

CONNECTION

Sharing the day-to-day learning experience

at

Community Homes & Services

PO Box 744, Novato CA 94948

415-408-3604

www.communityhomesandservices.com

SUPERMARKET EMPLOYEE DAY IS 2/22

Nino interviewed Devlin about what it's like working at a grocery store.

How long have you worked at Safeway?

I have worked at Safeway in Corte Madera for 10 months. Once I reach 1 year, I get a free cake and vacation time.

Where did you work before Safeway?

Before I started working at Safeway, I worked at Cinemark Movie Theater.

What's a typical work day look like for you?

I go to Safeway and I do the shopping carts, bagging groceries, sweeping and go-backs throughout my 4 hour shift.

What days and hours do you usually work?

I work 4 hours each day and I work 5 days a week.

What kind of training did you go through?

I have a job coach through ICS and I went through a 3 month training with her and my store manager. I successfully passed my training period.

What's your favorite part of working at a grocery store?

I like my co-workers and managers. I like bagging groceries the best.

What's the most challenging part of the job?

Pulling grocery carts from the parking lot is my least favorite part of my job because I don't like the parking lot traffic and bad weather.



Ian Makes a Fox

Chris, our art teacher, loves the challenge of a flat, cut-out puzzle that when assembled turns into a detailed 3-D object. One time he built an incredibly complex skull that was about 3 feet tall, and another time he made a white fox.

New(ish) student, Ian, became fascinated with the fox and wanted to try building one himself. (Did we mention that these puzzles are a bit *complicated*?) So Ian and Chris worked on carefully assembling the fabulous 3D fox and Ian proudly took it home.

Wow, we don't know what we or others are capable of until someone gives us the opportunity to try!



Snail Mail Pen-Pal Club



Let's Make Valentine's Day Cards!

Friday, February 6th

10AM-Noon

@ The Project Center

866 Grant Ave. #3

- Drop in and join us! Create a home-made Valentine's Day card or two
- We'll have everything you need to make and send a card—postage, stickers, rubber stamps, and stationary galore
- Tea and snacks will be served, because everything is better with snacks

If you have any questions

- Please call Jennifer at 415) 897-8676

FEBRUARY 2026 NATIONAL DAYS/MONTHS

Black History Month, Cancer Prevention Month, Bird Feeding Month

2/1 - Serpent Day, Dark Chocolate Day

2/2 - Groundhog Day, National Tater Tot Day

2/3 - Carrot Cake Day, Day the Music Died Day

2/4 - World Cancer Day, Homemade Soup Day, Thank a Mail Carrier Day

2/6 - National Chopsticks Day, Bubble Gum Day, Frozen Yogurt Day

2/7 - Send a Card to a Friend Day, Periodic Table Day

2/8 - Superbowl Sunday, Kite Flying Day

2/9 - National Pizza Day, Bagel and Lox Day

2/10 - Umbrella Day

2/11 - Super Bowl Sunday, Spilled Milk Day, Guitar Day

2/13 - Galentine's Day, Cheddar Day, Tortellini Day

2/14 - Valentine's Day, Ferris Wheel Day, Global Movie Day

2/15 - World Whale Day, Singles Awareness Day

2/17 -, Random Acts of Kindness Day

2/18 - Battery Day

2/19 - Presidents Day HOLIDAY, Chocolate Mint Day

2/20 - Comfy Day, Muffin Day, Love Your Pet Day, Cherry Pie Day

2/22 - California Day, Cook a Sweet Potato Day, Margarita Day

2/23 - Dog Biscuit Day, Banana Bread Day

2/24 - Tortilla Chip Day, Chili Day

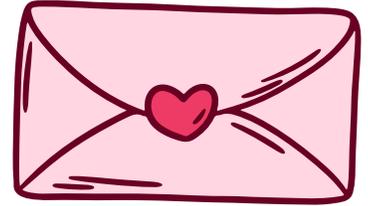
2/25 - Clam Chowder Day, Chocolate Covered Nut Day

2/26 - Set a Good Example Day, Toast Day, Pistachio Day

2/27 - International Polar Bear Day, Retro Day, Pokemon Day, Strawberry Day

2/28 - National Floral Design Day

2/29 - Leap Day



David Gold

CH&S STUDENT PPP

David is a man of peace and a man of great taste. David loves to be around people and people love to be around him because he is such pleasant company, and because his very presence brings out the “class” in others. David is appreciated as a great appreciator. He appreciates fine food, beautiful women, cool music, and “good vibes”.

David is devoted to his father and dearly loved by his housemates and his co-workers.

He is:

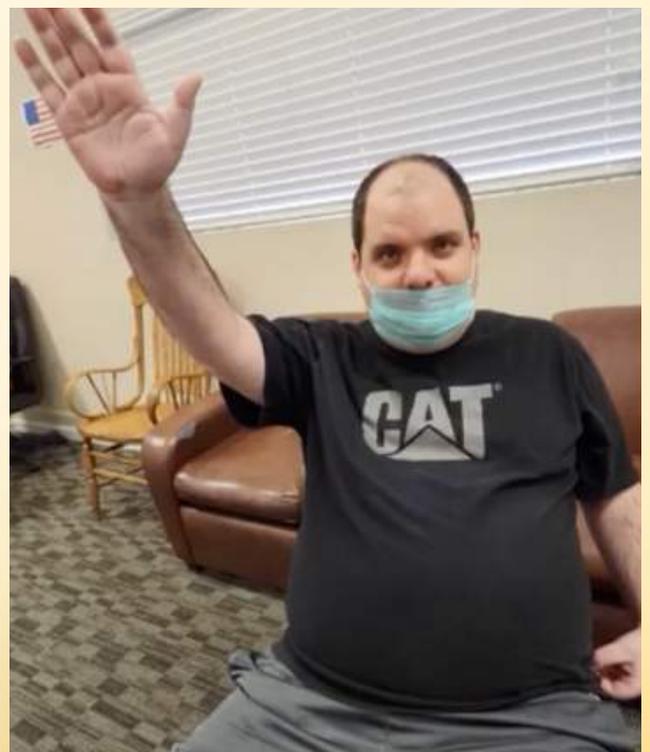
Intelligent

A great listener

Very good looking

A lot of fun

Full of love



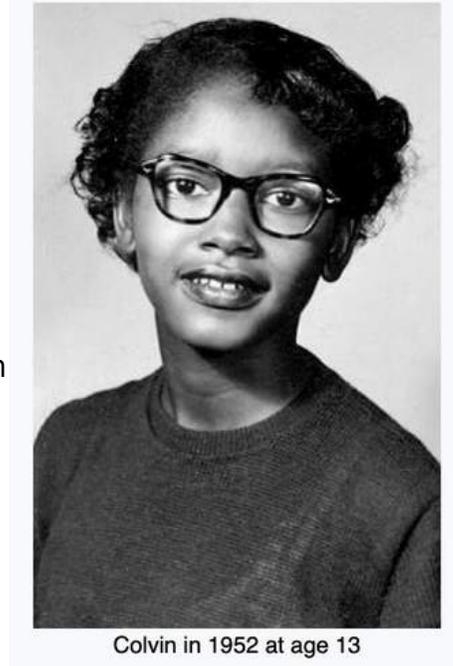
Watch David's PPP video
on our Instagram account:
<https://tinyurl.com/rehuvzj8>

Black History Month: How a Teenager Changed History

Claudette Colvin was just 15 years old when she made a decision that would quietly help change American history. On March 2, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, Colvin refused to give up her seat on a segregated city bus to a white passenger. She did not shout or make a speech. She stayed seated.

Colvin learned Black history in school. She had learned about the Constitution and the rights it promised. So when police officers dragged her off the bus, she was frightened but certain she was doing the right thing.

Her arrest came months before Rosa Parks' more widely known protest on December 1, 1955. Yet Colvin was not chosen as the public face of the bus boycott. Civil rights leaders worried that her age, her darker complexion, and later her pregnancy would be used to discredit the movement.



Despite being overlooked, Colvin's role proved legally crucial. She became one of the plaintiffs in *Browder v. Gayle*, the federal court case that successfully challenged bus segregation in Montgomery. The case reached the Supreme Court and led to a ruling that segregation on public buses was unconstitutional. Without Colvin's testimony, the legal victory might not have happened.

After her moment in history, Colvin did not become famous. She moved to New York City, worked as a nurse's aide for decades, and raised a family. Only later in life did historians and educators begin to restore her place in the story of the civil rights movement.

Colvin was born on September 5, 1939, and (as of January 2026) she is in her mid-80s. In recent years, her role in civil rights history has finally received wider recognition, including the expungement of her juvenile arrest record in 2021.

Review Questions

- How old was Colvin when she refused to give up her bus seat?
- How did what Colvin learned in school effect her decision to remain seated?
- Why was Colvin not chosen as the public symbol of the Montgomery bus boycott?
- Is Colvin still alive?

National Spilled Milk Day: How We Ended Up Talking About Oats, Regrets, and Making Coffee

National Spilled Milk Day (2/11) is a reminder not to get worked up over mistakes. You spilled the milk. You cleaned it up. Now move on. No need for dramatics. No guilt spiral. No berating yourself for being clumsy. No regrets or as they say “no regrets.”

But, of course, nothing is ever that simple.

Daniel and Thea started talking about spilled milk beginning with the best use of milk-cereal. Daniel prefers Honey O’s and ice cold milk. Or oatmeal–Daniel prefers his oatmeal with almond milk. This discussion led them to realize that neither of them had any real idea what an oat plant actually looks like (below left). Turns out, it looks nothing like the neat little oat clusters they had in their heads.



On Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oat>, they found a photo of people in Norway harvesting oats in the late 1800s which they both found mildly unsettling (above right). Harvesting a bowl of oats to make oatmeal seems like hard work.

They started talking about one small thing, and suddenly they’re questioning what they thought they knew. From oats, the conversation turned to regrets. Daniel mentioned that he once regretted not going to homecoming with the girl who asked him. He said that he regrets his decision and it stopped him from going to the dance, dating her, marrying her, then having children.

“Maybe,” said Thea, “you two would have just gone to the dance once and never dated or married.” Daniel admitted that his biggest fear wasn’t marriage anyway–*it was having kids*. The *responsibility* of it. The *permanence*. Thea (who does not have children) said that she related to Daniel’s fears.

Cleaning Up Spilled Milk

Thea told Daniel about a time when her friends Dave and Erin were pregnant. During that time, Thea had a dream: Dave and Thea were watching the new baby, and somehow, they lost the newborn. They looked *everywhere* and no baby! "I thought you had it, Dave!" Thea yelled in the dream as she looked in the kitchen. Dave told Thea that she had the baby last so he thought she had it. "Erin is gonna be so mad at us!" Thea said. Daniel laughed. Thea woke up in a panic and realized, that parenting was *not* her calling. No kids and no regrets.

Every morning, Daniel said that he makes coffee for his mom and adds milk, frothed and spooned on top. This feels important, it's a small daily ritual, milk as care, milk as routine, milk not spilled.

Which brings us to the things people have said about milk over the years:

- "I am thankful for laughter, except when milk comes out of my nose." – Woody Allen
- "Cheese is milk's leap toward immortality." - Clifton Fadiman
- "There is no sense in crying over spilt milk. Why bewail what is done and cannot be recalled?"- Sophocles
- "A creature that never cries over spilt milk: a cat." -Evan Esar

So what does "don't cry over spilled milk" mean? Don't obsess over what already happened. Don't build an entire imaginary future out of one small choice you didn't make.

Milk spills.

Oats look weird.
Life doesn't follow the
script in your head.

You clean it up, pour
another glass of milk,
maybe make someone
coffee in the morning, and
keep going.



And that's kind of the point.

A Golden Gate Bridge Model at the Project Center!

with Donald, James, Patrick and Joe

First we found this helpful guide, then we followed the instructions.



But we learned that our popsicle sticks were warped! Many of them, anyway. Donald was on quality control duty, and he helped the project roll along.



We started out painting the sticks individually, but that was too slow, so we glued what we had and painted the rest when it was complete.

James Built a Bridge!

When it came time to affix the cables we had to be creative about getting them stuck to the road surface. We just used hot glue - James' preferred medium.



The blacktop w/ dotted yellow center line, the orange safety lights, and the blue construction paper water below were custom additions. In the future James would love to add a fog horn, some Matchbox cars on the main span, boats, and an Equator on the southern shore.

We'll get there!



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of any size or kind.
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CH&S Reading Comprehension

Name: _____ Date: _____

Beekeeping

Ready to Read READING COMPREHENSION *by Darnell*

I had the pleasure of spending the day with my future daughter-in-law (her name is Emi) while she worked as a beekeeper.

Emi works for a company called Girl Next Door Honey. Her job is to visit people's homes where bees live in hives in their yards. She checks the hives to make sure the bees are healthy. She also looks for animals or insects that might harm the bees. She checks on the queen bee and looks to see if there are any new baby bees. The baby bees are lighter in color and a little fuzzy.

Being a beekeeper takes knowledge, skill, and care. Beekeepers help protect bees and teach people why bees are important. Bees help pollinate many of the foods we eat. Without bees, we would not have many fruits and vegetables such as: almonds, apples, blueberries, strawberries, avocados, cucumbers, broccoli, and pumpkins. When you eat fruit or foods like guacamole, you can thank bees for helping make that food possible.

Sometimes a group of bees, called a *swarm*, settles in a place that is not safe or not wanted. When this happens, my future daughter-in-law helps move the bees to a better location. On the day I was with her, she was called to move a swarm from a yard. While she was working, the homeowner decided to keep the bees instead. He even chose to add another hive. He said he liked the bees so much that he wanted more. Most homes only need two hives to make enough honey for themselves.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Beekeeping Reading Comprehension Questions

1. The beekeeper checks the hives to make sure the bees are healthy.

- True False

2. Who is Darnell writing about?

- A. Her neighbor
- B. A beekeeper she met
- C. Emi, her future daughter-in-law
- D. Her teacher

3. What job does Emi have?

- A. Farmer
- B. Gardener
- C. Beekeeper
- D. Chef

4. Why are bees important to people?

- A. They make loud noises
- B. They help flowers grow
- C. They help grow food we eat
- D. They keep other insects away

5. Which food is helped by bees?

- A. Bread
- B. Rice
- C. Apples
- D. Cheese

6. Bees are not important for growing food.

- True False

7. What did the homeowner in the story decide to do?

- A. Get rid of all the bees
- B. Keep the bees
- C. Call another company
- D. Sell the house

More Beekeeping Pics!



Check out Emi tending a bee hive (above and bottom left) while Darnell (bottom right) watches from the sidelines.



Beekeeping Coloring Page



The Quiet Brain Game

The Quiet Brain Game, also known as *cognitive shuffling*, is a simple and fun activity that can be used in classes or when a group needs some focused attention such as when waiting for a class to start or waiting for lunch. The game helps people focus their minds, practice language skills, and use their imagination.

To play the Quiet Brain Game, start with one easy word, such as BRAIN. Then ask the group to think of other words that begin with the same first letter, like "bird," "ball," or "brown." When no one can think of any more B words, move on to the next letter in the original word and do the same thing: What words begin with R?

(Some groups can really get into this so you may want to narrow it to *animal words* that start with B or that sort of thing.)

This activity is helpful because it keeps the brain busy without making it feel stressed or tired, though the game can get quite lively. The Quiet Brain Game can:

- Support attention and focus
- Encourage imagination and visualization
- Build language and word-finding skills
- Reduce anxiety and busy or worried thoughts
- Provide a calming transition between activities



Shall we give it a try? Let's start with the word **TOAST**.

- What is the difference between bread and *toast*?
- What is the first letter in the word *toast*?
 - Can you think of words that start with the letter T?
 - Write your T words here:

tomato

T-rex

The Sleep Game

- What is the second letter in the word **TOAST**?
 - Can you think of words that start with the letter O?
 - Start a list of O words. And so on. You get the picture.

open

oyster

The Quiet Brain Game is also useful as a relaxation tool at the end of the day or it can actually help you to go back to sleep in the middle of the night. Instead of thinking about worries or problems, just think of a word, like DOVE or PEACE or DREAMY and start making lists of words that start with the first letter then the second, then the third (if you make it that far). Focus on simple, neutral words and pictures. This can help quiet the mind and make it easier to relax or fall asleep.



The Quiet Brain Game can be used in different ways and the game shows that calming the brain can be simple and enjoyable. With no materials needed and no right or wrong answers, everyone can participate at their own level. The Quiet Brain Game (*cognitive shuffling*) turns thinking into a peaceful and positive activity.

Sweet dreams!



Andrew's Corner

Snowman Facts

You can have a workout by building snowmen for an hour which burns 238 calories! The people of Sapporo, Japan have a festival where they make art out of ice, including snowmen. A popular variant of snowmen is Yukiusagi, which means snow rabbit, which are rabbits with leaves for ears and red berries for eyes. One of the very first female photographers, Mary Dillwyn, provided one of the earliest photographs of the very first snowman made in Switzerland in 1400. Snowmen became more popular when the song "Frosty the Snowman" was released in 1950. The biggest snowman ever made, "Olympia", was a 122-foot-1-inch (37.21m) tall snowwoman. Both buttons and coal have been used to make the eyes of snowmen. Twigs have been used to make the arms of snowmen. Have you ever made a snowman?



Bio: Andrew Newson is a student at Life College and is 28 years old. He likes comic books, video games, hiking, exploring new places with his mom.... and babies. He is an authority in all things Star Wars, Star Trek and great places to go in the Bay Area. He is currently learning Mandarin and loves to research and learn new things.

***Happy February
Birthday!***

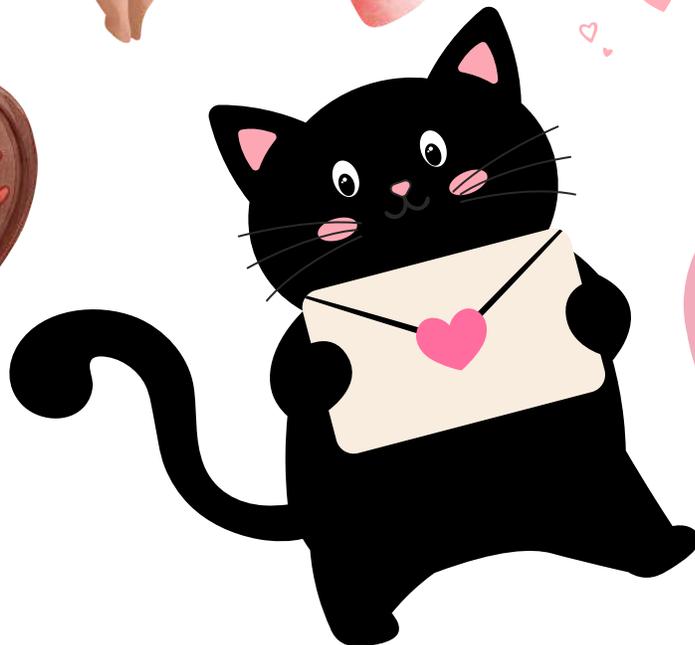
2/1 - Gregory
2/16 - Rebecca
2/17 - Andrew M.
2/18 - Linda



Valentine Cut Outs



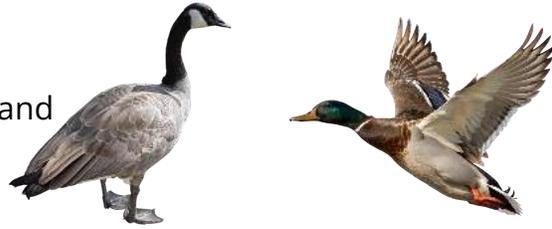
Happy
Valentine's
Day



Birds: Who's Here and Who's Visiting?

In the winter (December to February), some birds fly to warmer places. Although we've had some very cold days this winter, we still have birds here that have flown to Bay Area because we are the warm place for them!

Birds fly here from icy/snowy places like Alaska and Canada to spend the winter with us!

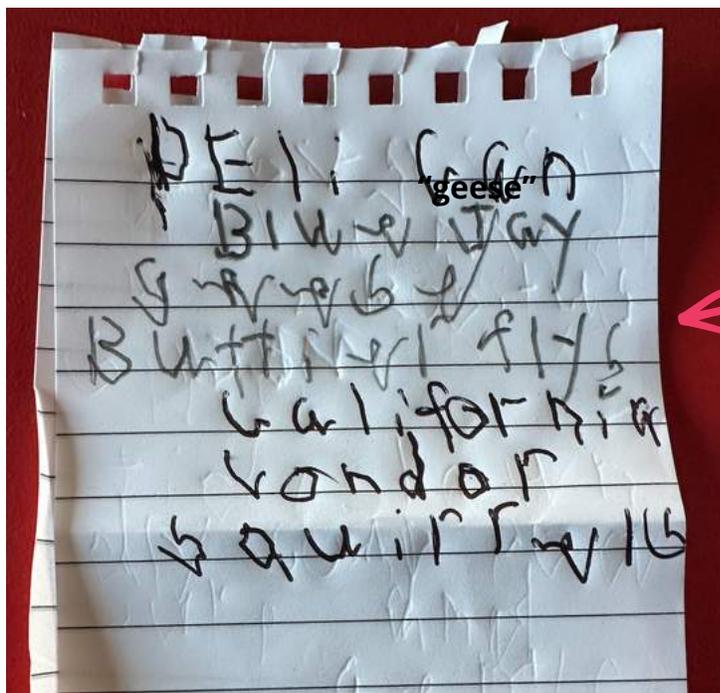


Here are some birds you might see:

- **Mallard Ducks** - The males have bright green heads and yellow bills, while females are brown with orange bills. They tip their tails up as they search for plants and insects.
- **Canada Geese** - These big birds have black heads and necks with white "chinstrap" markings. They're very social and often gather in large, noisy flocks on grass and in wetlands.
- **Brown Pelicans** - These large gray-brown birds have enormous pouches under their beaks that expand like nets to catch fish. They fly above the waves, then suddenly plunge headfirst into the water from heights up to 60 feet! Splash!!!

Some birds fly hundreds or thousands of miles to get here. They don't need a map—they just know the way.

Unrelatedly, Darnell and Amy were talking about making some new reading comprehension pages. They spent time coming up with new topics they thought would be interesting for you all to read. And with *no prompting*, Amy showed up during the next meeting with a list of ideas



for new reading comprehension pages. Amy assigned herself some homework and we really appreciate her initiative and work! **And Amy wishes you a happy Valentine's Day!**

Amy's list:

- pelican
- blue jay
- geese
- butterfly
- California condor
- squirrels



Match the Name to the Winter Bird

Here are some winter birds you may see around Marin.

- **American Avocets** - a long-legged shorebird with an upturned bill. The head and neck turn a rusty-cinnamon in breeding season then fades to grayish-white in winter.
 - *Which is the American Avocet?*
- **Buffleheads** - Known for their puffy, iridescent heads (males have a large white patch) and rapid wingbeats.
 - *Which is the bufflehead?*
- **Bald Eagle** -
 - *Which is the bald eagle?*
- **Yellow-rumped Warbler** -
 - *Which is the warbler?*
- **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** -
 - *Which is the kinglets?*



The answers are on the National Whale Day page.

Year-Round Bird Residents and Bird Invaders!

Audrey's group checked out some of the local birds and here is what they saw:



(Left) Doesn't this egret look great? That's probably because it's a great egret! Great egrets stand about 3 feet tall, have entirely white feathers, a long S-curved neck, and long, sharp bill. The great egrets we have here have yellow bills and black legs.

This is the Snowy Egret (right). It is about half the size of great egrets. The snowy egret has a black bill and black legs with yellow feet.



(Below) They saw a mute swan!



The mute swans living in Marin County are non-native and considered invasive. Why are the mute swans seen as invaders? They eat large amounts of underwater plants that native fish and birds depend on. They can also be aggressive, chasing away native waterfowl from nesting and feeding areas.

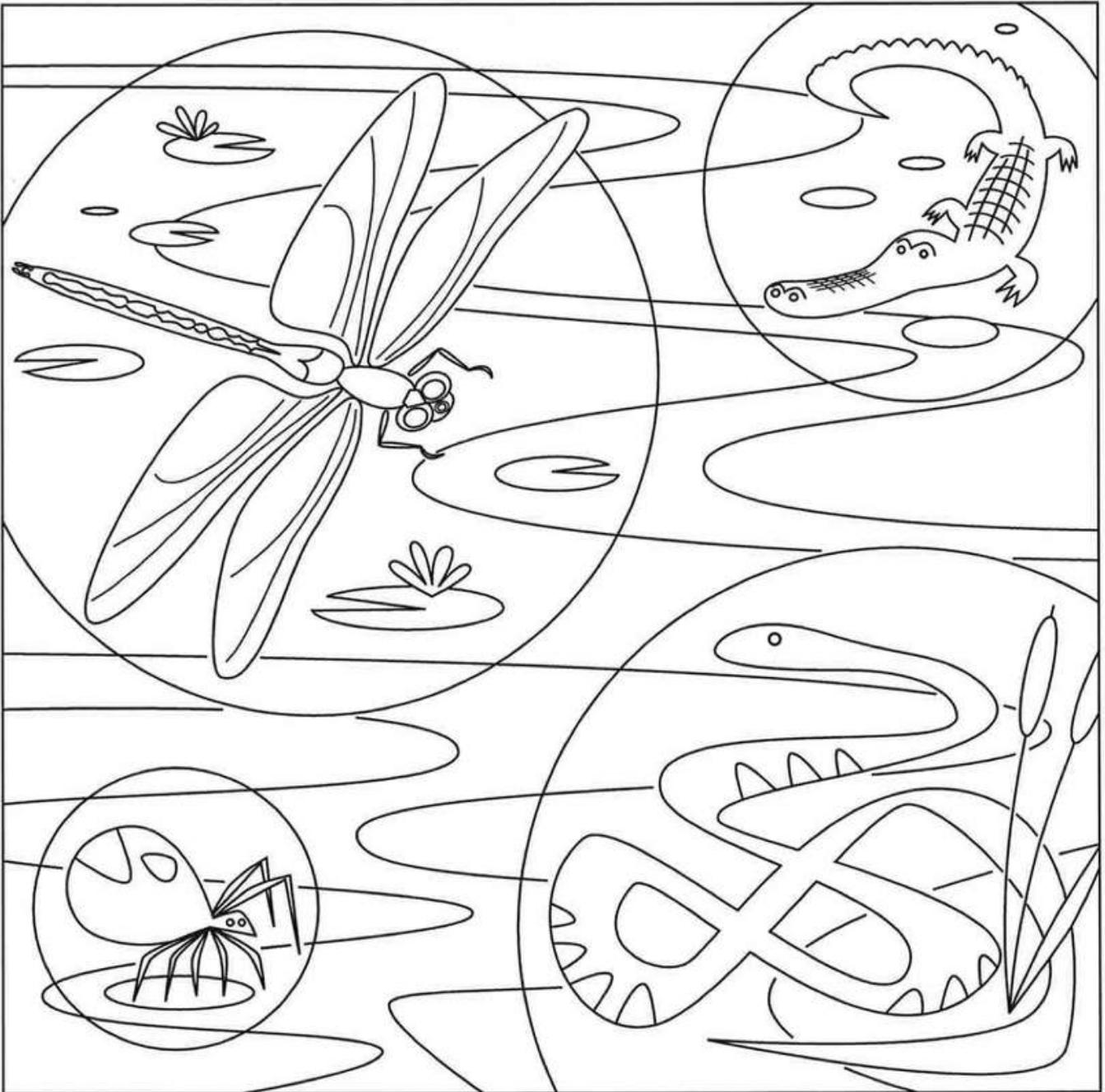
They are look peaceful, but their presence can slowly change and damage local wetlands.

All birds are looking for the same things: food, water, safety, and a place to rest. Just like people, they go where they can find what they need.

This month, try looking for birds out the window or while going for a walk outside.

What birds do you see?

Farewell to Claude



We mourn the loss of Claude, the California Academy of Sciences' beloved albino alligator, who passed away in early December 2025 at age 30 from liver cancer. Born in a Louisiana swamp in 1995, Claude touched hearts across the globe.

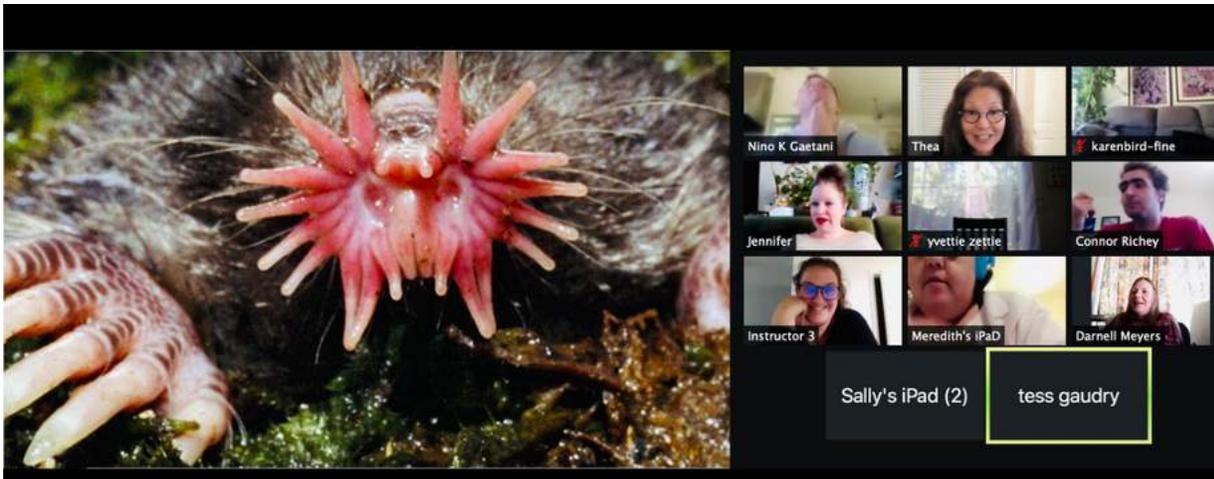
Swamp by Michael Bartalos for the California Academy of Sciences



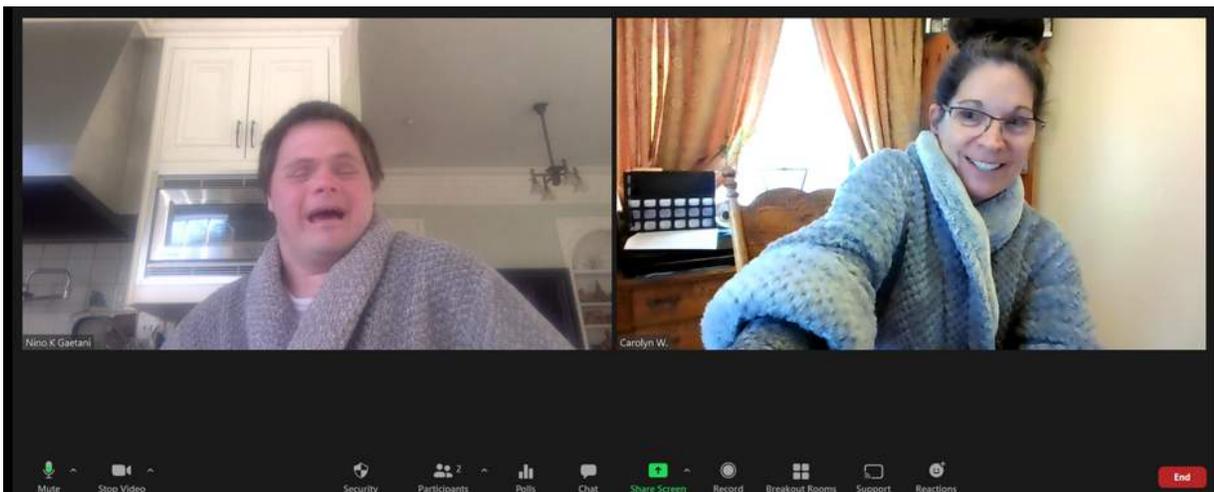
Do You Remember 2020?

Do you remember when we could not have in-person classes at CH&S? It was during the COVID-19 pandemic which started in 2020. Soon we begin having Zoom classes, and we had a lot of fun! Do you remember these classes?

(Below) The star-nosed mole class. Did you know that this mole is one of the few mammals that can smell underwater by exhaling bubbles and then re-inhaling them to "sniff" trapped scent molecules?



(Below) When you're on Zoom and sheltering in place, you learn that some people have the exact same taste in Costco robes that you do!

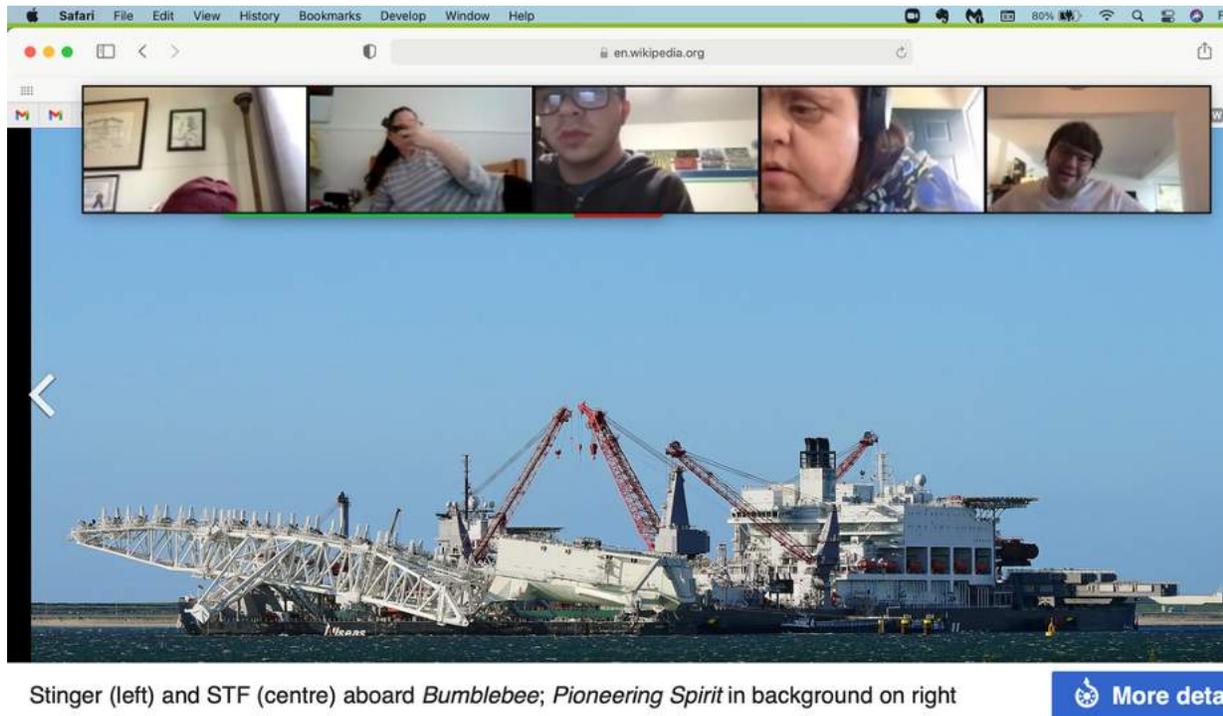


Like everyone else, we had no idea how to have a day program while sheltering in place. And staff put their heads together and soon we had a full schedule of Zoom classes engaging students, we learned about many new and interesting topics while connecting socially. Others may have been bored during the pandemic, but we were having fun, seeing our friends on Zoom, and staying together.

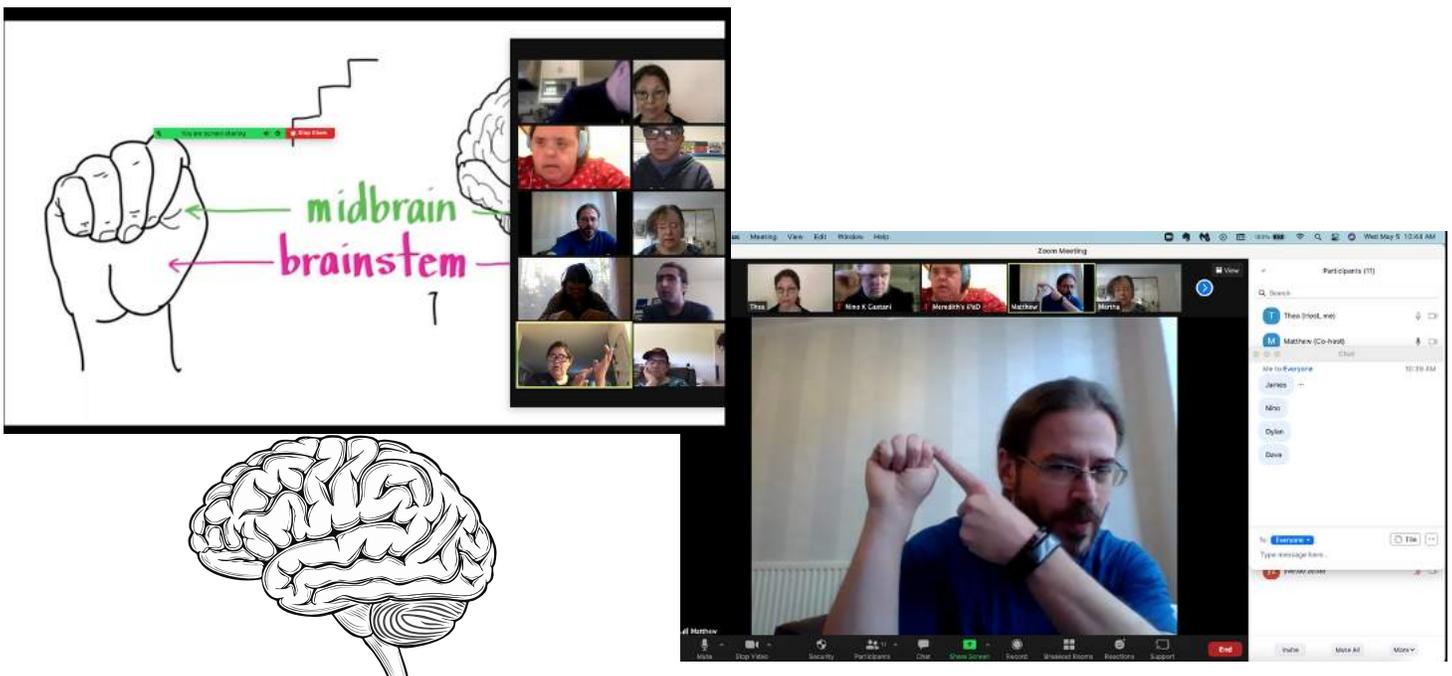
Do you remember our Zoom classes? Do you have a favorite?

Do You Remember 2021?

(Below) Chris taught us about giant ships. *Pioneering Spirit* is a split hull crane vessel designed for the installation and removal of large oil and gas platforms and pipelines. The 1,253 ft long, 407 ft wide vessel is the world's largest vessel by gross tonnage. That is one big ship!



(Left and below) Matthew uses his hand to demonstrate the anatomy of the brain. For a short video explanation go to: <https://youtu.be/IRmnVmELMn8> to see YouTube vide *The Hand-Brain Model!* | *Self-Regulation Lesson 2.*



SIMPLE BALANCE AND COORDINATION EXERCISES

Coordination is about how well your body parts work together. When coordination is good, movements feel smoother and more controlled. When it's not, it's easier to lose balance, trip, or drop things. Good coordination is important for preventing falls, injuries, and spills.

Why coordination matters

Coordination helps your brain and body communicate clearly. It supports:

- Better balance
- Faster reactions
- Safer walking and turning
- More confidence moving around

As we get older, coordination can slowly decrease. Practicing coordination helps keep the body steady and alert. Here are some easy coordination exercises to try:

A tennis ball is all you need.

Seated ball toss

What to do: Sit in a chair. Toss a ball up slightly and catch it.

Why it helps: Great for beginners who need extra stability.

Hand-to-hand ball toss

What to do: While standing, gently toss a ball from one hand to the other.

Why it helps: Builds hand-eye coordination and focus.

Make it easier: Sit down.

Make it harder: Toss a little higher or slower.



Wall toss

What to do: Stand a few feet from a wall. Toss the ball to the wall and catch it with the same hand. After 5-10 times, try doing this with your other hand.

Why it helps: Improves reaction time and coordination.

Safety tip: Use a soft ball and throw gently.

LET'S PREVENT FALLS!

Standing balance (with support)

What to do: Stand on one foot for 10-20 seconds. Then switch feet.

Make it harder: Stand without holding a chair or wall.

Why it helps: Strengthens balance and leg control.

Goal: 10–20 seconds per foot.

Heel-to-toe walking

What to do: Walk in a straight line. Place the heel of one foot right in front of the toes of the other.

Why it helps: Improves balance while walking.

Safety tip: Walk near a wall or railing.

Goal: 10–15 steps

Standing Balance (with support)

What to do: Stand on one foot while holding a chair or wall. Switch feet.

Why it helps: Strengthens balance and leg control.



Goal: 10–20 seconds per foot

Heel-to-toe walking

What to do:

Walk in a straight line. Place the heel of one foot right in front of the toes of the other.

Why it helps:

Improves balance while walking.

Marching in place

What to do: Stand tall and slowly lift one knee at a time.

Why it helps: Builds balance and coordination used for walking and stairs.

Make it easier: Hold a chair.

Make it harder: Pause at the top of each lift.

Helpful reminders

- Go slow
- Breathe normally
- Stop if you feel dizzy or unsafe
- Short practice is okay (1–5 minutes)

Simple coordination exercises help keep the body safe and steady. They lower the chance of falls and injuries while making everyday movements easier!

Pizza My Heart

with Jennifer



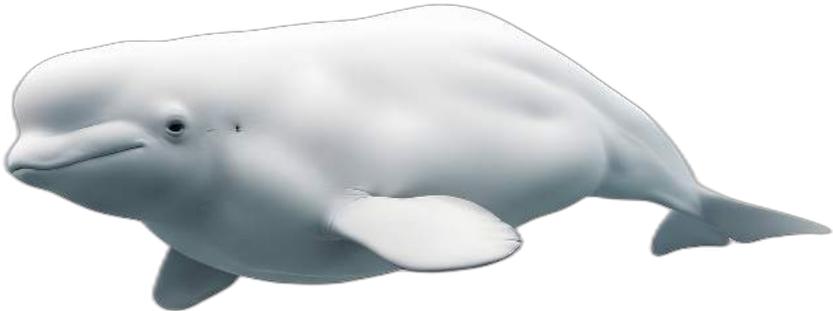
February is National Heart Month—fitting since there will be hearts everywhere you look for Valentine’s Day. Check out the heart-themed pizza bulletin board we made! We used good ol’ construction paper, plus fun textured paper like wallpaper samples, tissue paper and scrapbooking paper to make our pizzas. We scored an empty pizza box, some doilies (fancy!) and tiny paper plates. Jennifer cut out ingredients for toppings, and Michelle and Nino delivered a kit to Zachary who is home on Zoom, for a little pizza-to-go action. We think it turned out looking almost good enough to eat!



National Whale Day is 2/15



How well do you know your whales? There are three whales below, one is a humpback whale, one is an orca, and one is a beluga whale. Do you know which one is which?



And here are the answers to the winter bird matching game...

Match the Name to the Winter Bird

Here are some winter waterfowl you may see around Marin this month.

Draw a line from the waterfowl name /description to the bird photo.

*What does "fowl" mean?
What does "waterfowl" mean?*

- **American Avocets** - a long-legged shorebird with an upturned bill. The head and neck turn a rusty-cinnamon in breeding season then fades to grayish-white in winter. *Which is the American Avocet?*
- **Buffleheads** - known for their puffy, iridescent heads (males have a large white patch) and rapid wingbeats. *Which is the bufflehead?*
- **Bald Eagle** - *Which is the bald eagle?*
- **Yellow-rumped Warbler** - *Which is the warbler?*
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