

**July - September 2020** 

Volume 32, No. 3

## The 2020 Vallejo Election

If you have somehow missed it, 2020 has shaped up to be a rather important political year. National election coverage dominates news issues pitting parties against each other. While it is always important to exercise your right to vote, this year is an especially important year for those of us in Glen Cove. The mayor's seat is up for election and due to a recent change in how the city council is assembled, this year is the first time that the district that includes Glen Cove will elect its own city council member. Glen Cove is the largest part of a newly designated district.

For a little background, last year in July, the Vallejo City Council voted to move from "at-large elections" to "by-district" (aka "district elections") for city council seats. An at-large election is when the entire city votes on an elected position (such as mayor, which will continue to be voted on by the entire city). District elections separate the city into groups which vote for their specific representation on the city council. Why was this done? There have been numerous cases around California challenging cities compliance with the California Voting Rights Act and their use of at-large elections. In an effort to fall into compliance as well as avoid litigation, the city council voted to make the change.

District elections change the way we all will vote going forward in Vallejo when it comes to city council. Districts 1, 3, and 6 will vote this year and districts 2, 4, and 5 will vote in 2022. Each elected official will serve for a 4-year term as they did previously. To be eligible to run for a district such as Glen Cove, the candidate must "be a resident and elector of the district they are running for at least thirty (30) days preceding the last day for filing of



The Vallejo city district map. Glen Cove is district 3 and covers areas both below and above 780.

nomination papers." This means that at least at some point they have lived in the area defined as Glen Cove. You will note from the map that Glen Cove is a bit larger than the area many of us have known.

Moving forward, the Glen Cove Community Association (GCCA) will be providing updates and information as things change. The nomination period begins July 13th and ends August 7th (with the exception that if an incumbent doesn't file then the deadline is extended until August 12th). Once we have a better understanding on who is running, keep an eye out for information regarding the candidates. The GCCA has historically run candidates town hall meetings on election years. Due to the ongoing concerns of Covid-19, we are working to find solutions to still engage the community and assist in informed participation. More updates will be shared.

Along with our district position, the mayor's position is open. Mayor Sampayan has announced that he will not be seeking another term and a number of folks have already begun the campaign process. Glen Cove, this is one of many opportunities! If you are reading this you are most likely engaged in your neighborhood. Maybe you might think about running for office? The more voices we have, the stronger our community will be.







#### **Letter from the President**

Summer 2020 ... caring for ourselves and our community

The Glen Cove Community Association (G.C.C.A.) newsletter in July typically welcomes summer, reminds us that we live in a beautiful area, suggests how to get your architectural reviews accomplished efficiently, wishes everyone a fun-filled July 4th holiday, and includes a serious warning about the danger posed by fireworks.

Well, summer is here, we still live in a beautiful area and the bevy of contractor's trucks indicate that home improvement projects are underway. If you are starting one of these projects, like painting



Neal Zimmerman, GCCA President

or replacing your roof, don't forget to contact your GCCA representative to make sure it conforms to your developments CC&R's. In many cases, it requires an Architectural Review, which is a simple process that can be done fairly quickly.

We have added several exceptional community representatives in the past few years but some communities are still not represented. It will not be a drain on your time, it's not a difficult job and I have found it personally rewarding. If you are at all interested, please write or call me. You'll find my contact information as well as a list of developments that need a representative in the Community Directory near the back of this newsletter.

And while we have much to be thankful for, and much to look forward to, we must also remain vigilant to things that will keep our families and neighbors safe. Safety comes in many varieties.

We owe a tremendous debt of thanks to healthcare professionals, firefighters, police officers and other first responders who have risked their personal safety for us. The messaging about COVID-19 can be confusing at times but I have been gratified to see that most Vallejo residents and Glen Cove residents in particular, have adopted wearing masks to protect one another. You see people observing social distancing everywhere you look in places of business and while walking the streets of Glen Cove. I hate wearing a mask too, but keep doing it. We're doing it for each other.

As Glen Cove residents, we are acutely aware of fire danger and recognize that good planning is as important as good luck.

The City of Vallejo and the Vallejo Fire Department, under the leadership of Chief Daryl Arbuthnott, have created two must-read brochures. "Ready Set! Go!" is about being prepared if an immediate evacuation order

is issued due to an emergency such as a brush fire.

"Ready!" How to prepare your home by creating defensible space for firefighters, eliminating hazardous vegetation and ways to "harden" your home inside and out.

"Set!" Create a Wildfire Action Plan ... important phone numbers, what to take, an evacuation plan and an easy worksheet to organize yourself. You'll definitely want to remember the 6 P's (People/Pets, Papers, Prescriptions, Pictures, Plastic, and Personal Computers).

"Go!" When to evacuate, where to go and how to get there.

#### How to find these brochures:

Go to: <u>CityofVallejo.net</u>. Click on the green "Wildland Safety" box. Scroll down so you can view and download the Vallejo Fire Department's wildfire safety brochure.

The city previously emailed "A Firesafe Guide to Defensible Space" to Vallejo residents. That brochure is available as well.

One last thing: We have city elections this fall. Since we are uncertain when we can convene once again at Glen Cove Elementary for a Glen Cove community meeting, the Board of Directors is looking at video conferencing. We will share details as soon as they are available.



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#### **Safety Tip- Catalytic Converter Theft By Pat Tomasello**

There seems to be more awareness of catalytic converter theft in Glen Cove. Thefts occur night or day, it doesn't seem to matter. And the cost to replace one can run between \$2000-\$3500. Why? Catalytic converters contain platinum, rhodium, and palladium. These metals are expensive, and thieves sell the converters to scrap yards for several hundred dollars per converter, depending on the size of the converter and the current value of the metals inside it.

Hybrid cars are targeted because they have two power sources – an electric motor and a petrol or diesel engine so their catalytic converters are used less frequently to process pollutants. This means the metals inside them are less likely to corrode, making them more valuable. The rate of catalytic converter theft varies depending on the current prices of the metals inside it. As the value of the converters increase the thefts increase.

Thieves can remove a catalytic converter quickly, often in less than two minutes. The only tools a thief needs are a wrench (for converters that are bolted on) or a reciprocating saw (for converters



that are welded in). Some thieves bring a mechanic's creeper, so they can slide it under the vehicle and remove the bolts holding the converter. The thefts usually occur at night, but one Glen Cove resident confirms that he saw thieves steal 2 catalytic converters from cars parked in the Safeway parking lot during the afternoon.

The Glen Cove Community Association has reached out to the leasing property management company of the Robles Shopping Center, asking for better security. Thieves look for easy targets when it comes to catalytic converter theft and a few simple steps may help make your car or SUV a less likely target. Park in well-lit areas whenever possible. If you have a personal garage, keep your car in the garage with the door closed when the vehicle is not in use. If the garage isn't an option, back your car up into the driveway. When parking in a public lot, park close to a building entrance or to the nearest access road.

If you have a security system on your car, calibrate it so vibration sets it off the alarm. Having the converter welded in place also makes it more difficult to remove. There are also security devices that are available that attach to the converter, making it more difficult to steal.



# Person of Interest: Deputy Chief of Emergency Management - Byron Berhel By Jackie Corsun

Introducing Byron Berhel, the new Deputy Chief of Emergency Management.

Welcome Chief Berhel! Chief Berhel grew up right here in Vallejo and Benicia. He graduated from San Jose State University.

Growing up he really enjoyed sports. He thought he would be an Athletic Director. Instead he was hired by the City of Richmond and began a 30 year career as a Firefighter. He served 18 of those years as a Battalion Chief. He really enjoyed his career, but he particularly enjoyed working on CRISIS Projects, such as Earthquakes, Wild Fires, Tsunamis, and Pandemics.

He also had some experience with Civil Unrest, and lots of Youth Issues. Chief Berhel found out that he was really interested in mentoring youths. He was instrumental in helping to form the Robbin MackBee Youth Academy. It helped the youths of Richmond and it was a very successful program. The Youth Academy was named after Robbin MackBee who was a Firefighter who died in 1980. He was a youth mentor who loved helping the youth in Richmond. Many of the youths have gone on to become EMT's and Firefighters.

Continued on next page

#### **Family Health Center of Benicia**

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- 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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About 5 years ago, Chief Berhel became interested in Emergency Management. Chief Berhel retired for about 5 years and lives in Benicia. He became interested in the new position of Deputy Chief of Emergency Management in Vallejo. He was hired by the City of Vallejo in March 2020. He also is an Instructor for Fire Sciences at Solano Community College. He finds teaching very rewarding and many of his students have gone on to become Emt's, Fire Fighters, and First Responders.

Chief Berhel talked to The Glen Cove Community Association Board about the Covid-19 Pandemic. He said that he wanted to bring free



Deputy Chief of Emergency Management - Byron Berhel

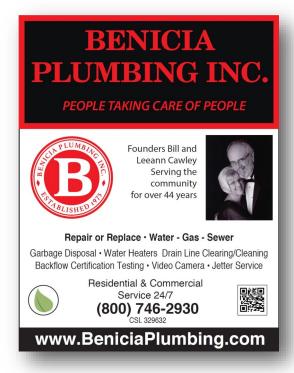
Covid-19 testing to our community. Check with the city at CityofVallejo.net/COVID19 for more information. We need to ensure that the community is aware that testing is available.

The chief is also very interested in getting the CERT program going and seeing how the volunteers could be utilized to help with the Pandemic. There is a need for all communities in Vallejo to communicate with each other and prepare for our future needs. For any additional information on Covid-19 visit City of Vallejo website at <a href="cityofvallejo.net/NCOV">cityofvallejo.net/NCOV</a>.

For Free Covid-19 testing: To make an appointment go to: <a href="https://lhi.care/covidtesting">https://lhi.care/covidtesting</a> or

Call 1(888) 634-1123 to make an appointment.







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## **Insect Populations Are Dwindling**By Ward Stewart



With the shelter in place requirement, decreased emissions from automobiles, and reduced business activity due to the coronavirus pandemic, the skies have become bluer and more undomesticated animals are moving into populated areas. The world has become cleaner and wilder! If humans disappeared from the

planet, the environment would revert back to its earlier verdant, pristine state.

Last year I wrote an article for the GCCA Newsletter about the decreasing population of monarch butterflies (January – March 2019). The paper discussed the precipitous decrease in the number of these beautiful, orange migratory creatures. At the time of writing, I thought the problem was limited to monarchs.

Upon receiving the May 2020 edition of National Geographic magazine, I was unpleasantly surprised to read the article 'Where Have All the Insects Gone'? In this piece I will provide some



of the insights that struck me from reading it. I recommend that you obtain the issue and read every word of this article.

First, surveys in different parts of the world have documented decreases in the populations of certain insect species. The locations cited include the Sierra Nevada, New Hampshire, the Netherlands, Germany, and Costa Rica. Roughly 80 percent of insect species live in the tropics. This fact makes the declines identified in Costa Rica very troubling.

While humans have been on the Earth for about six million years, insects have been on land for approximately 400 million years, roughly 200 million years before dinosaurs walked the planet. Because insects have been around for so long, they have had the time to evolve into a tremendous variety of creatures. Scientists have counted over 100 million species although they are certain many more exist that have not been identified. There is a family of parasitoid wasps with roughly 100,000 species; this is more than the total number of mammal, amphibian, reptile, bird, and fish species combined. Insects are adaptive as they live in environments ranging from boiling hot springs to freezing mountaintops.

Insects provide crucial functions that are important to the biological health of the planet. They are fundamental to most food chains on earth and are relied upon for sustenance by birds, bats, amphibians, and fish. Likewise, many of these animals are eaten by larger predators as they are all part of an interconnected system. Insects also fulfill the function of decomposing waste. Termites are specialists at breaking down wood while dung beetles facilitate the decomposition of waste into products that are beneficial to the ecosystem. Nature cleans up after itself.



Predatory insects like lady beetles and damselflies feed on insects that would otherwise eat crops needed by humans. These insects act as natural insecticides that can take the place of synthetic ones. This pest control function saves the agriculture industry billions of dollars annually. Insects that burrow into the soil like ants, bees, and termites improve soil aeration and make it better for planting crops and ornamental species. Soils, especially in arid regions, are improved by these tunneling insects.

Insects are pollinators (see the January-March 2020 newsletter)! Insects, including bees and butterflies, pollinate flowers and food crops. Approximately, three-fourths of all flowering plants rely on insect pollination. If insects don't pollinate, food crops would be severely limited and many plant species would disappear. California almond growers bring in bee colonies to insure that their trees are pollinated. They are also important seed dispersers.

Scientists are not unanimous about a single cause of the decline of insect populations. If climate change is a major cause, then a massive global effort to decrease carbon emissions must take place. If pesticides or habitat loss are to blame, then efforts on the regional or local levels can make a significant difference. I have vowed to use no pesticides in my yard in order to create one small environment that is as creature and plant friendly as possible.

While the Earth's ecosystem would thrive if humans no longer inhabited the planet, it would be a very different story if insects were no longer present.

Ward Stewart

UC Master Gardener-Solano



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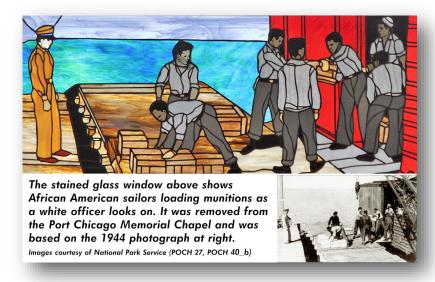
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#### A Local Turning Point in Civil Rights History

Today, Black Lives Matter is in the public eye. But did you know that 76 years ago, just ten miles upriver from Glen Cove, a massive explosion eventually led to a civil rights milestone, the 1946 desegregation of the U.S. Navy?

This piece of local civil rights history is the subject of an exhibition newly available online at the Treasure Island Museum, www.treasureislandmuseum.org.

It began with the worst U.S. domestic disaster of World War II, two huge explosions at the Port Chicago munitions loading station near Concord in July 1944. The blasts killed 320 people, 202 of whom were young Black sailors in a segregated



Navy, ordered to load and unload explosives with no training and inadequate equipment. They were supervised by white officers who pressed them to work ever faster, and placed bets on their productivity.

Following the explosion and cleanup, 328 surviving Black sailors were ordered to resume munitions loading at Mare Island. When their white officers marched them toward the loading pier, the sailors disobeyed orders and refused to work under the same hazardous conditions. Fifty of them were charged with mutiny, and then convicted in a trial held at the Treasure Island naval base.

However, publicity from the trial built public awareness of racism in the Navy and was a catalyst for the desegregation of the Navy, and subsequently all the armed services, after the end of the war. A Continued on next page



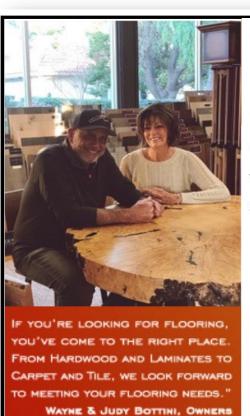


footnote to the trial was the presence of the NAACP's chief counsel, Thurgood Marshall, later the first black U.S. Supreme Court justice.

The site of the explosion is a National Memorial, although its location on an active Army base makes it difficult to visit. But visitors have been able to learn about Port Chicago at an exhibition at the Treasure Island Museum, on the former naval station where the mutiny trial was held. In response to the death of George Floyd, the ensuing protests and the museum's coronavirus closure, the exhibition has also been placed on its website at <a href="https://www.treasureislandmuseum.org/portchicago">www.treasureislandmuseum.org/portchicago</a>.

When the museum reopens, visitors will be able to view twisted pieces of metal, remnants of the two ships blown into fragments on the night of July 17, 1944. The small museum also displays the history of Treasure Island and six statues from the 1939-40 Golden Gate International Exposition, and there are three more exhibits on its website.

The National Park Service holds an annual memorial at the explosion site on or about its July 17 anniversary, the best occasion for a visit. But this year the commemoration will be virtual. Details will be posted at <a href="https://www.nps.gov/poch">https://www.nps.gov/poch</a>.



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

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



To check if you are a current member Call Ward at 707-853-4510

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Sunset Over San Pablo Photo by Dina Morrison



Bay Area Ridge Trail Marker Photo by Dina Morrison

Glen Cove Community Assn. 164 Robles Way, #254 Vallejo, CA 94591 707-563-1226

#### **Publishing Information:**

The Glen Cove—"Neighbor to Neighbor"

Newsletter is a publication of the Glen Cove Community Association



News/Articles Submission & information:

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