



*it's about growth.*

# february newsletter

*crestwood pleasant hill*

2.8.19

## Welcome!

With this February edition of our newsletter, we want to update everyone on some of the current things happening in our building, in the community, and in the world. Have ideas? Suggestions? Feedback? We'd love to hear them! Reach out to our journalism team anytime about anything you enjoyed, didn't like, or want to contribute! Happy reading! ☺

## Anniversary Dates

*Celebrating their Crestwood anniversaries in February:*

- Kenetha – 4 years (2/2)
- Marline – 1 year (2/5)
- Mary B – 4 years (2/20)
- Robert – 12 years (2/27)

*Thank you for your service, we appreciate you!*

## In this Issue...

- ✓ February Events
- ✓ Writing Group Submission
- ✓ Great Local Hiking
- ✓ Netflix and Gabe
- ✓ Raising an Eco Baby
- ✓ Restaurant Review
- ✓ Susan Explains
- ✓ Dog Show Details
- ✓ The Hill I'll Die On
- ✓ Badminton Tournament
- ✓ Trivia
- ✓ ...and much more!

## February Events

- 2/5 at 5:30pm – Trinity Center
- 2/8 at 10:00am – Animeals
- 2/12 at 5:30pm – Trinity Center
- 2/15 at 10:00am – Berkeley Shoreline Cleanup
- 2/19 at 5:30pm – Trinity Center
- 2/19 at 7:30pm – Danville City Council
- 2/22 at 9:45am – Hillcrest Church
- 2/26 at 5:30pm – Trinity Center
- 2/26 at 7:00pm – Hercules City Council
- 2/28 at 2:00 – Community Meeting



**Second place in the tournament, but first prize for loudest, most enthusiastic, most rambunctious team!**

When planning for a year, plant corn. When planning for a decade, plant trees. When planning for life, train and educate people.

*-Chinese proverb*

## Wildcats Return to the Softball Fields!

The start of February means it's time for your three-time champion Crestwood Wildcats to retake the diamond and start training for the 2019 season. After back-to-back championships in 2017 and 2018 (along with their 2015 win), the Wildcats are ready to pursue another title. Said reigning tournament MVP Martell after a thorough session at the batting cages, "We're ready – we're looking to three-peat like the Jordan Bulls." Come cheer on the Wildcats as the Tournament begins April 12<sup>th</sup>!



## Crestwood Dog Show



Remember our dog show from last year?? Well it's coming back in just a month, on Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.! Get ready for an afternoon of laughter and wonder as our competitors take on new, exciting challenges. Prizes will be awarded to our highest-performing friends, and we will have a bake sale with proceeds going towards an animal shelter. So if you own a dog, or know someone who behaves like one, please sign up by 2/28 next to the Bridge East Med Room. See page 3 for more details.

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



## Netflix and Gabe "Happy"



Gabe's commitment issues and interest in the bizarre recently led to him checking out *Happy!*, a one-season show which originally ran on the Sci-Fi Channel. "The premise is that an ex-cop is contacted by his daughter's imaginary friend to help save the daughter, who is in trouble. So you can imagine that things get a little wacky." In describing the gun and drug use in the show, Gabe made sure to clarify that this is "definitely not for kids," in spite of the ongoing presence of imaginary friends, 3-headed dogs and shiny unicorns. Gabe felt that *Law and Order: SVU* fans would enjoy another role with Christopher Meloni as the lead, and really enjoyed that the show was "dark, but also really wacky." Clearly, wackiness is something of a prerequisite for Gabe's viewing pleasure. "At its heart, it's a story of a father trying to reconnect with his long-lost daughter. In the end, they both end up growing a little bit, and it's beautiful – in between the drugs and murder." Emphasizing the benefits of the short investment required to watch the show, Gabe also made sure the audience knew that *Happy!* was not for everyone. "Netflix offers a wide-variety of viewing for all kinds of people – and this is definitely on the fringe. I would recommend it to someone who has reckless tendencies, and would enjoy watching them instead of acting them out. I would *not* recommend it for people who like normal shows with unicorns, because this is not the animated show with unicorns for you."



## **Jokes with Darby: President's Day and Valentine Edition**

Q: What kind of tea did the American colonists want?

A: Liberty!

Q: Do you know the 16th President of the United States?

A: No, we were never introduced!

Q: Did Adam and Eve ever have a date?

A. No, they had an apple!

Q. How did the phone propose to his girlfriend on Valentine's Day?

A. He gave her a ring.

*Bonus Polar Vortex joke-* It's so cold in Chicago, the politicians have their hands in their own pockets.

## Susan Explains **Valentine's Day**



In America's favorite feature, our beloved and eccentric Director of Culinary Services gets the opportunity to give her colorful, creative, alternate explanations to otherwise agreed-upon facts.

Want to hear Susan explain something in her own unique way? Let us know!

*Susan, explain Valentine's Day to us...*

Valentine's Day once a year? Is that because the guy is so cheap? I want Valentine's Day every day. I get mad about Valentine's Day – it's ridiculous. I told my ex that Valentine's Day is not Valentine's Day. Every other day is Valentine's day, I want it 364 days a year. I used to tell him "Don't buy me the stupid flowers." They're so expensive. The day of Valentine's Day they're beautiful, two days later, they're dead. What is the purpose? Whose idea was this? Is this the day of Cupid with his little arrow? He's an angel, right? Is he a baby boy? Why does he wear a diaper? Maybe because Valentine's Day people are making a baby. Nope, no more Valentine's Day for me. I. DON'T. LIKE. VALENTINE'S DAY. It's ridiculous! The guy is so cheap, only buys you flowers once a year. Does it only have to be the guy buying something? I don't know why it has to be a man. And what if there is no man in the relationship?? Plus, in high school, they carry the big teddy bear with the love. Dang, who pays for that?? I never celebrate Valentine's Day. Noooooooooooooo Valentine's Day. It's just the retailers that benefit, especially the flower stores and the candy shops. They bring candies and she thinks "Oh, he loves me" and then they eat the whole thing and then they think you're fat now. See? Don't ever celebrate Valentines' Day.

## **Writing Group Submission**

*Persuasive Writing Group Submission – What makes a good commercial? -- By Terri N.*

A bad commercial is when there is no purpose to the viewer. The short time it takes to create the short story of the commercial isn't a people-catching story to get them hooked on the product or the point it is trying to get addressed.

A good commercial attracts the people in the beginning and catches the eye of the viewer to be persuaded about a product or to the point it is drawing to sell the idea.

# COMMUNITY

## Dog Show Details

**Date/Time:** Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.  
(Meet and greet with the dogs starts around 1 p.m.!)

### Categories:

1. Best Trick
2. Obstacle Course
3. Dress Up
4. Dog's Mind You Most Wish You Could Read
5. Peanut Butter Eating Contest
6. Longest Stay Down
7. Best in Show

### Entry Rules:

1. Dogs must be friendly with humans and other dogs
2. Owner must pick up after their dog and provide water when needed
3. Dogs must remain on leash
4. Dogs must be house-broken

**Questions/Comments:** See Chloe, Darby, Kate, or Sara.

## Homelessness Outreach Updates

Our weekly outings to **Trinity Center** have continued to be a wonderful experience for staff and residents alike. For those who have not heard, we have been bringing food (prepared by our amazing Director of Dietary Services, Susan) and serving it to the homeless so that they may enjoy nice warm meals throughout the winter. Says James, one of our star volunteers, "It's nice seeing new faces and it's great that Crestwood is able to do something like this." Haven't had a chance to go yet but interested in helping? Our last day will be on March 26, so it's not too late! Please see Chloe or Danielle to get involved.

On Wednesday, January 29, Crestwood participated in the **Contra Costa Health Services Point in Time Count**, collecting data on homelessness in our community. The information gathered is used by the federal, state and local government to determine funding resources for homeless services.

## Our Newest Dreamcatchers!



**Markeise**  
*Pill Bottle Cleaner*



**Jayson**  
*Composting Agent*



**Lillie**  
*Lobby Monitor*

## Get to Know Lori!

### What's your favorite thing about Crestwood Pleasant Hill?

I like hanging out with my friends here and listening to music. I love Journey and 2Pac – pretty different from each other, I know!

### What are your hobbies and passions?

I love BBQs and being outside.

### What are your future goals?

I'd really like to work part-time as a cashier at Costco.

### What's something people don't know about you?

I was a cross-country truck driver. It paid good money, but it was scary. The worst was the weather – driving in the fog, the dark, the black ice... never again!

### Where would you really like to travel if you could go anywhere?

I'd like to go back to Cinque Terra. I went there years ago, and backpacked Through Europe for 3 weeks. It was my favorite part because of the general scenery, and I loved walked through the wine vineyards and olive groves.



# COMMUNITY

## Welcome Back Juan!

After making great connections with people during our inaugural internship, Juan is back as our newest Crestwood employee! Working on the Bridge on Fridays and Saturdays, Juan is Ready to bring his compassion, creativity and thoughtfulness back to the building!



## Farewell Cristina!

Best wishes and a fond farewell to Cristina, who after 10 months with Crestwood has moved on to take the next step in her career in human services. Cristina brought great joy, excitement and compassion to our community, culminating in her being voted the 2018 Crestwood Values Awards winner for Enthusiasm. Thanks for your service to Crestwood, and good luck moving forward!



## I Would Walk 180 Miles

Congratulations to Abeth for winning our 2019 Step Challenge! Over just a 17-day period, Abeth walked a total of 361,997 steps, which equals roughly 180 miles! Says Abeth, "At first, I didn't think of it as a competition. All I knew was that I was doing lots of walking every day. I just wanted to know how many steps I take using that little red thing in my waist. And then after the first day, I was amazed! So I challenged myself to do more every single day.

Each step I took brought me closer to my goal or even surpassed it. And every day that I saw progress, it made me even happier and more motivated to continue making more progress that led to an awesome and surprising 361,997 steps! Wow!!! It feels good... really good to get better and better every day!"

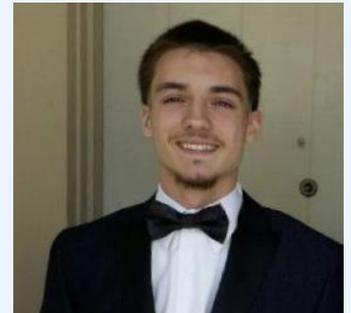


## Our New Interns!

We are so excited to announce that our second round of interns will be starting on February 11th! After a successful first semester of the program last year, we can't wait to see what our new interns, Boris and Dylan, will contribute to our building. If you see them around, be sure to give them a warm Crestwood welcome!



My name is Boris and I am from Hong Kong. I've been in the United States for 3 years and, so far, I love it. Some fun facts about me: I am bad at math, like really bad. I love playing sports and sleeping and I can speak 3 languages.



My name is **Dylan**, and I'm a Psychology student at Diablo Valley College because of my interest in a career in counseling. Although I've lived in California since I was 11, I'm originally from Boston and consider it my home. I'm a huge music fan - everything from Prince to Jay-Z. In my spare time, I love to watch and play sports, especially basketball.

## Outdoor Club

A new group in January, Crestwood welcomes Outdoor Club! Getting some exercise and Vitamin D, taking in the beautiful scenery and fresh air at our disposal in Contra Costa County, and exploring new locations and activities are the themes of this fresh traveling group. We take off from the lobby at 2pm every Wednesday, expect no 2 weeks to be the same! Talk to Clare, Janet, or Darby if you're interested in going AND if you're interested in planning a trip to a particular park, beach, hiking trail, or another outdoor spot! See you outside!



# COMMUNITY

## Dreamcatchers Employee of the Month:

### Cheryl

- Position:** Receptionist/Lobby Monitor
- Favorite Books:** James Mitchener books
- Favorite Movies:** The Matrix, A Few Good Men
- Favorite Music:** Old-school R&B
- Favorite Pastimes:** Studying French, knitting and crocheting, watching old movies, shopping



Cheryl has taken on her job as receptionist with enthusiasm and professionalism, being especially praised for her pleasant and helpful demeanor on the phone. She describes the Dreamcatchers program as being a great opportunity for residents to acquire job skills that will translate beyond working at Crestwood. In addition, Cheryl adds that this program is keeping her accountable and busy, and reminds her of what she needs to hold onto for the future, pointing out that her job will provide her with a valuable reference when working out in the community. Cheryl believes that it is not about the money or necessarily about the job, but more importantly about the experience and the skills gained in the process of working itself. We are happy that Cheryl has joined our Dreamcatchers team and thank her for her excellent work ethic.

## Contributing to Our Community

*The Curran household makes a monthly donation to varying causes. Donations of any amount can help organizations in need, and come with the side benefits of feeling empowered to aide causes of personal importance. In this feature, we highlight organizations to which you may want to donate, should you be inclined. Whether you are donating \$5 or \$100, you can make a real impact.*

This month's donation went to:

### American Cancer Society

Like most families, we have been significantly impacted by the devastation of cancer, the toll it takes on the people experiencing it, the effect on families, and the tragic way it can strip someone of dignity in their final days. The past few years have been especially difficult for us, and we want to do our part to support the American Cancer Society as they search for a cure. To donate or for more information, go to [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) And please join us June 8<sup>th</sup> for the Relay for Life.



We have continued splitting our donations between RAICES and a new cause. For more information or to help, [www.raicestexas.org/](http://www.raicestexas.org/)

## Volunteer Opportunity Spotlight: Hillcrest Food Room

On the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month, Crestwood volunteers head to the Hillcrest Food Room in Pleasant Hill to help bag emergency supplies of food for those in need. In 2018, Hillcrest, with the help of their volunteers, supported 2701 food-insecure individuals throughout Contra Costa County, which totals 24,309 meals. If you are interested in getting involved, see Abeth!

## So you think you know Marshet?

**What is your favorite thing about working at Crestwood?**

I love helping the residents in so many ways. I also do my best to organize the med rooms for staff and make sure everything is clean and safe for everyone in the building.

**Where did you work before Crestwood?**

I have worked at Crestwood for 15 years, before that I was a stay at home mom. Raising my three kids at home was more than a full time job!

**What is your most embarrassing moment?**

The fire alarm went off once when I was one of the few people in the building. I ran to the panel to see which alarm went off and on my way I tripped! I brushed myself off, looked around, and, fortunately, no one saw me! I look back and laugh, and I'm grateful it was a false alarm!



**What is something people don't know about you?**

I love singing! My favorite genre to sing is Christian music. It brings me a lot of joy.

**What is your dream vacation?**

I would love to go to Hawaii. I love scenic ocean views and nature. I've seen so many pictures and it looks beautiful. One day!

A reliable noc shift employee for a decade and a half, Marshet will be celebrating 15 years with Crestwood on March 5<sup>th</sup>!



# Travel

Recently returned from a trip? Planning one soon?  
Let us know so that we can share your experiences!

## Gabe Goes to Mexico

In December, Señor Gabe took an 11-day vacation to Mexico with his partner, sister, and mother. They spent the majority of their stay in Guadalajara and Cancun. Read on to learn more about his trip!

**Chloe:** What were some of the highlights of your trip?

**Gabe:** We got to climb pyramids near Cancun and one in Coba, which is a complex with multiple pyramids. We got to climb one that two days later people could no longer climb in order to preserve it. So we were some of the last people able to go. It was an amazing opportunity. You're three times higher than the trees and it's bizarre looking at the world from that viewpoint. There are no mountains in that part of Mexico, so it's mostly flat, and you know that when you see a "hill" in the distance, it's probably a pyramid covered by trees. Another highlight was seeing my family and meeting my 97 year-old great great uncle. He spoke English really well, which his daughters didn't even know. We were blown away that he still remembered it 70 years after leaving the United States. I also got to do some cool swimming and walk through the jungle.

**Chloe:** Did you eat a lot of tacos and/or burritos?

**Gabe:** I don't think I had a single taco or burrito. I did have some really good, rich food. When I got to the U.S., everything was bland in comparison. My favorite meal was a pork dish with a really dark, heavy sauce and potatoes, rice and beans. It was amazing. I wish I could eat it every day.

**Chloe:** What kind of person would you recommend go to Mexico?

**Gabe:** I guess it depends on where you want to go. If you were going to Guadalajara, I'd say the kind of person who enjoys walking around San Francisco and who doesn't mind being in a city with a lot of people. The kind of person who's willing to try new things and openly walk into a store or into one of the 400 churches in that city (which are like museums) and just explore. Also, since Guadalajara is a city that the U.S. doesn't recommend going to right now for safety reasons, someone who's a bit of a risk taker. The kind of person who might visit Cancun should be an adventurer. You'll see more if you have that adventurous spirit. Someone who also likes nature because there are beaches and jungles. Cancun is very similar to Hawaii in the sense that you'll have brief rainstorms but it'll still be warm. Cancun is a lot cheaper than Hawaii, but then you have to have a passport and have to exchange your money. So there are pros and cons to each.

**Chloe:** Which coworker (aside from me) would you most want to go back to Mexico with and why?

**Gabe:** I suppose it would be helpful to go back to Mexico with someone who speaks Spanish, so if there are any coworkers out there who speak Spanish, you're on my short list. I'd probably choose my officemate Sam; he seems like a fun person to go to Mexico with. I feel like he would do a lot of the things I like to do.

**Chloe:** Rumor has it that you're going to have your next birthday party in Mexico. Is there anything you'd like to say to our readers?

**Gabe:** You're all invited. And good luck finding me because it's a big country!

**Chloe:** Anything else you'd like to share?

**Gabe:** I enjoy getting out of the country to do trips like this; that being said, I still think there are a lot of things to be explored in the U.S. It's a big country and there's still a lot I haven't seen.

*Gabe's bonus pro tip:* Walk across the border to the Tijuana airport and fly from there to your destination. It's cheaper and customs is way easier than that at the airport.



# TELL ME SOMETHING GOOD



## Hana's New Place!

After putting in the work at Crestwood, Hana happily moved out to a house in Brentwood with friends at the end of January. "I'm grateful I could be here, and be able to practice my healing. I thank everyone for being kind to me and friendly." We'll miss Hana, but thankfully should still have her in our lives, as she will continue volunteering alongside Crestwood at White Pony Express, and plans to attend the dog show in March. Congratulations and best wishes, Hana!



## Justine Heads to D.C.!

February 5<sup>th</sup> was quite an experience for Justine in D.C. He attended the State of the Union Address and met with Several California Congressional Officers, including Leader Nancy Pelosi, Representative Mark DeSaulnier, and Senator Kamala Harris. Troubling issues around immigration were discussed and Rep. DeSaulnier was happy that Justine worked at Crestwood, especially when he learned the percentage of immigrants that are a part of the Crestwood family. He promised to pay our facility a visit soon! Says Justine, "True equality means holding everyone accountable in the same way, regardless of race, gender, faith, ethnicity, or political ideology."



## Michael Bids Us Farewell!

Well wishes for Michael! At the end of January, after spending time at The Bridge and The Pathway, Michael said farewell to Crestwood and moved into a place of his own. Michael explains that his time at Crestwood has been meaningful for him; the relationships he has created and the memories he has made are now positive experiences for him to reflect upon while taking on new endeavors. Michael reflects, "My time at Crestwood has been good. I've come a long way and made some good friends. I will miss everyone, especially Gabriel. I plan to visit and I will always remember this place."

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## Angelica's Recipe of the Month: Almond French Toast

### **Ingredients**

8 slices of bread (any to your liking but my favorite is sourdough)  
3 eggs  
1/3 cup milk  
2 teaspoons almond extract, divided  
3 tablespoons plus 1 cup butter, divided  
4 tablespoons confectioners' sugar



### **Additional topping ideas-**

Powdered sugar, sliced strawberries, blueberries, sliced almonds, whipped cream.

### **Directions:**

In a shallow bowl, mix eggs, milk and 1 teaspoon of the almond extract. Dip bread in egg mixture. In a large skillet, melt 3 tablespoons butter. Cook bread slices for 2-3 minutes on each side.

**To make almond butter:** Mix confectioners' sugar, 1 tsp of almond extract, and 1 cup of butter. Use as spread on French toast when ready to serve warm.

**Valentine bonus idea-** If you want to surprise your loved one with an special surprise this coming holiday try cutting the bread slices using a heart-shaped cookie cutter.

## **WRAP Tip of the Month**

Your wellness and recovery plan can help you think about how to maintain your wellness and recovery whether you are at home or at work. WRAP can help you gain a clearer understanding of what you are like at home and at work on good and bad days and identify what you can do to have more good days. When you are doing well, it will also positively affect your thinking, how you feel about yourself, how you feel about other people, and increase motivation to take care of yourself. So check on your Wellness Tools every day and try to choose at least 5 that you can do to work on your goal of getting well and staying well every single day.

## **MYTH or FACT : The 5-Second Rule**

We've all been there. You have something yummy you've really been looking forward to and the worst happens. It falls on the floor. Do you pick it back up, shake off the dust bunnies, and put it in your mouth OR move on? Some might ask, "Well what about the 5-second rule?" This supposed rule says that if your food has been on the floor for 5 seconds or less, it has no germs on it. But is that a myth or fact? The 5-second rule is a **myth**. In fact, it takes only milliseconds (fractions of a second) for bacteria to get onto the surface of your food. Yuck! Floor germs from the bottom of shoes and what-have-you! Next time something falls on the floor, the best advice for your health is to move on.



## **Wellness Tip of the Month**

In case you didn't know, February is Healthy Heart Month. So one simple wellness aspect to pay attention to this month is your sodium intake. Try to eat less sodium by not adding in extra to your meals; find other seasonings to use and be aware of sodium content in pre-packaged foods.



## **Sanity & Self:**

### ***The self-care app you've been waiting for!***

When one begins to think about self-care, visions of lengthy massages, expensive spas, or hours of meditation may come to mind. Let's be real, while that sounds incredible, who has the kind of time (and money!) to keep up with such an extravagant self-care routine? Enter: **Sanity & Self**, a new self-care app specifically designed to help people find time to take care of their mental and emotional well-being by providing interactive audio and video sessions guided by mindfulness, fitness, and personal growth experts. While this app is specifically marketed to women and includes a particularly feminine design, anyone can benefit from the content that is provided. I know I can definitely feel it when I let my self-care practices slip and it may be for good reason; according to the American Psychological Association, a consistent self-care routine can help protect you from burnout, emotional exhaustion, and even incompetence in your job. This app is free to download on the Google Play Store and iTunes App Store, with an option to upgrade with a subscription fee. Check it out!



## Chloe's Eco Product of the Month: Bamboo Toothbrushes

Toothbrushes: a daily necessity. Due to the number of germs that accumulate on your toothbrush head, dentists recommended switching them out at least every 3 months. Now, let's say you use the recommended 4 toothbrushes per year and live to be around 80 years old (which is hopefully an underestimate), how many toothbrushes are you using in your lifetime? Over 320!! That's a lot of pieces of plastic ending up in the landfill (or oceans) for just *one* item for just *one* person. So what to do... Use a bamboo toothbrush instead! I recently purchased [these](#) and received 4 toothbrushes for just \$8. Not a bad deal at all.



Why did I choose these? Because bamboo toothbrushes are compostable and the nylon bristles are chemical-free – oftentimes toothbrush bristles contain harmful chemicals that you definitely wouldn't want in your mouth. No siree! Important to note is that the bristles themselves are not compostable, so you need to either remove them with pliers or simply cut off the entire head in order to toss the bamboo part in the composting bin.

In conclusion, switching to these eco-friendly bamboo toothbrushes will not only significantly help the environment (*for no additional cost*), but will also help protect you from harmful chemicals frequently found in plastic toothbrushes. There are several options out there and, as with anything you purchase, just be sure you're getting what you're looking for.

# ENVIRONMENT

## Raising an Eco Baby

Babies are wasteful! Let's work together to take care of them while also protecting our planet.



## *Green Cleaning Products!*

If you're like me, you enjoy keeping a clean home, especially with a baby around. There's extra work, however, when counters and floors take an added beating from a child who enjoys throwing and smashing their food. Traditional cleaners work fine when it comes to getting the job done, but also add a constant stream of unnecessary chemicals to your home. Not only does your child risk airborne ingestion of these chemicals, but they can be absorbed through the skin or swallowed as well – kids do tend to put things in their mouths, after all. The harmful effects of exposure to these chemicals for anyone can include asthma, allergies and even cancer. To protect your baby (and yourself), consider a switch to options that are biodegradable, and made from plant-based/renewable resources. Companies like Method and The Honest Company are great for this, and you can even make your own! Check out some options here, or anywhere else online:

<https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/non-toxic-home-cleaning/>

## Eco Tip of the Month: Know What it Means



*Want to reduce your carbon footprint and save dollars while conserving the environment? Simple changes around your home can make it happen – I'm here for you, friends!*



### USDA Organic

What it means: Food is produced without antibiotics, genetic engineering or most synthetic fertilizers, and pesticides. (Seen on food products.)



### Rainforest Alliance Certified

What it means: Companies harvesting the food practice soil and water conservation; they also reduce the use of pesticides. (Seen on coffee, chocolate, bananas.)



### Fair Trade Certified

What it means: Food is grown on small farms; farmers receive a fair price. (Seen on coffee, tea, chocolate, fruit, rice, sugar.)



### Certified Humane

What it means: Animals raised for dairy, meat, and poultry products are treated humanely. Growth hormones are prohibited, and animals are raised on a diet without antibiotics. (Seen on eggs and meat.)



### Green Seal

What it means: Products are evaluated for environmental impact; they must meet recycling and bleaching standards. (Seen on napkins, paper, towels, and toilet paper.)



# ENVIRONMENT



## CCC's Last Plastic Straw Update

After a mellow month of December, Contra Costa County's Last Plastic Straw hit the ground running with the new year. In January we were invited to present at the AB939 County Manager's meeting, a group that has been tasked with addressing solid waste. The following day we had the pleasure of giving a presentation to the Martinez City Council, where we received kind and encouraging feedback; one Councilmember commented on how wonderful it is that a mental health facility is tackling the issue of plastic pollution! We also spoke at an Orinda City Council meeting, presented to the Campolindo High Environmental Club in Moraga to get the students involved, and presented at a Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce meeting. So all in all, it was a very busy, but productive month for CCC's Last Plastic Straw. Coming in February? An evening at the Mayor's Conference and attendance at the Danville and Hercules City Council meetings. Stay tuned for more updates!

## Do It Yourself: Coffee Scrub

Many individuals drink coffee on a daily basis to stay alert during those long, busy days. Hopefully your coffee grounds are going into the compost, and if you're looking for a fun way to reuse them, you can create a homemade coffee scrub to help exfoliate your skin and keep it looking nice and fresh!

### Ingredients

- 1 cup ground coffee
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup coconut oil
- 1/2 tablespoon cinnamon



Note: For a more pure homemade product, try organic versions of each ingredient.

### Instructions:

- Melt coconut oil and then mix all ingredients together. Store in a container. My favorite is in a mason jar.
- Use 1-2 times a week in the shower for soft and exfoliated skin. You can use on your face or entire body.

Some of the benefits of using a coffee scrub (in addition to helping the planet) include increasing blood flow, which can reduce the appearance of cellulite, absorption of antioxidants, which can help prevent premature aging, and aromatherapy.

## How to Unclog Your Drain Naturally

We've all been there. Watching day by day as the water in our sink or shower drains more and more slowly. The dread of what's to come...



Many of the products designed to unclog drains are loaded with toxic chemicals that eat away at anything they touch, including your pipes and skin. Not to mention the harmful chemicals that are then ending up in our water supplies. And in our lungs when we breathe them in. Yikes. To avoid at all costs! Fortunately you can make your own cheap, toxic-free mixture that is safe for both you and our planet.

### What you need:

- 1 cup of baking soda
- 1 cup of white vinegar
- 3-4 cups of hot water

### Steps:

1. Boil 3 to 4 cups of water.
2. Pour 1 cup of baking soda and white vinegar into the drain, followed by roughly half of the water.
3. Wait 5 minutes and then add the remaining hot water.
4. Avoid using the sink or shower for 8 hours (or as long as possible).
5. If the issue continues, repeat as needed.

# CLASSIFIEDS

## HELP WANTED

### Interns Wanted!

Are you or someone you know an undergraduate student or recent graduate looking to begin a career in mental health? Look no further! We are beginning our second cohort of interns in late January! The internship is a 12-week program focused on giving intern's hands-on experience working in a community mental health setting and an opportunity to develop an individualized project in our building. We have successfully worked with students and their universities on providing college credit. **The Spring cohort is underway and we are always accepting applications for the Summer!**

*To apply, send resume and cover letter to Kate khunter@cbhi.net*

## MOVING????

Need some boxes? See our award-winning Director of Dietary Services in the kitchen and she'll supply you with whatever you need!

## Looking to "Green" Your Home??

There are many tips and tricks for making a home more eco-friendly, and as inhabitants of this planet it is important that we do our part to reduce our environmental impact and ensure that future generations aren't drowning in a world of plastic. Not sure where to start? Want free items? See Chloe NOW for guidance!

## Wanted!

**Recovery Coaches and Service Coordinators:** We are currently looking for full-time, part-time, and on-call individuals interested in being a Recovery Coach or Service Coordinator. If you know anyone who is kind, compassionate, hardworking, and wants to make a difference, please come see Gabe ASAP.

# Your AD Here

## DREAMCATCHERS JOB OPENINGS

Flourishing vocational program seeks people interested in finding a meaningful role while helping the facility function.

**Dishwashers:** Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday

**Dining Room Attendants:** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

**Pill Bottle Cleaners:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

**Lobby Monitors:** Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

**Landscaper(s)/ Gardener(s):** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

**Napkin Folders:** Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday

*Please see the Dreamcatchers Bulletin Board for more details and see either Kenetha or Deirdre for an application!*

# LOCAL

## Angelica's Restaurant Review: Scott's

A few weeks ago my grandparents were in town for the day and invited Tyler and me out to dinner after work before they headed back to Merced. Since they live a couple hours away and we hadn't seen them since Christmas, we of course took them up on their offer. With Grandma's great sense of taste, she chose Scott's Seafood in Walnut Creek. Given that Walnut Creek is our favorite place to go for date nights, we were surprised she chose a restaurant we hadn't tried yet. Although attempting to stay away from carbs, we all gave into the warm delicious bread and butter they had placed in front of us while we explored the menu. Grandma ordered a cup of their clam chowder, which she ended up sharing with me because "cup" had somehow been relayed as huge bowl. Unplanned, three of us ordered the same crab avocado salad with a citrus vinaigrette. We were in agreement that, although presented as a stack of ingredients in a tower shape on a plate, the flavor was delicious. Being alone with his decision, Tyler went with a sandwich with crab, avocado, shallots and jack cheese on grilled sourdough. Despite that they forgot to remove the shiitake mushrooms as he requested, his review was that it was different but delicious. Plus, given that it is crab season, the crab for all of our meals was very fresh. Although a little loud in the restaurant, we still had a lovely time together catching up on family stuff, and Tyler and I got to share our experience of the venue we booked for our wedding next year. We didn't plan on having dessert but when the waiter said the magic words, Grandma insisted we all share a special treat. After all, Grandma can never say no to bread pudding. I could have done without the rest of the meal. The dessert was the best part! Vanilla ice cream, rum sauce, golden raisins, and banana. YUM!!!



## Opera Review: *It's a Wonderful Life*

Upon waking up with a completely free Saturday in December, friends out of town and weather on the rainy side, I found myself at a loss for how to spend my rare schedule-less day. Naturally, I turned to the Internet for some inspiration, and, after poking around on Facebook Events and deciding I could pretend to be fancy enough to appropriately blend into the crowd, I settled on a San Francisco Opera Matinee of *It's a Wonderful Life*. To be clear, I'd never been to an opera before and had long ago decided that sitting through the 3 hour *Nutcracker* ballet would never again be on my agenda after many, many years of attendance, but in an effort to be festive, I put on my Saturday best and off I went.

As I walked into the Opera's grand foyer, my intimidation quickly dissipated when the helpful volunteers handed me a glossy program guide and showed me to my seat. Despite being as far up into the nosebleed section as I could possibly be, there didn't seem to be a bad seat in the house. Megatrons are outfitted with closed captions, which was essential for my opera-newbie self. I sat back, relaxed, and let the incredibly impressive voices of those who must have lungs 4 times the size of mine wash over me. The show itself was creative and engaging, and, overall, for a impromptu afternoon, it turned out to be quite a treat. So, even if you don't think you're an opera person, it's worth checking off your bucket list! — Darby



# LOCAL

## Local Happenings

### Veranda on Ice – Now- February 18

Don't miss your last chance this season to go ice skating in the lovely Veranda! Open 7 days a week, with special holiday hours. Visit [shoptheveranda.com](http://shoptheveranda.com) for more details.

### Flash Book Sale – Saturday, February 9 from 10am to 2pm

Sale takes place in front of the Pleasant Hill Library. Take advantage of great prices on books, CDs, puzzles, and much more!

### Comedy with Liz Grant and Friends – Thursday, February 14 at 7:30pm

Spend time with that special someone laughing the night away at the Village Theater in Danville! Headliners Larry "Bubbles" Brown and Liz Grant take the stage for a Valentine's Day show. For ages 16+. Tickets are \$20-25 and can be bought online at [VillageTheaterShows.com](http://VillageTheaterShows.com).

### TreasureFest – Saturday February 23 and Sunday February 24 from 10am to 4pm

Spend the afternoon on Treasure Island with your friends and family, enjoying gourmet meals, local art, live local music, interactive vintage games, and, of course, treasure hunts! Free parking. Pet friendly. \$4 general entry, \$7 entry at the gate, and kids under 12 free. More info at [Treasurefest.com](http://Treasurefest.com)



### International Jewish Film Festival – March 2 –March 10

Enjoy award-winning films from around the world, including Argentina, Greece, and Spain. Located at Century 16 Theaters, Pleasant Hill. For details and tickets, visit [eastbayjewishfilm.org](http://eastbayjewishfilm.org).



### Local Runs and Hikes:

Bay Breeze 5K, 10K & Half Marathon – 2/9

Chabot Trail Run – 2/16

Mycology Hike at Mangini Ranch – 2/23

Livermore Half Marathon – 3/3

## GREAT LOCAL HIKING

There's plenty of great, nearby hiking in and by Contra Costa County. For the outdoorsy-types, we showcase some options as shared by staff and residents.

### Tennessee Valley Beach Trail

This trail is not for the faint of heart... or leg! It climbs and climbs then descends up and down the sea cliff face as you make your way between Tennessee Valley



Beach and Muir Beach in Marin County. The roundtrip clocks in at just over 5 hard miles. You can give yourself a reward at the half-way point by visiting the Pelican Inn English Pub in Muir Beach for some delicious fish and chips. The sun, views and sea air are well worth the climb. Check it out!

### Pros:

- Amazing views of the ocean
- Great workout
- Good for cloudy days as you get warm walking

### Cons:

- This is a popular trail and parking can be a challenge
- No water fountains or bathrooms along the route
- It's a long drive from Crestwood



# SPORTS



Congratulations to Chloe and Rich (right), our Badminton Tournament Champions! Thanks to all our participating teams – get ready for pool in February and the return of volleyball in March!



Crestwood's second-consecutive 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish has only lit a deeper fire for next year. Ready to start training for 2020? See Mike for practice times!

# OPINION

**Disclaimer:** Views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in the text below belong solely to the author and do not reflect or represent the views held by the editors.

## The Hill I'll Die On

First things first, we'll start with a definition: A "hill you'll die on" is something about which you have a strong opinion that is mostly unimportant.

So, let's start with a visualization exercise. In your mind's eye, imagine a day of the year during which it is acceptable, nay, encouraged, to eat chocolate and cupcakes all day long. Imagine a day where you think about all those you love and show it to them a little bit extra. Imagine a day to celebrate, via pink and red tissue paper and cards, one of most beautiful human experiences—love. And now, imagine that this amazing day exists and that there are people who HATE it!

Each year, the glory that is Valentine's Day receives a lot of flak. The haters say that it commercializes love, that it's a terrible reminder of loneliness for those who are unattached, or that they just plain old hate love/happiness.

And I am here to tell you, the hill I'll die on during the month of February is that Valentine's Day is the most overly-hated and unfairly shamed holiday on the calendar.

Valentine's Day is essentially Love Day. And I *love* love: I love talking about it, I love thinking about it, I love what happens when I show people I love that I love them, I love what happens when I show people who I don't like or who don't like me love, and I love a day that reminds us all to celebrate such a beautiful human experience.

I love an excuse to celebrate. Valentine's Day comes in the middle of a month that, if you're a lucky human who lives in California or Florida, may just be a little extra dreary. But if you're anywhere else in these great United States, might be a time when you find yourself in the middle of a polar vortex. Those of you with cold black holes instead of hearts that hate Valentine's Day may find this preferable I suppose... But really, breaking up the month with a reason to send a card, bake some goods, or bring candy to the office could never be bad. And I'm sorry, but neither Presidents' Day nor Groundhog Day really do that trick for me. (Sorry Puxsutawney Phil, please still give us an early Spring.)

And, of course, the quintessential Valentine's Day treat: I love conversation hearts. They are cute and they do not taste like chalk. So there.

I'd like to address some of the concerns from the haters: People don't like Valentine's Day because they aren't in love and it reminds them of their loneliness. However, romantic love is not the only type of love worth celebrating. Got a great BFF? Boom, love worth celebrating. Have an awesome parental figure? Celebrate that love! Barista at your favorite coffee shop consistently gives you a venti coffee for the price of a grande? **SHOWER HER WITH LOVE!** Y'all, this day is a great excuse to eat chocolate covered strawberries and wear pink with people you care about; find the love in your life and party on!

People who hate Love Day say that they don't agree with the commercialization of love. They don't like that the likes of Hallmark and jewelry stores make a profit on such a pure human experience. But you know what? The more times of the year that I have an excuse to show extra love to the people around me, the better. And if, during February, those ways are through cards with hearts on them, candies shaped liked hearts, and cheesy hallmark moments, then I'm totally good with that.

Lastly, there are those unfortunate souls for whom love as a concept to be celebrated makes them vomit. And all I have to say to that is sorry your heart is Grinch sized pre-Christmas morning, but mine is not so I'm going to celebrate until the cows come home.

In conclusion, now is the time to get into or onto your preferred mode of transit, scoot on over to the grocery and craft stores, and pick up some chocolate, giant Hershey kisses, pink and red foam hearts and ribbon and start celebrating. Happy Love Day from me and mine to you and yours!

**\*Check out Crooked Media's podcast "Hysteria" for more hills and some wicked smart women discussing politics on Thursdays wherever you get your podcasts!**

- Darby

# OPINION

## Ask Kate

Got an issue you need help with? A situation you're not sure how to address? Ask our advice columnist, Kate, for support! Please email her your questions at [khunter@cbhi.net](mailto:khunter@cbhi.net).



*Dear Kate,*

*For the past few weeks my roommate has seemed really down. They aren't getting out of bed and they have not been wanting to hang out with me in the evenings like they normally do. I've lived with this person for some time and this is far from how this person usually behaves. I'm worried about my roommate but don't want to come off as overbearing. Any advice to deal with this situation?*

*Sincerely,*

*Concerned Roommate*

Hi Concerned Roommate,

It sounds like you're in a tough situation. The roommate that you've known for a while is suddenly acting differently and it's making you concerned for his or her well-being. First off, I commend you for being such a conscientious roommate; I can hear that you care about this person and just want to support them through whatever they are going through. You have identified a few red flags which can be used as a good starting place for a conversation. Since you seem to be fairly close with this person, I would advise using a direct approach. It may be helpful to use "I" statements instead of "you" statements, for example instead of saying something like "You're not yourself anymore" or "You haven't seemed happy for a long time," it may be helpful to say "I've noticed you seem to be a bit more reserved and down lately. I want to make sure that you know that I'm here for you if you want to talk." Using "I" statements can help reduce the probability that you accidentally come off as accusatory or guilt-inducing. Additionally, as always, a little bit of empathy goes a long way. Having a roommate that is different than what you're used to may impact you in many ways, whether you miss the companionship on a social level or you're having to foot double the chores on a practical level, this situation can take a toll on you as well. Being able to identify and accept your own frustrations will help you in your efforts to connect with your struggling roommate and allow you to take care of yourself in the process. I hope this advice has helped, best of luck to you!

*Sincerely,*

Kate

## **Ben's Mental Minute**

### *Kintsugi*



I've been thinking proto-religiously, recently. I remember reading something about a Japanese belief in how people should treat objects. The very fact that there is thinking on the relationship between people and objects is fascinating to me. Anyway, there is an idea called *kintsugi*, which means "golden joinery."

Typically, when we break a ceramic vase or bowl, we throw it away. It can no longer fulfill its purpose, and if mended, it's ugly – it lacks its former perfection. However, with *kintsugi*, a breakage is merely one event in a longer history of an object. The history is part of the beauty. Breaks are carefully mended with lacquer mixed with gold, silver, or platinum. In some variations, gaps are filled with pieces from other objects, so that a current iteration of a bowl might include the reticulated pattern from a mug or a part of a pastoral scene from a vase.

How does your history show through?



## Caught in the Acts!

Noticing each other acting out our Crestwood values.

### *Felicia was caught in the act...*

Still new to Crestwood and Felicia has already built trusting relationships with our folks. This was most recently demonstrated when she stayed long after her shift was over to support someone having a difficult time. I appreciate you.

From Angelica

### *Abeth was caught in the act...*

Thank you for all the time you put into coordinating the bowling tournament. As usual, you did a ton behind the scenes to help us have a smooth, fun day. And everyone had such a great time! Thanks, Abeth.

From Travis

### *Ben was caught in the act...*

I was going to have Benjamin for a badminton partner but alas I'm still dizzy and he was scheduled to go on his vacation to visit his brother in St. Louis (back east). I realized "what a good son." He came back to work today looking all healthy and mentioned how good it felt to have family time.

From Linda

### *Amina was caught in the act...*

You have brightened up the AM shift with your always positive attitude. Thank you!

From Chelsea

### *Clare was caught in the act...*

Your commitment to providing the best support for residents continues to impress me. I admire and appreciate the thoughtfulness you bring to your work.

From Angelica

### *Ben was caught in the act...*

Ben, it has been so much fun and eye opening to discuss big questions with you in our Ethics group. Thanks so much for leading it with me; it's such a great way to start the week!

From Darby

### *Danielle was caught in the act...*

I appreciate your commitment to helping our folks get involved in the community and you model this by finding ways to get involved yourself. You're awesome.

From Angelica

*Clare and Danielle were caught in the act...*

Thank you for covering shifts when needed. I appreciate your flexibility whenever needed.

From Angelica

*Amina was caught in the act...*

Amina consistently greets and interacts with residents and staff with a big smile and joy and enthusiasm. I, and I'm sure everyone else, really appreciate this and believe it has a great effect on people.

From Anonymous

*Justine was caught in the act...*

Even with being left alone on most shifts, you come into work ready to help our residents in any way. I appreciate your great attitude and reliability.

From Angelica

*Angelica was caught in the act...*

Thanks so much for such a helpful group leading in service this month. It's already been so helpful in terms of engagement! You're the best!

From Darby

*Clare and Janet were caught in the act...*

Thank you guys for bringing your passions to your work and for being so down to add something new to your schedules to give our residents more chances to be outside. I can't wait for our February Outdoor Club plan!

From Darby

*Chloe, Clare, Gabe and Sam were caught in the act...*

Thank you all for the fun and informative Health and Fitness Project event you put on to get the new year off right. Even if the washing machine destroyed my chances of beating Lily in the step count challenge, I appreciate you all motivating us to get moving!

From Travis

*Chloe was caught in the act...*

I've said this before and I can't say it enough. I really appreciate the thought, effort, and time you put into getting residents involved and to bringing our facility more. I appreciate you.

From Angelica



# TRIVIA!!



Think you've got what it takes to answer our newsletter trivia questions?? Send your answers to either Chloe or Kate before February 27<sup>th</sup> to be entered into our monthly \$25 gift card raffle!

1. How many days did it take Abeth to walk 180 miles?
2. When and where can you help bag emergency supplies of food?
3. Who's invited to Señor Gabe's birthday party in Mexico?
4. According to the American Psychological Association, what can a consistent self-care routine help with?
5. \_\_\_\_\_ products are made without antibiotics, genetic engineering, or synthetic fertilizer.
6. Where can you enjoy amazing views of the ocean and get a great workout?
7. What is Kintsugi?
8. Where can you find interactive vintage games?
9. True or False: Darby recommends going to the opera.
10. Which Crestwood project plans to attend the Mayor's Conference in February?

**Note:** You must get at least 8 answers correct to be entered into the drawing!