Bring out the bagpipes

Everyone is Scottish this weekend — at the 147th Highland Gathering & Games

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‘New’ Gene’s Foods celebrates re-opening Wednesday

Casey Rodacker, who just turned 26, is described by some of his customers as that dashing young bachelor who runs Gene’s. It’s true that Rodacker is not married, but as the manager of Gene’s Fine Foods that will have its grand ‘re-opening’ next Wednesday, there’s little on his mind other than making sure that the store prospers. Rodacker and Kidd families, who own Mar-Val Food Stores in the Central Valley, bought Gene’s last April. Casey and his father Steve Rodacker have been busy ever since, working 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. shifts seven days a week to refurbish, modernize and expand Gene’s, a household name for grocery shoppers in Pleasanton for many years.

I’ve been a frequent shopper at the supermarket since 1990 when Saratoga-based Gene’s, with Don Smejdir as manager, took over the old grocery that had been at the Valley Avenue-Hoppyard Road location since 1971. Earlier this year, Don retired and Gene’s owners decided to pull back across the Bay, a decision that gave Mar-Val a chance to expand west, and Rodacker, who earned a degree in business management in 2009 at the University of Nevada at Reno, also completed studies at the University of Southern California’s prestigious Food Industry Management program, which also focused on quality foods and customer service.

Mar-Val also has long been active in the communities it serves and Rodacker will continue that effort in Pleasanton. Starring Wednesday and continuing for the next three weeks, Gene’s will match up to $5,000 customer contributions to local nonprofits. For the seven-day period starting Sept. 5, customer contributions along with the store’s match will go to the Discovery Shop in Pleasanton, the following week on 12 to Shepherd’s Gate in Livermore, and starting Sept. 19, to the Valley Humane Society. Customers can add their contributions to their grocery bill, which allows them to have a cash register receipt to use for charitable tax deduction purposes if they choose.

Also starting on opening day next Wednesday and continuing for the next 28 days, the new Gene’s will have drawings for prizes, including trips to Hawaii, Las Vegas and California, a 30-inch flat screen television set, 28 iPods and miscellaneous prizes.

Rodacker will be taking the next two days off to attend a wedding in Lodi. Not his, but his sister Courtney, who’s marrying Doug Gnas Sunday before heading back to Arizona where they’ll live. On Monday, Labor Day, it’s back to Pleasanton and a long day’s work for Casey Rodacker to get Gene’s ready for the grand opening.

Casey Rodacker, manager of Gene’s Fine Foods, shows fresh produce just received at the large Pleasanton supermarket which his family’s company, Mar-Val Food Stores, recently acquired. The Gene’s name will stay as the store celebrates its grand re-opening next Wednesday.

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About the Cover
Bagpipe bands led by energetic drum majors are just one of dozens of exciting things to enjoy this weekend at the 147th Scottish Highland Gathering & Games being held at the Fairgrounds in Pleasanton. Photo courtesy Caledonian Club of San Francisco. Design by Kristin Herman.
Are you Facebook friends with your children?

**Ann O’Neal**  
Principal’s secretary  
Yes, I’m friends with all of them. My son, Don, is serving in Afghanistan, and Facebook is our way of staying in communication with him. I read their posts and look at their pictures, but I rarely comment or post anything myself. I just enjoy visiting their pages.

**Gaiane Khachatryan**  
Recruitment and public relations manager  
My daughter is in fourth grade, so she is not on Facebook yet. I will be friends with her when she is allowed to have her own account, which will probably be in high school. It will allow me to observe what is happening in her life, and see what her peers are doing. I’ll be able to stop certain things if necessary.

**Delsole Cedrick**  
Visiting from France  
I don’t use Facebook. Perhaps I am too old. We have children, and I’ll probably have to join to be able to monitor them, but I will wait as long as I can.

**Edward Harper**  
Truck driver  
I certainly am. My 24-year-old daughter is the one that turned me on to Facebook. I have an account, but she would like me to be more active than I am.

**Nancy Riccomini**  
Homemaker  
I am not on Facebook. I don’t have time; I have so many emails every day to get through that I’m not interested in adding Facebook. My husband has an account and is friends with our children, so I get all of my updates from him.

—Compiled by Kerry Nally
City ratifies new contract with firefighters’ union

By JEB BING

Firefighters in the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department whose pension and benefit plans have long been fully paid by both cities will start contributing 6% of their wages toward those plans Saturday with their share rising to 9% next July 1.

The new plan was ratified by the Pleasanton City Council on Tuesday night at the end of a second public hearing on the new contract signed with Local 1974 of the International Association of Firefighters union, which covers LFDF’s unionized employees.

The new contract will eventually cut the costs to the cities by $2.13 million, a savings to be shared equally by Pleasanton and Livermore, which operate the LFDF under a joint powers agreement.

All other parts of the union’s pension and retirement program will remain in place, including the option of retiring starting at age 50 with a pension equal to 3% of wages earned for every year of employment as well as full health insurance benefits, the new contract puts in place a two-tier benefit program for firefighters hired after Jan. 1, 2013.

Their pension plan will be substantially less, with health benefits restricted to a retired employee only, not a spouse as was currently provided. Also, once the retired employee becomes eligible for Medicare, that individual would go off the CalPERS health benefit program altogether.

Further changes for new hires after Jan. 1 that are being proposed by Gov. Jerry Brown could also reduce the retirement benefits (2.7% of wages at age 57, instead of 3% at age 55 as it is today.)

The council voted 5-0 to accept the new contract agreement although Councilman Jeff Thorne said he opposes a two-tier program.

“I just don’t like a two-tier system,” Thorne said. “First, it takes a long time to have an impact.”

He said firefighters, like everyone else, are living longer so their CalPERS benefits and retirement costs to the city will continue longer.

But also, having two tiers (of employment benefits) in the fire department will create situations where there could be moral issues as well as issues among employees,” Thorne said.

Outside consultant John Bartel, president and chief actuary of Bartel and Associates, who has reviewed and helped draft union contracts for Pleasanton for years, agreed that the savings from the new contract will take a long time to help reduce the city’s pension liabilities, but said it’s a start.

He said Gov. Brown’s plan, which will be presented in detail Friday, could help restore fiscal sustainability in all state, county and municipal pension plans where generosity in earlier administrations created the costly pension system in place today.

See FIREFIGHTERS on Page 6

PUSD revises plan for special education students

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

The Pleasanton school district is looking to provide better services for special needs children — and save itself some money in the bargain.

The district hired Total School Solutions to create an action plan for special education, and the plan, including both short- and long-term goals, was unveiled at the board meeting Aug. 21.

“Our desire is to further improve the overall quality of special education services to effectively address the learning needs of our students with disabilities,” said Olel Douglas, assistant superintendent of educational services.

The cost of special education programs rose by nearly $2 million from the 2010-11 to 2011-12.

That included more than $200,000 in legal bills and settlements and more than $288,000 for room and board for students who received services outside the district. The district also spent $325,000 in occupational therapy contract expenses for 154 students in the 2011-12 school year.

By offering compliance training and professional development to district staff and administrators as recommended by the consultants, the district hopes to cut down on settlements and legal bills, and keep more students home instead of sending them elsewhere.

Total School Solutions also recommended rehiring a school psychologist and program specialist, which, Douglas said, could save the district money in the long run.

“Hopefully, we will increase our program efficiency and reduce the number of students requiring special education services by providing more support for students in the regular education program,” he said.

The ultimate aim is to mainstream as many students as possible, according to Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi.

“Let’s be clear that our goal is to exit students from special education services,” Ahmadi said. “It’s best for students to be in general education. Sometimes when they go into special education they have special needs, but our goal is to exit them.”

At its first meeting since the summer break, the school board approved an action plan written by the consultants and a revision to the state budget. For the most part, little has changed, although the district did learn that transitional kindergarten will be fully funded.
Federal funds restore Arroyo de la Laguna

$1.2 million project reduces erosion, flood risk

By Dolores Fox Carrelli

A federal project to restore Pleasanton’s Arroyo de la Laguna was completed recently, after its lower five miles were affected by rapid development upstream.

“The completion of this project is a great moment for our community,” said Congressman Jerry McNerney at a gathering of officials last week to acknowledge the project’s completion.

Both the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in California and the Alameda County Resource Conservation District were involved with other partners in the restoration efforts. Approximately $1.2 million went toward construction, design work and costs, monitoring and maintenance.

Bringing back federal resources to our city and neighborhood has always been a priority of mine, and now we see the wonderful result that will not only protect natural resources, but reduce flood risk in our region,” McNerney said.

The work included planting native vegetation and returning 600 feet of the arroyo to its proper function.

Streambank restoration features along Arroyo de la Laguna are visible near the Verona Road bridge, according to Jonathan Grovenan, a spokesman for Natural Resources Conservation Service. Now the waterway and its banks will serve as a protected habitat for threatened species, with reduced erosion of the stream’s bank and reduced flood risks.

Arroyo de la Laguna runs underneath the Verona Road bridge, a popular pedestrian and bicycle bridge south of Castlewood. The project included installing permanent informational panels to educate visitors on the importance and environmental benefits of the work.

Restoration features can be seen near the bridge, including native plants such as willows and cottonwood to prevent soil erosion and to expand habitat for local wildlife. Rock and log structures that help stabilize the slope are also visible.

Arroyo de la Laguna is the main tributary to Alameda Creek, which is the second largest drainage to the San Francisco Bay, with a watershed that covers about 700 square miles. Within the watershed are protected parks, wildlife and water supply areas, rangeland, and urban and suburban development.

Local agencies collaborating on the Arroyo de la Laguna project were the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Alameda County Public Works Department, Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, and Zone Seven Water Agency.

“I congratulate everyone who made this day happen,” McNerney said at the gathering last week.

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Streambank restoration features along Arroyo de la Laguna are visible near the Verona Road bridge.

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“As a reminder, the governor’s budget assumed that his initiative would pass in November,” said Luz Cazares, assistant superintendent of business services. “Flat funding is what that buys us, so not more money, the same money.”

Cazares said the district will probably not know much more about its financial situation until November. By that time, it will know if the governor’s tax increase will pass and will get additional information from the state Legislative Analyst Office about revenues.

The district may also have to do some short-term borrowing because the state is expected to withhold payouts. That will likely cost the district money to pay interest on the short-term borrowing of up to $30 million to cover its bills.

Brown’s tax increase, Proposition 30, is one of two competing measures that would provide addition-

al funding for the district. Board Member Jamie Hintzke noted the other, Proposition 38, also known as Our Children, Our Future, would provide more local control of money, since funds would be sent directly to the district.

However, Board President Joan Laursen pointed out that ballot measure would not give the district as much as in its first year and as it would get through Brown’s initiative.

“The loss for us in 2013 would be $400,000,” Laursen said. “Each initiative would affect us in different ways.”

The board opted not to vote on either, deferring action until its next meeting so it could vote on supporting one or both, since the two initiatives were bundled into a single resolution. The California School Board Association decided to support both, fearing that one or the other could lose.

“I think the biggest risk to the November election is that there’s confusion up and down the state and people would say, ‘I’m just not going to vote,’” said Board Member Chris Grant.

Should both initiatives pass, the one with more votes would take effect, Ahmad said.

With the start of the school year came staggered reading for first-, second- and third-graders. While the initial flak — largely over scheduling — has died down, one parent, Janel Sloan, asked the board to measure the differences in test scores as class sizes went from 20 to 25, and now, to 30.

Sloan also asked the board to track the progress of those in the program as they move up in grade levels, asking, “Is it really needed for third grade?”

The board also approved a revenue-neutral plan to upgrade lighting and some heating and ventilation systems. Under a PG&E program, the upgrades will be paid for by the amount the bill is lowered; bills will remain the same with the savings applied to the cost of the newly installed improvements. School officials expect that will be done in less than seven years, and that the district could save about $130,000 a year after that.

Congressman Pete Stark (D-13th) and his son Andrew join City Councilwoman Cheryl Cook-Kalloo at her 58th birthday party and fundraiser in Pleasanton. She is seeking election as the city’s next mayor.

COOK-KALLOO

“As mayor I will actively seek out businesses that help achieve those goals, small businesses throughout the city in addition to encouraging larger businesses to locate in Hacienda Business Park. These businesses help us pay our bills.”

With regard to the city’s affordable housing mandate, Cook-Kalloo said it’s critical that we plan well and within the law.

“We can be smart about this,” she said. “As mayor I will make sure that all stakeholders are educated in what this means and are involved in the decision-making process. As a public school teacher for more than 35 years, I truly understand the impact this housing will have on our schools and our community.”

Former State Superintendent of Public Instruction Eastin urged those at the fundraising rally to get out the votes for Cook-Kalloo, citing the councilwoman’s years of teaching experience and devotion to her school’s “We the People” civics teams as providing solid government experience.

“She does an incredible job, she’s a great teacher,” Eastin said. “She has the courage to stand up and get the job done. She has the courage to speak the truth in this state and city and country. She’ll make a great mayor for the city of Pleasanton.”

The birthday party and fundraiser were held in the home of former Councilwoman Becky Dennis and her husband Murray Dennis in the Foxborough neighborhood, just above Vintage Hills.

—Jeb Bing

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Opinion

Opportunity to consider new amenities for Pleasanton

People move to Pleasanton for a variety of reasons: excellent schools, good housing, abundant shopping and a quality of life that community leaders are determined to make even better. Just as important are the city’s 43 municipal parks, 50 miles of hiking and biking trails, sports fields, an award-winning golf course and public services for all age groups. Today, some of those facilities are getting old and need to be upgraded. New sports, such as cricket and rugby, require new fields and staff advisors. For these reasons, Susan Andrade-Wax, the city’s director of Parks and Community Services, is preparing a master plan that will assess the city’s parks and recreation amenities and suggest changes, improvements and additions.

After all, it’s been three years since we last dedicated a major park and sports complex — the city’s $38 million lighted baseball fields in the Bernal Community Park. The fields were to be part of a 50-acre sports complex to be developed in phases on Bernal, along with the remainder of the full 318-acre central park to come later. Except for the nearby Marilyn Murphy Kane Trail, which was built mostly with private funds, and work on the Iron Horse Trail that is now under way, Pleasanton’s much the same in terms of park and recreation amenities as it was three years ago.

With the economy improving and municipal tax revenues once again growing, Andrade’s master plan has a chance of breathing new life into outdoor places and activities Pleasanton enjoys.

Applications are currently being accepted to serve on the Master Plan Steering Committee. The document is intended to be a significant planning tool to help the city plan for the changing scope of recreational activities. As such it will summarize themes, trends and community priorities, assess available resources, review existing and anticipated demographic conditions and provide strategies for parks, recreation programs and open space needs.

To serve on the steering committee and assist with the master planning process, the City Council is seeking two Parents-At-Large representatives from the community who currently have a child or children attending preschool, elementary school, middle school and/or high school. All applicants must be residents here and willing to attend at least one or two meetings per month for a period of six to nine months. Committee members will have to do background reading and research, work collaboratively, and strive for clear communication, a balanced perspective and inclusion of a wide range of viewpoints.

Interested parties should submit completed applications to the City Clerks office by 4:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 13. The City Council will confirm the members of the committee at its Tuesday, Oct. 2, meeting.

What’s your opinion?

Imagine Pleasanton as a City of Peace

I propose the creation of a new commission for the city of Pleasanton. I refer to it here as the Pleasanton Peace Commission. Volunteers representing a cross-section of Pleasanton’s population will staff it. Its purpose is to nurture the concepts of peace and non-violence.

Examples of its duties might include sponsoring lectures and writing contests in the community, especially in the schools working with peace groups and veterans to promote peace and veterans’ well-being, working with police departments and schools to promote non-violence and tolerance among students, and even something as simple as marching in a parade under the banners of peace.

Its exact duties, of course, will be determined by its membership and city guidelines, but its mission is to make Peace into the premier City of Peace and Non-Violence in America, a city to which other cities and governments look for advice and guidance on these subjects, a city of which we can all be proud.

The Pleasanton Peace Commission, not meant to be an anti-war commission, I have strong anti-war beliefs, and I detest the illegal and immoral wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that have killed so many American military and innocent civilians, and continue to do so, and I detest drones, and I detest our armies lighting in Africa and the Philippines and Colombia, and I cringe when I think of the legacy I’m leaving for my grandchildren, but the Pleasanton Peace Commission is not Fred Norman. Instead, it is Pleasanton. The only criterion for being on the commission is the desire to promote peace and non-violence, and there are many people in Pleasanton who have that desire. Because of my radical views, I may not be asked to serve on such a commission, but I will proudly support those who do.

Imagine what an effective Peace Commission might do. Pleasanton is a city that strongly supports the troops, but I see little sign of Pleasanton opposing the wars. Imagine a city that supports the troops and at the same time, and as loudly, opposes the wars that kill and maim the troops, and the loudness comes about as a result of Peace Commission activities. Imagine schools in which the Peace Commission roams the halls as freely as military recruiters do now, its commissioners offering and explaining options to students who feel the military is their only path to success. Imagine constructive opposition to violent video games. Imagine the elimination of bullying. Imagine a city led by the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and Jesus Christ. This is the city that I see in my imagination.

Pleasanton has historically formed and used committees and commissions to make it the wonderful place in which to live that it is today. For instance, think of the Civic Arts Commission when you’re enjoying an event at the Firehouse Arts Center. Think of the Library Commission when you visit the library. And now, think of peace and non-violence. What might a Peace Commission do for Pleasanton and for our country? The choice is ours. Please contact the Pleasanton City Council to express your views.

Fred Norman, a 22-year Pleasanton resident, is a U.S. military veteran with 10 years service in the Marines and Air Force and a published author who now writes only on peace and anti-war themes.

LETTERS

Night Out success

Dear Editor,

In early August, we celebrated National Night Out. This was the first one that I attended, and I’m glad I did. It was held at the corner of the park and South Valley Trails. There were lots of folks from the homemakers and the local church working hard to make sure it was a success. There was lots of food, games for the kids, drawing prizes for lots of wonderful music.

We were lucky enough to have representatives from the Dublin Highway Patrol Office, Pleasanton Police Department (including K9 and Animal Control), Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department, and City Councilman Jerry Thorne. I am sure all of these folks had a very busy night trying to cover all of the National Night Out events and stay on top of whatever emergencies there were.

Thank you to them for attending our event and for all they do throughout the year.

Susan Thomas

Play money for rich kids

Dear Editor,

I’m outraged to learn that Pete Stark’s children are allowed to collect “play money” for charities payments just because their father is eligible. Social Security is not meant to be “play money” for rich kids. As you probably know, city and state employees who pay into Social Security are not allowed to collect 100% of the benefits they have paid and earned through their employment. It’s considered double dipping. A retiree who is fortunate to get $3,000/month on city retirement is only permitted to collect 50% of Social Security benefits earned — the rest is considered “windfall tax.” But how many millionaires like Stark and his family fleece the public? Shame on him!

Eileen Cordova

GUEST OPINION

Imagine Pleasanton as a City of Peace

Fred Norman

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No discounts at Pleasanton Safeway’s new gas station
Supermarket ends its Club Card program on move to Just for U loyalty plan

Safeway shoppers looking to save at the pump next year when the grocer opens its gasoline station next to its new Pleasanton store may be disappointed. Drug Store News, an industry trade publication, reports that the company is discontinuing its 3-cents-per-gallon gas discount for customers who carry the supermarket chain's club cards.

The news followed a preliminary injunction filed in May against the chain, Robert A. Breenik and Nicholas C. King, Paragon Outlet partners, told those attending the preview that the Livermore location is within easy driving reach of hundreds of thousands of shoppers and has a far greater range of upscale stores to attract the more discriminating customers in the Tri-Valley.

He said the company plans a four-day customer celebration starting on opening day Nov. 8 with gifts, prizes and discounts available throughout the center. Paragon’s stores include Bloomingdale’s The Outlet Store, Banana Republic Factory Store, Barney’s New York Outlet, Cole Haan Company Store, J Crew, Michael Kors, Neiman Marcus Last Call, Nike Factory Store, Off 5th Sales and Tommy Hilfiger.

Raley’s closes 2 more stores as union talks continue over wages, benefits

West Sacramento-based Raley’s has announced that it will close its stores in Pittsburg and Woodland, adding to the four stores the struggling supermarket chain has closed so far this year.

At the same time, the grocer said it is resuming negotiations with the United Food and Commercial Workers, where both sides have been locked in a lengthy stalemate over a new contract.

The Sacramento Bee reported Tuesday that this will be the first bargaining session since June 8 and follows several more weeks of turmoil in Northern California’s unionized supermarket industry. West two weeks ago, UFCW members rejected a tentative agreement with Save Mart/Lucky supermarkets by a wide margin but stopped short of authorizing a strike against the Modesto grocer, Dale Kasler reported.

Kasler reported that negotiations at Raley’s have been particularly acrimonious and that UFCW members have voted to authorize a strike.

Raley’s spokesman John Segale said he was disappointed. Raley’s told the Sacramento Bee that the Woodland or Pittsburg stores could have been saved if the union had agreed to concessions.

Even if union leaders can strike a deal with the company, there’s no guarantee it will be approved by rank-and-file members. A proposed contract with Save Mart, which owns the Lucky supermarket in Pleasanton, called for an end to bonus pay for Sunday and night work and employee contributions for the first time to their company health insurance premiums. The proposal was defeated by a 60-40% vote.

‘Sneak Peek’ shows Paragon Outlets nearing completion
Developer plans four-day celebration on opening day Nov. 8

The developers of Paragon Outlets led the media and selected guests on an hour-long “sneak peek” of the 120-store shopping complex scheduled to open Thursday, Nov. 8, at the southeast corner of I-580 and El Charro Road.

The $162 million outlet mall is on a 42-acre site, with another 17 acres suitable for further development, developers said.

Unlike most outlet malls, all of the stores and shopping corridors at Paragon are under a roof, with large openings at the ends and skylights overhead to give the center an outdoor feeling, yet one safe from the elements.

Also, the Paragon complex is unique in having a large food court in its center with a wide choice of offerings, including Villa Italian Kitchen, Japanese Cafe, Auntie Anne’s, Subway and many more.

The eight-building retail center is owned by Paragon Outlet Partners, a retail real estate development firm headquartered in Baltimore. It also owns outlet, retail and entertainment centers in Texas and Florida.

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Breenik said more than 2,000 jobs will be available at Paragon Outlets. Hiring fairs are scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 11, and Tuesday, Oct. 23, at the Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave. in Livermore.

Drug Store News said that Safeway’s decision to end its gas discount and follow several more weeks of stalemate over a new contract.

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THE DUMBARTON BRIDGE WILL BE CLOSED LABOR DAY WEEKEND 2012
10 p.m. Friday, August 31 to 5 a.m. Tuesday, September 4
DumbartonBridgeInfo.org
Don your plaid — if not a kilt — and head to the Fairgrounds this weekend for an adventure in everything Scottish, from bagpipes to whisky.

It's the 147th year for the Scottish Highland Gathering & Games, which was presented by the Caledonian Club of San Francisco for the first time in 1866.

"We've never missed a year, even during the wars or after the earthquake," said media chairman Floyd Busby. "It was held in San Francisco for the first two years, then the third year it was on the beach in Sausalito.

The event moved to the Alameda County Fairgrounds in 1994, and through the years it has added one feature after another until it fills every nook and cranny of the spacious grounds.

"It's basically reached its capacity," Busby said. "There's not must else we can throw in. It's gotten so big, probably there's only one other games bigger in North America, in Canada — it has the North American Pipe Band Championships."

The bagpipe bands also compete in Pleasanton and are a big draw. The local Gathering & Games also hosts the world championships for two of the eight athletic disciplines: the weight-for-height throw, and the caber toss.

In the weight-for-height throw, the weight has a ring attached to it, which the athlete swings then heaves over a bar that keeps getting raised.

The caber toss is a crowd favorite as the large wooden pole (typically 19 feet 6 inches and weighing 175 pounds for the men) is balanced in the athlete's hands as he or she runs and then hurtles it, with the goal being for the caber to land with the "top" end nearest to the thrower.

Several years from now, when we have the 150th Games, we will hold the world championships for everything," Busby said.

The Scottish Highland Gathering & Games has something for everyone so it can be hard for first-timers to decide what to explore first.

"It would depend on their interest," Busby said. "A lot of people love the bagpipe so I would suggest they watch the bagpipe competition. I would roam around, watch the athletics — six of the eight disciplines are held on the soccer field, where they have the children's carnival during the Fair, near the Pleasanton Avenue entrance.

"Then go and sit down and watch any entertainment, from easy music like folk music, to Celtic rock and roll, to Albannach from Scotland, which is more tribal," he added.

Seven stages will have continuous entertainment, with two hosting the Celtic Heritage performances of the Scottish Fiddlers Rally, Celtic Harpers, Scottish Country Dancing, balladeer John Kelly and Kirsty Fitch entertaining with Gaelic singing.

"There's also living history," Busby said, "with Mary, Queen of Scots. There are Romans and Vikings, which of course invaded Scotland, reenactments of battles and different events that take place, ceremonies and knightings."

He also recommended seeing the sheep dog trials and the birds of prey on display.

The handlers will get up with their bird and explain about them," Busby said. "It's really quite fascinating."

He also suggested a visit to the Gathering of the Clans, with almost 100 different clan tents, to see if you might have some Scottish blood. Clans have "septs" within them whose names are lesser known.

"A lot don't sound Scottish and a lot of people are fascinated to find they have connections to a clan," Busby said. "They find they have a tartan and a crest that, if they wish, belongs to them."

The Caledonian Club's special website, www.thescottishgames.com, lists everything that will be happening this weekend.
Everyone is Scottish this weekend — at the 147th Highland Gathering & Games

By Dolores Fox Ciardelli

weekend at the Gathering & Games and has a map of where activities are taking place.

"Plus there will be two information booths," Busby said. "They have maps, and if you buy a program, the center spread is a map."

Busby strongly advised visitors not to miss the closing ceremonies, which are held both Saturday and Sunday.

Beginning at 4:15 p.m., the 30 competing pipe bands from the United States and Canada march onto the field in front of the grandstand, each led by a drum major, and go into formation. They include the U.S. Marine Band San Diego and the L.A. Scots Grade 1 Pipe Band, performing together.

"We are the only Games in the world that has a U.S. military band and a Grade 1 Military Pipe Band that march together and play together," Busby said.

The lone piper comes up on stage and starts playing Amazing Grace, then the drum major raises the big staff and 650-700 pipes and drums come into it," Busby said.

"It's very stirring," he added, recalling that he's seen a tear rolling down the cheeks of a friend that isn’t even Scottish at more than one closing ceremony.

Seats for the closing ceremonies cost $5 but a standing area in front is free. A trackside terrace on the first landing offers a ringside seat with tables and chairs, in addition to a catered lunch, for $30.90.

"We only started doing this three to four years ago," Busby said.

The 36 organizing committees of the Caledonian Club meet throughout the year to brainstorm ways to improve and plan this annual extravaganza, which is put on completely by volunteers.

"There are people that plan their vacation around this," Busby said. "Some come from out of state, and Southern California. Our operations crew starts on Tuesday, assembling the stages, then more and more come through the week. They put everything together, then they’ve got to stay when games are over, and tear everything down.

"A lot are not members of the club and are not Scottish," he continued. "One couple comes from Virginia, one from Colorado, others from other distances, and then there are those that are local. This is their vacation but they love doing it, this is an adventure to them.

"They are all volunteer but they get lodging; we put them in different hotels."

This weekend at the Scottish festival, kids can also access their inner Scot in the Children’s Glen, which has games and prizes. And there is an abundance of British foods such as steak pies, hangers, shepherds pie, scotch eggs, baggis, pasties and Celtic rolls and, of course, ales.

Whisky Live at the Games is returning by popular demand, where, for an additional fee, one can sample the better single malts from Scotland and learn the finer points of the art of fine distilling from a Master.

147th Scottish Highland Gathering & Games
WHERE: Alameda County Fairgrounds
WHEN: Saturday, Sept. 1 and Sunday, Sept. 2 from 8 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
COST: $20 per adult for one day and $27 for both days; youths 12-17 and seniors are $12. Ages 11 and under and military with ID are free.
INFORMATION: www.thescottishgames.com
This weekend is a great time to explore the wine country right in our own back yard. Twenty-nine wineries are hosting festivities at their tasting rooms as part of the 2012 Livermore Valley Harvest Wine Celebration with wine tasting, food vendors, local artisans and live music.

“It’s a good event. It exposes a lot of people to the Livermore Valley,” said Mitchell Katz, the winery bearing his name is located on Vineyard Avenue in Pleasanton.

This is the 31st year that people have gathered over Labor Day weekend to enjoy the fruit of the vines of the Livermore Valley. Besides the 29 wineries opening their doors, an additional 12 will be pouring at either Concannon Vineyard or Wente Vineyards on Tesla Road.

The festivities take place between noon and 5 p.m. Sunday and Monday, and the ticket price includes shuttle bus transportation between the wineries on Sunday. The buses will travel on three different routes, each serving six to 11 wineries. Free parking will be available at Robertson Park in Livermore, where guests can board buses and transfer between routes during the day.

During the celebration, wineries are open only to ticket holders with event wristbands and no outside food is allowed.

On Monday, 38 Livermore Valley wineries will present a more intimate affair for guests at their tasting rooms. Some of these Monday-only special events include:

- Bottle your own wine at Cedar Mountain Winery, el Sol Winery and Eckert Estate Winery
- Big White House & John Evan Cellars: Aroma bar and sensory education to discover the aromas of different wine varietals
- Mitchell Katz Winery releasing a micro-brew

“You’d be surprised, there’s nothing like a cold beer after a long day of wine drinking,” Katz said. “My palate just wants a nice cold beer.”

Mitchell Katz Winery will have live music both days and different types of snacks, such as little tacos for about $1.

“When I pour an event I try to do my best wine,” Katz said. “I won’t get them to the tasting room if don’t give them my best.”

He figures that although people may not buy this weekend, they will remember the quality of the wine and the friendly pourers. “I love my staff — that is what has put me on the map,” Katz said, noting that the San Francisco Chronicle named it as one of the Top 40 tasting rooms in Northern California.

Tickets for the two-day celebration are $55 in advance; $59.50 each if buying 10; and $65 the day of the event. Designated driver tickets are also available on the day of the event for $10.

Admission price includes a commemorative Livermore Valley wine glass, tastings of at least two wine varietals from each participating winery, an event program and discounts on wine purchases. Food at all winery locations will be locally prepared and moderately priced (under $8).

Tickets are available online at www.LVwine.org and at all participating Livermore Valley wineries, the Wine Steward in Pleasanton and at Bay Area Safeway stores.

The Harvest Wine Celebration is a fundraiser for the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association.

TOAST THE WINE HARVEST

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Labor Day tradition celebrates the fruit of the Livermore Valley vines

Folks enjoy themselves a few years ago during the Livermore Valley Harvest Wine Celebration at the Mitchell Katz Winery.

COURTESY LIVERMORE VALLEY WINEGROWERS ASSOCIATION

COURTESY LVWA

Toasting the blessing of the grapes Tuesday morning are (l-r) Chris Chandler, executive director of the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association; the Rev. Stephen Wilde; Rabbi David Katz of Temple Beth Emek; and fourth generation winegrower Carolyn Wente.
Sports

Pleasanton Piranhas 12U baseball team displays its hometown flag in Cooperstown, N.Y.: (l-r) Mitch Benson, AJ Warford, Coach Kevin Lawrence, Justin Lavell, Joseph Murphy, Mitchell Lawrence, Coach Joel Warford, Justin Clark, Max Heverly, Coach Bob Kaufman, Jimmy Kaufman, Nick Orecchia, Anthony Steller Harter, Jeremy Lea, Coach Ken Harter and Carson Quintana.

Piranhas make final round in Cooperstown

By Joel Warford

The Pleasanton Piranhas 12U baseball team returned home after a successful week in Cooperstown, N.Y., competing against 25 teams from across the country.

The Piranhas started strong in pool play with two convincing wins against the Hudson Valley Bulls of New York and the Louyaa Lightning of Maryland featuring homeruns by Mitchell Lawrence, Mitch Benson, Max Heverly, key RBI hits by Jeremy Lea, and great pitching by Justin Clark, Jimmy Kaufman, Carson Quintana and Nick Orecchia.

Game 3 was a nail-biting 4-3 win over the Vipers from Oxnard on a strong five innings pitched by Mitch Benson and another homer by Max Heverly.

Game 4 was another tight game as Piranhas fell to the Franklin Square Ravens of New York despite back to back homers by AJ Warford and Justin Clark in the first inning.

The Piranhas battled through two more pool play games against the Hamilton As of New Jersey and Nomads from SoCal. Mitch Lawrence hit a grand slam against the As.

Piranhas finished pool play with the 12th seed out of 25 teams going into the single elimination playoffs.

The first playoff game featured a rematch with the Ravens and delivered some incredible drama. Early in the game Anthony Steller Harter and Justin Lavell hit back-to-back homers to ignite the offense. After tying the game in the fifth, the Ravens took the lead in the top of the sixth on a two-run homer. In the bottom of the sixth, AJ Warford hit a two-run homer, scoring Max Heverly to tie the game. Then, following a double by Justin Clark, Mitch Benson crushed a walk off homerun. Joseph Murphy pitched a complete game gem in the 9-7 win.

In the next playoff round, Piranhas faced the No. 5 seed Oxnard Vipers and this time won convincingly, 8-3, with homers by Max Heverly, Justin Clark and Justin Lavell to advance to the semi-final round of eight teams.

The Piranhas fell short of the final four with a narrow loss to the No. 4 seed Brookfield Bandits, 7-5. Overall for the tournament, the Piranhas displayed outstanding pitching and defense combined with their power bats hitting a total of 17 homeruns by seven different players, scoring 70 runs in nine games, and compiling a 387 team batting average to highlight their Cooperstown experience.

Seahawks end season well

The Pleasanton Seahawks finished the season with fantastic performances at the 2012 U.S. Open Swimming Championships and the Junior National Championships both held in Indianapolis. The women’s team took third at the U.S. Open, Aug. 7-11, with Catherine Breed, Allison Brown, Marissa Brown and Celina Li contributing to the scoring.

The following week the Seahawks finished second in combined team scoring at the Junior Nationals. Nick Silverthorn, Jason Chen, Maxime Rooney and Nick Johnston contributed for the men, while Allison Brown, Marissa Brown, Iris Brand, Kirsten Brand, Mariah Simonds and Celina Li contributed for the women. Notable swims were by Jason Chen (Pacific Record in the 100 back) and Maxime Rooney (Pacific Records in the 200 fly and 100 free). During the two weeks in Indianapolis, Seahawks swimmers achieved five new times under the 2012 Olympic Trials cuts: Nick Silverthorn (200 IM), Jason Chen (100/200 back) and Iris Brand (50/100 free).

Happy with their wins are (back row, l-r) Head Coach Steve Morsilli, Nick Silverthorn, (front) Celina Li, Catherine Breed, Allison Brown and Marissa Brown.
SPORTS

Phantom U12 team 4th in Western Nationals
2012 softball season best in 10 years

BY RENEE CABRAL

The Pleasanton Phantom U12 team traveled to Salem, Ore., July 30-Aug. 5 for the Western Nationals, its final tournament for the 2012 summer. Under the coaching of Mike Williams, Jenny Williams and Kristen Ho Tseung, the team prevailed into Sunday and finished fourth out of 49 teams, the highest for a Phantom team of any age at the Western Nationals in 10 years.

Game 1 on Tuesday was against the Portland Rip City. Phantom won, 5-1. The second pool play game was against the Corona Gold, which had finished third in the SoCal State Championships, and Phantom shut them down, 6-0, earning a No. 1 seed entering bracket play.

Now in bracket play, the next game was against the Orcutt Xplosion. Danielle Williams led the team to a win, 5-1. Next Phantom battled to get a 5-2 win against the PICO Fastpitch AllStars, who had finished second in SoCal.

Going into Saturday with four wins was invigorating, starting at noon, again against Corona Gold, but it did not come easy. Corona was ahead, 3-1, all the way into the fifth inning. Phantom’s bats finally fired up and it came back to win, 4-3. The next game was at 2 p.m. in 100-degree heat, a close battle against the eventual champions, Simi Valley. Phantom lost, 0-1, in the no hitter.

On Sunday, with only six teams remaining in the tournament, Phantom started against East County of San Diego. Both teams looked alive and ready to play. At the end of the first inning the score was 2-1 with Phantom ahead; the game ended in a Phantom 4-1 win.

With the tournament now down to four teams, Phantom faced the Alameda Blaze. The Blaze scored four runs in the first two innings, but in the third inning four singles from Nicole Riordan, Danielle Williams, Shelby Cabral and Courtney Dinelli put Phantom on the board to cut the Blaze lead to two. The Blaze held strong and scored one more run in the bottom of the third.

In the fourth inning, big hits from Mary Rockwood, Emily Trinidad and Nicole Riordan were not enough to get Phantom a run but they were able to hold the Blaze. In the fifth inning, Phantom continued its hitting streak with a double from Shelby Cabral followed by a single from Courtney Dinelli. Sofia Molina then hit a sacrifice fly to score a run.

Now at 3-5, Phantom was feeling positive and strong. Phantom was able to hold the Blaze to five runs; however, Blaze held the Phantom to three runs for a 3-5 win for the Alameda Blaze, which went on to defeat El Rio (Oxnard) and ultimately lose in the championship game to the still undefeated Simi Valley.

Pleasanton Phantom 12B played great throughout the tournament, which was a continuation of a successful softball season that wrapped up with a record of 38-7-1. The girls played in eight tournaments during the summer, won three titles, finished second twice, and culminated the season with this fourth place in Western Nationals. □

Pleasanton Phantom U12 team members are (back row, l-r) Coach Jenny Williams, Shelby Cabral, Sofia Molina, Coach Mike Williams, Michaela Cabral, Coach Kristen Ho Tseung, (middle) Courtney Dinelli, Emily Trinidad, Jenna O’Neal, Nicole Riordan, Mary Rockwood, Jessica O’Neil, (front) Danielle Williams and Lauren Ho Tseung.

EVENTS

PRO PICK ‘EM CHALLENGE
SEPTEMBER 2 - DECEMBER 30

10 WINNERS EVERY WEEK GET UP TO $5,000
PICK 196 OF 237 - WIN $1,000,000

JACKSON RANCHERIA CASINO RESORT
12222 NEW YORK RANCH ROAD, JACKSON, CA 95642
800-822-WINN (9466) • JACKSONCASINO.COM

$1,000,000
Pro Pick ‘Em Challenge

$9,250 Weekly Cash
Guaranteed
$25,000 Most Correct Picks

10 Winners Every Week Get Up To

$5,000

- Scan for Details or visit us at JacksonCasino.com
- Events subject to change. Must be 21 or older to attend.

Pleasanton Weekly
August 31, 2012
Page 16
Two women assaulted during early morning

Suspect poses as policeman as he hand cuffs woman, sexually assaults her

By JESSICA LIPSY

The Pleasanton Police Department and allied agencies are seeking the public’s assistance in identifying the suspects in two sexual assaults that occurred earlier this month. The incidents seem to be unrelated, though both occurred during the wee hours of the morning.

The most recently reported case involved the impersonation of a police officer at around 3 a.m., Sunday, Aug. 5. Police said a woman was driving on Valley Avenue at Bernal Avenue when she heard what sounded like the chirp of a police siren. After seeing a flash of light coming from the vehicle behind her, the driver believed she was being stopped by a law enforcement officer and pulled over to the side of the road in a secluded area.

The male suspect approached the driver’s side door and showed the victim a star shaped badge in his hand, then ordered the victim out of her vehicle and handcuffed her, according to police reports. She was then placed in the back seat of the suspect’s vehicle and driven to an unknown secluded road where she was sexually assaulted by the suspect in his vehicle. The suspect left the victim at the scene of the crime and drove away.

The victim walked back to her vehicle and drove home, police said. She did not sustain any life threatening injuries and did not report the incident to police until Aug. 28. It is not known why the incident wasn’t reported earlier.

Police said the victim, a woman in her 20s, was sexually assaulted and robbed Sunday, Aug. 19, while walking home alone from downtown at about 2:30 a.m., according to a news release from the Pleasanton Police Department.

While walking in the area of First Street and Spring Avenue, she noticed a male adult was following her. When she reached Kottinger Park, the male had closed the distance between them. He made a comment to her that caused her to fear for her safety, the release stated.

She waited, I’m just glad she came forward,” the victim said. She did not sustain any life threatening injuries and did not report the incident to police until Aug. 28. It is not known why the incident wasn’t reported earlier.

THE MOST RECENTLY REPORTED CASE INVOLVED THE IMPERSONATION OF A POLICE OFFICER AT AROUND 3 A.M., SUNDAY, AUG. 5.

The woman ran into Kottinger Park to get away from the suspect, he chased her into the park, then sexually assaulted her and robbed her, police said. She declined to specify the amount of cash before running off.

The victim was transported to a local hospital where she was treated and released.

“This is not threatening, she just received bruises and cuts all over her body,” said Munyower, who confirmed that sexual assaults by strangers are a rarity in Pleasanton.

This suspect is described as white or Hispanic with dark short hair, 5 feet 11 inches tall, weighing between 185 and with a muscular build. He also had disfiguring tattoos, according to the news release. “old English” style writing across his collarbones and one tattoo on each upper arm.

“Physical evidence recovered has been submitted to the Alameda County Crime Lab for forensic examination,” the press release said.

The Police Department has increased patrols, including unformed bicycle officers, around Kottinger Village Park. Anyone with information about these incidents is urged to contact the Pleasanton Police Department at 931-5100.

City Council

Tuesday, June 10, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

Introduction and demonstration of Pulse Point Community CPR/Automatic Defibrillator Smartphone Application.

Public Hearing: PUD.02.09M, P12.0367, and P12.0368, Safeway, Inc. – PUD 02.09M, P12.0367, and P12.0368, Safeway, Inc. - Consider applications for (1) Major Modification of the PUD Development Plan for the Pleasanton Gateway Commercial center located at 6782 Bernal Avenue to replace a 4,379-square-foot bank/restaurant building with a drive-through—a self-serve gasoline station with nine fuel dispensers and a monument sign facing Bernal Avenue; (2) Conditional Use Permit for a service station with 24-hour operation; and (3) Sign Design Review for the service station’s building and monument sign. Zoning for the property is PUD – C (Commercial District).

East Pleasanton Specific Plan Task Force

Thursday, September 6, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.

Moir Elementary School, 3300 Dennis Drive

Task Force will take a field trip of the East Pleasanton Specific Plan area. 

City of Pleasanton Seeks Members for the Parks & Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee

Applications are currently being accepted for Pleasanton’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is intended to be a significant planning tool to help the city plan for the changing scope of recreational activities. As such it will summarize themes, trends and community priorities, assess available resources, review existing and anticipated demographic conditions and provide strategies for parks, recreation programs and open space needs.

To serve on the Steering Committee and assist with the master planning process, the City Council is seeking two (2) Parent(s)-At-Large representatives from the community who have a child and are children attending preschool, elementary school, middle school and/or high school. All applicants shall be residents of the City of Pleasanton and at least one or two meetings per month for a period of six to nine months. The City seeks committee members who are able to do background reading and research, work collaboratively, and strive for clear communication, a balanced perspective and inclusion of a wide range of viewpoints.

Interested parties should submit completed applications to the City Clerk’s office by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 13, 2012. The Pleasanton City Council will confirm the members of the committee at the Tuesday, October 2, 2012 City Council meeting (tentative date).

Applications are available at the City Clerk’s office, located at 123 Main Street in Pleasanton, or can be downloaded at http://www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/pd/pr-mpcommittees. For more information, contact Susan Antes-Wax, Community Services Director, at (925) 931-5340 or sandra@ci.pleasanton.ca.us.

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND PUBLIC COMMENT IS WELCOME.

The above represents a sampling of upcoming meeting items. For complete information please visit:

www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/community/calendar

Residents on the 6700 block of Paseo Catalanida reported to police that $15,000 worth of jewelry was stolen from their home Aug. 26.

Police are investigating the incident as a residential burglary where there were no signs of forced entry and a housekeeper is considered to be a suspect.

In another theft, several hundred dollars of copper wire was stolen from a home in the 3400 block of Arbor Drive on Aug. 22. Piping valued at $750 was stored in the backyard of the home, which was under construction.
Mike and Sharon Fuller

Lily Ann Dowall Joberg

Linda Louise Ansell

McNerney-Broadway

Peggy and Bernie Monahan

Obituaries

Lily Ann Dowall Joberg

Linda Louise Ansell

McNerney-Broadway

Peggy and Bernie Monahan

Obituaries

Lily Ann Dowall Joberg

Linda Louise Ansell

McNerney-Broadway

Peggy and Bernie Monahan

Obituaries

Lily Ann Dowall Joberg

Linda Louise Ansell

McNerney-Broadway

Peggy and Bernie Monahan

Obituaries

Lily Ann Dowall Joberg

Linda Louise Ansell

McNerney-Broadway

Peggy and Bernie Monahan

Obituaries

Lily Ann Dowall Joberg

Linda Louise Ansell

McNerney-Broadway

Peggy and Bernie Monahan

Anniversaries

McNerney-Broadway

Congressman Jerry and Mary McNerney of Pleasanton announced the engagement of their son, Michael Christopher to Jillian Marie Broadway, the daughter of Noah III and Pam Broadway of Oregon, Ohio.

Michael and Jillian, both U.S. Air Force veterans, met while they were stationed together on active duty. Michael graduated from UC Davis and American University, Washington School of Law. He is currently a cyber policy advisor in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Jillian is a graduate of Bowling Green University in Ohio and does research and development for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

McNerney-Broadway

Congressman Jerry and Mary McNerney of Pleasanton announced the engagement of their son, Michael Christopher to Jillian Marie Broadway, the daughter of Noah III and Pam Broadway of Oregon, Ohio.

Michael and Jillian, both U.S. Air Force veterans, met while they were stationed together on active duty. Michael graduated from UC Davis and American University, Washington School of Law. He is currently a cyber policy advisor in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

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CROOKED JADES on Aug. 31. Visit www.pleasantonlionswaysidepark.com. Live Music: RUCKATAN LATIN TRIBE The popular Alameda-based world music group, Ruckatan Latin Tribe, will be performing at 8 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 1, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4449 Railroad Ave., Pleasanton. The seven band members, from three different continents, infuse their cultures and love of their roots into their music, a blend of Latin, reggae and rock sounds. Ticket are $15-$20. Call 931-4848 or visit www.firehousearts.org.

DMV SENIOR OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM Hear from one of four Ombudsmen with the DMV assigned to the state, from 10:30-11:30 a.m., Tuesday, Sept. 11, at the Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. The program addresses the concerns of senior drivers. Ombudsmen can assist as a “go-between” to ensure that senior drivers are treated fairly & consistently with laws and regulations and with the dignity they deserve. There is no charge for this event. Call 931-5365 or visit www.pleasantonseniorcenter.org.

SENIORS: BROTHELS, BAR ROOMS AND BANDITS The Museum on Main is holding its annual fundraiser, Brothels, Bar Rooms and Bandits, from 6-10:30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 15, at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. The program addresses the concerns of senior drivers. Ombudsmen can assist as a “go-between” to ensure that senior drivers are treated fairly & consistently with laws and regulations and with the dignity they deserve. There is no charge for this event. Call 931-5365 or visit www.pleasantonseniorcenter.org.

Senior Clipper Cards to those 65 years of age and older. Bring a driver’s license, passport or identification. Ombudsmen can assist as a “go-between” to ensure that senior drivers are treated fairly & consistently with laws and regulations and with the dignity they deserve. There is no charge for this event. Call 931-5365 or visit www.pleasantonseniorcenter.org.

BART OMBUDSMAN The DMV Senior Ombudsmen can assist as a “go-between” to ensure that senior drivers are treated fairly & consistently with laws and regulations and with the dignity they deserve. There is no charge for this event. Call 931-5365 or visit www.pleasantonseniorcenter.org.


BROTHELS, BAR ROOMS AND BANDITS, from 6-10:30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 15, at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Return to Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. by one of the Bay Area’s pre-eminent bluegrass bands, the Crocked Jades, which keeps true to its old-time string band heart, yet exagerates the aura of rural pre-radio era music. The concert is free one-hour concert at 3 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 9, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave, by one of the Bay Area’s pre-eminent bluegrass bands, the Crocked Jades, which keeps true to its old-time string band heart, yet exagerates the aura of rural pre-radio era music. The concert is sponsored by the Friends of the Pleasanton Library. Call 931-3405.

FUNDRAISERS: BROTHELS, BAR ROOMS AND BANDITS The Museum on Main is holding its annual fundraiser, Brothels, Bar Rooms and Bandits, from 6-10:30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 15, at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Return to Pleasanton of 1890s and enjoy gambling, with friends and eating great food. Western attire encouraged. Cost of $45 includes barbecue dinner, gambling chips and entertainment. Tickets available at Museum on Main, 603 Main St., Pleasanton, or call 482-2766.

Events: BACK TO SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP RUN Enjoy a run or walk at Shadow Cliffs Regional Park at the 17th annual Back to School Scholarship Run, sponsored by the Northern California Association of Sales & Marketing Companies, on Sunday, Sept. 9, to raise money for college scholarships for children of parents in the California food industry. It features a 10K Run, 5K Run & Walk, and a Children’s Mile. The first 300 registered entrants will receive the Scholarship Run’s Monster Goodie Bag. Entry fees are $30 for preregistered and $35 on race day. Call On Your Mark Race Events at 209-795-7832 or visit www.active.com.

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Citizens Watchdog Committee Activities

- **Ongoing Programs and Capital Projects Watch (On-going):** The CWC continued to watch specific programs and capital projects and to review any issues of concern.

- **Independent Audits (November 2010, January 2012):** The CWC met with and received presentations from independent auditors on expenditures and administrative caps. The auditors did not identify any accounting concerns.

- **Review of Local Agency Expenditures (November 2010, March 2012):** The CWC formed subcommittees to address fund balances of the cities of Fremont and Oakland, and Alameda County. Each agency provided explanations and plans for spending down fund balances, which the CWC will continue to monitor.

- **Audit and Compliance Report Review (January 2011, January 2012):** CWC members reviewed audits and compliance reports and requested more information from agencies and jurisdictions to help clarify expenditures. The CWC found no indication that funds were spent improperly.

- **Master Programs Funding Agreement Review (November 2011):** A subcommittee reviewed and provided input on the Alameda CTC’s new Master Programs Funding Agreement for Alameda County, local jurisdictions and transit agencies, which receive Measure B and Vehicle Registration Fee funds.

- **Information Received by CWC (On-going):** The CWC received updates on a new $7.8 billion Transportation Expenditure Plan that will go to voters in November 2012 and requires an independent Watchdog Committee, similar to the CWC, as well as on local business contract goal achievement success.
If you are thinking of selling or buying a home, call me for information on current market conditions and options available to you.

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visit www.deloresgragg.com

There are many reasons why someone might leave their home unoccupied for months at a time. Maybe you moved to another state and your old house is languishing on the market; or you can no longer afford your mortgage so you’re working out a short sale and couch-surfing at your sister’s house; or you struck it rich and are taking a six-month, around-the-world cruise.

In each case, there’s one very important person you should call well before locking the door that last time — your insurance agent.

“Many people don’t realize that their standard homeowners policy won’t provide full coverage if their home sits unoccupied for a certain amount of time,” Ruth Stroup, a Farmers Insurance Group agent from Oakland, said.

“The timeframe varies by state and insurance carrier, but typically it’s 30 or 60 days,” she explained. “After that, you could be liable for losses related to theft or vandalism.”

Unoccupied or vacant homes are considered a higher risk by insurers because no one lives on site to maintain and protect the property. We’ve all seen news reports of abandoned or foreclosed homes that have been stripped of their fixtures, over-run by squatters or simply vandalized.

Also, if you’re hoping that your insurer simply won’t notice your house is unoccupied, think again. As Stroup points out, “Insurance companies increasingly are doing routine inspections at policy renewal time. If they find that the property is unoccupied, chances are your policy won’t be renewed.”

So what should you do if you find yourself in this situation?

First, check your homeowner’s policy for language regarding unoccupied or vacant homes. Once you know that your house will be empty for more than the allowable time — and before the deadline passes — contact your insurer to find out whether they offer vacant home insurance.

They may be willing to make special provisions depending on the projected duration of vacancy. If your carrier doesn’t offer such coverage, find one that does.

Foreclosure or short sale. This is grim but critical information to know if you’re losing your home through a foreclosure or short sale: Even if you’ve already moved out, you’re still responsible for insuring the property until you can no longer officially own it.

“If a prospective buyer slipped and fell, you’d be liable for damages since you’re still technically the owner,” Stroup said.

Landlord insurance.

Many homeowners prefer to rent out their property until the real estate market rebounds. From the insurer’s perspective, this is preferable to leaving the house vacant, although it’s still considered riskier coverage because tenants are less likely than owners to protect and maintain the property.

Landlord insurance covers the structure of the building as well as any personal belongings you leave on the premises against hazards such as fire, water damage, lighting, etc. It will reimburse you for lost rental income if the home becomes uninhabitable.

“Landlord policies are structured differently than homeowners coverage but often cost about the same,” Stroup said.

“Homeowners policies typically provide considerable coverage for personal property, which you probably wouldn’t need here because your renters are responsible for insuring their own things,” she added.

To protect your current and future assets, always have sufficient loss and liability insurance on all your property and possessions. Better safe than sorry.

Jason Alderman directs Visa’s financial education programs.
This week’s data represents homes sold during August 2012.

Dublin
3312 Aradill Ln D R Horton to C. G. Guthria for $374,900
3316 Aradill Ln D R Horton to T. Tran for $352,500
3340 Aradill Ln D R Horton to S. Bhathal for $562,000
2108 Avanti Ave D R Horton to A. Patel for $871,000
2136 Avanti Ave D R Horton to S. Satar for $912,000
2178 Avanti Avenue D R Horton to R. & A. Barnaynie for $899,000
3312 Capoterra Way Standard Pacific Corporation to J. & S. Chang for $672,500
11461 Marwick Drive 6013 Kingsmill Terrace
3420 Finnian Way #232 Parchman for $381,500
3420 Finnian Way #219
3420 Finnian Way #200
6629 Ebensburg Lane Y. & G. Dhillon for $925,000
2831 East Sugar Hill Terrace to M. & G. Acojido for $361,500
2906 Liberty Drive S. Willis to F. & M. Tornaghi for $400,000
2930 Liberty Drive Archambault Trust to J. & L. Gao for $431,000
432 Mission Drive D. & M. Eckert to J. Kuizon for $780,000
2008 Olivia Court S. Kim to C. Gordet for $336,500
1981 Palmer Drive Barker Trust to T. Yerondopoules for $1,025,000
3723 Rose Rock Circle C. Leibengood to J. Papageorge for $632,000
3275 Royalview Court C. Parchman to R. & S. Warnick for $615,000
5168 Willowview Court R. & S. Warnick to C. Schutta for $525,000

PLEASANTON | 900 Main Street | 925.251.1111

Coldwell Banker #1 IN CALIFORNIA

CASTRO VALLEY
3743 SEPTEMBER CT $934,185
6 BR 3.5 BA 3,553 Sq.Ft. Remodeled w/Permits.Kt w/ Fam. Rm Combo & Fireplace. Hot Wtr Recirculation Sys. 925.847.2200

LIVEMORE
2479 CHARDONNAY WAY $1,187,000
3 BR 3.5 BA plq/pjg/pjg putting green in bckyrd.1/3 acre lot,2 bds down/master w/ffplce,left area upstairs 925.847.2200

LIVEMORE
1801 MARINI LANE $745,000
5 BR 4 BA Like New! Large Chef’s Kit, Dual Staircases, 3 Car Grg. Landscaped Exceptional Home & Location! 925.847.2200

PLEASANTON
463 MONTOIR CT. $1,100,000
5 BR 3 BA Lux & Private Backyard. Friendly Court Location. Walk to Community Pool & Tennis! 925.847.2200

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Susie Steele, Broker Associate • 925.621.4062 • susiesteele@apr.com • www.susiesteele.com
**New Price**

3266 Novaia Wy, Ruby Hill
Beautiful home of 6,450 sq. ft. 5 BR, 5.5 BA, office & bonus. Quality architectural detail throughout, pools & views from the golf course lot. Located on one of Ruby’s most sought after cul-de-sacs. Offered at $2,690,000

Fran & Dave Cunningham
925.202.6898
www.RubyHill.net
DRE #01226956  DRE#01395362
925.463.0436
www.SoldinaFlash.com
CA Lic #s 01713497, 01735040 & 01395362

**Price Reduced**

7795 Cedar Mountain Drive, Livermore
This gorgeous 16.2 acre Tuscan vineyard estate features a 6,671 sq. ft. home with 7 BR, plus in-law apartment, and 7 BA, plus a beautifully landscaped backyard with a pool, Jacuzzi and waterfall. Includes 14.2 acres of income-producing vineyards. Offered at $3,795,000

The Fabulous Properties Team
Donna Garrison & Susan Schall
925.980.0273  925.519.8226
www.FabulousProperties.net
CA Lic #01775951, 01730262 & 01395362

**Coming Soon in Laguna Oaks!**

Nestled on a wonderful court with views of the Pleasanton Ridge. With over 3800 sq ft this home boasts 4 bedrooms, a bonus room and a den. Beautiful granite kitchen overlooking a private and serene yard. Expanded family room has room for everything. One bedroom and full bath downstairs. Offered at $1,375,000

**New Price**

1348 Bordeaux St, Pleasanton
Unique 5 bedroom, 4.5 bath home w/ 3,864 sq ft. Home features an amazing custom gourmet kitchen, first floor master suite plus 2 more bedrooms, upstairs 2 additional private bedroom suites, an office, playroom and beautifully landscaped private backyard. Walking distance to Vintage Hills Elementary School. Part of the Kattinger Ranch HOA w/ pool, tennis courts and walking paths. Offered at $1,329,000

Melissa Pederson
REALTOR®
DRE #01002251
925.260.2220
www.armariohomes.com

**Pending**

942 Finovino Court — Pleasanton Heights!
Over 3400 sq ft, recently remodeled, 4 bed, 3 bath. Call Gail for more information!

Gail Boal
REALTOR®
DRE #01274455
925.577.5787
www.gailboal.com

5750 Belleza Drive, Pleasanton
Gorgeous end-unit loaded with upgrades! Kitchen w/ laminate floors, new stainless appliances, convection micro. Living rm built-in wood cabinets & gas fireplace. Full driveway for extra parking. Remodeled baths incl marble master bath, CA closet organizers, marble entry, long driveway. This home is a “10++”. Offered at $429,000

Cindy and Gene Williams
REALTORS®
DRE #01107076 and 0060751
925.918.2045
www.williamsteam.net

**New Price**

2190 Raven Road, Pleasanton
Single story in popular Birdland neighborhood. Open & sunny floor plan with 4 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, 1,871 +/- sq. ft. Hardwood floors, RV Access, and corner lot. Walking distance to schools. Offered at $699,000

DeAnna Armario
REALTOR®
DRE #01363180
925.260.2220
www.armariohomes.com

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This gorgeous 16.2 acre Tuscan vineyard estate features a 6,671 sq. ft. home with 7 BR, plus in-law apartment, and 7 BA, plus a beautifully landscaped backyard with a pool, Jacuzzi and waterfall. Includes 14.2 acres of income-producing vineyards. Offered at $3,795,000

Cristin Kiper Sanchez
925.580.7719
DRE #01479197
www.soldinaflash.com

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DRE #01107076 and 0060751
925.918.2045
www.williamsteam.net

**Pending**

7516 Interlachen Avenue, San Ramon
Lovely San Ramon Neighborhood! 4 Bedrooms, 2 baths, 1,710 sq ft. Hardwood floors in Kitchen, Family room, Breakfast area and Living room. Conveniently located close to 680, schools and shopping! Offered at $575,000

Lisa Sterling & Natalie Kruger
REALTORS®
DRE # 01012330 and 01187582
925.980.9265  925.847.7355
www.krugergroup.com

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