

Free Bus Rides to Libraries, Farms, Volunteering for Family Justice Upcoming West County Options for Learning, Exploring, and Pitching in for Our Community

With summer in full swing, many families, including mine, are looking for fun, enriching activities. Here are a few great options for children and adults.

Enjoy the rewards of volunteering by helping the new West County Family Justice Center; sign the kids up for free bus tickets to your local library, and tour a wonderful educational farm in Richmond.

Research shows that engaging summer activities help prevent “summer learning loss,” so kids don't have to spend so much time catching up when school starts in the fall. Summer learning loss has a cumulative impact on grades and test scores, making summer learning opportunities even more important.

Here are the details:

Saturday, June 30, 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. – Farm Tour Meet at Nystrom Elementary School in Richmond (at the Florida St. and 11th St. entrance), and take a bus to EcoVillage Farm and Learning Center; pick fruits and vegetables, learn about farming; free picnic lunch. Free. Reservations Required. **For more**, including making a reservation, contact Monica Boyd at the Richmond Community Foundation at 510-234-1200 or mboyd@richmond.org.

Saturday, June 30, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. – Volunteer Clean-Up Day for the future home of the new [West Contra Costa Family Justice Center](#), a nonprofit one-stop resource for survivors of family violence that I helped launch. Help prepare the now-vacant county building for a major renovation; meet at 256 - 24th Street in Richmond. Wear work clothes. **For more:** Melissa Caine-Huckaby, 510-965-4949.

June 1 through July 31, West County “Ride to Read” Summer Reading Program. Free youth bus tickets on AC Transit or WestCat to the City of Richmond's libraries and the County libraries in San Pablo, El Cerrito, El Sobrante, Kensington, Pinole, Crockett, Hercules, and Rodeo. For children ages 8 to 17. Entry forms available at all of these libraries, and at my office at 11780 San Pablo Ave., Suite D, El Cerrito. **For more:** Ian Richards at El Sobrante Library, 510-374-3482; or at www.ccclib.org, click on “Dream Big READ Summer Reading.”

Enjoy the summer!

John Gioia

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