

Contra Costa County now offering COVID-19 vaccines for littles

By Sora O'Doherty

Contra Costa County has announced that safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines are now being offered to children ages 6 months to 4 years old at county-run vaccination clinics.

According to Supervisor Candace Andersen, the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup recently authorized pediatric versions of Pfizer's and Moderna's vaccines for this age group. Previously, only children between the ages of 5-17 and adults were eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccinations.

The pediatric COVID-19 vaccines come in smaller doses than the adult vaccines. Pfizer's vaccine for this age group is a three-dose series: the

first two doses are spaced three weeks apart and the third dose is given eight weeks after that. Moderna offers a two-dose series with each shot given one month apart.

"Vaccines are our best defense against severe disease from COVID. While kids tend to get less sick from COVID-19 than adults, they can still get seriously ill from the virus," said Dr. Ori Tzvieli, health officer for the county. "COVID is now one of the leading causes of death among children in the United States," Tzvieli said, concluding, "Vaccination is the best way to reduce health risks to kids."

An estimated 60,000 county residents are in the newly eligible age group. Parents and guardians can schedule vaccination appointments at county-run vaccination sites or with their children's regular healthcare provider. Children must have consent

from a parent or adult guardian to receive the vaccine.

Contra Costa Health is also planning a series of mobile vaccination clinics in partnership with local child-development organizations in the coming weeks and will provide more details about those mobile clinics in the future. More information about vaccines for kids and appointments for vaccinations are available from the county at www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/vaccine-for-kids

In addition, members of Kaiser Permanente can also receive vaccinations for young children. Visit the county website (above) for more information or call the KP COVID InfoLine at 1-855-550-0951 (available in English and Spanish) 24/7 for regular recorded updates.

Teens fill vacancies as job openings persist

By Ashley Dong

For many children, summer is a sacred season. It is the time to swim at the public pool or attend fun summer camps. Unfortunately, with the nationwide labor crunch and reports across the country of a shortage of lifeguards to monitor pools and camp counselors to run the programs, finding qualified employees is proving to be a challenge.

The Lafayette Parks and Recreation Department, which runs a local summer program for 4- to 11-year-olds, Camp Awesome, found a solution to their summer labor deficit. Using Camp Awesome as their foundation, they created an afterschool program, called After School Awesome [ASA], to offer childcare throughout the school year. This way, the employees of Camp Awesome have an opportunity for year-round employment with the ASA, according to Director of Lafayette Parks, Trails & Recreation Jonathan Katayanagi.

With less experience than adults and more time on their hands, teenagers are often willing to work for lower pay

and benefits, which is ideal for hiring companies. In the annual summer job outlook for American teenagers, the Drexel University Center for Labor Markets and Policy predicted a summer teenage employment rate of 32.8%, the highest it's been since 2007.

By getting a job, teenagers not only help out companies in need, but they also learn invaluable life skills, like how to work with adults, how to assist customers, and how to take responsibility for one's actions. "We have found that working in programs like these camps and classes creates well-rounded individuals and gives the students experiences they can write about in their college essays," Katayanagi said. Additionally, teen employment is path-dependent, meaning that teens who are working now are more likely to continue working as adults.

But, working as an inexperienced teenager in a fast-paced environment alongside more adept and well-trained adults has its difficulties. "The biggest challenge for me was learning how I should be treated at work, even as just a minimum wage employee,

and how to stand up for myself when I am mistreated," Acalanes High School graduated senior Anson Añonuevo said, after spending a year working as a crew member for Chipotle.

"Real" jobs like Añonuevo's – as cashiers, retail associates, waitresses, and more – are mostly available to just those 16 years old and older. According to the California Child Labor Laws, 14- and 15-year-olds can only work 18 hours a week, while 16- and 17-year-olds are permitted to work up to 48 hours a week, which makes them more hireable.

However, there are still many job opportunities for those 15 years old and younger. Eden Berzansky, a 14-year-old rising freshman at Campolindo High School, has a summer job coaching 3- to 5-year-old swimmers at Las Trampas. But Berzansky is already learning some hard lessons after joining the ranks of the recently employed.

"Earning money is a lot tougher than it looks," Berzansky said. "I didn't expect to have to work so much and whenever I get a paycheck, it's never as much as I thought it would be."

Free concert planned at Reservoir to thank local volunteers fighting hunger and homelessness

The Rotary Club of Lafayette is planning a special free concert on Aug. 6 at the Lafayette Reservoir's Rotary Stage to say "thank you" to the hundreds of volunteers who are working with the hungry and homeless in Contra Costa County.

Over the last two years the Rotary Club of Lafayette has launched a monthly program, "Rotary Cares," finding ways to make significant contributions that might make a difference, including donations to the Monument Crisis Center, the Contra Costa Food Bank, as well as other projects such as making and donating warm blankets; making and

donating breakfast kits and hygiene kits for shelters; and collecting and donating gently used shoes.

The concert, which is a way to say thank you for the time, the hard work, and the money that has been raised by volunteers to help the very programs that create a safety net here in the East Bay, will begin at 4 p.m. with a warm-up act, followed by a 90-minute concert featuring the Big Band of Rossmoor. Audience members are encouraged to bring a picnic, a blanket, and enjoy the music. Visit www.lafayetterotary.com and order free tickets. - J. Wake

Orinda recognizes anniversary of interment

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"Your proclamation brought events that happened 80 years ago to the present and underscores the need to learn from our past to ensure that our history does not repeat itself and affirms the adherence to the rule of law." She concluded by thanking the council very much and saying that she will ensure that her mother and others know of Orinda's bold stance.

The proclamation was put together by Council Member Amy Worth. Worth said at the meeting, "I learned about it (the Japanese internment) when I was 10 years old and I was horrified." She had previously read a copy of "Lotus" that she found in the Orinda Library, but when she looked again, the book was no longer in the library. She has purchased another copy to donate to the library. Worth also

mentioned that this year Mt. Diablo High School presented retroactive high school diplomas to those Japanese students whose educations were ended prematurely when they were interned.

Library Manager Michael Beller was also at the meeting. "Memoires like this," he said, "remind us that it can happen here, that tragic decisions, racism and xenophobia can happen here and everywhere." He added his hopes that the public will read "Lotus," and will use other resources at the library in order that "we never forget what happened and to ensure that it doesn't happen again." Council Member Inga Miller agreed that it is "so important to pass along the stories of what happened, the awful, terrible thing that happened in our country's history." She said she was very happy that this book is being restored to the library.



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Dr. Matthew Tamplen, who grew up in Lafayette and is a well-known Facial Plastic Surgeon with Kaiser Permanente, just opened a private practice in Downtown Orinda to better serve Lamorinda patients.

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