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SERVING ALL OF THE DESERT CITIES AND UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY

BUSINESS BRIEFS

- **A Costco insider has revealed the most popular products for shoplifting:** a Dyson batter-operated vacuum cleaner, Gillette men's disposable razors, paper towels and batteries. Runners up are women's multi-vitamins and vitamin D3. Apparently thieves want to be clean and healthy.

- **Nationwide coffee recall:** Over 250 types of canned coffee could contain a deadly botulinum toxin. They're sold under various coffee roaster names, but you can spot them with a "Produced and distributed by Snapchill LLC" label below the nutritional facts. If you have any, return it to the store for a refund.

- **Average car insurance rates have increased by almost 12%** compared to December 2023. The effects of inflation impact businesses, including insurance companies. Rising costs for office supplies, employee benefits, and utilities are eventually passed on to customers. The number of traffic accidents, including fatalities, has increased. Repair costs for vehicles have risen, and labor shortages in the repair industry contribute to higher expenses. And, cars themselves are more expensive to buy and repair.

- **The unemployment rate for teenagers stood at 11.7 percent in April.** The rate for teens under 18 is probably much worse, but the U.S. Census Bureau doesn't break our minors from the stats for persons 16 to 24. Contributing to the

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Variety Children's Charity of the Desert Receives Desert Healthcare District Grant Aimed at Reducing Isolation & Loneliness

BY STAFF REPORTS

Variety Children's Charity of the Desert is pleased to announce the organization has received an impactful grant from Desert Healthcare District as part of the District's "Building Connected Communities Initiative," which was established to reduce isolation and loneliness.

Variety Children's Charity plans to apply the \$102,949 grant award towards expanding efforts in its Outreach Program – focusing on case management and referrals/support for the family unit. The program is available now and will be fully operational by October.

"We see social isolation across the family unit including the child with special needs, the parent/caregiver, and in siblings of the primary client. This morning my team was discussing feedback we are receiving from parents about the difficulty they experience in forming friendships and relationships due to the commitment of their time to ensure their child with special needs is accommodated. This often means that parents and caregivers don't have a safe, accessible outlet with a support group, and in addition, in couples of children with special needs the unique challenges faced can be a significant stress on marriages. With respect to siblings, it

is common that they feel isolated, lacking the attention of their parents due to their sibling requiring the majority of the time and energy which is necessary for the well-being of their sibling with greater needs. Each of these individuals face valid challenges based on their position in the family unit, and at Variety, we are seeking ways to ensure each group feels heard, served, and cared for to reduce isolation, loneliness, and promote well-being for each of them," said Heidi Maldoon, Executive Director of Variety Children's Charity of the Desert. Community outreach is a cornerstone of Variety Children's Charity in order to inform Coachella Valley families – specifically those who are underserved – to educate them about services that are available to local families which promote health, mobility, independence, and social inclusion.

The Desert Healthcare District grant is one of eight that has been provided to



diverse segments of the Coachella Valley community. The grant awards focusing on expanded resources for mental health, which total \$1,074,113, are in response to U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy's report on loneliness and isolation.

"Loneliness is far more than just a bad feeling — it harms both individual and societal health," Dr. Murthy says in the May 2023 report. "It is associated with a greater risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, stroke, depression, anxiety, and premature death." He goes on to describe loneliness and isolation as an epidemic that requires "all of us" working together to reduce its impact and mend the nation.

"The District is proud to support our community partners and stakeholders in addressing this important issue across the Coachella Valley," said Chris Christensen, interim CEO of the Desert Healthcare District and Foundation. **TPR**

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