

NEWS

Marin City unveils upgraded rec center

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BREAD&BUTTER

Local eats, drinks at Mill Valley music fest

Zest » B1

WARRIORS

Curry's special qualities on display

Local » C1

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SUNNY

High: 67 Low: 48 » PAGE B8

Marin Independent Journal

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

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COUNTY, MCF

Marin child care gets \$1.5M boost

Funding for immediate needs, planning and teacher’s aides

By Richard Halstead
rhalstead@marinij.com

The county and the Marin Community Foundation will spend a combined \$1.5 million over the next two years to bolster

child care in the county.

The Board of Supervisors authorized the use of \$525,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds in fiscal year 2022-23 Tuesday for four child care programs. The county intends to provide another

\$475,000 next spring to be spent during fiscal 2023-24.

In addition, the Marin Community Foundation has committed to spending up to \$500,000 over the next two years on long-range planning to “ensure that every kid and family in Marin who wants access to early care has it,” as well as some short-term needs, said Johnathan Logan, vice president of community engagement

at the foundation.

Logan said one of the first things the foundation plans to do is to assemble the major stakeholders in Marin, such as First 5 Marin, Marin Child Care Council and Marin County Office of Education, to determine a strategic direction.

Logan said one major question is: “How do we pay our providers a competitive wage so they stay in

the system?”

The bulk of the county’s initial \$525,000 allotment, \$375,000, will fund a pilot program that will seek to retain child care teacher’s aides and encourage them to become child care teachers by paying them a monthly stipend and providing them with other types of support.

Laws specify the ratio of child

CHILD » PAGE 4

‘30 BY 30’ INITIATIVE

Marin reveals wish list for open space projects



SHERRY LAVARS — MARIN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL

Eric van Boer and his wife, Sharlene, of Novato hike past a giant redwood tree on Roy’s Redwoods loop trail in Woodacre. The county hopes to upgrade trails in Roy’s Redwoods as part of the “30 by 30” preservation initiative.

Preservation, upgrades proposed for 2030 completion

By Will Houston
whouston@marinij.com

Marin could see a flood of new land conservation funding as part of a global initiative calling on countries to preserve 30% of their lands and waters by 2030.

Gov. Gavin Newsom and the Biden administration have committed to the “30 by 30” initiative, which seeks to preserve lands and protect wildlife, combat climate change impacts, preserve tribal lands and increase access to nature.

A coalition of Bay Area agencies and organizations known as Together Bay Area released a list this month of more than 110 projects, from new trail networks to purchas-

ing privately owned open space, that it says could be completed by the end of the decade.

Statewide, about 24% of its lands and 16% of its waters are already under protection, according to the final draft of the state’s 30 by 30 plan released this month. To meet its 30% goal, the state would need to conserve 6 million more acres of land and a half-million acres of water.

Given that 85% of Marin already consists of protected open space, parks, watersheds, tidelands and agricultural preserves, the aim of most of the county’s projects on the list is to preserve and upgrade what already exists.

“Marin County is a place where people from all over

OPEN » PAGE 2



ALAN DEP — MARIN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL

Adapting Bolinas Lagoon to sea level rise is among the projects in the county’s “30 by 30” list.

"These places aren’t just for the residents here. They inspire people from all over."

— Marin County parks director Max Korten

PANDEMIC

COVID has infected 60% in the nation

CDC says youth cases jumped during omicron

By Apoorva Mandavilli
The New York Times

The common perception that nearly everyone in the U.S. seemed to have acquired the omicron variant in the winter might not have been far from the truth. By February, nearly 60% of the population had been infected with the coronavirus, almost double the proportion seen in December, according to data released Tuesday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“By February 2022, evidence of previous COVID-19 infections substantially increased among every age group,” Dr. Kristie Clarke, the agency researcher who led the study, said at a news briefing.

Infections rose most sharply during the omicron surge among children and adolescents, perhaps because many people in those age groups were still unvaccinated. The increase was smallest among adults 65 or older, who have the highest rate of vaccination and may be the most likely to take precautions.

The new research suggests that three out of four children and adolescents in the United States had been infected with the coronavirus by February, compared with one-third of older adults.

COVID » PAGE 2

NATIONAL PROBLEM

Housing shortage, rents squeeze college students

By Janie Har
The Associated Press

BERKELEY » UC Berkeley sophomore Terrell Thompson slept in his car for nearly two weeks at the start of the school year last fall, living out of a suitcase stashed in the trunk and texting dozens of landlords a day in a desperate search for a place to live.

The high-achieving student from a low-income household in Sacramento was majoring in business administration at one of the most prestigious universities in the world. Yet, Thompson folded his 6-foot frame into the back seat of his Honda Accord at night, wondering how he would find a home in the exorbitantly expensive city.

“Academically it was hard, because I’m worried about finding housing and I’m worried about my clothes and I’m worried about getting my car broken into all the time,” said Thompson, 19, who now lives in a studio apartment he found in September. “I was anxious 24/7.”

College students across the U.S. are looking for housing for the 2022-23 school year and if 2021 was any indication, it won’t be easy. Students at colleges from California to Florida were denied

HOUSING » PAGE 2

PANDEMIC

Vice president tests positive for COVID-19

Kamala Harris has not been in close contact with President Joe Biden nor first lady Jill Biden in recent days. PAGE A8



CRISIS IN EUROPE

US pressing allies to provide Ukraine arms

Russia drills east, south of country and is suspected to be behind explosions in nearby Moldova. PAGE A10

BUSINESS

Dow Jones
33,240.18 (-809.28)

S&P 500
4,175.20 (-120.92)

Nasdaq
12,490.74 (-514.11)

ONLINE

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MediaNews Group



TODAY IN HISTORY

1941

German forces occupied Athens during World War II.

1973

Acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray resigned after it was revealed that he'd destroyed files removed from the safe of Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt.

1978

51 construction workers plunged to their deaths when a scaffold inside a cooling tower at the Pleasants Power Station site in West Virginia fell 168 feet to the ground.

1992

Russia and 12 other former Soviet republics won entry into the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

1994

Former President Richard M. Nixon was remembered at an outdoor funeral service attended by all five of his successors at the Nixon presidential library in Yorba Linda, California.

2010

Former Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega was extradited from the United States to France, where he was later convicted of laundering drug money and received a seven-year sentence.

Birthdays

Rock singer Kate Pierson is 74. Actor James Le Gros is 60. Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., is 53. Actor Sally Hawkins is 46. Rock singer-musician Patrick Stump is 38. Actor Jenna Coleman is 36. Singer Lizzo is 34.

Star report

The B-52s to launch a US farewell tour

The quirky dance-pop outfit The B-52s are hitting the road one last time for a final tour this summer that will roam from coast to coast. "No one likes to throw a party more than we do, but after almost a half-century on the road, it's time for one last blow-out," said Fred Schneider, co-founder and singer for the Athens, Georgia-based band, in a statement. Their North American farewell tour will visit 10 cities across the U.S., kicking off Aug. 22 in Seattle and ending Nov. 11 in Atlanta. Tickets are available at The B-52s.com.

— The Associated Press

LOTTERY

WINNING NUMBERS

Daily 3 Afternoon: 2, 0, 5

Daily 3 Evening: 7, 0, 7

Daily 4: 4, 5, 5, 0

Fantasy 5:

3, 18, 21, 24, 35

DAILY DERBY

1st: 10, Solid Gold

2nd: 6, Whirl Win

3rd: 3, Hot Shot

Race time: 1:49.00

SUPER LOTTO PLUS

Saturday's drawing: 13, 19, 21, 22, 39

Mega number: 9

Wednesday's estimated jackpot: \$37 million

MEGA MILLIONS

Tuesday's drawing: 5, 7, 19, 46, 69

Mega Number: 2

Tuesday's estimated jackpot: \$31 million

POWERBALL

Monday's drawing: 12, 18, 20, 39, 61

Powerball: 10

Wednesday's estimated jackpot: \$454 million

Housing

FROM PAGE 1

on-campus housing last fall and found themselves sitting out the year at home or living in motel rooms or vehicles as surging rents and decades of failing to build sufficient student housing came to a head.

For some colleges, the housing crunch was related to increased demand by students who had been stuck at home during the pandemic. For others, including many in California, the shortage reflects a deeper conflict between the colleges and homeowners who don't want new housing built for students who they say increase congestion and noise.

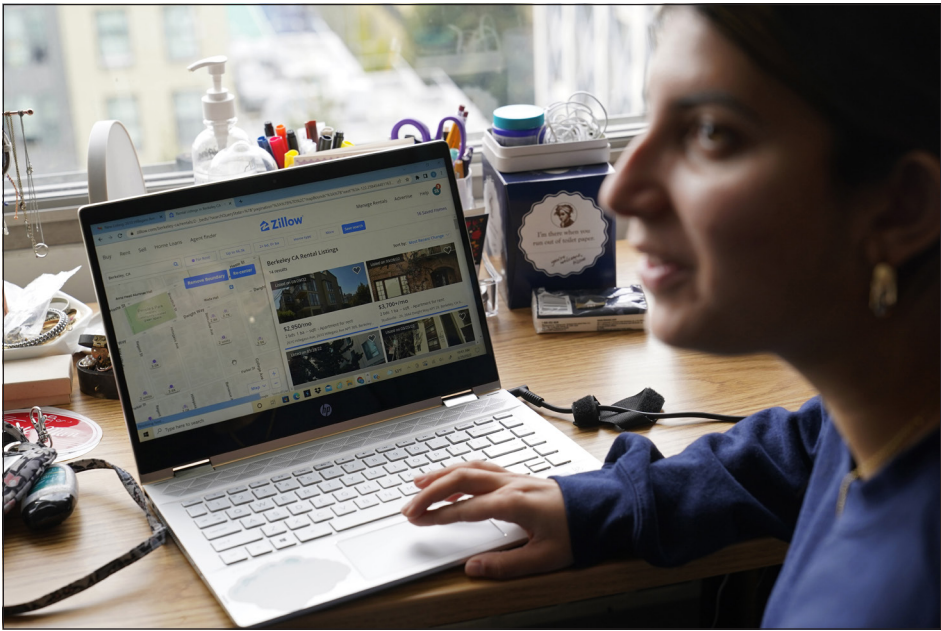
In March, the University of California at Berkeley said it would have to cap student enrollment because of a lawsuit brought by irate neighbors over the school's growth. State lawmakers fast-tracked a fix to allow the campus to enroll as many students as planned for the 2022 fall semester, but the legislation does nothing to produce more housing.

Nationally, 43% of students at four-year universities experienced housing insecurity in 2020, up from 35% in 2019, according to an annual survey conducted by The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice at Temple University. Students reported being unable to pay utilities, rent or mortgage, living in overcrowded units or moving in with others due to financial difficulties.

And for the first time since it began tracking basic needs in 2015, the survey found an equal percentage — 14% — of students at both four-year and two-year colleges who had experienced homelessness in the last year, said Mark Huelsman, the center's director of policy and advocacy.

"This is a function of rents rising, the inability of communities and institutions to build enough housing for students and other costs of college going up that create a perfect storm for students," he said.

For some students, the



ERIC RISBERG — AP PHOTO

University of California at Berkeley freshman Sanaa Sodhi talks with a friend in her on-campus dorm room while searching online for apartments in Berkeley. Millions of college students in the U.S. are trying to find an affordable place to live as rents surge nationally.

lack of affordable housing could mean the difference between going to college or not. Others take on massive debt or live so precariously they miss out on all the extracurricular benefits of higher education.

Jonathan Dena, a first-generation college student from the Sacramento area, almost rejected UC Berkeley over the lack of housing, even though it was his "dream program." He found a studio at the heavily subsidized Rochdale Apartments for under \$1,300 a month, but he might have to move because the barebones units may close for a seismic renovation.

Dena, 29, wants to continue living within walking distance of campus for a robust college experience.

But the urban studies major and student government housing commission officer said "it's kind of scary" how high rents are near campus. Online listings showed a newer one-bedroom for one person at \$3,700, as well as a 240-square foot bedroom for two people sharing a bathroom for nearly \$1,700 per person a month.

"If I go to school in Berkeley, I would love to live in Berkeley," he said.

Nationally, rents have increased 17% since March 2020, said Chris Salviati, senior economist with Apartment List, but the increase has been higher in some popular college towns. Chapel Hill, North Carolina,

saw a 24% jump in rents and Tempe, Arizona, saw a 31% hike.

In some cases, the rental increases have been exacerbated by a lack of on-campus housing.

Last fall, demand for on-campus housing was so high that the University of Tampa offered incoming freshmen a break on tuition if they deferred until fall 2022. Rent in the Florida city has skyrocketed nearly 30% from a year ago, according to Apartment List.

Rent in Knoxville has soared 36% since March 2020, and it could get worse after the University of Tennessee announced a new lottery system for its dorms this fall, saying it needs to prioritize housing for a larger freshman class.

Even two-year community colleges, which have not traditionally provided dorms, are rethinking student needs as the cost of housing rises.

In October, Long Beach City College launched a pilot program to provide up to 15 homeless students space in an enclosed parking garage. They sleep in their cars and have access to bathrooms and showers, electrical outlets and internet while they work with counselors to find permanent housing.

Uduak-Joe Ntuk, president of the college's Board of Trustees, hesitated when

asked if the program will be renewed.

"I want to say no, but I think we will," he said. "We're going to have new students come fall semester this year that are going to be in a similar situation, and for us to do nothing is untenable."

California prides itself on its robust higher education system, but has struggled with housing at its four-year colleges. Berkeley is notoriously difficult, with cut-throat competition for the few affordable apartments within walking distance to campus.

"I definitely was not prepared to be this stressed about housing every year," said Jennifer Lopez, 21, a UC Berkeley senior from Cudahy, in southeastern Los Angeles County, and the first in her family to attend college.

She imagined she would spend all four years on campus in dorms, but found herself in a scramble for a safe, affordable place to sleep. The urban studies major currently splits an attic space in what is technically a one-bedroom apartment shared by four undergraduates, one of whom sleeps in the dining room.

The total monthly rent is nearly \$3,700 — laughably high in most U.S. cities — but she's grateful for it.

"If I hadn't heard about this place, I was either going to end up living in a

Open

FROM PAGE 1

the region and the state go to visit amazing old-growth redwoods or beautiful beaches or some of these really amazing places," said county parks director Max Korten, who serves on Together Bay Area's governing board.

"Creating the experience so that that visitation doesn't have a negative impact on the environment takes funding," he said. "So that's why it's really important that the state, the region and the federal government support projects here because these places aren't just for the residents here. They inspire people from all over."

That said, a few projects on the county's list do aim to acquire more land to preserve as open space. The largest acquisition project seeks to protect 100 acres of privately owned, undeveloped grassland and woodland on Easton Point in Tiburon.

The point was the center of a legal dispute surrounding hiking trail access for years. The listed sale price for the property was recently dropped to \$63 mil-

lion, down from its original price of \$110 million, according to the property's realty agent.

The Marin Open Space Trust also is looking to preserve 60 acres of privately owned land on Bald Hill near San Anselmo and Ross, which has become a popular hiking destination. Another project seeks to purchase 13 acres of land on the slopes of Mount Tamalpais alongside the Myrtle Avenue fire road and trail near Mill Valley that includes a section of Cascade Creek.

Securing funding is key to convincing the landowners to sell, said Marin County Open Space Trust president Bill Long.

"These kinds of properties typically don't get donated outright, although sometimes owners will sell them at a bargain price," Long said. "But you still need to raise significant funding."

Several projects include upgrading and restoring trails such as Azalea Hill on Mount Tamalpais; upgrading trails in Roy's Redwoods in the San Geronimo Valley; creating a 1,300-foot trail extension on Dias Ridge near Highway 101; and creating a more than half-mile bicycle trail con-



SHERRY LAVARS/MARIN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL

The county hopes to upgrade trails in Roy's Redwoods as part of the "30 by 30" preservation initiative.

nect from Mount Tamalpais State Park to 80 miles of the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Other priorities include adapting Bolinas Lagoon to sea level rise, improving habitat for overwintering and breeding monarch butterflies, restoring habitat for coho salmon on Lagunitas Creek and wildfire prevention in the Mt. Tamalpais watershed.

Korten said many projects have undergone years of planning and community engagement already. While Marin does not typically compete well for federal or state grant funding compared to economically dis-

advantaged communities, Korten said the county and its residents have shown their willingness to put their own funding forward.

"For the state or federal government, there is an opportunity to leverage the funding we've already put in to protect these places not just for the residents of this county but for the state as these important places people come to visit and are kind of iconic in terms of the region and state," Korten said.

The county government seeks to renew its quarter-percent sales tax in June that provides funding for

basement, or in this other apartment I know (where) the girls are struggling with leaks and mold," Lopez said.

The Basic Needs Center at UC Berkeley, which operates a food pantry for students and faculty, found in a snapshot survey that a quarter of undergraduates reported they "lacked a safe, regular and adequate nighttime place to stay and sleep" at some point since October.

"That's huge," said Ruben Canedo, co-chair of UC's systemwide Basic Needs Committee. "This generation of students is navigating the most expensive cost-of-living market while at the same time having the least amount of financial support accessible to them."

Thompson, the business administration major, started looking for an apartment last May, after spending his first year at home taking classes remotely to save money. He quickly realized that his rental budget of \$750 was wildly inadequate and as a second-year student, he no longer qualified for priority in the dorms.

By the time classes began in late August, he was in a panic. He tried commuting from his home in Sacramento, leaving before 6 a.m. for the 80-mile drive to Berkeley and returning home around midnight to avoid traffic.

But that was grueling so he took to sleeping in his car. Initially he parked far away in a spot without parking limits. Then he parked at a lot between two student dorm complexes closer to campus, where exuberant partying kept him up at night.

He attended classes, studied and ate sparingly to save on ballooning food costs. He looked at apartments where five people were squeezed into two bedrooms with pared-down belongings stored under beds.

He slept in his car for almost two weeks until a sympathetic landlord who had also grown up in a low-income home reached out, offering a studio within walking distance of campus. The rent is \$1,000 a month, and he hopes to stay until he graduates.

"I think I have a little bit of a PTSD factor," he said.

parks, open space and agricultural preserves.

California already set aside about \$2.1 billion in funding over two years in its current budget to make progress on the 30 by 30 initiative but did not specify which projects it would fund. The state's final "Pathways to 30 by 30" plan, released Friday, is meant to guide these decisions. Organizations such as the Natural Resources Defense Council nonprofit have called on Newsom and the Legislature to identify specific projects as it prepares its 2022-2023 budget in the coming months.

The state report says federal funding will be "critical" to advancing state projects. The Biden administration announced a plan earlier this month to set aside \$440 million over the next five years to provide grants to projects throughout the state.

The California Natural Resources Agency also states that the nearly \$10 billion investment for national parks and wilderness areas from the Great American Outdoors Act in 2020 and the \$1 trillion infrastructure bill passed last year are expected to provide significant funding opportunities.

ple who have merely been vaccinated.

Between September and December, the prevalence of antibodies in the samples steadily increased by 1 to 2 percentage points every four weeks. But it jumped sharply after December, increasing by nearly 25 points by February.

The percentage of samples with antibodies rose to about 75% from about 45% among both children age 11 and younger, and adolescents aged 12 to 17.

By February, roughly 64% of adults 18 to 49, about half those 50 to 64 and about one-third of older adults had been infected with the virus, according to the study.