

PLEASANTON WEEKLY

Vol. VIII, Number 23 • July 6, 2007

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It's all about Pleasanton

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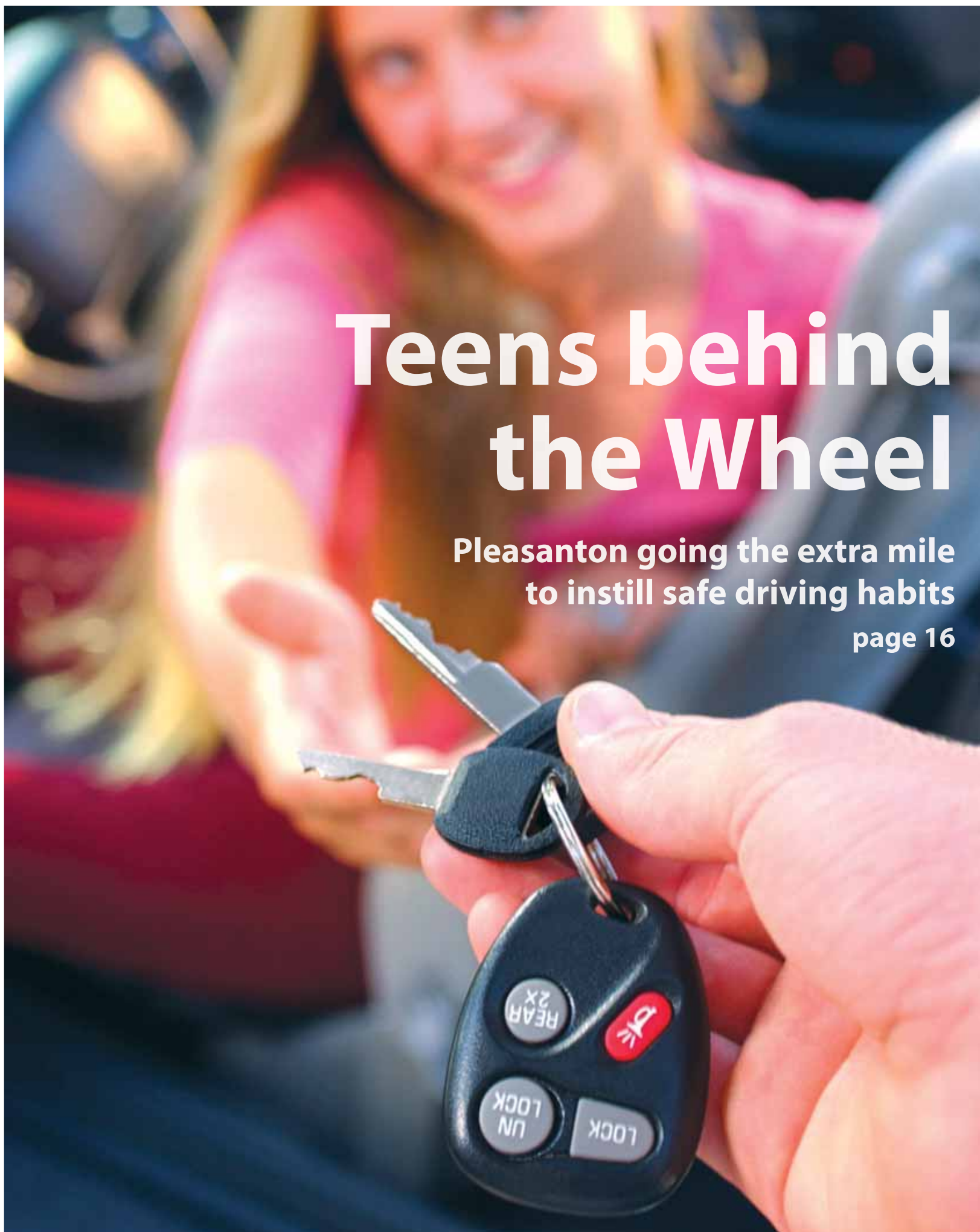
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about Pleasanton
every day

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Around Pleasanton

by Jeb Bing

Crossing America in a U-Haul truck

I'm just back from a 3,700-mile, six-day trip across the country, where I joined my son Chris in the cab of a U-Haul truck for his move from San Diego to New York City. It was a trip to remember, although there were times when it brought back memories of the Griswolds' drive to Wally World in Chevy Chase's "National Lampoon Vacation." We were supposed to make the trip in Chris' Scion, but the fully-loaded trailer was too much for the car. So he transferred the load to a U-Haul truck, loaded an older car onto a flatbed trailer and headed east. His wife Mary, who graduated from UC San Diego Medical School in early June, is already in New York in a four-year residency program at New York Presbyterian Hospital. Last-minute work in completing his master's degree in International Relations, also at UC San Diego, meant a late start on the trip, so I flew to Las Vegas to meet him. There we were, two guys who don't drink, gamble or smoke but surrounded by hundreds who do, meeting in Starbucks at the Planet Hollywood Casino (formerly the Aladdin) with laptops open as we planned our trip.

Rather than head straight east on monotonous interstates, we added a few diversions to see sights that would be new. These included Yellowstone National Park and Old Faithful, Mount Rushmore National Monument near Rapid City, S.D., relatives in the Chicago area, our former home in Pittsburgh and Costco in Billings, Mt.

Costco in Billings? That's right. Chris calculated that it was just 230 miles out of the way north of Yellowstone, but driving there would give him a chance to use a coupon for a new 42-inch LCD television in a state that has no sales tax. Forget the 12-mile-per-gallon costs in gasoline, it was a bargain. Like the Griswolds, though, we were there long after the store had closed, packing the already-filled truck to accommodate this humongous extra load.

If you've never been to

Yellowstone, be sure to put it on your vacation itinerary sometime. It has spectacular scenery and is much less crowded than Yosemite. Much to our surprise, geysers are spewing hot water and steam, sometimes with a strong sulfuric smell, in many parts of Yellowstone, although Old Faithful is the star of the show. Erupting about every 90 minutes, it's fun to watch close-up and also enjoyable from the veranda of the nearby park lodge where we dined on buffalo and wild salmon. Along the winding roads are herds of bison and black bears, including one old buffalo we saw sauntering along the double yellow line of the main roadway, oblivious to the cars lined up on both sides as we passed slowly by.

Mount Rushmore is also spectacular, but hard to reach. It's situated in the dense Black Hills about 20 miles south of Rapid City, S.D., remotely located from any other major tourist or family destinations, although many go there while also camping in the Black Hills. We've all seen photos of the faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt peering down from the mountainside. The figures were created by Gutzon Borglum, who planned to carve each president down to the waist but died before finishing that part of the project.

Our trip took us through 15 states on at least six different interstate highways and countless stops for coffee—and gasoline—along the way. The highlight of all this, of course, was the chance for father and son to travel together in the small cab of a U-Haul for six straight days, with conversations and memorable experiences that will last forever. Then, with only minutes to spare before plane time, Chris pulled into Islip's MacArthur Airport on Long Island last Sunday night in time for a brief but emotional farewell as I headed back to Pleasanton. Chris drove on back to Manhattan to join his wife in their new apartment, now 3,000 miles away. ■

About the Cover

A lot of responsibility goes along with the car keys being handed to new drivers. With several tragedies involving car collisions and Pleasanton families, the community is getting together to address the dangers that can come with unsafe driving habits of inexperienced drivers. From police-hosted town hall meetings to insurance incentives to intensive driving education, Pleasanton is getting to work to ensure safe driving practices.

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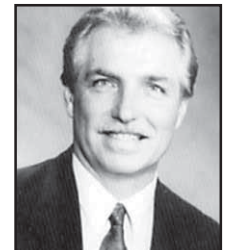
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Streetwise

Q: What is your opinion on the Oakland Athletics Baseball Club moving to Fremont?

Asked around town



Amanda Schmitz

Student

I think that they should stay in Oakland because it's going to cause a lot of traffic, and we don't need anymore traffic around here.

Matt Parken

Student

I hope this is only a plan B and they figure something out to stay in Oakland because Oakland is the home of the Athletics and I don't think the Fremont A's has a good ring to it.



Stuart Mensinger

Life Coach

I am personally from Chicago and I can't imagine the Cubs ever moving. However I know a lot has changed since then and as long as the locale is fairly close, I'm sure fans will find a way to stay if they care.



Josh Anderson

Student

I think that revenues are going to decrease since Oakland is a larger city than Fremont, and there are a lot more avid and faithful fans to the A's. I think Fremont may be a poor choice.



Jennifer Koskovich

Student

I think the idea to move the A's to Fremont is fine because the games will be closer and easier to reach.



Have a Streetwise question? E-mail: editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

Compiled by Tyler Bierbower

Pleasanton's online neighborhood www.PleasantonWeekly.com

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Newsfront

News Digest

Art for children

Children ages 10 and older will have the opportunity to explore their creative side next week as the Pleasanton Art League presents its fourth "Children's Summer Art Workshop." From 2 to 5 p.m. July 9 and 10, children will learn techniques simplifying the drawing process, making it easier to draw realistic works. Cost for the two-day workshop is \$40 per child, \$25 for one day. Additional siblings receive a discount of \$10 for two days and \$5 for one day. Registration flyers are located at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Avenue or contact Madelynn Ellis, 462-7964 or mtellis@pacbell.net.

Livermore Valley Wine presents "Taste of Terroir"

The Livermore Valley's Wine & Food Experience showcases the region and its dedication to preserving agriculture by bringing together the Valley's vintners and growers at "Taste of Terroir" July 26 at the Palm Event Center, 1184 Vineyard Ave. Eighteen teams of chefs and winemakers create dishes using fresh, local produce that complement the region's wines. Tickets are \$65. Call 447-9463.

Lucky in love at the fair on 7/7/07

After the seventh horse race at the fairgrounds, Chaplain David Corrales will hold a public vow renewal ceremony for all those looking to add a little luck to their life on July 7. No reservations needed, just head down to the winner's circle area after the 4 p.m. race.

More FasTrak lanes

Motorists who use FasTrak to pay their tolls on Bay Area bridges will soon be able to zip faster than ever through most of the region's toll plazas, while drivers who pay cash may face significantly longer lines. The Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) and Caltrans this week will begin converting more lanes at the region's state-owned toll bridges to FasTrak-only lanes and will start construction on a series of other improvements to the freeway approaches and toll plazas. In addition, new customers who open FasTrak accounts from July 1 through Aug. 31 can receive up to \$10 in free tolls. The changes are part of a comprehensive plan adopted last year to increase toll plaza efficiency and expand use of electronic toll collection. For more information, visit www.mtc.ca.gov.

Vineyard Avenue improvements almost complete

Median, street work to make thoroughfare quieter and more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly

by Janet Pelletier

Those driving along Vineyard Avenue know that for weeks it's been filled with construction crews, often causing traffic backups during peak times of the day. But alas, the work will be completed in just a few short weeks—this according to the project's manager, public works engineering technician George Farrell. "It is expected to be finished end of July, beginning of August," he said. "It's moving along pretty well." The work got under way in early April and is estimated to cost \$1.6 million. Among the improvements

are new medians with landscaping and a rubberized asphalt concrete along Vineyard, between Bernal Avenue and Leona Place.

After the asphalt is laid, crews will re-stripe the lanes to provide a 13-foot-wide travel lane, a 7-foot-wide bike lane and a 3-foot-wide buffer zone in each direction.

The landscaping being planted in the medians will now match up with that of existing islands between Grapevine Drive and Clara Lane, according to a staff report.

A total of 118 trees will be planted and the types include Chinese

(continued on page 7)



Peak hour traffic backs up on Vineyard Avenue at Bernal during \$1.6-million construction project now under way to provide new medians and landscaping.



Jay Flachsbarth

Wiggle, waggle! Splish, splash!

Casey, a Springer Spaniel, owned by Joseph and Bobby Lasica, gets a good scrub from volunteers Taylor Terhume and Alyssa Demariti at Valley Humane Society's Wiggle Waggle Dog Wash Saturday. Donations were taken to benefit the society, which was founded in 1987. To contact the humane society, call 426-8656 or visit www.valley-humane.org.

Oak Grove project turned down in 3-2 vote

Planning Commission's recommendation will be forwarded on to City Council

by Janet Pelletier

In a split vote and after some contentious testimony, the Planning Commission turned down the Oak Grove housing and open space project.

Commissioners Anne Fox, Arne Olson and Greg O'Connor voted to not certify an environmental impact report while commissioners

Jennifer Pearce and Kathy Narum dissented. Commissioner Phil Blank recused himself from voting on the project because he lives near the project area. O'Connor took his place.

The June 27 vote boiled down to mixed feelings about a proposed emergency vehicle access (EVA) road, photo simulations produced

by a project consultant and house sizes.

Oak Grove proposes 51 custom homes in the southeast hills above Kottinger Ranch and the dedication of nearly 500 acres of open space for a citywide trail system.

"I'm a little disappointed that

(continued on page 8)

New initiative OKs auto mall on Staples, but little else

Greenbelt advocates want open space buffer between Pleasanton, Livermore

by Jeb Bing

Proponents of a Greenbelt Initiative that would restrict Pleasanton's planned commercial and residential development of the 124-acre Staples Ranch site east of the city have filed a new measure that would allow an auto mall on the site, but no other businesses or homes.

Matt Morrison, a tax research specialist and Sierra Club activist, said the new initiative—now called the Eastern Gateway Initiative—amends one submitted just two months ago that sought to keep all of Staples as a green belt, limiting the undeveloped parcel's future use to trails, sports fields and open space.

Both initiatives are co-sponsored by Anne Fox, chairwoman of the Pleasanton Planning Commission and have strong backing from Brian Arkin, a former chairman of the commission.

Although the group had started collecting the 3,500 signatures from registered voters in Pleasanton that would be needed to place the first initiative on the ballot, Morrison said they will start over to gain support for the new one. City Attorney Michael Roush, as he did with the first petition, is now reviewing the language of the new initiative and expects to have the ballot title and summary ready for the group to

(continued on page 9)

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Amador Theater gets some competition

Three groups switch performance schedules to new 500-seat Livermore Theater

by Rebecca Guyon

As the Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center's new 500-seat theater gets ready to open in September, many dance, theater and musical groups in the Tri-Valley prepare to switch their productions to the new location, including three that once called the Amador Theater home. The Pleasanton Playhouse, Livermore-Amador Symphony and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's Science on Saturdays lecture series will all switch to the new theater, located at 2400 First St. in downtown Livermore, for the 2007-08 season.

Len Alexander, executive director of Livermore Valley Performing Arts, said many of the groups moving their performances to the new theater previously worked in facilities not designed for productions, such as local high school auditoriums or churches. The new theater will provide these groups with technical capacities and a larger audience space to take their productions to the next level,

Alexander said. In the case of groups moving from the Amador Theater, a professional 591-seat theater located at 1155 Santa Rita Road, the reasons are varied.

"Amador is better equipped than Livermore High School (for a production), but it's still not the same as the first-class theater this will be. There are some good seats and bad seats (in the Amador Theater); the acoustics are good or bad depending on where you sit," Alexander said, adding that he has only been to the Pleasanton venue twice.

Carol Hovey, president of the Pleasanton Playhouse, said being able to use a newer facility was the main motivating factor for the organization to move its musical performances to Livermore.

"The new performing arts facility is a state-of-the-art space with a complete orchestra pit, 45-bar fly system—some things an audience wouldn't know—but it meets all the technical needs of a musical production," Hovey said.

Since opening 24 years ago, the

Pleasanton Playhouse has held all its musicals at the Amador Theater, even before it was a city-owned performance space and was just the theater for Amador Valley High School. While the musicals will be at the new Livermore Theater, the playhouse will still put on its studio plays at its Studio Theater on Serpentine Lane in Pleasanton and its annual Broadway Chorus will still be at the Amador Theater.

For the Livermore-Amador Symphony and LLNL's Science on Saturdays, the move from the Amador Theater actually keeps the companies closer to their home locations.

"The Livermore Lab is in Livermore, so we wanted to be supportive of the local community," said Dick Farnsworth, manager for science and technology programs at the lab. "We thought it appropriate and it makes it easier for presenters who have materials for presentations since the theater is a lot closer; distance was a large part in the decision."

Rob Vogt, recreational supervi-

sor for the Amador Theater, said he was not concerned that the Amador Theater is losing some of its regular performances to Livermore and saw the change as an opportunity to bring more groups and performances to the theater. Although no outside groups are in mind yet, Vogt said Civic Arts is planning to put on an in-house holiday and spring theater production with the Civic Arts Stage Company. Until 2005, the company regularly put on a holiday performance, but due to a lack of rehearsal space the performance was cancelled in recent years. The spring performance is an entirely new production.

Alexander echoed this sentiment, saying the influx of performance space will only increase the art and theater community in the Tri-Valley as a whole.

"It's not like Amador will sit empty; it's like musical chairs. You move a chair and everything continues to run, making it even more exciting than it is now," Alexander said. ■

'Ask the Doctor' a growing success

TV30 program wins over 17 Telly Awards, gains more active viewers each month

by Tyler Bierbower

At a time when healthcare is anything but free, TV30's "Ask the Doctor" call-in program puts highly skilled medical specialists in reach of Tri-Valley residents. The live show allows viewers to phone in questions about personal health

or the health of a loved one.

A growing success, "Ask the Doctor" has won over 17 Telly Awards for outstanding non-network programming. Recently they were awarded the Silver Telly Award, the highest obtainable award, for the 28th annual national competition.

The latest episode to win a Telly

award was the Dec. 7, 2006 program on depression and anxiety. The guests on the show were Dr. Michael Levin a pediatric psychiatrist at San Ramon Regional Medical Center, and Dr. John Echols a psychiatrist at the Contra Costa Medical Center.

In observance of the Independence Day holiday, this month's show will air July 11, and will discuss stomach aches, gastro-intestinal conditions and diseases. The guest will be Dr. Jeffery Mark, a gastroenterologist who specializes in GI disease and treatment.

Dr. Robert Litman hosts the show which airs the first Wednesday of

each month from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. on local Tri-Valley channel 30. All of this year's programs are also available online anytime at www.TV30.org, in the video on demand section.

Litman has been a medical commentator and host for the series for the past 11 years. He specializes in family medicine, and has been recognized for his dedicated hard-work towards the program. Litman is also a charter member of the National Association of Physician Broadcasters.

With the number of callers increasing month-to-month, TV30

(continued on page 7)

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Emily Atwood

Local leaders speak on global issues

Mayor Jennifer Hosterman and Congressman Jerry McNerney, along with Foothill High School teacher Christopher Jones, were recently a part of a panel at Foothill High School's global warming assembly. Students watched a video with pictures and scientific data before having questions answered by the panel. Much of the focus was what students in Pleasanton could do in the effort to slow global warming. The assembly was a part of the school's first ever Global Chillout Week, which was organized by students after a teacher showed them "An Inconvenient Truth."

Ask the Doctor

(continued from page 6)

Executive Director Glenn Davis described the program as being a huge success.

"We want to educate and inform residents in the Tri-Valley area about important health issues," he said.

The show's target market is adults ages 40 to 60, however the show receives a wide variety of callers from many different age groups. Many people have even been calling the station while the show is off-air just to get more information about the program.

"Ask the Doctor" works in direct connection with the San Ramon Regional Medical Center. The medical center provides the show with many guest specialists and the funding to run the show, all as a service to our community.

The program covers a different topic each week. Some of the more recent topics have been back pain and treatment, diabetes, and beautiful and healthy skin.

On Aug. 1 the program's topic will be joint pain and treatment with guest rheumatologist Dr. Melissa McNamera.

For more information on the show contact Jane Roberts-MacArt at 275-8224. The program's call-in number is 462-3030. ■

Vineyard

(continued from page 5)

Pistache, Ornamental Pear and Crepe Myrtle. A total of 3,500 one-and five-gallon shrubs will also be planted, according to Farrell.

New signage and parking limits will also be imposed as part of the improvements, suggestions made by residents who live in the Vineyard Villa Mobile Home Park.

Residents had complained of excessive parking of cars that were for-sale on Vineyard as well as motorhomes, boats and other recreational vehicles. But, they added that they still wanted parking to be offered for when the park holds special events. The new plans call for signs that say there's a four-hour time limit on street parking.

The rubberized asphalt will also absorb some of loud traffic traveling on the major thoroughfare. ■

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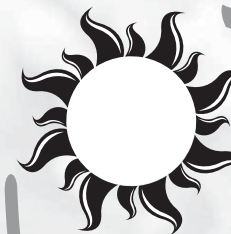
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Oak Grove

(continued from page 5)

some of the stuff we've been asking for in the past six months hasn't been provided," O'Connor said, adding that he had asked for an analysis on the vibrational impacts to existing neighborhoods during construction that was never conducted.

"The EVA is still fluid," Olson said of his decision not to certify the environmental report. "We don't know exactly where it's going to be. There needs to be another access to the area and that may mean moving some of the (home) lots lower."

Fox said she shared Olson and O'Connor's concerns, adding that she felt the photo simulations of what the homes would look like on the ridgetops weren't to scale, a claim also made by many homeowners who live in the bordering Grey Eagle Estates.

"It's not just the (camera) lens issue, the houses in the simulation are 6,700-square-feet" and that's just not accurate, she said.

Fox said while she understood that each custom home would have to go back to the commission for a separate approval, she didn't think that was the right process.

"I think doing it piecemeal doesn't give a broader perspective for what the homes are going to look like," she said. "People are going to build as big a home as they can."

The vote came after some heated comments made by residents, most of whom criticized the project. Many brought their own props to illustrate why it shouldn't be approved.

Armed with a grocery bag of bricks from his garage, Grey Eagle Court resident Russell Schmidt used three to show commissioners that three-story houses on ridgetops would be an eyesore no matter how they were positioned.

Martha Evans, who also lives in Grey Eagle Estates, brought a 19th century book called "The Necklace of Truth," which she said was a story of a girl with a propensity to tell lies. When she told a lie, the necklace shortened.

Others came with their own photo simulations, explaining the time they spent in Photoshop putting them together and lambasting the ones produced by a project consultant.

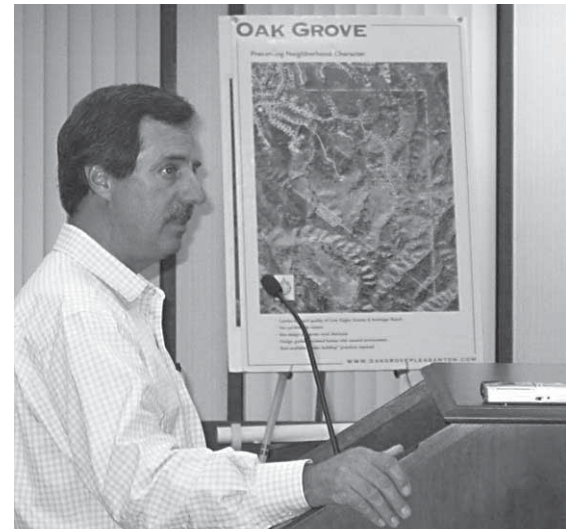
"I think 80 percent of the project is good but you don't buy a car on 80 percent—you have to look at the other 20 percent," said resident Lee Fulton, who also brought his own simulations.

Some changes were made to the project plans since it was last heard by the commission June 13. As part of the Urban Wild Interface Plan, trees have to follow a 100-foot protection zone from each lot's property line to lessen fire danger.

Fire Chief Bill Cody said that doesn't mean trees have to be planted farther away, but rather those planted closer to the homes must have narrower trunks so they don't encroach on the home.

But residents and commissioners were concerned that would provide less screening of the custom homes.

Another change that the project applicant agreed to deal with is the size limits of the homes. No home



Marty Inderbitzen talks about plans for the Oak Grove development, which he represents.

would be allowed to exceed 20 percent of the entire lot's size, with a maximum of 12,500-square-feet.

Residents said they felt the concession from a previous limit of 18,000-square-feet wasn't enough because existing homes in Kottinger Ranch and Grey Eagle are only 4,000-square-feet.

"Twelve-thousand, five hundred-square-foot houses? It's ludicrous," said former Councilwoman Kay Ayala.

"Is this the type of housing stock that should be applied in the voter-referended housing cap?" she said, adding that she felt affordable housing should have been considered over large-scale homes.

No changes from the June 13 meeting were made to the emergency vehicle access plans, which were routed through Grey Eagle Court. Grey Eagle residents have said they were concerned about the liability of having an EVA through their private road as well as how exactly the access road would connect to the new development.

Longtime resident Howard Neely was the only person who spoke in support of the project, saying people need to stop having a NIMBY (not in my back yard) attitude.

"When I lived here, the hills were full of cows," he said. "We didn't complain about Vintage Hills, Vintage Hills 2 and even Kottinger Ranch" when they were built.

"The biggest mistake we made was allowing private roads and developments. When that happens, you start social problems," he said, in a reference to the gated Grey Eagle Estates community.

Marty Inderbitzen, an attorney representing the project applicants, said the donation of 500 acres of open space was getting lost in the discussion. He said residents' makeshift photo illustrations weren't trustworthy.

"The only truly valid illustrations...are the consultant's," he said. "(Residents) even admitted they weren't familiar with the photo programs."

The Oak Grove project will now be forwarded to the City Council with the commission's recommendations. ■

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First place will be awarded \$25 and will be published in a future Pleasanton Weekly publication with the photographer credited. Second- and third-place winners will also be awarded cash

prizes and their photos published with a name credit.

Entries should be emailed to editor@pleasanton-weekly.com as a JPEG file, no larger than 2MB. The text of the email should include the caption information such as names of the people in the photo and where it was taken, the entrant's name and a daytime phone number.

Deadline for the entries is 5 p.m. Monday, July 16. Selected entries will be placed on PleasantonWeekly.com and winners will be contacted by July 20. Winners must be able to provide a full resolution image—a JPEG larger than 10MB, uncorrected and not cropped.

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Take Us Along



Weekly Jamboree

Boy Scouts (L-R) Jeff Buscheck, Brandon Coon, Justin Deeds, Ryan Dees and Andy Burgess along with adult leader Kevin Coon (back row, center) read the Weekly in a sea of Boy Scouts at the 2005 National Jamboree held at Fort AP Hill in Caroline County, Virginia.

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Initiative

(continued from page 5)

proceed with collecting signatures by next week.

"Then they will have six months from the time they published the initiative to collect the necessary signatures in order for their measure to qualify for a public ballot," Roush said.

The main difference in the new one is the willingness to allow 40 acres on the site for the Hendrick Automotive Group a longtime Pleasanton dealership that wants to expand. Although Hendrick has talked to Dublin officials about moving there, it prefers a Pleasanton address and told Morrison and Fox the 40-acre site they would allow would meet the dealer's needs.

Still, the revised initiative is generating opposition from city civic and business leaders who have already signed on to a City Council-backed plan to develop Staples, which is unincorporated land owned by Alameda County. The plan includes the auto mall, 10-12 acres of additional retail stores, a 600-800-unit apartment and assisted care living complex, an indoor skating rink to be built by a subsidiary of the San Jose Sharks and the extension of Stoneridge Drive, along with the Pleasanton city limits, to El Charro Road and the Livermore city boundary.

"This new initiative caves out 40 acres of the Staples Ranch property for private development, which would allow room for the auto mall," said Councilman Jerry Thorne.

However, he added, it would still cancel out the Memorandum of Understanding Pleasanton signed with Alameda County to fully develop Staples and build the Stoneridge Road extension.

"It still violates our MOU with the county and would allow annexation into another city," Thorne added. "The largest violation of the MOU is that there is no assisted living facility and the completion of

Stoneridge could be stopped. Also, there would be no ice facility."

"In short," he continued, "our objection to the initiative has not changed in that the property would be developed either in the county, Livermore or Dublin, and Pleasanton would have absolutely no control over what is developed on that property and would receive no revenues from it. We would still get all of the negative impacts such

"The largest violation of the MOU is that there is no assisted living facility and the completion of Stoneridge could be stopped. Also, there would be no ice facility."

—Jerry Thorne, councilmember

as traffic."

Morrison said the effort his group, the Friends of Pleasanton, is to preserve community separators as outlined in the Alameda County East County Area Plan.

"The western gateway of Pleasanton has open space and parks on the Pleasanton Ridge, and the southern gateway of Pleasanton has the Bernal Community Park," Morrison said. "By placing open space, parkland and sports fields at the eastern gateway of Pleasanton, this will ensure that residents living on the east side of Pleasanton, many who lack backyards, enjoy the same public amenities as the rest of Pleasanton."

"It will also reduce traffic in the most congested part of town," he added. "Pleasanton's voters are intelligent, informed citizens and as we live in a democratic society. Pleasanton's citizens should be given the opportunity to participate directly on how the few remaining undeveloped parcels of land are developed. We should all have the final say on what development is built on the last, large, publicly



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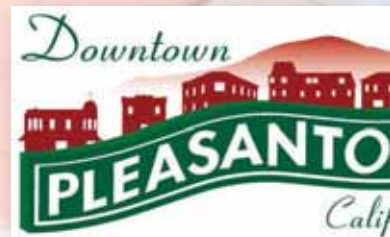
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Opinion

Editorial

Showcasing Alviso, a special part of Pleasanton

After years of planning and debate, work will finally get under way next week to restore, rebuild and expand the Francisco Alviso Adobe Community Park at Foothill and Old Foothill roads. The \$5.3 million project will create a seven-acre park across from the Laguna Oaks community. The site is home to a run-down adobe that has been shored up over the years to keep it from falling down but much more than that. There's evidence there of prehistoric culture which dates back as far as 3420 B.C. and the Hokan language family of Native Americans in this region. The same site and surrounding area was host to Spanish ranchos, then later to a time when tenant farmers tended the land, to the days of the 20th Century when it was managed as a certified dairy. Now, Pleasanton will dedicate it as an historical site and community park thanks to the enthusiasm and commitment from a range of people, including the Pleasanton city government and members of the Amador-Livermore Valley Historical Society. This group, which operates the Museum On Main, is expected to receive a \$100,000 operating stipend from the city to provide guides and historians to serve the anticipated crowds of school children and others who will come to Pleasanton to learn about the Alviso Adobe and its history.

This community park will provide Bay Area residents with the opportunity to learn first-hand about the legacies of the past, including the Ohlone Native Americans, the Spanish-Mexicans and the 19th Century dairy industry. The focus will be on the 1854 Alviso Adobe, with the contract awarded to JFC Construction of Martinez stressing the need for historically accurate restoration and reconstruction of the existing building. This will include the restoration of the adobe structure, itself, reconstruction of the historic milking barn and fabrications and installation of the museum-style historic interpretive program that will be run by the Museum on Main. The firm also will construct the park's parking lot, entrance roadway and related features at the project's southern end.

Officially named the Francisco Alviso Adobe in the California Register of Historical Resources, it was one of the first adobes built in California. Part of the original Mission San Jose in the 18th Century, the site was included in a land grant of 8,680 acres to Alviso. Plans for the hillside park include replicating the early 20th Century Meadowlark Dairy barn, a bunkhouse and an adobe brick-making area. The new community park will be a walk-through of three periods of our history, providing visitors with a look at the Indian, Early California and the dairy periods. The Alviso Adobe will offer a rare surviving example of architecture common to people who were not prominent social or historical figures, but rather important contributors to the functioning and well-being of the community they lived in.

Lydiksen Elementary School teacher David Hartman wrote in a Pleasanton Weekly article in 2000 that if the Alviso Adobe is ever restored, it will become an important and powerful means for education and enrichment, providing a lifelong experience in history for all who visit this special site. By finally moving forward with full funding and support, Pleasanton has an opportunity to showcase a very special part of the city's environment and history.

Your Turn

The Pleasanton Weekly encourages comments on our coverage or issues of local interest.

Submit letters to the editor of up to 250 words and guest opinion pieces up to 500 words with a short bio to editor@PleasantonWeekly.com. Include your name, address and daytime phone number so we can reach you. We reserve the right to edit contributions for length, objectionable content, libel and factual errors known to us. Anonymous letters will generally not be accepted.

Submitting a letter to the editor or guest opinion constitutes a granting of permission to the Pleasanton Weekly and Embarcadero Publishing Company to also publish it online, including in our online archives and as a post on Town Square.

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Talking Points

by Gina Channell-Allen

'Citizen journalists' are the eyes and ears of a community newspaper

New column addresses reader questions

The Internet age has brought us a completely new vocabulary. We know a "blog" is not an amphibian and a "wiki" is not a Hawaiian dance. These words are commonplace now, particularly with the Internet savvy set.



It is this group of people who have created and perpetuated "participatory journalism," also known as "citizen journalism." A Pleasanton Weekly Town Square post from "Paul, a resident of the Pleasanton Meadows neighborhood" is a perfect example of this phenomenon. Paul posted an item last week on an incident in his neighborhood, questioning why the SWAT team was surrounding a house and he and his family were evacuated from their home at 3 a.m.

Journalists have several different ways getting news, such as public meetings, press releases and wire services, but it's impossible to be everywhere and know everything. We rely on residents to be our eyes and ears.

As many times as readers question why journalists cover certain stories they question why a particular item was not published. Reasons range from the media doesn't care or even that the media and/or the police are covering it up. As the gatekeepers of public information—the fourth estate—most journalists take their jobs seriously and really care about educating and informing the readers of issues in their community.

And as far as the media and/or police covering up issues, well, it's really not that mysterious. Sometimes it's like on television and the reporter happens upon a scene or receives a call while the incident is in progress and can rush out the door, notebook in hand. The other 99 out of 100 times, however, we get information about police action from a press release a day or two later and follow it up with a phone call to the police department. Not too exciting.

In the case of the SWAT team and the 3 a.m. evacuation Paul posted his question about, we received a press release that hadn't made it from the fax machine to the reporter's desk before Paul's post. Because he alerted us, we called the police department and got the information.

This is a terrific example of a community member becoming a "citizen journalist." You are encouraged to ask questions via email, a phone call or through Town Square. More than likely, if you question something, many others are doing the same.

Keep the comments coming

I received a few very good comments on last week's column about the issue of anonymity of letters to the editor writers.

Anoop D, a resident of the Sycamore Place neighborhood asked, "What is the media's role/stand? If a source wants to stay anonymous should we respect that?" I agree that sometimes anonymity is important in certain circumstances, especially if there is a possibility of reprisal. And sometimes identification is not even necessary, such as in the case with the Town Square poster Paul mentioned above. We didn't need to know who came to us with the information.

However, when an individual accepts a position as a public servant, his or her views become public. As "Stacey from the Amberwood/Wood Meadows neighborhood" pointed out in a Town Square comment from the column, "Most public servants avoid conflict of interest by resigning their posts to pursue activities as private citizens."

—Gina Channell-Allen, a 20-year journalism veteran, is the president of the East Bay division of Embarcadero Publishing Company, president of the Pleasanton Weekly and publisher of the Danville Weekly. Send questions to gallen@pleasantonweekly.com or comment on PleasantonWeekly.com Town Square.

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Guest Opinion

A new negative Stoneridge Drive extension play

by Gerry Brunken

An organization calling itself "Open space, Park Land and Greenbelt Initiative" will soon present a petition to limit any development on the 124-acre Staples Ranch property to open space. Interesting,



and the writers of this piece know that, historically, if you mention a park, you get a vote. Brian Arkin knew this when, as a planning commissioner, he co-wrote Measure V to deny as little as five acres on the Bernal property for affordable housing. It comes as no surprise that 10 of the proponents of this petition mentioned in the media lately, including the authors—Anne Fox, a planning Commissioner, Matt Morrison, and Bimal Sangari—reside in the immediate area of Staples Ranch. Arkin also lives in this neighborhood.

For these greenbelters, sorry, but rain must fall on your parade. Your petition is not a "let's have more

parks" issue, but a thinly veiled attempt to prevent the ultimate and timely extension of Stoneridge Drive to the east, which would benefit all of the residents of our city and indicate to our neighbors that we really desire to cooperate in solving our mutual traffic problems. Items outlined in this group's recent letters and opinions require clarification. I will refer to the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan dated October 1989.

One writer said that the land use plan on the Staples property was done in secret city meetings. If one monitors city council meetings and minutes, and has read the local media for sometime, one might disagree with this statement.

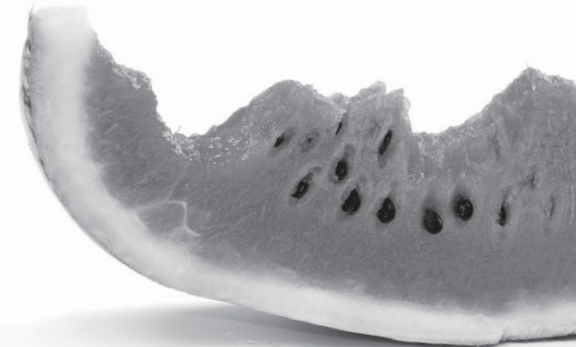
A second writer mentioned that Livermore has dedicated almost 100 acres east of El Charro Road to open space. This is disingenuous, as land in this area is within the adopted Livermore Airport Land Use Commission (ALVC) safety zone, which precludes incompatible structures in the zone (see page 16 of above plan). Staples Ranch is not in this zone.

Another writer suggested that the acreage in question had included a massive sports park. This is a massive misstatement. The Staples Ranch portion of the Stoneridge Drive plan outlined 20 acres of park (see page 7). Now, 17.2 acres remain, as 2.8 acres were used to expand Meadows Park at the east end of West Las Positas Boulevard (See page 15).

I, and others, will suggest to Pleasanton voters, that if asked to sign this petition, say no; it is a blatant land grab. Staples Ranch is within Pleasanton's sphere of influence, but owned by the county. If we lose it to Livermore, our tax base and traffic flow will be permanently and negatively affected. Recent traffic studies have outlined that traffic in the future can only get worse without the extension of Stoneridge Drive. Our council agreed, voting to keep it in the general plan. Now we must urge them to complete it in a timely manner.

—Gerry Brunken has lived in Pleasanton since 1971. He was a senior executive in Menlo Park until he retired in 1995.

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Sports



The Weekly's a part of the Tri for Fun team

The Club Sports Women's Triathlon Training Team brought a copy of the Pleasanton Weekly to celebrate a strong finish at the Tri for Fun event June 16 at Shadow Cliffs. In the back row are Heather Halliday-Dickson, Patty Stapp and Kathy Mitchell; middle row: Comay, Mary Kaye Jansen, Ellen Martinez, Cheryl Rego and Suzette Torres; front row: Barbara Inderbitzen and coaches Terri Romine and Melinda Wiley.

well as 78 amateurs.

The First Tee is going to be hosting a selection process to determine which 60 juniors will get the spots. The qualifier will be held July 17-25, at Kansas State University and Colbert Hills Golf Course. The First Tee has introduced golf to over 1.5 million junior golfers in 47 states and five countries. The honorary chairman of the program is former United States President George H. W. Bush.

Pleasanton Meadows falls short of Barracudas

The Briarhill Barracudas beat the Pleasanton Meadows Sharks swim team at Pleasanton Meadows Pool with a final score of 572 to 391.

Emily Tincher and Nicholas Tucker had a pair of wins for The Pleasanton Meadows Sharks, but it was not enough to hold off the Barracudas. Tincher snagged her wins in the U6 butterfly competition and the breaststroke. Tucker won the boys 9-10 butterfly competition, and the individual medley. Both Emily and Nicholas had siblings that also placed first, Blake Tucker claimed the boy's 7-8 backstroke, and Mary Tincher won the U6 girls backstroke.

Also finishing first in the freestyle competition for the Sharks were Perry Cheney, 9-10, Madeline Bush, 13-14 girls, and Joey Silva, 13-14 boys. In the butterfly event Elsa Schwaninger, 13-14 girls, took

first and both Jack Geasa, 9-10 boys, and Chris Bush, 11-12 boys, won their races in the breaststroke competition.

Briarhill had three swimmers that all placed first in their three individual events.

Matthew Grywczynski, 7-8 boys, finished first in the 25-yard freestyle, the 25-yard butterfly and the 25-yard breaststroke; Brittney Achziger, 9-10 girls, finished first in the 25-yard butterfly, the 25-yard breaststroke and the 100-yard individual medley; Brett Melloch, 11-12 boys, finished first in the 50-yard freestyle, the 50-yard butterfly and the 100-yard individual medley.

Wrestling camp open for registration

Summer Wrestling Camp is currently open for registration, and will take place Monday through Friday, July 16-20. The camp is for both boys and girls, and will offer three separate sessions for the different age groups. Harvest Park Middle School wrestling coach Dale Hazen will be hosting the camp. No experience is needed.

Session one is for grades 3-5 and will be held from 3 to 4 p.m. with a fee of \$50 for Pleasanton residents and \$55 for non-residents. Session two is for grades 5-6 and will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. Session three is for grades 6-9 and will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. The fees for both session two and three are \$70 for Pleasanton residents and \$77 for non-residents.

All sessions will be held in the

Harvest Park Middle School multi-purpose room. Grades are based as of fall 2007. Registration forms are available at the Pleasanton Tennis Complex, 5801 Valley Ave. For more information, call 931-3447.

—Ian Anderson

Play lacrosse this summer

The Pleasanton Lacrosse Club Summer Program is open for registration. Programs are available for all boys entering grades 1-12. No experience is required, but full equipment is necessary for all participants. The program begins on July 9 and runs for six weeks.

Boys' grades 1-8 program includes one clinic-style practice per week, and pickup games on Saturday mornings. Boys' grades 9-12 play pick-up games only, on Thursday evenings. Registration costs \$50 per player.

All games and practices take place at Thomas Hart Middle School. To register and/or obtain more information on the program see the website at www.pleasantonlacrosse.com or contact Bryon Hay at 998-5550 or byron.hay@comcast.net

—Byron Hay

Pleasanton junior golfer to play tournament at Pebble Beach

Kirk Laffins of Pleasanton shot a 70 at Poppy Ridge Golf Course in Livermore, which was good

enough to finish first out of a field of 90 junior golfers, and qualify for The Wal-Mart First Tee Open at Pebble Beach Golf Club. The tournament will take place over Labor Day weekend.

The 10 junior qualifiers from California will join a field of 78 others, they will play along side 78 Champions Tour professionals as

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Community Pulse



WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

Planning Commission

Wednesday, July 11, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- **PUD 05-02M. James Happ, Northstar Realty Services, Inc./ Kenneth and Pamela Chrisman**
Application for a major modification to an approved PUD development plan to replace the approved production home designs with design guidelines for the property located at 1944 Vineyard Ave, in the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan Area.
- **PUD 55. Michael Carey and Steve Maestas**
Application for Planned Unit Development (PUD) approval to: (1) rezone an approximately 0.24 acre parcel from RM 15 (Multiple Family Residential) District and Core Area Overlay District to PUD HDR (Planned Unit Development – High Density Residential) District and Core Area Overlay District; and (2) demolish two existing residential units, renovate one existing residential unit, and construct four new single family homes for a total of five residential units at the property located at 225 West Angela Street.
- **PCUP-185. Steve Black, Generations Health Care of Pleasanton, LLC**
Applications for: (1) a modification to a previously approved conditional use permit (UP 71 13, Pleasanton Convalescent Hospital) to increase the number of beds from 129 to 139 at the existing convalescent hospital; and (2) a variance from the Pleasanton Municipal Code to reduce the required parking from 125 spaces to the existing 99 spaces. The property is located at 300 Neal Street.
- **PDR 638. Mario Saavedra**
Renewal of a Planning Commission design review approval (PDR 316, November 16, 2005) to demolish the existing building located at 347 Division Street and to construct an approximately 6,378 square foot, two story commercial building in its place.

Parks & Recreation Commission

Thursday, July 12, 2007 @ 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Review and Approval of Proposed FY 2007/08 Park Renovation Fund Projects
- Review of Committee and Project Assignments

Library Commission

- The July 12 Library Commission meeting has been cancelled and rescheduled for July 19, 2007.
- The August 9, 2007 Library Commission meeting has been cancelled and rescheduled for September 13, 2007.

Youth Master Plan Implementation Committee

Monday, July 9, 2007 @ 6:00 p.m.
Operation Service Center, 3333 Busch Road

- Please visit our website at www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us to view the agenda

GENERAL INFORMATION

NOTICE OF FIRST-TIME HOME BUYER AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM BIRCH TERRACE TOWNHOMES by Silverstone Communities

Birch Terrace is a new townhome development that is currently under construction by Silverstone Communities at Vineyard Avenue and Birch Creek Drive in southeast Pleasanton. A total of seven townhomes will be offered for sale at below-market prices to low and moderate income first-time home buyers who meet eligibility requirements and can qualify for financing.

The sale of the below market units is being coordinated by the Tri-Valley Housing Opportunity Center (TVHOC). Interested parties should attend the following orientation session:

Monday, July 16, 2007, 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Pleasanton

Application packets will be available at the July 16 orientation session and (after July 16) at the City of Pleasanton Offices (123 Main Street, Pleasanton) and on the City's website at www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us

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

The above represents a sampling of upcoming meeting items. For complete information, please visit www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/community/calendar

Police Bulletin

Fairgoer's credit card, license stolen

After attending the county fair June 22, a woman walked back to her car, parked at Rose and Pleasanton avenues, around 10:30 p.m. when she heard a noise and turned around. A credit card and license had fallen to the ground from her fanny pack. The victim then saw a Hispanic female reach down, pick up the items and run down Rose Avenue with a male.

The victim lost sight of the suspect in the dark. The woman called the credit card company the next morning to cancel and no purchases had been made.

Tail pipe may not be a secure key hiding spot

An employee of an auto center on Doray Drive parked a 2004 black four-door Volvo S80 in a visitor's parking space around 5 p.m. June 5. The man told police that he left the key to the car in the tail pipe. When he returned to the lot at 3 p.m. June 12, the car was gone, with no broken glass or any other evidence of forced entry.

Police Report

The Pleasanton Police Department made the following information available. Under the law, those charged with offenses are considered innocent until convicted.

June 22

- **Theft:**
 - 12:49 p.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Avenue; petty theft
 - 1:03 p.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue; grand theft
- **Vehicular burglary:**
 - 10:36 a.m. in the 2600 block of Rasmussen Court
- **Lost property:**
 - 8:14 a.m. in the 5600 block of Owens Drive

June 23

- **Theft:**
 - 1:16 p.m. in the 3900 block of Stoneridge Drive; grand theft
- **Vandalism:**
 - 9:06 a.m. in the 8500 block of Lupine Court; worth over \$400
 - 7:57 p.m. in the 3200 block of Cheryl Circle
- **Public drunkenness:**
 - 2:40 p.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive

June 24

- **Battery:**
 - 12:10 a.m. in the 4800 block of Hopyard Road
- **Lost property:**
 - 12:29 p.m. in the 3300 block of Prairie Drive

June 25

- **Theft:**
 - 3:23 p.m. at the intersection of Rose and Pleasanton avenues; petty theft
- **Vehicular burglary:**
 - 8:35 a.m. in the 7000 block of Commerce Circle
- **Vandalism:**
 - 12:04 p.m. in the 3500 block of Bernal Avenue; worth less than \$400
- **Drug/alcohol violations:**
 - 5:24 a.m. in the 5700 block of Stoneridge Drive; DUI
 - 9:37 a.m. in the 5300 block of Case Avenue; paraphernalia possession, possession of a controlled substance
- **Disturbing the peace:**
 - 2:30 a.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue

June 26

- **Theft:**
 - 6:51 a.m. in the 8100 block of Mountain View Drive; stolen vehicle

- 10:52 a.m. in the 5800 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard; grand theft
- **Burglary:**
 - 3:57 p.m. in the 7800 block of Creekside Drive
- **Marijuana possession for sale:**
 - 5:03 p.m. in the 4600 block of Bernal Avenue
- **Bomb/fireworks possession:**
 - 7:42 p.m. in the 4100 block of Walnut Drive
 - 8:11 p.m. in the 2800 block of Jones Gate Court
- **Mental health danger:**
 - 10:31 a.m. in the 5500 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard
 - 9:29 p.m. in the 1800 block of Valley Avenue

June 27

- **Theft:**
 - 8:25 a.m. in the 5300 block of Case Avenue; grand theft
 - 1:16 p.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; grand theft
 - 3:13 p.m. in the 7700 block of Dublin Canyon Road
 - 10:44 p.m. in the 4500 block of Pleasanton Avenue; petty theft
- **Vandalism:**
 - 8:40 a.m. in the 3600 block of Andrews Drive; worth more than \$400
 - 4:13 p.m. in the 800 block of Palomino Drive; worth less than \$400
- **Vehicular burglary:**
 - 9:40 a.m. in the 7600 block of Flagstone Drive
- **Drug/alcohol violations:**
 - 9:01 a.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; marijuana possession
 - 11:06 p.m. in the 400 block of Old Bernal Avenue; public drunkenness
- **Mental health danger:**
 - 3:10 p.m. in the 5500 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard

June 28

- **Theft:**
 - 7:16 a.m. in the 4800 block of Bernal Avenue; forgery
 - 10:05 a.m. in the 500 block of Rose Avenue; forgery
- **Vandalism:**
 - 10:28 a.m. in the 5800 block of Arthur Drive; worth less than \$400
 - 10:42 a.m. at the intersection of W. Las Positas Boulevard and Payne Road; worth less than \$400
 - 8:41 p.m. at the intersection of Windsor Court and Churchill Drive

Obituaries

Josephine Blanton

Josephine Blanton died June 26 at the age of 87.

A native of Oakland, Mrs. Blanton had been residing in Pleasanton with her daughter for the past four years. She had been a dedicated homemaker for the past 50 years, who loved cooking and spending time with her family. She also enjoyed watching QVC and going to the casinos with her sister Eleanor.

Mrs. Blanton is survived by her loving family, daughter, Maric Johnson; sons, Aldo Castro, Rick Blanton, and Harold Blanton; son-in-law, Jim; daughters-in-law, Cheri, Gloria, and Kathy; and her sister, and casino partner Eleanor Muyo; grandchildren Wendi, Mike, Erik, Barbara, Bridget, Amanda, Jimmy and Victoria; eight great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Blanton was preceded in death by her beloved husband of 49 years, Harold Blanton.

A celebration of her life, followed by a reception, was scheduled to take place at 2 p.m. July 7 at a home on Golden Road. Donations may be sent to Hope Hospice, 6500 Dublin Blvd., Dublin, Calif. 94568.





An Amador Valley High School student cries after being involved in a “deadly” DUI-related crash. The mock accident was a part of the “Every 15 Minutes” anti-DUI program, put on by Pleasanton Police and the school district earlier this year.

story and photos by Emily Atwood

“We don’t call them accidents,” J.P. Rosales, a representative with Farmer’s Insurance Pleasanton, said at the recent town hall meeting aimed at teen driving. “Most often it’s not an accident, so we call it a collision.”

Rosales, members of the Pleasanton Police officers, many from the traffic division, and Commissioner Karen Rodrigue of the county’s traffic division of the California Superior Court were present at the meeting to candidly speak with parents about impressing upon new drivers the importance of developing safe driving habits.

Safely maneuvering the highways and byways can sometimes be a challenge for all drivers, but Sgt. Michael Collins of the Pleasanton Police Department said teens are especially at risk.

“Simply put, it’s a lack of experience,” he said. “It’s coupled with the fact teens are more susceptible than more mature drivers to peer pressure, increasing their likelihood of doing something common sense would otherwise dictate isn’t smart.”

Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration show 5,000 to 6,000 teens (ages 15 to 19) die annually in traffic collisions on U.S. roads, while another 300,000 are seriously injured. In a press release, Collins wrote that “many of these casualties are preventable, but not without the cooperative efforts of educators, law enforcement and parents, among others.”

For many families in Pleasanton and all over the Bay Area, recent tragic events make this a sensitive subject. With several collision-related injuries and deaths of local teens, it is difficult to talk about prevention. While the past can’t be changed and inexperience is not always the cause, Pleasanton Police, driving instructors and parents are taking action to help young drivers and their families avoid the heartache that can come with new drivers on the open road.

By the numbers

To put the numbers in perspective, at the meeting Collins said between March 2003 and September 2006, 2,600 soldiers were killed in Iraq, whereas 22,000 teens ages 15 to 19 died in car collisions. That’s 537 per month and 18 per day.

Legislatures have come to realize the problem of collisions among young, inexperienced drivers. The disheartening statistics show thousands of new drivers, and often their passengers, suffer injuries or even death, leading many states, including California, to adopt laws that put restrictions on licenses in hopes these numbers will decrease.

In 1998, California began enforcing license restrictions, also referred to as a graduated license, upon new drivers under the age of 18. Originally the restrictions lasted for six months, but in 2006 it was extended to a year. Under the law, these drivers must be accompanied and supervised by a licensed driver who is at least 25 years old when transporting passengers under 20. They also are not allowed to drive between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.

Even though data is still coming in from states that recently enforced the law, the impact of the graduated licenses seems to be improving the harrowing statistics. Collins said the national reports he’s seen have shown a 25 percent decrease in collision-related injuries for those ages 15 to 19 since the restrictions were enforced. As for California, the results show a decrease of almost 15 percent.

Hoping to see an even stronger decrease are local driving instructors, parents and law enforcement agents who are united in working to teach new licensees safe driving habits.

Driver’s education of today

Along with the provisional license laws, much has changed in the process of earning the privilege to get behind the wheel. Some permit hopefuls are opting to learn the laws of the road online, instead of watching Red Asphalt 3 or hearing a lecture at a driving school. This has some licensed instructors worried.

“Half the online kids can’t pass the [permit] test the first time; it takes two or three times,” Greg Cook of Amador Driving School said.

The difference in the online and classroom courses, according to Cook, is the time spent absorbing the information. In his program, students must be present for four days (25 hours) of class, which also includes five 50-question tests. Online, however, Cook said the practice tests have 10

questions and it can be breezed through in a few hours. But, he added, quality learning can also depend on the school.

“A lot of schools don’t teach the class,” he said. “They just teach kids to pass the test. And that’s not getting the message across.”

Pari Eshtehardi of Driversity of Dublin, a driving school, agrees.

“The online course can’t compare with our friendly classroom,” she said, adding that 98 percent of their students pass the test after 30 hours of instruction.

“We train instructors to let them know how dangerous that weapon is; I mean car,” she said. “It can destroy lives.”

Once the permit test is completed, over a minimum six-month period student drivers must log in six hours of behind-the-wheel training with an instructor and 50 hours with a licensed parent/guardian over the age of 25.

With log sheets and student evaluation cards, Eshtehardi and business partner Nadar Amani tell parents the strengths and weaknesses of the learning driver. It also gives parents a guide on how to better instruct students once they begin the 50 hours of training.

After hours of practice, students can head to the Pleasanton DMV to meet with the infamous “Scary Larry,” who administers the driving tests. Amani said while Larry doesn’t really like the nickname, which is rumored to come from a California High School newspaper article, it’s good to have someone ensuring only safe, capable drivers are being licensed. In fact, along with students’ drawings of admiration for Driversity’s instructors, Eshtehardi and Amani have a poster of Larry in the classroom, saying that he’s a life saver.

Exceptions to the rule

Even though parents are responsible for 50 hours of supervised practice driving, sometimes they are unaware of the frequently changing laws. At the town hall meeting, parents expressed concern and confusion as to the exceptions to the provisional restrictions.

According to the DMV, exceptions can be made when reasonable transportation is not available and it is necessary



Members of the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department remove the hood of a crunched car during the "Every 15 Minutes" anti-DUI program earlier this year. This program helps teens realize the responsibility that goes along with driving.

to drive. As for driving with peers and during curfew, the law allows medical necessities, school or school-authorized activities, employment necessities, and the immediate need of a family member as long as a note from a parent explains the reason and the time frame.

Commissioner Karen Rodrigue said the exceptions are clear and that any gray area is necessary to allow it to be applicable to a variety of situations.

"With any law, you have to filter through the verbiage," she said. "Go through each of the four (elements of exceptions) and make sure that the statement or letter covers each one, because the officer will look at it and see that it's legitimate to be driving."

And for those who are still issued a ticket for breaking the provisional license law, officers at the meeting reminded parents that those types of arguments are settled in traffic court, not on the street.

Legitimate excuses are very necessary as penalties and assessments added to the base fine of \$35 can add up to a total citation of \$161. Rodrigue went on to warn all drivers of a new assessment that adds \$24 to every \$10 in a base fine.

"For example, a carpool or red light violation in most parts is \$100 in base fine, and with all the penalties and assessments it goes up to \$361 to \$371," she said. "It basically triples the ticket. The new fee that's going to be included is emergency medical assessment, will add an extra \$240 to that ticket."

So whether it's violating the provisional license law or not stopping at a stop sign, she stresses the importance of having common sense for drivers of any age.

What do the driving instructors think about the graduated license?

"Thank god," Eshtehardi said. "It used to be six months. Thank god they changed it to a year."

Cook echoed her sentiments saying it's a good restriction for kids as well as parents and insurance companies. And that above all else, what motivates him to do well in his job, is that his students share the road with him, his daughter, son and new granddaughter.

"I've got a lot of responsibility to make sure I graduate safe drivers," he said.

Pleasanton takes action

While district schools no longer provide driver's education, they are partnering with police and organizations like MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) to provide educational programs and assemblies.

One of the programs the police have helped bring to high school juniors and seniors is the "Every 15 Minutes" presentation. While it alternates between the schools each year, it's eerily close to a real-life depiction that depicts a collision

and the aftermath where drunk driving is involved. A handful of the school's students are chosen to act out the gruesome scene which involves police, medics, a coroner and even a CHP helicopter. Furthering the message, those involved in the production are taken to an overnight retreat, leaving family and friends to ponder their absence.

"Every 15 Minutes' is a fantastic experience and we'll continue to offer it," Collins said. "But we realized we needed to get the message out earlier."

And that's where the town hall meeting comes into play. The meeting held June 7 is the first of many the police will host once a semester. Although only about 20 parents were in attendance—compared to about 100 parents attending a drug and alcohol related town hall meeting in March—Collins said the parent feedback was positive and word of mouth and more publicity will strengthen the program.

Those involved with new driver training also stress the importance of parental involvement.

"Parents have to work with their kids and provide time, not just buy a car and put them out there," Cook said. "Parents can also put restrictions on provisional licenses, like maintaining a B average."

Rosales mentioned that Farmer's Insurance provides resources for both parents and students in language easy for both parties to understand. He also said that insurance companies often offer incentives for maintaining good grades and safe driving—some of which require contracts between teens and parents.

Collins agrees that part of the responsibility falls on parents.

"Parents need to recognize they themselves have an obligation to ensure their kids are prepared for all the responsibility and liability that comes with driving," he said.

And part of that responsibility comes with equipping them with the right tools.

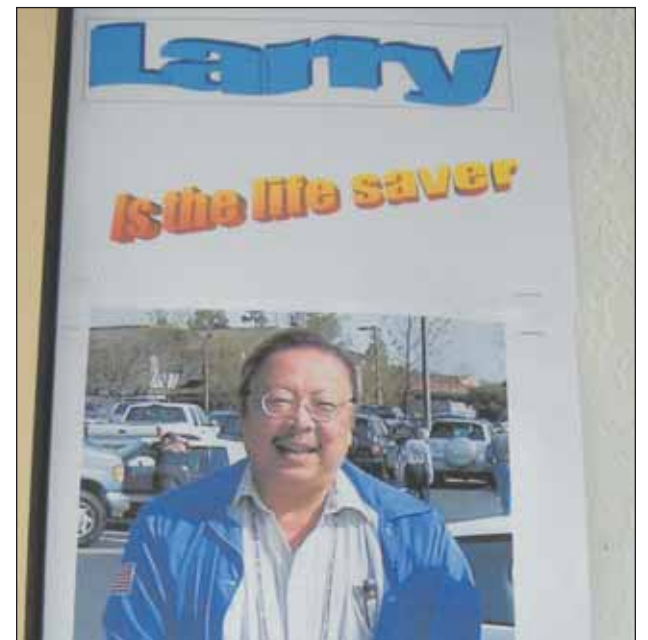
"In wealthier communities, such as ours here in Pleasanton, parents sometimes get caught up in trying to make sure their kid has the coolest car on the block," he said, recalling a time at Foothill High School when a 16 or 17 year old student hopped into a Porsche Boxter S. "It's an enviable ride, but not really the greatest way to ensure your kid learns safe driving habits."

Rorigue realizes it's a lot of pressure on parents and that teens need to share in the responsibility too. Beyond that, she emphasized the need for drivers, no matter the age, to practice safe driving habits.

"I would like for kids to have more common sense," she continued. "If they really thought about what they're doing and whether it's going to get them there quicker—it's just going to save them a minute and a half. But it's not limited to kids. Go on the freeway any day and sometimes it's very scary." ■



Nadar Amani and Pari Eshtehardi stand in the Driversity classroom. The walls are lined with drawings made by students to show gratitude to the instructors.



A poster of Larry, one of the Pleasanton DMV driving test administrators, shows he's not scary, but a "life saver."

Teen driving resources

- Driversity of Dublin, www.driversityofdublin.com
- Amador Valley Driving School, www.amadorvalleydriving-school.com
- DMV Teen Driver, www.dmv.ca.gov/teenweb
- Farmer's Insurance's YES (You're Essential to Safety) program, www.farmers.com/FarmComm/WebSite/html/auto/YES/Yes_1.html

Provisional license restriction exceptions

When reasonable transportation is not available and it is necessary for you to drive, the law grants the following exceptions for minors to drive between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. or to transport an immediate family member unaccompanied and unsupervised.

The law requires that you must carry a note explaining why you must drive and when the necessity will end.

- Medical Necessity: The note must be signed by your physician and contain a diagnosis and probable date when recovery will end your need to drive.

- School or School-Authorized Activities: The note must be signed by your school principal, dean, or his or her designee and include a reason for the school or school-authorized activity and the date when the activity will end.

- Employment Necessity: The note must be signed by your employer and verify employment and the date your employment will end.

- Immediate Need of Family Member: The note must be signed by your parent or legal guardian and include the reason and date the necessity will end.

- Emancipated Minor: No documentation is needed for this exemption, however you must have already declared yourself emancipated by completing a DMV form and by providing Proof of Financial Responsibility (SR 1P) in lieu of your guarantors' signatures when you applied for your instruction permit.

—Source: www.dmv.ca.gov

Dining Out

American

Vic's All Star Kitchen

201 Main St., Pleasanton, (925) 484-0789. Vic's delivers a stary mix of American food, fast service and a cheery atmosphere. Owner Vic Malatesta teamed his love of sports with his passion for good food to create a solid dining experience. Vic's is open daily 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Evening banquets and daytime catering are available.

Bridges

44 Church St., Danville, 820-7200. Executive Chef Kevin Gin interprets California-American cuisine with European and Asian influences with expansive lunch and dinner menus. Add dessert, wine and cocktails and you have Bridges' casual fine dining experience. Visit www.bridgesdanville.com for event and private party details.

Asian-Pacific

Mahalo Grille

425 Main St., Pleasanton, 462-2800. Treat yourself to a taste sensation at Mahalo Grille featuring a variety of Pacific seafood, Hawaiian fresh fish and shell fish, and "Mahalo" signature selections. Also try our various vegetarian-friendly offerings, California wines and island cocktails. Visit www.mahalogrille.com.

Barbecue

Red Smoke Grill

4501 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 734-0307. Home of the Tri Tip and Blue, Red Smoke Grill was voted best take out food by Pleasanton Weekly readers in 2006. Dine in or take out rotisserie chicken, ribs, prawns, salads and tri tip, or pulled pork sandwiches. Relax with a beer or a bottle of wine. Visit www.redsmokegrill.com.

Brewpub/Alehouse

The Hop Yard American Alehouse and Grill

3015H Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 426-9600. Voted Best Watering Hole in Pleasanton, The Hop Yard offers 30 craft beers on tap as well as great food. The full-service menu includes appetizers, salads and grilled fare that will bring you back time and again. Banquet facilities available. On the web at www.hopyard.com.

470 Market Place, San Ramon, 277-9600. Featuring a giant 8-foot projection screen for major sporting events, they also feature 30 beers on tap and a great grill. Go in for the beer, go back for the food. More at www.hopyard.com.

California Cuisine

Stacey's at Waterford

4500 Tassajara Road, Ste. C., Dublin, 551-8325. We serve seasonal California cuisine using the freshest ingredients, with delicious dishes including seafood, pasta, meat, wood fired pizza and even vegetarian choices. Available for special events on Sundays. Visit www.staceysatwaterford.com.

Stacey's Cafe

310 Main St., Pleasanton, 461-3113. Located on Main Street in downtown Pleasanton, Stacey's is open for lunch and dinner seven days a week, serving fresh California cuisine. Come as you are and enjoy our dining room, banquet room, outdoor patios and full bar. Visit www.staceyscafe.com.

Catering

Fontina's Catering

349 Main St., Downtown Pleasanton, 462-9299. Fontina Ristorante's award-winning menu can now be delivered to your home or office. Our lunch and dinner specialties feature homemade soups and pastas, premium seafood and meats, and a vegetarian menu. For parties of 10 or more, we'll include free dessert or 10 percent off your total bill (excluding tax).



Chinese

Chinese Szechuan

3059 Hopyard Road #G, Pleasanton, 846-5251. Chinese Szechuan is Pleasanton's best-loved Chinese restaurant. Family owned and run since 1987, it has friendly service, delicious food and great prices, including lunch specials and carry-out. A banquet room is available.

Panda Mandarin Cuisine

30 W. Angela St., Pleasanton, 484-4880. Panda offers several delicious specials using fresh ingredients and spices that make traditional northern Chinese cuisine such a delight. Open for lunch Monday through Friday, dinner Monday through Saturday, closed Sunday. A private banquet room is available. Visit www.pandapleasanton.com.

Willow Tree Chinese Cuisine

6512 Regional St, Dublin, 828-9111. Since 1978 Willow Tree has offered authentic Dim-Sum and banquet

buffet cuisine. We prepare each dish with the freshest ingredients and are dedicated to hospitality. View our complete menu at www.willowtreerestaurant.com

Continental

Barone's


475 St. John St., Pleasanton, 426-0987. Pleasanton's most romantic continental cuisine restaurant features innovative pasta, seafood and meat entrees, outdoor dining, and a full bar. Barone's is open for dinner seven nights and lunch Monday through Friday, with live music on Friday and Saturday evenings. Ask about our banquet facilities and special events.

Fusion

Oasis Grille

780 Main St., Pleasanton, 417-8438.

(continued on page 19)



Serving
BREAKFAST & LUNCH
7 Days a Week 7am-2pm
Banquet/Catering Available

Voted Best Diner/Coffee shop

(925) 484-0789 • 201 Main Street • www.vicsallstar.com

Pleasanton Weekly's
BEST OF PLEASANTON
 2006

think it can't get any hotter this summer?
mahalo grille celebrates our 2nd anniversary this month.

look for **sizzling** summer deals throughout june, july and august **going on now**.....

this weekend come down & try:
our Tommy Bahama Sunset Rum-tini and Filet Mignon & Lobster!



Mahalo
GRILLE

425 Main Street
 Pleasanton, 94566
 (925) 462-2800
 reservations recommended



CELEBRATE JULY
with a visit to pastas trattoria.

**So 4th of July was a few days ago...
 Continue Celebrating with Pastas all month long with summer inspired specials!**

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT OUR GREAT LUNCH SPECIALS TOO!!



Pleasanton's Favorite Italian
**405 MAIN STREET
 Pleasanton, 94566
 (925) 417-2222**



Dining Out

Visit downtown Pleasanton's exotic dining destination. Oasis features kabobs, rice and vegetarian dishes, to name a few. Check out our updated wine and exotic cocktail menus. We also cater! Visit www.OasisGrille.com.

Italian

Fontina Ristorante

349 Main St., Pleasanton, 462-9299. This popular downtown restaurant gets rave reviews from both locals and visitors. Fontina offers a changing, seasonal menu and daily specials—including homemade soups, pastas, seafood, chicken and veal—served in a comfortably elegant atmosphere. We have indoor and outdoor seating. Join us for Saturday and Sunday champagne brunch.

Frankie, Johnnie & Luigi Too!

11891 Dublin Blvd., Dublin, 828-9380. Lively chatter and the aroma of garlic fill this warm and friendly, classically "Italian" restaurant. Watch cooks hand toss dough at this Tri-Valley pizza Mecca. It's perfect for romantic couples and the entire family. Authentic Southern Italian cooking includes traditional dishes such as Veal Scaloppini, Lamb Osso Bucco and Scampi.

La Vite Ristorante

3037-G Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 485-4500. La Vite Ristorante was rated "A" by the Contra Costa Times restaurant critic and voted the best Italian restaurant by the readers of the Tri-Valley Herald. We're located off the beaten path of downtown Pleasanton in the Hopyard Village Shopping Center.

Girasole Grill

3180 Santa Rita Road at West Las Positas Boulevard, Pleasanton, 484-1001. Girasole, a locally owned family business, is an award winning California style Italian restaurant. We

feature signature cuisine such as Scoozzi, Absolut! prawns, chicken gorgi, spinach for Veronica, Tuscan pork and signature fresh seafood...just to name a few. We are upscale, but California casual with friendly prices.

Pastas Trattoria

405 Main St., Pleasanton, 417-2222. Pastas Trattoria has an elegant atmosphere and a one-of-a-kind menu. We feature steaks, seafood and our famous pasta, plus a superb selection of spirits and fine wines. Live music will jazz up your Friday and Saturday evenings. The banquet facilities have wireless Internet for large parties, up to 70 guests.

Japanese

Ume Sushi

4855 Hopyard Road #7 in Gateway Square, 734-0996. Acclaimed chef David Win brings delicious Japanese cuisine to Pleasanton at an affordable price! We have a daily fresh fish delivery, teriyaki and tempura. We are open Monday-Saturday, with lunch from 11:30-2:30 and dinner from 4:30-9:30, Saturday until 10 p.m. Party platters are available. Visit our Web site: www.umesushi.com.

Sato Japanese Cuisine

3105-K Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 462-3131. Makoto Sato, Owner Operator has been serving traditional

Japanese cuisine for over 25 years in Pleasanton. Enjoy the variety of our sushi bar and Japanese tempura and teriyaki sushi. We are open for lunch and dinner. We also do catering. Open Tuesday through Sunday and closed Monday.

Mexican

Blue Agave Club

Main St., Pleasanton, 417-1224. Come downtown for fine dining and casual lunches in our outdoor patio. Our menu includes a variety of selections from classic tortilla soup and mole poblano to grilled salmon (a house specialty) and filet mignon with a spicy Chipotle Chile sauce. We also specialize in premium "sipping" tequilas and carry over 200 different varieties. Visit www.blueagaveclub.com.

Pizza

Gay Nineties Pizza Co.

288 Main St., Pleasanton, 846-2520. Gay Nineties is family-oriented with an extensive menu, including our renowned pizza, Italian dishes, salads and sandwiches. We also have wine, beer, patio dining and games for kids. Come for groups, take out and call-ahead lunch orders. We're open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

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Italian Style Spaghetti & Ravioli

Lunches • Dinners • Beers on Tap • Orders to Go

Check out our new website at
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The euphoria of fine Italian food

Elegant banquet room and wine bar combination ideal for all your special occasions.

La Vite RISTORANTE

- Catering Service
- Take Out Menu

Garlic Di Pasta – same owner and same great food
3037-G Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton (At Valley Ave in Hopyard Village)

925-485-4500
www.LaViteRestaurant.com

Lunch • Dinner • Catering
Open Tuesday-Sunday
Closed Monday

Sato

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OWNER OPERATED FOR 25 YEARS
MAKOTO SATO

Sushi Bar
Tempura
Teriyaki Sushi

In Hopyard Village Shopping Center
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Chinese Szechuan

Szechuan Mandarin
—No MSG—

LUNCH SPECIALS
DINE IN
FOOD TO GO

Banquet Room Available

Closed Mondays

We also serve Brown Rice

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Hopyard Village @ Valley
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"Open Since 1987"

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3 New Specials Every Week
Seasonal Menu

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Kids eat free*
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*One free child meal (under 12 yrs) with one paying adult

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349 Main Street, Downtown Pleasanton • www.fontinas.com

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Neighborhood Brewpub

30 BEERS ON TAP
Huge Outdoor Patio!

BEST OF PLEASANTON 2006

Voted Best Place for an After-Work Drink

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Savory Delights of Northern China

LUNCH SPECIALS: Monday-Friday 11:30-2:00
DINNER: Monday-Thursday 5:00-9:30
Friday & Saturday 5:00-10:00
Closed Sunday

PRIVATE BANQUET ROOM TAKE-OUT

30 West Angela St., Downtown Pleasanton
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"alta cocina mexicana"

"High-end" Mexican Cuisine

casual lunches • fine dining
award-winning margaritas

625 Main Street • Downtown Pleasanton
Reservations: 925.417.1224
www.blueagaveclub.com

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Contemporary Asian Cuisine

Dinner Menu Sampler

- Starters —
- Shangahi Lumpia \$8
- Oak House Spare Ribs \$9
- Salads —
- Oak House Salad \$9 • Tropical Salad \$8
- Entrees —
- Vietnamese Lemongrass Pork \$12
- Chinese Sea Bass \$21
- Roast Duck Chinois \$18
- Asian Marinated Filet Mignon \$25
- Roasted Vegetable Napoleon \$10
- Desserts —
- Copa Catalina \$8 • Exotic Sorbeto \$6

Closed Monday
Tuesday - Thursday
11:30am - 2:30pm
5:00pm - 9:00pm
Friday - Saturday
11:30am - 2:30pm
5:00pm - 10:00pm
Sunday 5:00pm - 9:00pm

OAK HOUSE JULY SPECIALS

Free Lunch Sandwich
Buy One Lunch Sandwich and get the Second Sandwich Free!
Of equal or lesser value.
Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 8/17/07

Early Bird Dinner
Dine with us between 5pm and 7pm enjoy a 15% discount on your evening's meal.
Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 8/17/07

Complimentary Appetizer
(with minimum purchase of \$12 or more) choose from: Lumpia, Chicken Kabob, or Calamari
Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 8/17/07

OAK HOUSE
824 Main Street, Pleasanton
925-485-5300

You can find us at the corner of Ray and Main

You've got good taste

Share your dining experiences

Go to www.PleasantonWeekly.com and post your own rating and review of any restaurant!

And...Check out our comprehensive database on more than 800 local restaurants, including contact information, hours, directions and maps, professional and amateur reviews and ratings from across the Web.



Weekly Concerts in the Park Drawing

NAME: _____

Bring this entry form to this week's concert for a chance to win great prizes

E-MAIL: _____

Donated by members of the Pleasanton Downtown Association. Must be present to win. Must be 21 years of age to enter.

pleasanton downtown association presents

July 6

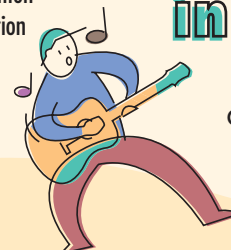
The Bell Brothers
Country rock
Sponsored by Pleasanton Cultural Arts Foundation

concerts in the park

July 13

D-Lucca
Modern melodic jazz
Sponsored by Eden Cosmetics

lions wayside park
at first & neal streets
fridays 7pm to 8:30pm



for more information: www.pleasantondowntown.net (925) 484-2199

Join the Pleasanton Downtown Association on Thursday, July 19 for our 7th Annual Summer

Wine & Stroll

6 pm-9 pm

Over 25 members of the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association will showcase their wines in over 35 Downtown Pleasanton shops and businesses. Hors d'oeuvres and alternative beverages will also be available.

TICKETS:

\$25 In Advance Available Now
(through July 18)

sold at:

Clover Creek
670 Main Street
Pleasanton Downtown Association
830-A Main Street

Studio 7 Fine Arts
400 Main Street

The Rose Hotel
807 Main Street

\$30 at Event
if not sold out

GET STARTED HERE:

Under the Arch in front of the Museum on Main Street. Redeem or purchase your tickets (if available) and pick up your wine glass and event map between 5:45-7:30pm

Glasses and event maps must be picked up by 7:30pm

Price includes wine glass, event map and tastings

Not responsible for lost, misplaced or stolen tickets

Rain or shine. No Refunds.

Participating Businesses Featured Wineries

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| A Touch Of Health | Little Valley Winery |
| About Face | Tamas Estates |
| Acc'sentials | Wood Family Vineyards |
| Aldrin Adamos, DDS | Elliston Vineyard |
| Alexander's Main Street Gallery | Concannon Vineyard |
| All About Me | White Crane Winery |
| Aloha Island | The Steven Kent Winery |
| Apparel & Co. | Retzlaff Vineyards |
| Bibiane Bakery | El Sol Vineyard |
| Cazinha Portrait Design | Les Chenes Estate Vineyards |
| Clover Creek | Rodrigue Molyneux |
| Day Art Studio | Tenuta Vineyards |
| Gallery M | Murietta's Well |
| Gift Baskets of Pleasanton | Bent Creek Winery |
| Gourmet Works | Hidden Creek Winery |
| Gregory Frame Shoppe | Livermore Valley Cellars |
| It's Only Natural | Fenestra Winery |
| Jewelers Gallery | Rodrigue Molyneux |
| Lily Ann's Lingerie | Little Valley Winery |
| MD Spa | Bodegas Aguirre Winery |
| Pans On Fire | John Christopher Cellars |
| Salon Vivace | Big White House |
| Savvy Seconds | Charles R Vineyards |
| Serenity Stoneworks | Wente Vineyards |
| Sincerely Yours Cards & Gifts | Eckert Estate Winery |
| Studio 7 Fine Arts | Crooked Vine Winery |
| Sugar Shack | Tenuta Vineyards |
| The Berry Patch | Palomares Vineyards |
| The Nail Gallery | Bent Creek Winery |
| The Treehouse | Boa Ventura De Caires Winery |
| Three Dog Bakery | Livermore Valley Cellars |
| Towne Center Books | Fenestra Winery |
| Valley Plumbing | White Crane Winery |
| World School Of Massage | Westover Winery |
| Worthington Gallery West | The Singing Winemaker |

Alternative Beverages & Hors d'oeuvres locations

CyclePath, Essence MedeSpa, Noland's Cake Shop, Oasis Grille & Wine Lounge, Stork's Nest, Washington Mutual Bank (Wamu)

Event sponsored by



For more information visit: www.pleasantondowntown.net or contact Nickie Hoppe at events@pleasantondowntown.net or PDA at (925) 484-2199

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