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# MARTINEZ NEWS-GAZETTE

Volume CLXII Issue XXXVII

Sunday, January 12, 2020

50 ¢ TAX included

## What's in a name?

### Martinez baseball team seeks suitable nickname

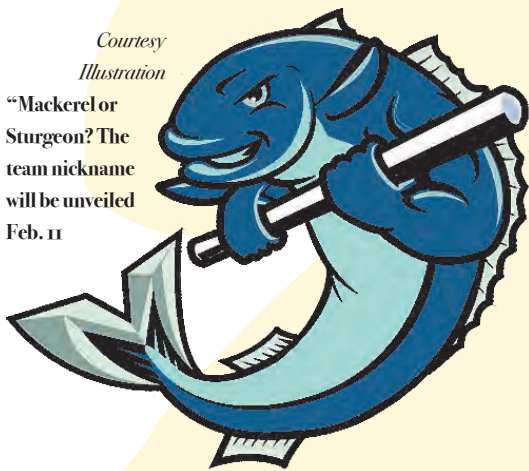
RICK JONES | EDITOR

**B**aseball will be back in Martinez for 2020, that was decided last month when the Martinez City Council unanimously approved a licensing agreement to field a new baseball team in the multi-state Pecos League.

What is still unknown is the team's name. Pecos League owner and founder Andrew Dunn chris-

*Courtesy  
Illustration*

"Mackerel or  
Sturgeon? The  
team nickname  
will be unveiled  
Feb. 11



*We are coastal people and the fish thing made sense. Right now, it's down to Beavers, Mackerel, Martini's, Pipeliners, Sturgeon, and Tugboats."*



*Courtesy Illustration*

Local artist Ken Mitchrone submitted his choice complete with a Beavers logo.



tened the Martinez franchise the Mackerel, but ever since the nickname has come under scrutiny.

The 12-team league will have six teams in California, many with aquatic-linked names. Included are Pittsburg Anchors, Monterey Amberjacks, Santa Cruz Seaweed, Wasco Reserve and Bakersfield Train Robbers.

Dunn is open to changing the name and wants to make sure there is input from a lot of people.

"We are coastal people and the fish thing made sense," Dunn said. "Right now, it's down to Beavers, Mackerel, Martini's, Pipeliners, Sturgeon, and Tugboats.

On the team's Facebook page commenters were split. Some suggested the team keep the name Mackerels. The top alternates were Beavers and Sturgeon.

"The ultimate decision has got to be me, but there will be a lot of people listened to. The city manager's recommendation was great, he said the

See **BASEBALL** on page A6

## Inside this Edition



### OPINION

I am delighted to be writing an article for the recently revived Martinez Gazette...

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The most dangerous mushrooms commonly found in the Bay Area are the Death Cap and...

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Weather: 56.41°



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## BRIEFS

**Two people arrested in computer theft death in California**

Oakland, Ca. - Police arrested two people suspected in the theft of a laptop computer from a customer at an Oakland Starbucks who witnesses said died after being injured while chasing the thieves.

A co-worker and friend told KGO-TV the man worked in the tech industry and frequently went to the Starbucks to work on his laptop.

The man, believed to be in his 20s or 30s, was not identified by police. The suspects also were not immediately identified and specific charges were not disclosed.

Authorities said the customer died January 1, 2020 after being taken by ambulance to a hospital.

The man was supposed to meet friends later that day to celebrate his birthday and New Year's Eve.

The man who took the laptop ran to a waiting vehicle that witnesses said drove off as the customer grabbed a door handle, causing him to slam his head into a parked car. Authorities did not immediately confirm the witness accounts.

"He was bleeding only from the head. His face was purple and blue," said Maria Chan, a florist shop owner across the street.

AP News

# Board of Supervisors Installs New Leadership

Voting in Candace Andersen as Chair and as Vice Chair Diane Burgis

CNS | CONTRIBUTED

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors held a swearing-in ceremony for Supervisor Candace Andersen as Board Chair and Supervisor Diane Burgis as Vice Chair at its January 7th, 2020 Board meeting.

District 2 Supervisor Candace Andersen who has served Contra Costa County since she was first elected in 2012, including a previous term as Board Chair in 2016, takes the leadership role from outgoing Chair, Supervisor John Gioia of District 1.

Supervisor Andersen expressed her thanks to Supervisor Gioia as well as her readiness to tackle our County's issues. "I appreciate Supervisor Gioia's leadership in maintaining our County's strong fiscal position and ensuring that many who need County services receive them in a timely manner. As Chair, I intend to work with my colleagues to strengthen the County's commitment to supporting our law enforce-



Courtesy Photo

Voting in Candace Andersen as Chair and as Vice Chair Diane Burgis.

ment to keep our communities safe, expand our work addressing homelessness and the need for more housing, and do even more to help individuals, families and communities confronting mental health issues," said Supervisor Andersen.

District 3 Supervisor Diane Burgis will serve as Vice Chair in 2020. She has served on the County's Board of Supervisors since 2017, representing the largest geographic region of the five districts.

Supervisor Andersen is com-

pleting her second term, and Supervisor Burgis is serving her first term. They will lead the five-member elected body that sets the direction of county government and oversees its \$4.43 billion budget to serve this large and diverse East Bay County.

For more information about Contra Costa County and its Board of Supervisors, visit the County's website at [www.contracosta.ca.gov](http://www.contracosta.ca.gov) or the webpage: <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/193/Board-of-Supervisors>.

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# New Head of Water Emergency Transportation Authority Plans Ferry Expansion

KPIX5 | CONTRIBUTED

A new director has been appointed to oversee the agency that operates the Bay Area's ferry system and he has an ambitious vision to restore the ferries to their former glory.

Every day, hundreds of thousands of people drive into San Francisco to work. And even though it sits right on a bay, there are only 17 ferry boats serving the entire city. If that sounds crazy to you, you may be surprised to learn the situation was no accident.

In the 1920s and 1930s people in the North- and East Bay took ferry boats into San Francisco to work.

After the the construction of the Golden Gate and Bay bridges, the government shut down the ferry system so people would have to use — and pay for — the spans. According to Jim Wunderman, CEO of the Bay Area Council, it wasn't until the 1980s that the ferries began making a comeback.

"Before the bridges were built, there were 50 million trips a year on San Francisco Bay — ferry

trips. Today, we're now back to three million," he said.

Wunderman has been appointed by Gov. Newsom to head up the Water Emergency Transportation Authority or WETA, the regional agency supervising ferry service on the bay.

The boats would be a means to move people if a major earthquake should ever wipe out ground transportation.

But Wunderman's vision goes far beyond that. He intends to quadruple the fleet and increase daily commute ridership from the current 7,500 passengers a day to almost 40,000 and he would like to open ferry terminals in cities up and down the bay.

"From Hercules to Martinez to points south of Redwood City, we have a large working population that commutes north and south," he said.

Although funding is always a challenge, Wunderman says that, while other transit systems have their critics, those who use the bay as their highway tend to love it.

See FERRY on page A6

## ANNOUNCEMENT

# Martinez News-Gazette Continues!

PCM Publishing LLC, owner of The Hemet & San Jacinto Chronicle along with Rick Jones, editor of the Martinez News-Gazette for the past six years announce the continuation of the Martinez News-Gazette.

In the upcoming weeks look for a new, full-color edition of the Gazette to be published weekly. We will continue to provide the best hyper-local news coverage in Martinez.

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## GAME SCHEDULE

## Sunday, January 12, 2020

- College Park Skyhawk vs Raptors 905 @ 2 pm
- Washington Wizards vs Utah Jazz @ 3:30 pm
- New York Knicks vs Miami Heat @ 3:30 pm
- Memphis Grizzlies vs Golden State Warriors @ 5 pm
- Toronto Raptors vs San Antonio Spurs @ 6 pm
- Brooklyn Nets vs Atlanta Hawks @ 6 pm
- Phoenix Suns vs Charlotte Hornets @ 6 pm
- Denver Nuggets vs LA Clippers @ 6 pm

## Monday, January 13, 2020

- Indiana Pacers vs Philadelphia 76ers @ 7 pm
- Detroit Pistons vs New Orleans Pelicans @ 7 pm
- Boston Celtics vs Chicago Bulls @ 7:30 pm
- Minnesota Timberwolves vs Oklahoma City Thunder @ 7 pm
- Memphis Hustle vs Santa Cruz Warriors @ 7 pm
- College Football Playoff National Championship Game @ 7 pm
- Salt Lake City Stars @ 7 pm
- Sacramento Kings vs Orlando Magic @ 7 pm
- Portland Trail Blazers vs Charlotte Hornets @ 7 pm
- Los Angeles Lakers vs Cleveland Cavaliers @ 7:30 pm

## Tuesday, January 14, 2020

- Atlanta Hawks vs Phoenix Suns @ 7:30 pm
- Brooklyn Nets vs Utah Jazz @ 7:30 pm
- Memphis Grizzlies vs Houston Rockets @ 7 pm

# Anonymous gift gives AHS marching band a new look

RICK JONES | EDITOR

Sarah Stafford, Director of Music at Alhambra High School, knew she had a challenge. Raising over \$30,000 is not easy goal. Her marching band's uniforms, meant to last ten years were over 12 years old, bought when most of her students were in kindergarten, needed to be replaced.

"When I began the fundraising a friend contacted me and saw what we were doing," Stafford said. "She wanted to help out in some way, wanted to help the kids. She's been following me and the program on social media. And she asked me how much we still needed to raise and at that time we had \$6,000 in donations."

At that point the fundraising was in its early stages. "We hadn't really ramped up and made a push with businesses yet," Stafford said. "She (my friend) said 'let me get back to you, I am going to talk to some folks'."

"Later that afternoon she called and asked to come see me at the school. When she came by, she gave me a letter and two checks totaling \$24,000."

Stafford's jaw hit the ground and she was overcome with emotions.

"She told me 'this is not about me, we just want to take this off your plate off, so you don't have to worry about it,'" Stafford said. "She told me 'I want you to be able to dream big and think about some other



*It's the kind of thing that makes Martinez great"*

**SARAH STAFFORD**

ALHAMBRA HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC DIRECTOR



*Courtesy Photo*

**The Bulldog mascot models the new marching band uniforms.**

things you need to work on for the department'.

Stafford is a resident of Martinez and says this is what makes her hometown special.

"It's the kind of thing that makes Martinez great. (The gift) was so humbling and overwhelming, completely amazing. I was just crying and felt so much gratitude."

Stafford said the old uniforms now being worn are classic and traditional.

"I love the old ones but are new ones very updated and new," Stafford said. "Very forward thinking. We are switching to two pieces instead of

three and the new uniforms are machine washable instead of dry cleaning.

"The new uniforms are moisture wicking and lightweight. Much lighter than the old ones. We march during a hot time of the year, so these will be better physically. No buttons at all, don't have to sew those on any longer. And the new pants won't even need to be hemmed, there are snaps at the bottom."

The group is hoping to get fitted and send the order to the manufacturer next week. Alhambra could have the shiny new outfits by early March.

Stafford has been working in the Alhambra music department for the last 15 years, but this is her first year as full-time instrumental and vocal teacher.



Stafford said checking off this big purchase will allow the department to look at other needs.

"We can now dream bigger, we can get color guard uniforms," Stafford said. "They've had to purchase their own uniforms in the past. I can see what my choir needs, we can tune our pianos, what does our jazz band need. It really frees us up."

"They (anonymous donor) are just a great family, they love this town, too. And they love what these kids are doing."



# Lady Bulldogs off to hot start on the court

 <b>ALHAMBRA BULLDOGS</b> <b>2019 GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL</b>				
Date		VS	Opponent	Time
Wed	November 27	VS	 Alhambra	5:30 pm
Wed	November 27	VS	 Alhambra	7:00 pm
Tue	December 10	@	NV Napa	7:00 pm
Wed	December 11	VS	NV Vintage	7:00 pm
Thu	December 12	@	HV Hercules	7:00 pm
Sat	December 14	@	CA Concord	1:30 pm
Tue	December 17	VS	CA Armijo	7:00 pm
Friday	December 20	VS	CA Arroyo	7:00 pm
Sat	December 21	VS	CA Tamalpais	1:30 pm
Sat	January 4	VS	CA College Park	1:30 pm
Tue	January 7	VS	CA Las Lomas	7:00 pm
Friday	January 10	VS	CA Campolindo	7:00 pm
Sat	January 11	VS	CA Sonoma Valley	1:30 pm
Friday	January 17	@	CA Clayton Valley	7:00 pm
Tue	January 21	@	CA Northgate	7:00 pm
Friday	January 24	VS	CA Acalanes	7:00 pm
Wed	January 29	@	CA Las Lomas	7:00 pm
Friday	January 31	@	CA Campolindo	7:00 pm
Sat	February 1	@	CA Pinole Valley	2:30 pm
Wed	February 5	VS	CA Clayton Valley	7:00 pm
Friday	February 7	VS	CA Northgate	7:00 pm
Sat	February 8	VS	CA Notre Dame	2:30 pm
Tue	February 11	@	CA Acalanes	7:00 pm

Made with SportFX on 11/8/2019

Check ScoreStream for latest schedule



*Photos by Mark Fierner for the Martinez News-Gazette Newspaper.*

STAFF WRITERS | MARTINEZ NEWS- GAZETTE

The Alhambra Lady Bulldog basketball team has started the 2019-20 basketball season in solid fashion. The Bulldogs are 10-3 on the season and 1-0 in Diablo-Foothill conference play. Alhambra downed Las Lomas 59-44 for the league win.





Courtesy Photo

## San Francisco's Ferry.

### FERRY

from A3

"There is only one group of happy commuters in the Bay Area," he said, "and that is the group of people who are able to use the ferries."

Matthew King rides a ferry into the city from his home in Vallejo. He enjoys the ride and doesn't understand why there are still so few boats available.

"Yes, it's very strange," he said. "I mean, it's an easier way to get around and you don't have to pay

the toll crossing the bridge."

Wunderman says government regulations make it difficult to do anything on or near the water these days but, with concerns about traffic and climate change, he believes a robust ferry system is an attractive solution for some of those problems.

He doesn't want to wait another generation to make his vision a reality.

"When we get to 2030," he said, "when you look out on the bay, it will be hard not to see a passenger ferry going past."

### BASEBALL

from A1

Martini's and I like the Martini's."

A few names are not possibilities according to Dunn.

The Martinez Clippers were part of the Pacific Association in 2018. However, in December of that year, the FBI raided the home of the team's owners (Jeff and Paulette Carpo) while investigating their businesses, including DC Solar in Benicia.

Dunn wants to keep away from the Clippers name and leave all that comes with it behind. Dunn also said that names associated with hometown hero Joe DiMaggio would come with possible royalty agreements, which is something the league can't afford to take on.

The new name will be unveiled Feb. 11 at the State of the

City Mayor's Breakfast hosted by the Martinez Chamber of Commerce's.

Whatever the team is called, Dunn said the league is excited to have Martinez as a franchise.

"When I saw Martinez and I really started to see what happened, it was a no-brainer," Dunn said of Martinez entering the Pecos League. "The ballpark and location are great."

Dunn is confident baseball in Martinez will be a success.

"Martinez is a better situation than Vallejo, it's better than anywhere but San Rafael," Dunn said of the old Pacific Association. "They (Carpo) didn't really care about running a baseball team. The people in Martinez just want a baseball team."

Whatever the team name, sounds of baseball will be heard at Waterfront Park Field #3 in late May.



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*531 people will now have no felonies on record*

# Contra Costa DA to clear marijuana convictions for 2,399 people

**Contra Costa County District Attorney & Code for America announce that 3,264 marijuana convictions will be cleared as part of automatic record clearance partnership**

PRESS RELEASE | CONTRIBUTED

Contra Costa County District Attorney Diana Becton and Code for America today announced that 3,264 marijuana convictions eligible for relief under Proposition 64 will be dismissed and sealed as part of their cutting-edge partnership.

"I am grateful the partnership with Code for America has given us the ability to deliver tangible results for members of our community by dismissing old marijuana convictions allowed under the law. Far too often old criminal convictions for minor drug offenses can leave a lasting mark on an individual's life. The removal of these convictions effectively reduces barriers to licensing, education, housing and employment. It is imperative that we continue to be innovative in our approach to reforming and strengthening the criminal justice system," said Diana Becton, District Attorney for Contra Costa County.

"At Code for America, we believe government can work dramatically better than it does today; the criminal justice system is one of the areas in which we are most failing the American people. We must make sure that California lives up to the obligation of Proposition 64 and now AB 1793," said Jennifer Pahlka, Founder and Executive Director, Code for



*Courtesy Photo*

**Diana Becton, District Attorney for Contra Costa County.**

America. "I'd like to thank Contra Costa District Attorney Becton for her leadership on this issue. Through our partnership, we will remove barriers to employment, housing, health and education for thousands of Californians. By reimagining existing government systems through technology and user-centered design, we can rethink incarceration, reduce recidivism and restore opportunity."

The Contra Costa District Attorney's office used Code for America's Clear My Record technology, which reads bulk criminal history data from the California Department of Justice, and securely and accurately analyzes eligibility for record remediation under state law. This technology



*Courtesy Photo*

**Jennifer Pahlka, Founder and Executive Director, Code for America.**

can analyze eligibility for thousands of convictions in just a few minutes, alleviating the need for DA staff to go through state criminal records one by one to evaluate eligibility, a time and labor-intensive process.

This partnership helps address wrongs caused by the failed war on drugs, felt most strongly by communities of color. Approximately 2,400 individuals will receive conviction relief through this partnership. Of those, approximately 36% are Black or African American, 45% are White, 15% are Latinx, 2% are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 2% are other or unknown.

Contra Costa is the fifth California District Attorney's Office

to announce a pilot partnership with Code for America and use Clear My Record Technology to clear marijuana-related convictions eligible under Proposition 64. The other counties include San Francisco, Sacramento, San Joaquin and Los Angeles. In total, these five pilots will help reduce or dismiss approximately 75,000 Proposition 64 eligible convictions.

Earlier this year, Code for America also launched its new Clear My Record Application and Implementation Blueprint, available at no cost and open source to all California counties. These resources allow all District Attorneys' offices to follow the lead of DA Becton and expedite and streamline review of Prop 64 convictions.

## Record Clearance for the Digital Age

Record clearance was not built for the digital age. Previously, each person seeking relief had to petition the court on their own to clear their records, but this is a time-consuming, expensive, and confusing process. Because of these barriers, the vast majority of those eligible for relief have not received it.

With the aid of Code for America's Clear My Record technology,

See **CONVICTIONS** on page B6





*It was a beautiful day in Martinez, a place be happy and safe.  
But, now a place without a newspaper.  
How could it be true?*

## WHAT HAPPENED?

from B1

the final day's publication. Many news writers, civic leaders, readers, business folks gathered their forces and provided an historic final edition of the Morning News-Gazette, the 161-year-old purveyor of news and advertising (never fake news!!), maybe a rumor or tad of gossip along the way. As a famous newspaper has stated, "All the news fit to print".

THEN, as the old story line which has been used in plays, etc., a strange thing happened on the way to the funeral for the beloved publication.

The grave diggers had completed their grave digging chores, and were standing by for the procession. Their grave site was prepared according to specifications. A large crowd of mourners had gathered to be part of the services. Anything reaching the venerable age of 161 years deserved proper mourning and respect. They were ready with hankies, tissues and dark glasses. It was a beautiful day in Martinez, a place be happy and safe. But, now a place without a newspaper. How could it be true?

As the gathering of friends, mourners and longtime subscribers waited for the procession to arrive, some began to be restless, began to fidget. Has something happened, they wondered? What could possibly delay a funeral for such an important member of the community?

Than, 'the word' came down from out there some place...there would be no funeral today. What?? Why not?? Answer: The reported demise of The Gazette (for Harriett, the Gazoo) had been apparently premature (not fake news) but, certainly official sounding on Page One the day it appeared. Was it a 'played closed to the vest' move, or was it a case of saved by the bell? Hopefully, we will hear the story one day soon. All of us are most anxious to know what is ahead. Meanwhile, how about a cup of coffee and a print newspaper to read? I will buy!

WE ALL KNEW 2020 was going to be an exciting (?) year, right?!? What we did not know was that our unfit Oval Office Person was going to get us into another potential war in the

Middle East. As of my deadline, we are still just (just!?!?) in the back and forth threatening stage. "If you do this, we'll do worse". How did we get here? We got here by 'hiring' a know-it-all real estate tycoon from NYC who has no integrity, and no idea of how a president of the United States behaves, or how to lead a nation of good people with ethics and rules of law and order. He also does not know how a leader of this "best nation of all time" should behave when out on the international scene.

When we hear explanations of why we had to assassinate a very popular Iranian general from the Oval Officed Occupant, knowing that has lied or made mistaken facts over 15,000 times since January 20, 2017, how confident can we be that what he and Mike Pompeo are now saying is the truth? Scary? You bet, Mr. and Ms America!!

As we citizens at home are waiting for the BIG BOOM, or whatever the Iranians and their supporters around the world might do, we have our thoughts on the upcoming 2020 national election next November.

OH, YES, THAT!! How do you feel about candidates chasing around the landscape trying to be presidential wannabees? Anyone stand out for whom you would like to plunk down \$\$ to help? Anyone know the details of the proposals for health care? Have you heard that drug costs are going to increase about five-plus percent in 2020? Make a difference? Or, are you more concerned about the international situation? How about the immigration problems? How about crime in your neighborhood? Then, of course, there are the homeless.

So much of which to be concerned. Or, are you concerned?

CHEERS to those who stepped up to save our local newspaper. As of this columnist's deadline, we are, fortunately, not in a new Middle East war, the SF 49ers made it to the NFL playoffs, and it looks like we are not headed for another California drought. And, so long to the former Oakland Raiders. If the Warriors can just get it all together!

Wish to comment?

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MARTINEZ NEWS-GAZETTE

## BE A TOURIST IN YOUR CITY!

# Weekly Calendar

### AAUW branch's International Soup Supper

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2020

The Pleasant Hill-Martinez American Association of American Women (AAUW) Branch will hold its annual International Soup Supper on Jan 15 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 1601 St. Mary's Drive in Pleasant Hill followed by the speaker, Hiro Okawachi. Hiro was a biology teacher at Alhambra High School in Martinez for many years. As a child, he was living in Martinez when World War II began, and Hiro and his family were relocated to the Santa Rita Camp in Topaz, Utah. He will share his vivid and interesting memories of that time.

Please join the branch for hearty, homemade soups, breads and desserts. Coffee, tea and water will be provided, but be sure to bring your own soup bowl and spoon. Dinner starts promptly at 6 p.m. AAUW members will provide crock pots of soup, and the cost to nonmembers is \$10 at the door. All are most welcome. Contact Nancy Hobert at 925-228-7271 or Marilyn Thelen at 925-228-2600 to reserve a spot. For more information about the Pleasant Hill Martinez AAUW branch, please visit their website at [aauw-pleasanthill-martinez.org](http://aauw-pleasanthill-martinez.org).

### Enrolling a Transitional Kindergarten (TK) or Kindergarten Student 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Students who will reach 5 years of age between September 2, 2020 and December 2, 2020 are eligible to enroll in TK. Students who will reach 5 years of age on or before September 1, 2020, are eligible to enroll in Kindergarten.

All required TK/K registration documents will be available electronically at the above link.

2020-2021 TK/K Registration Days are scheduled as follows:

- February 4, 2020: Las Juntas Elementary
- February 5, 2020: John Swett Elementary
- February 6, 2020: John Muir Elementary
- February 7, 2020: Morello Park Elementary

All Registration Days will be held at the District Office located at 921 Susana St., 9:00 - 1:00 pm. Please attend the Registration Day for your home school as determined by your place of residency.

Visit [www.martinez.k12.ca.us](http://www.martinez.k12.ca.us) for more information about the registration process and to determine your home school.

### Martinez Marina and the Martinez Bait and Tackle Store

SATURDAY JANUARY 25, 2020

14th Year Anniversary of The Diamond Classic. Catch and Release Sturgeon Derby.

Saturday January 25, 2020. Starts @ 7:00 AM Concludes @ 4:00 PM. Awards presentation at the Martinez Yacht Club @ 5:00 PM.

\$25.00 (CASH) Entry Fee. Kids 15 & Under Enter Free.

100% of the entry fees are paid in cash prizes (1st place through 7th place).

Additional prizes awarded at the Pre-Derby Seminar (see details below) and at Weigh In are courtesy of our sponsors.

All entries/registrations must be submitted in person and paid in cash at:

Martinez Bait & Tackle, 95 Tarantino Drive. Phone: 925-229-9420

### Election Preview goes Prime Time

FROM ENGAGE CONTRA COSTA

Be sure to tune in as CCTV, the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley, League of Women Voters of West Contra Costa and the Clerk-Recorder bring you this opportunity to see and hear the local candidates that will be on your ballot for the March 3rd election.

For the first time in the 26 year history of this voter education programming, we will be broadcasting a few races LIVE, starting next Thursday, January 16th, at 5:00 pm.

Here are the slated live broadcasts:

- 5 pm - State Senate District 7
- 6 pm - State Assembly District 14
- 7 pm - County Board of Supervisors District 5

All recorded broadcasts will be available on the Contra Costa Elections website, starting on January 22nd. You have a chance to participate. If you would like to submit a question for any local race, please either reply to this post or DM us.

We're looking forward to helping Contra Costa votes be informed as they cast their ballot.



Courtesy Illustration

PARK IT BY NED MACKAY:

# Mushrooms

NED MACKAY

MARTINEZ NEWS-GAZETTE COLUMNIST

With the winter rains, renewing grasses spread a welcome green blanket over the hills and fields. The rains also stimulate lots of other growth, including mushrooms. So it's an appropriate time to give both a warning and an invitation.

It's against the rules to harvest and remove any plants or animals from the East Bay Regional Parks, except of course for state regulated fishing at district lakes. The regional parks are essentially preserves where plants and animals are supposed to be left undisturbed. This is especially important with regards to mushrooms, some of which are extremely poisonous.

The most dangerous mushrooms commonly found in the Bay Area are the Death Cap (*Amanita phalloides*) and Western Destroying Angel (*Amanita ocreata*). Both contain powerful toxins. Symptoms don't usually appear until up to 12 hours after consumption. Severe gastrointestinal distress progresses to liver and kidney failure if treatment is

not sought immediately.

"Both the Death Cap and Western Destroying Angel grow near oak trees," said naturalist Trent Pearce, who works at Tilden Nature Area near Berkeley. "They can be lethal to both humans and pets if consumed."

Dog owners should keep a close watch on their pets during the winter months, and contact a veterinarian immediately if they believe the pet has eaten a toxic mushroom.

The Death Cap is a medium to large mushroom that typically has a greenish-gray cap, white gills, a white ring around the stem, and a large white sac at the base of the stem.

The Western Destroying Angel is a medium to large mushroom that usually has a creamy white cap, white gills, a white ring around the stem that disappears with age, and a thin white sac at the base. Other mushrooms in this area that contain deadly toxins include *Galerina* and *Lepiota*.

See PARK IT on page B6



## AT HOME

from B1

Martinez was a hubbub of change. Hundreds of laborers arrived to fill jobs at the new Shell refinery. This drove unprecedented construction all over town. Between 1915 and 1918, hundreds of houses and dozens of buildings were completed, including three residential hotels. The magnificent Hotel Ohem at 700 Alhambra Avenue was one. Twelve masonry commercial buildings sprung up during the same time including a new City Hall Building at 706 Main Street.

It was a time of great change for the whole country. The American Temperance Movement prevailed in January 1919 with the 18th amendment prohibiting alcohol in the United States for thirteen years. Violent criminal gangs armed with machine guns fought in the streets to control the flow of illegal liquor. The women's suffrage movement culminated in the 19th Amendment that states fiercely debated ratifying in June 1919. According to Melissa Jacobson writing in the Martinez News Gazette, Martinez was a hotbed of activity in the suffrage movement kicked off by a visit from Susan B. Anthony herself in 1896.

Domestic terrorism was a serious concern in America 100 years ago. On October 1, 1910, disgruntled steel workers used 16 sticks of dynamite to blow up the Los Angeles Times building, killing 21 and injuring dozens. Across the nation, steel workers blew up 110 iron works between 1906 and 1911. On July 22, 1916, a suitcase bomb exploded at the San Francisco Preparedness Day Parade killing 10 and wounding more than 40. Labor strikes erupted across the country. Law enforcement violence against strikers was so widespread and



*Courtesy Photo*

**Vivian and Jeff Roubal's three grandchildren at Christmas 2019.**

egregious that national troops had to be deployed. State militia conduct was so bad in Gary, Indiana that the U.S. Army was forced to occupy the town under Marshall Law. Federal troops were called in again when 35,000 striking shipyard workers and sympathizers took control of Seattle food, water, heat, and electrical distribution for five days.

Foreign terrorism was also widespread. On July 30, 1916, the United States suffered one of the largest ever disasters in our history -- The Black Tom Explosion in New York -- when German agents sabotaged over a ton of munitions bound for the war in Europe. The explosion incinerated \$20 million worth of military goods, killed 7, and destroyed the Black Tom pier. The Statue of Liberty's torch has been closed to the public since the explosion due to structural damages. The explosion, measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale, was felt as far away as Philadelphia.

World War I raging in Europe forced Congress to pass the national Selective Service Act on May 18, 1917. Twenty-three days later, 6,298 Contra Costa County men registered for military service, including 393 from Marti-

nez. America quickly drafted 2.8 million men. By summer 1918, the United States was shipping another 10,000 fresh American troops to France every day. Nine million combatants and seven million civilians died as a direct result of hostilities.

Fearful of attack, Congress enacted onerous laws including the Espionage Act of 1917 which made any protest of military operations or recruitment a crime. In 1918, Congress expanded this with the Sedition Act which made any speech or opinion critical of our government or of the war effort a crime. In October 1918 the Immigration Act mandated deportation of all non-citizens who disbelieved in organized government -- specifically anarchists.

In retaliation, anarchists bombed dozens of government and law enforcement officials in the Spring of 1919. In April, postal workers discovered 36 dynamite filled bomb packages addressed to prominent politicians and businessmen. On June 2, a suicide bomber targeted Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer in Washington DC. Eight more bombs were detonated the same day, targeting government offi-

cials across the nation in seven different American cities. Palmer organized nationwide raids in November 1919 and January 1920 arresting 10,000 suspects. After trial, 3,500 were held in detention and 556 deported. On September 16, 1920, a massive blast shook Wall Street at noon. A wagon with one hundred pounds of dynamite and five hundred pounds of lead shot exploded killing 38 people and injuring 143. The blast was so intense that shrapnel penetrated the 34th floor of the Equitable building.

Worst of all, a massive influenza epidemic raged in 1918. The "Spanish Flu" infected 500 million people (one third of the world's population) and killed over 50 million. In the United States, the flu killed 675,000 people - six times the number of Americans who died fighting in World War I. On October 18, 1918, The Morning Tribune reported that the entire city of San Jose was in quarantine. San Francisco had a flu death rate of 673 per 100,000, one of the worst in the nation.

My take on all this is, as bad as things seem now, we are much better off than Americans were one hundred years ago. Even the children of our grandparents did not fare better. They had the Great Depression of 1929-1939 when half the country's banks failed causing staggering unemployment and poverty. That is why I look around and can't believe how lucky we are today.

Vivian and I just celebrated Christmas with our children and grandchildren. I wonder what the little ones will live through before they reach our age in 2080. It is impossible to tell but I can say that their prospects are much better than 100 years ago. 2020 is already off to a great start right because we once again have our Martinez News-Gazette newspaper!

Happy New Year!

# PARK IT

from B4

species.

In sum, if you collect mushrooms in areas where it is permitted, expertise is a must. For most of us, the best place for mushroom gathering is the local supermarket.

If you want to learn more about mushrooms, and see some in the wild, join naturalist Kevin Dixon on a mushroom safari from 10 a.m. to noon on Sunday, Jan. 12 at Briones Regional Park near Martinez.

Meet Kevin at the Alhambra Staging Area. It's off of Reliez Valley Road about a mile south of the intersection with Alhambra Valley Road. For information, call 888-327-2757, ext. 2750.

And the Tilden Nature Area plans a Fungal Fair from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 25 and 26 at the Environmental Education Center. The center is at the north end of Central Park Drive. More on the fair in a future column.

Another seasonal phenomenon in the regional parks is the annual overwintering of monarch butterflies at Ardenwood Historic Farm in Fremont.

Unfortunately, for unknown reasons, very few monarchs have appeared this year in Ardenwood's eucalyptus groves. However, programs are still planned that describe the butterflies' life cycle and emphasize how the insects can be protected.

There are programs at the Ardenwood greenhouse from 2 to 2:30 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday in January, and from 11 to 11:30 a.m. on Sundays, Jan. 12 and 19.

A slide presentation on monarchs is scheduled at the Ardenwood granary from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, Jan. 26.

The historic farm is at 34600 Ardenwood Boulevard, just north of Highway 84. For information, call 510-544-2797.



Nearby at Coyote Hills Regional Park, there's a rare opportunity to see changing wildlife activity at dusk during a hike from 4:30 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 11.

The hike is for ages six and older, and registration is required. To register, call 888-327-2757, select option 2, and refer to program 27787. And there's more. The park's new Dumbarton Quarry Bayside Campground is scheduled to open this year. Naturalist Francis Mendoza will lead a preview hike to the site for ages 12 and older, from 1:30 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 12.

It's an easy 2½-mile out-and-back walk, during which Francis will talk about the history of the quarry and campground. Meet him at the visitor center.

Coyote Hills is at the end of Patterson Ranch Road off Paseo Padre Parkway. For information, call 510-544-3220.



At Crab Cove Visitor Center in Alameda, naturalist Morgan Guenther will host two adult craft night social gatherings. Both are from 5:30 to 7 p.m. One is on Jan. 12, the other on Feb. 8.

The project on Jan. 12 is macramé plant hangers from T-shirt yarn. On Feb. 8 it's picture frames and wall hangings from magazine paper reeds. The park will provide the project, instruction and supplies.

Registration is required, and there's a fee of \$10 (\$12 for non-district residents). To register, call 888-327-2757. Select option 2 and refer to program 27675 for Jan. 12, 27684 for Feb. 8.

Crab Cove is at 1252 McKay Ave. Call 510-544-3187.



The New Year brings lots of new programs to the regional parks. For full information, visit the website, [www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org).

# CONVICTIONS

from B2

a DA's office can automatically and securely evaluate eligibility for record clearance for thousands of convictions in just a few minutes.

This requires no action on the part of the individual, and minimal staff time and resources from the DA's office — two obstacles for record clearance. Streamlining conviction data processing

will also make it easier for courts to update records, ensuring that individuals can obtain relief as soon as possible.

These partnerships set the standard for the statewide implementation of Assembly Bill 1793, which tasks prosecutors with affirmatively reviewing convictions eligible for dismissal or reduction under Proposition 64. This novel approach also creates a blueprint for the future of record clearance for remedies beyond Proposition

64 — the development of policy and technology that expands, streamlines and automates the record clearance process at scale.

Code for America has been making it easier for people to remove eligible convictions from their records through Clear my Record technology since 2016.

## About Code for America

Code for America believes government must work for the people, and by the people, in the

digital age, starting with the people who need it most. We build digital services that enhance government capabilities, and we help others do the same across all levels of government. We organize thousands of volunteers across nearly 80 chapters nationwide who improve government in their local communities. Our goal: a 21st century government that effectively and equitably serves all Americans. Learn more [atcodeforamerica.org](http://atcodeforamerica.org).