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YEAR 33

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021

NO. 9

INSIDE YOUR FORUM

NEWS



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Push to Recall Newsom Gains Steam

By Jim Knowles
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

A group of Castro Valley residents have been out collecting signatures for the recall of Governor Gavin Newsom to help put the initiative over the top.

"This has been a 100 percent grassroots effort," said Castro Valley resident Elizabeth Stump, who's been collecting signatures on weekends. "People think it's Super PACs and it's a Republican thing, but it's not. We're all volunteers and we have Republicans, Independents, Libertarians, Green Party and a lot of Democrats have signed the recall, too."

The recall needs about 1.5 million signatures of registered California voters, and the total is now around 1.8 million, according to recall organizers. But as a rule of thumb, initiatives need at least a 15 percent cushion to outweigh signatures that turn out to be invalid.

The recall effort has until March 17 to collect enough valid signatures to cause a recall election, which would be held 60 to 80 days after the signatures are certified.

The group in Castro Valley sets up shop on weekends between 11:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. at the corner of Castro Valley Boulevard and Redwood Road, which has become known locally as Free Speech Corner.

Recall supporters say Newsom mishandled the coronavirus response, unnecessarily shut down businesses and schools, and hasn't addressed the state's housing and homeless problems.

Newsom counters that the recall was started by Trump supporters and would cost the state \$100 million and distract from the pandemic response.



Alan Klepatsky of Castro Valley signs a petition to recall Gov. Gavin Newsom on Saturday.

When recall supporters started in Castro Valley last summer, Stump says they would get an average of 35 signatures a day. But the number nearly doubled when Newsom gave the recall a boost by dining at the trendy Napa Valley restaurant French Laundry in violation of his own pandemic restrictions.

"Newsom did the French Laundry thing and it doubled," Stump said.

But reasons for the recall are a lot more numerous than that, said Stump who is the Vice Chair of the Libertarian Party of Alameda County.

"He's been taking tax dollars from gas tax meant to repair roads and bridges and sending it to his pet green projects," Stump said. "California is pro choice but he signed a mandatory vaccination law. What about having control of your own body?"

AB5 put freelancers, independent contractors, out of work and decimated the performing arts community," Stump said.

She said it's hypocrisy that the State of California now hires freelance sign language interpreters, making them exempt from state law, AB5.

Small business owners across

the state have been up in arms over the restrictions. One became national news when Angela Marsden, owner of a restaurant in Sherman Oaks, posted a video on Facebook of her outdoor tables empty due to the restrictions. She then panned the camera to the tables right next door, set up for the crew of a movie company, and allowed to be open under the state's rules.

That example rang a bell with small-business owners around the state who believe the pandemic restrictions are unfair.

There have been 55 attempts to recall a governor in California
see NEWSOM on page 14

A New Vaccine In Town

By Michael Singer
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

There's a new COVID-19 vaccine in town and it's expected to help protect the more than 400,000 people in Alameda County next in line for their vaccine.

Starting this week, as many as 20 million doses of Johnson & Johnson vaccine will be distributed in March across the U.S., according to the J&J's website. The company said it is on track to distribute 100 million doses by the end of June.

The Alameda County Public Health Dept. hasn't yet released information on its allocation of the new vaccine.

The J&J vaccine initially reported a 72 percent efficacy in testing, lower than the 94 percent effectiveness of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. The J&J drug is also given as a single shot.

"My advice is that you take whichever of these three vaccines you are offered. It is *way* better than not being vaccinated!" said vaccine scientist Shane Crotty, a professor at the nonprofit La Jolla Institute for Immunology.

Currently, people aged 65 and older as well as those working in education, childcare, food & agriculture, and emergency workers are eligible for a Covid vaccine in Alameda County. As of last week, county health officials report 102,750 doses have been administered.

Of that number, 14 percent of residents have received at least
see VACCINE on page 14

New Covid Vaccination Site Opens at Hayward Firehouse

The Hayward Fire Department has established a Covid vaccination site at the Firehouse Station 7 Clinic at 28300 Huntwood Ave. in South Hayward.

Initiated as a pilot project in partnership with Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center and the Alameda

County Health Dept., the Clinic is offering Moderna vaccine to community members who are age 65 and older with special attention to hard hit communities of color.

The number of vaccination appointments and days and hours of operation of the vaccine site are

subject to change based on weekly vaccine supply.

To learn more and add your name to the Clinic vaccination waiting list, visit: tvhc.org/covid-19-vaccine/ or, text 510-800-7198 and provide name and age to receive a link to join the waiting list.



Castro Valley
Confirmed Cases = 2,334

Alameda County
Vaccinations = 404,641
Confirmed Cases = 80,777
Deaths = 1,242

California
Vaccinations = 9,087,899
Confirmed Cases = 3,566,914
Deaths = 52,194

as of March 1, 2021

Castro Valley Weather Mar 3-7, 2021



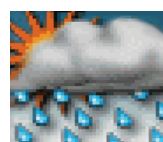
Wednesday
Partly Cloudy
High 65° Low 43°



Thursday
Partly Cloudy
High 64° Low 39°



Friday
Partly Sunny
High 67° Low 43°



Saturday
Cloudy, Poss Rain
High 59° Low 40°



Sunday
Partly Cloudy
High 60° Low 42°

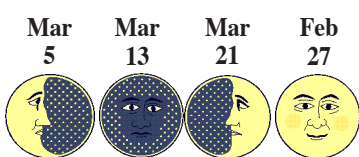
Almanac



Past Week's Rain: 00.00
Season To Date: 08.43
Normal To Date: 15.90
Season Average: 21.22

Sun sets at 6:05 p.m. today, rises at 6:38 a.m. Thursday.

Moon Phases



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Participate in Virtual 2021 Annual Golden Sneaker Contest; Event Ends This Friday

This week, nearly 100 schools throughout Alameda County are participating in the 2021 Virtual Golden Sneaker Contest.

Students, parents, teachers and school administrators are encouraged to participate from their own homes and neighborhoods by digitally tracking their travel activity throughout this week-long contest that began Monday. Students are encouraged to use a variety of active and shared transportation for the chance to receive incentives.

Traditionally, the annual Golden Sneaker Contest encourages travel mode shifts to schools. The event continues to support school communities in being safe and active while reducing their carbon footprint.

However, in response to continued implementation of distanced learning, this year's contest will occur in areas accessible to each student to ensure safe participation while maintaining social distancing best practices.

For the first time, indoor physical activities (such as yoga or jumping jacks) will also be tracked in support of sheltering in place. The classroom at each participating school with the highest travel rates will earn fun participant incentives.

The contest is an Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) Safe Routes to Schools Program event and continues through Friday, March 5.

Visit: alamedacounty.org/our-services/plan-an-event/golden-sneaker-contest/ for more information and follow the virtual 2021 Annual Golden Sneaker Contest event hashtag, #GoldenSneakerContest, on social media.

Castro Valley Woman Launches Eco-Friendly Pencil Enterprise

By Linda Sandsmark
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

A new earth-friendly product has arrived in Castro Valley in the form of "Terracils" — pencils whose shell is made completely from recycled, repurposed paper.

Castro Valley resident Aarthi Natarajan has launched a recent venture to introduce these zero-waste pencils to our area.

"My vision with Terracil is to make upcycled, recycled products mainstream," she says. "I would like to encourage friends and neighbors to make earth-conscious choices by offering products that are sustainably made and mindfully packed."

Pencils are such a ubiquitous product that the potential environmental impact could be huge. The entire product is designed to be zero waste.

No trees are cut down to make Terracil pencils. Its shavings are compostable, and even its packaging is glue-free and recyclable. An inkless laser method is used to imprint the Terracil name on each pencil.

Terracils do not have erasers, to avoid metal ferrules (which hold the erasers to the pencils). They're sharpened with regular pencil sharpeners. They work well for writing, drawing, shading and sketching.

So far, folks who have used the Terracils have been pleased with them, according to Natarajan who says she came up with this idea during Covid home containment earlier in 2020.

She noticed that her fourth-grader, whose school was online, went through a lot of pencils and was



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AARTHI NATARAJAN

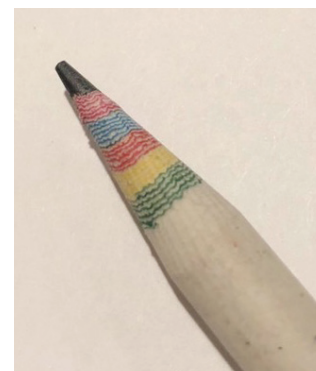
Castro Valley resident Aarthi Natarajan hopes these earth-friendly pencils will appeal to the public.

constantly sharpening them. She started researching and came upon pencils made from rolled recycled paper rather than wood.

They had a strong graphite core, but the paper itself came from discarded ends of paper rolls and newspaper. She teamed up with a manufacturing partner in India and hopes others will appreciate these sustainable products as much as her family does.

"We aspire to be waste-conscious and practice sustainability in our personal lives," says Natarajan. "Some efforts we have made so far include a self-built greenhouse, solar panels on our roof, and gray water recycling."

She adds that she and her family have lived in Castro Valley for close to five years and love being part of this wonderful, diverse, and welcoming community.



Colorful rolled paper, made from recycled materials, holds the strong graphite core of Terracil pencils

Find more info about Terracils at: www.terracil.com, or www.facebook.com/terracil or by emailing aarthinat@gmail.com. Terracils are \$4.50 for a pack of 10.

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Olivia Fryling Wins Castro Valley Rotary's Student Speech Contest

Olivia Fryling of Hayward, a student at Redwood Christian High School, won this year's Annual Student Speech Contest hosted by the Rotary Club of Castro Valley last week.

The competition, the first round of a district-wide contest that will eventually include entrants from 61 Rotary Clubs, was held Feb. 22 via Zoom this year because of current health restrictions.

The theme of the 2021 District 5170 Richard D. King Annual Student Contest was "Rotary Opens Opportunities." After showing pre-recorded speeches, the winners were announced by Contest Chair Bernie Kempen:

First Place (\$100) - Olivia Fryling, RCHS 12th Grade, for "A Homage to the Heroes Behind the Scenes";

Second Place (\$50) - Jonathan Burckin, RCHS 12th Grade, for "The Forgotten of Society";

Third Place (\$25) - Rohan John, RCHS 12th Grade, for "The Opportunity of Growth."

Fryling is the daughter of Pastor Larry and Arlene Fryling of Hayward. Burckin is the son of Mark and Becki Burckin of Castro Valley. Fryling and Burckin will move onto the Area 4 Speech Contest on March 8, which will pit them against winners from eight other clubs in Dublin, Hayward, Livermore and Pleasanton.



**Olivia Fryling
First Place Winner**

The winner of the Area 4 Speech Contest will then compete in the District 5170 Speech Contest.

This year's entrants from Castro Valley and Redwood Christian high schools were scored according to contest guidelines by Rotarians Murline Monet (President-Elect), Jim Phillips and Mark Poniatowski.

Other students participating in this year's contest included Nathaniel Calvert (RCHS), Quentin Hansen (CVHS), Rayah Miller (RCHS) and Kaitlin Tchang (CVHS).

The Speech Contest is one of the many ways Rotary promotes Youth Service among its members with three goals in mind for both its members and each Speech Contest participant:

- To increase the personal



**Jonathan Burckin
Second Place Winner**

knowledge and awareness of the importance of being able to speak effectively before a group.

- To increase public knowledge of what Rotary is and does throughout the world, especially among young people. Through this knowledge, we hope that they will learn, as we have in the past, "He who serves best profits most."

- To increase participation in the contest and to provide all high school contestants an opportunity to win prizes as top speaker, or runners-up, in District 5170.

The Club welcomes individuals who want to make a positive impact locally, nationally, and internationally.

The Rotary Club of Castro Valley is currently meeting online on Tuesdays at noon. For more info, visit www.castrovalleyrotary.org.

SHERIFF'S REPORTS

COMPILED BY MICHAEL SINGER • CASTRO VALLEY FORUM



Public Intoxication

Sunday, February 28: at 9:32 a.m., Sheriff's deputies arrested a 67-year-old CV man from Castro Valley on suspicion of public intoxication. The man was stopped for questioning in front of a home on San Carlos Avenue near Stanton Avenue. Deputies report the man failed his field sobriety test and was taken to a sobering center.

Drunk and Disorderly

Saturday, February 27: at 4:50 p.m., a 39-year-old man with no permanent residence was arrested on suspicion of public intoxication. Deputies responded to a report of a man harassing people outside a fast-food restaurant on Grove Way near Center Street. The man failed his field sobriety test and was taken into custody.

Wanted for Grand Theft

Friday, February 26: at 10:37 p.m., deputies served a warrant to arrest a 30-year-old man from Castro Valley. The man was in the parking lot of a grocery store on Redwood Road near the Boulevard. Deputies report the man was previously charged for grand theft, providing false ID and possession of illegal narcotics. The man was also found in possession of methamphetamine drugs and stolen property. Deputies took the man to Santa Rita Jail.

Accused of Arson

Friday, February 26: at 2:22 p.m., a 34-year-old CV woman was arrested on suspicion of arson to property. Deputies responded to an alert about a fire at a property at the intersection of Redwood Road and Grove Way. The woman had been seen trying to set fire to some boxes and garbage near the building. She was taken into custody.

Petty Theft at BART

Thursday, February 25: at 12:00 p.m., deputies arrested two people from Castro Valley on suspicion of petty theft. A 32-year-old man and a 26-year-old woman had been identified as stealing from passengers at the Castro Valley BART station on Norbridge Avenue. Deputies additionally charged the woman with resisting arrest. The couple was taken into custody.

Breaking and Entering

Wednesday, February 24: at 7:51 a.m., a 36-year-old man with no permanent residence was arrested on suspicion of breaking and entering into a business on Redwood Road near Knox Street. Deputies responded to a silent alarm from the security system only to find the man had broken in to get some sleep. The man was taken into custody.

Warrant for Assault

Wednesday, February 24: at 8:39 a.m., deputies served a warrant for the arrest of a 27-year-old woman from Castro Valley at a home on Castro Valley Boulevard near Cato Court. The woman had been previously charged with assault with intent to do bodily harm, two counts of possession of stolen

see **REPORTS** on page 14

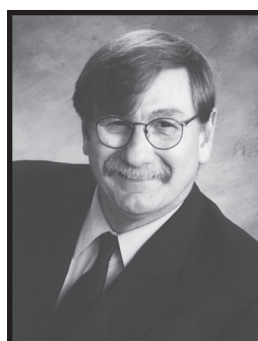
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If You Don't Know Beans...

Beans have been a food staple throughout the world for thousands of years. Once considered "peasant" food, they are one of today's super foods – rich in fiber, protein, calcium, phosphorus and iron – yet low in sodium and fat, and completely cholesterol-free.

When buying, inspect the package and look for firm, clean, whole beans of uniform size and color. Dried beans should be less than one year old – older beans take much longer to cook.

Pick over beans, removing any

broken beans, stones, or other foreign matter, then rinse them in cold water.

There are two ways to soak beans: (1) In a large kettle, combine beans and enough water to cover (2 to 3 cups for each cup of beans). Bring to a boil, reduce

heat and simmer for 2 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and let stand for 1 hour or longer.

Or (2), soak beans overnight in a covered pan. In either case, discard the soak water and cover beans in at least 2 inches of fresh water, bring to a full boil, reduce heat and simmer gently.

You can add seasonings and spices, but do not add salt or acidic ingredients, like vinegar, tomatoes or juice, as they will slow the cooking process. Instead, add these ingredients when the beans are cooked.

The beans will take anywhere from an hour to two hours to cook. If water runs low, add more boiling water (not cold water).

Although dried beans are by far the best value, canned beans are acceptable for nearly all recipes, saving time for busy cooks.

SMOKEHOUSE BBQ BAKED BEANS

- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1/4 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 (28-ounce) cans baked beans
- 3 tablespoons dark brown sugar, packed
- 6 tablespoons molasses

Saute onion and green peppers in butter until onion is tender. Add to baked beans with sugar and molasses, mixing well. Simmer over low heat 25 minutes. Serves 8.

LIMA BEANS & HAM HOCKS

- 1 pound dried large lima beans
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 ham hocks
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 5 or 6 sprigs of thyme

Wash the lima beans and put them in a large pot. Add water to cover them by 6 inches. Bring to a boil; boil for 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low, add the remaining ingredients and simmer for about 2

hours, or until the beans are tender and the meat easily pulls away from the ham bone.

If needed, add more water during cooking. Mash some of the beans with the back of a wooden spoon to thicken the juices. Serve with corn bread. Serves 6.

VEGETARIAN BAKED BLACK BEANS

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

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Drain the beans, reserving the water. Measure out 1/2 cup of bean water and save the rest in case it is needed during the cooking process.

In a medium-sized bowl, combine the beans, 1/2 cup bean water, onion, ketchup, molasses, salt, vinegar, curry powder, Worcestershire and minced chili peppers.

Mist a 7x9-inch baking pan with nonstick spray. Place bean mixture in pan and spread evenly. Cover dish with foil.

Place in preheated oven and bake for 30 minutes. Remove from oven, remove foil cover. If beans appear dry, mix in a bit more bean water. Return to oven. Continue baking, uncovered, for 30 minutes more. Serve hot. Serves 6.

NAVY BEAN SOUP

- 3 cups (1-1/2 pounds) dried navy beans
- 1 (14-1/2 oz.) can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 meaty ham hock or 1 cup diced cooked ham
- 2 cups chicken broth

2-1/2 cups water
Salt and pepper to taste
Minced fresh parsley

Rinse and sort beans, then place them in a Dutch oven or soup kettle; add water to cover by 2 in. Bring to a boil; boil for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat; cover and let stand for 1 to 4 hours or until beans are softened.

Drain and rinse beans, discarding liquid. Place in a large Dutch oven or soup kettle. Add the onion, ham hock, broth, water, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil.

Reduce heat; cover and simmer until beans are tender, about 1-1/2 hours. Add more water if necessary. Add tomatoes with juice during final cooking minutes.

Remove ham hock and let stand until cool enough to handle. Remove meat from bone; discard bone. Cut meat into bite-size pieces; set aside. (For a thicker soup, cool slightly, then puree beans in a food processor or blender and return to pan.) Return ham to soup and heat through. Garnish with parsley. Yield: 10 servings.

QUICK COWBOY BEANS

- 4 thick slices bacon, cut into small pieces
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes in juice
- 2 (15-ounce) cans pinto beans (do not drain)
- 1 or 2 canned pickled jalapeños, or more to taste
- Salt
- 1/2 cup chopped cilantro

In a 4-quart saucepan, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp, about 4 minutes. Add garlic and stir for a minute, then add half the tomatoes with juice (reserve rest of tomatoes for another use).

Cook, stirring, 3 to 4 minutes. Add beans with liquid and simmer over medium-low heat for about 15 minutes.

While beans simmer, stem jalapeños, cut in half lengthwise and scrape out seeds. Chop into small pieces and add to beans. Taste beans and season with salt, if necessary.

Ladle into small bowls, sprinkle with cilantro and serve. Serves 4 to 6.

SOUTHWESTERN BLACK BEAN SALAD

- 1/2 cup light ranch dressing
- 1 large tomato, cut into bite-size wedges
- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup frozen corn, thawed
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 4 green onions (including stems), sliced
- 1 package (5-ounces) salad greens
- 1 cup sharp Cheddar cheese, coarsely shredded
- Black pepper, to taste

In a large bowl, combine all salad ingredients except cheese and black pepper with ranch dressing.

Divide between large salad plates and top with cheese. Pass black pepper, preferably in a pepper grinder, so people can grind their own. Serves 4.

The Castro Valley Forum and San Leandro Times Present...

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

March 17 (CVF) & 18 (SLT), 2021

Here is your chance to tell your career success story in the Castro Valley Forum and the San Leandro Times. These special pages pay tribute to the women movers and shakers in our community. Whether you have started your own business, manage a local retail store, sold over a million dollars in real estate or have been a community leader, this section salutes top women employees and entrepreneurs through photo profiles.



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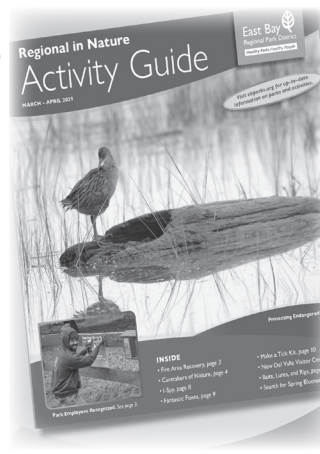
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This issue of the Castro Valley Forum contains the East Bay Regional Park District March-April 2021 Activity Guide.

If your copy of the Forum does not include the EBRP Activity Guide, call 510-614-1555 or stop by the Forum office (2060 Washington Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94577) between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday to obtain one.



SAMPLE AD

Saddle Up in the All New Ford Mustang Mach-E

By Steve Schaefer
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

The Ford Mustang Mach-E is one of the most intriguing and important auto debuts in years. As an all-electric SUV, it points the way to the future while intimately linking to Ford's most iconic brand.

The original Ford Mustang was an exciting, affordable sport coupe and convertible that was the perfect car at the right time. Hundreds of thousands were sold the first year, creating the "pony car" segment.

But the Mustang Mach-E is different. It's got four doors, for one thing. While its length and width are comparable to the regular Mustang, it stands nearly 10 inches taller, and boasts 101 cubic feet (cf) of interior volume versus 83 cf for the coupe.

Surely there were prolonged and heated discussions in the Ford boardroom about "diluting the brand" but I believe that in the end, they decided to spend a little of their amassed brand equity in order to bless this car with everything they could muster to make it successful.

Mustang styling cues include a long and curvaceous hood, muscular sides with rear haunches, a face with piercing eyes and those unique tri-bar taillights. The running horse logo is on the nose and tail, inside on the graphics and screens, and even as puddle lamps. The sporty bucket seats are covered in animal-free "Activex." You sit in a typical high crossover position. Legroom front and rear is generous, and headroom is amazing. There is nearly 60 cubic feet of cargo space with the rear seats folded and almost 30 cf with them up.

The Mach-E's motor puts out 346 horsepower (428 lb.-ft. of

torque) in the standard form and 480 hp (634 lb.-ft.) for the upcoming GT version, due this summer. With instant electric torque and responsive steering through a fat leather-wrapped wheel, I had a blast on back roads as well as cruising through town. The heavy battery pack provides a low center of gravity for road-hugging stability.

The Mach-E gets 105 City, 93 highway, and 105 Combined MPGe. It weighs between 4,400 and 4,900 pounds, depending on battery size and rear- or all-wheel drive configuration. The EPA Green scores are a pair of perfect 10's for Smog and Greenhouse Gas.

Range wise, the rear-wheel-drive car with the standard 66 kWh lithium-ion battery gets 230 miles per the EPA. The 88-kWh extended range battery brings it up to 300 miles. With all-wheel drive those numbers drop to 211 and 270 respectively.

The liquid-cooled lithium-ion battery pack sits below the floor and between the axles in a waterproof case with crash absorption protection. That location, preferred for EVs, means interior volume is uncompromised.

One of the benefits of EVs is the ability to use one-pedal driving. This means you press on the accelerator to go forward and lift off to slow down using regenerative braking. You can choose to disable it if you wish.

The interior blends Mustang cues with a modern, simplified design. A 15.5-inch vertical screen in the center of the dash houses the latest version of Ford's SYNC system. You can tap a box for entertainment, information, navigation, and so on and it displays larger at the top of the screen. Ford promises over-the-air updates.



The Mach-E gets 105 City, 93 highway, and 105 Combined MPGe. It weighs between 4,400 and 4,900 pounds, depending on battery size and rear- or all-wheel drive configuration.

Unlike Tesla, the Mach-E provides a small instrument panel behind the steering wheel, with a digital speedometer and a long blue bar displaying battery range. There's also a tiny image of the car and a humorous "Easter egg" that says "Ground Speed" under the digital speedometer.

The FordPass phone app lets you go without a key fob, unlocking, locking, and starting the car. It displays helpful info as well, including 13,500 charging locations. Pricing starts at \$42,895 for the Select. My test car, the next level Premium in Carbonized Gray Metallic Paint, had a base price of \$47,000. With the optional extended range battery (\$5,000) and \$1,100 for destination and delivery, the sticker came to \$53,100.

Certainly, the Mustang Mach-E's big target is the Tesla Model Y. Both cars offer standard and performance editions and rear- or all-wheel drive and similar pricing. The cars are essentially the same size.



AN ANIMAL-FREE PONY: The sporty bucket seats are covered in animal-free "Activex."

The Model Y looks like other Teslas—pleasantly rounded, with a grilleless face and generic-looking taillamps. Its interior is spartan Danish Modern. The Mustang, however, is notably buffed on the outside and inside, feels more like the cars we know and love.

The Mustang Mach-E's most important role may be to entice folks who admire Teslas but love the look and feel of cars they've

had before to try an EV. Ford offers more than a century of brand equity and a nationwide dealership network that Tesla can't. We'll need a lot more EV buyers as we leave fossil-fuel-burning cars in the dust over the next 10-15 years.

Steve Schaefer lives in Castro Valley. Last month was his 29-year anniversary of reviewing new cars for the San Leandro Times.

Safeguard Financial Information

Consumer Action has launched a new project to expand consumer awareness about how financial services applications ("apps") access, collect, store, use and share customers' personal information.

The project will share free resources, including tips, videos and webinars, on how to control and protect their financial data when using apps that collect bank and other financial services accounts.

While these popular apps help users manage their personal finances and monitor their accounts, consumers are often in the dark about the access they are giving these apps and how to control what personal information is shared.

"Careless use of FinTech apps can lead to fraud and loss of privacy," said Linda Sherry of Consumer Action. "We know FinTech apps are useful and convenient, so our goal is to suggest ways to use these apps in a safer manner while preserving the benefits they offer."

This "Share Financial Data with Care" project features online resources (bit.ly/fintech-privacy) where consumers can watch a short video and get advice and tips for using apps securely.

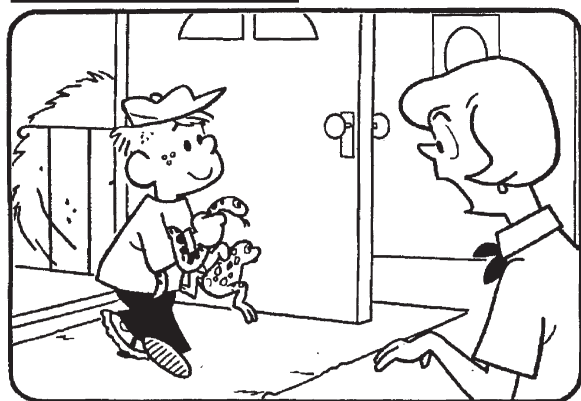
All materials are free and available for educational use.

Financial apps often store users' bank account, credit union and brokerage login credentials, but subject users to "terms and conditions" that limit the company's liability in the event of a data breach.

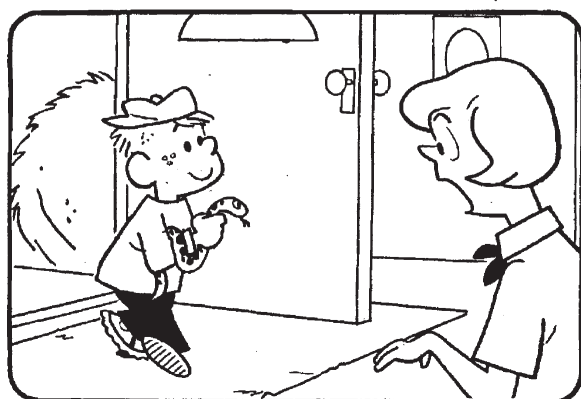
When app logins piggyback on customer-supplied usernames and passwords, it can be difficult for financial services companies to distinguish between malicious hackers and actual customers. In see **FINANCIAL** on page 14

HOCUS-FOCUS

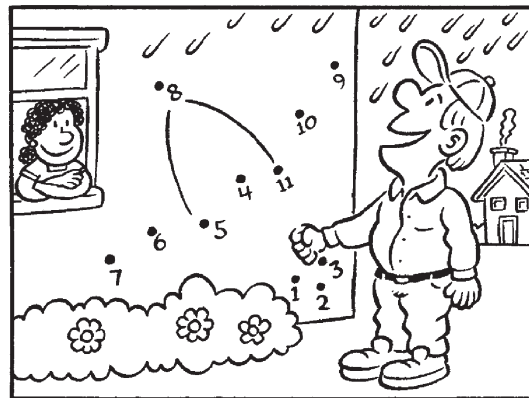
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Window is different. 2. Frog is missing. 3. Doorknob is higher. 4. Railing is missing. 5. Cap is reversed. 6. Earring is missing.



RIDDLE-DOTS! "Hey, Mike! What can go up a chimney down but can't go down a chimney up?" Connect the dots and solve the riddle.

SOMETHING IN COMMON: What do the following two sentences have in common? 1. No lemons, no melon. 2. Was it a car or a cat I saw?

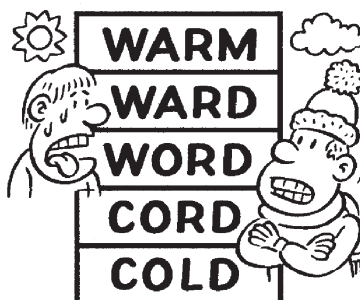
Both can be read the same forwards or backwards.

FIND-A-WORD! On the top line is our mystery word. You need to fill in the missing letters. Clue words (smaller words contained in letter-by-letter order within the mystery word) are defined below.

1. Cost per unit.
2. In or near.
3. Spoiled --.
4. Long-tailed critter.



by Charles Barry Townsend

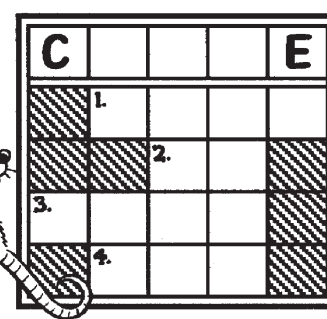


LADDER PUZZLES

LADDER puzzles have been around for over a hundred years. They were made famous by Lewis Carroll, the author of "Alice in Wonderland." In this type of puzzle you are given a word that must be changed into another word in a series of moves. During each move you must change one letter in the previous word so as to form a new word. In our example we changed WARM into COLD in four moves. See if you can change the following four words:

1. BOAT to CASH.
2. MORE to LESS.
3. FISH to MEAT.
4. SICK to WELL.

1. BOAT, COAT, COST, CAST, CASH.
2. MORE, LORE, LOSE, LOSS, LESS.
3. FISH, FIST, FEAT, FEAT, MEAT.
4. SICK, SILK, SILL, SELL, WELL.



Illustrated by David Coulson

Nursing Home Pressing Us to Take Father Home, After Being There Under Medicare, Is This Right?

Q: My father was discharged from the hospital into a nursing home, has been there only about 2 weeks under Medicare, and now they are pressing us to bring him home. But, he's not ready and still needs care. Is this right?

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

A: No, it is not. Unfortunately, many nursing homes are concerned about whether Medicare will continue to pay for care after the initial 20 days, and so often pressure the family to bring their loved one home, or move to another facility for further care.

This is not right and is not in compliance with either the federal Nursing Home Reform Act ("NHRA"), nor California State law.

Assuming the facility is licensed as a "Skilled Nursing Facility" (fancy name for nursing home, and often abbreviated as "SNF"),

it cannot force your loved one out if he or she still needs care.

Under the NHRA and later Regulations, there are only six (6) reasons that a SNF may use to discharge patients. If none apply, it cannot discharge the patient so long as that continued stay is paid for, whether by Medicare, private pay, private insurance, or Medi-Cal. Those reasons are:

(1) The transfer or discharge is necessary for the resident's welfare and the resident's needs cannot be met in the facility;

(2) The transfer or discharge is appropriate because the resident's health has improved sufficiently so the resident no longer needs the services provided by the facility;

(3) The safety of individuals in the facility is endangered due to the clinical or behavioral status of the resident;

(4) The health of individuals in the facility would otherwise be endangered;

(5) The resident has failed, after reasonable and appropriate notice, to pay for (or to have paid under Medicare or Medicaid) a stay at the facility; or

(6) The facility ceases to operate.

Further, as part of any discharge, the SNF must make suitable arrangements in writing for care elsewhere.

If a resident has applied for a Medi-CAL subsidy, and that application is pending, the SNF may not transfer or discharge a resident while that application (or any appeal therefrom) is pending.

Still further, the resident has a right to appeal a Notice of Transfer or Discharge, and may request an actual hearing before a judicial officer, to be held at the SNF, itself, or another place convenient to the



resident. At the hearing, the resident has the right to be represented by a family member or an attorney, the right to review documents ahead of time, the right to cross examine witnesses and/or to bring his own to the hearing.

If your loved one is not ready to be discharged, or even transferred within the facility to another room, I would suggest the following:

1) Advise the Administrator that continued care is needed and that your loved one does not intend to leave. Confirm that advice by a follow up letter;

2) Request a formal hearing by contacting the "Transfer Discharge and Refusal to Readmit Unit" of the Department of Health Care Services at 916-445-9775;

3) Arrange to review all of your loved one's medical records and any additional records that the SNF intends to offer at the hearing;

4) Contact the Long Term Care Ombudsman for assistance. The phone number should be conspicuously posted in the lobby of the SNF. If not, call 1-800-231-4024 or 510-638-6878 for Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano Counties;

5) Consider arranging for your loved one's doctor to write a letter affirming your father's continued need for care or, better yet, ask the doctor to appear at the hearing in person or by telephone;

6) Consider engaging an attorney for assistance.

Good wishes to you and your loved one.

Gene L. Osofsky is an Elder Law and Estate Planning attorney in the East Bay. Visit his website at www.LawyerForSeniors.com.



Covid Isolation Affects Seniors' Mental Health

By Matilda Charles
SENIOR NEWS LINE

Covid hits seniors hard. Many of us have underlying medical conditions that make a diagnosis of Covid very risky in terms of recovery. But the lockdown from the pandemic has another risky side: mental health disorders.

Whether we're living at home, in a retirement center or a care facility, our isolation has been very stressful.

A survey conducted in June concluded that seniors were less negatively affected than other age groups when it comes to mental health. They say we have better emotional regulation, which means we don't react as strongly to negative events.

But the study was done when we were only a few months into this new way of living. (Even the study mentions that as a caveat.) Now eight more months have passed. Holidays without family. Missed doctor appointments.

We've had to take a crash course in online chat to be able to see and talk to friends and family. Our regular meetings and social outings are canceled. The news has been a daily onslaught of the increasing numbers of positive cases and deaths.

A more recent study from Portugal unearthed the truth, however. After reviewing 41 pieces of research from around the world, scientists concluded that "anxiety, depression, poor sleep quality and physical inactivity" have been prevalent among seniors during our lockdowns.

If you're struggling, ask for help. In some communities, hotlines have opened up to deal with this kind of stress. Look online for "mental health hotline." The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention set up a web page in December. Search online for "CDC Coping with Stress" and look at all the offerings on the page.

There is a national helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357). Or you can just dial 211. It's a referral for community services. Stay safe.

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Track Your Misplaced Items

Q: Can you recommend any good devices that help seniors with tracking down misplaced items? My wife misplaces everything including her car keys, eyeglasses, cell phone, purse and more.

By Jim Miller
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

A: There's actually a wide variety of tracking devices that can help you and your wife find items that are commonly misplaced. Here are some top options to consider depending on how tech savvy you are.

Bluetooth Trackers

If you or your wife uses a smartphone or tablet, you can easily track down lost or misplaced items like keys, a purse or wallet, remote control, smartphone, tablet or even a laptop with a Bluetooth tracker.

While there are several different types of tracker products on the market today, the best is Tile (TheTileApp.com), which pairs with Apple and Android apps to help you locate missing items.

All you do is attach a small battery-powered Tile to the items you want to keep track of with an adhesive sticker, a key ring or you can just slip it inside the item.

Then, when a tagged item goes missing, you simply access the app on your smartphone or tablet to see how far away you are from the item or last known location on the map.

If you're within 150 to 200 feet, you can make the Tile ring so you can follow the sound to easily find it. Or, if your wife loses her phone, the Tile work in reverse, allowing her to double press the button on her Tile to make her phone ring (even if it's on silent) as long as it's nearby.

Tile also works with Google Assistant, Amazon Alexa or Siri to find misplaced items. All you have to do is ask.



There's a wide variety of tracking devices that can help you find items that are commonly misplaced.

Tile offers a variety of different sized trackers including the Tile Mate (\$25) that's ideal for keeping track of keys, purses or backpacks; Tile Slim (\$25), which is the size of a credit card that can be put into a wallet or attached to a laptop; Tile Sticker (\$40 for a 2-pack), the smallest finder that can attach to things like remotes, bikes and more; and Tile Pro (\$35), which is the most durable tacker that has a 400-foot range and extra loud ring.

Glasses Tracker

Since Tile doesn't offer a glasses tracker, a great product to help your wife keep tabs on her eyeglasses is Orbit Glasses (FindOrbit.com; \$40). This is a tiny rechargeable Bluetooth device that sticks to the inside arm of the glasses so it's not noticeable.

So, when your wife's glasses aren't on her head, but are nearby, she can use the free Orbit app to make them ring so she can find them quickly. Or, if she's out of Bluetooth range, she can check the last known location that will be shown on the map.

Radio Frequency Finders

If you or your wife don't have a smartphone or tablet, there are also radio frequency devices like the Esky Key Finders (EskyNow.com), sold through Amazon.com, that can help you find misplaced items.

These devices come with an item locator remote and four to six tags with prices ranging between \$20 and \$30. Attach a tag to the items you want to keep track of with a key ring or adhesive. Each tag is color-coded and corresponds to a colored button on the finder.

When an item goes missing, you simply press the colored button on the locator remote and the tag will flash and beep. The signal will go through walls and cushions and have a tracking range of around 100 feet.

Make sure you keep the finder fob in a safe spot, because if you misplace it, you won't be able to find the tagged items.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org.

How to Find a Quality Nursing Home During Covid Pandemic

By Jim Miller
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

The coronavirus has hit nursing homes hard over the past year, making it extremely difficult for people attempting to choose a nursing home.

While many eldercare experts suggest avoiding nursing homes during the pandemic if at all possible, some families find themselves in difficult situations needing long-term or rehabilitative care for their elder loved one now.

To help you find a good nursing home in the Covid era, and avoid a bad one, here are some steps to follow.

Make a list: There are several sources you can turn to for referrals to top nursing homes in your area including your mom's doctor

or nearby hospital discharge planner; friends or neighbors who may have had a loved one in a nursing home; and online at Medicare's nursing home compare tool at Medicare.gov/care-compare.

This tool will not only help you locate nursing homes in your area, it also provides a 5-star rating system on recent health inspections, staffing, quality of care, and overall rating.

Also keep in mind that it's always best to choose a nursing home that's close to family members and friends who can check in often, because residents with frequent visitors usually get better care.

Do some research: To research the nursing homes on your list, put a call into your long-term care ombudsman. This is a government

official who investigates nursing home complaints and advocates for residents and their families.

This person can tell you which nursing homes have had complaints or problems in the past. To find your local ombudsman, call your area aging agency (800-677-1116) or visit LTCombudsman.org.

You should also visit the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services website (data.cms.gov), which provides updated data on U.S. nursing home reported COVID-19 cases and deaths.

Contact the nursing homes: Once you've identified a few good nursing homes, call them to see if they have any vacancies, what they charge, and if they accept Medicaid.

see COVID on page 14

It's True, We Seniors Have Financial Clout

By Matilda Charles
SENIOR NEWS LINE

Have you given any thought to just how much financial clout we seniors have? Not because we necessarily have a lot of money, but because there are so many of us.

As a "silver block" we can make some changes. And with every day that passes, more and more people join our group.

Shopping locally has immediate benefits close to home. According to the Small Business Administration, for every \$100 spent locally, \$48 of it stays in the community. At a big-box chain store, only \$14 stays in town.

Consider that every local purchase you make might actually be the one that keeps a neighbor employed as small businesses struggle to stay open.

Foods that are made locally will be in your hands when they're fresher. And you're likely to get better service and free delivery from a local business that's grateful for your order.

Check a list of stores in your area to see if they have websites. If not, call and ask how orders are placed.

Look for local farmers who sell their products at farmers markets. Call local appliance dealers before your next big purchase. Contact bakeries, shoe stores, and toy, pet and furniture stores that are locally owned.

If shopping locally is too limiting, expand your view to goods made in the U.S.A. As a block, we

have a lot of clout there as well. Finding those items, however, can be difficult. When it comes to products made in America, here are a few websites that list by category dozens or hundreds of items made here:

- I Buy American Store (www.ibuyamericanstore.com).
- Made in America Store (madeinamericastore.com).
- Clark Howard (clark.com).

Put "Made in America" in the search box and look for 100-plus brands made in the U.S.A.

Do your homework before you place an order. Call the individual manufacturer to verify that the items are indeed made in America.

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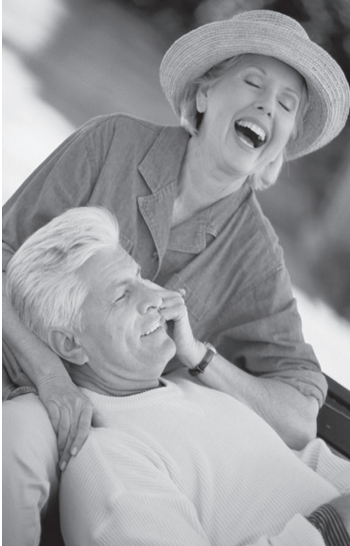
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By Carl Medford, CRS
Special to the Forum

GUEST COMMENTARY



Seller Beware of Fake Listing Prices

One of the most difficult tasks facing Realtors is helping sellers determine their home's list price.

Homeowners often have lofty ideals about their home's value and, in this overheated market, are hoping frenetic buyers will "shoot-the-moon" with overpriced offers. As a result, many seller's No. 1 criteria when shopping for an agent is to find one who "shares" their opinion of the home's value.

On a listing appointment recently, an agent was told, "We see your recommended price, but we were told by another agent they could get at least \$100,000 more." The listing agent, having heard this argument before, explained:

1. No agent can guarantee a sales price. When a home goes on the market, it is subject to all the normal market influences, including the number of competing homes available at the same time, current economic conditions, the actual buyers who are out looking for similar homes at that exact moment, the desperation level of any given buyer and so on.

As an example, a home might be priced perfectly, but

if there are no buyers actually looking for that type of home when it goes live, then regardless of condition and price, it could end up languishing for days.

The only caveat would be if the agent was offering a fixed, guaranteed price through an iBuyer program; usually, however, iBuyer offer prices are lower than current market values.

2. The practice of promising a high price is called, "Buying a listing." Typically, agents who promise a specific price do so hoping it will sell at their proposed price, but also know they will come back and ask for a price reduction if it does not sell after a certain period of time.

This practice often does more harm than good with the result that sellers frequently end up with less than if they had listed lower from the beginning.

3. There is a difference between list and selling prices. When markets are increasing, it is reasonable to believe new prices will be higher than older ones.

Agents, however, when providing pricing recommendations, need to rely on

past sales, not future hopes or expectations. Thus, listing prices in a hot market should reflect current closed sales, but may be driven up by multiple offers.

Seller beware: avoid false promises or hype – in the end, it is buyers who provide the final prices, not the listing agent.

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.

HOME of the WEEK

\$899,000

Must see this large 3 bedroom, 1-1/2 bath, 1880 sq.ft. home 1 block from Lake Chabot Regional Park. Features include lovely built-in cabinetry, open beam ceilings, french doors, hardwood floors and remodeled baths. Fresh interior and exterior paint, new roof, furnace and AC in 2020. Large lot with 2 car detached garage. This home has so much square footage for you to customize to your lifestyle!

Please contact me for more information about this home, or if you would like to learn more about our strategy for getting you the best price and terms for your home in this hot market.



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Should You Buy or Sell a Home in 2021? Here's What to Know

While the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine has left a lot of question marks about the future of the U.S. economy at-large, analysts expect the housing market to remain strong and stable in the coming year.

"Despite the uncertainties of the pandemic, the housing market performed well in the second half of 2020," says Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's chief economist. "Low mortgage

rates and the ability to work remotely continued to propel demand for housing, which is reflected in home sales reaching levels not seen in 15 years."

Whether you're a potential homebuyer, a current homeowner or considering selling, here are some of the biggest takeaways of Freddie Mac's Quarterly Forecast:

• Interest rates are likely to remain low. The average 30-



year fixed-rate mortgage (FRM) hit a record low over a dozen times in 2020. The low interest rate environment is projected to continue through 2021, with the 30-year FRM expected to average below 3 percent. Low rates are good news for buyers looking to purchase a home, and homeowners looking to reduce their mortgage payment through refinancing.

• Home sales to remain high. The demand for housing is expected to remain strong in 2021, creating a favorable market for sellers. Last year, low mortgage rates and the ability to work remotely drove up home sales (the measure of the number of homes sold every month). This year, home sales are expected to ride that wave, averaging 6.5

million for the year.

• House prices to grow moderately. In the second half of 2020, the high volume of home sales and low supply of housing drove up house prices. In 2021, house price growth is expected to moderate for the full year.

• Refinances to start declining. Low mortgage rates spurred refinance activity in 2020, boosting mortgage originations (the process in which borrowers apply for a home loan) to historic highs. As mortgage rates rise modestly in 2021, refinance activity should start to slow.

"While many homeowners took advantage of these low rates in last year, evidence suggests that many lower income homeowners still have the opportunity to strengthen their financial position by refinancing," says Khater.

For more insights on housing, visit freddiemac.com/research. For homebuying and homeownership resources, visit My Home by Freddie Mac.

—StatePoint

Resort Style Living

18088 Joseph Drive • Spectacular Upper Valley Home on 1/4 acre lot. Proctor School Neighborhood. Live and Play in your backyard. Beautiful pebble tech pool, basketball, Trampoline, outdoor dining and pergola. Move in ready updated 3/4bedroom, 3.5 baths, possible in-law set up. Asking \$1,250,000. Call Trish.



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RECENT HOME SALES

Castro Valley

21936 Dolores Street	94546: \$720,000 3 BD - 1,452 SF - 1948
3923 Forest Circle	94546: \$725,000 3 BD - 1,577 SF - 2009
21724 Orange Avenue	94546: \$765,000 3 BD - 1,504 SF - 1948
17226 Robey Drive	94546: \$825,000 2 BD - 1,693 SF - 1950
2713 Jennifer Drive	94546: \$855,000 3 BD - 1,327 SF - 1961
7849 Summerpointe Pl	94552: \$883,000 4 BD - 1,666 SF - 1997
18267 Redwood Road	94546: \$920,000 4 BD - 1,680 SF - 1962
18605 Buren Place	94552: \$1,060,000 4BD-2,251 SF-2003
4932 Lone Oak Place	94546: \$1,225,000 4BD-2,558 SF-1992
4174 Seven Hills Road	94546: \$1,248,000 4BD-2,417 SF-1991
3666 Arcadian Drive	94546: \$1,360,000 4BD-2,806 SF-1958

TOTAL SALES: 11

LOWEST AMOUNT: \$720,000 MEDIAN AMOUNT: \$883,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,360,000 AVERAGE AMOUNT: \$962,363

San Leandro

13017 Neptune Drive	94577: \$205,000 2 BD - 796 SF - 1954
1235 View Drive	94577: \$273,000 3 BD - 2,382 SF - 1956
1224 Lucille Street	94577: \$500,000 2 BD - 1,082 SF - 1946
1510 Timothy Drive	94577: \$631,000 3 BD - 1,015 SF - 1944
307 Garcia Avenue	94577: \$662,000 2 BD - 984 SF - 1939
1495 Timothy Drive	94577: \$668,000 3 BD - 1,015 SF - 1944
15176 Andover Street	94579: \$680,000 3 BD - 1,020 SF - 1950
16054 Selborne Drive	94578: \$685,000 2 BD - 1,050 SF - 1949
15589 Wicks Blvd	94579: \$690,000 3 BD - 1,084 SF - 1958
251 Peralta Avenue	94577: \$700,000 2 BD - 1,225 SF - 1939
14781 Martell Avenue	94578: \$710,000 3 BD - 1,086 SF - 1953
452 Thornton Street	94577: \$725,000 2 BD - 1,047 SF - 1926
255 Cherrywood Ave	94577: \$750,000 4 BD - 1,956 SF - 1926
15160 Swenson Street	94579: \$750,000 3 BD - 1,076 SF - 1948
14978 Fjord Street	94578: \$810,000 3 BD - 1,608 SF - 1978
1095 Dutton Avenue	94577: \$865,000 3 BD - 1,400 SF - 1942
12960 Neptune Drive	94577: \$875,000 2 BD - 1,444 SF - 1946
880 Juana Avenue	94577: \$960,000 4 BD - 2,280 SF - 1925

TOTAL SALES: 18

LOWEST AMOUNT: \$205,000 MEDIAN AMOUNT: \$695,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$960,000 AVERAGE AMOUNT: \$674,388

WORKING WITH THE FIEBIG TEAM

"First of all, thank you for all you have done for us! I was thinking of you telling our family how you were an angel sent to us after the awful experience we had on our first sale. We were all very grateful for how easy you made the sale of Mom C's house! You handled everything perfectly and because of that we have been able to 'let go' and move on from a very emotional sale and with a lot more money to share than we had ever dreamed."

You have certainly restored our faith in Realtors.

You can give our contact info to anyone who wants to be reassured that their interests will be championed.

- David & MaryAnn, Castro Valley



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Mature Tree Rose; Brown Fountain Grass

By Buzz Bertolero
Special to the Forum

Q I have an old tree rose in a wine barrel that's falling apart. I'd now like to plant it in the ground. The front of my house faces west, but there is a partially shady location in the backyard. Where would you suggest planting it?

A Either site would be okay, as both locations would receive at least six hours of direct sunlight per day. That said, I'd prefer the semi-shady location. This location, more than likely, is protected from the afternoon winds during the summer months.

Mature tree roses are susceptible to breakage, as they are top-heavy, especially the Hybrid Tea and Grandiflora types. They can get very top-heavy as the growing season progresses.

After each flush of blooms, reduce the height and remove some of the inner canes. This helps increase the airflow

through the canopy.

Afternoon shade prevents the exposed stem from sunburn during hot temperatures. This can cause the bark to crack and peel and can be an entry point for flat borers. They're also not adequately supported with a stake. Hence, the location that receives the lesser amount of wind is more desirable.

When you remove what's left of the barrel, you'll find little soil and a solid mass of roots. The roots will continue growing in this circular pattern unless you score the root ball. So you should trim the root ball by removing one to two inches off the sides and four to six inches off the bottom at planting.

The planting hole needs to be extra-large, and you should generously amend the backfill with organic matter. The original root ball should be one inch or more above the final grade to prevent it from sinking and being buried too deep.

The next step is to add a new stake, as the current one is too

short. The stake has to anchor the rose in the ground. I'd select one that is two inches by two inches by five feet that would be driven six to eight inches past the root ball. The stake should be under the grafts, which are about thirty-six inches above the ground.

A six-inch high watering basin is then constructed around the rose. It should extend from the trunk to the drip line. The water basin ensures that all the roots get wet when you water. And finally, fertilize with rose food often.

Q My Fountain grass has turned brown. How far back can I prune it? Also, when will it be nice and full again?

A Fountain grass is pruned down to the ground. The new growth will appear at the clump base as the days get longer and warmer. After Memorial Day, the growth rate will accelerate,

and the plant should reach full size by mid-July.

You can encourage the new growth with a hand full or two of an organic All-Purpose Fertilize in March.

Buzz Bertolero is an Advanced California Certified Nursery Professional. The Dirt Gardener's website is www.dirtgardener.com and questions can be sent by email to buzz@dirtgardener.com.



Mortgage Rates Rise Again

Long-term fixed mortgage rates rose again last week, according to Freddie Mac's weekly nationwide survey.

The 30-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 2.97 percent for the week ending Feb. 25, up from 2.81 percent the week before. A year ago at this time, the 30-year rate averaged 3.45 percent.

Fifteen-year fixed-rate mort-

gages averaged 2.34 percent, up from 2.21 percent. A year ago at this time, it was 2.77 percent.

Five-year hybrid adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs) averaged 2.99 percent, up from last week when they averaged 2.77 percent.

"Optimism continues as the economy slowly regains its footing, thus affecting mort-

gage rates," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's Chief Economist. "Though rates continue to rise, they remain near historic lows. However, when combined with demand-fueled rising home prices and low inventory, these rising rates limit how competitive a potential homebuyer can be and how much house they are able to purchase."



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Castro Valley Statistics

Current active listings: **33**
Current pending listings: **59**
Average days on market: **14**
Average list price vs. sale price:
106.8%

With low inventory, low interest rates and strong buyer demand it's a great time to sell your home. Give Jon and Leslie a call today for a no obligation, **free market analysis of your home or to be placed on our listing notification list.**

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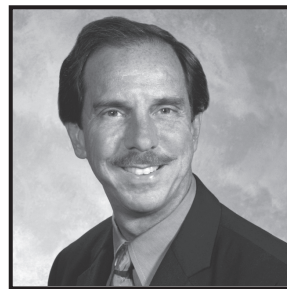
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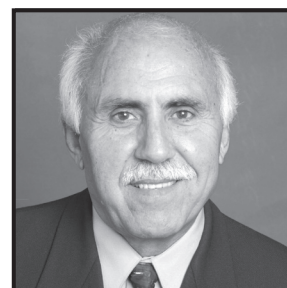
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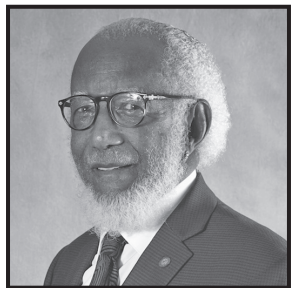
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5 Tips to Get Your Garage Organized – And Keep It That Way

Is your garage in disarray? While you dream of a perfectly organized workbench or garage, your reality probably looks more like a sea of random toys, boxes and exercise equipment.

Every do-it-yourselfer knows a clean, organized garage is the key to efficient project planning and repairs around the home. As we head into warmer months, set aside the time to take charge of the space and finally create a sense of tidiness that will last year-round.

Follow these five tips to tame the mess and get your garage back in shape:

1. Invest in shelving that accommodates clear storage bins. When it comes to organizing and storing the assortment of cords, car care items, paint supplies and kid's toys littering your garage, nothing does the job better than clear storage bins. Not only can you categorize items by project or activity type, you can also easily stack them to save space without sacrificing the ability to easily find what you need, when you need it. Invest in taller, wider shelving for the perimeter of the garage to

accommodate your chosen bins.

2. Fix or dispose of anything broken or past its prime. There's nothing worse than scrambling to find a specific tool or product in an urgent situation, only to realize it's broken, damaged or dried out. As you organize, pay attention to textures, consistencies and expiration dates. Toss and replace any items that have seen better days. For broken tools that seem salvageable, like cracked hoses or broken handles, reach for a professional grade, heavy-duty duct tape like T-Rex Tape to tackle the repair.

3. Utilize ceiling and wall space with hanging storage. From bicycles and skis to rakes and shovels, some equipment is better off stored up and out of your way. Install hanging racks or shelving above the area where you park your vehicles to store larger, heavier equipment, and use a double-sided mounting tape to attach hooks along the sides of your garage for lighter-weight items.

4. Stock up on the essentials so you can make repairs on the fly. While it's great to have a wide assortment of tools and

supplies, for many projects and repairs you really just need the basics – think max-strength waterproof tape, bungee cords, a hammer, nails and similar essentials. Use these items as the foundation of your garage workstation and stock up on extras to keep on-hand for emergencies, camping and other on-the-go uses.


5. Give everything a home. Aim to group supplies for similar activities, tasks and repairs together, giving each category a "home." In addition to helping keep things organized in dedicated spaces, hanging frequently

used tools and supplies on hooks or pegboard can make it easier to quickly scan the garage and find exactly what you need. Use your mounting tape to safely and securely create a space to store and display all your go-to items.

Interested in more solutions for all your home and DIY needs? Visit www.trextape.com for a wide variety project and repair ideas.

Whether you're working on your car or tackling a weekend DIY project, having all your tools and supplies in order will make all the difference.

—StatePoint




Cold-hardy bloomers

Here are eight colorful annuals that you can plant in early spring:

- Senetti pericallis
- Cyclamen
- Ranunculus
- Dianthus
- Campanula
- Calla Lily
- Freesia
- Calceolaria

—Brenda Weaver
Source: www.costafarms.com





WEEKEND GARDENER

March Jobs

Take time to get caught up on the chores you skipped during the rainy days. Yellow oxalis plants are blooming all over the East Bay. Pull them while the soil is still very moist, being careful to remove the root. Oxalis often break off at the soil line and will be up again before you know it. And don't forget those snails and slugs. The recent rains brought them out in force. Hand pick them in the evening, or use copper barriers or crushed eggshells around newly transplanted flowers and vegetables.

Strawberries

Remove strawberry blooms through May to concentrate the plant's energy into big, sweet berries.

Roses

Check roses and trees for suckers, those little shoots that grow from the rootstock. Cut them off with shears or a spade, since they sap the plant's energy.

Wildflowers

Wildflowers still can be sown and are excellent for erosion control on hillsides in the East Bay.

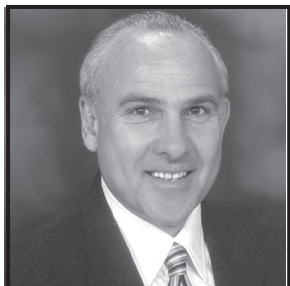
Anxious to Plant?

If you have a bad case of spring gardening fever, you can quickly dress up a bare-bones garden with instant color in blooming six-packs and four-inch pots.

Vegetables

Sow beets, carrots, chard, herbs, lettuces, green onion, parsley, peas, potatoes, radishes, spinach and turnips.

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Realtors... Your Picture could be here!

This Monthly Section will run the first Wednesday and Thursday of every month in the Castro Valley Forum and the San Leandro Times.

For information about advertising call:

Mary Florence: 510-861-3270 or

Linda Nakhai: 510-915-1513

www.castrovalleyforum.com



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

● Saturday & Sunday, March 6 & 7: Newsom Recall Drive

You are invited to sign a petition to recall Gov. Gavin Newsom this weekend from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the northwest corner of Castro Valley Blvd. and Redwood Road. Only 2 weekends left to sign. Info at recallgavin2020.com/.

● Tuesday, March 9: Rotary Topic: Business Strategies

Jeff Teresi will speak to the Rotary Club of Castro Valley on strategies to find their next business breakthrough at the club's next meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, from noon to 1:30 p.m. More information is available at castrovalleyrotary.org.

● Tuesday, March 9: CV Parent Nursery School Open House

If you have a 3- to 5-year-old child and are committed to working with other parents in a hands-on co-op environment, the Castro Valley Parent Nursery School may be just what you are looking for. The school is now enrolling for the 2021-2022 school year. You are invited to attend a virtual open house to learn more about this child-centered, play-based, cooperative model at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 9. RSVP to forms.gle/M9JA6xQeuMyN84xX6 to receive zoom link. Attendees eligible to win a bag of kid projects as a door-prize! Email to membership@cvpns.org with questions.

HARD Spring Recreation Registration is Underway

The Hayward Area Recreation District's Spring 2021 Recreation Programs Guide is on now on the website and available for viewing.

Registration began last week on an expanded offering of virtual and in-person recreation classes and programs for all ages, from preschool to seniors, including swim lessons, cooking, dance classes, crafts, tennis and adult fitness.

"This has been a very challenging time for our community, and staff has been working hard to create new and virtual opportunities for recreation," stated HARD Board President Louis Andrade.

"There are some terrific new programs to enjoy this Spring. HARD values learning and fun, and that's what recreation and parks bring to our residents."

Re-opening recreation facilities and returning programs is based on Alameda County and State public health orders.

To see the new Spring line-up of programs, visit www.HaywardRec.org/guide. Registration is on-line at info@HaywardRec.org and in-person. Scholarships are available. Visit www.haywardrec.org/432/Apply-For-A-Scholarship to learn more.

Postal Service Hiring for Several Local Openings

The U.S. Postal Service is hiring for several immediate local openings.

There are City Carrier Assistants (CCA) openings in Berkeley and across Alameda County. Those interested in starting a postal career should go online to www.usps.com/careers and search the latest job postings available in any cities in the county.

Each vacancy posting has specific job details including wages and benefits. Applicants must be 18 years of age, or 16 years of age with a high school diploma or

GED.

All applicants must be able to pass drug screening and a criminal background investigation. Some positions require an exam. Any position that has a driving requirement will also require a valid driver license and clean DMV 2-year driving history.

Citizenship or permanent resident status of five years is required.

Postal Service employment provides job security and benefits, with many challenging and rewarding promotional opportunities for future career employees.

Covid: Steps to Take When Choosing a Nursing Home

continued from page 7

Also, find out their staff-to-patient ratio and staff turnover rate; their Covid infection-control procedures; the percentage of residents and staff that have been vaccinated for Covid; and their facility visitation policy.

If visitor restrictions are in place, see if they offer smartphone, tablet or laptop technology assistance so you can have Facetime, Zoom or Skype video calls with your mom.

Tour your top choices: The

best way to evaluate a nursing home is to visit it in person, but because of Covid, some facilities may offer limited or virtual tours only. To help you evaluate and rate a facility, Medicare offers a terrific checklist of questions that you can print at Medicare.gov/Nursing-HomeCompare/Checklist.pdf.

Paying for Care: With nursing home costs now averaging \$255 per day nationally for a semi-private room and nearly \$290 for a private room, paying for care is an-

other area you may have questions about or need assistance with.

Medicare only helps pay up to 100 days of rehabilitative nursing home care, which must occur after a hospital stay of at least three days.

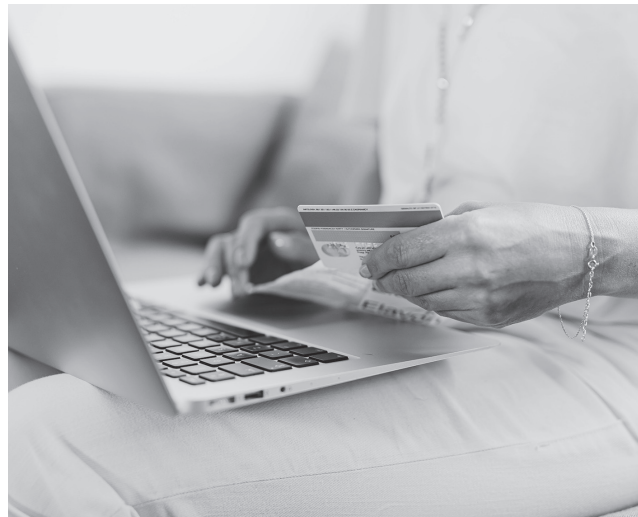
Most nursing home residents pay for care from either personal savings, a long-term care insurance policy, or through Medicaid once their savings are depleted.

The National Clearinghouse for Long-Term Care Information

website (LongTermCare.acl.gov) is a good resource that can help you understand and research your financial options.

You can also get help from your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), which provides free counseling on all Medicare and Medicaid issues. To find a local SHIP counselor visit Shipta-Center.org or call 877-839-2675.

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



Consumers should know how to better protect their financial data while using apps or websites.

Financial: Cyber Security

continued from page 5

A lack of awareness about the fact, some financial institutions estimate that up to 50% of online banking logins come from so-called "screen-scraping bots."

"Consumers should know how to better protect their financial data while using the apps," said Ben Isaacson, a senior vice president at The Clearing House, a banking association and payments company.

Research from The Clearing House found that 54% of U.S. banking customers had used at least one FinTech app in the past year, but most of these users are not aware that once they provide their financial account login credentials, the app provider often gains access to all transactional and even personal information.

App users are also often unaware they are accepting terms that give app providers permission to sell and share their data for marketing purposes.

"Unless users understand the ways apps potentially use their financial data, they will not be in a position to fully protect their financial information from marketers and data brokers," said Consumer Action's Sherry. "We understand banks are developing safer ways to allow users to share select information with FinTech apps, but, until these are universally available at all financial services companies, it's important for consumers to stay 'security savvy.'"

Consumer Action, founded in 1971, is a national nonprofit, consumer education and advocacy center based in San Francisco. For more information, visit www.consumer-action.org

Reports: Assault & Battery

continued from page 3

snooping around secure areas of the building. During questioning, deputies report they found stolen property in her possession. The woman was taken into custody.

Assault and Battery
Monday, February 22: at 11:49 a.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 49-year-old man from Castro Valley on assault and battery charges. The man was taken into custody. The victim was treated at the scene.

Loitering at the Hospital

Monday, February 22: at 5:52 p.m., a 40-year-old CV woman was arrested on suspicion of loitering and possession of stolen property at Eden Medical Center on Lake Chabot Road. Deputies were called to intervene after hospital security noticed the woman

Newsom: Recall Campaign

continued from front page

since 1911. Only one succeeded when voters recalled Gray Davis in 2003 and replaced him with Arnold Schwarzenegger.

If there's a recall election, the ballot would have two questions. The first, asking whether Newsom be recalled, would require a majority vote. The second, asking who should replace him, would be won by the candidate with the most votes.

Castro Valley resident Kelly Marquez Johnson joined Stump at her table last Saturday as people occasionally walked up to sign the petition.

Newsom's big dinner at the

French Laundry was the thing that spurred her to action, Marquez Johnson said.

"I was a sommelier and he killed my job," Marquez Johnson said. "But then he went to the French Laundry for a wine dinner when it's supposed to be outside and 6 feet apart, and he was inside, elbow to elbow, and no masks. There's an elite thing going on in this country on both sides."

The recall campaign was launched by Orrin Heatlie, a Republican and retired Yolo County sheriff's sergeant, in February of last year, long before Covid lockdowns caused Newsom's approval numbers to tumble.

Vaccine: Who's Getting It

continued from front page

one dose and 49 percent of adults 65 and older have received at least one dose.

County health data reveals that the majority of the vaccines were given to white or Asian residents. Vaccinated women outnumbered the number of men getting their shot by nearly a third.

To help get more people vaccinated, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors considered purchasing emergency vaccine equipment during its Tuesday meeting.

Youth Sports Returning

In a sign of life returning to normal, youth sports are now allowed to hold multi-team competitions under new guidance released by the State Health Department. New rules apply to both outdoor and indoor youth and recreational adult sports with appropriate distancing and personal protections in place.

County health officials said they strongly recommend that organizers of multi-team competitions limit the number of teams participating to no more than five teams.

What's New at A.R.T, Inc.?

There's always something new going on at A.R.T., Inc., the organization founded in 1984 by a group of artists at the Adobe Art Gallery in Castro Valley.

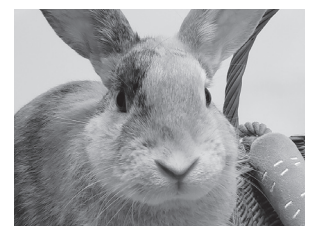
The group promotes art by encouraging artists to exhibit their work, and you can see the continuing viral exhibitions, the newly started solo shows, future demonstration announcements, a

calendar of events and much more at art.inc.org

Want to participate in a solo show? The application is right there. Every activity is free with exception to the juried show which costs \$10 for entering a second piece of art. To receive newsletters, emails and exhibit opportunities, become a member and support visual arts for just \$15 for 2021.



Radagast is a friendly and curious bunny. He is also quite active and would like enough space to stretch his legs. Interested in adopting? Please, call the Hayward Animal Shelter (510) 293-7200.



Tiger is a male bunny who is chipped, neutered, and vaccinated. He enjoys exploring, snacking on fresh greens, and playing with his chew toys. Call the Hayward Animal Shelter (510) 293-7200.



Marley is a 4 month old charcoal tabby. He's active and playful and will be available for adoption on March 8, once he is neutered, vaccinated and chipped. Info: email Loveall-pawzrescue@gmail.com.



Koko is a handsome 4 month old Siamese mix. He's sweet, and cuddly and will be available for adoption on March 8, once he is neutered, vaccinated and chipped. Info: email Loveall-pawzrescue@gmail.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FREDZ@EBPUBLISHING.COM



'Sins of Wrath and Pride'

Editor:

I am writing in response to the letter printed in the Forum from Michael Teves ("Some Biblical Advice," *Letters*, Feb. 24). I found the lecture he unloaded on Mr. Bradford to be in equal measures arrogant and sanctimonious.

It struck me as being full of the sins of wrath and pride, and very much lacking in the virtues of charity, patience, gratitude and humility.

Mr. Teves presents his belief system (which I share) as fact. By definition we adopt belief in absence of evidence! We have faith that our beliefs are true, but the fact is none of us will know for sure until we shuffle off this mortal coil and face our personal moments of judgment.

So lecturing Mr. Bradford about his lifestyle is out of line. Indeed Mr. Bradford exemplifies to a high degree how one should serve a community through his many good works. And his lifestyle in no way impedes Mr. Teves from pursuing life as he, himself, prefers.

So, who is Mr. Teves to assume God's role to sit in judgment? Mr. Bradford's eternal fate is between himself and God, and is no business of Mr. Teves'.

I would encourage Mr. Teves to read once again the Good News in the Bible, and reflect on whether his public lecturing of Mr. Bradford is truly in keeping with the teachings of the Aramaean whom we both profess to worship.

—Kern Lewis, Castro Valley

Prejudice: A Weakness to be Fought

Editor:

Letters like that of Michael Teves ("Some Biblical Advice," *Letters*, Feb. 24) remind me of the old joke, "Thank God I'm an atheist!"

Being an atheist, I can strive to judge those I meet by the quality of their character, not the supposed dictates of an imaginary lord and master. Surely I am not the only one to notice that, for those who reference God, God's views always align precisely with their own prejudices?

I would not say atheists are free of prejudice; sadly, none of us are. But prejudice is a weakness to be fought, not a divine commandment to be propagated.

—Carol Sholin, Castro Valley

What Defines Morality

Editor:

Michael Teves ("Some Biblical Advice," *Letters*, Feb. 24) makes two claims of knowledge.

First, he claims that he knows the intention of unknown, unverified authors of an arbitrarily selected collection of translations of translations of copies of stories for which we have no original manuscripts.

Mr. Teves is effectively saying "My interpretation is correct, and yours isn't." Well, what can be claimed without evidence can be dismissed without evidence.

Second Mr. Teves claims he knows what is going on in Billy Bradford's mind. He says "Your beef is with their Leader (and, you know it!)" There is one person on the planet who knows precisely what Mr. Bradford knows, and that is not Mr. Teves.

Mr. Teves ends with "So, if you have a problem with this Biblical provision take it up with the 'Author' not the Church." It is not the authors of books written millenia ago who are badgering our gay community; it is people today who uncritically follow faith leaders who teach their faith communities that their unsubstantiated interpretations of a set of Bronze Age stories is what defines morality.

—C. Conrad Cady, Castro Valley

In Support of Governor Newsom

Editor:

With a well-funded out-of-state libertarian corporate billionaire campaign underway to recall Gov. Newsom, I would like remind people of his accomplishments since his election by 64% of the vote in 2018.

As the leader of a progressive Democratic state, Gov. Newsom created a moratorium on the death penalty that targets the poor and people of color.

He declared a state of emergency in March 2020 to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic in lieu of honest and meaningful response from the federal government. Following science and health professional-based guidelines he necessarily shut down schools and businesses and thus saved tens of thousands of lives of Californians.

Now there is a very successful rollout of the vaccines and he is using an \$8 billion state surplus to help the citizens of the state.

Gov. Newsom had California be the first state in the nation to mail ballots to all registered voters. He is now overseeing a successful rollout of the vaccine to match the national response and is using an \$8 billion state surplus to help schools and businesses.

His administration stood up to the tRump University Administration to oppose environmental assaults on California, the governor is working to support immigrants, create universal health care, support public education and solve homelessness and the housing shortage.

I want to sincerely thank Gov. Newsom from the bottom of my heart and please don't forget to vote to stop this out-of-state tRump Republican power grab.

—David Siegel, Castro Valley

Sad to See Shuttering of Merle's Hallmark

Editor:

It was very sad to read that Merle's Hallmark is closing. I have been a fan for years in San Leandro and for the 16 years we have lived in Castro Valley.

The staff and owner have always exceeded in great customer service. I have marked many special occasions, some sad including when friends have lost pets, as well as many happy occasions. And I loved their Just Because line as well.

Beyond the great selection and wonderful service, I deeply appreciated their care and concern and extra efforts during Covid. I wish Mr. Saltzman and his entire team all the best. A card in the mail is a rarity these days and I will miss going in to choose the very best one.

—Kathy Padro, Castro Valley

Where Have All Our IQs Gone?

Editor:

In an age of increased access to information it seems that instead of increasing our IQs, we appear to be headed in the opposite direction. When I hear people say such things as; "I'm not getting vaccinated because I'm not sick", or "I don't want a chip imbedded in my arm so Bill Gates can control me", or "The election was fraudulent", or "Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden are Pedophiles, and Trump will be inaugurated as president on March 4th," I begin to wonder where this nonsense is headed?

Will people go back to burning witches again? Of course I am exaggerating. However, one thing is certain. George Orwell was astute when he prophesied that greater media access would lead to tribalism. We have divided ourselves into discrete cult-like belief systems, with little to no tolerance for others.

—Robert S. Thomas, Castro Valley

Finds Educational System 'Frightening'

Editor:

It is refreshing to see that there is still at least one newspaper in the Bay Area that will print letters to the editor from all sides of the political and social spectrum.

Mark Poland ("Left-wing Indoctrination in CV Schools," *Letters*, Feb. 17) made some excellent points as to how our children are being educated. My granddaughters asked me about a month ago, "are all of our Founding Fathers racist?" Wow!

HOROSCOPE by Salomé

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ARIES (March 21 - April 19): You might feel more encouraged about changes in your personal and/or professional life. However, it might be best not to rush things but rather work with them as they evolve.



TAURUS (April 20 - May 20): The Bovine's business sense is especially keen this week. But remember that it's always best to investigate before investing. Make sure there are no hidden factors that can rise up later on.



GEMINI (May 21 - June 20): Working on a family project could create tension between and among those concerned. Your good sense and your patience can help reduce bad attitudes and raise positive feelings.



CANCER (June 21 - July 22): You should be seeing more progress in the development of your plans and more supporters joining in. News from the past could help change someone's long-held position.



LEO (July 23 - August 22): With personal aspects strong this week, Leos and Leonas might want to spend more time with family and others who are especially close to them. Also expect news of a possible career change.



VIRGO (August 23 - Sept. 22): Taking a strong stand can be helpful this week. But be careful you don't cross the line into obstinacy. Best to take a position on facts as they are, not as you want them to be.



LIBRA (Sept. 23 - October 22): You have a strong sense of the needs of others. This week, turn some of that sensitivity into an honest self-appraisal, and let it find places where you can help yourself.



SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21): Creating an emotional comfort zone to handle a personal problem helps at first. But by midweek, you'll realize you need to deal with it directly or it could linger for too long.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21): Turning the page on a mistake to start fresh might not be the thing to do. Better to go over each step that led up to the decision you made and see which one misled you.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19): Goats enjoy a varied diet, but eating crow isn't on the menu -- at least not this week. An embarrassing situation might have gone wrong before you got into it. Check it out.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18): Your sense of honesty might impel you to speak up about a situation you disapprove of. That's fine. But do so without sounding accusatory. You might not know all the facts behind it.



PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20): Being asked to create a reassuring attitude in the middle of chaos isn't easy, but you can do it. Support for your efforts comes slowly, but it does come. Enjoy an arts-filled weekend.

In San Francisco, the Board of Supervisors are wasting all their time and resources on what to name the schools instead of how to get our kids back in the classroom. Ridiculous.

Unfortunately, democrats have taken control of the Executive and Legislative branch of government. They too at least currently have control of the governorship in the two largest states in the union, California and New York. I say currently because our governor, Newsom, is almost certain to face a recall election. And, in New York, Cuomo is being investigated by the Feds for lying and misleading his constituents on nursing home deaths. So much the left has to be proud of.

All of this of course means the liberal-socialist camp are also in charge of our educational system. Frightening.

—Charles Scott, 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 as necessary. Not all letters are published. 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.

Obituaries

Carolyn Karris Maravelias Brake

Castro Valley Resident
February 12, 1933 ~ February 19, 2021.

Carolyn passed away peacefully on February 19, after a short illness. She was born in Oakland and grew up in Castro Valley, graduating from Hayward High in June 1951. Shortly afterward, she married (Louis) Peter Maravelias and settled in Castro Valley raising their four sons.

Carolyn is survived by her four sons Michael Lemaster (Betsy), Pete (Ronda), Patrick (Jane) and Mark (Chris) Maravelias. Her grandchildren are Nicole Slattengren, Melissa Allen, Peter Maravelias Jr., Colton Maravelias, Patrick Daniel and Hannah Maravelias, Ryder Maravelias and four great-grandchildren. She is also survived by siblings Adrian Karris (Betty) and Penny Polyzos, and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

May she rest in peace and may she live on in our hearts. In lieu of flowers, you might consider donating to your favorite charity in her memory.



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may be emailed to:
obits@ebpublishing.com or
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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Leikela Lunt

Our Athlete of the Week is Leikela Lunt. The 2020 graduate of Castro Valley High School is currently a defensive player on the Briar Cliff University Women's Soccer team in Sioux City, Iowa. While at Castro Valley, Leikela was named a team captain in her Senior Year and played two years on the Varsity Girls Soccer team. She also made the All-League Honorable Mention for her Senior Year 2019-2020. Leikela was also notable in 2019 for playing on the Boy's Varsity Football team. She was the first girl to ever play and score for the CVHS varsity football team as a kicker. While at Briar Cliff, Leikela earned Second Team honors for the 2020 GPAC (Great Plains Athletic Conference) all-conference teams. Even as a defensive player, Leikela managed to produce four shots total including one shot on goal against Northwestern University.

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BART PHOTOS BY MARIA J. AVILA

BART Using its Downtime to Accelerate Infrastructure Plans

BIG LIFT: Above, the largest crane ever used by BART, looming taller than a 15-story building, lifts heavy crossover tracks, known as "interlocking," into the air and sets them into place by Richmond Station. The interlocking functions like an intersection for cars, allowing trains to safely move from one section of track to another. Below, workers guide a section of track into place as it hangs from the crane. The Richmond project is just one of five key engineering projects underway by the transit system. BART is using downtime during the coronavirus pandemic to accelerate infrastructure projects.

