

PLEASANTON WEEKLY

Vol. VII, Number 8 • March 17, 2006

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It's all about Pleasanton



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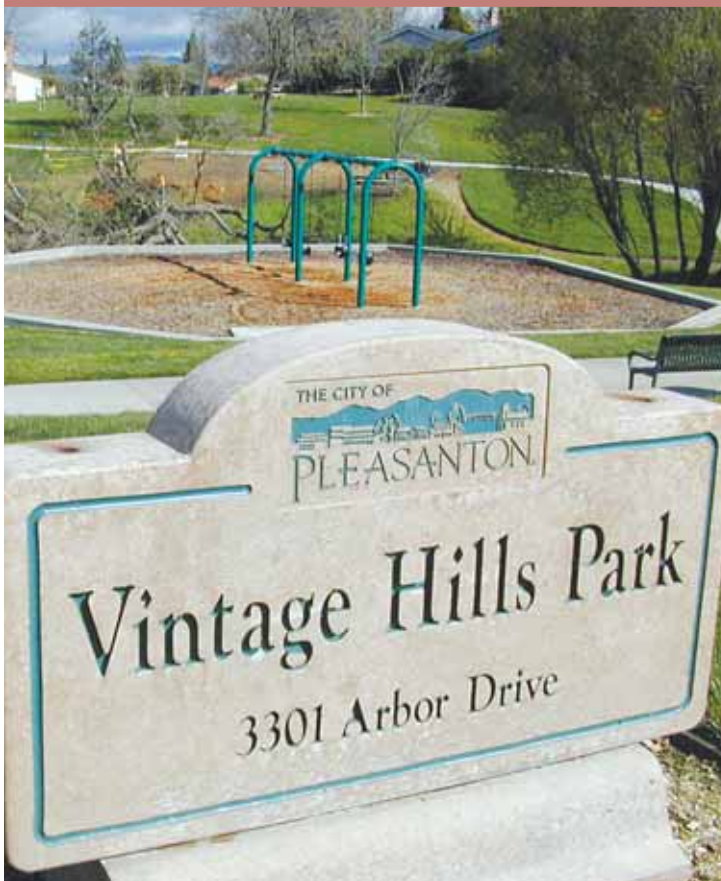
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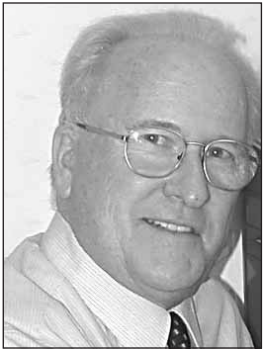
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Around Pleasanton

by Jeb Bing

Newspaper consolidations don't help local coverage

As a long-time newspaperman who has seen his share of consolidations, buyouts, downsizing and closings in this still-admired profession, I always find it disturbing to see good newspaper groups—their newspapers and reporters and the other media they own—affected by a sell-off like the one we just saw last weekend with the Sacramento-based McClatchy company's \$4.5-billion purchase of Knight-Ridder, the country's second largest newspaper group. While it's too early to see how this offer plays out, McClatchy has already announced that it will sell off or close some papers. It also said it will sell as quickly as possible 12 former Knight-Ridder newspapers, including the Contra Costa Times and the San Jose Mercury News. I have professional friends at both publications who watched nervously as Knight-Ridder marketed itself under pressure from dissatisfied stockholders. They're now pacing the newsrooms again to see who might be their new employer and if their paper and jobs will survive. One possible buyer, according to analysts, is Dean Singleton and his privately-owned Denver-based MediaNews Group Inc., which owns the Alameda Newspaper Group (ANG), publishers of the East Bay's Tri-Valley Herald, Fremont Argus, Hayward Daily Review and Oakland Tribune. In the East Bay's hotly-competitive daily newspaper market, it's possible that not all of these publications would go forward under a single parent.

Newspaper pundits are blaming the current round of consolidations and newspaper closings on the Internet, arguing that newspaper readers are forsaking their daily driveway deliveries for the ease of checking the news on their home computers or cell phone screens. But what they are checking is what newspaper reporters, and, to some extent, reporters for TV stations, have covered. There are no Google or Matt Drudge reporters at White

House press conferences, in Iraq or covering Legislatures or local elections. Without newspapers, there would be no reports to check online. Some believe that, rather than Internet competition, daily newspapers are in trouble because they too often cover the same stories, carry the same advertising inserts, and expand their marketing and subscriber bases too broadly, losing the interest of the readers they serve.

I saw this at the Chicago Tribune, where I was a reporter and Neighborhood News editor for 13 years. We once called the paper the "Voice of the Midwest," but over time retrenched as advertisers refused to pay for circulation to distant locations where they had no stores or customers. Subscribers found that they got the same regional news off TV. Even in big cities, subscribers increasingly dropped the second daily they were taking. When I went to the Trib, there were four newspapers in Chicago. Now there are two. There were seven in New York City, where there are now just three. In most American cities, a single daily survives as the print media source for regional and national news.

At the Pleasanton Weekly, we're strictly a local newspaper, covering only Pleasanton and the readers we serve. As exciting as last night's school board meeting in Martinez may have been, which the dailies report, we have found that our readers want to know about Pleasanton's, and that's what we cover. Our winning strategy is to focus on this community for both news and advertising. We're also easy to read and even easy to carry, which is why so many of you carry us to the far corners of the earth and send back your pictures. You'll often find readers carrying the Weekly on Main Street as they shop at stores and look for restaurants, garage sales or movie times and locations. There's no consolidation here as we continue to report independently on the news of Pleasanton. ■

About the Cover

First developed in the early 1970s, Vintage Hills is a cohesive community of well-built three-and-four-bedroom homes in the hills of southeast Pleasanton. Long ago sold out, resales are strong with buyers attracted to its centrally-located Vintage Hills Elementary School, manicured lawns and neighborhood parks. This is the first in a series of stories about Pleasanton neighborhoods. Cover photos by Rebecca Guyon; design by Ben Ho.

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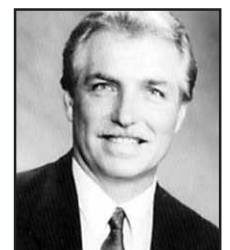
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Streetwise

Q: How well does the school district communicate with parents about policy changes affecting their kids?

Asked downtown.



Cathie Norman

Retired teacher, Pleasanton

I think the district communicates quite well, because we get periodic newsletters, and there are also items in the Pleasanton Weekly as well as the other local papers. I think they are very good about it and there are opportunities for the parents to give input.

Dan Taylor

Fitness Trainer, Pleasanton

The school district here is very comprehensive, through their Web site and e-mails. So anyone who is a Pleasanton parent can have access to the e-mail. I personally don't have time to read through each one, but it is there.



Valerie Skowron

Parent

My kids go to Valley View. I'm very active at the school on the site council and work in the classroom. I'm aware of what goes on at the school.



Betty Meilsenheimer

Special Needs-Student Aide

I think they communicate very well. I have two children in the district, and I am always well informed about changes.



Casey Nice

Sheriff's office employee

I think we get pretty regular correspondence from the school about what's going on, upcoming events, etc. I think they do a great job.



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Compiled by Sandy Christman

Newsfront

News Digest

Art students honored by state

Pleasanton students Max Loh and Jenna Crawford were honored by the California State PTA for their entries in the PTA Reflections contest. Loh, an 11th grade student at Amador Valley High School, received an Award of Merit for his original musical composition titled "No Exit." A total of 46 Awards of Merit were given out this year as it is the second level of recognition by the State PTA. The highest award is the Award of Excellence, which is given to 16 students who then move on to the National PTA competition.

Although Crawford, a second grade student at Vintage Hills Elementary School, did not win an award, she was one of 34 students chosen to have their entry on display at the California State PTA Convention in Anaheim, Calif. Her literature entry was a poem titled, "I Wonder Why?"

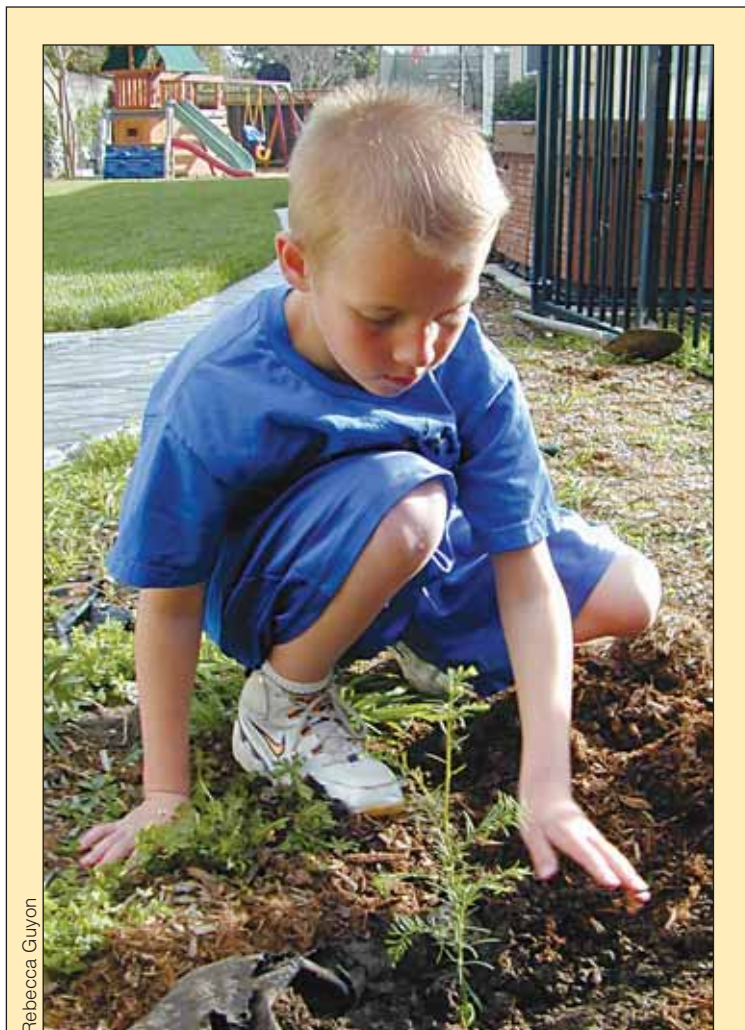
Childcare volunteers needed

Tri-Valley Haven, a local non-profit that provides counseling and a 24-hour crisis response to survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, as well as shelter for battered women and their children, reports an extreme shortage of childcare volunteers. Anyone interested must be 21 or older, agree to be fingerprinted and attend a two-hour training session. The organization also offers services to homeless families and community classes for violence prevention. For more information, e-mail jenny@tri-valleyhaven.org or call 449-5845 ext. 111.

Free Taiko drum performance

A free Taiko drum performance is coming to town at 7 p.m. March 23. Heidi Varian, who produced the famous Taiko scene in the film "Rising Sun," will be setting up her performers at Bay Books, 5698 Stoneridge Drive at Gibraltar in Pleasanton, and across the way at P3 Party Place. Taiko drumming is an ancient sacred practice in Japan that has evolved into a form of martial arts training combining rhythm, harmony, and movement.

Varian will be on hand to sign copies of her book "The Way of Taiko." To make a reservation for the free performance, call Bay Books at 460-3213, or P3 Party Place at 463-7300.



Rebecca Guyon

Blake Braden, a second grade student at Donlon Elementary School, plants a redwood tree seedling in his backyard. Volunteers from the Pleasanton Garden Club talked to second grade students at all of the district's schools from March 2-16 about the importance of trees and explained how the students could plant their own redwood seedlings. Alden Lane Nursery donated more than 2,000 seedlings to the district to give to every second grade student. This is the nursery's eighth consecutive year donating seedlings. The redwood is California's state tree and, because early March is the best time to plant them, California celebrates Arbor Day from March 7-14, although national Arbor Day is April 28.

Cooler barns coming to Fairgrounds

Plus, new ordinance may make Pleasanton a "Tree City USA"

by Carol Bogart

Forty-five new trees, many of them the California redwood, or sequoia, are newly planted alongside animal barns at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in honor of Arbor Day. The trees were donated earlier this month by Happy Valley resident and fair board member Frank Imhof. Imhof, who owns Imhof Tractor Service, even helped plant them.

Although Pleasanton has no specific Arbor Day activities planned, Parks and Community Services director Jim Wolfe said the city does have an ongoing tree planting program during months it's not busy with sodding and mowing. This year, for example, from December to March Pleasanton planted more

than 200 trees. Thanks to not having the weather extremes experienced elsewhere in the country, Wolfe said, "That's an ideal time for us to plant and give the trees an opportunity to take root and flourish as we head into spring."

Arbor Day's history

Arbor Day has its ... roots, so to speak ... in 1870s Nebraska. J. Sterling Morton, the editor of Nebraska's first newspaper, advocated planting trees as windbreaks, and, in his role as secretary of the Nebraska Territory, proposed a tree-planting holiday to be called "Arbor Day." According to the National Arbor Day Foundation, "Arbor Day" was officially pro-

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New Nordstrom, other Stoneridge Mall projects delayed

Virginia-based owner seeks buyer, new financing

by Jeb Bing

Multi-million-dollar improvements to Stoneridge Shopping Center are on hold after its owner, Virginia-based Mills Corporation, announced that it is reassessing its proposed projects across the country because of financial difficulties.

The move stalls, temporarily at least, 186,000 square feet of improvements to Stoneridge, the mall's first major change since the construction of the Sears retail store in 1997.

Construction was scheduled to start in January on a new two-story Nordstrom department store totaling 144,000 square feet in front of the current facility. Also affected is a 900-car parking garage planned on Stoneridge Mall Road adjacent to the new Nordstrom building, and new retail stores and a movie theater that were to be built in the old Nordstrom building once it was vacated.

City Planning Director Jerry Iserson said two other parts of the

project, a Cheesecake Factory restaurant adjacent to Macy's women's store and a P.F. Chang Chinese restaurant, may be on track. The Cheesecake Factory submitted building plans to the city's Planning Department and P.F. Chang has submitted a plan check, but not yet asked for a permit.

"Actually, I think they all are under the Mills Corporation umbrella, so it's uncertain just what might go forward at this time," Iserson said. "Everything was cleared through the Planning Commission last fall, but we still haven't heard anything from Mills."

In January, Mills announced a fourth quarter restructuring plan related to projects being written off that totaled \$71 million. At the same time, the company, which is headquartered in Arlington, Va., a suburb of Washington, D.C., said it was reducing its management workforce, with 17 executives expected to take early retirements

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Keeping kids safe online

Police, district team-up for cyber-safety workshop

by Rebecca Guyon

For students growing up nowadays, the Internet is a basic part of life—some may even say a necessity. But although younger generations are more tech-savvy than any generation before, they are still children and may not be aware of the possible dangers lurking on Web sites and in chat rooms. That's why the police department and the school district are teaming up to put on the March 23 workshop, "Student Safety in Cyberspace" to inform parents about what their children might find on the Internet and how to make sure they stay safe.

"If you look at today and five years ago, there is more crime involving children and the Internet today because of the access issues," said Sergeant Craig Eicher. That's why the workshop is focusing on teaching parents how to monitor their children's time on the Internet through one-on-one observation.

"The most important thing when children are accessing the Internet

is that parents know what they're doing and monitoring their activity," Eicher said, adding, "We don't recommend parents let children have unmonitored Internet access in their bedrooms."

Detective Daly Harnish is leading the workshop along with Gary Hicklin, technology director for the school district. Hicklin said student safety on the Internet has not been a

(continued on page 6)

Attend the workshop

What: Student Safety in Cyberspace: What Parents Need to Know to Keep Their Student Safe on the Internet

When: 7-8:30 p.m., Thursday, March 23

Where: Hart Middle School Multipurpose Room

Cost: Free

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Contact Jenise Falk, vice principal at Hart, at 426-3102 for more information.

Cyber safety

(continued from page 5)

huge concern for the district because it has not had major problems, but it does want to make sure students and parents are aware of the precautions they should take when interacting with others on-line.

"The way people communicate and the tools they use have changed," Hicklin said. "With that new communication there are risks that have to be identified to make sure this is a safe way to communicate. It's a real issue that we need to address and look at."

Concerns over the popular Web site MySpace.com sparked the idea to hold this workshop, Eicher said. Users of MySpace have their own personal page and they can post anything they want on that page. A parent contacted the police department when she found a user had posted homemade pornography on his page, meaning anyone registered on the site—including minors—could view the material. Teachers had also reported finding inappropriate postings by their students, including one teacher who found derogatory comments had been posted about her on MySpace by a student who had been disciplined, Eicher said.

"A lot of these issues that come up can be prevented if parents know what is going on," Eicher added.

Computers at the school sites are filtered by Websense, a program that keeps students from accessing Web sites that fall into 30 different categories, most notably:

- pornography
- gambling
- hate
- bomb making
- distasteful.

Administrators can add Web sites they want blocked to the program, and likewise, if a site is blocked but deemed necessary for educational purposes, administrators can unblock it. MySpace is blocked on school computers and was blocked before recent incidents such as the disappearance and death of a Livermore teen girl who had a MySpace listing, Hicklin said, but the main reason was not because school administrators thought it was a danger, so much as it was seen as a "nuisance" that distracts students from their work.

"I think (filters) are really good because they add a level of protection for students," Hicklin said. "A lot of these Web sites want to trick you to land on them, and the filters keep people from accidentally falling on places they shouldn't be."

Part of the workshop will include information on what filters are out there and how parents can set them up on their home computers. Hicklin added that filters are not fool-proof and the most effective filter is parent observation.

"(Parents) really need to monitor what their students are doing, especially with younger kids or middle school students," he said. "Keep the computer in a room where you can see what they're doing and can see how much time they're on. Monitoring is big." ■

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Rebecca Guyon

A 300-pound deposit

Local artisan Gary Winter (above) has people talking, once again, about his latest creation—a 6 1/2 foot, 300 pound, \$100 bill made out of 22,000 nails. Winter started making the piece in 1997, but stopped working when he was distracted by other projects, namely his production of miniature replicas of famous buildings in Pleasanton. Six months ago he was inspired to start work on the \$100 bill again and once he finished it he offered to put it on display at Valley Community Bank. "I wanted to show it off and thought it would be cool at a bank," Winter said. Winter, who banks with Valley Community Bank, asked them if he could "deposit his \$100 bill" and that's how plans for the installation got started. The bill will be at the bank for at least a month and Winter has received offers from other corporations interested in buying the piece to put on display in their lobbies.

Mall delays

(continued from page 5)

or leave the company.

Last month, in a second announcement, Mills announced that its board of directors was "exploring strategic alternatives to enhance shareholder value." The report, issued by Mills chairman and CEO Laurence Siegel, explained that the "alternatives" could include selling all or parts of the corporation.

"Domestically, The Mills (as it calls itself) will continue to concentrate its efforts on those development and predevelopment projects which the company believes are most likely to enhance shareholder value," the statement said.

Included in a list of six projects to be continued was Stoneridge Shopping Center.

The 1.3-million-square-foot

mall, with sales exceeding \$500 per square foot, is anchored by Nordstrom, two Macy's stores, Sears and JC Penney. It was built in 1979 and opened in 1980, but has never undergone a major renovation, which the East Bay Business Times reported as "unusual for upscale retail centers."

Alice Waterman, general manager of the Stoneridge center, did not return telephone calls asking about the building delays. Officials at Mills would not comment on specific property actions.

Representatives of the company who declined to identify themselves said, however, that the Stoneridge project could get back on track if Mills found a financing partner or was sold to another developer. The Westfield Group of Sydney, Australia, which owns a number of major retail malls in the country, has expressed an interest in acquiring Mills. It was also reportedly vying for part or all of Stoneridge at the time Mills successfully bought out General Motors Corporation's controlling interest. ■

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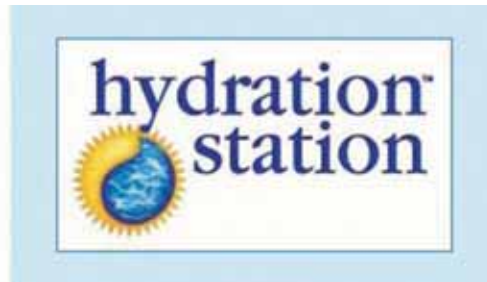
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Sean Herrero

Lana and Pat Johnson, parents of seventh grade Hart student Nick Johnson, support Hart Middle School while also having fun during the PTA's dinner/auction fundraiser at Castlewood Country Club.

Painting the town red, for schools

PTAs around the district kick-off the 'auction season'

by Rebecca Guyon

Hundreds of guests streamed into the Castlewood Country Club March 3 dressed up for a night of dinner and dancing, and prepared to spend some money on several highly valued pieces during a live auction. No, Sotheby's auction wasn't in town. This ritzy gala was put on by the Hart Middle School Parent Faculty Association to raise funds for art, music and lunchtime activity programs at the school. And Hart isn't the only school throwing such big fundraisers. During the first weekend of March, Hearst and Walnut Grove elementary schools' Parent Teacher Associations put on their own dinner events, complete with silent and live auctions, and Pleasanton Middle

School held a similar Caribbean-themed event the last week of February, all to raise funds for their respective schools. This is just the start of what some have dubbed "the auction season" with many schools planning their own swinging galas in the coming months.

Nowadays, some of the swankiest parties around are thrown by local parent-teacher groups to raise funds for schools. Many PTA groups are opting for big events instead of smaller fundraisers, like bake sales or gift wrapping services, because it offers them a chance to make a lot more money, and all in one night, said Melissa Theofanopoulos, event

(continued on page 10)

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Courtesy Alameda County Fair

A worker digs a hole for one of 45 trees, mostly redwoods, recently donated to the Alameda County Fairgrounds. The redwoods, or sequoia, are California's state tree. Expected to grow three to four feet per year, the new redwoods at the Fairgrounds will eventually be 100 feet tall or taller, towering over and shading an animal barn. The redwood, believed to be the tallest tree in the world, can live 2,000 years.

Barns

(continued from page 5)

claimed by Nebraska's governor on March 12, 1874. In 1885, it was named a legal holiday in Nebraska and Morton's birthday, April 22, was picked as the date for its permanent observance. On that first Arbor Day, it was estimated that more than one-million trees were planted across Nebraska's barren, windswept plains.

Throughout the 1870s more states passed legislation to observe Arbor Day and, although many of them traditionally celebrate Arbor Day on the last Friday in April, some states, like California, celebrate it on dates more suitable for successfully planting the state tree. This year, March 7-14 marked the state's Arbor Day celebrations since March is the best month for planting redwoods, California's state tree.

'Tree City USA'?

In Pleasanton, Arbor Day

Foundation guidelines are being studied to determine what it would take to have Pleasanton declared a Tree City USA. Of four standards that must be met, Wolfe said Pleasanton doesn't yet have a "tree care ordinance." According to the National Arbor Day Foundation, the ordinance "should be flexible enough to fit the needs or circumstances of the particular community. ... Ideally, it will provide guidance for planting, maintaining and removing trees from streets, parks and public places."

Pleasanton already monitors and maintains city trees regularly and designates trees that have trunks 50 inches in diameter or bigger

as "Heritage" trees, Wolfe said, but it does not currently have an actual tree care ordinance. His department is working on such an ordinance to take to city council. Wolfe said, "We would expect that to happen sometime this summer or fall."

Those interested in reading about the Tree City USA program can request a free booklet by calling (402) 474-5655 or by e-mailing treecity@arborday.org.

Interested in joining the Arbor Day Foundation? Call (888) 448-7337 toll-free, or visit www.arborday.org. If you join, the Foundation will send you 10 small flowering or oak trees for free. ■

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Auction season

(continued from page 8)

chair for the Hart Spring Auction. During Friday's gala, the Hart PFA took in \$42,000 at the end of the night from ticket sales and auction bids. Last year, the event brought in \$30,000, which went toward funding a second computer lab. In that one night, the PFA raised three times more than they had from that year's three other fundraisers—a gift wrapping service, See's Candy sales and a rummage sale—combined.

Ellen McGraw, event chair for Hearst's "Enchanted Evening" gala, said when the Hearst PTA surveyed parents at the beginning of the year, they heard that parents preferred to contribute during one big event rather than be constantly inundated with fundraisers over the course of the year. The "Enchanted Evening"—taken from what William Randolph Hearst used to call his many extravagant soirees—has been held at Castlewood as a school fundraiser since Hearst opened and is something parents have come to look forward to as a night of fun that helps the school.

"It's really important to us to continue the tradition of Phoebe Apperson Hearst and to stay tied to that past," McGraw said. This year, the event raised about \$70,000, an increase from last year which raised \$60,000. One of the big sales of the night was a package for six to

swim in the Hearst Castle outdoor pool and spend the night in San Simeon, Calif.—home of Hearst Castle—which went for \$5,250. Funds raised go to providing a full-time technology specialist and a full-time science specialist, as well as classroom expansion.

With so much glitz and glamour around town, Walnut Grove opted for a more casual event this year designed to feel like a day at an art gallery, said event co-chair Suzanne Smith. Because funds from the event, which totaled nearly \$60,000, go toward the art and science programs, event organizers wanted to make student art a central aspect and had students create 450 pieces of original art that were hung around the Palm Event Center and sold to the more than 400 parent buyers in attendance. Pieces that received no bids were put on sale at Walnut Grove during this past week and those that were still left were donated to the Senior Center. One of the night's big sales was a mosaic mirror created by Pam Black's fourth/fifth grade class that sold for \$1,000. In the past, Walnut Grove held a much more formal event, titled "A Night at the Oscars," which is held every two years and in its last year raised about \$40,000.

Although these events are one-night affairs, parent volunteers start planning far in advance. Committees begin meeting in September and with the work of between 8-20 committee heads, each group mobi-

lized nearly 100 volunteers to get the party started. Parents helped with a variety of activities ranging from securing auction items to selling tickets to after-party clean up. One of the main preliminary tasks is getting items donated for the auction, with each school securing hundreds of original items, most of which are donated by parents, teachers and local businesses.

Whether bidding on student artwork, a guitar autographed by Green Day or a chance to swim in the Hearst Castle pool, buyers can feel good that the money is going to support Pleasanton students. Smith said, regardless if the event is casual or formal, having big fundraisers is necessary so schools can offer a wide range of programs.

"A lot of people don't realize things like having a professional musician teaching music or having a science lab all costs money. The PTA at Walnut Grove said that's something we want our students to have, and the salaries and supplies need to be supplemented, so we need to have something to raise those funds," Smith said. ■

Upcoming school dinner/auction galas

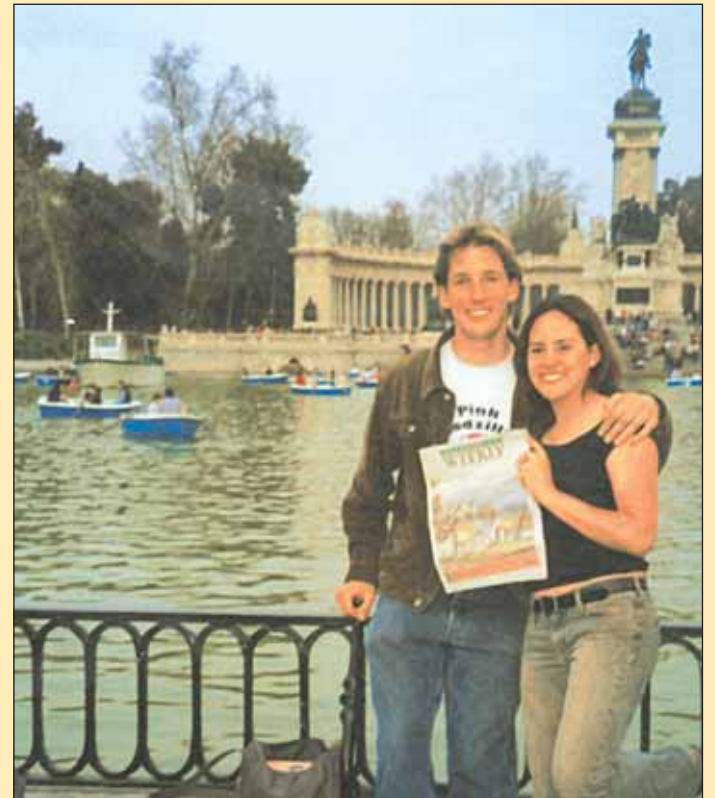
Valley View, Saturday, March 18 at Ruby Hill

Amador Valley Band, Saturday, April 9 at the Pleasanton Hilton

Foothill Falcon Royale, Saturday, April 9 at the Shrine Event Center

Amador Valley Athletic Boosters Club, May 6 at CarrAmerica Conference Center

Take Us Along



Amador friends meet in Spain

Bobby Jamieson was sure to bring a copy of the Weekly when he visited his friend Kate Gary who was studying abroad in Madrid, Spain. Both are 2004 graduates of Amador Valley High School. They decided to read the Weekly while at the Parque del Buen Retiro.

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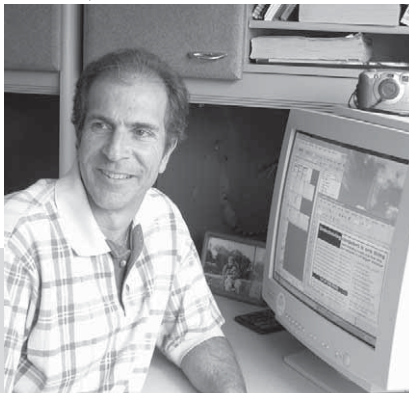
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Opinion

Editorial

Rebuild our overcrowded public library now

Pleasanton doesn't often find itself behind neighboring cities when it comes to public amenities, but a new report shows that our 18 year old public library is woefully short of meeting this community's needs and expectations. A Library Needs Assessment Survey found that the 30,178-square foot library, built in 1988 as part of the Alameda County Public Library system and purchased by the city of Pleasanton in 1999, is inadequate. The study found that it should be expanded to an at least 67,000 square foot stand-alone library to meet the city's current population of 67,200, and by much more to accommodate that additional growth expected when Pleasanton reaches build-out with more than 70,000 residents in the next few years. Debbie Look, chairwoman of the Library Commission, told the City Council last week that our library has .42 square feet of floor space against a national standard of 1 square foot per capita. Livermore's new library comes in at .88 square feet, Palo Alto's at 1.4 and Santa Clara and Saratoga at 1.6. Because of space limitations, the volumes of books accessible to Pleasanton library patrons measures 2.7 volumes per capita, compared to a standard of 4.6 and Cupertino's 5.1. The shortfall includes all materials we go to the library to read, check out or use, including computers, books-on-tape, CDs and periodicals. While the city prides itself on one of the finest sports parks in the region, an aquatic center that wins accolades in western states' swim competitions and a yet-to-be-developed 318 acre park near the center of town, the library is no longer a facility that would win any awards.

This is about to change, thanks to Look and her commission and Julie Farnsworth, a seasoned librarian who holds a master's degree in Library Science and became Director of the Pleasanton Public Library in 2003. Their work in assessing the library's needs prompted the council to approve the hiring of a consultant at an estimated cost of \$40,000 to \$70,000 to

conduct a one-year analysis of the existing library structure and to provide a conceptual design depicting an expanded building and a modified site plan. The consultant also would provide construction cost estimates, both for an extension to the library or to completely rebuild it as part of a much broader plan to build a new Civic Center, where the library would continue to be located. One conceptual design shown by Steven Bocian, Assistant City Manager, to downtown business leaders four years ago showed the library, doubled in floor space, jutting out into what is now its parking lot with a two-story parking garage proposed along Old Bernal Avenue. Other plans have called for tearing down the old post office building at 157 Main St., which some city administrative offices now use, and building a new library there, with the administrators moving into the existing library building. Although the existing library was not built to accommodate a second floor, a two-story extension into the parking lot has been suggested.

Whatever the decision turns out to be, it's clear that our library is over-crowded and lacks the space and staffing resources needed to serve our growing population. As Farnsworth points out, when the library was built in 1988, it was intended to be a branch. There were no CDs or DVDs, no Worldwide Web, no cell phones or E-books and LPs (long-playing records) were the most popular audio checkouts. Today, a multitude of different kinds of users, from computer gurus to readers of periodicals and books, vie for chair space in a library well beyond its time. City Manager Nelson Fialho told the council that although he can find the funds in the library reserves to pay for the consultant, there's nothing set aside to expand or rebuild the library, although there is a reserve set aside for a larger Civic Center complex that could include the library. Even so, expanding the library is looking like a long-range project that could take years to finalize at a time when the pressing need is to expand and rebuild our



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PLEASANTON NEIGHBORHOODS

A look at Vintage Hills

Small town ambiance in a growing city page 12



Many Vintage Hills homes, such as this one, are built on large lots. Today, the house has a market value estimate of \$1.2 million. Vintage Hills Park on Arbor Drive has many trees and is a popular area with heavy traffic.

by Cathy Jetter

Not so long ago, Pleasanton was a tiny town with one stoplight and a few easily defined neighborhoods separated by fields of hops, acres of grassland and a couple of shopping centers. Fast-forward to 2006 to find that sleepy suburb has become a bustling berg nearly 70,000 large. This type of rapid growth often results in a loss of identity, a disconnection between living in a home and feeling a part of the hometown atmosphere. Not in Pleasanton. From long-time residents to those newcomers still unpacking boxes as the paint dries on freshly plastered walls, most everyone who calls Pleasanton home agrees that, somehow, “small town” ambiance is an inherent part of everyday life in this much-larger-than-a-one-stoplight town.

While we could list numerous ways the “neighborly” atmosphere in this city is kept alive and growing as robustly as the housing industry, we believe the roots that nourish the spirit of a community can be found in one word—neighbors. Though many neighborhood borders now slip seamlessly from one street to another and smaller developments have “adopted” their larger, more established neighbor’s identity, Pleasanton residents are definitely joined together by a myriad of interwoven groups of friends and neighbors bonding over bunks, book clubs and block parties.

Does it matter where one neighborhood begins and another ends? Not in the eastern hills of Pleasanton where the Vintage Hills neighborhood has been growing and changing since the late 1960’s. Planted in the rolling terrain where John Kottinger once tended the grapes of Alameda County’s first commercial vineyards, the streets of the “original” Vintage Hills aptly reflect the area’s history. Tannet, Malbec, Claret, Gamay and Merlot set the trend, quickly followed by Concord, Riesling, Sirah, Grillo and others. As new developers continued expanding the popular area, many continued the xenophile tradition adding Zinfandel, Malaga, Rhine and Tokay to the varieties.

You can age a good barrel of cabernet faster than you can untangle the boundaries of the original divisions of Vintage Hills: Vintage Hills I, Vintage Hills I and a Half, Vintage Hills II and Vintage Heights I and II, where most residents think they live in Vintage Hills anyhow. And what about the eastern edge of Vintage Hills, where Foxbrough Estates, Grey Eagle and the Berattis property are now being developed? Then there are the mobile home parks, Shadow Cliff and Vista Diablo lining the Vineyard Avenue border to the north. Though these neighborhoods aren’t in Vintage

Hills, most children attend Vintage Hills Elementary School, the only school in Pleasanton named for a community. For these youngsters, they often think they’re also part of Vintage Hills.

Neighborhood involvement is a long-standing practice at Vintage Hills. Pleasanton’s John Reding, retired after many years of teaching auto shop at Amador Valley High School, recalled the school’s first principal, Phyllis Clark, welcoming his family as the Redings settled into their home at the end of Concord Street.

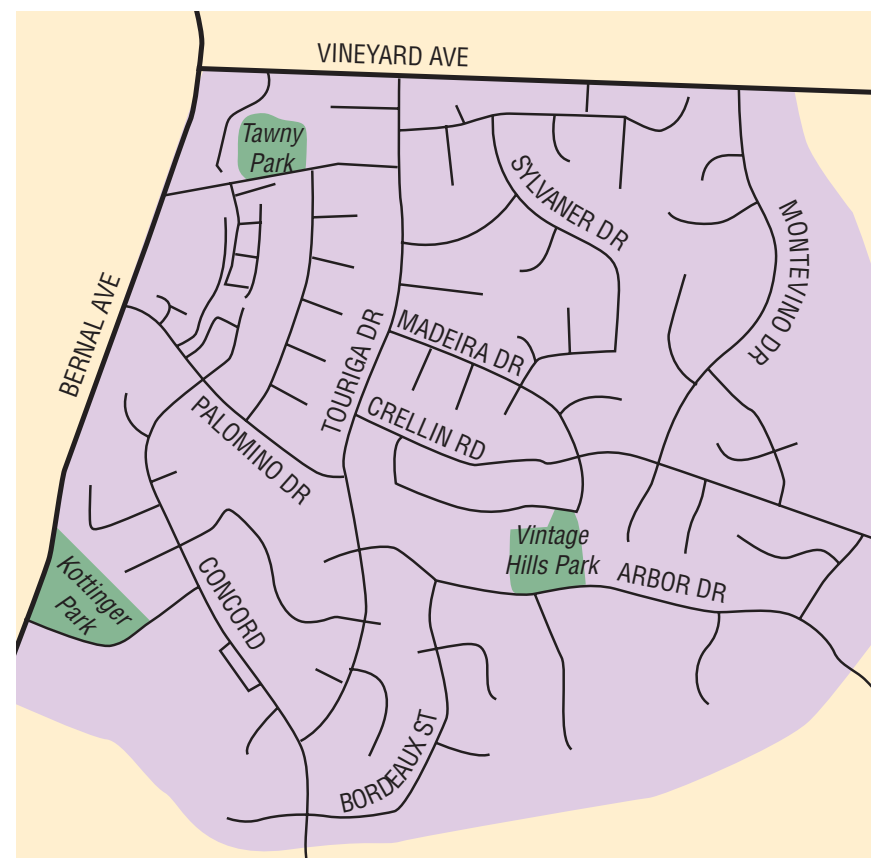
“The elementary school was just opening when we moved in across the street in 1974,” Reding said. “Phyllis lived just two doors down from us and she was there helping the day we moved in. Not long after, Phyllis asked if I could see about building a playground for the school. I got a bunch of guys together and we built the first Vintage Hills playground.”

From playground structures to computer labs—as school boundaries have expanded, parental support for the 600-plus students now attending Vintage Hills has grown just as quickly. Attend any monthly PTA meeting, and you are sure to find a representative from each branch of the neighborhood, no matter how you choose to define them.

Reding’s sons Josh and Jimmy certainly didn’t spend much time wondering where Vintage Hills began and ended. For them it was mostly open space just outside their Concord Street home’s front door, said Jimmy Reding, now a teacher at Wells Middle School in Dublin.

“Living in that house was like living in the country,” he added, recounting stories of a Pleasanton he says he was lucky to have known. As he tells it, life in the open hills now called Kottinger Ranch was a world today’s youths find only in books.

“Underneath the house we kept worm beds for catching bluegills



out in the ponds, or we’d ride our bikes out to the chickens and get dead chickens for catfish bait,” he recalled. Turtle flashlight tag and tarantulas were all parts of the adventure with encountering the occasional bull on the way home.

Today, Nintendo and X-box would have a hard time competing with the are-you-sure-this-was-just-30-years-ago? adventure Reding boys and their friends experienced on a regular basis.

“We shot squirrels for ranchers so their cows wouldn’t dig the holes,” Jimmy said. “And we could go over to Hopyar



the (left) on Concord Street, sold for under \$200,000 when built in the late 1970s. Estimated at more than \$700,000. Although one of the smaller neighborhood parks, many of the amenities in a quiet setting that is surrounded by homes and away from

where the Hacienda Business Park is now, and hunt for rabbit and pheasant.”

There was even a Hunting Club at Amador Valley High back then, John Reding added, and the boys would work on their guns during auto shop.

While today’s more typical 21st Century life in Vintage Hills no longer includes fishing for supper and keeping the community squirrel population under control, local Realtors report that the area is still one of the city’s most desirable locations.

“There’s just so much charm there,” explained Gina Piper of Prudential Realty. “Homes in newer developments can have a cookie-cutter feel, but in Vintage Hills there is a lot of character. Every home is different from the rest.”

Alain Pinel’s Realtor Blaise Lofland agreed, adding that the hills on which the homes are built mean wonderful views from many of the neighborhood windows

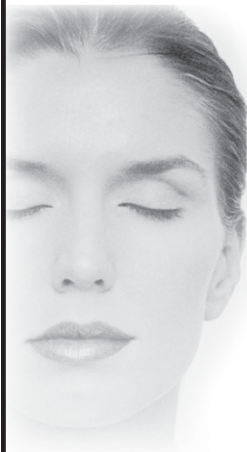
“And,” he added “Vintage Hills doesn’t have any freeway noise. With two freeways running through the city, that is pretty rare.”

Although not part of Vintage Hills, developers are hoping to add one last subdivision on its border—a 562-acre development at the southeastern end of Hearst Avenue, the main artery of the Kottinger Ranch development. Called Oak Grove, it is planned as a 98-home development on 67 acres with the rest of the undeveloped land—some 495 acres—to be left as open space. Some residents from both Vintage Hills and Kottinger Ranch have objected to the development plans, which are still in the proposal stage.

As community-focused as Vintage Hills is, it lacks the once-convenient retail center at Bernal and Tawny Drive. Formerly fully occupied with stores such as Romley’s Supermarket, Baskin-Robbins and a Chinese restaurant, only the Vintage Hills Cleaners and the Cutt Company hair salon remain. Although they do a brisk neighborhood business, efforts by the new shopping center owner have yet to attract new tenants.

“Unfortunately, we have nothing signed and ready to go at this time,” reported Patrick Davis, the commercial real estate agent currently working hard to find just the right tenants for this prime piece of property. “We are being picky. We’ve had lots of interest from offices, but we are really looking to find the right retail services.”

These might include what customers have told Young Lim at the Vintage Hills Cleaners they’d like to see come in: a corner café and coffee shop. Places to meet with friends and discuss the neighborhood news. As one customer put it, “That would make everything in this corner of Pleasanton just about perfect.” ■



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**PLEASANTON
WEEKLY**

Calendar

Weekend Preview

Library screening of 'Children of Alcatraz'

Pleasanton resident Scott Cornfield will show his documentary "Children of Alcatraz" 2 p.m., Sunday, March 19 at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. The movie documents the stories of children who lived on Alcatraz, the infamous island prison in the San Francisco Bay, with their families. Admission is free. Call Penny at 931-3405 for more information.



Auditions

Valley Concert Choral

The Valley Concert Choral is holding auditions to find experienced singers who enjoy performing a wide range of music. Auditions will be Mon., March 27 by appointment only in Livermore. Call 462-4205.

Author Visit

Derek Benz and J.S. Lewis

Meet authors of "Revenge of the Shadow King," Derek Benz and J.S. Lewis 4 p.m., Fri., March 17 at the Pleasanton Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Recommended for fans of "Harry Potter," "Artemis Fowl" and "The Spiderwick Chronicles!" Call 931-3400, ext. 8.

Robert Dugoni

Robert Dugoni, author of "The Jury Master," will discuss his novel 2 p.m., Sat., March 25 at the Pleasanton Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Call Penny, 931-3405.

Book Clubs

Livermore Book Club

The Livermore Book Club meets from 7-9 p.m. every fourth Tuesday of the month at the Livermore Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave.

Civic Meetings

City Council

The council meets at 7 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of every month in the City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave. The next meeting is March 21.

Housing Commission

The commission meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month in the City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave. The next meeting is April 20.

Human Services Commission

The commission meets at 7 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month in the City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave. The next meeting is April 5.

Library Commission

The commission meets at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. The next meeting is April 13.

Parks & Recreation Commission

The commission meets at 7 p.m. the second Thursday of each month in the City Council chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave. The next meeting is April 13.

Planning Commission

The commission meets at 7 p.m. the second and fourth Wednesday of every month in the City Council chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave. The next meeting is March 22.

School Board

The Pleasanton Unified School District Board meets at 7 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of every month in the district office board room, 4665 Bernal Ave. The next meeting is March 28.

Youth Commission

The commission meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month in the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. The next meeting is April 12.

Clubs

Amador Valley Quilt Guild

The Quilt Guild Club meets at 1:30 p.m. on the second Saturday of every month at Pleasanton Middle School, 5001 Case Ave. Call Marion, 828-5656.

Amador Valley Toastmasters

Improve your communication and leadership skills by joining the Toastmasters Club No. 2452 for breakfast from 7-8 a.m. every Thursday at Mimi's Cafe, 4775 Hacienda Dr., Dublin. Call 413-1096.

American Legion Post 237

The group meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St. Call Rene, 846-7532, or Dan, 846-7320.

Crossroads Business Network

Crossroads Business Network meets from 7-8:30 a.m. every Friday at Vic's All Star Kitchen, 201 A Main St. Membership is limited to one per profession. Call Bill, 249-1400.

Daughters of the British Empire

Meet your Sister Brits, and new friends in Daughters of the British Empire monthly at The Hall, 251 Kottinger Dr. Call Jenny, 484-1273, or Veronica, 846-4579.

Daughters of the British Empire

The John McLaren Chapter meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month. Newcomers and longtime residents are welcome to join the group for tea and a chat. Contact Jenny, 484-1273 or Veronica, 846-4579.

Del Valle Folk Dancers

Join beginning and experienced Balkan, Israeli, and other world dancers from 7:45-9:30 p.m. every Tuesday at the Livermore Academy of Performing Arts, 315 Wright Borthers Ave., Livermore. Cost is \$4. Dress casual. Call George, 447-8020.

Department 56 Collectors

Department 56 Collectors Club meets from 7-9 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month at Eden Villa, 4115 Mohr Ave. Call Mary, 846-6145.

Express to Success Network

The Women's Express to Success Network Club meets from 6-8:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month at the Four Points Hotel, 5115 Hopyard Rd. Attendees are encouraged to donate gently used career wear. Visit www.expressto-success.org or e-mail info@expressto-success.org.

Garden Club

The Livermore-Amador Valley Garden Club meets every first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at Alisal Elementary School, multipurpose room, 1454 Santa Rita Rd. Call 485-7812.

Hacienda Park Toastmasters

Hacienda Park Toastmasters Club meets from noon-1 p.m. every Thursday at Tyco, 4280 Hacienda Drive. Call Kevin, 598-5442 or e-mail kevin@kevdo.com.

Kiwanis Pleasanton Sunrise

Kiwanis Pleasanton Sunrise Club meets at 11:45 a.m. every Friday at Vic's All Star Kitchen, 201 Main St. Guests are welcome. The Foothill Kiwanis Key Club meets from noon-12:30 p.m. every Thursday at Foothill High School. Call Irv, 556-1177 or visit www.Kiwanis-pleasanton-sunrise.com.

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Ladies Choice Investment

Ladies Choice Investment Club meets at 7 p.m. on the second Monday of every month to discuss educational stock selections and investments. Call Jeannie, 846-5106.

Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society

The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Club meets at 7:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of every month at Congregation Beth Emek, 13400 Nevada Court. Call Jane, 447-3898 or visit www.l-ags.org.

Mount Diablo Rose Society

The Mount Diablo Rose Society meets from 7:30-9:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of every month except in July, August and December at the Dublin Civic Center, 100 Civic Plaza, Dublin. Call Pat, 846-4913.

Order of Eastern Star

Join Diablo Star #214 at 7:30 p.m., every second Monday of every month at Orinda Masonic Center, 9 Altarinda Rd. Focus on charity work for cancer and heart disease and organize fundraisers and scholarships. Call Karen, 798-9225.

P-Town Street Rods

This family oriented, truck or car enthusiast club meets 6-9 p.m. the second Wednesday and fourth Thursday of every month at Chicago's Metropolitan Deli, 6003 W. Las Positas Blvd. Call George, 846-5550.

Phi Delta Kappa

This international organization of professional educators of all kinds and others interested in education meets at varied locations four to six times during the school year. Call Pat, 443-5526.

Pleasanton Art League

The Pleasanton Art League and the Livermore Art Association's regular meetings feature demonstrations by nationally recognized artists, held at the Cultural Arts Center, 4477 Black Ave. Call 462-5917 or visit www.pal-art.com.

Pleasanton Downtown Association

The Pleasanton Downtown Association Design Committee is always seeking new members. Any Pleasanton resident is eligible to join. The group meets at 8:30 a.m. on the third Tuesday of every month at the PDA office, 830 Main St., Ste. A. Call Frances, 484-2199.

Pleasanton Lions Club

The Lions Club meets for dinner at 7:15 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at the Hilton, 7050 Johnson Dr. Call Jerry, 846-9628.

Pleasanton Newcomers

Pleasanton Newcomers Club meets at 10 a.m. on the first Wednesday of every month for coffee. Luncheons are at 11 a.m. on the second Wednesday of every month. Call 215-8409 or visit www.pleasantonnewcomers.com.

Pleasanton North Rotary Club

The North Rotary Club meets at 12:15 p.m. every Friday at the Hilton, 7050 Johnson Drive. Call Wayne, 426-2510.

Retired Public Employees Association

Meetings are held at 10:45 a.m. on the first Thursday of every month at Emil Villa's Hickory Pit, 3054 Pacific Ave., Livermore. Reservations required. Call Bob, 845-6563 or June, 461-0315.

Soroptimist

Soroptimist International of Pleasanton is dedicated to issues affecting women and children, meets at noon the second and fourth Wednesday of every month at Vic's All Star Kitchen, 201 A Main St. Call 846-6644.

Tri-Valley Fly Fishers

The Fly Fishers Club meets at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month at the Livermore Road and Gun Club, 40000 Dagnino Rd., Livermore. Call Bob, 989-2358 or visit www.tri-valley-flyfishers.org.

Tri-Valley Horseshoe Pitching

The Horseshoe Pitching Club meets at 1 p.m. every Tuesday at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, 4501 Pleasanton Ave. Call Martha, 462-4283.

Tri-Valley Leads

Tri-Valley Leads meets every other Wed. starting Feb. 22 from 7:15-8:30 a.m. at Carrow's, 7505 Dublin Blvd., Dublin. Call Donna, 586-3952 or e-mail donna@diamonddonna.com for reservations.

Tri-Valley Macintosh Users Group

TMUG meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month at Amador Valley High School, 1155 Santa Rita Road. Call Izak, 830-8838 or visit www.clubtmug.com.

Tri-Valley Rotary

The Rotary Club meets at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at Girasole Restaurant, 3180 Santa Rita Road. Call Marlene, 846-1000.

V.F.W. Auxiliary

The V.F.W. Post 6298 Auxiliary meets at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of every month at the Veteran's Memorial Building, 301 Main St. Call Ruth, 846-3040 or Gloria, 846-5453.

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Ambrose D. Regalia Post 6298 meets at 7 p.m. the second and fourth Thursday of every month at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St. Call Dan, 846-7320.

sion facilitated by Sue Evans during lunch time. Sign up at the Pleasanton Recreation Department, call 484-0239, or visit www.fitness-to-photos.com.

B2B Power Exchange

B2B Power Exchange presents "Leads Group for True B2B Business Developers" from 7:45-10 a.m., Thurs., March 23 at Mimi's Cafe, 4775 Hacienda Dr., Dublin. Cost and registration for non-members is \$35 and free for members, breakfast included. Reservations required, limited seating. Call 201-3410.

Diablo Ballet's 12th Anniversary Celebration

Celebrate Diablo Ballet's 12th Anniversary 8 p.m., Fri., March 24 and Sat., March 25 at Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Admission price is \$26-\$38. Student, senior and group discounts available. Call David, 943-7469 or visit www.dlrca.org.

Foothill Marching Band Boosters

The Foothill Color Guard and Percussion is hosting its annual Winter Guard and Percussion show Sat., March 25 at Foothill High School. The show includes units from more than 90 middle and high schools throughout Northern California. More than 50 trophies will be awarded. Call Angela, 462-3108.

Life on Earth

Daniel Barsky, LLNL scientist, and Frankie Tate, Granada High teacher, will present "Life on Earth" 9:30 and 11:15 a.m., Sat., March 18 at Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Rd. Seating is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Call 423-6627.

Meet the Winemaker

Meet Thomas Coyne of Thomas Coyne Winery from 2-4 p.m., Sun., March 26 at Tesla Vintners, 5143 Tesla Rd., Livermore. Admission is free. Call 606-9463.

Poetry, Prose and Arts Festival registration

The Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council and City of Pleasanton are now accepting early registrations and poetry contest submissions for the Fifth Annual Pleasanton Poetry, Pose, and Arts Festival held on Sat., April 1 at the CarrAmerica Conference Center, 4400 Rosewood Dr. Call Michelle, 931-5350 or visit www.pleasantonarts.org.

Taiko Drumming

Celebrate Spring with Heidi Varian and her taiko drummers 7 p.m., Wed., March 23 at Bay Books, 5698 Stoneridge Dr. RSVP required. Call Rich, 460-3213.

The Power of Networking

The Livermore Valley Business and Professional Women will be holding a dinner meeting to discuss the power of networking 6 p.m., Thurs., March 30 in Nordstrom's Cafe in the Stoneridge Mall. Cost is \$18. Reservations required by March 27. Call 449-3306.

Winemaking Dinner

The Pleasanton Hotel is offering a five-course dinner with Steven Kent and La Rochelle 7 p.m., Wed., March 22 at 855 Main St. Cost is \$70 plus tax and tip. Call 846-8106 or visit www.pleasantonhotel.com.

Concerts

'Carmina Burana'

The Valley Concert Chorale, Cantabella Children's Chorus, and the San Francisco Concert Chorale presents "Carmina Burana" at 8 p.m., Sat., March 18 at the First Presbyterian Church, 2020 5th St., Livermore. Tickets in advanced are \$17 adults, \$14 seniors. Tickets at the door are \$20 adults, \$17 seniors. Students 18 and under are free when accompanied by an adult. Call 866-4003 or visit www.valleyconcertchorale.org.

Special Tribute to Mozart

The third concert of the Livermore-Amador Symphony's 2005-06 season will be held at 8 p.m., Sat., March 25 at First Presbyterian Church, 2020 5th St., Livermore. General admission and seniors are \$13 and high school-age students or younger are \$5. Call 373-6824 or visit www.livamsymph.org.

Swiss Pianist to Perform

Swiss pianist Hanny Schmid Wyss, along with soprano Stephanie Johnson, tenor Linus Eukal and pianist LaDene Otuski will present a benefit concert 2 p.m., Sun., March 19 at the United Methodist Church, 1543 Sunnyvale Ave., Walnut Creek. Admission is free, donations accepted. A reception will follow the performance. E-mail amarquisfisher@yahoo.com, for more information.

The Italian Connection

Lyric soprano Karen Anderson will sing arias from five operas by Puccini and Verdi 2 p.m., Sat., March 25 at Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Tickets are \$12, \$20 and \$22. Call 943-7469.

Events

23rd Annual St. Patrick's Day Festival

The City of Dublin will set up booths featuring artisans, commercial vendors, carnival rides, Irish entertainment, food and more from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. and Sun., March 18 and 19. Admission is free. Call 556-4500 or visit www.DublinStPats.com.

26th Annual Cat Fanciers Association

Fancy felines from around the country will be on display and competing for Best In Show from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. and Sun., April 1 and 2 at the Alameda Country Fairgrounds, 4501 Pleasanton Ave. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 seniors over 60 and children under 10, \$16 family. Call 827-2722 or 426-7600.

Augustin Bernal Hike

Hike 4-5 miles with an elevation gain of 800 feet from 8:50 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Sat., March 25. Cost is \$18 and includes a group picture and a discus-

Exhibits

Art in the Family

See different styles of art from six painters from March 25-April 15 at Alexander's Main Street Gallery, 610 Main St. An Artist's Reception will kick off the show from 4-7 p.m., Sat., March 25. Pre-sale begins at 10 a.m. The first 50 guests will receive a free Morning Light poster signed by Barbara Daggett. Call 846-6015.

Film

'Children of Alcatraz'

Scott Cornfield will show his film "Children of Alcatraz" at 2 p.m., Sun., March 19, at the Pleasanton Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Admission is free. Call Penny, 931-3405.

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Music and Dance in Indian Film
Ashok Rane, director of the Indian Film Academy, will present a 70-minute slideshow discussing music and dance in Hindi films 6:30 p.m., Fri., March 24 at the Pleasanton Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Call Penny, 931-3405.

Ninth Annual Sonoma Valley Film Festival

Enjoy food, wine and more than 75 new independent films from all over the world April 5-9 at the Ninth Annual Film Festival. For more information, call (707) 933-2600 or visit www.CinemaEpicuria.org.

The Wonderful World of Black and White

The Pleasanton Library and Las Positas College present a series of classic black and white films for the entire family at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month until

June 2006 in the Pleasanton Library Meeting Room, 400 Old Bernal Ave. This is free and open to the public. Call 931-3405. Refreshments will be served.

Fundraisers

20th Annual Big Bucks Purple and Gold Gala

The Amador Valley High School Athletic Booster Club is hosting the 20th annual Big Bucks Purple and Gold Gala featuring fine dining, raffles, auctions and more 6 p.m., Sat., May 6 at the CarrAmerica Conference Center, 4400 Rosewood Dr. All proceeds will support 23 athletic programs. Tickets go on sale Mon., March 20. Call Lori, 426-6786 or visit www.amadorsports.com.

Bingo

Choice for Children Education Foundation hosts an afternoon Bingo at 4 p.m., every Sunday at Bingo Ranch, 3070 Pacific Ave., Livermore. Win prizes and enjoy free coffee and bagels. All proceeds go to the Livermore Valley Charter School. Call Maria, 201-3422 or e-mail ccef@lvcs.org.

Blankets for Babies

Sewn, knitted and crocheted 24- or 36-inch blankets are being collected for distribution at the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at ValleyCare Medical Center and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. Call 426-4307 or 426-9635.

Communities in Harmony

Tri-Valley YMCA has launched the 2006 Annual Partner Campaign running through March. Proceeds will be used for scholarships and program support for various Tri-Valley YMCA programs in Livermore, Pleasanton and Dublin. Call Kimiko, 475-6110 or e-mail kleong@ymcaeastbay.org.

Drawing to support Kidsave's Summer Miracles

Buy raffle tickets for \$50 each or three for \$100. Only 2,000 tickets available. Winner will choose from two vacations, Monaco or Florida. All proceeds will support Kidsave's Summer Miracles and Weekend Miracles programs. Drawing will be held at 9 p.m., Sat., May 20, at Kidsave's Annual Gala in Los Angeles. Winner is not required to be present. Call (310) 479-5437.

Entertainment Books at Valley Humane Society

Entertainment books are on sale for \$25 each and are available at the Adoption Center, 273 Spring St. All proceeds go to Valley Humane Society programs. Call 426-8656.

Foothill High School's Lacrosse Team

The Foothill High School's boys and girls Lacrosse Team is hosting a dinner, dance, raffle and silent auction from 6:30-11:30 p.m., Sat., March 18 at the Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Cost is \$35. Call Chris, 245-0141 or Terry, 484-3959.

Paint Your Own Art

Shalom Chapter Hadassah's "Paint Your Own Art" fundraiser will be held 7 p.m., Thurs., March 23 at Cafe Art, 1764 First St., Livermore. Call Judie, 484-9712.

Recycle for Breast Cancer

Recycle TV's, computers, monitors, laptops, cell phones, empty ink jet and toner cartridges from printers, fax machines and copiers to support the fight against breast cancer. Free pick up, drop off or prepaid envelopes and shipping labels are provided. Call Larry, 735-7203 or e-mail larry@recycleforbreastcancer.org.

Health

Exercise Classes

The Pleasanton Department of Parks and Community Services offers ongoing morning and evening adult exercise classes at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., and at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St. The cost varies from \$3 to \$4.50 per class. Call 931-5340.

Kids & Teens

2006 Congressional Art Competition

Congressman Richard W. Pombo is inviting all high school students in the 11th Congressional District to participate in "An Artistic Discovery." All entries must be submitted at one of Pombo's district offices by Fri., May 12. Visit www.house.gov/pombo/students/students.htm for entry requirements.

AAU Track and Field Sign Ups

Youths between the ages of 6-18 are welcome to join the Tri-Valley Track Club and participate in practices and meets throughout the year. Practices are held at 4 p.m. on Wednesdays and 3 p.m. on Sundays at Sunset Park, 1040 Florence Rd., Livermore. Call 862-0855 or 518-9356.

American Little League

Registration for Farm (ages 7-8) and T-Ball (ages 5-6) is still open. Visit www.pleasantonamerican.org or e-mail pall-registrar@comcast.net. All games are played at the Pleasanton Sports Park. Call 890-7679.

Lectures

Boutique Textile Art

Create home accessories, wearable art or soft sculpture. Learn how to piece, applique, embroider and use other techniques to transform your ideas into pieces of art from 10 a.m.-noon every Tuesday at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. This class is free. Bring fabric scraps, a yard of unbleached muslin, sharp scissors and dressmaker pins. Call 935-8972.

Character Education

In an eight-session class, learn how to take the mystery out of problems in all your relationships from 7-9 p.m., Wednesdays until March 22, at Amador Valley High School, 1155 Santa Rita Rd. Call 426-4280.

For Business Owners, CEOs and Presidents

This executive workshop for business owners, CEOs and presidents is from 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Fri., March 24 at the Foothill Corporate Center, 5820 Stoneridge Mall Rd. Cost and registration is \$55 and \$75. Call 847-4080 or visit <http://roberts.sandler.com>.

Papier-Mache Wimsy

Learn armature/form construction, painting/finishing and other techniques that will spark your imagination and encourage your creativity from 2-4 p.m. every Tuesday at Village High School, 4645 Bernal Ave., room 207. This class is free. Bring newspaper, roll of 1" masking tape and two wire coat hangers. Call 935-8972.

Poetry, Pose, and Arts Festival

The Fifth Annual Poetry, Pose, and Arts Festival offers poetry, prose, and art workshops for youth and adults,

and provides opportunities to learn a range of creative expressions on Sat., April 1, at CarrAmerica Conference Center, 4400 Rosewood Dr. Call Michelle, 931-5350 or visit www.pleasantonarts.org to RSVP.

Saturday Science Lectures

Science on Saturdays has returned until April 1 at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 7000 East Ave., Livermore. Explore soundwaves, microwaves and waves found in tsunamis and lasers. The first 600 students attending will receive a hands-on science experiment demonstrating waves. Admission is free. Call 422-5815 or e-mail lucchetti1@llnl.gov.

Steps to a Healthy Heart

San Ramon Regional Medical Center is giving a free seminar on "Steps to a Healthy Heart" from 7-9 p.m., Tues., March 21 in the South Conference Room, 7777 Norris Canyon Rd., San Ramon. Reservations required. Call (800) 284-2878 or visit www.sanramonmedctr.com.

Yoga and Breathing

The Art of Living Foundation will present a free two-hour yoga, breathing and meditation series 7 p.m., Mon., March 20 and April 17 at the Pleasanton Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. No prior experience required. Only for those 18 years or older. Call Penny, 931-3405.

Miscellaneous

Child Care Initiative Project

Child Care Links presents the CCIP project. Licensed and license-exempt child care providers are encouraged to participate. CCIP participants receive technical assistance and support, free training and support materials and more. Call Donnamarie, 249-3923 to receive a calendar of trainings in 2006.

Dog and Cat Adoption

Tri-Valley Animal Rescue has several locations for animal adoptions: Saturdays from 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Farmers' Market and from noon-4 p.m. at PetsMart, 6960 Amador Plaza Rd., Dublin. Cats are only available from noon-4 p.m. at Pet Food Express, 4460 Tassajara Rd., Dublin (excluding the fourth Saturday of the month) and Pet Food Express, 1436 1st St., Livermore (excluding second and fourth Saturday of the month). On Sundays, cats are available from 1-4 p.m. at PetsMart in Dublin, Pet Food Express in Dublin and Livermore and Livermore Pet Extreme. Call 803-7043 or visit www.tvlar.org.

Free Tax Preparation Services

If your household income was less than \$38,000 for 2005, you may qualify for a free tax preparation and filing service. Call 485-5266 or 485-5272.

Open Heart Kitchen

Open Heart Kitchen provides hot meals to the underprivileged from 4:30-6 p.m. Fridays at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Rd.; noon-6 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at Asbury United Methodist Church, 4743 East Ave., Livermore; and 4-6 p.m., Thursdays at Vineyard Christian Fellowship, 460 N. Livermore St., Livermore. Call Carol, 580-1616.

Pleasanton Farmers Market

Shop for fresh produce, flowers, and baked goods from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. every Saturday on Main and West Angela Streets. Call 825-9090.

Rabbit Education and Adoption

Tri-Valley Animal Rescue is hosting three days of rabbit information and adoption opportunities from 1-4 p.m., Sat., March 18 and April 1 at PetSmart. Call Marisa, 447-2130.

On Stage

Comedy Wednesday

John DeKoven's Comedy Showcase is every second and fourth Wednesday of every month at Main Street Brewery, 830 Main St. Guests are some of the best comedians in the Bay Area. \$7 cover charge and 2 item minimum. Call 264-4413 or visit www.trivalleycomedy.com.

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- Keep a record of the make, model and serial number of your bike.
- Obtain a City of Pleasanton license for your bike. Call 931-5100 for more information.

By working together,
we can ensure a safe community.

A reminder from the Pleasanton Police Department.



'Don Quixote de la Mancha'

The PTA Council is hosting a performance of "Don Quixote de la Mancha" 7 p.m., Tues., March 28 at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Rd. Admission is free. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Seats are available on a first come, first served basis. Call 846-3257 or visit www.pleasantonpta.org.

'Fiddler on the Roof'

Amador Valley and Foothill high schools will present their Spring musical, "Fiddler on the Roof" at 7:30 p.m., March 16-18 and March 23-25 at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Rd. Admission is \$15. Call Kelsey, 461-6100, ext. 6197 or (510) 816-7225.

'My Fair Lady'

The Diablo Light Opera Company presents "My Fair Lady" at 8 p.m., Thurs.-Fri. and 2 p.m., Sun. from Feb. 17-March 18, at the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Tickets range from \$25-36. Call 943-7469 or visit www.dloc.org.

Urinetown: The Musical

Las Positas College Theatre and the Music and Dance Department presents "Urinetown: The Musical" at 8 p.m., March 24, 25, 31 and April 1, 7 and 8 and at 2 p.m. April 2 and 9 at Las Positas College, 3033 Collier Canyon Rd., Livermore. General admission is \$14, \$10 for students and seniors. Call 424-1812 or 424-1166.

'Wigged Out'

Valley Humane Society presents "Wigged Out!," a musical comedy that takes place in a beauty salon, at 9 p.m., Sat., March 18. Tickets are \$38 and proceeds will benefit Valley Humane Society's building fund. Call Gay, 447-8903.

Recreation

Enrichment Classes

Pleasanton Parks and Recreation, 200 Old Bernal Ave., offers enrichment classes ranging from art, aquatics, sports, health and cooking. Call 931-5340 or visit www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/parks.html.

Scholarships/ Grants

U.S. Commission for Scholastic Assistance

Learn more about applying for scholarships and lists of scholarships available by sending a self-addressed, stamped, business size #10 envelope to: The U.S. Commission for Scholastic Assistance, P.O. Box 650067, Potomac Falls, VA 20165-0067.

Seniors

Daytime Bingo

Play bingo from 12:30-3 p.m. on the first, third and fifth Monday of every month and from 1-3 p.m. Fridays at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. \$1.25 for residents and \$1.75 for non-residents. Game cards are 50 cents. All card sales money is awarded. Call 931-5365.

Daytime Personal Computers Group

This group meets from 10 a.m. to noon the fourth Thursday monthly at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. \$1.25 for Pleasanton residents and \$1.75 for non-residents. Call 931-5365 or e-mail pleasenor@yahoo.com.

Emotional Wellness Group

Learn more about depression, anxiety and how medications and alcohol may affect emotional well-being at 2 p.m. every other Thursday at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Call Charlene or Jode, 931-5382.

Explore and Learn about the Internet

The Pleasanton Library will be holding a free workshop for seniors interested in exploring and learning about the Internet 9 a.m., Tues., March 28 at the library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Call Mary, 931-3400, ext. 21.

Friday Night Dance

Join the crowd for ballroom dancing once a month at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Tickets are \$7 for residents and \$8 for non-residents. Singles welcome. Reservations required. Call 931-5365.

Internet Access Workstation

The Internet workstation at Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., is available for adults, 50 and older, from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri. and 9 a.m.-noon most Saturdays. Tutors are available most days. Cost is \$1.25 for residents and \$1.75 for non-residents. Call 931-5365 for reservations.

Luncheons

The Dublin Senior Center hosts special luncheons on the second Thursday of each month at the Dublin Senior Center, 7600 Amador Valley Blvd., Dublin. Call 556-4511 or visit www.ci.dublin.ca.us. Reservations are needed the Friday prior to the luncheon.

Monday Movie Madness

The Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., invites seniors to watch free movies on the center's big screen at 1 p.m. on the first and third Monday of every month. Popcorn and refreshments available. Call 931-5365.

PC Users Groups

The group meets 10 a.m.- noon on the fourth Thursday of every month at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Fee is \$1.25 for residents and \$1.75 for nonresident. Call 931-5365.

Pleasanton Paratransit Service

The paratransit service provides door-to-door bus service to seniors 65 and older, and individuals with disabilities of any age and is available 8 a.m.- 5 p.m. Monday-Friday and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday. Call 931-5376.

Pleasanton V.I.P. Senior Club

Regular meetings are held 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. the second and fourth Mondays monthly at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Regular Snappy Cafe lunch is served at noon and meetings follow. For lunch reservation call 931-5385.

Senior Dinner

Open Heart Kitchen provides seniors 60 years and older with an evening meal from 4-6 p.m., Mon-Fri. at Ridge View Commons, 4200 Case Ave. Suggested donation is \$3. Call 484-5131 for reservations.

Senior Lunch

Spectrum Community Services provides seniors 60 years and older with a noon meal at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Suggested donation is \$3.25. Call 931-5385 for reservations.

Woodshop Program

The woodshop program is open from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. every Tuesday at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Drop-in fees are \$1.75 for residents and \$2.75 for non-residents. Call 931-5365 for additional drop-in hours.

Spiritual

Community Bible Study

An interdenominational bible study invites women in the community to a study of Ephesians from 9:30-11:30 a.m., every Thursday until May 18, at 4300 Mirador Dr. Childcare is available. Call 820-3481.

Faith Chapel Assembly of God

Sunday school for all ages begins at 9:30 a.m., worship at 10:30 a.m., and Children's Church Program (ages 3-12) at 11:15 a.m. Every Wednesday the Women's

Bible Study meets at 10 a.m., Choir Practice and Boys & Girls Mission Crusade Club (grades K-5) all begin at 7 p.m. Singles and Young Married home bible study meets at 7:30 p.m. every Thursday. Seniors 55+ meets at 7 p.m. the third Thursday of each month. Call Sophia, 846-8650.

Tri-Valley Unity Church

Tri-Valley Unity Church will meet until further notice at 10 a.m., every Sun. at the Radisson Hotel, 6680 Regional St., Dublin. Worship service and children's school will be offered as well. Call 829-2733 or visit www.trivalleyunity.com.

Sports

Athenian Athletics

This track and field club's mission is to promote the development of all levels of track and field athletes in any season or sport to make them faster, stronger, and healthier. Applications for the summer and year-round youth programs are now being accepted. Call 518-9356 or visit www.athenianathletics.com.

Tri-Valley Sea Devils

The Tri-Valley Sea Devils team is looking for year-round swimmers. Call Hope, 469-8495.

Support Groups

Al-anon and Al-a-teen

Al-Anon is a Tri-Valley support group for family and friends of alcoholics that meets from 6:30-8 p.m. every Sunday at San Ramon Presbyterian Church, 12943 Alcosta Blvd., upstairs in the Kindergarten room. Call 277-7661 or visit www.ncwsa.org.

Bereavement Support Group

This group of the Catholic Community of Pleasanton meets at 7:30 p.m., the second and fourth Thursdays monthly, and is for anyone of any faith at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Drive. Call Mary Hagerty, 846-5377.

Bipolar Support Group

The Tri-Valley Bipolar Support Group, which provides peer support for people with mood disorders, meets 7:15-8:45 p.m. every

Wednesday at St. Claire's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road. Call 560-0842 or e-mail trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com.

Breast Cancer Prayer and Support

The Breast Cancer and Support Group of the Catholic Community of Pleasanton meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Dr., room B. Call 461-8411. All are welcome

Breast Cancer Support

The free, professionally facilitated group is for women in any breast cancer treatment stage; meetings are 6:30-8 p.m. on the first Wednesday monthly in the south building's west day room at San Ramon Regional Medical Center, 7777 Norris Canyon Road, San Ramon. Call 275-8414.

Cancer Support


Anyone facing cancer and care persons may join the "Living Beyond Limits" group that meets from 7-8:30 p.m. on the first, third and fifth Thursday monthly at ValleyCare Health Center, 5575 Las Positas Blvd. No fee. Call Ken Smith, 846-8594.

Cancer Support Group

The Cancer Support Group meets from 2-4 p.m., every Tuesday at the ValleyCare Health Library and Ryan Comer Cancer Resource Center, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd., Suite 270. Call 933-0107.

Caregiver Support Group

Meetings are held from 1-2:30 p.m. the second Monday of the month for people caring for persons with Alzheimer's and dementia-related illnesses, at the Pleasanton Senior Center Support Program Sunroom, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Call 931-5389 or Jode, 931-5382, Ext. 1.




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Kay Huff (left) and Bernie Billen, recipients of the Pleasanton Downtown Association's "Arch Angel" Award.

Valley Community Bank
Salutes
Pleasanton Downtown's
Arch Angels

The "feeling of community" is more than just a word in our name...Valley Community Bank salutes their own Kay Huff & Bernie Billen, the 2005 and 2006 recipients of the Pleasanton Downtown Association's "Arch Angel" award. The Arch Angel award is presented to an individual who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in volunteering on the behalf of Downtown Pleasanton.



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(408) 275-7150

**Coming
next week**



**Pleasanton
Real Estate News**



by
**Gerarda
Stocking**

**TRAP: THE BEST
TIME TO BUY**

There is undoubtedly a moment in every real estate cycle that you will eventually look back on and say, "That was truly the best time to buy." Trouble is, most experts will always disagree about what makes a time particularly good for buying.

Is it the moment when interest rates reach their cyclical lows? Perhaps. But what if home prices have reached their cyclical highs at about the same time? Then maybe it was the moment, some time earlier, when house prices reached their lowest point relative to income levels and interest rates were declining.

In the final analysis, who knows the answer to this question? No one. (On the other hand, EVERYONE knows the answer, and we'll get to that.) The big mistake is waiting for precisely the right moment before jumping into the real estate market. It's even harder to identify when it's happening than in retrospect.

The best time to buy a home, as nearly everyone's heart and logical mind truly knows, is when you have found one that truly answers your needs and you can afford to make the purchase. You've doubtless noticed that real estate prices in our area have trended upward for the last century and are likely to continue doing just that. You have enough to think about when finding the right home and the right financing without dwelling overly long on finding the cosmic moment for buying. The cosmic moment, after all, is your moment alone and no one else's.

For help call Gerarda Stocking at 846-4000 or visit her website at www.gerardastocking.com.

Gerarda Stocking is the Owner/Broker of Stocking Realty.

CHADD

Meetings are held for parents of children with ADD/ADHD from 7-9 p.m. on the second Wed. of each month at Thomas Hart Middle School, 4433 Willow Rd. in the library. Call 484-2173 or visit www.chadnorcal.org.

ClutterLess Self Help Group

If clutter is stressing you out, come to the Presbyterian Church from 7-8:30 p.m. every Monday at 4300 Mirador Dr., room 7. Call 426-5311.

Dealing with Divorce or Separation

The Catholic Community of Pleasanton is offering support to individuals who are experiencing the hurt of a divorce or separation from a marriage at 7:30 p.m., Wed., March 22 for eight weeks at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Dr. Suggest donation is \$20. Everyone is welcome. Call 484-5020 to register.

Diabetes Support Groups

Groups meet from noon-1 p.m., on the first Wednesday monthly. Also from 6-7 p.m. every third Thursday monthly and for diabetics using insulin pumps, from 6-7 p.m. the second Thursday of every other month, Diabetes and Nutrition Education Center, Valley Care Medical Plaza, 5725 West Las Positas, Suite 220. Call 416-6710.

Domestic Violence

A Domestic Violence Support Group is meeting from 5-6:30 p.m., every Thursday at the Tri-Valley Haven for Women in Livermore. There will be a fee of \$40 for every eight weeks or based on a sliding scale. For information and registration, contact Elizabeth, 449-5845 ext. 109.

DRC

Meet other men and women in their early stages of alzheimer's disease or any other memory loss related diseases from 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Tues., Wed., and Thurs. at Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek. For women, call Angie and for men, call Norman at 210-6196.

East Bay Cancer Support Group

The East Bay Cancer Support Group, Inc. meets on Thursdays at the Faith Lutheran Church, 20080 Redwood Rd., Castro Valley. All services are provided free of charge. Call (510) 889-8766 or visit www.ebcancersupport.org.

Fibromyalgia, Arthritis and Chronic Pain

Share ideas and learn relaxation and pain management tools from 7-8 p.m. the first Thursday of the month at ValleyCare Health Library, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd., Suite 270. Free and open to the public. Friends and family welcome. Pre-registration encouraged, but drop-ins welcome. Call 989-5620 or e-mail betryrunnels@earthlink.net.

Forty Plus of Northern California

The group is for professionals over the age of 40 who are unemployed or in career transition. The free classes are held at 8:30 a.m.-noon Mondays at 770 Edgewater Drive, Suite 626, Oakland. Call (510) 568-7587 or visit www.fortyplus.org.

Grandparents Visitation Support Group

Grandparents who have problems visiting their grandchildren meets at 7 p.m. every Thursday in March at Pleasanton Public Library in the small conference room, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Space is limited. Call Joyce, 339-4700.

Head Injury Support

This group provides support for brain-injured individuals and their caregivers. It meets from 7:30-9 p.m. every fourth Wednesday in the Blackhawk Room at San Ramon Regional Medical Center, 6001 Norris Canyon Road, San Ramon. Call Jo Ann, 443-4366.

Hope Hospice Bereavement Support

The nonprofit organization offers a wide range of support groups, including grief support for adults, teens, children; young adult support; tragic loss; loss of children; men in grief; terminal illness; loss of parents; and loss of spouse; among others. Meetings are held at 6500 Dublin Blvd., Suite 214, Dublin. Call 829-8770 or visit www.hopehospice.com.

Independent Living

If you or your loved one need a personal assistant to help maintain independent living, Community Resources for Independent Living can help with specific needs. Call 371-1531; TTY, 371-1532. Visit www.cril-online.org.

Jobs Networking Group

CSIX East Bay, helping individuals in career transitions, meets from 1-3:30 p.m. every Thursday at WineCentives, 6040 Dougherty Road, Dublin. Cost is \$3. Call Doug Herz, 277-6600.

League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen

This group is designed to create a community between men to resolve problems, express feelings, form friendships and understand and improve relationships with women. The group meets from 7-8:30 p.m. every Wednesday at Anthropol Counseling Center, 326 South L. St., Livermore. Call 449-7925.

Live Beat Dads

Fathers who are raising their children meet at 7 p.m. Wednesdays at 1550 Springtown Blvd., Suite 7E, Livermore, for discussions and speakers on individual's rights, custody issues, networking and parenting programs. Child care is available. Call Pete, 449-8436, or visit www.lbduk.org.

Lupus Support

The group meets from 7-9 p.m. on the first Friday monthly at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center's north building conference room C, 7601 Stoneridge Drive. Call 846-5767.

Men at Work

This Al-Anon group meets from 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesdays at the Pleasanton Presbyterian Church, 4300 Mirador Drive. Call Tom, 417-7540.

Men's Support Group

Anthropos Counseling Center provides support for men to improve personal growth and change and become aware of emotional habits and attitude. Group meets from 7-8:30 p.m. every Friday, 326 S. L St., Livermore. Call 449-7925.

Narconon Arrowhead

Narconon Arrowhead offers free addiction counseling, assessments and referrals to rehabilitation centers nationwide. Call (800) 468-6933 or visit www.stopaddiction.com.

Newcomers to Al-Anon

This group, for those who are new to Al-Anon and anyone who is affected by someone else's drinking, meets 7-7:55 p.m. Thursdays at John Knox Presbyterian Church, 7421 Amarillo Road, Room H, Dublin. Call 277-7661.

Operation SAM

The group, offering emotional support to families with loved ones in the military, meets at 7 p.m., the second Monday monthly at the Livermore Police Station, 1110 S. Livermore Ave. Call Kristin, 443-7841.

Overeaters Anonymous

Meetings are held from 7-8 p.m., Thursdays at St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road. Call Lisa, 931-0994.

Parenting Again

This group, offering information and support to grandparents raising their grandchildren, meets at 5:30 p.m. on the second Saturday monthly in the fireside room in Valley Christian Center, 7500 Inspiration Drive, Dublin. Call 560-6200.

Parents of Alcoholics

Parents of alcoholics are welcome to join this Al-Anon group that meets 4:30-5:30 p.m. and at 6:30-7:30 p.m. Sundays at CalFed Bank, 3101 Crow Canyon Road, San Ramon. Call 277-7661.

Parents of Diabetics

The POD Squad, a support group for parents of diabetics, meets from 7-8:30 p.m. the third Wednesday monthly, September-May, at the Laguna Oaks neighborhood clubhouse. Call 461-1170 or visit www.podsquad.com.

Parkinson's Support Group

The Parkinson's Network of Mount Diablo and the city of Pleasanton co-sponsor a support group for the Tri-Valley area from 10 a.m.-noon on

the second Saturday monthly at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Call 931-5366.

Pleasanton Senior Grief Group

Not limited to seniors, this group is open to all grief issues. It meets from 10-11:30 a.m. on the second and fourth Fridays at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Call 931-5366.

Prostate Cancer Support Group

Men with prostate cancer and their families are welcome to Man to Man, a support group that meets from 7:30-9 p.m., on the second Tuesday monthly in the West Day Room in the south building at San Ramon Regional Medical Center, 7777 Norris Canyon Road. Call 933-0107.

Prostate Cancer Survivors

Tri-Valley Us Too, a support group for prostate cancer survivors, invites husbands and wives to its meetings held at 7:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month at the Kaiser offices, 7601 Stoneridge Drive. Men are also invited to meetings held at 7:30 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month at the same location. Call 846-7460.

R-Quest

R-Quest is a counseling agency for early recover education that serves to help teens and adults overcome addiction to alcohol, drugs, eating disorders or mental health issues, located at 40 California Ave., Suite B. Walk-in's are welcome. Free alcohol screening. Call 426-0501 or visit www.rquest.org.

Self Help for the Hard of Hearing

Tri-Valley Section of SHHH meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month at Valley Community Church, 4455 Del Valle Parkway. Refreshments served. Call 455-6591.

Sexual Assault Support Group

Tri-Valley Haven's support group for women 18 years and older helps provide understanding support for assault survivors. The group meets from 6:45-8:15 p.m., every Thursday. Call April, 449-5845, Ext. 126.

Six Sigma Lean Enterprise Practitioners

Members of this group should have Six-Sigma, Lean or Project Management experience to discuss real world challenges. The group meets at 7 p.m., premeeting is at 6:30 p.m., every fourth Wednesday of the month, Winecentives, 6040 Dougherty Road, Dublin. Call 485-1699 or visit fredlafontaine@yahoo.com.

Stroke Support Group

ValleyCare Health System is holding a Stroke Support Group the last Thurs. of every month from 5-6:30 p.m. at ValleyCare Medical Center in the Cafeteria. This is free and open to the public. Call 447-7000 ext. 5247.

Survival to Recovery

The focus of these meetings is for persons who grew up in an alcoholic home or who were affected by the drinking of one or both parents. The group, a part of Al-Anon, meets 2-3:30 p.m. Sundays at the St. Philips Lutheran Church, 8850 Davona Dr., Room 10-A., Dublin. Call 277-7661.

Temporary Restraining Order Clinic

This clinic is for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault and meets 5:30-7:30 p.m. every Monday in Pleasanton. Call Raeanne at 449-5845, ext. 111.

Tri-Valley ADHD Adult Support Group

This group meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of every month at Lynnwood United Methodist Church, 4444 Black Ave. Call Pattie, 548-4247.

Vision Support Group

This is for individuals and their loved ones who have any kind of vision impairment and meet from 10-11:30 a.m. on the third Tuesday of every month at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Call Jill, 931-5369.

March in the Garden

Join Jackie Williams Courtright from Alden Lane Nursery with seasonal

gardening tips at 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 10:30 p.m., Sat., March 18 on channel 30.

Pleasanton Schools

Join Myla Grasso for a look into Pleasanton schools at noon, Sun., March 19 on channel 30.

School Board Meeting

The Pleasanton School Board meeting from March 14 will air at 6 p.m., Sat., March 18 and at 10 a.m., Sun., March 19 on channel 28.

Volunteering

Alameda County Community Food Bank

Volunteers are needed to staff the Emergency Food Hotline from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-4 p.m., Mon-Fri. Call (510) 834-3663 or visit www.accfb.org.

Assistance League

Assistance League, a nonprofit organization, is looking for volunteers to assist with ongoing philanthropic projects and meets at 7 p.m., the third Thursday of every month at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Rd. Call 484-1354 or visit www.amadorvalleyassistanceleague.org.

Foster Homes Needed

Valley Humane Society, 273 Spring St., is urgently seeking temporary homes for rescued kittens, puppies, cats and dogs. Food and medical expenses are provided. Also needed are Adoption Volunteer Coordinators and counselors. Call 426-8656 or visit www.valleyhumane.org.

Jewish Community Federation

Jewish Community Federation of the Greater East Bay offers opportunities to volunteer within the community, such as serving meals, tutoring children, and serving on Jewish agency committees or boards. Call (510) 839-2900, ext. 261.

Museum Volunteer

Come and learn about upcoming events and special programs at 9 a.m. on the fourth Wednesday of every month at the Museum On Main Street, 603 Main St. Call Heather, 462-2766.

Open Heart Kitchen

If you love to cook and have a passion to end hunger, volunteer at Open Heart Kitchen, the Tri-Valley's only free hot meal service for the needy. There are many volunteer opportunities for teens and adults. Call Dianne, 580-1619 or e-mail dadamson@openheartkitchen.org.

Red Cross Blood Service

American Red Cross Blood Services is holding a volunteer orientation from 6-8 p.m., Tues., March 21, at the Oakland Blood Center, 6230 Claremont Ave., Oakland. Call 594-5165.

Senior Center Volunteers

The Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., has an array of daytime volunteer opportunities available to adults of any age including receptionist, bingo caller, teacher's aide and lunch program assistant. Call Raymond Figueroa, 931-5366.

Shepard's Gate

Volunteer at Shepard's Gate Shelter, 1660 Portola Ave., Livermore or their thrift stores, 7381 Amador Valley Blvd., Dublin, and 1362 Railroad Ave., Livermore any time Mon-Fri. Call Lyn, 443-4283, ext. 217.

ValleyCare Auxiliary

Volunteers are needed at ValleyCare Medical Center. With nine volunteer service areas in Pleasanton and Livermore, opportunities are available at the information desk, office, library, gift and thrift shop. Call 734-3368.

Volunteers Needed at RCJL

The Reutlinger Community for Jewish Living provides assisted living, Alzheimer's and skilled nursing care to its residents. Volunteers play a key role. RCJL has a wide range of opportunities matching volunteer's interests while ensuring the needs of residents. To apply, call Irma, 964-2098.

Dining Out

To have your restaurant listed in this dining directory, please call the Pleasanton Weekly Advertising Department at (925) 600-0840

American

Chicago's Metropolitan Deli

6003 W. Las Positas Blvd. & Hopyard, Pleasanton, (925) 462-1678. A new Rockin' Restaurant that features: Italian Beef, Chi-Dogs, Gyros, and more. We have over 50 menu items that are hot, juicy, fun and flavorful. Recently remodeled to create a festive atmosphere with a new bar, beers on tap and three sport TVs. We are family friendly with a nice Kids Menu, soft serve ice cream, shakes and sundaes. Come check out the flavors of Chicago right in Pleasanton's back yard!

Jim's Country Style Restaurant

5400 Sunol Blvd., next to Raley's, Pleasanton, (925) 426-7019. Loved by locals and famous for its ranch-style omelets and large portions, Jim's serves up the country-style fixings from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. So if you're in the mood for chicken-fried steak, an omelet, a stack of pancakes, a deluxe sandwich or just a good old-fashioned burger, you won't be disappointed. Jim's friendly staff invites you to drop in and say, "Howdy!"

Pleasanton Hotel

855 Main St., Pleasanton, (925) 846-8106. This restored Victorian "hotel" combines the ambiance of the past with the exciting contemporary cooking of Chef Neil Marquis. Also offering Mystery Dinner Theater and Winemaker Dinners, live music every Thursday, Friday and Saturday, some Sundays. Open for lunch, dinner and Sunday Champagne Buffet Brunch, patio dining, banquets and weddings to 200.

Red Smoke Grill

4501 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, (925) 734-0307. The place to go for great tri-tip, rotisserie chicken and baby back ribs. The wonderful staff serves up sandwiches, salads and family dinner meals. So come by for a glass of wine and a great meal. Crossroads Shopping Center on Hopyard just one block south of Stoneridge.

Swensen's

1991-A Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton, (925) 426-1266. Swensen's Ice Cream has called the Bay Area its home since 1948. Known for its delicious ice cream, smoothies, burgers, sandwiches, pho beef noodle soup and BBQ chicken, beef and pork over rice. Open 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Closed Monday.

Vic's All Star Kitchen

201 Main St., Pleasanton, (925) 484-0789. Located in the heart of downtown Pleasanton on Main Street, Vic's delivers a starry mix of American food, fast service and a bustling, cheery

atmosphere. Owner Vic Malatesta has teamed his love of sports with his passion for good food to create a solid dining experience with a local sports theme. Open daily 7 a.m.-2 p.m. Evening banquets/daytime catering.

Brewpub/Alehouse

The Hop Yard American Alehouse and Grill

3015H Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, (925) 426-9600. Voted Best Watering Hole in Pleasanton, the Hop Yard offers 30 beers on tap and a variety of great food, everything from finger food to full blown meals. Ask about new banquet menu.

California Cuisine

Silver Palate Restaurant

680 Main St., Downtown Pleasanton, (925) 417-5900. Silver Palate's menu is based on a concept of wholesome cooking, using the most natural ingredients available. The ambiance of this restaurant evokes the light-filled expanse of a European marketplace, while the outdoor patio captures the best in al fresco dining. Choose from a wide selection of flavorful entrees and side accompaniments ... among them risottos, specialty soups, Kobe beef burgers, wild salmon, Organic Sonoma Mix salads and handcrafted desserts. Country Brunch Buffet every Sunday. Open seven days a week.

Catering

Fontina's Catering

349 Main St., Downtown Pleasanton, (925) 462-9299. The seasonal tastes of Fontina's award-winning menu can now be custom delivered to you—direct to your home or office. Our lunch and dinner specialties feature homemade soups and pastas, premium seafood and meats, and a newly expanded vegetarian menu. Let Fontina's Ristorante bring "the taste of Italy" home to you soon. For parties of 10 or more, we'll include free dessert, or we'll take 10 percent off your total bill (excluding tax).

Chinese

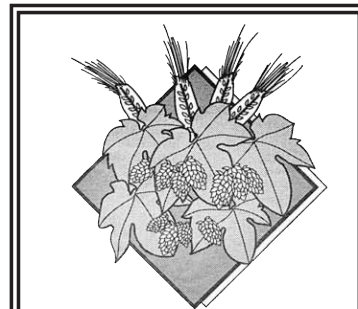
Chinese Szechuan

3059 Hopyard Road #G, Pleasanton, (925) 846-5251. Pleasanton's best-loved Chinese restaurant. Family owned and run since 1987. Friendly service, delicious food, great prices. Lunch specials from only \$5.25.

Continental

Barone's

475 St. John St., Pleasanton, (925) 426-0987. Pleasanton's most romantic continental cuisine restaurant. Innovative pasta, seafood and meat entrees. Outdoor dining. Open for dinner seven nights, lunch Monday-Friday. Live music Friday and Saturday evenings. Full bar. Banquet facilities, rehearsal dinners, special events.



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DINNER: Monday-Thursday 5:00-9:30

Friday & Saturday 5:00-10:00

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What's for dinner?



dining. Open for lunch 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Monday-Saturday. Dinner seven days a week, 5-10 p.m.

the cooks "hand toss" the dough for this pizza mecca of the Tri-Valley. It is perfect for romantic couples as well as the entire family, and the authentic Southern Italian cooking includes traditional dishes such as Veal Scaloppini and Lasagna as well as Lamb Osso Bucco and Scampi.

Italian

Fontina Ristorante

349 Main St., Pleasanton, (925) 462-9299. This popular downtown restaurant gets rave reviews from both locals and visitors. Offering a changing, seasonal menu and daily specials, including homemade soups, pastas, seafood, chicken and veal served in a comfortably elegant atmosphere. Indoor or outdoor seating. Saturday and Sunday champagne brunch.

Frankie, Johnnie & Luigi Too!

11891 Dublin Blvd., Dublin, (925) 828-9380. Lively chatter and the aroma of garlic are the first things you notice in this warm and friendly classically "Italian" restaurant, complete with red checked tablecloths. It has an open kitchen where patrons can watch

Garlic di Pasta
3037-G Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, (925) 485-4500. Rated "A" by the Contra Costa Times restaurant critic. Voted the best Italian restaurant in the year 2000 by the readers of the Tri-Valley Herald. Located off the beaten path of downtown Pleasanton in the Hopyard Village Shopping Center.

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5th Annual Poetry, Prose and Arts Festival

Saturday, April 1, 2006 • 8:30 am-7:00 pm
CarrAmerica Conference Center
4400 Rosewood Drive, Pleasanton

Workshops for all ages, Poetry and Prose Contests
Readings, Author's Row, Music, Banquet

New this year!



Cindy Fisher-Luck
Teen/Adult Prose



Tshaka Campbell
Teen Slam Poetry

Special Guest!



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Registration Deadline, March 25, 2006
Four registration options \$15-\$90
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Specials For This Weekend Include:

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Come visit us for a taste of Pastas at The Course at Wente Vineyards for the Nation Wide Tour Event! March 30 - April 2.

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Hasegawa Japanese

4855 Hopyard Road, across from Chili's Grill, (925) 734-0996. Japanese owner Kazutoyo "Joe Cool" Hasagawa has 26 years experience as a Suchi and Shabu-shabu chef. Traditional Japanese dining. Lunch served Monday-Friday. Dinner seven days a week.

Mediterranean

Athens West Restaurant

6999 Dublin Blvd., (925) 803-9601. Truly authentic Mediterranean cuisine featuring Greek specialties including delicious steaks and seafood. Large upscale dining facility with full bar located adjacent to the original Athens Burger Restaurant. Opens Tuesday-Sunday at 4:30 p.m.

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288 Main St., Pleasanton, (925) 846-2520. Family oriented with an extensive menu. Renowned pizza, Italian dishes, salads and sandwiches. Patio dining. Antique games for the kids. Groups, take out, call-ahead lunch orders. Wine, beer, open seven days a week, 11 a.m.-11 p.m.

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4001-5 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton, (925) 463-0280. Vinny's 2 Go! is the Rose Pavilion's newest authentic Italian pizzeria. Lunchtime favorites include New York pizza slices, meat-ball sandwiches and the popular Mona

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Sandwiches/Deli

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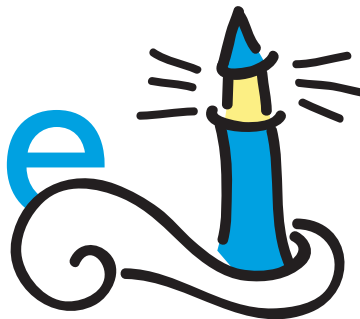
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Bulletin Board

115 Announcements

Chronic Pain Support Group

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