

KGO-TV
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
QUARTERLY LISTING OF COMMUNITY ISSUES
AND
RELATED PROGRAMMING

SECOND QUARTER 2017
REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING

During the Second Quarter of 2017, 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>Saturday</i>	<i>8:00-9:00AM / 4:30-5:00PM</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>9:00-10:00AM / 4:30-5:00PM</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- Let's Dish, Deals, Mexico: One Plate at a Time, Knock It Off, The Balancing Act, Fix This Yard, Food Rush and My Family Recipe Rocks, and Fix This Yard 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 second quarter of 2017, 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 WITH CHERYL JENNINGS: 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's Cheryl Jennings hosted this program that aired Sundays from 4:30 to 5:00pm.

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, email and hotline telephone calls from viewers seeking help with a wide variety of consumer problems. On the average, the unit received over 500 e-mails / letters, and over 1100 phone calls per month.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

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

AROUND THE BAY CALENDAR:

Through– 4/7/17

Unity Care: Youth Live (5/6/17) Spencer Christian MC

March of Dimes: March for Babies (4/22, 4/29, 4/30) ABC7 MCs

4/8/17 – 4/21/17

Hillier Aviation Museum: Airport Runway Run 5k/10k (4/23) Sandhya Patel MC

Ronald McDonald House of SF (5/19) C. Jennings, Mike Nicco MCs

Easter Seals Bay Area Gala (4/22)

4/22/17 –5/5/17

Marin Open Studios (first 2 weekends in May)

University High School: SF Decorator Showcase (4/29-5/29)

1000 Mothers Against Violence: Mourning Mothers Walk (5/13)

5/6/17 –5/19/17

Make-A-Wish Bay Area: Wishes in Wine Country (5/20) Ama Daetz MC

Leukemia & Lymphoma Soc. of Bay Area: Man & Woman of the Year (5/20)

5/20/17 – 6/2/17

Swords to Plowshares: Summer Concert (6/21) Eric Thomas MC

Trevor Project: Runway show (6/22)

Giant Steps: Steps & Style Fashion Show (6/4)

6/3/17 – 6/16/17

Italian Street Painting Marin (6/24-6/25)

Livestrong Foundation: Ryan's Ride (6/25)

Diablo Ballet: PAWS de Tutu (6/24)

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 applies feedback from the community in determining the key local issues, problems, and needs. Some of the station’s most significant treatments of these issues are described on the following pages:

- *ECONOMY*
- *TRANSPORTATION*
- *CONSUMERISM*
- *HEALTH / SAFETY & MEDICAL*
- *I-TEAM / SPECIAL NEWS REPORTS*
- *ABC7 STARS WHERE WE LIVE*

ECONOMY

MON 4/3/17 - ABC7 NEWS 5:00PM (1:35)

FED REGULATION OF FOREIGN WORKERS TO SILICON VALLEY

There's confusion and concern over a new guideline from federal authorities that may make it a lot harder for foreign computer programmers to come and work in Silicon Valley. The heart of Silicon Valley runs on the skills and innovation of those who love working in computer science, but the reality is, not enough people do.

"We're only producing 25,000 American-born kids with computer science degrees annually to fill 125,000 annual job openings," said Carl Guardino of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group. And that's why California has the highest number of H-1B visa applicants.

Over the weekend, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services issued a memo that is causing concern. It changes the way the agency processes applications for computer programmers and puts the burden on the company to prove that specific position is a specialty occupation. "Position of the computer programmer, it could invite further attention from immigration and they could issue a request for further evidence," said Immigration Attorney Jay Terkiana.

Terkiana says 80 percent of his clients are start-up companies and they could be impacted because of this new mandate. Industry watchers do not think established companies such as Google or Apple will experience much trouble getting visas approved for recruits.

"Our start-ups can barely afford to go through the H-1B process," Guardino added. "The lawyer fees are \$10 -- 20,000 per applicant." H-1B visas are awarded through a lottery system and the process to apply for the fiscal year began Monday. Attorneys and employers are closely watching if the Trump administration makes any changes to the process this year.

TUE 5/2/17 - ABC7 NEWS 5:00PM (2:00)

DEBUT OF ELECTRIC BIKE WITH FITNESS TRACKING

A new electric bicycle with fitness tracking technology debuted in the Bay Area Tuesday aimed at helping to reduce traffic congestion from commuting drivers. Swift mile installed an electric bike station that is solar powered at PARC in Palo Alto. They had a pilot program in San Jose at VTA and Google. Riders just need to download the app to reserve a bike.

"Show up, you hit the button, boom the bike's available and then you can take it home, you can take it wherever you'd like," Swiftmile Co-founder Colin Roche said.

PARC was looking for a way to help ease the commute and parking for its employees so it invested in the e bike stations. Like other companies they have shuttles but the schedules don't work for everyone. Rob McHenry, PARC Chief Operating Officer "It's kind of a win-win. They're not only a fun alternative way to commute, but it also decreases the number of cars and the traffic congestion around the area and the number of cars parking out here," PARC COO Rob McHenry said.

Swiftmile incorporated fitness tracker technology that tells riders information such as their distance and how many calories burned. Its founders feel the bikes be in demand because research has shown people are more likely to commute to work on a bike if they don't have to sweat. "I got up this hill really easy earlier. I don't think I'd sweat too much on a bike like that so I'd be cheating a little bit I wouldn't be burning as many calories if I used that system, makes the ride a lot nicer," PARC employee Tim Curley said.

MON 4/24/17 - ABC7 NEWS 11:00PM (1:51)

FLYING CAR DEBUTED IN SOUTH BAY

The future is here and it's airborne. A South Bay company has revealed its prototype for a flying car. The company says the Kitty Hawk Flyer is safe, tested, and legal to operate. You don't even need a pilot's license. "It really is an exciting area to be involved in from autonomous vehicles to these kinds of vehicles, absolutely," said Fred Barez, the head of the Aviation and Technology department at San Jose State University. He says eventually people will be able to fly themselves to and from work in something like this. The personal flight delay will come from the state and the federal government. "If you're going to be dealing with DMV and FAA working together," Barez told ABC7 News. "So that's the issue you're going to be dealing with, so regulation is the issue but the technology is there."

Kitty Hawk says the flyer is for recreation only. It can be flown only in uncongested areas, like over a body of water. Drivers of regular cars saw the test flight video. "I think it's really cool," said Campbell resident James Lick. "I think we'll get there at some point like "Back to the Future Part II. If I could afford one, I'd probably buy one." "It looks like fun, but I would worry about the safety issues," said Lynette Renteria of San Jose. Barez says the flying car is basically a giant drone and the company's number one priority should be assuring the public that the aircraft is safe. As for the price tag, that has yet to be revealed.

WED 5/3/17 - ABC7 NEWS 6:00PM (1:51)

INTEL UNVEILS GARAGE OF THE FUTURE IN SILICON VALLEY

Intel took the wraps off a new garage Wednesday where engineers will tinker with the cars of the future as self-driving cars inch closer to your driveway than ever before. Intel took the wraps off a new garage Wednesday where engineers will tinker with the cars of the future as self-driving cars inch closer to your driveway than ever before. While the ribbon cutting was quiet, the innovation inside will echo around the world. "It's looking around to see if there's a safe distance and changing lanes," Intel representative Anthony said. Anthony may be in the driver's seat, but really, he's just along for the ride.

The cars have sensors and cameras pointed in every direction, allowing the car to generate so much data that within a week, the trunk would be filled with hard drives. The trick is how to use all that data, and then quickly make room for more. Intel is teaching the cars to drive in different countries. "In the U.S. we have left freeway exits, we have right turns on red," BMW Engineer Grant Mahler said.

With no human to talk to, designers have to figure out how you'll interact with the car, from how long you need to hold the button down to how the car will convince you to trust it. "People obviously want to feel safe, they want to feel comfortable; physically comfortable yes, but more importantly psychologically comfortable," Intel Internet of Things Creative Director Matt Yurdan said. An autonomous BMW could hit the market by 2021.

TUE 6/6/17 - ABC7 NEWS 5:00AM (1:51)

NEW HARDWARE UNVEILED AT APPLE WORLDWIDE CONFERENCE

Several announcements were made Monday at the annual Apple Worldwide Developers Conference in San Jose. The company unveiled new hardware for consumers to use in their home. With thumping music and slick video, Apple showed off its latest invention for the masses -- a new smart speaker. "It's actually beautiful and we call it Homepod," Apple CEO Tim Cook said.

Apple said just like the iPod reinvented music in our pockets, it wants to do the same for music in our homes. "A breakthrough home speaker with amazing sound and incredible intelligence. It will reinvent home audio," Cook said.

It's a voice-activated speaker that uses Siri. Apple was late in introducing a speaker to consumers. There's likely to be comparisons to the Amazon Echo and Google Home, but Homepod is different. "It's about focusing on music, putting Apple music at the center of it and Siri interestingly becomes a musicologist," creative services tech analyst Carolina Milanesi said. The Homepod was just one of many things unveiled Monday. A new larger 10.5 inch iPad Pro that promises to be faster was introduced. Apple has also introduced a new feature called "Do Not Disturb While Driving." Apple said it will use speed-detection to know if a user is in a car while it's moving and block notifications to your iPhone. The screen will stay dark and auto reply messages can be set up. Users who are passengers can grant full notification access. Apple also showed its progress in virtual reality capabilities using Mac's new OS High Sierra.

Apple wowed developers with a new platform to make augmented reality apps, as well. Among them is a 10-year-old who had invented five apps and showed them to Apple's CEO. "It was amazing and when I showed him my app he was really astonished," Yuma Soerianto said.

MON 5/22/17 - ABC7 NEWS 4:00PM (1:35)

NEW LOOK AT APPLE'S FUTURISTIC CAMPUS IN CUPERTINO

Workers are putting the finishing touches on Apple's new state-of-the-art headquarters, years in the making. ABC7 News has a new look at the nearly completed futuristic campus. Sky7 flew over the new "Apple Park" campus that is nearly completed in Cupertino. It was the dream of the late Apple founder Steve Jobs - an office park that looks more like a nature refuge. The complex is just about finished and a small number of employees have quietly moved in. Sky7 flew over the 175-acre site Monday afternoon. You can see the perfect circle design of the main building.

The campus will be powered 100 percent by renewable energy. Sky7 spotted workers installing solar panels on the roof. Some of the park-like features are taking shape. A fraction of the campus' 9,000 trees have been planted and a giant fountain is under construction. The glass pavilion where you enter the Steve Jobs Theater looks to be mostly completed, although the actual auditorium is underground. That's where future Apple unveilings will be held.

There are also tunnels, ones that take construction crews inside the ring, and ones that will allow employees to zip from one part of the campus to another. The move in process is just getting underway. It'll take months for all 13,000 employees will work there to get in. There will be a visitor center with an apple store and café open to the public.

TRANSPORTATION

TUE 4/11/17 - ABC7 NEWS 5:00PM (2:20)

OAKLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT AND AC TRANSIT IN TALKS

Oakland Unified School District officials say AC Transit service to three schools may end since they can no longer afford it after losing funding from the state. AC Transit and the Oakland Unified School District have been in negotiations to resolve an ongoing issue regarding transporting students from three schools in the Oakland Hills. While AC Transit has promised to continue bus service through the close of the school year, nobody knows what's going to happen next year.

Students at Skyline High School in the Oakland Hills lined up to get on several AC Transit lines, unique to them. In fact, a total of 56 buses are provided exclusively to Skyline, Montera Middle School and Community Day High School thanks to an agreement between the school district and AC Transit. That was, until the Oakland Unified School District said it could no longer pay after losing funding from the state. "It is an agreement that had to be changed because of the way the state funded our home-to school transportation dollars. That money is no longer there," OUSD spokesperson John Sasaki said. AC Transit was surprised to learn the district was bailing out after the Oakland Unified School District lost \$2.25 million to subsidize student bus fares. Still, the transit agency promised to continue service until the end of the academic year while trying to determine if it's even financially possible to absorb the costs of transporting these students. "That would be for our planners to decide. There have been discussions about what efficiencies can be reached," AC Transit spokesperson Robert Lyles said.

AC Transit says other school districts operate along traditional routes and have adjusted their in-and-out times to fit the bus schedule. "So doing some very careful calculations on bus schedules, things like that, we'll be able to save quite a bit of money. The question is how do we close the rest of the gap" Lyles said.

Joseph Muscadini said he may have to transfer to another school. "If we lose the buses, I'll have no other way to come up to school," he said. Both sides promise to provide update to families as needed.

FRI 4/14/17 - ABC7 NEWS 11:00PM (1:50)

BART WORKS TO IDENTIFY MYSTERIOUS ELECTRICAL PROBLEM

An unsolved power problem that led to months of commute delays last year appears to be back. BART is working round-the-clock Friday night to identify and fix the mysterious issue that damaged 22 cars between North Concord and Pittsburg - Bay Point stations.

Commuters headed to Pittsburg - Bay Point were greeted by yellow-vested BART workers at the North Concord - Martinez station, one stop short of their final destination. An electrical problem on the tracks between those two stations seemed to affect longer trains. So BART used shorter, 5-car trains, to shuttle people between North Concord and Pittsburg. It was puzzling for some riders. "They just said they're having electrical problems at Pittsburg-Bay Point and we have to switch to a shuttle train, just confusing," said Oakland resident Allena Alasad. She was trying to get to the last stop on the line to pick up her son and go back home to Oakland. She had to have her babysitter drive him there before heading home.

Some commuters told us they could smell something burning on the ride to the North Concord station. "We caught the BART in Fremont. And all the way up here it smelled like burning break fluid," said rider Jamie Chavez. "Smelled like something was burning, almost something like electrical, or burning breaks," rider Rodney Hackney told ABC7 News. The problem started around 10 a.m. Officials spent the day tracking down what's causing the electrical systems to go haywire. Last year, mysterious power surges damaged dozens of cars. The problem eventually went away, even though the exact cause has not been found.

MON 5/8/17 - ABC7 NEWS 11:00PM (1:50)

CRIME ON SAN FRANCISCO MUNI HITS 4-YEAR LOW

Crime on Muni has dropped to its lowest point in four years, according to data analyzed by the San Francisco Examiner. Muni officials track their crime rates based on miles traveled per vehicles. As of February 2017, there have been 3.8 crimes per 100,000 miles traveled. The crime rate has dropped nearly 70 percent since a high of 12.2 crimes per 100,000 miles in October 2013. The transit system is safer now than it was a couple of years ago. "Wow, that's amazing, I don't know what would have changed really," Muni rider Kimberly Needham said.

Riders might not have noticed the shift, but SFMTA spokesperson Paul Rose said Muni made key changes to combat crime, including better communication with police, better video cameras and new data-driven policies. A rider said the news is exciting, but she's still on her guard. "Really early in the morning at this time, I'm a little nervous. I try to leave my house just in time to catch it, so I don't have to stand at the bus stop," Muni rider Roxana Delatorre said.

By contrast, BART is dealing with a rise in crime. BART measures crime rates per one million riders and after three years of decline, the rate of crime spiked to 2.24 crimes per million riders at the end of last year. There's a growing trend of youth robberies on BART, including the flash mob-style robbery on a Coliseum BART train. In response, the BART acting police chief said officers are being deployed to the stations with the most crime, including the Coliseum, Bay Fair and Fruitvale stations.

MON 5/8/17 - ABC7 NEWS 6:00PM (1:30)

MAN HURT IN GROUP TAKEOVER ROBBERY SUES BART

One of the victims from the flash mob BART takeover is suing BART for gross negligence. It was in April that dozens of teens jumped the turn styles at the Coliseum BART station, boarded a train and began robbing people of cellphones, purses and wallets, in some cases beating some victims into submission. Dublin resident Rusty Stapp says he was one of them. He says two to three people were beating him, even kicking him at one point, and that his wife fell on top of his daughter to cover her up and protect her. "If they can't protect the basic passenger from assault and robberies, how are they protecting us from terrorism right now? This was such an easy crime for these individuals to commit that I want to shine a spotlight on this," said Stapp.

Stapp said he and his family suffered physical and emotional injuries. "The BART personnel showed a conscious disregard for the safety of the BART passengers by failing to take any measures to prevent this attack from happening, starting with the two police officers that were in the parking lot through which these individuals passed," attorney Paul Justi said. BART has previously said that it made two arrests in the incident, also that several suspects were identified. The transit agency did not respond to ABC7 News' request on Monday regarding the lawsuit.

MON 5/15/17 - ABC7 NEWS 4:00PM (3:00)

EAST BAY FREEWAY CAMERA SYSTEM EXPANDING

Officials in the East Bay are issuing a warning to the shooters who have been terrorizing freeways in the area that they will soon be on camera. The system focusing its cameras on those troubled freeways in several cities will be greatly expanded. "The message to shooters on the freeways is, 'the reign of terror is over,'" said Contra Costa County's Senior Deputy District Attorney Mary Knox. Knox also serves on the FBI Safe Streets Task Force, a coalition of state and local officials formed with the goal of reducing the number of shootings on Bay Area Freeways.

"Let it be known that there are cameras on the freeway. Let it be known that if you create a horrible act, that it will be recorded, and you will be held accountable for your actions," said Democratic Assemblyman Tony Thurmond, who represents Richmond. Counting Sunday night's shooting on 880 in Hayward, the CHP says there have been 90 shootings on Bay Area freeways since late 2015, eight of them have been fatal including the murder of DeMarcus Doss on I-80 in Richmond in March.

Now thanks to up to \$2 million in funding from the California Department of Transportation, cameras will be installed at hot spots along Interstate 80 and Highway 4. The city of San Pablo already has three cameras aimed at the freeway. It's part of a larger system of more than 100 high definition cameras which record activity throughout the city. "Innocent lives have already been lost and we owe it all of our East Bay residents to minimize the damage," said Cecilia Valdez, the Mayor of San Pablo. The new state-funded system will include a variety of wireless high-tech components, depending on the location.

For instance, the Hilltop interchange in Richmond is complex. It has a dozen lanes that need to be monitored, so it's a location that will receive a more sophisticated system that could include shot-spotter microphones, tilt/zoom cameras and license plate readers. But, the answer to freeway violence may not rest in technology alone. "Freeway shootings do continue and we have to address this issue that cameras by themselves will not address," explained Thurmond.

TUE 5/23/17 - ABC7 NEWS 4:00PM (3:00)

BART ACCUSED OF SPYING ON PASSENGERS WITH NEW APP

An Albany resident sued BART and a software company in federal court in Oakland today, claiming that a mobile application provided for reporting crimes has been secretly collecting users' private cell phone information and physical locations. The program, known as BART Watch App, is made by ELERTS Corp. of Weymouth, Mass. It was launched by BART in 2014 to enable passengers to report criminal or suspicious activity to BART police.

Between 10,000 and 50,000 people have downloaded the app, according to the lawsuit filed by BART rider Pamela Moreno, who claims she never would have accepted the app if she had known what information was being collected.

The lawsuit alleges that when the app is set up, it collects a user's cellphone identification number, known as International Mobile Equipment Identity number, and other potentially identifying data. The app is also programmed to periodically transmit the user's precise location, the lawsuit claims. The suit additionally alleges the app's privacy policy "obfuscates" the actual data collection practices. While BART and ELERTS "represent that the app is a 'discreet' way of reporting issues...the defendants actually programmed the app to secretly collect transit users' unique cellular identifiers, periodically monitor users' locations, and track the identities of anonymous reporters," the lawsuit claims.

The lawsuit claims the alleged practices violate the state's Cellular Communications Interception Act, Consumer Legal Remedies Act and constitutional right to privacy. It asks to have a judge certify the case as a class action on behalf of all passengers who downloaded the app and had their phone's identifying number recorded. The lawsuit seeks unspecified financial compensation from ELERTS and an injunction against both BART and ELERTS halting the alleged practices. BART disputed the allegations in a statement by spokesperson Alicia Trost.

"The safety and privacy of our riders are a priority and we want to make clear we are not using ELERTS system for any other purpose than responding to security and safety reports made by our riders," Trost said. "BART does not use ELERTS system to randomly track users. An app's user location information is available only if the user selects the option to share their location information. "And then, BART only receives the user's location when the user is reporting an incident," the statement said. Trost called the app "a very helpful tool for our customers to report security concerns," and said, "We wanted to offer it as another tool to keep our system safe."

CONSUMERISM

WED 4/5/17 - ABC 7 NEWS 6:00PM (2:45)

VW OWNERS HELPED TO GET BUYBACK CHECKS

Frustration is mounting among the hundreds of thousands of Volkswagen diesel owners impacted by the recent emissions scandal. The people 7 On Your Side heard from accepted Volkswagen's offer to buy their vehicles. All have turned their cars into Volkswagen, but are still waiting for their checks. "It's \$19,000 is what it was and I've gotten zero," Pacifica resident Patrick Hanley said.

Hanley turned in his car into Volkswagen more than a month ago. So did Benicia resident Lisa Tosch. "It's almost \$13,000. It's a lot of money," she said. Lisa and Ken Tosch are just two of a half dozen VW diesel owners who have contacted 7 On Your Side in the last few weeks with concerns about the buyback program. It's is part of a settlement reached after regulators determined VW cheated by rigging its cars to pass emission standards. Volkswagen's own website says: "You can expect payment within three banking days of your closing transaction."

Some said it hasn't turned out that way for them. "They took the keys and my friend picked me up from the VW dealer and I had no car and no money," Hanley said. Hanley plans to buy a new car once his money arrives. Until then, he's been forced to borrow a car from a friend who didn't expect to lend his car for so long. Lisa's story is slightly different because she received her money, but then that money disappeared electronically right before her husband's eyes. "I was dumbfounded," Ken said.

Ken said the money was removed from the couple's bank account just days after they had spent it to pay off some credit cards. "You think everything is going good and then they can do something like this," he said.

Volkswagen declined to discuss individual cases, but told 7 On Your Side: "We know that there have been some issues along the way and our teams have been working tirelessly to make necessary adjustments and continually improve the process." The automaker says it has so far removed or modified 25 percent of the 475,000 two-liter diesel vehicles. It has also hired 1,300 employees to meet demand. Lisa and two others who contacted 7 On Your Side have received their payments. Unfortunately Hanley is not among them. "I just want to move on with my life," he said. VW has not given a reason for the delays, but the car owners 7 On Your Side talked to says the automaker is blaming the problems on a server issue.

TUE 4/11/17 - ABC 7 NEWS 6:00PM (2:35)

FILLING YOUR GAS TANK MADE EASY THROUGH MOBILE APP.

Bay Area innovators are always looking for ways to make your life easier and make money doing it. 7 On Your Side says the competition for your gas dollars is getting more crowded. There's a new type of gas war going on. It's between new providers working to disrupt the way you fuel your car. Like most of us, Kevin Chew's day is pretty hectic. He's just found a new way to save a little time. "It just makes it a little easier to try it out," he said. While Chew is inside working, Booster Fuels is outside fueling up his car.

Brad Peralta is a Booster Fuels user too. All you do is put in your request for gas through a mobile app. "After the first few times, I was like wow, this is awesome. Why not do it again?" said Peralta. For people like San Leandro resident Jenny Lam, it's more than convenience. For her, it's also an issue of safety. "It's late at night. Do I want to pull into this empty gas station by myself? I never have to think about that anymore," she said. Booster Fuels is one of the new entries into the Uber for Gas concept. Right now, it's only in the Bay Area and the Dallas-Ft. Worth area.

It services mainly corporate campuses and is largely concentrated in the South Bay and the Peninsula. Another mobile gas company is We Fuel. Unlike Booster Fuels, We Fuel goes to your home. There is a delivery charge and a monthly subscription fee. Right now, the service is only provided in Mountain View, Palo Alto, Los Altos and Menlo Park. Booster Fuels expects to serve shopping centers and malls within six months. On this day, Booster Fuel is selling for \$2.94 a gallon. "Prices are very comparable especially on the Peninsula here. I can probably get some gas in the East Bay maybe a little bit cheaper," Fremont resident Kevin Chew said. None of the customers 7 On Your Side talked to thought the generic Booster Fuels gas hurt their car's performance. But all three criticized Booster about not being more precise with appointments.

"It'd be nice to get an ETA of when the truck will arrive because sometimes you don't know unless you pay for rush delivery," Lam said. That service will cost you an extra fee of \$1.99. "I would say 80 percent of our customers are taken care of by our all day window if they get in at 8, they leave at 5," Booster Fuel co-founder Tyler Raugh said.

WED 5/17/17 - ABC 7 NEWS 6:00PM (2:35)

PROBLEMS CAUSED BY ENERGY EFFICIENT LOW-E GLASS WINDOWS

Energy efficient windows can help control utility costs. They keep the heat inside when it's cold, and outside when it's hot. However, as with anything, there can be a downside. A mechanical engineer and windows researcher at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, studies energy efficient low-e glass windows. The windows have microscopically thin, transparent coatings, and often multiple panes. Using heat lamps and radiometers, He demonstrated how low-e windows work. "They're made to reflect the solar radiation back out," he said. That reflection makes homes more comfortable.

One homeowner we spoke to has given those windows a lot of thought. Since her family moved to Sonoma, they started having problems right away. "The first summer that we moved here, we moved in October, and then the following summer we put out our furniture and it started melting. It doesn't take any time. It could probably be in a couple hours time, and then it's gone." The researcher says he has measured temperatures up to 170 degrees, which is enough to warp plastics and harm plants. If this is happening at your home, there is some good news. Usually, a common screen used to keep insects out of the home is enough to diffuse the light and energy.

SAT 5/20/17 - ABC 7 NEWS 11:00PM (4:10)

ANSWERS SOUGHT IN ADOPTION CENTER'S BANKRUPTCY & CLOSURE

The shutdown of a highly-respected, Bay Area child adoption agency shattered the dreams of hundreds of would-be parents when it suddenly went bankrupt. Now, the bankruptcy trustee is going after the directors to pay back the families. The emotions run deep for those who longed to start a family and thought they were on track to bring home a son or daughter. But doors suddenly closed, leaving them without their money, trust, and most importantly, a child. The baby's nursery is almost ready in Andrea and Brad Boca's Oakland home. They have little ones, baby books and this handmade quilt. The only thing missing is their baby. "I opened my email, and it was all over," Andrea said, recalling learning the adoption would not be going through.

"She called me on the phone," her husband, Brad, recalled. "She was hysterical. It felt like someone had died. She said, 'Oh, our future just died. That what it felt like.'" Brad and Andrea, unable to conceive, pit all their hopes for having a child with the non-profit, Independent Adoption Center of Concord, known as IAC. They took out a \$15,000 loan to pay the fees, went through months of screenings, home studies, background checks and made a full-color brochure showcasing themselves to prospective birth mothers. They had just been approved, when the adoption center abruptly shut down in January. The bankruptcy crushed the dreams of more than 1,000 hopeful parents across the country. Clients said they never saw it coming. IAC had boasted a 35-year record of success, never giving a hint of the possible shutdown.

Now, bankruptcy court trustee Marlene Weinstein is suing the entire Board of Directors and Interim Executive Director Marcia Hodges, who alone collected \$181,000 in salaries in the months before the bankruptcy. Board President Greg Kuhl declined an interview with ABC7 News. But, in a bankruptcy hearing recorded by the court, Kuhl said he knew the agency was struggling. "We were always successful in rebuilding, reinventing ourselves and rebuilding, and we thought we could do it again," Kuhl said in court.

Shane and Angela Stevens, from Livermore, went through five months of screenings, refinanced their house and scraped up the \$15,000 to pay IAC in cash. "We refinanced our house," Angela Stevens said. Brad and Andrea remain incensed, they say, the agency took their final \$2,400 in December, knowing IAC could go under in January. Kuhl, in his court testimony, said the situation was heartbreaking. "I don't want to sit up here and be callous," he said in court. "Can I sleep at night? No, I can't. I can't. I don't have an appetite ... Do I feel your pain? Yes."

(Adoption Center Cont.)

Would-be parents wonder what happened to the \$4.4 million in revenue IAC took in last year. In her lawsuit, Weinstein criticized the Board of Directors, saying it failed the agency's clients.

"(They) failed to find options for fulfilling contracts with adopting parents, failed to cut overhead expenses ... and failed to use assets to make refunds to adopting parents," she said in the suit. The Board Members' attorney did not respond to our request for an interview, but an attorney for Hodges said she, as interim director, isn't to blame since the agency was failing when she took over. It's little comfort to would-be parents, who still hold out hope for bringing home a child. "Our baby was not down that path," Andrea said, "our baby is somewhere else." In one ray of hope, the state's Department of Social Services has taken custody of the adoption files for IAC clients in California. They include all the home studies, medical reports, brochures and personal information. For prospective parents, this means they can try to pick up where they left off.

TUE 5/23/17 - ABC 7 NEWS 6:00PM (3:50)

BILLIONS IN UNCLAIMED PROPERTY AWAITS RIGHTFUL OWNERS

You pay your taxes, your fees, your bills -- but chances are you have some money coming to you instead. "My office is holding on to \$8 billion dollars in property that belongs to 36 million individuals and organizations," state Controller Betty Yee told ABC7. It's true. The state of California is holding billions in cash and valuables that have gone unclaimed - and some of it likely belongs to you or someone you know.

It includes valuables held in a vault in Sacramento, like gold coins, savings bonds, diamonds, rare baseball cards, military awards and historic documents. But most of that \$8 billion is in cash - in the form of forgotten bank accounts, stock dividends, uncashed checks, and inheritances. It also includes \$300 million worth of life insurance benefits. Those benefits were never claimed, typically because heirs didn't know their loved ones had taken out policies in their names. In the past, life insurance companies were keeping those benefits, Yee tells us.

Then California and other states went after that money. Now, insurance companies are turning over unclaimed benefits over to the state. An ABC7 employee just found a life insurance policy worth \$8,600 she never knew her late mother left behind. Yee encourages everyone to check the state's unclaimed property database to find items belonging to them. On average, there is nearly one item for every man, woman, and child in California. "We make it easy," Yee said. "We ask that everyone check regularly. This is property people just forget."

MON 6/5/17 - ABC 7 NEWS 6:00PM (2:30)

GIFT CARDS HAVE BECOME A POPULAR TARGET FOR THIEVES

You want to give money as a gift. But is it best to put it on a gift card? A Marin County woman says, maybe not, and 7 On Your Side has an important warning. With billions of dollars pumped onto gift cards every year, they have become a popular target for thieves. And the more they are used, the more ways crooks find to steal them. Susan Anderson gave gift cards to friends on the east coast last Christmas. So, why are they here at her home in Marin County? "I wrapped them. I put them under the tree," Anderson said. Anderson had loaded \$100 onto each card, and then delivered them in person. But, when her friends tried to use them, they didn't work. "They were told the money had been used before they even received the gift cards," Anderson said. It turns out that a thief in Oakdale, California had drained the money before the friends even opened their gifts. "I'm not sure how it happened, but I thought it was very unfair," said Anderson.

Susan contacted Visa, who told her, "it's your problem because you have only 30 or 60 days to report any issues." Visa said she had to report fraud within 60 days of buying the card. But, she thought they were safe. "I got the activation code; I kept my receipt, also made sure the casing was fully intact and not tampered with," Anderson said. Still, someone got the money off the cards. "It's not fair to sell a card that you can't make sure is safe. Most people buy gift card because they think it's safer than cash when in reality I think it's less safe," Anderson said. She contacted 7 On Your Side. We asked Visa how a thief can steal money off someone else's card. A common way is for a thief to take a blank gift card off a store rack, copy the card number, then puts the blank card back on the rack. When a customer loads money onto it, the thief uses the stolen numbers to drain the money.

We looked at the packaging on Susan's cards-this flap opens to reveal the bar code. Maybe it was scanned and reproduced? "It looked completely closed but I have no way of knowing," Anderson said. VISA issued a statement on the case. "While we cannot control every aspect of the purchase of a gift card, we do all we can to work with issuing partners and merchants to ensure that consumers are protected." However, Visa agreed to replace her gift cards after all. "We apologize for any difficulty Ms. Anderson experienced when reporting the fraud. Protecting consumer funds is a top priority." Luckily, 7 On Your side helped because now hopefully other people will learn about this," Anderson said.

So, how can you be sure your gift card is safe? First make sure the package is intact. Choose a card from the middle of the rack. And with many bank cards, you can create a pin number right away to avoid anyone using it

HEALTH / SAFETY & MEDICAL

WED 4/19/17- ABC7 NEWS 4PM (1:35)

Utah Man Denied Lung Transplant Due to Marijuana Use

A Utah man is recovering from a lung transplant in Pennsylvania after a Utah hospital refused to put him on the transplant list. Since 2015, California law says you can't disqualify a potential donor because of cannabis use. Still, it is a factor that doctors take into account when determining who the best candidate is. Within 10 days of being sent to the hospital for pneumonia, 19-year-old Riley Hancey's lungs collapsed. He needed a new pair, but the University of Utah hospital refused to put him on the transplant list. Hancey's dad says he had tested positive for THC. "Riley was not a big pot smoker," said Hancey's dad Mike. "He did smoke pot. He's a 19-year-old ski guy. It's not like he's a smoker for 30 years and has deteriorating lungs because of that." The hospital said in a statement, "We do not transplant organs in patients with active alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drug use or dependencies until these issues are addressed."

"We've recently liberalized our criteria regarding marijuana," said Dr. Ryutaro Hirose who is a transplant surgeon at UCSF, the country's busiest transplant center. Unlike the hospital in Utah, UCSF and other medical centers in California are forbidden by state law to deny a patient solely because of marijuana use. UCSF no longer tests for THC. But they do ask patients if they use marijuana and other substances and to what extent -- one of many questions doctors say helps them determine who will thrive post-surgery. "We don't have enough organs to go around for all the people who need them, and so what we do in terms of selection is to try and determine who is going to do best," said Hirose. As for Riley, he eventually got a lung transplant in Philadelphia. He's expected to remain in the hospital for the next year.

TUE 5/2/17 - ABC7 NEWS 11PM (1:35)

SAN JOSE HIKER IN SERIOUS CONDITION FROM RATTLESNAKE BITE

A San Jose man is in serious condition following a rattlesnake bite this afternoon east of Fremont on Mission Peak, a California Highway Patrol flight officer, and paramedic said. The snake bit the man at about 1 p.m. on the top of Mission Peak during a hike with his wife. A CHP helicopter crew heard a call to emergency personnel, responded and landed on the peak. "It's a pretty popular place. A lot of people come here, everyone's heard about Mission Peak."

The victim was given anti-venom and taken to Washington Hospital for more treatment, CHP Flight Officer and Paramedic Shaun Bouyea said. Bouyea was the one who administered the anti-venom. The victim, 47, sat on a rock at the top of the peak, put his hand down and was bitten by the snake, Bouyea said. When Bouyea got to him, the victim was in serious condition. The response by emergency personnel was delayed because cellphone service is limited on the peak and a language barrier existed. Bouyea said the only way to the peak is with a 4-wheel drive or helicopter and the quickest way to the man was by helicopter. The East Bay Regional Parks District released tips and information about rattlesnakes and how to keep safe when visiting Regional Parks.

MON 5/8/17 - ABC7 NEWS 5PM (:50)

SF NURSE GETS SPECIAL SONG OF APPRECIATION FOR NURSES WEEK

A San Francisco nurse got a huge surprise at work Monday. Nelson Yee was the focus of a nurses' week serenade at St. Mary's Medical Center for having that extra touch with patients. "When someone's not your patient, but you stop by anyway, they're frustrated and you give them time to vent," said the lyrics written with Nelson Yee in mind. He was the focus of a nurses' week serenade at St. Mary's Medical Center for having that extra touch with patients. "Patients write in about part of their stay here, and sometimes my name is mentioned," Yee told ABC7 News. "And so are other nurses, but this was a big one I guess. I was so surprised by this one."

Yee was honored among all the nurses at Dignity Health's four Bay Area hospitals.

MON 5/8/17 - ABC7 NEWS 11PM (1:50)

LYME DISEASE PLAGUES FAMILY, RESEARCHERS WORK FOR CURE

May is National Lyme Disease Awareness Month, and in California, that means a push to make not only victims but doctors more aware. The state reports roughly 100 cases per year, but in reality -- doctors miss many times more due to confusing symptoms. At age 18, Louis Sheridan is so familiar with his modern medications that you might think he has a degree in pharmacology. But he knows them for all the wrong reasons. "I got mono, walking pneumonia twice, stomach flu, a bunch of colds," he said. Such are a few of the diabolically deceptive symptoms of Lyme Disease. Sheridan's mother Kathleen O'Rourke has it too, after going undiagnosed for years.

"You either sound like a hypochondriac, or you sound like you need to go to a specialist for all those things," O'Rourke told ABC7 News. Lyme comes from ticks. The spring grass is full of them, even in California where most of us recognize those tell-tale bites with a target around them but not the more subversive symptoms. That's where Wendy Adams comes in. "We want to make Lyme Disease easy to diagnose, and simple to cure," she said. Adams' Bay Area Lyme Foundation is now partnering with medical groups in California and around the country to create a biobank of different strains from across the U.S. "Only 20 percent of researchers have the material they need to do research into Lyme Disease," Adams continued.

If you have a tick bite, the foundation may ask you to volunteer a few more vials of blood when being diagnosed. "We're getting the same amount of funding as Leprosy," said Adams. O'Rourke says she picked up the disease while gardening. Nine years later, she still suffers from chronic symptoms. "I never saw a tick on myself though," O'Rourke said. "I never did." Sheridan has had it twice. The first time, from a tick on his dog, and the second while camping. The disease has slowed him down so much that high school has taken five years instead of four. In California, there are thousands of stories just like his.

THU 5/11/17 - ABC7 NEWS 5PM (2:15)

NURSES STAGE A PROTEST NEAR SAN JOSE VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER

About 50 nurses staged a short march along Bascom Avenue Thursday morning to bring attention to an issue they want addressed-- the revolving door of nurses who go through training at Valley Medical Center, and then leave to take higher paying jobs at other South Bay hospitals and medical centers. The nurses are in negotiations for a new contract. A study by the Registered Nurses Professional Association says newer nurses are paid nearly 16-percent less than the average wages at El Camino Hospital, Stanford Hospital, Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, Kaiser, Good Samaritan, Regional Hospital and O'Connor Hospital. "When I come on a shift, and we have more new nurses and new hires, you have oncology and cardiac patients, and new nurses are not trained in those competencies because we've lost all the ones we trained," said Ellora Nuba, an Oncology, and cardiac care nurse. Debbie Chang, president of the RNPA, acknowledged that recent nursing graduates are under financial pressure due to student loan payments and high rent making higher pay elsewhere more attractive to them.

"The burden is falling on our experienced nurses, which is leading to burnout because there are not enough nurses to staff the hospital wards. In fact, we're pretty short on average daily. We're always short. There are always nurses working overtime," said Chang. Also attractive, to the other hospitals, is the high level of training the young nurses get in various specialties such as intensive care, trauma, oncology and diabetes care while in training at Valley Medical Center. Valley Medical Center spokeswoman Joy Alexiou says the concerns are being discussed as part of the negotiations with the nurses association for a new contract. "The leadership of Santa Clara Valley Medical Center is continuing to work with the union to discuss all of their concerns. We know that nurses are valuable. They're key to patient care, and we appreciate their dedication," said Alexiou. VMC employs 1,622 full-time registered nurses in addition to part-time nurses and extra help nurses who work at multiple hospitals.

FRI 6/21/17 - ABC7 NEWS 11PM (1:50)

OFFICIALS WARN OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS AFTER TWO DEATHS

The heat has turned deadly in the South Bay. Santa Clara County has confirmed at least two people died this week from heat-related illnesses. An emergency alert was sent out by Santa Clara County Wednesday. The Public Health Department says the victims are a 72-year-old man and an 87-year-old woman. One died in a car, and the other was homeless. "Both individuals died of what's called hyperthermia, meaning that their body temperature went very, very high," said public health official Sara Cody. The elderly are among the most vulnerable along with young people with chronic illness. Bruce Southwick has multiple sclerosis. "My symptoms get worse when I get hot."

Southwick was taking advantage of the cooling center established at Central Park Library in San Jose. "It's much cooler than outside. I'll put it that way.

RELATED: Heat stroke or heat exhaustion: Do you know the difference? Libraries, senior centers, and other locations in the county are staying open for extended hours during the heat wave, offering people air conditioning and water.

"If people take advantage of those services that are there, they're simple," said Patty Eaton of the Office of Emergency Services. "They're simple. They can avoid a lot of heat illness and perhaps even death."

Public health says heat-related deaths are preventable. The department is asking people to keep an eye out for anyone showing signs of illness. "Please extend a hand and help them get to a cold area or help them get medical assistance if they need it," said Dr. Sara Cody. Here's a list of cooling locations in Santa Clara County.

I-TEAM

FRI 4/28/17 - ABC7 NEWS 11PM (4:00)

SEXUAL ASSAULT ON FEMALE POT FARM WORKERS

Marijuana is becoming more mainstream after California voted for recreational use. Now, the industry has to deal with a dark secret - the sexual assault of female pot farm workers in an area known as the Emerald Triangle. Just three California counties account for the vast majority of marijuana grown in the state: Mendocino, Humboldt and Trinity.

"Trimmers," the people who work on the pot farms and prepare the marijuana plants for sale by clipping the leaves from the buds, make a decent salary of \$500 to \$600 a day.

"We just clean it up, we just process, get it ready for sale, make it look pretty," said one trimmer. But, they say, female trimmers can face problems - especially working on illegal grows - when the mundane work can turn sexual. These Humboldt County residents talked with the I-Team, but didn't want to show their faces. "It's like, you know, 'I'll give you an extra 20 bucks a pound or, whatever, if you trim topless,'" said one trimmer. Trimmers, rape crisis counselors, and law enforcement say they have seen an increase in recent years of trimmers sexually assaulted by growers and pot farm workers. "There are stories every single year," another trimmer added. "Like really, really terrible kidnapping stories of people being held against her will, girls coming out of the hills totally dazed and confused and really, they're lost." It is so pervasive that the North Coast Rape Crisis Team put out a flyer titled "sexual exploitation in the trim and grow scene." The I-Team agreed to not show the center's location in Eureka since trimmers come here for help dealing with cases of rape.

"Sometimes by one perpetrator, sometimes by many perpetrators," says Marian Hayes Mariani, the team's client services coordinator. Mariani says female trimmers are sometimes driven to the pot farms deep in the mountains, with no marked roads and no way out. They live and work there for weeks, sometimes months. "There are many areas in this community where there is no cell service," Hayes told the I-Team. "They're really isolated." Another trimmer says a 25-year-old grower raped her when she was 14 years old. Trimmers, she explains, often don't report sexual assault because they work in an illegal business and are afraid of losing such a good income and of retaliation. "They want to go to the cops because they're so traumatized, but they don't because they fear for their life," she told the I-Team. Leah Gee runs a group home for teens - some runaways, others on the verge of falling out of the foster care system. "At least eight girls that I have served have been abused and raped and taking advantage of being taken up to the mountains and I see the aftermath of that," Gee says.

(FEMALE POT FARM WORKERS CONT.)

"They're so traumatized that they get taken off and even more traumatized and nobody's looking for them," Gee says. "How do we find them -- there's three girls I still want to know where they are." Sgt. Kerry Ireland heads up the Humboldt sheriff's two-person marijuana unit. "In a lot of places where there is no law-enforcement coverage at all, yeah, it's the wild West," he said. When he last performed an aerial survey a couple of years ago, Ireland identified more than 20,000 separate grow operations in the county. He says working sexual assault on the mountains is very difficult, and it's made tougher by the flood of what are called "trimmigrants" - people coming from around the world during the September and October harvest. They're looking for work and are easily exploited.

"They're in the middle of nowhere, they have very little resources as far as outside help," Ireland says. "It becomes a dangerous situation." There's no way, he says, to have a clear picture of exactly how many women are being sexually assaulted in these mountains. We do know that Humboldt has one of the highest rates of missing persons in the state. The sexual assault issue may eventually go away with the trimmers' jobs. Machines are getting better at trimming buds, and the trend toward cannabis concentrates doesn't call for the leaves to be taken off.

FRI 4/28/17 - ABC7 NEWS 6PM (3:10)

WARRANTY / REPAIR ISSUE ON AUTO WIRING DAMAGED BY RODENTS

Imagine driving down the highway, enjoying the day, and all of a sudden your car develops a serious problem. The culprit? Rats. We're hearing reports it's happening - "rats eating cars." Of course, rats aren't eating whole cars but are nibbling on enough of the important parts to lead to costly repairs and concern for owners. Some question whether organic materials in many different makes and models are more appetizing to the rodents.

Margaret Levine loves her electric BMW - its zippiness and smaller environmental footprint. Turns out, rats love her car, too. "It was shocking, I had no idea that was even an issue," Levine tells the I-Team's Dan Noyes.

When the car wouldn't take a charge, she took it to a Marin BMW dealer and found wires clipped, insulation eaten around the "brains" of the car and a rat nest under the front hood. The total bill for damages: \$5,000.

A mechanic, Levine says, told her rats had been eating the wires of her car.

"I was flabbergasted," she says. "I was like, 'what?'" This undated image provided by Margaret Levine shows a rat nest under the front hood.

(Margaret Levine) Liz Wise experienced something similar when she took her Prius for its first checkup and discovered rats caused \$8,500 worth of damage. "The hood was opened, and they showed me a big dead rat,"

Wise recalls of her visit with the mechanic. Toyota is among the first companies to face class-action complaints based on new wire covers and car parts made out of organic materials. According to the filing, the use of soy or bio-based ingredients is "a defect ... that entices these pests to chew through, eat, or otherwise damage and compromise the wiring."

"As far as we can see from the anecdotal evidence, rats think this is delicious," says plaintiffs' attorney, Brian Kabateck, from his Los Angeles office. Kabateck says he's been contacted by angry drivers from across the country and Canada who've lost money after rats feasted on their cars and trucks. This undated image provided by Margaret Levine shows damage after a rat has nibbled around the "brains" of a car. (Margaret Levine) "We want Toyota to cover this under their warranty because it isn't the people's fault who bought the car," he says. "They didn't do anything wrong." Toyota declined an on-camera interview citing "current litigation" but sent the I-Team a statement. "Rodent damage to vehicle wiring occurs across the industry," the statement reads. "And the issue is not brand or model specific. We are currently not aware of any scientific evidence that shows rodents are attracted to automotive wiring because of alleged soy-based content." Thomas Ramies, owner of Portola Valley Garage, says he sees rat damage in Toyotas and many other brands. "It was the Mercedes and Porsches they like the flavor of, now it's everything," he says.

(AUTO WIRING DAMAGED BY RODENTS CONT.)

He used to see one or two cars with rat damage a year. Now, he's sees up to ten a week and thinks it's because of the newer compounds in cars that range from soy, rice husks, wood, sugars, vanilla, peanut oil and straw. This undated image provided by Margaret Levine shows insulation in a car that's been eaten by a rat. "Even rubber is being made out of plant products," says Ramies. "So it's an absolute smorgasbord for these rats."

Repairs can be costly, but in Levine's case, insurance is covering most of the damage. She's also haggling with BMW about the company paying her \$1,000 deductible. Levine says she can't sell the car because she would lose too much money. So, instead, she's spending hundreds of dollars to rat proof her garage with an assortment of traps, potions and sharp lattice that's tough on rats' little feet. The I-Team asked BMW to comment several times but didn't hear back. In addition to Toyota, Honda faces a similar class-action complaint over organic car parts. The company has said in other published reports there's a "long-known history of rodents chewing wires of all types."

THU 6/1/17 - ABC7 NEWS 6PM (3:05)

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS EXPULSIONS OVERTURNED ON APPEAL

The ABC7 I-Team has learned two more Napa Valley High School students expelled for hazing have won their appeals and their expulsions have been overturned. Last night, the Napa County School Board voted to overturn the expulsions of two boys ordered by the Napa County School District. These are the second and third cases where the county board has overruled the district board and overturned the expulsions of the football players accused of hazing. In response to county officials' decision to overturn the expulsions, a spokesperson for the Napa Valley School District released this statement:

"We respect the NCOE Board of Education's findings regarding procedural issues and thank them for their careful review. We also appreciate the acknowledgment that their action is based solely on technicalities and procedure, not the basis of the expulsion action itself. We feel that distinction is necessary to acknowledge that there are victims in this incident who deserve District and community support."

Superintendent of the Napa County Board of Education Barbara Nemko Ph.D. explained that the county board only considers violations of due process when deciding appeals. Due process rights, guaranteed under the Fifth and 14th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, prohibit the government from violating standards of fairness. While some may call these rights procedural technicalities, they are considered by many legal scholars to be extremely important protections.

Johnny Torres was the first student who appealed his expulsion to the county board and won. He was the first and only one of 11 students recommended for expulsion to demand a public hearing before Napa School District officials. He testified he never participated in any hazing and his attorney called a witness who appeared to corroborate Torres' story. Torres, a straight "A" honors student, the captain and quarterback of the junior varsity football team, pointed to his unblemished record when he spoke exclusively to ABC7 I-Team Reporter Dan Noyes in March. Allan Estrella, one of the students who won his appeal last night, had also vehemently denied the hazing allegations. All three students who won their appeals have missed nearly five months of school. Estrella said he was deeply disappointed when he learned he had been expelled and was worried the hazing allegations and getting expelled would ruin his life. He's hoping, he said, to study engineering in college. Estrella and the other boy who won their appeals last night were both represented by Sacramento Attorney Michelle Ball, an expert in education law.

(HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS EXPULSIONS OVERTURNED cont.)

Johnny Torres was represented by Attorney Mandy Leigh, who told us her client is considering suing school officials in federal court for violations of his civil rights and education law.

Of 11 students initially recommended for expulsion by the NVUSD, only five boys remained expelled today. School officials withdrew the expulsions of three students without any public explanation. The expulsions of three more students were overturned by the county board. One of the five students who remain expelled has not yet had his hearing before district officials. Four of the five boys who remain expelled either cannot or will not appeal their cases to the county board according to district officials. The Napa Police Department says they conducted a parallel investigation of potential hazing, assault and sexual assault offenses beginning last year. Police turned over the results of their investigation to prosecutors more than a month ago. Last Friday at 4 p.m., the Napa County District Attorney filed criminal charges against six Napa Valley High students, all juveniles, accusing them of conduct related to hazing.

Prosecutors would not elaborate on what charges have been brought or whether they are felonies or misdemeanors. The district attorney's statement said 11 other students were still under investigation bringing the total number of students investigated to 17 - despite the Napa Police Department indications last month they had only forwarded 14 students' names to prosecutors. Prosecutors also announced they were not filing charges against a Napa Valley High School football coach whose name was referred to the district attorney's office by police for potential charges of failing to report a crime against a child. While the press release said the coach would not face charges-it did identify him by name, the first time his name had been made public. We don't know yet if any of the three students whose expulsions were overturned by county education officials are among the six charged with criminal violations.

MON 6/5/17 - ABC7 NEWS 6PM (3:40)

MAN ACCUSED IN GHOST SHIP TRAGEDY IN COURT TO HEAR CHARGES

Oakland Ghost Ship founder Derick Almena, 47, appeared in Lake County Superior Court on Monday, where he's 36 counts of involuntary manslaughter in connection with December's warehouse fire.

I-Team Reporter Dan Noyes got tipped to the arrest early Monday morning from neighbors who saw it go down. He was the only television reporter in Lake County Superior Court, where Almena appeared late Monday afternoon. After the fire, Almena, his wife and three children had a hard time finding a place to settle. They moved to Lake County just a few months ago -- 140 miles from the scene of the Ghost Ship tragedy.

Almena fought returning to Alameda County to face 36 counts of involuntary manslaughter that could get him 39 years in prison, in connection with December's Ghost Ship fire. He insisted on appearing in court late Monday afternoon to have the charges read. No attorney, no family members and no friends came to support Almena. People living in the quiet Upper Lake neighborhood tipped the I-Team off to the arrest Monday morning, sending a photo of a sheriff's vehicle that accompanied the FBI and Alameda County DA investigators. "I just heard pounding on what I thought on the wall and I heard open up and just like shouting," one neighbor said.

"They looked like they were ready for a fight, I mean they were armored up, tacked out, there were assault weapons," neighbor Ron McMilin said. They said Almena, his wife and three kids moved here about three months ago and set up a normal routine. "We see them every morning, she takes the kids to school," McMilin said. But neighbors were also concerned Almena appeared to be gathering more material in the side yard that could pose a fire hazard. "After we realized who they were, that we just didn't want a lot of debris building up around the building or causing any kind of safety... for us," neighbor Jen said. Joseph, a man identifying himself as a family friend, answered the door at the couple's home on Monday. "It's been hanging for over six months. It could hang for another two years," he said.

He complained about the district attorney's decision to not prosecute the warehouse owner, Oakland resident Chor Ng. "I think there's a lot of culpability, personally I think, even in the newspaper article. Obviously, they have evidence that the owners of the warehouse didn't repair things," Joseph said. Almena is being held on \$1,080,000 bond. He could be brought back to the Bay Area as early as Monday night or any time in the next five days. The attorney representing Almena released this statement: "We believe that these charges represent no less than a miscarriage of justice, and we are confident that this attempt to make a scapegoat out of our client will fail."

THU 6/1/17 - ABC7 NEWS 6PM (3:40)

CRITICS LIST PROBLEMS AT CONTRA COSTA ANIMAL SHELTER

The Contra Costa County Martinez Animal Shelter is home to nearly 300 dogs. But with an influx of a thousand animals or more coming in every month, critics say the facility is understaffed, overwhelmed and mismanaged. Some say the shelter is forced to destroy too many healthy adoptable dogs. In one case, a dog set to be rescued was euthanized in what amounted to a fatal mistake.

The ABC7 I-Team has spoken with volunteers, animal rescue groups, customers, former staffers, consultants and medical professionals who have had experience with Contra Costa County's shelter system. Two years ago, Kathleen "Kat" Stercks saw a dog called "Peaches" on the Save the Contra Costa County Shelter Dogs Facebook page. She says it was love at first sight, but when she went down to the shelter to get Peaches-she got devastating news instead. "I went to the shelter to adopt a dog and found out that the dog that I came to rescue was put down hours before. So I went to the parking lot and cried," Stercks said.

She said right then and there she realized she wanted to make sure what happened to her didn't happen to anybody else. Stercks, a real estate professional who goes by the moniker "Kat", says she made up her mind to make a difference. Kat Stercks became a shelter volunteer. She's been working two to three days a week at the Martinez shelter for nearly two years. She started her own animal rescue group, Dogs and Kats Rescue. And she's shooting and posting videos of dogs and cats from the Contra Costa County Shelter to Facebook to help get them rescued or adopted out.

Stercks has been vocal about what she sees happening at the shelter. She said, "They have no room. They are overwhelmed. They're overcrowded and they will put dogs down for being overcrowded." Contra Costa County Animal Services, CCAS, provided the ABC7 I-Team with data that demonstrates one of the profound challenges facility managers are facing: intake. According to intake records from 2014 through 2016, the shelter has averaged nearly 12,000 animals per year. During those 36 months, 6 times the intake surpassed 1200 animals in a month. There are also a staggering number of dogs coming in for the past three years. The shelter saw an average of just fewer than 500 dogs per month coming in for the last three years. While the numbers have declined over the past three years, Contra Costa County has still faced an onslaught of 17,796 dogs since 2014. Critics and shelter managers alike are aware the pressure and the stress on the system and the people who work there can lead to mistakes. One case stands out.

(CONTRA COSTA ANIMAL SHELTER CONT.)

A year ago, the fate of a pit bull named Barbie was the subject of a story reported on ABC7 News. Barbie, a 4-year-old pit bull, was scheduled to be saved by a Bay Area rescue group had officially notified shelter staff and confirmed they had a home for Barbie. They had arranged for Barbie to go to a foster family. But before Barbie could be picked up, she was put down. Administrators at the shelter promised a thorough investigation. CCAS Acting Director Captain Jane Andreotti said, "We wanted to get her out of here." Andreotti acknowledged, "There was a rescue group that had expressed interest in taking her out of here," she said.

She told I-Team Reporter Dan Noyes, "I know the notes weren't checked clearly by an employee." Shelter notes obtained by the I-Team show 2 different rescue groups had volunteered to save the dog. But that information, contained in the shelter's computer system and accessible to the individual responsible for euthanizing the dog was somehow overlooked. "The notes weren't monitored the way they should have been," Andreotti said. Captain Andreotti insists they learned from that fatal mistake and they've made changes to prevent it from happening again. "We have put into place some policies and procedures to make sure that we are checking and double checking," she said. Andreotti says they depend heavily on the rescue groups to get dogs adopted out and to reduce the number of animals the shelter is forced to euthanize. "We're blessed because we have excellent transfer partners," she said. But three rescue groups told us they have quit working with the Contra Costa County Shelter. The co-founder of Petaluma Pet Pals said they stopped working with the shelter a short time after Barbie was killed.

Laylas Animal Cause and Scooter's Pals say they have also stopped pulling dogs from CCAS. They complain about rude and uncooperative staff, long wait times for pick-ups, and poor sanitary conditions. Dani Camarra leads Hearts for Paws Rescue in Davis, California. She has pulled more dogs out of the Contra Costa County Shelter than any other rescue group this past year. "As a rescue, we go into a great many shelters. This shelter in particular I wouldn't give high marks for cleanliness," she said. With more than thirty years of experience caring for animals, she's blunt when asked about conditions at the facility. "There's so many times I go in to look at the small animal cages where there's 10 dogs completely covered in feces," she told us. Camarra was especially concerned when an outbreak of Parvo virus led to an emergency quarantine at the shelter. The highly contagious and sometimes deadly virus impacts dogs' intestinal tracts and causes severe vomiting, diarrhea and dangerous dehydration. The resilient virus that causes the disease can live for some time on unclean surfaces and Parvo is often spread when a healthy dog comes in contact with feces from an infected dog.

(CONTRA COSTA ANIMAL SHELTER CONT.)

Dr. Bela Kisamov is the Chief of Veterinary Medicine at CCAS-the first person to hold that position. She's also the only full-time vet on staff at the shelter working with 8 other part-time contract vets to care for hundreds of animals. She told us stress can be a factor that causes a dog to come down with Parvo when it diminishes their immune system.

"Any animal who walks into a shelter environment, it's a stressful environment. This is not, you know, a Holiday Inn. This is a stressful environment," she said. She said the outbreak of Parvo that caused them to quarantine was not an epidemic. "We closed three wards for Parvo," she told us. And when we asked if unclean cages played any role in the Parvo quarantine, she said, "No, well, first of all the cages are being cleaned. We have a staff that does a fabulous job. Several sources we spoke with did not agree with her assessment. "I've observed kennels with one dog that has had three or four incidents, three or four poops," Debbie DeMello said.

DeMello works as an animal behavior consultant. She is the founder of Who's Training Who and she is at the shelter in Martinez at least one day a week with her clients who are rescue groups and families looking to adopt a pet. She said, "When dogs are living in kennels with their own waste-it's emotionally unhealthy for them." DeMello believes the shelter is woefully understaffed. We asked Captain Andreotti if they have enough staff to keep all 150 cages clean, to walk and care for all 300 animals.

She said, "I think any time you have more hands-you're better off. We are currently recruiting for numerous positions and we are moving forward with hiring. And the good news is we intend to have staffing at a better place within the next six months." Debbie DeMello says she's had cases where the evaluation of a dog's temperament is delayed for weeks and that means dogs are not getting walked for weeks at a time. She says dogs can get sick or go mad when they are caged for long periods of time without getting walked or getting any exercise.

Captain Andreotti says they've hired a company in a pilot program to walk up to 60 dogs a week but it won't start until the fall. She said, "I think it's always an issue in any shelter. I think that we do our very best to get these animals out as often as possible." DeMello says dogs that go without walks for weeks can get sick or go mad. "Here's my reply to 'we're doing the best we can.' No, you're not. If that's the best you can, you're in the wrong business," she said. Shelter officials say they're hiring a company to walk 60 dogs a week starting this fall and that no dogs died during that Parvo quarantine.

FRI 5/12/17 - ABC7 NEWS 6PM (3:10)

COMPANY CITED BY OSHA FOR VIOLATIONS IN PT. REYES CLEANUP

There's controversy surrounding the cleanup of Drakes Estero in the Point Reyes National Seashore. A former employee, who worked on the project, contacted the I-Team claiming the cleanup of the oyster farm harmed him and endangered other workers. The U.S. Department of the Interior shut the farm down more than two years ago. The National Park Service started tearing out the farm's oyster racks this year. This diver says he ended up with chemical burns while working on the project because the government didn't do enough to protect him and others.

Drakes Estero in the Pt. Reyes National Seashore is one of the most beautiful places on the West Coast. Look closely and you'll see what construction workers have been up to for the last couple months, pulling up the remnants of one of the state's oldest oyster farms. After a fight that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, the farm closed in December 2015. The National Park Services and some environmentalists hailed it as a new dawn for the estero, a returning it to wilderness. But a former worker says the company tasked with pulling out the oyster racks put employees at risk. Diver Matthew Zugsberger was hired to help remove the hundreds of oyster racks that lined the estero.

"I was under the impression that this was kind of an important job," said Zugsberger. "You know a lot of things had to be in order from environmental issues all the way to safety issues and that there were a lot of eyes on this project," added Zugsberger. He says he quickly found things that concerned him. He was particularly concerned about the lack of safety equipment and possible exposure to chemicals used on those old wood pilings that held the oyster racks. He also says he suffered chemical burns from pulling out those old oyster racks. "I did receive grade two, grade three chemical burns on my hips and on my chest and my torso," said Zugsberger. He was so concerned about the overall safety of the project he complained to the federal government's Occupational Safety and Health Administration, OSHA, late last year. In November, OSHA inspectors cited Galindo Construction, the sub-contractor handling the job for seven "serious" violations." Among them: Failure "... to ensure that frequent and regular inspections of the job site..." It didn't provide workers "... Coast Guard-approved life jacket(s)." OSHA said it failed to "... ensure employees were free from impalement hazards of pressured treated lumber..." There were "... no working horns on a floating barge..." and "... employees were exposed to, struck or run over by equipment." OSHA also reported that a lack of guard rails raised the risk that employees could drown. "...employees were exposed to drowning."

(COMPANY CITED BY OSHA CONT.)

There wasn't even "an adequate toilet facility aboard a floating barge." "So all human feces and urine was going back into the estero," said Zugsberger. Galindo Construction did not respond to our repeated requests for an interview.

But the National Park Service did. Park spokesman John Dell'Osso said in a statement, "the contractor corrected these findings immediately. OSHA did not make any findings with respect to the handling or disposal of treated lumber." adding, "all methods related to the project work were permitted and approved by the regulatory agencies." Zugsberger says he was fired days after reporting the problems to OSHA and still hasn't been paid for work he's done on the job. Galindo construction has disputed the amount he's owed and has also filed a temporary restraining order against Zugsberger, claiming he made threats towards their employees. Zugsberger denies the claim.

Meet The Stars Where You Live- ABC 7 STARS Recognizes Local People Doing Extraordinary Things:

FRI 4/21/17 - ABC7 NEWS 4PM - (3:40)

Marin County Singer Overcomes Challenges of Autism

Michael Valcour overcame the odds to become a professional singer-

As a child growing up in Marin County, Michael Valcour couldn't speak. Now, his voice soars as a professional baritone and he inspires others with his gift for music. We caught up with Michael backstage at the Special Needs Talent Showcase in Santa Clara. Standing in the wings with the microphone at his side, he's focused as he prepares for the finale. He's the last performer of the night. If another singer were minutes away from taking the stage, perhaps they'd be feeling the pressure right about now - maybe feeling those sweaty palms or a few butterflies. Not Michael. He's a stranger to stage fright and says he lives to perform. "Mmmhmm, I love it," said Michael. "I feel like a new me." Michael is often a man of few words, but just ask him to sing and it's hard to get him to stop. With his deep baritone and ability to hold a rich vibrato, the question is, why would you want him to?

When asked to sing the first song he remembers from childhood, he'll trace out each note of "Sing" from Sesame Street with a quiet gentleness. But he can just as easily belt out Italian opera, enunciating and trilling every syllable from memory effortlessly. He also loves contemporary songs, and classics- one of his favorites is "Let it Be" by The Beatles. Michael walked away a winner from the Special Needs Talent Showcase last year with his powerful rendition of "Climb Every Mountain" from the Sound of Music. He's since gone on to film a music video. It's a triumph after what can be described as a hard beginning. Michael's parents, Arnold and Kathy Valcour, say they've always wanted a family. "I wanted one of each," said Arnold, laughing. "Yes, we got what we wanted," said Kathy.

A daughter came first, and then Michael answered their prayers when he was born in Daly City. "He was a big baby," Kathy recalled. "The people who saw him, they were kind of awestruck because he looked so perfect." Arnold agreed. "He was a good-looking baby. You think about all the sports you'll play." But then came the moment that many parents of children with Autism experience. As time passed, Arnold and Kathy knew something wasn't right.

"It was his sister's birthday party. They were opening gifts and he just clamored in there and leapt on top of the presents. And everyone thought it was cute, but I just knew," said Kathy. "Why isn't he developing like other children? We went to the doctor and I said, 'He isn't talking.'"

(Marin County Singer Overcomes Challenges...CONT.)

For years they were not to worry, that he would grow out of it. Finally, they received a diagnosis. "His pediatrician did an analysis, he was holding pictures up of things like a house or a tree, and Michael couldn't name them, and these cards would just fall on the floor. He would hold up a picture of a dog, and Michael couldn't say it. A picture of a ball and he couldn't say it. And my heart just dropped as these cards dropped on the floor," said Kathy. Decades ago, Autism was not a word that necessarily elicited instant recognition. Kathy and Arnold describe the diagnosis as heartbreaking to hear, but say they never for a moment gave up on Michael.

"I cried for about 15 minutes, and we started thinking about what we needed to do. It was time to go to work," said Kathy. "I had great hope for him. In your heart you know there's a person in there who can be a part of society and a contributor." Even when he seemed lost in his own world as a child, music was a way they could reach Michael. "I used to carry him around and sing to him," said Arnold. "When I'd sing the words to him, he'd understand me a lot better than if I talked." Michael soon picked up the guitar and developed a love of singing. His voice and musicality emerged, and his parents found that, remarkably, Michael transformed on stage. To see him in the middle of a performance is to see a man with a commanding voice, conveying depths of emotion. He's able to express nuances that, his parents say, he still struggles with in daily conversation. "I want him to be as normal as he can be, and I want him to be accepted everywhere he goes," said Arnold. "And he is accepted, when you look at him, because he's a good-looking guy. But when he starts to talk, you can see people's acceptance goes away. That hurts, that really hurts." Michael is painfully aware of this, and says once he's off stage; he finds the social world can be an isolating place. "All of a sudden, I'll get something wrong for them," said Michael. At 80 and 75, Michael's parents worry about what will happen to him once they're gone. But today, they are wiping away happy tears, celebrating the fact that Michael has been chosen as an ABC7 Star. "I can't believe it," said Arnold. "This is one of the things I've always wanted for him. He wants to be recognized for his talent and ability... My life, after awhile, didn't matter at all. It's all about him." Finally, it's time for Michael's performance. He steps out from the wings, the light creating a halo around him, as the opening strains of piano float out of the sound system. Suddenly, he stands up straighter, his gaze steady, as he lifts his microphone and begins to sing. His performance pick for the night is "You Raise Me Up," and this song about love and support is dedicated to his parents. His notes are sure and unwavering. As he finishes, the audience is quiet before erupting into applause. Michael's mother is right there in the crowd, recording every performance. Arnold is also applauding.

FRI 5/26/17 - ABC7 NEWS 4PM (3:00)

ABC7 is recognizing a Doctor Whose Unexpected Friendship With a Patient Changed His Life and His Community

The JW House is meant to be a home away from home. It's for family of patients who need an extended stay at local hospitals. The pristine home sits in the parking lot of the Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara Medical Center. It's adorned with gorgeous roses on the outside, and welcoming furniture on the inside. However, this story is not about the building, it's about a volunteer and the unexpected friendship that started it all. "First of all this is my baby, this is JW's baby, this is the Knapen's baby, when you have your baby you're not going to let go," pediatric oncologist Alan Wong, M.D., said. "He's an authentic human being who loves JW, loves JW House," JW House family service director April Bignell said.

More than a decade ago, Wong, a pediatric oncologist, had a special patient named JW Knapen and the two forged a unique bond. "I would say I love him and we're friends. Before he died we were so tight," Wong said. JW died of Leukemia just before his 17th birthday. In his short life, JW wanted to build a home for families in situations similar to his. The teenager raised an initial \$10,000 and gave the money to Wong, asking the doctor for help to make it a reality. "Suddenly I became a fundraiser too, and then I become a businessman, too," Wong said. When JW died in 2005, Wong and others continued to raise money and eventually went through with plans, opening the doors in 2008. "They loved each other very dearly and if nothing else that's what really forged that relationship, that seed and wonderful love they shared through this dream that gave JW hope, that gave his family hope, and now certainly has given thousands of people hope," Bignell said.

Wong is there every Saturday. "I learned to do laundry at the JW house," he said. "He's so humble and the way he gives back. He doesn't have to volunteer. It's just a wonderful example of volunteerism and compassion, and empathy," Bignell said. Wong says his friendship with JW brought big changes, like the creation of the non-profit and small changes. "JW changed me we never hug people in Asia. We don't hug people." However, now he does. JW's mom said Wong is just a really good human being and has become a family friend, saying: "He went above and beyond."

THU 5/18/17 - ABC7 NEWS 6PM (4:40)

Second Chances: 'I survived jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge

Meet two men with an incredible connection. They jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge, and survived. Both say the moment their fingers left the railing, they felt instant regret. It's a story of mistakes, survival, and second chances.

On Baker Beach, it appears a pair of tourists are talking like old friends, just trying to take a perfect selfie with the Golden Gate Bridge in the background. In fact, Kevin Hines and Ken Baldwin are little more than strangers who happen to share an incredible connection. Both jumped off of the Golden Gate Bridge - and survived. They want you to know the overwhelming emotion they both had the moment their fingertips left the railing. "The millisecond my legs cleared it, the millisecond of true free fall, instant regret for my actions," said Kevin.

Ken had a startlingly similar experience: "I just vaulted over, and I realized, at that moment, this is the stupidest thing I could have done. Everything could have changed." Each man had a different journey leading them to the bridge. These are their stories: the mistake they say they made, how they fell, and perhaps, more importantly, how they rose up afterward.

Kevin Hines

"I jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge on Sept. 25, 2000. It was a Monday," recalled Kevin. He was just 19 years old and suffering from Bipolar Disorder. "I was hearing voices in my head saying 'I need to die,' getting louder and louder," said Kevin. "I thought I had to go, I thought I was my family's greatest burden, I thought I was useless."

Kevin's father was concerned, but Kevin managed to convince him he was fine. He assured his father that he would see him that night after work. "He said one of his mantras, 'Kevin, I love you, be careful.' He kissed me on the cheek, and I stepped out of the car," he said. "I remember thinking, as my father drove away, that's the last time I'll ever see someone I love, and of course the last time anybody I love will ever see me."

Kevin dropped his classes at City College of San Francisco and took a bus to the bridge. Sitting in the back row, he cried openly, not hiding his distress. "I actually had a pact with myself, this is something that many suicidal people do. If one person says 'Are you ok,' 'Is something wrong,' or 'Can I help you?' I was going to tell them everything and beg them to help me," said Kevin. No one spoke to him. He spent 40 minutes on the bridge, tears still streaming down his face. And then, finally, someone approached him.

(Second Chances Cont.)

Ken Baldwin

"On Aug. 20, 1985, I jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge, and I survived." Ken Baldwin was 28 years old and had just started a family. He and his wife lived in Tracy and had an adorable 3-year-old girl. He also says he had deep depression, which he likens to a "black vortex."

"I would wake up saying, 'Ah, I didn't die in my sleep,'" said Ken. "Everything was unfixable. I've got to get out of this life. Every day was the same: it was the blackness, the darkness." Unbeknownst to his wife, Ken was spiraling downwards. He describes feeling like a burden to his family.

"I started feeling like I was going to help them by dying. I was going to make their lives better. That's the depression talking, that they would be better off without me," said Ken. "I told my wife, 'Hey, I'm going to do a little extra work, I'm going to be home late,' knowing full well that I was not going to live through the day." He describes hating his job as an architectural drafter. That morning, he didn't go to work. Instead, he kept driving toward San Francisco and pulled up at the Golden Gate Bridge.

'Instant Regret'

Kevin Hines

Kevin had been waiting for just one person to reach out to him. On the span, a woman came up to him on his left side. "Blond curly hair, giant sunglasses that didn't fit her face, and a smile. And I thought, she smiled at me, she's going to ask me if I'm ok. I don't have to die today. I'm 19, and I don't have to die," said Kevin. "That's when she pulled out a camera and said 'Will you take my picture?' And I was crushed."

He took the picture and returned her camera. She walked away. Within moments, he jumped from the bridge. "It was a split-second decision, my thought was, 'Absolutely nobody cares. Nobody.' I took these hands, and I catapulted into freefall," said Kevin. It only took about four seconds for Kevin to hit the water, and he says it felt exactly that fast. But he remembers his few, fleeting thoughts and a flood of emotion.

(Second Chances Cont.)

"Instant regret, powerful, overwhelming. As I fell, all I wanted to do was reach back to the rail, but it was gone," said Kevin. "The thoughts in those four seconds, it was 'What have I just done? I don't want to die. God please save me.' Boom." He fell about 223 feet and hit the water in a seated position, likely at 75 miles per hour. He says he had never felt such pain. Disoriented under the water, he couldn't tell which was up or down. His back was broken; he found out later how severe his injuries were.

"I shattered my T12, L1 and L2 lower vertebrae upon impact," said Kevin. "I missed severing my spinal cord by two millimeters." Moments before, he had been determined to die. Suddenly, he found himself desperate to live. In blinding pain, he tried to swim upwards. "I remember thinking very clearly, 'Kevin you can't die here, if you die here, no one will ever know that you didn't want to. No one will ever know that you knew you made a mistake.' And I broke the surface."

This undated image shows Coast Guard Officer Marcus Butler. Kevin would be pulled from the water by a Coast Guard crew and Officer Marcus Butler. We tracked Butler down, now living in the Houston area. Years later, he still has nightmares about pulling bodies from the water beneath the Golden Gate Bridge. "The human psyche isn't meant to see bodies in the condition we saw them in," said Butler. "When these people jump, they don't hit the water and go peacefully into the night. I don't think people realize that. Sometimes the bodies are things you'd see on a horror show."

In his four years serving at U.S. Coast Guard Station Golden Gate, he pulled 57 bodies from the water - and just one live man. He believes that many of the people do not die on impact and that it's an agonizing way to go. He has not been able to shake those body recovery missions. The day he found Kevin is one that he'll never forget. "He's swimming! And all of us were like, what? He's swimming! And a light switch goes off and this goes from a body recovery to a rescue," said Butler. "It was just a miracle."

(Second Chances Cont.)

Ken Baldwin

Unlike Kevin, once on the bridge, Ken went to great lengths to appear inconspicuous. He was emotionless, his face impassive. He didn't want anyone to know what he was about to do. Internally, he said, he was terrified.

"I walked out onto the bridge, and I was really scared. I was scared that I wasn't making the right choice. I was scared it was going to hurt. But I said, 'You got to go. You can't survive this anymore.'" He remembers putting his hands on the railing and looking out toward San Francisco. He counted to 10, he said, and couldn't do it. "I looked to make sure nobody was near me. I counted again, and jumped." That was the moment he realized everything that overwhelmed him about his job, his life and his circumstances were completely fixable. "I saw my hands leave the bridge," he recalled. "I knew at that moment, that I really, really messed up. Everything could have been better, I could change things. And I was falling. I couldn't change that."

It's estimated that more than 1,600 people have made the decision to leap into the water below. He says that as he fell those four seconds, he saw the faces of the people he loved and didn't want to leave behind. "It was like your life flashing before your eyes, except it was my current life. It was everybody I was going to hurt: my wife, my daughter, my mom, my dad, my three brothers," said Ken. "I've never felt anything like it, that profound sadness." He remembers coming to in the water with a fierce will to live.

"I realized at the time, the irony of living through the jump and that I was probably going to drown," said Ken. "When I wanted to live the most, I was probably going to die." He suffered a collapsed lung, and doctors noted a bruising pattern that led them to believe he hit the water in a cannonball. He spent seven minutes struggling to keep himself alive in the water before the Coast Guard pulled him from the bay.

(Second Chances Cont.)

'Something in the Water'

Like Ken, Kevin was rescued by the Coast Guard and brought aboard. His clothes were cut off as they assessed his injuries and asked if he knew what he had just done. But Kevin wants you to know that he believes this isn't the full story of how he survived. Before the Coast Guard arrived, he had managed to reach the surface but was struggling to stay afloat. He realized he was drowning.

"I couldn't breathe, and I kept going down," said Kevin. "Every time I went down, I'd go down further, and then I'd have to swim back up, spit out salt water, go back down, spit out salt water, go back down. I couldn't even yell. I tried to scream, my lungs were impacted. I couldn't do it."

Kevin doesn't think he was alone in the water that day. "Something began circling beneath me, and I mean something very large, very slimy and very alive. And I'm freaking out, and I'm thinking 'You've got to be kidding me, I didn't die jumping off that stupid bridge, and a shark is going to eat me?'" In that moment, Kevin couldn't be clear on what was happening. But he believes whatever it was saved his life. "I realized I'm not trying to stay afloat," said Kevin. "I'm now lying on my back, being kept buoyant by this thing," Someone else saw what happened from above, standing on the pedestrian walkway looking down, he said. Kevin would later recount this story in an interview. Afterward, he received a letter.

"Kevin, I'm so very glad you're alive," it read. "I was standing less than two feet from you when you jumped. Until this day, no one had told me whether you lived or died. By the way, it wasn't a shark. There was a sea lion and the people above looking down believed it to be keeping you afloat." We reached out to the man who wrote the letter. He confirmed over the phone that he believes he saw a sea lion circling Kevin. Kevin was just 19 years old when he jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge. Now, he's recounting the incredible tale of how he believes his life was saved.

We asked Officer Butler if he saw anything on the day that the Coast Guard rescued Kevin. He says he never saw an animal in the water. But, he did say, a second witness came down to the station after the rescue to tell them that a sea lion had helped Kevin. "It helps make sense of how he was able to stay above water. If I remember correctly, Kevin was wearing long-sleeve clothes, pants and boots. You can't swim through that kind of stuff."

(Second Chances Cont.)

We took this story to an expert. Christina Slager is the Director of Animal Care and Exhibitory at the Aquarium of the Bay. She had another theory entirely. "It's in the realm of possibility for a seal or sea lion to do this, but it's very, very unlikely," said Slager. "I think it would be very easy to mistake a dolphin or a porpoise for a seal or a sea lion ... especially at a height like that."

Slager points out that there is anecdotal evidence that dolphins and porpoises have done similar things in the past. "The stories about them aiding humans go back to Roman and Greek times, and a lot of surfers, sailors and swimmers believe that they were saved, particularly from sharks, by dolphins," she said Kevin can't be certain what it was that saved him, but he believes without it, he would have died.

'What I Lived For'

Ken Baldwin

Ken made changes after he survived. He calls his wife the hero of this story and says he began truly hearing her when she says she loves him. "She'll just say the same thing she said before the jump, but I believe her now, and I believe I can fix things. I can work on this," said Ken. "Before the jump I was really scared to open up to her because I wasn't sure how she was going to react... Now I know what her reaction is going to be when I say, 'Wow, that was a really hard day.' It's going to be love." Those hard days haven't gone away. Ken says he still lives with the specter of depression and anxiety. It wasn't until eight years ago that he found a kind of freedom when he realized he would never be completely "cured." "I realized 'oh, this is my life.'" he said. "This is how I'm going to go through the rest of my life. The depression is never going away, you can only stave it off. You can help yourself. You can have tools to be able to work with it. And that freed me up."

He is bowled over by gratitude when he looks at his life now. He quit the job he hated and has been a high school teacher for 25 years, a position that he loves with a passion. His daughter grew up and attended the high school where he taught. He got to present her with her diploma on graduation day. Years after that, he walked her down the aisle. "I got to give my daughter away," he said. "She's had two kids, so I have two grandkids. I wouldn't have been here for the birth of my first grandchild, Zachary." We asked Ken if he could go back to the bridge on that day and talk to his 28-year-old self, what would he say? "Find a loved one, and believe them when they say that you're worth it," said Ken. "Every single day, I go, 'I get to do this!' And when it's a bad day, I go, 'ok I can get through this.'"

(Second Chances Cont.)

Kevin Hines

Walking on the bridge years later, Kevin vividly remembers what it was like to be that 19-year-old kid who felt he was worthless. "I wish I said to my father that morning, 'Am I a burden to you?' Because he would have said, 'No.' I wish I said to my dad, 'I'm thinking about suicide,' because he would have said, 'I'm not letting you go.'"

Kevin says he's learned to manage his mental health with medication. This is what he wishes he knew then that he knows now: "Today is not tomorrow. Just because you're in this kind of pain right now, doesn't mean it's going to be forever." Kevin has found his greatest support system in his wife. He thinks about the blessing of living to see his wedding day. "I would have missed marrying the love of my life, Margaret, my gift from God," he said. "I would have missed my father being my best man." Kevin has dedicated his life to making sure others don't make the same mistake he did by becoming a motivational speaker and activist.

He was passionate about pushing for a suicide barrier to go up at the Golden Gate Bridge, of which construction has just begun. It was a victory when a date for completion was set for early 2021. But, he said, more needs to be done. "It's not enough for politicians to come out and say 'Oh, we made it happen,'" said Kevin. "If we don't close the walkway or, at the very least, we don't up security so there is (someone) saying to the person who is all by himself, 'Hey are you ok?'...we're not doing our jobs."

In sharing his story, Kevin believes it's important to note that, for him, the struggle is still there. There are dark days when he still thinks about taking his own life. The difference though, is the way he reaches out for support, talks to his wife and works through it. "I get to be here every day," he said. "That's a gift I will cherish for the rest of my life. Even though I live with chronic suicidal thoughts, I will never die by suicide."

If you need support, please reach out for help:

- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255
- Text CNQR TO 741741

WED 6/7 -ABC7 NEWS 11PM - (1:40)

Bay Area Artist Paints Warriors Stars on Unique Canvas Hats

Warriors fan Nick Motley's art studio is the Starbucks on MacArthur Boulevard in San Leandro. His current canvas is hats. "I love Nick's hats, and I'm not even a sports fan," said San Leandro resident Rose Riskind. "But he puts so much of his soul into those things, and watching him paint -- he's a true artist." "I want a game, said Motley. "I want it to come down to the final minutes and Steph Curry drop that three in the basket and win and everybody goes crazy." Motley wants artistic inspiration.

"The energy that he puts into them, and it's like, you'd be proud to wear one of those," said Debbie Kapina of Stockton. You'd be even prouder if you know where the money goes when Motley sells an autographed hat. "I don't use their autographs as more money," he told ABC7 News. "I use their autographs to help inner-city kids sports and art programs." "The fact that he gives so much of the proceeds to charity is just -- him, it's the person that he is and it makes it even more beautiful," Kapina told ABC7 News.

"That's what got me through school -- is art and sports," Motley added. Most hats take about three hours to paint, but this one took 12. "A lot of people won't even wear my hats," Motley said. "They're like, 'I'm not wearing that.' I'm like, 'You gotta wear the hat.' 'But what if it gets dirty, 'Then wash it' WhaWhatever you do, don't put it on a shelf. "Then I have to come to your house and see it," Motley added. "I want to see it on your head." If you're interested in purchasing one of Motley's hats, you can call him at 510 - 590 - 6858 or email him at uniunicartist10@yahoo.com.