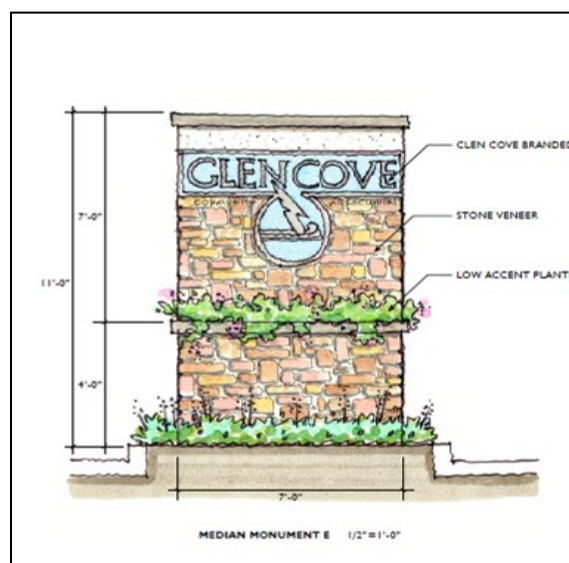


Parkway Landscape and Hardscape Renovation

In the last month a great deal of work has been done along the Glen Cove Parkway in the median strip and along the sides. Most shrubs and virtually all trees (except several Crape Myrtles) have been removed from the center strip. The monument that supported the Glen Cove sign has been taken down. So, the demolition stage of this initial phase of work has been completed.



New monument design as voted on by Glen Cove Residents.

A new monument with a design that was voted on and selected a couple years ago by residents at a general meeting at the elementary school will replace the old one. In addition, the median strip will be extended northward to the Robles intersection. The irrigation system will be upgraded to include state-of-the-art controllers and new trees and shrubs will be planted. At the time of this writing, the projected date of completion of this phase of the work is February, 2021.

This project has been in the works for several years. City of Vallejo staff hired a landscape architect to create plans for the renovation. The drawings were shared

with the Glen Cove Community Association's Landscape Maintenance District Committee whose members provided feedback to the landscape architect and revisions were made. The drawings call for multiple phases of the work for the entire length of the parkway. The first phase was to start at Robles Drive and end at New Bedford, however, complications with the irrigation system meant that the first phase had to be extended as far as Bermuda Lane.

Earlier this year, the project went out to bid and Coast Landscape, the firm currently performing maintenance along the parkway, was selected. Just recently Coast Landscape was purchased by a larger company, Brightview Landscape Services



LMD crews removing the old monument (Picture by Ward Stewart)

whose website states that they are “the nation’s leading commercial landscape company.” We hope that by the time of the next newsletter in the spring that this phase of the work will be completed and the new vegetation thriving.

Article by Ward Stewart

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Letter from the President

I'm confident that I am not the first Glen Cove resident to say, "Thank goodness 2020 is over."

Even though I was nervous as I assumed the role of President, 2020 started well enough. I succeeded John Douglas as president, enjoyed having a terrific Board of Director officers to work with ... Lisa Williamson as VP, Jackie Corsun as Secretary and past president Ron Bowen as Treasurer ... and a Board of energetic community representatives from all over Glen Cove to help us move forward. And to make it even better, John remained on the Board of Directors and took over as Editor and Operations manager of our quarterly newsletter. And then, the San Francisco 49ers made it to the Super Bowl after an exciting season! What a January!



*Neal Zimmerman,
GCCA President*

February was a whirlwind as we hosted an extra Candidates Night Community Meeting for the District 2 Solano County Supervisor and had a great turnout.

Board members immediately began planning our April community meeting to welcome Vallejo Police Chief, Shawny Williams, and Kevin Warner, Vallejo Fire Inspector. The October 2019 fire was still fresh in everyone's mind. A board sub-committee started planning the popular Glen Cove Community Association (GCCA.) annual Garage Sale. Unfortunately, both the community meeting and the Garage Sale had to be postponed.

Continued on next page

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GLEN COVE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

My family had a giant family vacation in sunny, warm South Florida in early March. Present were sisters, children, grandchildren, many meeting for the first time. It was so great ... until that ugly virus became a thing. I'll bet that you, your families and your friends all have a similar story.

Since March, we haven't been able to travel, shop, or hug like we want to. Young parents and grandparents in many cases have stepped up to help children learn at home. The teachers have been remarkable. That has not been easy but I think Glen Cove residents have done a great job of trying to help one another stay safe. Wearing masks, being patient in the lines at Safeway and the Glen Cove Mailbox Center, yielding when approached by walkers along South Regatta have all become part of the norm. Everything we can do helps our amazing healthcare providers and other professionals. We must continue to be diligent by wearing masks until the new vaccines allow us to resume the lives we want to enjoy.

I want you to know that your GCCA Board of Directors has been actively pursuing projects we believe Glen Cove residents care about. Emphasis remains on our core mission of promoting a high quality of life and high standards of municipal services in Glen Cove, emphasizing safety and security, supporting local businesses and encouraging homeowners to observe the framework of CC&R's (Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions) that enhance property values.

Despite COVID, there are several recent community examples I'd like to bring to your attention:

- The Board held two Candidate Election Community meetings in September on Zoom. Frank Overton led a committee that included Pat Tomasello and Ralph Mariscal. They created questions and maintained contact with the candidates. The feedback we received was gratifying.
- Alert Board members such as Jackie Corsun, Dina Morrison and Ralph Mariscal have alerted neighbors and the authorities when troubling circumstances have occurred in Glen Cove.
- Ward Stewart, our great newsletter Master Gardener columnist for years, completed a four year campaign that culminated in the removal of a deteriorating fence along South Regatta and the installation of an attractive new fence that has made a great walking location even nicer. Check it out!

Continued on next page



GLEN COVE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

- And, what is clearly no longer a secret, Glen Cove Parkway is getting a badly needed facelift. Over 70% of Glen Cove residents responded to the Glen Cove Community Association's campaign led by President John Douglas in 2015 to raise our taxes to replace badly needed landscape equipment and plants. The campaign worked, the necessary funds were raised, and as many have noticed, the work has begun. Tired and dying vegetation has been removed, the Glen Cove "monument" in the parkway median is gone, and soon, the new monument that Glen Cove residents approved will begin to take shape. In response to the smattering of NextDoor posts such as, "Does anyone know what is going on with the plants and sign being ripped out?", the answer is YES! There is a plan due to a lot of hard work the past several years by the GCCA's LMD (Landscape Maintenance District) committee under the direction of Ron Bowen, Ward Stewart and Dennis Albright.

Our excellent GCCA Secretary, Jackie Corsun tendered her resignation on 12/31/20 from the Board after several years of contributions. In addition to being the GCCA Secretary, she made our Facebook page more useful to thousands of Glen Cove residents and handled our social media postings on NextDoor. She was one of the friendly smiling faces offering coffee and treats at our community meetings at Glen Cove Elementary in the pre-Covid days. We thank Jackie for her contributions, ideas and energy, and although I'm sure we will find another secretary, we will definitely miss Jackie.

The GCCA welcomes folks that want to be a part of making our community a nicer place to live. It is not a big time commitment although it is an important one. Right now, we really need someone to take over our social media. Are you interested? If you'd like to know more, write or call me at:

Nzimmerman51@gmail.com or 707.556.3467.

Stay well! Happy 2021!



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Telephone Visits are appropriate for:

- Any person with cough or fever within the last week
- Any person with suspected COVID-19 exposure
- Any Medicare patients with issues that **can** be handled effectively over the phone.
- *Telephone/video visits are required for fever or cough but are also available for the discussion of chronic illnesses, labwork, or psychiatric issues. This option is encouraged particularly in the 65+ population.*

Office Visits are appropriate for:

- Patients without cough, fever, or exposure risk presenting for routine care such as Women's Health, diabetes management, chronic pain or preventative care.
- Any Medicare patients with issues that **cannot** be handled effectively over the phone.
- *In-office visits are available for all other issues, including injections, minor surgeries, osteopathic adjustments.*

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Glen Cove Community Association Food Bank Status *By Lisa Williamson*

The Holiday Spirits are alive! We have acquired our Glen Cove Food Bank's leased space. It will be located at 155 Glen Cove Marina Road, Suite #101, Vallejo, CA.



With Benjamin Buggs' (of Faith Food Fridays, where I have been volunteering) support and guidance, we have been fortunate enough to learn so much about the preparation, dedication, and love that all the volunteers contribute to this wonderful endeavor.

While we focus on getting up and operational here in the Glen Cove community, we will need many volunteers who are dedicated to work long days on Thursday and beyond, while assessing the needs of the Glen Cove community. It is our intent for the food bank to distribute food to the needy in the early afternoon hours. We will need drivers who can distribute food to the elderly and immobile, as well as volunteers to pack the food boxes for pickup at our site.

Please contact Lisa Williamson at packerlisa@yahoo.com or cell (510) 778-3177 with your capability to volunteer, your specific needs, those of your family, neighbors, and community. This will allow us to evaluate and plan accordingly.

Wishing all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with hope for 2021 and getting back to some sort of normalcy. In the meantime, stay safe and healthy.

Lisa Williamson

Vice President – GCCA

510-778-3177

Mina Diaz: “Amazing things happen ...”

By Linda De La Ysla

Some people are called to serve. They grow up with passionate beliefs about equity, community, and family and do their best to create lives that allow them to manifest those values. Guillermina (“Mina”) Diaz, our newly elected, first time ever Councilmember for District 3/Glen Cove, has done her best to live in that way.

Born in Aguascalientes, Mexico, Mina emigrated to the United States with her working-class family at the age of 4 ½. Growing up in Crockett, Mina married at 17. Then in 1984, she and her family moved to Vallejo. She recalls: “The City was more lively – the downtown was flourishing with businesses.” However, once Mare Island Shipyard closed in 1996, everything changed. Now, Vallejo’s downtown landscape of vacant and boarded-up businesses causes her great concern along with a commitment to work as hard as she can to encourage fellow Councilmembers to bring new commerce to the City. Historically, “There have been,” she says, “many lost opportunities to promote economic development.”

She is excited to be representing Glen Cove. Mina appreciates that many Glen Cove (GC) residents are engaged in community affairs such as the Glen Cove Community Association!) and—through the recent Glen Cove Community Association’s (GCCA) Candidate Forums and the community newsletter—stay informed about local issues. Mina is eager to explore the feasibility of bringing



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back the Glen Cove Fire Station and—upon learning about its importance to GC residents—she immediately reached out to the fire chief. “I want what’s best for the community and will listen to everyone,” she emphasizes. “And I welcome criticism!”

Mina is clear-eyed about the challenges inherent in bringing about positive change; at the same time, she plans to partner with Councilmembers and other stakeholders to improve Vallejo. As a team player, Mina understands the importance of collaboration with people whose opinions differ from her own. When asked if there is anything about her that might surprise those who have just met her she said “I do not give up!” That persistence, together with her belief in the power of the handshake (“In my community, a handshake represented a person’s word”)—has held her in good stead throughout her life.

Such resilience characterizes Mina’s professional career and a lifetime of advocacy. She worked for 28 years for three different counties and retired as an Employment Case Manager from Contra Costa County in 2017. In addition, she is founder of a local nonprofit, Diaz & Loera Centro Latino, a community-based organization focused on providing educational resources and support for Vallejo residents. Individuals from diverse backgrounds take part in the free workshops either on site at 520 Broadway or—on an as-needed basis—in people’s backyards (“We’ve had as many as 100 people attend!”). (Note: all pre-COVID) In addition to the Centro, Mina also founded SER Latino (Service Education Resources Latino) in 2016. SER works in two area high schools to tutor youth, help them and their parents navigate applications to colleges, and arranges visits to colleges and universities. She is on the First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission. Currently, Mina is employed as a realtor with ReMax.

In her “spare time”, Mina most enjoys reading or spending time at home with her family: two of her three children live in Vallejo and she has a 5-year-old grandson, A.J., with another on the way. Because of the pandemic, those opportunities have been affected, but using necessary precautions, the family gathers whenever possible.

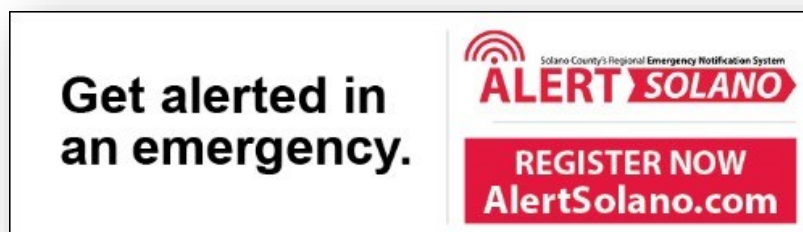
Accountability, transparency, open lines of communication, fiscal stability with a sustainable city budget, plus encouraging new business to Vallejo—this is the platform on which Mina ran. If she has anything to say about it (and having interviewed her, this writer thinks she will!), Mina stands ready to tackle her new role as City Councilmember of District 3.

“It’s really the American Dream,” she muses. “Amazing things happen when a little immigrant has a dream.”

Please feel free to contact Mina at:

Mina.Diaz@cityofvallejo.net

Phone: (707) 649-7716



Neighbors and the Vallejo City Code *By Pat Tomasello*

One of the most common threads in complaints to the Glen Cove Community Association deals with neighbor's behavior. Is it illegal or just irritating? The City of Vallejo Municipal Code probably has a Municipal Code addressing these concerns.

From the City of Vallejo website:

"COMMON CODE ENFORCEMENT VIOLATIONS

Each year, the Code Enforcement Division responds to thousands of complaints pertaining to property maintenance and other related violations. In most cases, investigations of code violations happen due to proactive code enforcement inspections or citizen complaints.

The types of violations that are typically inspected and reported include:

- * Junk, trash & debris on private properties
- * Deteriorated exteriors such as roofs, fences, and sidings
- * Unsecured and abandoned swimming pools
- * Vehicles parked on lawns and unpaved surfaces, inoperable/unregistered vehicles parked on private property

Continued on next page




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- * Trash bins blocking the sidewalk, strewn in the yard, placed on the sidewalk/street or driveway, too early or left out after 8:00 p.m. on service day
- * Graffiti on private properties
- * Weeds & overgrown vegetation on developed properties
- * Vacant buildings
- * Abandoned shopping carts
- * Inhabited trailers on private properties (or trailers hooked up to a private property)
- * Illegal vehicle repair businesses (<https://www.cityofvallejo.net/cms/one.aspx?pagelid=21789>)

For quick reference:

Car parked over 72 hours on the street?

Check out Municipal Code #8.12.030 - Removal of vehicles from street:

A police officer is empowered to remove or cause to be removed:

1. Any vehicle that has been parked or left standing upon a street for seventy-two or more consecutive hours.

Weeds a problem?

Try Municipal Code #7.56.020.

Trash Cans left on the street?

7.44.020 - In residential areas, solid waste, recycling and green waste cart(s), shall not be placed in public view for purposes of pickup by the franchisee prior to sunset on the day before pickup is scheduled, and empty cart(s) shall be removed from public view before ten p.m. on the day when pickup is made.

What do you do once a violation has been identified? There are two reporting mechanisms in place.

1. Report non-emergency maintenance problem to SeeClickFix (https://www.cityofvallejo.net/news/see_click_fix)
2. Go directly to the department responsible for enforcing the code. A complete list can be found at the City of Vallejo Municipal Code Enforcement web page (<https://www.cityofvallejo.net/cms/one.aspx?pagelid=21789>).



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The CDC agrees. The health, safety and well being of our residents is a HUGE priority, so they'll be in phase one of COVID-19 vaccinations held on site at our community.† If you've been considering senior living, make the move to Cogir where we strive for enriching lifestyles, excellence in safety and encompassing service and where **YOU can get priority access to the vaccine.** Make 2021 YOUR year of hope and change for the better.

†Covid-19 vaccines are limited in supply and distribution. At this time we have contracted with CVS Pharmacy to supply our communities with the vaccine in cadence with CDC inoculation protocols. The exact timing of the vaccines is still unclear at time of this publication. Please contact the community for more details.

*Care charges are not included. Certain conditions apply. Contact community for details.



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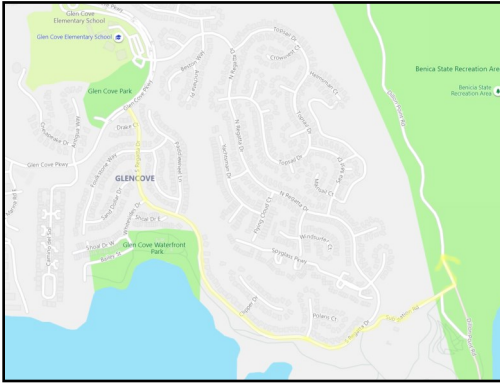
How Many Ways Out of Glen Cove?

By Ralph Mariscal

Many people think there is only one way into Glen Cove and one way out (Glen Cove Parkway to the Freeway).

In case of a evacuation you need to know that there are actually 4 alternative ways out.

There needs to be coordination with CERT (Community Emergency Response Team). They are coordinated by FEMA and would have the final say as to which developments would leave by which route. Until we can get this approved, let's know where they are.

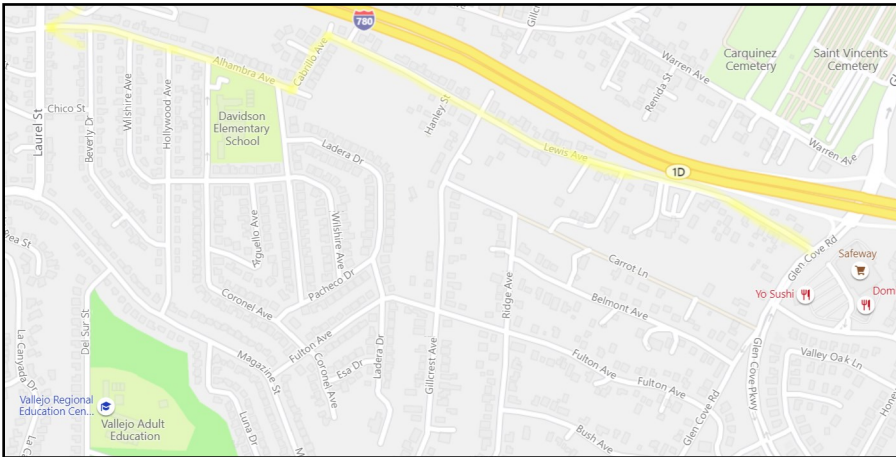


#1. Glen Cove Pkwy

Right turn to South Regatta Drive.

To Sub Station Rd.

This is a walking exit out to Benicia State Park.



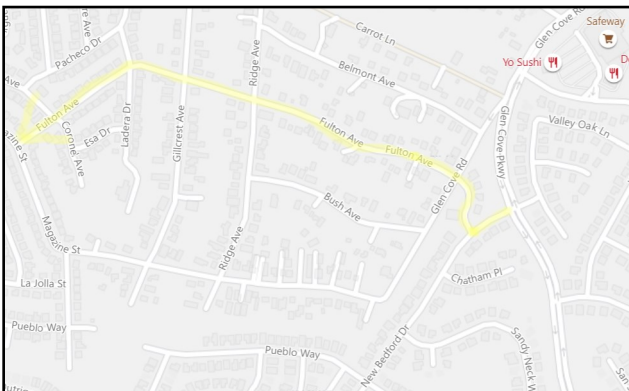
#2. Glen Cove Pkwy.

Left turn to Lewis Ave.

Left turn on Cabrillo Ave.

Right turn on Alhambra Ave.

This takes you out to Laurel St.



#3. Glen Cove Pkwy.

Left turn on New Bedford Dr.

Right turn on Fulton Ave.

This takes you out to Magazine Street.

GLEN COVE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

#4. Glen Cove Pkwy.

(This is the most complicated.)

Take Saybrook way

Right turn on Sandy Neck Way

Left turn on New Bedford Dr.

Right turn Pueblo Way

Left turn on Seahorse Dr.

Right turn on Outrigger Dr.

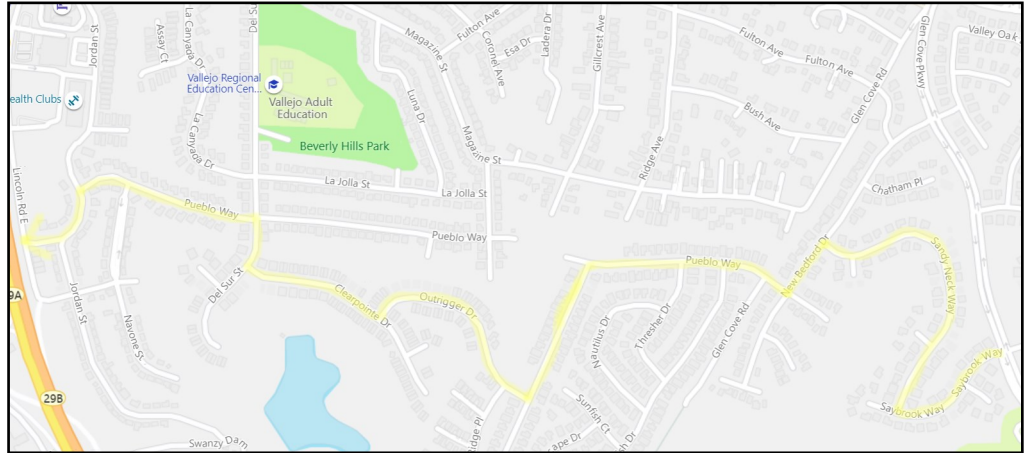
Right turn on Clear Point Dr.

Right turn on Del Sur St.

Left turn on Pueblo Way

Left turn on Jordan St.

This takes you out to Lincoln Road.



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RECENT SALES IN GLEN COVE

Sold Date	Street	Bed/Bath	Sq.Ft	Sold Price
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11/17/20	Brigantine Rd	4/2.5	1815	\$536,000
11/16/20	Captains Ct	3/2	1288	\$537,500
11/10/20	Robles Way	4/2.5	2230	\$553,000
11/05/20	Topsail Dr	4/2	1430	\$580,000
11/05/20	N Regatta Dr	3/2	1288	\$553,200
10/30/20	Camino del Sol Ct	4/2.5	2306	\$650,000
10/29/20	Clearpointe Dr	3/2.5	1531	\$465,000
Condos				
11/23/20	Little River Ct	3/2.5	1414	\$451,000
11/20/19	Little River Ct	2/1	989	\$390,000
10/16/19	Stinson St	3/2.5	1007	\$440,000

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The Chip Sealing of South Regatta Drive *By Ward Stewart*

At the beginning of October residents of The Pointe were informed that South Regatta Drive would be resurfaced using a process called 'chip sealing'. The main portion of the work took about a half day and consisted of applying a tar-like substance immediately followed by a machine that laid down small pieces of rock called chips.

The immediate reaction of the residents was, "Is this all?" People expressed that they hoped a layer of tar perhaps like 'slurry seal' should be applied over the chips. Residents were told, 'No, this is it!' There were large quantities of loose chips all over the roadway. Cars going down the street kicked up rocks onto the sidewalk and yards. One person noted that he hadn't moved here to live on a gravel road. Another resident complained about his car's paint job being harmed by the chips.



What ensued was an outcry that included phone calls to Howard Salamanca, Public Works Engineer with the City of Vallejo. Mr. Salamanca responded by returning phone calls and emails to the residents who complained. Furthermore, he set up a meeting in the neighborhood for the individuals who had contacted him and Matt Tuggle, Engineering Manager, Solano County Public Works. Ten residents of The Pointe were able to attend the meeting.

Mr. Tuggle is an expert on the chip sealing process. He and Mr. Salamanca pointed out that residents could visit Taylor Avenue off Benicia Road and Fulton Avenue near New Bedford to see

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what a chip sealed road looks like after a few years. Mr. Tuggle stated that as time goes by and more cars drive on South Regatta the chips will get more deeply embedded in the oil underlay which will also move toward the surface creating a smoother, darker roadway. This process will be expedited when summer heat softens the oil. He also said that slurry seal is not as good a procedure as chip seal since the former is more brittle and is more likely to crack over time.

After three weeks South Regatta was looking better than it did immediately after the work because there were fewer loose chips which was the result of car traffic and street sweepers coming by several times each week.

Mr. Tuggle told us that after four or five years South Regatta should be chip sealed again. A couple years later a micro layer should be applied. The result would be a nicely repaved street that shouldn't need any additional work for fifteen years.

At the meeting residents complained about the cracks and potholes in our street. Mr. Tuggle said that the chip sealing had closed up those problems enough so that water would not seep through and create more significant difficulties. To the public works staff stopping water infiltration was a major goal because water would make the underlying clay soil swell and push the roadway up making it 'alligator', that is, the street would have rolling hills and valleys not unlike the back of the aforementioned reptile.

In conclusion at the time of this writing, the street was looking better and residents had learned more about chip sealing. There remained more loose chips than residents would prefer. We thanked Mr. Salamanca and Mr. Tuggle for the time they took to speak with us and explain the chip sealing process. It is not often that public employees make significant efforts to respond to residents' concerns.



GCCA Memberships

10/1/2020 - 12/22/2020

Many thanks to those who renewed or joined the Glen Cove Community Association

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
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| Chandler, Vincent & Irene | Lessley, Joshua | Pokorny, Veronica |
| Chen, Lawrence | Lyman, Alexander & Virginia | Porter, Mark |
| Chlala, Elias & Salwa | MacLeod, Laura & Andrew | Reynolds, Daniel L. |
| Cross, Nancy | Mandel, Dave & Hilary | Roos, Paul |
| Davis, Jeremy | Manley, David & Joan | Seaward, Janel |
| Denay, Maryanne & Richard | Meadows, Cathy | Smith, Rodney & Elizabeth |
| Dey, Karen & Les | Miles, April | Solar, Gray & Michael |
| Domingo, Gene | Mimiaga, Tom & Pam | Sunga, Hermie & Mila |
| Finzel, Michael J. | Monteau, C. Carole | Sweatfield, Michael & Zee Magee |
| Flannery, Jo | Morgan, Nicole & Marc | Tabtab, Oscar E. & Zenaida |
| Garcia, Yolanda & Mariscal, Ralph | Murphy, Hezekiah & Gwen | Thomas, Stephen & Terrietta |
| Gibson, Gray & Solar, Michael | Myers, Jill & Ray | Tognoli, Elizabeth |
| Guevarra, Irene & Gerardo | Oteyza, Edgar & Tess | Warner, Rosemary |
| Haskett, Linda | Overton, Linda & Frank | Werlin, Otto |
| Hodge, Rosemarie | Paningbatan, Marietta | West, Lisa Simms West & Kim |
| Hottinger, Colette | Patterson, Michael | Winslow, Norvell |
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| Kennington, Stacey | | |

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| Johnson, Phillip & Beatrice | Porter, Mark | Warner, Rosemary |
| Meadows, Cathy | Reynolds, Daniel L. | Zimmerman, Neal & Monica |
| Myers, Jill & Ray | Sweatfield, Michael & Zee Magee | |

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There is a PayPal sign up with an option for yearly autopay of only \$20 annual membership.

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Person of Interest: Wellington Brookins

By Neal Zimmerman

Our Glen Cove Community Association newsletter "person of Interest" series has covered a variety of accomplished people with interesting backgrounds, occupations, and travels. Most of these people are in their 40's, 50's or 60's ... or even older.

But this "Person of Interest" is a first for our newsletter ... young, eager and ready to serve his country in a way that most of us can only dream about.

Wellington Brookins recently graduated from Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama, a private historically black Land-grant university in Tuskegee, Alabama. The campus is designated as the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site by the National Park Service. The university was home to scientist George Washington Carver and to World War II's Tuskegee Airmen.



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Wellington grew up in Los Angeles, and graduated from Da Vinci Science High School in Hawthorne, CA. He found that his interests were in science, math and Aerospace Engineering. He enjoyed playing football and rugby.

Wellington shared that Tuskegee University had outstanding programs in Agriculture, Business, Animal Sciences, and Engineering. He added that 75% to 90% of African American veterinarians in the US graduated from Tuskegee University.

In college, Wellington was in the Air Force ROTC program. He explained that becoming a Tuskegee Airman today is an expression of the ideals ... excellence in everything and a concept of double victory ... fighting for country and fighting against Jim Crow policies. Tuskegee Airmen were pilots, parachute makers, crew chiefs, and provided support for critical tasks needed by an air force unit.

Wellington graduated this year as a commissioned Air Force officer. Air Force officers are commissioned by the President of the United States. He is currently staying at his mother's home in Glen Cove. If his plan was to enter the Air Force, he would be in the Air Force Reserve.

However, he is not going into the Air Force. Wellington is one of the select few chosen for the United States Space Force. Formerly known as the Air Force Space Command, the United States Space Force is a separate branch of our military. This branch operates our satellites, tracks missiles, and a myriad of other tasks. Wellington will be part of this growing new branch of service. In March, Wellington will begin his new assignment at Vandenberg Air Force base in Santa Barbara County.

I know Wellington's mom, the Rev. Dr. Rosalynn Brookins. She's one of your Glen Cove neighbors. She's very proud of her son. I hope you now know why.



Please Don't Call It Dirt!

By Ward Stewart

Soil is the miraculous substance that forms a thin layer on much of the solid surface of the earth. Its importance cannot be overestimated as it is essential for large portions of the plant and, therefore, animal life on our planet. Soil is complicated. It is made up of a variety of matter both living and dead.

One soil component is microorganisms, or microbes, tiny organisms including bacteria, algae, fungi, and mycorrhizae. Within a single teaspoon of soil, millions of microorganisms live. They decompose and eliminate plant and animal remains and much more.

Do you remember the disastrous Deep Water Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico during which millions of gallons of oil were released into the water? A major component of the cleanup effort was the action of microorganisms to consume the oil. Oil-eating microbes are nearly ubiquitous around the world and may exist in low numbers when no oil is present; however, when hydrocarbons are

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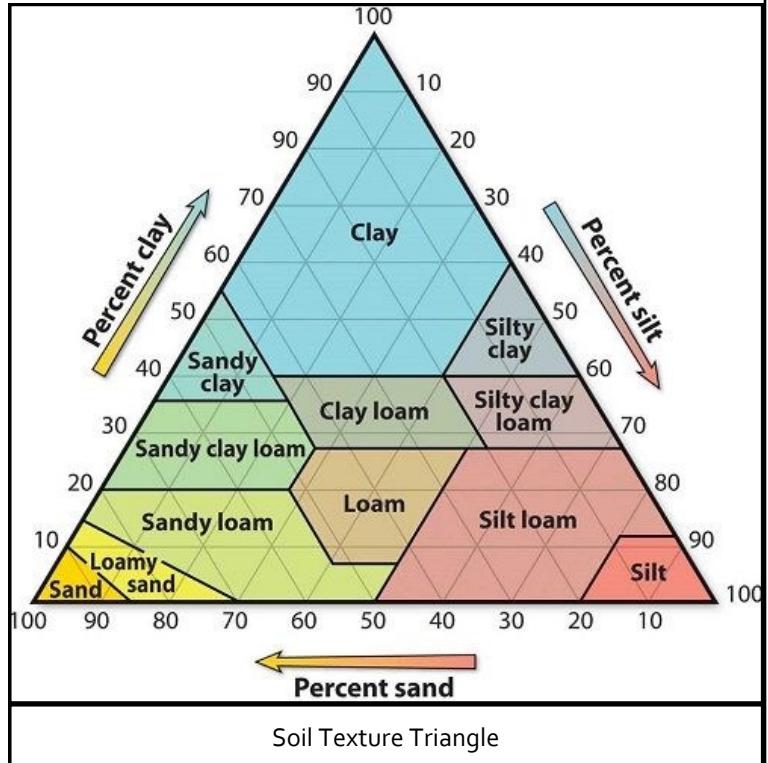
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present, the microbes reproduce quickly and do their work to degrade the carbon containing oil. But, we digress.

Soil is not homogenous, but is made of three phases: solid, liquid, and gas. Moist surface soil is approximately 45% minerals, 5% humus, 25% soil water, and 25% soil air by volume. The mineral phase consists of rocks ground into particles of various sizes that provide important chemical nutrients for plants. They are classified by their size as: clay, silt, or sand.

The smallest are clay particles that are less than .002 mm in diameter and are so small that individual particles are not visible to the naked eye. Clay feels sticky to the touch and can cling together so it can be rolled into a ribbon. Silt particles are larger than clay and can have diameters up to .05 mm. They, too, cannot be seen individually by the naked eye, will stick together, and to the touch are smooth without feeling sticky. The largest of the 'fine earth' particles is sand measuring up to 2 mm. Obviously, individual sand particles are visible, they ordinarily don't stick together, and feel gritty to the touch. The 'coarse earth' fractions are larger than 2 mm and include pebbles, gravel, and stones.



According to a soils test I conducted as a student at Solano Community College, the soil in my yard is classified as sandy clay. Roughly speaking, this means the soil I tested is 50% clay, 45% sand, and 5 % silt. I would assume most soil in Glen Cove has the same composition. I hear from Master Gardeners throughout the county that they believe their soil is predominantly clay. Perhaps, the significant sand content in my sample stems from the proximity to the Carquinez Strait? Water drains very quickly from sandy soil, while it drains much more slowly from clay soil. This latter characteristic is good for our plants as the soil holds water and keeps it available to them longer.

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Humus makes up the remainder of the solid portion of soil. It consists of organic particles such as the remnants of old plants or introduced compost. The solid phase provides nutrients for plants and a medium in which they can germinate seeds, grow, and anchor.

The other half of the soil consists of soil water and soil air. Both are important as too much water may drown the roots and too little will cause plants to wilt and eventually die. The soil air, like our atmosphere, is 78% nitrogen. Nitrogen is one of the most important chemicals that plants require; however, it can be in a form that is not 'available' to plants. A process called 'nitrogen fixation' must take place in order to transform the nitrogen molecules in air into a form that is useable by plants. One way this happens is by bacteria that live in small nodules on certain plant roots and convert the nitrogen into ammonium that plants can process. Legumes like clover, alfalfa, peas, and beans are hosts to the nitrogen-fixing bacteria. These legumes are often planted as 'cover crops' to increase the soil nitrogen content.

Another way that nitrogen fixation takes place is by means of lightning in the atmosphere. During storms lightning will oxidize nitrogen in the air creating nitrous oxide that will be brought to earth by rain and will be in a form readily available to plants. Unfortunately, we don't get rain and lightning together very often.

So, soil is a complex substance that provides the medium in which life on earth can grow. Dirt, on the other hand, is the stuff you sweep from your floor or get under your finger nails. Some definitions of dirt include soil but calling soil dirt is to do it a serious injustice.

Ward Stewart

UC Master Gardener-Solano



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GLEN COVE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



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*Glen Cove Water Views
Photos by Dina Morrison*

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