

KGO-TV
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
QUARTERLY LISTING OF COMMUNITY ISSUES
AND
RELATED PROGRAMMING
THIRD QUARTER 2015
REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING

During the second quarter of 2015, KGO-TV aired the following regularly scheduled local newscasts identified on air as "ABC 7 News" with a total cumulative average of over 100 hours per month:

<i>Monday - Friday</i>	<i>4:30-7:00AM</i>
<i>Monday - Friday</i>	<i>11:00-11:30AM</i>
<i>Monday - Friday</i>	<i>4:00-5:00PM</i>
<i>Monday - Friday</i>	<i>5:00-5:30PM</i>
<i>Monday - Friday</i>	<i>6:00-7:00PM</i>
<i>Monday - Friday</i>	<i>11:00-11:35PM</i>
<i>Saturday & Sunday</i>	<i>11:00PM-12:00AM</i>
<i>Saturday & Sunday</i>	<i>5:00-6:00AM / 6:00-7:00AM</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>9:00-10:00AM / 9:00-9:30AM</i>
<i>Saturday & Sunday</i>	<i>5:00-5:30PM & 6:00-6:30PM</i>

THE LIVE WELL NETWORK- KGO-TV / 7.2 HD

- KGO-TV's D2 sub-channel airs the "Live Well Network," a single free 24/7 over-the-air digital platform channel providing viewers with original content focusing on home, health and lifestyle.
- The "Live Well Network" offers programs entitled- Motion, Mirror, Mirror, Let's Dish, Steven & Chris, Knock It Off, Deals, Best Recipe, Food Rush and My Family Recipe Rocks, and Live Big With Ali Vincent along with others.

LAFF TV NETWORK- KGO-TV / 7.3 SD

- KGO-TV's D3 sub-channel airs the "LAFF TV Network," a single free 24/7 over-the-air digital platform channel providing viewers with comedy programming content.
- The "LAFF TV Network," airs vintage sitcoms and theatrical movies with a comedic theme.

KGO-TV'S D2 Live Well Network & KGO-TV'S D3 LAFF TV network signals carry Public Service Announcements and Children's Core Programming as described in the Quarterly FCC 398 Children's Report.

During the third quarter of 2015, KGO-TV also aired the following locally produced programming that addressed the problems and needs of the San Francisco-San Jose-Oakland Market area:

BEYOND THE HEADLINES- This locally produced public affairs program consisted of a variety of subjects primarily dealing with issues related to the local community. The program's objective was to go "beyond the headlines" and explore critical issues facing the community. KGO-TV news anchors hosted this program that aired Sundays from 4:30 to 5:00pm, and encores late Fridays from 1:30-2:00am.

SEVEN ON YOUR SIDE- Michael Finney headed this consumer affairs unit that provided consumer information / product recalls during local 5:00pm newscasts, and reviewed investigations / resolutions during 6:00pm newscasts. Office staff answered letters, e-mail and hotline telephone calls from viewers seeking help with a wide variety of consumer problems. On the average, the unit received over 3500 e-mails/ letters, and over 1400 phone calls per month.

ABC 7'S BAY AREA LIFE- Hosted by Lizzie Bermudez, this weekly lifestyle and entertainment destination program takes viewers around the Bay Area to celebrate and share what makes this beautiful place so fabulous. Each show explores local neighborhoods for the latest finds in food, fitness, entertainment, decor, fashion, culture, technology, and travel. Each week's program highlights the special people and places of the Bay Area. B. A. L. episodes aired Sundays from 6:30 to 7:00pm, and some encore episodes aired on Saturdays from 4:30-5:00pm.

SPONSORED COMMUNITY EVENTS

The following community events were featured on KGO-TV's day planner, "Around the Bay," the station's vehicle for sponsoring upcoming community events. Each of these thirty-second spots featured two to three events, and aired for two weeks on a fixed schedule:

7/1 – 7/3

AIDS Walk: benefits Project Inform (7/19) Dan Ashley, ABC7 Jumbotron
San Rafael Rocks: benefits Drawbridge (6/12-7/24)

7/4 – 7/17

Radio Day by the Bay (7/25) benefits California Historical Radio Association
Menlo Charity Horse Show (Aug 4-9) benefits The Vista Center

7/18 – 7/31

SF Jewish Film Institute: San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (7/23-8/9)
SFPD National Night Out, Central Station (8/4/15) public safety, neighborhood emergency preparedness resources

8/1/ – 8/14

Shop with a Cop Foundation: Heroes & Helpers Golf Tournament (8/14)
Friends of Faith: Breast Cancer Challenge (8/22) Carolyn Tyler, Dan Ashley
USS Hornet: Casino Night & Dance (8/22)

8/15 – 8/28

Performing Stars of Marin: 25th Anniv. (9/26) Cheryl Jennings
Taylor Family Foundation: Day in the Park (8/30) Cheryl Jennings

8/29 – 9/11

Center for Asian American Media: CAAMFest San Jose (9/17-9/20)
Mill Valley Fall Arts Festival (9/19 & 9/20)
San Francisco Foundation: Bay Area Bold (9/25-9/26)

9/12 – 9/25

SF Hep B Free Summit & Gala (10/2)
Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation: TNDC Pool Toss (10/7)
Cheryl Jennings
Ronald McDonald House of San Francisco: Home Away From Home (10/16)
Cheryl Jennings

9/26 – 9/30

Support for Families of Children with Disabilities: "Wine+Design" (10/9) Amy Hollyfield
Abilities United: Authors Luncheon (11/7)
BaySplash: EcoCenter (BVHP) (10/10)

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS-

During the third quarter of 2015, KGO-TV aired a number of public service announcements in various time periods throughout the broadcast day that involved a variety of topics. Some of the PSA sponsors that aired included: Red Cross, U.S. Department of Health, Partnership for a Drug free America, SF Parks Alliance, St. Jude Children's Hospital, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Wounded Warriors, National Foundation For Infectious Diseases, and Down Syndrome

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In addition to the local news and public affairs programs described in this report, KGO-TV carries all of the ABC Television news & public affairs programs listed and described in the report filed as "Network Programming."

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KGO-TV regularly surveys community leaders and organizations, and responds to these surveys. The station also regularly hosts community feedback meetings known as "ABC 7 Listens" at different Bay Area locations. Residents are invited to discuss, key issues, problems, needs and interests. Through these efforts we've determined that the following issues are important to the community:

- ***CRIME & LAW ENFORCEMENT***
- ***THE VALLEY FIRE***
- ***THE DROUGHT***
- ***EDUCATION***
- ***7 ON YOUR SIDE CONSUMERISM***
- ***I-TEAM / SPECIAL NEWS REPORTS***

Some of the station's most significant treatments of these issues are described on the following pages.

CRIME & LAW ENFORCEMENT

ABC 7 NEWS 5PM – TUESDAY, 9/8, 2015 (2:20)

SC COUNTY INMATE TELLS ABOUT THE NIGHT MICHAEL TYREE DIED

An inmate inside the Santa Clara County main jail is speaking out about what he says he heard and saw the night a mentally ill inmate allegedly died at the hands of three Santa Clara County correctional deputies. He spoke exclusively to ABC7 News on Tuesday. The inmate gave ABC7 News permission to use his name. Armando Galvin says everything he shared with us he also reported to the sheriff's office detectives who are investigating Michael Tyree's death. Inside the Santa Clara County Main Jail, Galvin says he heard screams coming from a nearby inmate's cell the night before Michael Tyree died. "I hear more screaming saying, 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry, please, please, I'm sorry,'" he said.

Galvin says the screams and pleas were followed by silence. At the time, correctional deputies Matthew Farris, Jerah Lubrin, and Rafael Rodriguez were conducting a routine search of inmates according to the sheriff's office. Galvin says when the correctional deputies got to his cell they were acting differently and hardly searched. According to the sheriff's office, about an hour later Lubrin returned; an account Galvin confirms. "Excuse my language but he said, 'Does he usually s*** himself?'" said Galvin. "He went back to Tyree's cell and was calling his name he didn't respond, went back to the phone on the desk called it in. Raphael Rodriguez came in with the flashlight." Galvin says he could see Lubrin pull Tyree's body out of his cell.

"He started trying to revive him by pumping his chest and when he was pumping his chest a bunch of body fluids was (sic) coming out of his mouth," he said. According to the coroner's report, Tyree died of multiple blunt force injuries and bled to death internally. "He's pretty much harmless, so I really don't know why they would go in there and do that to Tyree," Galvin said. While he found it confusing, Galvin says he's seen and heard correctional deputies using excessive force before. "And no one ever said anything," he said. That is, until now. Galvin says the other correctional deputies are trying to stay under the radar. "It kind of feels like they're trying to keep us happy right now," he said. ABC7 News reached out to the sheriff's office to see what if any response they had to our interview with this inmate. A spokesperson said detectives spoke with all possible witnesses inside the jail. The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors held a short closed session Tuesday to go over the possibility the family of Tyree may seek damages. On Tuesday, the district attorney's office revealed that the three deputies have been tied to the beating of another inmate the same day they're charged with killing Tyree. And the attorney for one deputy told ABC7 News he's trying to get his client released on bail.

(Crime Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - WEDNESDAY, 9/2 (2:35)

JUDGE COULD DISMISS CELLPHONE AS EVIDENCE IN VALLEJO CASES

A cell phone left at a home invasion crime scene in Dublin has become a crucial piece of evidence in the Vallejo Gone Girl kidnapping case, but it may have to be thrown out. The judge could decide if cellphone evidence in the Dublin home invasion robbery case is admissible, which could affect the federal kidnapping case later. The victim of the June robbery gave his account in court Wednesday. The robbery suspect, Matthew Muller, is also accused of kidnapping Vallejo woman Denise Huskins. The Dublin victim described waking up in the middle of the night to a man dressed in all black shining a flashlight and making demands. One of the victims of the Dublin robbery, a father, testified that the robber woke him up with a flashlight then said, "Your daughter is OK, listen to what I say." He said the robber tried to tie him up but he fought back. The victim said the robber hit his head with the flashlight and caused a cut. Meanwhile, he says his wife ran to the bathroom to call 911. The victim says the robber left the home when he told his wife to "get the gun," even though they didn't have one.

Dublin Police Services say they were able to identify Muller by a cellphone that he allegedly left behind. Without a search warrant, detectives bypassed the locked cellphone by calling 911. They say then got the phone's number and discovered it was registered to Muller's parents -- evidence Muller's attorney wants thrown out. "If you're going to search something without a warrant, you have to make that search clean," said Muller's attorney Thomas Johnson. If a judge believes detectives had an urgent need to get the phone's number without a warrant, the evidence could be considered. Dublin Police Services says they stand by their actions. "No, not nervous, I'm confident," said Lt. Herb Walters. The judge's decision in two weeks could have implications on this case and the kidnapping case.

The cellphone led detectives to Muller as a suspect in the March Vallejo kidnapping. Police had called that home invasion kidnapping a hoax. Months later, investigators say they found evidence linking Muller to that crime at his South Lake Tahoe home. Technology is key not only to the investigation, but also Muller's alleged crimes. FBI agents say Muller asked multiple victims for email log-ins, cellphone contacts and other personal information related to cyber-hacking. Muller is also being investigated for other alleged crimes in the Bay Area. In a search warrant request, agents outline in detail Palo Alto and Mountain View attacks dating back to 2009. "He has been a suspect in the Palo Alto case for some time," said Palo Alto police Lt. Zach Perron. In two of the cases the suspect drugged victims with NyQuil. He also threatened rape.

(next page)

(continued)

One victim had attended an event at Harvard University that was organized by Muller. At the time, Police did not have enough evidence to prosecute Muller, although he was their only suspect, Police are hoping evidence from the new cases may fill the gaps in theirs. Muller has not been charged in the federal kidnapping case. New federal documents and search warrants filed Friday indicate Muller told a reporter during a recorded jail interview that he acted alone and that his actions may have been linked to a side effect from a vaccine.

(Crime Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - WEDNESDAY, 8/12 (2:40)

ARMED ROBBERY SUSPECT SHOT, KILLED BY OPD DURING CHASE

A man was shot by Oakland police Wednesday afternoon following a pursuit and alleged carjacking attempt in West Oakland. The suspect later died at a hospital from his injuries. At 2:39 p.m., officers in the area of 69th Avenue and International Boulevard spotted a vehicle believed to be connected to a previous armed robbery, according to police spokeswoman Officer Johnna Watson. The officers attempted to pull the driver over, but he fled, leading police on a pursuit through Oakland city streets. An Oakland police helicopter tracked the car during the pursuit, Watson said. The pursuit lasted about seven miles until the suspect crashed into another car on 27th Street between Northgate Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Watson said.

The suspect ran from the car and, armed with a gun, tried to carjack another driver, Watson said. As police ran up, there was a confrontation with the suspect and at least one officer opened fire. The suspect was struck by gunfire and taken to a hospital, where he died. Police have not released his name and identified him only as a 24-year-old Oakland resident.

No officers were injured during the confrontation. Watson could not say whether the suspect fired his gun during the confrontation, but said a gun believed to be the suspect's was recovered at the scene. At a press conference held Wednesday evening, Oakland Police Chief Sean Whent said three officers were involved in the incident. One was a seven-year veteran of the force, one was a six-year veteran and the other was a one-year veteran. Whent added that the gun recovered at the scene was listed as stolen and was loaded. The Oakland police homicide and internal affairs units are investigating the shooting along with the Alameda County District Attorney's Office.

(Crime Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 5AM - WEDNESDAY, 7/15 (1:08)

POLICE SEARCH FOR SAN JOSE ARMED ROBBERY SUSPECT

Police want the public's help in finding the armed robber who held up a popular San Jose bakery. Most people come to Nothing Bundt Cakes for the bake goods, but an armed robber cooked up a plan to get some money by holding up the two cashiers inside. Surveillance video from June 23 shows the suspect walk up to the counter holding his hand on his side while looking at the display. He then pulls out a handgun and points it at the two young women working the counter. Police say the man demanded cash.

The workers, who feared for their lives, took out the cash from two registers and put it on the counter. The man took the money and then went behind the counter, looked under the register tray, while continuing to point the gun at the workers. He then left the store.

Police say he was last seen running northbound on Aborn Court. No vehicle was seen. The suspect is described as an Hispanic man in his 20s, with a skinny build, slender face and wearing a white T-shirt, blue jeans and white running shoes. Anyone with information is asked to call San Jose police.

(Crime Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - MONDAY, 9/21 (1:35)

VALLEJO KIDNAPPING SUSPECT MAKES COURT APPEARANCE

A man accused of kidnapping a Vallejo woman appeared in federal court Monday to be arraigned on a complaint linking him to that crime. Matthew Muller's attorney said Muller will plead not guilty. Muller's family and friends looked on as the young man they knew as a high achiever, faced a federal complaint that could land him in prison the rest of his life. "Obviously somebody that graduates from Harvard, that's an attorney, that survives four years in the Marines and the all of a sudden starts going sideways, there's something going on there," family friend Steve Reed said.

Reed said he's known Muller and his family since Muller was born. He said Muller's parents are shocked their son is the main suspect in the Vallejo kidnapping of Denise Huskins. "This is overwhelming to them and we're just at the very beginning of this whole thing," Reed said. Muller's parents led investigators to his South Lake Tahoe home after Muller left a cellphone behind in a Dublin home invasion in June. He entered a no contest plea to that crime Friday at the Alameda County Superior Court.

Vallejo police had called the March kidnapping of Huskins a hoax, but when Dublin investigators found Muller in his South Lake Tahoe home, they say they also found evidence linking him to the kidnapping. The couple says this is vindication for them after Vallejo police had called liars. Muller faces up to life in prison on the federal complaint. The judge decided he will remain fully shackled during court appearances.

"His whole family is pretty shaken up today, it is a very serious allegation and the consequences are extremely difficult for the family and for him," Muller's attorney Thomas Johnson said. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for October 5.

(Crime Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 4PM - THURSDAY, 8/6 (2:00)

CALFIRE OFFERS RESIDENTS LOCKS FOR THEIR WATER HYDRANTS

The newest battle to conserve water is being fought in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The region's main fire agency, Cal Fire, is offering residents locks so their hydrants won't be a target for water theft. There's no question that firefighters will need instant access to these newly locked fire hydrants, so they will be carrying special keys with them at all times. It's another example of how the drought has generated a special and new need to protect a limited resource.

The locks are the newest tool to prevent theft. And they're not just for municipal fire hydrants on the street. In rural areas, hydrants are connected to large, above-ground storage tanks. "For private hydrants, there's quite a few," said Cal Fire inspector Colleen Baxter. "There's hundreds of them because anytime someone builds new construction in Santa Cruz County, that's one of the requirements is above ground supply, 10,000 gallons of water and a residential fire hydrant."

So Cal Fire is offering the locks for \$100 for private hydrants and \$200 for municipal water systems. Residents of Scotts Valley hope no one is stealing water from hydrants. "Construction companies or something," said Scotts Valley resident Don Roberts. "But I wouldn't think, though. Hopefully they're honorable enough not to." When asked if he thinks the locks will be a deterrent, fellow Scotts Valley resident Bart Berardo said, "Oh, yeah, sure. I mean, it would be to me because when are they going to do it? At night? If you're going to do it at night and start breaking a lock, you're going to wake everybody up, right?" In Contra Costa County, fines are being imposed. It's \$250 for a first offense in one water district and \$500 the second time.

THE VALLEY FIRE

ABC 7 NEWS 5PM - THURSDAY, 9/24 (2:15)

SFFD CRITICIZED FOR NOT SENDING STRIKE TEAM TO VALLEY FIRE

A San Francisco Fire Commission meeting was held Thursday where firefighters spoke out against the decision by San Francisco Fire Chief Joanne Hayes-White to not send a mutual aid strike team to help Lake County crews fight the Valley Fire. A number of firefighters including, assistant chiefs told the commission that it was morally and professionally wrong not to respond to mutual aid to help fight the Valley Fire.

"I personally apologize for our leadership's failure to provide assistance to the residents of Lake County," San Francisco Fire Department Asst. Chief Tom Siragusa said. It was ironic for Siragusa because he started as a firefighter 40 years ago in Middletown, Lake County, so the Valley Fire was personal. The Valley Fire broke out September 12 when flames raged through Lake County, destroying everything in its path. Residents were being evacuated as their homes burned.

Siragusa couldn't believe what he was hearing. "We had a neighboring county that was in the middle of the biggest disaster that they ever had," he said. Lake County officials asked San Francisco to send a strike team with five engines, 20 firefighters and a team leader. Siragusa went to his superiors. "We're 90 minutes away from providing help and at every turn I was told we're not going to do it," he said. Siragusa was told that San Francisco already had a strike team at the Butte Fire in Calaveras County and Lake County was not part of the city's immediate mutual aid partner. Nevertheless, the chief was able to send one engine company.

Now, she spent a lot of time looking for resources to be able to send up there," San Francisco Fire Police Department Spokesperson Lt. Mindy Talmadge said. She also says sending another strike team would have meant closing a fire station, which the chief can't do under a city ordinance. But Siragusa doesn't buy that. "I would be willing absolutely to send five of them for a 12-hour period of time to go help them. That's what neighbors do," he said. Siragusa said what San Francisco did was like passing a lifeboat from the Titanic and not stopping.

(Valley Fire Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 5PM - FRIDAY, 9/18 (2:15)

MIDDLETOWN HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL EAGER TO RETURN TO FIELD

After the devastating losses Middletown has recently faced, the high school football team is looking forward to getting back on the field and return to some normalcy. Many of the evacuees at the Valley Fire evacuation center in Calistoga are from Middletown, an iron-clad community where football brings them together on a Friday night.

They could use a morale boost, especially on a Friday night when the Middletown High School Mustangs are supposed to be playing their homecoming game. Middletown resident Gerardo Cruz said, "Middletown needs to have a football game, bad. It brings everybody's hopes up. Friday night lights, everybody loves it." Sadly, a pile of facemasks is all that's left in the team's burnt out equipment shack. In 31 years, Middletown High School football coach Bill Foltmer has built a powerhouse Mustang football program. He has more than 240 career wins on field that has been named after him.

Foltmer told ABC7 News, "I know just about everybody and you run into them, and they tell you that they lost their home and it's just heart breaking." The fire spared Foltmer's home, but many of his players have nowhere to live, making getting back on the home field that much more important. Foltmer said, "I think it's the first step in the healing process to get those kids back on the field and just get that sense of normalcy."

Middletown football player Justin Rainee said, "Personally, I'm ready to get back on the field. I'm tired of not practicing, just laying around." Rival teams have raised money to replace Middletown's lost equipment and a practice has been scheduled for Monday morning. It's a sign Middletown is about to get back up. Middletown was supposed to play El Molino High School Friday night in Forestville. Instead, that school got together, raised \$10,000 and gave it to Coach Foltmer.

(Valley Fire Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - THURSDAY, 9/24 (2:55)

MIDDLETOWN VET AIDS ANIMALS INJURED IN VALLEY FIRE

After the devastating Valley Fire in Napa, Sonoma, and Lake counties there are many silver linings. Dr. Jeffrey Smith, D.V.M., of the Middletown Animal Hospital has helped about 500 animals that received various types of injuries. On Thursday, a pit bull name Miclo was brought in because someone shot him in the leg and face two days after the fire began. Miclo's owner, Exequiel Cervantes, doesn't know how or why his dog was shot. "We heard him cry next to my dad's room," explained Cervantes.

It's one more tough story in a community filled with them, which is why Smith and this hospital have worked non-stop to save pets that continue to come in. Smith said, "Well, it's important because people rely on them as a source of solace." When most of these animals come in, the hospital and staff rarely know anything about them -- no names, ages, or owners -- just the conditions in which they were found.

One badly burned little kitten was found alone in a garage. A Dachshund just wandered into the local grocery store. Vet assistant Jennifer Tennison has been here since the first day. She said, "It is exhausting, but so worth it."

The hospital is also helping those who lost their homes in the fire who do have their pets. Jennifer Nelson and Hayden Schwinn lost their home, but at least Shorty and Cricket have a roof over their heads. Small gifts and gestures mean a lot, right now. "It is a big help. If not, I don't know what I would really do," said Cervantes. In tough times, it is best to keep your friends around

(Valley Fire Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - MONDAY, 9/14 (2:05)

FAMILY GRATEFUL TO BE SAFE FROM FAST-MOVING VALLEY FIRE

The Valley Fire raced across Lake County at a terrifying speed and so did Middletown resident Eva Prado. "The fire didn't exist at that moment. I needed to get to my daughter," Prado recalled. She had to beat the fire to Young Street in Middletown Saturday, where her 16-year-old daughter was home alone. "So we didn't know where else to go and I couldn't leave at all because my mom was coming for me," daughter Jessica Prado said.

Steven Prado rushed to save the family dogs but there was no time to rescue any possessions. "I didn't focus on the heat feelings, I just ran," he said. Now kept out of the evacuation zone, people worry about looters. "Do they not think we're going through enough right now that they're going into our properties and taking whatever's left over? That is not OK," Eva said, wiping away tears.

The Lake County Sheriff's Department said there have been no confirmed reports of that happening so far. "That is just a rumor. We have no reports of looting, we have law enforcement out there," Cal Fire PIO Richard Cordova said. Someone sent Eva a picture of her property - she knows the home is gone. Others are trying to get into the evacuation zone but with power poles still burning and dropping lines, it's too dangerous for people to enter. "They become another hazard for us. Either they get hurt or it's so emotional for them that then we have to pull guys off the fire line to attend to a medical aid. So we just try to keep everyone out to keep them safe," Cordova said. Meanwhile, volunteers work to keep evacuees fed and clothed for what may be a week or more. "We're grateful, we're so grateful," Eva said. And grateful for what matters most. "My family means a lot more to me than anything else, cause I could never get them back," Jessica said. PG&E does not have an estimate for when all the lines will be cleared. It could be days or even a week before people will be allowed in. Reporters are stopped at all blockades and have to show press passes because in previous fires, people have posed as media in order to get in and loot.

(Valley Fire Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 4PM - SATURDAY, 9/19 (4:25)

BITTERSWEET HOMECOMING FOR VALLEY FIRE EVACUEES

The Valley Fire that broke out last Saturday, has burned more than 74,000 acres, destroyed 888 structures, including 585 homes and is still only 50 percent contained. Some Calistoga residents began to make finally their home way on Saturday. The first wave of evacuees returned to Calistoga, which they fled one week ago. In total, 85 people lined up in their cars hoping to check on their homes and animals. It's a painful homecoming for the Cervantes family. Their home was destroyed by the Valley Fire. "This is bad. This is really bad," said Anna Cervantes, who has lived in the area for the past 30 years. "We have to start all over again. We can't worry about this forever," said Samuel Cervantes.

The Valley Fire took all of Daniel Curtis' prized possessions, including his Mustang and a 1968 GTO he was restoring. His home was also reduced to ashes. "It's hard to believe it's all gone in the blink of an eye," said Curtis.

Charles Wolfensperger's appliance store survived but his heart is with his neighbors now. "Knowing we can be there for them, thinking about those who lost their homes and their lives," is what is more important right now said Wolfensperger.

A local assistance center is now open to help fire victims. "Think critical records, like DMV," explained Tim Runion with the California Office of Emergency Services. Back at the Cervantes home, something was just salvaged. Residents were also escorted to their homes in Hidden Valley, Cobb, Loch Lomond and Anderson Springs. They were given just 15 minutes to see if their homes are still standing and retrieve or feed animals. They were not allowed to get personal items or even medication.

Authorities are warning those who return home to be careful cleaning up ash, as tree ash is non-toxic and safe for basic cleanups, however, the ash from burned homes and other items can be toxic. Sonoma County deputies say to wear a mask when cleaning and do not use leaf blowers, as they just push ash into the air. They add, most vacuums do not filter small particles, so they advise using a hepa vacuum instead. If any ash gets on your skin, be sure to wash it as soon as possible. Wet ash can cause chemical burns.

Meanwhile, workers began to clean out the soot and smoke that has damaged the schools in Middletown. That includes purifying the air, wiping down surfaces, specialized vacuuming and throwing out rotten food inside fridges. Just one school was severely damaged. It is Loconoma Valley High School, a continuation school for Middletown High. Classes will be relocated while it's rebuilt.

(Valley Fire Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 5PM - WEDNESDAY, 9/23 (2:50)

FEMA ASKS VALLEY FIRE SURVIVORS TO CONTACT THEM

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, took an aerial tour of the devastation from the Valley Fire on Wednesday and now that they have declared the area a disaster zone, many are wondering what will happen next. It has been obvious for more than a week that cleaning up and rebuilding Lake County will be a laborious physical task.

There is all the wreckage of burned homes to move and to expedite that, those that lost their homes will be pushing a lot of paper too. FEMA and the California Office of Emergency Services made their point very clear to the public that they need the information and paperwork done in order to get the funds to make the clean-up happen.

It seemed reassuring to have FEMA administrator Craig Fugate in Lake County. He said publicly to the Valley Fire survivors, "Get in contact with us so we can plug you in and find out how to best help you." The Valley Fire now qualifies as a federal emergency thanks to a declaration from President Barack Obama on Tuesday. The number of burned homes now stands at 1,230. Victims are anywhere and everywhere in Middletown or Lake County. "Well, we're nomads I guess, at least for the time being," said Hayden Schwinn who lost his house in the fire.

We found Schwinn and Jennifer Nelson at the Middleton Animal Hospital where at least their dogs got new roofs over their heads. We asked Nelson what they need most and what FEMA or the state could do for them. She replied, "Well right now, we need shelter. We need money to get shelter." "We're looking at everything from hotels to what rental properties may be available, to opening an old resort - the Konocti Harbor Inn - to also maybe putting manufactured housing on the ground," said Mark Ghilarducci, director of the California Department of Emergency Services. One message from FEMA is that their assistance goes to the most-needy.

The most FEMA will pay in cash is \$3,200 per household. The average is \$7,000. "Our programs are not going to make people whole. If you lost your home and had no insurance, we will not rebuild your home. Our programs are not designed for that," Fugate said. So in fire ravaged Middletown, it remains a long road. The cavalry has arrived, but it needs information. As of Wednesday afternoon, FEMA said that about 100 people had registered, all at one Red Cross center. They say that with proper information, they can transfer money within a day. Valley Fire victims must register with FEMA in order to get federal disaster assistance.

THE DROUGHT

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - MONDAY, 7/27 (3:00)

NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBE USES OLD WAY TO FIGHT DROUGHT

In the Madera County foothills, above Oakhurst, Native American tribes and the Forest Service are working together on a solution to California's drought. It doesn't involve building dams, or digging wells. Instead, they're chopping down trees. It's an ancient practice producing more water. On a July morning at the Progeny Meadow in the Sierra National Forest, the scent of burning sage filled the air. About a dozen people gathered in a circle to listen to a voice raised in prayer, asking for ancestors' blessing before the day's work began. That voice belongs to Ron Goode, tribal chairman of the North Fork Mono Indians. He pointed out a section overgrown with trees: "These are water suckers. They take a lot of water." He knows a thing or two about the forest ecosystem.

His people have been here for thousands of years. "The more water they're pulling out of the meadow, that's also less amount of water going down to the Valley," he explained. Goode is leading the effort to restore the thousands of meadows that dot the Sierra Nevada, to restore them to the way they were when his people lived on these lands -- wide open, lush and thriving with plants and animals. It's backbreaking work, involving chainsaws, axes and saws. Goode said, "We spent two weeks cutting and we're only at 70 percent, but look at what we've accomplished. That can be done to every meadow. Every meadow can be opened up. "While chopping down trees might not seem like restoration, Goode says it's vital.

When the meadows become overgrown, any rain or snowfall gets sucked up by the trees, instead of soaking into the aquifers and feeding the streams. Thanks to their efforts the water is flowing, even in late July. This is the same water that eventually ends up in the Valley's rivers and reservoirs. A University of California study found forest thinning could add up to 16 percent more water flow yearly out of the Sierra Nevada and into California's water supply. Goode sees this work as a long-term solution to California's drought: "As Native Americans we know for a fact that there's another drought coming in the next 10 years. But if you're not preparing for the future, you're gonna have the same problem the next time a drought comes." Because only when there's water, can there be life.

Since the meadow restoration work began, dozens of species have returned to live here in the meadow, from birds, to butterflies, to beetles. Some species are not so welcome, like the invasive thistle plants. Those too are removed.

(next page)

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Forest service crews work side by side with the Native American tribes in a partnership that is now looking to expand to the public.

Dirk Charley is also Native American and serves as the liaison between the Forest Service and local tribes: "Oh, there's still a lot to do. Therefore by doing this, you're educating the people, you're able to invite them to come and join and make a difference." A difference that is already paying off.

Meadows are also natural fire breaks, and fewer trees and debris on the ground mean less fuel for wildfires, like the recent Sky Fire, which burned dangerously close to several of the meadows. So their efforts in the meadows continue because with every falling tree in our mountains, comes more water for a thirsty state. For more information on the meadow restoration efforts and how you can help, visit the tribe's Facebook page.

(Drought Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - THURSDAY, 716 (2:00)

DUBLIN RESIDENTS READY FOR NEW DROUGHT RULES

Bay Area homeowners are reacting to strict new water regulations that limit how much lawn new homes and commercial developments can have. The new regulations will have an effect on new homes and businesses. In Dublin, ABC7 News found homeowners who are more than willing to comply. The signs of California's drought are growing -- piles of dried up grass kicked to the curb, recycled water tanks parked outside homes, and drought resistant plants filling landscapes.

Landscaper Taylor Brakeman is embracing what she calls a new California consciousness. "I pull plants from lots of different drought areas -- Mexico, South Africa, Western Australia, Chile," she said. Now her neighbors are asking her for tips. Brakeman says she heard a lot of, "Hey that sounds great, would you do it for us?" She adds, "And I thought, sure!" Brakeman picked a good time to start her business.

The California Water Commission is implementing new rules reducing grass around new homes from a third of a landscaped area down to a quarter. Those new rules include reductions around new commercial and public developments as well. Large scale property changes requiring government permits also need to comply with the new regulations. "Now with the drought being at its fifth year we really need it," she said. There are some exceptions, including properties hooked up to recycled water.

Neighbor Lily Romo is one of Brakeman's first clients. "With now the restrictions and just our consideration for the environment we decided to let the grass go out," said the Dublin resident. Brakeman added, "It's going to be my canvas that I'm painting with plants." The landscaper hopes by changing landscapes she'll also be changing minds. Gone are the days of sprawling green lawns. "It should be your sanctuary it should be gorgeous," Brakeman said. A new kind of beautiful that's compliant with new state standards.

(Drought Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - THURSDAY, 7/16 (1:58)

RESEARCHERS LOOK TO CLOUDS FOR DROUGHT CLUES

While millions of Californians worry about how long our drought may last, some important clues are literally floating above us. Trouble is, we haven't been able to decode them yet. "Despite decades of research, there's a lot we don't know about how clouds behave," University of California researcher Dr. David Romps says. To help unravel those mysteries, Romps and his research partner Rusen Oktem have invented a new way of looking at clouds. They started by placing two cameras, slightly apart, along the coast of south Florida. Left alone, they produce slightly different views of the sky similar to the way each of your eyes work. "By closing one eye, and then you can close the other eye you will see the same target moving," Oktem explains. But take those moving targets and blend them together with powerful computers, and you get a stunning 3-D image of clouds as they move through their life cycle. And with all that churning, fluffy detail, the Berkeley team was then able to write a kind of visual recognition software that tracks the shape of clouds as they change.

The results are incredibly precise models of cloud behavior, from lightning, to turbulence, to perhaps the most important, rain. "The process of making rain is about cloud dynamics, how air moves through clouds and that's what we can measure with these cameras," Romps says. And while the notion of getting your arms around a cloud may seem a bit fanciful, the Berkeley team believes the data they're gathering will help researchers develop long term models that are far more precise. Helping us plan for the forces that have such a profound effect on our lives.

(Drought Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - TUESDAY, 9/10 (1:00)

NORTH BAY PREPARES FOR MORE DROUGHT AND FLOODS

A new report on El Nino came out Thursday that predicts heavy rains are likely coming to Northern California, but that could be a mixed blessing. We certainly need all the water we can get. Then again, that might mean too much of a good thing. In Novato, you can get a sense of how dry the summer has been by looking at the extremely shallow wetlands, only a few inches deep, just off Highway 101. After a good winter, there is a lot more water there that is feet deep. In the North Bay, people are worrying about floods while planning for a drought. This has been a year where Californians must account for every drop of water.

The Sonoma County Water Agency donated water saving devices such as shower buckets and shower heads. These items water savers in Santa Rosa, Windsor and in Novato. It is as if predictions of El Nino and a possible Pineapple Express never existed. "We hope some rain comes this year, but we would like to prepare our customers, just in case it doesn't," Ryan Grisso with the North Marin Water District said. "Free is good when paying those water bills. You like a little kickback," Novato resident Todd Smith said. If we had a crystal ball, dealing with the future would so much easier. Instead, we have memories and experiences.

Terry Pederson manages the Leisure Lake Village Mobile Home Park in Petaluma. He says he's concerned, but not worried. During heavy rains, Leisure Lakes has become a regular stop for us to check on flooding damage. During the El Nino of 1982, it flooded. Other years, it has merely becomes an island when a nearby, low-lying creek overflows. Leisure Lakes is a community hoping to save water, but not to float away in it, hence additional pumps, with a few rowboats lying about for good measure. Residents say it's a nice place to live, but flooding preparations come with the turf. Federal forecasters say the current El Nino appears to be one of the strongest seen in years, but it likely won't erase the California drought in one winter.

(Drought Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - THURSDAY, 8/27 (1:55)

EAST BAY COUPLE CONVERTS POOL INTO RAINWATER RESERVOIR

With the drought pushing water prices sky high, owning a pool becomes a pricey proposition, whether or not you actually swim in it. An East Bay couple decided enough was enough. The solution they found was anything but conventional. Jeff and Kathleen Johnson say their home came with a mystery fruit tree and a sprawling backyard pool. "My daughters and I thought it would be fabulous to have a pool," Kathleen Johnson said. "Now our girls are grown and on their own, and basically we don't use the pool at all anymore."

Use it or not, a pool is a lot of work. "That would be almost a daily task, to get the leaves out," Jeff Johnson said. The Johnsons decided to take the plunge and take it out. "It's a really small backyard that was taken up by a large pool and now they have a lot more space to plant lots of green," said Julie Liener, a designer and special projects manager.

You'd almost think they forgot something the pool still has water flowing into it. Landscaper Roxy Wolosenko had an idea to keep the yard lush and green while putting some green back in the Johnson's pockets. "Why not try to store some rainwater in it? You've got the hole already dug," Wolosenko said. In what was the deep end of the pool, there's now an underground reservoir made out of plastic blocks. The blocks form a surface strong enough to drive a truck over it, but equally important is how much empty space there is in the middle, space enough to hold 7,500 gallons of water. Rain captured from the roof will fill the tank, and water the new drought tolerant landscape on top of it. "And that's where the veggie gardens are going to be," Kathleen Johnson said. Kathleen Johnson's happy next year's harvest will have more than just mystery fruit.

(Drought Cont.)

**ABC 7 NEWS 4PM - FRIDAY, 7/3 (3:15)
BAY AREA CRACKING DOWN ON ILLEGAL FIREWORKS**

This week's searing heat is easing up for the holiday weekend, but not the high pressure to stop the use of illegal fireworks due to fire danger. Even in the few islands where Safe and Sane fireworks are sold, enforcement has been stepped up. It's part of the drill now. Produce an ID to prove you live in Gilroy. "It's the law and people should obey the law wherever they live, so I'm lucky that I get to live here in Gilroy and be able to purchase and light fireworks off here," Ryan Shock, a Gilroy resident.

The 16 nonprofits selling Safe and Sane fireworks generate most of their operating funds over four days. The Little League Ball Park stand rakes in \$25,000-\$30,000 a year to maintain and improve its fields. But they could lose their permits if they sell to someone outside Gilroy. "We had somebody who came by and asked if they can take it to the beach, and we told him, no, that's not allowed. You can't take them out of the city limits. If you use them on the beach, you run the risk of getting fined, so suggest, please do not," Edward Luia with the Little League Ball Park Fund.

Fire officials acknowledge no one can really track where these fireworks end up. Gilroy is the only place in Santa Clara County where Safe and Sane fireworks are sold and allowed to be set off. Gilroy had a reminder Tuesday of the high fire danger when 50 acres burned in the dry foothills. Gilroy prohibits the discharge of the Safe and Sane fireworks anywhere adjacent to wild land areas. "The police are on patrol. There's extra units, and the fire department. Our main responsibility is patrol, less enforcement than patrol, and making sure if we see anything, smell anything, hear anything, that we're on the scene quick," said Gilroy Fire Division Chief Mary Gutierrez. Nobody says they mind being carded. And with visual reminders, customers like Jacquy Carrasco say they're going to be very careful this 4th of July weekend. "We don't want to lose this privilege. We know it's very special," she said.

EDUCATION

ABC 7 NEWS 11PM - WEDNESDAY, 9/9 (1:55)

FREMONT SCHOOL DIST. TELLS DEVELOPERS- BUILD MORE SCHOOLS

The Fremont Unified School District sent a strong message to developers Wednesday night: if you want build houses, you must also build schools. A vote by the school board only begins to address the problem in the district. The median home price in Fremont is over \$800,000. People want to live there and the school district is suffering from its popularity while developers are profiting from it. "A big part of what sells homes in Fremont is the quality of our schools and that quality only diminishes when overcrowding becomes an issue," said one woman.

That is the key reason why people packed the Fremont Unified School District boardroom. Attorney Dave Lanferman, representing the Patterson Ranch development, asked for relief from an "uncertainty" vote. Its school assignment is "unassigned" meaning new students are not guaranteed a spot in neighborhood schools. "We are not going to overload schools that are already overloaded," school board clerk Larry Sweeney said. "We're going to have families with children moving in, in the next coming months and they're going to want to know 'Where's my starting point?'" Lanferman said.

The North Fremont development will add some 500 homes and originally included a new elementary school, but the developer has since backed out. That is leaving the burden on the school district to accommodate more students who will get a spot, but maybe across town. "We have the ability and the right to assign those students any school we feel is appropriate. That's guaranteed by law. That's the only thing that we have. That's the only leverage we have," Sweeney said. The board voted unanimously to keep the Patterson Ranch designation as unassigned, thus pressuring developers to build schools.

(Education Cont.)

**ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - MONDAY, 9/29 (2:25)
NASA BRINGS HIP HOP PHYSICS TOUR TO BAY AREA SCHOOLS**

It's science like you've never seen it before. This week, a NASA-sponsored tour is rolling through the Bay Area. It's one that puts hip hop beats to the laws of physics and leaves a lasting impression on middle schoolers. Science should not be boring. That's the attitude behind FMA Live!

"It is a science-based hip hop concert, basically a show, to inspire middle school students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math," said FMA Live! show captain John James. Now in its 10th year, sponsored by NASA and Honeywell, it's firmly rooted in the laws of physics and packed with rhymes that'll stick in your head. When you're talking to seventh-graders, sometimes all it takes is a good demonstration.

The learning experience comes at a key time for the kids. And while they might not understand everything that's being explained, they might just get inspired by it. "I think this is the age to actually light that little spark," said Hoover Middle School Principal Carline Sinkler. "Light that little spark with a student that says I see a future in this."

And it might just be working. When asked what they want to be when they grow up, students said an engineer, a stunt double or actor, doctor. Of course, they still have some growing up to do. In the meantime, there's joy in the little things, like sliming their vice principal.

(Education Cont.)

**ABC 7 NEWS 5PM - MONDAY, 8/24 (2:00)
OAKLAND SCHOOLS NEARLY CLOSES TEACHER HIRING**

Oakland Unified School District welcomed its students back to class Monday, as well as several newly-hired teachers. The district was short 70 teachers last week and now it has 12 open positions for educators. Wanda Reynolds, one of the district's recent hires, was named New Jersey Teach of the Year. In May, while contemplating a move, Oakland caught her attention.

"The people, the school, the history here, Oakland is entrenched in African American history and so many movements. Power movements have been made in this community, how could I not love it?" Reynold's said. Alliance Academy in East Oakland jumped at the opportunity to hire someone like Reynolds, a seasoned English teacher committed to working in underserved communities. Last year, Alliance Academy faced a harsh reality, only nine percent of students were reading at or above grade level. Finding teachers willing to come and invest in Alliance has been a challenge, especially with a teacher shortage.

"Other schools were looking for teachers and what would happen is if there was a school that had a more solid history, the teachers were able to make a choice and so of course, they would choose the school they felt was more secure," said Stacey Wyatt, the school's principal. Reynolds is seen as a rising star in the school. The teacher shortage was due to baby boomers retiring. Years of handing out pink clips during the great recession also discouraged many from going into teaching. That's changing.

"We just increased pay for our teachers so we are competitive in terms of salary, as well as still offering the best benefits in the region and we're starting our recruitment early," said Oakland Unified School District Superintendent Antwan Wilson. Oakland says the search for more teachers in key positions continues.

(Education Cont.)

***ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - THURSDAY, 9/3 (1:45)
FUNDRAISING TO HELP TWO LOS GATOS SCHOOLS DAMAGED IN FIRE***

A community restoration fund has been set up to help replace computers, musical instruments and other items damaged in a fire at a Los Gatos school complex this week. The Loma Prieta Community Center is known as the meet up place in the Santa Cruz Mountains. A lot of people and groups use it. Now, a fence is keeping people out. However, there is a big effort to help replace what was lost.

The fire damaged the building that sits between the Loma Prieta Elementary School and CT English Middle School off Summit Road in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Investigators say a 17-year-old boy and his friends were there to smoke marijuana Sunday night, but when no one had any, so they decided to keep warm by lighting a cardboard box on fire. The smoldering remains were thrown into a garbage can sitting next to the building -- leading to the fire. Classes were cancelled for the 500 or so students for the two schools on Monday.

The community center is used by several different groups -- including a seniors group and theatre in the mountains. The Santa Clara and Santa Cruz County sheriff's offices had a substation and the schools used the gym for PE and some of the rooms in the community center for music, art and dance classes.

The foundation is now raising money to help in the rebuilding efforts. Insurance will help, but so much more was lost -- including musical instruments, art supplies, sports uniforms, laptops, iPads, computers and other electronics as well as all the theater materials.

(Education Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 5PM - FRIDAY, 7/31 (1:42)

15,000 CALIFORNIA TEACHERS GATHER FOR EDUCATION SUMMIT

Teachers from all across the state came together on Friday with the goal of sharing best practices and resources as they get ready to begin a new year. It was part of the California Teachers Summit, a first-of-its-kind gathering. "It's not about covering a certain number of topics within an amount of time, it's really developing students' ability to think critically, to think analytically, to read and write in a much higher level, to see connections between disciplines," San Jose State University's Elaine Chin said.

The summit was an opportunity for educators to listen, talk and connect with their colleagues. "It's stimulating to be talking to other teachers about teacher issues. We're self-reflecting, we're learning much from each other. We're excited with each other, and we're problem solving," San Jose teacher Kimberli Doty said. Friday's event in Silicon Valley was one of the 33 held across the state. Overall, more than 15,000 teachers signed up to attend and nearly 600 of them came to San Jose State. "We truly are refining our practice. We're raising the integrity and the excellence of our profession and, truly, we are better together," Mountain View teacher Esther Wu said.

Teacher-driven topics ranged from lesson planning to parental involvement, as well as time management and collaborative learning. "Just little shifts in our instructional practice can have a really great change in the impact that we have on our students' ability to succeed," San Bruno teacher Dan Wekselgreene said. Teachers are looking ahead, hoping to have their students meet the common core. "We often underestimate the amount of time and energy teachers really put into their work, and no amount of money can really compensate for that kind of passion and commitment," Chin said. These teachers gave up a day of their summer break but got so much more in return.

(Education Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 5PM - TUESDAY, 7/14 (1:48)
MYSTERIOUS DONOR GIVES MILLIONS TO OAKLAND SCHOOLS

An anonymous person has donated millions of dollars to the Oakland Unified School District and dozens of nonprofit organizations to help children and low-income entrepreneurs. The people receiving a \$34 million gift would like to say thanks, but it remains a mystery who the donor is.

Regina Jackson from the East Oakland Youth and Development Center received a \$1 million donation to expand her building and mission. "Character building, that is the fruit of all labor, you know if we can get kids to be better people and make better decisions, we will resolve a lot of problems there are in this world," Jackson said.

At least 17 organizations received \$34 million from an anonymous donor who gave the money to the San Francisco Foundation to invest in Oakland. "They said they want it to go to Oakland. They want it to be transformative," San Francisco Foundation spokesperson Fred Blackwell said. "\$34 million can make a difference particularly in the right hands," Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf said.

The donations will reach people across Oakland including at places like the Asian Health Services, which is receiving \$3 million that will help renovate the clinic serving patients who don't speak English. Along International Boulevard, a program called Hack the Hook will receive half a million dollars to turn at-risk kids from technology consumers to technology producers. It's already influenced Ashton Ealy's life. "I use Twitter and I Facebook. You know I'm a consumer and I like to use them all the time and it just opened my eyes to get behind the scenes of those things that I like to use," he said.

SEVEN ON YOUR SIDE CONSUMERISM

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - THURSDAY, 9/10 (2:56)

7 ON YOUR SIDE HELPS COUPLE WITH IKEA KITCHEN PROBLEMS

We previously told you earlier about a Berkeley couple who took on the daunting task of building an entire kitchen from products from Ikea. They seemed to run into trouble right away because it was mind boggling. The two brave do-it-yourselfers faced a mountain of boxes with hundreds of parts.

The last time 7 On Your Side's Michael Finney saw Thea Sizemore her kitchen was in boxes on the floor. "It's hard to believe, but it will be a kitchen," she said. She and her husband bought the kitchen from Ikea, so you know what that means. "With Ikea it's like you know it's assemble," Thea said. But she says before they even started there was a catch. "I got like 90 percent of the kitchen and then there's this other 10 percent." Thea said key pieces were missing and impossible to get. "To build Ikea, you have to have the whole, like you can't just have some of the parts," Thea said.

So she contacted 7 On Your Side who got Ikea to dig up those missing pieces. And now their kitchen was a done deal, right? "Obviously we have a lot of work to do," Thea said. Actually getting the parts was only the beginning. Thea worked on finding the pieces that matched the diagram to build one of the cabinets. "And I hate reading manuals," she said.

Then, 20 minutes later, a cabinet started to take shape. "I think it's going to be a kitchen," she said. Her husband Patrick worked on making drawers, while Thea began installing pieces and the construction zone began to transform. "That's the hardest is like organizing the parts," Thea said. There are setbacks like when Patrick built the wrong sized cabinet. "I walked into the room and I'm like 'oh no that's the cabinet we don't need,'" Thea said. So Patrick had to start over again. "We're still married, it all worked out," Thea said.

After weeks of assembly required aggravation the big reward came when they finished building the kitchen. Thea says assembling an entire kitchen isn't for everyone, but in the end it's pretty satisfying. "I can't believe it's real," she said. All that hard work saved the couple a lot of money. The whole kitchen ended up costing them \$4,200, which is a fraction of a contractor's price. If you try this, Thea says make sure you have good tools, a lot of patience and maybe a marriage counselor to get through those rough patches.

**ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - THURSDAY, 9/3 (2:40)
7 ON YOUR SIDE HELPS UNHAPPY DIRECTV CUSTOMER**

As you know, television sets are becoming more and more sophisticated. If you're watching TV in high definition, you're getting a much clearer picture and eye popping color. But there are still a lot of people who watch TV on analog sets that sometimes don't work so well in the digital age.

Some folks just want to hang onto the old-style TV they've used for years, and don't want to contend with the complexity of a high tech TV. However, when old technology meets the new, they sometimes don't get along.

Esther Todd of San Francisco likes having the TV on in the kitchen. She said, "I like to have noise. IT keeps me company." For years she has used the same analog-style TV with an antenna on top and cable hookups in back. It worked just fine till she tried something new.

"AT&T kept calling and telling me a deal they had. What a good deal it would be," Todd said. She found out she could save money by bundling her AT&T phone service with DirecTV. She went for it, but as soon as DirecTV installed this dish on her house. Everything changed. "They were slow coming on and I wasn't pleased with the picture," said Todd.

She says images on the screen turned fuzzy. The remote didn't work and the technicians told her she needed a modern TV and that hers was too old, but she didn't want to upgrade it. "I'm 89 years old. I'm on social security and I can't just go out and buy a new television," said Todd. Instead, she canceled her DirecTV contract and reconnected the cable. The TV works, but the downside was DirecTV said she had to pay a \$460 early termination fee.

"I don't think I should have to pay because I wasn't pleased. They knew my television was old and I couldn't get the pictures. I told them I was going to call 7 On My Side," said Todd. She did contact us, we contacted DirecTV and the company agreed to waive the fee, telling us: "Our remote control was not compatible with the customer's television sets due to their age and the customer was required to use the TV's remote, in addition to ours. As a result, we waived the early cancellation fee."

DirecTV tells us satellite receivers should be compatible with any of the old analog style TV sets. However, the remote devices may not work together -- that's the catch. If you have an older TV you may want to ask about compatibility before you get locked in a contract.

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - TUESDAY, 9/1 (3:00)

FITNESS CLUB CHANGES POLICY AFTER 7 ON YOUR SIDE REPORT

A health club with dozens of California locations is vowing to make changes to its cancellation policy following complaints brought to light by 7 On Your Side. For six years, Fitness Evolution has been rapid expansion mode. Now the company's new senior executive is questioning whether the company has moved too fast. San Francisco resident Kirill Solodchenko works out at Kezar Stadium. He had been a member of Fitness Evolution, a health club franchise with 33 locations in the state. Solodchenko went into the club to cancel his membership. "Two months later, both my girlfriend and I, we found out that our bank accounts were still being charged," he said. He says he went into the gym in May of 2014 to complain, only to be told he didn't sign the required paperwork. The club's new senior executive Martin Stein said it's all spelled out in the contract members sign.

"We probably all at some point in time have been guilty of not reading something and signing it," Stein said. Solodchenko said the club presented him his contract on an iPad, that he felt extremely rushed and never really had a chance to read it before signing. "A lot of people are being victimized in a similar manner as me. It can be seen documented all over Yelp. It can be seen documented all over the Better Business Bureau website," he added. He said Fitness Evolution refused to bend on what they say. He and his girlfriend owed.

Both contested the bill and the bank eventually reversed the charges. One year later, Fitness Evolution sent a bill collector after them. They originally owed less than \$100. The collection agency demanded payment of nearly \$950.

Fitness Evolution says it's reevaluating its collection practices and has simplified its return policy. "We want to measure up to what you want us to be, our standard of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. If we're not doing our job, we're going to be held accountable," Stein said. The club is working to make sure members know about its cancellation policies when they join.

Club members can cancel their membership by talking to a manager and signing the forms, or doing it via certified mail, online or through regular mail. All outstanding balances must be paid before the cancellation becomes effective. "If you don't owe anything, it's as simple as that. You just cancel it," Stein said. The club has agreed to zero out Solodchenko and his girlfriend's account. Their membership is now cancelled. "I feel like it's a small battle won for the little guy. I feel grateful to 7 On Your Side," Solodchenko said. Fitness Evolution just closed its San Francisco Civic Center location. It said all memberships will be honored at nearby Fitness SF and everyone is entitled to 75 free days. It will be adding four more clubs in the state in the coming months.

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - THURSDAY, 8/27 (2:40)

7 ON YOUR SIDE: STORE LOYALTY PROGRAMS GIVE GREAT DEALS

Retail loyalty programs are gaining ground. More than just a bonus, customers are now beginning to expect them. Now even small merchants are getting in on the programs. Some of the programs are a waste of time and others can really help consumers save. So when we found out about a new program, we had to check it out.

When you hop on a jet, you can get reward miles. If you use a credit card, you can pick up points. Even when buying groceries, there are special deals for those who have signed up. "I've got one here. And I got another. I've got another one for Bi-Rite," Katie Pluymert of San Francisco said.

Pluymert showed 7 On Your Side several old-school loyalty punch cards she carries. Many smaller businesses have relied on these types of cards while the big guys computerized. Now companies like Five Stars are offering computerized loyalty programs to the little guy. "Five Stars is the same Fortune 500 level technology that is available at Safeway, Walgreen's and CVS, just bring it to a small business," Mike Polner of Five Stars said.

At Plentea customers earn free drinks and other rewards. Owner Henry Tang says before Five Stars he heard from his customers. "People always ask me, 'Hey, do you have those punch cards? Do you have something we can redeem points, something like that.' People are asking me all the time. I think people want that right now," Tang said.

"Every small business owner offers a different reward. Some people offer free coffee, some people offer, 10 percent off or 20 percent off. Every business owner customizes their own reward program that way," Polner said. Now, that is important to know.

Consumer Action's Joe Ridout looked at Five Stars at our request. He said, "We were looking through the site and found some that are quite nice, for example, a pizza shop near here. After you spend \$25 on pizza, you get another slice of pizza. More pizza is always good, right? But there is another one for MetroPCS where they give you \$1 store credit after you pay your entire bill 10 times, hundreds of dollars."

That MetroPCS deal Ridout was referring to is in San Rafael. You get \$1 if you go to the store 10 times. The app offered with Five Stars is very good. You can find participating stores, but you must remember these points and programs do not trade back and forth between retailers. Each store has its own program.

(Consumerism Cont.)

**ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - WEDNESDAY, 8/26 (2:00)
MISTAKE SNOW-BALLED FOR VACATIONING AIR TRAVELER**

An Antioch woman was all ready to vacation in Puerto Vallarta. She showed up at the airport counter and was told she didn't have a ticket to board. Frances Finley had a big problem this summer when she showed up at the Alaska Airlines ticket counter. Her name was not on the reservation. She thought she had fixed the issue back in April when she booked through Expedia.

"Upon receiving an email confirmation, I see my name isn't on the ticket," Antioch resident Finley said. She says Expedia had substituted her name with the name of someone who traveled with her four years ago on another Expedia trip. Frances contacted Expedia immediately and thought they had taken care of it.

She says she received this confirmation with her name and her husband's name, but when she and her husband showed up at the airport. "And they go, 'Oh, yeah. We have your seat. Mr Finley.' But we have no seat for Francis Finley in the system," Finley said. Finley tried to show the agent her confirmation.

"They said, 'Excuse me, we don't deal with paperwork. We only deal with the system. You're not in the system and therefore you cannot board the plane,'" Finley said. Finley was forced to rebook another ticket for \$492. She and her husband Patrick had a wonderful time in Puerto Vallarta.

When she got back, she called Expedia asking for a refund on the second ticket. She estimates she talked to 40 people. She decided to call 7 On Your Side for help. We called Expedia and the company said, "We regret the confusion surrounding the itinerary details and the delay in processing this refund." Expedia refunded the full ticket price and gave her a voucher for a future flight. "It would have never happened if KGO hadn't helped me," Finley said.

(Consumerism Cont.)

**ABC 7 NEWS 5PM - THURSDAY, 7/23 (1:40)
TESTS REVEAL BEST LAUNDRY DETERGENT**

Consumer Reports has been testing laundry detergents for years and it's now seeing what it calls the best detergent it has ever tested. Several types of Tide along with over 50 other detergents were tested and for the first time in years Tide did not come out on top.

When Consumer Reports Pat Slaven tests laundry detergents she doesn't let them off the hook easily. Each detergent is judged on how well it removes tough stains. "We use swatches that are highly saturated with stains, common stains such as blood, wine, dust sebum commonly called ring around the collar, chocolate ice cream and grass," Slaven said.

Among the laundry detergents that were tested were Wisk, OxiClean, several kinds of Tides and one each from Sam's Club and Costco. For the first time, three kinds from Persil, a new detergent available at Walmart was also tested. "Persil is popular in Europe, but is new to the U.S. The company launched the detergents in Walmart, but it plans to expand to other retailers later in the year," Consumer Reports spokesperson Dan Diclerico said.

Consumer Reports says The Persil ProClean Power-Liquid 2-in-1 turned out to be the best performing laundry detergent it has ever tested. It surpassed Tide Plus Ultra Stain Release and Tide H-E Plus Bleach Alternative, which are the other two detergents Consumer Reports recommends. "They all did a very good job on grass and chocolate, tea stains and ring around the collar. But Persil was the only one that was excellent on blood," Diclerico said.

Just like the recommended Tides, Persil ProClean costs about 25 cents per load. Other good options for far less are Sams Club Members Mark Mark Ultimate Clean or Costco's Kirkland Signature Ultra Clean Free and Clear. While they didn't perform as well as the Tide or Persil, they still did a very good job and cost half the cost.

I TEAM / SPECIAL NEWS REPORTS

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - WEDNESDAY, 7/15 (2:45)

I-TEAM: FAKE NAVY SEAL FACES FELONY THEFT CHARGES

A Marin County man investigated by the ABC7 News I-Team last year is now facing felony charges. Chuck Lyman is accused of using a fake military record to get money out of his close friends and neighbors.

Lyman pleaded not guilty to five counts of theft by false pretenses. Four of those alleged victims were interviewed by ABC7 News in March of 2014, and a new alleged victim was interviewed this week. The criminal complaint against the 54-year-old reflects what was reported last year. He allegedly convinced his own girlfriend and his neighbors at a Corte Madera apartment complex that he had an incredible military record. Reporter Dan Noyes interviewed several of Lyman's victims.

Alden Feldon: "He said he had worked in the service and that he was currently employed in the Coast Guard." Darlene Stone: "When I first met him, he brought up Navy SEALs and special forces." Susan Ferrell: "I thought it was the Army Corps of Engineers, and he was like an ex-Navy SEAL."

None of it was true. Records obtained under the Freedom of Information Act show that Lyman spent six years with the Army National Guard Reserves as a mechanic and was not on active duty. When Lyman didn't return phone calls, Noyes caught up to him in a grocery store parking lot last year. Noyes: "You claimed that you were a Navy SEAL." Lyman: "Nah, you're a bunch of s___. You can believe them if you want."

His friends told Noyes, Lyman convinced them of his special forces background and that another Navy SEAL was working with him on a great deal. They were buying containers from the Port of Oakland, refurbishing them, and selling them to the Army at triple the price. His friends say they gave Lyman money to invest. Richard Alden: "\$6,000 over time." Susan Ferrell: "\$2,500." Darlene Stone: "\$17,000." Beth Mullen: "\$30,000."

This week, the I-Team interviewed Jerry Wynkoop from his new home in Oregon about the \$6,850 he says he gave Lyman and his Navy SEAL business partner. "Vernon was supposed to be the other special-forces guy in Texas," Wynkoop said. A police detective investigating the case couldn't find Vernon, the Navy SEAL, but did learn "Vern" was the name of the defendant's first dog. Wynkoop laughed when he heard the news. "Wonderful, you made my day there, Dan. I don't know what to say about that. "Wynkoop can laugh now, but he is deadly serious about what he wants for Lyman's future. "Well, I want my money back, number one, and I'd like to put him in jail," Wynkoop said.

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Lyman was quite aggressive when confronted by the I-Team last year outside a Sonoma County grocery store.

Lyman: "Get out of here, I got the police on the phone."

Noyes: "That's all right, it's a public place. Have the police come."

Lyman called the police and said, "Get out of here, man."

An officer told Lyman the I-Team had a right to take his picture in public and that he couldn't drive his SUV because of a suspended license. Once the officer left, Lyman ignored the order and drove away. Lyman could receive five years, eight months in jail if convicted of all charges. Noyes tried to reach him and his public defender for comment, but did not hear back. Noyes plans to be in court next month as the criminal case gets underway.

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - MONDAY, 7/20 (4:25)

UPDATE: POLICE CLEAR SQUATTERS FROM OAKLAND HILLS HOUSE

After police cleared squatters out of a house in the Sequoyah Hills-Oak Knoll neighborhood, the I-Team got a look at the mess left behind. Police raided a home in the Oakland Hills on Monday. They say squatters there have been the source of crime in the neighborhood. This comes 10 days after the ABC7 News I-Team first talked to the squatters and showed you why neighbors are so concerned.

Dan Noyes got the first look inside that home and the squatters have done serious damage. The neighbors hope this nightmare is finally coming to an end.

The I-Team arrived just in time to see two squatters leaving the house in the Oakland Hills. Noyes asked the squatters as they pulled away, "Hey, how you doing? Can I talk to you? I'm from Channel 7." Oakland police swept the house. We got our first look inside at the damage the squatters have done and what they've left behind. There was junk everywhere -- trash and discarded clothing, dirty dishes and rotting food and a set of golf clubs.

Since the squatters took over the house in December, crime has soared in this normally quiet neighborhood. There have been a number of stolen cars, gunfire and drug use. Then in May, a pit bull from the house attacked neighbor Tim Nichols, biting him and breaking his arm. His dog, Billy, is still recovering. "How many times are we going to be victimized?" asked Nichols. "How long is it going to take the city to do something to have these people removed?" Police cleared the squatters out this past Friday. A neighbor's surveillance camera caught one hauling his stuff in a wheelbarrow, but they came back over the weekend. Neighbors told the I-Team the squatters often just walk the block until the coast is clear. And sure enough, when we were there, we found two more squatters just around the corner.

Noyes: "You really shouldn't stay there if that's not your house, right?"

An unidentified woman answered: "I'm not going to anymore."

Noyes: "Are you done with it?"

Woman: "Yup."

City crews boarded up the house. Police told neighbors, even if the squatters don't come back, they should expect some strangers to be stopping by. Susan Hunt told Noyes, "Well, they said that because there are some known prostitutes that have been frequenting this house, that we should probably expect people coming and going until they realize that these people are gone."

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The neighbors are scheduled to meet with representatives from the Alameda County District Attorney's Office Monday evening to give sworn statements as part of a formal process to evict the squatters. The house is headed for foreclosure. The owner had a reverse mortgage and is now in a nursing home. Neighbors can't wait for a new buyer to move in.

Noyes: "Are you hopeful?" Hunt: "I am hopeful. I was hopeful on Friday and I was very disappointed over the weekend, but I am hopeful now that they are gone. We'd like our neighborhood back." The I-Team has been getting some very interesting reports of other squatter houses around the Bay Area and are following up.

(I-TEAM / SPECIAL NEWS Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - MONDAY, 8/17 (3:20)

PACIFICA WOMAN CAN'T WORK AFTER POLICE ERROR ON TICKET

The ABC7 News I-Team investigates how a long-time driver for the U.S. Postal Service can't work, because a police officer got one number wrong on the ticket he gave her. There's some good information in this story for all drivers. That mistake by the officer started a chain reaction, and this driver has had a very difficult time getting the police and the courts to help her fix the problem. Gail Cottrell drove tractor-trailers for the Postal Service for 27 years. She's looking for another driving job, but last month when she tried to get new car insurance, she received shocking news. "I was just like, I couldn't believe it," Cottrell said. "I said I had been driving a whole year and they're telling me my license is suspended and I didn't know what it was from."

Then, she recalled in January 2014, she got a fix-it ticket from a San Francisco police officer because her Jeep had a headlight out. She had it repaired, had an officer sign off, and mailed in a \$21 check. That was Cottrell's mistake. She misread the amount; it should have been \$25. But the officer had written her home address on the ticket incorrectly -- a five should have been an eight. So, Cottrell never received any notice from traffic court about the extra \$4 she owed, or about failing to appear for her court date. She went to the counter at the Hall of Justice and recalled, "I said, 'Can you write down what date I failed to appear?' And he wrote March 28. Well, I had never heard of that day before. "That's because the officer had made another mistake. He wrote Jan. 22 as her date to appear -- the same day he gave her the ticket. An SFPD spokesman emailed the I-Team, "This incident is unfortunate. We have notified commanding officers at the stations to pass along this information to their staff about ensuring the citations are properly filled out. Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention."

That doesn't help Cottrell. Her \$25 fine has turned into \$497 with all the penalties, but that is extra money she doesn't have since she is a single mom raising two daughters. She told the I-Team, "I'm struggling really hard. I don't have my rent yet this month. I'm expecting an eviction notice any day." Cottrell has turned to the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights for help. Executive Director Kimberly Thomas-Rrapp tells the I-Team, "The big issue is when there is a mistake made by the officer or even the court system, who has the obligation to fix and address the problem? In Ms. Cottrell's case, the entire burden was really placed on her."

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In May, the Lawyers Committee released a report called "Not Just a Ferguson Problem -- How Traffic Courts Drive Inequality in California." For people of color or low income, it found "over four million people, or more than 17 percent of adult Californians, now have suspended licenses for a failure to appear or pay." The report also said the "total uncollected court-ordered debt now exceeds \$10 billion" in the state. And the report concludes, "California should end the use of license suspensions as a collection tool for citation-related debt, allowing more people to work and pay their debts."

Thomas-Rapp adds, "The fees and the fines are just continuing to mount against Ms. Cottrell and she can't do her job. She can't work. So, it would be impossible for her to even pay on the fees and fines at this stage of the process, but she shouldn't have to in the first place." Cottrell tells the I-Team, "And all those mistakes, it just trickles on down and it's just a shame that it could actually keep me from making money to support my daughter." She has filed a petition and the traffic court emailed the I-Team saying they'll have an answer this week. Hopefully, Cottrell can get this all behind her and find a new driving job.

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - WEDNESDAY, 9/9 (3:50)

A LOOK AT THE STATE BILL TO END BAN ON KANGAROO PRODUCTS

A battle over kangaroos is giving us new insight into how the California Legislature works, and how they sometimes avoid the normal vetting process for a controversial measure. A Southern California assemblyman is coming under fire for the moves he's making. In 1970, California first banned products made from kangaroo skin, such as soccer cleats and gloves. That ban was suspended for the past eight years and is set to go back into effect at the end of this year. But, not so fast.

Mike Gipson is a freshman assemblyman from Southern California. His district includes Carson, Compton and North Long Beach. He's open about where he got the idea for his latest and most controversial measure. "The Australian Government have, as well as other people, approached me around this particular measure," he said. According to Gipson, his constituents enjoy soccer cleats and gloves made from kangaroo hides, and he wants to end the state ban of those products for good. He's also concerned about California's business relationship with Australia.

Gipson: "Not to mention jobs as it relates to, will be placed in jeopardy as it relates to this bill." Noyes: "Which jobs? Which jobs are going to be in jeopardy?" Gipson: "Well, the jobs that through this particular bill, the import and export of the kangaroo." Australia culls millions of kangaroos each year; they outnumber people there. The Humane Society of the United States, or HSUS, calls that "the world's largest wildlife slaughter" and opposes Gipson's efforts. "I think everything about this stinks," said Jennifer Fearing with the HSUS. "I think it's all meant to be cloaked in secrecy and obfuscate a real conversation."

Gipson did not follow the normal procedure of introducing a bill early in the session and holding committee hearings. He took a bill he authored on gambling back in February, AB-1188 and, just last week, gutted and amended it, turning it into the kangaroo bill. Gipson will need a two-thirds vote in the Senate and in the Assembly by this Friday to pass the measure.

Gipson: "So, I have to get a 54-vote in the State Assembly. So 29 votes, I believe, in the State Senate in order for it to pass through."

Noyes: "But in three days though, right?"

Gipson: "In three days."

Noyes: "But, is that not a rush process?"

Gipson: "No."

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Gipson believes at some point in the next few days, he'll hold a committee meeting where the public can voice their opinions.

Sacramento State government studies professor Wesley Hussey told the I-Team, "Sometimes these bills go through committee in 20 minutes, and 10 other gut and amend bills will join them and it will be a very quick hearing." He adds that gut and amend is a California concept that's not seen in other states or the federal government, and that oversight is weakening. "There used to be a process where a committee would review the gut and amend changes and they have to be at least the same topic," said Hussey. "And that's going away; the extra regulation involved if you're going to do a gut and amend has disappeared." An animal rights activist has filed this complaint with the California Fair Political Practices Commission, saying the Australian Government has funneled money through a kangaroo industry trade group to a Sacramento lobbyist to influence the debate. A check of political contribution records shows 14 lawmakers received money from that lobbyist, including \$1,000 to Mike Gipson. "If you're asking me have I, am I carrying this bill for that particular reason? The answer is no," Gipson said. "We have seen members of the Australian Consulate lobbying alongside these paid lobbyists in the building last week. People should be concerned about a foreign government's influence here that's not being disclosed to their people or ours." Editorials in the Los Angeles Times and Sacramento Bee say Gipson should drop the kangaroo bill, in part because of his gut and amend tactic. Dan Noyes is posting more of the interviews with both sides of the issue on his Facebook page. He'll keep track of what happens and get back to you.

(I-TEAM / SPECIAL NEWS Cont.)

ABC 7 NEWS 11PM - THURSDAY, 9/24 (3:50)

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER MISTREATS AUTISTIC BOY, FATHER SEEKS HELP

If there were a video of your child being treated badly by a school bus driver, would you want to see it? And, would you have a right to see it? A San Mateo County school bus driver has lost her job because of how she treated a nine-year-old student with autism. But the student's father is having a hard time finding out exactly what happened on that bus, so he turned to the ABC7 News I-Team for help. In this case, law enforcement, the school district and the bus company didn't let the father see that video, and he can't understand why. Lloyd Santos is a 9-year-old special education student with autism at Roosevelt Elementary in Daly City. He is a happy, inquisitive boy, but something changed after school one day last May. When his grandmother met him at the bus stop, Lloyd wasn't his usual happy self. The I-Team spoke with his father, Jason Santos, about the incident.

Santos: "My mom noticed that he was scared there."

Noyes: "He came off the bus and hugged her?"

Santos: "Yeah, and then looking at the bus driver like that, 'Grandma, I love you. Grandma, I love you.'"

Other students complained the driver had grabbed Lloyd after he refused to sit at the front of the bus, so the school called police. A Daly City detective told Santos a surveillance camera captured the incident.

"He saw the video and when I requested, 'Can I see it?', he said, 'I wouldn't suggest it because you'll get even madder,'" Santos said, telling the I-Team after that initial meeting, police would not return his calls. So Noyes began digging. After weeks of phone calls, door knocks, and public record requests, the I-Team obtained a copy of the police report. The detective recommended a charge of "willful cruelty to child." Students on the bus told police "the bus driver got rough with [Lloyd]," and "grabbed his hoodie and pushed him down, then picked him up with both hands and pushed him into the seat." Lloyd "began crying" and yelled "baby bus driver stupid!" The bus driver told police "she did not touch [Lloyd], only his clothes." The report reads: "I wouldn't hurt anybody, especially a little kid, but he was defiant... I should have handled it differently."

The San Mateo County District Attorney's office reviewed the case and decided not to prosecute. "We determined that even though it was not necessarily appropriate conduct by the bus driver, it does fall short of criminal conduct," San Mateo County Deputy District Attorney Karen Guidotti told the I-Team.

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Guidotti added that it didn't help the case that Lloyd would not tell the investigating officer what happened. "It appears because of his developmental disabilities that he was not able to have a conversation with them," Guidotti said. But Lloyd was very clear with Noyes. He said he doesn't like sitting at the front of the bus with the girls. He likes it near the back, with his male friends. "She doesn't like me to sit with the boys any more on the bus," Lloyd said. He said he was scared that day when the bus driver came back to get him.

Lloyd: "Grabbed me."

Noyes: "She grabbed you?"

Lloyd: "Yeah."

Noyes: "Grabbed you where?"

Lloyd: "On the hood."

Noyes: "On the hood of your sweatshirt?"

Lloyd: "Yes."

Our public records request to obtain Lloyd's surveillance video took Noyes from the San Mateo County District Attorney to Daly City Police, the City Attorney, the school district, the bus company Durham School Services, and to the San Mateo County Office of Education and County Counsel where they refused to release it, on grounds of "student privacy". But if they wanted to release the video, they could easily protect the identities of the students on the bus by blurring their faces.

"I think that is a very strong argument," said California First Amendment Coalition executive director Peter Scheer. He added that there is no good reason to withhold the video. "Let the various responsible public officials know that they are making a mistake here, and they need to figure out a way to exercise their considerable discretion," Scheer said.

At least one public official has gotten the message. "They're not disclosing it. That's not right," Daly City Councilmember David Canepa told the I-Team. He's pushing the San Mateo County Office of Education to release the video. "We have to learn from these events and the more that we don't disclose or reveal it, how are we supposed to learn on preventing these incidents in the future?" Durham School Services confirmed that the bus driver lost her job after the incident. That's not enough for Santos, though, he wanted her prosecuted. Still, he doesn't plan to sue. "My close friends would tell me, 'Oh, you'll get money out of that, you'll get this or that.'" But Santos said, "I don't want money. I just want justice, that's all I want." The bus company is now making arrangements with the father to see the video. They will not give him a copy of it. We'll let you know how this turns out.

ABC 7 NEWS 6PM - THURSDAY, 7/23 (3:50)

I-TEAM: FAKE MARIN COUNTY MARINE ACCUSED OF ABUSIVE TRAINING

The ABC7 NEWS I-TEAM is investigating claims a Marin County Gym Owner poorly treated some of the young men who came to him for training. Greg Allen shut down his business in May after the I-team revealed he lied about being a military hero and that the FBI is investigating possible criminal charges. Allen put himself out there as a war hero and a former Marine drill instructor who knew how to get someone in shape. But the real professionals tell the I-Team that some of what Allen allegedly did at his gym was abusive and dangerous. Joey Lazor is heading off to college soon, but he was just starting his freshman year of high school when he went to San Rafael's House of Steel. His Dad thought it would toughen him up. At 4am on a school day, Lazor says he made the mistake of looking gym owner Allen in the eye.

Lazor: "He said, 'Don't you dare f***** look me in the face or I'll smash your head into the wall.'"

Noyes: "And you're 14 years old?"

Lazor: "Yeah, it scared me. His bald head and very piercing watery blue eyes, I will never forget that image."

Even though Allen's actual military records show no active duty, just eight months in the Navy before a medical discharge, he demanded respect as a war hero, as seen in a video obtained by 20/20. "My name is Gregory Bruce Allen, retired first lieutenant United States Marine Corps," he said in the video. Allen wore a rack of phony medals, including a Purple Heart and Bronze Star with "V" for valor. He also lied about being a Recon Marine, a sniper with two tours in Vietnam. Hardy also worked out at House of Steel and he tells the I-Team, "He was talking about like they made a movie about him called 'Sniper' and stuff like this." When asked if Allen meant the movie was about him, Hardy said, "Yeah, he said it was about him, which it really isn't."

Allen inspired such admiration in the young men he trained, several got big tattoos like one that reads: House of Steel -- Lt. Greg Allen.

"I would feel like I got duped if I got that tattoo and found out that this guy was a fraud," says 1st Sergeant Christian Bull, a real Marine drill instructor. The I-Team asked Bull to analyze the claims about Allen's training techniques. The House of Steel workouts were reportedly very tough, especially for beginners like Lazor on that first day.

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"And I remember trying to do, you had to do 100 pushups," Lazor said. "And if you didn't, you had to start over. And I could not get past the pushups." Bull explains, "And you can hurt somebody like that. That's exactly how you're going to hurt them. How can I train somebody if I don't know their ability?" Later that morning, Lazor said Allen held a hose over kids' faces, as they lay outside on the ground.

You have to scream like non-stop, otherwise the water goes in your mouth and the only way to prevent yourself from choking is to, is just to keep screaming cause as soon as the water gets into your mouth you start choking and then it's just a disaster," he said. Several sources told the I-Team that Allen often used that technique with the hose. Bull: "That sounds like something you would do in some kind of POW camp." Noyes: "Do you use water in any way besides to hydrate, besides a healthy way?" Bull: "Absolutely not." Kris Hardy told the I-Team that Allen and his squad leaders sometimes used drinking water as punishment and that in one session, while running laps in a parking lot, he downed 10 bottles. "We'd have to drink the whole water bottle after one lap," he explained. "And then we would get another water bottle, have to drink that all down in another lap, and do that over and over again until we vomited back up."

Hardy says one of Allen's squad leaders made him do pushups in the mess. "What kind of person would make somebody else do pushups in their own vomit?" Bull said. "To me, I don't see how the guy slept at night." Bull says Allen seems to have made up training techniques of what he thought Marines might do because he never attended boot camp himself. Bull is upset about what Allen did in the name of the U.S. Marine Corps. "It absolutely infuriates me because to me that's un-American," he said. "You don't do stuff like that. We are a nation that's built on honesty, integrity, commitment, dedication. These words, they have meaning. When we say things they mean something. Some young men serving in the military credit Allen's training with giving them a head start before boot camp.

The I-Team spoke with Simon Duvall, a Recon Marine, when he was in the Philippines for a joint exercise." Getting in shape, a lot of running, a lot of calisthenics, lifting," he said. "It definitely prepared me, gave me an upper edge." Duvall was stunned when the I-Team broke the news to him that Allen is a fake. Bull said that with all the effort Allen put in, he could have become a real Marine and wouldn't have had to lie about it. After the first I-Team report in May, Allen shut down the House of Steel. Two weeks ago, we saw a crew patching the walls at the gym and preparing for new tenants. Allen did not return the I-Team's calls or texts, but we did reach his lawyer who would not comment for this report. The Marine Corps has banned Allen from all functions and facilities and now forbids any Marines from working out with him. The I-Team will keep tabs on the FBI investigation and report on the outcome.