

# CV Tree Lighting



# CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SERVING CASTRO VALLEY SINCE 1989

YEAR 31

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2019

NO. 48

## INSIDE YOUR FORUM

### NEWS



#### Big Book Sale

Annual Winter Book Sale by the Friends of the CV Library this weekend

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### LIVING



#### Holiday Cookies

Nothing says the holiday season like the smell of freshly-baked cookies

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### NEWS



#### Holiday Shipping

The U.S. Postal Service has released shipping deadlines for the holidays

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PHONE: (510) 614-1560

### WEATHER

## Clouds, Showers Forecast Through Rest of the Week

Stormy weather is expected to continue over the Bay Area with clouds and rain showers forecast through the rest of the week.

Although Castro Valley has received over an inch of rain since the storms began last week, totals are still well below normal for this time of year.

Showers and occasional rain are predicted for the next two days.

On Thursday evening or Friday morning, another wet weather system from the Northwest is due to hit the East Bay with forecasters saying the so-called "storm door" remains open through the weekend.

Over the past weekend, more than seven inches of rain fell in a 48-hour period on the coast around the Big Sur area and up to four feet of snow piled up in parts of the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Chains were required on I-80 where westbound big rigs were turned back at the Nevada state line. A rock slide on Highway 50 blocked the westbound lane for a time on Monday afternoon.

Several feet of new snow is expected to fall beginning on the weekend.

The National Weather Service issued a wind advisory through 3 a.m. Monday. Gusts of up to 60 mph were reported in some areas.

Some 300 flights were canceled Sunday at San Francisco International Airport and more than 100 were delayed. Short delays were also reported on many flights at Oakland International.

The weather caused a series of power outages, mostly in San Francisco and the South Bay.

High temperatures in Castro Valley will mostly be in the low 60s for the next week.



PHOTO BY FRED ZEHNDER

Eli and Sam Rykoff of Castro Valley dodge raindrops and hail as they head to lunch on the Boulevard on Sunday.

## Castro Valley Rising Star Ricardo Garcia On Center Stage for 'Bravissimo' Dec. 14

By Terry Liebowitz  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

Castro Valley's Ricardo Garcia and Philip Skinner star in "Bravissimo—From Opera to Broadway," at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14 at the Castro Valley Center for the Arts.

They will be joined by soprano Vivian Yau singing familiar opera, Broadway and holiday classics. Kevin Korth will accompany the singers.

Ricardo (aka Ricky) grew up in Castro Valley, attending Independent Elementary, Creekside Middle and Castro Valley High School.

As a youth he dreamed of baseball as a career, but that began to change when Ricardo started singing at church and in school musicals.

His voice caused heads to turn

and his pianist Uncle J. C. labeled Ricardo's voice "a special gift" at age 12. As his tenor range developed, it became clear that opera was his future.

In preparation, Ricardo studied voice at University of Pacific and earned his graduate degree from San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Ricardo has discovered that becoming an opera star takes tenacity and diligence.

"You must hold yourself accountable since you don't work a regular 9-5 job," he explained. He just returned from a week in New York City auditioning for the Houston Grand Opera and Boston Lyric Opera.

Some companies require the singer to prepare arias in every language, while others request only the language that will be used



Ricardo Garcia

in their particular season. Preparation for these auditions is intense!

As a sample of his busy schedule, last week Ricardo sang the tenor role in the Messiah with the Pacific Chamber Orchestra. Dec.13-24 he plays the part of Jo-

seph in the Christmas Miracle at 3 Crosses Church in Castro Valley.

After winning the San Francisco Metropolitan Opera Council competition, Ricardo will travel to Los Angeles to compete in the regional contest.

Later in January he moves to Portland for a 6 month residency with the Portland Opera. There he will sing Beppe in Pagliacci as well as the tenor lead in two other operas.

Ricardo credits his teacher Cesar Ulloa and his New York agent Gloria Parker for believing in him.

"They saw things in me that I didn't know I could achieve," he admits.

For ticket info, please visit: [www.cvartsfoundation.org/shows](http://www.cvartsfoundation.org/shows)

Terry Liebowitz is a founding member of the Castro Valley Arts Foundation.

## Armed Robbery at Qwik Stop

### SUSPECT IS AT LARGE

The Alameda County Sheriff's Office is investigating an armed robbery that occurred early Monday morning at the 24-hour Quik Stop convenience store at 20757 Lake Chabot Road.

Just after 4:30 a.m. an individual brandishing a weapon robbed the store, getting away with an undisclosed amount of cash, according to Sheriff's Sgt. Ray Kelly.

Anyone who may have information is asked to call the Sheriff's Office.



## Castro Valley Weather Dec. 4 - 8, 2019



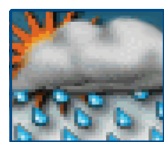
Wednesday  
Cloudy, Showers  
High 59° Low 47°



Thursday  
Cloudy, Showers  
High 62° Low 54°



Friday  
Rainy  
High 62° Low 54°



Saturday  
Rainy  
High 61° Low 51°



Sunday  
Cloudy, Showers  
High 64° Low 44°

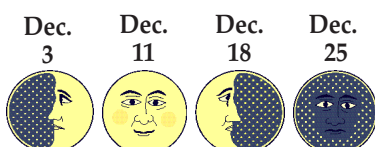
### Almanac



Sun sets at 4:51 p.m. today, rises at 7:00 a.m. Thursday.

Past Week's Rain: 01.60  
Season To Date: 01.98  
Normal To Date: 04.22  
Season Average: 21.22

### Moon Phases



## To Advertise Call:

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# Neighbors Oppose Proposed 72-Unit Housing Complex

(Editor's Note: Due to a production error, last week's Page 1 story about the Nov. 25th MAC Meeting was incomplete. Here is the full version)

By Amy Sylvestri  
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

Dozens of residents of the area of Grove Way, Crescent St., and A St. spoke at Monday night's meeting of the Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) mostly to oppose a proposed affordable housing project in the area.

The project, the Ruby Street Apartments, is a four-story 72-unit complex which Eden Housing wants to build on a 3-acre parcel of land currently owned by Caltrans.

Neighbors told the MAC that they were worried about traffic,

that the project would be too high density, it would require heritage trees to be cut down, it would displace wildlife which live in the San Lorenzo Creek, and that construction would necessitate digging up Native American artifacts.

"I live in the immediate area," said speaker Dave McDermott. "How these are considered parcels is beyond me because I think it's more of a habitat. The reason this is happening is that habitats don't make any people any money."

The MAC heard public testimony for nearly two hours, most of which encouraged them to vote against recommending the project.

"None of my neighbors are in favor of this project," said Crescent Ave. resident Ed Thomas. "There is a lyric from an old '70s song that goes 'pave paradise, put

up a parking lot, and that's exactly what they want to do."

But some speakers told the MAC they were in favor of the development, citing an urgent need for housing.

Speaker Julie Greenfield said she loves the open space but, realistically, housing must be created and even smaller projects help fill that need.

"Infill is the most sensible way to go," said Greenfield. "I encourage you to approve this project."

In the end, MAC Chair Marc Crawford told the county and developers to listen to the public feedback they've received and prepare to answer those concerns at a future meeting which will be devoted entirely to this specific land use.

see MAC on back page

## 'CHRISTMAS IN OZ'

# New Musical About Old Friends Next Week at Morrisson Theatre

This holiday season, the Douglas Morrisson Theatre and East Bay Children's Theatre are decking the halls with the splashy musical "Christmas In Oz," a show for the entire family.

For the first time ever, these two venerated companies are joining forces to give a holiday gift to Bay Area audiences from Dec. 13-22.

It's Christmas Time again and somewhere in Kansas, Dorothy is lonely for her friends back in Oz.

And so, with the help of the kindly Mr. Tinker, she builds herself a magical wish machine, and returns to the Emerald City—just in time for the big holiday celebration.

But the holly is quickly stripped of its jolly when a sassy sorceress named Nefariosa crashes the party and kidnaps Santa Claus!

Now Dorothy must recruit the Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion to help her rescue Saint Nick and save Christmas for the entire world.

"Christmas In Oz" is an enchanting, full-length Broadway-style musical treat for the entire family. L. Frank Baum's classic characters have been beloved by young and old for nearly 120 years. And now, a cast of all-new characters has been added to the glittering residents of Baum's magical world.

The script and score overflow with unforgettable songs, exciting dance numbers, classic comedy, and magical special effects. And



PHOTO BY EAST BAY CHILDREN'S THEATRE

IT'S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS... IN OZ! Dorothy (Jordyn Foley) meets a mysterious new friend in the musical "Christmas in Oz."

it's all the brainchild of the Bay Area's own theatrical wizard, Ron Lytle, creator of "The Man Who Saved Christmas," "Oh My God-mother!" and more than a dozen other musicals.

The exceptional cast is a lineup of talent gathered from throughout

the entire Bay Area.

Performances are at 8 p.m. on Dec. 13, 14, 20, and 21, at 7 p.m. on Dec. 19, and at 2 p.m. on Dec. 15, 21 and 22.

For tickets (\$15-\$29) or information, visit [www.dmtOnline.org](http://www.dmtOnline.org) or phone 510-881-6777.

## Winter Holiday Season is Painful for Some

For people who have experienced the death of a loved one, the winter holiday season can be painful. Hope Hospice offers a free workshop to present healthy coping strategies to help those who are experiencing grief during the winter holiday season.

The workshop, which is offered at no cost to anyone in the community, will be held from 4:30 to 6 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 9, at 6377 Clark Avenue, Suite 295 in Dublin. It will provide ways to manage grief at family gatherings and social events, help participants

explore strong emotions connected to the holiday season, and exit strategies for unexpected grief bursts.

There is no cost to attend, but pre-registration is required and seating is limited. Please call 925-829-8770 to register.



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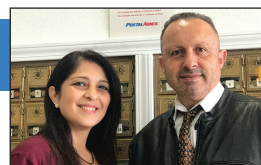
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FRIENDS OF THE CASTRO VALLEY LIBRARY

## Winter Book Sale This Weekend

The holidays are coming! And so is the annual Winter Book Sale by the Friends of the Castro Valley Library!

Thousands of books will be available for eager customers. As always the funds raised by the Friends go to the library to continue engaging children's programs, many adult services including Castro Valley Reads and outstanding activities for the whole family.

Tables, and boxes underneath them, will be overflowing with books, multi-media materials, and the ever popular miscellaneous items in the large community room at the library this coming weekend.

Unpublicized deals in specific

sections will be a pleasant surprise for many.

For holiday gift-giving (even to yourself), specially selected gift-quality books will be in the cafe area. In addition, Star Wars aficionados will find much to appreciate while anticipating the new film being released later this month.

As always, from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 6, will be "Members Only" with new memberships available at the door.

Saturday, Dec. 7 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. is open to the public with discounts available to members for both days.

Sunday, Dec. 8, from 1 to 4 p.m. is the eagerly awaited "Bag

Day" where hundreds of books and other materials, and missed treasures from the first two days, still remain. The Friends provide the bags which customers fill for only \$4/bag.

The three-times-a-year Book Sales are always a win-win situation with community members getting great books at truly bargain prices and the library using proceeds to continue their creative and broad-reaching programming.

The Book Sales also are gathering places for seeing friends and neighbors. Books, multi-media, friends, surprises, amazing prices and support of our great library are all available this weekend at the Castro Valley Library.

## CVSan Textile Collection a Huge Success

Castro Valley Sanitary District's recent Textile Collection Week was a huge success.

During the Oct. 7 to 11 drive, CVSan residents set out bagged textiles at the curb to be picked up by Alameda County Industries on their regular collection day.

A grand total of 11,654 pounds of textiles was collected and diverted from the landfill. CVSan residents set out items such as clothing, linens, shoes, and stuffed animals.

The St. Vincent de Paul charity in Oregon, will sort and distribute

the textiles for resale at their various retail locations and recycling sites.

The next collection of textiles will be at CVSan's Recycles Day event on April 25.

Visit [www.cvsan.org/Recycles-Day](http://www.cvsan.org/Recycles-Day) for more information.

## SHERIFF'S REPORTS

COMPILED BY MICHAEL SINGER • CASTRO VALLEY FORUM



### Can't Stay Away from Mobile Home

Sunday, December 1: at 1:00 p.m., Sheriff's Deputies arrested a 32-year-old woman from Castro Valley on suspicion of violating the terms of a restraining order. The woman was spotted near a mobile home park on Castro Valley Boulevard near Anita Avenue. A resident there had filed the complaint and called deputies to ask the woman to leave. Deputies took the woman into custody.

### Stolen Property

Saturday, November 30: at 5:03 p.m., a 28-year-old man with no permanent residence was arrested on suspicion of possession of stolen property. Deputies were dispatched to a fast food restaurant on Redwood Road near Redwood Court to investigate a suspicious patron. The man was hanging around outside when deputies arrived and discovered his stash. The man was taken into custody.

### Lost Dog Leads to Arrest at Homeless Camp

Saturday, November 30: at 11:28 a.m., deputies arrested a 52-year-old man with no permanent residence on suspicion of possession of illegal narcotics and related drug paraphernalia. The man was hanging out in a homeless camp near the 580 Market Place shopping center on East Castro Valley Boulevard when a man looking for his dog showed up and later reported the camp to officials. Deputies report the suspect had a warrant issued for his arrest and took him to Santa Rita Jail pending \$10,000 in bail.

### Wanted Woman

Saturday, November 30: at 6:43 p.m., a 28-year-old woman with no permanent residence was arrested as part of a court-issued warrant. Deputies report the wom-

an had failed to show up to court on multiple occasions to account for illegal drug possession arrests. The woman was stopped for questioning on Castro Valley Boulevard near Redwood Road. Deputies positively identified the woman and took her to Santa Rita Jail pending \$100,000 in bail.

### Traffic Stop Ends in Arrest for Drugs and Burglary Tools

Friday, November 29: at 11:52 p.m., deputies pulled over and arrested a 29-year-old man from San Leandro on suspicion of possession of burglary tools, an illegal sized knife, stolen identification cards, methamphetamine drugs, and related drug paraphernalia. The man was driving on Norbridge Avenue near Castro Valley Boulevard when deputies noticed he had no license plate in the front of his vehicle and pulled him over. The man was found to have a warrant out for his arrest and was taken to Santa Rita Jail pending \$45,000 in bail.

### Stolen Red Bull Clipped His Wings

Friday, November 29: at 8:11 p.m., a 27-year-old man with no permanent residence was arrested on suspicion of shoplifting a Red Bull energy drink from a gas station on Castro Valley Boulevard near Redwood Road. Deputies made the arrest after the store clerk decided to press charges. The man

was also found with illegal drug paraphernalia and was taken into custody.

### Attempted Shoplifting

Friday, November 29: at 12:24 p.m., deputies arrested a 38-year-old woman from San Ramon on suspicion of attempted shoplifting from a drug store on Castro Valley Boulevard near Yeandle Avenue. The woman was seen walking out of the store with unpaid merchandise and was detained by security. Deputies took the woman into custody.

### Apartment Complex Squatter

Wednesday, November 27: at 12:02 p.m., a 38-year-old man with no permanent residence was arrested on suspicion of illegally entering an apartment without the consent of the owner or lease agent. Deputies were called to the complex on Grove Way near Redwood Road following a complaint from the manager. The man was also found with illegal drug paraphernalia in his pockets and a warrant issued for his arrest. Deputies took the man to Santa Rita Jail pending \$5,000 in bail.

### Warrants Served on Couple

Tuesday, November 26: at 11:05 a.m., deputies arrested two people with warrants issued for their capture at a home on Camino Alta Mira near Proctor Road. A

see **REPORTS** on page 15

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### Free Meditation Workshop

Tue., Dec. 10 - 6:30 to 7:15p.m.  
Castro Valley Library

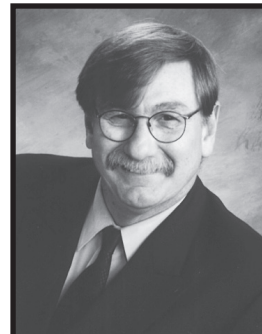
#### Workshop includes:

- Brief overview on meditation benefits.
- Breath awareness and thought observation meditations.
- No special attire required

We recommend those in attending be at least 12 years old.



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[www.danaleipold.com](http://www.danaleipold.com).



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## The Week Ahead

### ● Thursday, December 5: *Lap Harp Class*

Learn to play the lap zither that produces beautiful, soothing music, during beginning music classes from 1 to 2 p.m. on the Thursdays of Dec. 5 and 12, at the Kenneth Aitken Senior Center, 17800 Redwood Road. Seniors with arthritis or limited mobility are encouraged to attend. The class costs \$18 and a \$10 material fee payable to the instructor on the first day of class for use of the zither and songbook. For more info, call 510-881-6738.

### ● Thursday, December 5: *Reach Youth Center Lighting Event*

Reach for the holidays from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. tomorrow at Reach Ashland Youth Center, 16335 E. 14th Street. Food will be provided by the Ashland Market & Cafe, plus hot cocoa and crafts. Special lighting event at 7:15 p.m.

### ● Thursday, December 5: *Free Tinseltones Concert*

The Aitken Senior Center, at 17800 Redwood Road, invites you to an all-ages holiday concert by The Tinseltones with festive music that spans decades and the globe, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 5. Reserve your spot by calling the Senior Center at 510-881-6738.

### ● Friday, December 6: *Christmas Tree Lighting*

Enjoy music, entertainment and free photos with Santa from 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 6, in Castro Village. Lighting of the big Christmas tree will take place with a countdown at 6 p.m.

### ● Friday-Sunday, Dec. 6-8: *CV Library Book Sale*

A well-established tradition is the Friends of the Castro Valley Library Winter Book Sale with thousand of good quality books available at low prices. Friday, 6-8 p.m. members only (memberships available at the door); Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, 1-4 p.m. "Bag Sale," fill a provided bag for \$4. Find unpublicized deals in select sections, gift quality books for holiday giving and a special Star Wars section.

### ● Friday, December 6: *Eden Area Village Meeting*

Join Eden Area Village at Hayward City Hall at 2 p.m. on Dec. 6 for a member forum and public outreach. Meet some members and hear how this group of local seniors is helping each other remain in their homes, active and engaged in our community. More info at edenareavillage.org

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### ● Saturday, December 7: *Holiday Concert & Dance*

All Saints Episcopal Church, at 911 Dowling Blvd. in San Leandro, will hold a Holiday Concert and Community Dance from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Dec. 7, with Celtic, Medieval and Early Music, and dance that honors the season. Dancing is fun, accessible and completely optional! \$15 per person (tickets purchased at the door). Children with parents are free.

### ● Saturday, December 7: *Light Up the Season 2019*

Downtown Hayward presents its annual holiday event — a Christmas Tree Lighting, Ice Skating, Choirs and School Bands and entertainment for the whole family — from 3:00 to 6:30 p.m. this Saturday, Dec. 7, at B and Watkins streets. Bring an unwrapped toy or Teddy Bear for the Police and Fire departments' drives and receive a prize ticket to win a Family Fruit Basket.

### ● Saturday, December 7: *Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day*

Join your neighbors and VFW Post 9601 at 10 a.m. this Saturday in paying tribute to those who served at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, at the Castro Valley Veterans Memorial.

### ● Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 7-8: *Christmas Bake Sale*

St. Gerard Women's Club at St. John's Church are holding their famous Christmas Bake Sale and Raffle in the Community Room, 264 E. Lewelling Blvd., San Lorenzo, after the 4:30 p.m. Mass on Dec. 7 and starting at 7:30 a.m. on Dec. 8. On Sunday, a continental breakfast will be available, the raffle will be held after the 11:30 a.m. Mass (you do not have to be present to win). Come enjoy lots of baked goods, raffle prizes and the "trinkets & treasures" table. All proceeds go to St. John's Church. To donate baked goods, bring them throughout the weekend. For more info, call Juanita Velasquez at 510-688-0669.

### ● Monday, December 9: *Hope Hospice Grief Workshop*

For people who have experienced the death of a loved one, Hope Hospice offers a free workshop presenting healthy coping strategies to help those who are experiencing grief during the winter holiday season. The workshop is offered at no cost from 4:30 to 6 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 9, from 4:30-6 p.m. at 6377 Clark Avenue, Suite 295, in Dublin. For info, or to register, call 925-829-8770.

### ● Monday, December 9: *Lawyer in the Library*

On Dec. 9, and on the second Monday of every month, a free consultation with an attorney will be available at Castro Valley Library. Advance registration is required, no drop-ins. Sign up in person at the Reference Desk or call 510-667-7900.

### ● Tuesday, December 10: *Veterans of Foreign Wars*

VFW Post 9601 invites all veterans and active duty military to meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Bldg., 22737 Main St. in Hayward. Visit [www.vfw9601.org](http://www.vfw9601.org)

### ● Wednesday, December 11: *Free Winter Holiday Concert*

Start the holiday by enjoying a special musical performance and an audience sing-along as the Castro Valley Adult & Career Education Community Band conducted by Kathy Maier invites you to a Winter Concert at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 11 in the Castro Valley High School Cafeteria, 19400 Santa Maria Avenue. Refreshments will be served.

### ● Thursday, December 12: *Libertarian Party Meet & Greet*

The Libertarian Party of Alameda County will be having a Holiday Meet & Greet from 7 to 9 p.m. on Dec. 12 at Buffalo Bill's Brewery, 1082 B St., Hayward, with an optional anonymous gift exchange (\$10 and under if newly purchased), re-gifting and white elephants are welcomed, baked goods work too. No membership required. More info at [lpac.us/events](http://lpac.us/events).

### ● Friday, December 13: *Traditional English High Tea*

The Aitken Senior Center at 17800 Redwood Road is taking a break from the hectic holiday season with a traditional English High Tea plus entertainment and a raffle for exciting prizes, from 1 to 3 p.m. on Dec. 13. Purchase individual tickets or a table for 4 and decorate it in a holiday theme with your own linens, china, silverware and teapot. The Senior Center provides the tea and scrumptious treats. The High Tea is \$12 per person and reservations are required. Buy tickets early as this event will sell out. For more information, please call 510-881-6738.

### ● 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, December 14: *Hearing Loss Association Meeting*

"The ways we cope with Hearing Loss," a members' discussion group about our ongoing problems in social situations, and a "show and tell" of our latest gadgets which allow us to hear better at the next meeting of the Hearing Loss Association. Audience participation is encouraged, so please come prepared to share a funny story, or a frustration

you have recently experienced. Please bring finger food to share at this Holiday Potluck. Oakland Kaiser Hospital, Fabiola Bldg., 3801 Howe St., Lower Level, Room G26. Parking garage on Howe is free on Saturday. [info@hearinglosseb.org](mailto:info@hearinglosseb.org) or (510) 221-6080.

### ● Saturday, December 14: *Holiday Saxophone Quartet*

Enjoy an afternoon of seasonal music with The Holiday Saxophone Quartet featuring Tony Gallardo, Michael Wirgler, John Aczon and Michael Wilson at 2 p.m. in the Chabot Room of the Castro Valley Library. Bring the whole family and sing-along. No reservations needed. For more info, see "Events" at <https://www.aclibrary.org/home>.

### ● Saturday, December 14: *Candlelight Caroling*

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church at 22577 Bayview Ave., Hayward invites you to its Annual Las Posadas candlelight caroling in the neighborhood at 5 p.m. on Dec. 14, followed by a community dinner at about 6:00 p.m. (No RSVP required). For info, call 510-581-2060.

## Arts & Entertainment

### CASTRO VALLEY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

*Tickets for Center for the Arts events (unless otherwise listed) are available at [www.cvcfa.com](http://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. For the school events - prices go up at the door.*

● **CVHS Band Concert**, featuring the High School Jazz Band, Concert Band, Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble, will be presented at 7 p.m. today, Dec. 4. *For tickets (\$5-\$10) see above.*

● **CVHS Orchestra Holiday Concert**, featuring the High School's Concert and Symphony orchestras, will be presented at 7 p.m. tomorrow, Dec. 5. *For tickets (\$5-\$10) see above.*

● **"Convidando Esta La Noche,"** a CVHS Choirs Winter Choral Concert featuring all 250 singers from the high school's outstanding choral program, will be presented at 7 p.m. this Friday, Dec. 6, and at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7, showcasing music from around the world. *For tickets (\$10-12) see above.*

● **"The Jewelry Box"** **CANCELED** *Please Note:* Brian Cope-land's show scheduled for 7 p.m. this Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Castro Valley Center for the Arts *has been canceled.*

● **Creekside Middle School Winter Concert**, an evening of beautiful choral music celebrating the winter season will be presented at 7 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 9. *For tickets (\$5-\$7) see above.*

● **Creekside 6th Grade Winter Band/Orchestra Concert**, featuring works by Bob Phillips, Robert Sheldon, and more, will be presented at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 11. *For tickets (\$5-\$7) see above.*

● **"Bravissimo: From Opera to Broadway,"** featuring rising star tenor Ricardo Garcia singing familiar opera and Broadway classics at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14. He will be joined by international opera luminary Philip Skinner. Both men are from Castro Valley. Soprano Vivian Yau will make a guest appearance. *For tickets (\$29-\$31), see above.*

### ART GALLERIES, RECEPTIONS & ART INSTRUCTION

● **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.

● **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 from Dec. 6 to Jan. 17. An artists' reception, open to the public, will be held this Friday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

### AT THE CHABOT CINEMA 12/4 - 12/9

● **Frozen II**, PG

Wed 12/4 - 4:10p, 6:45p

Thu 12/5 - 4:10p, 6:45p

Fri 12/6 - 1:35p, 4:10p, 6:45p

Sat-Sun 12/7-12/8 - 11:00a,

1:35p, 4:10p, 6:45p

Mon 12/9 - 4:10p, 6:45p

● **Elf**, PG

Mon 12/9 - 6:00p

**Listings for the Community Calendar and A&E Calendar must be received by the Friday before publication date. Send information as text (*not flyers or posters*) to: [fredz@ebpublishing.com](mailto:fredz@ebpublishing.com)**

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## Nothing Says Christmas Like Homemade Cookies



There's a reason that the word *cookies* follows *Christmas* with such inevitability.

Teamed up with hot cider or eggnog or coffee, cookies are the number one choice for holiday munching.

When making cookies, follow directions precisely and don't overbake. Underbaking is better than overbaking. Measure carefully. If you add too much flour, the cookies will be dry and crumbly; too little and they will spread and be thin. Use the ingredients called for in the recipe. Substitutions may present problems.

Grease the pans *only* if specified in the recipe.

Use the heaviest cookies sheets you have to reduce the chance of burning and let pans cool before placing more unbaked cookies on them.

### BASIC HOLIDAY BUTTER COOKIES

- 2-1/2 cups flour
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- 2 egg yolks
- 3 tablespoons light cream
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 cup sugar
- 12 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 4 tablespoons vegetable shortening

Heat oven to 350°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment.

Mix flour, cornstarch, baking powder and salt in a medium bowl. Mix yolks, cream and vanilla together in a measuring cup.

Cream sugar with butter and shortening until lightened and pasty. Beat yolk mixture into creamed butter until just combined. Add dry ingredients and beat until mixture begins to clump together (about 18 to 20 seconds on the lowest speed of an electric mixer).

Turn dough out onto a lightly floured board and knead gently to shape into a soft dough. (Can be wrapped in plastic and refrigerated up to three days at this point). Proceed with rolling, shaping and baking. Yields about 72 single cookies.

**For Chocolate Butter Cookies:** add 1 ounce each of melted unsweetened and semi-sweet chocolate chips after creaming sugar with butter and shortening.

### SNICKERDOODLES

- 1 cup butter or shortening
- 1-1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoons baking soda
- Cinnamon and sugar mixture to coat (about 1/4 cup sugar combined with 1/2 tablespoon cinnamon)

Preheat oven to 400°F. Mix together butter and sugar until smooth, then add eggs, cream of tartar, and baking soda. Stir in flour until well mixed.

Roll into balls about 1 inch in diameter and roll in cinnamon and sugar to coat.

Place on ungreased cookie sheets and bake 8-10 minutes. Cookies are done when they are just barely browning. Makes about 4 dozen.

### CHEWY MOLASSES SUGAR COOKIES

- 1-1/2 cups shortening
- 2 cups white sugar
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 2 eggs
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon salt

Melt the shortening in a large pan on the stove, and cool.

Add sugar, eggs, and molasses, beat well. In a separate bowl, sift dry ingredients together and add to the pan. Mix well and chill 3 hours or overnight.

Form into walnut-size balls. Roll in granulated sugar. Place on greased cookie sheet about 2 inches apart.

Bake at 375°F for 8-10 minutes. Makes 6 dozen cookies. (If they lose their softness, an easy way to restore it is to place one slice of fresh bread in the container with the cookies for a couple of hours or overnight and they will be soft again)

### CARAMEL SHORTBREAD COOKIES

- 1 cup butter (no substitutes)
- 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 (1-ounce)squares semi-sweet chocolate, melted, cooled 5 minutes
- 2 cups flour

- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1 (14-ounce) package Kraft Caramels
- 2 tablespoons cream
- 6 ounces (1-1/2 cups) pecans, chopped

Preheat oven to 300°F.

Mix butter, brown sugar and vanilla thoroughly using an electric mixer. Beat in melted chocolate. Gradually blend in flour and corn starch.

Form into 1-inch balls and place on ungreased baking sheets. Gently press down on each cookie to flatten using fingers or a flat bottomed drinking glass (dipped in sugar to prevent sticking).

Bake at 300°F for 25 to 30 minutes, or until bottoms begin to brown. Cool for 5 minutes; remove to a wire rack to cool completely. Melt caramels and cream in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly.

Dip cookies in caramel sauce; roll dipped portion in chopped pecans. Place cookies on wax paper to cool before serving. Makes about 3-1/2 dozen cookies.

### THUMBPRINT COOKIES

- 3/4 pound butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 3-1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg beaten with 1 tablespoon water, for egg wash
- 7 ounces sweetened flaked coconut

Favorite jam or preserves

Cream together the butter and sugar until just combined, and then add the vanilla. Separately, sift together the flour and salt. With the mixer on low speed, add the flour mixture to the creamed butter and sugar. Mix until the dough starts to come together. (Do *not* overmix.) Dump on a floured board and roll together into a flat disk. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes.

Roll the dough into 1-1/4-inch balls. Dip each ball into the egg wash and then roll it in coconut. Place the balls on an ungreased cookie sheet and press a light indentation into the top of each with your finger. Drop 1/4 teaspoon of jam into each indentation.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until the coconut is a golden brown. Cool and serve. Makes about 2-1/2 dozen cookies.

### SOFT GINGERBREAD COOKIES

- 2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup margarine, softened
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1/4 cup molasses
- 2 tablespoons white sugar

Preheat oven to 350°F. Sift together the flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, and salt. Set aside.

In a large bowl, cream together the margarine and 1 cup sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, then stir in the water and molasses. Gradually stir the sifted ingredients into the molasses mixture. Shape dough into walnut sized balls, and roll them in the remaining 2 tablespoons of sugar. Place the cookies 2 inches apart onto an ungreased cookie sheet, and flatten slightly.

Bake for 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven. Allow cookies to cool on baking sheet for 5 min-

utes before removing to a wire rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight container. Makes about 2 dozen cookies.

### CHRISTMAS MERINGUES

- 4 egg whites at room temperature
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, finely grated
- 6 ounces semisweet chocolate pieces
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 cup finely chopped walnuts

Beat egg whites until stiff but not dry. Gradually add 2/3 cup sugar while continuing to beat. Add vanilla. Gradually fold in remaining 1/3 cup sugar and grated chocolate.

Shape into well-rounded ovals with teaspoon. Bake on nonstick baking sheets (or baking sheets covered with parchment paper) at 275°F until firm, 45 to 50 minutes. Cool in pan.

Melt chocolate pieces with milk in top of double boiler. Dip top of cooled meringues in warm chocolate then in chopped nuts. Makes about 60.

## THE FORUM CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
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51					52	53						
54					55				56			
57					58				59			

#### ACROSS

- 1 Temperate
- 5 Owns
- 8 Lovers' quarrel
- 12 Sandwich treat
- 13 Final (Abbr.)
- 14 Small combo
- 15 "Desperate Housewives" actress Eva
- 17 Cincinnati team
- 18 Ingratiate
- 19 Warehouse pile
- 21 Pigpen
- 22 Deck for a 10-count
- 23 Wife of Saturn
- 26 Embrace
- 28 Become one
- 31 Addict
- 33 Shell game item
- 35 "My Heart Will Go On" singer
- 36 Ringworm
- 38 Egypt's boy king
- 40 Toss in
- 41 Transmit
- 43 Afternoon party
- 45 "Jane Eyre" author
- 47 Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do
- 51 Mongolian tent
- 52 Great bliss
- 54 Mideastern potentate
- 55 Fields or Butterworth
- 56 Villain's look
- 57 Fix, in a way
- 58 Crafty
- 59 Young woman

#### DOWN

- 1 Double agent
- 2 Press
- 3 Give for a time
- 4 Venetian magistrates
- 5 "Get a move on!"
- 6 Foreman foe
- 7 Pile
- 8 Wandered off
- 9 Transvaal city
- 10 Staffer
- 11 Pitch
- 16 Inauguration recitation
- 20 Ewe's mate
- 23 No longer stylish
- 24 Omega preceder
- 25 Brain's stimulus receptors
- 27 Understand
- 29 Deity
- 30 Conclude
- 32 Space flight conclusion
- 34 Job for a medical examiner
- 37 Pismire
- 39 Georgia --
- 42 Considers
- 44 Coral circle
- 45 Tourney situations
- 46 Derriere
- 48 Vicinity
- 49 Competes
- 50 Corn spikes
- 53 Web address

ANSWERS ON PAGE 16

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## Senior Q&A: Does Your Trust Contain 'Poison Pill' Provision?

**Q** In past articles you have written about the option of seeking a Medi-Cal subsidy to help pay for the cost of nursing home care if that need arises. I have a Living Trust. Are there provisions that I should include, or some that I should avoid, in order to facilitate Medi-Cal qualification?

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

**A** Great question. While I cannot provide an exhaustive list in the space of this article, I can comment on one that is critically important: a Living Trust-based estate plan should permit amendment or revocation by a trusted agent if the trustor, himself, later becomes incapacitated.

Background: When many people set up trusts, they provide that only they, themselves, are empowered to make amendments or withdrawals from the trust.

For persons in robust good health, that restriction makes perfect sense: they understandably do not want others tampering with their trust.

However, when those same individuals age, become infirm and face the need for nursing care, this restriction can become a financial obstacle. Reason: In order to invoke strategies to accelerate eligibility for a Medi-Cal nursing home subsidy, it is often necessary to first remove assets from the trust.

The problem arises where the infirm trustor does not then have sufficient mental capacity to sign documents to amend or remove assets from his trust in order to facilitate Medi-Cal planning.

In that case, his family may be unable to invoke planning strategies to deal with excess resources and qualify him for Medi-Cal. Without help from Medi-Cal, the cost of care in a nursing home could potentially drain the trust estate, to the financial detriment of the trustor and his family.

So, check to see if your trust provides that the right of amendment or withdrawal is "personal" to you, as the trustor. If so, you may have a problem. Such a provision might read something like the following:

"The power to revoke or amend this trust is personal to the settlor and shall not be exercisable on the settlor's behalf by a conservator, an agent under a power of attorney, or any other person or entity."



If your trust contains a provision like the above, it could be the "poison pill" which later exposes your trust assets to rapid spend down in the event you need nursing care and are unable to qualify for a Medi-Cal subsidy to help with the cost.

Perhaps a better plan would be to change your trust now to authorize your trusted agent under a Durable Power Of Attorney ("DPOA") to amend or revoke your trust in certain circumstances, such as if the need for nursing care arises.

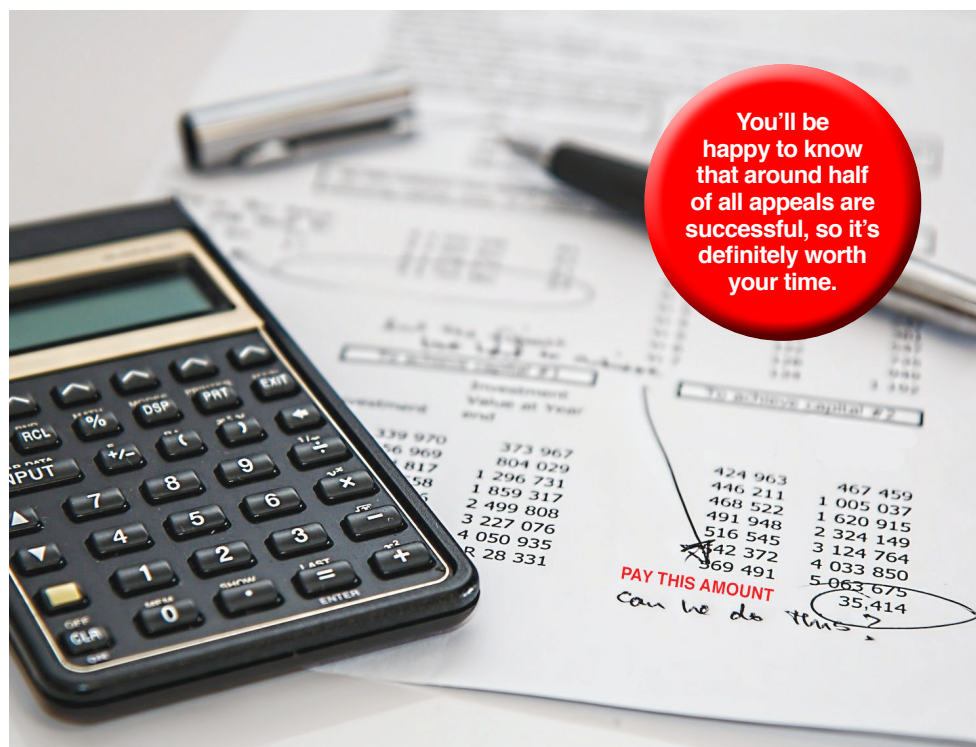
If you are concerned that such power might be abused, you might build restrictions into its exercise, such as by requiring the written certification of a physician that you need nursing home care, the approval of an attorney who practices in the field of Medi-Cal planning and/or the approval of a judge.

If you have complete trust in your agent, then I would suggest not requiring the approval of a judge, as that approval would require a court proceeding, with its attendant delay, cost and uncertainty of outcome.

If you do opt to so modify your trust, be sure to include coordinating provisions in your DPOA, a legal requirement that is often overlooked.

Lastly, for those who no longer have capacity to change their trust, know that application can sometimes still be made to the superior court for permission to amend or revoke the trust when need requires, a process which is expensive and the outcome uncertain.

Gene L. Osofsky is an elder law and estate planning attorney in Hayward. Visit his website at [www.LawyerForSeniors.com](http://www.LawyerForSeniors.com)



## Medicare Appeals: How to Go About Handling Discrepancies

By Jim Miller  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

If you disagree with a coverage or payment decision made by Medicare, you can appeal, and you'll be happy to know that around half of all appeals are successful, so it's definitely worth your time.

But before going that route, talk with the doctor, hospital and Medicare to see if you can spot the problem and resubmit the claim.

Some denials are caused by simple billing code errors by the doctor's office or hospital. If, however, that doesn't fix the problem, here's how you appeal.

### Original Medicare Appeals

If you have original Medicare, start with your quarterly Medicare Summary Notice (MSN). This

statement will list all the services, supplies and equipment billed to Medicare for your medical treatment and will tell you why a claim was denied.

You can also check your Medicare claims early online at My-Medicare.gov, or by calling Medicare at 800-633-4227.

There are five levels of appeals for original Medicare, although you can initiate a fast-track consideration for ongoing care, such as rehabilitation. Most people have to go through several levels to get a denial overturned.

You have 120 days after receiving the MSN to request a "redetermination" by a Medicare contractor, who reviews the claim.

Circle the items you're disputing on the MSN, provide an explanation of why you believe the denial should be reversed, and include any supporting documents like a letter from the doctor or hospital explaining why the charge should be covered. Then send it to the address on the form.

You can also use the Medicare Redetermination Form. See [CMS.gov/Medicare/CMS-Forms/CMS-Forms/downloads/CMS20027.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/CMS-Forms/CMS-Forms/downloads/CMS20027.pdf) to download it or call 800-633-4227 to request a copy by mail.

The contractor will usually decide within 60 days after receiving your request. If your request is denied, you can request for "reconsideration" from a different claims reviewer and submit additional evidence.

A denial at this level ends the matter, unless the charges in dispute are at least \$160 in 2019. In that case, you can request a hearing with an administrative law judge. The hearing is usually held by videoconference or teleconference.

If you have to go to the next level, you can appeal to the Medicare Appeals Council. Then, for claims of at least \$1,630 in 2019, the final level of appeals is judicial review in U.S. District Court.

### Advantage & Part D Appeals

If you're enrolled in a Medicare Advantage health plan or Part D prescription drug plan the appeals process is slightly different.

With these plans you have only 60 days to initiate an appeal. And in both cases, you must start by appealing directly to the private insurance plan, rather than to Medicare.

If you think that your plan's refusal is jeopardizing your health, you can ask for a "fast decision," see **APPEALS on back page**

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# REAL ESTATE GALLERY



## REAL ESTATE REALITY

By Carl Medford, CRS  
Special to the Forum

GUEST COMMENTARY



## Solar Panel Mandate on New Homes to Begin January 1, 2020

With 2020 inching ever closer, new home builders are readying themselves to begin installing solar equipment on most newly constructed homes.

Beginning January 1st, 2020, California is the first state in the union to mandate solar panels on new homes up to three stories.

As of 2017, a U.S. Department of Energy Report indicated that only 9% of California homes had solar panels. California has been leading the nation with an ambitious renewable energy goal of sourcing half of all its electricity from renewable sources by 2030.

Adopting solar panel legislation mandating panel inclusion on new homes is a significant step in the journey towards that goal.

In a unanimous decision on May 9, 2018, California's Energy Commission adopted the sweeping solar panel legislation.

A Reuters post by Sebastien Malo and Nichola Groom on May 9, 2018, stated, "The decision ... is part of the state's effort to fight global climate change. It came despite estimates it would raise the up-front cost of a new home by nearly \$10,000 in one of the most expensive parts of the country."

The article continued, "The Commission estimated the standards will add about \$40 to monthly mortgage payments but will compensate for that by saving residents \$80 a month on energy bills."

And therein is the rub: buyers will need to qualify for higher prices at a time when the extremely high cost of homes in California is already locking many homebuyer wannabes out of home ownership. It is a classic Catch 22 scenario.

While the goal of reducing emissions is applaudable, this mandate directly interferes

with California's acknowledged housing crisis and efforts to provide increased numbers of affordable housing units.

While some argue the cost of the panels will be offset by the lower energy costs, lenders currently do not factor in lower energy costs when calculating the income-to-debt ratios required to qualify for a loan.

These price increases will effectively lock out some buyers who are already straining at the limits to qualify.

There is additional concern that the new rules will negatively affect those building new homes to replace proper-

ties destroyed in California's devastating wildfires. Many who lost dwellings are already struggling to replace their homes due to insufficient insurance settlements made worse by skyrocketing construction labor and materials costs.

The real winners short-term will be solar panel installers, who are already gearing up to meet the increased installation demands.

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.

## Don't Plant Too Deep!

By Buzz Bertolero  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

**Q** I transplanted a small tree peony into a three gallon ceramic container this spring. I added plenty of peat moss to the planting mix to keep it acidic, along with Osmocote fertilizer and covered about an inch of the stem. It was kept outside in partial shade and the soil was constantly moist. Other than some leaf edge burn on a few the leaves, there is absolutely no sign of any growth. What's up?

**A** You have broken one of the cardinal rules of gardening by planting a plant too deep.

Plants growing in a container have an established planting depth. The original root ball should be at the soil surface. You can correct this problem by replanting the peony and removing the excess soil down to the original root ball. Another

option is to scoop out the excess soil in the existing container.

I don't know if it will survive. The growing season is over for this year. If it hasn't leafed out by May or June, you'll need to replace it.

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

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## WEEKEND GARDENER

### Frost Protection

Freezing nighttime temperatures have already hit most parts of the East Bay. The coldest time is from 4 a.m. to sun-up. If you haven't already done so, here's what to do right away:

Move tender container plants under the eaves of a roof, on the porch, or even in the house if necessary.

Cover anything you can't

move with an old sheet, a tarp or cardboard boxes. The covering should be anchored by stakes above the plant so there is an air gap between the plant and the covering. Cloth gives more protection than plastic. Remove the covering in the morning.

Mist garden plant foliage at night and again in the morning. The thin layer of water on the

foliage helps to insulate the leaves. The morning sprinkling washes away the frost before the sun hits it when most of the actual damage is done.

Keep garden soil moist. Dry plants are easy victims of frost.

If a plant is damaged by frost, don't prune away the damage. Wait until the plant begins its spring growing cycle, then prune off any dead parts.



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5659 Boulder Canyon Dr.	94552: \$1,720,000 4 BD - 3,236 SF - 1996
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<b>MEDIAN AMOUNT:</b>	<b>\$860,000</b>
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# Prune Climbing Roses After the Holidays

By Buzz Bertolero  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

Many years ago we planted a climbing rose on the south side of the house. It's been somewhat neglected, so it is two-stories high, very woody and doesn't bloom on the lower half. Can I prune it severely to bush it out, and when is the best time to do so?

A Sure, you can prune climbing roses severely just like a bush rose. The primary season to prune it would be now through the end of February. However, most gardeners would wait until January to start their pruning as the holidays get in the way.

At this writing, the rainy season has started and it hasn't been cold, damp and muddy.

So, pruning early is a good option.

Before pruning a climbing rose you should try to determine whether it is a Hybrid Tea, Grandiflora or Floribunda type rose.

With Hybrid Teas and Grandiflora, the flowers bloom on the second year wood so heavy pruning will prevent it from blooming next year. This

is typical of those varieties introduced and planted in the last century.

The new Hybrid Teas and Grandiflora will bloom on the old and new wood so heavy pruning will not cause you to miss a flowering cycle.

Floribunda type climbers bloom on the first year wood so heavy pruning shouldn't effect it as much. Hybrid Teas and

Grandiflora type roses have the large flowers while the floribunda flowers are much smaller, about the size of a fifty-cent piece.

Another strategy is not pruning it and instead plant another climber at the base to fill in the blank area. At one time this was taboo but not today.

One other point. The new vine doesn't have to be a rose. It

could be a Clematis, Honeysuckle or Trumpet Vine.

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



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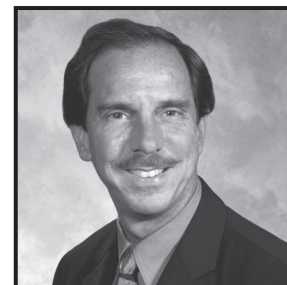
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## Selecting and Caring for Your Christmas Tree

By Melinda Myers  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

The Christmas tree is the center of many family celebrations. Ornaments collected over the years decorate the boughs while brightly wrapped gifts are carefully placed underneath.

But the hunt for the perfect tree can be an important part of the tradition. Many try to find the right size and shape for the space allotted, a fragrance the whole family prefers and good needle retention for long lasting beauty.

Load the family into the car or walk to your local Christmas tree lot and let the hunt begin.

Size and shape are important. Your tree needs to fit, but finding a fresh tree to last through the holidays is equally important.

Here are a few tips to help you find the right tree and keep it looking its best throughout the holidays.

✓ Select the right variety. Family tradition may dictate your tree choice. Many prefer the fragrance of balsam fir and the needle retention of other firs like Fraser, white, Grand and Noble.

Though not a true fir, Douglas fir needles have a wonderful aroma when crushed. White pines lack the fragrance that many prefer. Its pliable branches only support lightweight ornaments, but the soft needles have less bite than the popular Scots or Scotch pine.

This evergreen has stiff branches that support heavier ornaments and its needles hold even when dry.

✓ Check for freshness. A fresh tree will last throughout

the holidays. Run your hand along the stem. The needles should be pliable, yet firmly attached to the branch. Avoid trees with lots of moss, lichens, vines, broken branches and other signs of poor care.

✓ The right fit. Look closely at the overall shape and size of the tree. Stand the tree upright to make sure it will fit in the allotted space. ✓ Check the trunk. It should be straight and the base small enough to fit in your tree stand.

✓ Make a fresh cut. Remove at least an inch from the base of the trunk before setting it in the stand. Straight or diagonal cuts work equally well. A diagonal or V-shaped cut may make it difficult to properly support the tree in the stand.

✓ Proper watering is key. Fill the stand with water and check it often. Fresh trees can

absorb as much as 2 quarts of water in the first 24 hours. Keeping your tree stand filled with water is the best way to keep your tree looking its best throughout the season.

Once your tree is in place you can add lights and decorations. Then be sure to take time throughout the busy holiday season to sit down, relax with your favorite winter beverage and enjoy the beauty of your Christmas tree.

Melinda Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and her web site is [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.MelindaMyers.com).

**Proper selection and care of your Christmas tree will ensure that it lasts throughout the holiday season.**



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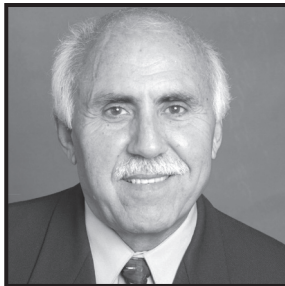
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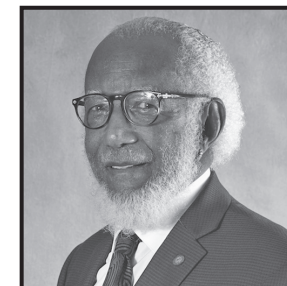
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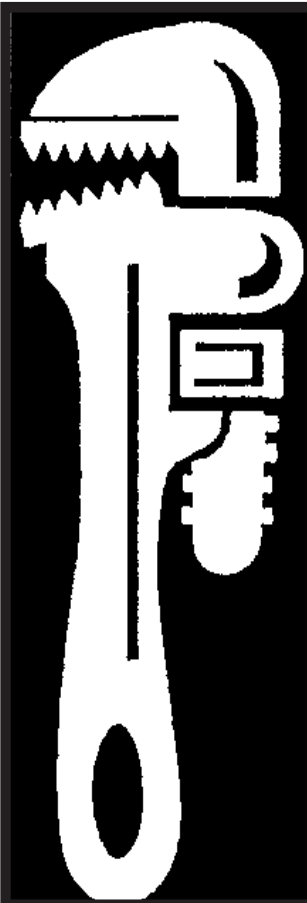
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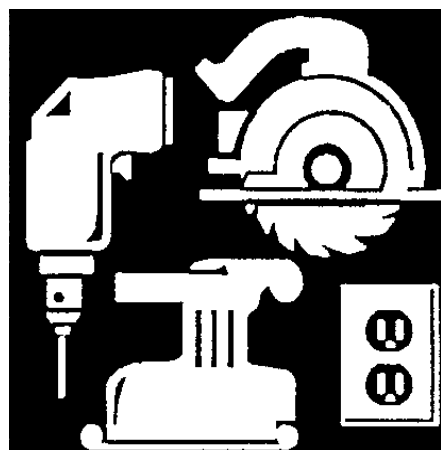
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**Help for the homeowner means business for you!**



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**CALL 614-1558**

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**How about a new kitchen or bath?**



**CHECK OUT OUR CLASSIFIED ADS & HOME SERVICES FOR HELP!**

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PHOTOS BY FRED ZEHLER

## Picking the Perfect Tree

Despite intermittent showers, local Scouts were busy helping customers select just the right Christmas Tree on Sunday at their lot at Center Street and Heyer Avenue. Sales of the trees support eight local Scout troops.

## LETTERS to the EDITOR

### Homeless Man Needs Help

Editor:

My friend Bret Devooght is homeless. He's been on the streets since 2011 and couch-surfs

whenever he can.

He also has Stage 3B Astrocytoma Brain Cancer which is extremely difficult to get treatments for because he is judged as being homeless and uninsured. Medical,

Obamacare and covered California keep playing the run-around game with him..

He may be homeless, but he doesn't drink or do drugs, he's as straight-edge as it gets.

His Mother was killed by his step dad and Bret went to the streets when he was 13, then put in foster care where he fell into

that stereotype of being a foster child who became homeless.

Castro Valley News did a story on Bret back in 2011 that's on YouTube.com/BretDevooght. I have made him a gofundme to help him out with major brain surgery which he needs to save his life, but to no avail.

Bret lives in Castro Valley. A fundraiser for Bret will be held from 7 to 11 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 21 at the Moose Lodge, 20835 Rutledge Road in Castro Valley.

—Casey Dresser  
Castro Valley

## Obituaries

### SARA L. ENNOR LAWYER

- Wills & Trusts
- Benefits, ERISA
- QDROs

510-633-9985

**CASTRO VALLEY FORUM OBITUARIES**  
may be emailed to: [obits@ebpublishing.com](mailto:obits@ebpublishing.com) or faxed to 510-483-4209. Include a phone number. For help, call Patrick Vadnais at 510-614-1558

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FD 1168 CR49

### JoAnn Weir

August 22, 1924 - December 1, 2019

JoAnn Weir, a resident of Castro Valley since 1963, passed away while surrounded by her family on December 1, 2019. She was born at home on August 22, 1924 in Deaverton, Ohio. She married William "Bill" Weir with whom she had a wonderful marriage for over 50 years. JoAnn was a long-time employee of the Castro Valley Unified School District where she was an aid in the office at Marshall Elementary School, an administrative assistant at the District office and an assistant at the District's transportation office.

She loved visits with her grandchildren and spent many hours cultivating a beautiful garden. She is missed and loved by her daughter, Helen Bonds; sister, Joy McGrath; son-in-law, Jay Bonds; and grandsons Jared Bonds, Travis Bonds and Braden Bonds, all of Castro Valley.

A celebration of life will be held in her honor at CV First Church of Castro Valley on December 14 at 2 p.m.



### Favors Housing Complex

Editor:

Low income housing is greatly needed here in the Bay Area.

My wife and I are retired and got into the housing market back in the '70s, when housing was affordable. With two professional non tech salaries, I believe we might qualify for low income status in today's market.

The site proposed for the apartments near Grove Way, have been empty for some time now, and have become unsightly, overgrown lots cordoned off by ugly chain link fence.

One day I even noticed a couple of buzzards feeding on a dead animal in the middle of the site.

So, rather than have an overgrown firetrap and animal graveyard, let's put it to good use.

—Robert Thomas  
Castro Valley

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

## HOROSCOPE by Salomé

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**ARIES (March 21 to April 19)** That change in holiday travel plans might be more vexing than you'd expected. But try to take it in stride. Also, it couldn't hurt to use that Aries charm to coax out some helpful cooperation.



**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** Your Bovine determination helps you deal with an unforeseen complication. And, as usual, you prove that when it comes to a challenge, you have what it takes to take it on.



**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)** Although a romantic theme dominates much of the week, all those warm and fuzzy feelings don't interfere with the more pragmatic matters you need to take care of.



**CANCER (June 21 to July 22)** Best not to ignore those doubts about an upcoming decision. Instead, recheck the facts you were given to make sure nothing important was left out. A weekend surprise awaits you.



**LEO (July 23 to August 22)** No time for a catnap -- yet. You might still have to straighten out one or two factors so that you can finally assure yourself of the truth about a troubling workplace situation. Stay with it.



**VIRGO (August 23 to September 22)** News from an old friend could lead to an unexpected (but nonetheless welcome) reunion with someone who had once been very special in your life. Be open to the possibilities.



**LIBRA (September 23 to October 22)** It might be time for a family council. The sooner those problems are resolved, the sooner you can move ahead with your holiday preparations. Don't let the opportunity pass you by.



**SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21)** Take some time out to give more attention to a personal relationship that seems to be suffering from a sense of emotional neglect. Provide that much-needed reassurance.



**SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21)** Cheer up. That unusual circumstance that might faze most people can be handled pretty well by the savvy Sagittarian. Look at it as an opportunity rather than an obstacle.



**CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19)** Someone you believe has hurt you in the past might now need your help. Reaching out could be difficult. But the generous Goat will be able to do the right thing, as always.



**AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18)** Prioritizing is an important part of your pre-holiday scheduling. Try to give time both to your workday responsibilities and those personal matters you might have neglected.



**PISCES (February 19 to March 20)** With the vestiges of your anger about that painful incident fading, you can now focus all your energy on the more positive aspects of your life, including that personal situation.

## THE FORUM CROSSWORD

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### ACROSS

- 1 Zinger
- 5 Nuisance
- 9 Oprah's network
- 12 Chills and fever
- 13 Viscous
- 14 Dove's call
- 15 Short musical works
- 17 "Hail, Caesar!"
- 18 Yule quaff
- 19 Fairy tale villains
- 21 Chic
- 22 Island porch
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- 27 Evergreen type
- 28 Break suddenly
- 31 Tasseled topper
- 32 Lobe locale
- 33 Gorilla
- 34 Dread
- 36 Attempt
- 37 Car sticker no.
- 38 Batman's pal
- 40 Proceed
- 41 Dishes
- 43 Commercial song
- 47 Scoot
- 48 Varieties of wheat
- 51 Carte lead-in
- 52 Handle
- 53 Point
- 54 Clear the tables
- 55 Stitches
- 56 Wan

### DOWN

- 1 Foundation
- 2 Enthusiastic
- 3 Ladder step
- 4 Cap with a propeller
- 5 Bluenose
- 6 A billion years
- 7 Hot tub
- 8 Mike of the ring
- 9 Simple wind instruments
- 10 Used a loom
- 11 Vetoers' votes
- 16 Heavy weight
- 20 Petrol
- 22 Memorize
- 23 Distorted
- 24 Vacationing
- 25 Born
- 26 Ivan's and Peter's wives
- 27 Bigfoot's cousin
- 29 Spring mo.
- 30 Vigor
- 35 Director Howard
- 37 "Friends" role
- 39 Soaks up some rays
- 40 Hodges of baseball lore
- 41 Seafood entree
- 42 Streaming video giant
- 43 Apple co-founder
- 44 Wildebeests
- 45 Whip
- 46 Catch sight of
- 49 Away from WSW
- 50 Do some lawn work

ANSWERS ON PAGE 15



## ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



### Canyon 7th Grade Boys Basketball Team

This week's athletes of the week are the members of the Canyon Middle School's Seventh-Grade boys basketball team who won the Seventh Grade Middle School Championship 65-61 against Washington Manor in a game that went into double overtime.

Canyon finished the season undefeated, so

they had a bye in the first round, but in the semi-finals they defeated John Muir 54-35 to advance to the Championship game.

The Championship Team from left, Jalen A, Joshua B, Greyson M, Bryce P, Justin C, Ian H, Javon J, Amari L, Anthony M, David C, Tino F, Lance C, and Coach Jason Treglown.

## CASTRO VALLEY INDEPENDENT SPORTS LEAGUE

**Youth Baseball and  
Flag Football Programs**

[www.CVSPORTSLEAGUE.org](http://www.CVSPORTSLEAGUE.org)

## Castro Valley School Waste Audits Begin

As a part of CVSan's Green Ribbon Schools Program, Vannoy Elementary School completed the first waste audit for the 2019/20 school year.

A team of students, staff, a parent volunteer, and CVSan staff worked together to sort through one day's worth of garbage from the school to determine which items should have been placed in recycling and organics instead.

In this hands-on learning experience, the students at Vannoy Elementary School learned that out of 66 gallons of material collected in the school garbage from the day before, only about a third was actual garbage, the rest could have gone in the recycling and organics.

This year's audit results indicate that Vannoy Elementary School has reduced its overall garbage and that students are continuing

to learn how to sort more of their materials into the recycling and organics.

CVSan congratulates staff, students, parents, and volunteers at Vannoy Elementary School for the improvements they have made in waste reduction at their school.

Schools save money when material is sorted properly and everyone, including the environment, benefits when materials are diverted from landfill.

CVSan provides resources, education and support to CV schools to help implement programs which reduce waste. For more info, visit [www.cvsan.org/schools](http://www.cvsan.org/schools).



CVSAN PHOTO

**Vannoy Elementary School's staff and students completed CVSan's Waste Audit on November 15th and learned that nearly two-thirds of the materials in one day's worth of garbage could have been diverted from the landfill.**

## LEGAL NOTICES

FILED  
OCTOBER 31, 2019  
MELISSA WILK  
County Clerk  
ALAMEDA COUNTY  
By-----, Deputy  
FILE NO. 565020

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business:  
Bud Builder at 22262 B Street, Hayward, CA 94541, in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Gregory Nicholas Jebejian, 4854 Audrey Dr., Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced on 10/31/2019.  
/s/ Gregory Nicholas Jebejian

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.

Expires OCTOBER 31, 2024  
**NOV 13, 20, 27, DEC 04, 2019**  
0179-CVF

FILED  
NOVEMBER 01, 2019  
MELISSA WILK  
County Clerk  
ALAMEDA COUNTY  
By-----, Deputy  
FILE NO. 565077

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business:  
The DJ Roy Experience at 5509 Rothman Ct., Castro Valley, CA 94580, mailing address P.O. Box 852, San Lorenzo, CA 94580 in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Roy E. Stone, 5509 Rothman Ct., Castro Valley, CA 94580. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced January 2000.  
/s/ Roy E. Stone

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.

Expires NOVEMBER 01, 2024  
**NOV 13, 20, 27, DEC 04, 2019**  
0180-CVF

FILED  
OCTOBER 29, 2019  
MELISSA WILK  
County Clerk  
ALAMEDA COUNTY  
By-----, Deputy  
FILE NO. 564939-941

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the business:  
(1) Cornerstones, (2) MindShare Management, (3) MindShare at 18059 Lamson Road, Castro Valley, CA 94546, in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Uniphied Thought, 18059 Lamson Road, Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by a corporation. This business commenced on 10/23/2017.  
/s/ Uniphied Thought

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.

Expires OCTOBER 29, 2024  
**NOV 13, 20, 27, DEC 04, 2019**  
0181-CVF

## Reports: CV

*continued from page 3*

28-year-old man from Castro Valley and a 30-year-old woman from Hayward were found with illegal narcotics and related drug paraphernalia at the home. Deputies handcuffed the pair and transported them to Santa Rita Jail pending a combined \$15,000 in bail.

**Elder Abuse Suspect Caught**  
Monday, November 25: at 3:35 p.m., a 51-year-old woman with no permanent residence was arrested at a convenience store on Redwood Road near Grove Way. Deputies spotted the woman in the parking area and positively identified her as a suspect in a string of charges of elder abuse and phone harassment. The woman was handcuffed and taken to Santa Rita Jail pending \$105,000 in bail.

**Waving Around a Kitchen Knife**  
Monday, November 25: at 8:55 p.m., deputies arrested a 57-year-old man with no permanent residence on suspicion of wielding a long-blade kitchen knife at a fast-food restaurant on Redwood Road near Redwood Court. The man was also found in possession of stolen merchandise and violating the terms of his parole. Deputies disarmed the man and took him into custody.

## Shipping Deadlines For Holiday Season

The United States Postal Service has released shipping deadlines for the 2019 holiday season.

Dec. 16-22 is predicted to be the busiest mailing, shipping and delivery week, of the year.

Some changes have been made to how you can ship your packages this year.

For safety reasons, you can no longer drop off stamped packages (using individual stamps as postage) that are more than one-half inch thick or that weigh more than 10 ounces into Post Office mail slots, building mail chutes or outdoor blue collection boxes.

Instead, you must go to a retail counter or use the self-service kiosk to purchase a postage label, according to USPS.

The Postal Service recommends the following mailing and shipping deadlines for expected delivery by Dec. 25:

- **Dec. 9** — APO/FPO/DPO (ZIP Code 093 only)  
Priority Mail and First-Class Mail
- **Dec. 11** — APO/FPO/DPO (all other ZIP Codes)  
Priority Mail and First-Class Mail services
- **Dec. 14** — USPS Retail Ground service
- **Dec. 18** — APO/FPO/DPO (except ZIP Code 093)  
USPS Priority Mail Express service
- **Dec. 20** — First-Class Mail service (including greeting cards)
- **Dec. 20** — First-class packages (up to 15.99 ounces)
- **Dec. 21** — Priority Mail service
- **Dec. 23** — Priority Mail Express service

## Castro Valley Mobil Gas Station

**18950 Lake Chabot Rd.,** *Must Present Coupon At The Time Of Write-Up.*

**Castro Valley** **\$10.00 OFF**

**510-888-1334**

**STAR Certified** **SMOG TEST**

**6 Days/Week** **Free Retest**

**Mon-Sat 8:30am-5:30pm**

**5¢ OFF EVERY WED.**  
Quality Gas At OFF BRAND PRICES!  
Regular Unleaded Gas

## A Christmas Miracle

**DEC 13-24, 2019**  
TICKETS \$5 ONLINE AT [3CROSSES.ORG](http://3CROSSES.ORG)  
**3CROSSES, 20600 JOHN DR., CASTRO VALLEY CA**

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Esther Nevarez • Castro Valley  
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## CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS FOR DEC. 4th

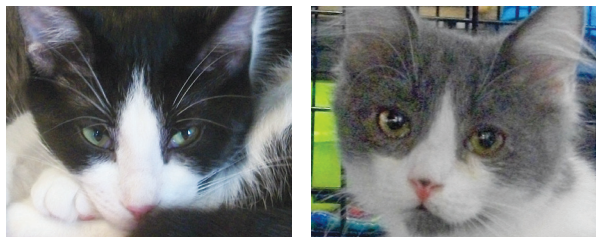
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## ADOPT-A-PET



**PUMPKIN**, a handsome, neutered boy, and his gorgeous sister **AUTUMN**, are bonded siblings who would love to go home together if possible. Ginger color girls are extra special because 80% of felines that color are male. Of course, ginger color boys are just as precious! Both are very playful, fun-loving teenagers who may have special needs. Info: Hayward Animal Shelter, 510-293-7200.



**ROSIE** is a 7-month-old black and white tuxedo. She's sweet and is OK with cat-friendly dogs. Spayed, vaccinated and microchipped. More info, email: Love-allpawzrescue@gmail.com.

**CENZIO** is an 18-week-old tuxedo. He's very playful, gets along with cat-friendly dogs. Cenizio is neutered, vaccinated and microchipped. Email: Love-allpawzrescue@gmail.com.

## Appeals: File

*continued from page 8*

where a Part D insurer must respond within 24 hours, and Medicare Advantage health plan must provide an answer within 72 hours.

If you disagree with your plan's decision, you can file an appeal, which like original Medicare, has five levels. If you disagree with a decision made at any level, you can appeal to the next level.

For more information, along with step-by-step procedures on how to make an appeal, visit Medicare.gov and click on the "Claims & Appeals" tab at the top of the page.

### Get Help

If you need some help contact your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), which has counselors that can help you understand the billing process and even file your appeal for you for free.

To locate your local SHIP, visit ShiptaCenter.org or call 877-839-2675. The Medicare Rights Center also offers free phone counseling at 800-333-4114.

*Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM HARDY

Since 1982 Jim Hardy has carved sculptures of his experience during the Vietnam War.

## Veterans Art Project' Opens This Friday Inside Hayward City Hall

By Winda I. Shimizu  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

The Alameda County Arts Commission and the Hayward Arts Council are proud to present the "Veterans Art Project" at the John O'Lague Galleria at Hayward City Hall from Dec. 6 to Jan. 17.

This is a group exhibition created by local veterans who participated in the Veterans Art Project at the Oakland Vet Center and Cal Veteran Services Center on the U.C. campus.

The program's goal is to provide veterans with opportunities to express themselves in a supportive environment, explore visual art-making techniques, and engage in community building.

Participants include 15 veterans who served during the Vietnam War, 13 who served during the Global War on Terror or other conflicts, and six partners of veterans.

Art projects on display include a "Then and Now" project featuring service photos, current photos, collage and writing; an "Emotion Timeline" project featuring painting and writing; and a "Memory Box" project featuring photographs, mixed media collage and writing.

In addition, artist Jim Hardy's wood carving sculptures and drawings depict his experience in the Vietnam War.

Ceramist Ehren Tool cups and vases will be on display. Ehren Tool has given away over 20,000

ceramic cups bringing awareness to war and veterans.

Join us at the artists' reception this Friday, Dec. 6, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at John O'Lague Galleria in Hayward City Hall, 777 B Street in downtown Hayward. Gallery hours are weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Veterans Art Project is coordinated by the Alameda County Arts Commission in partnership with the Oakland Vet Center which serves veterans from across Alameda County. It is funded by the California Arts Council.

Visit Hayward Arts Council for more art exhibits and events.

*Winda I. Shimizu is the Executive Director of the Hayward Arts Council.*

## MAC: Future Meeting Specific to Land Use

*continued from page 2*

Crawford said that meeting will also give the public a chance to address the MAC without tight time constraints (comments were limited to two minutes at Monday's meeting).

In other MAC news, the council was critical of a plan from the county's General Services Agency (GSA) to demolish a historical property on the Fairmont Hospital campus.

The 116-year-old "Whitcoton Cottage" is on county-owned property at the campus. A century ago, it served as a residence for the Fairmont superintendent, but by the 1950s it became disused. From the 1970s through the year 2000, the building was used as office space, but has now been empty for 20 years and is in disrepair.

The GSA plans to raze the building and cover the site with gravel. There are no plans for a new use for the parcel.

Crawford took the opportunity to express his frustration with the GSA for their plan to demolish the cottage as well as what he said was the agency's unresponsiveness regarding another GSA project—renovation plans for the old Redwood Road Library.

Pointing out the probable historical value of Whitcoton Cottage, Crawford suggested a MAC field trip to the site in the near future.

At Monday's meeting the MAC also unanimously approved the continued operation of two massage businesses, one at the inter-

section of Castro Valley Blvd. and San Miguel Ave. and another at the Stanton House, 1700 Norbridge Avenue.

Finally, the MAC voted 6-0 (with Moore abstaining) to approve a large electronic billboard at 3893 East Castro Valley Blvd. which would face eastbound I-580 traffic.

For over a decade, the county has sought to decrease the number of billboards along the Boulevard, according to Eileen Dalton, Community Development Agency director.

The new proposal would allow billboard owners Clear Channel the one large electronic billboard in exchange for their agreement to remove 15 other billboards along the corridor.

The sign will be quite large—42-feet tall counting the pole. With the MAC's recommendation of approval, the plan will now go to the county Planning Commission and then to the Board of Supervisors likely sometime in January, Dalton said.

## 2020 CVSAN CALENDAR AVAILABLE SOON



This week, the CVSAn 2020 Calendar and 2018/19 Annual Report will be arriving in the mail. This edition features the Sustainable Home and highlights lifestyle habits shared by some of CVSAn's own residents. We hope their pictures will inspire you. CVSAn's 2018/19 Annual Report precedes the calendar pages and offers you information about what CVSAn has accomplished this past fiscal year. We take pride in putting together this resource for the community and hope you'll benefit from it all year long.

If you'd like additional Calendars, drop by CVSAn offices at 21040 Marshall Street, Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### CASTRO VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT

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## CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS

MILD	HAS	SPAT
OREO	ULT	TRIO
LONGORIA	REDS	
ENDEAR	CRATES	
STY	KAYO	
OPS	HUG	MERGE
USER	PEA	DION
TINEA	TUT	ADD
SEND	TEA	
BRONTE	OCTAVE	
YURT	EUPHORIA	
EMIR	MRS	LEER
SPAY	SLY	LASS