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# Parents Guide



# CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SERVING CASTRO VALLEY SINCE 1989

YEAR 33

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2021

NO. 3

## INSIDE YOUR FORUM

### NEWS



#### Watch Out!

Two of the world's most  
toxic mushrooms grow in  
East Bay parklands

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### LIVING



#### A Favorite

Here's a reminder why  
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PHONE: (510) 614-1560

## Heist at Walgreens, Weapons Arrest Keep Sheriff's Deputies Busy Friday

By Michael Singer  
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

Alameda County Sheriff's officers were busy investigating two unrelated incidents that occurred in Castro Valley on Friday.

Early Friday afternoon, deputies arrested 29-year-old Lonnie Williams of Castro Valley on weapons possession charges at a storage facility on the Boulevard near Marshall Street.

Officers said Williams, who had a previous felony conviction, had several loaded weapons in his possession. A search of his storage container uncovered a stash of handguns and automatic weapons, including some that could carry 100 rounds of ammunition.

Williams was booked into Santa Clara County Jail. *see BUSY on page 4*



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ALAMEDA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

A display of weapons confiscated by Alameda County Sheriff's deputies Friday after the arrest of a Castro Valley man on charges of illegal weapons possession.

## A Slow Vaccine Rollout

By Michael Singer  
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

If you are 65 years or older, you're now eligible to get a COVID-19 shot. But an inconsistent amount of vaccine available from week to week means it might be a while before you can roll up your sleeve even if you are lucky enough to schedule an appointment.

Last week, Governor Gavin Newsom announced the expansion of the coronavirus vaccine rollout to include those ages 65 and older as part of California's Phase 1B plan.

The problem is that Alameda County is only still administering vaccines to those in Phase 1A, meaning only health care workers and first responders are receiving doses. County health officials report they have administered 85,350 doses out of an estimated 145,000 people who qualify in the initial phase.

Prior to last week, some 53,000 people received their first vaccine shot while 32,350 received their follow-up injection in Alameda County except for Berkeley.

More than 23,000 doses went to hospitals and 1,800 were given to health care entities such as long-term senior care facilities. Health officials administered an additional 4,525 doses last week.

But the County's supply has been slow in coming as only about 25 percent of the state's total allocation have been shipped, according to data released last Friday by the California Department of Public Health.

*see ROLLOUT on page 4*

**Castro Valley**  
Confirmed Cases = 1,942

**Alameda County**  
Confirmed Cases = 66,476  
Deaths = 759

**California**  
Confirmed Cases = 2,973,174  
Deaths = 30,699  
as of January 18, 2021

## Hundreds of Health Care Workers Get COVID-19 Vaccinations at CV Library

By Linda Sandsmark  
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

Castro Valley Library became a "pop-up" COVID-19 vaccination site for approximately 1,400 health care workers and first responders last week.

Although the Library staff wasn't involved with the registration or vaccination process, Library Manager Dawn Balestreri says they were happy to provide a vaccination location.

"It was exciting," says Balestreri. "We're making history, and we were glad to have this in Castro Valley."

Because many vaccination pop-ups are arranged with very little notice, early visitors to the Library January 12 and 13 may have been surprised to see participants lined up around the building.

Castro Valley Library's vaccination POD (Point of Dispensing) was arranged by the Alameda County Public Health Department, which set up the appointments. *see VACCINATIONS on page 6*



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAWN BALESTRERI

Some 1,400 local health care workers were vaccinated at a pop-up 'POD' at the entrance of the Castro Valley Library last week.



## Castro Valley Weather Jan 20-24, 2021



Wednesday  
Sunny  
High 65° Low 43°



Thursday  
Partly Sunny  
High 60° Low 46°



Friday  
Cloudy, Showers  
High 56° Low 42°



Saturday  
Mostly Sunny  
High 57° Low 42°



Sunday  
Mostly Cloudy  
High 55° Low 48°

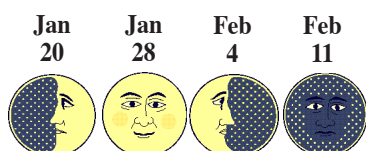
### Almanac



Sun sets at 5:20 p.m. today, rises at 7:22 a.m. Thursday.

Past Week's Rain: 00.00  
Season To Date: 02.39  
Normal To Date: 08.78  
Season Average: 21.22

### Moon Phases



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### SEASONAL WARNING

## Toxic Mushroom Growing in East Bay Regional Parklands

Mushrooms are an ecologically important part of East Bay parks and while they can look beautiful, some of them contain dangerous toxins.

Mushrooms of all types proliferate after the first sustained rains of the season. The death cap (*Amanita phalloides*) and Western destroying angel (*Amanita ocreata*) are two of the world's most toxic mushrooms, and both can be found in East Bay Regional Parks.

These mushrooms contain amatoxins, molecules that are deadly to many animals. Symptoms may not appear until up to 12 hours after consumption, beginning as severe gastrointestinal distress and progressing to liver and kidney failure if treatment is not sought immediately.

"Both of these mushrooms can be lethal to humans and pets if consumed," says Park District Naturalist Trent Pearce, who

teaches about fungi in the Bay Area. "They are mainly associated with oak trees and can be found growing anywhere oak roots are present."

The death cap is a medium to large mushroom that typically has a greenish-gray cap, white gills, a white ring around the stem, and a large white sac at the base of the stem.

Although mainly associated with oak trees, it has been found growing with other hardwoods. It was accidentally introduced to North America on the roots of European cork oaks and is now slowly colonizing the West Coast. The death cap is not native to California.

The Western destroying angel is a medium to large mushroom that usually has a creamy white cap, white gills, a white ring around the stem (that can disappear with age) and a thin white sac at the base.

It fruits from late winter into

spring. It is associated exclusively with oaks. Unlike the death cap, it is a native California mushroom.

"The Park District urges the public to be safe and knowledgeable about toxic mushrooms when encountering them in the parks," said Park District Public Information Supervisor Dave Mason. "Collecting any mushrooms in East Bay Regional Parks is not allowed."

"Dog owners should keep a close watch on their dogs during the winter months," said Mason. "Pet owners should contact a veterinarian immediately if they suspect their pet may have eaten a toxic mushroom."

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

## MULTI-FAMILY RECOGNITION PROGRAM



### RECOGNITION AND AWARDS FOR MULTI-FAMILY COMMUNITIES

Multi-family communities that are on the path to zero waste qualify for CVS's new Green Neighbor Community Recognition Program! Communities may apply to become a certified "Green Neighbor Community" by maintaining activities in each of the 4R categories - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot. The property and its tenants will each receive part of an award ranging from \$160.00 to \$950.00!

Certified Green Neighbor Communities are recognized with an award certificate, an ad in the Castro Valley Forum, and other publicity! To get program details and tips on how to complete the 4R activities and to complete an application, visit: [www.cvsan.org/GreenNeighbor](http://www.cvsan.org/GreenNeighbor).

### REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE ROT

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JoAnn Walker



Pamela Price

PHOTOS BY VINNIE BACON

## Two Black Women Launch Joint Ticket for 'Justice Transformation'

Two Black women launched a joint campaign last week to replace Alameda County's sheriff and district attorney for what they call "a progressive ticket for justice transformation."

JoAnn Walker of Hayward, a 25-year veteran San Francisco Police officer, is seeking to unseat Sheriff Gregory Ahern who has held that office for 14 years.

Pamela Price, a prominent civil rights attorney in Oakland, is opposing Nancy O'Malley, who was appointed as DA for Alameda County in 2009 by the Board of Supervisors when her predecessor retired. O'Malley ran unopposed in 2010 and 2014.

In 2018, Price challenged O'Malley and garnered 42 percent of the vote after law enforce-

ment unions spent large sums on O'Malley's campaign and in opposition to Price.

"I knew if I won in 2018, it was going to be an uphill battle to push through true reform given the lack of commitment to address systemic issues of racial, gender and socioeconomic bias in policing and sentencing," stated Price. "It was going to take collaboration and a shared vision for change."

"When JoAnn expressed her commitment to reform by running for sheriff, I knew we could be that ticket for true change for Alameda County in 2022," Price continued.

While Walker is relatively unknown politically, she is a 40-year resident of the county with enforcement experience in crisis support and suicide prevention.

Her resume includes working as a community relations liaison and terrorism liaison officer.

In their press statement released last Wednesday, Walker and Price say they will run as a "Justice Done Right" slate for sheriff and district attorney. They say the slate unifies them on many of the issues that Alameda County residents want to see addressed in the county justice system.

Common platform stances include ending mass incarceration and over-criminalization of Black and Brown youth in Alameda County, addressing racial, gender and socioeconomic bias in policing and sentencing, reducing gun violence, protecting immigrant communities, restoring public trust and investing in public health and social services.

## SHERIFF'S REPORTS

COMPILED BY MICHAEL SINGER • CASTRO VALLEY FORUM



### Attempted Robbery

Thursday, January 14: at 8:30 p.m., Sheriff's deputies arrested a 19-year-old man from Castro Valley on suspicion of attempted robbery and possession of illegal narcotics. The man was seen leaving with unpaid merchandise from a grocery store on East Castro Valley Boulevard in the 580 Market Place shopping center. While store managers chased him down, deputies responded and took the man into custody.

### She Illegally Sprayed Tear Gas

Wednesday, January 13: at 7:22 a.m., a 53-year-old woman from Castro Valley was arrested on suspicion of illegal use of tear gas. Deputies responded to a report of a suspicious person at the intersection of Castro Valley Boulevard and Wilbeam Avenue. The woman was found to have sprayed the aerosol in the area without evidence of being threatened. Deputies took her into custody.

### Wanted Woman

Wednesday, January 13: at 11:20 p.m., deputies served a warrant for the arrest of a 36-year-old CV woman. The woman was previously charged with possession of a stolen vehicle and possession of a controlled substance. Deputies made a positive identification of the woman in the parking lot of the 580 Market Place. The woman was taken to Santa Rita Jail.

see **REPORTS** on page 4

### Illegal Possession of Ammunition

Friday, January 15: at 4:40 a.m., an 18-year-old CV man was arrested on suspicion of illegal possession of ammunition. Deputies responded to a call about a disturbance at a home near Page Street and Toledo Avenue. The man was identified as having a criminal record and being prohibited from carrying a firearm or ammunition. Deputies took the man into custody.

### Joy Ride Ends in Arrest

Friday, January 15: at 1:24 a.m., deputies pulled over and arrested a 27-year-old CV man on suspicion of driving a vehicle reported stolen. The man was traveling on the Boulevard near Redwood Road when deputies pulled him over after the rental company which owned the car reported it missing. Deputies took the man into custody and impounded the vehicle.

## Agencies Issue Statement On Inauguration Security

Following the events that unfolded in our nation's capital and subsequent information from federal law enforcement officials, our agencies want to assure Californians of the following efforts to ensure their safety:

Our collective agencies are working closely together and remain vigilant to respond to potential threats that may occur anywhere in the state, including the Capitol.

Collectively, we maintain strong relationships with our security and intelligence partners at the local, state, and federal levels and are continually monitoring and sharing information about possible emerging threats to the state.

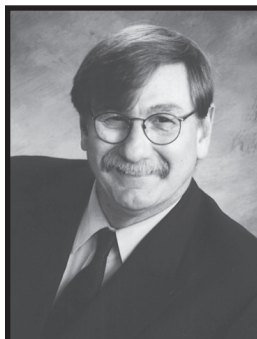
Together, our role is to safeguard lives and property and ensure that California remains a safe place for those who live, work, and travel within the state while ensuring the ability of individuals and groups to lawfully exercise their First Amendment rights.

For security and safety reasons, the agencies will not be commenting further on specific matters involving local preparedness plans or personnel deployment.

— Amanda Ray, CHP Commissioner

— Mark Ghilarducci, Homeland Security Advisor

— David Baldwin, Adjutant General, Calif. National Guard



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PHOTO COURTESY OF C.E.I.

As a front-line worker, CEI driver Sangworn Saephan said he was grateful to get the Covid vaccine from Registered Nurse Shuxia Li for his own protection and to protect the vulnerable seniors he transports.

## CEI Moves Quickly to Protect Seniors, Staff

Center for Elders' Independence (CEI), one of the first health care providers in Alameda County to receive Covid vaccine, began administering the first round of shots to its front-line staff and at-risk senior participants last week.

A shipment of 500 doses of the Moderna vaccine arrived late Tuesday night. By early Wednesday morning, CEI began transporting their participants from their homes throughout the county to its San Leandro location where they are carefully being monitored.

In the first two days, CEI administered about half of the first shipment. Alameda County Health Care Services Agency has indicated

that it will provide more doses of the vaccine as needed.

The Center's home health nurses have also been deployed to administer the vaccines at home to accommodate participants who cannot travel to San Leandro.

The inoculations are being carefully orchestrated to follow strict safety precaution and proper handling procedures, and to prevent wasting any vaccine doses.

Keeping staff and participants informed and involved throughout this historical process has been a high priority.

In preparation for the vaccine's arrival, Chief Medical Officer Dr. James Mittelberger conducted a series of town hall meetings with

staff to let them know how the vaccine works, what to expect when it arrived, and to answer questions about vaccine safety and efficacy.

His chief message: "It is crucial to recognize that this vaccine does not include any whole virus; it is impossible to get COVID-19 from this vaccine."

In response to the pandemic, CEI has pivoted its operations to serve most seniors at home. In addition to providing a full range of telehealth services, the Center also offers an array of online activities, including exercise, games, spiritual counseling, customized arts and crafts, nutritious meals and all medications needed by seniors in their care.

## Busy: Armed Robbery at Walgreens

*continued from front page*  
Rita Jail.

### Walgreens Heist

Earlier that day, deputies responded to an armed robbery at the Walgreens Pharmacy in Castro Village that went largely unnoticed while it was in progress.

Shortly after 11 a.m. deputies say a suspect entered the store and asked for the manager.

According to Sheriff's spokesperson Sgt. Ray Kelly, the man indicated to an employee that he was armed and that it was a robbery. He demanded to be taken to the store's safe and another employee was ordered to follow along.

"The two employees were taken to the rear office where the suspect tied them up," said Sgt. Kelly. "The suspect took an undisclosed amount of cash and threatened the employees not to call the police or they would be killed."

The suspect fled to a vehicle where an accomplice was waiting. Shoppers were in the store during the robbery but no one was injured.

While some details of the ongoing investigation are being withheld, the suspects are believed to be connected to a robbery reported 30 minutes earlier at the Walgreens on Foothill Boulevard in Hayward.

Customers were shocked when they heard the news.

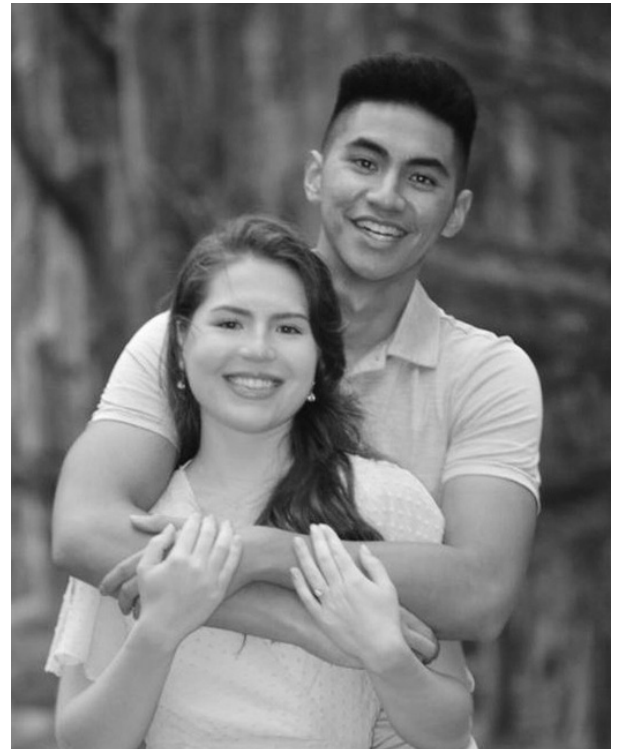
"It's so scary that this happened in broad daylight," said Castro Valley resident Mimi Totten. "That is one of our go-to stores. Glad no one was seriously injured."

"The poor people who work there. I shop there once a week and the employees are so sweet. I sure hope they are able to cope with such a traumatic experience," said Castro Valley resident Vanessa Nool.

A sheriff's helicopter circled overhead in hopes of spotting the suspects.

Detectives are following up on information regarding the heist. Anyone with any information on either of Friday's events is asked to call the Alameda County Sheriff's Office at 510-667-7721.

## JULY WEDDING PLANNED



Susan and Raymond Ruiz have announced the engagement of their daughter Caitlyn to Daniel Briones, son of Rhodora and Dennis Briones. The couple graduated from Castro Valley High School in 2015. Caitlyn graduated from the San Francisco State University Nursing Program in 2019 and is now working in her chosen field of acute care. Daniel graduated from Cal State East Bay in 2019 and is now pursuing his Doctorate degree in Physical Therapy at Cal State University Sacramento. He will receive his doctorate in 2023. Their wedding date has been set for July 18, 2021.

## BART Has a Job Opening

BART has created a new position to help address homelessness within the system and connect unsheltered people to resources.

The job – Senior Manager of Social Services Partnerships – was posted at bart.gov/jobs on Friday.

The manager's duties will focus on designing and overseeing programs and being the advisor to BART's top officials on issues related to homelessness and the health and social welfare of the system's riders.

"Homelessness is a complex issue and as a transit system we have struggled to effectively respond to the crisis occurring in the Bay Area" said BART General Manager Bob Powers. "We need someone who can work with a variety of stakeholders, find funding

partnerships, and bring new ideas to the table."

The senior manager will also work closely with the BART Police Department to ensure all programs are in alignment with its policies.

The position is one of several new initiatives being implemented to bolster BART's policing efforts and to find new solutions that don't rely on armed police.

Qualifications for the position include a degree in such fields as public policy, social welfare and health care administration, plus five years of full-time experience implementing programs.

BART also plans to hire 20 crisis intervention specialists beginning later this year and to continue its Transit Ambassador Program.

## Reports: Drugs; Shoplifting; Wanted Man

### *continued from page 3* Methamphetamines

Tuesday, January 12: at 1:39 p.m., a 29-year-old man with no permanent residence was arrested on suspicion of possession of methamphetamine drugs. Deputies stopped the man for questioning outside a business on Rutledge Road near the Boulevard when they discovered his stash. The man was taken into custody.

### Man Tried to Shoplift in Castro Village

Tuesday, January 12: at 2:56 p.m., deputies arrested a 46-year-old man from Castro Valley on suspicion of shoplifting from a business in the Castro Village Shopping Center. The man was spotted leaving the store with unpaid merchandise but was detained by store security. Deputies handcuffed the man and took him into custody.

### Wanted Man Caught

Tuesday, January 12: at 7:06 a.m., a 41-year-old CV man was arrested as part of a warrant issued for his capture. Deputies served the warrant to the man who was traveling on the Boulevard near Wilbeam Avenue. The man had previously been charged with breaking and entering a business, identification theft, and possession of illegal narcotics.

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## Rollout: Difficulties with Scheduling Shots

*continued from front page*

And now word is that some 300,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine are being held for inspection after some people have reported allergic reactions.

Alameda County Public Health said Monday that it has, "not received or administered vaccine from this Lot, but some local providers did receive doses from it. No Alameda County providers have reported unusual vaccine responses to the Public Health Department at this time."

While doses are now being allocated for the next phase of recipients (people who work in education and childcare, emergen-

cy services, and food and agriculture), people 65 and older are having a hard time scheduling their vaccinations.

Health providers such as Kaiser Permanente and Sutter Health say they are receiving a high volume of calls and emails, and both are asking members to refrain from calling their doctors as they are unable to schedule vaccinations.

"You don't need to call or email us. We'll let you know by letter or email when we can schedule you," Kaiser posted on its COVID-19 vaccination website. "Since supplies are low, it'll take time to offer everyone an appointment."

Sutter Health is also prioritizing

patients who are in the highest risk categories. And while Sutter is accepting online requests for injections, they do acknowledge that their phone lines are overwhelmed at the moment.

Alameda County says its strategy is to make the vaccine readily and easily available through County-administered points of dispensing (PODs) and partnership with health care systems and community clinics/organizations. Qualified individuals who are not notified by their employer to schedule their COVID-19 vaccination will be alerted by their medical insurance or other community messaging, County health officials said.





## Coffee Cake: An All-Time Favorite

Sitting leisurely with a slice of coffee cake and a steaming cup of coffee, is one of life's little pleasures. Whether you serve it for breakfast, brunch, an afternoon snack, or dessert, this homey treat is an all-time favorite.

If you don't already have a special family coffee cake recipe in your repertoire, here are some perfect options.

### SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE CAKE

*For the streusel:*

1/4 cup all-purpose flour  
2/3 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 cup butter

*For the cake:*

2 cups all-purpose flour  
3/4 cup granulated sugar  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup butter  
1 egg  
3/4 cup milk, or as needed  
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9x13 inch pan.

Make the streusel topping: In a medium bowl, combine flour, sugar and cinnamon. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine 2 cups flour, 3/4 cup sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

Crack an egg into a measuring cup and then fill with milk to make 1 cup. Stir in vanilla. Pour into crumb mixture and mix just until moistened. Spread into prepared pan. Sprinkle top with streusel.

Bake in the preheated oven for 25 to 30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. Allow to cool. Makes a dozen servings.

### APPLE-CINNAMON BUNDT CAKE

1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 tablespoon cinnamon  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1 cup butter, melted  
1-1/2 cups packed light-brown sugar  
4 large eggs  
6 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and sliced 1/4-inch thick  
1 cup powdered sugar  
1 to 2 tablespoons water

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, baking powder, salt, and baking soda.

In a large bowl, combine butter, brown sugar, and eggs. Whisk until smooth. Gradually whisk in dry ingredients just until combined (do not overmix).

Using a rubber spatula, fold in apples. Spoon batter into a 12-cup nonstick Bundt pan, and smooth top.

Bake until a tester inserted in cake comes out clean, 50 to 60 minutes. Cool in pan on rack 15 minutes; invert onto rack to cool completely.

Make the Glaze: Whisk together powdered sugar and enough water to form a thick yet pourable glaze. Set rack with cake over a piece of wax paper (for easy cleanup); drizzle cake with glaze, and let set before serving. Yields 10 servings.

### OLD-FASHIONED CRUMB CAKE

2-1/2 cup flour  
1 cup brown sugar, packed  
1 cup granulated sugar  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon nutmeg

3/4 cup oil  
2 teaspoons cinnamon  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 egg  
1 cup buttermilk

Combine flour, brown sugar, granulated sugar, salt, nutmeg and oil. Remove 1/2 cup of mixture from the bowl, adding 1 teaspoon of cinnamon to it. Set aside for topping.

Combine remaining 1 teaspoon cinnamon, baking soda, egg and buttermilk and blend well. Add flour to mixture. Do not overmix.

Spoon batter into greased 13x9-inch baking pan. Sprinkle with 1/2 cup reserved topping. Bake at 375°F for 30 to 40 minutes. Yields 8 servings.

### BLUEBERRY COFFEE CAKE

1 egg  
1/2 cup fat-free milk  
1/2 cup plain fat-free yogurt  
3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
4 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1-1/2 cups frozen blueberries  
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour  
2 tablespoons turbinado (raw style) sugar  
2 tablespoons sliced almonds  
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

Preheat oven to 400°.

Whisk together first 4 ingredients in a large bowl. Sift together flour and next 3 ingredients in another bowl. Stir flour mixture into egg mixture just until dry ingredients are moistened.

9-inch springform pan. Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 cup blueberries. Stir together the turbinado sugar, sliced almonds, and cinnamon; sprinkle over batter.

Bake at 400° for 25 to 30 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan on a wire rack 15 minutes; remove sides of pan. Serves 10.

### BETTY CROCKER'S POPULAR COFFEE CAKE

*For the cinnamon streusel:*

1/3 cup Original Bisquick mix  
1/3 cup packed brown sugar  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
2 tablespoons firm butter

*For the cake:*

2 cups Original Bisquick mix  
2/3 cup milk or water  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1 egg

Heat oven to 375°F. Grease 9-inch round pan. In small bowl, stir streusel ingredients until crumbly; set aside.

In medium bowl, mix coffee cake ingredients until blended. Spread in pan. Sprinkle with streusel. Bake 18 to 22 minutes or until golden brown. Best served warm.

Serves 10.

### ALMOND BUTTER COFFEE CAKE

1-1/2 cups sugar  
3/4 cup melted butter  
2 eggs  
1/2 teaspoon almond extract (or more)  
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1-1/2 cups flour  
3 tablespoons slivered almonds

Blend sugar and butter in large mixing bowl. Beat in eggs, 1 at a time, and stir well. Add almond and vanilla extracts and mix thoroughly into batter. (Taste and add more almond extract, if necessary). Add salt and flour and mix until batter is smooth.

Spread batter in greased 9-inch round cake pan. Sprinkle 2 teaspoons sugar over batter, then sprinkle with almonds.

Bake at 350°F until wood pick inserted in center comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes (begin checking on doneness after 25 minutes). Remove and let cool for 10 minutes. Turn cake out onto rack to cool completely. Yields about 10 servings.

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While acupuncture isn't a cure-all treatment, it is a safe, drug-free option for relieving many different types of pain

## Acupuncture: Is It Worth Trying And Is It Covered by Medicare?

*Q: Is acupuncture a viable treatment for pain and is it covered by Medicare? Since the pandemic hit, I have a lot of lower back and neck pain and am wondering if it's worth trying. What can you tell me?*

By Jim Miller  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

A: Many studies over the years – funded by the National Institutes of Health – have found acupuncture to be very effective in easing pain and can help with a variety of other ailments too. Here's what you should know.

### Acupuncture Treatment

First used in China more than 2,000 years ago, acupuncture has become increasingly popular in the United States over the past decade.

While acupuncture isn't a cure-all treatment, it is a safe, drug-free option for relieving many different types of pain including low back pain, neck pain, osteoarthritis, migraine headaches, fibromyalgia, postoperative pain, tennis elbow, carpal tunnel syndrome, dental pain and more. Studies have also

shown that it can be helpful in treating asthma, depression, digestive disorders, menopause symptoms like hot flashes, and nausea caused by chemotherapy or anesthesia.

Exactly how or why acupuncture works isn't fully understood, but it's based on the traditional Eastern theory that vital energy flows through pathways in the body, and when any of these pathways get blocked, pain and illness result. Acupuncture unblocks the pathways to restore health.

However, today most Western practitioners believe that acupuncture works because it stimulates the nerves causing the release of endorphins, which are the body's natural painkiller hormones. It's also shown to increase blood circulation, decrease inflammation and stimulate the immune system.

### What to Expect

During acupuncture, practitioners stimulate specific points on the body by inserting thin needles through the skin. The needles are solid, sterile and disposable (used only once), and as thin as a cat's whisker.

The number of needles used for each treatment can vary anywhere

from a few, up to a dozen or more. And where the needles are actually stuck depends on the condition being treated, but they are typically inserted about one-quarter to 1-inch deep and are left in place for about 20 minutes. After placement, the needles are sometimes twirled or manipulated, or stimulated with electricity or heat.

You may feel a brief, sharp sensation when the needle is inserted, but generally it's not painful. Once the needle is in place, however, you may feel a tingling sensation, numbness, mild pressure or warmth.

How many treatments you'll need will depend on the severity of your condition – 12 treatments done weekly or biweekly is very common. It's also important to know that acupuncture can be used in conjunction with other conventional medical treatments, or by itself.

### Cost and Coverage

The cost per treatment typically runs anywhere from \$40 to \$150, depending on where you are in the country and what style of treatment you are receiving.

see COVERED on page 15

## Affordable Housing for Older Adults

*Q: Are there any resources to help seniors find and pay for senior apartments? My aunt, who's 75 years old, needs to find a new place to live but has very little money. What can you tell me?*

By Jim Miller  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

A: Finding affordable senior housing options can be difficult depending on where your aunt lives. Senior apartments for some retirees are a good option, and you'll be happy to know that there are a number of government programs that can help out financially. Here are some tips that can help you and your aunt find a low-income senior apartment that fits her budget and living preferences.

### Start with HUD

There are several different government programs available today that can help individuals who qualify to locate and pay for housing, including:

**Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8):** This program allows you to find the housing you want. The government provides the amount allowed by your voucher to the landlord each month.

**Privately owned subsidized housing:** HUD helps some apartment owners offer reduced rents to low-income tenants.

**Public Housing:** These communities are generally apartment buildings or complexes that are overseen by a city or county public housing agency, and are available to low-income families, the elderly and those with disabilities.

**Low-Income Housing Tax Credit:** This program provides housing to low income families and includes rents that don't exceed a fixed amount.

**Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly:** This initiative helps seniors and the disabled. It offers housing for individuals who are able to live mostly on their own but need assistance with certain daily tasks like cleaning and cooking.

For more information about these programs and to locate apartments in your aunt's area that may offer them, visit the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development rental assistance page at [HUD.gov/topics/rental\\_assistance](https://www.hud.gov/topics/rental_assistance).

You can also search for low-income housing at senior living sites like After55.com and SeniorHousingNet.com.

If you or your aunt don't have internet access or have troubling maneuvering the internet, you can also locate nearby affordable housing options by calling your local housing authority – call 800-955-2232 to get your local number. If your aunt lives in a location that spans multiple counties, check with the housing authority in each one to compare.

see HOUSING on page 15



## Vaccinations: CV Library

continued from front page

The vaccinations took place in the Chabot/Canyon Room, where large meetings are often held. Six stations were set up for these first doses.

The entire indoor process took about 25 minutes per person. This included a 15-minute post-vaccine observation period to monitor for adverse reactions. The Moderna vaccine was used, because it doesn't need to be kept at such low temperatures.

The Library was able to continue its normal functions, including No Contact Pickup, through the

back (staff) door on the other side of the building.

Last week's vaccination event focused on folks in Phase 1a – mainly health care workers. The next Phase, 1b, is slated to include those over 65 and certain essential workers.

The Library does not schedule any of these vaccinations. Instead, residents may inquire with their health care provider, or register with Alameda County to be notified of their turn at [covid-19.acgov.org/vaccines](https://covid-19.acgov.org/vaccines). The website also describes in detail who is included in each Phase.

## Order Your Free Credit Reports

By Matilda Charles  
SENIOR NEWS LINE

For years we've been able to get one free credit report per year from each of the three credit bureaus. Right now, we're able to get a free one each week until the middle of April.

Why? Their generosity is likely due to the astronomical number of scams coming out of the COVID crisis. The number of unemployed crooks has surely gone up, making your good credit too enticing to pass up.

This is one time when constantly monitoring our credit is a good idea. Besides ordering your credit reports, one additional big step is to freeze your account, making it

impossible for someone to apply for credit in your name.

All three credit bureaus (TransUnion, Equifax and Experian) can be accessed in the government clearinghouse website [www.annualcreditreport.com](https://www.annualcreditreport.com) ... theoretically, that is. In 2015, 2017 and today, I was only able to access TransUnion.

For the other two I had to go to the individual website. One I had to call, as the website was down.

If you decide to order your credit reports by phone, allot several hours to the task and turn down any background noise so you'll be able to hear clearly.

Go to [www.usa.gov/credit-reports](https://www.usa.gov/credit-reports) to learn more about credit reports, scores, freezes and errors.

If you want to try to get all three reports at once, call 1-877-322-8228 at the Annual Credit Report location. The others are:

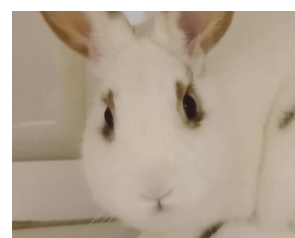
- Equifax: 1-888-548-7878 or 1-800-685-1111; [equifax.com](https://equifax.com).
- Experian: 1-888-397-3742; [experian.com](https://experian.com).
- TransUnion: 1-800-916-8800 or 888-909-8872; [transunion.com](https://transunion.com).

Once you get your report, either online or in the mail, study it carefully.

Look for accounts that you never opened and the names of people you don't know. Be sure all the information is correct. If you need to file a complaint, go to [ftc.gov/complaint](https://ftc.gov/complaint) or call 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357).

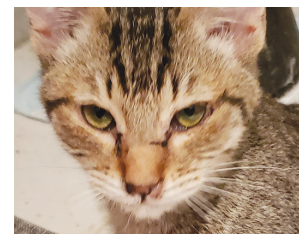
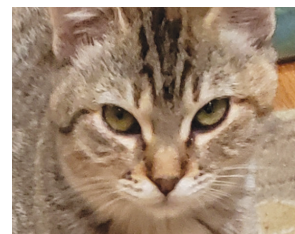
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# How Seniors Can Make Their Bathrooms Safer, Easier to Use

**B**ecause more accidents and injuries happen in the bathroom than any other room in the house, this is a very important room to modify, especially for seniors with mobility or balance problems.

Depending on your needs and budget, here are some simple tips and product recommendations that can make a bathroom safer and easier to use.

**Floor:** To avoid slipping, a simple fix is to get non-skid bath rugs for the floors. Or if you want to put in a new floor get slip-resistant tiles, rubber or vinyl flooring, or install wall-to-wall carpeting.

**Lights:** Good lighting is also very important, so install the highest wattage bulbs allowed for your mom's bathroom fixtures and get a plug-in nightlight that automatically turns on when the room gets dark.

**Bathtub/shower:** To make bathing safer, purchase a rubber suction-grip mat, or put down adhesive nonskid tape on the tub/shower floor. And have a carpenter install grab bars in and around the tub/shower for support.

If you use a shower curtain, install a screw or bolt-mounted curtain rod, versus a tension-mounted rod, so that if you lose your balance and grab the shower curtain the rod won't spring loose.

For easier access and safer bathing, consider getting a shower or bathtub chair so you can bathe from a seated position. In addition, you should also have a handheld, adjustable-height showerhead installed that makes chair bathing easier.

If you have the budget for it, another good option is to install a curb-less shower or a walk-in bathtub. Curb-less showers have no threshold to step over, and come with a built-in seat, grab bars, slip resistant floors and an adjustable handheld showerhead.

While walk-in tubs have a door in front that provides a much lower threshold to step over than a standard tub, they also have a built-in seat, handrails and a slip resistant bottom, and some have therapeutic features like whirlpool water jets and/or bubble massage air jets.

Curb-less showers and walk-in-tubs run anywhere between \$2,500 and \$10,000 installed.



**Toilet:** Most standard toilets are around 15 inches high and can be an issue for taller seniors with arthritis, back, hip or knee problems. If you have trouble getting on or off the toilet, a simple solution is to purchase a raised toilet seat that clamps to the toilet bowl, and/or purchase toilet safety rails that sit on each side of the seat for support. Or, you can install a new ADA compliant "comfort height" toilet that is 16-to-19 inches high.

**Faucets:** If you have twist handles on the sink, bathtub or shower faucets, consider replacing them with lever handle faucets, or with a touch, motion or digital smart faucet. They're easier to operate, especially if you have hand arthritis or gripping problems.

Also note that it only takes 130-degree water to scald someone, so turn your hot water heater down to 120 degrees.

**Doorway:** If you need a wider bathroom entrance to accommodate a walker or wheelchair, an inexpensive solution is to install some swing clear offset hinges on the door which will expand the doorway an additional two inches.

**Emergency assistance:** As a safety precaution, you should also consider purchasing a voice-enabled medical alert system like Get Safe (GetSafe.com) for the bathroom. This device would let you call for help by simple voice command, or by pushing a button or pulling a cord.

You can find all of these suggested products at either medical supply stores, pharmacies, big-box stores, home improvement stores, hardware and plumbing supply stores, as well as online.

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

## Stimulus Payments and Medi-Cal, SSI

**Q** My wife and I are both on SSI and Medi-Cal and we just received \$1,200 under the federal stimulus program, and hope to receive another round if Congress and the new administration approve more. Will these payments mess up our public benefits, which we depend upon?

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

**A** The short answer is "No." Some background may be helpful:

As you may know, the basic Medi-Cal and Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") rules are that both income and assets are considered in terms of eligibility.

If the stimulus payments were considered income, they would potentially undermine that eligibility or at least increase the Medi-Cal recipient's Co-Pay ("Share of Cost") for health care services.

Also, since the value of countable assets of recipients on SSI and/or Medi-Cal must be under the permissible resource ceilings, there was also concern that these stimulus payments would put many over these ceilings and result in their termination from these vital public benefit programs.

Because of these concerns, immediately after the last round of stimulus payments in April, 2020, the Commissioner of Social Security issued an important statement which recited, in part, as follows:

"Please note that we will not consider economic impact payments as income for SSI recipients, and the payments are excluded from resources for 12 months." [Emphasis added]

Because federal public benefits law provides that state Medicaid (Medi-CAL) programs cannot impose eligibility requirements that are stricter than SSI requirements,

the Commissioner's pronouncement of favorable treatment for the SSI program essentially resulted in the extension of the same treatment to the Medi-Cal program.

In accord with federal law, the Medi-Cal folks in Sacramento then issued a statewide directive to all counties further clarifying this matter, essentially affirming the Secretary's statement of "no effect."

While they have not yet issued another statewide directive with regard to the last round of stimulus payments a few weeks ago, my contacts at the Department of Health Care Services in Sacramento assure me that the same treatment will apply, again, and that a further written directive to that effect will issue soon.

There is one caution, however: if the stimulus payments are saved, and not spent within the 12 month grace period, then they will thereafter count as resources, and that circumstance could then undermine a beneficiary's ongoing eligibility.



**Gene L. Osofsky**

However, if the stimulus payments are spent in the interim, or used to purchase exempt resources (e.g. funeral plan, clothing, automobile, home repair, etc.), then there would be no adverse effect after that 12 month grace period.

Lastly, for folks reading this article, please do not confuse economic stimulus payments with unemployment assistance payments. The latter will count as income in the month received, and if not spent in the month of receipt will count as an asset as of the next following month. So be careful to distinguish these subsidies.

Further, these stimulus payments will not be counted as income for purposes of the various subsidies available to qualify for health insurance under plans available through Covered California. However, Pandemic Unemployment Benefits will count.

For those wishing for more information, please see this same article on our website, where we have included internet links to articles and source materials for further reference.

*Gene L. Osofsky is an Elder Law and Estate Planning attorney in the East Bay. Visit his website at [www.LawyerForSeniors.com](http://www.LawyerForSeniors.com).*

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## Does a Gap Year Make Financial Sense?

By Nathaniel Sillin  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

In some parts of the world, a gap year – a year-long break between high school and college – is the norm. It's starting to catch on in the U.S. as well.

It's a chance for recent high school graduates to earn money, challenge themselves, explore the world and build their resume while experimenting with different career paths.

Those who take full advantage of the opportunity often find the experience to be rewarding and beneficial. And colleges report that students who start school after a gap year tend to earn higher grades, are more involved with campus life and graduate within four years at a higher rate than their non-gap-year peers.

Lessons along the way: Many people spend at least part of the

year traveling, working or volunteering away from home. During the year, they may discover that what they originally wanted to study isn't a good fit, or may come away with a newfound passion.

Entering college with this knowledge can help them focus on a major, plan their classes and graduate early. Or, at least avoid changing majors and extending their schooling. In either case, they can save tens of thousands of dollars.

During a gap year, young adults also often take a more direct role in their day-to-day finances. They can develop a greater appreciation for earning, and spending, money.

In turn, this can give them a framework when taking out student loans and an extra push to apply for scholarships.

Finding a gap-year structure: To avoid squandering the year, you can look into formal programs that can help you achieve or define your personal, academic or career goals. More than 80 percent of gap year students say the skills they acquired helped them be successful in their career after school.

Many choose service-oriented work. The federally backed AmeriCorps programs place volunteers throughout the U.S. to help communities in need. Once you complete a full-time 10- to 11-month commitment, you may be eligible for a scholarship worth thousands of dollars. Some colleges and universities will also match a portion of the award.

Working for a local business could be another great option. You can earn money, see if you truly enjoy the work, network and may be able to line up work during school or for future summer jobs.

The industry connections and mentorship you receive can also be valuable for your post-graduation job search.

Funding your gap year: There are gap year options for students from all socio-economic backgrounds.

Inquire with your university to see if it recommends or runs any programs. Some schools offer scholarships to admitted students who take a gap year, and a few will give you college credit for completing certain programs.

Once you start your college education, you can try to capitalize on your year off. There are many scholarships available to continuing college students and your experience could be a good jump-off point for an essay.

Taking a gap year between high school and college is increasingly popular, although still not as common as it is in some other parts of the world.

While jumping right into college and getting a degree is the traditional path towards employment, some parents and students see the benefit of taking a year off to better define one's goals and gain real-world experience before going to college.

Nathaniel Sillin is with Visa's financial education programs.



## Teaching Kids Money Basics

Amazingly, many teenagers will graduate high school with little knowledge about how finances work, flying blind into a hurricane-sized storm of potential debt, bad loans, bankruptcy, and no savings or retirement.

As a parent, you can head this off. To help, the makers of the app BusyKid are offering these tips and financial basics for getting started.

- Chores. Introduce chores early and treat them as if it's your child's first job. By changing the mindset around chores, kids can develop a good work ethic that can carry over to a real job.

- Modern Money. It's estimated that less than 10 percent of the world's currency is actually paper or coins. This means your child needs to know how to manage invisible money, including paying bills and tracking credit and debit card spending.

- Savings. Thirty-nine percent of Americans admit to having no money in a savings account. Teach children to save a portion of money they receive from birthdays, holidays, babysitting, mowing grass, etc. A good rule of thumb for kids: 50 percent savings, 40 percent spending and 10 percent sharing.

- Sharing. Contributing to non-profits not only feels good but helps others in need. It could also provide a tax benefit when your child is old enough to be filing.

see MONEY on page 9

## Pets Provide Opportunities For Learning

By Hugh Norton  
SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

A friend and I were recently discussing family pets. Their family had recently adopted a dog, and he was pointing out that while his children had fervently promised to take care of the pet with the best of intentions, they didn't necessarily have the greatest track record of following through. After the first few months, he and his wife found themselves handling 90 percent of the responsibilities.

Regardless of who handles the bulk of the responsibility for a pet over the long term, the conversation got me thinking about the many valuable teaching moments that can present themselves when you bring a pet into your family.

While parents often use pet ownership as a tool to teach overall responsibility, there are great opportunities to use the experience to impart lessons concerning financial responsibility as well.

### Trying before Buying

Children and teenagers don't always understand the long-term consequences of their decisions. However, if you can get them to take care of neighbors' or friends' pets (with you there to supervise if necessary), they'll be able to experience the balance of work and enjoyment that goes into having a pet before the final decision is made to foster or adopt a pet of their own.

It may even be a good way of creating income and encouraging entrepreneurship.

They might offer friends and neighbors a service – the first few dog walks, check-ins or litter box changes as freebies and then charge a small fee for services.

The experience will help them get a taste of the responsibilities while practicing entrepreneurship and learning about the effort needed to succeed and rewards that can

see PETS on page 9

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— Maria Montessori



## Pets: Teach Children to Follow a Budget

*continued from previous page*  
come from starting a business.

In addition, if they are able to amass an income of their own from the experience, you may want to consider having them chip in to cover part of the adoption fees.

### Creating a Budget

The real work (and fun) starts once you bring a pet home. Picture this: your children have learned about the many responsibilities that come with having a pet and are taking it upon themselves to handle all the basic associated chores (a parent can dream, right?).

Even if your children don't exactly tackle these chores with the grit and determination you would have hoped for, you can teach them financial lessons by involving them in all pet-related financial decisions and transactions and by teaching them how to create and follow a budget.

Have them start by listing out the necessary expenses, such as food, vet check-ups and toys. Then work together to research the anticipated costs and create a plan.

There is a big difference in the budget needed to bring home a small goldfish versus a cat or even a large dog.

If you want to teach your children about budgeting in this context, they'll need an income to use to cover their expenses. The money could come from an allowance, continued pet care work or a part-time job if they're old enough. Or you may have to fund a special pet care account that they help manage.

### Importance of Saving

While a budget is primarily intended to be used to cover day-to-



**While parents often use pet ownership as a tool to teach overall responsibility, there are great opportunities to impart lessons concerning financial responsibility as well.**

day expenses, it's also an important tool for planning for the future.

To help teach your children the importance of saving, make sure to teach them to set aside money in the budget for longer-term expenses including boarding or pet sitting fees for when your family travels or even an emergency medical fund for visits to the vet.

Boarding and medical care can be expensive. To help set your child's expectations and set savings targets, research your pet or breed of pet and base your savings plans on the information you find.

Tangible savings accounts, such as a jar labeled with the saving goal, could be a good option if only a small amount of funds

needs to be saved.

As savings needs grow, it could be a good opportunity to open a joint checking or savings account where your child can deposit money and practice using an account.

Bottom line: For children and adults alike, learning about money can be difficult when it's only an abstract concept.

By tying the prospect of getting and taking care of a new pet to the importance of earning, budgeting and saving money, you can help teach your children about financial responsibility and instill money habits that could serve them for the rest of their lives.

*Hugh Norton directs Visa's financial education programs.*

## Boosting Your Child's Confidence Can Help Them Land a Tech Job

Confidence is a great thing. It can make people more open to learning new skills, pursuing new opportunities and living new experiences.

When it comes to career choices, confidence, or rather a lack of it, can keep qualified and motivated individuals from even considering certain fields.

Technology is at the forefront of this dilemma, according to those in the industry, who also note that lingering misconceptions may be widening a "confidence gap."

"For too long we've been telling young people that the best jobs of the future will require advanced degrees in science, technology, engineering or math," said Todd Thibodeaux, president and CEO of the Computing Technology Industry Association. "The reality is that the vast majority of good paying jobs in the next 30 years won't require a STEM degree."

"Unfortunately, many students have concluded that they don't have the qualifications or skills to work in tech, creating a confidence gap that contributes to the lack of diversity in the tech workforce," Thibodeaux continued.

"To close this gap we need employers to open the door to more candidates with non-traditional backgrounds, and for parents and role models to encourage all young people to look at opportunities in tech when they think about their career options."

Thibodeaux explains that a great first step is to speak with young people in plain and simple language about what a career in technology truly entails.

That includes making sure they understand that working in tech isn't always about engineering, coding, calculus and Silicon Valley. It's also about customer service, teamwork, curiosity, communication and problem solving. It means working for any size company in any industry and in any location.

Equally important, young people need to know about the many resources available to them to learn about careers in tech, network with others who share their



**In the next 30 years, a majority of good paying jobs won't require a STEM degree.**

interests and acquire the skills that will help them land a job. Here are a few examples:

- The Technology Student Association is a national, nonprofit career and technical student organization of 250,000-plus middle school and high school students that offers exciting opportunities in networking, competitions, leadership and community service. For more information, visit [tsaweb.org](http://tsaweb.org)

- The National Cyber League offers students of all ages game-meets-edutainment competitions simulating real-life cyberthreats

in a safe environment so students can learn how to defend against threats. To learn more, visit [nationalcyberleague.org](http://nationalcyberleague.org)

- TechGirlz inspires middle school girls to explore the possibilities of technology through the creation of free, fun, interactive "TechShopz" led by industry professionals, community leaders and students. Get the details at [techgirlz.org](http://techgirlz.org).

The tech industry is in the midst of a massive new wave of innovation. Advances in renewable energy, artificial intelligence, bionics, robotics, healthcare and many other areas are changing virtually every walk of life. To turn these possibilities into realities, millions of knowledge workers and technology professionals will be needed.

"Don't think that you need to be a math or science genius or that you need to have coding skills or that if you're not good at 'computational thinking' you don't have a chance. All you need is confidence in yourself," says Thibodeaux.

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DR #3828724 • January 20, 2021

## Money: Management and Knowledge

*continued from previous page*

- Investing. If your child ever wants to retire, he or she will need to invest money along the way, and practice makes perfect. Luckily, there are resources available to teach them how, including some fantasy investing games, as well as apps like BusyKid, which provides a place to buy real shares of stock for as little as \$10.

- Compound Interest. Compound interest is when a bank pays interest on both the principal (the

original amount of money) and the interest an account has already earned. As an example, if you put \$1000 in the bank with compound interest of 10 percent, in 20 years you'll have more than \$7,000. Without compound interest, it would be \$3,000. Let your money make money!

- Credit Cards. This is not free money! Have one card for emergencies or travel, but make sure the annual percentage rate is low and is paid off monthly. Your kids

will be flooded with offers as soon as they're old enough, so teach them to say no, even when promised gifts for signing up.

- Student Loans. The U.S. student loan debt is currently \$1.45 trillion (an average of \$37,000 per student) and nearly 7 million loans are in default. Follow this simple rule -- don't borrow more than your child will earn in his or her first year out of school.

*For more money management knowledge visit [www.busykid.com](http://www.busykid.com).*

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# REAL ESTATE GALLERY

## REAL ESTATE REALITY

By Carl Medford, CRS  
Special to the Forum

GUEST COMMENTARY



## Many Looking to Relocate After the Pandemic: Top 6 Reasons

**W**ith a COVID-19 vaccine in place and inoculations underway, people are imagining what it might look like once this pandemic is behind us.

The world as we have known it is no more, so many are looking to make significant real estate moves once the all clear is sounded. Here are our top 6 reasons:

- I'm sick of this home.

Homes that may have been OK prior to the pandemic have proven to not work in the shelter-in-place environment; especially homes with a smaller footprint.

The search is on for larger homes with more outdoors room, dedicated home office spaces with doors that can shut,

flex space and more.

- I'm sick of my partner.

While some have suggested forced proximity has improved relationships, others tout increasing online applications for divorce agreements as evidence the pandemic has taken a toll on partnerships.

Expect to see an increasing number of homes come on the market as couples look to sever links and go their own way.

- I'm sick of this area.

People historically willing to endure hardship to remain employed realize that work-from-home policies have changed everything. There is less need to join long commuter traffic lines, pay premium prices to live close to work, inhabit high density areas or endure the exorbitant costs of Bay Area living.

The lines to head to less populous areas with lower prices have already formed.

- I'm sick of poor air quality.

With increasing numbers of forest fires, poor air quality is forcing people with chronic ailments such as asthma to make a choice: spend money on extensive filtered heating and cooling system with hepa filters and remain indoors or move to areas with better air. COVID-19 has proven that staying inside is not the desired option, so many are looking elsewhere.

- I'm sick of political biases.

A growing number are feeling politically alienated and are seeking to move to locales more in alignment with their political perspectives.

- I'm sick of growing state legislation and taxation.

Watching the State's response to the pandemic, many have decided to vacate to other parts of the country. Citing heavy-handed overregulation and skyrocketing taxes, there is a growing movement to relocate to regions with more lenient business regulations and no state taxes.

With so many changes, it is a brave new world and many are looking to capitalize and move to a better life.

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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## Apple Trees Pollinate Apple Trees

By Buzz Bertolero  
Special to the Forum

**Q** I'm looking to plant a small orchard, but I'm a bit confused. I've read that I must have two trees close to each other for fruit production. Does that mean I need to have two identical trees, or do I need to plant two different varieties, or do they need to be the same?

**A** This is a great — and common — question to ask regarding pollination of fruit trees.

First, another variety within the same species pollinates individual fruit trees. For example,

an Apple tree can't pollinate an Apricot or any other type of fruit tree. You will need two cherries, apples, apricots, etc.

To make things even more confusing, some varieties require a specific variety for cross-pollinating purposes. For example, Black Tartarian cherry pollinates Bing cherry but not the Royal Ann.

Then there are self-fertile varieties, which do not require a pollinator. Stella cherry, Yellow Delicious apple, Blenheim apricot, and all the peach varieties are examples of self-fertile fruit trees. These trees do not require a second variety of fruit.

The nursery professional at your favorite garden center is an excellent resource. Some good home garden varieties are unknown to the general gardening public.

When selecting fruit tree varieties, one thing that is commonly overlooked is the ripening dates. You want to stagger the maturity dates so the crops don't all ripen on top of each other.

Also, keep in mind that a semi-dwarf fruit tree will reach a height of 15 feet with an



eight-foot or more spread. This may be too large for many of today's gardens.

The Ultra Dwarf Fruit trees are ideal for smaller yards and are available at a limited number of garden centers. They reach a height of seven to ten feet. January and February is an excellent time to make your selections. If you wait until spring, the section in containers will be much smaller.

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



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### Happy New Year 2021!

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## Shape Hydrangea Any Time

By Buzz Bertolero  
Special to the Forum

**Q** I have a hydrangea plant that is still in its pot. I want to keep it as a house or porch plant. Is it okay to cut it back at this time?

**A** Once Hydrangeas finish blooming, they're typically pruned. However, you can shape them at any time of the year. The newer varieties bloom

on both the old and new wood, which allow you to prune anytime. The older varieties, planted last century, bloom on the second year wood. The old spent flowers and stems are cut off as close to the ground as possible. The rest of the plant is trimmed for shape; otherwise, you remove the following season flowering wood.

Since you're planning on keeping it as a container plant,

you should transplant it into a larger container in the spring. Its current pot is not big enough for the long term.

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



## Mortgage Rates Tick Up

Long-term, fixed mortgage rate rose a little last week, according to Freddie Mac's weekly nationwide survey.

The benchmark 30-year mortgage averaged 2.79 percent, up from the previous week when it averaged 2.65 percent, a record low. A year ago at this time, the 30-year

rate averaged 3.65 percent.

Fifteen-year fixed-rate mortgages averaged 2.23 percent, up from 2.16 percent.

And five-year hybrid adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs) averaged 3.12 percent, up from 2.75 percent.

"While mortgage rates are expected to increase modest-

ly in 2021, they will remain inarguably low, supporting homebuyer demand and leading to continued refinance activity," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's Chief Economist. "Borrowers are smart to take advantage of these low rates now and will certainly benefit as a result."

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### Songbirds in winter

Missing your wild feathered friends? If you stand near some trees and make soft

"psh-psh-psh" sounds, this is bird parlance for "a predator is near," and even in winter, some birds may pop by to investigate! They may also make a few short "call notes" of their own to help warn of danger. Your best ally in this trick is the black-capped chickadee, often the first to respond. They can vary the rate or urgency of their calls to convey the distance or the immediacy of the threat. - Brenda Weaver

Source: [northernwoodlands.org](http://northernwoodlands.org)



## WEEKEND GARDENER

### Assessing Your Soil

Planting instructions usually say, "Place is soil with good drainage." But how do you know whether or not your soil drains well? If water forms puddles in your flower beds and stays there for a time after a rain, it is *not* draining well. Another test: Dig into the soil with 48 hours after a normal rain. If the soil breaks up without clumping, then it has good drainage. But, if the soil sticks together like Silly Putty, the drainage is poor. You can increase drainage in heavy soil by adding compost or peat moss. Building a raised flower bed will also work.

### Prune, Prune, Prune

Prune crape myrtles severely to force growth on new flowering wood. Prune dormant deciduous flowering vines and shade trees. And prune those roses if you haven't already done so. But hold off pruning spring-flowering ornamentals until just after they bloom.

### Landscape

Plant acacia, dogwood, forsythia, lilac, mimulus, flowering quince and other ornamental shrubs and trees.



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# Letters to the Editor

## Chick-fil-A: Don't Sell Our Soul

Editor:

I completely agree with Katy Wright ("No More Fast Food Restaurants?" Letters, Jan. 13) about another fast food restaurant in our town.

We especially don't need one at such a high visibility corner. She is right about attempting to keep a small town charm for the valley.

Almost anything would be better. Even another motel or medical office building. This intersection is already the most congested in the valley; we don't need to make it worse.

Do we need to sell our soul for some more tax revenue?

—Pete French, Castro Valley

## Chick-fil-A's Traffic Problems

Editor:

Google "traffic problems caused by Chick-fil-A" and you'll see that all over the nation this restaurant causes much more traffic trouble than other drive-thru restaurants.

Drive-thru lines blocking the public roads have been a daily thing at Chick-fil-A's in Seattle, Charlotte, Santa Barbara, Henderson and many other cities.

Like a restaurant cultivating a line out the door, the traffic jams make people wonder what's so good about the food and provide some free advertising on the local newscasts; I wonder if their traffic blockades are more of a feature than a bug.

Traffic on Castro Valley Blvd at Stanton is already problematic at times, so besides several other reasons to reject them, I would want to hear how they have quit causing traffic trouble at their other locations.

—Carolyn Street, Castro Valley

## Chick-fil-A: Time to Forgive?

Editor:

People are quick to throw stones at those they perceive to have done them wrong. They are slow to forgive, if at all. So, how is unity possible if we can't move forward beyond the mistakes of past?

Such is the case presented by Carey Pera at the MAC Board meeting concerning tentative plans for a Chick-fil-A restaurant at Castro Valley Blvd. and Northbridge Avenue.

Although Chick-fil-A has made amends to the LGBT community by discontinuing its charitable donations to organizations perceived to be

hostile by them, there are still objections being raised to the Chick-fil-A proposal to operate in Castro Valley based on its past actions. If the LGBT community cannot forgive them and move on, how can they consider themselves to be progressive? The same applies to the Castro Valley community and all those who still smear Chick-fil-A with false accusations of them being hateful.

—Laura Putnam Ladley, Castro Valley

## Recognizing Jim Phillips' Support of the Arts

Editor:

I was pleased to see Jim Phillips was named co-chair of the Castro Valley / Eden Area Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee.

The list of his qualifications, accomplishments and service should have also included his role and continuing support of the Castro Valley Arts Foundation.

The Arts Foundation has played a critical role in the success of the Castro Valley Center for the Arts, by providing financial, programing and volunteer support.

Jim was instrumental in helping form the Arts Foundation, and served as a founding member of the board. His guidance, encouragement and support have been invaluable.

Castro Valley students have also benefited from the yearly James and Melissa Phillips Scholarship awards. The Chamber is fortunate to have Jim as one of the new co-chairs. Thank you Jim, for supporting the arts, and your continuing service to Castro Valley.

—Erma Smith, Castro Valley

Letters continue on next page

## Obituaries

### James R. Ingram

September 22, 1942 ~ December 28, 2020

Resident of Castro Valley, CA

After living with Parkinson's Disease for nearly 10 years, James R. Ingram passed away on December 28, 2020, at his home surrounded by family.

Born on September 22, 1942 in Duluth, MN to parents Earl and Angeline (Scrignoli) Ingram, the family moved to California in 1959 and settled in Castro Valley. In 1967, Jim married Annette Paredero of San Leandro to whom he was married until her death in 2012. He worked in trucking until he sold his business and retired in 2008. Jim loved spending summers camping in Clearlake with family, going on hunting and fishing trips with his brothers-in-law and nephews, and was always up for a family poker game.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents Earl and Angeline, wife Annette, and brother Ronald Ingram. He is survived by his daughter Kimberly Worley, son-in-law Daniel, grandsons Brannndon Genung, Andrew, James, William, Anthony, and Charles Worley, and sister Barbara Lydon.

Due to Covid-19 there will be no visitation. The inurnment will take place at Holy Sepulcher Cemetery in Hayward, CA on February 5, 2021.



## Obituaries

### Dorothy May Bovyer

Surrounded by her loving family, Dorothy May Bovyer, entered into rest on January 2, 2021. She was 92 years old. Dorothy was born on May 11, 1928 in Tacoma, Washington to the late Henry "Hank" and Ann Margaret Glockner.

Dorothy is preceded in death by her parents, Hank and Ann Glockner, brothers Henry "Hank" Glockner Jr., George Glockner, William "Bill" Glockner, Robert "Bob" Glockner, and sister Betty Glockner Benitez, and her very loving husband Wesley David Bovyer, who passed away November 3, 1976.

Dorothy is survived by her children sons Corey Gilbert Bovyer and Bruce David Bovyer, as well as a daughter in law, Willette (Bruce's wife), 4 grandchildren (Mark, Jeanine, Nick, Jason) and 6 great-grandchildren (Noah, Noel, Nina, Colin, Riley, Gavin) and her sister June Glockner.

Dorothy was a Castro Valley, CA resident for over 60 years. She raised her family in Castro Valley and worked for over 30 years with the Castro Valley School District as a career guidance counselor. She was also president of the CSEA in the Castro Valley School District. Dorothy was also involved in a lot of local community functions. Her and her husband Wes were part of the IMPS, which was Instrumental Music Parents Society at Castro Valley High School (for son Corey). They were involved in all the musical programs at CVHS, including the outside projects like the yearly Pancake Breakfast, and all the yearly concerts and musicals (husband Wes would design and silkscreen most of the performance posters).

Dorothy loved to play Bridge as much as possible. She would play up to three times a week with her Bridge groups. She also loved to bowl with a lot of her school colleagues on local bowling leagues.

Dorothy's sweet charismatic personality and grace made her unforgettable and well known by many. She also had a great sense of humor. She loved to socialize with all her friends as much as possible. She would have dinner parties a lot, along with holiday parties and football parties. She also loved to go to her friends houses for dinners. She was a very big Oakland A's fan and San Francisco 49er's fan. She would also like to play softball with friends during the weekends. But most of all she loved spending time with her family, they were everything to her. She loved to spend as much time at her camp (Boards Crossing) in the summer with all of her friends that she had known since she was in grade school in Oakland, CA. She would spend weeks at a time there during the summer sitting in the sun, playing card games like "spoons", "hell", playing dominoes and many other games (and they all loved their daily cocktail hour). Dorothy also enjoyed traveling abroad with friends including to England, France, and Italy, and these adventures were the source of many fond memories and laughs, as she would recount years later. She loved going to the horse races also, including traveling to the Kentucky Derby a few years.

Just as Dorothy loved unconditionally throughout her lifetime, her final days were full of unconditional love by her family and friends. She lived each day with appreciation and strong faith. Dorothy had fought a valiant battle but was never afraid of anything. Even though she had a heart attack in late November 2020 and then contracted the COVID-19 about two weeks later, she fought a good fight through it all. She was a very strong willed woman who fought anything she felt was wrong.

She will be remembered for fighting the good fight, finishing the race and keeping her faith till the end. She will be deeply, deeply missed by all who knew her.

Dorothy did not want any type of funeral service. In lieu of a funeral service there will be a celebration of life later in the year (due to all the COVID-19 restrictions). If you know the family, you will be kept informed. If you would like to attend, please email bbovyer@yahoo.com.

Arrangements made by Jess C. Spencer Mortuary, Inc. & Crematory, (510) 581-9133



### Isabel (Ariza) Campouris

Isabel (Ariza) Campouris, 89, of Castro Valley, California, passed away on December 29th, 2020, peacefully in her home surrounded by her children. She was born on January 18th, 1931 in Hayward, California. Isabel grew up in Decoto, where she treasured her time with her parents, sisters, brothers and nieces. She married then moved to Castro Valley at the age of 18 where she remained for the next 71 years.

As an adult, while raising her children, Isabel was the bookkeeper for the family business, Campouris and Son Roofing Co. She enjoyed gardening, dancing, shopping, bus trips to Reno, vacationing around the globe, attending gatherings for birthdays and holidays and watching Jeopardy, but most of all, she loved spending time with her family.

Isabel was preceded in death by her parents, Francisco and Teresa Ariza, her siblings Josephine Hernandez, Frank Ariza, Mary Senna, Jim Ariza, and Carmen Sanchez.

Surviving Isabel are her three children, Susan Campouris, Nancy Wiacek, David Campouris, and her son-in-law, Larry Wiacek. Isabel has six grandchildren: Alexis Nisperos, Nicholas Nisperos and his wife (Lizbeth), Alissa Archuleta, Matthew Campouris and his wife (Bessie), Alexander Raymond, Lindsay Baran and her husband (Ryan). Isabel's great-grandchildren are Rayna, Vincent, Aryanna and Dominic Archuleta; Mathew, Alexander, Gabriel Nisperos; Joseph Raymond, Max Campouris and her great-great-grandchild, Mathew Nisperos Jr.

She will forever be missed, loved and always remembered.

Funeral arrangements are pending at this time, due to COVID-19.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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Letters continued from page 14

Big Tech's Personal Agenda

Editor:  
I find the letter from Chris Ackerman ("Trump's Social Media Ban," Letters, Jan. 13) very alarming. To be in favor of taking away free speech from certain individuals is short sighted to say the least. We all are guaranteed freedom in the First Amendment.  
When big tech starts imposing their own political agenda on the people that disagree with them, that should be a red flag for all of us.  
—Judi Molini, Castro Valley

'Trumpers' – What Do they Respect?

Editor:  
What to think? For over four years, Donald J. Trump has expressed his opinion of voter fraud and fraudulent elections. He has maintained that the election is fraudulent only if he loses.  
The "Trumpers" have accepted Trump's logic. Since the election Trump has maintained that "his victory" was stolen from him. He and his followers have gone to court with this accusation. They failed in court not just once, or twice; it was dozens of times that they consistently failed.  
So, not legally achieving what they wanted and without evidence, facts, or proof, Trump and his "Trumpers" continued their quest to overturn the certified election results, lately, using violence.  
It is Trump and the "Trumpers" who are attempting to steal the election at the risk of whatever it takes. Trump and his "Trumpers" do not respect law and order, they do not respect democracy, and they do not respect the peaceful transition of power. Well, then, what do they respect?  
—Jack Aydelott, Castro Valley

A Change in the Tax Code Needed

Editor:  
People seem to be baffled by the actions of Trump supporters in the Capitol last week. Not me. It all makes perfect sense. In the very convincing view of Isabel Wilkerson, author of "Caste—The Origins of Our Discontents," the dominant caste will go to any extreme to try to maintain their control over the castes they have subordinated, and to set members of the lower-but-not-lowest caste-- working class and rural whites, the mainstay of the Trump base-- against African Americans and non-European immigrants, to the benefit of the very wealthy.  
I just hope these are the death throes of the systemic racism our nation was founded on, and that a new day is coming, in which the tide will start to turn and we can all thrive, all of us, of all classes and races, with the dignity so long withheld from so many.  
Of course, we'd need a re-write of the tax code, which has been churning out billionaires since Reagan, and allowing a few people to skim a large percent off the top of our economy. But wealthy people aren't the enemy either. It's fine if they make a lot of money. We just need to pay their fair share of taxes.  
Immigrants and African Americans are not stealing wealth and opportunities from Trump supporters. The tax code is. We can change that. Keep voting.  
—Mal May, Castro Valley

Covered: Try Workshop for Japanese American Writers

continued from page 6

Today, an increasing number of private insurance plans, including some Medicare Advantage plans, and policies provided by employers offer some type of acupuncture coverage.  
You'll also be happy to know that last January (2020), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced that original Medicare will now cover up to 12 acupuncture sessions in 90 days for patients with chronic lower back pain. Eight additional sessions can be added if patients show improvement.  
But in order to receive Medicare coverage, you must use a licensed acupuncturist who is supervised by a medical doctor, physician assistant or nurse practitioner trained in acupuncture, who will need to process the acupuncture claim. Currently, licensed acupuncturists can't directly bill Medicare.  
To find an acupuncturist in your area ask your doctor for a referral, or you can do a search online. Two good resources are the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (nccaom.org), and the American Academy of Medical Acupuncturists (medicalacupuncture.org), which offers a directory of MDs and DOs who are certified to practice acupuncture.  
Send senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

The Hayward Area Historical Society in partnership with the National Japanese American Historical Society (NJAHS) of San Francisco is offering a workshop for second-generation (Nisei) Japanese American novice writers. No previous writing experience is preferred.  
The Nisei narrative is complex and compelling, enriched by family, community, culture, and country.  
Family, friends, and persons unknown can benefit from understanding how the Nisei led their lives before, during, and after World War II. First-hand accounts offer inspiration to individuals of all ages and backgrounds.  
Workshop leader Naomi Shibata will shepherd writers through the process of recording their own memoirs and will demystify the writing process so participants can record vital family stories for future generations.  
A long-time NJAHS docent, Shibata is the author of *Bend with the Wind*, a celebration of the life,

standing how the Nisei led their lives before, during, and after World War II. First-hand accounts offer inspiration to individuals of all ages and backgrounds.  
Workshop leader Naomi Shibata will shepherd writers through the process of recording their own memoirs and will demystify the writing process so participants can record vital family stories for future generations.  
A long-time NJAHS docent, Shibata is the author of *Bend with the Wind*, a celebration of the life,

family, and writings of her mother, Grace Eto Shibata.  
This three-part program will be held from 10 a.m. until noon on the Wednesdays of Jan. 27, Feb. 17, and March 10. The work is cumulative, and each session builds upon the completion of the previous session's efforts.  
To register for this Zoom workshop, email education@hayward-areahistory.org or you can call (510) 581-0223. For more information, please visit: www.haywardareahistory.org.

FILED DECEMBER 3, 2020  
MELISSA WILK County Clerk  
ALAMEDA COUNTY  
By-----, Deputy  
FILE NO. 574969  
**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930  
The name of the business(es): Siena Music located at 4962 Vannoy Avenue, Castro Valley, CA 94546, mailing address 3056 Castro Valley Blvd #57, Castro Valley, CA 94546 in Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Marcella P. Schantz, 4962 Vannoy Avenue, Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced 07/12/1999.  
/s/ Marcella P. Schantz  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.  
Expires DECEMBER 03, 2025  
**DEC 30, 2020, JAN 06, 13, 20, 2021 309-CVF**

FILED DECEMBER 11, 2020  
MELISSA WILK County Clerk  
ALAMEDA COUNTY  
By-----, Deputy  
FILE NO. 575171  
**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930  
The name of the business(es): Becky Rich Coaching located at 3460 Remco Street, Castro Valley, CA 94546, in Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Rebecca Rich, 3460 Remco Street, Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced N/A.  
/s/ Rebecca Rich  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.  
Expires DECEMBER 11, 2025  
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FILED DECEMBER 3, 2020  
MELISSA WILK County Clerk  
ALAMEDA COUNTY  
By-----, Deputy  
FILE NO. 574967  
**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930  
The name of the business(es): Eden Music & Arts located at 4962 Vannoy Avenue, Castro Valley, CA 94546, mailing address 3056 Castro Valley Blvd #57, Castro Valley, CA 94546 in Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Marcella P. Schantz, 4962 Vannoy Avenue, Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced N/A.  
/s/ Marcella P. Schantz  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.  
Expires DECEMBER 03, 2025  
**DEC 30, 2020, JAN 06, 13, 20, 2021 308-CVF**


FILED JANUARY 4, 2021  
MELISSA WILK County Clerk  
ALAMEDA COUNTY  
By-----, Deputy  
FILE NO. 575574  
**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930  
The name of the business(es): Little Imaginations located at 20964 Chester St., Castro Valley, CA 94546, in Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Danielle D'almeida, 20964 Chester St., Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced N/A.  
/s/ Danielle D'almeida  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.  
Expires JANUARY 4, 2026  
**JAN 20, 27, FEB 3, 10, 2021 320-CVF**

FILED JANUARY 4, 2021  
MELISSA WILK County Clerk  
ALAMEDA COUNTY  
By-----, Deputy  
FILE NO. 575579  
**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 17900-17930  
The name of the business(es): Terracil located at 18483 Hastings Way, Castro Valley, CA 94546, in Alameda County, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Aarthi Natarajan, 18483 Hastings Way, Castro Valley, CA 94546. This business is conducted by an individual. This business commenced N/A.  
/s/ Aarthi Natarajan  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on date indicated by file stamp above.  
Expires JANUARY 4, 2026  
**JAN 20, 27, FEB 3, 10, 2021 321-CVF**

Housing: For Seniors

continued from page 6  
How to Choose

If you or your aunt find several apartment choices that fall within her budget, she should consider what's important to her. She may want housing that's close to family, religious organizations, senior centers, or places she visits regularly, like grocery stores, parks or gyms.  
Or, if she has a disabling condition, it may be especially critical for her to find a living space that has easy access to important services like senior transportation and health care centers.  
In your housing search, you may also come across some red flags that indicate a retirement community wouldn't be a good fit for your aunt. Keep an eye out for extra fees that may be applied to everyday items or perks you normally wouldn't think about like laundry service, parking or pets.  
You should also make sure the apartment is in good condition and then scout out the neighborhood. Ask yourself if the community is clean and well maintained and if there is any debris or messy landscaping. If you notice anything out of the ordinary, follow up with questions before your aunt signs a rental contract.



21040 Marshall Street  
Castro Valley, CA 94546  
(510) 537-0757  
www.cvsan.org  
Contact: Evan Choy  
Evan@cvsan.org

### INVITATION TO BID

#### Sanitary Sewer Cleaning Flusher Truck

**Posted: January 14, 2021**  
**Bids Due: Thursday, February 18, 2021 @ 2:00 PM PST**  
**NOTICE INVITING BIDS**

Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received by the Castro Valley Sanitary District in their main office located at 21040 Marshall Street, Castro Valley, CA 94546-6098, at any time prior to 2:00 p.m. (PST), on Thursday, February 18, 2021 to provide the following, with the minimum specifications attached thereto and, by this reference, made a part hereof:

**One Sanitary Sewer Cleaning Flusher Truck**

Through virtual video conference, bids will be publicly opened, examined, and declared on said day and hour, and will be referred to the CVSan Board of Directors for subsequent action. Please contact CVSan at 510-537-0757 ext. 109 for virtual video conference details. Sealed proposals or bids for the furnishing of all materials and delivery to the CVSan of a Sanitary Sewer Cleaning Flusher Truck is to be done in strict accordance with said specifications. All bids shall include the completed attachments: Attachment 1 "Flusher Truck Bid Specifications", Attachment 2 "CRT Specifications", Attachment 3 "Bid Form". Payments for said Sanitary Sewer Cleaning Flusher Truck so ordered by CVSan shall be 100% of the contract price upon delivery of said equipment to the specified point and after invoicing and acceptance by CVSan. All bids are to specify a firm delivery date. If product on which bid is submitted varies in any detail from these specifications, special mention must be made of each variance. Submit any questions by January 28, 2021 to [evan@cvsan.org](mailto:evan@cvsan.org). CVSan reserves the sole right to reject any and all Bids and to waive any informality in a Bid. The successful bidder shall, within fifteen days after written notice that the contract has been awarded to them, enter into a contract with CVSan. All proposals or bids shall be delivered to CVSan on or before 2:00 PM, February 18, 2021 at the office located at 21040 Marshall Street, Castro Valley, California. Bids shall be submitted in a sealed envelope bearing the name and address of the bidder and plainly marked:

**NOTICE OF INVITING BIDS**  
**One Sanitary Sewer Cleaning Flusher Truck**  
A full version of the Notice Inviting Bidders is available online at [222.cvsan.org/oan](http://222.cvsan.org/oan) for review.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Roland P. Williams, Jr., General Manager  
Castro Valley Sanitary District  
Date: January 5, 2021

HOROSCOPE by Salomé

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- **ARIES (March 21 - April 19):** Guess what, Lamb? You're about to experience a new perspective on a situation you long regarded quite differently. What you learn could open more opportunities later.
- **TAURUS (April 20 - May 20):** The Bold Bovine is tempted to charge into a new venture. But it might be best to take things one step at a time so that you know just where you are at any given point.
- **GEMINI (May 21 - June 20):** It's a good time to go on that fun getaway you've been planning. You'll return refreshed, ready and, yes, even eager to tackle the new challenge that awaits you.
- **CANCER (June 21 - July 22):** The Moon Child loves to fantasize about magical happenings in the early part of the week. But the sensible Crab gets down to serious business by week's end.
- **LEO (July 23 - August 22):** What goes around comes around for those lucky Leos and Leonas whose acts of generosity could be repaid with opportunities to expand into new and exciting areas of interest.
- **VIRGO (August 23 - Sept. 22):** Your concern about your job responsibilities is commendable. But you need to take some quiet time to share with someone who has really missed being with you.
- **LIBRA (Sept. 23 - October 22):** Aspects favor getting out and meeting new people. And as a bonus, you could find that some of your newly made friends could offer important business contacts.
- **SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21):** You might take pride in wanting to do everything yourself. But now's a good time to ask family members to help with a demanding personal situation.
- **SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21):** Pay more attention to the possibilities in that workplace change. It could show the way to make that long-sought turn on your career path.
- **CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19):** Your need to succeed might overwhelm obligations to your loved ones. Ease up on that workload and into some well-deserved time with family and friends.
- **AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18):** Love rules for amorous Aquarians who can make good use of their ability to communicate feelings. Don't be surprised if they're reciprocated in kind.
- **PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20):** Fishing for compliments? No doubt, you probably earned them. But it's best to let others believe they were the ones who uncovered the treasure you really are.



## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



### Austin Bolender

Austin Bolender is our Athlete of the Week. Austin is a Freshman at Castro Valley High School. He was a wrestler on the Canyon Middle School team all three years.

Canyon Wrestling is grateful for Austin and the example he sets. His coach says Austin always worked hard in practice and competition and you could always find Austin on the corner of the mats helping his teammates in their matches.

Unfortunately, Austin is fighting against Aplastic Anemia, a rare condition where the body stops producing new blood cells. His family has set up pages on MealTrain.com and GoFundMe.com for those who wish to help support Austin's toughest opponent.



HOPE HOSPICE PHOTO

## Lifelike Robotic Pets Lessen the Impact of Isolation on Patients

Hope Hospice in Dublin is using robotic dogs and cats to help lessen the impact that pandemic-related isolation has had on its patients.

The animatronic toys are designed specifically to comfort older adults in need of companionship. Early studies specifically charted the benefits for people living with Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of cognitive decline.

The "pets" are battery powered and, when stroked, become alert and make lifelike noises and small movements.

A generous donation from NorCal Minis Car Club made it possible for Hope Hospice to purchase 20 cats from "Joy For All Companion Pets" to start. Due to hygiene protocols at this time of heightened concern, the cats are gifted to the recipient and are not expected to be returned for reuse.

"No one expected quarantine orders to have carried on this long," says Nikki Tildesley, Hope's Manager of Volunteer Services. "But here we are, nearly a year into this pandemic, and our patients continue to go without the benefit of

face-to-face companionship visits from our volunteers, and in many cases, even the patient's own family. They are truly suffering."

Patients with dementia are especially prone to experiencing side effects of long-term social isolation and loneliness.

"It's common for care providers to observe increased agitation, confusion, and repetitive behaviors in their patients who are struggling with a change in routine, like what this pandemic has caused," says Gia Barsell, Dementia Services Manager. "As the underlying disease that causes dementia progresses, verbal ability wanes and

behaviors become the patient's main form of communication. So, the patient is usually trying to communicate an unmet need in the only way he or she can."

Clinical studies conducted with Joy for All Companion Pets have shown positive results in mitigating behavior issues and potentially improving cognitive abilities in older adults.

Hope Hospice began distributing the cats to its dementia patients in December. The non-profit organization will seek grant funding and donations to continue the program and to get lap-dog models as well.

## Rotary News, Deans List

### Rotary to Hear from Oakland Mayor

Mayor Libby Schaaf of Oakland will provide an update on developments in her city at the next meeting of the Rotary Club of Castro Valley from noon to 1:30 p.m. next Tuesday, Jan. 26, via Zoom. More information is available at [castrovalleyrotary.org](http://castrovalleyrotary.org).

### Sean Gaffney Named To Dean's List

Sean Gaffney, a major in Psychology and Criminology, was named to the University of Utah's Fall 2020 Dean's List. To qualify, students must earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher in at least 12 credit hours during any one term. The University is located in Salt Lake City.

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

## ASK THE ZERO WASTE EXPERT!



### VIRTUAL DISCUSSION ABOUT WHAT GOES WHERE? Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> from 12:15 - 1:15 p.m.

Learn about what goes in recycling, organics, garbage and more. With plenty of time for questions and an informative presentation on sorting, you will be able to get all of your "Where does this go?" questions answered. Space is limited, so register soon for CVSan's Ask the Zero Waste Expert virtual discussion at [cvsan.org/ZeroWasteWeek](http://cvsan.org/ZeroWasteWeek). A zoom link will be emailed to you.

## REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE ROT

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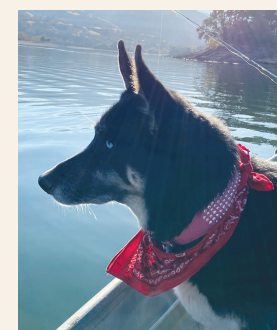
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## HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

This sweet Husky-Australian Sheep Dog mix, with blue eyes, black with white markings has been missing since 2 p.m. Monday, Jan. 11. Last seen on Jensen Road. She is friendly and well-behaved. If you have info, please call Josh at 510-695-1519.