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# San Francisco Chronicle

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Couple turn to San Jose clinic  
for emerging, but unproven, treatment



Photos by Minh Connors/The Chronicle

Maureen O'Neill, left, embraces her daughter, Charlotte, 8, in between Magnetic e-Resonance Therapy sessions at Summit Brain Health in San Jose in July. Charlotte receives MeRT treatment for her autism.

## Family takes risk for autistic child

By Annie Vainshtein

On a sunny day in July, while other Bay Area kids were playing at camps or water parks, 8-year-old Charlotte O'Neill was leaning back in a reclining chair in a small, carpeted San Jose office room. Her eyes were fixed on a television playing her favorite cartoon, "Bluey."

Maureen and Bill O'Neill, her parents, sat beside her in the room at Summit Brain Health, where a neuro-technician had placed a large, figure-eight-shaped



Charlotte covers her eyes during her MeRT treatments, in which a magnetic coil is used to stimulate specific areas of the brain.

magnetic coil on her forehead. Every 28 seconds, the coil sent a magnetic pulse to her brain, which required Charlotte's eyes to be closed for five seconds at a time.

Due to her autism diagnosis, Charlotte struggled to do that herself. Her parents took turns covering her eyes with their hands during the 30-minute treatment. For the first part of the treatment, the technician held the coil over the back of Charlotte's head. Fifteen minutes later, he targeted the front.

Autism continues on A8

## AI-powered satellites could help fight wildfires

By Chase DiFelicianantonio

After the Camp Fire killed 85 people in the town of Paradise, the U.S. Department of Defense quietly reached out to the California

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, commonly known as Cal Fire, offering a powerful new tool: high-resolution satellite imagery to accurately track and attack fires as if they were advancing enemy troops.

Combined with Cal Fire's existing prediction technology, "that changed fire spread prediction for the fire service" and proved that a high-tech approach worked, said Phillip Selegue, the agency's fire in-

telligence chief.

Now, six years later, a philanthropically funded effort years in the making is betting on a fleet of small, purpose-built satellites called FireSat to further that

Satellites continues on A10

## Experts: RFK Jr. can't halt vaccines suddenly

States set rules for kids; access  
may get tougher in other ways

By Catherine Ho

Vaccine skeptic Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s nomination to lead the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, announced Thursday by President-elect Donald Trump, sent waves of trepidation throughout public health experts in California — where years of advocacy by doctors have led to some of the strongest childhood vaccination laws in the country.

Known for promoting the discredited link between autism and childhood vaccines, Kennedy could be in the position to push for radically different public health policies — whether by backing executive orders, installing political appointees whose decisions weaken access and funding for vaccines, or undermining public trust in vaccination.

"If things unfold the way some people would like them to, there will be more work for people like me to do," said Dr. Art Reingold, a professor of epidemiology at UC Berkeley School of Public Health. "That's not a good thing. But it could hap-

Vaccines continues on A10

## Why Dems' ground game didn't matter

A lot of Democrats are feeling hopeless  
after Donald Trump's decisive victory.

Many of them have been engaged in worthless and self-serving finger-pointing, and are doing things like urging candidates to talk to Joe Rogan.

But Marshall Ganz, better known as the architect of the ground game that propelled Barack Obama to twice win the presidency under the "Yes, we can" mantra, told me there are four options for Democrats as far as what comes next.

"One is you can leave. You can go to Canada, or whatever," he said. "Second one is, you can fight, but not resist. Third, is resist. Fourth, is build."

Ganz said he prefers "to fight and build." And he draws a distinction between fighting and resisting.

"Those are two very different mindsets,"

Garofoli continues on A10

## Displaced woman seeks to reclaim family's land

Richmond seized  
home in 1993 under  
eminent domain

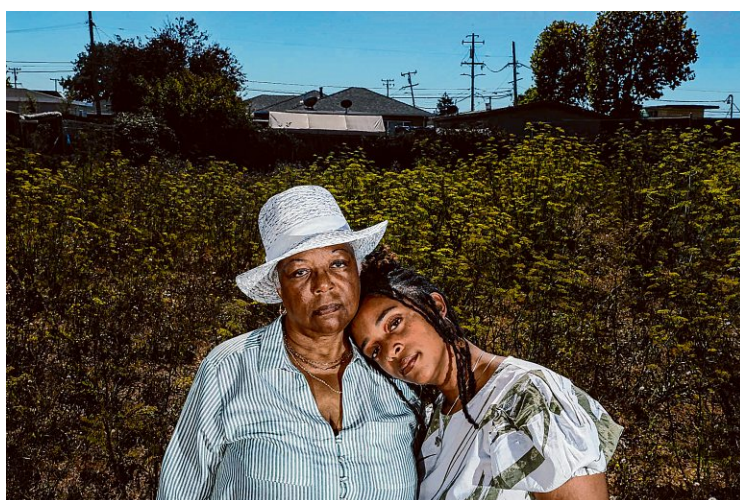
By Chasity Hale

The empty plot of land on 502 Enterprise Ave. in Richmond was once Beverly Moore's home.

Now 72, Moore moved into the one-story house at the end of a cul-de-sac with her mother and four siblings in 1956. In the backyard, now overgrown with weeds, Moore's mother, Juanita, grew a bounty of produce — squash, watermelons, tomatoes.

The family "lived off the land," Moore said, recalling how they would barter with their mostly Black neighbors, trading collard greens or onions for freshly caught fish.

After earning her teaching



Yalonda M. James/The Chronicle

Beverly Moore, 72, standing with daughter Kadija Phillips, 34, is part of a wave of Black Californians displaced by eminent domain practices in the 20th century.

credential and bachelor's degree at Cal State Fresno, Moore, then 23, did something her mother

had always wanted to do. She bought the home her family had been renting. It was July 21, 1980.

"That was one of the happiest days of our life because everybody else in the neighborhood owned their property," Moore said.

But in 1993, the city of Richmond seized the land through eminent domain, the government's constitutional authority to take private property for public use in exchange for "just compensation" based on market value.

Moore had purchased the house for \$13,000. Thirteen years later, the city gave the family \$27,000 and tore it down to build a highway drainage project connected to the Richmond Bypass. Now known as the Richmond Parkway, this arterial road was constructed in the 1990s to connect Interstates 580 and 80. Theirs was the only house on the street condemned.

Land continues on A9

