

Pet-friendly indoor plants are important to many households. My favorite lazy gardening houseplant is the butterfly orchid. Its flowers last for months and it needs just three to five ice cubes in the pot twice a week for watering. I always have them around in various stages of bloom or rest. Pet-safe plants also include areca palm, bamboo palm, purple waffle plant, gerbera daisy, Boston fern, money tree, African

violet, spider plant, and lily turf. Many of these plants are easily leaf propagated in water for more plants around the house.

Next month, we'll get out our seed packets and plant our windowsill greens, so save your eggshells and used coffee grounds to power up the potting soil. Also, we'll review ways to help plan safe alternatives for upcoming Woodmoor Improvement Association

and other homeowners' associations' current budget plans for toxic weed mitigation with Our Toxic Strive for Perfection: effects of glyphosates on humans and animals, plus safer alternatives.

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Art Matters

Why tech leaders have their kids in artful pursuits



By Janet Sellers

Who would have guessed that making art and being in art class is the new disruptive "technology"? Art is a creative, engaging involvement to life, and making art and using the hands fingers combined with observing—participating in three dimensions—help brain development and flexibility. It also helps with interpersonal relationships in many ways.

The act of drawing is directly from our minds to the page, wholly spontaneous, and for that reason it is important to creativity and imagination. It is the closest connection of the immaterial imagination to manifesting the idea into material form. Even the words "to draw" indicate pulling ideas into physical form. Once learned, the creative efficiency of the pencil or brush with the human mind at the helm is extremely efficient for sharing ideas. It often exceeds other methods of effort, even electronic.

Kids and adults that engage in art and creative activities have shown they are good at self-regulating, partly because they must develop their project with failures and successes and partly because they actively build other interests as well, offshoots of the creative process. And the interest in art making is having a high-profile comeback, too.

The New York Times reported that after reading the book *The Growth of the Mind*, Pierre Laurent, a former Microsoft and Intel marketing manager, did some research and started connecting with the artfully based Waldorf Schools, which his children soon

attended. Laurent saw that, "Waldorf teenagers had a different way of approaching adults and were very interested in the world, and we decided that there's no harm in not exposing children to screens until they're big enough, that it can only be beneficial. Young children like stories, to play with things, sing, make things, build and be in nature. So that's what we did. They haven't complained."

Laurent also related that (tech) looks like it's soothing your child and keeping them busy so you can do something else, but that effect is not very good for small children. "There isn't an intent to harm children, but media products are designed to keep people engaged and have a powerful hooking effect ... it stops them discovering the world with their senses. And there's a risk to attention When you engage with these devices, you don't build that capacity. It's computer-aided attention; you're not learning to do it." He let his kids start interacting with computers around age 12.

Chris Anderson, father of five and former editor of *Wired* and co-founder of 3D Robotics, a drone maker, while allowing screen time, instituted time limits and parental controls on every device in his home. "We have seen the dangers of technology firsthand. I've seen it in myself, I don't want to see that happen to my kids." He referred to harmful content such as pornography, bullying, and "becoming addicted to their devices, just like their parents."

Most parents agree that limiting screen time is

parent-led but prefer their children to develop good judgment with practice. The American Academy of Pediatrics discourages any screen time for the first two years of life, but after that recommends no more than one to two hours a day, no screens in children's bedrooms, and enforcing meal-time and bedtime media-device curfews. Pediatricians are encouraged to take a media history and ask two media questions at every well-child visit: How much recreational screen time does your child or teenager consume daily? Is there a television set or Internet-connected device in the child's bedroom? Parents are encouraged to establish a family home use plan for all media.

At my house, for all our artful life of keeping the art, violin lessons and outdoor time at optimal levels (it did make a difference for good) with screen time minimal, we still succumbed to some television and computer games. I ended up cutting the TV cord, literally, and wow was that a noisy discovery one night. My kids, now grown and on with their professional lives, still love long hikes, cross country runs, gourmet cooking, and no screen time after a long day of it at work. I'd like to say I don't, either. I'd rather walk my dog in our beautiful forests here where we live—and paint those scenes, too.

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Snapshots of Our Community

Caption correction



Please note the following corrections regarding the Snapshots of Our Community caption that ran with the photo headlined *Child Trafficking Widespread* on page 28 of our Dec. 1 issue. **Above left:** This is the photo that should have been associated with the caption that ran in the paper: "The Rev. Dr. Becca Jordan-Irwin, left, Monument Community Presbyterian Church, and Patti Neely, Sarah's Home Volunteer Coordinator, share helpful information at the child trafficking seminar. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*" **Above right:** This is the photo that ran in the paper. The caption for it should have read: "Representatives of the Southern Colorado Human Trafficking Task Force presented Colorado's child trafficking statistics and ways to provide or support safe sanctuary homes for rescued kids. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*" OCN regrets the error.

Forest View Acres passes budget



Above: On Nov. 28, the Board of Directors of Forest View Acres Water Department unanimously passed its 2019 budget. From left are John McGinn, Clyde Penn, Martin Taylor, Heck Zimmerman, Joel Meggers, Brad Hogan, Nancy Wilkins, and Hans Zimmerman. *Photo by John Howe.*

Community supports kettles



Left: The Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign got support from Monument Hill Kiwanis volunteer Richard Bjarke, who rang the holiday bell in front of the Monument Walmart on Dec. 1. Kiwanis and high school Key Club volunteers also collected donations at King Soopers and Safeway. All proceeds were given to the Salvation Army (SA) of El Paso County. The international SA movement provides food programs, social services such as addiction rehabilitation, youth services, emergency disaster services, shelter and housing, and church ministries all "motivated by the love of God." Part of SA's goal is to "meet the human needs of vulnerable members of our community in His name without discrimination." See <https://coloradosprings.salvationarmy.org/>. For more information about Monument Hill Kiwanis, visit www.monumenthillkiwanis.org/mhk/ *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*

Sertoma donates to officer's family



Left: Gleneagle Sertoma Board President Greg Maxwell spoke Nov. 28 about the El Paso County Sheriff's Office Foundation's dedication to helping the families of fallen officers. Gleneagle Sertoma made a gift of \$16,000 to the foundation, a nonprofit organization led by a volunteer board of directors, that is committed to "supporting local law enforcement, dedicating the time and resources to bridging the gap where the annual budget stops and specific project needs begin." The foundation received the designated funds on behalf of Deputy Sheriff Micah Flick's family. Flick suffered fatal gunshot wounds during an auto theft investigation Feb. 5, 2018. *Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.*