

# The Woodlands

Keeping You Informed For 50 Years

May 2019

## Q&A with Mayor Silva

By Jared Asch, Director of Community Affairs



**1. The City of Walnut Creek receives significant revenue from sales tax due to our great shopping and restaurants. As other cities develop high-end shopping (Veranda in Concord and San Ramon's City Center) how will Walnut Creek keep up in competition?**

About 30% of our city revenues come from sales tax – some from auto sales and service businesses, the rest from retail and restaurant businesses. And, all of these sectors are under competitive pressure, whether it be from other communities or from the internet.

We are delighted that Broadway Plaza chose to invest \$250 million in recent years to update and expand the center – and it continues to be the premier open-air shopping center in the East Bay, drawing patrons from a 150-mile trade area. Broadway Plaza's success also helps ensure the continued economic vitality of the

smaller, locally owned shops and restaurants in the traditional downtown – the spill-over effect. And neither the Veranda nor City Center are located adjacent to a "traditional" downtown.

So, over and above the revitalization of Broadway Plaza, what is the City doing to keep people coming to Walnut Creek?

Sustaining the Leshher Center, which draws 200,000 patrons per year, 25% of whom come from outside Contra Costa – and these visitors shop and dine while they are in town

Creating two plazas in the traditional downtown that can support passive and program activities, a mini-plaza at Main and Cypress and a larger plaza space at the Leshher Center

Examining ways to downtown transportation, including parking options and the free downtown trolley

Supporting the development of downtown housing, which provides housing opportunities for both younger adults and empty-nesters who want to live where they can walk to amenities



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P.O. Box 31085  
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

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## Who to Contact?

The Woodlands Association receives some emails and questions about many issues that are best resolved by contacting the following agencies directly. The following is a reference guide:

### Walnut Creek Code Enforcement, 925-256-3508 or 925-943-5863

The Code Enforcement Division of the Community Development Department is responsible for enforcing provisions of the Walnut Creek Municipal Code involving quality of life and neighborhood quality issues. [http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/cd/nuisance\\_abatement\\_n\\_code\\_enforcement.asp](http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/cd/nuisance_abatement_n_code_enforcement.asp)

### Walnut Creek Police Department, 925-943-5844

<http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/police/default.asp>  
To report a suspicious circumstance, call 925-935-6400

### Oversized Vehicle Reporting, Sandy Mulligan: Parking Lead Services Officer, 925-943-5874

**Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District (Pests and Insect Issues), 925-771-6196**  
[http://www.contracostamosquito.com/programs\\_services\\_index.htm](http://www.contracostamosquito.com/programs_services_index.htm)

### Contra Costa Water District, 925-688-8000

Water conservation, information, gardening resources, moneysaving tips. <http://www.ccwater.com>

### Allied Waste Services of Contra Costa County, 925-603-1144

<http://www.pleasanthillbayshoredisposal.com>

### Valley Waste Management (recycling and yard waste service): 925-935-8900

### Canal Maintenance, 925-313-2235

The canal is part of the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Maintained by the Public Works Department

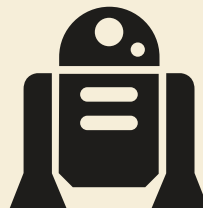
### Graffiti Reporting: City of Walnut Creek, 925-943-5854

### Contra Costa County Animal Control, 925-335-8300

After business hours, contact the Walnut Creek Police through Dispatch Center at 925-935-6400.  
<http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=59>

### Street Maintenance: 925-943-5854

# MAY THE 4TH BE WITH YOU!



## Woodlands Association Board of Directors

Bill Gilmyers ~ *President*  
Erik Ehlers ~ *Vice President*  
Vacant ~ *Treasurer*  
Vacant ~ *Secretary*  
Jared Asch ~ *Members at Large*  
Todd McNeill ~ *Webmaster*  
Susan Pfau ~ *Newsletter Editor*

Jennifer Zotti ~ *Newsletter Distribution Manager*

## Upcoming Board Meetings

**8:00 - 9:00 a.m.**

**Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>**

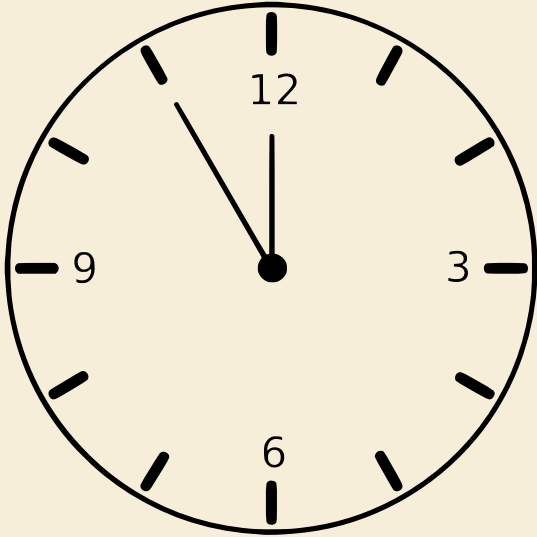
**Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup>**

at Denica's,  
2280 Oak Grove Road,  
Walnut Creek  
(in Citrus Marketplace)

Woodlands residents  
are encouraged to  
attend board meetings.

## Time Running out for Woodlands Newsletter

By Bill Gilmyers



As we've published in the last couple of issues of the newsletter, the Woodlands Association is seeking volunteers from the neighborhood to help continue producing and publishing the monthly newsletter. As of this writing in early April, we've received a few suggestions on changes that could be made to the newsletter, but no offers to assist in its publication. While we appreciate the feedback, the only way the newsletter can continue in any form is by members of their community volunteering a small amount of time every month to help.

We are currently looking to replace our **Newsletter Editor**, **Treasurer** and **President**. Each of these roles requires 2-4 hours per month (less than an hour a week!), with a bit more some months for the Newsletter Editor. The current incumbents in these roles are available to provide training and support for anyone who may want to help, but time is running out to hand off their duties.

If we cannot find volunteers by the end of June, the Association will need to begin winding down the newsletter and returning money to our advertisers who have paid in advance to support us. We anticipate that once the Newsletter publication has ceased it is unlikely that the Board will be able to restart it, so this would truly mark the end of this neighborhood institution.

Hopefully it will not come to this but time is running out. If you think you can give a small amount of your time to help, we would greatly appreciate it. Please e-mail your interest to [woodlandswalnutcreek@gmail.com](mailto:woodlandswalnutcreek@gmail.com)

## Q&A with Mayor Silva...Continued

### **2. The State of California and nearly every city is facing budget challenges related to pensions and healthcare costs. How is Walnut Creek preparing for this challenge? How does our city's readiness compare to others?**

Like 90% of California cities, Walnut Creek is part of the CalPERS pension system and pension costs (employer contributions) are rising much faster than revenues. To illustrate: In just three years, Walnut Creek's pension costs jumped almost 50% (from \$7.4 million to \$10.6 million). And the costs continue to rise.

Fortunately, Walnut Creek is in much better fiscal health than most cities and that will help us face the challenge. 1) The two-year operating budget, adopted last June, is balanced. 2) We did not sacrifice our capital infrastructure to balance the operating budget. The two-year capital budget is \$19.6 million. 3) The City has very healthy reserves (\$42.2 million), including \$13.6 million just for fiscal and catastrophic emergencies. 4) The City has no debt (i.e., borrowed funds).

In addition, over the past 10 years, the City has taken a number of steps to help manage rising pension costs.

All employees pay the full share of their current pension costs, and our police officers recently agreed to pay a higher share.

Current employees pay a significant share of their healthcare costs.

The City does not offer retiree health benefits.

The number of full-time city employees is still lower today than it was in 2008.

Most significantly, the City has set aside \$17 million in an irrevocable pension trust that we can "tap" for future pension costs.

Unfortunately, the \$17 million will not be enough. The City will be faced with difficult choices in how to maintain critical services for residents and what services to reduce.

### **3. The term "Smart Cities" is often referred to as the adoption of technology by a city in order to embrace the Internet of Things thus allowing us to impact traffic and transportation systems, accountability, government efficiency (permitting, budgeting, etc.). What has Walnut Creek done today to adopt new technology and what is on the one and five-year horizons?**

Walnut Creek continues to embrace new technologies that make the city more efficient. The best example: The City is using Smart City data to keep traffic running smoothly. In simplest terms, real-time traffic and parking data is collect and sent to the Cloud, the data is translated, and then it is pushed out to real-time signage, apps and in-car navigation systems.

The challenge, of course, is that these technologies are very expensive and the City will be accumulating funds and seeking grants to support these future opportunities.



## CABANA CLUB NEWS



### LET THE WOODLANDS SUMMER FUN BEGIN!

The Cabana Club officially opens for our 2019 season on May 11th!!!

Our SEASON OPENER is on Saturday May 11th at 3:00 - 6:00PM. Please join us for a festive afternoon of family fun and a taste of all the swim season has to offer at the Cabana Club. We will have a host of games, swim fun and information at this annual event. There will be a cash bar with pizza, sodas, beer, wine and snacks. This event is open to the public! We can't wait to see you there!

Woodlands Swim Team has hit the pool! The 2019 competitive season started in earnest April 11th. It is with great excitement that we welcome our new head coach Jack Sorensen! We would also like to extend a warm welcome to all our new WST families and welcome back to our returning families; and great appreciation to our returning coaches, instructors and lifeguards. LET'S GO WOODLANDS!!!

Woodlands Swim School registration starts now. WSS offers private lessons for all ages and abilities. Whether it is water safety for your youngest swimmer to perfecting strokes for seasoned athletes. Lessons are available to both members and non-members. For more information, contact Jordan Sibley: [jordan.c.sibley@gmail.com](mailto:jordan.c.sibley@gmail.com) or visit [www.swimwoodlands.org/swim-school](http://www.swimwoodlands.org/swim-school)

Private lesson fees.

Member \$30 per lesson

Nonmember \$40 per lesson

Buy 3 - get 1 free

Registration for Cabana Club and Swim Team are OPEN. Please visit [www.swimwoodlands.org](http://www.swimwoodlands.org) for registration, seasonal hours and team information.

SEE YOU AT THE POOL!

### KEY UPCOMING DATES:

Woodlands Season Opener May 11th 3-6 PM

WST New Parent Meeting & Coach Social - May 18th 4:30-5:30 PM

WST May 19th Time Trials - May 19 5:30-8:30 PM

Cabana Club Friday Funday - June 7 4:00PM

Swim School June 10-Aug 9

## Q&A with Mayor Silva *(Continued from pg. 4)*

### **4. Living in the Woodlands, our commuters are often concerned with traffic on Ygnacio Valley Road and Treat Blvd headed to BART and freeways. What is the city doing to invest in congestion relief and traffic easement?**

Our local roads are vital to the local economy, to business, and to our quality of life. Our goal is to ensure that our roads are safe and that traffic flows as efficiently as possible.

First, we invest significant funds in maintaining and rebuilding our roads -- \$5 million just last year. Good roads are safer and allow traffic to move more smoothly. As we update our roads, we have the chance to improve intersections – lengthen turn lanes, create new turning options – which prevents back-ups that block traffic. And, while we're updating, we add bike lanes and improve sidewalks, which encourages people to walk or bike rather than drive. Just last year, we invested \$1.1 million in improvements to pedestrian facilities.

Second, we manage traffic by monitoring and adjusting the city's 100-signalized intersections. In the future, new technology will allow our intersections to automatically adapt to traffic fluctuations.

Third, as new development occurs, we require the development to mitigate its traffic impacts. For example, the Orchards project rebuilt the Oak Grove-Ygnacio intersection; John Muir added and lengthened turn lanes on Ygnacio Valley at the hospital; the Walnut Creek Transit Village recently built a new mid-block pedestrian crossing on California north of Ygnacio.

But we can always do more. So, we are currently completing a transportation planning project called Rethinking Mobility. Please stay tuned for the results.

### **5. How is Walnut Creek addressing the Bay Area housing crisis while maintaining our community's character?**

Housing is fundamental to a strong local economy. People need places to live.

California is experiencing a severe housing shortage – a shortage this is resulting in high housing costs and forcing people into long, traffic-snarled commutes. A report by the Bay Area Council shows that the Bay Area added 531,000 jobs since the end of the recession, but only 124,000 new housing units. And the recent wildfires have only exacerbated the crisis.

Walnut Creek is using General Plan 2025 as its guidebook for how to provide more housing while maintaining our community's character. As envisioned in the General Plan, most new housing is multi-family apartments, townhomes, and condominiums -- and is located in the downtown core area. This ensures that, as we grow, we both preserve the character of the single-family home neighborhoods and protect our open space hills. Focusing our growth downtown also reduces the impact on the environment – less land, less use of water – and results in fewer car trips per housing unit because people can walk to amenities.

### **6. What is the Second Saturday Spotlight?**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Spotlight program is a mayor-led initiative in 2019 that is intended to help us engage with and involve the community more in volunteerism. On the second Saturday of each month, community members are invited to join us in a 90-minute behind-the-scenes visit to one of our community non-profits. As an added option each month, we also take a short walking tour of a nearby neighborhood. In January, we visited Tony

LaRussa's Animal Rescue Foundation and toured the Woodlands. In coming months, we'll visit John Muir Hospital (May), Shadelands Ranch Museum and the Walnut Creek Historical Society (June), the Gardens at Heather Farm and Ruth Bancroft Garden (July), and the Trinity Center (August). Space is limited, so community members should visit [walnut-creek.org/spotlight](http://walnut-creek.org/spotlight) for more details and to sign up.

## **7. How can we individuals get more involved with our city and community?**

There are lots of ways to get involved in the community. Here are just a few ideas:

On October 12, volunteer for a Community Service Day Project. Almost every year, we have projects at local schools, in the open space, at local libraries, and at community gardens. Sign-ups start in September ([walnut-creek.org/service](http://walnut-creek.org/service)).

Attend 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Spotlight and learn more about the work of some of our great community organizations ([walnut-creek.org/spotlight](http://walnut-creek.org/spotlight)).

Attend the Citizens Institute, the annual City-sponsored "academy" where community members learn more about how the City works ([walnut-creek.org/about-us/community-resources-programs](http://walnut-creek.org/about-us/community-resources-programs)).

Complete the training to become a CERT (Community Emergency Response) volunteer for your neighborhood ([walnut-creek.org/CERT](http://walnut-creek.org/CERT)).

Read the City's quarterly Nutshell newsletter, which includes information about local community groups.

If you have a particular passion (e.g., sustainability, gardens, libraries), search the internet for like-minded organizations and volunteer.

## **8. While the city does not control the school districts, how can the city be a resource to improve the quality of education children in this city receive?**

As a City, we have a close working relationship with our local schools on both sides of town. We provide a variety of programs and services that support our youth and supplement the offerings available through the public schools.

To ensure student safety, the Police Department has two full-time school resource officers, one of which works at Northgate and Foothill. The City also co-funds the school crossing guards. And, the City regularly invests in safe-route-to-school projects. For example, in 2017, we completed a project that improved walking and biking facilities along Cedro and Wiget, adjacent to the schools.

Health and wellness are important. The City provides a community grant program that helps to fund the crisis counselors in our schools. To support physical health and recreation, the City runs the after-school programs at Foothill and operates the gym in partnership with the school district. This year, the City has resurfaced the tennis courts at Northgate.

To ensure that libraries have consistent hours that meet the needs of our youth, the City funds an additional 21 hours of service at both libraries, bringing the total hours of operation to 56 hours per week.

The City's Center for Community Arts (Shadelands) offers a range of performing and visual arts classes for youth – programs that are unavailable through the public schools.

# ADVERTISING

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## Advertising Rates & Sizes

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 Size = height x width in inches

Full Page – 10 x 7.5 - \$99/month

1/2 Page – 5 x 7.5 - \$55/month

1/4 Page – 5 x 3.5 - \$33/month

1/4 Page on back cover - \$55/month

1/8 Page – 2.5 x 3.5 - \$22/month

Classified Ads maximum 30 words:

\$5 Woodlands Residents, \$15 Non-Residents

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Attorney, RN  
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**February 6th** - Transportation: Challenges & Options  
**March 6th** - Selling Your Home in Today's (Shifting?) Market  
**April 3rd** - Aging in Place-AKA Stayin' Put  
**May 1st** - Senior Scams: Don't Be a Victim  
**June 5th** - Do You Have a Fiduciary in Your Future?  
**July 17th** - Reverse Mortgages: Stay at home OR Purchase  
**August 7th** - Assisted Living Options: What They Are and Are Not  
**September 4th** - Downsizing Your Home and Rightsizing Your Life  
**October 2nd** - Understanding Continuing Care Retirement Communities  
**November 6th** - Estate Liquidation Strategies - Get Rid of Your Stuff  
**December 4th** - Downsizing Lessons from People Who've Done It

**Oakmont Senior Living** - Pamela Campbell 925-301-9179  
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Marty Appel - 510-701-2167 - Martha Echols - 925-914-9326  
**Senior Visionary Services** - Jann Oldenburg 925-699-2295  
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Each day, we will present new opportunities for your child to learn and grow through play in our TK/Kindergarten readiness program.

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*Fun with Phonics*    *Friendship Skills*

*Explosive Experiments*    *Magic Math*    *Little Chef Experience*

### 123, EYES ON ME

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Our 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders will expand their horizons this summer through enriching activities that encompass STEAM in exciting, new ways.

*Team Challenges*    *Yoga*    *Mad Science*

*Field House Fridays*    *Top Chef Cooking*

Every week, our kids will have the opportunity to participate in field trips, special events, and swimming at the Cabana Club.

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Every week, our kids will have the opportunity to participate in field trips, special events, and swimming at the Cabana Club.

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### HOURS OF OPERATION

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## CONTACT US

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valleverdechildrenscenter.org

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# WALNUT CREEK MARKET REPORT: THE WOODLANDS

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3623 Mahogany Ct.	4	2.5	1,990	\$ 980,000	\$1,020,000
417 Candleberry Rd.	4	2.5	1,781	\$1,038,000	\$1,045,000
594 Rock Oak Rd.	4	3	2,004	\$1,050,000	\$1,050,000
545 Banyan Cir.	4	2	1,968	\$1,090,000	\$1,055,000
536 Banyan Cir.	5	3	2,004	\$1,090,000	\$1,255,000

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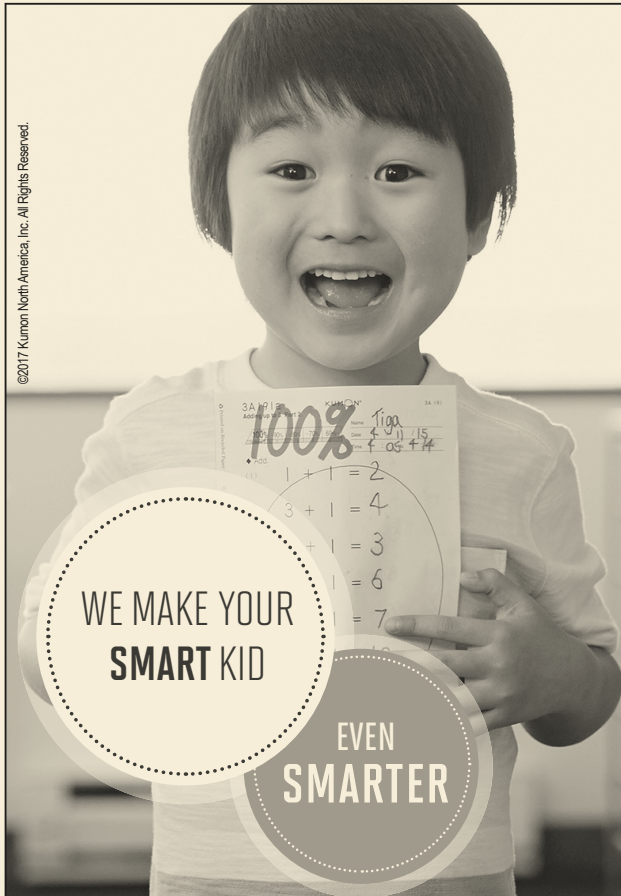


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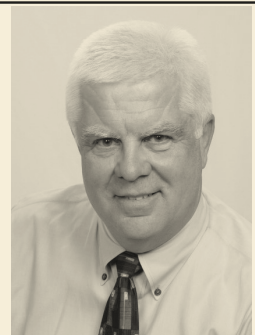
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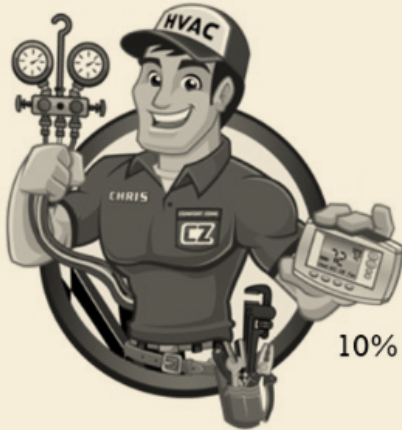
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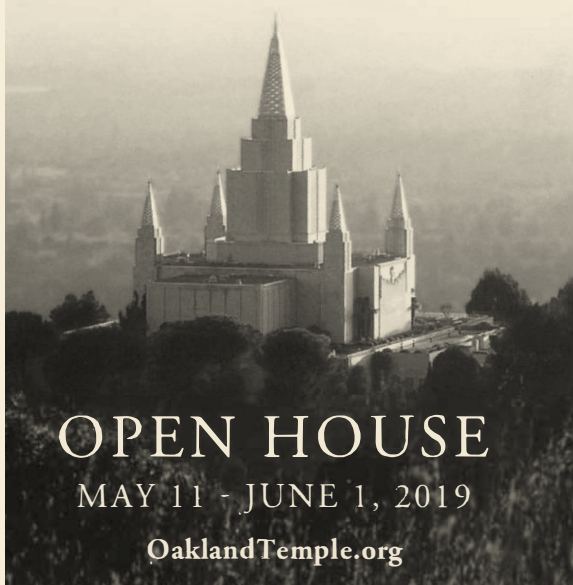
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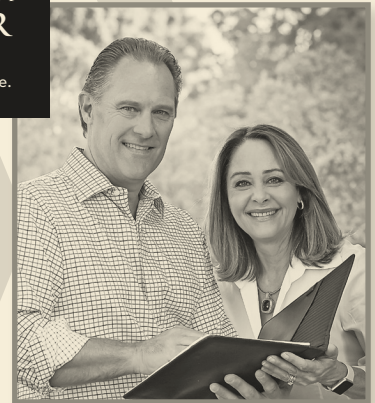
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