Here we are, the beginning of August and school is but a few weeks away. Speaking of school, I discovered that I own a Heald College Swiss Army knife. I'm not sure where I got it, or how long I have had it. I did not attend Heald College. I am not sure why a business college student would need one of these. So I opened it up. There was a knife blade. Okay, expected, at some point even students can use a knife. I flipped open a two-prong tool for fixing divots on the golf course. Got it, golf is a big part of a successful business person’s future. A bottle opener … (sigh) naturally. After all, this is for college students. A pointy tool that I suspect is for punching holes in cans for shotgunning beer. And another smaller two-prong tool that I am not sure what it is good for. It must be symbolic of Heald College’s Course Credits. No one knows what those are good for either.

Did anyone know that Diablo Valley College has a pretty good football program? Sadly, it gets overshadowed by all of our high school football successes and the attention paid to Cal and Stanford programs. Vikings stadium announcer and Diablo Gazette writer, Alaina Limbrick, fills us in on the upcoming season.

I am really excited over the addition of our new column FrugElegance. Carol & Randi, aka The FruGirls, are all about living the most frug-elegant life. FrugElegance is where frugal and elegance come together. “We love to create an elegant look for a lot less!” Visit their blog at www.FrugElegance.com. Their blog has been featured in Huffington Post’s Hometalk many times. They also own a local home staging & decorating business called FrugElegance by Design. The column will unveil their creative decorating ideas.

Be sure to read our article regarding AHA! (Anti-Hazing Awareness). No one wants to go through the nightmare Debbie Smith went through when she lost her son, Matt, to a hazing ritual at Chico State 10 years ago. Debbie is on a mission to make sure no one does. Diablo Gazette is always interested in your stories. Email them to DiabloGazette@gmail.com. Be sure to like our Facebook page for local stories and updates at www.facebook.com/diablogazette.
If there’s smoke in the sky, Bart delays, a helicopter circling above, we know to go to claycord.com to get the first factoid of breaking news.

Its audience levels are simply incredible for a hyperlocal blog. “We don’t see many hyper-local websites with the numbers of readers and pageviews that Claycord.com provides,” according to Carla Posthauer of Local Yokel Media, an ad network that serves hyper-local audiences to national advertisers.

A large readership, they have indeed. Google Analytics reports the following audience figures for July: 193,503 Unique Users -- the number of readers (devices) who visited claycord.com at least once; 1.1+ million pageviews; 694,978 Sessions -- the number of actual visits onto Claycord.com. The latter is an all time high for Claycord.

Claycord.com’s Facebook page has also blossomed recently with just shy of 40,000 followers, up from around 9,000 only two years ago. Facebook tracks which stories readers prefer to engage. Oddly, last month’s post that Sonic Drive-In announced its plan to open in Concord, and also in Pleasanton, Livermore, Fairfield and Oakland, had the most FB shares since Claycord began tracking such things.

This is what they posted:

**JULY 7, 2015 8:00 AM · 102 COMMENTS**

Sonic Drive-In is coming to Concord. The company confirmed to Claycord.com on Monday that it has plans to open a fast-food restaurant in Concord, and also in Pleasanton, Livermore, Fairfield and Oakland.

At this time, they only have plans to open in Concord, and a location has not been chosen.

We’ll keep you updated on any further developments.

Here are the Top 6 most read topics in July.

6) Woman mistakes gas pedal for brake, accidentally kills husband  
5) A Walnut Creek murder-suicide  
4) Concord Police arrest Bank robbery suspect after pursuit  
3) Window shot out in drive-by on Hwy.4  
2) Naked man masturbating in someone’s yard after a Concord Pavilion Concert, was also a released child murderer  
1) Best of Claycord - Sonic Drive-In is Coming to Concord!

How did that beat number 2? Are Claycordians hungry, or just hungry for refreshing news?

The current geo-politics between nations take a back seat to this mystery drama from Iran. The film will be presented Friday, August 14th and Saturday, August 22nd, at 7:30 in the Oak View Room of the Walnut Creek Library, 1644 N. Broadway, in downtown Walnut Creek.

From the acclaimed director Asghar Farhadi (Oscar-winning, A SEPARATION, and THE PAST), and just recently released in the U.S., “ABOUT ELLY” depicts the affluent, well-educated, cultured, and only marginally religious members of Iran’s upper-middle-class.

When ordinary circumstances take a tragic turn, such universal human traits as deceit, brutality and betrayal come into play. Therein lies the filmmaker’s critique of the lies and evasions that permeate Iranian society.

The program will also include filmmaker Brett Weiner’s comedic American short from the NYTimes Op-Docs, “VERBATIM: What Is a Photocopier?”

Mountain Shadow Film Society is a non-profit, member-based organization, which presents great foreign and independent films that are typically unavailable in our locale on a twice monthly. A limited number of $12 tickets are always available at the door on a first come basis, beginning at 7:00 PM.

More information about Mountain Shadow and coming attractions, with trailers, is available at http://mountainshadow.org or by contacting Mountain Shadow’s director, John Bennison at jb@mountainshadow.org.
Fundraisers

Pancake Breakfast - Supporting Veterans of foreign Wars – 2nd and 4th Sundays includes eggs, pancakes, sausage, beverage. 8 – 11 a.m. Willow Pass Road, Concord $5, $3 Children under 12. www.vfwpost125.org

August 13 Gourmet Gallop - Food and wine walk to benefit Diablo Ballet and its PEEK Youth Outreach Program. 6-9 pm. Check in at Massimo 1604 Locust St. Walnut Creek. $45. More info at diabloballet.org.

Aug 8, Paint the town Purple, Clayton. Store fronts on Main St. Clayton are to be decorated in purple to raise awareness for Relay for Life Clayton. 9-10am. Contact Nancy Salmon at fishal@pacbell.net.

Events and Entertainment

Clayton: Concerts in the Grove Saturday's 6pm to 8:30 p.m. Aug 15 - 24th Annual SUMMER CONTRA COSTA CRYSTAL FAIR August 8-9, 2015. Civic Park Community Center, Walnut Creek presented by Pacific Crystal Guild. We’re at it again! This summer, we’re bringing over 30 vendors to Walnut Creek. Find a magical mix of crystals, minerals, beads, gems, jewelry and metaphysical healing tools. Thousands of items at excellent prices, massage, aura reading, and psychic reading. Location: Civic Park Community Center 1375 Civic Drive at Broadway, Walnut Creek Hours: Saturday, August 8, 10am - 6pm; Sunday, August 9, 10am - 4pm. Admission: $8 for the weekend (12 and under free with adult). Come for a few hours or spend the whole weekend. Something for everyone!!

•DANVILLE: First Sunday of every month: Cars ‘n Coffee, On the First Sunday of every month, automotive enthusiasts gather in the parking lots of the Blackhawk Automotive Museum to share their vehicles and admire the other fabulous classics, exotics, rods and anything else with wheels and a motor. There is no fee for Cars & Coffee. Come when you want, leave when you want, but know that early arrivals do get the parking space they prefer. Also, the Museum opens at 9am on Cars & Coffee Sundays. 8am-10am, Blackhawk Museum • 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle • Danville, CA 94506 • p:925.736.2280 • f:925.736.4818 • museu@blackhawkmuseum.org, http://www.blackhawkmuseum.org/cars/coffee.html

•MARTINEZ: Friday's on the Main & Market featuring a Farmers Market 4pm - 8 pm and Cool Cars & Music 6 pm - 8 pm on the 600 & 700 blocks of Main. Free.

Pleasant Hill: Sunset by the Lake Summer Concerts: Every other Sunday 6-8pm by the lake at City Hall, 100 Gregory Lane

Downtown Plaza Concert Series - Third Thursday of the month, Downtown Plaza 6:30-8:30 pm

Walnut Creek: Summer Concert Series and Block Party Thursdays 6-8:30 p.m. 8pm. Admission fee includes admission to Botanica) Learn how to make your own crepe paper poppies! In this workshop, Botanica artist Tiffanie Turner will teach you how to create beautiful Icelandic poppies which can be displayed on their own or worked into floral crowns and garlands. Light breakfast and coffee will be provided. Space is limited - please email galleryinfo@bedfordgaller.org to RSVP (required).

Botanica: All Things Plant Life; A National Juried Exhibition through September 6, 2015. Inside the Lesher Center for the Arts at 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, (925) 295-1417 Email: galleryinfo@bedfordgaller.org Admission: General $5; Youth (17 and under) $8; Children 12 and under, free; First Tuesdays are free; Free for ticket holders to events in the Lesher Center for the Arts on ticketed date. Hours: Tuesday through Sunday, Noon – 5:00pm, and 6:00 – 8:00pm on evenings when there are theater productions in the LCA. The Gallery is closed on Mondays. Tours: To book an exhibition tour, call (925)935-1461 or email gallerytours@bedfordgaller.org Website: www.bedfordgaller.org

The Summer Contra Costa Crystal Fair; August 8-9, 2015. You will find a magical mix of crystals, minerals, beads, gems, jewelry and metaphysical healing tools. Plus you can get a massage, have your aura read, and have a great psychic reading. Over 35 vendors. Location: Civic Park Community Center, 1375 Civic Drive at Broadway. Hours: Saturday, August 8, 10am - 6pm; Sunday, August 9, 10am - 4pm. Admission: Inform: Jerry Tomilson (415) 383-7837 , jerry@crystalfair.com or visit our website www.crystalfair.com


The Man from I.M.P.R.O.V. Aug 21 Presented by Trapped in a rumor Improv 8:15P.M. LesherCenter for the Arts, 1601 CivicDr. Walnut creek $12-15 lessherartcenter.org 925-7469

Home & Garden/Farmers’ Markets

Concord Tuesdays, 10am to 2pm, year-round, rain or shine, Todos Santos Plaza. •Concord Thursdays, 4pm to 8pm, Clayton, Saturdays 10am - 2pm Martines, Sundays 10am to 2pm, year-round, Main St. and Estudillo. Pleasant Hill Saturday, May 3rd through November 13th, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Downtown Plaza (in front of Jack’s Restaurant) http://www.pcfma.org Walnut Creek - Diablo Valley Farmers Market Saturday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Shadelands Business Park, N. Wiggett Lane and Mitchell Dr. Contra Costa Certified Farmers Market Sundays 9 a.m - 1 pm, Year Round, Walnut Creek, North Locust St between Gianna and Laccasie St. (925) 431-8361 http://www.ccffm.org

Clubs

•American Association of University Women - Concord Branch www.aaauw-concord.org•American Legion Post 171 - 5 p.m. third Tuesdays, Veterans Memorial Hall, Concord. 687-1427•B.F. Business Networking Group - noon first and third Thursdays 998-8844. •Beachcomber Singles - Social and service activities for active adults age 45 and above. For more information call (510) 709-2280. Or visit our website: www. beachcombersingles.org.

•British club - 11:30 a.m. first Wednesdays, Zio Fraelo’s, Pleasant Hill. 682-7978.

•Circle of Friends - second Mondays, Walnut Country Club, Concord. 998-8844.

•Clayton Valley Garden Club - 7 p.m. second Wednesdays, February- November, Diamond Terrace, 6401 Center St., Clayton. Contact: www.claytonvalleygardenclub.org.

•Clutch Busters Square Dance Club - 7:30 p.m. -9:30 p.m. Thursdays, New dancers and those wanting brush-up are welcome. Willow Pass Community Center, 2748 E. Olivera Rd, Concord. 686-3774.

•Concord Art Association - 12:30 p.m. second Tuesdays, Concord Library, 464-5455.

•Concord Diablo Rotary - 12:15 p.m. Wednesdays, Crown Plaza Hotel, Concord. dirk@ventilenguido.com 685-7760

•Convalton Valley/Creston Sunrise Rotary Club - 7 a.m. Thursdays, Oakhurst Country Club, Clayton. 689-7640 or www.claytonvalley-rotary.org. New Meeting Place for Clayton Valley Woman’s Club –Starting August 11 Clayton Valley Woman’s Club will be meeting at St. John’s Episcopal Church, located at 5555 Clayton Road, Clayton. CVWC meets at 10a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. New members are always welcome. For more information please call Sheila at 925-672-7947. www.claytonvalleywomansclub.org

•Concord Garden Club - 9:30 a.m. third Tuesdays, Bethel Baptist Church,
ALAINA LIMBRECK
DVC football announcer

We live in an area rich in football success. De La Salle and Campolindo reign as CA State Champions in the Open and Division III respectively. Clayton Valley Charter High School season ended in a heart-breaking 2nd place finish at state in Division II. Cal and Stanford teams are well-covered with Network TV, local TV and radio, and national sports press. The Diablo Valley College Vikings football program has been somewhat overlooked, while quietly enjoying its own success.

We thought we would bring you up to speed with an exclusive interview with DVC Vikings football Head Coach, Mike Drew Anderson.

Last fall, the Diablo Valley College Vikings football team finished the season with an overtime loss against Sacramento City in the East Bay Bowl and a 7-4 overall record. Not bad for a team playing in one of the top conferences in the country. According to humbled Coach Darr, the Vikings are destined for another successful season. Vikings Head Coach Mike Darr expressed his excitement over this year’s talent. The team has been working hard during the off season. “I’m working with a group of selfless guys. These guys are looking at the overall team goals this year. They are coming to practice every day with great attitudes and focus. I felt last year’s team was more based on individual goals, Darr explained.

DVC will be losing some key players from last year including QB Adam Wood, who was 4th in yards per game. The Vikings also lost star player and UC Berkeley Cornerback commit Antoine Albert. He was a fantastic standout with recognition from 24/7 Sports as the #9th best in California in 2014. Wood will be replaced by QB Drew Anderson who is returning home from San Diego State University. Drew led Miramonte High School Matadors to NCS Championship in 2013.

Drew Anderson

Coach Mike Darr

Despite the loss of talent, the Vikings will still be rolling on with remarkable returning players, Wide Receiver, Marcus Armstrong-Brown. He had an explosive freshman year with 13 touchdowns last season for the Vikings. Also returning, Marc Anthony Hor, the leader of a Vikings defensive line featuring four players with Division-I offers.

The Vikings are also adding new local standout, De La Salle’s Drew Sullivan to their offensive line.

With these returning and new talent added to the Vikings, this season is looking very promising.

Coach Darr emphasized how important it is to develop his team not only on the field but off it. “I told the guys I do not want to be their last coach, I want them to use the skills and techniques that come with football in the classroom and in their daily lives” Darr said.

Concord. 687-2334.
• Concord Lions Club - 7 p.m. third Tuesdays, La Tapatia Mexican Restaurant, Concord. 687-3594.
• Concord Mystery Book Club - 2:30 p.m. second Sundays, Concord Library, 646-5455.
• Concord Senior Club - Ballroom dancing, 1 p.m. Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and 8 p.m. second Sundays. 2727 Parkside Circle, Concord. 708-4357.
• Contra Costa Genealogical Society - 7 p.m. second Thursdays, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 2657 Clayton Road. Contact Rayce at 683-9717 or email: Herbleder_KOP@Yahoo.com. For more information and membership dues: 925-680-8714.
• Knights Of Columbus, Concord Council 5348. Contact 925-682-7358.
• Contra Costa Numismatic Society - 7 p.m. third Thursdays, Veterans Memorial Hall, Concord. 825-0649 or xsteamerx@aol.com.
• Diablo Numismatic Society - 7 p.m. third Sundays, Clayton Library Study Room, 6125 Clayton Rd., Clayton. Arlene 673-9777, akiksen@aol.com.
• Diablo Valley Democratic Club - 7 p.m. third Wednesdays, Ygnacio Valley Library, Walnut Creek. 946-0496 or http://www.dvdem.org.
• Diablo Valley Macintosh Users Group - 6:30 p.m. third Tuesdays, Bancroft Elementary School, Walnut Creek. 689-1155 or www.dvmug.org.
• Diablo Valley Mustang Assoc meets 7:00 pm second Wednesdays each month at Fuddruckers Concord. All Mustang aficionados invited. Nancy Russell 925-825-5994. www.dvmu.org
• Diablo Valley Wings, Chapter P of the Gold Wing Touring Association - 12:15 p.m. third Tuesdays, Sizzler, Concord. 686-3774 or http://www.GWTA-CAL.org.
• East Bay Prospectors Club - 7 p.m. fourth Wednesday, 1024 Detroit Ave., Unit D, Concord. 672-1863 or www.eastbaypsa.org.
• Ellen’s Guild - 10 a.m. second Sundays, Family Stress Center, Concord. 672-5409 or www.familystresscenter.org.
• Hope Academy Concord Open House, Third Thursday of each month, 9 – 9:45 a.m. Reservations required: Judy Davies 687-7555; 5333 Concord Blvd. www.hopeacademyconcord.org.
• Kiwanis Club of Greater Concord - 8:15 a.m. Wednesdays, Buttercup Grill and Bar, 4301 Clayton Rd., Concord. 372-5348.
• Kiwanis Club of Concord - 8:15 a.m. Wednesdays, Buttercup Grill and Bar, 4301 Clayton Rd., Concord. 372-5348.
• Knights Of Columbus, Concord Council 6038 Knights of Pythias, Lodge #162 meets on the 2nd Tuesday and 4th Thursday of each month. For more information and membership call Herb Lederman at (925) 631-0229 or email: Herbleder_KOP@yahoo.com. Meet 7:30 p.m. first Tuesday of the month, St. Bonaventure Church, 5362 Clayton Road, Contact Rayce at 683-9717 or rayce@aol.com.
• Mt Diablo Metal Detecting Club and have Meets at the Elks Lodge in Walnut Creek. 1475 Creekside Dr. 730 pm www.mdmdc.com meets on the second Wednesday.

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Marc Anthony Hor


The Secret Success of Diablo Valley College Football

Drew Anderson

Coach Mike Darr

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Visiting our Website for Full Printable Calendar at www.DiabloGazette.com
In 2005, Pleasant Hill resident Debbie Smith endured the pain associated with losing her son, Matthew Carrington in a fatal fraternity hazing. In September of 2006, she worked to get “Matt’s Law” passed. The law makes hazing-related death and extreme harm a felony rather than a misdemeanor.

Since then, Smith, amidst the rest of life and work, has created and launched the AHA! Movement, which works to educate students and parents on the dangers of hazing.

Smith says they didn’t even know what hazing was, and after her son’s death, she realized that they were probably not the only ones unaware of the dangers of these initiation processes.

The goal of the AHA! Movement is to educate students and parents about hazing.

“The most important thing for us is to get into the colleges and help our young people understand what hazing is, why it’s so dangerous and help them recognize it,” Smith says.

Smith says she is currently scheduled to speak at the Pleasant Hill Rotary Club on August 20, as well as speak to the fraternity and sorority leadership at UC Berkeley on September 22.

“We’re focusing on the local area right now,” she says, “But we are willing to go wherever people will have us.”

“What’s most important to me is that we go in while they’re still young,” Smith says. “And we help them identify what it is so that when someone hears ‘hazing,’ they don’t think about the end, but they think about how it begins.” She hopes teaching them early will reduce some of the glorification of “rushing,” where new students can check out different fraternities and sororities.

A big part of what they want to do with the new organization is just open lines of communication and conversation about a topic that is usually unspoken of by the groups themselves. They are also looking to start an ambassador training program to equip students to help talk to students who have concerns with hazing. Fraternities and sororities have gotten a bad reputation for hazing, but they also have the opportunity to be great leadership building.

For more information, visit the AHA! Movement website.
One can’t be everywhere. However, photographer Micah tries. Here he shares photos of a few moments of locals having fun. And, he discovered a treasure of artistry that most of us would never see at Buddha Gate Monastery in Lafayette. Thanks Micah.

Long Train Runnin’, the Doobie Brothers Tribute band was extremely popular at Todos Santos Plaza on Music and Market Thursdays. “Excellent band … I’ve never seen the crowd more active.” Micah stumbled upon a Cornhole event at Pleasant Hill Park. Are you a Cornholer?

In Lafayette, The waitress at Millie’s Kitchen suggested he check out the Buddha Gate Monastery nearby. That wasn’t his plan for the day, but he was curious. He was amazed at the beautiful art, statuary, and gardens there, some of which he shared with us. For more photos visit their website, http://buddhagate.org.

One can’t leave a Buddha Monastery without some words of wisdom. “Be mindful of each moment. Do not dwell in the past, present or future. The past is past, to linger on it is pointless. The future has yet to come, to speculate on it is wishful thinking. To worry about the present is to be trapped in fleeting, inconsequential thoughts.”
Several years ago, my neighbors and I had a community garage sale. I set a table in my driveway and put “treasures” out for sale. My 15 year old son, Mike, asked if he could add his old student desk and keep the money for himself. I told him that I thought the desk was not in good shape and that he wouldn’t get much for it, but, he was welcome to try to sell it.

He put a $25.00 sign on it and sat back to ward off the many buyers he was sure were out there. Several hours into the sale, a young lad and his mom came by and looked at the desk. After a discussion with his mother, the boy offered Mike $15.00. Mike said “no” and turned away. The pair left. I told my son that he should have taken the offer, as the desk was not worth much more than that. Mike said that he was sure they would be back, as the kid really wanted the desk. Mike removed the $25 sign, and sat back. Sure enough the pair returned. The boy told my son he would give him $17.00. Mike said he was sorry, but the price was $35.00, take it or leave it. At this point the mother became very angry and ran up to Mike and said that he had asked $25 when they first came. My son apologized and said that he had made a mistake when he said $35.00, and that they could have the desk for $25. The mother smugly peeled off the $25 and they carried the desk away.

I should have seen the writing on the wall as to Mike’s future vocation. He became a lawyer and could convince anyone to always see things his way.
Easy DIY Succulent Planters: Twisted Rope Wrapped Cans

With a drought turning our lawns brown & brittle, it’s the perfect time to make some beautiful outdoor decor that is perfect for front door, porch or backyard. All you need are succulents & some not so obvious items.

**Items Needed:**
- package of Twisted Manila Rope (1/4" x 50’)
- 1 Empty Coffee Can & 3 Empty Tuna Cans
- Potting Soil
- Glue Gun & Glue Sticks
- A variety of Small & Medium Size Succulents

Succulents have recently become all the rage on Pinterest, Hometalk and many other home improvement sites. They are drought friendly, come in many varieties and sizes, and are very affordable. They are also easy to maintain.

We used the store brand rope from our local Ace Hardware store. LOVE the tones in the twisted rope. It is a rustic chic that looks straight out of Pottery Barn or Restoration Hardware. Upcycling cans that would have gone into the recycle bin ... good for our environment and our wallets. We like free! Our total cost for three small and one larger plant container and the succulents is under $20.

**Directions:** With a little patience and lots of glue sticks, all you need to do is wrap and glue, wrap some more and continue to glue around and around until the can is completely covered.

To start and finish, each end of rope should be cut on an extreme angle and glue along the rope line closest. This will keep the line as smooth and tight as possible. Be generous with the glue without letting it show or seep through the edges of the rope.

Put slight pressure on the rope when you press and hold for a few seconds while the glue settles and dries. Your pattern starts to blossom as you go around the can. Keep the rope pushed as close to the glued layer before it. It will create a tight and beautiful rope pattern without showing any can. Be generous with the glue without letting it show or seep through the edges of the rope. We prefer putting the glue directly on the can but do be careful because the can will get hot in the spot behind the glue.

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Carol & Randi, aka The FruGirls, are all about living the most frug-elegant life. FrugElegance is where frugal & elegance come together. “We love to create an elegant look for a lot less!” Visit our blog at www.FrugElegance.com.

Our home staging & decorating business is FrugElegance by Design.
There are literally hundreds of fig varieties, but only about a half dozen are grown commercially in California. During a normal year, the season for the first crop of fresh Mission figs grown in the San Joaquin Valley begins in early to mid-June and lasts approximately two weeks. The second crop of Mission figs, as well as other varieties including Calimyrna and Kadota figs are available mid-July. Brown Turkey figs may be available as early as late-May through December.

Calimyrna: These are large pale yellow-skinned fig with a nutty, sweet flavor. This fig may be eaten fresh or cooked as an ingredient in chutney or preserves.

Black Mission: This purple to black-skinned fig with pink flesh are delicious either fresh or cooked in your favorite fig recipe.

Kadota: The Kadota fig, the American version of the original Italian Dottato, is thick-skinned and possesses a beautiful creamy amber color when ripe. Practically seedless, this fig is a favorite for canning and preserving.

Buying and Storing Fresh Figs
Fresh figs are very perishable and should be kept refrigerated. The skin of figs is fragile, and often scars during the growing period from the leaves rubbing against the fruit. These marks do not hurt the flesh inside at all. Recommended storage temperature is 32-36°F. Use figs as soon as possible. Under ideal conditions, fresh figs will store for up to five to seven days, or frozen in a sealed bag for up to six months.

From the recipe book:
Grilled Figs with Goat Cheese & Prosciutto

Ingredients:
- 24 fresh figs, mixed varieties
- 1/4 pound thinly sliced prosciutto
- 6 long woody sprigs rosemary
- Olive oil for brushing and drizzling.

Directions:
- Combine goat cheese, rosemary, and a pinch of salt and pepper in a small mixing bowl, and stir. Make a small slit in bottom or side of each fig. Fill a pastry bag fitted with a small plain tip with cheese mixture. Pipe cheese into each fig through slit. Fill figs with just enough cheese so they expand slightly. Tear or cut the prosciutto slices into long strips.
- Wrap a strip of prosciutto around each fig, and skewer 4 figs on each rosemary sprig. Brush figs with olive oil, and season with salt and pepper. Place figs on a moderately hot grill, rotating skewers until figs are very hot and cheese starts to ooze, about 6 minutes. Remove from grill; serve immediately with olive oil and bread.

Coming to the Rescue
Contra Costa County Humane Society Hosts Annual Dinner and Auction Fundraiser

In an effort to keep up with the times, Contra Costa County Humane Society’s annual gala dinner/auction, Noah’s Ark- tion, has been renamed Coming to the Rescue and is set to be an even grander event this year.

The evening will include an elegant buffet dinner with cuisine from Diamond Cut Catering and a large selection of silent auction items including tickets to restaurants, fun items for dinner guests and their pets and entertainment tickets. Live auction items will include fun vacation packages and top of the line sports equipment. There will also be an opportunity to win an extraordinary wine and chocolate package featuring more than two dozen fine wines and chocolate treats.

Fine wines, ales and lagers from some of the best vintners and brewers in the Bay Area including the Lagunitas Brewing Company will be available and live rhythm, blues and jazz music will be provided by the popular Bay Area combo The Lost Cats.

Proceeds from Coming to the Rescue support CCHS programs and services including CCHS’s Kitty Corner free roaming cat shelter, AniMeals providing pet food and supplies for families unable to afford feeding their companion animals, a subsidized spay/neuter assistance service and CCHS’s dog and cat foster programs.

Coming to the Rescue will be held on Friday, August 21 at the Perera Pavilion in the Pleasant Hill Community Center, 320 Civic Dr., Pleasant Hill. From 6:00 – 8:30 pm. Tickets, $50/ per person, may be purchased online at www.ComingtotheRescue.eventbrite.com.

For information about tickets, sponsorship and donation opportunities please contact Leanne Lorono at (925) 259-2247. Ext. 306
Appreciating Architecture as Art

There are so many forms of art to see everywhere in the world and we are lucky that the Bay Area has the best of practically everything. This month, the American Institute of Architects or AIA, brings back their popular home tours on August 8th. The tour, which is mostly self-guided, features six houses showcasing superior architectural design and the importance of architecture on the way we live here in the Bay with our changing environmental issues.

The houses on tour are located in Oakland, Piedmont and Berkeley and feature designs by AAA Architect with Benjamin Parco, Anderson Anderson Architecture, Andrew Lee Architect, Kuth Ranieri Architects, Lavenson Design and Studio Bergtraun AIA Architects.

One of the Berkeley houses, “Courtyard Retreat”, or “The Phoenix” as AAA Architecture calls it, is a new creation built on the footprint of the original house. It has the flavor of the 1932 house designed by Henry Hill, who built it for owners who were patrons of the arts and had a large and wide art collection; much from local craftspeople. The new design wraps the house around a central courtyard combining the ideas of the mid 20th century with modern concepts and future environmental concerns. The house was rebuilt after a terrible fire destroyed the original home.

Another one of the houses, located in Piedmont, is the Artist Remodel. The original house was built in 1948 and was remodeled in 2014 by Kurt Lavenson. This house looks like a one story from the outside, but was creatively transformed into a three story home taking it from traditional to modern. The interior rooms were merged and the lower living space also functions as a gallery and studio for the owner’s wife who is an artist.

“Canyon Repose”, located in Berkeley at the base of Claremont Canyon, was built in 1937 and remodeled in 2014 by Kuth Ranieri Architects. The house was redesigned so that each room tells a story and holds a unique connection with the landscape. The wife has a background in landscape architecture so the importance of outdoor living space and choice of plants and the intertwining of inside rooms to outside landscape was an important element in the re-creation of the home.

Each house in the AIA home tour is unique in concept and design and showcases the best in East Bay architecture. Taking part in the tours is a fun and fascinating way to spend an afternoon, learning about residential designs and the architects who created them. If you are considering a remodel to your own home, you may want to see what each of these architects is capable of doing or see their style.

The tours run August 8th from 10:00-4:30 and tickets are $50 in advance and $60 at the door. To find out more about the AIA or the home tour, you can call the AIA at (510) 464-3600, or visit their website at aiaeb.org.
Microsoft has released Windows 10 and it’s a big hit. Users are embracing the new operating system in droves, as well they should. This new operating system is proving to be the best of breed with new enhancements and superior performance, even on old computers. One doesn’t need a new computer to enjoy the benefits of Windows 10. While manufactures of CPUs like Intel don’t get to sell a new CPU (central processing unit = brain) the good news is users benefit. I have been testing Windows 10 on all sorts of computers and find that one of the benefits is your old computer runs better than it did when it was new.

Of course there are some restrictions and a condition to just how old, old is. But, if you have a computer running Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7, and Windows 8.x, your box is likely to be fine. A few checks to be sure. You need a minimum of 4GB RAM (memory), about 50GB of hard drive space, and a good connection to the Internet. Really, that’s about it.

No need to spend a pile of money on a new computer, unless you want to. The Windows 10 upgrade is free to existing licensed users of Windows 7 and 8.x. All others need to purchase a new license that costs around $150.00. Not bad considering the alternatives. If you need more RAM or hard drive space that is the easy part and not too expensive either. The upgrade is quite smooth compared to any other upgrade you have ever encountered. Microsoft took the time and worked at great lengths to make the process as smooth as possible. Nearly all existing programs (apps) will work and perform better under this upgrade. Most settings will be preserved as well. Some exceptions still remain, however. Windows XP users that want to upgrade, we suggest you use a professional; otherwise programs and data found on your computer hard drive might be lost. The whole process includes wiping your drive clean and starting over. If you no longer have your program’s media (CD) and license keys your computer tech should be able to recover them and reinstall your application.

When you have Windows 10 installed take the time to get friendly with Microsoft Edge. Edge is the new Internet browser like Internet Explorer was. Edge, however, is much easier to use, a great deal faster and more secure than any other competitor including Chrome and Firefox. For the game and engineering crowd you are going to love Hololens. Oh man, the future is finally here. But wait, there’s more...

See their ad below.

**Windows 10 Brings Benefits to New and Old Users**

**MISTY BRUNS**
Clayton museum docent

The property known as the Keller Ranch is thought to have been the principal village site of the Chupcan or Volvon people who occupied the areas around Mt. Diablo dating back three to four thousand years. The land currently owned by the Keller house may have been a part of Rancho Del Diablo, a Mexican land grant. It was subsequently owned by Joel Clayton. Vincent Liberty was a rancher and operated a “road house” on the Fairfax-Bolinas road. Vincent Liberty left his wife in Marin County in 1894. His 24 year old daughter, Elodia, chose to live with him and his son remained in Marin County with his wife, Mary Jane Liberty. Liberty leased the ranch on the Clayton property and he and Elodia lived in the house that is now the Clayton Museum.

In 1897, Elodia married Charles Henry “Harry” Keller, a man whom she had met in the course of his making deliveries from his butcher shop in Concord. The Kellers built a house on Galindo Street in Concord to and lived there. (It is now a Concord historical house.) Charles Henry was eight years Elodia’s junior. The 1900 census shows 63 year old Vincent Liberty living on a rented farm on the Clayton estate, his occupation “farmer”. His marital status was “married”. Living with him were two servants, Julia Holdway, age 40 and Henry Frank. At the time of Liberty’s death in 1923 he was married to Julia Holsway, Mary Jane having died in 1919. Harry and Elodia Keller purchased the property in 1910 from the Estate of Joel Clayton. Voter registration records show that his occupation changed from “butcher” to “rancher” between 1910 and 1912. It is said that the Kellers camped under a huge oak tree on the site while the house was being built.

The Keller house, named Casa del Sierra, “has been locally identified as a rare surviving building of this period and a fine example of custom home building of the early twentieth century.” It is of the Mission Style with Craftsman elements. Magnificent gardens and a fish pond surrounded the home, tended by Elodia. The property had large barns and cattle yards.

Harry Keller operated the ranch until his death at the end of 1940. From 1940 until her death in 1954 Elodia Liberty Keller retained a life estate of the property but it was leased to Bob Flackus. From the early 1960s until 1972, trustees of the Keller estate leased the property to Manuel DeJesus who continued ranch operations.

In 1972 the property was sold to Pacific Coast Construction Company. An economic downturn and resistance from the Native Americans prevented its development. Seeno Construction Company bought the property in 1978. Wanting higher development standards and more protection of natural terrain, the voters rejected Seeno’s proposal in 1983. In 1987 Prestley Homes bought it. In 1991, the City of Clayton acquired a small parcel holding the Keller house and the property on which the Clayton Library sits. The State Historical Resources Commission determined the Keller house to be of significant value in 2001 and voted to list it on the California Register of Historical Resources.

**A Walk Through Time: The Keller Ranch—105 Years Ago**

**WILLIAM CLANEY**
Computers USA

**Photos and information courtesy of Clayton Museum**
Review: Rolling in the Deep by Mira Grant

If there is one kind of monster story I enjoy more than any other, it is one with a good sea monster in it. Rolling in the Deep, a recent novella from Mira Grant, has some excellent, and scary, sea monsters in it.

Published in early 2015, as a limited edition hardcover, but now available in convenient ebook formats, Rolling in the Deep is the terrifying story of the Atargatis and how it came to lose all hands at sea.

Accompanying them are some professional mermaids, so an occasional glimpse or two of something unnatural swimming about in the open ocean is certain to be captured on film.

What no one expected them to discover was that mermaids are quite real. They also learn that mermaids captured on film swimming about in the open ocean is certain to be an occasional glimpse or two of something unnatural searching for real life mermaids.

There they will create a documentary about the scientists out to the most isolated section of the Marinas Trench. Atargatis and sends a group of scientists, with film crew, huge financial success.

Creature feature programming that helped make it such a Channel) wants to both capitalize on and diversify the how it came to lose all hands at sea. In actuality, the writing paper Southpaw possesses fantastic same could be said of this project. On

Southpaw gets so much right about the main reason to see Southpaw. Great pugilists are often referred to as brutal knock-out machine Billy Hope (Jake Gyllenhaal) is an undefeated light-heavyweight champion. Hope sports a 43-0 record and delights in absorbing as much punishment as he dishes out. As the film opens, we witness a particularly damaging fight that Billy wins by a come from behind KO late in the bout. Sitting rings-side is Maureen Hope (McAdams), who acts as manager and lover to her husband. She is concerned for Billy's mental well-being after he displays a few troubling signs of early on-set dementia. Maureen urges him to quit the sport, while they are financially sound and he's woreiness force the courts to appoint his daughter to foster care. Broke, grieving, and estranged from his daughter, Hope's only hope to survive is by re-learning his approach to life and fighting.

Of course, this being a boxing movie everything culminates in a big fight to settle all wrongs. Inexplicably, Hope and Torres are matched up, presumably to add closure on Billy's raw nerve. However, the killer is never brought to justice and a secondary character is so sketchily written he's basically used as a plot device and not a human.

Southpaw gets so much right about fighter's mentalities and the sport in general that it's tempting to recommend the film. However, the sub par writing steals from so many other genre pictures that this story never feels fresh or independent of those that have come before. A four-star performance from Gyllenhaal is trapped in a two-star movie.

Stars: Jake Gyllenhaal, Forest Whitaker, Rachel McAdams

Director: Antoine Fuqua


Read more of Chad’s book reviews at http://bit.ly/McHguP

Review: Southpaw

Jake Gyllenhaal's continued emergence as one of today's finest actors is the main reason to see Southpaw. Great pugilists are often referred to as having all the tangible qualities, the same could be said of this project. On paper Southpaw possesses fantastic Oscar potential. In actuality, the writing is on the level of a second-tier TV movie and the pacing is slack and rushed in alternating rhythms. Yet, the lead performance by Jake Gyllenhaal and fine turns in supporting roles from Rachel McAdams, Forrest Whitaker, and Oona Laurence are marvels that nearly elevate the mediocre flick to contender level.

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Then Hope's world is thrown into turmoil. His wife is killed in a bizarre incident involving a fellow boxer, Miguel Torres and his posse. This loss is harder to cope with than any defeat in the ring. Billy's unstable behavior and mental weariness force the courts to appoint his daughter to foster care. Broke, grieving, and estranged from his daughter, Hope's


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College and Your Child’s Dental Health

DR. ROBERT WALDMAN

To me as a professional, I think of the month of September and what it represents and I am reminded that over the years I have noted a significant drop off of annual dental check-ups in students during their college years. As explained to me by many parents, they just don’t feel comfortable making an advanced appointment for their college student before they come home from college because they don’t know their child’s summer schedule. Before they know it, they are packing their kids up again and shipping them back to school and their child never made it to their dentist.

Now, I can speculate that parents are trying to teach their young adult children to take on the responsibility for themselves, for others it maybe a financial issue; if the family doesn’t have dental insurance, yet many families have dental benefits and neglect to use them. I don’t have the exact answer as to why college students don’t take advantage of their scheduled breaks to get routine dental check-ups and cleanings. I do know that as these students graduate and go off on their own and they discontinue the good habits their parents have taught, habits which prevent dental problems. So here are a few suggestions:

1. Take control and make an appointment for your student. You know what he or she thinks will work out best and schedule an advanced appointment so your child can put it on their calendar.
2. Ask your dentist to call or text your student directly on their cell phone to schedule an appointment with your child. Hopefully your dentist won’t get a message that says “Mailbox full”.
3. If necessary, arrange for dental care in the city where they are going to school. We dentists look forward to seeing your college students this summer, not only to give them their dental check-up and cleaning but also to “catch-up” with them about their college experiences!

Always remember to swish, floss, brush and swish again at least twice a day. We dentists encourage college kids to pack a toothbrush, dental floss, mouthwash, toothpaste, and a mirror in their college backpack. We recommend using a pea-sized amount of toothpaste twice a day. Swish with mouthwash, but don’t swish for more than 30 seconds, or you could wash away the fluoride in the toothpaste.

See his ad to the left.

10 Bad Advice Ideas from Rock and Roll

by Trapped in a Rumor Improv

Trapped in a Rumor Improv’s talented cast specializes in professional improvisational comedy. TIR performs short form improv in the style of Viola Spolin... and Whose Line Is It Anyway. That means everything is completely made up on the spot with no cues, no prior planning, and no interruptions. With every show being unscripted, audiences will never see the same show twice!

As we were brainstorming for this article, we realized – the number one rule of Improv is to just go with it. But we don’t recommend one can do that with Rock and Roll music lyrics. — Our favorite rockers have given us bad advice.

• School is not out forever. Alice Cooper. Clearly a misunderstanding, but, to an 8-year old, that famous line sounded like a dream come true! Imagine his devastation when our little guy realized he did have to enter 3rd grade.
• Love is not all you need. The Beatles. You need love, money, food, and a good-paying job doesn’t hurt either. Not to mention, it helps when looking for love.
• (Tied): You need an education. Pink Floyd. Remember our love discussion? Want a good-paying job? You’re going to need training or education. And, darn it, you can eat your pudding before your meat – just don’t tell your parents.
• Big girls do cry. The Four Seasons. After midnight, letting it all hang out isn’t a good idea. JJ Cale. Not a lie, but really bad advice. Mama always said nothing good happens between midnight and 2 am. If we listened to her instead of JJ, we’d be better off.
• Doves do not sound like rock songs when they cry. Prince. Ok, it turns out doves do cry, or at least have tear ducts and elicit tears, but have you ever heard doves do cry, or at least have tear ducts and elicit tears, but have you ever heard one crying? Does it sound like Prince’s song? I think not.
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• There is no stairway to heaven. Led Zeppelin. A bummer, but true. No shortcut. No stairway. We’ve looked. We know.
• California hotels insist you leave. The Eagles. Californians know the Eagles got it wrong – but everyone else? We’re not all blond; we don’t all surf; and you must check out and leave.
• Girls don’t just wanna have fun. Cyndi Lauper. Some want rings on it. And 2 am. If we listened to her instead of JJ, we’d be better off.
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The city of Walnut Creek finds itself in a new era of development, construction and revitalization. Developments throughout the city have local residents excited and anticipating what is to come.

According to the Orchards at Walnut Creek website, their 25-acre site located on the intersection of Ygnacio Valley Road and Oak Grove Road will play a key role in reinvigorating the local Shadelands business park as well as usher in several new retail stores, restaurants, a health club and up to 200 units of senior housing. In addition, it will feature a 55,000-square-foot Safeway set to open in the fall of 2015.

Despite offering local residents several shopping and business amenities, the complex will also offer the general public a new multi-use pathway, four acres of open space with a splash pad for kids, an amphitheater, a community room, public art and significant right-of-way improvements to manage the congestion of traffic in the area.

On the other side of the city, downtown Walnut Creek has been undergoing equally drastic transformations while seeing millions of dollars in investments being poured into various housing and commercial developments throughout the local area.

Proposed, in progress, and completed residential complexes for the surrounding downtown Walnut Creek area include the Ascent Apartments, the BRIO Apartment Community, The Arroyos, The Landing, The Village, Arboleda (Third Avenue) Apartments and the WC Bart Transit Village.

Concord resident Jacob Jenner noted several benefits of the new influx of investment in Walnut Creek.

“All of the construction and developments in Walnut Creek will undoubtedly boost local property values and draw an immersion of wealthy new residents to the area,” he said. “Even with the dramatic changes in landscape and environment, I feel the culture and community will remain unchanged and just as strong as ever.”

Developments are expected to expand into the West Downtown region between Highway 680 and California boulevard, and developers have categorized the changes into five districts: Trinity, Mt. Diablo boulevard, Lacassie, Olympic boulevard and BART.

A site many shoppers in downtown Walnut Creek may have noticed under construction in recent years is the Broadway Plaza shopping center and parking garage.

Construction worker Alex Vera explained “Macy’s is being expanded, and it will be completed hopefully by Black Friday or in the next year and we are completing the new parking structures to sustain the amount of visitors to the new sites.”

Construction worker Arturo Maya noted the massive scale of the project.

“I’ve only been here for a few months but I can see that it is an immense project and won’t disappoint when it is completed.”

The project is being supervised and developed by contractors Rudolph and Sletten and numerous subcontractors. The entire remodeling process is estimated to cost $250 million with 300,000 new square feet, and a new 600 space parking garage.

ветка приведенное изображение: Construction crews demolish houses near BART in downtown Walnut Creek on July 21, 2015. (Shane Louis)

Drought Tolerant Real Estate Landscape

JENNIFER STAJONOVICH
Better Homes Realty

Recently I’ve had questions from several clients in regard to their landscape and the drought. Several of my clients have let their lawns and other shrubs/ornamentals go due to mandatory water restrictions. Now they are ready to sell their home but don’t know the best route to take in regards to enhancing their homes curb appeal.

On the other hand, buyers I’ve been working with are looking for properties with drought tolerant landscape. If the property they are considering does not have this type of landscaping, buyers are calculating the cost of changing the landscape before making an offer.

If you are planning to sell your home, it may be a good idea to change your landscape to something that is drought tolerant but enhances your homes curb appeal before going on the market. A professional landscaper or local gardening shop can offer assistance in choosing the right plants to conserve water. They can also help to install a drip-irrigation system that reduces waste as compared to sprinklers. Consider replacing lawn with a heavier ground cover to reduce water consumption and protect from erosion. The Contra Costa Water District has some great information on landscape and maintenance tips. www.ccwater.com/350/Water-Conservation-Tips There are also other resources on the internet that can also be helpful.

Call our office for a consultation so we can help with any changes that may need to be made to your landscape before selling your home.

See her ad to the left.
Maximize Your Cruise Experience and Feel Like a Celebrity

It’s a fact. There is no such thing as too many ways to perk up the perfect vacation.

When it comes to cruising, service is everything, so perk up. Celebrity Cruises have introduced a program to perfect your cruise vacation with options for those looking for a more complete all-inclusive experience. Allison Conrad and Randi Lundy of Cruise Adventures Unlimited recommend vacationers to take advantage of the program.

“It gives cruisers more of an all-inclusive experience, with less out of pocket expenses while you are vacationing,” advises Allison Conrad.

Here’s how that program works. To Go Big, it’s automatic. Your first perk is already included. Just pick your preference and go.

If you want to go a step better, perk up and pick two to add to your onboard experience. If you really want to feel like a celebrity, and why not, you’re almost there anyway, just get them all. Even an upgrade from a classic beverage package to a Premium Beverage package will make a noticeable difference to your experience.

“Clients can now customize their amenities. They can pick one or more that they need to enhance and meet their overall cruise experience expectations,” according to Randi Lundy.

Classic level members and above get 50 percent off the deposit at booking. Celebrity Cruises is offering this program on more than 470 sailings from October 2015 to April 2017. This program is revenue and capacity controlled and subject to Celebrity rules and regulations.

Speak to a Cruise Expert at Cruise Adventures Unlimited to create your own perfectly perked-up vacation. See ad below for more details.