

Around the Bay

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POINT RICHMOND

Building a community art scene

Craftsman hopes event will boost foot traffic in quiet area

By Chris Treadway

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If Steve Hurst's many friends alone show up for an artist's reception on Saturday in Point Richmond, the event will be a success.

But Hurst, whose eye-catching art clocks and other creations made from recycled and found objects have gained him a large following of fans, is hoping for more.

"I'm hoping the name recognition and promoting through a number of mediums will bring people here," Hurst said this week. "I'm passionate about trying to get some foot traffic in this ghost town. We've got three galleries here and another

slated to open, but where are all the people?"

Hurst is part of a growing community of artists making their home base in the historic neighborhood.

"Whenever artists begin to flourish in an area, it's a clear indication of that area's rise, and that's what's happening here," Hurst said.

Publicizing that community takes some time and effort, as Hurst knows from the years he donated graphics work and other promotional efforts for the annual Point Richmond concert series.

"The concert series took awhile to get going, but now it's established," he said. "I want to do the same thing with the arts here. I want people to realize this is not just Point Richmond, this is part of Richmond."

Hurst and Malik Seneferu are also current featured ar-



KRISTOPHER SKINNER/STAFF ARCHIVES

Steve Hurst works on a clock at his Point Richmond studio. A Saturday reception will feature Hurst's work.

ists at Pikanha's Brazilian Steak House at 25 W. Richmond Ave. in Point Richmond.

Five restaurants in the commercial district are do-

minating food for the free reception at the DeWitt Gallery: the Up & Under Pub and Grill, the Baltic, Hidden City Cafe, El Sol and Kao

Sarn Thai Cuisine.

There will also be a jazz pianist and the hospitality that Point Richmond has made a specialty.

The evening should give a good idea of what the neighborhood has to offer.

The reception hosted by the Point Richmond Art Collective is scheduled for 4 to 8 p.m. Saturday at the DeWitt Gallery, 121 Park Place.

Learn more about the art collective at www.point-richmondartcollective.org. You can check out Hurst's creations at www.stevenart.com.

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Follow him at Twitter.com/[christreadway](https://twitter.com/christreadway). Stay up-to-date on West Contra Costa news at IBABuzz.com/westcounty.



ACTION LINE

DENNIS ROCKSTROH

Ownership change can affect tax evaluations

Q We asked the Santa Clara County Assessor on March 1 if the property tax assessment changes when one joint owner dies but they have not replied by March 19.

Can you please help?

Brian Draper
San Jose

A This can get very complicated, depending on whether the joint owners were married, domestic partners, two cohabitating seniors, siblings, business partners or parent and child, Brian.

But David K. Ginsborg, deputy to the assessor, offered this response and advice:

"A property is typically reassessed to market value when there is a change in ownership.

"There are exclusions, however, that enable a property to not be reassessed to market value.

"The most common exclusion is between a married couple.

"For example, if a spouse passes away, leaving the remainder of their property's ownership to the surviving spouse, the property is NOT reassessed.

"If the same circumstances occurred between two individuals who were not married, such as siblings, the property would likely be reassessed to market value.

"Unfortunately, the laws concerning what constitutes a change in ownership are very complex.

"Taxpayers with questions are encouraged to review the assessor's website and consult with an attorney or tax professional as transfers that are made for other purposes (federal taxes, etc.) can have unintended consequences with regard to the assessment of their property.

"If taxpayer is really interested in learning a lot more they are welcome to review the Assessor's Handbook 401 which simplifies some of the change in ownership concepts. The handbook offers examples of different scenarios involving joint tenancy ownership. It is available at www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/pdf/ah401.pdf.

Or, Brian, you may just need an attorney to untangle this for you should the occasion arise.

Reminders

Best two ways to contact Action Line are by email to action@mercurynews.com or on the Action Line Facebook page at www.facebook.com/BayAreaNewsGroup. ActionLine.

And, if contacting Action Line by phone to leave a message, please say your phone number slowly.

Contact Action Line at actionline@mercurynews.com, 408-920-5796, Facebook.com/BayAreaNewsGroup, ActionLine or Twitter.com/Action_Line.

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OUR COMMUNITIES IN BRIEF

SAN LEANDRO

Woman found stabbed to death in vehicle

A woman was found stabbed to death in a car on Best Avenue in San Leandro on Friday afternoon, police said. Police found the woman, who was in her early 20s, slumped over in the driver's seat of a parked car in the 300 block of Best Avenue in a residential neighborhood near Pershing Drive, investigators said.

Someone called 911 about 4 p.m. to report the stabbing, police said.

Alameda County Fire Department crews and paramedics were dispatched to the scene. The woman was pronounced dead at the scene.

Her name, exact age and hometown were not released pending notification of her family.

Police said it appears the woman was targeted. A motive was not immediately known, and no arrests have been made. This is the first homicide in San Leandro in 2012.

— Kristin Bender, Staff

LIVERMORE

Stockton teen arrested in gas station car theft

A 16-year-old Stockton boy, who police say is a gang member and stole a car while it was running at a gas station last week, has been arrested, police said.

Police concluded their investigation into the theft Thursday, Livermore police spokesman Steve Goard said. The boy, whose police did not identify because of his age, was booked into Alameda County Juvenile Hall on suspicion of driving a stolen vehicle, evading police and possessing a loaded firearm.

The theft took place March 9 about 9:50 p.m. when the driver of the vehicle and his passenger were inside a Chevron station at 39 E. Vineyard Ave. in Livermore. The victim left his vehicle running while he went inside the shop at the station, police said.

Police delayed announcing the arrests while they searched for the owner of the gun, which Goard said turned out to be stolen from another county.

— Rick Hurd, Staff

BRENTWOOD

Impending divorce sparked murder-suicide

The pending dissolution of his marriage led a Brentwood man to shoot his wife to death before turning the gun on himself earlier this week, police said.

The bodies of Christopher Lo, 47, and Joyce Lo, 42, were discovered by their teenage daughter Wednesday afternoon at their home on Finn Way. It rocked the quiet neighborhood in the eastern reaches of the city, which had not recorded a homicide since 2009.

LENS ON THE BAY



DAN ROSENSTRAUCH/STAFF

Beginning fly fisherman Greg Land, left, of Novato, tries to learn the technique as instructor John Hernikl, of Walnut Creek, looks on at the Heather Farm Park pond Tuesday in Walnut Creek.

Detective Sgt. Tim Herbert said that Joyce Lo recently filed for divorce.

"We believe their relationship was estranged, and he couldn't handle the breakup," Herbert said. "He is the only suspect in the case."

Herbert confirmed that Christopher Lo was the shooter. A handgun was recovered in the bedroom where the bodies were found.

The couple's 13-year-old daughter was given grief counseling and reunited with relatives after the shooting.

— Robert Salonga, Staff

EL CERRITO

Weather concerns cancel Street Play

El Cerrito has canceled the Street Play event scheduled for Sunday because of predicted rain. The day of outdoor recreation, which will be rescheduled, was going to be on closed portions of Key Boulevard and Conlon and Humboldt avenues at the north end of town.

Sign in at www.el-cerrito.org/streetplay to receive an email update about the event.

— Chris Treadway, Staff

CONCORD

School board to mull medical benefits cap

Mt. Diablo school board on Monday expects to discuss capping medical benefits for trustees and whether to support the Community Clean Water Initiative.

Trustees will meet at 6:45 p.m. in the district office at 1936 Carlotta Drive in Concord. The board is also scheduled to vote on a Cyber High Online Learning pilot program and facilities for Clayton Valley Charter High School and

the Eagle Peak Montessori charter school for 2012-13.

Also up for discussion are policy changes regarding minutes and recordings, along with exploring the possibility of televising meetings.

More information about the meeting is available by calling 925-682-8000 ext. 4000 or by visiting www.mdusd.org. Click on March 26.

— Theresa Harrington, Staff

ALAMEDA COUNTY

'Cash Mob' coming to local shops

A couple of shops in Castro Valley and San Lorenzo may be especially popular Saturday, beneficiaries of a national "Cash Mob" movement that encourages people to spend money at local retailers.

The Castro Valley/Eden Area Chamber of Commerce is supporting the events, one at 9 a.m. to benefit Gala Bakery in San Lorenzo, the other at noon for Trader Sporting Goods in Castro Valley.

According to the Cash Mob website, "The general idea is to encourage people to go into small, local businesses and spend their money, en masse, to give the business owner a little bit of economic stimulus."

Gala Bakery is in the Lorenzo Manor Shopping Center, 18070 Hesperian Blvd. Trader Sporting Goods is at 3169 Castro Valley Blvd.

For more information, go to <http://cashmobs.wordpress.com>.

— Eric Kurhi, Staff

PITTSBURG

Los Medanos president hopefuls to hold forum

The final four candidates for the presidency of Los Medanos College will appear in a public forum

on Monday.

The forum is for the campus community and the public to hear from the candidates, ask questions, and be part of the selection, according to a news release from the campus.

The forum will begin at 1 p.m. in the Library Community Room at the college, 2700 East Leland Road, Pittsburg.

The candidates are Bob Kratochvil, who will appear from 1-2 p.m.; Kenneth Meier, 2-3 p.m.; Deborah Budd, 3:30-4:30 p.m.; and Jonathan Eldridge, 4:30-5:30 p.m.

For the past two years, Richard Livingston has led the college as interim president after the departure of Peter Garcia, now president at Diablo Valley College.

— Andrew McGall, Staff

RICHMOND

Federal grant awarded for lead hazard program

Richmond will receive a \$2.3 million federal grant to protect children and their families against the hazards of lead-based paint, and an additional \$180,000 to protect against other hazards in 200 homes, as part of a \$12.7 million cycle of funding for California announced by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on Friday.

Richmond will partner with Brookside Community Health Center, Contra Costa County Health Services Department and other agencies, according to the announcement.

The awards are part of a national effort to protect children from hazards in their homes and to make the nation's housing healthy and sustainable, according to the announcement. The grants announced Friday are supposed to clean up lead

and other health hazards in nearly 6,000 high-risk homes, train workers in lead safety methods and increase public awareness about childhood lead poisoning.

— Tom Lochner, Staff

RICHMOND

City seeks service awards nominations

The deadline to submit nominations for Richmond's first Distinguished Volunteer Service Awards, which will be presented at the upcoming citywide Volunteer Recognition Ceremony, is 5 p.m. Wednesday.

Volunteers will be recognized for community service in the areas of Public Safety, City Beautification, Education, Health and Wellness and the Arts at the ceremony, which will be held 4-6 p.m. April 11 in the lobby of the Richmond Auditorium, 403 Civic Center Plaza, as part of National Volunteer Week.

The nomination form and guidelines are online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/WWMZCQB.

— Chris Treadway, Staff

BENICIA

Council to consider deal on historic park

City officials have announced a deal with the state to maintain the Benicia State Historic Park grounds.

The City Council will consider the proposal on April 3. If approved by both the council and the state parks director, the two year-agreement would begin May 1.

Dedicated to California's third capitol, the park is among 70 of California parks listed to be closed by July 1 to help pay down the state's deficit.

— (Vallejo) Times-Herald