



The Best Beans
BELIEVE IT OR NOT
THE LOWLY BEAN IS A SUPER FOOD..... 4

WEEKEND WEATHER
Partly cloudy Friday
the sunny thru Sunday
HIGHS: 58-63
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110
LOWS: 40-44

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

San Leandro Times

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

VOL. 34 • NO. 6 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2024 SAN LEANDRO • CALIFORNIA



Author and San Leandro teacher Carolina Ixta (right) is interviewed by San Leandro High School students Alana Daly and Hassy Flores on January 25 at a book talk held at the Arts Education Center.

PHOTO BY MIKE McGUIRE

Teacher's Book Sparks Students' Interest

By Mike McGuire
San Leandro Times

Some 500 people came to see local writer Carolina Ixta talk about her book "Shut Up, This Is Serious" at the San Leandro Arts Education Center on Bancroft Avenue last Thursday – San

Leandro's best-attended author talk in years.

Most of the crowd was students, teachers and staff members from several San Leandro schools. Some 18 classes came, almost filling the 540-seat venue at the San Leandro High School campus.

Ixta's young adult novel is about the friendship between two Latina young women growing up in Oakland as they face serious challenges together in their high school years.

Belén is outspoken and outgoing
see BOOK, page 11

Public Wants Answers on Pridgen's Leave

People question City Council about police chief's absence

By Michael Singer
San Leandro Times

Nearly six months ago, San Leandro's first Black police chief, Abdul D. Pridgen, was abruptly put on paid leave regarding allegations of violating department policy.

This past Monday, more than a dozen people, including City Councilmember Fred Simon, spoke up during public comment portion of the San Leandro City Council meeting, asking what's taking so long and demanding resolution and transparency.

"As mentioned during my comments at the Black

History Month Proclamation, I am also concerned as to why the investigative process into complaints against Chief Pridgeon is now in its sixth month, which, in my opinion, cast the cloud upon and raises suspicion regarding the progress of reforms in our police department," Simon said.

Mayor Juan González later reiterated the official city comment on the investigation, telling the Times that the matter is being addressed as a personnel issue and is being handled as
see PRIDGEN, page 12

Man Arrested for Firing Gun at Woman On Springlake Drive

By Michael Singer
San Leandro Times

A 25-year-old man from San Leandro was arrested on Saturday, Jan. 20 after he fired eight shots at a woman at the apartments on the 5100 block of Springlake Drive, police said.

No one was injured, and

no property damage was reported. The man, whose name was not released, eventually surrendered and was taken to Santa Rita Jail, according to police.

The incident started just after 11 a.m. that Saturday when police received multi-
see ARRESTED, page 10

18 Candidates Apply for City Council Seat

City Council to narrow field down to eight and interview the candidates; District 1 seat must be filled by February 29

By Michael Singer
San Leandro Times

Next week, the San Leandro City Council will consider applicants to replace Celina Reynes' vacated Council seat and represent District 1 for the rest of this year.

At Monday's meeting, the San Leandro City Council voted 6-0 to approve a plan to appoint a qualified applicant before the end of the month and avoid a special election that could cost the

city \$990,000.

The City Clerk received 18 applicants for the council seat. Three of the applicants do not qualify because they did not complete their paperwork. Two others would be unable to be sworn in until later this month to allow them to meet the eligibility requirement. The remaining 13 are a cross-section of qualified residents who live in District 1.

Last month, the council approved the creation of an

ad hoc committee if more than 11 eligible residents applied for the open seat. The committee, comprised of Mayor Juan González and council members Victor Aguilar, Jr. and Xouhoa Bowen, is now tasked with filtering through the list of 18 applicants and narrowing down the list to recommend as many as eight people for consideration.

The committee has until noon on Friday, Feb. 9, to file those recommended names

with the City Clerk.

The City Council will hold a special meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 13, at 6 p.m. to review the ad hoc committee's suggestions, deliberate on a final list of candidates, and begin interviews. All qualified candidates will be invited to attend the meeting.

Each council member will get to ask two questions per candidate. The council is expected to cast its votes
see COUNCIL, page 5

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Learn how to start a native California garden. Page 3

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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.



San Leandro Times

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

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Pets of the Week



Mellow



Dallas

The Pets of the Week at the Hayward Animal Shelter, 16 Barnes Court in Hayward, are a pit bull mix and a German shepherd.

Mellow is a 5-year-old pit bull mix. Mellow sounds exactly like his name...he's mellow.

If you looking for a couch potato, Mellow is your dog. If you looking for a companion

to be with all the time, Mellow is the right choice.

Dallas is a 2-year-old German shepherd. Dallas is a rootin' tootin' cowboy of a dog. He loves to play, he loves to walk, and he would love to be with you in your home.

To meet or adopt Mellow or Dallas, call the Hayward Animals shelter at 510-293-7200.



PHOTO BY ZAC BORJA

Over 400 guests had dinner at the Boys & Girls Club's 61st Annual Crab Feed.

Annual Crab Feed Helps Fill the Coffers at Boys & Girls Club

The Boys & Girls Clubs of San Leandro hosted its 61st Annual Crab Feed to benefit local youth on Jan. 27.

The club's staff and dozens of volunteers hosted over 400 guests with 1,550 pounds of fresh crab along with bread, pasta, salad, and desserts.

Ticket sales, funds from raffles and a live auction will benefit youth and teen programs at 23 club sites across San Leandro, San Lorenzo, and surrounding communities.

The club is in its 77th year as it continues to expand its essential programming for some 2,500 kids for a bright future. The clubs offer caring mentors, fun and friendship, and high-impact programs during critical non-school hours.

"We're so grateful to see the community come together once again to support our youth," says Kimberly Pace, CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of San Leandro. "We're committed to creating safe, welcoming, impactful spaces where our youth can thrive, and we couldn't do it without the support of our incredible community."

While guests flowed in,

volunteers from the San Leandro Masonic Lodge prepared heaping plates of pasta, salads, and freshly baked bread.

Meanwhile, Alameda County Fire Reserves and local high school students arranged tables and greeted guests. When it was time to eat, 50 incredible youth club members served food and bussed tables.

In addition to the volunteers, local sponsors stepped up to help make the event a success, including State Roofing, Pulte Group, Torani, Shaw Bakers, FH Dailey Chevrolet, Community Realty & Investment, Supervisor Lena Tam, and Fremont Bank. The club thanks them for their continued support.

Looking for ways you can help? Make an impact on local youth with a tax-deductible donation to the Boys & Girls Clubs of San Leandro. Go to bgcsf.org/donate to make a one-time or recurring monthly donation.

This Day in History: February 8

1889: Flood ravages Dutch coast.
1920: Swiss men vote against women's suffrage.
1922: Radio arrives at the White House.
1923: Coal mine explosion at

Dawson, New Mexico kills 120
1926: Sean O'Casey's "Plough & Stars" opens at Abbey Theater.
1986: 5' 7" Spud Webb of the Atlanta Hawks wins NBA Slam Dunk Competition.

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Community Calendar

Community Chat with Fred Simon

San Leandro City Councilmember Fred Simon will hold his monthly community chat on Saturday, Feb. 10, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. at the Greenhouse Market Place, 699 Washington Ave. (in front of Great Clips). Listen and share ideas on improving our environment and city, and learn how to become a community ambassador. The City's Community Development director will be in attendance sharing information on the city's plans and programs to help the unhoused.

Gardening with Nature

Come to a presentation on "How to Propagate Native Plants" by Laura Cornett, a Horticulturist from Las Positas College, on Saturday, Feb. 10, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at the Manor Branch Library, 1241 Manor Blvd. The presentation will be followed by a Q&A session, native garden patio tour, and native plant giveaway.

Valentine's Day Craft Making

Enjoy an afternoon of Valentine's Day craft making and activities on Tuesday, Feb. 13, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Manor Branch Library, 1241 Manor Blvd. in San Leandro. The group will be making heart wreaths, STEM Valentines crafts, and much more. Children of all ages are welcome.

The Alta Mira Club Mystery Writers' Luncheon

The Alta Mira Club, 561 Lafayette Ave. in San Leandro, will host a Mystery Authors Scholarship Luncheon on Monday, Feb. 19, at noon. Award-winning mystery writers James L'Etoile, Camille Minichino, Ann Parker and Simon Wood will speak after a salad buffet luncheon. The lunch and program is \$25 per person. For reservations, email nancyfong@aol.com or call 510-483-1018.

Origami Workshop

Ring in the Year of the Dragon with award-winning origami artist and Paper Tree Japantown proprietor, Linda Tomoko Mihara on Tuesday, Feb. 20, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Manor Branch Library, 1241 Manor Blvd. Learn the history of the intricate paper folding-art and create your own origami dragon. This program is open to adults, ages 18 and over. No registration required.

CV Women's Club Talk on Isadora Duncan

The Castro Valley Women's Club, 18330 Redwood Road in Castro Valley, invites the community to hear Lois Ann Flood, classically trained dancer, present a free program on Isadora Duncan on Wednesday, Feb. 21, at 1 p.m. Ms. Duncan (1877-1927), born in San Francisco, famously performed and choreographed modern contemporary dance throughout Europe and the United States. Light refreshments will be served.

Family Fun Night: African Music with Baba Shibambo.

Come to a Family Fun Night of African Music & Art Village on Wednesday, Feb. 21, from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. at the San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Ave. Explore the rhythm and cultures of Africa with Baba Shibambo, a South African master drummer and multi-instrumentalist. All ages welcome.

SL High United Parents Crab Feed

The San Leandro High School United Parents will host a crab feed on Friday, March 9, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the San Leandro Boys & Girls Club, 2200 San Leandro Blvd. Tickets are \$70. Order by March 1. (www.32auctions.com/SLHSUPCrabFeed2024) Pre-sold tickets only. No-host bar and dessert bar, raffle, auction items. All proceeds fund programs directly supporting students. For more information or if you need to pay by check, email slhsunitedparents-pirates@gmail.com.

Arroyo Athletic Boosters Crab Feed

Arroyo Athletic Boosters will hold their Crab Feed Fundraiser on Saturday, March 16, from 4:30 to 11 p.m. Tickets are \$75 for adults, \$50 for kids 6 to 12. All you can eat cold crab, salad, pasta, bread. Raffle Prizes, DJ, No-Host Bar. Tickets: <https://ahs.slzUSD.org/apps/pages/arroyocrabfeed>

Lunar New Year at the SL Library

Year of the Dragon Festivities

Celebrate the Lunar New Year with festivities honoring the Year of the Dragon on Saturday, Feb. 10, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Ave. Admission is free.

The Dasen American Academy will perform traditional dance at 1:30 p.m. At 2:30 p.m., enjoy traditional lion dances by The Joyous Spring Lion Dance Troupe. The organization strives to preserve and promote the art of lion dance in the Bay Area. Refreshments and photo time to follow these fantastic cultural performances.

Free Lunar New Year Crafts and Snacks For Teens

Teens in grades 6-12 are all invited to enjoy and honor the Lunar New Year with games and crafts at the Teen Lounge on Thursday, Feb. 15, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Ave. No registration is needed for this very fun, informal after-school event.

Lunar New Year Celebration at the Manor Library

Join the Manor Branch Library, 1241 Manor Blvd. in San Leandro, and celebrate the Year of the Dragon on Saturday, Feb. 17, at 1 p.m. Festivities include Lion Dancing, Traditional Dancing, Crafts by the Asian Community Cultural Association of San Leandro, and Storytime. Free admission for all.

American Legion Post 649 Monthly Meeting

American Legion Post 649 in Castro Valley meets on the last Monday of every month at 1800 (6 p.m.) meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Moose Lodge, 20385 Rutledge Road in Castro Valley. For more information, call Jim Smith at 510-305-2280.



A buckeye butterfly sips nectar from a California coast buckwheat (*Eriogonum latifolium*) in a San Leandro native plant garden. Learn about gardening with California native plants at the Manor branch library on February 10.

Gardening with Nature: How to Propagate Native Plants

Learn how to start a California native plant garden without spending a lot at the nursery and simple ways to grow them from seeds, cuttings, and divisions at Manor Library, 1241 Manor Blvd., on Saturday, Feb. 10, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in the Program Room.

Presentation and Q&A with Laura Cornett, horticulturist, Los Positas College, followed by a seed and plant giveaway outdoors in the garden. Rain or shine.

Presented by Homegrown Habitats San Leandro. Sponsored by the City of San Leandro, Office of Sustainability.

Webinar for Judge Candidates

The Alameda County Bar Association and the League of Women Voters of Alameda County are co-sponsoring a free webinar for the Superior Court Judge Office 12 candidates on Thursday, Feb. 15, at 6 p.m.

The candidates for the Superior Court Judge Office 12

are Mark Fickes and Michael Johnson. Advance registration is required.

Register at <https://bit.ly/SuperiorCourtJudgeOffice12>

to receive Zoom link.

Note: the Alameda County Office of Education forum planned for Feb. 8, 2024 has been cancelled.

Public Notice

San Lorenzo USD Public Hearing on District Voting Plan

As part of the transition to a by-trustee area election system by the San Lorenzo Unified School District, the District's Governing Board will hold a public hearing to receive community comments and public testimony concerning the composition of potential trustee voting areas associated with the District's transition to a by-trustee area election system in advance of the preparation of draft trustee voting area plans by the District's demographer. The public hearing will be held during a Governing Board meeting on February 20, 2024 at 7 p.m., located at the District Office Boardroom, 15510 Usher St., San Lorenzo, CA 94580 or via Zoom by visiting www.slzUSD.org/apps/pages/boardmeetings, then scrolling and clicking "Agenda" next to "February 20, 2024." A Zoom Webinar link will then appear at the top of the page for virtual participation.



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If You Don't Know Beans...

Beans have been a food staple throughout the world for thousands of years. Once considered “peasant” food, they are one of today’s super foods – rich in fiber, protein, calcium, phosphorus and iron – yet low in sodium and fat, and completely cholesterol-free. Beans have a long history in California, first grown to supply food for miners during the Gold Rush. Today the state produces about a dozen types of dried beans, all of which are interchangeable in recipes.

When buying, inspect the package and look for firm, clean, whole beans of uniform size and color. Dried beans should be less than one year old – older beans take much longer to cook. Pick over beans, removing any broken beans, stones, or other foreign matter, then rinse them in cold water. There are two steps to cooking beans – soaking and cooking, and a couple of important rules to follow (see box at right). Although dried beans are by far the best value, canned beans

are acceptable for nearly all recipes, saving time for busy cooks.

THREE BEAN PASTA

- 1 pound medium or wide egg noodles, uncooked
- 1 (15-ounce) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup frozen green beans, thawed
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, seeds and ribs removed, chopped
- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Prepare pasta according to package directions; drain. Rinse under cold water and drain again. In a large bowl, stir together the pasta, kidney beans, chickpeas, green beans, onion and bell pepper. In a small bowl, stir together the remaining ingredients. Toss pasta with dressing and serve. Serves 4 to 6.

Note: One pound of dry noodles will produce a cooked amount of 5 cups. Other pasta shapes may be substituted for the

pound of noodles, however, a different amount (about 10 ounces) is needed as one pound of macaroni, spaghetti, penne, etc. equals 8 cups cooked volume.

ONE-DISH ROSEMARY CHICKEN & WHITE BEANS

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1-1/2 teaspoons dried rosemary
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 8 skinless and boneless chicken thighs (1 pound)
- 1 (14-1/2 ounce) can stewed tomatoes, undrained
- 1 (15-ounce) can navy beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup pitted kalamata olives, chopped

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Combine rosemary, salt and pepper; sprinkle over one side of chicken. Place chicken in pan with seasoned side down, cook 3 minutes. Reduce heat to medium and turn chicken. Add tomatoes and beans, cover and simmer 10 minutes or until chicken is done. Stir in olives. Yields 4 servings.

NAVY BEAN SOUP

- 3 cups (1-1/2 pounds) dried navy beans
- 1 (14-1/2 oz.) can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 meaty ham hock or 1 cup diced cooked ham
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 2-1/2 cups water
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Minced fresh parsley

Rinse and sort beans, then place them in a Dutch oven or soup kettle; add water to cover by 2 in. Bring to a boil; boil for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat; cover and let stand for 1 to 4 hours or until beans are softened. Drain and rinse beans, discarding liquid. Place in a large Dutch oven or soup kettle. Add the tomatoes with juice, onion, ham hock, broth, water, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat;

Cooking Beans: The Basics

There are two ways to soak beans: In a large kettle, combine beans and enough water to cover (2 to 3 cups for each cup of beans). Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 2 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and let stand for 1 hour or longer. Or, soak beans overnight in a covered pan. In either case, discard the soak water and cover beans in at least 2 inches of fresh water, bring to a full boil, reduce heat and simmer gently. You can add seasonings and spices, but do not add salt or acidic ingredients, like vinegar, tomatoes or juice, as they will slow the cooking process. Instead, add these ingredients when the beans are cooked. The beans will take anywhere from an hour to two hours to cook. If water runs low, add more boiling water (not cold water). Beans are done when they can be easily mashed with a fork. Always test a few beans in case they have not cooked evenly. When beans are tender, let them cool in the cooking liquid

cover and simmer until beans are tender, about 1-1/2 hours. Add more water if necessary. Remove ham hock and let stand until cool enough to handle. Remove meat from bone; discard bone. Cut meat into bite-size pieces; set aside. (For a thicker soup, cool slightly, then puree beans in a food processor or blender and returned to pan.) Return ham to soup and heat through. Garnish with parsley. Yield: 10 servings (2-1/2 quarts).

VEGETARIAN BAKED BLACK BEANS

- 2 (15-ounce) cans black beans
- 1/2 cup water from beans
- 1/4 cup minced onion
- 1/4 cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 chili peppers (serrano or jalapeño) minced

Preheat oven to 350°F. Drain the beans, reserving the water. Measure out 1/2 cup of bean water and save the rest in case it is needed during the cooking process. In a medium-sized bowl, combine the beans, 1/2 cup bean water, onion, ketchup, molasses, salt, vinegar, curry powder, Worcestershire sauce and minced chili peppers. Mix well. Transfer the mixture to an 8x12 inch baking dish. Top with remaining Cheddar and Monterey Jack cheeses. Bake in the preheated oven 20 to 30 minutes, until cheese is slightly browned. Yields 7 cups.

ses, salt, vinegar, curry powder, Worcestershire and minced chili peppers. Mist a 7x9-inch baking pan with nonstick spray. Place bean mixture in pan and spread evenly. Cover dish with foil. Place in preheated oven and bake for 30 minutes. Remove from oven, remove foil cover. If beans appear dry, mix in a bit more bean water. Return to oven. Continue baking, uncovered, for 30 minute more. Serve hot with corn bread. Yields 6 servings.

QUICK HOT BEAN DIP

- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sour cream
- 4 cups refried beans
- 1/2 (1-ounce) package taco seasoning mix
- 5 drops hot pepper sauce
- 2 tablespoons dried parsley
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- 1 (8-ounce) package shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 (8-ounce) package shredded Monterey Jack cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a medium bowl, blend the cream cheese and sour cream. Mix in the refried beans, taco seasoning, hot pepper sauce, parsley, green onions, 1/2 the Cheddar cheese and 1/2 the Monterey Jack cheese.

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ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might feel bolder as each new success falls into place. However, caution is still advised throughout the end of the week. Taking it step-by-step is the best approach.

TAURUS (April 20 - May 20): The cooperation that you request could come at too high of a price. Since few can beat the Bovine at being clever and resourceful, why not see what you can do on your own?

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Aspects favor a quieter time to get closer to the people who are especially important to you. There's always much more to learn and appreciate about each other.

CANCER (June 21 - July 22): The concerned Crab will act to resolve workplace misunderstandings before they get out of hand and cause serious problems. Co-workers rally to support your efforts.

LEO (July 23 - August 22): What the Big Cat might see as a disturbing act of disloyalty might just be a failure of communication on both sides. Take time for mediation rather than confrontation.

VIRGO (August 23 - Sept. 22): Be more patient with those who seem unwilling to accept your version of what's right. The fact is, there's a lot more to learn on all sides of this issue.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - October 22): It should be easier for you to assess the facts and make an important decision. But don't commit if you still have doubts. There could be more you need to know.

SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21): Your excitement level remains high as you continue working on a new project. Expect some setbacks, but on the whole, all will move pretty much on schedule.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21): It might be wise to be more prudent with expenses right now. But your financial situation should soon clear up, and you could be back shopping as happily as ever.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19): You might prefer sticking with your current schedule, but some newly emerging information could persuade you to consider a change. Keep an open mind.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18): You might want to reject a suggested change, but it could be wise to go with the flow, at least for a while. You can always return to your first plan if you like.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20): You're bolstered by both the practical and poetic sides of your nature as you maneuver some unsettled emotional situations. Things ease up by week's end..

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SENIORS

Free Tax Filing for Seniors

Q: I hear that the IRS may offer free tax preparation services. Is this true?

A: Yes. The IRS offers free tax preparation software, fillable forms, and free taxpayer assistance, all available in an effort to make tax compliance easier, especially for seniors, those with a disability and those whose primary language is not English.

The free tax software is actually available from private vendors, but studies find that the availability of the free software is not well known and, in fact, is not easy to find on an Internet Search. It seems that, some years back, in an effort to increase the number of electronically filed returns, the IRS decided to encourage the use of tax preparation software. In aid of that goal, the IRS entered into an agreement with private software vendors whereby the latter agreed to make their software available for free to low-income persons, especially seniors, and in exchange the IRS agreed not to design its own free software to compete with those private companies.

Unfortunately, it seems that some of these companies have initiated computer code so that their free software is not easily "findable" on an internet search. As a result, the number of taxpayers actually using the free software is tiny.

That said, seniors, retirees and persons with a disability should know that they can take advantage of free help to file

their tax returns. There are basically two (2) categories of free assistance, depending upon income, age, disability and facility with English, as noted below. In each case, seniors can go to the IRS website [IRS.gov] and type in the following words in the search bar: "Free File: Do Your Federal Taxes for Free". A screen will then pop up to give you choices, as follows:

Option 1: Guided Tax Preparation Software: This option is for seniors whose Adjusted Gross Income ("AGI") is less than \$79,000. Seniors who qualify can peruse the IRS site, choose their favorite vendor, and download free federal and state tax preparation software from vendors with such familiar names as Turbo Tax and H&R Block.

Option 2: Free Fillable Forms: Available for any income level, Seniors can opt for Free Fillable Forms, but must have a basic understanding as to how to do their own taxes.

The IRS.gov site also shows how to seek help, pursuant to the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance ("VITA") program, which offers free tax help to people who earn \$64,000 or less, persons with disabilities and taxpayers with limited English speaking skills. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic tax return preparation with electronic filing for qualified individuals.

Another program of note is the Tax Counseling for the

Elderly ("TCE") program: The TCE offers free tax help for all taxpayers, particularly those who are 60 years of age and older, and specialize in dealing with pensions and retirement-related issues unique to seniors. The IRS-certified volunteers are often retired individuals associated with non-profit organizations.

You can find a location near you to obtain free assistance in any one of the following ways:

a) Call the VITA locator phone number at 1-800-906-9887; b) Call the AARP Foundation's Tax Aid Program at 1-888-227-7669; or, c) Go to the IRS.gov web page, type the following into the search bar: "Free Tax Return Preparation for Qualifying Taxpayers". Then Click on one of the two Locator Tools.

Alternatively, you can just call one of these nearby locations for on site assistance: Hayward Area Seniors Center, Hayward: (510) 881-6766; Eden Social Services Agency, Hayward: (510) 271-9141; Alameda County Social Services: (510) 670-6000; or, Hayward Library (510) 293-8685.

Gene L. Osofsky is an attorney who has been helping East Bay families for over 30 years with Estate Planning, Elder Law, Medi-Cal Planning, Trusts, Powers of Attorney, Wills, Probate and related matters. Visit his website at www.LawyerForSeniors.com or call (510) 247-2555.

Council: Choosing an applicant

continued from front page
afterward.

The City Clerk will randomly assemble the applicants' names to choose fairly. Each council member will have one vote. The first applicant to receive a majority (four votes) will win the appointment to become the District 1 member of the City Council.

If the council chooses a candidate on February 13, that person will be sworn in on February 20 during the regularly scheduled council meeting, the council agreed this week. If not, the council

will reconvene at a special meeting on February 27 at 7 p.m. to repeat the deliberation process until an applicant is chosen.

Under the City Charter, the mayor and council have until February 29 to decide who will fill the District 1 seat, which requires council seat replacements in 60 days. It's a 10-month term that expires on December 31. But the person appointed to District 1 is qualified to run for the same seat in the general election on November 5, which would extend the term of that council

member to the end of 2026.

If the council cannot agree on an applicant, the city would be required by law to call a special election prior to the November general election and leave the choice up to the voters.

Reynes gave notice she was reigning on December 7, saying she needed to spend more time with her newborn baby. Her service officially ended on December 31.

District 1 includes downtown, Estudillo Estates, and the Bay-O-Vista neighborhoods.

City Grants Available For Artists

The City of San Leandro and the Arts, Culture and Library Commission are administering a civic grants program to support San Leandro-based nonprofit organizations and individual creators, artists, or culture bearers living in San Leandro.

The Arts & Culture Grants Program is seeking applications of high artistic or cultural quality, with an emphasis on activities that support and celebrate the San Leandro

community.

Arts and culture projects that are eligible for grant funding through this program include dance, music, theater, visual, literary, culture, media, multidisciplinary, traditional, folk, and performing arts.

Nonprofit organization-led projects will be supported with grants of up to \$10,000. Individual-led projects will be supported with grants of up to \$5,000.

Please review the Arts

& Culture Grants Program Guidelines (<https://sanleandro.org/ArtsCultureGrants>) thoroughly and the appropriate application, including instructions, before applying for a grant.

After reviewing the guidelines and the appropriate application, email libraryinfo@sanleandro.org if you have any questions.

The application deadline is Thursday, February 29, at 5 p.m.

SLHS United Parents Crab Feed

The San Leandro High School United Parents will host a crab feed on Friday, March 9, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the San Leandro Boys & Girls Club, 2200 San Leandro Blvd.

Tickets are \$70. Order by March 1. (www.32auctions.com/SLHSUPCrabFeed2024)

Pre-sold tickets only. No-host bar and dessert bar, raffle, auction items.

All proceeds fund programs directly supporting students. For more information or if you need to pay by check, email slhsunitedparents@slhsunitedparents.org.

¡Únete a nosotros para un taller sobre el Plan Maestro de Recreación y Parques!

San Leandro
BETTER TOGETHER, OUTSIDE

La Ciudad de San Leandro está creando un Plan Maestro de Recreación y Parques, ¡y necesita tu opinión sobre el futuro de sus sistemas de recreación y parques! Únete a nosotros para un taller de puertas abiertas sin cita previa.

¿Quieres hablar sobre el Plan Maestro de Recreación y Parques?
Únase a nosotros para esta jornada de puertas abiertas sin cita previa:
Sábado, 10 de febrero
10 am - 1 pm
Centro Comunitario Marina
15301 Wicks Blvd, San Leandro, CA

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Suscríbase al boletín en: <https://www.sanleandro.org/rpmasterplan>

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Please join us for a Recreation and Parks Master Plan workshop!

San Leandro
BETTER TOGETHER, OUTSIDE

The City of San Leandro is creating a Recreation and Parks Master Plan, and needs your input on the future of its recreation and park systems! Please join us for a drop-in open house workshop.

Want to talk about the Recreation and Parks Master Plan?
Join us for this drop-in open house:
Saturday, February 10th
10am - 1pm
Marina Community Center
15301 Wicks Blvd San Leandro, CA

STAY TUNED FOR UPDATES!
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Sign-up for the newsletter at: <https://www.sanleandro.org/rpmasterplan>

REAL ESTATE GALLERY



REAL ESTATE REALITY

By Carl Medford, CRS
Special to the Times

GUEST COMMENTARY



Who's Your Neighbor?

By Carl Medford, CRS
Special to the Times

With the San Francisco 49ers in the Super Bowl, the Bay Area is awash in football fever. Ever wondered what it might be like to have a pro football player for a

neighbor? Zillow did, and in preparation for the big game, surveyed Americans across the country to see which pro football player they would like to have living next door.

To no one's surprise, the top survey answer was Travis Kelce, the Kansas

City Chiefs' tight end. The big question is who everyone was voting for: Travis or the chance of having his girlfriend show up ... Taylor Swift.

While conjecture is fun, it does bring up a few thoughts about neighbors. In a perfect world, we would be able to choose our neighbors. In real life, however, we only have a little control, and that happens only at the point we are buying a home. Even then, your research is limited to what a potential seller is willing to tell you and whatever you might discover online. After that, if a neighbor sells once you have purchased you have no control at all as to who your new neighbor might be.

California has very comprehensive disclosure laws and sellers are obligated to disclose all material facts that could affect the value or desirability of the property. As an example, is there a heavy metal garage band that practices 3 doors down? Any neighbors hosting noisy parties, excessive traffic, motorcycle gangs or drug dealers? Is the property under any airport's flight path? The list is endless.

On the other hand, potential buyers should do their own research when

looking at specific properties. To begin, obligated to disclose all material facts that could affect the value or desirability of the property. As an example, is there a heavy metal garage band that practices 3 doors down? Any neighbors hosting noisy parties, excessive traffic, drug dealers and more? Is the property under any airport's flight path? The list is endless.

On the other hand, potential buyers should do their own research when looking at specific properties. To begin, it is always wise to search the address online to see if anything pops up. To make things more complicated, Realtors – due to federal fair housing laws – are not allowed to do any research or provide clients with opinions on any given neighborhood. A Realtor can provide a buyer with a list of websites they could potentially visit to obtain things such as crime statistics or the local sexual offender database but cannot do research for clients or provide any interpretations of the data.

It is a classic case of 'buyer beware.' Read the seller's disclosure package carefully and have your agent relay any questions you might have. While you cannot control who might move in later, you can definitely choose your next neighborhood now.

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.

RECENT HOME SALES

Home sales information is compiled and provided by CalREsource and includes Bedrooms, Square Feet and Year Built when available

Castro Valley

18845 Carlton Avenue 94546: \$965,000 [3 BD - 1,064 SF - 1965]
3634 Swallow Court 94546: \$1,100,000 [3 BD - 1,264 SF - 1955]
18164 Vineyard Road 94546: \$1,125,000 [4 BD - 2,200 SF - 1974]
5505 Jasmine Court 94552: \$1,350,000 [1,908 SF - 1978]
3675 Christensen Lane 94546: \$1,362,000 [4 BD - 2,272 SF - 1947]
3315 Baddling Road 94546: \$1,395,000 [4 BD - 1,681 SF - 1946]

TOTAL SALES: 6
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$965,000 **MEDIAN AMOUNT:** \$1,395,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,395,000 **AVERAGE AMOUNT:** \$1,216,166

Hayward

26897 Huntwood Avenue #4 94544: \$520,000 [2 BD - 1,104 SF - 1980]
25113 Copa Del Oro Drive #103 94545: \$569,000 [3 BD - 958 SF - 1986]
20255 Concord Avenue #1 94541: \$590,000 [3 BD - 1,411 SF - 1990]
26226 Mocine Avenue 94544: \$655,000 [3 BD - 1,040 SF - 1952]
18331 Hunter Avenue 94541: \$680,000 [4 BD - 1,418 SF - 1951]
19232 Hathaway Avenue 94541: \$705,000 [3 BD - 1,182 SF - 1952]
22677 7th Street 94541: \$740,000 [3 BD - 987 SF - 1927]
355 Saint George Street 94541: \$780,000 [4 BD - 1,186 SF - 1950]
26593 Mission Boulevard 94544: \$803,000 [3 BD - 1,735 SF - 2020]
22565 Byron Street 94541: \$815,000 [2 BD - 1,084 SF - 1946]
70 Barnes Court 94544: \$830,000 [3 BD - 1,562 SF - 1952]
23655 Fuller Avenue 94541: \$860,000 [4 BD - 1,432 SF - 1959]
25613 Firebrand Place 94541: \$985,000 [3 BD - 1,818 SF - 1975]
2520 Coldstream Way 94545: \$1,240,000 [4 BD - 2,134 SF - 2008]
4120 Forest Hill Court 94542: \$1,600,000 [4 BD - 2,962 SF - 1996]
24728 Fairview Avenue 94542: \$1,800,000 [5 BD - 2,154 SF - 2017]

TOTAL SALES: 16
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$520,000 **MEDIAN AMOUNT:** \$791,500
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,800,000 **AVERAGE AMOUNT:** \$885,750

San Leandro

15956 East 14th Street #401 94578: \$401,000 [1 BD - 680 SF - 2008]
1527 139th Avenue 94578: \$600,500 [2 BD - 1,039 SF - 1946]
1134 Donovan Drive 94577: \$698,000 [2 BD - 832 SF - 1942]
1371 Post Avenue 94579: \$823,000 [3 BD - 1,177 SF - 1951]
679 Valita Drive 94577: \$838,000 [2 BD - 1,012 SF - 1944]
156 Dutton Avenue 94577: \$850,000 [3 BD - 1,920 SF - 1929]
16244 Lyle Street 94578: \$950,000 [3 BD - 1,320 SF - 1953]
1596 165th Avenue 94578: \$1,025,000 [6 BD - 2,820 SF - 1989]
15911 Gramercy Drive 94578: \$1,176,000 [4 BD - 1,895 SF - 1952]
604 Oakes Boulevard 94577: \$1,276,000 [1 BD - 2,109 SF - 1934]

TOTAL SALES: 10
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$401,000 **MEDIAN AMOUNT:** \$844,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,276,000 **AVERAGE AMOUNT:** \$863,750

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Mortgage Rates Tick Down

Although affordability continues to impact home-ownership, the combination of a solid economy, strong demographics and lower mortgage rates are setting the stage for a more robust housing market. Mortgage rates have been stable for nearly two months, but with continued deceleration in inflation, rates are expected to decline further. The economy continues to outperform due to solid job and income growth, while household formation is increasing at rates above pre-pandemic levels. These favorable factors should provide strong fundamental support to the market in the months ahead.

Protect Tree Rose from High Winds

By Buzz Bertolero
The Dirt Gardener

Q I have a three-year-old tree rose that is in a large oak barrel. I would now like to plant it in the ground. The front of my house faces west but there is a partially shady location in the backyard. Where would you suggest planting it?

A Either site would be okay for the tree rose, as both locations would receive at least six hours of direct sunlight per day.

That being said, I'd probably select the semi-shady location. This location, more than likely, is protected from the afternoon winds during the summer months. Mature tree roses are susceptible to break-



Make sure to use a stake to anchor the rose in the ground at least one foot past the root ball.

age, as they are top heavy, Grandiflora types. In addition, especially the Hybrid Tea and they're also not adequately

supported with a stake. Hence, the location that receives the lesser amount of wind is more desirable.

When you pull the tree rose out of the barrel, you'll find little soil and a solid mass of roots. The roots will continue growing in this circular pattern unless you score the root ball.

To prevent this, you should trim the root ball by removing one to two inches off the sides and four to six inches off the bottom at planting.

The planting hole needs to be extra large and you should generously amend the back fill with organic matter. The original root ball should be one inch or more above the final grade, to prevent it from

sinking and being buried too deep.

The next step is to add a new stake(s), as the current one is too short. The stake(s) has to anchor the rose in the ground. I'd select one that is 2 inches by 2 inches by 5 feet, and it's driven a foot past the root ball.

A six-inch-high watering basin is then constructed around the rose; it should extend from the trunk to the drip line. The water basin ensures that all the roots get wet when you water.

And, finally, fertilize with rose food, often.

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.



Sowing Seeds

It's not too early to sow some flower seeds outdoors, including cosmos, sweet alyssum, sweet peas, California poppies and larkspur. Start seeds indoors in flats for summer vegetables, including tomatoes, squash and peppers.

Perennials

Plant perennials now for early spring bloom. English primroses, day lilies, Shasta daisies and phlox are all good bets.

Don't Wait

If you haven't pruned roses, fruit trees and grapes, do it now. New growth has already started to appear, but better late than not at all. Also, February is your last chance for dormant spraying. Dormant spraying controls insects that hibernate during the winter and fungal diseases such as peach-leaf curl.

THINKING ABOUT BUYING OR SELLING? CONTACT ONE OF THESE...

AGENTS IN ACTION



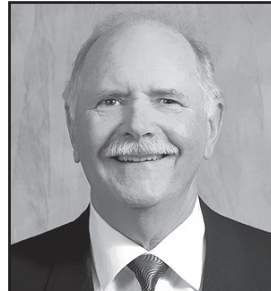
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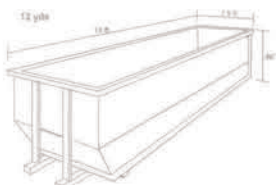
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LEGAL NOTICES

FILED
MELISSA WILK
January 18, 2024
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 603448
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and
Professions Code
Sections 17900-17930
The name of the business(es):
Terencia Antonio Insurance Agency, located at 1403 Kelley Ave, San Leandro, CA 94577. Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Maria Terencia E. Antonio, located at 1403 Kelley Ave, San Leandro, CA 94577. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced 02/01/22
/s/ Maria Terencia E. Antonio
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires January 17, 2029

FILED
MELISSA WILK
January 18, 2024
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 603436
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and
Professions Code
Sections 17900-17930
The name of the business(es):
Happy House Daycare, located at 33841 11th Street, Union City, CA 94587. Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Maria Salgado, located at 33841 11th Street, Union City, CA 94587. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced 01/18/24
/s/ Maria Salgado
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires January 17, 2029
JAN 25, FEB 01, 08, 15, 2024

FILED
MELISSA WILK
January 18, 2024
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 602487
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and
Professions Code
Sections 17900-17930
The name of the business(es):
Sorrento Auto Sales Inc., located at 22268 Mission Blvd., Hayward, CA 94541. Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Sorrento Auto Sales Inc, located at 22268 Mission Blvd., Hayward, CA 94541. This business is conducted by a Corporation. This business commenced N/A
/s/ Karina Suse Bibiano Nunez
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires January 17, 2029
FEB 01, 08, 15, 22, 2024
1050-SLT

FILED
MELISSA WILK
January 18, 2024
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 603461
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and
Professions Code
Sections 17900-17930
The name of the business(es):
Ten Ton Consulting, located at 659 Broadmoor Blvd., San Leandro, CA 94577. Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Ten Ton Consulting Inc, located at 659 Broadmoor Blvd. This business is conducted by a Corporation. This business commenced 02/25/14
/s/ Michelle Huitema
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires January 17, 2029
FEB 01, 08, 15, 22, 2024
1050-SLT

FILED
MELISSA WILK
January 10, 2024
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 603289
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and
Professions Code
Sections 17900-17930
The name of the business(es):
Crafty Hanako, located at 1008 Cumberland Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94579, Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Justine Dalipe, located at 1008 Cumberland Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94579. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced 01/10/24
/s/ Justine Dalipe
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires January 09, 2029
FEB 08, 15, 22, 29 2024
1082-SLT

FILED
MELISSA WILK
February 02, 2024
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 603796
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and
Professions Code
Sections 17900-17930
The name of the business(es):
Gms Cleaning Services, located at 1664 Maubert CT #10, San Leandro, CA 94578, Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Gabriela Mondragon Soto, located at 1664 Maubert CT #10, San Leandro, CA 94578. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced N/A
/s/ Gabriela Mondragon Soto
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires February 01, 2029
FEB 08, 15, 22, 29 2024
1085-SLT


FILED
MELISSA WILK
February 02, 2024
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 603789
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and
Professions Code
Sections 17900-17930
The name of the business(es):
Rocky's Charcoal Drill, located at 300 W Estudillo Ave., San Leandro, CA 94577, Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Demetrio Martinez, located at 1990 Hillsdale Street, Hayward, CA 94541. This business is conducted by An Individual. This business commenced N/A
/s/ Demetrio Martinez
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires February 01, 2029
FEB 08, 15, 22, 29 2024
1091-SLT

FILED
MELISSA WILK
January 16, 2024
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 603364
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and
Professions Code
Sections 17900-17930
The name of the business(es):
Adepa's Kitchen, located at 21070 Royal Avenue, Hayward, CA 94541, Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Josephine Adutwum-waah, located at 21070 Royal Avenue, Hayward, CA 94541. / Jennifer Asumatse Ampong located at 2153 Alameda Ave Apt B Alameda, CA 94501 This business is conducted by Co-partners. This business commenced 01/16/2024
/s/ Jennifer Asumatse Ampong
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires January 15, 2029
FEB 08, 15, 22, 29 2024

FILED
MELISSA WILK
December 27, 2023
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 603028
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and
Professions Code
Sections 17900-17930
The name of the business(es):
H & L Home Decor, located at 14315 Washington Ave, San Leandro, CA 94578, Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Pro Kitchen & Bath Supplies LLC, located at 14315 Washington Ave, San Leandro, CA 94578. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. This business commenced N/A
/s/ Bing Jian Zhang
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires December 26, 2028
FEB 08, 15, 22, 29 2024
1090-SLT

ABANDONMENT FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NUMBER: 559072
The following person has abandoned the use of the fictitious business name:
Gms Cleaning & Landscaping Services
at 1664 Maubert CT #10, San Leandro, CA 94578.
Full name of registrant is:
Gabriela Mondragon Soto
The Fictitious Business Name Statement
Gms Cleaning & Landscaping Services
was filed on 05/13/2019 in the county of Alameda.
Original File Number 559072.
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 02/02/2024
JAN 08, FEB 15, 22, 29, 2024
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ANSWERS ON PAGE 4

San Leandro Scholarship Foundation Fundraising Dinner and Silent Auction

The San Leandro Scholarship Foundation is hosting its annual Scholarship Dinner and Silent Auction to benefit graduating seniors on Thursday, March 14, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the San Leandro Senior Center, 13909 East 14th St. in San Leandro. A social time and silent auction will begin at 6 p.m., and dinner will be served at 7 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by students from the San Leandro High School Orchestra, Jazz Band, and performers from Mamma Mia, and the keynote speaker will be Carolina Ixta, SLUSD teacher and award-winning author. To donate or purchase tickets visit <https://www.sanleandrosf.com> or for more information, contact Chad Pennebaker at sanleandrosf@gmail.com, or 510-289-9225.

The scholarships go to local graduating seniors who are going to college or trade school.

Arrested: Man gave himself up to police

continued from front page

ple calls about gunfire in the area. Eight officers, including Watch Commander Lieutenant Steve Cesaretti, arrived shortly after.

In addition to the squad cars, San Leandro Police brought in their BearCat MedEvac vehicle, an armored transport that also serves as a command center.

"Officers were able to contact the victim, a 24-year-old woman whose name we're not releasing at this time," Lt. Cesaretti told the Times. "She knew the suspect and was able to provide us with details that led us to him."

Police found the man at a nearby apartment complex

where he was known to have lived, Cesaretti said. Officers spotted him passing in front of the window and used a public address bullhorn to talk the man out of the apartment.

He surrendered to police 20 minutes later and was taken to Santa Rita Jail.

San Leandro police arrested the man for assault with a firearm. The man had no previous record that would have prevented him from owning a gun, Cesaretti said.

"We're grateful to the San Leandro community for giving us detailed information which helped us with our investigation, and we're grateful that no one was harmed," Cesaretti said.

Apply for Rotary Club Community Grants

The Rotary Club of San Leandro provides grants to local non-profit organizations that make a difference in San Leandro and the club is now accepting applications for this year.

The application can be found under the "community grants" section of the club's website: <https://sanleandro-rotary.org> - Please read the instructions and answer all questions. Applications are due by March 1.

Grant Priority Areas:

- San Leandro based, majority (51%) of clients served are San Leandro residents. Any exceptions to this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Focused on programs or

activities with the most benefit to individuals.

No "cosmetic" capital projects (painting, flooring, etc.)

- Focus populations: Children and families, seniors, "at-risk" individuals.

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.

Death Caused by Bicyclists' Negligence

Editor,

I am truly saddened by the story of the elderly woman who as she stepped off the curb was hit from the right by a bicyclist and later died.

I read that Lt. Tang says, "By all indications this was a tragic accident." San Leandro police say the boy was not cited for reckless negligence leading up to the collision.

What bothers me, is she was hit from her right. As far as I know stepping off the curb leaving Kohls is not one-way traffic, it is two-way traffic. If I step off a curb, get hit from my right, the car or bicyclist was in the wrong lane, going the wrong direction. Cars are not allowed to do stunts driving down the street, and bicyclists should not be popping wheelies as they ride in a public area where there are cars and pedestrians.

I did some research with DMV and found an answer by Bob Katz on Quora. "The California Vehicle Code applies to cyclists just as it does to drivers. Must treat pedestrians just as drivers do. Yield to them if they are in a crosswalk. Even if it's inconvenient to stop because you have a good pace going."

Now, I don't know if this elderly woman looked both ways as she stepped off the curb, but these bicyclists did contribute to the accident. My research found that "Negligence is the failure to behave with the level of care that a reasonable person would have exercised under the same circumstances."

To me, a reasonable person would drive a car or ride a bike in the correct lane without doing stunts.

Kathy Starzenski
San Leandro

Removal of Police Chief Reeks of Racism

Editor,

I am a 52-year-old resident, who was born and raised in San Leandro, and who has lived here for about 42 of my 52 years.

Professionally, I work in public education and for nearly 16 of these years, I have been in administration. This has included taking part in sensitive personnel issues and personnel investigations. Our current police chief has been on administrative leave for nearly 6 months.

Our City Manager, Mayor, and City Council have not communicated well with us, as to why he is on leave, how they are handling his

leave, and what their process is to move forward. Putting an individual on leave for nearly six months is simply unacceptable.

What I believe, with my 42 years of San Leandro living, is that this issue has not been addressed in a timely manner, that it reeks of the racism of old, of ignorance, and of avoidance. I speak of this not just as a citizen but as a citizen who witnessed and observed numerous discussions, from childhood to now, from our city leaders, political and non-political.

My hope is that our current leadership can step up, prove me wrong, and take ownership of this situation. Please move us forward and not backwards. If they do not, this will very predictably and appropriately result in a private settlement for the mishandling of a personnel situation.

And if they do not, this will also result in the continued racism that San Leandro is known for, likes to think they have gotten away from, but that sits deep, very deep, in our leadership, and those who serve us.

MaryAnn Frates
San Leandro

Follow the Math, if Possible

Dear City Councilmembers,

For your selection of a new City Council member for District 1, which is vacant at this moment, I would like you to appoint Ken Pon. He lives in District 1 where I live, and represents me in District 1

Ken Pon has been involved as City Commissioner for many years, as well as San Leandro school board member, and President of San Leandro school board. He is also involved in the Downtown Business Association, Bay-O- Vista Improvement Association, Rotary Club, San Leandro Chamber of

Commerce, etc.

Besides these involvements above, he is the only candidate involved in Asian community activities, such as the Moon Festival, Chinese New Year, and San Leandro City and cities in China Friendship City Delegation in 2007. He knows the Asian community in San Leandro, while others do not know much about Asians in San Leandro. Plus, the Asian population is the highest among other groups.

Based on Alameda County 2020 data: San Leandro population = 91,103

White = 17,876, 19.6%

Black = 9747, 10.7%

Asian = 32,370, 35.5%

Latino = 26,014, 28.6%

Ratio: 100% / 7 councils =

14.286% per council member

White = 19.6 % / 14.286% =

1.37 ratio

Black = 10.7% / 14.286% = 0.7

Asian = 35.5% / 14.286% = 2.48

(City web updated Asian =

36.1% / 14.286% = 2.52)

Latino = 28.6% / 14.286% = 2.0

White : Black : Asian : Latino =

1.37 : 0.7 : 2.48 (2.52) : 2.0 = 1 : 1

: 3 : 2 (rounding number)

From the above ratio, at least 1 White council to represent our White community, at least 1 Black council to represent our Black community, at least 3 Asian councils to represent our Asian Community, and at least 2 Latino councils to represent our Latino community, in order to balance representation for our San Leandro population.

In contrast to other candidates, Ken Pon went with us to China in 2007 for a delegation trip for San Leandro City and City of China Friendship City Delegation in 2007. During this trip, Ken Pon saw a lot of the developments

China has that could help our own city's development. Here is the photographic record of our meeting with different city mayors and officers in the cities of Canton Province, China.

First day: Dinner with Yang Chun City mayor and city officers.

Second day: Dinner and meeting with ZhongShan City Mayor and officers.

Last day of the trip: Meeting with Macao special regional Officers.

Ken Pon is a Chinese American born in the USA, knows Asian and Chinese culture, and is close to our Asian community. He represents the Asian Community of San Leandro, as well as the Chinese Community of San Leandro. On behalf of the Chinese Community of San Leandro, and Asian Community of San Leandro, I look forward to seeing your decision to appoint Ken Pon as the new San Leandro District 1 council member.

Hendy Huang
San Leandro

No Problems with School Buildings

Editor,

The Alameda County Taxpayers Association President and Vice President say that inspectors find no problems with current school buildings and that school districts should not be in the housing business.

They also find that building teacher housing and mixing it with school facilities in the same bond measure isn't legal. Don't be fooled. Vote against Measure J because going so far into debt for foolish reasons is unhealthy for San Leandro's taxpayers.

George Z. Banks
San Leandro

Book: 'Every rejection I ever got led me to where I needed to be'

continued from front page

but not a good student and dealing with a troubled family. Leti, her best friend, is a brilliant student who is shy and doesn't mix socially, but is pregnant by a boyfriend of another race, against her parents' objections. She, like her parents, is very religious, so she thinks she has committed a terrible sin.

"Before she went to hell, she was wondering how she could ever go to college," Ixta told the crowd.

Leti had sets of calculations for how old the baby would be when school started in the fall. The one she had her heart set on, though, was UC Berkeley, the author said.

In the course of the novel, Leti moves from being passive to taking charge of her life, the author said.

Ixta read a selection from her book, and then answered questions from student interviewers Alana Daly and Hassy Flores. Later, she took numerous questions from audience members, who followed the discussion closely.

She teaches in the Spanish-English bilingual program at Jefferson Elementary School. The talk was organized by SLHS teacher-librarian Lori Sasaki.

Ixta told students she had wanted to be a writer since she was eight, helped by kind words from her third-grade teacher Mrs. Katz following a Reading Rainbow event.

She had finished her first novel before she graduated from San Leandro High School in 2014. She studied creative writing at UC Santa Cruz, and had been writing articles for years before a major publisher, Harper Collins, agreed to publish her first novel.

Ixta encouraged students that one can indeed make a living as a writer, with novels paying better than memoirs or nonfiction, but that working one's way into the industry was the hard part. Even finding an agent can be difficult, she said.

But, she said, anyone in the audience could conceivably be up on the stage like her in 10 year's time.

Ixta said at a smaller event held afterwards at the SLHS library, that she had written several novels previously that had not been published. However, after her book agent sent "Shut Up, This Is Serious" to Harper Collins they begged her not to approach any other publishers and offered to match any other offers.

Some 30 students came to that smaller event and peppered Ixta with questions about becoming a writer and the mechanics of writing books, as well as details of how she had written her novel.

Ixta told the large audience that, compared to when she was at SLHS 10 years ago, they were privileged to be attending there now. There was

considerable racial tension then, which has eased since, she said. And the teachers and staff are almost all supportive of students of color, which wasn't the case then, she added.

She wanted to enter a national writing contest, which she eventually won, but several of her teachers wouldn't sign her nominating forms. But her biology teacher, Mr. Doan did sign the forms for her—and he was at the event last Thursday to introduce her to the audience.

Ixta also said the publishing industry paid relatively little attention to writers of color or identity issues 10 years ago, but that this has changed since.

Asked at both sessions for the best advice on becoming a writer, Ixta said, "Read. Read much more than you think you need to."

She advised reading everything, not just serious books but lighter ones, graphic novels, advertising copy and even instructional manuals.

Asked how much the characters had been drawn from her own life, she said she was more like the outspoken Belén, going against cultural expectations for women to stay quiet and defer to men. Leti was inspired by a friend of hers who was so shy Ixta had to order for her when they would go to Starbucks.

"But then I decided that there were so many stereotypes around young Latina women that I decided to thoroughly mix up the rest of their personalities," she said.

Teacher-librarian Sasaki said she had talked to several of Ixta's former teachers, who

reported that the author in high school was a bit like Belén and a bit like Leti.

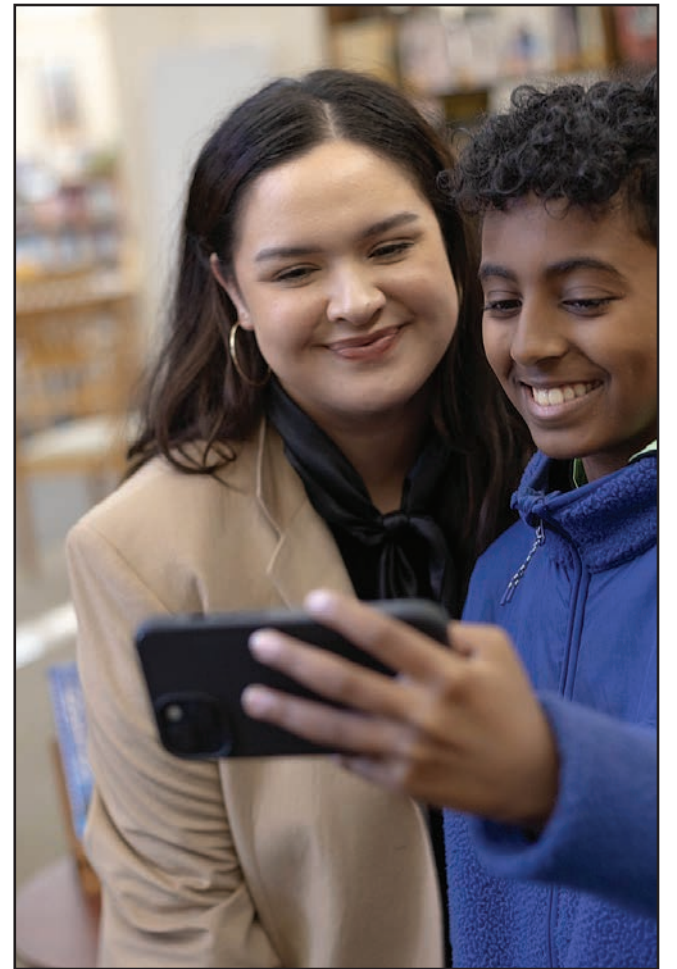
Ixta said that she was outspoken to the point where some at school and in her family considered her arrogant, but she was a good student.

She credited teaching in Jefferson's bilingual program with pushing her to write the novel, which brought together ideas she had explored in shorter works. She realized how little information some students' families had given them about their bodies, and that some students didn't realize some racial terms were offensive, after hearing parents use them.

Ixta wrote the first chapter while her students were taking the state-mandated STAR test, Ixta said. Later, some of her students helped her choose the cover for her new novel, which had to be negotiated with the publisher, she said. It shows a BART train in a station with Port of Oakland's cranes visible in the background.

Ixta said one thing to be ready for as a writer is getting told no a lot.

"But literally every single rejection I ever got led me to where I needed to be," she said. She urged students to persevere and get a little closer to yes each time.



PHOTOS BY REED NORBERTO

Ixta told students to read everything they could, not just serious books but lighter ones, graphic novels, advertising and even instruction manuals.

"Shut Up, This Is Serious" by Carolina Ixta can be obtained at Books Inc., 2483 Washington Ave. in San Leandro, at other bookstores or online. If you are a San Leandro High School student, there are numerous copies available for lending in the school library.

SL Art Association Watercolor Demo

The San Leandro Art Association will host a free art demonstration on Tuesday, Feb. 13, at the San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Ave.

Socializing and refreshments at 5:30 p.m., short meeting at 6 p.m., and the demonstration begins at 6:30 p.m.

Local artist Jennifer Koney will do a presentation about travel watercoloring to capture memories and place, for absolute beginners to those who want to take capturing travel memories to a whole new level. SLAA members will also display artwork for the Artist of the Month Contest.

All ages are welcome to participate in this free event.

For more information contact sanleandroart.contact@gmail.com

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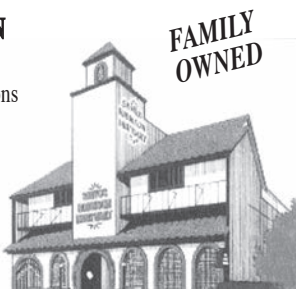
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Obituaries

John Tandi (Giovani Victorio)

December 2nd, 1931 ~ January 22, 2024

John Tandi (Giovani Victorio) was a loving husband, father and Nonno. He peacefully took his last breath on Monday, January 22, 2024. John was surrounded by family 24/7 in his last days and was never alone. He was born in Alameda, California December 2nd 1931 to Angelo and Maria Tandi and was a first-generation Italian American. John met his wife Anna May in 1952 and knew right away she was the one for him. They were married in April of 1953. They were married for 70 beautiful years and lovingly called each other "Honey". They have two daughters Kathy and Lisa. John worked for Burgen Brunswick Pharmaceutical and was a respected shop steward for many years. After retiring from Burgen Brunswick Pharmaceutical he became the head chef for the Colombo Club in Oakland, California and remained the head chef until October 2023. John loved spending time with his family, golfing, playing bocce-ball with family, playing Pedro with his cousins and fellow Colombo club cooks, and he also enjoyed his vegetable garden. John was also a proud member and two-time president of the Buon Tempo Italian Club where he also cooked his famous Polenta and Pesto dinners. John is survived by his loving wife, Anna May, daughters Kathy Gorham, son-in-law Richard Gorham, Lisa Briones, grandchildren, Andrea (Renata Browne), Lindsey (Craig Durao) Matthew (Lei Masaniai), Madeleine, Valerie, & Jessica. Great grandchildren Craig Jr., Cayley, Jasmine, Sadiq, Kalea, Chace, Kailani, Malik, Amena, Yusef, and Great-great grandson Tripp. John was preceded in death by his parents Angelo & Maria Tandi, son in law Roger Briones, and great grandson Cash Durao.



Nonno beautifully let us know he made it into the hands of his maker with a gorgeous rainbow outside of the hospital as we left him for the last time. Family and friends are invited to pay their last respects at a visitation and presentation of his long life, on Monday, February 12th from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm. A graveside burial will take place at 1:00 pm at Holy Sepulcher Cemetery, 1051 Harder Rd. Hayward, Ca.

A celebration of John's life will be held at the Colombo Club, 5321 Claremont Ave. Oakland, Ca. Sunday February 18th at 3:00 Pm. Please come and spend time with family and friends, share stories and a buffet dinner to celebrate 92 years of happy times and wonderful memories. In lieu of flowers please make donations to San Damiano Retreat Center, 710 Highland Dr. Danville, Ca. 94526.

Pridgen: Ashcraft says police union opposes a Black police chief

continued from front page
carefully as possible to protect the rights of Pridgen.

Chief Pridgen was appointed in 2021 by City Manager Fran Robustelli, who at the time said Pridgen would bring “transparency, investment into personnel, and implementing police oversight for the department.” She also said he would be an “advocate for diversity, inclusion, and a community builder.”

But on September 11, 2023, Robustelli put Pridgen on paid leave for what was called “allegations regarding department policy violations.”

Former Kensington police chief Kevin Hart came out of retirement to fill in as police chief in San Leandro during Pridgen’s leave.

The city hired Kramer Workplace Investigations of Danville to conduct the inquiry into whether Pridgen violated department policy. The investigation wrapped up



Police Chief Abdul Pridgen (left) was put on paid leave last September by City Manager Fran Robustelli (right).



in late December 2023 and has been reviewed by the city manager.

The City Attorney’s office and Chief Pridgen’s legal counsel are currently reviewing and discussing the report, according to City of San Leandro spokesperson Paul

Sanftner. They haven’t yet said when the report will be made public.

Several speakers at Monday’s meeting chastised the City Council and the city manager about the lag time between the investigation and the report, claiming race was a

“You are ... doing a political lynching of a Black police chief.

— Bernard Ashcraft

motivating factor in Pridgen’s removal.

“We believe that there is nothing here but the desire to keep things the way they have always been,” said former San Leandro Councilwoman Surlene Grant. “Cut the charade and do what is right.”

Unity in the Community founder Bernard Ashcraft called the situation racially motivated.

“You are kicking off Black History month by doing a political lynching of a Black police chief,” Ashcraft said.

Ashcraft claimed the San Leandro Police Officers Association (POA) never wanted a Black police chief, and that Pridgen’s attempt to promote a Black woman to a leadership position in the police department may be what’s behind the allegations against him.

“The POA has never wanted a black police chief,” Ashcraft said. “The city doesn’t care about how much it will cost to get rid of him...as long as they get rid of him.”

Mayor González chided Ashcraft for what he called slanderous accusations.

“It’s not appropriate to attack individuals on this dais,” González said to Ashcraft. “You have accused council members and me specifically of promulgating lies. It’s slanderous if you don’t come with evidence. If you have evidence of any kind, please share it

“You have accused council members of lies. It’s slanderous if you don’t come up with evidence.

— Mayor Juan Gonzalez

with the city attorney.”

Pridgen hasn’t been sitting still. He applied for the police chief job in the city of Oakland last month. Pridgen was one of three candidates for the position. Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao eventually rejected all three.

Support Quality Education In San Leandro

VOTE MARCH 5TH

Measure J is a \$174 million bond measure that will make **essential improvements and renovations** to our public schools and build **affordable rental housing** for teachers and staff **without raising tax rates** homeowners currently pay.



MEASURE J FUNDS WILL GO TO:

- ✓ **REPAIR deteriorating roofs**, plumbing, and electrical systems;
- ✓ **PURCHASE up-to-date technology** for high-quality instruction in math, science, engineering, and career technical education;
- ✓ **BUILD new classrooms** at our elementary schools for all San Leandro four-year-old children to attend public school;
- ✓ **REPLACE worn and outdated classrooms** for band and orchestra with new classrooms for choir and instrumental music and build a new library and student center at San Leandro High School; and
- ✓ **CONSTRUCT affordable housing** for teachers and school staff. The Bay Area housing crisis makes it very difficult for the District to hire and keep talented teachers. By building affordable rental housing, **Measure J will help the District attract and retain outstanding teachers and school staff** who will live and work in San Leandro.

JOIN US IN SUPPORTING MEASURE J



Assemblymember
Liz Ortega



Mayor
Juan Gonzalez, III



Ellen Corbett,
Former Mayor &
State Senator

And All San Leandro City Council members
and School Board Trustees



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Learn more at www.facebook.com/MeasureJforSanLeandro