

*skyline'64 * newsnote * 5.15*

Mail Bag:

We are at the age where death has touched us, some more than others. When I saw Al Stirling died in January, I could not control my tears and sorrow. And I tried. I needed to know why. I emailed his wife Jeanie. Her reply was very powerful. Seems Al and Jeanie were living in or around Bakersfield. I drove through Bakersfield on my way out to Oakland from South Carolina several weeks ago. Anyway, Al and I were in the same grade at Montclair Elementary school, Claremont JHS, Montara JHS and Skyline. Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts. And we played trumpet in band together, usually side-by-side. Al was always interested in sports and a fair athlete. Following graduation in 64 I next saw him in late 66 when he came home on leave after completing Marine Corps boot camp. Al, a Marine? Didn't quite fit in my eyes. I had stayed out of college a semester working as a carpenter on the Oakland Army Terminal, Naval Supply Center and other loading areas for goods and munitions headed for the Western Pacific. I also joined the Marines on a 120 day delay program so I could finish my last semester at Oakland City College (OCC) on GROVE st. Remember?

Al came to my apartment and we talked the evening away. I peppered him with questions about boot camp. I had read Battle Cry and any other book about the Marines and got myself in good condition. Ran 5 miles a day and was a competition power lifter. I wanted to be a Marine, go to Vietnam and help win the war. OK. I was also politically naive. Al invited me to run with him the next morning. Great! I am psyched. We meet in front of Montclair Elementary school at about 6am. We run, jog slowly really, all the way down Ashby (I think) to Telegraph Ave, turn right and continue until we hit its end at UCB. Al buys a newspaper at the corner stand and immediately heads back the same path we came. I am keeping up with him, although Al is not even breathing hard. We eventually arrive at Thornhill and Mountain when Al sprints the last couple hundred yards. I did not try to stay with him. When I did get to where our cars were parked, he looked at me and chuckled. Then he said "you will be fine", or similar words.

I was in Vietnam about 2 months in early 68 when I got a letter from my mom telling me Al was in Khe Sanh. My unit had a detachment in Khe Sanh that needed some help, so I was able to get on a chopper and be dropped into Khe Sanh. Not the smartest decision in my life since Tet was still going, but I did it.

So I am dropped on the Khe Sanh air strip. Dropped. The chopper barely touched down when one of the crew tossed my gear out and another pushed me out the side door. 4 of us ran off the landing strip and a few minutes later I ran back to retrieve my gear. I found Al easily. He was a SGT E5 Chaplain's assistant, and we spent a couple hours just relating how the Marines got us there. I was in Khe Sanh 2 or 3 days I think, and I don't recall much more about my time with Al, except when I left. I got ordered back to my main unit south of Da Nang, and would be on the first chopper that wasn't filled with wounded and/or killed Marines. We said our good byes and then hugged. This was when guys hugged for a split second, if at all. Al held tight for what was (for me) an uncomfortably long time, maybe 5 seconds. And he told me I would "be fine". The next time I connected with Al was ---- NEVER.

In 78 I went to work for the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and from time to time, accessing the VA computer system, tried to locate Al. Up to my retiring in 2000 the VA had no record of Al filing a claim of any sort. All I had (and have) was a newspaper clipping of his marriage to Jeanie. After I was medevac'd out of Vietnam in 68 the only thoughts I had of Al were that he'd surely outlive me. And damn it, he did not. I am angry that I did not find him earlier. But, Al was a man of integrity, of faith, who loved God a lot longer than I. See, I was a hardened atheist, in my father's mold, until age 49 in 1996. THAT is something I wish I could have shared with Al. Selfish, I know. Al did just fine without me finding him. But (another but), my regret not finding Al, like my regret not being with my unit when it got overrun, is not logical. It is very profound however and real.

Stan Lore

Joaquin editorializes on conversation at Kaspers. Next Dog Cuisine days will be May 11 and 25.



Guess who?!

Hint:

One of the birthday boys.

I've just read some of the correspondence you have been sending me. Thank you so much for including me. It is fun to read through and see all the names of places I knew so well for 31 years. It makes me rather homesick for the Bay Area. I always loved visiting after we moved to Portland Oregon in 1978. My folks lived in Castro Valley during the 70's and 80's. I played tourist when I visited and especially liked showing off the Oakland/San Francisco Bay Area to my son when he was in his teens. I, also, like reading the articles and seeing familiar names. Thank you Shayne and Carol for all you do to keep everyone apprised of what is going on in my hometown, and with my classmates. I appreciate it!

Sincerely, **Diane (Squaglia) Fly**



The LaMarres, the Szymkiewicz, Cynthia Harelson and Maureen Sarment were captivated at the Wei Wei Exhibit at Alcatraz on another Skyline64 outing.



tom.mortensen@ymail.com
4 generations of mortensen so glad to have both my mom and dad they are still active at 91

So many connections. That picture of the two switch engines from the Sacramento Northern Railway passing through Montclair was of interest because I recreated the historic Northern Electric Railway Depot in Woodland from blueprints I found in the California State Archives. It is now a bank, which is a big improvement over a vacant lot. I'm enjoying being mayor of Woodland. It got me to the US Conference of Mayors in D.C. and an invitation to the White House with the Prez (along with 224 other mayors), but it was cool to walk through the front door as well as getting to know my seat mate, Mayor Ed Lee of SF. I am one of those who does not foresee retirement. I think transitions are OK, but I think we should all try to be as useful as possible as long as possible.

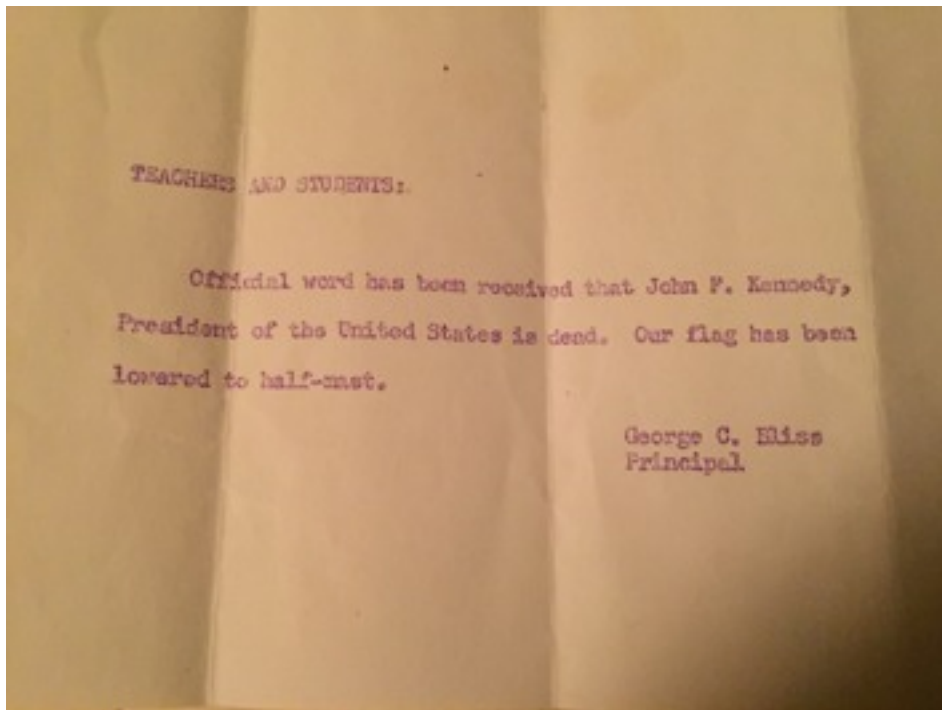
The U.S. Conference of Mayors met at The White House for 6 hours on January 23. The President was with us in the East Room for almost one hour, just before he boarded Air Force One for his

trip to India. I will send a little video I took of a portion of his remarks to us. I like the fact that he said "Mayors get things done." This is true. We are the closest public officials to the people, so they hold our feet to the fire. The pictures of the children are from yesterday at Ramon Tafoya]



Elementary Santa Ana Elementary School in Woodland. I was invited as part of their career exploration. I was greeted by 4 sixth graders with the sign who then escorted me to 14 classrooms for five minute sessions followed by a one hour assembly with all the 4th-6th graders. **Tom Stallard**

Look what John Ballinger found. We all remember that day/that weekend.....



Birthdays!

"Tra-la- its May"

May

- 05 Andrea Thompson
- 07 John Close
- 08 (Kathy Currier Wilson)
Jim Barranti
- 12 Laynee Melmet Goodstein
- 19 Ken Hood
- 25 Marti Heath

June

- 1 Elaine Hendrikson
- 13 Kathleen Lofing Crawford
- 19 Bob Nordgren
- 22 Bill Giacometti
- 26 Craig LaBarbera
Russ Union
Jennifer Morag Keene
- 29 Sue Gracie Lanphear

Again, additions/corrections solicited!

The Phenomenauts - Theme For Oakland

"Theme For Oakland" from The Phenomenauts' new album, Escape Velocity, available June 10th 2014 from Silver Sprocket. <http://www.silversprocket.net> <http://ww...>

Earlier today, Billy Frijoles gave us an excellent, in-depth look at the awesome new scoreboard in the O.co Coliseum. But that's not the only new thing at home games, as he mentions at the end of the post, and as Susan Slusser details on the Chronicle's site. The Oakland A's have a new victory song, as well. After using "Celebration" by Kool & The Gang for most of the last 30 years, they tried out something new on Opening Night. Behold, "Theme for Oakland" by the Phenomenauts.

Mother's Day Bouquet

This is a **drop-in program** (no registrations taken).

05/10/2015 (Sun) from 10:00am to 12:00pm Leona Canyon Regional Open Space Preserve
Price: Free Gender: Coed Spaces: Unlimited openings

LEONA CANYON: Did you forget to get your mom flowers for Mother's Day? Join us on a moderate 3-mile hike to enjoy (but not pick!) the wildflowers with the whole family. For information, call: (510) 544-3187. No registration required; drop-in program.

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### **Citizen Science and the CA Phenology Project**

05/17/2015 (Sun) from 10:00am to 12:00pm Redwood (Canyon Meadow Staging Area)  
Price: Free Ages: 7 and up Gender: Coed Spaces: Unlimited openings

REDWOOD (CANYON MEADOW STAGING AREA): Are flowers blooming, fruits forming, leaves emerging? Discover how you can become a citizen scientist with East Bay Regional Parks and Save the Redwoods League, helping track what is happening to our redwood forest with a changing climate. For information, call: (510) 544-3187. No registration required; drop-in program.

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Our annual **Oaklandish Innovators grants** recognize local programs that exemplify the values of innovation and progress in all areas of civic life. It's a year-round partnership that doesn't just end with writing a check. Along with financial support, we also pitch in to help our Innovators with events, collaborative designs, and awareness campaigns.

### **OMNI COMMONS**

Omni Commons is an accessible progressive multi-disciplinary community space located in Temescal. Occupying the old Omni nightclub, the Omni Commons is a "cooperative of cooperatives" that includes a citizen run science / DIYbio space, print studio and bindery, health and wellness center, the Food Not Bombs kitchen, a celluloid film lab, worker-owned cafe and bookstore, and of course the grand ballroom which is slated to host all manner of gatherings and celebrations. [omnicommons.org](http://omnicommons.org)

### **DESTINY ARTS CENTER**

Destiny Arts Center's mission is to end isolation, prejudice, and violence in the lives of young people. They offer dance, theater, and martial arts classes for youth ages 3 to 18, and no youth are ever turned away for lack of funds. All of Destiny's movement arts classes are taught by professional working artists, integrated with their time-tested violence prevention curriculum and frameworks, and offered during after-school hours when youth are most vulnerable to violent interactions. [destinyarts.org/](http://destinyarts.org/)

### **MAMACITAS CAFE**

Mamacitas Cafe is an Oakland-grown enterprise that hires and trains women, ages 16-24, to run a mobile cafe. Through employment, training, and mentorship, they provide meaningful solutions to the city's high unemployment rate while also encouraging employees toward their higher goals and aspirations. [mamacitascafe.com/](http://mamacitascafe.com/)

### **CAT TOWN**

Cat Town is a cat rescue organization that partners with Oakland Animal Services to help the cats least likely to be adopted from the city shelter and those who have been there the longest. The

Cat Town Cafe is a fun and highly visible way to showcase their cats, get them adopted quickly and highlight their mission to save the most vulnerable shelter cats. [cattownoakland.org/](http://cattownoakland.org/)

### **INTERNATIONAL BLACK WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL**

The International Black Women's Film Festival explores the social, aesthetic, and political contexts of Black women in society through film, television, and other media. The festival has screened over twenty-five films and has showcased a multitude of panel discussions, championing global and local independent filmmakers, many of whom are Oakland residents. The organization's goal is to provide these filmmakers a professional visual forum to help generate a new audience of moviegoers who demand better representation of Black women in the media. [ibwff.com/](http://ibwff.com/)

### **BAY AREA SPARTAN MIDGETS**

The Bay Area Spartans Football program is a progressing athletic organization dedicated to providing healthy sport activities, in a safe environment, to urban youth, between the ages of 5-14. They take pride in helping each participant develop self-worth, self-discipline, teamwork, leadership qualities, and physical fitness. In addition, they highly encourage their children to strive for the highest scholastic achievement throughout the year. [Facebook](#)

### **ZOO LABS**

Zoo Labs is a music accelerator located in West Oakland. They strive to be a thought leader in the Bay Area music scene, providing a gathering space for music fans through their *Release Day* concert series and other events. Their flagship program, the *Zoo Labs Music Residency*, provides music-making teams with time to focus on recording music, as well as bringing their creative minds to their business strategies through workshops with industry-leading experts. [zoolabs.org/](http://zoolabs.org/)

Read about previous [Oaklandish Innovators Award](#) winners...

In addition to the Innovators grants, we also give donations to local nonprofits, community groups, independent businesses, and artists. These donations come in the form of gear, event sponsorships, auction donations, free screen printing jobs, and more.

Our Oaklandish donation package consists of an "Oaklandish swag bag" with a t-shirt, a sticker, and a button, all included in an Oaklandish tote bag. Organizations may be able to receive up to three swag bags, depending on the nature of your event. For event sponsorship and large-scale donation requests, please refer to our "Partnerships" section below.

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Seeking a donation? Follow these steps:

1. Fill out our [donation request form](#) at least 3 weeks before your event. Please be sure to include the date of your event and your expected number of guests or participants.
2. Send a copy of your 501(c)3 letter, along with any questions, to [community@oaklandish.com](mailto:community@oaklandish.com) as soon as possible.
3. Within two weeks, we'll contact you concerning next steps!

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Recipients of Oaklandish donations and sponsorships in 2013 include:

[Alameda County Community Food Bank](#)/[Awaken Cafe](#)/[Bay Area Parent Leadership Action Network](#)/[Bay Area Sports Guy](#)/[Bay Localize](#)/[Bedrock](#)/[Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Bay Area](#)/[The Black Hole](#)/[Breathmobile](#)/[The Brown Boi Project](#)/[Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiently](#)/[Californians for Justice](#)/[Center for Independent Living](#)/[Chabot Space & Science Center](#)/[Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland](#)/[Civicorps](#)/[The Crucible](#)/[Dimond Recreational Center](#)/[Downtown Oakland YMCA](#)/[East Bay Asian Youth Center](#)/[East Bay Bike Coalition](#)/[Ella Baker Center](#)/[Fever Charm](#)/[Food Shift](#)/[Glam.I.Rock](#)/[Goapele](#)/[Halftime Sports Bar](#)/[Hella Hack Oakland](#)/[Hiero Day](#)/[Hieroglyphics](#)/[HUB Oakland](#)/[Inner City Advisors](#)/[Justice Now](#)/[Kaiser Elementary](#)/[Kev Choice](#)/[Lake Merritt Garden Center](#)/[Libros Libres](#)/[Life Is Living](#)/[Los Rakas](#)/[Lungomare](#)/[The Memorials](#)/[Montclair Elementary](#)

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<http://>



[home.web.cern.ch/about/updates/2015/04/cern-researchers-confirm-existence-force](http://home.web.cern.ch/about/updates/2015/04/cern-researchers-confirm-existence-force)

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## **GUIDE TO EAST BAY CREEKS - Chapter Ten**

### **Sausal Creek Walk**

*This walk begins easily and becomes steeper and more rugged. Hiking shoes are recommended. The approximately two-mile walk described is not a loop. You can return along the trail, descend along city streets, or take public transportation, which serves both ends of the walk.*



Fruitvale Avenue runs up the floodplain of Sausal Creek, the area regularly inundated when the creek rose over its banks. The remarkably fertile soil produced by regular flooding (think of ancient Egypt) gave rise to lush vegetation -- oaks, willows, berries, flowers -- and was home to a great variety of birds and animals. Sausal, willow in Spanish, comes from the thick willow groves that grew along the banks.

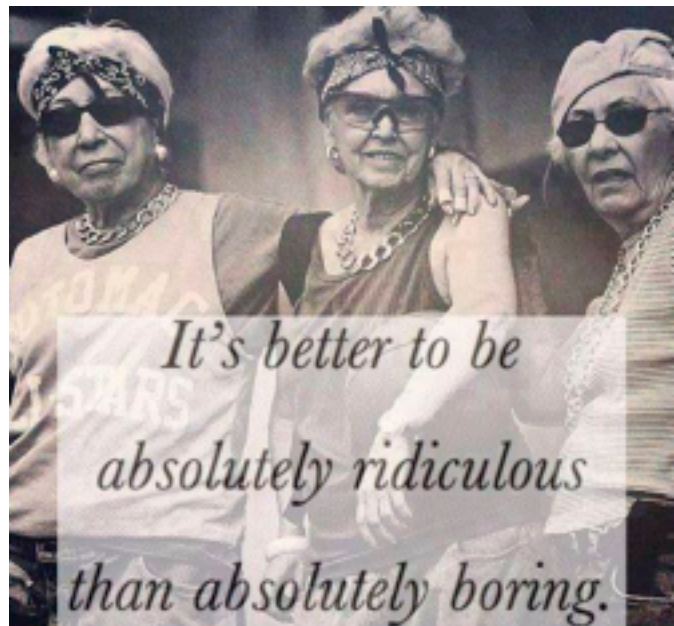
In the mid-19th century, Fruitvale Avenue led into the rich timber area that supplied lumber for the fast-growing East Bay communities. Known as San Antonio Forest, the huge trees -- some 32 feet in diameter -- extended from upper Dimond Canyon over the hill through Joaquin Miller and Redwood Regional Parks and on to Moraga. Oakland's first sawmill was built along the Palo Seco branch of the Creek; oxen pulled redwood logs on skids along Fruitvale Avenue

**Take Fruitvale east from I-580. At MacArthur Boulevard, jog one block north to Dimond Avenue and the entrance to Dimond Park.** On the hillside to your left creekside homes perch precariously on eroding banks. You can see how their owners might call the open creek a nuisance. On your right, behind the building next to the rest room, is a historic plaque marking the remains of the old adobe. Years ago, the lower area of Dimond Park had a dam and pipeline built by the Dimond family to supply water for their downstream estate. It formed a swimming hole popular with Oakland youth. Today, children swim in a city-run pool, much like earlier East Bay residents.

**Upstream past the recreation center, take the trail that runs alongside the creek, emerging at El Centro Avenue. This is the entrance to Dimond Canyon Trail, which you will follow along Sausal Creek through the canyon up to Highway 13.**

In its urban setting, Dimond Canyon's native plant life has long been invaded by exotics, the term used for any nonnative plant, no matter how common! Cooperative work between municipal and community organizations has made major gains in restoring native vegetation along this stretch of the canyon. However ivy, acacia, and other exotics continue to threaten encroachment into the native restoration. These and the other exotic plants took root after being dumped in the creek or spread from nearby gardens.

One hardy, native, ground cover, man-root, with leaves similar to German ivy, produces curly tendrils and spiky little green balls. Soap plant, horsetail, five species of ferns, and myriad other natives flourish along the creek. Two types of blackberry are profuse: the native California blackberry and the Himalayan blackberry.



In areas beyond the restoration, exotic trees, like Dutch elm, eucalyptus, and acacia, seem totally at home among the bay, oak, buckeye, alder, and redwood native to the canyon, as do the Monterey pines, introduced from another part of California.

The trail provides good access to the water. WPA park-improvement projects built concrete walls along the streambank. Fifty years ago, concrete was poured at one spot to stabilize and control the creek's natural flow. But, water sweeping around and under this unyielding, unabsorbent material has eroded a great gap, leaving a concrete "tongue" projecting above the creekbed.

Walls built from train track cross the creek regularly. It is said that they originally prevented people from driving up the creekbed! Dirt and debris have completely filled in behind these walls, and now they function as trash racks and check dams that slow the water flow.

Relatively few creatures live in the calm water. But, where there is a faster-flowing riffle the bottom is scoured cleaner, the water is more oxygenated, and the rough bottom provides microhabitats that support diverse plant and animal life.

You can gauge the stream's health by looking for algae and bacterial growth, indicating pollution and a lack of grazing insects. A sewer line runs underground alongside Sausal Creek. Its manholes are visible along the trail and its old pipes undoubtedly leak into the stream. Heavy rains also can affect water quality.



The urban runoff -- laced with street grime, fertilizer, detergents, and motor oil -- flows down gutters and storm drains into the creeks.

**Continuing upstream** you come to a dramatic view -- bay trees arch across the canyon, echoed by the arching Leimert Avenue bridge. Past the bridge, a spring flows out of a rock on the north bank, creating a mossy glade of ferns, blackberry, water parsley, and

horsetail. A concrete flood control flume drains the hillside to the right.

The creekbed now becomes the trail, so it may be difficult or impassable during rainy seasons. **Follow the creek beyond where it runs through a tunnel** built to protect it from the sliding hillside to the right. **About 130 yards further, cross the creek on a weir** Watching out for poison oak, **take the trail that zigzags up the hill to the right.**

**At the top, walk left on the trail**, an old road into Upper Dimond Canyon that was once a continuation of Bridgeview Drive. You will soon see a huge net across the canyon where the creek disappears under the Montclair Golf Course, built in the 1950s. A raw gully cuts into the hillside, the result of erosion. In 1982, the poorly engineered drainage system, diverting water from its natural course that led onto the driving range, "blew out" in a storm. You can see the broken pipe in the streambed below. From this vantage point, you can see clearly how the driving

range and clubhouse were built directly over the creek. The Shepherd Canyon and Palo Seco branches of Sausal Creek meet in the eucalyptus grove at the eastern end of the parking lot.

**Continue along the trail** into a spectacular redwood canyon and the valley formed along the Hayward Fault. The jog to the right as you follow the Palo Seco branch indicates millennia of geologic displacement along this fault. Highway 13 runs through this valley. Although traffic sounds from the freeway and Park Boulevard are loud, you also can hear many birds. There is a sense of otherworldliness in this area, of stepping into the past.

Just before the trail/former road disappears into undergrowth, **take the set of steps leading into the canyon.** Near the bottom, a concrete pad once anchored a suspension bridge across the creek. **Cross the creek on the low check dam. Take the path up to Monterey Boulevard**, ending at the Dimond Canyon Hiking Trail sign like the one at El Centro.



Although this walk ends where the trail climbs above the creek, you can turn right on Monterey Boulevard, and take a pedestrian trail under the freeway. This puts you on Palos Colorados trail, which goes up hill through Joaquin Miller Park, and into the San Leandro Creek drainage. Both San Leandro and Sausal Creeks Drain into San Leandro Bay, demonstrating the ties between the watersheds we inhabit.

-- Shelby Hall

### Measure CC Success Stories

If you're planning a picnic this spring, be sure to check out the renovated picnic areas at Tilden, Crown Beach and Lake Temescal – all funded by Measure CC. Approved by voters in 2004, Measure CC funds critical improvements at parks, shorelines, and trails in western Alameda and Contra Costa counties, home to some of the District's oldest and most well-used parks. Thanks to Measure CC, the Park District has been able to thin eucalyptus forests and reduce other fire hazards in the Berkeley and Oakland hills, build new restrooms at Tilden, Pt. Isabel and Anthony Chabot, and improve access for disabled people at parks throughout the Measure CC area. Stay tuned for more improvements! Check out our [Events Calendar](#).