

San Leandro Times

AN INDEPENDENT HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SERVING SAN LEANDRO, ASHLAND, SAN LORENZO AND SHEFFIELD VILLAGE

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SAN LEANDRO • CALIFORNIA



PHOTO BY MIKE MCGUIRE

Some of the musicians who appeared in Russell City are shown in a mural at the corner of A Street and Maple Court in downtown Hayward. An inscription reads "The city may be gone but the memories live on," above the dates for Russell City's founding, 1853, and its destruction, 1963.

Documentary Film on Russell City Shows East Bay's History of Injustice

By Mike McGuire
San Leandro Times

Some 150 people came to the Chabot Theater in Castro Valley on Sunday night, April 7, to see a screening of a film about the intentional destruction of a mostly Black and Latino community in Hayward in the early 1960s.

The Apology tells the story of the

fight against the destruction of Russell City, originally founded in 1853, and the fight for justice for those former residents today.

In 1963, after declaring it "blighted," the county seized the homes of 1,400 people along with

a school, churches and stores and bulldozed them to make way for an

industrial park. The former 200 acres of Russell City is off West Winton Avenue, which used to be called Russell Avenue.

The former residents and descendants of Russell City have hardly forgotten. They have banded together for a reunion picnic over 40 times since they were forced out of Russell City. see RUSSELL CITY, page 10

Sheriff's Dept. to Take SLPD's Overnight 911 Calls

Sheriff's Department to pick up nighttime calls until San Leandro resolves dispatcher shortage

By Michael Singer
San Leandro Times

San Leandro police officials say they have a temporary dispatcher shortage, prompting them to contract overnight 9-1-1 services to the Alameda County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) until at least September.

At its meeting on April 15, the San Leandro City Council unanimously approved (7-0) proceeding with the contract and other public safety and community policing issues.

On March 10, the San

Leandro Police Department (SLPD) began coordinating the transfers of 9-1-1 and non-emergency telephone calls to the sheriff's department's Emergency Services Dispatch Center between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m., seven days per week. San Leandro's current police dispatchers will continue managing 9-1-1 calls during the rest of the day.

Sheriff Yesenia Sanchez and San Leandro's acting see 911, page 12

Robustelli Leaving Post for Florida

By Michael Singer
San Leandro Times

San Leandro City Manager Fran Robustelli is leaving to take the city manager job in the town of St. Pete Beach, Florida. Her last day at San Leandro City Hall will be June 21.

"It is bittersweet to leave this community," Robustelli told the Times. "I am most proud of the staff succession

planning and professional development that has occurred and the talented leadership team in place to carry on the vision for the city's future. They are top-notch."

At his annual State of the City speech on Tuesday, Mayor Juan Gonzalez thanked Robustelli for her service to the city. She received flowers and a standing ovation.

see ROBUSTELLI, page 12

City Council Sets Its Annual Agenda; Finance Director Points to Upcoming Expenses

By Michael Singer
San Leandro Times

San Leandro will continue to complete its public safety, housing, and infrastructure projects in the next 12 months. It will also add "quality of life" and "economic development" to its priorities, said city officials.

But paying for everything on the City Council's wish list

may be difficult due to current and future financial challenges, said the city's financial director.

That message was presented to Mayor Juan González and the council during a 5-hour planning session open to the public this past Saturday at the San Leandro Library. The event included an update on the city's long-term forecast,

a review of accomplishments in 2023, and an evaluation of the city's top priority areas for 2024.

City Financial Director T. Michael Yeun shared the city's updated 2024-2025 budget: \$144 million in revenue with expenses of \$150 million. The deficit would be made up from reserve funds from the previous year, Yeun said. The

2025-2026 budget shows an anticipated \$148 million in revenue and \$148 million in expenses.

Yeun noted that the city's budget task force successfully created the civilian police review board, hired a dedicated staffer to tap into state and federal grants, and piloted the city's safety liaison and see AGENDA, page 12

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MEETING SCHEDULES

CITY COUNCIL

Council meets on the first and third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers, City Hall, 835 E. 14th St., San Leandro. For more information, call the City Clerk at 577-3367.

SAN LEANDRO SCHOOL BOARD

Board meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 835 E. 14th St., San Leandro. For more information, call Michelle Mayfield at 667-3522.



Happy Passover

By Rabbi Josh Weisman
Special to the Times

Jewish families in our area and around the world are celebrating the springtime festival of Passover this week. Passover commemorates the Israelites' freedom from slavery and exodus from Egypt.

In the most well-known Passover observance, the seder, Jewish families retell this story and reflect on its meaning in our lives today over a festive meal while eating foods that symbolize the hardship of oppression, the sweetness of liberation, and the renewal of spring.

Many peoples throughout history have taken inspiration from this story of liberation. During Passover, Jews traditionally eat unleavened bread called matzah in commemoration of the Israelites' hurried flight to freedom. They also refrain from eating leavened food and products containing certain common grains throughout the eight-day festival, which runs from the evening of April 22 through April 30 this year. Wish someone a Happy Passover!

Rabbi Josh Weisman is the rabbi at Temple Beth Sholom on Dolores Avenue in San Leandro

Assumption School Celebrates International Day Tradition

Assumption Catholic School hosted its annual International Day on March 8, continuing a tradition that has been a staple at the school for over 20 years.

This day of celebration has become an integral part of the school's identity, promoting cultural pride, diversity awareness, and acceptance among students.

"International Day is special because it's not just an annual event, it has also become an Assumption School tradition that allows our students to be proud of their heritage and learn about others," said Mrs. Katherine Rubio, the event's chair. "It educates our students about the richness of the different cultures represented in our school while also highlighting the commonalities and similarities within our diversity."



The theme of this year's International Day was visual arts and performances, showcasing the talents and cultural expressions of Assumption School's students.

Students performed songs from Cambodia, Ukraine, and the Middle East, as well as dances from Africa, China, and Mexico. The event also included outside performances from Pallen's Martial Arts and Ballet Folklorico Mexicano de Carlos Moreno.

"International Day has evolved over the years, starting as a community-led event and now integrated into the 7th-grade curriculum," Mrs. Rubio said. "This has become another opportunity for our middle school students to take leadership at the school and to connect with younger students."

Each 7th grader selects a country and creates a short presentation to showcase to the school. Parent volunteers collaborate with the students, hosting country tables with art, currency, physical items, and food or treats from that country.

"It's amazing to see my daughter host the Germany table as a 7th grader, as I hosted it as a parent when she was in kindergarten," said one Assumption parent.

International Day at Assumption School is not only see INTERNATIONAL, page 11

San Leandro Times

An independent hometown newspaper serving San Leandro, Ashland, San Lorenzo and Sheffield Village

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The San Leandro Art Association on Display

The San Leandro Art Association is displaying the artwork of many members in the gallery at the San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Avenue. The public is welcome to stop by and check out the original artwork created by local artists. The show runs through May 5.

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Community Calendar

San Leandro Democratic Club to Meet

The San Leandro Democratic Club will meet on Thursday, April 25, at 6:30 p.m. in the Trustees Room of the San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Ave. Meeting topics will include planning for the club's participation in the June 1 Cherry Festival and volunteering in the Democratic Campaign Headquarters in the fall. The public is invited to attend.

History of Industry in San Leandro at the 21st Amendment Tap Room

Join the San Leandro History Museum at 21st Amendment Brewing, 2010 Williams St. in San Leandro, for a unique program on the history of industry in San Leandro on Saturday, April 27, from noon to 4 p.m. Learn about San Leandro's industrial history by viewing a small exhibition with a short hands-on activity. Drop by any time between noon and 4 p.m. The program is designed for ages 21 and up.

Eden Garden Club Plant Pop-Up

The Eden Garden Club is having a Plant Pop-Up at Paradise Gardens, 20095 Mission Blvd. in Hayward, on Saturday, April 27, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Featuring vegetables, perennials, succulents, shrubs, natives, garden art, pottery, garden supplies and tools. Donations of plants and garden related items in good condition are accepted from 6 to 9:30 a.m. The proceeds are given for school garden grants awarded to CVUSD and HUSD schools. For more information, email edengardenclub@yahoo.com.

Hill & Valley Club Flea Market

Hill and Valley Club, 1808 B St. in Hayward, will hold its annual Flea Market on Saturday, April 27, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This old-fashioned indoor rummage sale will include clothing, jewelry, household goods, plants, books, toys, sewing and craft materials, electronics, holiday decorations, baked goods, and miscellaneous. This is a fundraiser to benefit several local charities. The sale will be held rain or shine, and plenty of parking is available.

American Legion Post 117 Sunday Breakfast

American Legion Post 117 of San Leandro will host its monthly Fourth Sunday Breakfast on Sunday, April 28, from 8 to 11 a.m. at the Veterans Memorial Building, 1105 Bancroft Ave. in San Leandro. Pancakes with sausage, eggs, coffee, tea, juice. Veterans \$7, non-veterans \$8.

Friends of Castro Valley Library Book Sale

The Friends of the Castro Valley Library will hold an indoor book sale on Saturday, April 27, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sunday, April 28, from 1 to 4 p.m., fill a bag for \$5. The sale will feature fiction and mystery books as well as all genres of nonfiction, children's books, music CDs, DVDs, jigsaw puzzles and games, and miscellaneous, at bargain prices. Funds from this sale pay for library programs and amenities.

Friends of San Leandro Library CD Sale

The Friends of the San Leandro Library will host a CD sale on Saturday, May 4, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Avenue in San Leandro. Check out the large selection of CDs at low prices with a buy-3-get-1 deal. All proceeds benefit the San Leandro Library's programs and services. Credit cards now accepted.

San Leandro Dahlia Society Tuber and Small Pot Sale

For spectacular summer color, it's time to plant those dahlias. The San Leandro Dahlia Society will hold its annual tuber and small plant sale on Saturday, May 4, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Milford Garden Improvement Clubhouse, 13055 Aurora Drive in San Leandro, across the street from Garfield Elementary School. Tubers will sell for \$7 and cuttings, small plants, will sell for \$9, including tax. Dahlia aficionados will be on hand to advise on planting and caring for the dahlias. With so many varieties, there is something for everyone. Just no blue blooms.

The Martina Show Celebrates Women's History Month

The Martina Show is celebrating Women's History Month by celebrating and sharing the accomplishments of the Women Ms. Martina has interviewed and those who have supported the TV show, over the years.

For example, Ms. Martina has had the opportunity to chat with a woman bakery owner, women celebrities, and a former city council member.

These are women who have shown that anyone can accomplish their goal with hard work and a will to succeed.

Ms. Martina hopes to air a special segment on her show, which will promote Women's History month. You can expect to see Martina sharing a photo taken after chatting with Gayle King, chatting with Singer/Actress Brandy Norwood,



what it was like to interview Celebrity Yo-yo, and what it was like to chat with Former City Councilmember Lynette McCalhany.

If you have a topic you want to see discussed on the show e-mail: themartinaalkshow@yahoo.com

This special episode will be shown on the Chabot College TV site on Friday night at 7 p.m at: <https://www.chabotcollege.edu/chabottv/>

Mini-Grants Available For Youth Programs

The City of San Leandro's Youth Advisory Commission (YAC) announces the release of the Youth Mini Grant for the 2023-2024 term.

This innovative annual program provides grant funding to support organizations or programs that are youth-driven and have a positive impact on San Leandro youth.

The YAC raised the grant money by volunteering and implementing special fundraising events. Additional funds to support this program were generously donated by the San

Leandro Optimist Club. The total funding available for this year's Youth Mini Grant is \$1,000. The amount per award will be dependent on the number of awards granted and their corresponding funding level.

Apply online at <https://forms.office.com/g/91LgNBbTgt> to access the application. Applications must be submitted by May 6. Early applications encouraged.

For more information, visit sanleandro.org/YAC or email youth@sanleandro.org.

More Events

Animal Trivia Night

Test your knowledge of animal facts and compete to earn a prize at the Animal Trivia Night on Thursday, April 25, at 6:30 p.m. at the Main Library, 300 Estudillo Ave. Come with a team or join one at the event. This event is for adults 18+

San Leandro Players to Present

Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express

The San Leandro Players will present Agatha Christie's "Murder on the Orient Express," running through May 5 at the San Leandro Museum/Auditorium, 320 West Estudillo Ave. Show times are Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m., plus two Friday show at 8 p.m. on April 26 and May 3. Tickets are \$25 general; \$20 seniors and under 12 (other discounts may apply). For tickets or more information, visit www.slplayers.org or call 510-895-2573. Masking is strongly recommended.

Castro Valley Orchestra Spring Concert

Castro Valley Orchestra will present a spring concert on Sunday, May 5, at 2 p.m. at the Castro Valley Center for the Arts, 19501 Redwood Road in Castro Valley. Works by Mozart, Mendelssohn, and Bach will be performed. Isaac Kim and James Choi will be featured in the Bach Double Violin Concerto. There will be a reception immediately after the concert to meet the soloists and musicians. Admission is free.

Carrington College Pet Adoption Fair

The Carrington College San Leandro campus, 15555 East 14th St. at Bayfair, will host a Pet Adoption Fair and Open House on Wednesday, May 8, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Guests will be able to adopt pets, view live student demonstrations, and tour the campus while learning more about the programs and training equipment.



• Propagate Plants

This is a good time to root cuttings of carnations, fuchsias and geraniums in moist sand, or a mixture of sand and vermiculite. If you are pruning these plants, use the tips for new plants.

• Yellowing Foliage

Look for signs of chlorosis—yellowing leaves on azaleas, gardenias, rhododendrons and star jasmine. Wet soil or a pH that is too high or too low renders iron unavailable to the plants, yellowing the leaves between green veins. Now's the time to take quick action. Spray water-soluble chelated micronutrient fertilizer on the foliage. This works best on young leaves that are still growing. For longer-lasting results, work iron sulfate or sulfur into the top layer of soil.

• Snails and Slugs

These slimy little devils are out in force this spring. Protect seedlings by sprinkling the garden just before dusk. Then, after dark, take a flashlight and handpick them of the leaves and put them in a plastic bag. Crush the bag and put the dead snails and slugs into your compost pile. This is a way to get rid of them without using chemical baits that eventually find their way into the Bay.

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Chef's Specials Revealed

Not all of our memorable recipes came from the likes of Martha Stewart or Julia Child. In fact, many regional favorites were born in the work-a-day kitchens of large chain restaurants and small mom-and-pop diners. Sometimes these eateries made their recipes available to the public. In other cases, inventive chefs produced copycat versions. Some of the establishments have disappeared from

the landscape, but their classic innovations live on in countless cookbooks

DENNY'S-STYLE FRENCH TOAST

- 4 eggs
- 2/3 cup whole milk
- 1/3 cup flour
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

- 6 slices Texas toast thick bread
- 3 tablespoons butter
- Powdered sugar
- Butter and syrup
- Fresh berries, optional

Mix together the eggs, milk, flour, sugar, vanilla, salt and cinnamon.

Heat a large skillet, or griddle. When the skillet is hot, add 1 tablespoon butter. (If butter smokes, the pan is too hot – turn down the heat.)

Dip each slice of bread into the batter for 30 seconds on each side.

Let some of the batter drip off, then put in skillet. Cook each slice 1-1/2 to 2 minutes per side until each side is golden brown.

Add more butter, if necessary, to cook all of the slices. To serve, put on plate, dust with powdered sugar. Serve with butter, syrup and fresh berries if you like. Serves 6.

OLIVE GARDEN'S MINISTRONE SOUP

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup minced white onion
- 1/2 cup chopped zucchini

- 1/2 cup frozen cut Italian cut green beans
- 1/2 stalk celery, minced
- 4 teaspoons minced garlic
- 4 cups vegetable broth (not chicken broth)
- 2 (15-ounce) cans red kidney beans, drained
- 2 (15-ounce) cans small white beans or great northern beans, drained
- 1 (14-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1/2 cup shredded carrot
- 2 tablespoons minced parsley
- 1-1/2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 3 cups hot water
- 4 cups fresh Baby Spinach
- 1/2 cup small shell pasta

Heat olive oil over medium heat in a large soup pot. Sauté onion, celery, garlic, green beans, and zucchini for 5 minutes or until onions begin to turn translucent.

Add vegetable broth, tomatoes, beans, carrot, hot water, and spices and bring soup to a boil, then reduce heat and allow

to simmer for 20 minutes. Add spinach leaves and pasta and cook for an additional 20 minutes or until desired consistency. Makes eight 1-1/2 cup servings.

SPENGER'S CRABLEGS IN SHERRY WINE SAUCE

- 3 pounds crab legs
- 6 tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1/4 cup Sherry
- 1/4 cup clam juice

Roll the crab legs in flour. In a large pan, heat the butter. Add crab legs. Sauté 2 minutes on one side and turn. Add onions and mushrooms; cook 2 minutes. Add Sherry and clam juice. Cook 3 minutes while shaking pan. Serve on hot cooked rice. Serves 6.

BLACK ANGUS GARLIC BREAD

- 1 loaf French bread
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup shredded Asiago cheese
- 1 cup shredded Jack cheese
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 bunch green onions,

- chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, puréed

Split French bread loaf into halves horizontally. Mix butter, cheeses, mayonnaise, green onions and garlic in bowl, blending well. Spread the cut side of bread halves with spread.

Bake at 350°F for 7 minutes, then place under broiler about 3 minutes longer.

Cut into slices and serve. Makes 10 to 12 slices.

TONY ROMA'S ONION RING LOAF

- 4 to 6 mild white onions
- 1 cup milk
- 3 eggs, beaten
- Salt
- 2 cups pancake mix, about
- Oil for deep-frying
- Parsley

Slice onions crosswise and separate into rings. Soak rings in mixture of milk, eggs and salt to taste in bowl for 30 minutes. Dip each onion ring in pancake mix and fry in oil heated to 375°F until golden brown. Pack fried onion solidly, without pressing, into 8x4-inch loaf pan and bake at 400°F for 10 to 15 minutes. Turn onto serving plate. Garnish with parsley. Makes 4 servings.

PANERA BREAD BLACK BEAN SOUP

- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 celery ribs, finely chopped
- 1/4 red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 small chicken bouillon cubes
- 2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, undrained
- 1-1/4 cups boiling water
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1-1/2 tablespoons cornstarch

In a pot, combine the first six ingredients; simmer for 10 minutes. Add half a can of beans, salt and cumin; cook for 5 minutes.

Puree soup and add the rest of the beans to the soup. Combine the cornstarch with 1-1/2 tablespoons of water. Add the lemon juice and cornstarch and cook until thickened. Yields 4 to 6 servings.



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- ARIES (March 21 to April 19):** You're doing better on a flexibility issue, but you still need to loosen up a bit to show that you can be less judgmental and more understanding about certain sensitive matters.
- TAURUS (April 20 - May 20):** Your personal aspect continues to dominate this week, but try to make time to deal with important career-linked matters as well. A change of plans might occur by the weekend.
- GEMINI (May 21 to June 20):** Excuses are not really needed for much of the confusion occurring this week. However, explanations from all parties could help in working things out to everyone's satisfaction.
- CANCER (June 21 - July 22):** A surprising (but pleasant) recent turn of events continues to develop positive aspects. But be prepared for a bit of a jolt on another issue that needs attention.
- LEO (July 23 - August 22):** Creating a fuss might bring you the attention that you want. But are you prepared for all the explaining you'd have to do? Better to use more subtle ways to make your bid.
- VIRGO (August 23 - Sept. 22):** September 22) With education continuing to be a strong factor this week, this could be the time to start learning some new skills that can later be applied to a bid for a potential career move.
- LIBRA (Sept. 23 - October 22):** You might do well to reconsider some of your current priorities before you get so deeply involved in one project that you neglect meeting the deadline on another.
- SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21):** With an important decision looming, you need to be careful about the information you're getting. Half-truths are essentially useless. Get the full story before you act.
- SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21):** Find out what everyone's role is expected to be before accepting a workplace proposal. Getting all the facts now could prevent serious problems later on.
- CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19):** A flexible position on a workplace matter could be the best course to follow during the next several days. A personal issue also benefits from an open-minded approach.
- AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18):** Involving too many people in your workplace problem can backfire. Remember: Allegiances can shift. Ask trusted colleagues for advice, but don't ask them to take sides.
- PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20):** Before submitting your suggestions, take more time to sharpen the points that you want to make. The clearer the presentation, the more of a chance it has to get approved when submitted.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS

E	P	P	S	A	S	T	A	G	A	P
D	A	R	N	I	B	E	G	O	L	E
G	R	E	A	T	D	A	N	E	L	E
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C	O	G	S	G	O	T	D	U	P	E
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HEALTH & FITNESS

Looking Back at 13 Years Of Social Media and Fitness

By Mitch Rothbardt
Special to the Times

I've been a personal trainer for over 13 years and in that time social media has had a massive impact on fitness and the world.

I freely admit that without it I wouldn't be the trainer I am today. I learned a ton following great trainers from all over the world. Things about posture, building strength and mobility, how to coach, anatomy, how muscles and movement patterns affect other muscles and movement patterns, and a lot more. My programming philosophy came from a simple social media post.

The good old days.

I don't know when it happened exactly, but at some point, things started to turn. I guess it was inevitable.

There's an old proverb that says, "Methods are many, but principles are few. Methods always change. Principles never do." This means that, at its core, the stuff that worked years ago, still does. It also means that when it comes to preying on people's insecurities and fears, the stuff that worked

years ago, still does.

So, when social media started becoming something for people to monetize, fitness "influencers" started popping up left and right. People whose concern wasn't about spreading good information. It was about "likes" and "follows." They focused on things that would get people's attention as they scrolled, and "Clickbait" was born.

Of course, other versions of "clickbait" have been around since before the days of salesmen going from town to town selling hair tonic out of the back of horse-drawn carriages. They'd plant people in the crowd and get to work convincing men that with a few applications they could regrow a beautiful head of hair. We know it didn't work. It was too good to be true.

But remember, methods change, and now those same types of people are selling today's version of hair tonic on social media. Playing on the insecurities and fears of their followers.

Predictable, I suppose.

Luckily, you're too smart to fall for it. You're not going to lose 20 pounds in two weeks and keep it off. There is no "Secret they don't want you to know." But you knew that already. And deep down, so did the men who bought that hair tonic.

But what if it does work? That thought just nags at you, doesn't it? It nags at me, too.

There are things I want, and boy wouldn't it be great if I could get them, like now? What if their secret method really does the trick? What if I miss out on the real good stuff?

But we know that if it sounds too good to be true then... you can fill in the rest. We know that people buy on emotion and then use logic to justify the purchase. That means you—and I hate to admit it—me, too. But now that we've admitted it, maybe we can stop falling for it.

Mitch Rothbardt is the owner and head trainer at Castro Valley Fitness. He can be reached at Mitch@CastroValleyFitness.com.



Apartment Fire on Miramar Displaces Three People

The Alameda County Fire Department put out a fire in an apartment building last Friday night on the 2200 block of Miramar Street in unincorporated San Leandro. Firefighters arrived at the 3-story apartment building at about 11:20 p.m. and called a second alarm due to the complexity of the fire, according to the Alameda County Fire Department. One person was taken to the hospital with respiratory issues, and three residents were displaced, according to the fire department.

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REAL ESTATE GALLERY



REAL ESTATE REALITY

By Carl Medford, CRS
Special to the Times

GUEST COMMENTARY



Realtor Commission Reality

By Carl Medford, CRS
Special to the Times

With attention focused on Realtor commissions these days, a reality check is in order. For whatever reason, popular opinions holds Realtors make megabucks and do little or nothing to earn their keep. Nothing could be further from the truth.

For this article, I dug into my data source* and found that over the past 12 months, 6,157 real estate agents had at least one transaction in all of Alameda County. Of this

number, 5,635 (91.68%) sold between 1 to 6 homes all year. The average gross commission for this group was \$51,415.

Unfortunately, that is not their take-home wage. In most cases, these agents work for a brokerage that takes a percentage of this income. Best case scenario given this limited number of transactions would be an 80/20 split, with 80% going to the agent and 20% kept by the brokerage. In reality, the agent's percentage is often lower and only increases if the agent sells more homes. Using the best-case

scenario, 80% of \$51,415 is \$41,132. That is not the end of the deductions, however.

Most brokerages charge fees which cover Errors and Omissions insurance, desk/technology fees, training, printing and more. These can range from \$1,200 to \$3,000 a year, depending on the office. Unfortunately, costs do not end there. Most agents are part of an MLS and Association of Realtors with an approximate cost of \$1,700 a year. If an agent has a listing, they pay for photography and other marketing costs. Since agents need to have a car, phone and typically a laptop, and since those are considered business expenses, they are deducted as well. Bottom line, the average Realtor is not making a huge salary – in fact, many only survive because their significant other is bringing home a regular paycheck.

As for those agents who ARE making a decent income? Of the total, 349 Realtors (5.68%) sell between 7-12 transaction sides a year (1 or less a month). And here is the shocker – only 162 agents out of the 6,157 (2.64%) sell more than 1 a month and for those agents, the costs

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19425 Waverly Avenue 94541: \$880,000 [3 BD - 1,620 SF - 1951
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5064 Elrod Drive 94546: \$1,069,000 [4 BD - 1,322 SF - 1949
19664 Fremery Court 94546: \$1,088,000 [4 BD - 1,578 SF - 1950
2804 Sydney Way 94546: \$2,825,000 [5 BD - 4,300 SF - 1935
TOTAL SALES: 3
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$1,069,000 MEDIAN AMOUNT: \$1,088,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$2,825,000 AVERAGE AMOUNT \$1,660,666

Hayward

208 Anderly Court #11 94541: \$528,000 [2 BD - 940 SF - 1992
27713 Pensacola Way 94544: \$570,000 [3 BD - 1,000 SF - 1954
22797 Atherton Street 94541: \$630,000 [2 BD - 1,075 SF - 1997
1312 Valley Street 94541: \$735,000 [2 BD - 1,260 SF - 1948
19425 Waverly Avenue 94541: \$880,000 [3 BD - 1,620 SF - 1951
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303 Medford Avenue 94541: \$1,105,000 [3 BD - 1,411 SF - 1926
22101 Cynthia Court 94541: \$1,225,000 [4 BD - 3,546 SF - 1997
2683 Oakes Drive 94542: \$1,490,000 [3 BD - 1,676 SF - 1958

TOTAL SALES: 14
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$220,000 MEDIAN AMOUNT: \$905,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,490,000 AVERAGE AMOUNT \$868,785

San Leandro

3517 Figueroa Drive 94578: \$650,000 [3 BD - 1,135 SF - 1955
14485 Locust Street 94579: \$750,000 [3 BD - 1,096 SF - 1952
776 Collier Drive 94577: \$775,000 [3 BD - 1,539 SF - 1932
2135 Strang Avenue 94578: \$800,000 [3 BD - 1,125 SF - 1951
15145 Andover Street 94579: \$880,000 [3 BD - 1,020 SF - 1949
1320 Sandelin Court 94577: \$907,000 [2 BD - 1,385 SF - 1940
1519 166th Avenue 94578: \$960,000 [4 BD - 1,728 SF - 1955
16882 Robey Drive 94578: \$1,000,000 [4 BD - 2,472 SF - 1982
151 Euclid Avenue 94577: \$1,040,000 [3 BD - 1,559 SF - 1915
2545 West Avenue 130th 94577: \$1,330,000 [6 BD - 2,552 SF - 1948

TOTAL SALES: 10
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$650,000 MEDIAN AMOUNT: \$893,500
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,330,000 AVERAGE AMOUNT \$909,200

San Lorenzo

1753 Keller Avenue 94580: \$1,005,000 [3 BD - 1,050 SF - 1952
15583 Via Vega 94580: \$1,058,000 [3 BD - 1,744 SF - 1956

TOTAL SALES: 2
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$1,005,000 MEDIAN AMOUNT: \$1,031,500
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,058,000 AVERAGE AMOUNT \$1,031,500

Tomatoes Should Be Planted Deep

By Buzz Bertolero
The Dirt Gardener

Q I'm being told I should plant my tomato plants halfway up the stem. Why should I do this when we're cautioned not to plant plants too deep?

A I'm a strong advocate of planting tomatoes deep. Tomatoes will develop roots off the buried herbaceous stem. This doesn't happen with other plants. I'd leave the top two leaves above the ground and bury the rest of the plant, which is much deeper than what you were told. I prefer to plant a tall, leggy tomato plant rather than a short, compact plant. They can be planted vertically in a traditional cylinder-shaped hole or horizontally in a trench. With either method, I remove all the leaves on the portion of the stem that is buried, but this is not a requirement. The leaves just get in the way as you backfill and compact the soil around each plant. In the beginning, these plants are less affected by heat stress as the majority of the root ball is insulated from the sun. The next issues are the soil drainage and watering frequency. Clay soils traditionally drain slowly and stay wet for long periods of time. The amount of organic matter at planting time improves water percolation. However, it is safe to say that the soil in most vegetable gardens is not over-amended. Most of the amendments or organic matter is found in the soil's top six to eight-inch layer. Tomatoes like to be kept moist but not soggy wet. They also have a deep root system. Their roots will extend far beyond the amended layer, so the watering frequency should be addressed. Young tomato plants whose roots are close to the soil surface are watered often. It's not necessary to water those plants that are planted deep as often. As tomato plants mature, the volume of water increases, but the watering frequency should not. Because our temperatures change weekly, so should the watering schedule. We certainly know how to



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tomato_scanned.jpg#/media/File:Tomato_scanned.jpg

increase the water when it is hot, but we haven't learned to reduce the volume when it is mild enough to cool. The critical point to successfully growing tomatoes is learning when not to water. Young tomato

plants struggle when kept too wet.

I put some ground cover in my front yard last year. It did quite well until the neighborhood dogs got attached to it. It got very burned from all the urine.

leaves force the dogs elsewhere?

A The key issue is whether the neighborhood dogs have sensitive noses. Changing the ground cover to Thyme may not improve the situation. You might

first plant a small section and see how it works. *Buzz Bertolero is an Advanced California Certified Nursery Professional. The Dirt Gardener's website is www.dirtgardener.com, and questions can be sent by email to buzz@dirtgardener.com.*

Mortgage Rates Exceed 7 Percent for the First Time this Year

The 30-year fixed-rate mortgage surpassed 7 percent for the first time this year, jumping from 6.88 percent to 7.10 percent this week. As rates trend higher, potential homebuyers are deciding whether to buy before rates rise even more or hold off in hopes of decreases later in the year. Last week, purchase applications rose modestly, but it remains unclear how many homebuyers can withstand increasing rates in the future.

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A	1-4		1512 Hickory Avenue	\$875,000	3/2	Re/Max Accord	The Lovewell Team	510-351-5555
A	1-4		14535 Elm Street	\$779,000	3/1	Re/Max Accord	The Lovewell Team	510-351-5555

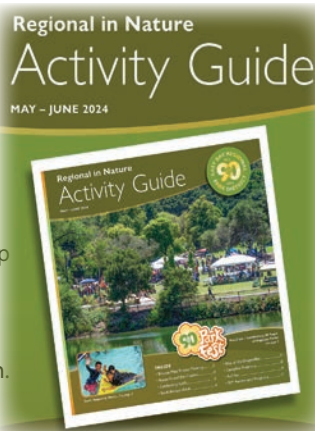
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This issue of the San Leandro Times contains the East Bay Regional Park District May-June 2024 Activity Guide.



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 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business(es):
 1. The LockerRoom 2. The LockerCast, located at 17265 Via Primero, San Lorenzo, CA 94580 Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): The Kid 'n Crew, located at 17265 Via Primero, San Lorenzo, CA 94580. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. This business commenced N/A /s/Raine Godfrey
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 14, 2029

FILED March 18, 2024
 MELISSA WILK County Clerk
 ALAMEDA COUNTY
 By-----, Deputy
 FILE NO. 604873
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business(es):
 General Merchandise, located at 27516 Tampa Ave., Hayward, CA 94544. Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Arturo Landers Andrade, located at 27516 Tampa Ave. Hayward, CA 94544. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced 04/04/2023 N/A/s/ Arturo Landeros Andrade
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 17, 2029
 APR 18, 24, MAY 02, 09, 2024
 1292 - SLT

LEGAL NOTICES
 FILED March 25, 2024
 MELISSA WILK County Clerk
 ALAMEDA COUNTY
 By-----, Deputy
 FILE NO. 605074
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business(es):
 Pilas Cloud Solutions, located at 2181 E 14th street, Unit 10, San Leandro, CA 94577 Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Peter Lasode, located at 2181 E 14th street, Unit 10, San Leandro, CA 94577. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced 02/07/2024 /s/Peter Olumuyiwa Lasode
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 24, 2029
 APR 18, 24, MAY 02, 09, 2024

FILED March 12, 2024
 MELISSA WILK County Clerk
 ALAMEDA COUNTY
 By-----, Deputy
 FILE NO. 605525
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business(es):
 The Lonchera Deli, located at 2109 Mac Arthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94601. / 20325 Wisteria Street, Castro Valley, CA 94542. Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): The Lonchera Deli, located at 20325 Wisteria Street, Castro Valley, CA 94542. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. This business commenced N/A /s/Gerry Mendoza
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 11, 2029

LEGAL NOTICES
 FILED March 16, 2024
 MELISSA WILK County Clerk
 ALAMEDA COUNTY
 By-----, Deputy
 FILE NO. 604863
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business(es):
 1. The LockerRoom 2. The LockerCast, located at 17265 Via Primero, San Lorenzo, CA 94580 Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): The Kid 'n Crew, located at 17265 Via Primero, San Lorenzo, CA 94580. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. This business commenced N/A /s/Raine Godfrey
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 14, 2029
 APR 18, 25, MAY 02, 09, 2024
 1295 - SLT

ABANDONMENT FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NUMBER 586705
 The following person has abandoned the use of the fictitious business name: **UNIVERSAL CARPET,** at 1600 86th Ave. Oakland, CA 94621. Full name of registrant is: **Tomas Gutierrez,** at 1600 86th Ave. Oakland, CA 94621. The Fictitious Business Name Statement **UNIVERSAL CARPET,** was filed on 2/25/2022 in the county of Alameda. Original File Number 586705. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime.) This statement was filed with the County clerk of Alameda County on: top right stamp date. NOTICE - This fictitious name statement expires five years from the date it was filed on, in the office of the County Clerk. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed prior to that date. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state or common law (see Section 14400, et seq., B&P Code.) This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 03/12/2024
APR 11, 18, 25, May 2, 2024
 1273 - SLT

FILED March 29, 2024
 MELISSA WILK County Clerk
 ALAMEDA COUNTY
 By-----, Deputy
 FILE NO. 605206
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930
 The name of the business(es):
 Marina's Harmony, located at 24645 Broadmore Ave. Hayward, CA 94544. Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Marina Garcia, located at 24645 Broadmore Ave. Hayward, CA 94544. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced 12/2020 /s/Marina Garcia
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 28, 2029
 APR 04, 11, 18, 25, 2024
 1280 - SLT

LEGAL NOTICES
 FILED March 12, 2024
 MELISSA WILK County Clerk
 ALAMEDA COUNTY
 By-----, Deputy
 FILE NO. 605525
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business(es):
 The Lonchera Deli, located at 2109 Mac Arthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94601. / 20325 Wisteria Street, Castro Valley, CA 94542. Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): The Lonchera Deli, located at 20325 Wisteria Street, Castro Valley, CA 94542. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. This business commenced N/A /s/Gerry Mendoza
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 11, 2029
 APR 18, 25, MAY 02, 09, 2024
 1283 - CVF

FILED March 26, 2024
 MELISSA WILK County Clerk
 ALAMEDA COUNTY
 By-----, Deputy
 FILE NO. 605109
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business(es):
 Dabarkadz Filipino Bistro, located at 24297 Hesperian Blvd. Hayward, CA 94545. / 1442 Mount Palomar Dr., San Jose, CA 95127 Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Asian Grill & Bar LLC, located at 24297 Hesperian Blvd. Hayward, CA 94544. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced N/A /s/Teresita Collong
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 25, 2029
 APR 04, 11, 18, 25, 2024
 1280 - SLT

FILED March 25, 2024
 MELISSA WILK County Clerk
 ALAMEDA COUNTY
 By-----, Deputy
 FILE NO. 605074
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930
 The name of the business(es):
 Pilas Cloud Solutions, located at 2181 E 14th street, Unit 10, San Leandro, CA 94577 Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Peter Lasode, located at 2181 E 14th street, Unit 10, San Leandro, CA 94577. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced 02/07/2024 /s/Peter Olumuyiwa Lasode
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 24, 2029
 APR 18, 24, MAY 02, 09, 2024
 1296 - SLT

FILED March 12, 2024
 MELISSA WILK County Clerk
 ALAMEDA COUNTY
 By-----, Deputy
 FILE NO. 604747
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
 Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business(es):
 Banejad & Haddad Properties San Francisco. LLC, located at 3716 Oakes Drive, Hayward, CA 94542. Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Banejad & Haddad Properties San Francisco. LLC, located at 3716 Oakes Drive, Hayward, CA 94542. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. This business commenced 02/28/2024 /s/Hani Haddad
 This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
 Expires March 26, 2029
 APR 18, 24, MAY 02, 09, 2024
 1282 - SLT

THE TIMES CROSSWORD

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Russell City: County bulldozed neighborhood for an industrial park

continued from front page

City, though they did skip the pandemic years.

"I grew up going to those picnics and hearing people's stories," said Ashland resident Aisha Knowles, whose father, James, had lived in Russell City and spoke at the screening. "I wanted to make sure many more people heard them if they could when I got older, and I hoped those people could get justice in some way."

She told Russell City's stories by getting together with director Mimi Chakarova and becoming a producer of

The Apology. Together, they went through a mass of historical materials and spoke to a number of now-aging former residents, one of whom was Aisha's father.

Russell City's residents came to the community because the racial covenants and redlining of the time often prevented them from buying homes anywhere else. Real estate agents explicitly pushed Black homebuyers toward Russell City, several residents recalled in the film.

They found a community there without fresh water lines, nor sewage lines, where

main roads were paved, but side streets weren't, the former residents said. Busses and trains did not serve the community. But it was also a place where different races lived together without rancor and families helped raise each other's children.

They recalled that there was a good local school, the Russell School, with an excellent teacher and an unusually large school library.

Russell City sat on unincorporated land. First, Alameda County refused to annex Russell City and provide services. Hayward followed



PHOTOS BY MIKE MCGUIRE

At the screening of *The Apology* at the Chabot Theater in Castro Valley, former Russell City resident James Knowles and his daughter, the film's producer Aisha Knowles, answered questions from the audience.



Russell City is remembered in a mural at the corner of A Street and Maple Court in downtown Hayward. The Russell School is shown at right.

suit. Then, in the early 1960s, the county moved to condemn the land to make way for an industrial park, and residents fiercely defended the community at a series of well-attended public meetings.

The county paid families \$2,250 each to take and bulldoze their lands under eminent domain laws.

Years later, the first screening of "The Apology" was held in May 2023 in the same Hayward Veterans' Building

where some of those public hearings were held, with today's county officials invited.

A month later, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors apologized for the county's destruction of Russell City, citing the film for making them aware of the injustice. The City of Hayward apologized soon after for its role. Several commissions are looking at ways to fully compensate the former residents and their descendants.

"The Hayward City Council approved the 26 recommendations made by the Hayward Russell City Reparative Justice Project to undo as much harm as possible for the residents and their families," said Aisha Knowles, who serves on that project. "It is wonderful to have a theater like the Chabot to show the film, and wonderful to see the support from Castro Valley groups and individuals at the screening."

OPINION

LETTERS to the EDITOR

Letters must include the writer's name, address and phone number, and must be under 300 words. Letters can be edited for clarity or length. Letters are the views of the author and not necessarily the views of the newspaper or its advertisers. E-mail letters to: letters@ebpublishing.com or send by mail to: The Editor, San Leandro Times, 2060 Washington Ave., San Leandro, CA 94577.

One Coach Omitted

Editor,

Thank you for your coverage of Bancroft's girls wrestling team. Their accomplishments are the result of their efforts and of many who assist in the program. Unfortunately, one very important individual was omitted from the list of assistant coaches: Wilson Nicario. Wilson was part of the James Logan High School wrestling dynasty for many years and brought his expertise and leadership to Bancroft. For that, the team and I are grateful.

Dave D'Antonio
Oakland

Dave D'Antonio is the head coach of the Bancroft Middle School girls wrestling team

Kudos to Coach D

Editor,

We are so lucky to have David D'Antonio as a teacher at Bancroft Middle School. We are lucky that he molds those girl wrestlers into championship form year after year. But wait – D'Antonio for the last 30 years has taught inclusion, equity, and tolerance in his classes before those philosophies were even a part of educational jargon. Hail to Mr. D and his staff and again...we are so lucky to have him in San Leandro.

Jack Nelson,
former SLHS teacher
San Leandro

Reconsider Tax Strategy

Editor,

It takes tax revenue to maintain public goods, so I'm open to a tax to support our roadways. However, I'm concerned that the proposed utility tax is regressive, meaning it would disproportionately impact San Leandro's low-income households. The City Council should use its consultant to recommend an alternative approach to generating the revenue needed to maintain our roads.

Utility taxes are regressive because low-income families already spend a greater proportion of their income on utilities than do high-income families. Though a flat utility tax may seem fair because all households are taxed at the same rate, the reality is that it expects low-income families to shoulder a greater burden than their high-income neighbors.

There are many alternate approaches the city could consider. Among them:

- Taxes on discretionary and vice products such as alcohol and tobacco
- Taxes on luxury purchases such as materials and permits for residential additions and renovations
- A progressive utility tax that would charge high-income households relatively more than low-

come households

• Increased enforcement and fines for traffic and parking violations (let careless drivers pay for the roads.)

I'll admit that I haven't run the numbers to confirm that any of my suggestions would generate the revenue that our roads need. Lucky for me, consultants tend to be good at those types of investigations, and so I urge City Council to reconsider both its tax strategy and how it's using its consulting budget.

Tom Connor
San Leandro

Taxing an Already Shoestring Budget

Editor,

You have got to be kidding me. The City Council has hired a consultant for \$225,000 to determine how to bamboozle us out of our hard earned dinero by adding another tax to our all ready over-taxed quality of life.

How is this consultant going to convince me to give up my moola? Let's take a stab at the possibilities. If you give me your wampum I'll forgive your student loans – oh wait, the president has all ready done that one. What about, if you give me

your stash of greenbacks I'll fill all the pot holes. Aren't those suppose to be fixed by our current gas taxes, which by the way, are \$2 higher than the rest of the country.

How about, do you realize that if you don't approve this new tax I'll need to bump up the sales tax (which is currently at the highest level in the state) to a new record high. Oh boy, I can hardly wait for a new record but I was hoping to wait for the Summer Olympics.

This tactic will of course also take another wad of cash out of my all ready strained shoestring budget. Soon the top hit won't be coming from Taylor Swift but from Yip Harburg when he wrote the song "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime" back in the '30s.

The City of San Leandro is all ready looting enough bread out of my wallet that I don't have anymore dough left to rise to the occasion of another bump in taxes. The big bucks disappeared many years ago from out-of-control tax increases so shut the front door and tell the consultant not to come a knocking.

Brent Heath
San Leandro

SLED to Host Cornhole Fundraiser

The San Leandro Education Foundation (SLED) will host its first ever Cornhole Tournament on Saturday, April 27 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Bayfair Mall rooftop parking area, 15555 East 14th St.

In an effort to put the FUN back into fundraising, SLED is partnering with California Cornhole Association to host a family-friendly daytime event to raise funds for local education enrichment programs. The 'Spring Fling' Cornhole Tournament is a professionally-run tournament, and all players will be guaranteed at least 3 games, regardless of skill level.

You don't have to be a pro to have a great time and compete. The top three teams will win fun prizes, too.

Local vendors will be on hand selling food and beverages, and SLED will be selling adult beverages. A free hydration station will be hosted by the Davis Street Community

Center.

You must register in advance to play – \$60 for a team of two. Sponsorships for local businesses are also available.

The night prior on Friday, April 26, SLED is also hosting our Spring Fling Dinner Fundraiser from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Dunsuir Hellman Historic Estate Pavilion. Tickets include dinner catered by Tio's Mediterranean Grill, cocktails from Sons of Liberty Alehouse, a short program during a seated dinner, photo booth, DJ, and the party. Early-bird dinner tickets are \$125.

This year alone, SLED has funded science festivals and assemblies for over 5,700 students, field trips for over 2,500 students, classroom grants that benefited over 6,000 students, and much more.

Cornhole tournament tickets and fundraising dinner tickets are available at www.sledfund.org/springfling/.

Countywide Clean Water Program

The Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program is inviting grant applications for up to \$6,000 per project to encourage grassroots community action that prevents stormwater pollution and enhances the health of local watersheds, creeks, and the San Francisco Bay.

Activities can range from litter cleanups, creek restoration and wildlife habitat enhancement projects to art and multimedia projects, community outreach events and more. Creative and innovative ideas wanted.

Eligible applicants include teacher and student groups, youth organizations, homeowner associations (HOAs), community groups, environmental groups and non-profit or-



PHOTO BY MARY SPICER

Litter cleanups are among the types of projects funded by grants from the Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program.

ganizations.

Application deadline is

May 10. For more information and to download the application packet visit www.cleanwaterprogram.org/grants.

Volunteers Wanted to Help Make Rain Garden

Environmental nonprofit San Leandro 2050 is building a rainwater garden at Bethel Presbyterian Church, 14235 Bancroft Ave., to keep water from flooding storm sewers during winter storms.

The idea is to let plants, rather than storm drains, store excess water including from the church's roof, and then let it slowly filter through the soil to become groundwater.

They can use more volunteers this coming Saturday, April 27, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. You can sign up at www.sl2050.org/post/rain-garden.

International: Fosters understanding

continued from page 2

a celebration of the school's diverse community but also an educational experience that fosters understanding and appreciation for different cultures. It has become a cherished tradition that highlights the school's commitment to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

For more information about Assumption School and its International Day celebration, please visit www.assumptionschool-sl.org

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Betty June Brown
 Sadly, on April 14th, 2024, Betty June Brown passed away having been a resident of San Leandro for 96 years. She was preceded in death by her husband of 70 years, Gerald; parents Ruby and Earl Bettencourt; siblings, Earl Bettencourt Jr. (Barbara), Marguerite McLachlan (Mac), and son-in-law Paul Herkenrath. Betty is survived by her children, Cheryl Brown-Herkenrath, Caryn Brown-Welch (Corey), Richard (Rick) Brown and her grandson, Rory Gallagher (Laurel). She is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews.
 Betty was born in San Leandro on August 25, 1927, and attended San Leandro High School and UC Berkeley. She married her high school sweetheart, Gerald, after his return from military duty. Betty worked until the arrival of her first child and then devoted herself to motherhood.
 Betty was a dedicated and loving spouse and mother. As a young mom, she was actively involved in her children's lives by taking leadership roles in everything from scouts to PTA. Betty was a life-long and active member of the First Presbyterian Church of San Leandro until the day of her passing. She was a member of the church's Young at Heart group, and for many years chaired its Chancel Guild, decorating the church for every service. Which included countless original floral arrangements by her and others. She held numerous jobs and responsibilities throughout the years.
 She participated in many groups and organizations including Questers #444, Friendly Connections, several bridge clubs, travel groups, and the Bay-O-Vista tennis team. She and Gerald visited Europe, the East Coast, Mexico and traveled up the Mississippi. They enjoyed many outings on their boat water skiing and loved spending time at their cabin in Arnold relaxing on the deck.
 Betty treasured spending time with her family and friends. Her presence in our lives brought immeasurable joy, love, and laughter, and for that, we are forever grateful.
 There will be a celebration of life on May 4th, 2024, at 11 am at the First Presbyterian Church in San Leandro at 180 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94577.
 Donations can be made to the First Presbyterian Church of San Leandro or a charity of your choice.

William Joseph Murray
March 27, 1921 ~ October 12, 2021
 William Joseph Murray passed away from cancer on March 10, 2024 at his home in San Leandro with his family at his side. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, son, brother, and FUB, "favorite Uncle Bill".
 Bill was born in San Jose, CA on August 27, 1953, the third of twelve children, to John and Mary Grace Murray. He attended St. Francis Cabrini, Archbishop Mitty High School (1971), San Jose State University (B.S. in Business Administration), and University of Santa Clara Law School, graduating in the top 10% of his class in 1979. He practiced law for 44 years in the East Bay where he litigated real estate and business cases throughout California. In later years, working with his close friend and partner Bob Belzer, Belzer & Murray was known as an honest and results oriented law firm representing multiple generations of appreciative clients, many of whom became friends.
 Whether it was playing at Alameda Beach with the granddaughters, swimming in Lake Tahoe or hiking in Big Sur, California was his playground and he loved exploring and photographing near and far. He was a collector of art and was a patron to many emerging photographers and artists. He loved mariachi music and visiting Mexico, learning about the culture and people. He relished his role as Papa to the three granddaughters, always making up games, working on art projects or just chatting. Everyone who knew Bill declared him to be THE Bill Murray as he was one of a kind and will be remembered for his unselfish, giving heart, fierce competitive nature, quick wit, and keen intellect.
 Bill leaves behind his wife of 45 years, Katherine (Gilmore), children Justin (Becky) Murray, Laura (Mike) Constantin, granddaughters Cecilia Murray and Summer and Fiona Constantin, sisters Mary Ann (Michael) Fiamingo, Mary Beth (Scott) Kolstad (both deceased), Mary Kay (Mark) Mercer, brothers John (Terri) Murray, Michael Murray, Terrence Murray, France (Kris) Murray, Phil (Linda) Murray, Patrick (Connie) Murray, Martin Murray, and Tim (Marina) Murray, sisters' in law, Liz (Randy) Harward, Caroline (Samir) Fahmy, Jennifer (Mark) Gustafson, mother in law Leah Gilmore, many nieces and nephews and longtime friends. He was the rock of our family and will be missed forever.
 Family services were held with interment in Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland. Memorial donations may be sent in Bill's name to Meals on Wheels of Alameda County.

Robustelli: Cameron to fill in

continued from front page

“I want to recognize you, Fran, for not only developing the team but also holding them accountable and driving change throughout the organization. Know that you will be missed,” Mayor González said.

Earlier in the day, the St. Pete Beach City Council voted unanimously (5-0) to bring Robustelli to their city. She was one of five people considered for the position.

Originally from Lakeland, Florida, Robustelli earned her undergraduate degree at the University of South Florida and moved to California with her husband after graduation. She said a recruiter recently contacted her and discussed potentially coming to St. Pete Beach.

Earlier this month, Robustelli applied and interviewed with officials from the Florida town. She alerted the San Leandro City Council to her

potential departure soon afterward.

At a closed-session meeting on Monday night, San Leandro’s City Council named current Assistant City Manager Janelle Cameron as its interim city manager.

Robustelli’s background includes working as the assistant city manager in Napa and Walnut Creek and as the human resources director for Hayward. In April 2020, San Leandro hired her on an interim basis following Jeff Kay’s departure to become the city manager of Healdsburg in Sonoma County.

Robustelli became the city manager during troubled times in San Leandro, including shuttering city services during the coronavirus pandemic,



Fran Robustelli

calls for police reform following the deaths of George Floyd and Steven Taylor, budget shortfalls, and City Council leadership changes.

“It has been a privilege to serve the community of San Leandro during my tenure,” Robustelli said. “The city team made all the great things that have happened over the last several years possible. I am deeply grateful to the City Council that appointed me and the current council that has worked alongside me to ensure the important work was prioritized and implemented.”

St. Pete Beach is a barrier island west of St. Petersburg and south of Clearwater with a population of 8,879. The city features a landmark hotel on the shore, the Don CeSar, built in 1928. In addition to galleries, shops, and a historical museum, Tripadvisor named St. Pete Beach one of the “World’s Best Beaches” in 2021.

Agenda: ‘Funding challenges’

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ambassador program. Other high-profile projects, such as the Nimitz Motel Navigation Center, Mental Health Crisis Response Team, and studying revenue options for capital projects, were all “in progress.”

But Yeun warned that the funding challenges – over the next decade or two – include a \$385.6 million backlog of capital improvement projects, \$16.6 million needed to fund the city’s aging facilities, \$81.6 million in capital and operating and maintenance costs for stormwater infrastructure, and \$245.4 million needed to fund the city’s retiree health and pension funds.

“If we do not address these problems, we will not be able to meet our economic uncertainty reserves, and this could impact the city’s current AA credit rating,” Yeun said.

Yeun added that the City Council will need to make some hard decisions in the next two-year budget cycle if it is to re-negotiate labor contracts and avoid the headwinds of a potential recession anticipated in 2028.

Yeun said he would like the city to prioritize its legal requirements, such as pensions, first.

The city has considered some financial solutions over



PHOTO BY MICHAEL SINGER

The City of San Leandro’s Financial Director T. Michael Yeun discussed the city’s budget last Saturday at the City Council’s annual planning session.

the last month, including getting voters to add property tax fees to fix and maintain stormwater pipes, and a proposed monthly fee added to electric, gas, cable, and telecom bills.

The City Council spent much of the morning listening to public comments about the current state of the city, including calls to restore the historic Casa Peralta, increase transparency in city policies, preventing property crimes, and stepping up efforts to curb homelessness.

City Manager Fran Robustelli outlined the accomplishments from the previous year, including hiring more sworn

officers and doubling its field officers to train the new hires.

Robustelli added that the city applied \$800,000 in federal funds for beautification projects like murals and parks. From a housing and homeless priority, she reiterated the creation of the Mental Health Crisis team, and established more housing protections for renters.

In a final exercise, Councilmember Xouhoa Bowen presented adding two additional categories to the city’s priority list—quality of life and economic development. Deciding the priorities for both categories was tabled for a future work meeting.

911: Contract will help alleviate overtime pay for San Leandro

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police chief Kevin Hart signed the contract agreeing to a \$500,000 six-month contract with the option of extensions.

According to the staff report, the contract was forged to provide 24-hour services and alleviate overtime pay for San Leandro’s understaffed police dispatch team. Police brass said they hoped to have two supervisors and 14 trained, full-time dispatchers by now. But they only have 11 dispatchers (some who are not officially trained) and only one supervisor on staff.

“We are effectively around 60 percent of our authorized number of dispatchers, which does not include the two that are in training,” San Leandro Police Lieutenant Abe Teng told the Times. “The length of the contract is to provide the department a chance to allow our recruitment and training pipeline to refill those ranks while simultaneously alleviating the existing staff

from the inordinate amount of overtime needed to provide 24-7 coverage.”

The dispatch vacancies are expected to be filled by June, with training finished in September.

According to sheriff’s Lt. Ty Modeste, the Sheriff’s Office, San Leandro police, and California Highway Patrol (CHP) all have cell towers in common, which means that any of the agencies would pick up a cell phone call in San Leandro.

“Calls would be routed to the ACSO Emergency Services Dispatch Center, which would then call on San Leandro police to assist if an incident were in its jurisdiction,” Lt. Modeste said.

No, to Sideshows; Yes, to Shotguns

On Monday, the City Council also unanimously approved (7-0) several ordinances to the “Public Welfare” section of its municipal code.

Police can now add special fines of up to \$1,000 for street racing or sideshow participants and those on the sidelines watching within 200 feet.

The council also passed an ordinance adding weight to catalytic converter theft or illegal possession. In 2020, 178 catalytic converters were reported stolen in San Leandro, 482 in 2021, 595 in 2022, and 302 in 2023.

The City Council approved the use of police department’s military-grade weapons and ammunition, a measure prompted by California compliance and transparency law AB 481.

Under the ordinance, officers are currently able to use the department’s surveillance robots, drones, armored vehicles, battering rams, flash-bang grenades, tear gas, and specialized shotguns and rifles. But San Leandro police must obtain City Council approval before purchasing more.

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