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Livermore Council Retools Public Nuisance Law For Possible Coronavirus Lockdown Enforcement

By David Chircop

The Livermore City Council unanimously approved and made permanent changes to its municipal code that could provide authorities with more tools to enforce social distancing and stay-at-home orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While city officials say Livermore's approach to enforcement will continue to prioritize education as the primary means to obtain compliance with the emergency orders, the changes are designed to give police and enforcement officers more leverage they anticipate might be needed to compel compliance during a prolonged quarantine period and as the weather improves.

The changes were initially put into effect April 10 by Marc Roberts, the city's top administrator, who is also the emergency operations director, under an emergency declaration.

"The orders of the Alameda County Public Health Officer may be enforced criminally," Livermore City Attorney Jason Alcala told the City Council during a live-streamed meeting Monday night. "What does that mean? That means through arrest and criminal prosecution. But it remains uncertain at this point whether the district attorney would actually prosecute … or how receptive they would be to those types of prosecutions."

While Alcala made clear Livermore retains the option to pursue criminal charges for violations of emergency orders, the new rules that allow the city to pursue administrative abatement and civil action allow the city to retain more control over

(See LOCKDOWN, page 7)

Experts Looking at Restaurant, Grocery Distribution Future

By Ron McNicoll

A panel of four experts recently discussed the impacts COVID-19 has had on food and agriculture.

The panelists spoke during 7th District State Sen. Steve Glazer's virtual April 23 Town Hall meeting, which was also broadcast live on Channel 27 on Comcast.

The panel included Jamie Johansson, president of the California Farm Bureau Federation; Estella Cisneros, an attorney for California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA); Matt Sutton, senior vice president of the California Restaurant Association; and Ben Palazzolo, market manager for the Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association.

The food industry has been knocked out of balance, the experts reported. Despite phone orders and customers ordering takeout, 49% of the state's restaurants are not open.

(See DISTRIBUTION, page 5)

Stanford Health Care–ValleyCare recently launched COVID-19 testing at the Alameda County Fairgrounds. Tests are offered for residents of Livermore, Pleasanton and Dublin. To read more, see page 12. (Photo - Doug Jorgensen)

Census Moves Forward Despite The Pandemic

By Dawnmarie Fehr

With delays from the COVID-19 pandemic and a slow response rate at a state level, county and city officials continue urging residents to participate in the 2020 Census.

While parts of the Census agenda — such as door-to-door visits to nonresponsive residents and the end date for data collection — have been postponed from July 31 to Oct. 31, many households continue to respond virtually. Overall, Alameda County's self-response rate (SRR) is at 61.1% as of April 25, making it sixth in the state, with Pleasanton and Livermore returning at 68.2% and 68.5%, respectively. Dublin trails at 62.2%, with one tract returning only a 43.4% SRR.

On June 1, Census 2020 volun-

(See CENSUS, page 8)

Meals on Wheels Delivering More Than Just Food

By David Chircop

Every weekday around 10:30 a.m., Phyllis and Shirley Stribling of Livermore get a knock on their front door.

Until mid-March, the knock meant a volunteer from Meals on Wheels was at the door ready to hand off two prepared meals for the day.

Now, volunteers first set the meals down on a table between the Striblings home and the sidewalk, knock and announce the delivery, and then back away from the door for a brief chat from a safe distance across the driveway.

Meals on Wheels programs, like most essential services, are still operating under the state and Alameda County's shelter place orders, which aim to slow the spread of COVID-19.

"I can't imagine being without

(See MEALS, page 7)

Santa Rita Inmate Arrested for Alleged Carjacking Within an Hour of Release

By Larry Altman

A Walnut Creek man with an alleged penchant for stealing cars drove his way last week into the controversy over whether Santa Rita Jail inmates should be released early from the Dublin facility to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Rocky Lee Music, 32, was arrested in connection with two alleged carjackings in Dublin and San Ramon, committed just 40 minutes after he was released on a court order from jail on zero bail. He had been arrested earlier in a stolen Ford van, the Alameda County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) said.

According to prosecutors' reports, a witness called Oakland police about 7:30 p.m. April 19 when Music nearly drove a stolen car into Lake Merritt and fled. Police found him in Oakland, arrested him on suspicion of auto theft and receiving stolen property, and booked him at the Santa Rita Jail.

(See INMATE, page 6)

Dublin Greenlights Road Improvement Project

By Ruth Roberts

The Dublin City Council has approved the next steps in a capital improvement project designed to prevent accidents along a hazardous stretch of thoroughfare on Tassajara Road.

The Tassajara Road Alignment Project will reduce the number of lanes from six to four on Tassajara Road at north Dublin Ranch to the city limits and establish right-of-way lines for Tassajara Road between Palisades Drive to the Alameda-Contra Costa County line.

The council unanimously approved the General Plan Amendment and an Eastern Dublin Specific Plan Amendment during its virtual city council meeting April 21.

Mayor David Haubert opened the meeting to the public, but no speakers submitted forms for comment.

The plan is part of two separate projects within the city's capital improvement program: the Tassajara Road Widening and Realignment Project and the Tassajara Road improvements from north Dublin Ranch Drive to Quarry Lane School. According to the staff report, the city's expected financial commitment to the first

(See DUBLIN, page 6)

Ronald Gerhard New Chancellor At Local Colleges

After two nationwide searches, the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District has selected one of its own to lead the 29,000-student district.

Ronald P. Gerhard, 45, former vice chancellor for business services, who had been serving as interim chancellor since January 2019, was named permanent chancellor last week in a 4-0 vote by the Board of Trustees.

The two-college district – Chabot College in Hayward and Las Positas College in Livermore – had been without a permanent leader since former chancellor Jannett Jackson resigned in August 2018, soon after the trustees decided not to extend her contract. Jackson had been chancellor for five years.

"I am honored to continue to lead our district in the permanent role of chancellor," Gerhard said in

(See CHANCELLOR, page 2)

Pleasanton Approves Drive-Thru Taco Bell and Other Regulations

By Aly Brown

Last week's Pleasanton City Council meeting saw councilmembers modify regulations to allow for a drive-thru Taco Bell.

During the April 21 meeting, the council held a public hearing to discuss the possibility of altering the rules to permit a drive-thru Taco Bell in Rose Pavilion, near Santa Rita Road and Rosewood Drive. In addition, per the request of Councilmember Julie Testa, consent items regarding fiber installation in the city and weed abatement during the shelter-in-place order were brought forth for discussion.

Public Hearing: Taco Bell

In a staff report presented to the council, Associate Planner

(See COUNCIL, page 4)

Despite sheltering in place, Brandon Fischer, a competitive swimmer from Livermore, is training for the Olympics. To read more, see page 3. (Photo – Brandon Fischer)

Jackson Butler's Family Waits for Answers

Pleasanton Police Arrest Two In Connection With Homicide

By Larry Altman

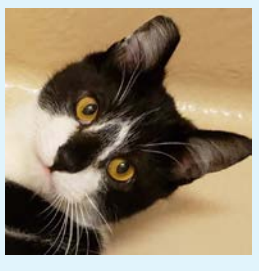
The Pleasanton Police Department (PPD) announced two arrests this week in connection with the April 15 death of 19-year-old Jackson Butler.

Although neither suspect was initially held on suspicion of murder, PPD Lt. Erik Silacci said both "are directly involved in the murder."

"We had statements from other

(See ARRESTS, page 6)

PET OF THE WEEK



FAUCI

Fauci reminds us all to cover your sneeze and wash your paws! This playful 1-year-old male cat hasn't let quarantine keep him down. If you want to shelter in place with a party animal, come adopt Fauci today! While Valley Humane Society has closed the facility during the shelter-in-place, adoptions are being facilitated by appointment with approved adopters. If you are interested in adopting Fauci, email info@valleyhumane.org.

Photo credit: Valley Humane Society /E. Scholz

INSIDE

Classifieds 11
Community Information 3
Editorial 4
Mailbox 4
Obituaries 9

Second Judge Disqualified from Livermore Valley Hotel Plan Lawsuit

By David Chircop

A Livermore neighborhood group's lawsuit against the city and a developer was reassigned again after the first two judges were disqualified.

Alameda County Superior Court Judge Noël Wise on March 13 became the third judge assigned to the case since the case was filed a month before.

The lawsuit, filed on Feb. 13 by Friends of South Livermore, alleges the Livermore City Council abused its discretion by granting approval and ignoring what it claims are conflicts between the project and the city's own general plan, the South Livermore Valley Specific Plan, the municipal code and state environmental laws.

In addition to the city, the lawsuit opposes the developer Michelle Boss and LWCI Inc. — a business entity she started for the Livermore Wine Country Inn — and the Alameda County Surplus Property Authority, which remains title owner of the land where the hotel is planned pending sale.

On March 5, the court reassigned the case to Judge Evelio Grillo, after granting the City of Livermore's request to disqualify the first judge, Hon. Frank Roesch, based on a declaration that the judge is prejudiced against the city's case.

On March 12, Friends of South Livermore filed a motion to disqualify Grillo based on a declaration that the judge was prejudiced against its interests. It was assigned to Judge Wise the following day.

The California Code of Civil Procedure provides a party to litigation the ability to disqualify any judge based on a good-faith belief that the judge is prejudiced against the party or its attorney so that they cannot have a fair and impartial trial or hearing before the judge.

The Friends of South Livermore lawsuit asks the court to reverse city approval for the hotel project and seeks an injunction halting any action on the development pending the court's decision.

Livermore City Attorney Jason Alcala said in an email to The Independent in early March the city believes project approval was appropriate and applicable regulations were followed.

A case management conference is scheduled for May 15 at 9 a.m. in Dept. 24 of the Administration Building, 1221 Oak St. in Oakland. Since March 17, the courthouse has been closed to the public under an emergency order that is set to expire May 1. It is unclear at this point whether the proceedings will continue as scheduled, whether in the court or remotely via telephone or videoconference.

Update on COVID-19

As of April 28, Alameda County has reported within its jurisdiction a total of 1,533 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 55 deaths.

By city, Livermore has 36 confirmed cases, Pleasanton 52 and Dublin 24.

CHANCELLOR

(Continued from first page)

Ronald P. Gerhard

a statement. "Our colleges are vital to our communities and I look forward to providing stable leadership in these unpredictable times."

Gerhard was the third interim chancellor at Chabot-Las Positas in the last 20 months. Chancellor Emeritus Susan Cota briefly returned in an interim capacity in the immediate aftermath of Jackson's resignation. She was followed by Thomas Fallo, a retired, longtime California community college administrator, who was appointed through the end of 2018.

Gerhard was then appointed interim chancellor after the Board of Trustees rejected three finalists from the district's initial nationwide search. Gerhard was not a candidate during that first search, but he was a candidate, and ultimately a finalist, in the district's second search.

The other two finalists in the second search were Santanu Bandyopadhyay, president of Columbia College in Sonora, California, and Bryan Reece, former president of Norco College in Norco California.

When he started his term as interim chancellor, Gerhard said, he wasn't sure he was interested in the permanent position.

"After some time in the position, I found myself enjoying both the challenges and successes of the job," Gerhard said. "I had started new projects that I hoped to see through to the end, and realized I wanted to continue to serve the students and community in the capacity of chancellor."

Board of Trustees President Edralin J. "Ed" Maduli said Gerhard had proven himself as an exemplary leader in the district and community.

"He has a long and successful history in helping California community colleges become successful institutions of student learning and access," Maduli said. "He has been able to help bring our district together, and we are confident that he, along with his leadership team, will guide us through these challenging times."

Maduli represents Area 7 on the Board of Trustees, which encompasses Livermore and parts of Pleasanton.

Gerhard has been with the community college district since 2017, when he was named vice president of administrative services at Chabot. He was named vice chancellor for business services in 2018. He previously held various finance and administrative positions at City College of San Francisco, Peraltra Community College, Compton Community College and San Bernardino Community College. He earned a bachelor's degree in accounting at the University of Redlands, in Redlands, California, and a master's degree in business administration from the University of California, Riverside.

One of the challenges Gerhard said he came to enjoy as interim chancellor was lobbying lawmakers and policy makers in Sacramento to change the new student-centered funding formula, which, he said, could cost Chabot-Las Positas $6 million a year.

Equally important, Gerhard said, is guiding Chabot-Las Positas during the COVID-19 pandemic and classroom closures and working with public/private partners and local school districts to increase enrollment and transfer opportunities.

As chancellor, Gerhard will be paid $340,000 annually, a 24% increase over what he received as interim chancellor.

Chabot College opened in 1961 at a temporary site in Leandro, moving to a nearly 100-acre campus in Hayward in 1965. Las Positas College in Livermore began as an extension program in 1963, later known as the Livermore Education Center of Chabot College. With a 147-acre campus in Livermore, Las Positas became an independent college in 1988 and was fully accredited in 1991. Administrative offices for the Chabot-Las Positas Community College are in Dublin.

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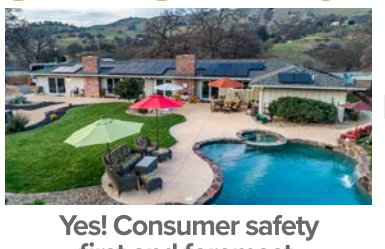

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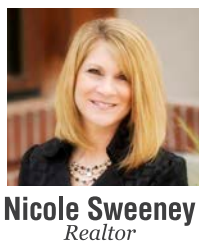

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925-449-5842
TriValleyHaven.org

Tri-Valley Nonprofit Alliance
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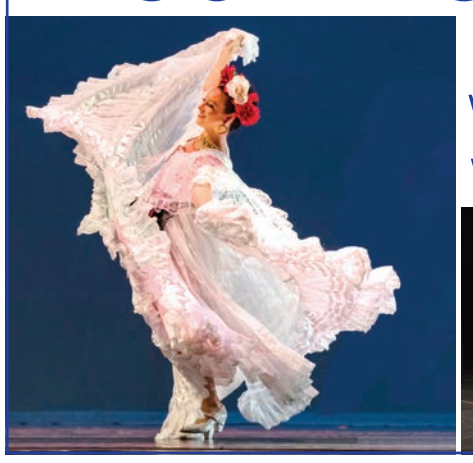

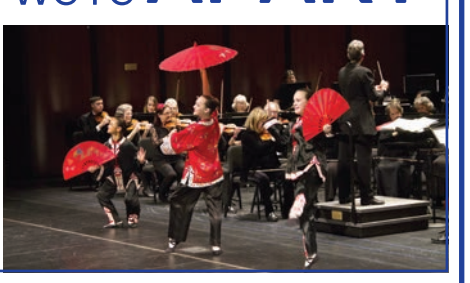

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Olympic Hopeful Brandon Fischer Is Overcoming Challenges

By Dawnmarie Fehr

Livermore resident Brandon Fischer is working on making his Olympic dreams come true, despite the hurdles life has thrown in his way.

The 31-year-old swimmer set his mind on Tokyo and a one-year delay caused by the COVID-19 pandemic did not change his mind — just his plan.

"In 2008, 2012 and in 2016, I tried," Fischer said of his journey to get to the Olympics, which is now slated for 2021. "That's what I've been trying every time, and I keep getting better and faster every time . . . This hasn't changed my goals — just made it that much more challenging."

Fischer has only improved with age. While he was always a strong swimmer and focused competitor, his race times shrink with every attempt at competing on the Olympic team. Last summer, he made headlines when he became the 11th person to swim the 100-meter breaststroke in under one minute, earning him his first spot on the National Swim Team.

He was at a training camp at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs last month when the shelter-in-place orders were issued, forcing him to head home to Livermore.

"I knew this was going to stink and not be pretty, but you have to be the river that flows around the rock," Brandon said. "I've done my stationary bike, training over zoom, biking and hiking outdoors, meditation and yoga, and whatever else I can get my hands on."

Without access to a competitive pool, Fischer is limited in what he can do, but works at what he can. His longtime coach and friend, Alex Silver, said if anyone can focus and make training work during a time like this, it is Fischer. The pair work out and go for hikes in the hills around Livermore, all while maintaining social-distancing practices.

"I check in with him," Silver said. "He has some goals, like trying to strengthen things out of the water he doesn't normally have time to work on."

Fischer and Silver's relationship began when Fischer was swimming for his college in Wyoming. At that time, Silver asked him to come speak to his team, the Livermore Aqua Cowboys, about swimming in college. Silver coached Fischer through the 2016 Olympic trials, where he placed 15th overall, the closest Fischer has ever come to the Olympics.

A Livermore native, Fischer graduated from Granada High School in 2008, then earned a bachelor's degree in fine arts in Wyoming. He returned home and earned an engineering associate's degree at Las Positas Community College, before going to work for Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, where he is currently a mechanical technologist.

Despite his successes, Fischer overcame difficulties in his life, including a rare disorder that surfaced as a learning disability with delayed speech and communication skills. He was bullied through high school and suffered from social anxiety, leading him to focus his energy on his sport. Now, Fischer enjoys talking about his adversity more than his success.

"We all lose sight of the failures," Fischer said. "We just see the tip of the mountain in the clouds, but we don't see the huge mountain of failure and ridicule and embarrassment, so I like to shed light on that."

He hopes his struggles and positive outlook will inspire others to follow their dreams.

Bruce Wolfe, Fischer's former middle school science teacher and swim coach, has enjoyed years of watching Fischer's journey from a frustrated child to an Olympic contender.

"He's overcome a lot," Wolfe said. "He has the highest work ethic I've ever seen in any swimmer. He's extremely dedicated to anything he does and has a high level of integrity."

Without access to a competitive pool, Brandon Fischer is limited in how he can train for the Olympics while shelter-in-place orders are in effect. (Photo – Doug Jorgensen)

Arts Center to Offer Online Classes for Kids

Building on the success of its spring-break online art classes, the Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center is launching a twice-weekly series of classes for children from 5- to 10-years-old, beginning May 5 and running into June.

Taught by visual arts manager Anne Giancola, the classes are designed to use common materials found in most homes. Giancola said each lesson would encourage each child's personal style and creativity while teaching basic art techniques. The "Spring into Summer" online classes will be offered from 9:30 – 10:15 a.m., on Tuesdays and Thursdays and cost $15 per week.

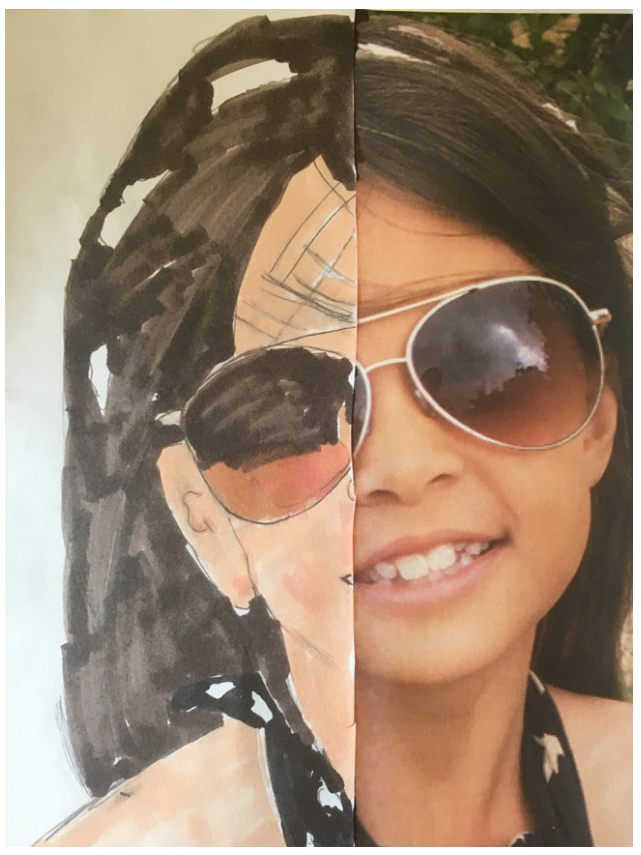
Giancola said she had already planned spring-break art camps for April when shelter-in-place orders closed the Bothwell Arts Center in early March.

"With everyone staying inside, it seemed more important than ever to find ways to make art and creativity a part of their daily lives," Giancola said.

She developed five virtual classes for spring break, including "Spring Blossoms," Llama Fun," and "Self Portrait Half & Half," using materials that children should have access to at home. The classes were offered online for free, using the videoconferencing service Zoom. Participation ranged from 50-85 per session, according to Giancola.

The "Spring into Summer" series will use similar materials and techniques, Giancola said, but will be more expansive since each lesson will span two days. The first week will involve an accordion art project with an Earth Day theme.

Parents can register their children for all or any one of the six sessions offered through June 11. Parents will receive a Zoom link each week via email. To register, or for more information, call (925) 373-6800, or go to livermorearts.org/event/online-art-classes.



Taught by visual arts manager Anne Giancola, new online art classes for children are designed to use common materials found in most homes.

Cavanaugh Achieves Rank of Eagle Scout

Kyle John Cavanaugh, a member of Boy Scout Troop 948, is now an Eagle Scout, the highest rank a Boy Scout can achieve.

Cavanaugh, who lives in Pleasanton with his parents Wendy and Brian Cavanaugh, will graduate this spring from Amador Valley High School, where he was on the leadership team for the marching band and played trumpet for the school's wind ensemble, which performed at Carnegie Hall in New York in 2018 and at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago in December 2019.

For his Eagle project, Cavanaugh led a team of 16 volunteers in restoring the marching band's flatbed trailer, stripping the rust and repainting the frame, rewiring, and replacing the wood boards.

To achieve the rank of Eagle, a Scout must earn at least 21 merit badges and plan, develop and provide leadership for a service project benefiting a religious institution, school or community group. A Court of Honor will be scheduled once the shelter-at-home order due to the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted.

Cavanaugh will enter the University of San Diego this fall, where he intends to study mechanical engineering with the goal of one day starting his own company.

Kyle John Cavanaugh

EDITORIAL

Consider Volunteering

In retirement, many individuals decide to donate their newfound "extra time" to nonprofits that help their community. Meals on Wheels (MOW), which operates with a mission to feed homebound seniors and those in need, is just one example of an organization in the Tri-Valley that relies on its pool of volunteers to make an impact.

The sweeping shelter-in-place order not only made all seniors homebound, but also it restricted a heaping handful of volunteers from aiding in the effort. More than ever, volunteers are needed.

The unfortunate reality is that many now have extra time due to job loss or reduced hours. These are uncertain times, with stress, depression and anxiety punctuating daily life. But it's also a perfect time to channel that energy into something positive, like helping others.

Spectrum Community Services is a nonprofit organization that assists low-income individuals, families and seniors. It's also a MOW member, delivering food to homebound seniors in the Pleasanton and Livermore areas. To contact the Livermore office, call Carrie Oldes at 925-421-4657. To contact the Pleasanton office, call Jennifer Choi at 925-931-5385. For more information, visit https://www.spectrumcs.org/senior-services/meals-on-wheels. To read more about MOW, visit www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org.

Some organizations are holding back on in-person volunteering, due to COVID-19 social distance requirements, but they continue to seek contributions of food or virtual volunteering. Tri-Valley Haven Food Pantry is seeking milk, eggs and nonperishable food donations at its location at 418 Junction Ave. in Livermore. Before delivering supplies, please call 925-449-1664. Open Heart Kitchen is another nonprofit pumping the brakes on certain volunteer efforts, though it continues to call for community help from a distance. To learn how you can assist during COVID-19, visit https://www.openheartkitchen.org/response-to-covid-19/.

Take care of your family; take care of yourself; and if you have the extra time or an extra can to spare, take care of your neighbor as well.

MAILBOX

Opinions voiced in letters published in Mailbox are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Independent. Anonymous letters will not be published. All letters are required to have the name(s) of the person(s) submitting them, city of residence and phone number, for verification purposes. Abusive letters may be rejected or edited. Letters are subject to verification and may be edited for clarity at the discretion of the editor. We reserve the right to decide whether or not the letter will be published. Headings for all letters may be edited at the discretion of the editor to properly reflect their content. A headline will be added to letters received without one. Frequent letter writers may have publication of their letters delayed. Letters should be limited to 400 words or less and should be sent by email to letters@independentnews.com. To be considered, letters must be received by 6 pm on the Monday before publication. Changes to them can be made until 4 pm Tuesday.

Lawn and Garden Workers

Jeff & Carol Garberson, Livermore

We agree with those who think that lawn and garden maintenance work should be allowed to continue, provided common sense social distancing rules are followed. Many older people are unable to do lawn and garden maintenance themselves. A hired worker mowing a lawn, trimming a hedge, or pruning trees is no more a threat to community health than is someone walking a dog. City and park district workers are out mowing and doing other maintenance; hired lawn workers should be allowed to do the same. These jobs help keep at least some of the economy going, provide much needed income to the workers, and keep the neighborhoods looking good – just what the city maintenance workers are doing.

More Protections for Pleasanton Renters

Ashton Rome, Pleasanton

Renters and homeowners in Pleasanton are experiencing reduced, and even entirely eliminated paychecks during the shelter-in-place order. Many residents are currently hoping that their savings, one-time stimulus checks and/or unemployment insurance will allow them to cover rent or mortgage payments for April, May and the coming months.

From mid-March until now, approximately 3.1 million Californians have filed for unemployment benefits, and many have yet to receive their benefits. These numbers are expected to soar as companies begin to enter a deep, economic crisis and more businesses permanently close and more workers are laid off. Scarily, our state has already exhausted almost 50% of the funds set aside for unemployment payments.

Our current eviction and foreclosure protections are nowhere near enough.

The current protections provide a temporary moratorium on eviction, if tenants can prove that they are were unable to pay rent as an effect of the shelter-in-place or because they or a loved one contracted the coronavirus. Tenant may need to go to court to prove they meet the conditions. "Means testing," especially during a crisis where unemployment numbers are surging, risks missing people who are in need and adds unnecessary huddles.

Even if they do qualify for the moratorium, Pleasanton renters would still owe past due rent. Unfortunately, renters who can't afford the rent one month will likely not have the money to pay double next month, or triple the following month. After all, 60% of Americans are unable to cover an unexpected $1,000 expense.

Even if they are somehow able to pay the rent in arrears and catch up, the moratorium doesn't guarantee that they won't face just-cause termination.

The moratorium also does not waive late fees for nonpayment.

Nor does it protect against rent increases. Even before this crisis, rents in Pleasanton had grown by 31.5% since 2014, far outpacing the national average of 12.7%.

Our city's elected representatives have the responsibility to immediately take all steps necessary to address this crisis.

We ask for a suspension of all rent and mortgage payments for as long as the pandemic lasts, and a freeze on residential and small-business rent increases through the end of the year, which should be extended for longer if the economic impact of the coronavirus crisis continues through 2021. See the petition: http://chng.it/G99qxGkrfN.

A Perfect Couple

Gary Estee, Livermore

During what I consider a normal American male's youth, I gravitated to the belief of the existence of a soulmate. A "soulmate" usually refers to a romantic or platonic partner, with the implication of an exclusive lifelong bond. The term first appeared in the English language in a letter written by the English poet Samuel Coleridge in 1822.

Literary and entertainment industry examples of this type of relationship resulted in my continued belief that such a person existed in the world for me: Robert and Virginia Heinlein, Heinlein's characters Ted and Cynthia Randall from a Heinlein short story, Katherine Mary and Sergeant Mike Flannigan in Nancy Freedman's novel "Mrs. Mike," Dashiell Hammett's detective couple from "The Thin Man," and the Beresford's in Agatha Christie's stories.

It was in the TV lounge of the Manzanita Trailer Park at Stanford University that I finally met her. The lounge was a focal point for student interaction. By chance, the two of us first met there for daily reruns of Star Trek. With a natural inclination towards Trekker trivia, we frequently competed on same. Eventually, we both graduated and left school.

After a couple years in Ohio, I tried to reconnect with some college acquaintances by writing letters to their homes of record (pulled from the college student register). Of 10 letters sent, only my companion from the lounge responded. During the subsequent months, we dated and eventually made a trip to Sausalito, where we ordered a wedding ring as a natural result of our relationship.

One factor that seemed to indicate the depth of our feelings came from a $5 bill I sent to Skip Fickling at AstroMatchups. He stated definitively that as a couple (a male Libra and a female Capricorn), out of 144 different combinations, we were rated No. 6 astrologically. Astrological compatibility (synastry) is the branch of astrology that studies relationships by comparing natal horoscopes. In fact, Fickling said, "Once in a while you bump into two people who appear to have popped right out of the kaleidoscopic merry-go-round of Walt Disney Studios performing in the roles of Dick Van Dyke and Julie Andrews in Mary Poppins. Yes, this is the supercalifragilisticexpialidocious Matchup!"

The past 36 years has proven him to be correct in all aspects, and my life has been greatly improved by her presence.

Don't Allow Politicians to Control Our Lives

Kenneth Nather, Livermore

No president, governor or mayor has the legal authority to shutdown schools, churches, businesses, or parks because they think they know best. Where does that authority come from? These elected officials usurped power because we the taxpayers were asleep at the wheel.

The shutdown of everything is going to bankrupt many people, maybe the whole USA.

It is strange that most people who work for government are still collecting their wages and the generous government handout. Meanwhile, private businesses are forced to pay employee salaries with no income. The food industry is hard hit because there is no one to harvest the crops. Perishable food has to be hauled to the dump at the owner's expense. Rent, mortgage, and utility bills still have to be paid. Oil companies are shutting down because no one is driving; auto insurance companies are giving rebates. Everyone is losing except government workers and politicians who get paid no matter what happens. This looks to me like the plan is to turn the us into a communist country.

Misinformation Pandemic

Daryl R Carlson, Livermore

Rich Buckley's letters to The Independent have the depth and viscosity of a mud puddle. His most recent—a parroting of a ludicrous internet rumor that the coronavirus originated in a Chinese biolab—serves only to embolden racists and deflect attention from the Trump bungling of his pandemic response. Buckley offers no credible evidence to support his claim. Rumor mongering during a national emergency serves only to frighten an already distraught populace. I too pray daily--for Trump's resignation.

Snooping Helicopter

James Monroe, Livermore

Yesterday and today I witnessed our new sheriff's helicopter hovering about 200 feet above neighborhoods near my residence for several hours. While they may have been "testing" its capabilities, it looked more like they were snooping around people's backyards. They were not being the least bit discrete about their snooping, and in fact, put law-abiding citizens in danger hovering so low and potentially interfering with jets coming in to land.

It's apparent that gifting them this new helicopter was a mistake, with more mistakes to follow. What do you think will happen when you give them hand grenades? There now, don't you feel safer? Considering the astronomical cost of keeping one of these helicopters in the air. How about keeping it to necessary emergency flying only?

Time to Push Back on Shutdown

Mike Grant, Dublin

Today the counties in the Bay Area decided to keep business shut and force all of us to stay at home for another month. Meanwhile, city officials in Dublin, Pleasanton and Livermore are not suffering at all. They all are getting full pay checks and giving all of us the alligator tears.

The question the nearly 40 million California residents should ask state and city managers is simple. Why are other states reopening the doors to small businesses, based on guidelines like masks, social distancing, and wash sta-

(See MAILBOX, page 8)

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COUNCIL

(Continued from first page)

Eric Luchini outlined the situation limiting the current Taco Bell owners' ability to move their walk-in restaurant, currently located in the Rose Pavilion, to a nearby location where a drive-thru could be constructed. Based on the existing planned unit development (PUD) condition of approval (COA), a drive-thru restaurant is prohibited in the pavilion, and the PUD would need modification based on the approval of the council in order for the drive-thru construction to proceed.

Prior to questions, comments or an official vote, Luchini provided an analysis and noted a drive-thru would potentially increase vehicle trips, vehicle idling and emissions; and reduce a pedestrian and bike-friendly environment compared to a non-drive-thru restaurant.

"In terms of analysis, staff's presentation will focus on the general plan and climate action plan, or CAP, consistency," said Luchini. "As stated in the agenda report, staff believe removing the existing condition of approval and allowing a drive-thru restaurant on this site would be inconsistent with these plans."

Before it went to council, the project was under review by the planning commission. Luchini said despite the issues noted in the agenda report, the planning commission proposed PUD major modifications at its Jan. 22 meeting and disagreed with staff's position. However, the commission did support staff's recommendation with respect to the future Taco Bell restaurant in that it will require a conditional use permit and design review, require design revisions to the proposed Taco Bell exterior elevations per staff's analysis, enhance green building measures and pedestrian connectivity, and require an acoustical analysis.

At the time of the April 21 presentation to the council, Luchini said that staff recommended the city council deny the proposed PUD major modification based on inconsistency with the general plan and CAP.

Councilmembers wondered why this particular section of Pleasanton was under such scrutiny when other restaurants with long drive-thru lines of cars idling were recommended by staff in previous years, such as the Chic-fil-A.

"(The proposed drive-thru site is) not near residential areas, and it's not a walk-up friendly location," Councilmember Karla Brown said. "How could this facilitate a walk-up for any restaurant in that area? There aren't houses in the proximity."

Luchini and Ellen Clark, community development director, said the recommendations were provided specific to the Rose Pavilion case — not to be taken as a guide for the entire city when considering drive-thru restaurant construction.

The council voted unanimously to support the PUD modification, allowing the owners to construct a drive-thru, with the added amendment that the area be built to make it bike-friendly.

Fiber to Pleasanton

During the meeting, the council also unanimously approved an agreement with Pakpour Consulting Group for engineering services to support the MCINerizon fiber installation. Steve Kirkpatrick, director of engineering, said the project would not exceed $375,000.

"We have been working with MCI since about 2018, and they came forward looking to install approximately 60 miles of fiber optic throughout Pleasanton," Kirkpatrick said. "We have reduced that number somewhat to about 35 miles of fiber they're now looking to install."

The group will service businesses with the fiber. The city's role is to manage the right of way and make sure the network is installed properly, and sidewalks and paving are restored to minimize impact. Most of the work will be done with a boring technique.

"To date, the carriers have been fairly good with working with us to find the best locations, creating less impact in our city," said City Attorney Dan Sodergren.

Weed Abatement During COVID-19

The council then discussed the 2020 weed abatement program in the city and set a date for a public hearing. To prepare for the upcoming fire season, certain properties require abatement and have until June 30 to comply.

Under the county health order — given crews abide by proper social-distancing practices while wearing masks — landscaping is considered an essential service, but only to the limited extent necessary to maintain the habitability, sanitation, operation of businesses or residences or the safety of residents, employees or the public. On an economic level, City Manager Nelson Fialho noted both the city and residents are looking at preserving the investment put into their properties with regard to landscaping.

"We don't have interest in property owners losing their assets," Fialho said.

The public hearing for those landowners who need to complete abatement was originally set for May 19, which the council felt was an unrealistic timeline, especially given many were complying with a shelter-in-place order that came with uncertainty regarding landscaping services. Brown asked for a modification to the 2020 weed abatement program resolution to change the public hearing date from May 19 to June 2.

"The only reason I'm asking this at all is because of the COVID-19 situation," said Brown.

Directly following the council meeting, Fialho said mailers would be sent to the landowners, notifying them of work needed to be done by June 30. The motion passed unanimously.

The next regular city council meeting is set for May 5. For full agendas, visit https://bit.ly/2YdzhWz.

DISTRIBUTION

(Continued from first page)

Added to that is the impact of homeschooling, which has reduced the school lunch market to almost no level at all, except for a relatively small percentage of students whose families pick up free lunches in boxes daily.

Media reports show farmers have dumped milk, because the market has shrunk so much. Johansson said that California produces about 20% of the milk in the U.S., and sells related products such as butter, yogurt and ice cream.

"The biggest buyer of milk is schools," Johansson said. "When they shut down, it sent the first shock wave."

Johansson said California has the seventh largest food economy in the world.

"Half of our production goes to restaurants, so we lost half our market overnight," he said.

Sutton from the restaurant association said that 1 million of the state's 1.5 million restaurant workers have been laid off.

Health departments regulate restaurants, about such things as six-foot spacing and wearing masks. One questioner in the phone conference asked how diners will eat their food if they must wear masks. Sutton said the masks are required of employees, but as far as diners are concerned, "The caller makes a good point."

With people losing their jobs during shelter in place, which in the Bay Area is being extended to May 31, food banks want to gear up for more volume, something farmers say will take a year or more, because modifications have to be made to the old system of distribution, said Johansson.

Farm Workers Feel Unsafe

The people who harvest, box and store food in warehouses regard themselves as part of a team of first responders, said Cisneros, the attorney from CRLA. She referred to the death of one worker at a 2.2 million square-foot center in Tracy where Safeway employs 1,700 workers. Some 51 cases of COVID-19 have been found there, she said.

"We were saddened to learn that an associate at our Tracy Distribution Center has passed away due to complications related to COVID-19," Safeway spokeswoman Wendy Gutshall said in a statement. "Our hearts are heavy, and our thoughts are with that associate's family. This is difficult for the entire Safeway team."

The Safeway Foundation will contribute to the victim's family, said Gutshall.

Food Banks Important Component

Farmers want to do more for food banks, since they realize the need has grown because of mushrooming unemployment, said Johansson.

One thing they hope to develop is refrigeration that can preserve more perishables, but it may be more than a year to achieve the goal.

In the Valley, the food business is picking up at Meadowlark Dairy in Pleasanton. The weather is warming up; people want their soft ice cream cones; and the dairy is now able to get eggs in dozens of cartons, instead of big flats of 30, noted manager Jesse Takens. Meadowlark has a reliable source for its milk products because it signed a contract with Crystal Dairy in the Central Valley a few years ago, said Takens.

There is space for only seven Meadowlark employees, mostly high school students, because of the social distances required of employees, instead of the previous maximum of 15. They have to have their temperatures read electronically and wear face masks.

At Gay 90's Pizza, on Main Street in Pleasanton, staff member Julie Patterson

(See DISTRIBUTION, page 6)

TIRED OF COOKING? THE FOLLOWING RESTAURANTS ARE READY TO SERVE YOU!

DUBLIN

Amalfi Mediterraneann Fusion
7111 Village Parkway, Dublin
925-833-2715
amalfifusion.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Casa Orozco Mexican Restaurant
7995 Amador Valley Blvd., Dublin
925-828-5464
casaorozco.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Coco Cabana
4500 Tassajara Rd. #C, Dublin
925-556-9055
cococabanadublin.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Frankie Johnnie & Luigi Too!
11891 Dublin Blvd., Dublin
925-828-9380
giorgiosandfjlitalian.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Hana Japan Steakhouse
7298 San Ramon Rd., Dublin
925-829-7491
habajapan.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Mountain Mike's Pizza
8951 San Ramon Rd., Dublin
925-829-1670
mountainmikespizza.com/locations/dublin-san-ramon.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Outback Steakhouse
6505 Regional St., Dublin
925-833-9335
outback.com/location/ca/dublin
Takeout & Delivery Available

Rigatoni's Restaurant
7350 Dublin Blvd., Dublin
925-875-1500
rigatonis.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Sourdough & Co
2696 Dublin Blvd., Dublin
925-364-7331
sourdoughandco.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

LIVERMORE

Americano Livermore
978 Murrieta Blvd, Livermore
925-583-5773
americanolivermore.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Beach Hut Deli
1770 First St., Livermore
925-292-1547
beachhutdeli.com/store/livermore
Takeout, Curbside & Delivery Available

Bella Roma Pizzeria
853 E Stanley Blvd., Livermore
(925) 447-4992
bellaromatogo.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Big Apple Pizza
184 South K St,, Livermore
925-606-1111
livermorebigapplepizza.com
Takeout & Curbside Available

Bruno's Italian Cuisine
2133 First St., Livermore
925-371-3999
brunositaliancuisine.com
Takeout, Curbside & Delivery Available

Campo di Bocce
175 E. Vineyard Ave., Livermore
925-249-9800
campodibocce.com/livermore/
Takeout & Curbside Available

Canton Village Chinese Restaurant
1070 E. Stanley Blvd., Livermore
925-373-3900
cantonvillage.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Casa Orozco Mexican Restaruant
325 South L St., Livermore
925-449-3045
casaorozco.com
Takeout, Curbside & Delivery Available

Cattlemens
2882 Kitty Hawk Rd., Livermore
925-447-1224
cattlemens.com
Takeout & Curbside Available

Checkers Catering & Special Events
83 Wright Brother Ave., Livermore
925-457-5947
Corporate Delivery Available

Cuppa Cafe
53 Wright Brothers Ave., #A, Livermore
925-447-6844
Cuppa-café-café.business.site
Takeout & Delivery Available

Demitri's Taverna
2235 First St., Livermore
925-373-0306
demitristavernalivermore.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Donut Wheel
2017 First St., Livermore
925-447-8190
Takeout Available

El Charro Mexican Food & Cantina
186 Maple St., Livermore
925-371-8297
elcharrolivermore.com
Takeout, Curbside & Delivery Available

Emil Villa's Hickory Pit
3064 Pacific Ave., Livermore
925-449-1499
emilvillaslivermore.com
Takeout & Curbside Available

Espresso Rosetta
206 South J. St., Livermore
925-800-5192
espressorosetta.com
Curbside Available

First Street Alehouse
2106 First St., Livermore
925-371-6588
firststreetalehouse.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Fratello's Restaurant
2852 Kitty Hawk Rd., Livermore
925-294-9771
Takeout and Delivery Available

French Dips and More
2181 First St, Livermore
925-447-0775
Takeout Available

Garré Vineyard Restaurant
7986 Tesla Rd., Livermore
925-371-8200
garrewinery.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Jake's Cafe & Catering
51 Wright Brothers Ave., Livermore
(925) 292-8088
jakes-cafe.com
Takeout Available

Lo's China Bistro
2059 First St., Livermore
925-455-6878
loschinabistrolivermore.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

LV Fusion Eatery
174 South K St., Livermore
925-292-4697
lvfusioneatery.com
Takeout Available

Melo's Pizza and Pasta
4433 First St., Livermore
925-371-4499
melospizzapasta.com
Takeout & Dining Available

Monica's Livermore
2074 Second St., Livermore
925-292-5568
monicaslivermore.com
Takeout and Delivery Available

Mountain Mike's Pizza
1472 N. Vasco Rd., Livermore
925-455-8999
mountainmikespizza.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Mountain Mike's Pizza
1304 First St., Livermore
925-960-9555
mountainmikespizza.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Mountain Mike's Pizza
1304 First St., Livermore
925-960-9555
mountainmikespizza.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Ofelia's Kitchen
850 Hillcrest Ave., Livermore
925-449-5162
ofeliaskitchen.com
Takeout/Curbside Available

Panera Bread
4685 1st St., Livermore
925-606-1456
Panerabread.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Patxi's Pizza
2470 1st St., Livermore
925-371-1000
patxispizza.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Petra Middle Eastern Cuisine
4524 Las Positas Rd, Livermore
925-371-0412
petra-livermore.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Posada Restaurant
988 Murrieta Blvd., Livermore
925-606-1004
posadarestaurant.com
Takeout & Curbside Available

Riata Diner & Tavern
190 South J. Street
925-294-9170
theriata.com
Takeout & Curbside Available

Roya Afghan
2020 First St., Livermore
925-447-0576
Royaafghancuisine.com
Takeout, Curbside & Delivery Available

Roppongi Sushi
2206 First St., Livermore
925-245-9662
roppongisushilivermore.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Sauced BBQ & Sprits
2300 First St.
925-961-1300
saucedbbqandspirits.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Shadow Puppet Brewing Company
4771 Arroyo Vista, Suite B., Livermore
925-453-6498
shadowpuppetbrewing.com
Takeout Available

Simply Fondue
2300 First Street
925-443-6638
simplyfonduelivermore.com
Drive thru Groceries Available

Star Anise
2470 First St. #108, Livermore
925-454-9888
Takeout Available

Strings Italian Café
2205 Las Positas Rd., Livermore
925-373-1044
stringslivermore.com
Takeout Available

Strizzi's Restaurant
2205 First St., Livermore
925-456-2200
strizzis.com
Takeout, Curbside & Delivery Available

Terra Mia Livermore
4040 East Ave., Livermore
925-456-3333
terramialivermore.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

The Original Mel's Diner
1116 E. Stanley Blvd., Livermore
925-371-6357
originalmels.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Tin Thai Kitchen
235 S. Vasco Rd., Livermore
925-960-1030
tinthaica.com
Takeout Available

Uncle Yu's At The Vineyard
39 S. Livermore Ave., Livermore
925-449-7000
uncleyusvineyard.com
Takeout, Curbside & Delivery Available

Viet Noms Vietnamese Eatery
1100 E. Stanley Blvd., Livermore
925-292-5539
Takeout & Delivery Available
vietmonseatery.com

Village Pet Shop
3008 Pacific Ave., Livermore
(925)443-3015
Mon-Sat, 12pm - 6pm
Store or Curbside Pickup Available

Vitality Bowls
2175 First St., Livermore
925-292-5697
vitalitybowls.com/locations/livermore
Takeout & Delivery Available

Yin Yin
2083 1st. St., Livermore
925-447-1240
yinyinlivermore.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Zephyr Grill & Bar
1736 First St., Livermore
925-961-1000
zephyrgrill.com
Takeout & Curbside Available

PLEASANTON

Alberto's Cantina
435 Main St., Pleasanton
925-462-2316
albertoscantinapleasanton.com
Takeout/Curbside Available

California Pizza Kitchen
1328 Stoneridge Mall Rd., Ste D122, Pleasanton
925-251-9771
www.cpk.com
Curbside & Delivery Available

Chianti Reserve
436 Main St., Pleasanton
925-484-3877
chiantireserve.com
Takeout & Some Delivery Available

China Lounge Restaurant & Bar
4220 Rosewood Dr., Pleasanton
925-227-1312
chinaloungetogo.com
Takeout Available

Cocina Mexico
55 W. Angela St., Pleasanton
925-485-3010
mycocinamexico.com
Takeout Available

De La Torre's
6025 West Las Positas Blvd., Pleasanton
925-484-3878
delatorres.net
Takeout & Curbside Available

Eddie Papa's American Hangout
4889 Hopyard Rd., Pleasnton
925-469 6266
eddiepapas.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

El Molino
5321 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton
925-463-0428
Takeout Available

Experience Burma Restaurant & Bar
221 Division Street, aka 600 Main St, Unit G, Pleasanton
Phone: (925) 398-8219
theexperienceburma.com

Gay Nineties Pizza Co.
288 Main St., Pleasanton
925-846-2520
gaynineties pizza.com
Takeout Available

Hap's Original Steaks and Seafood
122 West Neal St., Pleasanton
925-600-9200
hapsoriginal.com
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Inklings Coffee & Tea
530 Main St., Pleasanton
925-399-6746
Inklingscoffee.com
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Jim's Country Style Restaurant
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925-426-7019
Takeout & Delivery Available

Main Street Brewery
830 Main St., Pleasanton
925-462-8218
mainstbrewery.com
Takeout Avaiable

Mama's Pizza Take and Bake
1991 Santa Rita Rd. #E, Pleasanton
925 417 751
mamas-pizza-take-bake.business.site
Curbside Pickup & Delivery Available

New Thai Bistro
4301 D Valley Ave., Pleasanton
925-425-7333
newthaibistro.com
Takeout Available

Nonni's Bistro
425 Main St., Pleasanton
925-600-0411
Nonnisbistro.net
Takeout Available

P.F. Chang's Pleasanton
1330 Stoneridge Mall Rd., Pleasanton
925-224-9916
pfchangs.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Pasta's Trattoria
405 Main St., Pleasanton
925-417-2222
pastastrattoriapleasanton.com
Takeout/Curbside Available

Prim Rosebakery
350 Main St., Pleasanton
925-249-1261
primrosebakery.com
Takeout Avaialble

Plucked Chicken & Beer
6762 Bernal Ave. #630, Pleasanton
925-425-0795
pluckedchickenandbeer.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Porky's Pizza Palace
2911 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton
925-417-1600
porkyspizzapalace.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Rancho Grande Taqueria
2707 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton
925-600-8620
ranchograndetaqueria.com
Takeout & Delivery Available

Rooster & Rice
3120 Santa Rita Rd., Pleasanton
925-425-7500
roosterandrice.com
Takeout Available

Salt Craft
377 St.Mary's St., Pleasanton
925-425-9716
saltcraftpleasanton.com
Takeout & Delivery Avaialbe

Strizzi's
649 Main Street, Pleasanton
925-484-9600
strizzis.com
Takeout & Delivery Avalialbe

Sozo Sushi
2835 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton
(between Secretariat Dr & Valley Ave)
925-484-5588
sozosushi.com
Pickup & Delivery Available

Stable Cafe
Pleasanton Fairgrounds/Gate 12
4501 Pleasanton Ave., Pleasanton
925-998-2897
Takeout & Curbside Available

Sultans Kebab
6654 Koll Center Pkwy., Pleasanton
925-846-2511
sultanskebabpleasanton.com
Takeout & Delivery Avalialbe

Sunshine Saloon
1807 Santa Rita Rd., Ste K Pleasanton
925-846-6108
sunshinesaloon.com
Takeout Available

The Cheesecake Factory
1350 Stoneridge Mall Rd., Pleasanton
925-463-1311
thecheesecakefactory.com
Curbside & Delivery Available

The Hopyard
3015 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton
925-426-9600
hopyard.com
Takeout Available

Two Amigos Taquería
33550 Stanley Blvd., Pleasanton
925 425 7667
Curbside Pickup & Delivery Available

Vic's All Star Kitchen
201 A Main St., Pleasanton
925-484-0789
vicsallstar.com
Takeout & Deilvery Available

Wild One
349 Main St., Pleasanton
925-249-9108
wildonegrill.com
Takeout Available

If you own a local restaurant and are open for takeout, curbside pickup or delivery and would like to be added to our restaurant list please email kim@independentnews.com

INMATE

(Continued from first page)

Rocky Lee Music, 32, was arrested in connection with two alleged carjackings in Dublin and San Ramon, committed just 40 minutes after he was released. (Photo – Alameda County Sheriff's Office)

Music did not stay behind bars long. He was released later in the day as part of a policy to let inmates arrested on nonviolent offenses including auto theft go to reduce the jail population during the COVID-19 pandemic, authorities said.

Time of release, ACSO said in a Tweet: 7:23 p.m.

"Thirty-seven minutes after release, Mr. Music made his way to the Dublin BART station," ACSO Sgt. Ray Kelly said. "Mr. Music decided to carjack a victim and take their car to San Ramon."

According to a prosecution report, a motorist told police he was assaulted and robbed of his white 2011 Toyota Prius in the 5200 block of Campus Drive in Dublin. Deputies showed the victim a lineup of photos; he picked out Music, a police report said.

A report of the crime was broadcast to surrounding police agencies.

"At a gas station in San Ramon, he abandoned the first vehicle and attempted to carjack a second victim," Kelly said. "That carjacking was interrupted by responding police units, and Mr. Music fled on foot to the Iron Horse Trail."

Police searched the area for Music and found him trying to open a door of a building in the 6100 block of Bollinger Canyon Road. Music ran from them and kicked a police dog sent after him, the report said.

After deputies and the dog corralled him, Music was arrested and returned to the Santa Rita Jail.

By the end of the week, Alameda County prosecutors charged Music with violent felonies that kept him behind bars, including carjacking, unlawful taking of a vehicle and receiving stolen property.

"We believe he will not be released again due to the violent nature of his crime spree," Kelly said.

The complaint filed in court shows Music has a lengthy criminal history. He was convicted of auto theft and burglary in Solano County in 2018; burglary in Alameda County in 2013; burglary in Solano County in 2012; and assault in Solano County in 2016.

Two weeks ago, Alameda County's District Attorney Nancy O'Malley and Public Defender Brendon Woods clashed over Woods' call to release inmates from the jail to stem the spread of COVID-19.

O'Malley accused Woods of grandstanding when he called for her and judges to release inmates with sentences of six months or less to serve.

Woods made the request after a dozen inmates and two staff members had tested positive for coronavirus by April 9.

O'Malley said she was balancing public safety with efforts to reduce the jail population.

On April 13, the California Judicial Council issued a policy mandating law enforcement impose $0 bail for arrestees held for low-level felonies and misdemeanor crimes. Normally, many of those inmates would have to pay cash bail for release while awaiting court dates, but state authorities imposed the new policy to try to reduce the possibility of a massive a COVID-19 spread behind bars.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, ACSO had reduced the Santa Rita Jail population at 2,597 on March 1 to 1,746 on April 27.

Through that date, authorities reported that the jail had nine inmates who had tested positive for COVID-19 and 23 formerly positive inmates who had completely recovered. Two formerly positive inmates who had recovered were no longer in custody; and one inmate who had tested positive was also released. SRJ has two current positive staff/contractor cases; one has completely recovered.

DISTRIBUTION

(Continued from page 5)

said that people can pick up orders; it has not been hard for the restaurant to get ingredients. The restaurant opens at 11 a.m. and closes at 8 p.m. In the pre-COVID 19 days, closing time was 10 p.m., except in summer when it closed at 11 p.m.

Open Heart Kitchen Has Reliable Supply

Denise Bridges, development director for Open Heart Kitchen (OHK), the Valley's food bank, said part of its food supply has been interrupted, because food donated by well-wishers can no longer be accepted, as it could be contaminated.

OHK is relying more on the commercial food supplier that it has regularly used. To help make up the gap left by elimination of home-food donations, OHK is asking its supporters to donate more cash to expand the budget to buy more from its usual supplier.

OHK still is maintaining its lunchtime food pickups at the senior centers in Livermore, Pleasanton and Dublin for seniors 60 and older, Mondays through Fridays. People who want to order a meal need to call 925-500-8291 by 1 p.m.

Others can pick up hot meals between 1 and 3 p.m. at the Robert Livermore Senior Center, 4444 East Ave., Livermore.

OHK dinner can be picked up between 4 and 6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays at the entryway counter of Ridgeview Commons, 5200 Case Ave., Pleasanton.

Tri-Valley Might Get Another Farmers Market

Pleasanton Vice-mayor Kathy Narum said the city staff is looking into the possibility of restarting its farmers market, which has become a year-round community institution.

Safety must come first. Staff is analyzing how to draw the lines for social distancing for customers and the farmers. The market is also a Saturday morning gathering spot, with people encouraging attendees to sign their initiative petitions, so First Amendment rights need to be examined, too, said Narum.

Meanwhile, Dublin is continuing its farmers market from noon to 4 p.m. Thursdays in Emerald Glen Park. There are no tables or chairs, a measure to discourage people from gathering too closely. Farmers prepackage their produce off-site with proper procedures and wear face masks, which is now the order for everyone in Alameda County.

DUBLIN

(Continued from first page)

phase, which is part of a multijurisdictional plan, is $12.5 million; the second city-specific phase is $7.5 million. Both will be funded through SB1 funds and traffic impact fees. There will be no effect on the general fund. The project will consist of a four-way divided roadway. Improvements will include a raised median, bicycle lanes and a traffic signal.

Director of Public Works Andy Russell said the project is expected to take between two to three years from design to completion.

Councilmember Melissa Hernandez acknowledged that while they would prefer to see a swifter process, the intent behind the project is the council's priority.

"We're definitely doing this for safety reasons," Hernandez said. "Our residents just have to be patient and understand where we are coming from."

Plans to straighten the stretch of roadway dates back to 2010, when the county reached out to Dublin to improve safety on Camino Tassajara Road following a bike fatality. In 2015, the city and county completed a joint traffic analysis on the area and determined there would be little traffic impact by going from six lanes to four; in 2016, the capital improvement program was launched.

Haubert thanked staff for their diligence and commitment to the project.

"It's going to be great when we are done," he said. "A much safer road and right-sizing the lanes there I think is just the right thing to do. I wish we could get it done sooner ... but I know we are going to do the best we can as always."

For additional information on the project, visit https://bit.ly/2VG95SL.

Approved in a public hearing last week, the Tassajara Road Alignment Project aims to improve the safety on Tassajara Road at north Dublin Ranch to the city limits. (Photo – Doug Jorgensen)

ARRESTS

(Continued from first page)

people that there was possibly a third person, so we are continuing to investigate that," Silacci said.

Police identified one suspect as Isaiah Joseph Howard, 19, who was held April 21 on suspicion of accessory to murder and concealment or destruction of evidence. Howard posted $40,000 bail and was released from the Santa Rita Jail in Dublin. Howard's Facebook page showed he was a former Amador Valley High School student. The other suspect, a 17-year-old whose name was not released because of his age, was detained at juvenile hall on suspicion of robbery and conspiracy.

Pleasanton detectives were awaiting DNA evidence and were expected to release more information sometime next week on the first homicide to occur in the city in eight years, Silacci said.

Butler's family is awaiting answers, questioning why anyone would take the life of an athletic young judo coach with aspirations to compete in the 2028 Olympics.

Kevin and Tracey Butler said the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders prevented them from holding services for their son, a former Amador Valley High School student. Friends were unable to gather for a candlelight vigil.

"All I can think about are good things," his father said. "He had so much potential."

What happened that night remains unclear. According to police, Butler was staying in a room at the Hyatt House on Chabot Drive. He went to the parking lot to meet with some people. During an altercation, he was stabbed several times. Although they said they could not confirm a motive, detectives said they were investigating the possibility of drug sales activity.

Bulter's father said his son wanted his independence and was staying at the hotel while working to get an apartment. He worked at the Lululemon clothing store at the Stoneridge Shopping Center, took classes at Las Positas College in Livermore and was considering a firefighting career that would follow in his father's footsteps.

A gifted athlete since his elementary school days, Butler played every sport – soccer, swimming, ice hockey, basketball, wrestling and baseball. Coaches told his father he was "very coachable" and "very respectful," an athlete whom others followed, his father said.

Excelling in judo, Butler traveled to events around the globe, often finishing on the podium and becoming friends with competitors from Japan, Korea, France, Belgium, Australia, Ecuador, Brazil and England. He assisted his father in coaching children at Tri-Valley Judo and also aspired to take that over. He and his sisters,

Jackson Butler

Camaryn and Rachael Butler, talked about how great it would be for him to train to compete in judo in the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles.

"We are devastated," Rachael said. "I lost my best friend. It's the worst feeling in the world. Nothing can bring him back."

In death, Butler was an organ donor. His father said he "lives on."

Friends expressed condolences on his parents' Facebook pages. Said one: "Still just can't wrap our heads around this tragedy."

Another said their son had "left his mark on this world."

"He reminded me of a modern-day knight – honorable, fearless, humble, well-loved," the friend wrote. "The loss is staggering."

Foothill High School Students Create Free Tutoring Service

Seeing a need in the community, a group of Foothill High School students launched a free tutoring program to support the academic needs of elementary school children.

A team of four freshmen — Sanjay Adhikesaven, Abyan Das, Milan Suresh and Monish Muralicharan — created Sailors Learning in March after speaking to a local parent, who expressed their child was struggling to adjust to distance learning.

"We support all grades from kindergarten through eighth grade for one-on-one tutoring, and we support grades two through eight for our extracurricular group lessons," said Sanjay. "This program extends throughout the Tri-Valley, and we hope to expand it further later on."

Extracurricular classes offer a deeper dive for students interested in science, math, coding and history. Signups have already rolled in, and the four expanded the tutoring team to include a total of 15 tutors. They hope to grow the effort in order to serve more children.

Monish explained the program started off as free and will always remain free, in order to make it accessible to people of any socioeconomic background.

"We get satisfaction out of helping out children because we provide resources that are unavailable to them otherwise," Abyan said. "It feels great to set up children for success in school subjects, their interests and future life endeavors."

The high school students teach children over Zoom, an online video conference service, which many children already use in regular schooling.

"I personally think that besides providing crucial support to these students, we teach them the skills that they need to succeed on their own in the future," Milan said.

For more information, visit www.sailorslearning.com.

Speaker Series Talk on Superbug Including COVID-19 Moves Online

Dr. Jake Scott, an infectious-disease specialist and co-medical director of the Antibiotic Stewardship Program at Stanford Health Care – ValleyCare in Pleasanton, will give an online presentation, "Major Infectious Disease Threats: COVID-19 and the Rise of Superbugs," on Thursday, May 7.

Initially scheduled to be the final presentation in this year's ValleyCare Speaker Series at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore, Scott's talk has been updated to include the coronavirus and recast as a Zoom teleconference through Stanford University, where Scott is also a clinical assistant professor in infectious diseases.

Dr. Jake Scott

Tickets are $10 and can be purchased at livermorearts.org or by calling the Bankhead box office at (925) 373-6800. Ticket buyers will receive a link via email to join the monitored presentation, which is scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m.

In addition to his original topic of "superbugs," and why the world is seeing an increase in the number of drug-resistant infections, Scott will discuss the current COVID-19 pandemic.

He will accept questions in advance for a Q&A session following his presentation. Questions should be submitted by email to marketing@lvpac.org. No personal case information should be included.

"We're very pleased to be able to convert this program to an online event, making it accessible to our entire community," said Chris Carter, executive director of the Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center. "COVID-19 is the reason we are unable to welcome attendees into the Bankhead Theater, making this topic extremely timely."

The ValleyCare Speaker Series is a collaboration between the Performing Arts Center and the ValleyCare Charitable Foundation designed to share science and medical knowledge with local audiences.

MEALS

(Continued from first page)

Meals on Wheels is partnering with the Tri-Valley Transit to meet the increased demand of bringing meals to homebound seniors. Seen here is driver Kevin Ulrich.
(Photo - Doug Jorgensen)

it now," Phyllis Stribling, 91, said of the service. "It's also something to look forward to."

Like so many of the nation's estimated 52 million adults ages 65 and older, the Striblings are following the guidance of health experts and staying at home and away from other people.

Because older people and those with underlying health conditions are more susceptible to serious injury or death from the new coronavirus, the most important way to stay safe is to stay at home.

Phyllis said she considers herself fortunate and credits the community-based Meals on Wheels program, grocery deliveries from family and the ability to have prescription refills sent in the mail — allowing her and her 89-year-old husband to safely self-isolate.

Since Gov. Gavin Newsom called for home isolation of all seniors in the state on March 15, Phyllis said she has only had to make a single trip to the store for basic necessities.

"It means a lot that we don't have to get out that much," she said.

During the stay-at-home order, more older residents, who have effectively become homebound, are turning to services like Meals on Wheels for help.

Spectrum Meals on Wheels, which delivers more than 40,000 meals annually to residents in Livermore, Pleasanton, Sunol and Dublin, has added about 60 new clients since the pandemic was declared, pushing the number of people it serves above 200.

At the same time, the nonprofit was forced to turn away much of its volunteer base, which includes a significant percentage of retired seniors, from volunteer work outside the home.

Spectrum Community Services Inc. runs the Tri-Valley Meals on Wheels program. Before the lockdown, roughly half of its delivery volunteers were 65 or older and at a higher risk of developing complications from COVID-19, said Carrie Oldes, Tri-Valley supervisor for Spectrum Meals on Wheels.

Oldes said removing ready, willing and able senior volunteers from delivery assignments was difficult and came with pushback. But it was necessary to keep volunteers safe. Some of those who fought to stay on are now making friendly phone calls to check in with seniors from their regular routes.

In the meantime, Oldes said there has been an outpouring of support from younger volunteers, who are suddenly out of work and looking for ways to help.

"There's no clear answer to when we're done, when volunteers will come back and when people will go back to work," Oldes said.

Because social isolation can be difficult even in the best of times, Oldes said the Tri-Valley Meals on Wheels program now includes handmade cards and notes along with meals at least once a week in an effort to help those forced into deep isolation feel more connected. As a precaution, the cards are held for at least 72 hours before being sent out.

LOCKDOWN

(Continued from first page)

the process and to recover its costs.

Under the new city rules, any activity that violates an order issued by the city's director of emergency services or the county health officer are automatically treated as a public nuisance, which can be enjoined in a civil action without further proof of injury or effect.

The ordinance does not specify how and when such orders would be enforced. As a general rule, public nuisance cases originate from citizen complaints.

A resolution supporting the changes specifically cites requirements to shelter in place and for all businesses and governmental operations to cease nonessential operations, as well as more stringent restrictions, to comply with social distancing requirements when outside of the home, to cease all activities at nonessential businesses, except for minimal basic operations, and the prohibition of nonessential travel and gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a single household or living unit.

Most of the changes to the city's public nuisance ordinance approved this week were already in the works and nearing completion when the new coronavirus outbreak prompted a number of public health orders to be issued by local, state and federal agencies.

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A special thanks to author Bill Leach for his poem entitled "Livermore," which ran in last week's paper. Below is a note from the author:

"Years ago, I thought about how the name 'Livermore' rhymes with The Raven's 'Nevermore' in Edgar Allen Poe's fine poem and jotted down some lines relating 'Livermore' and Poe's black bird to our town's wine industry. But Poe's complicated triple-internal rhymes and bouncy rhythm stymied me then and I set it aside. I brought it out recently, thanks to downtime during our stay-at-homes, and saw a way to finish it."

Passports Still Being Processed

While international travel may not be possible during the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Postal Service in San Francisco sent out a reminder this week that people can still apply for, or renew their passports for future use.

The Postal Service website includes an online tool to schedule an appointment at the nearest available office. The Postal Service said social distancing and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines would be followed during the appointment.

Once the appointment is scheduled, the Post Office will follow CDC guidelines of social distancing during the in-person application process.

To help speed up the process, applicants should fill out all forms ahead of time. Application forms and information on costs and how to apply for a passport book or passport card can be found at usps.com/passport or travel.state.gov/passport. Travelers can also obtain passport information by calling the National Passport Information Center at (877) 487-2778.

Updated Information On Suspect of Suspicious Fire

On Friday, April 17, Pleasanton officers responded to a residential fire on Paseo Navarro. Several people were inside the residence and were evacuated to safety. The cause of that fire was considered suspicious and has been under investigation by arson investigators. On April 23, Pleasanton police detectives arrested Kent Charles Hermanson for aggravated arson, child endangerment and domestic violence. Hermanson was transported and booked at Santa Rita Jail.

GOT WINE?
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3steveswinery.com
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arroyocellars.com
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Bent Creek Winery
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925-455-6320
bentcreekwinery.com
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Big White House Winery
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925-449-1976
bigwhitehouse.com
Pickup & Delivery Available

BoaVentura de Caires Winery
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925-606-9672
boaventuravineyard.com
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caddiswine.com
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925-373-6636
cedarmountainwinery.com
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8195 Crane Ridge Rd. (5800 Greenville Road), Livermore
925-337-3081
charlesrvineyards.com
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2400 Arroyo Rd., Livermore
510-304-0914
cudaridgewines.com
Curbside Pickup Available

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danterobere.com
Local Delivery & Curbside Pickup Available

Darcie Kent Vineyards
7000 Tesla Rd., Livermore
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darciekentvienyards.com
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eagleridgevineyard.com
Curbside Pickup, Delivery & Shipping

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925-606-1827
elsolwine.com
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fenestrawinery.com
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7986 Tesla Rd., Livermore
925-371-8200
garrewinery.com
Curbside Pickup & Shipping Available

Las Positas Vineyards
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925-449-9463
laspositasvineyards.com
Curbside Shipping & Delivery Available

Leisure Street Winery
8953 Tesla Rd., Livermore
925-337-5463
leisurestreetwinery.com
Curbside Pickup & Delivery Available

Longevity Wines
2271 S.Vasco Rd., Livermore
925-443-9463
longevitywines.com
Pickup, Delivery & Shipping Available

McGrail Vineyards and Winery
5600 Greenville Rd., Livermore
925-215-0717
mcgrailvineyards.com
Curbside Pickup, Delivery & Shipping Available

McKahn Family Cellars
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925-453-1823
mckahnfamilycellars.com
Pickup Available

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Location as of 5/1/20
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pagemillwinery.com
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rioslovellwinery.com
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rmwinery.com
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rosafierrocellars.com
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925-484-1699
rubinoestateswinery.com
Shipping Available

Ruby Hill Winery
400 Vineyard Ave., Pleasanton
925-931-9463
rubyhillwinery.net
Shipping Available

Steven Kent Winery
5443 Tesla Rd., Livermore
925-243-6442
stevenkent.com
Curbside Pickup & Shipping Available

Tenuta Vineyards
633 Kalthoff Common, Livermore
925-699-4576
Tenutawinery.com
Pickup, Delivery & Shipping Available

The Singing Winemaker
5143 Tesla Rd., Livermore
925-606-9463
thesingingwinemaker.com
Pickup & Delivery Available

Wente Vineyards Estate Winery & Tasting Room
5565 Tesla Rd., Livermore
925-456-2305
wentevineyards.com
Shipping Available

Wente Vineyards Tasting Lounge
5050 Arroyo Rd., Livermore
925-456-2405
wentevineyards.com
Shipping Available

White Crane Winery
5405 Greenville Rd., Livermore
925-321-5463
whitecranewinery.com
Shipping Available

Wood Family Vineyards
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925-606-7411
woodfamilyvineyards.com
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If you are a winery and would like to be added to this list
please email kim@independentnews.com

MAILBOX

(Continued from page 4)

tions? Remember we are the owners of the cities and this state, not just a bunch of overpaid governmental officials.

The gun stores were re-opened because that's part of our Second Amendment rights. So, let's start this going around: The governor and city managers want you to stay at home for the next 30 days. That's 60 days total, unless they keep it going into June. No problem. When this over, we the taxpayers should have our property taxes, sales taxes, payroll taxes and, yes, gas taxes forgiven for at least the say amount of time we were put out of work and had no income.

Think about that for just one minute before you justify this takeover of our lives.

These same people told us all just one month ago that masks would not work to stop the spread of COVID-19. Now masks are required. Another thought: I guess the coronavirus will not get you at Safeway, the banks, Starbucks, or the drive-up window at McDonalds. BS!

Dublin citizens, get out and protest this lockdown and quit being scared of these government officials. Get off your butt and push back!

Mount Diablo State Park's light, called the "eye of Diablo," is set to shine each Sunday after sunset until the next morning's sunrise until the pandemic is over. The lighting began April 12. (Photo - Doug Jorgensen)

CENSUS

(Continued from first page)

teers will begin visiting non-responsive homes in person, while complying with any necessary health mandates. At this point, while the overall response to the Census is slow, responses are coming in. Stephanie Kim, senior director of Census 2020 at the United Way, said there may be some correlation between the slow rate and the pandemic.

"A lot of people have been trying to draw lines between COVID-19 and response rates, and nationally, there are some groups that have been comparing data," Kim said. "So far, they haven't seen any striking statistical relationships . . . That doesn't mean it isn't there."

Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty stressed the importance of an accurate count despite hurdles raised by the coronavirus. Census participation determines each community's share of federal funding for health care, schools, roads and more for the next decade. Undercounting can cost cities thousands of state and federal dollars.

"We cannot allow the pandemic to cause an undercount of our communities," Haggerty said in an email to The Independent. "While operating in accordance with all public health mandates, we must continue our outreach."

Prior to the shelter-in-place order, hundreds of Census promotional events were planned, and questionnaire help centers were slated to open all over the state. In light of social-distancing mandates, these plans have been canceled or postponed. Haggerty noted the organizations participating in the Complete Count Committee remain deeply committed and have been remarkably resilient in pivoting their outreach efforts to phone banking, targeted messaging and sharing Census information at food distributions at schools and faith communities.

The City of Dublin is divided into 10 tracts, with nine responding between 55% and 74%. The low-response tract is in the south-central part of the city, attracting the attention of phone bank volunteers. There is still time to reach homes before door-to-door efforts are made starting June 1. Volunteers have pivoted attention to that area, adding 800 responses just last week, ranking the city 145th in the state.

"The 2020 Census is important because it brings federal funding to our community for schools, roads and housing," said Shari Jackman, Dublin public information officer. "We've been promoting it heavily within our community, and while we have a higher response rate than the state average, we would still like to achieve a 100% response rate."

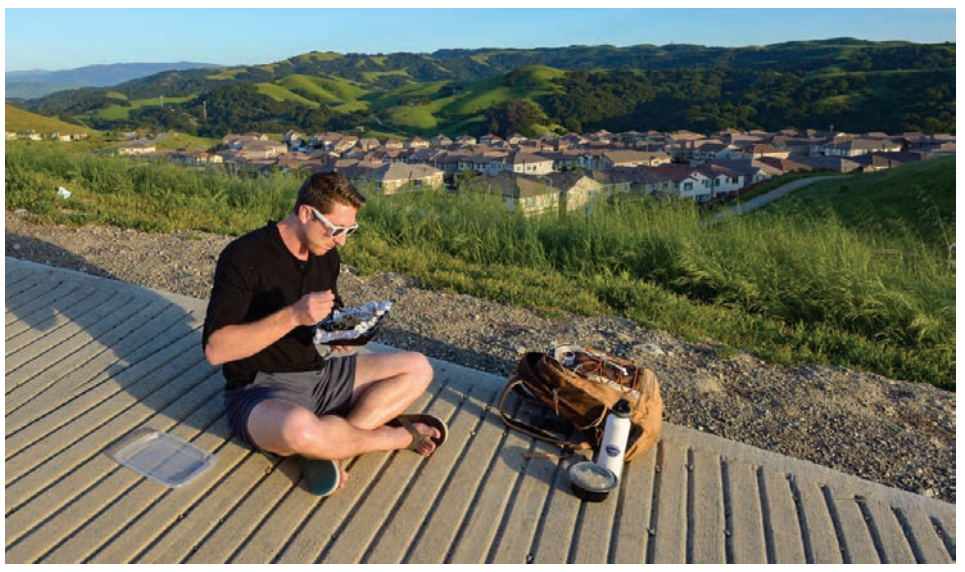
Pleasanton's high SRR is well above the state average of 54.6%, placing it 42 in the state. City Manager Nelson Fialho was pleased to note that several tracts in his city are above a 70% average and said the pandemic has not slowed his community down at all.

"During the shelter-in-place order, we are still encouraging residents to respond by mail or complete the Census using the new online option being offered this year," Fialho said. "With the U.S. Census Bureau suspending field operations until June 1, we are optimistic that Pleasanton will reach or exceed the (2010) Census responses this year."

Livermore is also optimistic, with all tracts reporting above 58% and ranking 39th in the state. City Manager Marc Roberts said his town's response rates look good, despite the fact that not all residents have responded yet. He encouraged people to call the Census hotline if they need assistance.

"Residents can respond online or by phone while sheltering in place," Robert said. "Census 2020 response rates will determine the federal funding Livermore will receive for the next 10 years to help provide community services, so it's important for Livermore residents to be counted."

To complete Census 2020 online, visit my2020census.gov or call 844-330-2020. To see the most current data on your town's SRR, visit https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html.



Caleb Cooper is a traveling nurse from Georgia, Alabama, who alternates working in California and his hometown. Cooper is seen here, getting a little reprieve with fresh air and lunch overlooking Schaefer Ranch Park in Dublin. (Photo – Doug Jorgensen)

Early Childhood Music Program Goes Online

Music Together Tri-Valley, an early childhood music program based on family and teacher interactions, is now posting online videos during the shelter-at-home order because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Our whole business model was based on in-person interaction" said Rowena Morgan, owner of licensed Music Together sites in Dublin, Pleasanton and San Ramon.

"We sing and dance and make music as a group," Morgan said. "Children see not only their parents, but many other adults as music models on a weekly basis. Parents are encouraged to sing and improvise and have fun and support each other and each other's children."

But the pandemic brought that to a halt, just as a new 10-week spring course was set to begin. And with rent and other overhead to pay, "never have I built a completely new business model so fast," Morgan said. "What was unthinkable just 6 weeks ago is now a viable business."

With the support of the parent company, Music Together, in Princeton, New Jersey, Morgan and other licensees developed a plan for online classes.

Music Together Tri-Valley is now posting a dozen 20-minute videos a week, two from each of its six teachers, that include singing and dancing, along with craft ideas and information about the role of music in early childhood education. The videos can be paused or played as often as desired.

"Families are actually getting way more music time and exposure than they used to get with just one 45-minute class a week," Morgan noted.

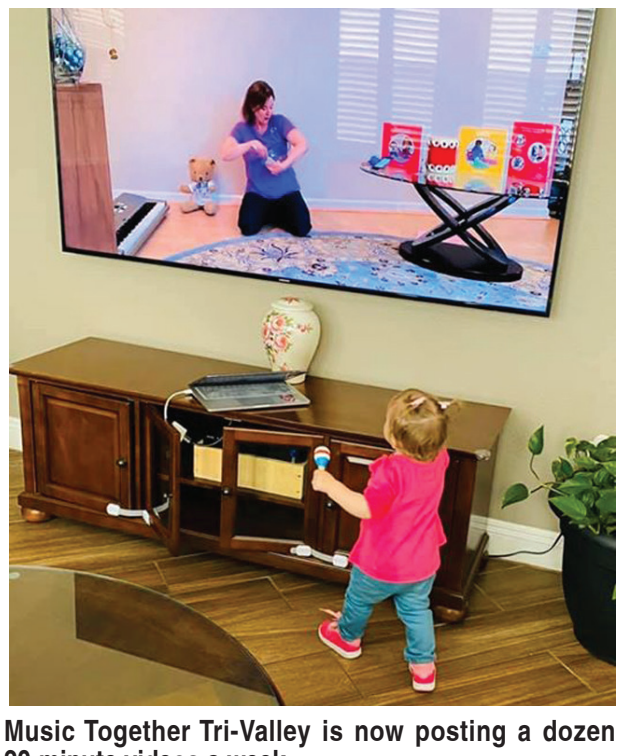
"While our classes and videos are designed to be parent/child interactive, parents can also be confident that if they need to leave their children in front of a screen to get something done, their children will be getting a solid experience," Morgan said. "Screen time is not what it used to be; it's a child's new social playtime."

The videos are only available to parents who have enrolled in the Music Together program.

"While we are currently only at 20% of our usual enrollment, I am at least able to keep the business up and running and some familiarity and music learning going for our youngest ones affected by this." Morgan said. "I am also extremely grateful to the teachers who have had to pivot and re-design their usual in-person music making and dancing for a video environment."

Because of the pandemic, "a young child's schedule has been completely upended too," she added, "and the comfort of seeing their familiar teachers singing songs they know and love is fascinating and comforting to them."

The Music Together program, which is now in more than 40 countries, is designed for parents of newborns through 5-year-olds. Morgan opened her first site, in Pleasanton, in 1998, with 500 families enrolled at the Dublin, Pleasanton, and San Ramon locations at the beginning of 2020.



Music Together Tri-Valley is now posting a dozen 20-minute videos a week.

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State Funds Toll-Free Crisis Line for Lonely, Isolated Older Adults

The Institute on Aging, a nonprofit organization that provides services for older adults living at home, and adults living with disabilities, is teaming up with the California Department of Aging to better support lonely and isolated seniors across the state.

The state will provide funding for a toll-free "Friendship Line California" telephone service, to be operated by the San Francisco-based Institute on Aging, that seniors can call when they are feeling lonely, scared or confused.

The Institute on Aging already operates a "Friendship Line," a 24-hour toll-free crisis line for older adults and adults living with disabilities. It also serves as a "warm" line offering emotional support to seniors who need someone to talk to.

Both the new Friendship Line California (888-670-1360) and the established Institute on Aging Friendship Line (800-971-0016) will take inbound calls, as well as offer scheduled outbound call service. Both lines will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Initially, Friendship Line California will be staffed by nearly two dozen staff members, many of whom previously worked for the Alzheimer's Association. All were trained for their new role by the Institute on Aging.

"We want to give the state of California credit for recognizing the deep impact of the pandemic on isolated, older adults, as well as the extraordinary risks and challenges that these circumstances present to this particular subset," said Dustin Harper, chief strategy officer for the Institute on Aging.

Kim McCoy Wade, director of the state Department of Aging, noted that "Older adults are heroes for being the first in California to stay at home, but they can't risk falling into social isolation while in physical isolation."

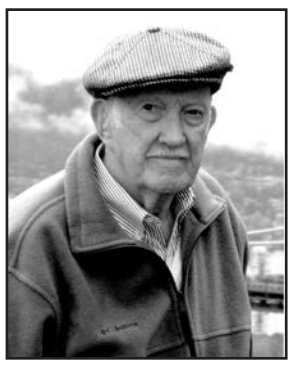
"We want make it easy for older adults to dial the Friendship Line California at any time – to have a friendly conversation, when they are feeling a little lonely, or when in crisis – and help them continue to stay home while also staying connected in the tough and uncertain months ahead."

OBITUARIES

Dr. Gus D. Dorough

Longtime Livermore Resident

After a long and full life, Gus Dorough died on April 13, 2020, at the age of 98. Gus was a native of California, born in Los Angeles, and a longtime Livermore resident before moving to Walnut Creek, California.



In 1944, he was in graduate school at the University of California, Berkeley, majoring in chemistry, when he was drafted into the Army and eventually assigned to work on what would become the Manhattan Project. He was sent to Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and then to Los Alamos, New Mexico. In 1946, he returned to UC Berkeley to complete his doctoral work. Gus left California in 1947 to teach at Washington University in St. Louis, but returned in 1954 to work at the University of California Radiation Laboratory in Livermore (later to become the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory).

Gus was head of the Chemistry Department at what by then was known as the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory when he accepted a presidential appointment as deputy director of research and technology at the Pentagon in 1971. Returning to Livermore in 1973, he resumed working at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory until his retirement in 1985.

Gus was a world traveler and lover of the arts. He was proud to have endowed a professor's chair in chemistry at U-C Berkeley. A mentor to many throughout his professional career, his keen wit and intelligence endeared him to a large circle of friends. He enjoyed backpacking in Yosemite, tennis, and playing such games as backgammon, cribbage and bridge. He also enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, preferably with fine food and a good martini.

Gus was father to three children, Susan Fisher of Blythe, California; Lisa Giannini of Hickman, California, and Dan Dorough of Emeryville, California. He was stepfather to four children, Drake McCarthy of Oakland; Valerie McCarthy of Santa Clara, California; Maureen McCarthy of Walnut Creek, California; and Colleen Faith of Livermore. He is also survived by 10 grandchildren and numerous great grandchildren.

Gus was preceded in death by his wife of 38 years, Raellen Dorough, in 2008. He was also predeceased by his first wife, Maxine Dorough. Ever the scientist, Gus donated his body to the University of California, San Francisco. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Neil C. McEntee

Aug. 9, 1969 – April 15, 2020

It is with great sorrow that the family of Neil McEntee announces his sudden passing on April 15, 2020, at the age of 50. Neil was born in Pleasanton, California, on Aug. 9, 1969, to Louise and Ben McEntee.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by his daughter, Megan McEntee, and his siblings, Jim McEntee, Jaime Hildebrand (Rob), Joe McEntee, Frances English, and Paul McEntee (Kelly). He is also survived by his nieces and nephews, Jonathan Shattuck; Zack and Louise English; Kevin, Ryan, and Kira McEntee; Madison and Mia Hildebrand; and Daniel McEntee, along with many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Neil was kind, loving, caring, hilarious, fun, high energy and devoted to helping others.

He attended Alisal Elementary, the "old" Pleasanton Middle School, and Harvest Park Middle School, all in Pleasanton, and Mission San Jose High School in Fremont, California, where his father taught. He also attended Las Positas College in Livermore and California State University, Chico. Neil held a California license as a general contractor.

At Mission San Jose, Neil excelled in wrestling, track and woodshop. As a wrestler, he was a Mission Valley Athletic League champion in 1987 and 1988. His woodshop creations won blue ribbons at the Alameda County Fair four consecutive years. In 1988, he received the "best of show" Golden Bear Trophy at the California State Fair for a roll-top desk that he designed and built under the tutelage of teacher and mentor Bud Finley. His passion for woodworking led to his founding of Big Mac Cabinets in Pleasanton.

Neil became a divemaster and a marathoner in his 20s and qualified for the Boston Marathon. For many years, he was also an active member of the Tri-Valley Fellowship AA, hosting Sunday night meetings and baking chocolate chip cookies.

Neil's greatest passion was raising and spending time with his beloved daughter, Megan. Together they enjoyed her sports events, fishing, Disneyland, Sunday night family dinners, and spending time at the family cabin in South Lake Tahoe.

The McEntee Family would like to thank the staff at Graham Hitch Mortuary for their efficient, professional and compassionate care during this trying time. We'd also like to thank Deacon Joe of the Catholic Community of Pleasanton, for the "socially distanced" blessing, which was attended by Neil's immediate family. Donations may be made in Neil's name to Shepherd's Gate in Livermore and the Catholic Community of Pleasanton. A celebration of life will be held at a later date when safe conditions allow.

Roger Leroy Busbee

Longtime Livermore Resident

Roger Leroy Busbee lost his 10-year battle with cancer on April 10, 2020. A private man in many ways, he fought valiantly, keeping the knowledge of his illness mostly to himself.

Roger was born in Hawaii in December 1940 to young Navy parents, Lloyd and Margie Busbee. He survived the attack on the Pearl Harbor naval base shortly before his first birthday, hiding from the weapons fire from Japanese planes in the bushes with his mother. That began a childhood growing up on or near several naval bases, until he moved to Livermore, California, to finish high school. He has been a resident of Livermore since then.

As a young man, he spent many weekends at the Fremont and Half Moon Bay dragstrips, where he won several trophies. Tiring of rebuilding motors every week, he began building hot rods, showing them around the country and picking up more trophies. In his early 20s, he began a nearly 50-year career at Sandia National Laboratory in Livermore, and continued as a consultant for several years after that.

He is survived by his two sisters, Cheryl Field and Kathy Newland; niece Seana Field; and nephews Iain Field and Michael McPoland. He was preceded in death by his beloved parents and a niece, Shannon Kinser.

Julia "Darlene" Lima

Nov. 6, 1939 – April 8, 2020

Darlene Lima, 80, passed away at home, surrounded by her family, in Livermore, California, on April 8, 2020. She was born in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, on Nov. 6, 1939, to Luther and Dovie Cook. She was the fourth of their four children.

Darlene and her family moved to California when she was just a toddler. She graduated from San Lorenzo High School in 1957, and married her high school sweetheart, Wayne Lima in 1958. The couple had three children, Jeffrey, Michael, and Kristine.

Raising her family in the country, Darlene taught her children responsibility and passed along a love of animals. She gave horseback riding lessons to children throughout the Livermore Valley, and was a member of the Livermore Ranch Riders during the late 60s and early 70s.

While raising her family, Darlene attended night classes at California State University, East Bay, and the University of California, Berkeley, earning a degree in geriatrics and gerontology. She enjoyed a multifaceted career working with seniors. Darlene was a longtime parishioner at Saint Michaels Catholic Church in Livermore.

Darlene is survived by her husband of 62 years, Wayne Lima; son Jeff (Janice); daughter Kristine (Jay) Foscalina; and grandchildren Dustin, Megan, and Lane, in addition to many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her son Michael in 1964; siblings Bernice, Minnie, and Jim; and nieces Jody, Toni, and Cathy.

A celebration of Darlene's life will be held for friends and family at a later date.

Glen Eugene Howard

Longtime Livermore Resident

Glen Eugene Howard went to meet his Lord on Feb. 6, 2020.

He was born in Seminole, Oklahoma, in 1937, and moved with his family to Point Richmond, California, in the 1940s. He lived in Point Richmond and San Pablo, California, until 1971, when he moved with his own young family to Pleasanton. For the last 32 years, he had lived in Livermore.

Glen had a creative mind, was fascinated by electronics as a boy, and enjoyed taking apart and rebuilding whatever he could find. As an adult, he helped design and build electron beam technology capable of etching the Declaration of Independence on the head of a pin and the entire text of the Bible within one square inch. His name is on seven patents.

After graduating from Richmond High School, in Richmond, California, Glen joined the Navy. He served two years on active duty, seeing much of the world and becoming a "Shellback" by crossing the equator. He also served four years in the reserves.

Glen first spotted the love of his life, Margaret Ellen Walls, when he spied her through binoculars getting off a bus at the base of a hill where he lived. He would later joke that he knew she was smart because she was heavily laden with textbooks.

He asked one of his sisters, who rode the same bus, to set up a double date. Margaret, however, was unaware it was a double date until the group pulled up to her door. Glen and Margaret fell in love and were married on his 22nd birthday in 1959. They were blessed to share sixty wonderful years together.

Glen loved to spend time with his daughters and later his granddaughters. He enjoyed playing ball and flying kites with them. He taught them games from his youth, sang folk songs passed down to him by his parents, and built countless cardboard houses to their delight. In his spare time, Glen loved to play ping-pong and dominoes, and to fish. Vacations were usually spent with his extended family at Clear Lake, California.

Glen was a man of strong faith and instilled his love of God in his daughters. His family knows he is in heaven with his Savior, but he will be missed here on earth. Glen is survived by his wife Margaret, daughters Deborah (Sean) McMenamin and Diana (Rick) Chimenti, granddaughters Katelyn (Dan) Adams and Rachel McMenamin, sisters Carolyn (Don) Morgan and Sandra Haigh, and many nieces and nephews. He was interred in a family plot at Upper Lake Cemetery in Clear Lake.

Carolyn Mary Muth

Aug. 17, 1938 – April 4, 2020

Carolyn Mary Muth, 81, passed away peacefully at home in Livermore, California, on April 4, 2020, with her husband Chuck and her dogs by her side.

Carole was born in New York to Carolyn and Ernie Ferreira, the oldest of three children. She graduated from Campbell High School, in San Jose, California, and soon afterwards entered the Sisters of the Holy Family Convent. After 10 years, Carole (then Sister Angelica) left the order to pursue a career in preschool education at the Sierra school in Dublin, California, first as a teacher and then as the owner. In March 1972, she married Chuck Muth. They were married for 48 years.

In addition to her husband, Carole is survived by two sons, Curt and Craig; a brother, Ernie Ferreira; a sister, Nancy Money; and three grandchildren, Zackary, Angelina and Cody. She was preceded in death by a granddaughter, Oceana Muth, and Annette Velez.

Carole loved animals, especially her dogs, birds, and horses, and belonged and contributed to many animal organizations. A celebration of life will be scheduled at a later date.

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As a non-profit agency serving the Tri-Valley for 40 years, Hope Hospice relies on donations to help provide end-of-life care and support to all who need it. If your family is designating charitable donations in memory of a departed loved one, please consider Hope Hospice. Your generosity will allow us to continue providing excellent care, grief support, and caregiver education to the local community.

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Altamont Creek Elementary School Earns Gold for Going Green

Altamont Creek Elementary has been recognized by the California Department of Education as a Green Ribbon Gold Award School for environmental excellence.

The Livermore elementary was one of 25 schools honored last week by Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond. Last year, Altamont Creek also became the first in the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District to receive a Green Ribbon School Silver Award in the state's Green Ribbon Schools awards program.

Science teacher Fenna Gatty said the school had its sights set on achieving the Gold Award this entire year. She said Altamont Creek stepped up efforts to stop waste "by coordinating donations that allowed for surplus food to be given to those in need in our community," as well as continuing efforts "to divert tons of materials from the landfill."

Since 2012, the state has recognized schools and school districts for reducing their environmental impact and costs; improving the health and wellness of their schools, students and staff; and for providing effective environmental education through the incorporation of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), civic skills, and green career pathways – considered the three pillars of a Green Ribbon School.

At Altamont Creek, Getty said, students, parents, and staff have a desire to keep the school environment clean, efficient, healthy, and safe by minimizing waste at all levels and leaving a smaller footprint on the planet.

Starting in transitional kindergarten, teachers use songs, games, and puppets to teach their youngest learners how to sort trash and be "Eco Warriors," Getty said. Older students learn about recycling and conservation, impacts on weather and environmental change, renewable energy, plant and animal ecosystems, and decomposition.

"Our students serve as inspiration and learn firsthand what being an environmental steward truly means," Gatty said.

Outside the classroom, students can be part of Altamont Creek's Green Team which monitors recycling systems and educates others on what items should be recycled, composted, or sent to a landfill. Third, fourth and fifth-graders can also be on the Green Council Leadership Team, a student think tank for exploring solutions to environmental issues affecting the community.

The California Department of Education recently recognized Livermore's Altamont Creek Elementary School as a Green Ribbon Gold Award School for environmental excellence. The school was one of 25 schools honored last week by Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond. (Photos – Altamont Creek Elementary School)

Gov. Newsom Announces Initiatives to Support Older Californians During COVID-19 Pandemic

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced April 24 a series of initiatives to support vulnerable older Californians who are isolating at home during California's stay at home order.

California is launching a first-in-the nation meal delivery program, a partnership to make wellness check-in calls, and the expansion of Friendship Line California to help combat social isolation. These actions will support the approximately 1.2 million Californians over the age of 65 who live alone.

"The most important way for older Californians to stay safe is to stay at home," said Newsom. "These programs will provide older, vulnerable Californians with access to nutritious meals in the safety of their homes and the opportunity to connect with someone who can listen to their concerns and make sure their needs are met. We are all in this together and we will continue to support older Californians who are more at risk during this public health emergency."

Director of the California Department of Aging Kim McCoy Wade noted older adults may be struggling to access food or suffering from isolation.

"These programs will make sure our older friends, family, and neighbors have access to the food and friendship they need," Wade said.

Restaurants Deliver: Home Meals for Seniors

This first-in-the-nation program will ensure vulnerable older Californians have consistent access to nutritious meals while staying safe at home. The Restaurants Deliver: Home Meals for Seniors program will enlist community restaurants to prepare meals that will be delivered to older Californians who are isolating at home during California's stay at home order. The program will also support local restaurant workers and owners who have lost business during the pandemic. The program will be administered by local authorities and will serve older Californians who are ineligible for other nutrition programs.

Social Bridging Project

The Social Bridging Project will mobilize more than 1,000 callers to proactively reach out to older Californians who are isolating at home. The project will combat social isolation through direct, one-on-one communication with older Californians, many living alone and isolated. Listos California (https://www.listoscalifornia.org/) is partnering with the California Department of Aging, United Airlines, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), and Sacramento State University to make calls to older Californians. Callers will check on the individual's well-being, connect them to resources, and connect with them on a personal level.

Friendship Line California: 1-888-670-1360

California is expanding Friendship Line California to support lonely and isolated older Californians across the state. Friendship Line California is toll-free and available to provide emotional support to older Californians facing loneliness, isolation and anxiety. The California Department of Aging is partnering with the Institute on Aging to support this effort.

Today's announcements build on previous actions to support older Californians isolating at home. Governor Newsom previously announced the Stay Home. Save Lives. Check In (https://www.engageca.org/check-in) campaign to help combat social isolation among older Californians. The campaign urges all Californians to check in on their older neighbors with a call, text or physically-distanced door knock.

Californians are also encouraged to join the #CaliforniansForAll initiative by signing up at CalifornainsForAll.ca.gov. #CaliforniansForAll unites organizations in desperate need of volunteers with Californians looking to serve and share their commitment to their neighbors, while ensuring stay-at-home and physical distancing protocols are met. The initiative will focus on recruiting younger Californians to help the most vulnerable throughout the state, including older Californians who are at higher risk of serious illness due to COVID-19.

Learn more about the state's ongoing COVID-19 response efforts at https://bit.ly/2SaEef2. Visit covid19.ca.gov for critical steps Californians can take to stay healthy, and resources available to those impacted by the outbreak.

Public Health Officers Signal Restrictions to Continue

Public health officers for Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties, as well as the City of Berkeley, were expected to issue revised shelter-in-place orders this week that largely extend the current restrictions through May.

The new orders were expected to include limited easing of specific restrictions for a small number of lower-risk activities, according to a statement issued Monday by the public health officers, although no details were provided.

The shelter-in-place orders currently in effect across the seven jurisdictions were set to expire May 3.

"Thanks to the collective effort and sacrifice of the 7 million residents across our jurisdictions, we have made substantial progress in slowing the spread of the novel coronavirus, ensuring our local hospitals are not overwhelmed with COVID-19 cases, and saving lives," according to the joint statement. "At this stage of the pandemic, however, it is critical that our collective efforts continue so that we do not lose the progress we have achieved together."

The statement noted that hospitalizations have leveled off, but "more work is needed to safely re-open our communities. Prematurely lifting restrictions could easily lead to a large surge in cases."

The public health officers were also expected to release a broad set of indicators to track the region's progress in its response to COVID-19. The future easing of restrictions would require that each jurisdiction continue to develop the infrastructure and systems "to respond to and control the spread of coronavirus infections and to ensure the health care system's ability to meet demand."

According to joint the "global pandemic of COVID-19 is still in its early stages."

"The virus spreads easily, testing capacity is limited and expanding slowly, and vaccine development is just beginning," the public health officers said. "We expect to be responding to COVID-19 in our communities for a long time. As effective as our efforts have been, if we move too fast to ease restrictions, the potential of exponential spread could have grave impacts to health and wellness of our residents as well as the economy."

PG&E Contributes $150,000 To California Food Banks

The California Association of Food Banks has established a Rapid Response Fund with an initial $150,000 contribution from Pacific Gas and Electric.

The fund will allow 40 food banks across the state, including 34 in PG&E service areas, to purchase additional food and supplies, and supplement their staffing, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Food banks are a vital resource in every community, working throughout the year to ensure that no one goes hungry," said Stacia Levenfeld, chief executive of the California Association of Food Banks. "During this current crisis, food banks are at the forefront providing an unprecedented amount of food to millions of Californians."

The contribution is part of $1 million that PG&E and The PG&E Corporation Foundation have pledged to nonprofits focused on supporting individuals and families coping with the impacts of the coronavirus health crisis. The donations come from shareholder funds, not customers.

To brighten up her neighborhood during the quarantine, Pleasanton resident Rhonda Chase has created beautiful artwork with chalk on her driveway. (Photo – Doug Jorgensen)

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LEGAL NOTICES

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 569676

The following person(s) doing business as: Home Star Properties, 1430 2nd Street, Livermore, CA 94550, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Kate Chen-Eldridge, 1503 Helsinki Way, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by an Individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: February 1, 2002. Signature of Registrant/s/: Kate Chen-Eldridge, Broker. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 19, 2020. Expires March 19, 2025. The Independent, Legal No. 4737. Published April 9, 16, 23, 30, 2020.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 569899

The following person(s) doing business as: Shakespeare in the Vineyard, 2172 Railroad Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Shakespeare's Associates, Inc. 2172 Railroad Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: August 31, 2006. Signature of Registrant/s/: Lisa A. Tromoriteh, President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on April 15, 2020. Expires April 15, 2025. The Independent, Legal No. 4738. Published April 30, May 7, 14, 21, 2020.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 569898

The following person(s) doing business as: Livermore Shakespeare Festival, 2172 Railroad Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Shakespeare's Associates, Inc. 2172 Railroad Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: August 31, 2006. Signature of Registrant/s/: Lisa A. Tromoriteh, President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on April 15, 2020. Expires April 15, 2025. The Independent, Legal No. 4739. Published April 30, May 7, 14, 21, 2020.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 569732

The following person(s) doing business as: Interlude the Extension Salon and Barbershop, 2258 Third Street, Livermore, CA 94550, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Interlude The Salon LLC. 2258 Third Street, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Chrisanthi Sahines. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on April 8, 2020. Expires April 8, 2025. The Independent, Legal No. 4740. Published April 30, May 7, 14, 21, 2020.

CLASSIFIEDS

ANIMALS

2) CATS/ DOGS

ADOPT A DOG OR CAT, for adoption information contact Valley Humane Society at (925)426-8656

Tri-Valley Animal Rescue

Adopt a new best friend TVAR Tri-Valley Animal Rescue

Our current weekly adoption events include:

Saturdays - Dogs & Puppies at Farmer's Market in Pleasanton. The location is Delucchi Park, 4501 First St. Hours: 10:00am to 1:00pm.
Saturdays & Sundays - Kittens at Dublin PetSmart, 6960 Amador Plaza Rd. Hours: 11am to 3pm.
Visit our website, WWW.TVAR.ORG, to see adoptable animals, volunteer opportunities, and how to donate.

Follow TRI-VALLEY ANIMAL RESCUE on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

FERAL CAT FOUNDATION
Cat & kitten adoptions now at the new Livermore Petco on Saturdays from 10:00AM to 2:30PM. We have many adorable, tame kittens that have been tested for FIV & FELV, altered & vaccinated. We also have adult cats & ranch cats for adoption.

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Sr. Engineer, QA sought by Elie Mae Inc. in Pleasanton, CA to design, execute and maintain comprehensive test plans and test cases. Apply @ www.jobpostingtoday.com, #36396.

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57) SERVICES

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115)ESTATE/ GARAGE/ YARD SALES

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127) LOST/ FOUND

NOTICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

155) NOTICES

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REAL ESTATE

170) LAND FOR RENT

157) OFFICE/HOUSE/CONDO / DUPLEX / APT RENTAL

165) HOUSE/ROOMS/RENTALS TO SHARE

160) BOAT / RV RENTAL SPACE

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Career Center Open to Help Employees and Employers

The Tri-Valley Career Center is still operating, virtually. They are conducting workshops and classes online via Zoom. They return calls from job seekers and help them navigate a difficult time with stress reduction workshops and COVID-19 job search tip workshops.

To assist employers, their job board is up and functional. They have experimented with a virtual recruitment event that puts the employer face to face with potential jobseekers.

You can check their webpage at www.trivalleycareercenter.org.

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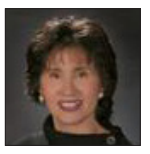
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With county orders for all workers and residents to wear masks effective April 17, locals in the Tri-Valley are making their own. Seen here, Pleasanton resident Jeanne Brophy, a member of Amador Valley Quilters, is one of many using her skills to follow the order. Please send us a photo of yourself wearing a mask to editor@independentnews.com. (Photo – Doug Jorgensen)

Drive-Through COVID-19 Test Offered at Fairgrounds

Nurses store a test sample while working at the newly opened COVID-19 testing site at the Alameda County Fairgrounds. (Photo – Doug Jorgensen)

Stanford Health Care–ValleyCare is now offering drive-through testing at the Alameda County Fairgrounds for residents of Livermore, Pleasanton and Dublin who fear they may have contracted COVID-19.

No doctor's referral or appointment is necessary, but those tested must meet at least one of several criteria, including recent exposure to a confirmed of suspected case of COVID-19; running a fever higher than 100 degrees; shortness of breath or other respiratory symptoms; suffer from a chronic disease; be 65 or older; pregnant or recently pregnant; or be homeless. No one under 10 will be tested.

Stanford Health Care said all medical insurance will be accepted and billed, and there will be on-site or out-of-pocket costs. Those tested will need to provide a phone number or email address to receive results and follow-up instructions. Test results may take up to 72 hours.

To be tested, residents should enter the fairgrounds through gate 12, off Valley Avenue in Pleasanton. Testing will take place 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, while supplies last. The site can test up to 150 people per day. If the testing site closes early, a sign will be posted at the gate 12 entrance.

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Nonprofit With a Heart for Horses Helps Fund Rescue Organizations

Big Bay Ray is a nonprofit organization that's helping the equine crowd by transforming feed bags into totes, and during the COVID-19 quarantine, the group and its volunteers are also using their sewing skills to make masks.

"We also are happy to report that our chief sewer of bags has now switched to temporarily sewing masks for frontline workers and individuals in need having made more than 200 in one month's time," said founder Gretchen Kyle.

Inspired by a beloved family horse, Ray — who was a rescue horse — Big Bay Ray makes reusable shopping and wine tote bags out of animal grain bags. Profits from the bags are given to a partner horse rescue organization that changes annually. The proceeds help offset the cost Big Bay partners incur on their quest to rescue abused and neglected horses. These costs include boarding, veterinary, dental, and farrier work.

Big Bay Ray has found there is a unique opportunity to educate the community about horses in need through the sale of its bags and fundraising.

"Many people are surprised to realize just how many horses are in need of rescue and what rescue efforts entail in terms of financial and human cost," Kyle continued. "We are happy that our support of horses goes beyond our financial contributions to horse rescue organizations."

During this time of public health crisis, the need for reusable bags to be easily cleaned is very important. The bags are made from polypropylene, which can be disinfected in less than one minute.

For more information, visit www.bigbayray.com or contact Gretchen Kyle at 925-523-3133.

Big Bay Ray is a nonprofit organization that makes reusable shopping and wine tote bags out of animal grain bags. Profits from the bags are given to partner horse rescue organizations. (Photo – Gretchen Kyle)

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