

# San Leandro Times

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

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2017

SAN LEANDRO • CALIFORNIA



PHOTO BY JIM KNOWLES

Along with other Star Wars characters at Bayfair mall on Saturday were three teens who have received life-saving blood transplants – Ryan Tam in the red and black Mandalorian costume, Juan Carlos Zapata (center) as Han Solo, and Erika Tsuchihashi in red as Queen Amidala.

## Donors – the Life-Saving Force

By Jim Knowles  
San Leandro Times

Three Star Wars fanatics posed for photos with other fans at Bayfair mall on Saturday, glad to share the spotlight on the opening weekend of *The Last Jedi*.

Three of the characters in costume have received life-saving bone marrow trans-

plants. They came from different cities in the Bay Area and met for the first time, and to be a part of the Be The Match Marrow Donor Drive.

Playing the Star Wars characters was a fun way of sending the message that people with life-threatening blood cancers—like leukemia and lymphoma—or other diseases,

that a cure exists.

The three teens – 16 and 17 year olds – are all outstanding high school students, as well as Star Wars fanatics. Ryan Tam of Danville received a core-blood transplant when he was 1 year old. He was dressed in a custom-made Mandalorian costume as a

see STAR WARS, page 7

## City, EBMUD Hagggle Over Chabot Park

If city uses park it should pay for tree maintenance, says EBMUD

By Amy Sylvestri  
San Leandro Times

Chabot Park will be open again this winter after being closed for almost two years during the seismic retrofitting of the Chabot Dam.

Chabot Park is a 10-acre city park in the hills at the end of Estudillo Avenue, not to be confused with the much larger Lake Chabot Regional Park.

The City of San Leandro renegotiated the terms of its lease with the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), which owns the land. Under the new 20-year lease, the city will pay \$4,000 for use of the park land – up from \$2,000 annually.

The city will also pay up to \$75,000 to maintain trees in the park, an expense that was previously the responsibility of EBMUD.

The city will continue to spend another \$50,000 to \$100,000 annually in general maintenance of the park, as is had in the past.

The after three months of negotiations with EBMUD, the contract was approved by a 6-1 vote at Monday night's City Council meeting, with council member Pete Ballew dissenting.

EBMUD is making similar requests of the East Bay Regional Park District for land they lease from EBMUD, according to Jeanette Dong, the city's

recreation director.

EBMUD said that it is logical that it should be up to the lessee to keep the property they are using in good order, according to spokeswoman Jenesse Miller.

see PARK, page 10

## City Council Going Global

By Amy Sylvestri  
San Leandro Times

San Leandro isn't content with trying to stand out as an innovator in the Bay Area, the City Council wants to make their mark internationally.

Last Monday, the City Council heard from their "multicultural ad hoc committee" and the council says it wants to take steps toward "inclusiveness and diversity" in the community and global awareness.

Exactly what that means remains unclear, but council members said they want to create

see GLOBAL, page 12

## Broadmoor Resident Hounded by Dog Owners

By Amy Sylvestri  
San Leandro Times

Fritz Limner says something stinks in the Broadmoor neighborhood – his lawn has become a target for people who let their dogs do their business and then neglect to pick it up.

Limner's house has a big front yard and he says that his grass seems to be a hot spot for all the dogs in the neighborhood. To add insult to injury, when he asks the owners to pick up after their pets, they get mad at him.

"They get downright belligerent," said Limner. "About half the people don't pick it up."

Limner says about 20 to 30

people regularly take their dogs though his yard and he'd prefer they didn't step on the grass at all, let alone have their dogs use it as a bathroom. He added that even some of the people who do use a bag to clean up their dog's mess just walk a few feet away and toss the bag on the ground.

Limner said that one day he got frustrated and made a post on a neighborhood website calling the dog owners "ignorant."

"People wrote back, 'I have a degree, how can I be ignorant?' I'm thinking, if you don't know

see DOGS, page 10



PHOTO BY JIM KNOWLES

Homeowner Fritz Limner says dog owners ignore his requests and let their dogs poop in his yard. Another homeowner has this message to dog owners.

## INSIDE YOUR TIMES

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San Leandro artist lets nature be her medium. **Page 2**

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Tractor-trailer overturns on I-580. **Page 3**

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Take a recipe tip from Charles Dickens. **Page 6**

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## San Leandro Times

An independent hometown newspaper  
serving San Leandro, Ashland,  
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## Nature Provides Artist with Inspiration and Material

By Stephanie Turner  
Special to the Times

I'm a longtime resident of San Leandro and an artist whose palette is flowers, leaves, seed pods, weeds, feathers and even bugs.

Rather than paint or draw these natural items, I use the actual species, letting them speak for themselves. I preserve them by pressing with techniques learned from the World-Wide Pressed Flower Guild, or immersing the plants and insects in slice gel, a white sand that preserves them.

Then I compose a design, frame it, sometimes in a deep shadow box to provide the space they need. I am a self-trained artist, and I'm learning from other artists at the San Leandro Art Association and Adobe Art Center in Castro Valley.

My artistic goal is to invite viewers to zero in on the shape and texture of plants such as lichen, eucalyptus pods, even decaying lacy leaves. Often these can be found on sidewalks, in parking lots and parks, or by the side of the road.

Recently I returned to San Leandro after taking a six-year hiatus to care for my parents in Maryland. They were artists, my mom a florist, and both had Alzheimer's Disease. My mom died in 2014, my dad, this July. I knew it was time to return.



Artist Stephanie Turner recently touched up her work, "Field Flowers," which is on display in Dr. Steven Rosenthal's office.

Shortly after I arrived, one of my first stops was to see my doctor, Steven Rosenthal. My visit was partly medical. I also went to check the condition of "Field Flowers," a pressed flower picture Dr. Rosenthal had

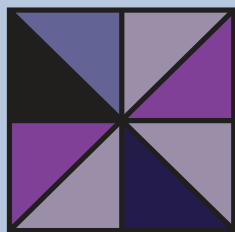
purchased at Paradiso Restaurant on Bancroft Avenue in 2004. At that time, I was just starting to use pressed flowers as an art medium, and had no idea how they would fare over time.

I was happy to see the picture

still hanging in Dr. Rosenthal's waiting room after all these years, but dismayed that after thirteen years the once-colorful flowers had faded. Dr. Rosenthal agreed to let me borrow the artwork and refresh it. He said kindly that

"Even Michelangelo had to have his work touched up."

A few weeks ago I presented Dr. Rosenthal with the new version of "Field Flowers II." Beetles with jade highlights, a see ART, page 7



# SAN LEANDRO Connect Monthly



## San Leandro City Council

Mayor Pauline Russo Cutter

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To receive City Council and Commission agendas and meeting materials, press releases, quarterly newsletters and City sponsored information, you can subscribe at [sanleandro.org/mycity](http://sanleandro.org/mycity).

Para Asistencia en Español  
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(510) 577-3351

### Save the Date:

## City Council Annual Planning Session

Saturday, January 20

8:30am - 2:00pm

Senior Community Center  
13909 E. 14th St.

The public is invited to attend and offer input at the City Council's annual planning session. The meeting will include an update on City finances as well as accomplishments from the past year and Citywide goals for the upcoming year.

For more information, please contact Eric Engelbart, Deputy City Manager at [eengelbart@sanleandro.org](mailto:eengelbart@sanleandro.org)

### Save the Date:

## MLK Celebration Oratorical Festival & Poetry

January 15 @ 10:30am

Senior Community Center  
13909 E. 14th St.

The public is invited to attend the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Oratorical Festival & Poetry slam. Students will perform original or well-known essays, speeches, or poems honoring MLK, Jr.

## Interested in Serving on the City's First Administrative Hearing Board?

As part of San Leandro's Community Care initiative to improve neighborhood aesthetics, the City is now recruiting additional members for a new Administrative Board that hears code enforcement cases that are appealed by the property owner or are scheduled for abatement. The Board will be comprised of six community residents and will serve for two years. To learn more about Community Care, please visit: [www.sanleandro.org/communitycare](http://www.sanleandro.org/communitycare). If interested in serving on the Board, please contact Eric Engelbart at [eengelbart@sanleandro.org](mailto:eengelbart@sanleandro.org) or 577-3391.



## Holiday Lights Recycling

7:00am - 3:30pm - Now thru January 12, 2018

Public Works Service Center  
14200 Chapman Rd.

Did you know it can take up to 1,000 years for plastic holiday lights to break down in a landfill? To help address this issue, the City is now offering free holiday lights recycling. San Leandro residents may drop off lights in working or non-working condition at the Public Works Service Center. Lights should be free of all bags, binding and packaging. Extension cords, Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs), pre-lit trees, wreaths and garland will not be accepted. For more information, contact the Recycling Hotline at 577-6026.

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Finance.....(510)577-3376  
Human Resources.....(510)577-3396  
Police Department  
(Non-Emergency).....(510)577-2740  
Library Services.....(510)577-3970  
Public Works.....(510)577-3440  
Recreation & Human Services....(510)577-3462





PHOTO COURTESY OF ACFD

## Big Rig Blocks I-580

People headed over the Dublin grade to do some Christmas shopping last Saturday got caught in a nasty traffic jam. A big rig overturned on eastbound I-580, east of the Crow Canyon Road exit in Castro Valley at around 11 a.m. Lanes were closed for hours before the wreck was cleared around 4 p.m. There were no injuries, according to the Alameda County Fire Department and the cause of the crash is under investigation.

## DA Promotes Trafficking Awareness

The Alameda County District Attorney's Office has launched its newest campaign aimed at combating the sex trafficking of children and teens, a cause that is important to District Attorney Nancy O'Malley.

Sixty public service ads have been placed on AC Transit buses and bus shelters throughout Alameda County as part of an education effort called "Disrupt Sex Trafficking."

The campaign focuses on the methods by which youth are recruited by traffickers and practical steps that can interrupt sexual exploitation of children. Ads reading "Sex Traffickers Love

Technology, Too" highlight how exploiters befriend their victims on social media. Another poster, "Girlfriend for Sale," focuses on how traffickers lure victims into false relationships and then coerce them into the illicit sex trade.

"The terrifying reality is that any child or teen with a device can meet a sex trafficker, even in the safety of their own home. Teens now have hundreds or even thousands of online contacts, and predators use this tool to befriend, lure, and gain the trust of young victims," said O'Malley in a written statement.

The campaign was created along with the anti-trafficking

organization Abolitionist Mom with input from trafficking survivor leaders.

"Youth can be recruited and trafficked while attending school. Human trafficking education and intervention programs at schools are necessary to prevent more children from becoming exploited," says Genice Jacobs of Abolitionist Mom.

Visit [DisruptSexTrafficking.org](http://DisruptSexTrafficking.org) to see the ads and links to educational resources.

For information on how to identify, prevent, and report human trafficking, please visit [HEATwatch.org](http://HEATwatch.org) and AbolitionistMom.org.

## Teens Swipe Patrons' Pricey Electronics at Starbucks

Two thefts occurred simultaneously at the Starbucks at Bayfair mall last Monday, Dec. 11 and police say both crimes were committed by a group of teens.

At around 2:30 p.m., two customers were working on electronic devices at separate tables. One victim had a laptop stolen and the other got his iPhone X swiped by two separate male juveniles, according to Lt. Isaac Benabou of the San Leandro police.

A group of teens, including the two suspects then fled the Starbucks and ran off in multiple directions.

When police arrived, they

spotted part of the group running to the Bay Fair BART station and pursued them to the platform.

Officers detained the group on the platform before they could board the BART train. The victim's stolen laptop was located inside one of the juvenile's backpack.

A second laptop was also found and is being investigated as possible stolen property. The other victim's iPhone X was not located.

"The theft of laptops and cell phones from coffee shops is a daily crime in our society," said Benabou in a written statement.

Stolen laptops and other electronic devices are being sold for a fraction of their value to other thieves and resold through various means.

"Please take extra precaution when handling your expensive electronics in public. Always be aware of your surroundings and never leave your personal belongings unattended," said Benabou.

A similar laptop theft occurred at the Starbucks on MacArthur Boulevard near Thanksgiving and a group of four teens were detained by police and a 16-year-old boy was arrested.

## Berkeley Cops Looking for Suspect In Multiple East Bay Robberies

Berkeley police are looking for a robber who has struck in various East Bay cities, including San Leandro.

Berkeley police have released a photo (left) of the unidentified suspect and are asking the public's help in finding him.

Investigators with Berkeley police's robbery unit said last week that they have been working with detectives in Alameda, Albany, Walnut Creek and San Leandro to find the suspect.

The suspect has attempted to

rob at least three separate Berkeley businesses – two pharmacies and a restaurant – in October and November.

In each case, the suspect approaches an employee, demands money, and flees on foot.

He is described as an African-American man in his 40s or 50s, about 5-foot-5 to 5-foot-8 with a thin build, and a mustache.

Anyone with information about the suspect is asked to call the Berkeley police department at 981-5742.



## One Arrest in Sex Offender Sweep

San Leandro police officers recently performed a compliance check on 59 registered sex offenders living in the city.

The officers found that six registered offenders are not in compliance with the terms of their release.

On Dec. 13, four teams of officers contacted local registrants

to ensure they are in compliance with the law by verifying places of residence, vehicles they drive, and places they work. This is required under the California Penal Code.

In total, 40 sex offenders were contacted and found to be in compliance. Six offenders were found to be out of compliance

and 13 were not home.

One offender was arrested for having an outstanding warrant and being in possession of drugs and an illegal weapon.

All out-of-compliance cases will be sent to the Alameda County District Attorney's office for review and possible prosecution.

### CROSSWORD ANSWERS

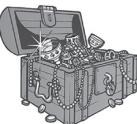
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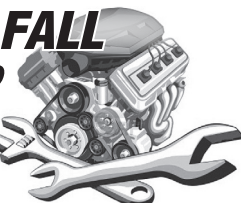
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## Photos with Santa

In Center Court • Through December 24

Live Holiday Performers, Every Saturday  
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### RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE:

Tuesday, December 26, from  
12 p.m.-6 p.m. Call 1-800 RED CROSS  
to schedule an appointment



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\*Performers begin in center court.  
Some will stroll the center



# NEIGHBORS



Gima Rivera left was happy to see all 400 stuffed Rory the Lions that Myrna Hoag delivered for the kids at Children's Hospital for the Christmas Holiday.

## San Leandrians Deliver Plush Animals for the 4th year to Children's Hospital

Myrna and Keith Hoag delivered 400 plush Lions to Gima Rivera at Children's Hospital. This was Myrna's fourth annual Avon fundraiser for Children's Hospital.

They would like to thank the following businesses, families and friends who helped make this Avon fundraiser a great success: Pirtek San Leandro, Chambless and Son Towing, Aiken and Welch Inc., F H Daily Chevrolet, Nicks Family Restaurant, San Leandro Auto

Upholstery, Duarte's Towing, Maria Monteiro, Anna Connie Monteiro, Moeller Bros. Body Shop, Electro Plating Specialties, Bara's Grocery & Deli, Elios Rest., Roger Fernando State Farm Ins., Vintage Alley, Mama Lupe's Mexican Rest. Precision Auto Care, California Fancy Dogs, Tender Loving Care House Keeping, Number One Acoustics, Candice Hanisch, Cheryl Burns, Lori Anixter, Carrie Sinai, Danielle Nebel, Priscilla Himenez,

Diana Henares, Denise and Larry Hemenez, Marcie Lambly, Karen Clore, Tina Nepp, Pam Neal, Patricia Sack, Linda Cortez, Michelle Iwai, Angie Cortez, Celeste Peper, Rose Mercado, Irma, Caren Rivera, Susan Reisz, Kathy Hanson and Kathleen Kozel.

## San Leandro High Class of 2007 Reunion

The San Leandro High School Class of 2007 will have its 10 year reunion on Wednesday, Dec. 27, from 5 to 11 p.m. at the 21st Amendment Brewery, 2010 Williams St. in San Leandro.

Tickets are available for \$50 per person. All classmates are allowed to bring a plus one as a guest (please purchase separate ticket for the plus one). The event will include 2 beers per person, assortment of foods, a live DJ, photo booth, and a few prizes.

For more information, facebook message Ravina Dhaliwal or email ravinadhaliwal@gmail.com.

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

❖ **Holiday Concert at Morrisson Theatre**  
The Morrisson Theatre Chorus, under the musical direction of César Cancino, will present its Holiday Concert, *Special Songs for a Special Time of the Year*, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Dec 21, 22 and 23 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 24 at 1 p.m. at the Douglas Morrisson Theatre, 22311 N. Third St. in Hayward. The concert will feature a selection of classical sacred works, popular holiday songs and jazz, as well as audience sing-a-long pieces. Tickets are \$18 for adults, \$15 for under 30/over 60 and \$12 for youth/student. For tickets, go to [www.dmtonline.org](http://www.dmtonline.org) or call the box office at 881-6777. The box office is open Tuesday through Friday from 1 to 5 p.m.

❖ **Living Nativity Event**  
The San Leandro Church of Christ, 601 MacArthur Blvd. in San Leandro, invites everyone to come to the corner of MacArthur Boulevard and Lewis Avenue for a Living Nativity event on Friday, Dec. 22, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Enjoy cookies, caroling, and hot chocolate while viewing live animals in a manger scene, sponsored by the San Leandro Church of Christ in partnership with Enchanted Ponies and Pets. Free parking in the parking lot in back of the church or along the street. Drop by for a few minutes.

❖ **Christmas & Christmas Eve Services**  
All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling Blvd. in San Leandro, will hold services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Christmas Eve service at 8 a.m. (Rite I Mass), 10:15 a.m. (Children's Nativity Mass), and 9 p.m. (Candlelight Vigil Mass). Christmas Day Mass (Rite II) at 10 a.m. All Saints is an inclusive and welcoming church. For more information, see [www.saintsalive.net](http://www.saintsalive.net).

❖ **Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols**  
The First United Methodist Church, 1600 Bancroft Ave. in San Leandro, will hold a Christmas Eve service and carols on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 7 p.m. All are invited.

❖ **Christmas Concert and Dinner**  
Badarikashrama, 15602 Maubert Ave. in San Leandro, will host a free Christmas Concert and an International Vegetarian Dinner on Monday, Dec. 25, at 3 p.m. Items from many cuisines and vegan items. All are welcome. Reservations suggested, but no one turned away. For more information, call 278-2444.

❖ **Rocking Holiday Party**  
Come refresh your spirits with award winning musicians, The Fundudes on Friday, Dec. 29, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the 21st Amendment, 2010 Williams St. in San Leandro. You can bring food, pets, beverages. Play bocce ball, sip beer by the fire pit, watch big screen, dance and celebrate.

❖ **I.D.E.S. of Alvarado St. Crab Feed**  
I.D.E.S. of St. John will have its annual crab feed on Saturday, Jan. 6, at 1670 Orchard Ave. in San Leandro. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m., the raffle at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$50 per person, \$25 for persons under 12. Dinner will include hot and cold crab, pasta, salad, garlic bread and desert. For tickets call, Willie Calvo at 207-6326, John Santos at 992-9985, and Frances Leite at 886-1568. The door prize is a 32 inch flat screen TV.

❖ **Lego Brickshow at Principled Academy**  
See a giant Lego display at the Lego Brickshow 2017 through Jan. 7 at the Principled Academy, 2305 Washington Ave. in San Leandro, on the second floor. The display is open on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. Cost is \$2. All proceeds go to The Principled Academy 7th and 8th grade trip to Washington, D.C.

❖ **SL Boys & Girls Club Crab Feed**  
The San Leandro Boys & Girls Club, 401 Marina Blvd. in San Leandro, will host its annual crab feed on Saturday, Jan. 13. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. with dinner served at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$50 per person, which includes all-you-can-eat crab, pasta, salad and French bread. Live entertainment by Curtis & Nikkole. The event is assigned seating only and always sells out so purchase tickets early. For tickets or more information, call Bob Glotch at the Boys & Girls Club between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 483-5581. Proceeds support the San Leandro Boys & Girls Club, which provides educational and enrichment after-school programs for 1,200 children per day at 12 sites in San Leandro and San Lorenzo.

❖ **Sons of Norway Snorre Lodge Crab Feed**  
Sons of Norway Snorre Lodge 6-61 presents its annual crab feed on Saturday, Jan. 27, at 1808 B St. in Hayward. No host bar and raffle begin at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m., raffle at 8:30 p.m. Early bird payment must be postmarked by Dec. 16. Make checks payable to Sons of Norway and send to Aunda Arndt, 1016 Apache St., Livermore, CA 94551. Cost is \$50 for Adults, \$17 for children 12 and under. For more information, email [aja469@hotmail.com](mailto:aja469@hotmail.com) or call 925-548-0292.

❖ **San Leandro Art Association Exhibit**  
Original paintings by The San Leandro Art Association artists are on display and available for sale through Feb. 8 at the San Leandro Senior Community Center, 13900 East 14th St., in the three activity rooms and in the hall lobby.

❖ **Bayfair Toastmasters**  
Bayfair Toastmasters is a small, growing club seeking new members who want to learn the art of public speaking. All are welcome to the club's weekly meetings every Wednesday from noon to 1 a.m. in the Bayfair Mall 2nd floor meeting room above the food court. Come through Entrance 5 facing the Century Theater. For more information, call Noreen at 538-6025 or Wayne at 407-0048.

❖ **Kiwanis Club of San Leandro**  
Join the Kiwanis Club of San Leandro for weekly meetings. The first Tuesday is for socializing. Dinner is open menu and starts at 5:30 p.m. The following Tuesdays, second through the fourth or fifth, are luncheons and are from 12:10 to 1:30 p.m. and will have a speaker. All meetings are held at The Englander, 101 Parrett Street in San Leandro.

❖ **San Leandro Toastmasters**  
The San Leandro Toastmasters meet on Thursday nights from 7 to 8 p.m. at the San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo Ave. The group fosters improved communication and public speaking. All levels of speakers from novice to seasoned are welcome.

Calendar items should be submitted at least one week prior to the desired edition of the Times, which is published Thursdays. Space limitations require we print items of the most general interest. Only Non-Profit Organizations should submit calendar items.

### HOROSCOPE by Salomé

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**ARIES (March 21 - April 19):** Make a start on that new workplace challenge. But get more information before you find yourself too deeply involved without knowing in which direction you should go.



**TAURUS (April 20 - May 20):** You might find things becoming tedious as your schedule slows down for the holidays. Use this time to get information about a possible post-New Year job change.



**GEMINI (May 21 - June 20):** The creative Twin finds outlets for her or his ideas in the early part of the week. The practical Twin takes it a step further and rallies support to turn the ideas into reality.



**CANCER (June 21 - July 22):** It's time to stop being intimidated by someone's negative behavior. Start taking positive steps on your own to help strengthen your position down the line.



**LEO (July 23 - August 22):** Look closely at that so-called golden opportunity. Best to be a cautious Cat who approaches things slowly, than one who pounces without knowing where you'll land.



**VIRGO (August 23 - Sept. 22):** Your apology can resolve that personal situation before it overshadows the holidays. You'll feel better, even if you're only partly to blame for what happened.



**LIBRA (Sept. 23 - October 22):** Avoid overtaxing yourself, even if your energy levels are high and you feel that you can do it all. Best to pace yourself so you won't run yourself down before the holidays.



**SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21):** Your sense of humor helps get you through a stressful period. Some of your quick quips can take the edge off any remaining negativity being aimed at you.



**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21):** Your artistic talents not only help you express yourself these days, but they also set up a line of communication between you and someone very special.



**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19):** It's fine to appreciate the importance of "proper form" for doing things. But relax a bit in order to allow newcomers on the project to feel less intimidated by you.



**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18):** Use your boundless reserve of optimism to persuade others to work with you to resolve a difficult workplace problem before it can ruin your holiday fun.



**PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20):** You brim over with self-confidence as you begin to tackle a new challenge. And, before you know it, you're not alone: Others have taken the plunge with you.



# REAL ESTATE GALLERY



## REAL ESTATE REALITY

By Carl Medford, CRS  
Special to the Times

GUEST COMMENTARY



## 'Tis the Season of Giving

With our state focusing on the unseasonal fires raging across California, we have been distracted for weeks. Consequently, it feels like Christmas snuck up on us this year.

Approaching the heart of the Holidays, Central County Realtors want to remind you this is the Season of Giving. We urge you to focus outward to meet housing needs at home and abroad.

**Give Locally:** As the weather turns colder, the homeless in the Bay Area need additional support.

While it is easy to stereotype the homeless, they are real people with specific needs that we can meet. Go to <https://trust.guidestar.org/> for a list of the 16 Top Non-profits Fighting Bay Area Homelessness.

**Give Statewide:** For those of us spending the holidays in warm, safe dwellings, remember the fire victims across California who've recently lost their homes.

Fire is no respecter of persons and the devastation has impacted every socio-economic category. With the most recent fires devastat-

ing Southern California, those just to the north of us who lost everything have vanished from the news. Their needs are still, however, very real.

While there are numerous groups helping with relief, the primary organization is the American Red Cross at [www.redcross.org/donate/](http://www.redcross.org/donate/). Fire victims do not need used clothing or similar items – direct donations to nonprofit organizations set up to receive charitable gifts are best.

**Give Nationally:** The flooding in the Houston area is over, but the rebuilding efforts have just begun. [www.redcross.org/donate/](http://www.redcross.org/donate/) to learn how to partner with relief efforts.

**Give Globally:** As a family, we have chosen to forego giving gifts to adults (we give one present to each of the small children) and to focus instead on providing for the needs of families around the world.

Every year we collaborate with [www.worldvision.org](http://www.worldvision.org) to provide funds that will buy a cow or other animals for families in less-fortunate areas. We also give to [www.](http://www.streetsofhope.com)

[streetsofhope.com](http://www.streetsofhope.com), an organization in Kenya that takes abandoned boys from the streets and provides them with housing, food, clothing and a full education. The boys are taken from a life of despair and given the gift of hope.

We want to wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. It is our sincere hope that you and your loved ones have a wonderful peace-filled season and that you experience the joy that comes from giving to others and meeting them at their point of need.

Carl Medford is a licensed Realtor with Keller Williams Realty. Article is sponsored by the Central County Marketing Association.



John and Mary Anne Abercrombie of 1718 138th Ave. thank Matt and Bob for selling their home. "You guys did a great job!" **SOLD by Robert Jones and Associates**, celebrating our 34th year at our downtown location, 142 Joaquin Ave. Call 510-357-0120.

## Do Yard Work Now to Reap Springtime Benefits

Lots of people think their yards need less attention in late fall but this is no time to ignore your lawn and landscape.

"What you do now will determine the quality of your family yard next spring and summer," said Kris Kiser of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, the association representing more than 100 power equipment, engine and utility vehicle manufacturers and suppliers.

"Every gardener knows to plant bulbs in the fall but now is also the time to mow, aerate, mulch, trim and patch your lawn," said Kiser. He offers these tips to help you get your yard ready for more relaxing and fun outdoor activities next year.

**Keep mowing.** Grass still needs regular care to stay healthy. Shorter grass is more resistant to diseases and traps fewer falling leaves. Cutting grass low lets more sun reach the crown of the grass.

However, cutting off too much at one time can be damaging, so never trim more than a third of the grass blades off in a single cutting.

**Aerate your lawn.** Aerating punches holes into the soil and lets oxygen, water and nutrients in.

**Mulch your leaves.** Many

mowers can mulch leaves with an attachment. Since mulching with a mower can mix grass clippings with leaf particles, these nitrogen-rich grass particles and carbon-rich leaf particles will compost more quickly. Together, they return nutrients to the soil.

**Trim and shore up trees and bushes.** Use trimmers, chain saws or pole pruners to cut back trees, shrubs and plants. Make sure branches are safely trimmed back from overhead lines and not in danger of falling on a structure in rough weather.

Call a professional arborist for

big trees or hard-to-reach spots.

**Repair bald spots.** This is a great time to patch bald or thin spots in a lawn with an all-in-one lawn repair mixture (found at most garden shops and home centers).

Kiser also stresses that it's important to follow safety procedures whenever using outdoor power equipment. Read your owner's manual. Fuels containing more than 10 percent ethanol should not be used unless directed in the owner's manual.

Most gas-fueled outdoor power equipment is warranted and designed to run on E10 (10 percent ethanol) fuel or less. There are fuel options available today that should not be used in your outdoor power equipment. Safely dispose of any fuel that is more than 30 days old.

For information on safe fueling, go to [www.LookBeforeYouPump.com](http://www.LookBeforeYouPump.com). For tips on outdoor power equipment safety, go to [www.opei.org](http://www.opei.org).

— North American Precip Synd., Inc.

### RECENT HOME SALES

#### San Leandro

1550 Bancroft Avenue	94577	\$479,000	3 BD - 1,680 SF - 1976
791 Dolores Avenue	94577	\$725,000	3 BD - 1,381 SF - 1948
1081 Douglas Court	94577	\$605,000	3 BD - 1,234 SF - 1942
2456 Driftwood Way	94577	\$690,000	5 BD - 1,584 SF - 1963
351 Kenilworth Avenue	94577	\$640,000	2 BD - 1,121 SF - 1926
14263 Seagate Drive	94577	\$480,000	2 BD - 904 SF - N/A
1563 136th Avenue	94578	\$750,000	3 BD - 1,834 SF - 1947
1722 140th Avenue	94578	\$550,000	4 BD - 1,604 SF - 1947
1440 151st Avenue	94578	\$580,000	3 BD - 1,150 SF - 1942
1616 167th Avenue	94578	\$431,500	1 BD - 632 SF - 1916
15678 Maubert Avenue	94578	\$455,000	2 BD - 904 SF - 1946
2112 Placer Drive	94578	\$630,000	3 BD - 1,389 SF - 1925
14856 Sylvia Way	94578	\$635,000	2 BD - 1,213 SF - 1945
16130 Windsor Drive	94578	\$675,000	2 BD - 1,411 SF - 1948
14560 Birch Street	94579	\$520,000	3 BD - 1,114 SF - 1953
1342 Devonshire Ave	94579	\$650,000	5 BD - 1,680 SF - 1952
1041 Marquette Way	94579	\$600,000	3 BD - 1,148 SF - 1956
2015 Spirit Way	94579	\$800,000	4 BD - 2,255 SF - 1999

TOTAL SALES:	18		
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$431,000	MEDIAN AMOUNT:	\$617,500
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$800,000	AVERAGE AMOUNT:	\$605,306

#### San Lorenzo

1443 Bockman Road	94580	\$650,000	3 BD - 1,339 SF - 1951
15779 Paseo Del Campo	94580	\$615,000	3 BD - 986 SF - 1944
16131 Via Sonora	94580	\$635,000	3 BD - 1,078 SF - 1955
734 Videll Street	94580	\$585,000	3 BD - 1,034 SF - 1951

TOTAL SALES:	4		
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$585,000	MEDIAN AMOUNT:	\$625,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$650,000	AVERAGE AMOUNT:	\$621,250

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Broker Associate • BRE# 01012751  
1.510.701.3442 (Cell)  
[mmiller@pacunion.com](mailto:mmiller@pacunion.com)

May you have a safe and relaxing holiday.

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# Star Wars: New marrow makes healthy blood

continued from front page  
Bounty Hunter.

Juan Carlos Zapata who receive a core-blood transplant was dressed as Han Solo, and Erika Tschihashi of Sacramento received a blood transplant at 1 year old. She joined the Star Wars troupe as Queen Amidala.

The three teenagers said they want to share their life story with other patients as a hopeful message.

New bone marrow starts making healthy blood, and it can be a cure for blood cancer, said BeTheMatch spokeswoman Kate McDermott.

Seventy percent of patients don't have a fully matched donor in their family. In the past year, Be The Match has facilitated 6,200 transplants.

Be The Match is a group of donors, volunteers, health care professionals and researchers. The organization helps more patients afford blood transplants, funds research, and adds potential marrow donors to the registry.



PHOTO BY JIM KNOWLES

Ryan Tam, Erika Tschihashi and Juan Carlos Zapata donned their Star Wars costumes for the blood marrow donor drive on Saturday at Bayfair.

The Be The Match registry is the largest in the world with over 16 million potential marrow donors. About 1 in 430 Be the

Match registry members in the United States go on to donate to a patient.

For more information, see BeTheMatch.org.

# Morrisson Theatre Chorus Presents Holiday Concert

The Morrison Theatre Chorus, under the musical direction of César Cancino, will present its Holiday Concert, "Special Songs for a Special Time of the Year," on Dec. 21, 22 and 23 at 8 p.m. and Dec. 24 at 1 p.m. at the Douglas Morrison Theatre, 22311 N. Third St. in Hayward.

The concert will feature a se-

lection of classical sacred works, popular holiday songs and jazz, as well as audience sing-a-long pieces.

Tickets are \$18 adult, \$15 for under 30/over 60 and \$12 for youth/student. For tickets go to [www.dmtonline.org](http://www.dmtonline.org) or call the box office at 881-6777. The box office is open Tuesday through Friday from 1 to 5 p.m.



## St. James Lutheran Church

### Christmas Eve Services

Sunday, Dec. 24  
10 a.m.  
with Communion  
and a light lunch

11 p.m.  
Christmas Carols  
by Candlelight

993 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94577

# Church Stages Living Nativity Scene

The San Leandro Church of Christ, 601 MacArthur Blvd. in San Leandro, invites everyone to come to the corner of MacArthur Boulevard and Lewis Avenue for a Living Nativity event on Friday,

Dec. 22, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Enjoy cookies, caroling, and hot chocolate while viewing live animals in a manger scene, sponsored by the San Leandro

Church of Christ in partnership with Enchanted Ponies and Pets. Free parking in the parking lot in back of the church or along the street. Drop by for a few minutes.

# Art: Take a closer look

continued from page 2

real yellow mushroom with white polka dots, and bird feathers from the rural area of Carroll County, Maryland join giant morning glories from California.

The purple-framed picture with flowers scattered across fern-like shadows seems to draw people in. This reaction to my pictures gave me the idea to name my business "A Closer Look."

In the new year, I plan to make prints of my work and display them in public places such as medical offices and hotel lobbies. I will also teach classes on the art of drying and pressing flowers at local recreation centers.

I can be reached at [stephanturn@icloud.com](mailto:stephanturn@icloud.com) and soon in Facebook under "A Closer Look."

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The City of San Leandro will be accepting online applications starting on December 18, 2017 for:

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For more detailed information, please visit [www.sanleandro.org](http://www.sanleandro.org)  
EOE

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San Leandro Times and the Castro Valley Forum newspapers are looking for a highly motivated career oriented, sales rep. Experienced preferred.

**If interested fax resume to:**  
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**Landscape/ Gardening** assistants needed for full-time work. Based out of Castro Valley. \$16/hr to start, increasing every 3 months to \$18 after a year. Benefits. Advancement opportunities. Must have CDL, good DMV. Please do not call, please kindly email: [hansen.steve@comcast.net](mailto:hansen.steve@comcast.net)

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# Park: You use it, maintain it, says EBMUD

continued from front page

"It makes sense that the lessee would do maintenance," said Miller.

The city first entered into a contract with EBMUD in 1950 and the lease has been renewed several times since. In May of 2016, when the dam retrofit began, the lease was allowed to end.

The lease enables the city to run summer camps in the park and during the last two years when the city was forced to use an alternative site for the camps, enrollment was cut in half. During that period the city said it lost \$110,000 in revenue, so that money could be restored by having the camps come back to Chabot Park.

"I'm not thrilled that costs have gone up, but this is a highly valued park," said Councilwoman Deborah Cox.

Under the new agreement, the city will continue to be responsible for general maintenance of the fields, restrooms, trashcans, paths, and fencing. The city will have to add gravel to the parking lot, clear ivy, pick weeds, remove graffiti, and more.

But it was the ongoing tree



Chabot Park has been closed for two years but should open again in a month or so.

maintenance that was the sore spot for the council.

"I think it's a shame that they are charging us (for the trees) and I don't agree with that, but it (the park) is of value to the community," said Mayor Pauline Cutter.

Ballew said that he highly

values Chabot Park but he could not support the new lease agreement. He said that the actual annual lease was "very reasonable" but he did not agree with the tree maintenance fees.

The next step will be for the contract to be approved by EBMUD in January. After that, San

Leandro Public Works Director Debbie Pollart estimates that it will take two weeks for her crews to get the park back in shape for the public.

So the Chabot Park gates will open this winter and camp should be in session this summer, the city says.

# Dogs: Man complains but says his neighbors just pooh-pooh the problem

continued from front page

how to pick up after your dog, you're pretty ignorant. I don't care about the degree," said Limner.

"We can cite them up to \$400, that usually gets their attention," said Kristina Herrera, police service technician with city's Animal Control department.

## Is It Retaliation?

After his posting, he said the number of dog messes he had to clean up went up sharply, as if angry dog owners were doing it out of spite.

"People came on purpose," said Limner. "It was funny that this is their form of dissent. Where is the etiquette and courtesy?"

According to the San Leandro Municipal Code, it's not just a matter of courtesy, it's the law.

The code states that dog owners must pick up after pooches, and they also must have proof of their intent to do so – they need a plastic bag or other method of handling the waste while walking their dogs. And they must be prepared to show the baggie to any animal control officer or cop if asked to do so.

## So Who Wants to Handle the Evidence?

But Herrera says enforcement can be difficult because of evidence issues – they often cannot connect the dog directly to the doo doo.

"Nine times out of ten, we don't know the culprit," said Herrera. "But people can install cameras and if a neighbor is having a dispute, they should talk to each other. We'd be happy to talk with people who are having problems with dogs about their situation."

While Limner wishes his yard would become a no-go zone, Herrera says his problem is thankfully pretty rare in the city.

"I don't believe we have a huge problem in San Leandro," said Herrera. "There are a lot of responsible dog owners."

## Pets of the Week



Polly

The Pets of the Week at the Hayward Animal Shelter, 16 Barnes Court in Hayward, are Polly the cat and Cheddar the cat. Both are special needs kitties.

Polly is a young, special needs gal who's a bit shy at first but seeks attention as she settles in. She has extra toes on her front paws and is a bit cross-eyed



Cheddar

making her an extra special kitty.

Cheddar is a handsome boy who will lean into your hand and purr when you pet him. He doesn't like a lot of activity and would love to be someone's mellow companion. He's a special needs kitty.

For more information on Polly or Cheddar, call the Hayward Animal Shelter at 293-7200.

## Pay Property Tax by Dec. 31 for Deduction

The Alameda County Treasurer-Tax Collector, Henry (Hank) Levy wants to remind all taxpayers, especially residential homeowners, that they may want to consider paying their second installment property taxes for 2017-18 fiscal year by Dec. 31, 2017.

The due date for the second installment of the 2017-18 fiscal year property tax is Feb. 1, 2018 and delinquent after April 10, 2018. But the new income tax law will limit the amount of the itemized deduction for property taxes paid after Jan. 1, 2018. Taxpayers should check with their income tax advisors, but many taxpayers will lose an income tax benefit by waiting until next year to pay the second

installment if the new income tax law is enacted.

Taxpayers can use all the payment options that are usually available. The county treasurer recommends e-check payment option, which is payment through the web via a bank transfer called an ACH.

However, taxpayers may continue to pay by cash, check, or credit card. Visit the county's website at [www.acgov.org/propertytax](http://www.acgov.org/propertytax) or call the office at 272-6800, if you need help locating your second installment voucher.

Unfortunately, the office is not able to collect taxes for the 2018-19 fiscal year. Bills for that year will not be prepared until September of 2018.

## THE TIMES CROSSWORD

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### ACROSS

- Muse's instrument
- Renders speechless
- Obtain
- Billions of years
- Future stallion
- Multipurpose truck
- Avocado dip
- Top card
- Singles
- Gordon and Ginsburg
- Mad
- It begins at 40
- Toe woe
- Zigzagged on skis
- Eggs
- Actress Witherspoon
- Past
- Clothing
- Story line
- "... She Sweet?"
- Instant
- From then on
- Icelandic epic
- Industrious insect
- Port city of Ecuador
- Eisenhower
- Being, to Brutus
- ... Major
- Caustic solution
- "... of Our Lives"
- Shade trees

### DOWN

- Lower limb
- Thee
- Genetic letters
- Accompany to a party
- Pinnacle
- Courts
- Right angle
- Germ-free
- Central American nation
- Leave an impression
- Golf gadgets
- Whatever number
- Aliens' craft
- Enthusiastic, plus
- PBS science show
- Insure
- Glasgow girl
- Transmitted
- Allow
- Hollywood clasher
- "... protest too much"
- Went back on an agreement
- Karaoke need, for short
- Award for a dentist?
- Med. approval org.
- Take to the seas
- Black
- Simple
- Coloring agents
- Can. neighbor
- Web address
- Doctrine
- ... Vegas

ANSWERS ON PAGE 3

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DEIDRICH, Lee Tasto.

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■ **Deidrich, (Dick) Lee Tasto.**, Deidrich (Dick) Lee Tasto, January 22, 1933 – December 12, 2017, long time resident of Castro Valley (1960 - 2013) prior to moving to San Ramon, passed

away at age 84, after long battle with Vascular Dementia. Service was held Dec. 19 at 11 a.m. at Saint Patrick's Catholic Church in Sonoma, CA followed by a brief burial at the cemetery.

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## OPINION

## LETTERS to the EDITOR

Letters 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](mailto: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.

**The following four letters are in response to last week's letter, "Unsympathetic to Females, Males on Sexual Misconduct Claims"**

Editor:

I am a resident of San Leandro (born and raised) and I also represent San Leandro on the Alameda County Commission on the Status of Women.

It is my passion and job as a commissioner to ensure that the needs, rights and equality of women are being met. The needs of women in San Leandro span so many areas from access to good healthcare and childcare to dealing with domestic violence, which is rooted in women getting treated like an object or possession. These are real issues.

I was very upset to see the (Robert Johansen) letter to the editor published in the most recent edition of the San Leandro Times. I understand the importance of letting all sides speak their minds on controversial or complicated topics (as I follow routinely in your paper), but giving this disturbed and troubled man a platform to share such discriminatory, disrespectful and uncivil opinions about women does not add value to the conversation, and propagates the harmful idea that those who are victims of sexual assault and harassment are to blame for the acts of their assaulter (i.e. his comments regarding "Let's talk about the women who barely dress and are somehow inviting sexual misconduct;" and "more women saying yes = no more sexual crime").

Let's say, hypothetically, Mr. Johansen had written an opinion that asked why people of a specific racial group should complain about use of racial slurs. Would you publish it? Where is your line drawn?

Understanding that there is a hyper sensitivity around the national conversation regarding women and sexual harassment, please consider more thoughtfully who your paper gives a voice to in our beloved community. We are a community of diversity, tolerance and respect for one another. And, for the many women with needs in our community, Mr. Johansen's comments are a stark reminder why women tend to not speak up.

—Lauren Sugayan  
San Leandro

Editor:

I'm writing in response to Robert Johansen's letter published in your December 14th edition.

Mr. Johansen, your "math" that, "more women saying yes = no more sexual crime" is brilliant! If only women actually wanted all the unwanted sexual advances they receive, then everyone's problem would be solved!

Unfortunately, scientists have recently proven that women have their own thoughts and feelings. Shocking!

This leaves us men asking ourselves questions like you posed, "Is hugging now an act of sexual harassment?" That's unanswerably difficult. I propose we resort to the unthinkable — ask women. Perhaps say, "would you like a hug?" In other words, don't be an (expletive deleted).

—David Bober  
San Leandro

Editor:

The letter last week concerning sexual misconduct/assault/harassment is particularly disheartening.

While the writer is wishing these issues had been brought up 5, 10, 15 or 50 years ago so it could all be worked out by now, the problem is he was not listening or watching or paying any type of attention. This has been brought up repeatedly over many years by many people, mostly women and they were blamed or ignored.

If he is confused by how he should approach women in the work place, let me ask if he would walk up to a man he works with or who works for him, drape an arm across the man's shoulder, lean over and whisper in that man's ear: "hey dude — lookin' good today — those pants looks sexy on you! — how come you always smell soooo goood?" while making sure that all the other men working noticed his "squeeze." Of course he wouldn't.

If he would not speak that way to a man why would he speak to a woman that way in any place. It assumes a level of familiarity which is not present.

As for the "years" this has been ignored — well, sorry to say many time when women did bring it up, the response from people in charge was "you asked for it by being there," "you didn't fight hard enough so you must have wanted it" and "well, what did you expect dressed like that?"

This time, the internet interconnection allowed many women to stand up together and respond as one and not be dismissed as being the one who caused the problem.

This issue is not about dressing/dating/mating/conversing — it is about power. It is about people and mostly men who need to reinforce themselves by dominating others. If you do not understand that power over people is enforced in many different ways including forced sexual content/harassment then probably you have an issue which far exceeds the need for "training."

Of course, the letter-writer's last line says it all: "more women saying yes = no more sexual crime." I am guessing if your gold Rolex was taken from you by someone with power over you like, say — with a gun — would you say the same thing: "more guys giving up their Rolex = no more robbery." Good luck with that.

—Moir Fry  
San Leandro

Editor:

What a sad man you must be, and one without daughters. Your math is flawed. You state, "Math problem: more women saying yes = no more sexual crime".

The correct math is as follows:

If men understood and respected when women said no = no more sexual crime.

If a dog can understand "NO," so can you.

—Jenni Romero  
San Leandro

**Wants SLPD to Preempt Out-Of-Town Crime Before it Happens**

Editor:

What is the SLPD doing to fight crime committed by people from Oakland,

Hayward, and other places?

Although I was unable to find the data tracking crime by place of residency, San Leandrans feel that most crime committed here is by out-of-towners. Out-of-town crime is keeping San Leandro from developing into a more prosperous community as potential residents and businesses will not want to move here given the bad reputation that these people create.

We pay the SLPD huge salaries, pensions, and other benefits and they are responsible for keeping us safe. SLPD should aggressively patrol BART and bus stations and also use technology, such as social media and surveillance cameras, to preempt out-of-town crime before it is committed.

I truly believe that out of town crime is one issue that we can agree is holding our town back from becoming great again.

—Ricardo Trigueros  
San Leandro

**Trump Reverses Rule Protecting Farm Animals from Cruelty**

Editor:

The Trump administration ruled on Friday that animals raised for food under the "USDA Organic" label need not be treated any less cruelly than those in conventional farming. The decision reverses years of U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, which held that the "organic" label should impose minimal ethical, health, and environmental standards.

For the animals, this included adequate space, light, and access to the outdoors.

Under the Trump administration, this will no longer be the case. "Organic" farm operations will be allowed to cram laying hens five to a small wire cage that tears out their feathers and to grind or suffocate millions of male chicks at birth because they don't lay eggs. Mother pigs will spend their miserable lives in tight metal crates, as their babies are torn from them and mutilated with no anesthesia. And dairy cows will continue to cry for their babies torn from them at birth, so we can drink their milk.

Caring consumers opting for "organic" animal products, to reduce their role in subsidizing these abuses, will now have no choice but to switch to plant-based foods, including the widely available nut- and grain-based meats, milks, cheeses, and ice creams.

—Dennis Roth  
San Leandro

**City Hall Should Accept San Leandro for What it Really Is**

Editor:

About 10 years ago it became important for City Hall to rebrand San Leandro away from a blue-collar beer-drinking town into the new tech and innovation hub of the Bay Area.

We've put all our energy and resources toward fulfilling this dream and yet, after 10 years and countless millions spent, we're still not the new Silicon Valley. And we never will be. This isn't me being a pessimist, but a realist.

The original Silicon Valley is 30 miles away and we look like a sad imitator in a region of tech dominance. We've touted LIT San Leandro as if it's unique and without competition. We've never held any monopoly on internet speed and yet City Hall in wide-eyed optimism has proclaimed LIT San Leandro as the answer to all that ails poor us. Why the mayor was just in Italy bragging about us on the international stage.

But the reality is far different. We're

the town that hasn't even finished converting all our street lights to LED bulbs.

The reality is we have office space ready for occupancy right now and no tech firms are flocking to San Leandro. The reality is we're constantly in the news for high-speed police chases, not the speed of our internet service.

I can't stand it when people or institutions act uppity or pretend to be something they're not, like we're doing right now. City Hall has now decided art is going to cure all that ails us, too. And yet murals on private property that depict nothing about San Leandro are a gigantic waste of money at this point. You're putting lipstick on a pig.

The very best way to rebrand San Leandro is by reducing crime. We are not in the news for being innovative or cool. We are constantly in the regional news for crime. City hall would rather have endless meetings about street banners or murals or butterfly interpretive centers, but crime reduction should be the No. 1 and only topic of those endless meetings.

No one is buying the Giga City moniker so how about we try just being the law-abiding, blue-collar, beer-drinking town that we really are. It's as if the people at City Hall are embarrassed and ashamed of the people they represent.

—Gary Langbehn  
San Leandro

## INQUIRING REPORTER

## What do you want for Christmas?

— Asked around town

To get off of work, and to see my kids happy. As long as they're happy, that's all that matters.

**Java Bacot**  
San Leandro



To have a lot more Christmases. To be healthy and to be strong.

**Trae Reddick**  
San Leandro



A new guitar. I had a fire in my studio and lost my guitars. I'd like a Gibson Les Paul with a cherry sunburst finish.

**Brian Crew**  
Castro Valley,  
works in San Leandro



I don't want so much of anything. You know, when you get to a certain age you don't need anything. I just want what everybody else wants, just world peace.

**Tina Copus**  
San Leandro



I hope everybody can be calm and peaceful around their families. There's a lot of anxiety around Christmas.

**Leah Nelson**  
Oakland







PHOTO BY JIM KNOWLES

## Mariachi at the Mall

Mariachi Tradicion Mexicana entertained holiday shoppers in the main concourse at Bayfair Mall last weekend.

### Correction

A story in the Nov. 2 issue ("Supervisors Create Eden Area Board") incorrectly stated that the Alameda County Board of Supervisors approved the formation of an Eden Municipal Advisory

Council (MAC).

It should have said that Supervisors Nate Miley and Wilma Chan established an ad hoc committee to study the Eden MAC.

The ad hoc committee with

begin meeting in January.

After approximately four meetings, the ad hoc will report to the Board of Supervisors, who will then vote whether to approve the MAC.

## Global: Council calls for culture

continued from front page

a general atmosphere of acceptance – cultural, sexual, gender, and otherwise.

Council members Benny Lee, Corina Lopez, and Ed Hernandez

**"It's not just about the culture, it's a bigger thing."**

— City Councilwoman Corina Lopez

have been working on creating a commission to celebrate the art, culture, and diversity of other countries. One way to do that will be to reaffirm San Leandro's sister city relationships they already have and creating new ones.

The current sister cities are Ribeiro Preto, Brazil (established in 1962); Ponta Delada, Portugal (1970); Jinotegi, Nicaragua (1976); Naga, Philippines (1980); and San Leandro's friendship city is Yangchun, China (2007).

Friendship cities are for educational, cultural, and economic exchange, whereas sister cities come from a shared historical or cultural connection and are usually cities of similar size.

In 2013, the Asian Community Cultural Association in San Leandro hosted a benefit for Naga after a disastrous typhoon.

Assistant city manager Jeff Kay said that fostering international relationships, whether they are official sister cities or something less formal, is an easy and cost-effective way of "reaching out."

Mayor Pauline Cutter spent a few days touting the city's tech prowess in Italy last month, paid for by the conference organizer, not San Leandro taxpayers.

Closer to home, the multicultural committee supports events including the Lunar New Year, Cinco de Mayo, and has partnered with Unity in the Community for events including teen workshops.

"It's not just about the culture, it's a bigger thing," said Lopez. "It's how do we encourage people from other parts of the world so we don't have this long list of people we haven't even engaged with over the decades," Lopez. "We are missing a lot of opportunities with our sister cities."

Lopez said the city should strengthen relationships that they started back in the 1990s and earlier.

Hernandez said he'd be interested in creating a sister city relationship somewhere in Mexico as well as maintaining older relationships.

Kay said there an increased interest in reestablishing sister city relationships, but no specific travel policies are in place at this time. He said that each council member has an annual budget of \$7,000 for transportation and training. That includes everything travel-related such as airfare, hotels, and conference costs. He added no city funds have been spent on international travel in the past nine years.

City Council member Pete Ballew said a more pragmatic approach was needed to international relationships.

"I'm not for spending money for anyone to go anywhere," said

**"We aren't talking about jet-setting, we're talking about building relationships."**

— City Councilman Benny Lee

Ballew. "Spending money to go outside the country isn't something I'm interested in."

Ballew said technology including Skyping or email penpals would be okay, but he didn't want tax dollars to go to travel for the time being.

"When it comes to paying for travel, no," said Ballew. "If these (Sister Cities) are so important why have we neglected them for the past 15 years?"

Hernandez took his point, but said that sometimes in-person meetings are more efficient than Skype.

"Technology is great, but sometimes you have to press the flesh," said Hernandez.

Benny Lee agreed that if the city wants to go global, they'll have to hit the bricks internationally, especially to promote San Leandro amenities like the fiber data loop.

"We aren't talking about jet-setting, we are talking about building relationships," said Lee. "We have a fiber loop – what are we doing with it?"

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