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# SONOMA WEST TIMES & NEWS

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## On guard at El Mo

Sonoma County deputy (and an El Mo alum) joins the staff at the high school

By Carol Benfell  
Special to Sonoma West

El Molino High School has its first-ever school resource officer, Deputy Sheriff Mark Aldrich, whose job is to protect students and staff in an emergency, but he will spend most of his time as a friendly and positive presence on campus.

It's déjà vu for Aldrich, 50, who graduated from El Molino High School 32 years ago and still cheers on the El Mo football team.

"It's my alma mater. It's where I grew up," he said. "It's a chance to give back to the community and to have an impact on the kids."

Aldrich has been a deputy sheriff for 15 years, working in west county for the last 10. He lives in Forestville, the fifth generation of his family to do so.

"It's always been our priority to make sure the campus is safe for students and staff. Having Mark here adds an extra piece of assurance," El Molino principal Matt Dunkle said. "We're truly fortunate to have someone like Mark, who knows our community well and knows our school well."

Schools nationwide are increasingly seeking out school resource officers in the wake of recent mass shootings. It's the fastest growing segment of law

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## The monarch apocalypse

The western monarch population is crashing, but home gardeners and the Laguna Foundation are here to help

By Laura Hagar Rush  
Sonoma West Editor  
[laura@sonomawest.com](mailto:laura@sonomawest.com)

Sonoma County Master Gardener Suzanne Clarke has been raising monarch butterflies for over 20 years, so when she learned that the population of monarch butterflies in the western United States had declined by 84% last year, she took it personally.

"I was an elementary school teacher, and I had them in the classroom and started every September that way, which is a great way to get kids really interested in learning," she said.

This Saturday, Clarke will be giving a talk at the Sebastopol Library about the plight of the monarch and what the home gardener can do to help their survival.

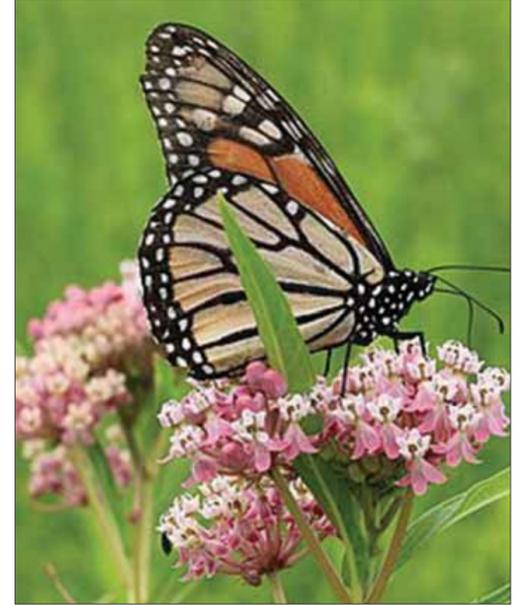
### A monarch primer

"One of the important things to know is that there are actually two distinct monarch populations. The dividing line is more or less the Continental Divide. The East Coast monarchs are the ones that go to Mexico," Clarke said, noting that she traveled to Mexico to see them for the first time this year in February. "The ones west of the divide overwinter in California."

"They're migratory creatures,"



TO THE RESCUE — Sonoma County Master Gardener Suzanne Clarke will speak on "Can the monarch butterfly be saved from extinction?" on Saturday, Sept. 7, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Sebastopol Regional Library.



Photo, left, Laura Hagar Rush and, right, Wikipedia

she said. Both populations fly north into Canada during the summer months and then fly south again in fall.

Most people are familiar with the monarch's life cycle — egg, larvae, chrysalis, adult. There are four generations in a year. Monarchs emerge from their chrysalis in late spring and live just two to six weeks but before they die, they start the cycle over again. Ditto for the second and third generation. The fourth

generation is different. Born in September and October, it migrates south, lives through the winter — sometimes six to eight months — and starts the cycle all over again in spring.

"One of the interesting things about monarchs is they're one of the few butterflies that overwinter as adults, rather than as a chrysalis," she said. "That's why you hear about them roosting together in a clump when it's chilly; they warm

themselves that way."

### The role of native milkweed

As most American school children know — thanks to teachers like Clarke — monarch butterflies lay their eggs on one plant: milkweed, a meadowland plant that grows in profusion throughout the United States, providing a traveling buffet and egg depository for

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## Parent Resource Fair weaves web of support for families

A friend's suicide inspires a local holistic health educator to develop a new event to support west county parents

By Laura Hagar Rush  
Sonoma West Editor  
[laura@sonomawest.com](mailto:laura@sonomawest.com)

The West County Parent Resource Fair sounds like a blast — fun activities for kids plus support, education and free massages for parents — but the fair was born, in part, out of a local tragedy.

The fair is the brainchild of the Cradle-to-Career Taskforce of the Gravenstein Health Action Chapter, and the director of that taskforce, Celosia Arcadia, is the driving force behind the event.

Arcadia became involved in the local Health Action Chapter after a friend in Napa, a first-time mother in the throes of post-partum depression, died by suicide, leaving an eight-month old baby behind. The method her friend chose to kill herself — setting herself on fire in the middle of an empty playground — shocked the community, especially those who knew her.

Grieving her friend's death and looking for answers, Arcadia, a holistic health educator who teaches yoga, stress reduction and chi gong at Sonoma State University, attended one of the listening sessions that the Gravenstein Health Action Chapter held in west county last year in an attempt to suss out the community's most pressing health needs.

When the organizers mentioned they were looking for someone to lead the group's committee on children's health, known as the Cradle-to-Career Taskforce, Arcadia raised her hand.

### Supporting young children by supporting their parents

Arcadia said her taskforce — which includes Tasha Beauchamp (Cittaslow), Kellie Noe (West County School Board), Stephen Zollman (Library Commission Board), Adriel Ahern (Sebastopol Regional Library), Cordelia Holst (Sebastopol Community Center), Nichole Warwick (Daily Acts), and Melissa Barnett and Sherry Kane, R.N. (both part of the Resilience Collaborative) —



Photo Laura Hagar Rush

LOVING — Holistic health educator Celosia Arcadia is the driving force behind the West County Parent Resource Fair.

did a lot of research and analysis before deciding what they should do to support the health of young children in west county. Ultimately they decided to create the West County Parent Resource Fair, which seeks to support the health of young children by supporting the

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## The line that divides us

High Street Salon takes on the issue of immigration

By Cynthia Albers  
Special to Sonoma West

Rick Rozet's High Street Salon took on one of the most contentious political issues of the day on Friday night — immigration — offering presentations from a local immigration attorney, three local activists and an undocumented immigrant who shared her experiences of crossing the border and her life in Sonoma County.

The panel sought to clarify immigration issues, expose immigration myths, provide eyewitness accounts of the humanitarian crisis at the border and propose local citizen actions.

"The world is on the move," warned local activist Margaret Howe, who cited the massive increase of displaced people worldwide (currently 70.8 million), who are refugees, asylum seekers or immigrants.

"We are living in a new era of rethinking borders. It's time to open the conversation: What do borders mean today?" she said.

### An immigration attorney's view of immigration law

Immigration attorney and Sebastopol resident Christopher Kerosky acknowledged the standing-room-only crowd and said the turnout was proof of the public's interest in the immigration conversation.

"This is democracy!" he affirmed. Kerosky has practiced immigration law for over 30 years and is a member of the Sonoma County Human Rights Commission. His presentation focused on the biases in immigration law and the



Photo provided

ADVOCATE — Immigration attorney Christopher Kerosky calls the American immigration system blatantly biased against Mexicans.

mythology that has developed around the current refugee situation. He wanted to debunk the following myths:

*Myth: Our borders are porous, and immigrants enter the U.S. at will.*

According to Kerosky, "Today, almost everyone who tries to get into the U.S. illegally is caught. There has been a net decrease in illegal immigration from Mexico over the last 10 years."

He said the current "mania" about an invasion from Central America and Mexico falls short of the truth, and the numbers trying to cross illegally are about half what they were 10 years ago.

"The apprehensions at the border have dropped from 1.6 million in

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