

CHEERS TO

2020 Happy New Year

FROM THE
STAFF OF
THE FORUM

CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SERVING CASTRO VALLEY SINCE 1989

YEAR 32

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2020

NO. 1

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NEWS



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Castro Valley Elementary receives Distinguished Schools Award

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PHONE: (510) 614-1560

ANNUAL WARNING

Watch Out For Wild Mushrooms

Each year, mushrooms pop up in our back yards, lawns, parks and around trees after the first rains of the season.

Mushrooms are ecologically important and can look beautiful – but some of them contain dangerous toxins.

The death cap (*Amanita phalloides*) and Western destroying angel (*Amanita ocreata*) are two of the world's most toxic mushrooms, and both can be found throughout the East Bay during the rainy season.

In mammals, the liver and kidneys are typically the first organs affected after ingestion. Symptoms don't usually appear until up to 12 hours after consumption, beginning as severe gastrointestinal distress and progressing to the liver and renal failure if treatment is not sought immediately.

"Both of these toxic mushrooms can be lethal to humans and pets if consumed," said East Bay Regional Park District Naturalist Trent Pearce, who is based in Tilden Regional Park and documents the fungi in East Bay Regional Parks. Collecting mushrooms in the Regional Parks is not allowed.

The death cap is a medium-to-large mushroom that typically has a greenish-gray cap, white gills, a white ring around the

stem, and a large white sac at the base of the stem.

It was accidentally introduced to North America on the roots of European cork oaks and is now slowly colonizing the West Coast.

The Western destroying angel is a medium-to-large mushroom that usually has a creamy white cap, white gills, a white ring around the stem that disappears with age, and a thin white sac at the base. It fruits from late winter into spring. It is associated exclusively with oaks. Unlike the death cap, it is a native California mushroom.

The death cap and Western destroying angel can also be dangerous for pets. Pet owners should contact a veterinarian immediately if they suspect their pet may have eaten a toxic mushroom.

While the death cap and western destroying angel mushrooms are responsible for most cases of mushroom poisonings in California, deadly toxins can also be found in *Galerina* and *Lepiota* mushroom species, both of which are found in the Bay Area.

The public can learn more about the fungi at the annual Tilden Fungus Fair, Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 25-26, at Tilden Nature Area's Environmental Education Center, 600 Canon Drive, Berkeley, phone 510-544-2233.



Wild mushrooms in the East Bay can look beautiful, but some of them contain dangerous toxins. The Bay Area is home to two of the world's most toxic varieties (below), the *Amanita phalloides* (Death Cap) at left, and the *Amanita ocreata* (Western Destroying Angel) at right.



New Year, New Laws

Dozens of new California laws go into effect in 2020, covering everything from gun purchases to housing restrictions and the definition of "beer." Here is just a sample.

Motorists

The California Highway Patrol is reminding motorists of new laws that take effect Jan. 1.

- AB 1266 permits bicyclists to travel straight through right and left turn lanes at intersections, so long as the traffic light indicates such movement is allowed.

- AB 47, which goes into effect on July 1, strengthens the Distracted Drivers Law by adding a point to their license for the subsequent 36 months for using a handheld device while behind the wheel.

- AB 1820 ends an exemption that allowed passengers to ingest marijuana while in a bus, limousine, taxi or camper, however passengers in any of those vehicles will still be able to consume alcohol.

Employment

- AB 5 changes the status of some independent contractors to employees and provides new protections for so-called gig economy workers, such as minimum wage, paid sick days and health insurance benefits. This bill sets a new three-factor test for independent contractors. But organizations representing freelance journalists have already sued over the law and Uber has said it will not adhere to the changes.

- SB 3 raises the state minimum wage to \$13 an hour for workplace-see LAWS on page 3

SF Waterfront Fireworks to Ring-in 2020

Bundle up if you plan to join the thousands of revelers Tuesday night who will be bidding goodbye to 2019 on the San Francisco waterfront where the city will once again host its traditional midnight fireworks show.

Arrive by 11:30 p.m. and head south of the Ferry Building along the Embarcadero for the best view. Fireworks kick off right at the stroke of midnight.

The fireworks typically launch from barges located a thousand

feet out in the bay, just south of the

Ferry Building near Pier 14, so the best viewing spots will be south of the Ferry Building along the Embarcadero between Mission and Folsom Streets.

Typically, there's a 15-minute midnight fireworks show. Each year, they unveil a few new and interesting pyrotechnics which are usually synced to music.

In the East Bay, best locations for viewing are the Oakland Hills near the Mormon Temple or Griz-

zly Peak in Berkeley.

Assuming the weather is good, other great locations to view the fireworks are suggested at bayarea.com/play/fireworks-bay-area/

BART Service

BART will run trains until 3 a.m. on New Year's Eve with some changes in service after 8 p.m. to accommodate the crowds expected to pack downtown San Francisco for the fireworks.

To minimize platform overcrowding at Embarcadero, Mont-

gomery and West Oakland stations, beginning at 8 p.m., trains will skip stops into and out of San Francisco as follows:

Dublin/Pleasanton line trains will not stop at Montgomery Station. Passengers should exit at Embarcadero for the fireworks show.

After the fireworks end, Dublin/Pleasanton line trains will not stop at Montgomery. Passengers should use Embarcadero Station to catch these trains.



Castro Valley Weather Jan. 1 - 5, 2020



Wednesday
Partly Cloudy
High 60° Low 46°



Thursday
Mostly Sunny
High 60° Low 43°



Friday
Mostly Sunny
High 62° Low 43°



Saturday
Mostly Cloudy
High 67° Low 48°



Sunday
Partly Sunny
High 58° Low 42°

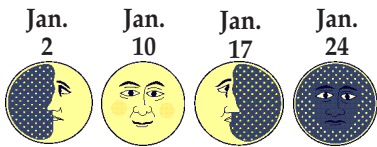
Almanac



Sun sets at 5:00 p.m. today, rises at 7:25 a.m. Thursday.

Past Week's Rain: 00.28
Season To Date: 03.72
Normal To Date: 06.49
Season Average: 21.22

Moon Phases



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HOLIDAY TREE COLLECTION

January				
M	T	W	Th	F
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17

- Place trees next to carts for pick-up on your regular collection day.
- Remove ornaments, tinsel, lights, nails, and stands. Cut tall trees into lengths no longer than six feet.
- Flocked trees will be collected, but not composted. Artificial trees not accepted.
- Multi-family residents: place in general collection area. Do not block access to collection containers.
- Trees are collected using a special vehicle that may service your block earlier or later than regular vehicles.



Questions? Contact Alameda County Industries at (510) 483-1400 or visit www.alamedacountyindustries.com/cvsan/holiday.

OTHER HOLIDAY RECYCLING TIPS & REMINDERS:

- Recycle wrapping paper with no foil or glitter in the blue recycling cart or bin.
- Compost food scraps, uneaten leftovers, refrigerated cartons, and food-soiled paper in the green organics cart or bin.

For more Zero Waste tips, visit www.SelectMyPath.org.

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CV SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Ups & Downs: CV's Hills Aided Calvin Gaziano's Running Career

Fourth in a series profiling the 16 new members of the Castro Valley Sports Hall of Fame. The induction banquet will take place Sunday, April 26, 2020, at Redwood Canyon Event Center. For details, please visit www.castrovalleysportsfoundation.org.

By Dave Del Grande
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM



Calvin Gaziano

When it was suggested by his mother to give up soccer, baseball and basketball as a youth in order to focus on running, Calvin Gaziano did just that.

Turns out mom knew what she was talking about. Gaziano quickly blossomed into one of Castro Valley's best distance runners. Until, that is, he went against his mother's wishes and took up another sport — taekwondo — as a junior at the University of California.

It's the reason he's a leading authority today on crime-scene blood spatter.

"When I was young, I was going to be an Olympian. Then I got hurt," Gaziano recalled recently. "What would have happened if I hadn't gotten hurt? I don't know. But now I'm able to help society."

"Sometimes things don't work out the way you want. But looking back, I'm happy it worked out this way."

Now 52 years old, a sergeant in the Fremont Police Department and a CSI expert, Gaziano says he doesn't think much about his running career.

Maybe he just doesn't have the time, because he's got so many memories, they've earned him entrance into the Castro Valley Sports Hall of Fame's 2020 class, which will be inducted in April.

Gaziano, who attended Redwood Christian Elementary and Canyon Middle School before

dominating the track and cross country competition at Castro Valley High, credits the East Bay in general, and Castro Valley in particular, for making all the memories possible.

"The geography of Castro Valley was one of the benefits in our training," the 1985 graduate recalled. "You have a lot of hills, a lot of trails. We did a lot of training in the hills. The Berkeley hills. The Oakland hills. That made us strong."

The road to prep stardom, national prominence and dreams of the Olympics began in a car. He'd been invited by his friend, David Douglas, to join him and his father on a trip to Half Moon Bay for the Pumpkin Festival Run.

"I didn't know anything about running," Gaziano, then a middle-schooler, said of his first-ever competitive race. "I just went to the front of the pack. I played soccer, so I had endurance. Believe it or not, I won the race. I just remember Mr. Douglas encouraged me to keep running. I did well, so I thought maybe I could well in high school."

Oh, that he did. Gaziano made a career out of running out front in cross country, starting with a victory as a freshman in the Artichoke Invitational, one of the top local invitationals.

"I remember when they were giving out the award," he recalled. "The guy who was hosting said, 'The Great Gaziano.' I remember thinking: Wow, that's kinda cool. When you're 14 years old, you're like, Wow."

Gaziano was the Northern California prep cross country champion as a junior, earning the No. 1 ranking in California after beating a guy who a couple of weeks later went on to capture the national championship. He then repeated his NorCal title as a senior.

He had similar success in track, but through different means. The races were usually shorter — half-mile, mile and two-mile — so he hung back in the pack and used his speed for late bursts.

His prep track highlights included finishing second in the State Meet two-mile and being crowned national indoor champion at 3,000 meters.

Gaziano began his college career at Texas A&M, where he set a school record at 1,500 meters.

In two seasons at Cal, he considers his greatest success outrunning Oregon's legion of All-Americans in a 5,000-meter race. But it was in his first year at Cal that Gaziano injured his knee in his venture into martial arts.

"I ran the next season, but to be honest, I never made it back," he said. "I lost a few seconds, and at that level, losing a few seconds is devastating."

Two Masters degrees and a 26-year career in the Fremont Police Department have followed, ending his running career to a distant memory.

"It was great being part of a team," he said of his prep days. "I always had a lot of pride wearing a jersey that said 'Castro Valley.' My friends, my teachers were all from Castro Valley. I enjoyed running for my city."

Make Sure to Keep Resolutions, Take a Class at the Adult School

By Linette Escobar
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

How are you doing with those New Year's resolutions? Research from the University of Scranton suggests that only 8% of people succeed in keeping their resolutions.

The team at Castro Valley Adult and Career Education (CVACE) has researched expert advice on achieving goals and is offering a host of classes to support the community in their efforts to create the lives they want.

First, set short term and realistic goals. Joyce Hanna, MA, MS, Associate Director for Stanford University's Health Improvement Program says that by breaking

goals into smaller steps you will be more likely to sustain a behavior change.

For example, do you have a larger goal of finding a better job? You might not find your dream job tomorrow, but taking a once-a-week Microsoft Office class or Special Education Paraprofessional class is do-able and sets you up to complete even more challenging long-term goals.

There are even online certificate courses. If your goal is an entirely new and more well-paying career, take the first step by learning more about our Medical Academy or Waste Water Treatment Program.

Second, change one behavior at a time. The American Psychological Association on its website

recommends focusing on the small steps and only working on one behavior at a time so you don't get overwhelmed.

We can apply this to the huge goal of feeling less stressed. Start by taking a Meditation for Busy People class or Melt and Restore Pilates to bring some calm time to your week.

Next, get support. Betsy Capes of Capes Coaching says, "Having a champion alongside you makes all the difference." You can consider the instructors and other classmates at the Adult School as partners in your behavior change.

This is true whether you take one of our popular exercise classes or take our Lose Weight the see **SCHOOL** on page 11



PHOTO BY SHARON TRIEU-QUINCE

Rotary Gift to the Adobe

Castro Valley Rotary President Todd Anglin presented School Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi with a check for \$650 as an investment in the Adobe Art Center for its use in hosting a variety of events, including A.R.T., Inc. art shows and community educational events. Shown above, from left, are Rotarian Randy Vanderbilt, Assistant School Superintendent of Business Services Suzy Chan, Rotarians Anglin and Gary Howard, Superintendent Ahmadi and Rotarian Cliff Sherwood.

Laws: State Employment; Housing; Guns

continued from front page

es with 26 or more employees and to \$12 for workplaces with fewer. The law outlines incremental minimum wage increases through 2023 when it will reach \$15 an hour for all workplaces.

- AB 9 allows employees up to three years to file complaints of discrimination, harassment or retaliation with the Dept. of Fair Employment and Housing instead of the previous one year limit.

- SB 188 prevents discrimination in workplaces and schools based on traits historically associated with race, including certain hairstyles such as braids, twists and locks.

Housing

- Homes built before Jan. 1, 2020, will need to be retrofitted to meet standards set by the State Fire Marshal, and other state agencies will need to create plans to prevent more homes from burning

during wildfires. Homeowners must begin to retrofit their homes with the plan set by the State Fire Marshal if they want to sell their home in 2021.

- AB 68 facilitates Californians who want to build Accessory Dwelling Units, often referred to as "granny flats" on their property, as a way to ease the state's housing crisis.

- AB 1482 caps rent increases at 5% each year plus inflation for the next decade. The cap does not apply to property built within the last 15 years. It also requires landlords to provide just cause for evictions.

Guns

- AB 12 extends the amount of time before a person can buy a gun to five years, if they have a gun violence restraining order placed against them. The new law would allow a law enforcement officer to file for a gun violence restraining order on behalf of their agency. The bill would also change how long a restrain-

see LAWS on page 11

SHERIFF'S REPORTS

COMPILED BY MICHAEL SINGER • CASTRO VALLEY FORUM



She Punched Him in the Face
Friday, December 27: at 3:55 a.m., Sheriff's deputies arrested a 26-year-old woman from Castro Valley on suspicion of assault on a family member. Deputies stopped a man for questioning outside a home on Barlow Drive near Lake Chabot Road. The man reported that his ex-girlfriend punched him in the face. The woman at the home confirmed the assault and was taken into custody.

Woman with Drugs Inside Storage After Hours

Friday, December 27: at 3:43 a.m., a 55-year-old woman from Castro Valley was arrested on suspicion of possession of methamphetamine drugs and related drug paraphernalia. Deputies responded to a silent alarm at a storage business on Grove Way near Redwood Road. The woman was inside the gates after hours. Deputies found the drugs along with a pipe and needle. The woman was taken into custody.

Not Guilty of Trespassing, But Still in Trouble

Thursday, December 26: at 7:22 p.m., deputies arrested a 58-year-old man from Castro Valley as part of a warrant issued for his capture. A call from a manager at the Moose Lodge on Rutledge Road sent deputies to the scene. The man was falsely accused of violating a restraining order, but deputies report the man did have an outstanding warrant on previous charges of breaking and entering into a building. Deputies took the man to Santa Rita Jail pending \$5,000 in bail.

Traffic Stop Ends in Two Arrests

Friday, December 27: at 1:37 a.m., two women were arrested on charges related to driving under the influence of and in possession of drugs. Deputies stopped the vehicle on Stanton Avenue near San Carlos Avenue after observing the vehicle swerving in traffic. The driver, a 21-year-old from Dublin was charged with driving with an expired license and driving under the influence of drugs. The passenger, a 22-year-old from San Leandro was charged with possessing a controlled substance. The women were taken into custody.

Bicycle Rider with Warrant
Thursday, December 26: at 1:42 a.m., deputies arrested a 43-year-old man from San Lorenzo as part of a warrant issued for his capture and resisting arrest. The man was riding a bicycle on the Boulevard near San Miguel Avenue when deputies stopped him for questioning. The man was wanted on previous charges of speeding and racing on the freeway. Deputies also report the man had illegal narcotics and related drug paraphernalia in his pockets. The man put up a fight before being taken to Santa Rita Jail pending \$5,000 in bail.

Convict with Gun and Stolen Vehicle

Tuesday, December 24: at 3:28 p.m., a 42-year-old man from San Leandro was arrested on suspicion of illegal possession of a handgun and driving a stolen vehicle. Deputies stopped the man for questioning in the parking lot of Castro Valley BART near Wilbeam Avenue. The man had a previous felony conviction preventing him from possessing a handgun. Deputies took the man to Santa Rita Jail and held him without bail.

Spousal Assault

Tuesday, December 24: at 12:20 p.m., a 911 call about a loud and aggressive-sounding argument sent deputies to an apartment on Center Street near Grove Way.

There, they arrested a 22-year-old man from Castro Valley on suspicion of assaulting his wife, damaging her cell phone she was using to make the call for help, vandalism, and possession of illegal narcotics. The man was handcuffed and taken into custody. The victim was treated at the scene.

Can't Stay Away

Monday, December 23: at 3:25 p.m., a 38-year-old man from San Leandro was arrested on suspicion of violating the terms of a restraining order and possession of illegal narcotics. Deputies were called to a home on Nordell Avenue to investigate a suspicious person on the property. The man fitting the description identified himself and was taken into custody.

Welfare Fraud

Monday, December 23: at 10:47 p.m., deputies arrested a 47-year-old man from San Lorenzo as part of a warrant issued for his arrest and contempt of court. The man was a passenger in a vehicle stopped at Eden Canyon Road and Castro Valley Boulevard. Deputies questioned the occupants and found the suspect wanted for a previous charge of welfare fraud. The man was also charged with failing to appear in court. Deputies took the man to Santa Rita Jail pending \$25,000 in bail. The other occupants of the car were released.

CV Elementary Awarded As Distinguished School

State School Superintendent Tony Thurmond has named Castro Valley Elementary School as a 2020 California Distinguished School. The award recognizes schools that demonstrate exemplary achievements.

"Congratulations to Castro Valley Elementary School's staff, students and families for being recognized for their academic

achievement and a positive school climate," said Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi. "This is the result of a laser-like focus on each and every child. There are 5,887 public elementary schools in California and to be among only 323 schools selected this year is a tremendous honor and a well deserved recognition of Castro Valley Elementary School."

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS

J	A	W	S	M	A	P	M	E	I	N
E	C	H	O	A	D	O	U	N	D	O
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The Week Ahead

● Saturday, January 4: “Raspberry Jam” at the Library

Interested in computer coding? Want to know what a Raspberry Pi is? Then check out the “Raspberry Jam,” from 1 to 4 p.m. this Saturday at the Castro Valley Library where a gathering of people will be sharing a common interest in a powerful “micro-computer” used for coding. Whether you want to try out computer programming for the first time or hack some electronics, there’s something for everyone! Some equipment provided, but feel free to bring your own project. No experience at all is necessary, but registration is required. Call 510-667-7900.

● Tuesday, January 7: Buon Tempo Family Dinner

Everyone is welcome to attend as Chef John Tandi and crew serves a five-course family style dinner of chicken with polenta at 7 p.m. on Jan. 7 at Mt. Tabor Hall, Transfiguration Church, 4000 E. Castro Valley Blvd. Red and white wine and soda are included, \$15 for members, \$20 for others. Happy hour at 6. Make reservations by Jan. 3 by calling 510-483-6929 (option 1). For more info about events/membership or to see how we’re supporting the George Mark Children’s House, see our website at www.buontempoclub.org

● Tuesday, January 7: Ohlone Audubon Meeting

Presenter Hans Peedters will discuss “Mimicry in Raptors” at the

CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

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ESTABLISHED: 1989 • CIRCULATION 22,500
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Published every Wednesday by EastBay Publishing Corp.
2060 Washington Ave., San Leandro, CA 94577
Corporate Address: P.O. Box 2897, Alameda, CA 94501
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Wednesday, January 1, 2020 New Year’s Eve / Day Schedules

● **Government:** New Year’s Day will be observed as a federal, state, county and city holiday on Tuesday. Except for emergency services, all government offices will be closed.

● **Stores, Offices, Restaurants:** Some supermarkets, restaurants and pharmacies will be open, but may be operating on a shortened schedule, so plan ahead for food and medical needs. All banks and nearly all business offices, including the Forum office in San Leandro, will be closed on Wednesday.

● **Public Transit:** For New Year’s Eve (Tuesday), special BART service to and from San Francisco will be available. See story on page 1. On New Year’s Day, BART will operate on a Sunday timetable with service beginning at 8 a.m. AC Transit buses will operate on a normal Sunday schedule on New Year’s Day. For other transit schedules (ferries, etc.), visit transit.511.org/schedules/holiday.aspx

● **Garbage Collection:** Recycling, organics, and garbage collection services will occur one day later starting on January 1 for the rest of the week. Those with Friday collection days will have pick up on Saturday. Service on Tuesday, Dec. 31, will be unaffected. Christmas trees will be collected curbside on January 6-10 and 13-17, 2019. Visit www.cvsan.org/HolidayTrees for more information on collection guidelines.

● **Castro Valley Sanitary District (CVSan)** offices will be closed on Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 31 and Jan. 1. Call 510-506-5821 for sewer emergencies. For information regarding CVSan services, visit www.cvsan.org.

next free meeting of Ohlone Audubon at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 7 at the Carlton Plaza of Fremont, 3800 Walnut Ave., Fremont. Mention of mimicry in nature instantly brings to mind butterflies and orchids, but who would ever think of one kind of Hawk pretending to be another species? Few people realize how common the phenomenon is in birds of prey. For more info, visit www.ohloneaudubon.org.

● Tuesday, January 7: Rotary Topic: The Economy

Elizabeth Laderman, PhD, economist with the San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank, will discuss the state of our current economic affairs at the next lunch meeting of the Rotary Club of Castro Valley from noon to 1:30 p.m. on Jan. 7 at the Redwood Canyon Golf Course, 17007 Redwood Road in Castro Valley. The cost of lunch is \$15 and reservations must be made by 9:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 5, by contacting Rotary at cvrotary@iCloud.com or 510.402.5123. More information is available at castrovalleyrotary.org

● Wednesdays, Jan. 8 - Mar. 4: Workplace Communications

If English is not your first language and you want to improve your speaking and presentation skills for work, Castro Valley Adult & Career Education is offering a class in Workplace Communication and Presentation Skills on nine Wednesdays beginning Jan. 8, with plenty of practice, interaction, and support. For advanced-level English learners. \$115. Register at www.cvadult.org, click on “Learn English” and complete the interest form, or call 510-886-1000.

● Thursday, January 9: Libertarian Party Election

The Libertarian Party of Alameda County will be hold its officer elections at 7:15 p.m. on Jan. 9 at The Englander Pub, 101 Parrott St., San Leandro. Membership not required to attend, but membership to the Libertarian Party and residency in Alameda County are required for officer eligibility. More info at lpac.us or at <http://www.facebook.com/LPAlamedaCounty/>

● Sunday, January 12: Tango Demonstration

The Castro Valley Library presents “Tango: A Lecture & Demonstration of Argentina’s Traditional Dance” at 2 p.m. on Jan.12. Jurek Mazur, from Academia de Tango Argentino, will present a multimedia talk on the roots, history, culture and etiquette of tango, with music and a special live performance. This program is in the Chabot Room, and no reservations are required. For more information call 510-667-7900, or see Events at www.aclibrary.org/branches/CSV.

● Wednesday, January 15: Creating a Secure Future

An Advance Health Care Directive lets you have a say about how you want to be cared for if you cannot speak for yourself. Learn about this important document at a free presentation by Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) of Legal Assistance for Seniors from 11 a.m. until noon on Jan. 15 at the Castro Valley Library. Learn what the directive is, how to complete the forms and appoint an agent, and more. No registration is necessary.

● Saturday, December 14: Buon Tempo Crab Feed

\$50 gets you all you can eat Alaskan Dungeness crab, pasta, and salad, with all proceeds going to the Bob Grazzini Memorial Scholarship Fund. No-host Happy Hour is 5-6 p.m., dinner at 6 at Transfiguration Church, 4000 East Castro Valley Blvd. in Castro Valley. Also a raffle for and silent auction (cash) for some very delicious desserts. Drink and raffle tickets sold at the event. To make reservations, send a check with number of tickets requested made out to the Buon Tempo Club to: Rick Martens, P.O. Box 2625 Fremont, CA 94536 before Dec. 12. Check in

at the door the day of the event. Over the past 30 years, Buon Tempo has given out over \$175,000 to students who are graduating high school, to help them pursue college and/or vocational training.

● Saturday, January 11: Social Justice Film & Discussion

The film, “Beyond the Wall” highlights the flood of prisoners returning to our streets and communities each year where they face tremendous challenges and barriers. Sponsored by the Castro Valley Community Alliance, it will be shown at 2 p.m. on Jan. 11 at the Castro Valley Library. The film vividly shows their struggles and strategies for survival beyond the walls of jail and prison. Following the screening, a panel of local re-entry experts will discuss their work and welcome your questions.

● Tuesday, January 14: Science Lecture: Animal Intelligence

Are humans really the most intelligent creatures on the planet? Join Castro Valley Science for its next talk: a fascinating look into unexpected levels of animal intelligence at 7 p.m. on Jan. 14 at the Castro Valley Library when PhD candidate Julie Hui of the Anthropology Department at UC Berkeley discusses examples of animal intelligence and explores animal language studies. Register now at <http://bit.ly/animal-talk>

Submissions to The Forum

News submissions as well as items for the Calendar Page must be received by 6 p.m. Friday for inclusion in the following Wednesday’s newspaper. Send information in an email to: fredz@ebpublishing.com.

Arts & Entertainment

CASTRO VALLEY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Tickets for Center for the Arts events (unless otherwise listed) are available at www.cvcfa.com; or at the Center Box Office, 19501 Redwood Road, Thursdays and Fridays 3-5 p.m. (phone 510-889-8961), or at the Castro Valley Adult School, 4430 Alma Avenue.

● **“Funny Fiddle”** — Chris Pendleton seamlessly blends hilarious stand-up comedy with her virtuoso violin playing into a fresh, funny, one-of-a-kind show at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25 at Center for the Arts, an entertainer you won’t want to miss! *For tickets, see above.*

ART GALLERIES, RECEPTIONS & ART INSTRUCTION

● **A.R.T., Inc. Members’ Show** will be presented from Jan. 18 to Feb. 1 at the Adobe Art Gallery, 20395 San Miguel Ave. Thursdays through Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. A free Artists’ Reception, open to the public, will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 18. Refreshments will be served. Sponsored by A.R.T., Inc. and the Castro Valley School District.

● **Veterans Art Project**, a group exhibition of artwork created by local Veterans and presented by the County Arts Commission and the Hayward Arts Council, will be on view at the John O’Lague Galleria at Hayward City Hall through Jan. 17.

● **Hayward 21st Century Library Grand Opening Exhibit** continues on the 2nd floor, featuring art by members of Sun Gallery and the Hayward Arts Council until Jan. 18.

AT THE CHABOT CINEMA 12/31 - 1/9

● **Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker**, PG-13

Tue 12/31 to Sun 1/5 - 12:45p, 4:15p, 7:45p

Mon 1/6 to Thu 1/9 - 3:45p, 7:15p

REGULAR GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

• **Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Council (MAC)** generally meets on land-use issues on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month, and holds general purpose meetings on most 3rd Mondays. Meetings are at 6 p.m. at the Castro Valley Library Chabot Room, 3600 Norbridge Avenue.

• **Castro Valley School Board** usually meets at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 4400 Alma Avenue.

• **Castro Valley Sanitary District (CVSan)** meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month at the District Headquarters, 21040 Marshall Street.

• **Alameda County Board of Supervisors** meets every Tuesday at 10:45 a.m. in the Supervisors’ Chambers in Oakland.

HOROSCOPE by Salomé

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ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Events could inspire adventurous Lambs looking to make a major career or personal move. But as always, get all the facts before rushing into any sort of deal or commitment.



TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) What seems to be a great opportunity could cause even usually practical Taureans to ignore their inner caution cues. Best to move carefully to avoid falling into unseen traps.



GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Need a holiday now that the seasonal festivities are behind you? Good idea. Plan to go someplace wonderful. You’ll return refreshed and more than ready for a new challenge.



CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Progress continues to be made on that pesky workplace problem. Meanwhile, don’t assume a personal situation will work itself out. Best to get more involved earlier than later.



LEO (July 23 to August 22) Catnaps are definitely recommended for Leos and Leonas who had been going at a hectic pace over the holidays. Adding relaxation time to your schedule helps restore your overdrawn energy reserves.



VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Sure, some of the new friends you made over the holidays might move out of your life at some point. But at least one might show significant “staying power” with some encouragement.



LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Encourage family members to join you in supporting a relative who could be facing a difficult emotional challenge in the New Year. Showing your love and concern helps keep his or her hopes up.



SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) While a long-deferred decision suddenly might take on some urgency after news on a related matter, you still need to weigh all factors carefully before deciding one way or the other.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) This is a good time to reassess the earlier plan you made for the New Year. Some elements you felt you could depend on to make it work might no longer carry that assurance.



CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Forming a renewed connection with a former associate is only the first step toward working out your new plans. Be prepared for problems, and deal with them as soon as they arise.



AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) A romantic situation that was going smoothly not too long ago might take a new turn. Be honest about your feelings before you decide whether to follow it or take another path.



PISCES (February 19 to March 20) The wise Pisces (that’s you, of course) will make sure everyone knows your plan to keep your options open and listen to all sides of the situation before making any decisions.

REAL ESTATE GALLERY

REAL ESTATE REALITY

By Carl Medford, CRS
Special to the Forum

GUEST COMMENTARY



2019: The Year of the Expired Listing

It is no secret the local housing market has shifted downward over the past 18 months.

When a market shifts, the group benefitting from the change adapts immediately, while the segment adversely affected takes much longer to adjust.

In this case, while the data shows a definite decrease in home values, many sellers are struggling with the new reality. Consequently, many seller wannabes, unable to come to terms with the new, lower home values, are listing their homes too high.

As a result, the number of expired and cancelled listings jumped dramatically in 2019.

Peeking in May/June 2018, Alameda County single family home prices began a slow descent that continued through December 2019. The market average, topping at \$1,119,000, dropped to \$948,000 in December 2018, a 15.3% reduction. January 2019 opened with a further descent before rebounding to \$1,084,000 in June 2019.

Even at its peak, 2019 prices were lower than 2018 highs and, like prices in 2018, dropped significantly heading into winter.

If there is any good news here, it is that the rapid declines of 2018 were not mirrored in 2019 as the year-ending average sales price was \$959,144, up a fraction from the 2018 December average.

One thing is clear: 2019 prices were lower than the 2018 peak and sellers, if they wish to sell their homes, must adapt to the new market realities. If they do not, we will continue to see a rise in expired and cancelled listings.

As expected, we saw a marginal drop in sales from 2018 to 2019 (81 homes), but witnessed a dramatic 51.6% increase in

expired listings and a 22.1% jump in canceled listings. If we trace the numbers back to 2017, we see a 58.4% surge in expireds and a 59% upturn in canceled listings.

This indicates a fundamental shift from canceled listings (removed for any number of reasons) to expired listings (did not sell because the price was too high).

For this reason, I am going to label 2019 as The Year of the Expired Listing.

While some sellers like the strategy of listing high and then

adjusting downward, market research indicates buyers are too smart to play that game. Sensing a home is overpriced, they simply stay away. Consequently, overpriced homes languish on the market.

In reality, it is better to price it right from the beginning than keep lowering the price and chasing the market down.

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.

Mortgage Rates Change Little

The 30-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 3.74 percent last week, according to Freddie Mac's weekly survey.

"The 30-year fixed-rate mortgage rate saw little change again this week and

averaged just 3.9% during 2019, the fourth lowest annual average level since 1971 when Freddie Mac started its weekly survey," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's chief economist.

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OPEN HOMES

SAT. & SUN.
JAN. 4 & JAN. 5



No Open Homes Are Scheduled for this Weekend.

One-Line Open Home Listings run Wednesdays in the Castro Valley Forum (22,500 circ.) and Thursdays in the San Leandro Times (38,500 circ.) for \$25. For more information and a listing form, call 614-1558. DEADLINE: TUESDAY AT NOON.

CITY GUIDE

A = SAN LEANDRO • B = BERKELEY • C = CASTRO VALLEY • D = DUBLIN • F = FREMONT • H = HAYWARD
L = LIVERMORE • M = MODESTO • S = SHEFFIELD VILLAGE • SLZ = SAN LORENZO • W = WALNUT CREEK • Z = ALAMEDA



All real estate advertised in the Castro Valley Forum is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, marital status, national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. The Castro Valley Forum will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate that is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.



This home was reconstructed in 2008 to a beautiful 3 bedroom + office, 2 bathroom, 1,968 sq. ft. home with an attached 2-car garage. Inside, there is a spacious master suite, an open and modern kitchen and family room, and a formal dining room. Amenities include central heat and A/C and upgraded electrical. Prime central location near highly rated schools, shopping, restaurants, BART and easy access to freeways.



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Spray

The Yuletide season is a reminder to apply the second round of dormant oil spray to deciduous fruit trees, shrubs and roses. The spray should be applied through mid-January whenever you can expect several days of dry weather above 40 degrees.

Shopping for Bulbs

Summer-flowering bulbs can be planted in the coming weeks for cut flowers and garden colors in spring. You'll find a fresh crop of bulbs for gladioluses (plant at three-to-four week intervals from January through March) and begonias (set the tubers in peat moss to sprout, then pot up in larger containers).

Macadamia Nut Trees Grow 50-plus Feet

By Buzz Bertolero
Special to the Forum

Q We purchased a small Macadamia Nut tree from one of the gift shops at the Honolulu International Airport. It's sitting on the back porch. I'd like to plant in the spring. Can you give me some care instructions?

A Macadamia trees are a large evergreen reaching a height of

50-plus feet with a wide spread. It's easy to grow, taking the same care and fertilizer as an avocado, but they don't start producing until they're between seven and ten years old.

The nuts are somewhat problematical to harvest as the nuts fall randomly from the tree when they're mature. Besides, a tough shell protects the nut, they aren't easy to crack. But the biggest drawback is that they're very susceptible to cold

weather damage. That's why very few are grown in California.

Note: Macadamia trees, also known as the Queensland Nut, are native to Australia. It's the only native Australian plant introduced into the United States that is used as a food source.

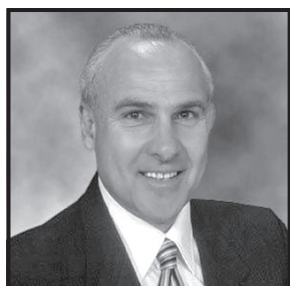
Buzz Bertolero is an Advance California Certified Nursery Professional. The Dirt Gardener's website is www.dirtgardener.com and questions can be sent

by email to buzz@dirtgardener.com or on Facebook at [Facebook.com/Buzz.Bertolero](https://www.facebook.com/Buzz.Bertolero)



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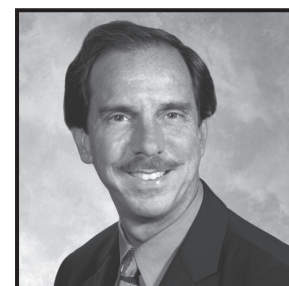
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Pruning Improves Air Circulation, Disease Control for Dwarf Peaches

By Buzz Bertolero
Special to the Forum

Q Sitting on my deck is a Genetic Dwarf Peach in a container that I planted last spring. How do I go about pruning it since it's a compact and bushy grower?

A The popularity of genetic dwarf fruit trees is increasing as gardeners with small yards look to pick homegrown fruit.

The bushy, compact growth habit comes from the space between two leaves, also called internodes, which is very short. They're also desirable, as you don't need a tall ladder to manage them; although, some varieties can grow to ten feet if left unpruned.

Genetic dwarf peaches and nectarines are excellent

container plants on decks patios and balconies. They're often used as a substitute for citrus along with making handsome landscape shrubs and require little pruning each year.

Pruning involves thinning the branches to open up the canopy to maintain the height and spread of the tree. It also strengthens limbs by removing entire branches instead of reducing their length.

It would help if you had strong branches to support the weight of the fruit. Fruit production occurs on the extremities of the higher branches, so removing this growth is not a severe problem. You should also remove any of the rubbing and crossing branches, keeping those branches that best add to the overall shape of the plant. This improves the air circulation, which is essential for

controlling disease and allows more sunlight to reach the ripening fruits in the center of the trees.

The dead or dying twigs and branches should also be removed. This dieback tends to occur in the lower section due to the shading from the dense growth. Remove any unwanted growth and suckers on an as-needed basis during the balance of the year.

And finally, genetic dwarf peaches and nectarines are susceptible to Peach Leaf Curl. You apply a Copper Fungicide

starting in late November. Right now, I'd make two applications with the last one occurring just as the buds are swelling and showing color. This is called 'the pink bud' stage.

Buzz Bertolero is an Advance California Certified Nursery Professional. The Dirt Gardener's website is www.dirtgardener.com and questions can be sent by email to buzz@dirtgardener.com or on Facebook at [Facebook.com/Buzz.Bertolero](https://www.facebook.com/Buzz.Bertolero)



Houseplant care

- Allow tap water to warm to room temperature before using on houseplants.
- Kill white mealy bugs by touching them with a cotton swab soaked in rubbing alcohol.
- Quarantine new gift plants to be sure they do not harbor any insect pests. - B. Weaver

RECENT HOME SALES

Castro Valley

20600 Waterford Place	94552: \$675,000	2 BD - 1,440 SF - 1981
2270 Star Avenue	94546: \$675,000	2 BD - 1,141 SF - 1948
18366 Joseph Drive	94546: \$735,000	3 BD - 1,172 SF - 1954
22032 Cameron Street	94546: \$750,000	3 BD - 1,386 SF - 1947
TOTAL SALES:	4	
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$675,000	MEDIAN AMOUNT: \$705,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$750,000	AVERAGE AMOUNT: \$708,750

San Leandro

15070 Norton Street	94579: \$300,000	2 BD - 965 SF - 1949
1833 Hillview Drive	94577: \$560,000	3 BD - 1,850 SF - 1962
357 Durant Avenue	94577: \$575,000	3 BD - 2,010 SF - 1925
16052 Berkshire Road	94578: \$641,000	2 BD - 1,002 SF - 1949
1261 Margery Avenue	94578: \$655,000	2 BD - 1,058 SF - 1947
802 Estudillo Avenue	94577: \$930,000	3 BD - 2,208 SF - 1926
330 Beverly Avenue	94577: \$970,000	4 BD - 2,185 SF - 1946
TOTAL SALES:	7	
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$300,000	MEDIAN AMOUNT: \$641,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$970,000	AVERAGE AMOUNT: \$661,571

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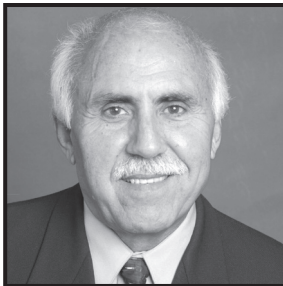
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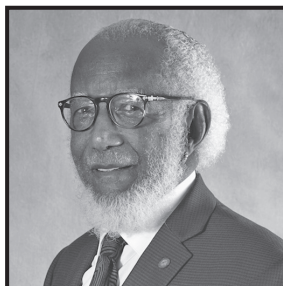
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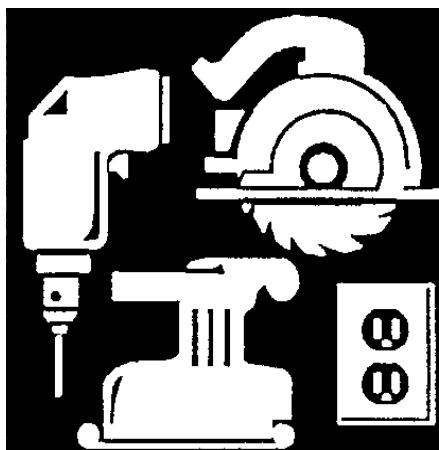
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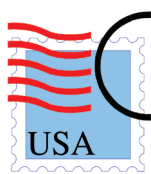
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Season's Greetings & Sincere Wishes for a Safe & Joyful New Year

From the staff of the Castro Valley Forum

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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A Good Story to Share

Editor:

On Tuesday, Dec. 17, my sister and I had a tire completely shred apart on Dublin Canyon Road. We are senior ladies and longtime Castro Valley residents.

A man, who we will call Santa Claus (because we do not know his name), a construction worker about 50 years old who was on his way for medical help with a bleeding finger, stopped to help us.

We had a plate of cookies in the car (meant for someone else) which we gave to him.

After he changed our tire and accepted the cookies, he gave us a wave as he drove out of sight, just like Santa Claus.

We felt blessed and wanted to share this story of his kindness and generosity.

—Joni Hales, Castro Valley

A Plea to Dog Owners

Editor:

Keep your dog on a leash at all times!

There is a leash law at-all-times for a reason.

I had a most unfortunate incident on Christmas Eve walking my

leashed Daschund on the public trails inside Chabot Lake park. An unleashed full-grown German Shepard charged and attacked my dog. My dog, in a panic of flight, reared and escaped her collar and took off running.

I live a mile and a half away from where we were. The owners of the Shepard were far behind with their other two dogs. The Shepard was not interested in abiding by the owner's commands, it was intent on attacking my dog.

This was a violent, horrific and traumatizing event for my dog and myself. Whether or not you think your dog is friendly and just wants to play, dogs will act according to their instincts.

As responsible pet owners we have to put those canine instincts in our own hands, literally, with a leash at all times. The public has the obligation of responsibility when we take on owning pets. If we all just abide by the leash rules and laws of the parks where we walk our dogs this situation would have not occurred.

How many of our neighbors are afraid to walk their dogs because of the irresponsible, gross negligence of a few that don't follow the leash law. There are off-leash parks in the area, go there to untether your dog, and let the rest of us exercise our dogs in peace.

—Jonathan Schumann, Castro Valley

Women Taking On Corporate Predators

Editor:

The ugly daily reality of the nationwide housing crisis is forcing new leaders to organize around the vision of housing as a human right.

Oakland's #moms4housing is a protest against global corporate investment groups that are buying up and hoarding housing — not to shelter people but to shelter billions in investment money while sprawling homeless encampments grow nearby, along with sky high rents and housing insecurity.

No political party protects workers from the death grip of corporate predators. A national epidemic of evictions, homelessness, and housing insecurity is spreading to every region of the country.

In California, over half of renters pay over one third of their income for housing, and over a third pay more than half. Hundreds of thou-

sands are homeless.

To build an effective movement we need to understand the real cause — the capitalist economy that is failing us. Why? Because automation dominates the production of things everywhere across the world.

Robots cost less than human workers, so jobs are disappearing as we speak, and they are not coming back. Together these situations have caused the rise of the broadest and deepest movement for housing in the history of the U.S.

Oakland's #moms4housing are the latest expression toward unity that are beginning to overcome the scattered, divided, and localized nature that has characterized the struggle so far. Women are standing against corporate predators and taking steps toward a new economy that puts human beings and the planet first.

—Ethel Long-Scott, Oakland

More Tom Lorentzen Columns!

Editor:

I enjoyed reading Tom Lorentzen's article ("Math and the Meaning of Christmas," Page 12) in the December 25th Forum as I have his other articles.

In this article Tom said "Our gratitude can be expressed with a simple smile, hug or expression. This is what Christmas is about --- to find the good in life and express gratitude."

Tom, thank you and please write as many articles for the Forum as possible.

—Janice Loomer

Long time Castro Valley resident

On the Road to Recovery in a Year?

Editor:

Wow, Mr. Hauer ("Calls Trump Impeachment 'Unconstitutional'," Letters, Dec. 25) you should "chill out" letting those anti-trumpers bother you! You must recall a week ago a Trump tweeted Greta Thunberg, you know, the 16-year-old Times person of the year beating out the president. He told her she has anger management issues because she was getting excited about climate-change deniers.

In one year Trump will be voted out and America will once again be on the road to recovery of a President that was just short of a dictator. So chill, please.

—Jack Gayle, Castro Valley

December 18: Impeachment Day

Editor:

I'm one of many, many #VeteransAgainstTrump ... trained to know the danger the Kremlin (the Russian MOB) poses to our Republic.

December 18th is also the anniversary of the day I raised my right hand and took the Oath of Office to become a military officer atop the Campanile on the Berkeley campus.

Thank God my (now-deceased) brother recorded the moment; my hubby digitized this 4-minute clip for this milestone.

Colonel Corbett, my Air Force ROTC Professor of Aerospace Studies at Cal, brilliantly invoked the words of a Holocaust survivor and Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega as he distinguished between taking an Oath to defend the Constitution, as we do in our Republic, and declaring loyalty to a dictator.

(We removed Noriega in the invasion 24 hours after this commissioning ceremony!)

Those who follow me on Instagram (graciela.tiscarenosato) & Twitter (@mama_gts) see my relentless, daily support of our Constitution as a member of #TheResistance.

Watch this clip to viscerally understand *why* I care so damn much and *why* I activate my fellow citizens daily to #RiseUp.

I'm thrilled to share this video for the firsts time ever on #ImpeachmentDay on my Instagram feed. It's poetic timing. I have goosebumps... https://www.instagram.com/p/B6OqDuUgVVc/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

—Grace Tiscareno-Sato, Castro Valley

On the Impeachment of President Trump

Editor:

A recent letter to The Forum mistakenly calls the impeachment of President Trump unconstitutional. The superficial critique fails for several reasons.

First, the July Trump-Zelensky phone call jeopardized U.S. national security in two respects: revelation of foreign interference in the 2020 election would diminish public confidence in the integrity of the outcome; and delaying or withholding military aid to Ukraine might obliterate a buffer between an expansionist Russia and our democratic allies in Europe, perhaps requiring eventual deployment of U.S. troops pursuant to NATO obligations.

Second, the Articles of Impeachment allege an Abuse of Power and Obstruction of Congress. The Constitution establishes Congress as the first coequal branch of government.

President Trump's blanket defiance of congressional subpoenas impairs the House's oversight authority in derogation of Separation of Powers.

Likewise, compromising national interests for purely personal and political gain defies Separation of Powers, in effect elevating the Executive branch to the status of a king.

Letters continue on page 11

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ANSWERS ON PAGE 3

Margaret "Peggy" Ward

Margaret "Peggy" Mary Foley Ward of Castro Valley and, more recently, San Rafael, passed away on December 27, 2019 at the age of 86 surrounded by her family.

Peggy was born on August 31, 1933 in Portland Maine. She moved to San Francisco at the age of three. She attended Most Holy Redeemer Grammar School, St. Brigid's High School and Holy Names College. She moved to the East Bay when she married her husband Raymond "Ray" Ward. Peggy and Ray raised their four children in Castro Valley.

Peggy taught second grade at Our Lady of Grace school in Castro Valley for 15 years. She loved taking daily walks around Lake Chabot and swimming at Chabot Swim Club and Bay-O-Vista. Peggy was famous for her Irish Soda Bread and generous spirit.

Peggy is survived by her children Michael Ward (Katie) of San Rafael, Barbara Peters (Bill) of San Rafael, Mary Pat Fredrick (Doug) of New York City and James Ward (Laura) of San Francisco and grandchildren Bridget, Tommy, Patrick, Kevin, Matthew, Mary Elizabeth and Annie.

Friends and Family are invited to a Memorial Service on Thursday, January 2nd at 11 a.m. at Our Lady of Grace Church, 3433 Somerset Ave., Castro Valley, CA. In lieu of flowers, donations in her name can be made to UCSF Care at Home program.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEFANSALINAS.COM

What's Up at Smalltown

Save the date — Saturday, January 25th — for an inspirational and lively afternoon from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at Smalltown Society. Mike "No Name" Nelson will interview Bay Area author, illustrator, and muralist Stefan Salinas as he presents his book "A Muslim Family's Chair for the Pope." What better way to compliment this interfaith story than with live music from sufi rock band 7 Stations and Cafe Rumi's signature "pink chai." This event, for all ages, is sponsored by Eden Interfaith Council hosted by Smalltown Society. The event will be a donation-based entry suggested at \$15.

For more details on this event and others visit www.smalltown-society.com or text "Smalltown" to 797979. Smalltown Society is located at 22222 Redwood Road, Castro Valley.

School: For Resolutions

continued from page 2

Healthy Way in 2020 class by a respected nutritionist who also teaches a companion cooking class.

Finally, focus on why you have set this goal. Hanna says that by focusing on the benefit you will receive will help you stay committed when you might feel weak.

Write a note on your bathroom mirror that says, "I want to make our family gatherings more memorable." Look at that in the morning to help you get our advanced cake decorating class or to sign up for woodworking to create a family heirloom.

So what is your resolution? Whether your goal is getting a new job, planning your estate, finishing your high school diploma or finally learning Spanish, Castro Valley Adult and Career Education has a class.

For more information and to sign up, visit www.cvadult.org. Take a class and find yourself among the 8% next January saying, "I did it!"

Linette Escobar is Marketing Chair for Castro Valley Adult and Career Education.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Lauren Green

This week's Athlete of the Week is Lauren Green, a sophomore at Castro Valley High School.

She plays point guard and is one of the team captains for the CVHS Varsity girls basketball team and is averaging 11.2 points, 1.3 assists, 8.5 rebounds, 5.3 steals, and 1.3 blocks per game.

Green has had 3 double-doubles, throughout the first twelve games, with 15 points, 10 rebounds against Granada and 15 points, 10 rebounds versus Moreau Catholic.

Most recently, she scored 18 points with 12 rebounds and 6 steals to help her team win 63-53 against Atwater, on Friday, in the West Coast Jamboree-Quartz division, held at Alhambra High School in Martinez.

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Continued from page 10

status of a king.

Third, the standard for impeachment is commission of "High Crimes and Misdemeanors." That isn't synonymous with a statutory crime; if it were, presidents could be removed for a variety of fairly minor misdemeanors such as public intoxication, which hardly rises to the gravity of an impeachable offense.

Fourth, the Articles of Impeachment embody admirable restraint, rather than the hyper-partisanship claimed by the letter. The Trump regime has committed a number of impeachable offenses (including statutory crimes) not presently charged, such as Obstruction of Justice cited by "The Mueller Report"; conspiracy to violate campaign finance laws in concert with ex-fixer Michael Cohen; and violation of the Constitution's "Take Care" Clause by failing to enforce the Affordable Care Act, putting at risk health insurance for millions.

In sum, far from undermining the Constitution, the Articles comprise a commendable attempt to preserve the Republic.

—Gregory Sarno, Castro Valley

Exploitation of Farm Animals

Editor:

Thousands of Nativity Scenes graced the nation's churches, civic centers and homes in the spirit of peace and goodwill to all. Most featured adoring farm animals gathered around the Holy Family in a manger: cattle, horses, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, et al.

Ironically, these are the very same animals exploited in the nation's rodeo arenas throughout the rest of the year, where they are routinely terrorized, brutalized, crippled and often killed, all in the name of a bogus, macho "entertainment." There are connections to be made here, folks! I can't believe that either Jesus or God would approve. Nor should anyone else.

—Eric Mills, coordinator, Action for Animals, Oakland

A Disregard for People's Culture and Religion

Editor:

I agree with Carol Sholin ("On National Origin," Letters, Dec. 18). The executive order by Trump to turn Judaism into a nationality was done simply to assuage the messianic fantasies of born again Christians who make up part of his cult base.

The action by Trump is yet another example of the man's total ignorance and disregard of people's culture and religion. Nancy Pelosi, stop praying for this sociopath.

—Robert Thomas, Castro Valley

Laws: Police Use of Deadly Force; Cannabis Industry

Continued from page 3

ing order could be renewed.

• SB 61 extends the prohibition from buying more than one handgun a month to include semiautomatic rifles as well. The law that prohibits people from purchasing more than a handgun a month would be extended to those who want to buy a long gun as well. The law would also restrict people under the age of 21 from buying a gun.

Police Use of Deadly Force

• Assembly Bill 392 revises the standard under which a law enforcement officer can use deadly force, limiting to when an officer "reasonably believes" it is necessary, including when defending against an imminent threat of death or serious injury to themselves or another individual. Senate Bill 230 mandates police

agencies rewrite use-of-force policies and provide officers with mandatory training in order to comply with the new law.

Criminal Justice

• SB 310 allows convicted felons who have completed their sentences, parole, probation and supervision to serve as jurors.

Cannabis Industry

• Assembly Bill 34 allows licensed marijuana retailers to donate cannabis to medical patients

who have difficulty accessing it through compassionate care programs while excluding the cultivation tax.

Non-Citizens Appointments

• Senate Bill 225 allows non-citizens living in California, regardless of immigration status, to serve on appointed government boards and commissions if they are 18 or older. It is not applicable to elective civil offices.

Food

• AB 205 expands the definition of beer to include alcoholic beverages fermented with fruit, honey, herbs and other newly approved ingredients.

• AB 619 allows restaurant customers to bring, and eat from, their own food containers and silverware. It also allows food vendors at fairs, festivals, and Farmers' Markets to use reusable items, which has been against the code until now.

Church Group Provides Christmas Meals

A number of local families in need had a merrier Christmas this year thanks to the Rapid Relief Team, the charitable arm of the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church.

Team members gave out 50

holiday meals of ham, potatoes, stuffing, beans, corn, and desserts to 50 families on Christmas Eve morning at the Certified Tire store on Castro Valley Boulevard.

With help from the Alameda County Food Bank, the Team was

able to provide outreach to the families to help them enjoy the holiday season, with a complete dinner.

For more information on the organization, visit their website at: <https://us.rapidreliefteam.org/>

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FILE NO. 565920

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business:
Health Approaches at 20891 San Miguel Ave., Castro Valley, CA 94546, in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Thomas Lorentzen, 20891 San Miguel Ave., Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced in 2011.
/s/ Thomas Lorentzen
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires NOVEMBER 27, 2024
DEC 18, 25, 2019 JAN 01, 08, 2020 0191-CVF

FILED
DECEMBER 06, 2019
MELISSA WILK
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By _____, Deputy
FILE NO. 566229

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business:
Lavender Hair & Nails Spa, Inc. at 1647 Industrial Pkwy West, Hayward, CA 94544, in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Lavender Hair & Nails Spa, Inc., 1647 Industrial Pkwy West, Hayward, CA 94544. This business is conducted by a corporation. This business commenced 6/13/2013.
/s/ Lavender Hair & Nails Spa, Inc.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires DECEMBER 06, 2024
DEC 18, 25, 2019 JAN 01, 08, 2020 0195-CVF

FILED
DECEMBER 18, 2019
MELISSA WILK
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By _____, Deputy
FILE NO. 566645-647

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the businesses:
(1) Private Eye Real Estate Appraisal Services, (2) Private Eye Appraisal Services, (3) Private Eye Appraisals at 5168 Cunningham Court, Castro Valley, CA 94546, in Alameda County are hereby registered by the following owner(s): Todd Allen Nicklous, 5168 Cunningham Court, Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced May 2000.
/s/ Todd Allen Nicklous
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.
Expires DECEMBER 18, 2024
JAN 01, 08, 15, 22, 2020 0200-CVF

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

SENIORS

What You Should Know About Gift Taxes

Q: My wife and I are considering making large gifts to our two children and four grandchildren, and we would like to do so in a way that is "tax wise." Do you have any advice for us?

By Gene L. Osofsky, Esq.
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

A: Yes. Many people mistakenly believe that you cannot gift more than \$15,000 per year without incurring a gift tax.

Not so. In fact, many will be surprised to learn that in 2019 an individual who is a U.S. Citizen can actually gift up to \$11.4 million during lifetime (increasing to \$11.58 Million in 2020) without incurring a gift tax under the current Tax Cuts & Jobs Act ("TCJA").

This is called the Lifetime Exemption Amount. ("LEA"). The LEA is an exemption that can be used to make gifts during lifetime, or at death, or by a combination thereof.

But the sum total of gifts during life and at death cannot exceed the exemption amount, or a gift or estate tax will be due.

Here is the way gift taxes work:

Annual Exclusion Gifts:

No Gift Tax Return Required:

1) \$15,000 Per Year: Each of you can gift up to \$15,000 per year per recipient without the need to file a Gift Tax Return. Such gifts are called "Annual Exclusion Amount" (AEA) Gifts and you can make such gifts to as many persons as you wish each year.

As the name implies, none of these gifts would reduce your Lifetime Exemption Amount.

2) "Doubling Up": If you and your wife are in a position to do so, together you can actually double that amount for each gift recipient.

So, together, you could gift a total of \$30,000 to each recipient for a total of \$180,000 to your loved ones (\$15,000 x 2 donors x 6 recipients), and none of these gifts would require the filing of a Gift Tax Return, the payment of any gift tax, or any reduction in either of your LEAs!

Gifts Above the Annual Exclusion:

Gift Tax Return Required:

1) Lifetime Exemption: If you choose to make gifts above the



A U.S. Citizen can gift over \$11 million during lifetime without incurring a gift tax.

\$15K Annual Exclusion Amount, then you can still make them gift tax free by using a portion of your Lifetime Exemption Amount (also called the "Unified Credit").

However, for these larger gifts, a Gift Tax Return is required so that the IRS can track your use of your lifetime exemption and subtract it from the amount of your estate tax exemption available for use at your death. But unless the cumulative total of your lifetime gifts exceeds your LEA, no actual tax would be due.

2) Deceased Spouse: Unused Exemption Can Be Preserved: In a situation where one spouse has died, the surviving spouse can — by making a timely election — preserve the deceased spouse's unused Lifetime Exemption Amount for the survivor's own use, thereby effectively doubling it.

Cautions: Before making large gifts, be sure that you can afford to do so, and that your gift recipients will use the money wisely. Lastly, if there is a possibility that either of you may need to apply for a Medi-Cal subsidy for nursing home care within the next 2.5 years (soon to be 5 years), you should first consult a professional with special knowledge about the Medi-Cal program before making those gifts.

Reason: Gift transfers may adversely affect your ability to qualify for a Medi-Cal subsidy unless those gifts are handled in a very special manner.

Gene L. Osofsky is an elder law and estate planning attorney in Hayward. Visit his website at www.LawyerForSeniors.com.



Artists' proposals for Corridor Improvement Projects in Ashland and San Lorenzo are currently on display at the San Lorenzo Library. Community members are invited to share their opinions when they visit.

Art Projects Coming to Ashland, San Lorenzo

The Alameda County Arts Commission is launching two major public arts projects to beautify and make streets safer for people walking, biking and driving in Ashland, San Lorenzo and along Hesperian Blvd.

Artists' proposals for both Corridor Improvement Projects are available for viewing at the San Lorenzo Library, 395 Paseo Grande, now through January 26.

Community members can submit comments in person at the library or by visiting the website bit.ly/PublicArt_CorridorProjects.

The County's Arts Commission and Public Works Agency are working together to revitalize the

corridors and increase community pride.

Feedback collected this fall from residents and local artists during a series of meetings and roundtables will be considered by the Artist Selection Committees when they reconvene in February to select one artist for each of the projects. Everyone is invited to give feedback.

Those wishing to receive updates about the projects should send an email to artscommission@acgov.org to be added to the Arts Commission's email list.

For more information about the Public Arts Programs, call 510-208-9646 or visit www.acgov.org/arts.

Hope Hospice Offers Free Class on Dementia Basics

Since dementia dramatically changes the ways that individuals think, perceive, and use language, caring for a loved one with dementia presents a unique set of challenges.

On Saturday, Jan. 11, Hope Hospice will offer a free presentation "Living With Dementia: Dementia Basics" with basic information about the nature and progression of dementia and the various diseases and conditions that can produce its symptoms.

This class will take place at Hope Hospice, 6377 Clark Avenue, 2nd floor, in Dublin. Free

parking on site. Coffee and light refreshments are served at 9:45 a.m. and the class is in session from 10 a.m. to noon.

An optional caregiver support group convenes after class from 12:15 to 1:45 p.m.; bring your own bag lunch if desired.

Classes in Hope's Family Caregiver Education Series are offered to the community for free, though donations are gratefully accepted.

Registration is required. The complete series schedule and registration details are available online at hopehospice.com/family, or call 925-829-8770.

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ADOPT-A-PET

MONTE is a 1-year-old boy who's shy, yet enjoys attention. Once he feels comfortable with you, he'll crawl into your lap for pets and cuddles. OK with other small dogs and possibly dog-friendly cats. Hayward Animal Shelter, 510-293-7200.

TEDDY is a shy, 1-year-old pup who likes soft warm beds that have a cover so he can feel hidden and safe. He'd do best in a quiet home with teens and adults. He needs a patient family and a little TLC. Hayward Animal Shelter, 510-293-7200.

ENZO is a very petite, 5 month old orange tuxedo boy. He's super sweet and loves to snuggle with his foster mom and foster mates. Neutered, vaccinated, microchipped and FIV/FelV negative. Email: Loveallpawz-rescue@gmail.com.

JADE is an extra special, 1 year old orange beauty. Only 20% of orange cats are female! She's sweet, affectionate and loves attention. Spayed, vaccinated, microchipped and FIV/FelV negative. Email: Loveallpawz-rescue@gmail.com.