

HOLIDAYS AROUND THE TOWN: SAFEST WAY TO BRIGHTEN THE SEASON

Let it Shine

PAGES 4 & 5



CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SERVING CASTRO VALLEY SINCE 1989

YEAR 32

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2020

NO. 50

INSIDE YOUR FORUM

NEWS



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The Gift of Sanity

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MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT



PHOTO BY DEBBIE TEE

Although the Eden United Holiday Lights Caravan scheduled for this past Saturday evening had to be postponed at the last minute because of new emergency pandemic orders, dozens of homes sparked with brilliant holiday displays to demonstrate that the holiday spirit still shines in Castro Valley.

Eden Hospital Workers Threatening to Strike

By Amy Sylvestri
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

Health care workers from Eden Medical Center addressed the Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) during a special meeting Monday night, saying they lack the proper equipment to face the COVID-19 pandemic and are threatening a strike against Sutter Health, the operator of the hospital.

Around 140 members of Teamsters 856 (including lab and imaging technicians, and respiratory therapists) have announced their intention of striking beginning next Monday, Dec. 14, citing lack of proper personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks and face shields, as well as under-staffing.

At Monday night's virtual MAC meeting, representatives from both the union and the hospital spoke, but Sutter said they wouldn't speak on the labor issues and said that proper PPE had been issued and adequate staffing was in place.

The MAC responded that they wanted to give both sides a forum to speak and the public to hear, but added that they were not there to mediate any contract dispute.

The meeting amounted to labor representatives saying they are ill-prepared to deal with the pandemic and the hospital administration saying everything's in place – with the MAC acknowledging the hard work and difficult circumstances of both entities.

"It's important for the community to hear it," said MAC member

Chuck Moore." I'm a little concerned with getting in between labor (concerns) – or to get in a judgmental position at all. But I hope we don't have a strike and I hope we are taking care of our front-line workers."

There are currently 20 active COVID patients at Eden, which care workers say they are struggling with.

"Safety is becoming an issue," said Maleah Best, a medical technician. "As far as protective equipment, obviously we are limited. She said they get two N95 masks per day and she has been forced to bring her own additional masks and face shields.

"Morale here is very tense," said Best. "Everyone here is very stressed, very burned out."

see STRIKE on page 11

'Stay at Home' Ordered, New App Announced

By Michael Singer
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

Alameda County is under a stay-at-home order until January 4, 2021, as coronavirus cases climb and hospital ICU beds continue to fill up.

The Order, which became effective on Monday, is based on the regional availability of intensive care unit (ICU) beds.

The San Francisco Bay Area reports about 25 percent of its COVID-19 units are still available.

While the state's order would have gone into effect if ICU bed availability fell below 15 percent, Alameda County Public Health Department officials joined other counties around the Bay in the stay-at-home order to avoid a critical situation in the days ahead.

"Rising hospitalization rates across the region threaten not only our community members with severe COVID-19, but anyone who may need care because of a heart attack, stroke, accident, or other critical health need," said Alameda County Health Officer Dr. Nicholas Moss. "By acting together now we will have the greatest impact on the surge and save more lives."

Alameda County also issued

a statement on Saturday urging businesses and residents to plan now for further restrictions.

The news did not sit well with some residents.

"How are we in this together?" asked county resident Judea Johnson. "What are the folks working from home on Zoom having to sacrifice? You're still getting a paycheck while receiving your deliveries from essential workers. All while insisting others suffer and lose their businesses and their kids not go to school."

As of Monday, there have been nearly 17 new cases per day per 100,000 Alameda County residents, up from nine last week. More than 187 patients were hospitalized.

see STAY on back page

Castro Valley
Confirmed Cases = 941

Alameda County
Confirmed Cases = 32,545
Deaths = 522

California
Confirmed Cases = 1,366,435
Deaths = 19,966

as of December 7, 2020

PG&E Rate Hike

Castro Valley households will be paying about \$13.44 more for their electricity and natural gas service each month beginning in March.

The California Public Utilities Commission approved the 8% rate hike for PG&E residential customers at its meeting last Thursday.

Electric bills will jump about \$10.40 a month; gas bills by about \$3.05. The increases will continue through 2022.

If it hadn't been for stiff opposition from consumer groups, PG&E might have gotten a requested \$12.4% increase, which would have seen monthly bills rise by a whopping \$20.55.

PG&E says the revenue is needed to fund improvements to its outdated electrical distribution system which has been blamed for igniting several of the devastating wildfires in California over the past four years.

The fires resulted in more than 120 deaths and caused an estimated \$10 billion in damage. The soaring costs led to PG&E filing for bankruptcy last year.

Under the agreement, none of the additional revenue can be used for executive compensation or for paying bankruptcy settlements.

PG&E supplies power to some 16 million people in Northern California.

Castro Valley Weather Dec 9-13, 2020



Wednesday
Mostly Sunny
High 60° Low 44°



Thursday
Partly Sunny
High 61° Low 41°



Friday
Partly Sunny
High 57° Low 41°



Saturday
Partly Cloudy
High 59° Low 46°



Sunday
Partly Sunny
High 62° Low 47°

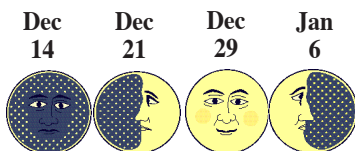
Almanac



Sun sets at 4:51 p.m. today, rises at 7:16 a.m. Thursday.

Past Week's Rain: 00.00
Season To Date: 00.71
Normal To Date: 03.91
Season Average: 21.22

Moon Phases



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Prominent Castro Valley Horse Trainer Bob Hess, Sr., 86, Dies

By Lowell Hickey
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

Bob Hess, Sr., a prominent horse trainer at Golden Gate Fields who was recently elected to the Castro Valley Sports Hall of Fame, died Saturday from the effects of COVID-19 at Eden Hospital. He was 86.

Hess, who was born Oct. 10, 1934, is survived by his wife of 56 years, Maria Elena, four children — Bob Jr., Howie, Erica and Anna — and six grandchildren.

Former thoroughbred trainer Greg Gilchrist, another member of the CV Sports Hall of Fame, had known Hess for years as a friend, a rival and a Castro Valley neighbor.

"Bob was just a great guy," said Gilchrist on the phone from his present home in Las Vegas. "He was a really good horse trainer and



Bob Hess, Sr.

an even better friend. If you ever needed anything and Bob had it, it was yours. That's just the kind of guy he was."

Initially hospitalized in mid-November when he first test-

ed positive to COVID-19, Hess was subsequently released and then re-admitted when symptoms returned. More than 200 workers at Golden Gate Fields have tested positive and the track has suspended racing through Dec. 25.

Over a distinguished career that saw him saddle 1,592 winners from 10,448 starters, Hess's horses earned more than \$17.2 million. His last winner came Oct. 29 at GGF with the horse Just Like Fred.

Hess was scheduled to be inducted into the CV Sports Hall of Fame this past April, but ceremonies had to be postponed due to the pandemic. He will be officially inducted posthumously when the ceremonies are permitted to take place.

Services for Bob Hess, Sr., are pending.

Park District Facilities Now Closed As COVID Cases Continue to Rise

The East Bay Regional Park District on Sunday evening closed all campgrounds, visitor centers, outdoor museums and children's playgrounds until further notice.

Notice of the closures came after regional health officers in Alameda County and five other Bay Area counties ordered new lockdowns in the face of rising rates of

COVID-19 infections.

Future camp reservations through made through Jan. 4 were also cancelled, including for the Sibley backpack camp. Customers will receive full refunds.

Because outdoor activity is encouraged by health officials during the new Regional Stay-At-Home Order, Park District officials are reminding visitors that spending time in nature is important for mental and physical health and wellbeing.

To keep yourselves and Park District staff safe when visiting regional parks and trails, please wear masks when within six feet of others and follow all COVID-19 safety requirements.

Happy Winter!

If you have non-perishable food to be picked up, give us a call and we shall pick it up and deliver it to Dig Deep Farms on Fairmont Dr. We just did a food drive and filled up 5 SUVs. Thank you to all of the people who contributed.



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Nominate a Community Volunteer

The Hayward Area Recreation and Park District (HARD) is accepting nominations for the Board of Directors' Annual Awards for Distinguished Community Service during 2020.

The awards are an opportunity for the Board to formally recognize individuals and organizations whose efforts have helped to provide high quality leisure activities and programs to its residents on a voluntary basis.

All members of the community are encouraged to nominate those individuals or organizations who exemplify such important volunteer service.

"HARD and the board of directors have recognized individuals and organizations with this award program since 1962," stated Board President Paul Hodges.

"The 2020 pandemic has been a very challenging year to provide services, and yet we've had businesses, organizations and individuals who have contributed and connected with us and we want to show our appreciation."

Deadline for nominations is Friday, Dec. 31. Winners will be announced at the Board of Directors' next month and will be formally recognized on Friday, Jan. 22.

The downloadable nomination form available at: www.HaywardRec.org, or at the District Office, or by contacting Jim Wheeler at 510-881-6704 or at WheJ@HaywardRec.org. For additional info, visit www.HaywardRec.org or call HARD office at 510-881-6700.

Holiday Mail

This year, the United States Postal Service recommends that anyone shipping gifts through USPS to put their items in the mail by next Tuesday, Dec. 15, to ensure they arrive before Dec. 25.

Of course, sending presents and holiday cards as early as possible is the best way to avoid any issues.

Retail Ground Service is the most affordable method of shipping through the Postal Service, but anyone able to pay more (or anyone running behind on their holiday prep) can ship or mail items by Dec. 18 through First-Class Mail or by Dec. 19 through Priority Mail Service.

The Priority Mail Express service—the most costly option—has a Dec. 23 deadline.

For more info, visit usps.com.



PHOTO BY JIM NEGRI

ROTARIAN OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER: Ceta Dochterman with one of her rescue dogs "looking for a home."

Rotarian of Month

The Rotary Club of Castro Valley is honored to name Ceta Dochterman as the Rotarian of the Month for December.

"I didn't join Rotary to say 'no' to helping." That statement clearly defines who Ceta is and what she does.

Whether it is helping with the Thanksgiving Senior Lunch or distributing iPads to residential senior care and nursing homes, or taking part in Rotary's weekly meetings, Ceta is always there with her big smile and positive attitude.

She also works with Officer Gabriel Walters at the Castro Valley CHP office to ensure that children in shelters are provided presents each year at Rotary's annual Children's Christmas Party.

It doesn't stop there. Ceta is involved in many other community projects, such as packing and distributing Thanksgiving Lunch Bags at the Kenneth Aitken Senior Center.

In addition, she led the club's singing at each weekly meeting when the Club was meeting in person, and was often accompanied at meetings by rescue dogs that she tries to place in good homes.

Service is truly in Ceta's DNA. Her brother, Cliff Dochterman, served as President of Rotary International in 1992-93.

"Ceta sets a great example for us all," said Club President Gary Howard. "She challenges us all to live up to Rotary's motto of 'Service Above Self'."

SHERIFF'S REPORTS

COMPILED BY MICHAEL SINGER • CASTRO VALLEY FORUM



Ignored Restraining Order

Thursday, December 3: at 1:10 p.m., Sheriff's deputies arrested a 61-year-old woman from Castro Valley on suspicion of violating a court-issued restraining order. The woman was spotted outside a home on Seven Hills Road near Quail Avenue fewer than the 100 feet permitted by the court order. Deputies took the woman into custody.

Drove with Invalid License

Thursday, December 3: at 12:30 a.m., a 19-year-old man from Castro Valley was arrested on suspicion of driving with an invalid driver's license. Deputies stopped the man on Castro Valley Boulevard near Park Way for a traffic violation but made the arrest after they saw his license was invalid. The man was taken into custody.

Methamphetamine Drugs

Tuesday, December 1: at 11:46 p.m., deputies arrested a 37-year-old woman with no permanent residence on suspicion of possession of methamphetamine drugs. The woman was hanging around a gas station on Grove Way near Center Street when deputies stopped her for questioning and discovered her stash. Deputies took the woman into custody.

Assault Outside a Store

Wednesday, December 2: at 12:38 a.m., a 911 call about a loud and aggressive-sounding argument sent deputies to a business on Jamison Way near Redwood Road. There, they arrested a 36-year-old woman from Castro Valley on suspicion of assault on a family member in the parking lot. Deputies handcuffed the woman and took her into custody. The victim was treated at the scene.

Wanted Man Previously Charged with Burglary

Tuesday, December 1: at 7:54 p.m., deputies arrested a 27-year-old man from Castro Valley as part of a warrant issued for his capture. The man was previously charged with burglary. Deputies stopped the man for questioning in front of a business on Castro Valley Boulevard near Stanton Avenue where they confirmed his warrant. The man was taken to Santa Rita Jail.

Confrontational Shoplifter

Tuesday, December 1: at 2:40 a.m., a 65-year-old CV man was arrested on suspicion of petty theft, providing false identification to law enforcement, and resisting arrest. Deputies were called to a grocery store on Redwood Road near the Boulevard after managers called about an elderly man shoplifting. The man gave deputies a false ID and then became confrontational. He was taken into custody.

Virtual Menorah Lighting

Join Tri-Valley Cultural Jews for a secular humanistic menorah lighting and naming ceremony from 7 to 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 11. Bring your menorah and candles.

We will also play dreidel virtually. We ask for a donation of \$10 for non-member adults. Contact Jamie at culturaljews@gmail.com for the registration link.

CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

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HOLIDAYS AROUND *the* TOWN

Safest Way to Brighten Season

Holiday lights and decorations have popped up around Castro Valley, offering a dash of much-needed cheer in 2020.

As those lights go up indoors or outside, PG&E reminds customers to use energy efficient bulbs, which are the safest option and can help save money.

"Holidays are a great time to remind our customers about how to practice holiday lighting safety. First and foremost, be aware of your surroundings to avoid electric hazards," says PG&E's Aaron August. "Second, LED lights are a great way to save energy and money on your bill this time of year."

LEDs produce almost no heat, so they are safe to touch and greatly reduce the risk of fire.

They are 75% more energy efficient and last up to 25 times longer than traditional incandescent light bulbs — up to 40 holiday seasons. They're also shatterproof and shock resistant.



Lighting Safety Tips

Check for overhead power lines before hanging outdoor lights and keep at least 10 feet away from lines.

Never place yourself or any object near a power line.

Make sure lights are approved for outdoor use. Never use indoor lights outdoors.

Use a timer or turn off lights before going to bed, or if you are away from home.

For more PG&E holiday safety and energy efficiency tips, visit www.pge.com.



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Latkes Keep the Hanukkah Tradition Glowing Bright

When the first Hanukkah candle is lit tomorrow evening, the glow will remind those of the Jewish faith of a miracle with oil that took place more than 2,000 years ago when the Jews drove a foreign army out of Jerusalem and rekindled the eternal light in the Temple with pure oil.

Legend relates that only enough oil for one day could be found, but it miraculously lasted for eight days. To commemorate this event, colorful candles are lighted each

night of the holiday.

The custom of serving fried foods, particularly latkes (potato pancakes), grew out of the miracle of the oil, and have become the symbol of the holiday.

Latkes are usually served with sour cream and applesauce.

CLASSIC LATKES

- 1 pound russet potatoes, peeled
- 1 small onion, peeled
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten

- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives (optional)

Apple sauce

Grate potatoes, then the onion using the large hole of a box grater. Place grated vegetables in a large clean kitchen towel. Bring up the ends of the towel and twist together to form a pouch. Hold the bundle over the sink, then squeeze out as much excess moisture from the vegetables as possible. Place vegetable mixture in large bowl. Add egg, flour, salt and pepper; mix well.

Heat oil in medium nonstick skillet on medium-high heat. Carefully drop tablespoonfuls of the vegetable mixture into skillet; spread each into thin circle with back of spoon. Repeat to cook 2 to 3 latkes at a time. Cook 3 to 4 minutes on each side or until golden brown on both sides. Remove latkes from skillet; drain on



Classic Potato Latkes

paper towels.

Serve each latke topped with a teaspoon of the sour cream and chives and applesauce alongside. Serve warm. Serves 4.

APPLE FRITTERS

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1-1/2 cups flour

- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1 cup sugar
- 6 medium-size crisp apples such as Fuji or Granny Smith
- Oil for frying

Puree the eggs, milk, flour and salt in a blender or food processor until smooth. Scrape the batter into

a shallow bowl.

Combine the cinnamon and sugar in a small bowl and set aside.

Peel, core and slice the apples into 1/2-inch-thick wedges.

Heat about 1/4 inch of oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until hot but not smoking.

Dip each apple slice into the batter; let excess batter drain of briefly, then fry slices, a few at a time, until golden on both sides, about 3 to 4 minutes. Remove slices to a paper towel-lined platter or baking sheet to drain and cool briefly.

Sprinkle apples on all sides with cinnamon-sugar mixture. Keep warm in a 200°F oven, if necessary.

Repeat with remaining apples, skimming browned bits of batter from the pan and adding additional oil if needed. If oil becomes too brown, discard it and use fresh oil for successive batches of frying.

Transfer apple fritters to a warm platter. Sprinkle with more cinnamon-sugar before serving. Yields about 30 fritters.

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REAL ESTATE GALLERY



REAL ESTATE REALITY

By Carl Medford, CRS
Special to the Forum

GUEST COMMENTARY



Buyer Love Letters May Be Inciting Discrimination

Seated at a table with an elderly couple, I was discussing the details involved in selling their house.

It was clear they loved their home and, although they knew that relocating closer to family was the right choice, it was going to be difficult to leave the home they had cherished for so many years.

"We raised our family here," the wife stated, "Every inch of this home is filled with delightful memories."

The husband nodded, and then, grasping his wife's hand, looked at her and stated, "We really want a young family to get this home so they can have the same experiences we've had."

I have lost count of the number of times I have heard this sentiment from older sellers who want to pass their home to younger generations. Potential buyers, aware of this sentiment, are eager to convey to sellers their willingness to carry on a family-oriented tradition. The vehicle they choose to communicate their sentiments is the ubiquitous "love letter."

A staple accompaniment of offers for years, these letters often include pictures of young couples, children and even pets.

Ho Hum, Mortgage Rates Reach Another Record Low

Long-term home mortgage rates hit another record low last week, according to Freddie Mac's weekly nationwide survey.

The 30-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 2.71 percent for the week ending Dec. 3, down from the previous week when it averaged 2.72 percent. A year ago at this time, the 30-year rate averaged 3.68 percent.

Fifteen-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 2.26 percent, down from 2.28 percent.

Five-year hybrid adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs) averaged 2.86 percent, down 3.16 percent.

"Despite persistently low mortgage rates, home sales have hit a wall," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's Chief Economist. "While homebuyer appetite remains robust, the scarce inventory has effectively put a limit on how much higher sales can increase."

"Unfortunately, the record low supply combined with strong demand means home prices are rapidly escalating and eroding the benefits of the low mortgage rate environment."

The joy-filled faces peering out from the pages are hoping their carefully crafted communication will win the hearts of the sellers and get their offer accepted.

The letters work: I have watched sellers read the letters and accept offers based not on the price or terms but the content of the letters and the individuals portrayed therein.

While these letters seem warm and fuzzy, and have been an accepted practice for years, they can be construed as a violation of our nation's fair housing laws. According to the Fair Housing Act, sellers, when choosing an offer, should be impartial to a potential buyer's race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status or national origin.

In other words, if sellers, based on their preferences, choose a family over others equally or

better qualified, then they have discriminated against other potential buyers.

The problem with "love letters" is that the pictures clearly communicate a buyer's characteristics, making it easy for sellers to discriminate. Intentional or not, if the decision to accept a specific offer is based upon the attached letter, the sellers may be guilty of violating the law.

Consequently, with society's ever-increasing sensitivity to fair housing laws, attaching love letters to offers is a custom coming under increasing scrutiny, and may be a practice to abandon going forward.

Carl Medford is a licensed Realtor with Keller Williams Realty and a licensed general contractor. This article is sponsored by the Central County Marketing Association.

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WEEKEND GARDENER

Prune

Prune fruit trees and vines this month and next, but only after all of the leaves have fallen. Pruning plants that are not fully dormant leads to disease and damage to the tree tissue. Don't prune rose until mid-January.

Vegetables

Transplant globe artichokes, Jerusalem artichokes, asparagus, broccoli, cabbages, cauliflower, horseradish and rhubarb. Dig the soil when it's not waterlogged. If you squeeze a handful of soil and it stays in a lump, it's too wet to dig.

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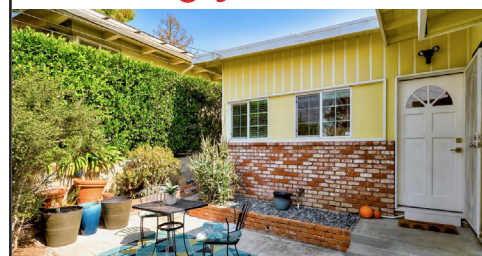
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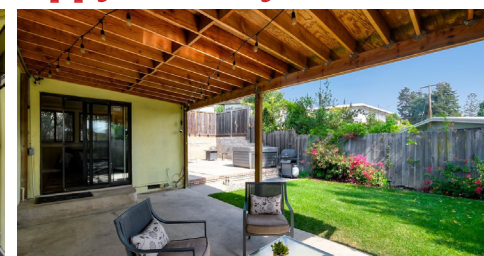
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Peter William Post

October 5, 1928 ~ November 24, 2020

Peter William Post, beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather was called home to our Lord on Tuesday, November 24, 2020.

Peter was born in October 1928 in Chicago, Illinois from Dutch parents, William and Anna Post.

As a youth he had a newspaper route in Alameda, helped his father deliver mail and attended Alameda High School. He worked on a tugboat in the San Francisco Bay where he discovered and later fulfilled his passion for sailing.

Peter enlisted in the US Army where he served for three years obtaining the rank of Corporal as a Fireman at Fort Greely in Kodiak, Alaska. He was honorably discharged and awarded the World War II Victory Medal. While living in Alaska he enjoyed having his very first boat as well as ice skating on the rivers and lakes in the area.

When he moved back to Alameda, he met his wife, Frieda Jordan at work, who he married in 1952 at Havenscourt Colonial Church in Oakland.

In 1953 he received his Certificate of Gemology and Horology where he became a master watchmaker and jeweler. He opened the Manor Jewelry Store in San Lorenzo where he restored and repaired watches and clocks, as well as selling jewelry.

For his second career, Peter worked as a successful and dedicated Farmers Insurance Agent from 1964 until his retirement at the age of 70.

Throughout the years he enjoyed riding his motorcycle, skiing, ice skating, boating, roller skating, camping, backpacking and fishing. Most of all, his love for sailing in his Columbia 22 and later Ranger 28 sailboats on the San Francisco Bay was what he enjoyed the most. He was also a member of the Berkeley Yacht Club. He competed in many sailboat races on the San Francisco Bay where he achieved 1st and 2nd place winning cups. An article was written about him and his love for sailing in the boat magazine Latitude 38.

Peter was a loyal member at the Three Crosses Neighborhood Church where he taught Sunday school and Junior Church for many years. He also worked in the lighting room during the church theatrical productions. He was a faithful member of the Gideons International where he would hand out Bibles and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Peter is survived by his beloved and dedicated wife of 68 years, 4 children and their spouses, 9 grandchildren and their spouses and 9 great-grandchildren, as well as many nephews, nieces and friends.



HOROSCOPE by Salomé

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ARIES (March 21 - April 19): At this time you might want to resist that otherwise admirable Aries penchant for getting to the heart of a matter quickly. Keep in mind that a delicate situation calls for patience.



TAURUS (April 20 - May 20): Your aspects favor more diplomacy and fewer direct confrontations when dealing with a relationship problem. Avoiding hurt feelings can help in your search for the truth.



GEMINI (May 21 - June 20): Positive aspects are strong this week. Although you might still have to deal with some problems caused by a recent period of turmoil, you are making progress, and that's what counts.



CANCER (June 21 - July 22): A family matter could benefit from your counsel. But don't come into it unless invited, and don't stay if you feel uneasy. Just remember to reassure one and all that you'll be there for them.



LEO (July 23 - August 22): As the truth about an ongoing situation emerges, you could find that you were right to defer judgment before you had all the facts. Now would be a good time to move on to other matters.



VIRGO (August 23 - Sept. 22): Your plans to take control of a personal situation because you feel you are best qualified could create resentment. Best to hear what everyone else involved in the matter has to say about it.



LIBRA (Sept. 23 - October 22): Uncovering some surprising background facts about that ongoing personal matter could make you reconsider the extent of your involvement. A neutral family member offers advice.



SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21): Religious or spiritual themes start to dominate your aspect this week. This can serve as a counterweight to the mounting effects of the season's growing commercialization.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21): Taking on that recent challenge impressed a lot of important decision-makers. Meanwhile, proceed with your holiday plans, and don't forget to include you-know-who in them.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19): Disagreeing with an opinion you can't accept could be dicey, and your motives might be questioned. Best to wait to mount a challenge until you have support for your position.



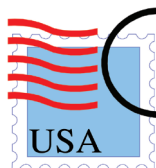
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18): Getting involved in helping others in this increasingly hectic period not only makes the generous Aquarian feel good, but you could also gain a more substantive benefit from your actions.



PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20): The Piscean way of thinking clearly and objectively helps you resolve a complex situation without creating any ill will. Don't be surprised if your counsel is requested on another matter.

LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR
FREDZ@EBPUBLISHING.COM



Caravan Canceled, But Not the Spirit Behind it!

Editor:

Although the Eden United Holiday Lights Caravan scheduled for December 5 did not happen due to the most recent COVID-19 look-down, the key figures who worked so hard to bring this event to the rest of us should not be overlooked.

All modest servant-leaders never seeking recognition, the following five individuals worked tirelessly to bring some Christmas Joy to the rest of us, their neighbors in the Ashland-Castro Valley-Cherryland-Fairview-Hayward Acres-San Lorenzo area: Todd Anglin, David Gehrke and Cindy Torres who serve on the Castro Valley/Eden Area Chamber Board, Fairview MAC Board member April Chan, and Michael Freed, who serves on the San Lorenzo MAC.

Your efforts, individually and

collectively, were a wonderful example to the rest of us, as the caravan tagline stated, "showing that even in the dark, we can share hope, joy and the spirit of community at a time when we all need it the most."

Blessings and Merry Christmas!

—Bruce D. &
Linda Lee Johnson
Castro Valley

Keeping Community Safe

Editor:

My name is Sean E. and I am a Boy Scout in Troop 726. I am writing this letter to fulfill a Communication merit badge requirement.

My subject for this letter is about Covid-19 and taking precautions. I know people have heard it hundreds of times: wear your mask, wash your hands and social distance. But what I want to talk about is the fact that some people are wearing a mask incorrectly.

I would kindly ask that everyone wear a mask completely covering their nose, mouth, and chin so it will protect yourself and others.

Also, whenever washing your hands you should wash them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to clean them.

By covering your nose and mouth, as well as, washing your hands you will help slow the spread of Covid-19. Your family, friends, and neighbors will be safer. Thank you for helping to keep our community safe.

—Sean Edens, Boy Scout
Troop 726, Castro Valley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

must include writer's first and last names, phone number, city of residence, and must be under 300 words. We reserve the right to edit. We do not withhold names. Email letters to: fredz@ebpublishing.com or mail to: The Forum, P.O. Box 2897, Alameda, CA 94501.

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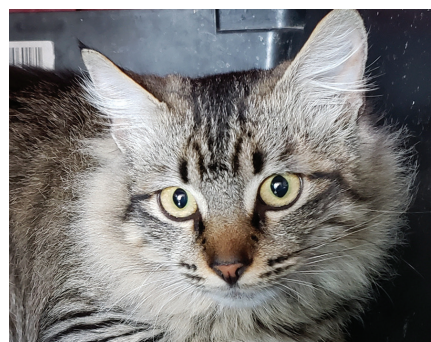
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LOKI is a 2 year old male. This energetic boy will do a full body wag when his favorite people enter the room. Loki loves playing with toys, eating treats, and exploring. He would do best in an active home with teens or adults. Hayward Animal Shelter (510) 293 - 7200.



LILAC is an active 4 month old gray and white beauty. She's sweet and playful and would love to go home with you. Lilac is spayed, vaccinated, microchipped and FIV/FELV negative. For more info, please email: Loveallpawzrescue@gmail.com.

Health: Help Manage Holiday Stress During Coronavirus

By Ann Marie O'Brien, R.N.
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

Feeling stressed? You're not alone. Stress levels are rising due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the numerous disruptions in our daily lives.

The American Psychological Association recently reported that "we are facing a national mental health crisis that could yield serious health and social consequences for years to come."

And it's not just adults who are feeling it. The report reveals that our children are "facing unprecedented uncertainty, are experiencing elevated stress, and are already reporting symptoms of depression."

Although a modest amount of stress

is normal, high levels of stress can be dangerous to your health and may contribute to serious health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, anxiety and depression.

Therefore, make sure to keep a close eye on your well-being and the well-being of your loved ones during the holidays. It's true, there is no magic bullet to make stress disappear forever, but we can take action to help reduce stress. Here is a list of tips that may reduce your stress and lead to a more enjoyable holiday season.

- Learn to recognize your holiday stress triggers and relievers such as financial pressures and personal demands are two common triggers. Also, beware of unhealthy stress relievers

like smoking, drinking or eating too much.

- Give yourself a break. While doing things for others, it's easy to forget to take care of ourselves. If you feel stress building, take a break for a few minutes. Listening to calming music, taking time to watch a movie, or just getting away to take a brief walk can give you time to unwind and recharge.

- Make time for your health. In the holiday rush, don't let your well-being fall by the wayside. Try to stay on your normal sleep schedule, incorporate healthy foods and get regular exercise. If you can't find a 30-minute chunk of time for exercise, break it up into three 10-minute sessions spread throughout the day.

- Enjoy, even if it's virtually. In the flurry of holiday activities, we sometimes forget what we're celebrating, so remember to savor the time with people you love. Use a phone or set up a Zoom call to celebrate and spend time together. It's important to minimize any feelings of isolation.

- Talk to your doctor. If it feels like you're not able to get a handle on your stress, talk to your doctor. They may recommend a counselor who could help you find other ways to help reduce or manage the unhealthy stress.

For more health and wellness information, visit UHC.com.

Ann Marie O'Brien is national director of health engagement strategies at UnitedHealthcare.

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Strike: Negotiations

continued from front page

Best described a "bare-bones" lab staff, with people waiting upwards of four or five hours to be seen for simple blood tests.

Sutter Health Chief Medical Executive Dr. Veronique Au countered that the hospital has a 90-day supply of PPE, which is "good shape" and said that they could potentially access ventilators from all of the Sutter system for Eden if necessary.

"It is a very challenging time right now," said Au. "The pandemic has definitely struck the health care system. We are staying fluid with situations and we are trying to fill any staffing gaps we have."

Au refused to discuss the labor negotiations and concentrated on speaking of the measures they were taking medially during the pandemic. Teamsters Local Union 856 representative said that it has been difficult to get Sutter/ Eden representatives to sit down at the negotiation table.

Newsom Recall Petition

A "Recall Gavin Newsom" signature petition drive will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. this Sunday, Dec. 13, at the corner of Castro Valley Blvd. and Redwood Road, in front of Safeway. For more information, visit recallgavin2020.com.

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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

2020 CVHS Graduate Tony Henson

Our Athlete of the Week is Tony Henson. The Castro Valley High School 2020 graduate played on the Varsity Football Team for his Junior and Senior year. Tony says he knew since he was little that he wanted to be in the Army. He joined the military right after graduation and soon left for BCT (Basic Combat Training). He graduates on December 18th as a US Army Soldier.



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If you have already installed a BPD, check to see if it is functioning properly. Remove any debris or obstructions. Annual maintenance can ensure that your entire BPS is operating properly for when you will need it the most.

In Castro Valley, a BPS is required on all new structures and is installed when laterals are repaired. A CVSan Repair Permit is required for installation. If you have questions, please contact our Engineering Department at 510-537-0757.

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Stay: Order

continued from front page
patalized and 57 were admitted to ICUs for COVID-related illness, double the number from last week.

"We know that those cases that occurred around people's dinner tables or activities and travel through Thanksgiving are going to show up right about now," said Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly. "We believe that the levels of transmission that we've been reporting will likely continue to go up because of those activities around Thanksgiving."

At his weekly update, Governor Gavin Newsom announced that California is planning to receive 2.16 million first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine this month. His office also rolled out a new smartphone app that can send an alert if you come into contact with someone who has tested positive.

The app, called "CA Notify," is available starting tomorrow for your Apple iPhone or Google Android device. When a person tests positive for COVID-19, the California Department of Public Health will send a verification code to plug into the app. Once the code is entered, it will trigger an alert to phones of people who may have been in close proximity – within 6 feet of that individual for 15 minutes or more – in the past 14 days. The app is voluntary and was field-tested by UC San Francisco and UC San Diego Students.

COUNTY'S NEW RESTRICTIONS AT A GLANCE



The new Stay-At-Home order took effect in Alameda County at 12:01 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 7. It prohibits gatherings of any size, non essential travel, closes operations except for critical infrastructure and retail, and requires 100% masking and physical distancing. The order will stay in effect until at least Jan. 7, 2021. Here is a partial list of how it might affect you.

These businesses and activities must close:

- Indoor and outdoor playgrounds
- Indoor recreational facilities and live audience sports
- Hair salons, barbershops, nail salons
- Museums, zoos, and aquariums
- Movie theaters, entertainment centers, amusement parks
- Wineries, bars, breweries, and distilleries

The order allows for:

- Critical services and outdoor activities to preserve physical and mental health, including obtaining healthcare services
- Working at any business that's allowed to be open
- Attending *only outdoor services* at places of worship
- Engaging in physical recreation, including walking your dog
- Caring for family or friends needing assistance

These businesses and activities may operate with additional restrictions and 100% masking and physical distancing:

- Outdoor areas like beaches, parks and hiking trails
- Shopping at stores at 20% capacity with entrance metering
- Restaurants for take-out, pick-up, or delivery only
- Hotels, motels open *only* for critical infrastructure support
- Medical and dental offices remain open

The order does not modify existing state guidance for K-12 schools. Child care, pre-kindergarten and K-12 schools already open for in-person learning may remain open with masking and social distancing protocols.

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