

Pinole Historical Society Newsbriefs



P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564

www.PinoleHistoricalSociety.org info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.org

ESSAY CONTEST DELVES INTO MID-20TH CENTURY HISTORY

Every year since 2009 the Pinole Historical Society has sponsored a history essay contest in the city's schools. The goal is to get students to practice their writing skills, get them interested in history, and learn how to be critical thinkers.

This year's question—**What do pizza, tomatoes, and Pinole have in common?**—will allow students an opportunity to study the mid-20th century history of the city and discover one of the stories that contributed to making Pinole one of the great agrarian communities in Contra Costa County.

Certificates and grand-prize awards will be presented in person in May (pending public health guidance), or will be sent to teachers for distribution to their students.



Mrs. Chainey's fifth-grade class at Shannon Elementary School pose with their 2019 essay certificates.

Pinole Historical Society

P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564

www.PinoleHistoricalSociety.org info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.org

2022 PINOLE HISTORY ESSAY CONTEST

Dear teacher,

The Pinole Historical Society requests your students' participation in its 2022 PINOLE HISTORY ESSAY CONTEST.

If you have any questions, please call me at 1-510-724-9507, or send me an e-mail at info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.org.

Thank you.

JEFF RUBIN, President, Pinole Historical Society Board of Directors

ESSAY RULES

Maximum of 250 words on this topic:

WHAT DO PIZZA, TOMATOES, AND PINOLE HAVE IN COMMON?

The correct answer requires research that will teach you about the history of Pinole.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Ellerhorst, Collins, Shannon, and Stewart elementary schools, Pinole Middle School, Pinole Valley High School, and St. Joseph School.

CONTEST PERIOD

The contest will run through FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 2022. Students will email their essays to their teachers. Essays must include student's name, school, grade, and teacher's name. Teachers will email the essays to the Pinole Historical Society. Members of the Pinole Historical Society board of directors will select the winners.

CERTIFICATES AND GRAND-PRIZE AWARDS will be presented in person in May (pending public health guidance), or will be sent to teachers for distribution to their students.

WHAT'S THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF A CULTURAL COMMUNITY SPACE?

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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.

**Call to see if business is open.

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

Pinole**Historical**Society

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.

THE PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS A REGISTERED 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT. TAX ID: 23-7441316

PHS at Pinole Farmers' Market

The Pinole Historical Society will resume its booth at the Pinole Farmers' Market in April. We'll be there twice every month through December.

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

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President's Message

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

FUNDRAISING FOR THE PINOLE HISTORY MUSEUM — WHEREVER IT WILL BE

Both the Pinole Historical Society and Pinole History Museum boards of directors —and their members — are hoping this city council will consider and approve the renovation of the Faria House when it reviews the Capital Improvement Program during the first quarter of 2022.

And, we are hoping this city council approves the lease agreement it negotiated with the museum's board of directors in 2020, a lease agreement that benefits both the city and the museum, but was not approved when councilmember Anthony Tave voted against it.

To be successful, the Pinole History Museum will have to be self-sustaining. That is our objective.

The Pinole History Museum board has not done any fundraising since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020. We didn't think it was right to ask people for money during the difficult economic conditions the pandemic caused.

Now, with unemployment low, businesses open again, and the country's — and the city's — economy on the upswing, the Pinole History Museum has mailed its first donor appeal since the fall of 2019.

There's also a donor card on page 5 of this newsletter. Please show your support for the Pinole History Museum by being a donor.

We will continue to raise money for a Pinole History Museum — whether or not it's located in the historic Faria House — though that location, which was promised as a site for a museum by several previous city council decisions

for many years — would be its ideal location.

And, we will continue to advocate for the establishment of the Pinole History Museum. There *will* be a Pinole History Museum.

In the interim, we're going to be a "museum on wheels," bringing the history of the city to the community in a series of exhibits over the next year, hosted by local businesses.

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.

FUNDRAISING FOR THE PINOLE HISTORY MUSEUM — WHEREVER IT WILL BE

Continued from page 3

The first will be pop-up exhibits installed at Mechanics Bank and Bank of the West.

And, we will continue our educational programs designed to bring history to the community.

HISTORY'S PURPOSE

Studying our city's past is fundamental for understanding its present. The impact of decisions made can ripple across generations.

That's why a statement made by one of Pinole 4 Fair Government's (P4FG) supporters on the social media platform Next Door — "There are paperback books that tell the history of Pinole, Hercules, San Pablo, Richmond, Martinez, etc., etc. If you read the Pinole book for say an hour or so, you would know everything important there is to know about Pinole" — shows, too, how ignorance can have a ripple effect.

I mention this because the Pinole Historical Society and the Pinole History Museum received letters from P4FG objecting to my last two editorials in this newsletter.

Apparently, we struck a nerve by highlighting the electoral failures of P4FG's leadership, and

the political shenanigans of its acolytes that have prevented the long-planned-and-promised renovation of the Faria House and the establishment of a museum.

To these people, our city's history and culture are not a priority.

THE LETTER

P4FG's letter read (**bold type included in the letter**):

"Unfortunately, over the past few months, Pinole History Museum and Pinole Historical Society President Jeff Rubin has used the PHM/PHS platforms and newsletters to disseminate inaccurate and damaging attacks on Ivette Ricco and Pinole 4 Fair Government volunteers and leaders. (Summer and Fall 2021 issues). The accusations were hurtful and damaging, not only to the leaders mentioned but the entire organization of P4FG.

"We know passions run high around politics and budgetary priorities, but community leaders should argue for their priorities based on their merits. Engaging in personal insults and false accusations is never acceptable and we view this as creating further unnecessary

division within our beloved community.

*"We would respectfully like to clarify that P4FG has never taken an **OFFICIAL** position of opposition to the History Museum, rather, P4FG and its members have questioned the use of \$1.5 M in public funds for a project that may not be able to sustain itself without the continued and ongoing use of public funds. It is strictly a financial concern for the City's use of public funds and budget priorities.*

"President Jeff Rubin's decision to defame his neighbors in his role as President of two tax exempt nonprofit corporations is a critical failure of leadership. While his goal may have been to tarnish the reputation of those with whom he disagrees, his actions are more likely to undermine the reputation of PHM and PHS and their fiduciaries.

"Before responding publicly, we wanted to reach out to the PHM/PHS Board of Directors to resolve this directly. We ask that you exercise your governance responsibility by fulfilling your legal duties and providing oversight and accountability for the actions of

your President. Specifically, we request that the PHM/PHS Board of Directors direct its leadership to refrain from publishing personal attacks on civic and elected Pinole leaders in the organization's newsletters, social media platforms or on its website.

*"We further ask that you affirm this, and take action to remove Mr. Rubin, should he continue to spread disinformation or engage in ad-hominem attacks on his fellow citizens. **The continued use of these platforms for personal attacks could be perceived as bordering on libel and slander.**"*

The letter requested a meeting with the PHS and PHM boards.

INTERESTING LANGUAGE

Hmmm. No "OFFICIAL position of opposition to the museum." What does that mean? Has its opposition been informal?

Libel? Slander? The Pinole Historical Society and Pinole History Museum boards of directors inferred from this language that a P4FG lawsuit was implied.

P4FG's correspondence reminded me of a

Continued on page 5



YES, I WANT TO MAKE HISTORY HAPPEN BY DONATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PINOLE HISTORY MUSEUM.

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

Enclosed is my gift of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000* or other _____

*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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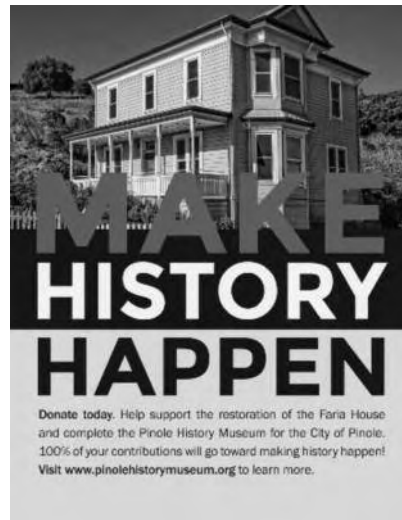
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Mail your donation to Pinole History Museum, P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564

The Pinole History Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Your donation is tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.



FUNDRAISING FOR THE PINOLE HISTORY MUSEUM — WHEREVER IT WILL BE

Continued from page 4

quote from Harry S. Truman, our 33rd president:

"There is no substitute for a fact. When the facts are known, reasonable people do not disagree with respect to them."

Nearly all of the opposition to the Faria House renovation and the museum — formal or informal — has come from P4FG, of which Ivette Ricco is the founder and chairperson, and its supporters.

That's a fact.

In her June 29, 2021, public comment — the night the city council removed the Faria House renovation from the Capital Improvement Plan's funded list for the 2021-22 fiscal year — Ricco made this statement about the future use of the Faria House:

"I support a revenue-generating use — cafe, coffee shop, restaurant, event/wedding venue. It is my opinion that small cities should not com-

mit needed public funds for non-revenue generating projects."

She made no mention of a museum. Was hers a formal or informal statement of opposition?

PHS RESPONSE

The PHS responded: *"The PHS board has reviewed and discussed the text of the articles written by Jeff Rubin in the summer and fall issues of Newsbriefs, and finds the information in the articles is accurate and consistent with the society's mission statement: '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.'*

"The articles chronicle the city's recent political history as it relates to the renovation of the Faria House, the establishment of the Pinole History Museum in the

Faria House, and the activities of those who might oppose it. Recording history is an essential duty and responsibility of a historical society.

"Considering P4FG's opposition to the Pinole Historical Society's newsletter informing Pinole's citizens about P4FG's politics and activities that are obstructing the renovation of the Faria House and the establishment

of a museum in the Faria House, the Pinole Historical Society board of directors sees no reason to meet with P4FG's members."

The Pinole Historical Society and its supporters would welcome P4FG's public support and endorsement of the renovation of the Faria House and the establishment of a museum in the Faria House."

The PHM board sent a similar response.

What can you do to help create a museum in the Faria House?

Contact city council members, and participate in the public comment section of council meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of the month.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Devin Murphy:
dmurphy@ci.pinole.ca.us

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

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

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

PINOLE HISTORY MUSEUM

We thank our donors for their generosity and support

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WHAT'S THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF A CULTURAL COMMUNITY SPACE?

For nearly two decades city councils have declared their intent to create a museum in the Faria House.

This was documented in a presentation to the Pinole City Council in June 2020 by Jeff Rubin, president of the Pinole Historical Society (PHS) and Pinole History Museum (PHM) boards of directors.

It was also documented in a report made by then-Assistant City Manager Hector de La Rosa to the council in November 2020.

The former councils raised expectations in the community that a museum would be established in the Faria House.

The museum board has raised more than \$70,000 — a staggering amount considering there's no facility and fundraising activities were suspended two years ago with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic — because previous councils led the community to believe this project was going to happen.

Two hundred and forty people attended the last PHM fundraising dinner in 2019. Pinole community members have clearly

and emphatically demonstrated their support for a museum every time this issue has come before the council.

For example, on June 15, 2021, when the council added the renovation of the Faria House to its Capital Improvement Plan for the 2021-22 budget — a vote that was subsequently reversed — the council received 70 public comments in favor of the Faria House renovation and a museum, and only two comments opposed.

Between 2018 and 2020, the city paid Interactive Resources, an architectural firm, approximately \$100,000 for renovation plans and a cost estimate for the Faria House project **specifically** for its use as a museum. That's the language in the contract. The city's intent was clear.

MUSEUM PRESENTATION

What was also documented in that June 2020 presentation were financial benefits museums bring to communities. Cities with museums — particularly those in downtown locations — have brought extensive economic benefits to their communities.

There are economic and societal reasons museums are important.

Museums play an essential role in cultural and social life across the U.S. They tell our stories, preserve our heritage, interpret the past, and explore the future. In this way, museums enrich our lives daily by feeding a hunger for knowledge and continually igniting our imaginations.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

But beyond this cultural impact, the museum sector is also essential to the national economy of the United States — generating Gross Domestic Product (GDP), stimulating jobs, and contributing taxes.

That's great return on investment (ROI).

An American Alliance of Museums (AAM) report issued pre-Covid examined the impact of museums on the US economy in 2016.

It was researched and prepared in partnership with Oxford Economics, with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

To conduct the research for this report, Oxford Economics used standard techniques known as economic

impact analysis. This kind of analysis measures not just the direct (operational) contribution of the museum sector but also the impact that is felt as its activities ripple out across the economy.

Here's what the survey found:

- Each year, more than 850 million visits are made to U.S. museums from all across U.S. society, and that number continues to grow.

- The total economic contribution of museums in 2016 amounted to more than \$50 billion in GDP, including 726,200 jobs.

- Museums contribute \$21 billion to the U.S. economy each year. They generate billions more through indirect spending by their visitors.

- Museums contribute \$14 billion in taxes to local, state, and federal governments: \$8 billion in federal taxes and \$4 billion in state and local taxes.

- Museums provide important economic impacts to every part of the nation. The top 10 states driving this impact are geographically diverse and account for 57 percent of the gross

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WHAT'S THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF A CULTURAL COMMUNITY SPACE?

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value added to the national economy.

States with the highest economic impact from the museum sector included California (\$6.6 billion), New York (\$5.4 billion), and Texas (\$3.9 billion).

California provides the highest economic impact from the museum sector of any state in the country.

NATIONAL STATISTICS

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis found that arts and cultural production constitute 4.2 percent of the nation's entire economy, a \$704 billion industry.

Museums and other cultural organizations return over five times as much in local, state, and federal tax revenue as they receive from all levels of government.

In short, museums can be moneymakers that contribute to local economies.

NATIONWIDE SUPPORT

A report conducted in 2018 by the American Alliance of Museums and Wilkening Consulting — *Museums & Public Opinion* — examined the opinions of Americans concerning museums, their educational and economic value, as well as their thoughts about federal funding and support for museums in their community.

The study polled more than 2,000 Americans. The survey results overwhelmingly demonstrate the high degree to which Americans believe in and support their museums,

regardless of political affiliation, geographic location, and whether they visit museums or not:

- 97 percent believe that museums provide valuable educational experiences to their communities.

- 89 percent recognize the important economic contributions and jobs that museums bring.

- 96 percent would approve of elected officials who act to support museums.

- 78 percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural or heritage activities. These travelers — including visitors to museums — spend 60% more on average than other leisure travelers.

LOCAL STATISTICS

The Pinole History Museum surveyed several area museums — pre-Covid — to learn about their attendance and

activities that allow them to be sustainable.

- **Museum of the San Ramon Valley, Danville:** 1,800 visitors annually, including school programs. Open 18 hours a week.

- **San Leandro Museum:** 3,900 visitors annually; the majority from school tours (two a week, one class per day). Limited public hours; Wednesday and Thursday from 1-4 pm and one Saturday a month from 11-4.

- **Alameda Museum:** 1,500 visitors annually, plus a few private tours (schools, Girl Scouts, retirement communities). Open 15 hours a week.

- **Martinez Museum:** 900-1,200 visitors yearly. This museum is about the same size as the Faria House and is located in downtown Martinez.

These are impressive numbers of visitors to small-city museums. The Pinole History Museum

can be a similar destination spot for visitors to our city, and with partnerships with local businesses and restaurants, can be a revenue-generator and contributor to the city's sales-tax base.

If we want people to visit Pinole, eat and shop here, and support our local businesses, we must give them a reason to come here. A museum is a fabulous reason.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

The Pinole Historical Society has spent the last decade building relationships with teachers and principals of all the Pinole schools through our annual essay contest and fourth-grade Pinole history programs, where we go into the schools to teach.

We have the support of the schools whose teachers are aching for a place to bring their students to learn about the

Continued on page 10



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WHAT'S THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF A CULTURAL COMMUNITY SPACE?

Continued from page 9

city's history because local history is not taught in schools in the West Contra Costa Unified School District.

You may think school trips don't have an economic benefit, but envision this scenario: a child — or several children — gets excited by our museum and asks their parents to take them back. Now it's a family outing.

They go for burgers or lunch or a drink at one of our many downtown restaurants, cafes, or bars after their museum tour. They shop. Parents talk to other parents, and before you know it you have local and out-of-town families visiting the museum and eating and shopping in Old Town.

DOWNTOWN

The Pinole History Museum in the Faria House would be a focal point of an Old Town

The Faria House, by Earl Combs



revitalization plan, a place where the community can gather for events and programs and regularly explore the city's history.

Think of how many hundreds, if not thousands, of museum visitors might stay downtown to eat and shop and spend their money —

and how a museum would attract new businesses to Old Town.

Private and corporate parties and events at the museum — weddings, engagements, anniversaries, etc. — would draw hundreds more to Old Town.

Most importantly, the Pinole

History Museum would preserve and share our heritage. It would educate children and inspire Pinole residents' community affiliation and civic pride.

Pinole would derive a significant ROI from a museum.



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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.

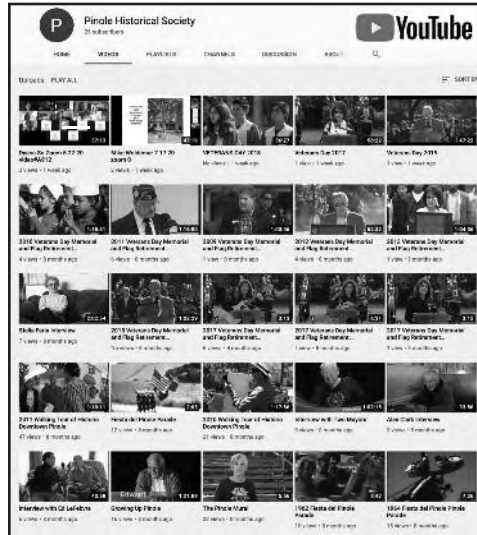
MORE VIDEOS UPLOADED TO PHS YOUTUBE CHANNEL

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 2022

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
2022 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 2022 CALENDAR YEAR (EXCEPT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS)

NAME: (each member): _____

ADDRESS: _____

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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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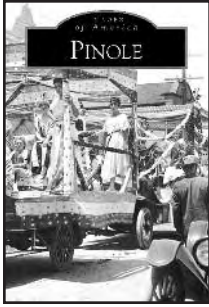
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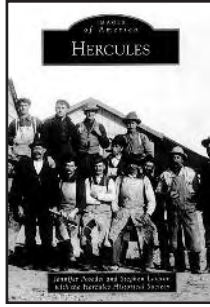
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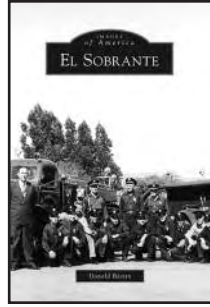
Pinole



Hercules



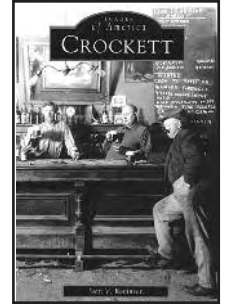
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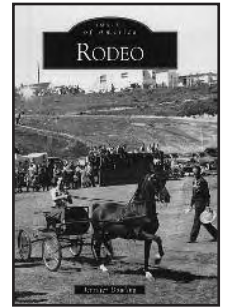
LOCAL HISTORY BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM THE PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

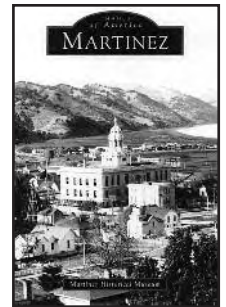
The Pinole, Pinole Through Time, Hercules, Richmond, El Sobrante, El Cerrito, Maritime Contra Costa County, East Bay Hills, Tilden

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

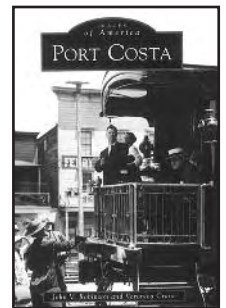
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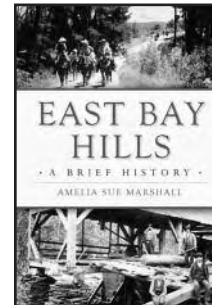
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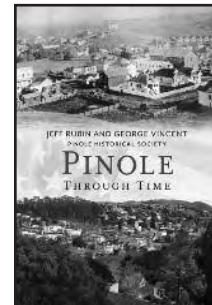
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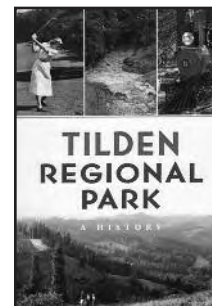
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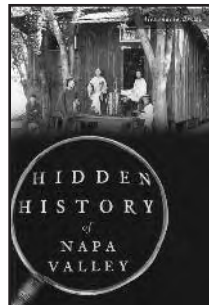
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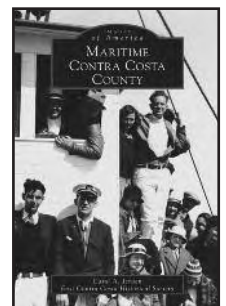
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