

mn

mountain network news

June 2021







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**LearyProperties.com**

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**George Montanari**  
408.497.2213  
[george@compass.com](mailto:george@compass.com)  
DRE 70010073

Los Gatos Mountains



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DRE 01342694

Los Gatos Mountains



SALE PENDING

**22905 Schulties Road**  
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Los Gatos Mountains



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408.396.7231  
[lisa.sgarlato@compass.com](mailto:lisa.sgarlato@compass.com)  
DRE 01342694

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**Circulation**

More than 4000 homes and businesses  
in the Santa Cruz Mountains

**Cover**

# Learning to Work Together at Building Blocks Preschool

Photography by Nicole Gomez

Our children  
are back to school.

Returning from social Isolation  
to working and playing together.

We adults are also returning  
to work and social events.

It will be more difficult for adults.  
We are slower learners.

But remember how good it was  
to be together?

It's a change worth making.

**Contents****resources**

Proposition 19	6
Speaking out on climate change	8
Santa Cruz County issues	9

**events**

LP volunteer fire department barbecue	10
Loma Prieta Museum history events	10
Alison Sharino Band	11

**people**

Kimiko Milheim and Rosie Gomez	12
Mountain LEO's Club	13

**gallery**

Bruce Sudweeks	14
Bruce Fournier	15
Mercury Freedom	16

**calendar**

20

**exploring**

Fort Ord	22
----------	----

**history**

Riches to rags: Martina Castro	24
--------------------------------	----

**schools**

LPJUSD new superintendent	26
Farewell from Lisa Frasier	26
LPEF KEEP! campaign	27
Daughters of the American Revolution	28
Building Blocks Preschool	28
Lakeside Community Foundation	29
Lakeside School News	30
Lexington School	32

**classified and business directory**

34

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## 17952 Madrone Drive, Los Gatos



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# resources



## **What it means to you and your family** **Proposition 19** **Grant Turner**

California voters passed Proposition 19 (51 percent to 49 percent) in 2020. The proposition amended our state constitution as it relates to the assessment of property taxes. Following is a brief history of property tax changes in California over the last 43 years.

### **1978**

Proposition 13 capped any increase in residential property taxes by limiting the amount a property's assessed value can be adjusted for inflation to two percent per year. Over time—particularly in the Bay Area where property values rise rapidly—a disparity was created between the assessed base value and the fair-market value.

When there was a change in ownership as defined by the tax and revenue code—such as a sale or gift—the value of the property was reassessed to the fair-market value and the property taxes were almost certainly higher for the new owner.

Notable exceptions to these rules have allowed owners to keep their low Proposition 13-assessed base value, even if they moved or transferred the property to their children or grandchildren.

### **1986**

Proposition 58 excluded transfers from parents to their children from the definition of “change in ownership.” The exclusion had to be requested within three years of the transfer. The exclusion was unlimited for transfers of the parents’ primary residence and up to \$1,000,000 (assessed value) for other property (*i.e.*, vacation homes, rental, or commercial property).

The children's property taxes were calculated on the established Proposition 13 value, not the market value at the time the property was transferred. This exclusion was available whether the transfer was by gift, sale, or inheritance.

### **1986**

Proposition 60 allowed homeowners over the age of 55, and permanently disabled persons, to transfer the assessed value of their principal residence to a new home under two conditions: the new home was of equal or less value and was also within the same county. The claim had to be filed with the county assessor within two years of sale.

### **1988**

Proposition 90 modified the rules set up under Proposition 60. Owners were now allowed to transfer the base value of their old home to a new one in another county, provided that county allowed it. This exclusion could only be used once per lifetime, but that one time still allowed owners to keep their property taxes lower when they moved.

### **1996**

Proposition 193 extended Proposition 58 by permitting the same exclusions for transfers to grandchildren, but not for transfers between siblings.

### **2020-2021**

Passed in 2020, Proposition 19 modified these exceptions again. Now, more conditions are required for exclusions to apply to transfers from parents or grandparents under Propositions 58 and 193.

To qualify for the exclusion, the inheriting children or grandchildren now must use the home as their principal residence within one year and file a homeowner's exemption form. If the heirs don't move in, the property is reassessed at its fair-market value and property taxes will increase, likely by a substantial amount. This could prompt the heirs to sell.

Even when the heirs move into the house, property taxes could still increase. When the value of the home exceeds the transferred base value by more than \$1,000,000, the difference is subject to a reassessment based on the market value. This means property taxes would increase, not as much as they would have if no exclusion applied, but more than under the prior law.

These changes went into effect on February 16, 2021. Unfortunately, this didn't give owners much time to plan how to react to the new law. Those who made these types of transfers before February 16 weren't affected since the new law isn't retroactive.

A second major change in Proposition



19 is an expansion of the rules created by Propositions 60 and 90. As of April 1, 2021, owners over 55, those permanently disabled, and victims of wildfires and contamination may transfer the base value of their residence to any new home within California, regardless of whether the new home is of greater or lesser value. Eligible homeowners can now transfer their tax exemption up to three times, allowing greater opportunities (and incentives) for eligible owners to sell their homes while keeping property taxes low.

If the new home has a greater value than the old one, property taxes will still rise, but not by as much as before. For example, if an eligible owner sells a home with a \$500,000 base value for \$2,000,000 and purchases a new home for \$2,500,000, property taxes would increase even when the base value is transferred to the new home. The base value of \$500,000 could be transferred, but it would then be added to the difference between the value of the old home versus the new one.

The likely effect of these changes is that more inter-generational property transfers will result in an increase in the assessed value of that property. Property taxes will increase for younger owners, and more homes may become available on the market.

On the other hand, a greater number of older or displaced homeowners can maintain a low tax base when they move anywhere in the state.

Property taxes are just one consideration for property owners during retirement, tax, or estate planning. Income, capital gains, gifts, and inheritance taxes are also considerations for any transfer of a property.

**Grant Turner is an attorney with  
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([www.prattattorneys.com](http://www.prattattorneys.com))  
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**Grant has practiced in the Bay Area  
since 2004, representing associations,  
individuals, estates, buyers/sellers,  
brokers/agents, businesses, and public  
entities in a wide variety of civil matters,  
lawsuits, and appeals.**





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Surfnet would like to take the opportunity to say "Thank You" to our Summit Area and Santa Cruz Mountains friends and families who have helped us grow over the last 20 years.

We couldn't be where we are today without you. We'll continue to strengthen our rural networks with the latest Wireless and Fiber internet technologies available.

We look forward to serving you into the future in this beautiful place we all call home!



# resources

## Speaking Out! Climate Change Crystal Huang

Last year, my family, and many other families who live in the Santa Cruz Mountains, had to pack our bags and evacuate during the CZU lightening-complex fire. Many of us remember days when the sky was orange from wildfire smoke, and we worried that our homes were burning. These fires prompted important discussions about climate change because as the planet heats up, we'll have more wildfires of greater intensity and size.

Scientists predict that to prevent the worst effects of climate change, the world must reach net zero emissions by 2050. As individuals, we can make changes to reach this goal, such as using a reusable water bottle or composting.

It's not enough. Legislative change to fight

the climate crisis is crucial. Carbon taxing is a powerful tool that could help us fight the climate crisis.

A basic premise in economics is externality—the cost of something that remains unaccounted for in its market price. For example, the price of fossil fuels is a negative externality, because the price of gas fails to take into account the negative effects of air pollution and climate change.

Carbon taxing seeks to address this by taking into account the true cost of using fossil fuels. There is near unanimous agreement among economists that carbon taxing is the most cost-effective approach to reduce carbon emissions. The idea is simple—making carbon more expensive encourages individuals and businesses to buy and create fewer products made using fossil fuel.

One criticism is that this may place a burden on lower-income people. This is what a carbon dividend is designed to prevent. The surplus money from the tax



is given directly to households, helping offset the cost to the consumer. In 2019, numerous Nobel Prize-winning economists supported carbon dividends. Over 3,500 economists have signed approval.

The time is limited before we reach the tipping point of global warming, when our planet will suffer irreversible damage.

To fight climate change, significant transitions must happen at the individual and legislative levels. Carbon taxing will help us get there.

**Born and raised in the mountains, Crystal Huang is a graduating senior at Los Gatos High School.**



## Angelé Price

*From San Jose to Santa Cruz  
and Everything in Between*

## COMPASS

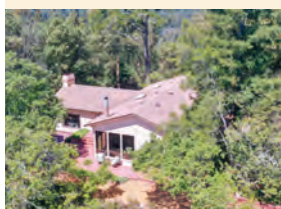
PENDING



**21240 Summit Woods Drive**

Sophisticated country living in the Summit Woods Community. Updated and expanded to include high-end appliances, tankless water heaters, hard-wired generator, electric car charger, remodeled bathrooms, and more! 4/3, 2,338 sq ft. on fully fenced acre. **\$1,699,000**

ACTIVE



**Mountain Charlie Road**

Quality built home with long range views from both sides of Mt. Charlie. Gorgeous modern kitchen, updated bathrooms, separate family and living rooms for flexible living, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths. Located on over 2.6 private acres. **\$1,450,000**

COMING SOON



**21550 Madrone Drive**

Spectacular canyon views from this peaceful 3 level home in Redwood Estates. 10 minute commute to downtown Los Gatos. Downstairs has separate entrance and kitchen. Terraced gardens for vegetables, fruit trees and flowers. Colisted with Monica Lussier. **\$1,400,000.**

SOLD



**Holiday Drive**

Quietly tucked away by the shore, this home offers ocean views and an updated, modern appeal while maintaining casual elegance. Paradise found! **\$1,610,000.**

SOLD



**Wilma Way**

Located in the coveted Carlton Elementary School District. Lovely updates throughout with an open floorplan and lushly landscaped yard made for gatherings and staycations at home. 3 bedrooms, 2 baths. **\$2,020,000**

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## Santa Cruz County Issues

### First District Supervisor Manu Koenig

We have been working on several issues that affect you. Here are a few highlights from the First District office.

#### Wood Chipping Program

At our Summit town hall meetings, a frequent topic has been fuel-reduction efforts and the creation of defensible space. The Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County has opened registration for their summer 2021 chipping program.

The RCD's community chipping program helps homeowners create defensible space around homes in high-wildfire-risk areas. The program will chip, at no-cost to residents, up to three piles of cleared vegetation that originated within 100 feet of occupied structures or 10 feet on either side of a private road. Space is limited due to funding. (Current funding will cover 700 to 900 households.) It is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Consider reaching out to your neighbors to encourage their participation. Organize a neighborhood workday to clear overhanging limbs and dense vegetation to improve safety for your whole community.

Make sure to check the registration deadlines for your address, as they differ by region. Find out more at <https://chipping.rcdsantacruz.org/>.

Santa Clara County residents have access to Santa Clara County's chipping program.

Unfortunately, the 2021 program is full, but residents can still sign up to be notified if additional spots are made available.

Residents of both counties may also want to check out CalFire CZU San Mateo-Santa Cruz's YouTube page, offering a defensible-space and home-hardening webinar: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCi7V54\\_W8fPvjGq7Mrod7w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCi7V54_W8fPvjGq7Mrod7w).

#### Fire Funding for Mitigation Efforts

In April, the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County released a draft Santa Cruz County Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan for public review and comments. The plan was developed through coordination between the RCDSCC, the San Mateo RCD, state parks, CalFire, the California Coastal Commission, and planning department staff from Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties.

The goal of this plan is to provide a framework to efficiently review and authorize vegetation-management projects within the program area over the next ten years. It will use best practices that align fire-prevention planning with the protection of coastal resources. A public hearing on the draft is scheduled for the RCDSCC's virtual board meeting on **June 9, 2021**, at 6:30 p.m. Comments are due by midnight June 8. You can view the plan, meeting information (including Zoom link), and contact information for submitting comments at [rcdsantacruz.org](https://rcdsantacruz.org) (search for Santa Cruz County Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan).

#### Minimum Fire Safe Regulations- "Substandard Roads"

The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection opened the 45-day comment period for the state-minimum fire-safe regulations on April 23, 2021. The 45-day comment period will end at the close of the public

hearing on **June 22, 2021**. You can view the 45-day notice, initial statement of reasons, and rule plead at the board's proposed rule packages webpage at <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/regulations/proposed-rule-packages/>. You are invited to submit your comments to [PublicComments@bof.ca.gov](mailto:PublicComments@bof.ca.gov).

#### Cell Towers

The proposed cell tower at the Seventh-Day Adventist site on Soquel-San Jose Road is currently in litigation. The April 26 hearing was postponed by the courts. A new hearing date is scheduled for June 17. Until the case regarding this site is resolved, and the process becomes more streamlined, no towers are planned for the Summit area.

#### Flight Path

I met with Congressman Jimmy Panetta to discuss the FAA flight-path issue. Congressman Panetta reassured me that the select committee's recommendation to move the flight path is still the guiding directive. He and Congresswoman Eshoo reinforced that with the FAA director when they met a few weeks earlier. He attributed the lack of progress to turnover in FAA leadership, communication issues within the FAA itself, and the general challenges of working with the previous administration. We are expecting an update from the new FAA director soon. We will share any new information.

#### We are listening.

We welcome your feedback. Email us at [first.district@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:first.district@santacruzcounty.us). We also welcome you to join us for constituent meetings, held every Monday evening prior to board of supervisor's meetings, as well as our monthly Summit-area neighborhood meetings. Visit District 1 ([santa-cruz.ca.us](https://santa-cruz.ca.us)) for a complete list of upcoming constituent meetings.



## BRUSH CLEARING AND GRINDING

- Fire clearances
- Poison oak, vines, heavy thick brush removal
- Brush grinder will grind up to 6" in diameter and spread chips
- Brushing along community roads and driveways
- Brush pile grinding

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## events

### Loma Prieta Volunteer Fire and Rescue Community Barbecue on September 12

Toni Sheppard

Hello, mountain neighbors. Our community barbecue is going to happen—with safe precautions. It will be great to get back to near-normal.

Look for the first scavenger hunt clue in



this issue of *Mountain Network News* and on the LPVFR website ([www.lomaprietafire.org](http://www.lomaprietafire.org)). There will be additional clues posted in July, August, and September before the barbecue. The first 36 people to bring the correct items/answers to the barbecue will win a prize (one per family). Win an extra prize for correctly guessing the significance of "36."

We need volunteers. If you would like to help with the barbecue, or throughout the year with administration, taxes/accounting, or handyman/maintenance, email [volunteer@lomaprietafire.org](mailto:volunteer@lomaprietafire.org).



### Loma Prieta Museum History Events Update Roger Mason

Thanks to everyone who has donated time, stories, pictures, articles, artifacts, antiques, and monetary gifts.

Several people have inquired about Loma Prieta Museum shirts and hats. Email us at [LomaPrietaMuseum@gmail.com](mailto:LomaPrietaMuseum@gmail.com) for more information and to request your shirt or hat. You can also get hats at Summit Store.

We will hold history events this fall. Watch for more information in the *Mountain Network News*.

We are updating our Facebook page ([Facebook.com/LomaPrietaMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/LomaPrietaMuseum)) to include local history articles, pictures, and future events. Send us your suggestions.

To make a donation, mail a check payable to Loma Prieta Community Foundation, with a footnote for Loma Prieta Museum, to LP Museum, 22951 Summit Road, Los Gatos, CA 95033, with your return address. We will send you a donation receipt.

If you have history articles, stories, photos, artifacts, or other donations, email us at [LomaPrietaMuseum@gmail.com](mailto:LomaPrietaMuseum@gmail.com). We also need volunteers to help us research, document, and communicate local history to our schools and community. If you are interested in helping us share history, we would love to hear from you.

Thank you for your support.



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*Music by the Alison Sharino Band*

### **It's Time to Rock Again!**

Lani Christianson

On **Saturday, July 24**, the Alison Sharino Band will perform at the Loma Prieta Playfield, 23845 Summit Road. Save the date and come celebrate with your mountain neighbors as life begins to return to normal. The band is amazing and perfect for dancing out the kinks we've accumulated over the past year.

Bring a lawn chair or spread a blanket. Kick back to listen to the music, or dance the night away under the stars. This year only, tickets will be free to mountain residents. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the number of tickets available is limited. Details will be published in the next issue of the *Mountain Network News*.

Rockin' in the Mountains is sponsored by the Loma Prieta Community Foundation. A huge thank you to our loyal sponsors—*Mountain Network News*, Loma Prieta Volunteer Fire & Rescue, and Lani Christianson.

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## people

### **C.T. English Middle School Two Female Athletes Recruited Maya Gomez**

Kimiko Milheim and Rosie Gomez met on the kindergarten playground at Loma Prieta Elementary School in 2008. Now they celebrate becoming college-recruited athletes. This fall, Milheim will head to Southern California to play volleyball at Occidental College. Gomez will be off to Buffalo, New York, to play softball at Canisius College.

At C.T. English Middle School, the girls played volleyball and basketball together. Kimiko also medaled in hurdles at the county-level while on the track and field team. Having played softball since the age of six, Rosie was named C.T. English's female athlete of the year in 2017.

Both athletes represented the Los Gatos High School Wildcats in their respective sports while continuing to compete in their free time with their club teams.

Milheim completed her final season as libero on her Imua Volleyball Club Power team. She is preparing for her last beach volleyball season. Meanwhile, Gomez gears up for her final travel summer ball season



with her club team, Cal Nuggets.

With most sports competitions shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the NCAA dead period extended through 2020 and into 2021, college recruiting shifted from in-person tournament-based exposure to independently created online videos. Athletes and college coaches quickly adapted.

The two families compared recruiting notes throughout the pandemic. They created online recruiting profiles and

sent customized postcards. A cell-phone tripod went from one house to the other. Countless hours were spent recording and editing video, emailing coaches and, ultimately, Zooming with the final choices.

With the mountain community connecting them, Milheim and Gomez look forward to staying in touch and comparing big-city life experiences as female college athletes competing on opposite sides of the country.

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### Mountain LEO's Club

Helena Cramer, Eli Asheghian,  
Lyla Barber, and Miriam Watson

Despite the pandemic, the C.T. English Middle School LEO's Club has found many ways to contribute to our community this year. We met every Monday on Zoom to discuss our ideas, make plans, and share information about our projects.

In the past few weeks, we've presented our Flag Day talk to the first-grade students at Loma Prieta Elementary School. This annual project focuses on helping young students better understand what our Pledge of Allegiance and our United States flag mean and represent. We were excited to present to the first-graders over Zoom for the first time, and we made sure that all 49 students got to take home a small U.S. flag.

Currently, the LEOs are writing to a group of senior citizens on the mountain. We started this project to connect with others who may feel lonely and isolated during COVID-19. The project, known as the Pandemic Pen Pal Project, or P4, has been a wonderful opportunity to talk to others outside our bubble without having to worry about safety. The best thing about P4 is the stress relief we experience as we write our thoughts and feelings down on paper. It has also been helpful to practice good grammar and to learn the art of letter

writing. We hope our letters make our pen pal's day, but we feel it has also been a great experience for each of us. We are continuing to write our letters.

Recently we finished a project collecting and making dog toys and dog beds for the Santa Cruz Humane Society. We appreciate the donations of dog toys from the community. For the homemade dog toys, we cut up old T-shirts into strips, then tightly braided and knotted them to make excellent pull-toys. To make the beds, we used fleece fabric that we fringed, filled with recycled foam, and knotted to secure it inside. The Humane Society liked the beds so much they said they might use them as sitting pillows in their education program for children. We loved this idea because it meant they would be well-used for a long time.

We're finishing up our last project of this school year—a time capsule. The time capsule contains objects intended to be symbols of actions, experiences, ideas, and changes that are worth preserving from this unusual time. Can you guess the most-



suggested item? Hint: You couldn't ever have imagined you would wear this over your mouth and nose every time you were in the presence of others.

The time capsule will be buried on the Loma Prieta school campus. It is intended to be opened in ten years. This was a meaningful project because it encouraged us to think and talk about what we experienced together, as a community, during the pandemic.

We are taking a break from projects over the summer, but we will start again in the fall. We will continue to do our best to support our amazing community.





# gallery

## Loving Sea Slugs Bruce Sudweeks

Spring is in the air (and water) for the two sea slugs in this month's photo.

Monterey Bay is the northern end of the range of the California Blue Dorid (*Felimare californiensis*), a species of colorful sea slug that eats dysideid sponges. In the 1970s, this sea slug started to disappear from Southern California and, by 1984, was extinct in the region. Its extinction is unique among the 130 species of sea slugs known to inhabit California waters.

In 2003, this beautiful gastropod reappeared off Santa Catalina Island. In 2011, it was spotted near Santa Cruz Island and off the coast of San Diego.

I am pleased to have photographed this pair mating. Note the orange and blue swirls around the edges of the photo. They are reflections from a piece of chrome plumbing pipe I fastened to my underwater camera housing to make the swirling reflection pattern.



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*A spring rose*

*Photo by Bruce Fournier*

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Allen's hummingbird

Photo by Mercury Freedom

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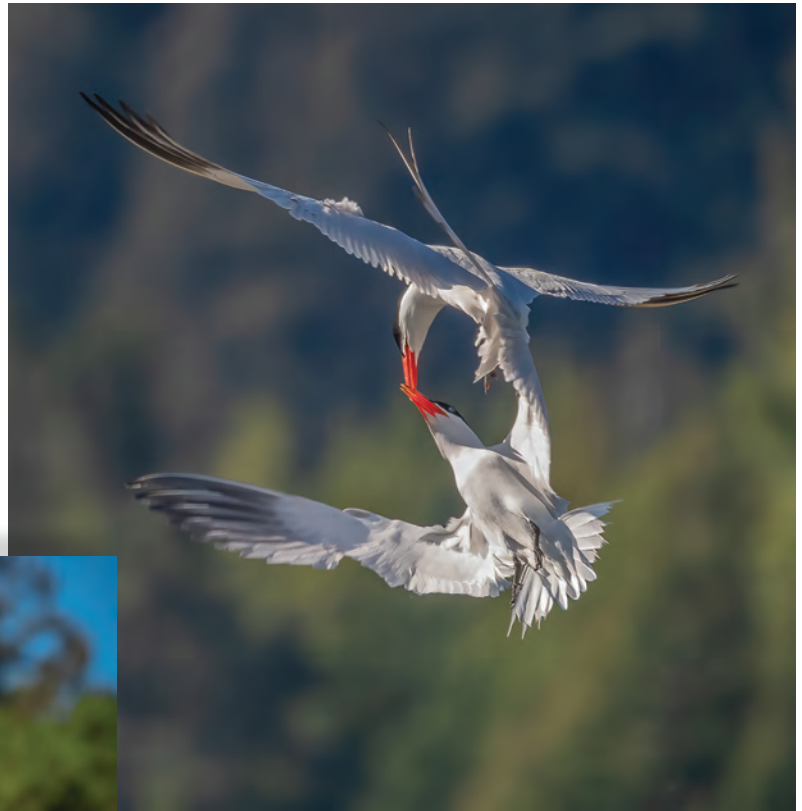
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*Caspian terns in flight*

*Photos by Mercury Freedom*

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### Summit Woods Gem!



4 bedroom, 2 bath home on over an acre, with remodeled kitchen, hardwood floors, vaulted ceiling in great room, wall of windows overlooking deck and garden, & extensive decking. Converted garage, plenty of uncovered parking plus room to further landscape, plant fruit trees, etc. **\$1,499,000**



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**Offered at \$2,095,000**

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35,030 SF Lot  
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20974 Pawnee Trail



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4 Beds | 2 Baths | 2,630 SF Home  
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25237 Terrace Grove



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2 Beds | 2 Baths | 1,062 SF Home  
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18800 Favre Ridge



SOLD

3 Beds | 2.5 Baths | 2,772 SF Home  
.95 Acre  
**Sold for \$1,532,500**

20143 Beatty Ridge



SOLD

4 Beds | 3 Baths | 2,455 SF Home  
34,935 SF Lot  
**Sold for \$1,425,000**

21860 Bear Creek Way



SOLD

4 Beds | 3.5 Baths | 2,052 SF Home  
3.6 Acres  
**Sold for \$1,400,000**



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23739 Summit Road



3 Beds | 2 Baths  
2,181 SF Home | 16.2 Acres

Rare Opportunity! 16+acres along Summit Rd, from the CT/Loma school campus exit to Morrill Rd. Mostly sunny usable land, was once pear orchards, could be developed as an estate property, room for horses, livestock, organic farming, vineyards. Existing home is set back from Summit with gated entry. Home is well maintained - has been rental. Existing lease ends mid June. Loma Prieta Elementary/CT English Middle/Los Gatos High.

**Call for Price**

24210 Summit Woods Dr



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24123 Mt. Charlie Road



4 Beds | 3.5 Baths | 2,981 SF Home  
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310 McAmant Drive



3 Beds | 2.5 Baths | 2,862 SF Home  
4.36 Acres  
**Sold for \$1,625,000**

437 Anchorage Avenue



2 Beds | 1 Baths | 731 SF Home  
2,396 SF Lot  
**Sold for \$1,300,000**

24150 Loma Prieta Ave



3 Beds | 2 Baths | 1,616 SF Home  
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**sereno—**



# calendar

## ON-GOING CLASSES AND MEETINGS

*Class and meeting schedules are valid as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Call or email to confirm dates and times.*

### Sundays

Dog agility, 24900 Highland Way, 9 to 11 a.m. Call 408-506-8670, or email in8runner@aol.com to confirm dates.

### Mondays

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings at Skyland Church, 8 p.m.

### Tuesdays

Qi-gong classes, 8:45 to 10 a.m. at Skyland Church. Call 831-247-5617.

Pilates mat class, 7 to 8 p.m., via Zoom. Email altesta@gmail.com or text 650-465-8513.

### Wednesdays

Tai chi for beginners is held from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Los Gatos Recreation Center.

Downtown Santa Cruz Farmer's Market, Cedar and Lincoln streets, from 1 to 5 p.m.

### Thursdays

Yoga at the Redwood Estates Pavilion, 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. We meet on Zoom and (weather permitting) on the Pavilion lawn. Visit <https://bit.ly/3t6UkG5> for details.

Pilates mat class, 7 to 8 p.m., via Zoom. Email altesta@gmail.com or text 650-465-8513.

Yoga at Skyland Church, 7 p.m. \$10 per class

Integral yoga at Lakeside School (held online currently), 6:30 to 8 p.m. Visit [www.lgsrecreation.org](http://www.lgsrecreation.org).

Alcoholics Anonymous, Redwood Estates Pavilion, 7:30 p.m.

Loma Prieta Amateur Radio Club meets the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Burrell CDF station on Highland Way.

Narcotics Anonymous meetings, 7 p.m. at Mountain Bible Church, 23946 Summit Road. Call 408-353-2302.

### Saturdays

Summit Toastmasters 95033, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Mountain Bible Church, 23946 Summit Road. Call 408-634-3493.

Westside Santa Cruz Farmer's Market, Mission Street extension and Western Drive, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### Sundays

Los Gatos Farmer's Market, Town Park Plaza, Main Street and N. Santa Cruz Avenue, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Live Oak Farmer's Market, 15th and East Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Monday, June 7

Agenda-review constituent meeting with First District supervisor Manu Koenig, 6 to 7 p.m. Zoom link is available on the County of Santa Cruz website.

### Wednesday, June 9

Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County holds a virtual board meeting and public hearing to discuss vegetation-management projects in the county, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Visit [rcdsantacruz.org](http://rcdsantacruz.org) for more information.

### Thursday, June 10

Santa Clara County Bookmobile is at Loma Prieta Playfield/Building Blocks Preschool, from 1 to 4 p.m. Order items for pickup at [www.sccld.org](http://www.sccld.org), or call 408-273-2326, ext. 3060.



### Wednesday, June 16

Santa Cruz County Supervisor Manu Koenig hosts a Summit town-hall meeting on Zoom, from 6 to 7 p.m. Register at [www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us](http://www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us) (select District 1).

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### Tuesday, June 22

Santa Clara County Bookmobile is at Lakeside School, 2 to 4 p.m. Order items for pickup at [www.sccld.org](http://www.sccld.org), or call 408-273-2326, ext. 3060.

### Thursday, June 24

Santa Clara County Bookmobile is at Redwood Estates Pavilion, 2 to 4 p.m. Order items for pickup at [www.sccld.org](http://www.sccld.org), or call 408-273-2326, ext. 3060.

### Saturday, July 24

The Alison Sharino Band will perform at the Loma Prieta Playfield, 23845 Summit Road. This year only, tickets will be free to mountain residents. The number of tickets available is limited. Watch for more information in the July issue of *Mountain Network News*.



### Sunday, September 12

Save the date for the Loma Prieta Volunteer Fire and Rescue annual barbecue at the Loma Prieta Playfield. See page 10 for more details, and watch for more information in upcoming issues of *Mountain Network News*.



**Loma Prieta Volunteer Fire & Rescue**  
Serving the Summit area of the Santa Cruz Mountains

36



## Kanady Team's Prop 19 Guide

Reach out to me today to get your C.A.R. Quick Guide about Prop 19!

### Proposition 19

has officially passed  
- what does that mean for you?



Prop 19 allows homeowners who are over 55, disabled, or wildfire/ disaster victims to transfer primary residence's tax base to replacement residence. Changes taxation of family-property transfers. Establishes fire protection services fund.

I'm happy to share the breakdown from the CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® of the changes on tax breakdown portability, the impact on intergenerational transfers to children or grandchildren, when the law goes into effect, and more!

Give me a call or send me an email so we can connect!



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The first time I heard of Fort Ord was in 1960. I was in boot camp at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. I wanted to be anywhere else.

Although almost 1.5 million troops trained at Fort Ord, the Army had other plans for me. Instead of shooting a mortar, I drove a tank in Fort Knox, Kentucky. When I got to California a few years later, I finally visited the Fort's rifle range to renew my acquaintance with an M-1. It was loud.

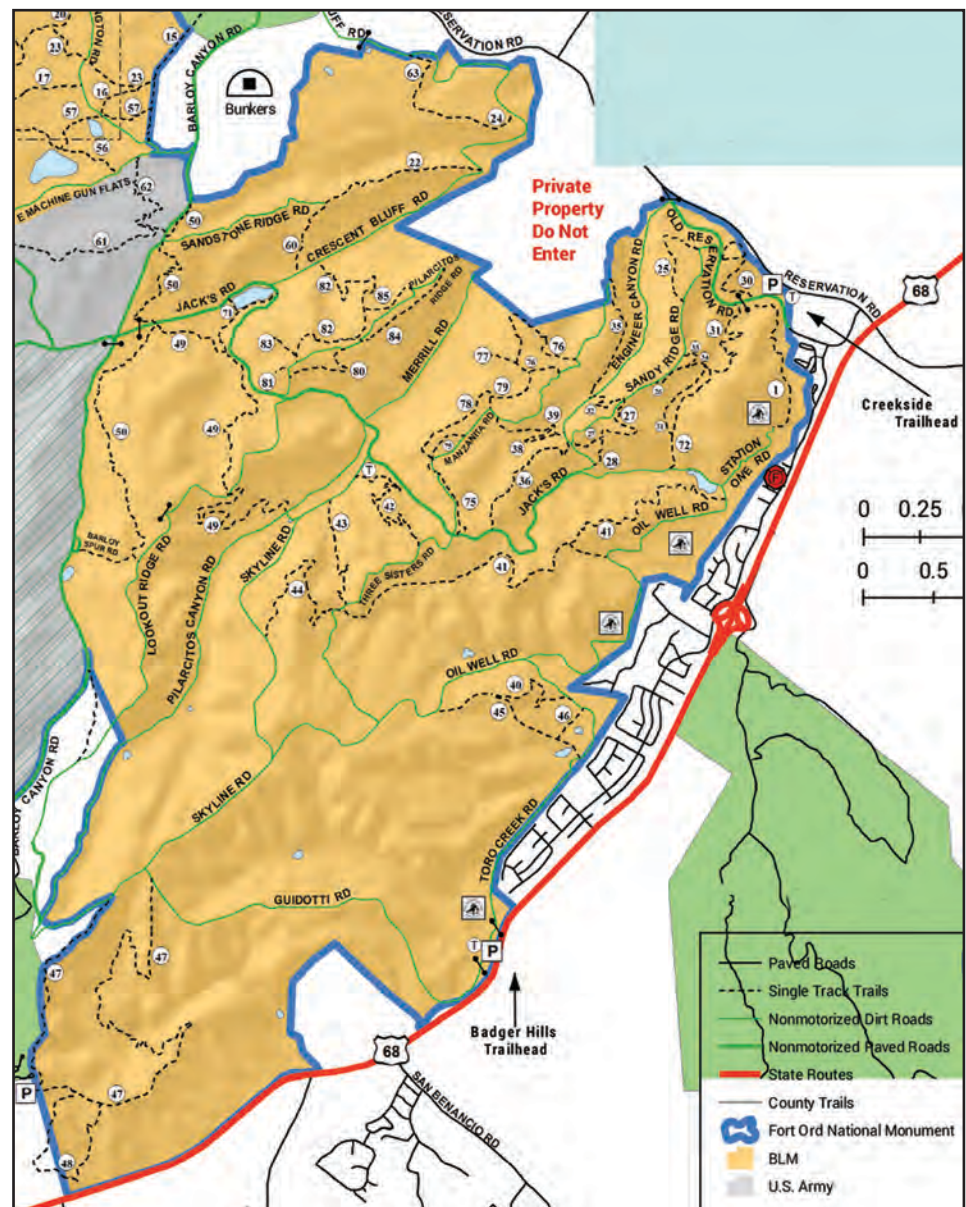
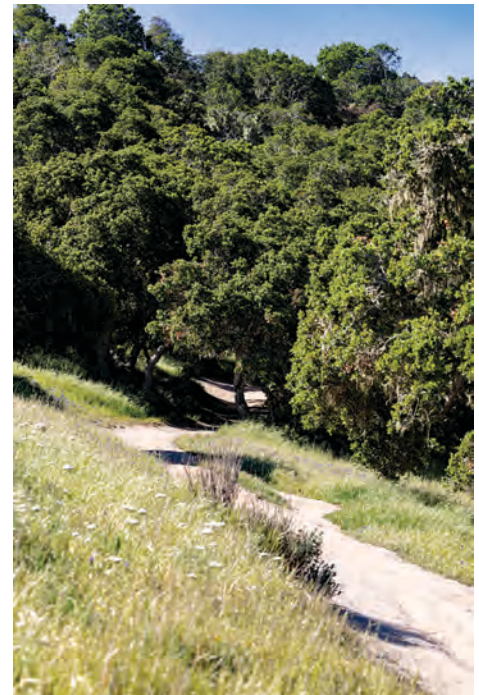
After seeing my marksmanship, the Army formally closed Fort Ord in 1994. When it was converted to civilian use, space was set aside for the first nature reserve in the United States created for conservation of



page 22

In 2012, President Obama signed a proclamation designating a 14,651-acre portion of the former post as the Fort Ord National Monument. He said, “The protection of the Fort Ord area will maintain its historical and cultural significance, attract tourists and recreationalists from near and far, and enhance its unique natural resources, for the enjoyment of all Americans.”

Half of this monument is still closed because of risk from old explosives, but the Bureau of Land Management manages 7,200 safe acres and 86 miles of well-mapped trails. These trails take you through a wide range of environments, from sandy







fields, up green hills, through shady, forested areas to views of fractured rock walls, distant mountains, the varied topography of the National Monument and, in the distance, the table-top flatness of Salinas Valley. Above it all is a blue dome of big sky that reminds you of Kansas or Montana.

The trails are good for hikers, bikers, and equestrians. Dogs are allowed on most trails.

A few trails are steep. Others use gentle curves for easy climbs. The main roads are dirt and sometimes lightly graveled. The many single tracks are hard-packed dirt; others are softer sand.

Plant life is dominated by chaparral shrubs of every size, including manzanitas, wild lilac, and chamise, but you can find larger shade trees. Oaks, grassland, small pools, and meadows offer biodiversity and natural beauty.

In the spring, you can see baby blue

eyes, ceanothus blue blossom, Hickman's popcorn flower, buttercups, lupine, goldfields, and sunflowers. In the summer and fall, watch for blooms of sticky monkey flower, nightshade, chaparral, currant, and California goldenrod.

With so many trails to consider, it's difficult to make a choice. Here's a good start. Consider it an appetizer.

#### **A two-mile sampler loop**

Starting from the Creekside Terrace Trailhead, walk Old Reservation Road north from the parking lot about one-tenth of a mile, and then turn left on the signed single-track Trail 31. You walk uphill, but the grade is relatively easy with many mild turns and some shade. If you look back, you can see the parking areas below, and the broad Salinas Valley in the background.

At a three-way split at the top of the hill, take the signed Trail 34 to the right. You'll

soon reach a large rock-wall formation.

After a steep, but short, climb you reach the hilltop with a beautiful view north and west that displays miles of the monument.

When you reach the next fork, take Trail 26 to the right. At the end of this trail, take a sharp right on Sandy Ridge Road. It's wide and a little less interesting, but an easy downhill walk. Soon you reach a viewpoint where you can see the length and width of Salinas Valley.

The trail narrows as you near the bottom, where you reach a paved road. Cross the road to Trail 30. You'll soon see a bench where you can sit to enjoy the view. Take the next fork to the right. You will get close and personal to another rock formation you can touch on your right.

Continue down the trail to the parking lot and your car. I think that you will agree that this short walk gives you lots of variety in a short distance. To see all Fort Ord trails, walk only 84 more miles.

#### **More to see**

The historic Anza Trail roughly follows the route taken by the Anza Expedition colonists in 1776. The five-mile Fort Ord section can be entered from two trailheads: Creekside Terrace at the north end and Badger Hills at the south end. From Creekside, the route follows Trail 1, Station One Road, Oil Well Road, and Toro Creek Road.

Other promising hike candidates include the two-mile Engineer Road Loop, and the longer four-mile Oil Well Road/Engineer Canyon Road Loop. See you on the trail.

#### **Details**

You can reach the Creekside Terrace Trailhead in Fort Ord using Highway 1 or Highway 101 to Highway 68. (Highway 1 to Monterey usually has less morning commute traffic going south, and you can have lunch at Moss Landing.)

The Creekside Terrace Trailhead is just off Highway 68 near the intersection of Reservation Road and Portola Road. Badger Hills Trailhead is just off Highway 68 six miles east of Salinas. For non-emergency law-enforcement issues or assistance, call 831-242-7851.

Both trailheads have restrooms, picnic tables, and two parking lots (one paved and one for horse trailers).

Bring water and a map. There isn't much shade. Trails are well-signed, but missing one intersection can get you lost.

Maps are usually available at the trailhead building, but it's safer to get one before you go at [www.blm.gov/fort-ord](http://www.blm.gov/fort-ord).





# history

## Riches to Rags Martina Castro Neil Wiley

Watch where you step. If you walk in the northern part of Santa Cruz County, you may be stepping on land that once belonged to Martina Castro. She once owned almost ten percent of the county.

In 1833, she received a Mexican land grant for the 1,668-acre Rancho Shoquel (Soquel) that included present-day Soquel and Capitola. Her brother Rafael Castro was her next-door neighbor. He owned Rancho Aptos.

It appears that she needed more room. She applied for an addition. In 1844, she was granted 32,700 acres located above her existing parcel. Called the Soquel Augmentation, it covered portions of the Soquel Creek and Aptos Creek watersheds, Trout Gulch, and much of the Valencia Creek area.

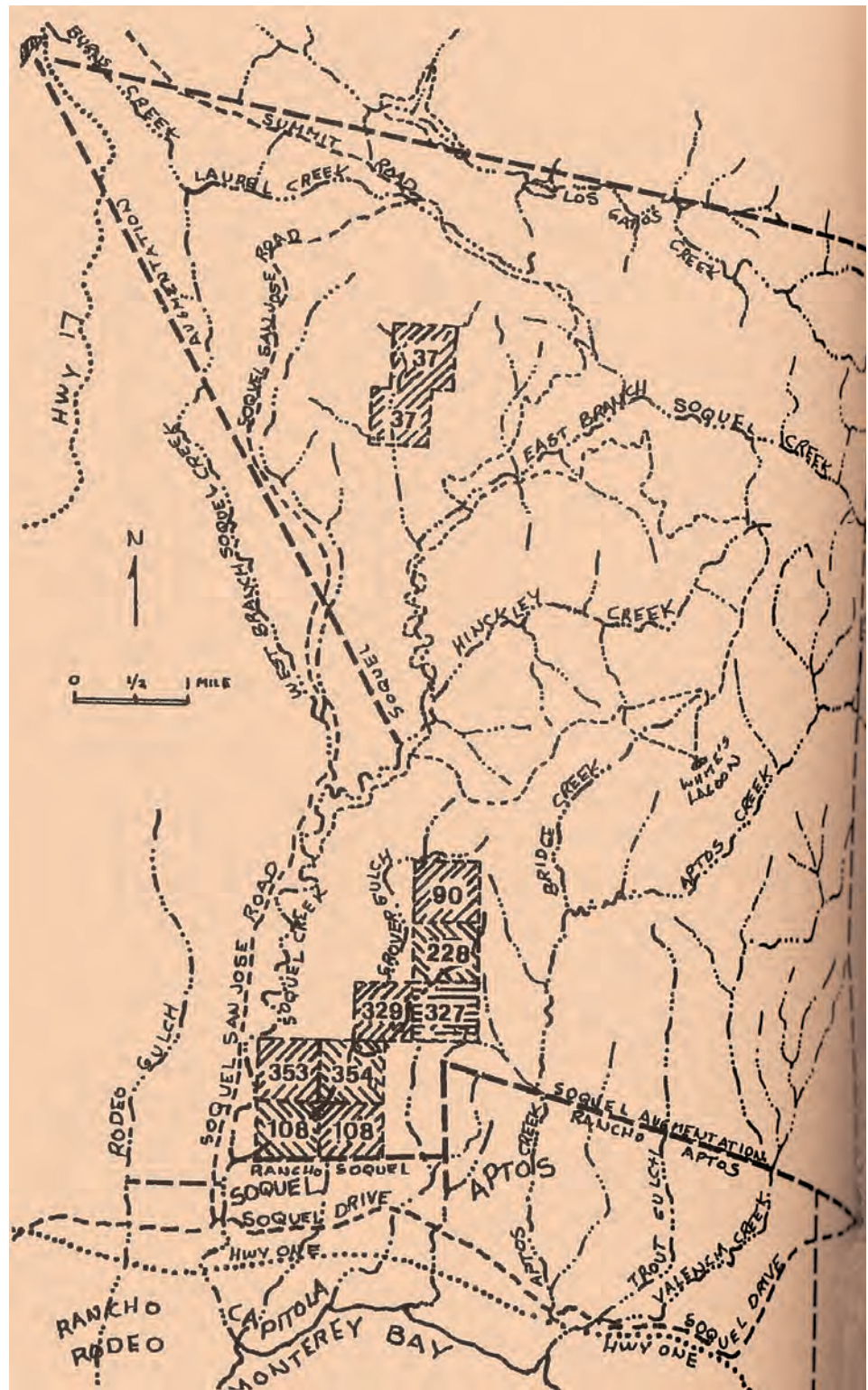
Although undeveloped, it had valuable timber resources that included what became The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park and the Soquel Demonstration State Forest. Rough, vague maps suggest that the grant extended beyond today's Summit Road on the north, as far west at the northeast corner as today's Highway 17, but generally bordering Soquel/San Jose Road.

So, who was this woman who owned so much land?

Martina Castro was born in 1807, in Villa de Branciforte, a pueblo located on the eastern bluff of the San Lorenzo River. Her father, José Joaquín Castro, was a grantee of Rancho San Andres. In 1824, Martina married the first of her three husbands,



**Martina Castro**



**Historic map showing school land warrants in Rancho Shoquel Augmentation**

Simon Cota, a soldier in Monterey. He died in 1830, leaving Martina with four young children. That same year, she married Michael Lodge, who encouraged her to apply for the larger Soquel Augmentation and to contract John Hames and John Daubenbiss to build a sawmill to take advantage of the heavily forested property.

Even with this source of income, the

couple got gold fever and left for the gold fields in 1848. It didn't last long. Martina returned after three of her children died, but Lodge never returned. He was presumed murdered. Just one year later, in 1849, Martina married Louis Depeaux. He was 16 years younger and disappeared soon after the wedding.

Although the United States assumed



control of California, the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo protected Martina's land grants. It took five years of court battles, but her two grants were patented in 1860. Her troubles were not over.

After her husband died, Martina gave each of her remaining eight children one-ninth of Rancho Soquel. The Catholic Church received the last one-ninth. She also sold her remaining land. Claims of mental instability forced her to live with her daughter, Guadalupe, in Capitola. Martina died in 1890 at the age of 83.

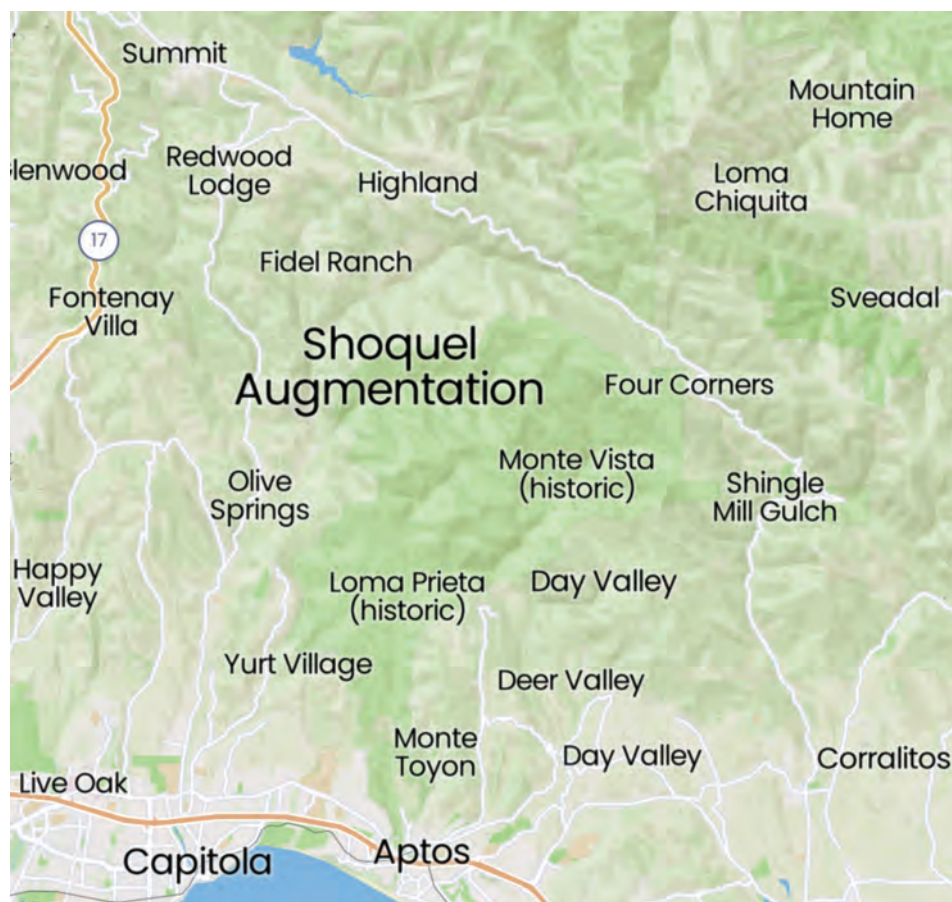
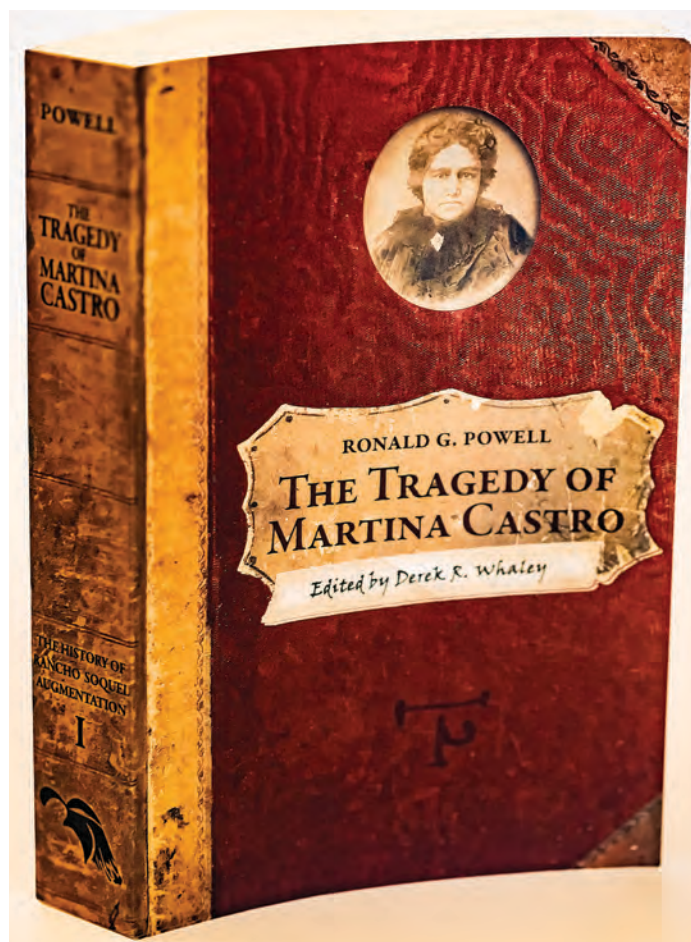
The aggressive Santa Cruz developer and logger, Frederick A. Hihn, acquired much of her redwood forest land and the building site for Capitola.

Did the pressure of too much wealth or responsibility affect her mind? Were the deaths and disappearances too much to handle? Or was her sickness and death caused by the continuing strain of lawsuits and other legal battles?

Perhaps the book *The Tragedy of Martina Castro*, researched and written by Ronald Powell, and edited by Derek K. Whaley, holds the answer. Marlene and I met with Ronald Powell several times. He spoke at one of Marlene's mountain-history group meetings.

He was a quiet introvert, but he was a man with a mission. He couldn't stop researching and writing about the people who lived in this period of fierce competition in the mountains. His research is reflected in his documentation of *The Frederick Augustus Hihn Story*. It is written in 52 volumes now preserved in the McHenry Library. He also wrote a 395-page history—*The Castros of Soquel*.

This work was distilled by historian and editor Derek K. Whaley in the 2020 publication of *The Tragedy of Martina Castro*. If you would like to see almost 600 pages of our local history, you can get this book on Amazon, or direct from [www.ZayantePublishing.com](http://www.ZayantePublishing.com).



This modern map shows the general area (today) of Martina Castro's property.

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**Loma Prieta Joint Union School District  
Meet our New Superintendent  
Deana Arnold**

On April 14, the Loma Prieta Joint Union School District board of trustees unanimously approved the appointment of Dr. Kevin Grier as the district's new superintendent. Dr. Grier is currently the Director of Curriculum and Special Projects in Livermore Joint Unified School District and lives in San Jose. He has served as Director of Human Resources in Dublin Unified School District. He has been the principal of elementary, middle, and intermediate schools. He began his career 29 years ago as a math teacher in Claremont, California.

Dr. Grier has a keen depth of knowledge in curriculum and instruction. He has trained district staff in equity-based decision-making and leadership. Throughout the Loma Prieta interview process, he emphasized the importance of clear communication and building strong relationships. The board was impressed with his administrative experience and focus on students. We look forward to his guidance and leadership in the upcoming school year.

Following his introduction at the Loma board meeting, Dr. Grier said he looks forward to visiting classrooms and getting to know the students and staff. "I am excited and humbled to be selected as the next superintendent of Loma Prieta. I can't wait to begin getting to know each of

our fabulous students, working alongside our excellent staff, and engaging our community."

In addition to interviews with the board of trustees, candidates also interviewed with a community panel that included staff, parents, and representatives of the community at large. Dr. Grier will begin work in the district on July 1, 2021.

The selection of a new superintendent began in February 2021, following Superintendent Lisa Frasier's announcement that she would retire on June 30. The candidate pool consisted of 25 candidates that included superintendents, assistant superintendents or directors, principals or coordinators, and teachers. In addition, 24 percent of the candidates were local and 60 percent held a doctorate degree. The board is grateful to the candidates for their interest in our wonderful district.

**Loma Prieta Joint Union School District  
A Bittersweet Farewell**

**Lisa Frasier**  
Superintendent

It is with bittersweet emotion that I write this final superintendent's message to a community that I have grown very fond of over the past three years. I will retire this month, after serving as a teacher and educational leader for forty years. Not everyone has the privilege of engaging in their passion as a career. I have been one of the lucky ones. It has been deeply rewarding to serve our mountain youth and families at the conclusion of a career I have thoroughly enjoyed.

My professional mission statement reads, "I dedicate my heart, my mind, my time, and my talents to enhancing the lives of young people."

I have done my very best to stay true to this purpose throughout my tenure as your superintendent. I have had the pleasure of working closely with teachers and staff who inspire me daily through their dedication, passion, and competence. We are so fortunate to have educators that care deeply guiding our youth. I am extremely proud to have had the opportunity to serve as their leader.

Who would have guessed three years ago that our time together would include the myriad and magnitude of challenges we have weathered together as a community? It has been said that "when things are good,



be grateful, and when times are tough, be graceful."

I have tried my best to emulate this advice in my day-to-day personal and professional interactions, knowing that at the end of the day, students are looking to us to guide them by our example.

I understand profoundly that the challenges of school closures and fire evacuations have significantly impacted our entire mountain community. I want to sincerely thank you for your patience, resilience, and for continuing to believe in what is best in our schools. I do regret that the distance created by COVID-19 restrictions made deepening relationships with you more difficult, but I am grateful for the connections I have made. I will carry these memories forward as a cherished gift.

What will I miss most? You guessed it. The students. Thank you for sharing your precious children with us each day. Thank you for the opportunity to guide their future. As a community, I hope you will continue to support that which helps them to thrive. You have much to be proud of. Loma is a special place, and our youth are the fortunate beneficiaries.

As you might well imagine, the job of leading schools is also very demanding. My family has graciously indulged my passion and has shared me with school families for many years. It is now time for me to put them front and center. As the old adage goes, "It is time for me to stop living at work and start working at living." I sincerely appreciate all that you have done to support me and our schools. Stay mountain strong.



**KEEP!**  
**SOS—Save Our School**  
**A Great Campaign**  
 Ruth Gantly

June is the time to pause, breathe, and reset as we get ready for summer. Our LPEF KEEP! campaign is finished, with an amazing result. So many people reached out to help us with this campaign—parents, students, teachers, staff, community members, organizations, and sponsors.

Jen Chen, Lauren Gallagher, Tiffaney Gallup, and Elyse Fairweather worked tirelessly with me, campaigning to put our students first and save our schools.

The work doesn't stop here. We will continue to invest in our schools and community. Our goal is to consistently improve education for our students so that they are prepared for the future.

Under the leadership of Superintendent Lisa Frasier and Principal Billy Martin, and the backing of our wonderful teachers and staff, we are in a better position today to stay the course for our children. It's no accident that our schools are good. Parents choose our schools when they move to this mountain. Longtime residents support our schools. Teachers love our schools. Our community backed the Save our Schools campaign.

Our teachers and staff put students first every day. They have the privilege of sharing both joys and challenges with our families.

Julie Bourque, a mountain mom and resident since 1993, and C.T. English Middle School secretary since 2005, explained it when she said, "A school isn't a school without the students. As students transition back to in-person learning, the staff will be there to help them all the way. Our students bring energy to all of us."

Tony Arias has taught history at C.T. English Middle School for 18 years. He knows how important it is for children to have a safe place to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. The time he spends understanding, listening, and coaching helps strengthen our students. They gain confidence and improve their social and cognitive skills, maximizing their opportunities for success in life.

Raquel Marin, the Loma Prieta Elementary School secretary, has lived in the mountains since 1993. She says that our school prepares our students well for transition to high school and college.



LPEF believes in innovation to meet the educational demands of a changing world. With our committed teachers and LPEF funding, we can give our students what they need when they return to school in the fall.

We can all support those who make these moments count. Our students' experiences are influenced by those who care, teach, awaken interest, make a difference, and take time. When children feel safe and supported, they learn.

This is not a new struggle. Adequate sustainable funding brings real opportunities for our students who have the right to a great education. LPEF will continue to work with our district and the budget advisory committee to allocate funds to priorities for the 21/22 school year and beyond.

Thank you for putting our children first. Thank you for supporting KEEP! and LPEF.

**THANK YOU to our LPEF KEEP! SPONSORS**



# **schools**

## **Loma Prieta Joint Union School District Daughters of the American Revolution Support Loma Prieta School Carolyn Dufort**

Superintendent Lisa Fraser's March 2020 presentation about the district's purposeful use of the YMCA Project Cornerstone Asset Building Champions program continues to inspire the Los Gatos Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Asset Building Champions are parent-engagement programs that foster the development of social and emotional learning for kindergartners and elementary-school youth. This skillset includes self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, social awareness, and relationship skills.

Volunteers are trained in the developmental assets model for positive youth development. They are prepared to read a specially selected children's book and lead related activities and discussions in classrooms each month.

Throughout the challenges of the pandemic, the DAR classroom-outreach program continued its focus on one of the Project Cornerstone assets: community values youth. Success here indicates that a young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.

Last August, the Los Gatos DAR chapter answered an immediate need by purchasing iPads for ninety kindergarten through second-grade students to support distance learning.

In January, we gave Kendra Zanotto's fourth-grade classroom eight picture books. These books described diverse perspectives and experiences that led to quality discussions.

Inspired by the nature art of Andy Goldsworthy, the DARs and Stacey Dorn's second-graders celebrated Earth Day in April. The photographs of everyone's creations (young and old) were compiled into a joint video that can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/yxm2cm44>.

In May, as many students returned to school four days per week, second-grade teachers Stacey Dorn and Janis Riccomini expressed their desire to foster student-to-student discussions and friendships by forming book clubs. The Los Gatos DAR Chapter donated eight sets of engaging chapter books for their eager readers.

## **Building Blocks Spring Session Alexandra Hughmanick**

The spring session opened at Building Blocks on April 26, and will operate through June 10. (We extended the session by two weeks due to popular demand.) The seven-week program is in full-swing with stable cohorts on campus on Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday. We also have a small playgroup on Fridays.

Our play-based program, staffed by two teachers and three or four parent volunteers during 'normal' times, is strictly outdoors (except for restroom breaks) and staffed by two teachers with smaller class sizes. Development themes in the first few weeks include the joy of socializing, shaking off social-isolation cobwebs, gaining independence, practicing manners, and learning how to resolve conflicts.

Teacher Nicole shared, "The children have adapted beautifully to being back at

school. They follow our COVID-19 health and safety protocols at drop off. They are already pros at taking their temperatures, hanging up backpacks, and jumping right into playing. The first day was a little socially awkward, but by the time we finished our snacks, the children were seeking each other out and creating play schemes as if no time had passed. With the social isolation of 2020, I'm sure we will encounter some surprising bumps along the





way back to normal, but the children are resilient. One thing is obvious. The children (and I) thrive in social situations. We are excited to be back.”

Teacher Sally added, “One of the many great things about getting the children back is helping them with everyday social interactions. Being isolated from other people for a year, they are used to taking what they want to play with. Consequently, we do a lot of conflict resolution. ‘You took that from Joey! Joey, were you still playing with that?’ Joey nods and we tell the other child ‘Joey was still playing with that; can you give it back? If you ask, I bet he’ll give you a turn when he’s done.’

Sometimes with help, but mostly on their own, a child will hand back the toy they took. They are also learning to say please and thank you in a silly and playful way. We are promoting accountability and independence. Many of the children hand me their backpack to hang up, or their lunch box to put their snack items away. Although it would be easier and faster for me to do it, guiding and making observations on what they are doing and holds them accountable for their belongings helps them develop life skills.”

It’s so good to be back in the beautiful Building Blocks yard. We thank the reopening task force for planning and preparing our campus for students, and the Building Blocks families for their interest and support of our program.

Our summer program details aren’t finalized yet, but if you are interested in learning more about our summer or fall programs, visit [www.buildingblockscoop.org](http://www.buildingblockscoop.org). You can also email us at [membership\\_bb@lpcf.org](mailto:membership_bb@lpcf.org).



june 2021

## Lakeside Community Foundation

Holly Stewart

We thank parents and the mountain community for supporting Lakeside School throughout the year, including those who supported the Lakeside Community Foundation’s annual auction. With the generous support of our sponsors and the community, the Foundation raised \$105,000. We look forward to working with the district to resume prior levels of financial support for school programs.

We thank former Lakeside parents Eric Horton and Hausley Silva, and principal Shama Marshall, for their hard work on the live portion of the auction, and their years of support and dedication to the Foundation. We also thank Jing Tang for translating to make the auction more widely available to all of our families and community. We couldn’t have made this fundraiser as successful without them.

Our school is grateful to Kate Manning, Tiffany Cisler, Debbie Lee, Molly Sundar, Hila Propp, Mary Slaughter, and Laura Brouwer for their hard work and dedication to the Lakeside Community Foundation throughout the school year.

We need parents and community volunteers to help the Lakeside Community Foundation as we plan for the next school year. Email [foundation@lakesidelosgatos.org](mailto:foundation@lakesidelosgatos.org) for more information.

A large graphic with a decorative background of gold and grey geometric patterns. At the top left is a colorful feather. The main text reads "Thank You Lakeside Elementary Mad Hatter's Auction 2021 Sponsors". Below this, several sponsor logos and names are listed: JOHN &amp; BARBARA HARRIMAN, REBECCA SMITH &amp; KAREN IZZO, sereno, bayareamortgages.com (with a QR code and a photo of a man), and Schwarzbach Associates Inc. (with "Est. 1955 Inc. 1974"). At the bottom right is the logo for CR COLE &amp; RIESE Real Estate Group.



# **schools**

## **Lakeside School News**

Kathy McKinney

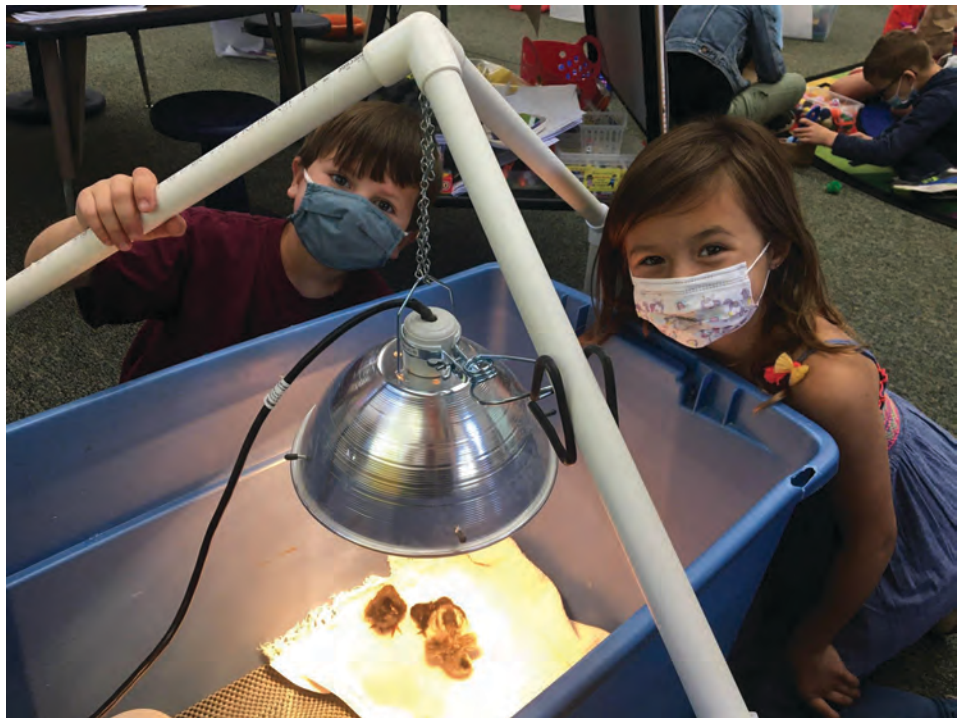
As the school year comes to a close, our students, staff members, and parents have been busy.

Teachers Heather Wingfield and Kajsia Byrne helped the TK, kindergarten, first-, and second-grade students practice a few of the songs our students usually perform as part of our community May Day celebration. We couldn't include the community in our celebration this year, but our youngest students performed the songs they learned while the older students watched (and sang along to the songs they learned in previous years).

Our TK and kindergarten class got a dozen eggs from a local farm to incubate as they studied the life cycle of chickens. After six days, and again after 14 days, they candled the eggs to see if they were fertile. Only three eggs had embryos, so they removed the unfertilized eggs. Once the chicks hatched, students excitedly cared for them at school, teaching them to find their food and water and naming them. Teacher Heather Wingfield noted, "We have done tons of math, art, and singing with this unit. The students were very enthusiastic!"



*First- and second-grade students practiced May Day songs in their outdoor classroom.*



*Kindergarten students peeking in on their newly hatched chicks.*





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Our first- and second-grade class observed the stages of metamorphosis as caterpillars emerged from their cocoons as Painted Lady butterflies. First, the baby caterpillars emerged from their egg. The caterpillars ate voraciously for two weeks, before entering the cocoon stage. The students were thrilled when the Painted Ladies emerged, and they released them into our butterfly garden.

Lakeside's school garden is designated as an official Monarch Way Station. It draws all types of butterflies throughout the spring and summer months. Three years ago, Marcia Williams and her second- and third-



**Students observed the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a Painted Lady butterfly.**

grade students planted additional milkweed and nectar plants in the school garden..

Marcia is retiring at the end of this school year, after teaching first through fourth grades at Lakeside for twenty years. We thank her for all she has done for her students over the years. Her current

and former students shared some of their favorite memories of Marcia:

"My favorite memory was that at the end of the school year, we would put all the desks in a U shape, and then spray the tops with shaving cream and rub it all around. Then we would walk along the desktops, and she'd help us down while saying 'Congratulations, you are now a third-grader!'" ~Jacqueline

"My favorite part of the school year with Ms. Williams is when she would share stories about her dog and cats. Sometimes her dog would jump on her lap in the middle of a Zoom meeting and try to eat her pens." ~Amelia

"Ms. Williams is really really nice and I love doing math with her. She makes it fun." ~Lemon

"Ms. Williams is really nice and always lets me stay and chat on Zoom when I need to." ~Jocelyn

We all wish Marcia good luck in future adventures.

For teacher-appreciation week the Lakeside parent community showered our teachers with love. We enjoyed a catered lunch, sweet letters of thanks from students, snacks, flowers, donations to non-profits in teacher's names, gifts, and more. The staff is thankful to our parent community for the appreciation.



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# schools

## Lexington School Deanna Wilk

Lexington's 2021 Science Fair was virtual this year, but as thought-provoking as ever. Mistakes were made, assumptions questioned, and observations investigated further.

From using a potato to power an LED, to making fresh water from salt-water and dirty water, our young scientists did a fabulous job explaining what they did, what inspired them, and what they would investigate if they could do it again. They proved that some YouTube experiments don't always have repeatable results. They experimented with creating lightning in a jar, seeing how soap's dissolving properties work, discovering what our dirtiest surfaces are, and creating the best soda explosions. One group discovered that there were more bacteria present on hands that touched everyday surfaces than on unwashed hands after using the restroom.

The student presentations were funny, engaging, and honest. It was great to see genuine curiosity at work. Thank you to our Science Fair chair, parent Anna Kearney, for inspiring students to participate, compiling students' visuals, and hosting the Science Fair Zoom night on April 23.

### My Question

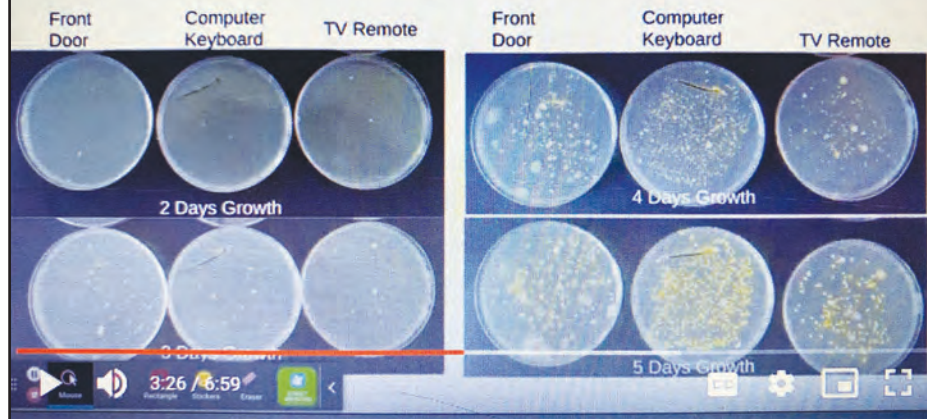
Which potatoes would produce the most electricity? The ones boiled in water for 10 minutes or raw ones.



VS.



### Looking at Bacteria on Frequently Touched Surfaces



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Earth Week, from April 19 to 23, was a collaborative effort among LGUSD elementary school Green Teams. Each day of the week had a theme: Meatless Monday, Trash-Free Tuesday, Walk-and-Roll Wednesday, Turn-Off Thursday, and Freaky Friday.

Students learned that taking care of our environment individually can be as simple

as using less water, reusing containers, including more plants in their diets, and using the energy in their bodies to walk to their destinations—even simply walking over to turn off that light.

Every day they learned fascinating facts—did you know that plastics need up to 450 years to disintegrate? Every piece of plastic ever produced is still around today, and 93

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percent of top bottled-water brands contain micro-plastics.

A special Zoom presentation by Santa Clara Valley Water was fun and hands on. Participants created their own watershed with a crumpled paper that they gently opened to create their very own unique individual landform. They traced the highest lines brown, and the lines running down those "summits" blue. They made predictions on where lakes would form, where trees would grow, and marked X on the spots they thought would be best to build a house. They dropped raindrops from their fingertips to see if their predictions were correct and if they had chosen the best home plots.

Thank you to our home and school clubs and Santa Clara Valley Water for bringing our watersheds to life for our students. It was an interesting spring activity to do with families.

The Lexington campus is nearly full. Ninety percent of students have been learning in person every day since April 19. Thank you to our community for taking care. You reduced our COVID-19 cases enough to make this possible.

*Photography by Deanna Wilk*



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