's administrative processes, such as accounts payable, are very outmoded. Payroll is often a dizzying puzzle of Post-it notes and handwritten exceptions on time cards and reports. I'm certain we'll see the introduction of new tools and policies to support our staff, which I'm sure they'll welcome. It will make their jobs so much easier.

From a community engagement perspective, I imagine residents will soon see a lot of Tony. I admire his calm candor, and he can be a little wry at times, which has been great. It feels so good to finally share a laugh around here! I think folks will come to appreciate his clarity and light touch. He's a great listener.

Personally, this job has never been more enjoyable. I credit Tony, Ann and Chief Hull for that, as well as our management consultant, Bob Deis.

There seems to be a persistent assertion that the decision to contract out has already been made. Is this your read?

I know! It's maddening. If you took a straw poll before I resigned, you would have probably seen a 3-2 vote in support of contracting. Today, you might see a 3-1 split. Tomorrow, who knows? There is so much play on this issue, especially in the absence of any feasibility studies, and rightly so.

I do sense a softening from some who made very provocative campaign statements around contracting last November, which makes this kind of speculation even more amusing. In my three years in office, I, too, made several public statements against contracting with (or annexation to) El Cerrito. They're a fine police department, but that jurisdiction is large and predominately urban.

I think Kensington needs a more community-oriented policing model, and from what I've gleaned from the ad hoc report, some agencies are poised to deliver just that. Albany is an intriguing option. Its residents are delighted with their police service.

There really are some good police officers out there, men and women who actually respect the people they're paid to serve. They love their jobs, and it shows.

Can Kensington support an independent police department?

No, not if officers demand market-rate salaries, but remain unwilling to shoulder the increasing costs of their benefits package.

We've seen the difficulties in a small department, such as overtime pay for officers forced to work long hours to make up for colleagues on medical or administrative leave. How can this be managed?

If the goal is maximum service coverage with minimal overtime, contracting is the only answer. I asked the fire district about this, as well as the Kensington Fire union steward. It was explained that response units are always fully staffed. If there is any kind of absence, a replacement firefighter is brought in to maintain continuity of service—without overtime.

As a municipality with multiple revenue streams, El Cerrito can easily carry more personnel to maintain service demands at full capacity. We're a tiny special district with a very limited tax base, and as such, a smaller force.

Do we need a chief of police—and should Rickey Hull continue in that role?

You know, within fire protection agencies, it's not uncommon to find a lower rank firefighter operating as a fire chief. It's an interesting approach, which is why in the past, I've advocated for a captain position or a chief position at a lower rank and salary step.

But I think Chief Hull has done a marvelous job as Interim GM/COP. He has served us in this role many times over the last ten years. He also deserves a lot of credit for the challenging dispatch communications transition to Albany from Richmond. You know, he worked very hard to revitalize that partnership, and boy, did he make the right call! No sooner did we ink that agreement, the East Bay Times reported that the county sheriff backed away from a proposed dispatch agreement with El Cerrito's police department, apparently over an unrelated political squabble. Had we gone that route...well, I'm relieved we didn't.

I think one of Chief Hull's greatest strengths is his longevity. He's worked in this community for what, 20 years? No other officer has that kind of institutional knowl-

edge. Unlike previous chiefs, he enjoys a very positive reputation among the law enforcement community in this area. I know he'll continue to cultivate those critical interagency relationships, just as he has with residents, with whom he is quite popular.

What would need to be changed for the KPD to be on better footing with the community and its finances?

A third of the police personnel are very talented and compassionate professionals. But they've been marginalized under previous police chiefs for so long, I'm afraid the internal divisions are now too deep to repair. It's been very difficult to effect a meaningful chain of command without a blizzard of complaints that are obviously rooted in the past. It's just so dysfunctional. There is an inexplicable sense of entitlement in the department, as if some personnel operate knowing they're beyond reproach.

Many of us had hoped the Reno affair would be a wake-up call for the board, as well as personnel. It obviously wasn't. And taxpayers are growing tired of paying for subpar service in the absence of real accountability.

How can the KPPCSD board reduce its massive legal expenses?

You know, someone passed along a recent Nextdoor post by a former board director who is threatening to sue the district if the board approves police contracting. At a certain point, there is only so much the board can do. It's certainly not going to be coerced into restraining its fiduciary authority.

Why does the fire district spend so little while the KPPCSD spends so much?

It's interesting. Look at their delivery model from a liability perspective. The majority of the fire district's service calls are medical-related emergencies, which carry potential legal exposure. And yet, the fire district has not had any profound misconduct or lawsuits since contracting with El Cerrito 20 or so years ago.

I think part of the answer can be attributed to the leadership of Chief Lance Maples and district manager Brenda Navellier. Together they run a very disciplined, transparent and respected operation. Our firefighters are kind and caring people—very service oriented. And their union doesn't endorse retaliatory tactics as we've seen with the Kensington Police Officers Association.

Some favor consolidation with the fire district (in which the KPPCSD would absorb the fire district). Do you think that would make governance easier and aid financial stress?

I was open to consolidation when I first ran for office. Now it's quite clear that the culture of these two agencies and governing boards are incompatible.

Operations-wise, police services are delivered within a paramilitary paradigm, which is quite different from a fire protection operation. So there is an inherent tension, but it's not exclusive to Kensington. There are only about 300 combined fire and police departments in the United States, according to a Michigan State/DOJ funded survey. And most of those agencies are in rural areas. There just aren't many success stories, but that doesn't mean the idea is without merit.

None of our districts should subject the community to a hostile takeover of another when each delivers an entirely specialized service. Nowhere in California has LAFCO approved the consolidation of a police district with a fire district for the same reasons you won't find combined water and parks districts, or transit and sanitation districts. So, unless the agency can prove efficiencies in the delivery of both services with cost savings, any rally for consolidation would be a fool's errand.

If both departments contracted out services, would consolidation make more sense? Sure, I could see the potential economy in joining the two. But unless both boards and the respective bargaining units support the effort, any gains will be offset by interagency lawsuits and labor grievances.

How can the KPPCSD afford to pay for the Community Center and in addition pay approximately a third of the Public Safety Building construction?

As we saw with the failure of Measure L, a parcel tax won't fly. One option is to seek an old-fashioned bank loan, I suppose. But I haven't studied that approach enough to provide an opinion. However, I can say I don't support the use of district funds to pay for the construction costs of the public safety building.

The fire board gave up on putting up a building on the park, which the KPPCSD owns and manages. Were you glad that option was dropped?

Developing Kensington's only recreational asset would have sorely diminished our quality of life. Think of the kids who would be robbed of the unique play experience that particular parcel offers. How about the park-adjacent homeowners? The increased traffic and noise would certainly impact their property values. In my opinion, it's an inconsistent use of the land, and I'm glad the matter has been tabled, at least for now.

If you could start over organizing how Kensington operates, what would you do?

In the world of magical thinking, I'd probably focus on incorporation.

There was a great deal of bitterness over the last election. Why do you think there is so much rumor and backbiting in this community of smart, savvy residents?

Kensington can be a wonderful place, but sometimes I wonder if there's something in our water. There are so many "-isms" that emerge when people feel threatened—even insulted—by change. And now with the advent of Nextdoor, public vilification has become an acceptable sport.

It reminds me of a New Yorker cartoon I just sent Rachele. In it, one coworker lays his hand on the shoulder of a colleague and says, "I just want you to know how much I appreciate you being blamed for everything." What a commentary!

I don't understand the intensity sometimes. So, I voted no on a \$35K car for a temporary GM/COP. I didn't shoot your dog. I'm not attacking your family. Why are you screaming at me in a public meeting? I have wiped more spittle from my face during board meetings than I care to remember. That's the nonsense that scares me a little bit, when the rage boils over and turns physical, and suddenly there's a finger in my face. Maybe it's because I'm a smaller person, but it's unnerving to watch an educated professional unravel like that.

Kensington is such an embarrassment of riches. None of these issues are life or death—we're all just trying wrangle a little one-horse town, folks. Count to 10. Visit your new grandchild. Pull some weeds. Walk the trail. There's no reason to be so hostile.

What is your most important takeaway from this experience, and what misconception about the board do you think does the most damage?

You know, I served on KMAC for six years and didn't have an enemy in this town until I was elected to this board. The smear tactics of some board members and their political supporters have been very informative for those residents who have less familiarity with the board, but have known me through my other community work, including my stint as a nanny in the early 1990s.

For over a decade, this particular governing body has been run like a country club board. The inflammatory discourse of some directors has gained traction over the years, especially in the *Outlook* (under a previous editor) and now on Nextdoor. You'd never see that kind of behavior from anyone on KMAC. You don't see it on the fire board.

But the culture of this board is slowly improving as we elect more independent and responsive directors. I hope the electorate knows that November's mandate has already improved how we function and serve this community.

It's been a wonderful experience. I'm leaving the district in better shape than I when arrived in 2014, which is all that matters. So, I have no regrets.

We've read the criticism. Have you received any support from residents?

Yes! I have received some wonderful letters of encouragement, and plucky advice from men my father's age, which always make me chuckle. "If you were my daughter..." The Carmelite nuns write to me every month. Folks drop my name in the prayer box, if you can imagine. Their letters have been such a beautiful source of comfort, I always carry at least one with me.

You cite a cerebrospinal fluid leak as a reason for resigning. What can you tell us about your health?

Well, it's a complication of the medical issues I had in October, which resulted in a brief hospital stay. By January, I still wasn't feeling very well. I had an unrelenting runny nose, and was really nauseous and lightheaded. In a crowded, stone and mortar environment like Florence, the prospect of collapsing again is frightening. So with the exception of attending Mass, I took it easy, figuring it was the medication or a cold bug. It was my pharmacist who finally said, "I don't think you have a virus. You need to see a doctor."

There are many conservative approaches, which are less invasive but not a lot of fun. But about three months ago, I knew the writing was on the wall. I've written three resignation letters since then, but some board members and residents asked me to hang in longer because it was a very contentious and pivotal time policy-wise.

Now with a stable district leadership team in place, it's time to pass the torch. I don't have the physical and mental bandwidth to endure this kind of surgery and execute my fiduciary duties, and stay on top of my studies.

Besides phoning into meetings, how have you been conducting business?

I've been able to execute my duties without too many limitations. When I'm in Kensington, I conduct district business by phone and email anyway. I rarely set foot in the public safety building. So, calling the general manager from Europe or Kensington makes no material difference. I have recordings of county and district committee meetings at my disposal, which helps. I still participate in my statewide legislative and government formation committees through the special districts association. I speak with Rachelle nearly every day, the police chief about three times a week, which hasn't changed. I've also maintained a Pacific Standard time schedule because I'm a full-time student back home, and I have a few California-based projects.

What are you studying?

Circumpolar policy.

Talk about your relationship with board president Sherris-Watt.

Well, we have a joke: A Catholic and an Episcopalian walk into a Democratic club debate wearing the same discount dress... That's how our working relationship began!

People ask if we're close. The simple answer is yes, but it's a very unique bond. For the first two years, after Reno and during the recall effort, there was virtually no trust between us and the incumbent board members. We'd try to foster relationships, but those efforts always came back to bite us. We were very naive. We laugh about it now, but it was frustrating.

When you're operating in a hostile environment like that, you need someone to lean on when you're most vulnerable, but can't show it. It was Rachelle who held my hair back while I vomited before walking into the big Reno meeting. Some days, I'd hold her sleeping baby so she could eat something between feedings and meetings. We laughed, we cried, as the saying goes.

Thankfully, we're both people of faith, so there has always been an unspoken understanding that we would get through this mess together, and that's what we did. We didn't always agree, and still don't. But there is a deep level of trust, respect and affection between us. Beyond that, we crack each other up!
