

Pinole Historical Society Newsbriefs



P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564

www.PinoleHistoricalSociety.org info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.org

Pinole City Council against Faria House renovation

Earlier vote rescinded despite extraordinary public support favoring renovation and years of promises by previous councils.

— See President's Message, page 3

PILOT PROGRAM TO DIVERSIFY PINOLE'S HISTORY ARCHIVES

This summer, five students with a shared curiosity for history, storytelling, and social impact are interviewing minority business owners in Pinole to chronicle their stories in print, in photos, and in videos.

This visual storytelling community project will diversify the Pinole Historical Society's historical archives.

The paid student interns — four from Pinole Valley High School and one from Kennedy High School — are the first to participate in "Diversifying Pinole History," a nascent Pinole Historical

Society program that will capture stories of minority-owned businesses in Pinole.

Diversifying Pinole History is a visual storytelling project for 9th-11th grade high school students in the West Contra Costa Unified School District interested in history, civic engagement, journalism, and diversity topics.

The Pinole Historical Society is committed to diversifying its historical archives and invited these students to engage in the documentation of narratives of Pinole's longtime residents, specifically its minority business owners.

Continued on page 5



(L-R) Dyana Wing So, Alyssa Keller, Justin Trujillo, Melinda Mariotti, Devin Dinh, Aaliyha Sandoval, and Mitzi Pérez-Caro on the steps of the Fernandez Mansion. Not pictured: Elizabeth Duarte.

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).

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

PHS at Pinole Farmers' Market

The Pinole Historical Society has resumed its booth at the Pinole Farmers' Market. We'll be there at least once a month.

We've missed our friends! Let's get reacquainted!

Please stop by and share some Pinole history — and tell us how you've been since we last saw each other.

We are eager to see you again!

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President's Message

Jeff Rubin, President, Pinole Historical Society and Pinole History Museum

PUBLIC'S CALL FOR MUSEUM IGNORED — AGAIN

Twenty-five years after purchasing the Faria House, 16 years after moving it to Heritage Park, and after several previous councils since 2005 signaled their intent to renovate it and then lease it to the Pinole History Museum, the Pinole City Council voted June 15 to allocate \$1.4 million in the 2021-22 budget to renovate the historic, 1880s farmhouse by bringing it up to current building code standards.

And then, on June 29, in a 3-2 vote, the council reversed its decision and chose not to fund the renovation when it approved the budget that night.

This vote was only to renovate the Faria House for any use. The Pinole History Museum (PHM) board planned to ask the council to approve a previously-negotiated museum lease later this year.

WIDESPREAD PUBLIC SUPPORT

At the June 15 meeting, the council received 69 emails supporting the renovation of the Faria House. SIXTY-NINE!

These emails came from:

- Families, some representing several generations.
- Local school teachers and school principals who realize the importance of museums in teaching their students about the city in which they live.
- Neighboring historical societies.

And, most came from individuals who love our city and want to see its history preserved.

Only two people sent emails opposing the renovation; one was Ivette Ricco, who runs Pinole 4 Fair Government (P4FG), the political action committee (PAC) that sponsored Salimi, Tave, and Murphy when they ran for office.

Mayor Norma Martinez-Rubin and Councilmember Maureen Toms voted for the renovation. Mayor Pro Tem Vincent Salimi and Councilmembers

Anthony Tave and Devin Murphy voted against renovation.

Salimi voted for the renovation on June 15, but cited a "common law" conflict of interest that compelled him to change his vote on June 29. He did not disclose what the conflict was.

Earlier this year, the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) ruled that Salimi *does not* have a conflict of interest in voting to renovate the Faria House.

The FPPC administers the 1974 Political Reform Act, which regulates campaign financing, conflicts of interest, lobbying, and governmental ethics.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

At the June 29 meeting when the budget was approved, the council received about 15 emails opposing the renovation. Half of those emails contained the exact wording of a sample letter on a flyer produced by P4FG and distributed at the Pinole Farmers' Market the weekend preceding the meeting by P4FG member Franke Martinez. Councilmembers Tave and Murphy were nearby, "reaching out" to the community about the budget.

The flyer listed several reasons for not spending money on the Faria House: pandemic, crumbling infrastructure, extended fire season, extreme drought, etc. Excluding the pandemic, these conditions have existed for many years and will continue to exist

Continued on page 4



Jeff Rubin



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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.

PUBLIC'S CALL FOR MUSEUM IGNORED AGAIN

Continued from page 3

for years to come. To stall progress because of them is short-sighted disregard for recovery and the best interests of the city and its citizens. When will we fund something that enhances the city culturally?

SOME HISTORY

While the June 15 and June 29 votes were only on renovating the Faria House, city councils have discussed a museum in the house since the city bought it in 1996. The city's intent for the Faria House to become a museum is documented in council minutes from 2005 to 2020. In 2019-20, the council spent around \$100,000 on an architect and a cost estimate to renovate the Faria House for use as a museum.

And, the city council STILL can't make a decision and refuses to honor their word. Now the city is considering hiring another architect to give them renovation and cost information they already have.

In 2020, Councilman Tave headed a council ad hoc committee that negotiated a proposed lease agreement with the PHM board for the Faria House — a lease prepared by the city attorney — and then Tave killed the deal last November by voting against an agreement he himself helped negotiate.

Two hundred and forty people attended the last pre-Covid museum fundraising dinner in 2019. Citizens have demonstrated overwhelming support for a museum in the Faria House. Who, then, are Salimi, Tave, and Murphy representing?

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Please continue to send emails to all council members and the public comment portion of every council meeting (first and third Tuesdays, and let the council know how you feel about this issue.

Soon, council meetings will be held again at Pinole City Hall and the public will be able to attend. Please attend these meetings, if only for the public comment portion at the beginning.

Public Comment: comment@ci.pinole.ca.us.

Mayor Norma Martínez-Rubin:
nmartinez-rubin@ci.pinole.ca.us

Mayor Pro Tem Vincent Salimi:
vsalimi@ci.pinole.ca.us

Councilmember Devin Murphy:
dmurphy@ci.pinole.ca.us

Councilmember Anthony Tave:
atave@ci.pinole.ca.us

Councilmember Maureen Toms:
mtoms@ci.pinole.ca.us

The true depth and scope of Pinole's existence can be achieved ONLY with a museum, a physical space and home to house the history of our city.

Please help convince the city council that past, present, and history yet to be made deserves a public space for the entire community.

Without renovation and a museum, this architectural and familial landmark, meaningful to so many people, will remain a relic deposited on a heavily traveled street, rather than a city treasure.

There are big decisions ahead for the Pinole History Museum. We'll keep you posted.

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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DIVERSIFYING PINOLE HISTORY

Continued from front page

The project kicked off June 19 on the lawn of the historic Fernandez Mansion, where owner Melinda Mariotti welcomed the students, took them on a tour of her home, and opened up the well-known Southern Pacific Railroad caboose on her property for the students to explore.

The students are receiving guidance, preparation, and production support from:

- Dyana Wing So, a 2012 PVHS grad and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania (B.A.) and Erasmus University in Rotterdam, The Netherlands (M.A), and creative strategist for Gold Front, a category design studio in San Francisco.

- Mitzi Pérez-Caro, a UC-Berkeley graduate and lead digital arts and web design teacher at Kennedy High School in Richmond.

The program concludes July 31 with a presentation of the students' work.

Their work will be part of the Pinole Historical Society's archives, as well as create an informal bridge with small business owners to engage more with the city and vice versa.

We are excited to see what this new generation of inquisitive historians working to continue this city's embrace of local history toward civic and community engagement creates.

Follow the students' progress on the Pinole History Museum

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Item Count
263

Most Classifications
Photograph, Book, Map, Postcard

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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.

OUR ACTIONS:
• Publishing books: Images of America: Pinole (2009) and Pinole Through Time (2015). Purchase them at pinolehistoricalsociety.org or via e-mail at info@pinolehistoricalsociety.org.
• Conducting Pinole history programs for fourth graders in Pinole's elementary schools, our members, service organizations, non-profits, and the public.

OUR CALL-TO-ACTION:
Help us preserve our city's history. Join the Pinole Historical Society. For only \$30, you can help the PHS accomplish its mission of bringing the history of Pinole to our residents – and you'll have the satisfaction of helping promote and preserve Pinole's history for future generations.

These images are available for purchase from the Pinole Historical Society. Please email info@pinolehistoricalsociety.org or call (510) 724-9507 if you would like a photo.



BANDS
11 Items
Photograph
Pinole's band was a fixture in the city's parades for much of the 20th century. Bill Lewis founded the Pinole Municipal Band. It was a time of community involvement and pride, even



Churches
11 Items
Photograph
In 1865, the coming of the Martinez to San Pablo stage line through Pinole's Main Street enhanced commerce and population growth in the downtown. St. Joseph Church was erected



CLASS PHOTOS
28 Items
Photograph
PINOLE-HERCULES SCHOOL #1. Class reunions are still held for graduates of this school, the "School on the Hill" or the "Old School," which served the Pinole and Hercules communities for



DOWNER MANSION
8 Items
Photograph
Edward M. Downer, one of the most influential and prominent business figures in the history of Pinole and its surrounding communities, built his home at 2711 San Pablo Avenue in 1909. He



EARLY SCHOOL
5 Items
Photograph
Pinole's first one-room school was located on the Fitzgerald Ranch along First Avenue, now Agopian Way, and opened in 1886. The school was a farm building that stood until the 1950s and



FARMS AND RANCHES
20 Items
Photograph
There were many families and individuals who helped shape the beginnings of Pinole in the 19th century. The earliest of these newcomers was the family of Don Ygnacio Martinez, who



FERNANDEZ MANSION AND FAMILY
14 Items
Photograph
A sailor (late age 13), Portuguese immigrant Bernardo Fernandez arrived in 1854. Bernardo left Lisbon, Portugal, in 1840 on a sea-going freighter. In 1854 he landed in Pinole and joined



FLOODS AND DISASTERS
30 Items
Photograph
On April 2, 1958, after several days of hard rain, high tides contributed to the overflow of Pinole Creek, which flooded the downtown area. Boats tied up along Tarrant Avenue so the Pinole



HOLY GHOST FESTIVALS
6 Items
Photograph
The annual Holy Ghost celebration was held under the auspices of the local (D.E.S. Brandaedo do Divino Espirito Santo, The Society of Divine Holy Ghost).



MANN HOME
8 Items
Photograph
William W. Mann and his wife, Elizabeth, were born in England in 1863. They married in 1882 and immigrated to Pinole in 1886. William was a foreman at the nearby California Powder



MARTINEZ FAMILY
18 Items
Photograph, Book
There were many families and individuals who helped shape the beginnings of Pinole in the 19th century. The earliest of these newcomers was the family of Don Ygnacio Martinez, who



PINOLE FIRE DEPT
9 Items
Photograph
Pinole grew from a bucket brigade fire department in 1906 to a staff of full time professional firefighters. The old fire station on Plum Street, built by volunteers with Larber from a tool-



PINOLE VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL AND PINOLE MIDDLE SCHOOL
8 Items
Photograph



PINOLE-HERCULES SCHOOL #1
8 Items
Photograph
PINOLE-HERCULES SCHOOL #1. Class reunions are still held for graduates of this school, the "School on the Hill" or the "Old School," which served the Pinole and Hercules communities for



POWDER WORKS
14 Items
Photograph
In 1860, California Powder Works established a dynamite plant in San Francisco in the same area that is now Golden Gate Park. As San Francisco developed and the populace moved closer



SANTA FE DEPOT AND TRAINS
20 Items
Photograph, Publication
In March 1881, the Atchafalaya, Toiyoka and Santa Fe Railroad reached Southern California, turned northwest, crossed the Tehachapi Mountains, and went into the great San Joaquin Valley. At



SCHOOL BELL
6 Items
Photograph
A ceremony formally dedicating the 189+-year-old Pinole-Hercules School #1 school bell adjacent to the main purpose room at Collins Elementary School was held Saturday, January



SOUTHERN PACIFIC DEPOT
12 Items
Photograph, Book, Map
The Southern Pacific Railroad (formerly the Northern Railway and now Union Pacific) came to the Pinole waterfront in the late 1870s. Until 1910, the depot served as Pinole's post office. The



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL
7 Items
Photograph
In 1965, Father Thomas Collins, pastor of St. Joseph Church of Pinole, expressed to Bishop Boyd of Oakland a desire to build, staff, and operate a Catholic elementary school in



TEACHERS
23 Items
Photograph
Pinole's first one-room school was located on the Fitzgerald Ranch along First Avenue, now Agopian Way. The school was a farm building that stood until the 1950s and was used as a

EXPLORE THE COLLECTION

These photos may be viewed at <https://hub.catalogit.app/157>

PHS EXPANDS ITS ONLINE PUBLIC PHOTO DATABASE

More than 250 of the photos in the Pinole Historical Society archives may be viewed online and purchased via CatalogIt, our cloud-based Collections Management System.

PHS members and Pinole History Museum donors get 20% off on photo purchases.

View the photos at: <https://hub.catalogit.app/157>.

The photos are assembled in folders. There are 20 folders available for public viewing. More will be posted soon.

The 20 folders include: Bands, Churches, Class Photos, Downer Mansion, Early School, Farms and Ranches, Fernandez

Mansion, Floods and Disasters, Holy Ghost Festivals, Mann Home, Martinez Family, Pinole Fire Department, Pinole Valley High School and Pinole Middle School, Pinole Hercules School #1, Powder Works, Santa Fe Depot and Trains, School Bell, Southern Pacific Depot, St. Joseph School, and Teachers.

The photos have light watermarks in the middle that say Pinole Historical Society.

If you would like to purchase a high-resolution photo suitable for framing, the watermarks will be removed. Please email info@pinolehistoricalsociety.org, or call (510) 724-9507.

PHS ESSAY CONTEST ELICITS DEEP THOUGHTS FROM STUDENTS

More than 200 students from Pinole schools participated in the 13th annual Pinole Historical Society essay contest – an impressive number considering their pandemic-learning conditions.

This year's question was: **"What's the most important lesson you've learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, and why?"**

Here are excerpts from some of the best essays we received, including one from Collins Elementary School kindergarten student Asher Ziegler (right).

"I learned to appreciate even the smallest forms of human connection. I came to cherish every text message or email that close friends and relatives sent my way." – Emily Gonzalez, 11th grade, Pinole Valley High School.

"I thought that perhaps this disease that was wiping out our loved ones would unite the United States. Instead the distance between us grew much greater than the mandatory six feet." – Olivia Lubinger, 11th grade, Pinole Valley High School.

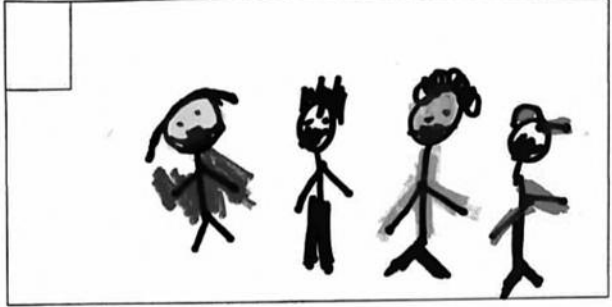
"There's been a lot of lessons I've learned during the quarantine. But the biggest thing I've learned was how to be a better person to everyone, like my family, my friends, and myself." – Miguel Wi, 6th grade, Shannon Elementary School.

"The most important lesson I learned ... is that everybody's actions can affect others. Whether it is not wearing a mask, or sanitizing your hands properly after going outside. Small actions can make a big difference. Not only can you affect those around you, but you can cause a bigger problem for your entire community" – Victoria Dean, 6th grade, St. Joseph School.

"I have learned that family is so important to me. I've learned that being on a tablet instead of face to face is not as good as I thought it would be. I've learned that going to school and being in Mrs. Chan's class in real life was very important to me. I feel sad that I never got to be in her classroom." Shelby Kasari, 3rd grade, Ellerhorst Elementary School.

"During this tough time I learned not to take anything for granted. We should treasure every day because we never know what is gonna get thrown at us the next day." – Juliana Campos, 5th grade, Stewart Elementary School.

Name Asher Z Date _____



The most important thing I learned from COVID is that friends and hugs are missed I miss my friends.

Asher Ziegler
Collins Elementary School
Kindergarten (Mrs. Gray)



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CC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFERING PHS MEMBERS A DEAL

The Contra Costa County Historical Society turns 70 this year, and to celebrate, it's partnering with local historical societies to encourage their members to join the CCCHS for only \$10 for a year. The usual rate is \$40.

After one year, as long as you maintain your membership in the Pinole Historical Society, your CCCHS dues will be only one-half the usual rate, or \$20.

By becoming a CCCHS member, you will have access to the huge archive at the Contra Costa County History Center, 724 Escobar Street, in Martinez, which the CCCHS operates. Your CCCHS membership entitles you free research in the history center and reduced costs on items such as photographs, document copies, and books.

The CCCHS houses the largest historical archive in the country. If you are doing historical research of any kind, this is the place to start. The history center is open Tues-Thurs, 9 AM-4 PM, and the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month from 10 AM-2 PM.

Members have access to:

- **Court Documents:** Going

back to 1848. The CCCHS is the official county repository of Superior Court records up to 1911.

- **Maps:** More than 1,100 maps of all sizes and types, from 1775 to the 1990s.

- **Naturalization Cases:** The archive holds a unique collection of 99 volumes containing 12,646 separate records.

- **Newspapers:** More than 160 separate publications; some have been digitized and are searchable.

- **Photographs:** More than 20,000 images scanned and available as digital files, dating from the late 19th century to the present.

Call the CCCHS at (925) 229-1042 or contact CCCHS Executive Director Michael McCarron

at director@cocohistory.org, for more information. Visit the CCCHS website at www.cocohistory.org for a more complete view of the center's services.



EL SOBRANTE HISTORY CENTER IS OPEN

The El Sobrante History Center is open Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. It's housed in the former offices of Nancy Fahden, Contra Costa County's first female supervisor, behind the El Sobrante Library. Weekday tours are available for individuals or small groups by appointment. Send your date and times of availability to eshistory@gmail.com



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Help us preserve Pinole's history

The PHS welcomes donations of objects and memorabilia significant to the history of Pinole.

Though we do not have a museum, we have two exhibit spaces at the Pinole Library, and our volunteers 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 artifact you'd like to donate.

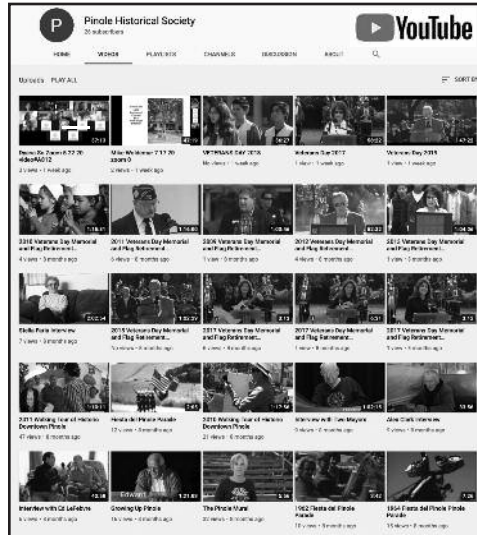
MORE VIDEOS UPLOADED TO PHS YOUTUBE CHANNEL

More videos have been uploaded to the Pinole Historical Society's YouTube channel, including Mike Woldemar's terrific July 2020 presentation on the many Pinole buildings he designed during his long career as an architect.

All of the programs we've recorded since 2008 are on our YouTube channel for your enjoyment. Our thanks to Pinole History Museum board member Alec Jason, who reformatted more than a decade's worth of PHS programs and uploaded them to YouTube.

Among the 30-plus videos include:

- **George Vincent's** two walking tours of historic downtown Pinole.



- **The Pinole Mural:** Wells Fargo Bank produced this video about the history of Pinole. The mural hangs in the bank's Pinole office on Fitzgerald Drive.

- **An Interview With Two Mayors:** Former mayors Jack Meehan and Tom Cutino tell how they saved Fitzgerald Drive — and the sales-tax dollars its shopping centers produce — for Pinole.

- **What's in a Name?:** How Pinole streets got their names, and the characters behind those names.

- **1962, 1963, 1964 and 1965 Fiesta del Pinole parades,** courtesy of PHS member Jim Payne.

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SUPPORT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PHS BY BECOMING A MEMBER IN 2021

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!

Pinole **Historical** Society

2021 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 2021 CALENDAR YEAR (EXCEPT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS)

NAME: (each member): _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE: () _____

E-MAIL (please!): _____

CIRCLE ONE: Annual-new (\$30) Annual-renewal (\$30) Business (\$50) Life (\$150)

METHOD OF PAYMENT: Check (Payable to Pinole Historical Society)

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard American Express Discover

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date _____ CVV _____

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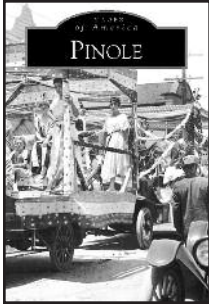
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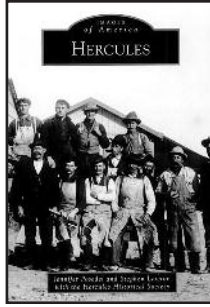
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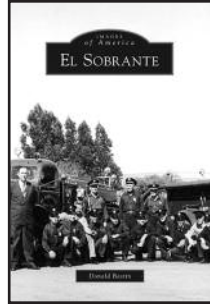
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Hercules



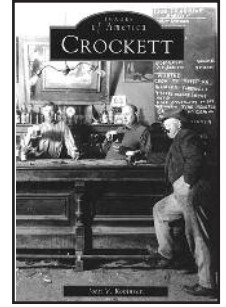
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El Sobrante



El Cerrito



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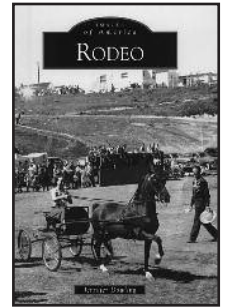
LOCAL HISTORY BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM THE PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

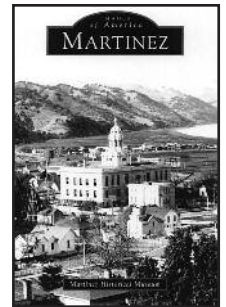
The Pinole, Pinole Through Time, Hercules, Richmond, El Sobrante, El Cerrito, Maritime Contra Costa County, East Bay Hills, Tilden

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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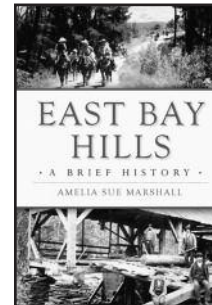
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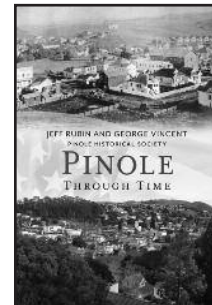
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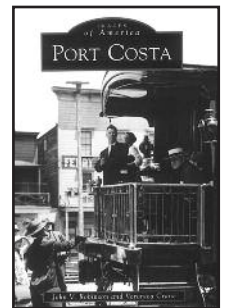
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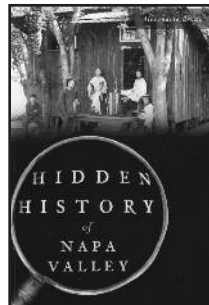
East Bay Hills



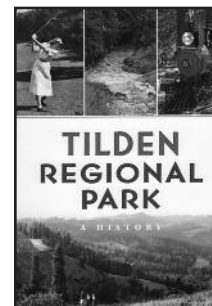
Pinole Through Time



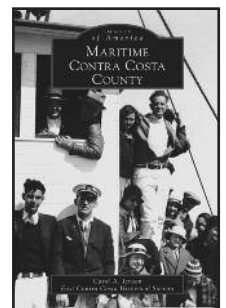
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Tilden Park



Maritime

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