

Pinole Historical Society Newsbriefs



P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564

www.PinoleHistoricalSociety.org

info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.org

A DIFFERENT KIND OF FUNDRAISING LETTER

The Pinole Historical Society and Pinole History Museum boards of directors feel this is an inappropriate time to ask our supporters for donations.

We previously sent everyone in our e-mail database the letter below. It's been posted on the Pinole Historical Society and Pinole History Museum Facebook pages, and will be added to both websites very soon.

Here's our message:

Dear Pinole History Museum supporter,

The Pinole History Museum board of directors wants to thank you for your financial support, and for encouraging us to proceed with our goal of establishing a world-class, small-city museum in the historic Faria House. We will get there.

These are wild, crazy, unpredictable times. And scary, too. We are fortunate to live in a community that is strong and supportive. We shall get through this.

We understand the financial and emotional strain the coronavirus pandemic has placed on everyone. This is affecting many people we know. We feel it, too.

For the last two years the Pinole History Museum has mailed two appeal letters per year, once in late April, and another in early November. The response from our donors has been generous and enthusiastic. For this we thank you.

This letter is different. We haven't attached a donor card and we're not asking for money. We are just hoping you, your families, and the people you care about, are well. And stay well.

We'll be in touch again in late fall. We are hopeful that this challenging time will be just a footnote in our history by then.

As always, thanks for supporting the Pinole History Museum. And, keep your spirits up.

* * *

P.S. The museum's third annual fundraising dinner is scheduled to be held Saturday, October 17, at St. Joseph School. In addition to delicious food, we are planning an array of fabulous raffle and silent auction gifts. We hope you will join us.

For a look at some of our favorite shelter-in-place memes, see page 4. It's important that we keep our sense of humor in trying times like this. Send us your favorite shelter-in-place memes and we'll post them on our Facebook pages.

OUR MAY 1 ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM AT KAISER HAS BEEN POSTPONED TO SEPTEMBER 11. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THEN TO ENJOY ANOTHER INTERESTING PROGRAM ABOUT PINOLE'S HISTORY.

Published quarterly by the Pinole Historical Society

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Newsbriefs also posted on the PHS website (click on NEWSLETTER in the menu bar).

FOR ADVERTISERS: 2,000 printed copies of *PHS Newsbriefs* are distributed every quarter, generating readership among thousands of Pinole and West County residents. Hundreds more receive the newsletter directly from the PHS via its database and website.

If you're interested in advertising, contact Jeff Rubin at info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.org or (510) 724-9507.

PHS CALENDAR

ONGOING

May 13, June 10, July 8: Monthly Board of Directors meetings. The public is invited to attend and speak on any of the items discussed at these meetings. Pinole Senior Center, 6:30 to 8 p.m.**

PHS at Pinole Farmers' Market. April-December.**
**Once the shelter-in-place order is rescinded.

PinoleHistoricalSociety

Board of Directors: Jeff Rubin, President; Mary McMains, Treasurer; Jo Ann Gannotti, Secretary; Norma Martinez-Rubin, Carol White.

Directors Emeritus: Marcia Kalapus, Jack Meehan, George Vincent. **Newsletter Editor:** Jeff Rubin.

2020 PHS MEETING DATES

September 11, November 6

Meetings are held from 6:30-8 p.m. in conference rooms 2A and 2B of the Kaiser Permanente Medical Office Building, 1301 Pinole Valley Road.

For more information, call (510) 724-9507, e-mail info@pinolehistoricalsociety.org, or visit our website at www.pinolehistoricalsociety.org.

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President's Message

Jeff Rubin, President, Pinole Historical Society

INTO THE DIGITAL AGE WE GO

These unusual times are forcing many businesses and nonprofits into the advanced digital age. We're included in that group.

I subscribe to several nonprofit Facebook groups, and all of the members are scrambling to keep their missions alive online because they've had to cancel their spring fundraising events.

We're also working to stay in touch with our members and donors while we're sheltering-in-place.

- We will continue publishing our *Newsbriefs* newsletter online until it is safe to print and deliver to all of the locations on page 2 of this newsletter.

- We're increasing our Facebook postings.

- Digital-arts students at Kennedy High School, under the direction of their teacher Mitzi Pérez-Caro, are creating marketing videos for the museum showing the interior rooms of the

Faria House and what they will be used for when it becomes the Pinole History Museum.

- We will convert all of our quarterly program videos — and George Vincent's two downtown walking tours — to YouTube format and post them on our YouTube channel.

- We are developing Pinole history games and quizzes (Pinole History Jeopardy, word-finds with hidden messages relating to Pinole's history, etc.) that parents can use with their school-age children, based on material in our books.

And, don't forget about the downtown walking tour brochure, map, and synopsis that's already on our website:

www.pinolehistoricalsociety.org/walkingtour.htm. This is a good time to safely take a history walk.

**PLEASE SUPPORT
OUR ADVERTISERS**

One final note: Our advertisers make it possible for the historical

society to publish this quarterly newsletter.

They enrich our community, and they're really hurting right now, just like the rest of us.

Let's help them out.



Jeff Rubin

Put My Experience and Knowledge to Work For You

Having the right connections in the community makes all the difference. I grew up in the Pinole-Hercules area, where my ancestors settled more than 150 years ago, some farming the fertile soils from Pinole to Rodeo, while others helped build the communities we now call home. The benefits of my longstanding connection to and detailed knowledge of the community are the foundation for the outstanding service I deliver to my clients.



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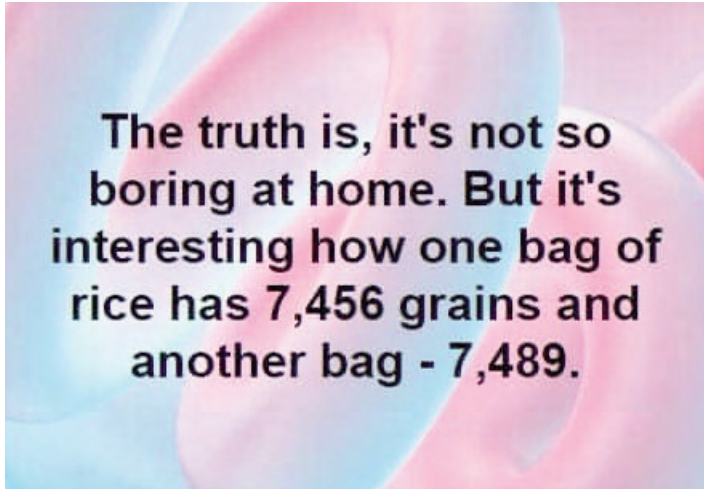
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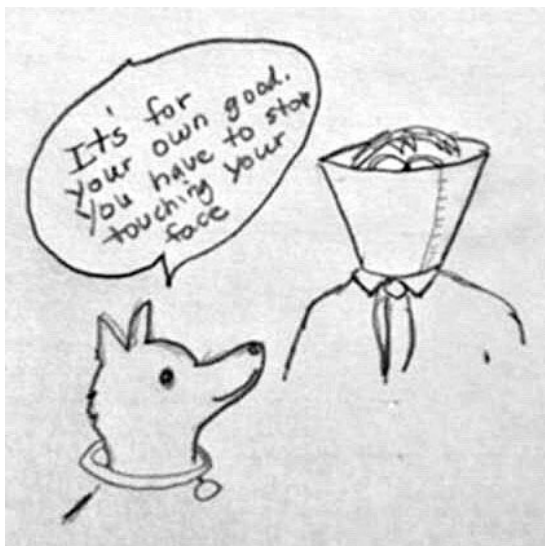
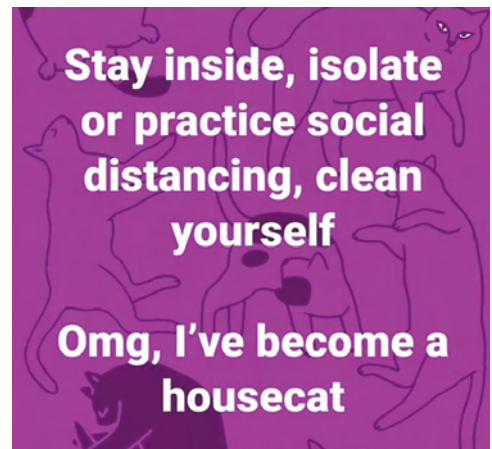
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Jeff Rubin and
Norma Martinez-Rubin

In memoriam

Pete Norgaard

October 9, 1946 – February 3, 2020

Age 73

By Mike LeFebvre

On February 3, Pete Norgaard passed away. He was 73.

He was the only child of Henry (Hank) and Pat Norgaard.

While not a Pinole native (Rodeo), make no mistake, Pete was a Pinolean through and through.

Moving here at an early age, he attended Pinole-Hercules School #2 (Margaret Collins Elementary) and The Old School (Pinole-Hercules School #1). He would have attended high school here had there been one.

After graduating from Cal State Hayward, Pete taught history and physical education, and coached boys' basketball, at Pinole Valley High School. Pete's boys' basketball team won the North Coast Section championship in 1980.

But that is not where he made his mark.

Throughout my era (late 1950s until now), there were a great many athletes who made their reputation on the playground of Fernandez Park, such as (not in any particular order) Kenny Burrow, Bruce Hall, Frank and Joe Coppa, and Louis Millhollin — and Pete went head-to-head with all of them.

But alas, Peter J. was not to be found in that

rarified air. He was relegated several tiers below them. He was excruciatingly slow, had a vertical leap in the negative numbers, and was as close to being an automatic out at the plate as a baseball player could be.

But, he was in this for the long haul. He showed up and played at Fernandez Park every day of his pre-teen, adolescent, and young-adult life.

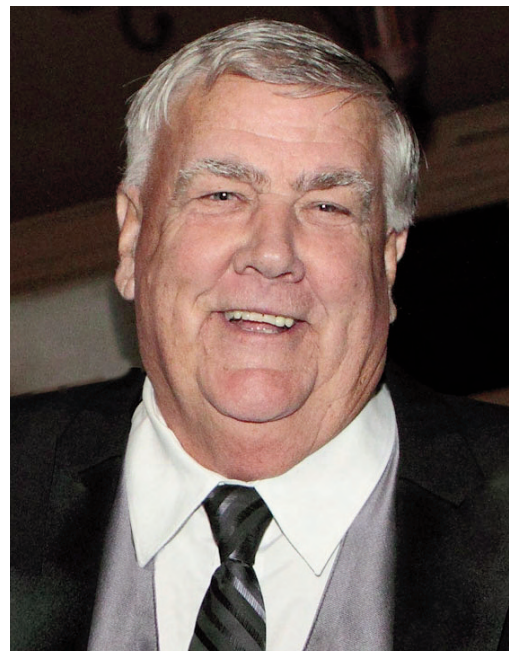
When I say every day, it is no exaggeration. On the hottest summer days, we played baseball (games, work-up, three flies up, strike-out, screen ball, et. al) from about 8 a.m. until dinner-time at 5 p.m.

During the rainy season, we played football (tackle — no pads) in the outfield, taking only an hour break for lunch.

In between those seasons, we would adjourn to the park's one asphalt basketball court.

During the times when school was in session, we would hustle down to the park as soon as school let out at 3:15.

In all of the times, despite Pete's lack of athletic prowess, I don't ever remember him being selected anywhere but among the first few picks. (In the interest of full disclosure, Pete was usually a captain and doing the picking.) This was because he was a



**Pete
Norgaard**

man who knew his limitations.

In football, since he had a severe lack of mobility and a disdain for physical contact, but possessed an above-average arm and a very high mental acuity, he was always the quarterback.

In basketball, limited by his lack of verticality, he was nonetheless a prolific shooter. (If you looked up the definition of a "gunner" in the dictionary, you would see a picture of Pete.)

In baseball, he was an underrated pitcher who could tame the mediocre and average hitters. Against the very talented hitters, Pete would never give in to them, preferring to walk them instead.

It was all part of his master plan, as he had developed a masterful pick-off move which eliminated all but the stealthiest of base runners.

The crux of this is that you always wanted to be on the same team as Pete because he, by guile and intelligence, was

always going to put you in a position to win, and that ensured you bragging rights until the next day.

During his collegiate years, he worked for the Pinole Recreation Department as a playground director at Ellerhorst Elementary School. During his tenure, he developed many fine athletes and shaped a goodly number of young men into solid citizens. Many of these young men have grown up to be pillars of our community, and many of them lavish credit upon Pete.

Pete's athletic career did not end as an adult. He continued to play year-round sports in all three sports on teams sponsored by many of our local merchants.

He played softball for both the Wagon Wheel and the Mexican Villa, competing in several state and regional championships. He quarterbacked a very talented Mexican Villa touch football team to a trio of

Continued on page 7

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PETE NORGAARD

Continued from page 6
county championships.
And, he was a prolific
scorer as a basketball
player for C&C Deli and
The Villa in the Pinole
Recreation Leagues.

He would have been a
scratch golfer if it had
not been for an abun-
dance of trees, sand
traps, and water hazards,
and if the holes had
been quite a bit larger.

During the last few
years, he had taken
charge of running the
annual Jerry Deuker
Memorial Golf Tourna-
ment, which raises

money for scholarships
for high school students
wanting to attend col-
lege.

I don't want to portray
Pete's life as one of all
fun and games. It was as
a history teacher where
his light shone the bright-
est. He made learning
history interesting (and
I dare say, even fun) for
these students, who
otherwise would not have
been on a path toward
graduation.

Pete made myriad
friends in all walks of life
and touched countless
others in a positive man-

ner. His time here was
shorter than it should
have been, but it was a
life well lived.

He leaves behind his
wife, Debbie; daughters
Anjee, Stacy, and
Danielle; a son, Nick; two
grandchildren; a grand-
dog, Hurley; his first wife,
Patti (Lopes) Clark, and
his two sidekicks, Dennis
Palmer and John Powder-
ly, who learned to give
back with gusto as much
wit and sarcasm as they
received from Pete.

I feel honored to have
counted him as a friend
and am so grateful to
have played alongside
and sometimes opposite
him.

In lieu of flowers,
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worked closely:

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A celebration of Pete's
life will be held Friday,
May 22, at 10:30 a.m.,
at Lone Tree Golf &
Event Center in Antioch.

* * *
*Mike LeFebvre taught
math and coached
girls' softball, girls'
JV basketball, and
freshman football at
Pinole Valley High
School.*

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El Sobrante Historical Society news

Donald Bastin, President

EL SOBRANTE HISTORY CENTER TO OPEN IN JUNE

When the El Sobrante Library caught fire more than two years ago and caused the library's closure, our community was scrambling to carry on its business; the library has been our heart for more than 50 years.

Fortunately, other organizations, particularly the Elks Club, stepped up to provide meeting space in the interim. The fire, however, provided an opportunity to mount a badly needed upgrade.

The library is now a better place, roomier, airy, full of light, and updated in ways that could not have been foreseen in 1975, when it was first brought up-to-date. So, we got a better

library and something more — a history center.

Along with the library reconstruction, Supervisor John Gioia saw the opportunity to refurbish the little house behind the library and make it more usable for community groups.

While he was able to find some money for this secondary job, it was made simpler by the fact the services of the general contractor already on site could be utilized without any break in the flow of work, resulting in savings in time and cost.

The old "Friends of the Library" building was thoroughly gutted; new wiring, walls, bathroom, and a heating and A/C system were installed; and the building was



Nancy Fahden House at the El Sobrante Library.

made ADA accessible.

It's now the "Nancy Fahden House," in honor of the first woman supervisor in Contra Costa County (and first female president of the Board of Supervisors), who used this building as one of her offices during her 16-year tenure.

Now the house is an historic building, and a perfect place to house the collection of the El Sobrante Historical Society (ESHS).

The ESHS shares the building with the Friends of the Library. We have roughly one-third of the total space, 2½ rooms at the right end of the building, around 250 square feet.

We have had access to the building since late November, and have been busily creating exhibits to best display our collection.

Many donors have offered their historic items to us. For instance, Richard Oliver, owner of Oliver's Hardware, donated a very large 1909 map of the Rancho El Sobrante. This fragile and rare document took weeks to prepare for display; it hangs proudly in our hallway.



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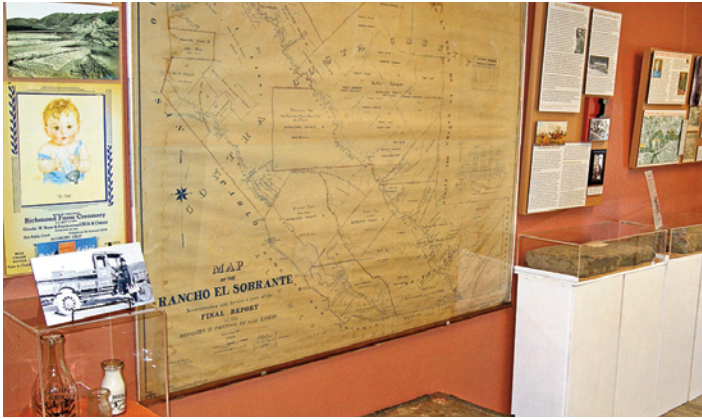


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Continued on page 9



1909 map of the Rancho El Sobrante.

EL SOBRANTE HISTORY CENTER

Continued from page 8

We also have received adobe bricks (from the Victor Castro Adobe in El Cerrito) and from both the El Cerrito and San Pablo historical societies. From the Contra Costa County Historical Society we received (on a long-term loan) a matrimonial trunk of Spanish-Mexican origin that once belonged to the John Marsh family.

None of these artifacts would have come to us without space to display them. And, we now have space to display objects we have had for years, but have been unable to show the public.

At the top of that list is our collection of Native American stone implements found along the banks of San Pablo Creek.

Just off the hallway leading from the entrance is the Maurice Abraham Room (named in memory of our late president and founding member). Here we have our document collection and a visitor-accessible computer for searches of our database.

We also have a large collection of items from the old De Anza High School, including very old and beautifully drawn scientific charts, which were old even when the school opened in 1955.

We had hoped to be open by early April, but the current coronavirus pandemic has caused us to push the opening date to Saturday, June 6. As the date nears, we will send out a reminder to our members and to our sister historical societies in the area.

The April 26 Pear Street Bistro fundraiser for the Pinole History Museum has been postponed. A new date will be announced.



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The Pinole Historical Society promotes awareness and appreciation of history through preservation and education, and chronicles the city's heritage for current and future generations.

Help preserve Pinole's history

Always seeking to improve and add to the society's collection, the PHS welcomes inquiries from individuals owning objects which are significant to the history of Pinole.

Though we do not have a museum, we have three exhibit spaces at the Pinole Library and conduct history programs for service organizations, retirement residences, and schools. Artifacts are an important part of these programs.

Please contact us at info@pinolehistoricalsociety.org or call (510) 724-9507 if you have an object you'd like to donate.

Also, you can view the numerous PHS programs archived on the city's website:

https://www.ci.pinole.ca.us/city_government/pinole_tv/archived_meeting_events and click PINOLE MUSEUM SOCIETY-HISTORY.



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PINOLE'S MUSEUM WEBSITE — SPREAD THE WORD!

The Pinole History Museum website is online at www.pinolehistorymuseum.org.

There are sections on the Pinole Garden Club, historic preservation, the Pinole Historical Society's annual school essay contest, the Faria House, the Fernandez Mansion, and some of our planned museum exhibits.

And, of course, you may donate to the museum via the website.

Let us know what you think of the website. E-mail comments and suggestions to info@pinolehistorymuseum.org.



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My donation will help the museum enhance the preservation and collection of artifacts that represent Pinole's history and culture.

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*With a gift of \$1,000 or more your name will be placed on the museum's Wall of Honor.

Please make checks payable to **PINOLE HISTORY MUSEUM** or provide credit card information below. To donate online, please visit www.PinoleHistoryMuseum.org.

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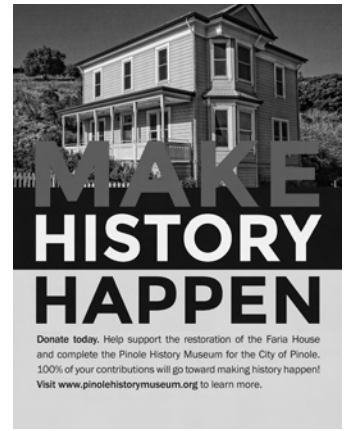
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The Pinole History Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (82-1454949).

Your donation is tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.



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Pinole Historical Society
2020 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(PINOLE RESIDENCY NOT REQUIRED FOR MEMBERSHIP)

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND SEND THIS FORM TO PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 285, PINOLE, CA 94564

MEMBERSHIPS ARE FOR THE 2020 CALENDAR YEAR (EXCEPT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS)

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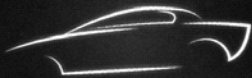
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For only \$30, you can help the PHS accomplish its mission of bringing the history of Pinole to our residents through exhibits at the Pinole Library, Pinole history programs in schools, Pinole Community TV programs, walking tours of downtown Pinole, the Veterans Day event in Fernandez Park — and you'll have the satisfaction of helping promote and preserve Pinole's history for future generations.

JOIN THE PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY (OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP) AND HELP PROMOTE AND PRESERVE THE HISTORY OF OUR CITY.

Please mail the membership application in this newsletter today!

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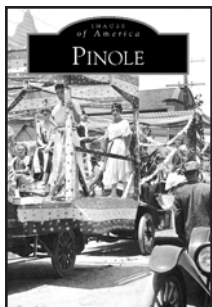
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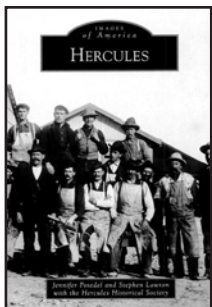


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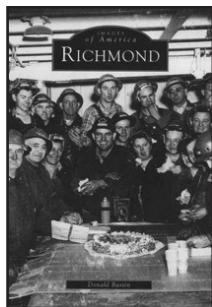
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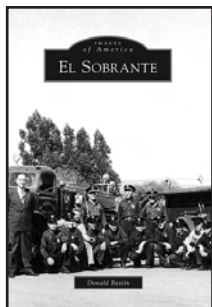
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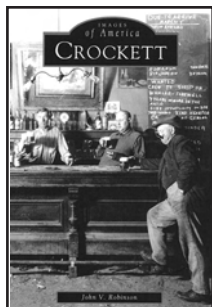
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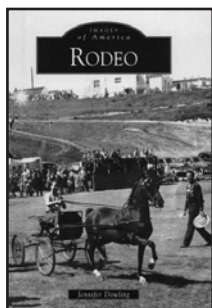
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The Pinole Historical Society sells these Arcadia books at the Pinole Farmers' Market every other Saturday through December.

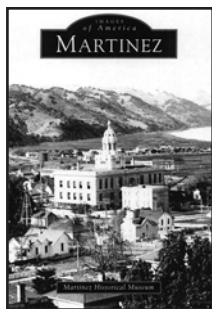
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Park, and Napa Valley books are \$25, including sales tax. The Crockett, Rodeo, Martinez, and Port Costa books are \$23, including sales tax.

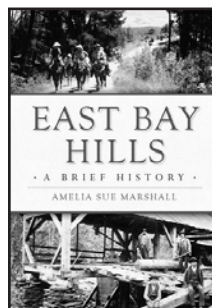
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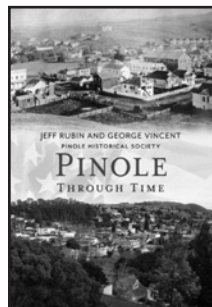
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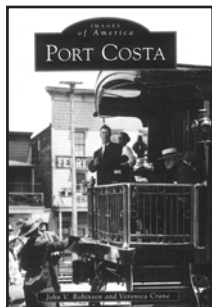
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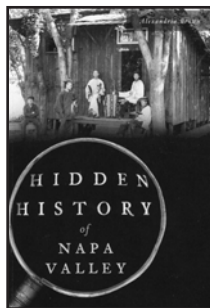
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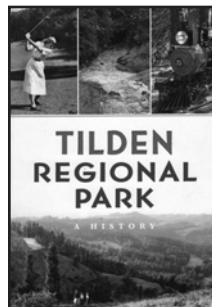
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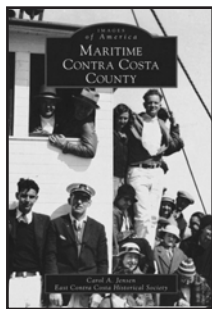
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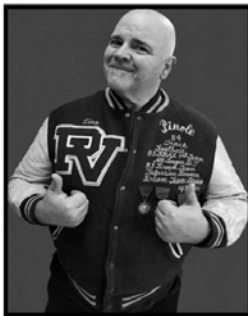
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