

# VIVA!

VINEYARD VALLEY NEWS

VOLUME 48

OCTOBER 2024

NUMBER 11



## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR OCTOBER

<b>VVHA</b>	Lobster Boil	Oct. 6
	Bingo	Oct 11
	Board Meeting	Oct. 16
	Friday Night Social	Oct. 25
<b>COMMUNITY EDUCATION</b>	Meet the Candidates	Oct. 4
<b>LOCAL EVENTS</b>	Sidewalk Sales	Oct. 4-6
	Festa Italiana	Oct. 5
	Harvest Festival	Oct. 19

# FUNDRAISER

## LOBSTER BOIL

### Silent Auction

Sunday, October 6, 2024  
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*Starts at 4:00pm, Lobster pour at 5:00pm*



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2023 Lobster Boil

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and family



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# October 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 G. Kistner Host Political Meeting w/candidates 5:30 pm	5 FESTA ITALIANO 12-4 LYMAN PARK
6 LOBSTER BOIL 4pm	7	8	9	10	11 BINGO 6:30 pm	12
13	14 Columbus Day	15	16 VVHA BOARD MEETING 3pm	17	18	19 HARVEST FESTIVAL 10am-4pm OAK ST.
20	21	22	23	24	25 FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL 5:30pm	26
27	28	29	30	31 Halloween		

Black - Holidays

Red - VVHA Event

Blue - Clubhouse, non VVHA

Green - Local Event

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**VIVA Mission Statement:** To provide a periodic newsletter concerning current & upcoming events, VVHA news, Activities, neighborly news, and other non-political and local items of interest to all Vineyard Valley Residents.

## 2023-2024 VVHA OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

President \_\_\_\_\_ Rick Wood  
Vice President \_\_\_\_\_ Janet Schmidt  
Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Mae Van Nett  
Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_ Henk Brok  
Directors: Eve Breckenridge, Joyce Cahill  
Ines Chiarello, Janice Dugan, Inger Laidley

VVHA Clubhouse Coord. \_\_\_ Mae Van Nett  
Hospitality Robin McGuire, Mae Van Nett  
Memorials and VV Clubhouse

Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Janeen di Rienzo  
Directory \_\_\_\_\_ Michael Merriman  
Library \_\_\_\_\_ Joyce Cahill, Rick Wood  
Bocce Committee Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Bob Distad  
Clubs/Activities \_\_\_\_\_ Rick Wood

Non-Social Resident-formed Groups  
Community Education \_\_\_\_\_ Grace Kistner  
Neighbor Helping Neighbor, Carroll Cotten

**VIVA** viva.vineyardvalley@gmail.com

## October Birthdays

- 1 Terry Maurer
- 2 Leona Alves, Cynthia Lane
- 3 Ken Bergeron, Audrey Pniower
- 4 Lori Zumwalt
- 5 Carl Myers, Teri Scalzo, Minna Williams
- 7 Anne Marie Clifford, Linda Titus
- 10 Gary Crosman, Ken Young
- 12 Laurel Guiliani, Rick Wood
- 14 Kathy Conum, Doug Schmidt
- 15 Vivian Robison
- 16 Carroll Cotton
- 17 Diana Lavagnino
- 18 Janet Schmidt
- 20 Chuck Pniower
- 21 Patty Welsh
- 26 Bob Distad
- 27 Cathy Small
- 28 Michael Berger

If there are any changes or additions to our list, please call Hospitality Chair  
Robin 303-901-4343 Mae 707-246-2631

If there is a death, call Janeen di Rienzo at 707-294-8307 so she can post it on the bulletin board and arrange for the \$50. donation to the organization you designate. She will explain how to schedule the clubhouse for a memorial

**Moving In -  
Welcome to our community**

**Moving Out -  
Sad to see you go**

Kim Abrahimi, Gillian Pierini, Rich Hughes  
21 Los Robles

**In Memory of our friends**

# The Prez Sez . . . by Rick Wood

Well, fall is here and as the leaves change colors and the day start getting shorter it's a good time to take advantage of a few events left in this year's calendar. The lobster boil is Sunday, October 6 in the corporation yard starting at 4 PM so if you signed up and paid, please remember that there is a silent auction so bring cash checks or credit cards. There should be great donations to bid on.

Joyce and I made it 4 1/2 years but finally we had our time with Covid and as I write this, we are just on the other side of it so remember if you're not feeling well and stay put and if you need help reach out to your neighbors and friends.

I am keeping the short and sweet, so remember to get up and get out and be healthy.



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**VINEYARD VALLEY HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION SEMI-ANNUAL  
GENERAL MEETING  
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 18, 2024 MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 3:06pm by Vice-President Janet Schmidt and a quorum was confirmed.

**Minutes** of March 2024 General Meeting and August 2024 meetings were approved

Treasurer's report by Henk Brok: As of August 31, 2024: Checking \$8,979.01; Savings \$9,012.82; VIVA \$3,738.07; Bocce \$2,153.32; Total \$23,883.22

**August Bingo** - 57 people (Janet was hoping to hit 60!) Ines's creation this month was shredded chicken sandwiches with coleslaw, thanks Ines!

**The Newcomer's Social** on Aug 24 hosted 17 new residents from 11 homes. 90 people showed, bringing so much tasty food – the tables were groaning!

**Labor Day** brought with it Men in the Kitchen. The men served eggs, sausage, potatoes, fruit and Mike Greensill's British pancakes to 70 attendees, followed by Bocce.

**Thanks to all** who joined us on this **September Semi-Annual Meeting**. And thanks to everyone who signed the Voting and Proxy form (68 total recorded) The motion to exclude the Treasurer position from the 2 year consecutive term limit was approved with 63 yes votes vs 5 no votes. Janeen DiRenzo brought up the fact that the update, as written, needed parameters. Several residents agreed. It was discussed and voted Yes that VVHA would arrange for an audit of the treasurers books and a further amendment to be presented in the next General Meeting in March 2025 to add that the treasurer position, while still subject to yearly terms, would be subject to positive audit reports every 5 years. I will work with Henk to get a working knowledge of the books, in the case he disappears to Holland for an extended visit :-)

**Hopefully** everyone had a chance to sign up for the Lobster Boil on Sunday Oct 6. It should be another great event. We are still accepting donations for the fundraising portion so if you have anything you'd like to contribute please reach out to a Board Member. Funds raised will benefit the general VVHA fund, which helps pay for many of the events put on throughout the year, including the upcoming Christmas festivities.

**The 2024 Directory** will have already gone to print by the time you read this so look forward to receiving your copy shortly.

**Grace Kistner** reminded all to attend the **Oct 4, 5:30pm** meeting in the clubhouse with members of the SH City Council. The candidates for city council and Mayor will be there as well as representatives of the 3 main issues on the upcoming city ballot.

**A resident** inquired as to whether there would be a **Thanksgiving Dinner** this year. Janeen DiRenzo stated that she'd like to host the Dinner, which in the past has served many residents, both in the clubhouse and via home delivery. Information to follow

**A resident** mentioned the fact that the climate in the clubhouse was decidedly chilly, not just during the meeting but also during bingo, etc. VVHA has brought it up to mgmt

**Vice-President** Janet Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 3:38pm

Submitted by Secretary Mae VanNett



# PARK MANAGER REPORT

**OCTOBER 2024**

Happy Fall! As we move in to the cooler weather and overcast mornings, we are still in the drier season with increased risk for Red Flag Warnings and Public Safety Power Shutoffs. Preparedness is a topic that has been often repeated in our messaging to residents, it is essential that each household have a plan for power shut offs, and evacuation and that it is shared with family and friends. Thank you to all the residents who participated in the City of St. Helena East Side Evacuation Drill.

## FALL HOME MAINTENANCE

Please do your part to keep your property lean and green to help protect your family and home as well as others in the Vineyard Valley community. Please join your neighbors in doing your part to protect our community by:

- Removing all dead and dying weeds, grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, and vegetative debris (leaves, needles, cones, bark, etc.); Check and clean your roofs, gutters, decks, porches, stairways, etc.
- Contacting the office to review any tree branches within 10 feet of any chimney or stovepipe outlet
- Limit combustible items (outdoor furniture, planters, etc.) on top of decks and patios
- Remove accumulated vegetative debris from the roof

## COVID AND FLU VACCINE OPPORTUNITY AT VINEYARD VALLEY

A Covid and Flu Vaccine opportunity for Vineyard Valley residents through the St. Helena Hospital Foundation was held at the clubhouse on September 18th. Seventy-five residents were vaccinated. We are grateful to St. Helena Hospital Foundation for providing this service to the Vineyard Valley residents.

## PAVEMENT STRIPING

The streets and parking lots will be re-striped Tuesday, October 1st. The mail room and clubhouse parking lots will be closed that day.

## NAPA COUNTY WILDLIFE SERVICES

There have been reports of coyotes in Vineyard Valley and surrounding areas. Please use caution when walking small dogs, keep them on a short leash. If you see a coyote, please contact Napa County Wildlife Services at 707-253-4357 and leave a message for the federal trapper assigned to Napa County.

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# FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL

## OCT 25TH,

### 5:30



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# Thanksgiving Dinner

This year, Thanksgiving Dinner will be put on by and for residents of Vineyard Valley. This dinner will be at no charge to diners and sponsored strictly by donations, This is not a VVHA sponsored event, but one put on by your neighbors  
**To donate**, make a check payable to **Ed or Susie Stark, 29 Redondo** who will act as our Treasurer

**To attend** the dinner, call **Janeen at 707-294-8307** to reserve your place.

If you cannot attend and still want dinner, we will deliver it to you at home

This will take place in the Clubhouse on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 28 at 3 pm,

**Volunteers are needed for this event. Please call Janeen if you want to help.**

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# *A tale of Three Rooms by Mike Greensill*

I don't really want this piece to sound like I'm an old fogie who complains that, "things were better in my day", but there's bound to be a bit of that because I'm going to reminisce about three rooms in San Francisco that loomed large in my life, and now they're gone. And "rooms" is what they were, just bricks and mortar, but populated by unique human beings who brought them to life.

I first entered Washington Square Bar & Grill in the fall of 1977. Fresh from the old country and the colonies (England and Hong Kong, long story) I was eager, as a new immigrant and a jazz musician, to check out the local scene. I was immediately directed to North Beach and found myself in the warm and woody confines of "The Square". Ed Moose, one of "The Square's" co-owners along with Sam Dietch, always hated the commonly used nom de plume "The Washbag" that Herb Caen had coined, so we'll call it "The Square". Within a week I'd become fast friends with various curmudgeonly bartenders and the nightly parade of jazz piano players. Every Wednesday Norma Teagarden, the sister of the more famous Jack, held forth at the piano and invited musicians to sit in. In those days I still played clarinet as well as piano and I became a regular visitor. In 1979 I was finally asked to play a shift on piano. The shift was Friday nights. Oh the horror! 1,000 people crammed in the bar, falling over the piano, blowing cigar smoke at me; the noise so loud my most creative flourishes went completely unheard. I have to admit I enjoyed being a customer at the Square much more than my attempts to persuade the regulars of the efficacy of the Duke Ellington Songbook. But as it turned out I seemed to spend many more lunchtimes and afternoons drinking and eating at the Square than I did nights playing the piano. Of course in those days one could have 4 or 5 pints of Guinness at lunch and still function in the evening. Ah days gone by.

Ed Moose, who comes up later on, and the late Sam Dietch owned the Square. And in those days I was closer to Sam than Ed. Ed was always shepherding around some local or national notable and generally "working the room" whilst Sam seemed happier spending his time with the proletariat. Sam could be acerbic and didn't suffer fools gladly, but I loved him and here's why. One night a customer came up to me and requested "New York, New York" and being as I was in one of my "I'm an artist don't bother me with this commercial crap", phases, I said I don't play that one! So off he goes in a huff to "complain to the management". Probably in any other joint I was about to be in a lot of trouble, after all we were supposed to entertain the customers. But Sam Dietch in his inimitable way proceeded to throw the customer out, came over to me and whispered, "let me know if anyone else is bothering you". The Square has a permanent place in my heart because it's where I married my 3rd and favorite wife the vocalist Wesla Whitfield. It's great getting married in a saloon, one can throw down a Martini before the ceremony. After the deed was done I sat down at the piano and Wesla sang the beautiful love song "That's All" by Bob Haymes,.... not a dry eye in the house... and the whole wonderful event chronicled in Herb Caen's next column. Priceless! The Washington Square Bar & Grill is sorely missed.

Speaking of Ms. Whitfield she looms large in the next rooms history. The Plush Room was a Cabaret. What's a Cabaret? It's small room where lovers of the Great American Songbook gather, in silence, to worship at the feet of Gershwin, Porter, Berlin, Rodgers et al. Singers practice their craft and you can get a Martini. There seems to be a theme here! The Plush Room was the perfect cabaret. It seated 130, everyone could see and hear, and the piano was large and in-tune. The waitresses were almost wraith-like in their ability to quench the thirst of the punters in an unobtrusive and silent way. Even during the most sensitive ballad they would ply their trade without disturbing the sensitive ego of a quietly emoting torch singer - they were known as "The Plushettes". I first accompanied Wesla there in 1984, though she started singing at The Plush when it first opened in 1979. We performed there until it closed in 2008. The Plush Room was unique because it was a "listening room" no loud shouts for "New York, New York" in here! We've lived through countless changes of ownership and management and survived it all until now. It was a magic place where a simple saloon piano player and singer could make music with taste and dignity. Now it's been taken apart, the beautiful stained glass ceiling removed and it's been converted into a breakfast nook or something just as dreadful. A curse on corporate hotel management.

When I was originally writing this piece it was titled, "A Tale of Two Rooms" but now another venerable institution, one that has had the good taste over the last 10 years to employ my aging fingers, has closed. "Moose's", Ed Moose's successful follow up to "The Square" has shuttered it's doors. The thing I love about about Ed Moose is that he adores jazz and hires jazz musicians, not because they might sell more drinks, but because he loves the aesthetic of live music permeating his restaurant. I remember when I was working at Stars (good lord I've closed a lot of rooms!) Jeremiah Tower would often hang the sword of Damocles over my head by saying, "I could get rid of this piano, put in a 4-top and make an extra \$100,000 a year, don't forget it!" Moose would never say anything like that, his joint will be sorely missed.

I'm sure that the 20 and 30 something's of today have their own Square's, Plush's and Moose's. Though you won't find me in them. The thump, thump of techno rock, or any other form of the rhythmic water torture that passes for music these days and pervades modern saloons, sends me scurrying back to my burrow. The vibrations disturb the internal balance when imbibing that first sip of an overfilled Martini. But, despite the fact that the drinking world I knew and loved is seemingly collapsing around me, I will still raise a toast to a place that's the greatest city in the land. My favorite Goddess, San Francisco!



# The Bear Flag Revolt: Locals Help Overthrow Mexican Rule in 1846

By Mariam Hansen, St. Helena Historical Society

with Shannon Murray Kuleto, Napa Valley Roots

Californians recognize the grizzly bear as a popular symbol of our state. It even appears on our state flag. Some might also know the symbol's connection to something called the "Bear Flag Revolt" and the short-lived "California Republic" of the summer of 1846. But did you know that a number of new Napa Valley settlers were at the very heart of this rebellion?

The 1840s were a turbulent time for Mexico's government, and that unrest was multiplied in the far reaches of the Mexican frontier of Alta California, where Sonoma and Napa were the most remote political district. The colonial settlers, the Californios, were Mexican citizens, but had traditionally welcomed newcomers of other nations who wished to swear loyalty to Mexico (e.g. 1840s-era locals George Yount, Dr. Edward Bale, and Joseph Chiles).

But by 1845, the annual trickle of new Americans coming into California ramped up to a few hundred at once! The local government in Monterey, fearing the Californios would soon be outnumbered, ceased to give these newcomers permission to stay.

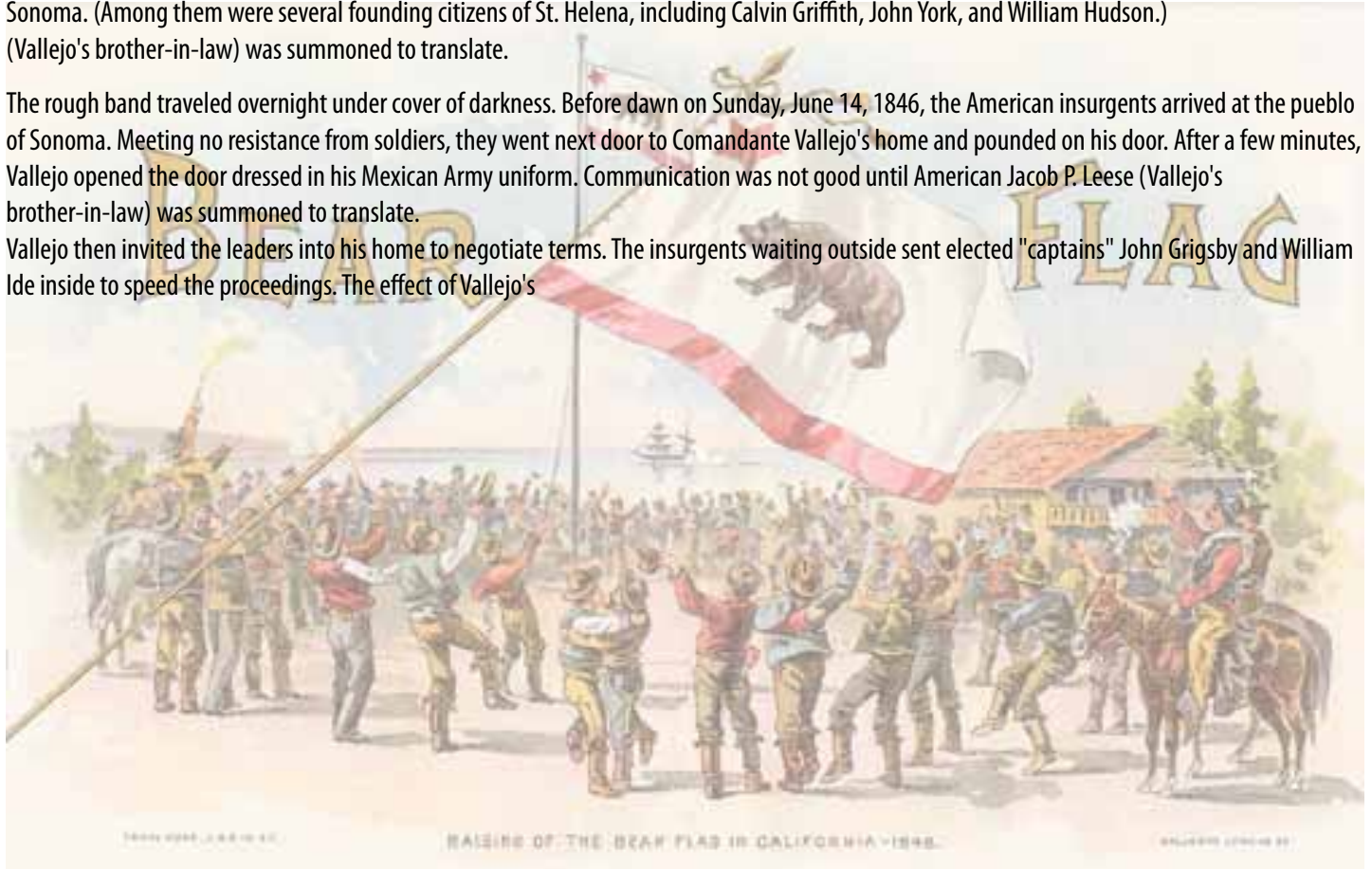
Tensions mounted – even more so as news slowly filtered west that the US and Mexico might go to war at any moment – and the governor ordered Americans out! That command included both the 60-man company of US Army Surveyors under John C. Frémont, and the 300 Missourians, who'd crossed the Plains to Sutter's Fort (Sacramento) in late 1845 in the Grigsby-Ide wagon train. All were to leave the area by the summer of 1846 or be forced out at gunpoint.

Frémont had other ideas, and took his men to a remote location above modern-day Winters to await the turn of events. The American newcomers, too, had no wish to leave, and began to see their only recourse would be outright rebellion. It was an audacious plan, encouraged covertly by Frémont, and inspired by Texans who'd done something similar in the 1830s. They'd take the fort at Sonoma, and then hold out in hopes the United States government would intervene.

Quite a few of the Grigsby-Ide emigrants had settled themselves in Napa Valley in 1845, wintering with George Yount, then finding work in 1846 with Dr. Bale building his new grist mill and establishing crops. Their leaders, including John Grigsby of Napa, got fired up after spending some time in Frémont's camp in the Sacramento Valley, and resolved to use force to stay here. They started towards Napa Valley, gathering other Anglos along the way. Finally, on June 13, at Dr. Bale's new Mill, the group swelled to over 30 men – about half Napa Valley men – and resolved to attack Sonoma. (Among them were several founding citizens of St. Helena, including Calvin Griffith, John York, and William Hudson.) (Vallejo's brother-in-law) was summoned to translate.

The rough band traveled overnight under cover of darkness. Before dawn on Sunday, June 14, 1846, the American insurgents arrived at the pueblo of Sonoma. Meeting no resistance from soldiers, they went next door to Comandante Vallejo's home and pounded on his door. After a few minutes, Vallejo opened the door dressed in his Mexican Army uniform. Communication was not good until American Jacob P. Leese (Vallejo's brother-in-law) was summoned to translate.

Vallejo then invited the leaders into his home to negotiate terms. The insurgents waiting outside sent elected "captains" John Grigsby and William Ide inside to speed the proceedings. The effect of Vallejo's



# The Bear Flag Revolt: Locals Help Overthrow Mexican Rule in 1846

By Mariam Hansen, St. Helena Historical Society  
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Vallejo then invited the leaders into his home to negotiate terms. The insurgents waiting outside sent elected "captains" John Grigsby and William Ide inside to speed the proceedings. The effect of Vallejo's hospitality in the form of wine and brandy for the negotiators and someone else's barrel of aguardiente for those outside is debatable. However, when the first agreement was presented to those outside, they refused it. They angrily insisted the Mexicans be arrested and held as hostages. John Grigsby refused to remain as leader of the more radicalized group, but William Ide took over and gave an impassioned speech urging the rebels to stay in Sonoma and found a new republic.

Grigsby took charge of the prisoners: Mariano Vallejo and his brother Salvador, Col. Victor Prudon (Mexican Army), and Jacob Leese (married to a Vallejo). The Californios were placed on horseback to be taken to Frémont, along with several insurgents who did not support forming a new republic under these circumstances. That night they camped near Napa. Local Californio Cayetano Juarez sent his brother – disguised as a woman – to ask Vallejo if he wanted to be rescued. Vallejo declined to be released, wanting to avoid any bloodshed and expecting that Frémont would release him on parole. Frémont did not, and the group went on to Sutter's Fort where they were held in chains for several months.

Back in Sonoma, the barracks became headquarters for the remaining 24 rebels. The Napa Valley families all moved to Sonoma for protection, and local American-Californio Joseph B. Chiles was set to protect them from a Mexican counter-attack (that never happened). Within a few days the group created their homemade flag – featuring a crudely drawn bear – declaring the "California Republic." This flag earned the insurgents the nickname Los Osos (The Bears) and the term "Bear Flaggers" stuck. Thus the uprising became known as the Bear Flag Revolt. Just three weeks later, after celebrating July 4th in Fort Sonoma, word reached California that the U.S. and Mexico were at war, and the U.S. Navy took Monterey. When Navy Lt. Joseph Revere (Paul's grandson) hand-delivered the news and a U.S. flag to the rebels, the Bear Flag came down, the Stars and Stripes went up and the California Republic came to an end.

Most rebels then volunteered for military service with the US Army, many fighting with John C. Frémont to hold California for the Americans until the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War in 1848. In this treaty, Mexico ceded all of their Alta California territories to the United States, including, of course, what we now know as the state of California.

By the next year, in 1849, the Americans, along with pro-American Californios such as Mariano Vallejo (who apparently held no lasting grudge for his months of imprisonment), gathered in Monterey's Colton Hall to hammer out a California Constitution – published in both Spanish and English – to guide its governance. California became the 31st state on September 9, 1850.

Bear Flag exploits were for many years celebrated in our state with pride, parades, statewide holidays, and annual reenactments. In recent decades, however, historians more often view this rowdy, armed rebellion of white Americans, using extra-legal force to demand land, as problematic at best.

In Napa Valley, you may visit the Bale Mill where Los Osos gathered, or view the historic plaque by the Napa River in downtown Napa that marks Frémont's crossing. Many of the participants and their families are buried in either St Helena's Public Cemetery or in Napa's Tulocay. In the town of Sonoma, the Plaza boasts a grand statue commemorating the Bear Flaggers, and you may tour the barracks and the place where these men negotiated with – and arrested – General Vallejo. The "Paths of History" walking tours in Monterey also offer wonderful insight into these mid-19th-century lives and events.

\* Both Marian Hansen and Shannon Kuleto are members of the Vineyard Valley community







## Whitehall Lane

It's that time of year in the valley when the vineyards light up early in the morning so the vineyard workers can start pulling grapes while it is still cool. I can hear the clanking of the conveyor belts at Beringer Winery signaling another delivery of several tons. Trucks loaded with white bins carrying 1000lbs of grapes each rumble through town all day. Harvest is upon us! I love walking next to the vineyards and seeing the large clusters of grapes dangling underneath their canopies. It's a glorious time of year here.

With the weather changing just enough to keep us under 90 degrees, we found ourselves at Whitehall Lane Winery. Whitehall Lane was founded in 1979 by the Finkelstein's (who own Judd's Hill Winery). They were the first to establish the winery at the corner of Whitehall Lane and Highway 29. However, its land has been continuously cultivated for grapes since the mid 1800's due to the desirable soil types on the property. Initially the winery focused on Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. 1993 saw the Leonardini Family buy the estate. They have been evolving the winery, focusing on Cabernet and Bordeaux varieties and sustainable farming practices. In addition, they have purchased 6 additional vineyards. The most recent is in the Petaluma Gap AVA in Sonoma, allowing them to become 100% estate bottled. The Sonoma County property produces the grapes for their Chardonnay and Pinot Noir as well as their newish sparkling wine.

With a day that was ONLY 85, a very pleasant change, we made use of the vineyard terrace setting. The tasting started with their 2022 Blanc de Noir. Lightly pink, with light strawberry notes and tight acidity, it was a refreshing start to our tasting.



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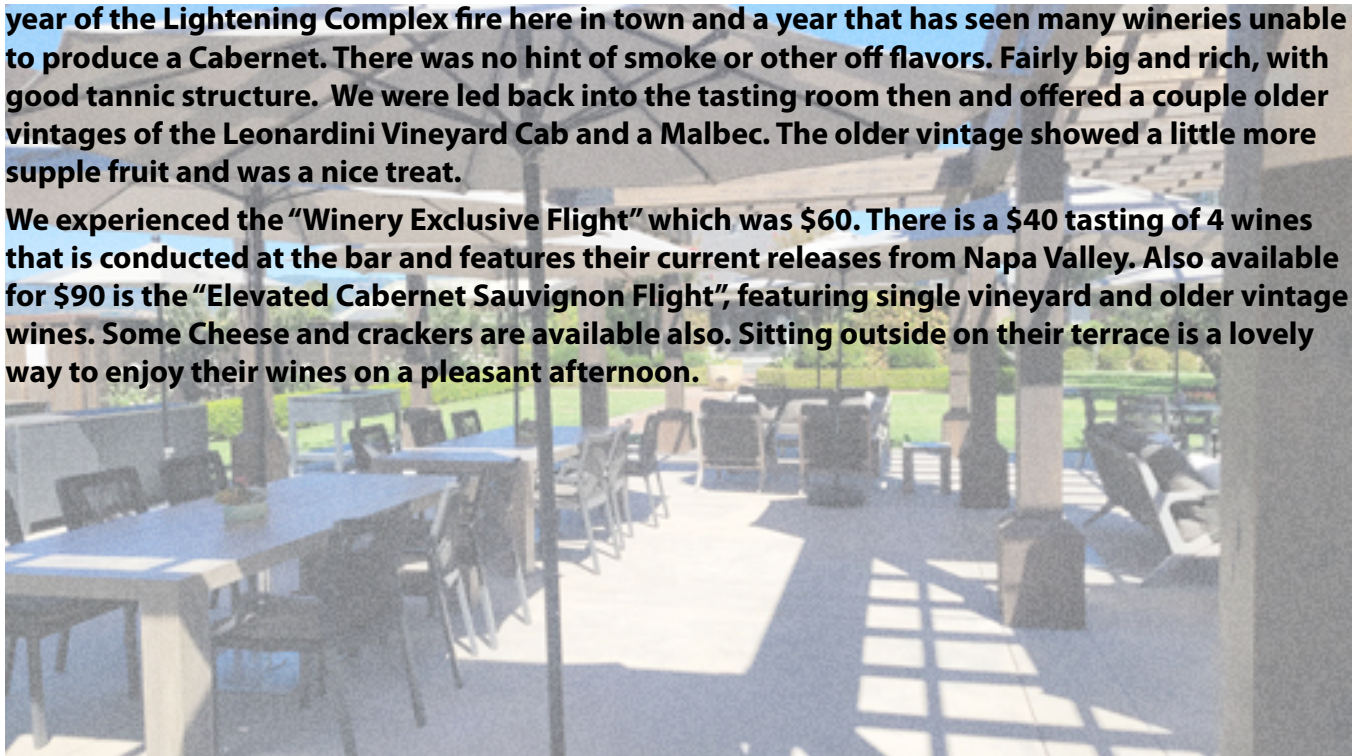


# THE TASTING ROOM

by Steve Kinney

Our host, Aubrey (who is the grandson in law of Carol Haven) walked us through the bustling winery, busy with crush, to the Vineyard Terrace. New Italian Barrels had just arrived and were being unpacked and readied for use. Next was a Petaluma Gap Chardonnay from their new vineyard. Crisp with a bit of malolactic creaminess and nice apple fruit flavors. Another of their Petaluma Gap wines, a 2022 Pinot Noir, was poured. From the Swan clone, this showed light strawberry flavors with a bit of acidity and light tannins. Cabs were up next, starting with their whimsically named Mancino Lanciatore. Named for Tom Leonardini's stint as a left-handed pitcher in his college days. This wine contained two new grape varieties that may see more use in the future, due to their climate capabilities. These were Paseante Noir (7%) and Camminare (just 1%). The 2020 Leonardini Cabernet followed. 2020 was the year of the Lightening Complex fire here in town and a year that has seen many wineries unable to produce a Cabernet. There was no hint of smoke or other off flavors. Fairly big and rich, with good tannic structure. We were led back into the tasting room then and offered a couple older vintages of the Leonardini Vineyard Cab and a Malbec. The older vintage showed a little more supple fruit and was a nice treat.

We experienced the "Winery Exclusive Flight" which was \$60. There is a \$40 tasting of 4 wines that is conducted at the bar and features their current releases from Napa Valley. Also available for \$90 is the "Elevated Cabernet Sauvignon Flight", featuring single vineyard and older vintage wines. Some Cheese and crackers are available also. Sitting outside on their terrace is a lovely way to enjoy their wines on a pleasant afternoon.



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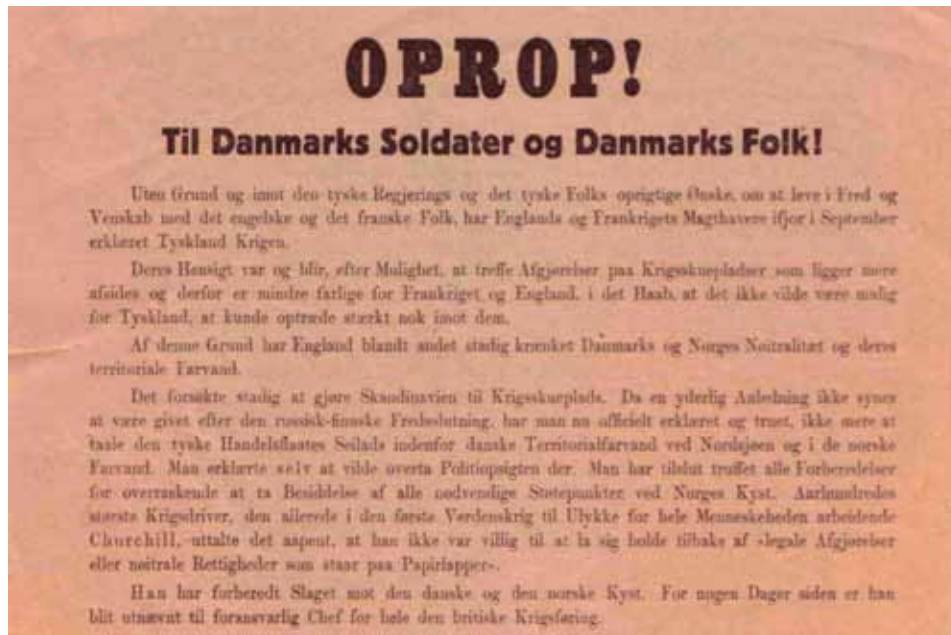
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# Murder At The Vicarage


by Minna Williams

The Germans occupied Denmark on April 9, 1940. This pamphlet was released by German airplanes flying over Denmark on the morning of April 9, 1940.




This absurd German message was written in a mixture of broken Danish and Norwegian and authored by Hitler himself :

"TO THE DANISH SOLDIERS AND THE DANISH NATION. Without any reason and against the German's government's true wish to live in peace and friendship with the English and French nations, the English and French governments have last year declared war against Germany. ...Due to the threat from England and due to the acts by this century's biggest warmonger Churchill, .... the strong German military has this morning occupied Denmark and Norway .... the people is encouraged to continue their daily lives and to secure peace and order...."



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# Murder At The Vicarage

by Minna Williams

During the war the king rode daily through the streets of Copenhagen.

How cozy it is to sit in the dining room with the whole family. Christmas is over and it is dark and foggy outside. The parishioners are happy with their pastor Gaarn Larsen, and he has now established a close friendship with them and especially with a group of 10-15 with whom he consults on matters concerning the parish.

Suddenly a loud noise erupted from the entry hall, and we all run out to see what happened. A man is lying on the front steps. He has been shot.

Excerpt from an article written by Peter Ovid Knudsen in 2000.

"One evening on Christmas, 1944, the door bell rang at the home of teacher Søren Birktoft, Chairman of the local parish council. Outside stood three young men pretending to be from the German Security Police. They accused Søren Birktoft of being a communist and of collaborating with the Danish resistance underground movement.

Mr. Birktoft insisted that he has always been a social democrat and his pastor could confirm this. They walked over to the vicarage where according to the police, Birktoft started to run towards the front door. One of the young men drew his revolver and shot Birktoft, where after another one went over to him and fired the fatal shot into the wounded man.



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# Murder At The Vicarage

by Minna Williams

In reality, the three young men were resistance men who had come under the influence of a local pastor, Svend Aage Stigvad, who was seen as a leader of a small resistance group.

Stigvad wanted Birktoft out of the way, because he had insisted on an accounting by Stigvad of over 20,000.00 kr that Stigvad had collected for a new church to be built. The money had disappeared a couple of months before the murder, and Stigvad had been suspended.

He was later convicted of manslaughter, embezzlement and creating gang activities. He was removed from the church, and after the sentence was finished in 1949, he became a teacher under an assumed name."

A couple of days after the shooting, also a dark and foggy night, a man appears at our front door. He warns my father that some Germans, or maybe Danes, had asked for directions to our house. They were pointed to the opposite direction by this man.



After a short discussion my father walks across the dark cemetery to get to some friends' house. They gather together a group of parishioners to discuss what advice to give my father. They all advise him to leave Hvidovre as quickly as possible.

My father has six children to protect. There is no law and order in the country since the Danish police was rounded up by the Germans in 1944. The resistance movement's young men are trigger happy. Pastor Stigvad is unbalanced and jealous of my father because he is so popular. It is time to leave.

The whole family gathers in the entry hall. Suitcases are stacked up, even the twins obey orders and stay put in their chairs. We are now refugees and on our way to the family farm on the little inland Læsø in the middle of Kattegat, the sea between Denmark and Sweden. The furniture, china and silverware are locked up and stored in the attic. The taxi is filled with children and grownups. The trip to Læsø begins. We have no idea how long we will be gone, but know that we have to get away to security on the little island. Our little house on Læsø is a small ruin with a roof of seaweed. It is called "The little Place", and located near the main farmhouse Juelsminde, Dad's home.

## The Little Place

On Juelsminde live Aunt Jonna, Uncle Bernhard and their three children. They will later in life become well-known persons both on and outside Læsø. Olav Juul becomes a progressive farmer and lord mayor of Læsø. Anne Julie is a world renowned artist, especially known for her hand made pipes, which the Japanese tobacco smoking citizens love, and Karen works in Norway as a social worker in her husband's mental health clinic.



# Murder At The Vicarage

by Minna Williams

In the train on the way to Læsø, one of the twins get his leg stuck in the toilet and yells through the aisle, " Mr. German", to the great consternation of our parents who did not want people to know we were all leaving our home. However, a nice German soldier helped the kid, and nothing more came of it.

The last leg of the voyage was done on the Læsø ship. It is only a couple of hours of sailing, but the currents are very strong and many people get sea sick.

When my mother saw our new home, she almost panicked. This little stone cottage was to house her whole family of eight persons. The range in the kitchen has removable rings of irons which have to be moved to stick the wood into the bottom of the stove. There is no running water but a well with a pump outside. The windows are very small and close to the ground. Mice and rats run freely though the rooms at night.

Lena contracts meningitis and becomes deadly ill. Father talks to her and Lena asks if she can die from this illness. She is seven years old. Father answers, "Yes, you can." Whereupon Lena says, " I am not afraid of that because I know all the apostles." During her illness Father brings cold milk to Lena, milk that he lowered in a container down into the well, so it would be very cold and refreshing.

It is a very severe winter in 1944. The frost and snow seem never to leave. Slowly though, the first signs of a thaw appear. Puddles of blue water form in the green fields. On our way to school, we walk through the woods. The ditches are filled with water and grass, the fir trees needles smell of wet bark, and the earth between the trees are covered with soft green moss. Small yellow and white spring flowers peep up from the ground. The sun shines between the tree branches, and the force of nature's beauty and strength surround us. The scent from the fir trees and the earth, the spring flowers' color, the lonesome and quietness make an unforgettable impression on all of us. Even the twins walk slowly and quietly with us to the schoolhouse.

I am often sent to Juelsminde to get milk in a little white enamel bucket. I have to be very careful not to spill any on the way back. Cows, horses and pigs live on the farm. On the neighboring farm they raise pigs. One day I hear a terrible sound. There is screaming and yelling, people are running around chasing a pig they want to slaughter. The scream is heart piercing, it knows its fate. A little later mother is invited to the witness the slaughter and participate in the distribution of the meat. I follow her. The pig hangs from a hook in the ceiling, it is dead, the blood gathers in a bowl. The room is hot and disgusting. Later we get blood sausage which is fried with sugar. We all must eat it

The summer rolls around, the hay is golden, the sun is warm, the icicles which ran outside the windows, almost to the ground, have melted. The blue water that we splashed in evaporated, doors and windows are kept open, feather beds and linens are aired out, winter clothes packed away under the beds. Its time to have fun. But suddenly, we have to move again. We are returning to Hvidovre.

THE LIBERATION MESSAGE IS BROUGHT OVER THE BBC RADIO AT 8:30 PM. The Germans capitulated in Denmark as of 8:00 PM.

THE LIBERATION MESSAGE: "At this moment ,we are informed that Montgomery has declared that the German troops in Holland, Northwest Germany and Denmark have surrendered. This is London. We repeat. Montgomery has at this moment stated that the German troops in Holland, Northwest Germany and Denmark have surrendered."

*To be continued next month*

## Upcoming Local Events

### St. Helena's Annual Sidewalk Sale

Friday, October 4th 08:00 am - Sunday, October 6th 05:00 pm 1150 Main Street, St. Helena  
Head to the Historic Shopping District the first full weekend of October shop, St. Helena's Annual Sidewalk Sale. Featuring great deals on home goods, last season clothing, accessories, art, and more! Make a day of it, sip, shop, and dine St. Helena!

### Festa Italiana Oct. 5, 2024

This event is for locals not tourists. It is not advertised and the small flyers are given out by a few of the local establishments that we frequent. Although it does not say on the flyer, there will be some world class accordion players as well as a group from the SH Community Band and more.

All food is free and a minimal \$5.00 charge for wine tasting (according the ABC rules for California). Everything for this event has been bought by, or donated by, generous members and businesses of the community of St. Helena.



Join the  
Sons & Daughters of Italy in America #2077  
in celebrating

### ITALIAN FLAG RAISING

Italian National Anthem sung by Katie Hopgood-Sculatti

### & FESTA ITALIANA

**OCT. 5, 2024 12-4pm**

Lyman Park  
Main Street, St. Helena

*"Your donations make this event possible"*

Sample wines from Local Italian Owned Wineries  
Italian & Other Foods  
Italian music and much more

For information call Anthony Micheli at 707-486-3832

## St. Helena HOMETOWN HARVEST Festival

Our annual St. Helena Hometown Harvest Festival takes place the 3rd Saturday of October. Activities will include the 5k & Community Fun Run, Pet PAWrade, and Hometown Harvest Festival Street Fair.

#### Festival Information:

The Hometown Harvest Festival is St. Helena's most-beloved Fall event for the young and old held on the 3rd Saturday in October each year. The Hometown Harvest Festival features live music, wine and beer, a food alley, kids zone, and an array of arts and crafts vendors.

**Date: Saturday October 19, 2024 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**Location: Oak Avenue between Adams Street and Spring Street**

#### 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run Registration

All registrations before October 1st will receive a t-shirt included in their registration! Registration will also be available on-site on the morning of the race. 5K start time will be 7:45 a.m. 1 mile fun run will start at 9 a.m. More information available online at [www.cityofsthehena.org](http://www.cityofsthehena.org)

#### Pet PAWrade

Pets of all shapes and sizes (under 300 lbs) are invited to show off their best Halloween costumes at our Annual Pet PAWrade during the Hometown Harvest Festival on Saturday, October 19th at 10 a.m., rain or shine. Registration will close October 16th at 5 p.m.!



# RIANDA HOUSE SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER

## OCTOBER 2024

### **Balance & Stretch Amanda Cole & Kerry Brackett**

**Mondays, 10:00-10:45, Rianda House or Zoom (hybrid) Thursdays, 11:15-11:45, American Legion Hall**

We tend to lose balance as we age, but we can improve with practice! Join us on Mondays (Rianda House or Zoom) or Thursdays (American Legion only) for balance exercises followed by a stretch for flexibility.

### **Canasta Lucy Thater      Fridays, 1:00-4:00, Rianda House**

Typically played with four people, canasta is great for both mind and spirit. The game takes 2-4 hours, as each has multiple rounds. If you don't know how to play, Lucy will teach you!

### **Dementia Family Caregiver Support Group**

**Thursday, October 7, 3:00-4:00, Rianda House, Thursday, October 17, 3:00-4:00, Zoom**

Guided by a skilled social worker, this support group provides a comforting setting to ease isolation, depression, and anxiety commonly faced by care partners, offering a space to learn practical tips and share experiences. For information contact: Melissa Gerard at Providence Adult Day Health, 707-815-6258; melissa.gerard@providence.org

### **Hert of the Matter with Lorne Glaim      Mondays, October 7 & 21 at 1:00 PM, Rianda House**

Join us for thought-provoking discussions that dive into today's most relevant topics—ranging from world events and local happenings to personal experiences that shape our lives. Our group leaders will guide engaging conversations in a welcoming, respectful environment where your ideas and stories matter. Don't miss this chance to connect and share!

### **Ladies & A Cuppa Tea with Ellen Cotten      Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30 AM, Rianda House**

Ladies, come sip, chat, and connect! Join us for a cozy cup of tea and lively conversation in a warm, friendly atmosphere. Whether you're here for the laughter, the friendship, or simply the tea, you're sure to leave with a smile.

### **Master Minds Veronna Ladd      Wednesdays, October 2 - November 6, 10:00-11:30, Rianda House**

As we age, memory functions change, and our ability to process information slows. Our trained instructor will lead the new Master Mind! Program, a 6-week course based on cutting-edge brain health research and Total Brain Health Memory 1.0. You'll learn about memory and practical steps to improve your memory skills.

RSVP--

### **Special events:**

#### **Veronica Beard Gives Back Saturday, October 12, 12:00-2:00pm, Veronica Beard**

The women of Rianda House invite you to a special shopping event benefiting the organization on Saturday, October 12, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. Enjoy shopping and a glass of wine, as Veronica Beard will generously donate 15% of the proceeds to Rianda House.

#### **Halloween Happy Hour      Thursday, October 31, 4:00-6:00, Rianda House**

Treat yourself to a social happy hour at Rianda House, would be sweet if you joined us, no tricks, just treats! RSVP



September Bingo Winners

## Labor Day Men in the Kitchen Breakfast & Bocce Tournament



Rich and Rick on the griddle



Bocce Tourney Winners

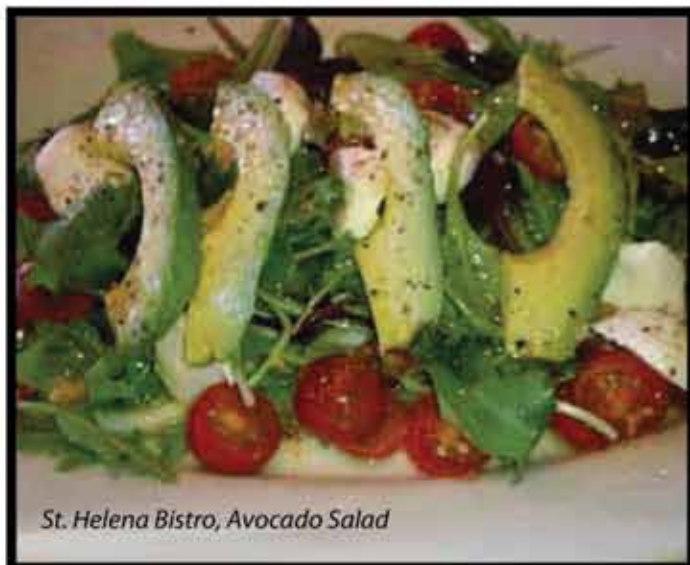


Mike and Gale, British Pancakes



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### Community Education

*A Non-Social Resident Formed Group*

Headed by Grace Kistner

Will be having a political meeting in the  
Clubhouse on October 4th at 5:30 pm  
and will feature the Mayor  
and his opponent  
as well as other candidates.

In addition, there will be speakers  
for and against the Charter City,  
Transfer Tax  
and the Hotel on Krug

Names of the speakers will be provided  
before the actual event.

This will be for  
Vineyard Valley Residents only

### VIVA NEWSLETTER

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### Late addition



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And featuring  
the wonderful vocalist Gale Terminello

A concert of swinging jazz, with repertoire  
drawn from the best of the Great American Songbook,  
from Gershwin to Porter to Ellington  
and a little Greensill too!

Friday, November 1 7pm