

San Leandro Times

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2019

SAN LEANDRO • CALIFORNIA



The wishes for rain came true over the past week as a series of storms brought a good drenching to Northern California, including the streets of downtown San Leandro.

Winter Rains Back on Track

The rainy season started out slowly through October and most of November but then the atmosphere decided to make up for lost time.

We got practically a solid week of rain, and more is on the way. San Leandro received about 2 inches of rain so far this

season. Rainfall totals vary in the Bay Area, as the cities of Novato, Santa Rosa and Watsonville, have received 6-and-a-half inches of rain so far this season.

Two feet of snow fell in the Sierra Nevada on Monday where over six feet of snow has accumulated in a span of a week,

according to the Associated Press. The snow in the mountains halted traffic temporarily on trans-Sierra highways, but the snow in the Sierra Nevada is a welcome sight, both for its beauty and as a vast water storage resource that will fill the state's reservoirs in the spring and summer.

PHOTO BY JIM KNOWLES

Toll Lanes Coming to Interstate 880

HOV lanes to cost drivers from Hegenberger to Fremont

By Mike McGuire
San Leandro Times

Tolls are coming to Interstate 880, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) told the San Leandro City Council at its Nov. 14 meeting.

The MTC plans to convert the current HOV (high-occupancy vehicle) lanes, which are free but restricted during morning and evening rush hours, to "Express" toll lanes open to all but not free for most vehicles most of the time. Much of the electronic infrastructure has already been completed, said Lisa Klein, field operations director with the MTC.

said. Caltrans initiated the idea, sent it to the MTC for their input, and then submitted it for an environmental impact report, the

see TOLL, page 14

Downtown Holiday Festival On Friday



San Leandro's 25th annual "It's A Wonderful Night" festival will be held on Friday, Dec. 6 from 5:30-9:30 p.m. in the Downtown Plaza.

The holiday tree will be lit at 5:30 p.m. with civic leaders welcoming the crowd to downtown San Leandro. Horse-drawn carriages will be on hand to give rides around the block.

The entertainment will include dancing, music, outdoor movies and games. Santa Clause and Mrs. Claus will be on hand for picture taking.

The opening of the express lanes is planned for late summer 2020.

According to Klein, switching to Express Lanes, with tolls, from HOV lanes has already been decided. The reason for the MTC's presentation, and for a number of public open houses being held along the route, is to gather comments on details of how the new system would operate.

The next of those open houses will be held Dec. 11 at the San Lorenzo Library, 385 Paseo Grande, from 5 to 8 p.m. There is also an online open house being held through Dec. 18 at mtc.ca.gov/expresslanes.

No agency actually voted to add the toll lanes to I-880, Klein

Post Office Reminder on Dog Bites

By Linda Sandsmark
San Leandro Times

The holidays are just around the corner, and with them come additional package and mail deliveries. The U. S. Postal Service (USPS) asks everyone to help ensure letter carriers and parcel delivery personnel don't fall prey to dog attacks.

Because dogs are territorial by nature, they can view deliveries as a threat. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that 4.5 million people are bitten by dogs each year, and letter carriers face this threat on a daily basis.

Nationwide there were a reported 5,714 dog attacks on letter carriers last year. California had the most of any state, 794 in 2018.

According to USPS information, San Leandro letter carriers reported seven dog bite incidents in 2017, and eight incidents in 2018.

"Dog bites are problematic year round nationally," says Post Office spokesman Augustine Ruiz. "Even one is of concern."

If a letter carrier feels threatened by a dog, or a dog is loose or unleashed, the owner may be

see BITES, page 9



PHOTO BY LINDA SANDSMARK

San Leandro letter carriers and delivery personnel ask the community to help protect them from dog bites this holiday season.

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MEETING SCHEDULES

CITY COUNCIL

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

SAN LEANDRO SCHOOL BOARD

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



PETS OF THE WEEK



Pumpkin



Autumn

tered 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 percent of felines that color are male. Both are very playful, fun-loving teenagers who may have special needs.

The Pets of the Week at the Hayward Animal Shelter, 16 Barnes Court in Hayward, are Pumpkin and Autumn.

Pumpkin, a handsome, neu-

For more information on Pumpkin or Autumn, call the Hayward Animal Shelter at 510-293-7200.



San Leandro Times

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

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Strolling Musicians Coming to Bayfair

Bayfair Center, 15555 East 14th St. in San Leandro, will host

a series of festive strolling musical performances this holiday season on Saturdays through Dec. 21, with one final performance on Tuesday, Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve).

Demo Club Christmas Party

The San Leandro Democratic Club will have a Christmas party on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 6:30 p.m. at the San Leandro Senior Community Center, 13909 E. 14th St. Sing Christmas carols, tell political jokes and line dance.

During the events, the performers will begin near Center Court of the mall and from there they will stroll through the center from 1 to 3 p.m., sharing their happy holiday sounds with everybody along the way.

These performances are free and open to the public.

Ho! Ho! Ho!

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VETERINARY CLINICS
Every Sunday
From 1:30 to 3 p.m.

Reception for Artful Steps Artists Tonight at Downtown Taproom

Artful Steps of Davis Street, in partnership with The Cooler, will hold an art reception presenting the works of local artists with disabilities tonight (Thursday) from 6 to 8 p.m. at The Cooler, 1517 East 14th St. in San Leandro.

The 19 pieces of artwork showcased in the craft beer taproom include ceramic mosaic, wood assemblage, acrylic paintings and more, on display through the end of the year.

A wide assortment of crafts will be available for purchase. Greeting cards, coloring books, handmade felt Christmas ornaments will all be displayed, along with a chance to meet the artists.

The exhibit provides an opportunity for the community to appreciate the diverse and unique artistic visions within the Artful Steps program of Davis Street.

"Our crafts make epic Christmas presents," said artist Jade Saren.

"Being able to show my art

is the best part of my year," says Mona Nonette, an artist of Artful Steps.

For more information, con-

tact Artful Steps Program Manager Sonja Amoroso at 510-567-2621 or email sonja.amoroso@davisstreet.org.

Lunch Menu at The Senior Center

Lunch provided by Spectrum Community Services

A low-cost senior lunch provided by Spectrum Community Services is served on weekdays at the San Leandro Senior Center, 13909 East 14th St.

Everyone age 60 and up can have lunch. A suggested donation is \$3.75, but no one is refused for lack of funds. (\$10 for those under 60.)

Call 24 hours ahead to reserve a lunch (1-510-825-9793) or sign up at the Senior Center.

The menu for lunch next week, Dec. 9 to Dec. 13, is:

Monday – Turkey chili,

garden salad, cornbread and oranges.

Tuesday – Baked cod, melted leeks in cream sauce, bok choy, whole wheat rolls, fruit mix.

Wednesday – Apricot glazed chicken, minestrone soup, carrots, brown rice, and strawberries.

Thursday – Beef stroganoff over egg noodles, spinach salad with red onions and carrots, whole wheat roll, banana.

Friday – Cheesy veggie rice casserole, tossed vegetable salad, whole wheat roll, and grapes.



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POLICE & FIRE

Police Tell Council About Power Shutoff Response Effort

By Mike McGuire
San Leandro Times

San Leandro's emergency services held up well in the recent power outages, but much remains to be done to be fully prepared, the Police Department told the City Council at its Dec. 2 meeting.

Police Chief Jeff Tudor introduced Capt. Luis Torres, who then gave a presentation prepared by himself and Emergency Services Specialist Cristina Christian on the city's emergency response to both the Oct. 9 and Oct. 26 power shutoffs.

The council was unanimous in its praise of the work of the police and Christian.

Capt. Torres noted problems include the police dispatch center's operations being interrupted for several minutes at a time despite emergency backup preparations. Dispatch did switch to a different antenna tower that was analog rather than digital, and it ended up working smoothly, Torres said.

"Sometimes analog is still better," said Torres.

A generator currently located too close to dispatch impeded its work with noise and fumes, Torres said. The department kept testing for carbon monoxide as a precaution, but all tests were negative.

Torres said it was a relief, though, that the generator worked for the length of the outage. It had been tested regularly and was refueled when needed, but it had never faced a real-life test of this magnitude before. Moving it further away from dispatch was needed, though, he said.

Councilman Benny Lee pointed out that the next test of our emergency response might not be a power shutoff, with some advance warning, but rather a major earthquake along the Hayward Fault arriving without warning.

As bad as a power shut-

off might be, Lee said, getting through an earthquake's immediate aftermath and then back to normal would likely take much longer. Lee added that experts believe a major quake along the Hayward Fault is "overdue."

Lee said the city needs an assessment of needed infrastructure upgrades in case of a major earthquake. Included in that, he said, should be cell towers, power for landline phones, and superchargers for electric vehicles so people using those could still get to work, or go elsewhere.

A big fear during the emergency, Torres reported, was that legally required backup power might not work for all the city's railroad crossings. Each was checked by police and found to have backup, though one crossing did require checking with the railroad to be sure.

There are 37 railroad crossing gates in San Leandro, Councilman Lee pointed out later in the meeting. In case of an emergency, he said, the 93 sworn police officers would have to cover these plus any major street intersections without traffic signals.

Despite being busy otherwise on the day after the shutoff started, emergency responders also encountered an arsonist setting fires on the west side of town, around Catalina Street and Farallon Drive, Torres said.

Firefighters had responded to a vehicle fire in the 14700 block of Catalina about 2 p.m. on Oct. 27. They were extinguishing it when they saw a brush fire just to the south.

They also spotted a suspicious individual near the fire, who ran when they approached him. They put out the brush fire, but soon discovered several others had been set at nearby businesses, doing some damage before they were extinguished, Torres said.

The man was not apprehend-

ed despite a police search, but no fires have been set in the area since, Torres said.

Torres said that lights went out in only a few places around town, but two of those were City Hall and the Police Department, which did have generator backup.

The main library kept its power during the shutoff, but does not currently have backup power, according to Torres.

A public speaker before the police presentation, Ginny Madsen, had said a power backup at the library was essential. Not only is it an obvious gathering place in an emergency, but it is also the hub of the city's entire wi-fi network, she said.

Later in the meeting, several Councilmembers and Mayor Cutter also called for a backup generator for the main library, along with solar panels on select city buildings. As storms do not usually come with sunshine, some form of energy storage would also be needed, councilmembers noted.

Councilwoman Deborah Cox suggested looking into storage devices made by San Leandro's Freewire, among others.

Vice-Mayor Corina Lopez said all public facilities in San Leandro should have solar panels for emergency backup power.

Lopez also called for greater outreach, starting ahead of emergencies, to people without access to computers or other electronic devices. She suggested radio, print, including perhaps running ads, and billboards.

Mayor Pauline Cutter said it is important that all city residents know, before an emergency, what they need to do and what resources are available.

Capt. Torres said the city's emergency radio station, broadcasting at 1610 AM, was not used during the first power outage on Oct. 9. It was used for the Oct. 26 outage and will be used in the future, he said.

Reviving the city's television station would also be a good idea, he added.

Torres said the city had already applied for a grant for backup power for the main library and for traffic lights at 10 major intersections.

The city is also looking into getting charcoal filters for several large buildings so they can be clean-air havens in case of wildfires or other air-quality emergencies.

Torres also said we need to have a PG&E Community Resource Center in San Leandro where people can get help and recharge electronic devices. The utility set up centers in Berkeley, Oakland and Hayward, but these are too far away from some San Leandro residents, he said.

Some signs of discontent with PG&E were evident at the meeting. Councilman Victor Aguilar suggested sending PG&E the city's bill for added overtime pay. Councilman Ed Hernandez



Brush fire believed deliberately set near Catalina Street warehouse on Oct. 27.

suggested looking into joining San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo's proposal to turn PG&E into a customer-owned rather than investor-owned utility.

Public speaker Milan Baranco identified herself as a San Francisco State University student who was unable to use devices essential to her studies during the shutdown. She said using generators more might be a big mistake. Quoting officials in wildfire-plagued El Dorado County, she said they added diesel fumes to existing air-quality

problems, as well as risked sparking more fires themselves.

Public speaker Ken Fox offered practical advice for many owners of electronic devices. Rather than heading some distance to a community resource center or other such large operation to recharge devices, there are chargers that run off stored power, for about \$50. You leave them plugged in when you have power, he said, and then use them to recharge when you don't. You can thus stay "plugged in" at home if you wish.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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FoodPantry
at All Saints Episcopal Church
911 Dowling Blvd, San Leandro

Are you hungry and low on food for your family? Everyone is invited to get free food at the holiday Food Pantry!

WHEN CAN I GET FOOD?

Two pantries in December:
Saturday, Dec. 7
Saturday, Dec. 21



WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

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You can help setup, distribute food, and clean-up until 2:30pm.
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SUNDAY 11:11 A.M.

Unity Church of San Leandro

Meeting at 13909 E. 14th St. • San Leandro • 510 483-2132

NEIGHBORS



Happy Birthday Alma

Although originally from Bellwood, Illinois, Alma R. Drown has called San Leandro her home for the past 76 years. Family and friends gathered together recently to celebrate her 100th birthday.

Alma was encircled in love by her four adult children, and their spouses; her ten

grandchildren, and their spouses and her eighteen great grandchildren.

The celebration also included cherished family members, longtime family friends and neighbors. First Presbyterian Church of San Leandro hosted this milestone event.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

❖ Holiday Festivities in Downtown San Leandro

The San Leandro Downtown Association is sponsoring "It's a Wonderful Night" on Friday, Dec. 6, from 5:30 to 9 p.m. at the downtown Plaza, between Washington Ave. and East 14th St. Kick off the holidays with the Holiday Tree Lighting at 5:30 p.m. Sing along with stages full of holiday entertainment. Get selfies with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Come for the outdoor movies and

games. Bring an unwrapped toy for Marine Toys for Tots and receive a free hot dog and popcorn. Take a ride with friends and family in horse-drawn carriages. The best parking will be in the nearby city parking lot at Estudillo and East 14th. Traffic through the shopping area is often crowded and slow.

❖ Douglas Morrisson Theatre *Christmas In OZ*

This holiday season, the Douglas

Morrisson Theatre and East Bay Children's Theatre are decking the halls with a splashy musical for the entire family, *Christmas In OZ*, running Dec. 13 to Dec. 22. Tickets are \$15 to \$29. Performances will be held at Douglas Morrisson Theatre, 22311 N. Third St. in Hayward. For tickets and more information, visit www.dmtOnline.org or www.ebctOnline.org or phone 510-881-6777. Show times are Friday and Saturdays Dec. 13, 14, 20, 21 at 8 p.m., Sundays Dec. 15 and 22 at 2 p.m., and Thursday, Dec. 19, at 7 p.m.

❖ Evening of Christmas Hymns at St. Felicitas Church

Catholic Daughters of the Americas will host an Evening of Christmas Hymns and Humorous Stories with singer Michael Russell O'Brien on Friday, Dec. 13, at 7 p.m. at St. Felicitas Church, 1662 San Leandro Blvd. in San Leandro. Tickets are \$10 in advance. Call Kim Oliver at 510-940-5949. Proceeds benefit local charities such as Habitat for Humanity, Disabled Veteran's and many others.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Deadline for Calendar Items is Friday for the Following Week



❖ Drake's First Friday Fundraiser

It's all happening at Drake's Barrel House, 1933 Davis St. in the West Gate Center, on Friday, Dec. 6 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. All donations and net proceeds from beer sales will benefit Wilson Elementary School and John Muir Middle School. There will be 32+ beers on tap and great food from local food trucks available for purchase. Feel free to bring your own lawn chair or other tailgate seating to make yourself comfortable. \$5 suggested donation per person at the gate. This event is for 21 and over, children 16 and under allowed if accompanied by parents.

❖ St. Gerard Women's Club

The members of St. Gerard Women's Club at St. John's Church will have a Christmas Bake Sale and Raffle in the Community Room, 264 E. Lewelling Blvd. in San Lorenzo, after the 4:30 p.m. Mass on Saturday, Dec. 7; and and after all the Masses starting at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 8. Baked goods and raffle prizes. For more information contact Juanita Velasquez, president at 510-688-0669. edited for the calendar:

❖ Winter Wonderama

Diana Shmiana presents Winter Wonderama: a multicultural show about winter themes of giving, light, and seasons changing, on Saturday, Dec. 7, at 2:30 p.m. at the Manor Branch Library, 1241 Manor Blvd. in San Leandro.

❖ Oakland Youth Chorus Performance

The San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Ave., invites the public to celebrate a "Goodwill to All" gathering with music on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 2 to 3 p.m. Music will be performed by the Oakland Youth Chorus, sending the message of peace on earth to all. The music inspires songs of peace, goodwill and acceptance of all ages, all races, all nationalities, and all cultures across all beliefs or philosophies. Admissions is free.

❖ Child Actors Needed

Child actors needed for Christmas pageant. Rehearsals will run for about an hour for the first three Sundays in December at noon on stage at the San Leandro Church of Christ building. All ages are welcome. Contact Woody and Judy with questions and to sign up: woodysquare@sbcglobal.net. Pageant is during worship service on Sunday, Dec. 22, from 10:15 to 11:45 a.m. San Leandro Church of Christ, 601 MacArthur Blvd. in San Leandro.

❖ San Leandro Readers Roundtable

The San Leandro Readers Roundtable meets Saturday, Dec. 7, at 2 p.m. at the San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Ave., to discuss *Go, Went, Gone*, by Jenny Erpenbek, the story of a widower in Berlin and the African refugees he becomes involved with. All are welcome, and all books discussed are available for purchase in the Library's Booktique bookstore.

❖ All Saints Holiday Concert & Dance

All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling Blvd. in San Leandro, will hold a Holiday Concert and Community Dance on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. with Celtic, medieval music with dance that honors the season. Dancing is fun, accessible and, of course completely optional. These concerts have a holiday party feel. Tickets are \$15 per person (tickets purchased at the door). No charge for children with parents.

❖ Creekside Craft Show

The 16th annual Creekside Craft Show will be

on Friday, Dec. 6, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Saturday, Dec. 7, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Creekside Community Church, 951 MacArthur Blvd. in San Leandro. The Holiday Art & Craft Show is free of charge, food and drinks will be available for sale each day and includes a raffle at 4 p.m. on Dec. 7. Plenty of parking. This year, a portion of the proceeds will support Foster the Bay, a coalition of churches committed to providing a loving home for every child in foster care. The Chili Cook-Off will be on Friday, Dec. 6, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. where 10 chefs will compete in a fiery competition all for a good cause. \$5 advance ticket or \$7 donation at the door until the chili runs out.

❖ Corvallis Elementary Holiday Boutique

Corvallis Elementary School, 14790 Corvallis St. in San Leandro, will have a holiday boutique on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the cafeteria. Bring a toy, canned food item or a clean used coat for a donation to the Davis Street Family Resource Center. Receive a raffle ticket for every item you bring for a chance at a prize drawing.

❖ Assumption Church Santa's Breakfast

The Church of the Assumption, 1100 Fulton Ave. in San Leandro, annual Santa's Breakfast will be on Sunday, Dec. 8, after the 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Masses. Tickets are \$8 for adults, and \$5 for students and seniors. Photo with Santa is \$5, Blitzen's mimosa bar \$5, and the North Pole hot chocolate is \$1.

❖ SLZ Adult School Fall Job Fair

San Lorenzo Adult School, 820 Bockman Road, will host its Fall Job Fair on Tuesday, Dec. 10, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in its Multipurpose Room. Open to the public. For more information, contact Trish Jetson at 510-317-4224 or pjetson@slzsd.org if interested in participating as a vendor.

❖ Libertarian Party Holiday meet-and-greet

The Libertarian Party of Alameda County will have a Holiday meet-and-greet on Thursday, Dec. 12, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Buffalo Bill's Brewery, 1082 B St. in Hayward. There will be an optional anonymous gift exchange (\$10 and under if newly purchased), re-gifting and white elephants are welcome, baked goods work too. No membership required. For more information, visit lpac.us/events.

❖ Adult Coloring Fun

Remember when coloring made you feel relaxed and happy? Relax and enjoy the moment at the Manor Branch Library, 1241 Manor Blvd. in San Leandro, on Thursday, Dec. 12, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Whether you color inside or outside the lines is your call. Refreshments, relaxing music, and coloring supplies provided. No registration required.

❖ Meeting of the SL Democratic Club

The San Leandro Democratic Club will have a Christmas party on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 6:30 p.m. at the San Leandro Senior Community Center, 13909 East 14th St. Sing Christmas carols, tell political jokes and line dance.

❖ Alta Mira Club Holiday Tea

The Alta Mira Club, 561 Lafayette Ave. in San Leandro, will host the Lucille Kline Holiday Tea on Saturday, Dec. 14 at noon. Tickets are \$25. For reservations, call Linda Klass at 510-914-5684 or Isabel Polvorosa at 510-483-2073.

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.

Acute Rehabilitation Unit Moves to San Leandro Hospital

By Mike McGuire
San Leandro Times

Alameda Health System (AHS) will be moving its Acute Rehabilitation Unit (ARU) from Fairmont Hospital to San Leandro Hospital on Dec. 8, the county health care system announced.

Patients recovering from major trauma such as strokes, spinal cord injuries, brain injuries or car accident will be able to get acute rehabilitative care, according to AHS spokeswoman Jeanne Herrera.

Patients have typically come to the ACU directly after suffering a trauma for intensive rehabilitation therapy, Herrera said. They can expect 3 hours of therapy a day, or 15 hours each week. They stay an average of 12 to 14 days and receive occupational and speech therapy if needed. The intense therapy is meant to get them home, and relatively soon, said Herrera.

There are 28 beds in the new facility, which features the most modern rehabilita-



PHOTO COURTESY SAN LEANDRO HOSPITAL

A patient room at the newly opened Acute Rehabilitation Unit at San Leandro Hospital.

tion equipment. More spacious rooms have upgraded beds, an ADA-compliant bathroom in each room, and individual

televisions. Designated rooms now have overhead lifts that will decrease the likelihood of both patient falls and physical

strains on staff.

The facility has a new gymnasium with a ZeroG system that suspends patients using a

tether so they can practice walking without the fear of falling. There is also a newly designed rooftop therapeutic area that allows patients to practice their physical therapy with a scenic

view.

To help patients regain independence around ordinary household activities, the center also includes a kitchenette and a laundry room.

All Saints Episcopal Church Holiday Concert and Dance

All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling Blvd. in San Leandro, will hold a Holiday Concert and Community Dance this Saturday from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. with Celtic, medieval mu-

sic with dance that honors the season.

Dancing is fun, accessible and, of course completely optional. Tickets are \$15 per person at the door.

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF

Ruth Dahl
Case Number:
RP19042988

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of: **Ruth Dahl.**

A Petition for Probate has been filed by **Stonecrest Acquisitions, LLC: Denise Hill, Manager** in the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda. The Petition for Probate requests that **Stonecrest Acquisitions, LLC: Denise Hill, Manager** be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

The PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on 12/18/2019, 9:31 a.m., Dept. 202, at 2120 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley, CA 94704.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) **four months** from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code or (2) **60 days** from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. **Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.**

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for petitioner: Heather Ledgerwood, Esq
2400 Professional Drive Suite 100, Roseville, CA 95661 800-835-2634
LEGAL 0187-SLT RP19042988 11/21, 11/28 12/05/2019

Theater Troupes Join Forces To Present Christmas in Oz

This holiday season, the Douglas Morrisson Theatre and East Bay Children's Theatre are decking the halls with a splashy musical for the entire family: "Christmas In OZ," running Dec. 13 to Dec. 22.

Tickets are \$15 to \$29. Performances will be held at the Douglas Morrisson Theatre,

22311 N. Third St. in Hayward.

For tickets and more information, visit www.dmtOnline.org or www.ebctOnline.org or phone 510-881-6777.

Show times are Friday and Saturdays (Dec. 13, 14, 20, 21) at 8 p.m., Sundays (Dec. 15 and 22) at 2 p.m., and Thursday, Dec. 19, at 7 p.m.



Assumption Santa's Breakfast

The Church of the Assumption, 1100 Fulton Ave. in San Leandro, annual Santa's Breakfast will be on Sunday, Dec. 8, after the 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Masses. Tickets are \$8 for adults, and \$5 for students and seniors. Photo with Santa is \$5, Blitzen's mimosa bar \$5, and the North Pole hot chocolate is \$1.

LEGAL NOTICES

FILED
NOVEMBER 05, 2019
MELISSA WILK
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 565177

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the businesses:
El Canario Produce Sales located at 1455 167th Ave. Apt. 19, San Leandro, CA 94578, in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): (1) Jose Coto (2) Lucy Jouel, 1455 167th Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94578. This business is conducted by a general partnership. This business commenced on 11/05/19.

/s/ Jose Coto, Lucy Jouel
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.

Expires November 05, 2024
NOV 14, 21, 28, DEC 05, 2019
0182-SLT

FILED
NOVEMBER 06, 2019
MELISSA WILK
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 565205

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the businesses:
Tonya Kelly Jewelry located at 2237 Sol Street, San Leandro, CA 94578, in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Tonya Kelly, 2237 Sol Street, San Leandro, CA 94578. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced N/A.

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

Expires November 06, 2024
NOV 14, 21, 28, DEC 05, 2019
0183-SLT

FILED
OCTOBER 31, 2019
MELISSA WILK
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 565038

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the businesses:
A1 Gutierrez Construction located at 3875 Castro Valley Blvd. #54, Castro Valley, CA 94546, in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Alfredo Gutierrez Medina, 3875 Castro Valley Blvd. #54, Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced N/A.

/s/ Alfredo Gutierrez Medina
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.

Expires October 31, 2024
NOV 14, 21, 28, DEC 05, 2019
0184-SLT

FILED
OCTOBER 18, 2019
MELISSA WILK
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 564577

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the businesses:
Healthy Life Nutrition located at 14410 Washington Avenue Ste 100, San Leandro, CA 94578, in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Magdalena Quintero, 15227 Central Ave., San Leandro, CA 94578. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced N/A.

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

Expires October 18, 2024
NOV 14, 21, 28, DEC 05, 2019
0185-SLT

FILED
NOVEMBER 05, 2019
MELISSA WILK
County Clerk
ALAMEDA COUNTY
By-----, Deputy
FILE NO. 565175

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930

The name of the businesses:
Tacos El Diablitto located at 1024 75th Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94577, in Alameda County, mailing address 1024 75th Avenue, Oakland, CA 94621 in Alameda County is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Mario Gomez, 1024 75th Avenue, Oakland, CA 94621. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced 11/05/19.

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

Expires November 05, 2024
NOV 21, 28, DEC 05, 12, 2019
0186-SLT

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SENIORS

Does Your Trust Contain a 'Poison Pill'?

By Gene L. Osofsky, Esq.
Special to the Times

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?

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

What to Do When Medicare Tells You No

By Jim Miller
Special to the Times

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

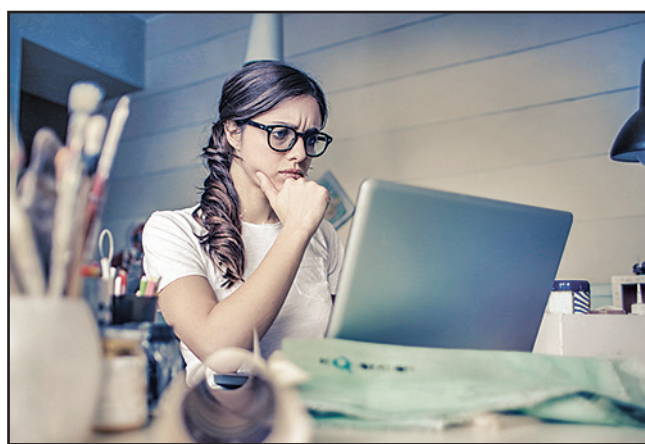
If you have original Medicare, start with your quarterly Medicare Summary Notice (MSN). This statement will list all the services, supplies and equipment billed to Medicare for your medical treatment and will tell you why a claim was denied.

You can also check your Medicare claims early online at MyMedicare.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 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," 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.

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LIFESTYLE

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

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

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 bak-

ing 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. Yields 48.

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.

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Hot Cocoa Crawl and Mayor's Tree Lighting..... 12/7

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Raiders Assist Food Bank Distribution

Raiders players, kicker Daniel Carlson, running back James Butler, fullback Alec Ingold and tight end Darren Waller spent their lone off-day last week assisting in sorting and distributing food out of the Alameda County Community Food Bank's (ACCFB) Mobile Pantry truck to low-income families in the East Bay.

The players lent their support in handing out fresh fruits, vegetables and staples to residents from the Mobile Pantry, which provides to local families a free farmers-market filled with healthy staples and fresh produce.

The Food Bank serves one in five people – including children, seniors, and entire families – in Alameda County. ACCFB's Mobile Pantry truck visits dozens of neighborhood schools, parks, wellness centers as well as additional locations in the community.

The Mobile Pantry last week was parked outside the Ashland Village Apartments in the Bay



PHOTO OAKLAND RAIDERS

From left, tight end Darren Waller, running back James Butler, kicker Daniel Carlson and fullback Alec Ingold prepare to hand out fresh fruits and vegetables to Bay Area residents from the Mobile Pantry.

Area community of San Leandro and families were lined up well in advance of the start of the

distribution to collect their items and meet, greet, take photos and interact with the players, who

mentioned that they were happy to assist and humbled by the experience.

Bites: Be considerate of your letter carrier

continued from front page

asked to pick up their mail at the Post Office. If a dog is roaming the neighborhood, the pet owner's neighbors may also be asked to get their mail at the Post Office.

Preventive measures can help deter such problems before they occur. First, keep dogs on leash when on the street. Make sure fences and gates which hold pets are in good repair, and consider having parcels delivered to your office or secure box location.

Dogs have been known to burst through screen doors and even plate glass windows to attack visitors. If a letter carrier delivers to your door, move your pet to a separate room and close that door before opening the front

door. Alternatively, have another adult far from the door restrain the pet on a leash.

Remind children who are home with a dog not to open the door to letter carriers or delivery personnel – let the adults do it.

Technology can also help. The USPS Mobile Delivery Device (scanner), which is used to confirm deliveries, has a feature to indicate a dog at a particular address. Also, the package pick-up app asks customers to indicate if there is a dog at their address when they schedule pickups, so carriers are alerted in advance.

A little forethought and planning can help ensure the safety of letter carriers, residents and pets this holiday season.

Corvallis School to Host Holiday Boutique

Corvallis Elementary School, 14790 Corvallis St. in San Leandro, will have a holiday boutique on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the cafeteria.

Bring a toy, canned food item

or a clean used coat for a donation to the Davis Street Family Resource Center.

Receive a raffle ticket for every item you bring for a chance at a prize drawing.

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REAL ESTATE GALLERY



REAL ESTATE REALITY

By Carl Medford, CRS
Special to the Times

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 Sebastian 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 ex-

pensive 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 properties destroyed

in California's devastating wild fires. 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.



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Selecting and Caring for Your Christmas Tree

By Melinda Myers
Special to the Times

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 fir 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.



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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.



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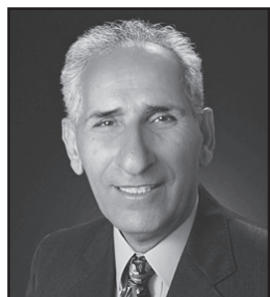


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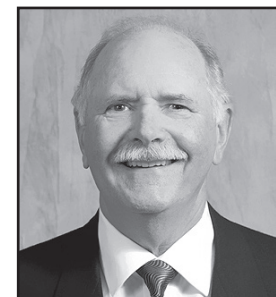
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Toll: Comments to be heard at meeting in San Lorenzo on Dec. 11

continued from front page
biggest step in moving it toward construction.

The state legislature had previously authorized building express lanes on some California freeways.

The I-880 HOV lanes have been limited up until now to cars with two or more occupants during morning and evening rush

“Some 20 percent of carpool lane users cheat.

hours, from 5 to 10 a.m. and 3 to 7 p.m., but open to all vehicles during other hours. No tolls are currently charged. Some clean-air vehicles are also allowed in the current HOV lanes during peak times, along with motorcycles.

Under the MTC plan, the restricted hours would expand to 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. Any vehicle, including those with solo drivers, could use the lanes during those hours — if they pay using FasTrak. Half-price tolls would be collected for two-occupant cars and clean-air vehicles which do not currently pay tolls at all. Any vehicle could use the



PHOTO BY JIM KNOWLES

Caltrans plans to change some of the HOV lanes on I-880 into toll lanes from Hegenberger Road in Oakland to Dixon Landing Road in Fremont.

Express Lanes for free during off-hours.

Only cars with three or more occupants would get to drive for free in the proposed Express Lanes. Motorcycles would be included.

AC Transit Buses Could Use Lanes for Free

Public transit vehicles such as AC Transit buses would travel the lanes for free, even if returning empty at the end of the day. Commercial buses, though, would only get to ride free if they had

at least three people on board and if they have a FasTrak. Otherwise, they would pay a full toll.

The Express Lanes would resemble those recently opened in I-580 in Pleasanton, Dublin and Livermore.

The current HOV lanes on I-880 extend from south of Hegenberger Road in Oakland some 25 miles south to Dixon Landing Road in Fremont. Northbound, they cover the 20 miles from Dixon Landing Road to Lewelling Boulevard in San Leandro.

In arguing for the Express

Lanes, the MTC said the current HOV lanes on I-880 have a number of shortcomings. They said the I-880 HOV lanes are slow and unreliable, with HOV lane speeds frequently less than 45 mph for 90 percent of the length of the corridor.

Some 20 percent of carpool lane users cheat — driving in the lane with not enough people in the car — and some 20 percent of lane users are Clean Air Vehicles. It wasn't clear in the presentation if the Clean Air Vehicle use was considered a drawback or a pos-

itive aspect.

The MTC said that Express Lanes would help encourage people to travel in fewer vehicles and by changing prices depending on volume of traffic. Higher tolls would be charged at times of high demand, and lower tolls when traffic is light.

However, according to their presentation, while a minimum price of 50 cents per “zone” (2 to 5 miles) is being proposed, no maximum toll is proposed. A zone is typically several miles long.

According to John Goodwin of the MTC, there will be six toll zones going southbound from Hegenberger Road to Dixon Landing Road, and five lanes going the shorter distance northbound from Dixon Landing Road to Lewelling Boulevard in San Leandro. At the 50 cent per zone minimum toll, that would be a minimum toll for the entire distance of \$3 going southbound and \$2.50 going northbound. But that toll would rise with higher demand.

Goodwin pointed out that

as demand rises at some point the lanes would be nearly filled with carpool vehicles including buses, and it would be physically difficult to fit in more single-occupant cars.

“We really are trying to encourage carpools with the Express Lanes,” Goodwin said.

Drivers using FasTrak transponders would set the device for the number of people in the car. That number would show on overhead sensor stations as a car passes under them. Just as with carpool cheaters now, a waiting police officer could see how many people were actually in the car if there were fewer than three.

The MTC believes that charging tolls will lead to lanes that are well-used but not over-crowded, encourage higher-occupancy vehicles, reduce carpool cheating (partly due to electronic enforcement being introduced), and reduce vehicle weaving. They also say that hours of enforcement would be expanded compared to today's HOV lanes.

Tickets on Sale for Boys & Girls Club Crab Feed

The San Leandro Boys & Girls Club will hold its annual crab feed on Saturday, Jan. 11, at the Marina Community Center, 15301 Wicks Blvd. in San Leandro. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. with dinner being served at 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$50 per person,

which includes all-you-can-eat crab, pasta, salad and French bread.

According to Boys & Girls Club Executive Director, Bob Glotch, “The Club's Annual Crab Feed usually has 480 tickets available but because we're at the Marina Community Center this year, we can only offer

about 300 tickets. So this year's event will definitely sell out. I suggest that anyone interested in coming should purchase tickets early”.

Assigned seating only. To purchase tickets or for more information, call Bob Glotch at the Boys & Girls Club at

510-483-5581 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Proceeds support the San Leandro Boys & Girls Club, which provides educational and enrichment after-school programs for 1300 children per day at 12 school sites in San Leandro and San Lorenzo.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD

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- 9 Oprah's network
- 12 Chills and fever
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- 18 Yule quaff
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- 21 Chic
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- 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
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DOWN

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- 3 Ladder step
- 4 Cap with a propeller
- 5 Bluenose
- 6 A billion years
- 7 Hot tub
- 8 Mike of the ring
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- 11 Vetoers' votes
- 16 Heavy weight
- 20 Petrol
- 22 Memorize
- 23 Distorted
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- 25 Born
- 26 Ivan's and Peter's wives
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- 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
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- 44 Wildebeests
- 45 Whip
- 46 Catch sight of
- 49 Away from WSW
- 50 Do some lawn work

ANSWERS ON PAGE 3

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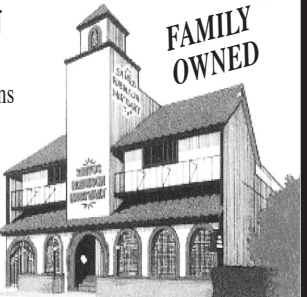
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SLHS Teachers Receive Grant for Environmental Education

San Leandro teachers will get a boost in teaching about the environment due to grants the school district received along with the Sequoia Foundation from two government agencies.

One grant came from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and focuses on air quality, while the other came from the Environmental Protection Agency and focuses on environmental justice.

The new grants build on previous projects where the Sequoia Foundation partnered with the San Leandro schools on a BAAQMD grant to develop lessons involving use of air monitoring sensors. In the second year of that grant, they were joined by Oakland Technical High School in looking at community impacts of air quality and how to reduce exposure to pollutants.

Six teachers at San Leandro

High School and both Muir and Bancroft middle schools are setting up a total of five student projects studying different areas of the environment.

Two teachers are involved with their students studying the impact of idling cars at school drop-off areas on air quality. Other studies are climate change, toxins in the home, waterway toxicity and its impact on fishing, and access to organic food in low-

income areas.

Gaia Pine, instructional coach with the San Leandro Unified School District, said that the students and teachers will present their findings at an Environmental Justice Summit on May 21.

Students will also be developing a community education plan to share findings and promote solutions or healthier alternatives, Pine said.

The teachers will receive

technical assistance from the scientists at the Sequoia Foundation, a California nonprofit that promotes a healthy environment through community involvement.

The foundation meets with and assists teachers in developing curriculum, evaluates projects, and promotes community engagement.

Sequoia is helping organize a community advisory group to assist the teachers and students

further. They are seeking someone with a background in water-quality testing, along with parents and community leaders. The advisory committee already includes city of San Leandro sustainability manager Dr. Hoi-Fei Mok and other city officials.

People interested in serving on the advisory board can contact Deanna Rossi at the Sequoia Foundation at deanna@sequoiafoundation.org.

OPINION

Are Rude And Crude the New Norm, Or Will America Bring Back Civility?

By Dr. Steven Mintz
Special to The Times

"Can we talk?"

Joan Rivers made that catchphrase popular decades ago, but in 2019 the answer to the late comedian's heart-felt query appears to be a resounding no.

Whether it's tweets on social media, pundits on TV, politicians in Washington, or parents at a youth soccer match, much of the communication we engage in today is ill-mannered, inconsiderate, vicious and sometimes downright cruel or violent.

In short, civility is taking a beating.

Incivility occurs because we lose sight of what it means to be an ethical person.

"Ethical people do not berate others. They certainly don't promote violent behavior. Being willing to accept the ideas of others who may not agree with you is a sign of civil behavior. It values those with opposing views as members of humanity."

Ellen DeGeneres made that point recently when she became the target of online outrage after she was seen enjoying a Dallas Cowboys football game with former President George W. Bush. Those taking umbrage with DeGeneres didn't understand why she would hang out with someone whose beliefs and ideals are diametrically opposed to hers.

"When I say be kind to one another, I don't mean be kind to the people who think the same way you do," DeGeneres told her studio audience. "I mean be kind to everyone."

An annual poll by Weber Shandwick, a public relations firm, found that 93 percent of Americans believe there is a civility problem in the country, and whether people realize it or not, we all pay a price.

Incivility can negatively affect happiness and impact wellness. It can harm mental and physical health, affect

productivity in the workplace, inhibit civil engagement, and, taken to an extreme, cause violence in our streets, schools, and places of business.

Who's at fault for the decline of courteous communication? The Weber Shandwick poll found that 57 percent of Americans lay the primary blame on social media and the Internet.

Other culprits they point to include behavior in the White House (50 percent), politicians in general (47 percent), news media (40 percent), political and social commentators (38 percent) and Hollywood celebrities (30 percent).

All is not lost, though. Here's how everyone can do their part to stem the rising tide of incivility.

Think before speaking.

Focus on facts rather than beliefs and opinions.

Be open to others' ideas without hostility.

Disagree with others respectfully.

Focus on the common good rather than one's personal agenda.

Finally, ask yourself how you would feel if the comments you are about to make or treatment of others went viral on social media. Would you be proud of it?

I'm convinced the nation could use a good public debate on civility.

Unfortunately, our leaders don't seem to think it's important enough to do. The Democratic presidential debates haven't touched on these issues, but what better way to address gun violence, workplace harassment and bullying than openly discuss how a lack of civility is tearing apart the basic fabric of society.

Dr. Steven Mintz (www.stevenmintzethics.com), author of "Beyond Happiness and Meaning: Transforming Your Life Through Ethical Behavior," recently retired as a Professor Emeritus from Cal Poly State University in San Luis Obispo.



Letters to the Editor must include the writer's name, address and phone number, and must be under 300 words. We reserve the right to edit as necessary. E-mail letters to: letters@ebpublishing.com or fax to: 510-483-4209, or send by mail to: The Editor, San Leandro Times, 2060 Washington Ave., San Leandro, CA 94577.

INQUIRING REPORTER

What do you like about winter?

— Asked at Freedom Avenue and Fairmont Drive

I like the colder weather and rain, especially when I can stay inside and watch television without guilt.

Carlos Samgoa
San Leandro



We need winter. You've got to take the good with the bad. Inclement weather gives me a reason to avoid outside work and enjoy staying in.

Gil Greengrass
Castro Valley



I love skiing and making snowmen. I also like the traditions of the season to be with family and to worship.

William Martin
Brownsville, Oregon



Family time. I like the fun of the season, like going out shopping to see all the decorations, the festivities, and eggnog.

Dan Rideaux
San Leandro



I like it cold because I feel more comfortable in cold weather. I like to see the bay when it's really rough.

Jim Wheat
San Leandro



Handmade Items, Chili Cookoff at 16th Annual Creekside Craft Show

The 16th annual Creekside Craft Show will be on Friday, Dec. 6, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Saturday, Dec. 7, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Creekside Community Church, 951 MacArthur Blvd. in San Leandro.

The Holiday Art & Craft Show is free of charge, food and drinks will be available for sale each day and includes a raffle

at 4 p.m. on Dec. 7. Plenty of parking.

Each year, local artisans have gathered to sell their handmade items such as pottery, leather products, stained glass,

jewelry, fused glass, quilts, clothing, artwork, candles and home décor.

This year, a portion of the proceeds will support Foster the Bay, a coalition of churches

committed to providing a loving home for every child in foster care.

The Chili Cook-Off will be on Friday, Dec. 6, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. where 10 chefs will

compete in a fiery competition all for a good cause. \$5 advance ticket or \$7 donation at the door until the chili runs out. Proceeds from the Chili Cook-Off also benefit Foster the Bay.

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Casa Peralta To Host Holiday Celebration

Everyone is welcome to attend a traditional holiday celebration at San Leandro's historic Casa Peralta, 384 W. Estudillo Ave., and a Grinch Christmas at the neighboring History Museum on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Casa Peralta will be decked with boughs and beautiful holiday décor. Enjoy cookies, hot chocolate and warm cider while you sit and write a letter to Santa or make a card for someone special this holiday season.

For a Grinch Christmas visit the History Museum, 320 W. Estudillo Avenue, to make a special Grinch holiday ornament and watch the 2018 animated movie "The Grinch" showing at 11:15 a.m. and again at 1:30 p.m. Ornament craft will be available while supplies last. Admission is free for all ages.

For more information, call 510-577-3991 or email asilveira@sanleandro.org.

Gun Safety Presentation At All Saints Episcopal

The public is invited to a gun safety presentation and question-and-answer period at All Saints Parish, 911 Dowling Blvd., San Leandro, on Sunday, Dec. 8, from noon to 12:45 p.m. Discuss what steps will help keep homes and communities safer from gun violence.

San Leandro Police Officer Kevin Hackl will address such issues as how guns can be stored

safely in the home, what a gun owner can learn by taking a gun safety course, and what citizens can do when confronted with a potentially violent gun-related incident.

All are welcome. Refreshments will be available. For more information, contact Justice and Peace co-chair Maxine Sitts at Maxine.sitts@gmail.com.

SL Adult School to Host Tech Ed. Open House

San Leandro Adult School, 1448 Williams St., will host a Career Technical Education Open House on Thursday, Dec. 19, at 6 p.m.

Explore the many certificated training classes and programs: Accounting I & II, Administrative Assistant, Barbering & Cosmetology, Clinical Medical Assistant, Employment Preparation, Homecare Worker, Nurse

Assistant & Home Health Aide, Medical Billing & Coding, Medical Terminology Bootcamp, Microsoft Office Word, Excel & PowerPoint, Office Skills Preparation, Para Educator Test Preparation, Payroll Accounting, Pharmacy Technician and QuickBooks.

For more information, call 510-667-6250 or visit www.sanleandroadultschool.org.

Make a Life-Saving Gift this Holiday Season

Individuals are urged to give a lifesaving gift this holiday season by making an appointment to donate blood or platelets and help the American Red Cross ensure a sufficient supply is available for patients throughout the holiday season.

Those with type O blood are especially needed.

During the holiday season, set aside an hour to give blood and be the lifeline patients need. Make an appointment now by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, or

calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Upcoming blood donations in San Leandro will be on the following dates:

Dec. 7, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Barbara Lee Center for Health and Wellness, 2251 Bancroft Ave.

Dec. 10, from noon to 6 p.m. at Bayfair Center, 15555 E. 14th St.

Dec. 18, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at San Leandro Hospital, 13855 East 14th St.