

Adams plans OK'd

Dilbert creator to build 16,000-square-foot property > **page 8**

**Spring
Home & Garden**

Inside
this
issue



Vol. IX, Number 8 • March 21, 2008

www.PleasantonWeekly.com

PLEASANTON WEEKLY

**Easter
is here**

Find out what's
happening
at your
congregation

> **page 6**



Castlewood in cold blood

Double homicide shocks Pleasanton
as investigators continue to follow leads



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Around Pleasanton

by Jeb Bing

Amador Boosters raise big bucks for sports

In this time of fiscal cutbacks in Pleasanton schools, the hundreds signed up for athletic-related programs at Amador Valley High and the eighth-graders who will be in them next August should schedule a grandstand salute to Lori Rice, Sally Parsons, Suzy Graham and many others whose Booster Club fundraiser last Saturday raised more than \$125,000 for these activities. Parsons, whose son Ryan plays varsity football at the school and whose daughter Kelly will move there after completing eighth grade at Pleasanton Middle School, chaired this year's Purple and Gold Gala, which had a record-high 490-plus turnout at the dinner, auction and dance at the Palm Event Center. Rice is president of the Amador Athletic Boosters Club and Graham handled logistics and finances, counting door receipts that totaled \$195,000, a new whopping record before expenses.

Even the "items" contributed for the silent auction held before the dinner were in the out-of-the-ballpark range, generating over \$5,000 for such offerings as sports tickets, power tools, laptop computers and weekend getaways.

Skilled auctioneer Mark Gellman of Charity Benefits handled the live auction after dinner with his usual rapid-fire call for bids that steadily raised the offers on scores of top-value contributions. This included a seven-day stay in a 3,000-square-foot apartment in the bow of The World, a private cruise ship that spends its time sailing the globe. The high bidders can board the vessel anywhere it docks to start their seven-day tour. Other winning bids went for a banquet for 24 with winery magnate Phil Wente, two weeks at a club in Phoenix and a day of sailing on a 42-foot yacht on the San Francisco Bay.

The poker-based theme of the event was "All In," and most of the nearly 500 party-goers joined Gellman, a Ruby Hill auction

specialists, in flashing their bid cards in his search for the highest bidder. With door and table prizes and one of the best meals in town served up by Read Phillips of Beet's Catering, nobody left empty-handed. Local craftsman Gary Winter also sold out his wood carvings of Amador Theater miniatures, with purple and yellow banners etched on the front that buyers could add "Class of 2008" or other years, with all profits going into the Booster fund.

Even the "items" contributed for the silent auction held before the dinner were in the out-of-the-ballpark range, generating over \$5,000.

This was the 23rd annual fundraiser dinner-dance sponsored by the Boosters, who raise money during the year for 23 athletic sporting programs that include all varsity and junior varsity sports, the cheerleaders and other sporting organizations at Amador Valley High.

Parsons found that with the school district's decision to cut some coaching jobs along with programs and classroom aides, such as reading specialists, parents were especially motivated this year to pitch in actively and financially to help. They know it's going to be a hard couple of years for many of these programs and they're willing to do whatever it takes to keep Amador athletics financially sound. Their record-setting attendance at Saturday's Booster fundraiser and generous contributions may also bode well in any effort by the school board to seek approval for a parcel tax to help all schools later this year. ■

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Pleasanton Real Estate News



by
Gerarda
Stocking

WHY YOUR HOME WON'T SELL

According to long-time real estate expert and attorney Robert Bruss, "the top reason a home doesn't sell" is very simple: "the asking price is too high."

Okay—but what exactly does "too high" mean? And why can't a buyer who likes your property go ahead and offer less than you're asking for it? "Too high" means that the asking price simply can't be justified by the recent selling prices of comparable homes located nearby. Today's buyers are far more sophisticated than they were five or ten years ago. They know what homes like yours are selling for and, generally, they are prepared to offer a fair purchase price if they like your property.

However, if you are asking more than makes sense in the current market, most buyers won't think you're a serious seller and, further, will doubt that they can negotiate a fair purchase price with you. So they generally won't even want to look at your home. Obviously, if they don't even look at it, they're not going to make an offer on it.

Your real estate professional can provide all the data you need to check recent sales prices and the specs on the homes that sold. With that, and with the ability to see your home as objectively as possible, you can determine an asking price that will actually hasten its sale, rather than impeding it. For more information call Gerarda Stocking at 846-4000 or visit her website at www.gerardastocking.com.

Gerarda Stocking is the Owner/Broker of Stocking Realty.

About the Cover

The city of Pleasanton and particularly the hillside enclave of Castlewood are in shock after learning of a couple who were brutally beaten in their home recently. In an area that rarely sees violent crimes, let alone homicides, the news has sent shockwaves and even garnered national coverage. Authorities continue to follow leads on Ernest Scherer Jr.'s ties with poker, his role as a former school board member and real estate investor. Cover by Shannon Corey.

Vol. IX, Number 8

The Pleasanton Weekly is published weekly by Embarcadero Publishing Co., 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566; (925) 600-0840. USPS 020407. The Pleasanton Weekly is mailed free upon request to homes and apartments in Pleasanton. Voluntary subscriptions at \$30 per year (\$50 for two years) are welcome from Pleasanton residents. Subscription rate for businesses and for residents of other communities is \$40 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Pleasanton Weekly, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566. © 2007 by Embarcadero Publishing Co. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

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Streetwise

Q: Are we headed for a recession or is this just a slowdown?

Asked Downtown



Kyle Sanchez

Automotive Technician

I think we are headed for a recession. The price of gas is through the roof. My business has slowed a lot. The cost of doing business in every way is inflated.

JB Collins

Distributor

We are in a slowdown. People are nervous to spend the money they have. We are nervous about the inflated fuel prices, therefore we don't want to spend money on fun, frivolous things. I would also say there is an opportunity for turn-around. Coming downtown, frequenting the shops and farmers' market helps to spur the local economy.



Francine Crisostomo

Travel Operations

I think we are headed for a recession. As job markets continue to move overseas, real estate values decline and gas prices escalate.



Lori Pavich

Homeless Advocate

I want to stay optimistic, I think we are in a slowdown. We'll recover. The euro taking a lead over the dollar may shake folks up a little. I don't know that people will use the government stimulus check to stimulate the economy but that might help. I just want to think positively about it.



Jessica Chacon

High School Teacher

We are headed for a recession. The constant news reports of the indicators heading downhill and all the stress and worry in the economy, unemployment rates are going up—that's what makes me think that.



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

Compiled by Cybele Ryan

Newsfront

News Digest

Easter Sunrise service planned

Pleasanton Presbyterian Church will sponsor a public Easter sunrise service starting at 6 a.m. Sunday at Shadow Cliffs Regional Park. There is no parking fee for people attending the service. Rev. Mike Barris will deliver the message.

The service will end at 7 a.m., followed by coffee and donuts. In case of rain, the service will be moved to Harvest Valley Church, 3200 Hopyard Road. For more information, contact Howard Neely at 462-3346.

Volunteers needed for film festival

Those interested in volunteering for the 10th annual California Independent Film Festival are invited to attend a meeting at 6 p.m. March 25 at Goal Line Studios, 5959 Coronado Lane. Jobs range from set up, collecting tickets and more. Contact Stephanie Petemeir at 462-6964 or spetermeir@comcast.net.

Foothill jazz band to compete in Monterey

The Jazz A band at Foothill High School was chosen from about 1,000 high school bands in the country to compete, for the second time, in the Monterey Jazz Festival's "Next Generation" event from April 3 to 6. Bob Moorefiled directs Michael Czaja and Sahil Punamia on alto sax; John Holmgren, Kevin Miller and Kirk Naylor on tenor sax; Anthony DeBenedetti on baritone sax; Maxwell Mensinger, Spencer Miller, Kurt Pretzel, Jessica Saldinger and Dan Yeffa on trumpet; Jeff Buscheck, Steven DePinna, Ryan Fuerstenau, David Gruen and Sam Joda on trombone; Jonathan Lee on piano; Eugene Bang and Joe Alicea on guitar; Kyle Fujino and Sam Shieh on bass; and Tyler Brown and Eric Miller on drums.

To learn more, visit www.foothillband.org.

Corrections

The Weekly desires to correct all significant errors. To request a correction, call the editor at (925) 600-0840 or e-mail: editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

Sunol golf club celebrates 40th birthday

Despite a few 'wrinkles,' club is going strong with planned upgrades

by Janet Pelletier

Forty years have gone by since the first bulldozer began paving the way for the Sunol Valley Golf Club.

Since then, the palm and cypress trees have grown to their full size, three generations of golfers have putted on the green and thousands of brides and grooms have said "I do" before their family and friends.

There have been a few wrinkles that come with age. The gas-powered golf carts will soon need replacing with electric carts (a state mandate), all of the banquet areas have been renovated, and an outdated sprinkler system will need an upgrade.

A lot has changed since the club opened in 1968, offering two 18-hole championship golf courses. For one, the sheer popularity of golf has grown to include more youth and female players—something the club attributes to the celebrity of pro

golfer Tiger Woods.

"Golf wasn't half as popular as it is now," said Perry Lee, the director of food and beverage.

"We have mostly the same mix as back then, but now there are more youths and women," added Brett Townley, golf shop manager and tournament director. "We have three clubs—Sunol Valley Players Club, a men's and a women's club."

The high schools in nearby Fremont practice on the courses three times a week and Sunol Valley Golf Club is home to a number of tournaments.

(continued on page 7)



Scholarships available for college-bound students

Dowd and Guild Inc. seeks community-focused candidates

Students heading to college and who have a heart for serving the community are encouraged to apply for scholarships offered by Dowd and Guild Inc. The specialty chemical distributor in San Ramon has awarded scholarships since 1998. To date the group has given \$86,000 and

over 80 scholarships.

Candidates are described as having a strong commitment to educational goals and actively participating in school leadership and volunteer activities, as well as extracurricular activities. Graduating high

(continued on page 6)

Schools join to bring all-district art show

Student work will be on sale with proceeds going towards art programs

by Emily Atwood

Art is bringing together students across the Pleasanton Unified School District in a two-evening event. The first art show of its kind will raise money for district art programs.

Mark Lightfoot, an arts teacher at Foothill High School since 1989, said the goal behind the event is to showcase student talent. The district Visual and Performing Arts

Committee and the Pleasanton Art League are sponsors for the show.

"For students with art backgrounds, especially in digital work, we wanted to give them an opportunity to show their stuff and what they can do," he said.

Lightfoot said that there are many gifted students in the district, with some he thinks could have promising art and design careers in

(continued on page 6)

Pitbull unleashed

I just want to bring to your attention and the Pleasanton community.

[READ MORE/COMMENT](#)

TownSquare Forum

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Scholarships

(continued from page 5)

school seniors and college students in need are welcome to download an application from the company's Web site: www.dowdandguild.com/community.html.

To learn more about the scholarship, contact Christie Becker at 820-7222. Scholarships are awarded throughout the year, so there is no deadline and it is never too late to apply.

—Emily Atwood

Art

(continued from page 5)

the future.

The show, titled "Art Lets Kids March to Their Own Beat," will be on display from 5 to 9 p.m. April 1 and 2 at the Veteran's Memorial Building, 301 Main St.

Approximately 500 student works—from the elementary to high school level—will be on display and on sale for a \$25 donation.

Posters will also be for sale for \$5. "Some of the middle and high school students didn't want to sell or give away their work," Lightfoot said. "They gave us permission to take a photograph of their work and make a print of it."

There will also be refreshments and performances by elementary school string orchestra and the Foothill orchestra.

The public is invited to what Lightfoot hopes will be a pilot event that will continue in the coming years. ■

Come Celebrate Easter With Us

Easter Service
Sunday March 23rd
10:00 am



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Holy Week Services

March 21 - Good Friday - 7:30 p.m.

Remembering the moment of our Lord's Death

March 22 - Children's Easter Egg Party - 10:30 a.m.

Bring a basket of plastic eggs/candy and share in the Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Morning Services

March 23 - Resurrection Sunday - Easter Festival Worship

6:30 a.m. Sunrise Worship in Trinity Park
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March 23

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Holy Week and Easter

Good Friday, March 21

Noon Stations of the Cross
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7:30pm Good Friday liturgy with Holy Eucharist

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10:00am

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Easter Sunrise Service

All Are Welcome!

Shadow Cliffs Regional Park

Sunday, March 23

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New Beginnings



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Easter, March 23rd - 10:45am
Easter egg hunt and light refreshments following

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This is a historic photo of the Sunol Valley Golf Club, which opened to the public in 1968.

Sunol

(continued from page 5)

A total of 95,000 rounds of golf are played a year. While the club still attracts a sizeable number, some factors have affected that.

For one, competition courses such as the new Callippe Preserve Golf Course, a city-owned course in Pleasanton and other newer courses in the Tri-Valley have made a mark. Lee said he's also noticed a decline since Sept. 11, 2001, with customers spending less discretionary income, as well as the recent downturn in the economy.

But what other new courses can't offer are a nostalgic golfing experi-

ence and family ownership.

"A lot of people grew up here playing with their parents," Townley, who is a Foothill High School graduate, said.

Lee, who was raised in Fremont and now calls Pleasanton home, said players like Sunol Valley Golf Club because it's a playable course and it's centrally located to both the Silicon Valley and the Tri-Valley.

The club has been owned by the Ivaldi family since its inception. According to the history of the courses, Frank Ivaldi, who died in 1995, started a construction business with just two shovels and a dump truck and later, the club. He was also a former part-owner

of the Oakland Raiders football team.

Another advantage Sunol Valley Golf Club has over other area courses is that it can host events for up to 288 players and a large banquet room can serve up to 500 people. Pleasanton tournaments held there include the GASIT (George A. Spiliotopoulos Invitational Tournament) and the Tri-Valley Special Needs Annual Tournament. They also host a number of events for Fremont and Union City, who don't have golf courses in town.

For more information about the Sunol Valley Golf Club, located at 6900 Mission Road in Sunol, visit www.sunolvalley.com. ■

Bilingual 'cross walk' held today

Ninth Good Friday event focuses prayers on undocumented, deported

The Catholic Community of Pleasanton hosts a Good Friday "cross walk" at 4:30 p.m. today. Starting at St. Augustine and ending at St. Elizabeth Seton churches, the 3.3-mile walk will pray for the undocumented and deported while also remembering the passion of Jesus.

Organizers say "faith-based people of good will" are invited to join the walk. There will be a sequence of 14 stations following the gospel narratives (in English and Spanish) that provide the story of Jesus. Text and reflections were based on the cross walks celebrated in front of the

Cathedral of Tijuana since 1999.

Participants will gather at St. Augustine Catholic Church, 3999 Bernal Ave., to begin the walk. Small crosses, prayer cards and picket signs will be distributed there. Walkers can begin at any part of the route. The walk will end at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Drive, around 7:15 p.m., in time for the Good Friday service at 8 p.m. Carpools will also be formed for people to return to their cars at the starting point.

For more information, call the CCOP at 846-4489.

—Emily Atwood

Hopyard! Give me the Diablo

Now this is a true winner of Best of Pleasanton! Burgers like the Diablo (beef) are where it's at!

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Town Square Forum

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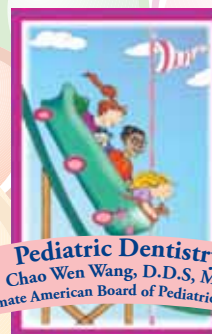
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Two of a kind

The Weekly wants photos of mother-daughter look-alikes.

Mothers and daughters can be so much alike in mannerisms, personality, thoughts and, of course, appearance.



With Mother's Day coming right up, the Pleasanton Weekly will hold a Mother-Daughter Look-Alike contest. If you think you and your daughter could be twins, please send a digital photo to gallen@pleasantonweekly.com by Monday, April 21. Photos can be black and white or color, need to be in JPG format, at least 300 dpi and no larger than 1 MB.

The staff at the Weekly will choose the finalists, and readers will be able to vote on which mother and daughter in Pleasanton look most alike. Prizes will be awarded for the first- and second-place winners. Photos of the winners will be published in the May 10 edition of the Pleasanton Weekly.



Adams house given the go-ahead

Neighbors don't like size of home, but back down when it becomes clear it will be approved

A proposal by Dilbert comic strip creator Scott Adams for a 8,300-square-foot home and adjoining 8,500-square-foot indoor tennis court was given the green light by the Planning Commission.

While the plans were disliked by neighbors who said the house was too large and would block their views and take away their privacy, they realized the commission would approve the project because it had met city planning standards and instead primarily used their time to address the planning board on imposing conditions of approval.

Many of the commissioners cited that while they understood neighbors wanting privacy and to maintain their views, there are no existing view easements, meaning they don't have a legal right to those views.

Resident Becky Randall said "never did we think Pleasanton would support something like this," adding that "this would likely be the largest home in Pleasanton."

But despite those sentiments, Randall said she feels Adams and his wife Shelly have worked with the neighbors on their concerns.

Residents have said the home

would be significantly larger than those surrounding it, which range from 2,700 to 5,000 square feet.

At the meeting, Adams and his architect Terry Townsend updated the commission on information they compiled in response to a previous meeting on the proposal. The information included a report on what trees would be removed, kept or added, a grading and drainage plan and a landscaping plan. According to a city staff report, unlike most custom home development proposals which require design review, the Adams proposal does not because it was exempted in the original Foxborough Estates development approval.

"The proposal we have right now isn't our solution, but it does a lot to address the neighbors' concerns," Adams told the commission.

Conditions of approval included no construction on weekends, prohibiting construction vehicles on Gray Fox Circle in Foxborough Estates and directing lighting downwards.

The proposal for the home on Crellin Drive was approved 5-0 by the commission on March 12.

The commission has praised Adams for giving the home an

above 150-point rating in terms of environmental-friendliness. The roof will have embedded solar panels and the home and property will incorporate recycled wood and drought-tolerant landscaping.

Adams, who currently lives in Dublin, said he wanted to moved to Pleasanton because his wife Shelly and her two children are from here. He also will be more centrally located to the two restaurants he owns, Stacey's Cafe in downtown Pleasanton and Stacey's at Waterford in Dublin.

Planning Commission OKs updated massage ordinance

After an approval by the Planning Commission recently to update the city massage ordinance to allow student clinics, the World School of Massage will open its own on April 9.

The clinic will serve a dual purpose, according to school manager Nick Tangney—provide student with professional experience and offer residents reduced-cost massages.

For more information on World School, located at 699 Peters Ave., call 461-2533.

—Janet Pelletier

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Of Note



The NCL Class of 2008, (L-R) Sarah Griffus, Sarah Groshans, Nicole Zeunen, Holly Micheff, Christina Blake, Jordan Strangmeyer, Amanda Schmitz and Taylor Robertson, (seated L-R) Jillian Harvey, Kristine Zeunen, Christina Lambert, and Shannon Byrne

Charity league has volunteered 5,000 hours of service

The Pleasanton chapter of the National Charity League, recently celebrated six years of community service that 12 high school seniors and their mothers have contributed to local charities March 16 at an event called "Senior Presents" at the tasting room at Wente Winery.

Senior Presents is the recognition of the NCL class of 2008 Ticktockers (daughters) completing the chapter's six-year program that includes a variety of cultural, educational and philanthropic opportunities in the community. The small class of mothers and daughters has volunteered more than 5,000 hours of service to the chapter and philanthropies such as Taylor Family Foundation—Camp Arroyo, Tri Valley Haven, American Cancer Society, Special Olympics and Open Heart Kitchen.

Taylor Robertson, a Foothill high school senior, was

the first recipient of the Yellow Rosebud Award which requires a Ticktocker to complete 50 hours of service in combined chapter philanthropies in addition to the required grade level philanthropy hours. Additionally, Robertson has received the Mission Bell Award. Jillian Harvey, also a senior at Foothill and the president of the Ticktocker class of 2008, received the Yellow Rose Bouquet Award for 100 volunteer hours in a single philanthropy. She also received the Senior Service Award which is presented to the graduating Ticktocker with the highest number of cumulative philanthropic service hours earned during her years in NCL.

The event was a sentimental affair that included creative poetry and Pearls of Wisdom.

Phil Kernan inducted to SF State Hall of Fame



Phil Kernan, a graduate of Amador Valley High School, will be inducted April 5 into the San Francisco State University's Hall of Fame for his notable athletic achievements. The '95 Gator baseball player is among eight other athletes to be honored.

Kernan was a four-year SF State starter and letter-winner in baseball as well as being the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Player of the Year in 1995. His other recognitions include being named All-American and First Team All-Region selection in 1995 and the team's MVP. That year he was selected three times to the All-NCAC team.

He finished on the SF State top 10 career lists in games played, runs scored, at bats, doubles, triples, home runs, walk and put-outs. Kernan completed his four-year career as a Gator with a .312 batting average.

Take Us Along



Hungary, anyone?

Meredith Glynn, 11, a sixth-grader at Harvest Park Middle School, takes the Weekly high above Budapest, Hungary.



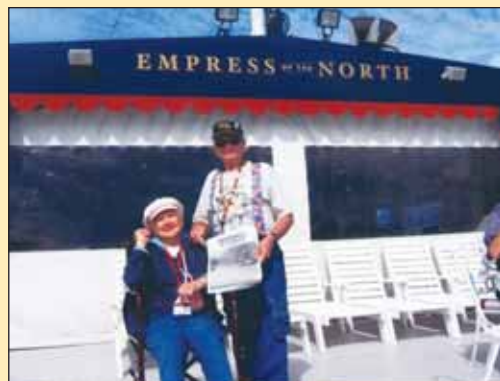
A Weekly piece of history

Dave and Roz Gamble stand by a bunker on Omaha Beach in Normandy. At the time, it was the 60th anniversary of the invasion on June 6, 1944. The Gambles reported that it was "a very touching place to be at this time."



Chateau Weekly, madam

How demure! The Hunt family: Leigh, Peter, son Ethan and daughter Emily pose with the Weekly in front of the Chateau de Chenonceau in France. Has a nice ring to it, doesn't it?



An Empress-ive Weekly

Tillie and Howard Ferreira enjoy the Weekly and their seven-day river boat trip on the Empress of the North in Alaska. Part of their activities included whale watching and a helicopter ride to see a glacier.



A literary Weekly

Dr. Susan Fox and Ellie Haynes visit the Blue Lagoon in Iceland. The trip, which included teachers and librarians, others who love to read and those just interested in children's literature, also visited Scotland and England. They made sure to make stops at libraries, met with children's authors, and visited the homes of Robert Burns, William Wadsworth and Beatrix Potter.



All aboard for the Weekly

Beverly Ales takes the Weekly as she "revs up" locomotive No. 608 at "Run a Locomotive," sponsored by the Western Pacific Railroad Museum in Portola, Calif.

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The Pleasanton Weekly is published every Friday by Embarcadero Publishing Co., 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 100 Pleasanton, CA 94566; (925) 600-0840.

Mailed at Periodicals Postage Rate, USPS 020407. The Pleasanton Weekly is mailed free upon request to homes and apartments in Pleasanton. Voluntary subscriptions at \$30 per year (\$50 for two years) are welcome from Pleasanton residents.

Subscription rate for businesses and for residents of other communities is \$50 per year.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Pleasanton Weekly, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566.

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Opinion

Editorial

New organization, leadership streamline city services

City Manager Nelson Fialho took a big step this week toward improving and streamlining operations at City Hall, a long-sought objective of local developers, contractors and businesses that have complained about planning approval and building permitting procedures that they consider too complex and time consuming. Other cities have streamlined their development services operations and, 16 months ago, with the City Council's approval, Fialho and his associates embarked on a mission to update and upgrade ours.

The timing was right. Both Planning Director Jerry Iserson and Public Works Director Rob Wilson have announced their retirements, giving Fialho the opportunity to make changes at the top. He has done that by hiring one director to replace the two, restructuring City Hall to combine both large departments. Heading up the new organization will be Brian Dolan, who will take the new post of community development director starting April 7.

Reporting to Fialho, Dolan will be the new voice to the community regarding development, building permits, property and building inspections, planning, traffic, design review, even code enforcement. Whether you need a permit for a new roof or approval of plans for a two-story house, Dolan's department will handle the request. He also appears to have the right credentials for the job. With 22 years of professional urban planning experience, he also has eight years of managerial skills in municipal planning and private sector experience in environmental engineering. A resident of Moraga, where his wife Allison is a member of that city's Planning Commission, Dolan has been Director of Development Services for the city of Vallejo. Prior to that, he worked in economic development and planning for the cities of Concord and Palo Alto.

Other cities have combined key planning, building and engineering groups successfully. Fialho and his associates looked at those and brought back the best of those organizational plans to use in restructuring Pleasanton's. Besides Dolan, the new organization also calls for hiring a permit center manager, which will not be a new position but probably a combination of several positions now in place. Money is also already allocated to redesign the customer service area at the 200 Old Bernal Ave. building and to upgrade the land management computer system used by various functions in the city to improve work flow internally and communications externally with the public. Once the new "one-stop" customer service structure is in place, applicants will go to a single city associate instead of the many they do now. It will be the associate's job to walk the applications through the necessary channels for approvals or to advise the applicant that more time will be needed and to take responsibility for a quick turnaround on the project.

This is more than just rearranging the deck chairs. Fialho's restructuring addresses the problems of the past and provides new leadership, services and computer applications to make doing business in Pleasanton easier, faster and more efficient.

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For more information contact Editor Jeb Bing at (925) 600-0840.

Talking Points

by Gina Channell-Allen

Wordsmiths will boldly edit and correct abuses up with which they will not put

Editor's note: I had so many responses to pet peeves concerning grammar (or more accurately, the abuse of the English language), I ran out of space. I will share more next week.

My grimacing at incorrect word usage on restaurant menus and groaning over split infinitives on school newsletters has caused me to be ridiculed by family and friends. While called many unflattering names when I lament the decay of grammar (or especially when I slip up and correct someone), I am proud of the title given to me by a friend not too long ago: "wordsmith."

It's good to know I'm not alone.

Last week I wrote about National Grammar Day, which was celebrated March 4, and I made public a few of my personal pet peeves. When I asked for readers' vexations, the emails and comments online started almost immediately!

Nancy Lyness of Pleasanton emailed, "I have so many!" Her number one peeve is when people use "a large word (to sound smarter) when a small word will do the trick just as well." She gave the example of "utilizing" versus "using."

Nancy Freedom's example was using the word, "'transitioning,' instead of the perfectly good verbs 'transferring' or 'changing,'" she wrote.

On the same note, Andrea Brennen and Nancy Freedom both referenced the common practice I refer to as "verbization." Brennen wrote of her 19-year-old daughter, "I am appalled every time she uses nouns as verbs and try to correct her. For instance, she'll say something like 'I Facebooked her,' or 'I Googled (fill in the blank topic),' or 'I texted so and so.' Why can't she say, 'I sent a text to so and so,' where 'sent' is the verb? I notice that it's not just teenagers who are doing this, but I cringe every time I hear a noun turned into a verb."

While these grievances aren't exactly as grammar-related, they are irritations nonetheless.

Many people voiced their intolerance for incorrect word usage.

Nancy Lyness commented on use of "then" versus "than."

"Why can't people just commit to learning when to use which word, and then (not 'than') get it right?" she asked. "Next on the list is 'infer' versus 'imply,'" she continued. "To 'infer' means to come to a conclusion or to form an opinion about something on the basis of evidence or reasoning."

And it drives me and Nancy Lyness crazy when people write or say, "In lieu of the fact that ..." when they really mean "In view of the fact that ..."

Lyness said, "'In lieu of' means 'in place of'—it is not synonymous with 'in view of.' It just sounds similar.

"Bill O'Reilly used to do this all the time on Fox News Channel's 'The O'Reilly Factor,'" Lyness continued. "I sent him an e-mail about it. He didn't read my e-mail on the air, but not once since I sent it has he said, 'In lieu of the fact that ...' He now routinely says 'In view of the fact that ...'"

Brian Leonard of Pleasanton referenced the improper use of the word to "bring" in place of the word "take."

Using the example, "When I go on vacation I am going to 'bring' my new camera," Brian advised, "the easy way to distinguish between the use each is remember that when one goes, one takes. When one comes, one brings."

Freedom said in addition to "verbization," her pet peeves include substituting "who" for "whom" and adding unnecessary prepositions, such as saying, "Where's it at?" as opposed to "Where is it?"

(My efforts to correct both of these offenses usually results in the recipient of my good-natured suggestion giving me an eye-roll and a heavy sigh.)

Frank, an online poster, and I agree that the consistent misuse of "effect" and "affect" is somewhat frustrating. The way my high-school English teacher taught me to distinguish between the two was that "effect" is a noun and "affect" is a verb.

Brian Leonard mentioned that his junior college English instructor did not allow sentences beginning with "but," "and" or "however," but that this seems to be common among columnists and authors.

I admitted last week that I split the

occasional infinitive to make the writing more conversational and I believe that is why using "but," "and" or "however" is common. It just sounds better. I have also been known to end a sentence with a preposition for the sake of rhythm. (gasp)

In the words of Winston Churchill, "Ending a sentence with a preposition is something up with which I will not put."

Stacey, a frequent contributor on PleasantonWeekly.com, noted that I didn't follow the infinitive rule in my poem last week when I wrote, "I obviously missed National Grammar Day."

"I missed obviously National Grammar Day" simply doesn't sound right. The most popular split infinitive is from the television show "Star Trek," in which the Starship Enterprise's five-year mission was "to boldly go where no man has gone before."

However, (sorry Brian), Nancy Freedom said, according to the English teacher author of the book "Woe is I," it is permissible to split infinitives when you think it is best.

"So," Freedom told me, "split away unabashedly without impunity."



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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.

Zorn's Restaurant

3015 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 462-0994. Located in the Hopyard Village Shopping Center, Zorn's serves breakfast all day. Open seven days a week from 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. with breakfast and lunch specials. Dine in or take out. Catering also available.

Barbecue

Red Smoke Grill

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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.

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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.

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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.

Japanese

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

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WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

Planning Commission

- The March 26, 2008 Planning Commission meeting was cancelled. The next commission meeting will be on April 9, 2008.

Trails Ad Hoc Committee

Monday, March 24, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m.
Council Conference Room, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

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

GENERAL INFORMATION

CIVIC ARTS COMMISSION
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
YOUTH COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF PLEASANTON

The Civic Arts, Human Services and Youth commissions will be reviewing Fiscal Year 2008/09 City Grant Applications from various nonprofit, community-based organizations. The Commissions will consider applications within predesignated categories (Cultural Arts, Human Services, and Youth) at the dates and times listed below. Each Commission's recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for its review and consideration as part of the Fiscal Year 2008/09 Operating Budget.

Human Services Commission:

April 2, 2008, 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

Civic Arts Commission:

April 7, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

Youth Commission:

April 9, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Boulevard

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

Community Pulse

Police Bulletin

House fire causes \$37,500 in damages



A house fire on Clovewood Lane, off of Muirwood Drive, was contained in five minutes as five Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department trucks responded to the blaze March 13. The cause was undetermined, but ruled not to be suspicious. Structural damage was estimated at \$35,000 and damaged home items totaled about \$2,500. While the homeowner was inside at the time of the fire, no one was injured.

Battalion Chief Joseph Testa said a call came in at 10:18 a.m. reporting a small fire in an upstairs bedroom

of a home just south of Muirwood Community Park. Smoke reportedly filled the upstairs portion of the house, leading firefighters to cut a ventilation hole in the roof. The fire was extinguished shortly after the department's arrival.

Testa said a female homeowner was home at the time and exited the house as soon as she noticed the fire. Two cats were also in the home, but Animal Services Officer Roy Ficken was only able to locate one. The other one was said to have fled.

Police Report

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

March 7

- Theft:
 - 11:34 a.m. in the 3600 block of Dunsmuir Circle; identity theft
 - 5:47 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- Vandalism:
 - 7:19 a.m. in the 2200 block of Segundo Court; worth less than \$400
 - 11:27 a.m. in the 1700 block of Santa Rita Road; worth less than \$400
- Assault:
 - 5:40 p.m. in the 3500 block of Whitehall Court

March 8

- Vandalism:
 - 7:40 a.m. at the intersection of Neal and Third streets; worth less than \$200
- Drug/alcohol violations:
 - 3:21 a.m. at the intersection of Stanley Boulevard and Bernal Avenue; under the influence of a controlled substance, DUI
 - 11:35 a.m. in the 5700 block of Owens Drive; DUI
 - 8:49 p.m. in the 4100 block of Churchill Drive; public drunkenness

March 9

- Stolen vehicle:
 - 9:57 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
- Vandalism:
 - 7:50 a.m. in the 3300 block of Touriga Drive; worth over \$400
 - 11:37 a.m. in the 3200 block of Valley Avenue
- Assault:

- 1:02 a.m. in the 3000 block of Hopyard Road

• Projectile weapon use:

- 1:57 p.m. in the 3200 block of Valley Avenue

• Wire tampering:

- 3:55 p.m. in the 7900 block of Kentwood Way

March 10

- Theft:
 - 4:02 p.m. in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft
 - 5:47 p.m. in the 4000 block of Crest Court
- Vandalism:
 - 1:34 p.m. in the 6100 block of Johnson Court; worth over \$400
 - 2:42 p.m. in the 500 block of Kottinger Drive; worth less than \$400
 - 2:44 p.m. in the 4000 block of West Ruby Hill; worth less than \$400
- Vehicular burglary:
 - 9:41 a.m. in the 7800 block of Meadowbrook Court
 - 9:47 a.m. in the 7800 block of Meadowbrook Court

March 11

- Theft:
 - 7:36 a.m. in the 5500 block of Sonoma Drive
 - 1:00 p.m. in the 6100 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
 - 5:12 p.m. in the 4100 block of Stanley Boulevard; identity theft
- Vandalism:
 - 8:26 a.m. in the 4000 block of Vineyard Avenue
- Vehicular burglary:
 - 11:27 a.m. in the 11900 block of Dublin Canyon Road
 - 3:55 p.m. in the 5600 block of San Luis Court

• Public drunkenness:

- 11:42 p.m. at the intersection of Valley Avenue and Hopyard Road

March 12

- Theft:
 - 3:47 p.m. in the 4000 block of Cristobal Way
 - 3:51 p.m. in the 100 block of West Angela Street; grand theft
- Vandalism:
 - 8:57 a.m. in the 4600 block of Chabot Drive; worth less than \$400
 - 11:09 a.m. on West Angela Street; worth less than \$400
- Burglary:
 - 6:09 p.m. in the 4300 block of Foothill Road

March 13

- Theft:
 - 4:56 p.m. in the 700 block of Concord Street; identity theft
 - 6:58 p.m. in the 3100 block of Bernal Avenue; petty theft
 - 7:08 p.m. in the 3900 block of Kirkcaldy Street; petty theft
- Vandalism:
 - 9:20 a.m. at the intersection of Stoneridge Drive and Santa Rita Road; worth less than \$400
 - 12:33 p.m. in the 7800 block of Knollbrook Drive; worth less than \$400
 - 3:50 p.m. in the 2300 block of Santa Rita Road; worth less than \$400
 - 3:50 p.m. in the 4100 block of Mohr Avenue; worth less than \$400
- Shoplifting:
 - 4:30 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
- Assault:
 - 12:33 p.m. in the 7800 block of Knollbrook Drive

Transitions

Obituaries

Margaret Gordillo

Margaret Gordillo died Feb. 26 after a courageous fight with kidney disease at the age of 82.

The end of her remarkable life was peaceful and filled with those who she had loved and mothered over the years.

Mrs. Gordillo was born July 20, 1925 in Naco, Mexico, in the state of Sonora. She was the eldest daughter of 11 children born to Elisa and Pablo Garcia.

For the first few years of her life, her family lived in Arizona. During a trip to visit family friends in Midway, Calif., they decided to stay permanently. Years later, it was during one of the regular Saturday night dances in Livermore that she met and later married Eugenio Gordillo. They were married Aug. 28, 1947 in Livermore. Just last August, their many friends and family gathered in Brentwood in a joyous, surprise celebration of their 60 years of marriage. The pair eventually settled in Pleasanton, and there they remained for nearly 40 years. Their own family grew to 10 in number.

Mrs. Gordillo was well-traveled, making trips to Europe, Guatemala, Hawaii, and across the United States. She was an exceptional cook, who could whip up exactly what her family needed, seemingly out of thin air. She was a sucker for flashy jewelry and bright colors. Later in life she became a sports fan.

She particularly liked the A's, Tiger Woods, and World Cup soccer.

To anyone who knew her, she was defined by one simple and over-arching quality—she was a mother. Whether it was her children, her children's friends, nieces, nephews, grandchildren or great-grandchildren, it didn't matter. Anyone who needed mothering would be taken in, whether for a day, a month, a year or always.

Mrs. Gordillo is survived by her children, Gene, Alfred (Patricia), David (Vicki), Arthur (Dottie), Phillip (Jane), Grace (Tom), Jerri Ann (Paul) and Louis (Kim); sister, Emily Berrios; 22 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren and six great-great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her eldest child, Larry, who died in a car accident in 1983, and son Jerry, who died shortly after birth.

A Rosary was held March 2, with a mass the following day. Donations may be made to an organization that benefits children, such as Children's Hospital of Oakland or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Kay Easley Wilson

Kay Wilson died March 15 with her family at her side after a courageous battle with cancer. She was 75.

Mrs. Wilson was born July 9, 1932 and raised in Clinton, Iowa.

She was well loved and voted homecoming queen of the Clinton High School Class of 1950.

She and her family moved to California in 1959, and eventually settled in Pleasanton. She retired

in 1997 after working many years in Dublin.

Mrs. Wilson touched many lives with her sense of humor, generosity, caring ways and love for life. She enjoyed spending time with her family and friends, reading, gardening and movies.

Her love and companionship will truly be missed by her three children and their spouses, Dawn Wilson, Steve Finley and Terry Joy; her grandchildren, Will, Chelsea, Ryan, Katy and Colin; her three sisters, Mary Buikema and Joanne Geary of Clinton, Iowa, and Linda Bederson of LeHigh Acres, Fla.; special friends and family.

A celebration of her life will be held on March 29 in Pismo Beach, Calif. All that loved her are welcome to attend. Contact the family for further details.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in her name to the charity of your choice.

Vera J. Sharples

Vera J. Sharples died March 17 in Pleasanton at the age of 95.

Mrs. Sharples was born June 22, 1912 in Boston.

She enjoyed gardening, playing bridge, her family and friends.

She is survived by her sons, James D. Sharples and wife Mary of Michigan; and Thomas



E. Sharples and wife Anita of California; daughter, Janet Sauerbrey and husband Dennis of Michigan; 10 grandchildren and 29 great-grandchildren.

A memorial service is to be determined. Call Graham-Hitch Mortuary, which is handling the services, for information and times, 846-5624. Burial will be private.

Births

The following information on Pleasanton births was provided by ValleyCare Medical Center.

Feb. 15

Tracy and David Seeger, a boy

Deaths, Weddings and Births

are a free editorial service. Information should be submitted, typewritten or emailed no later than Monday at 5 p.m. Send to:

Transitions
Pleasanton Weekly
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Or fax: (925) 600-9559
Or e-mail:
editor@PleasantonWeekly.com
(subject: Transitions)

Please include a contact name and telephone number. Not responsible for lost photos. Information how to send a photo digitally can be found on the Weekly's web site: www.PleasantonWeekly.com

The Weekly reserves the right to edit information for space and format considerations.



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Engagements

Cara Chalberg & Nathan Cook

Cara Michelle Chalberg and Nathan Anderson Cook have announced their engagement to be married.

Cara is the daughter of Mark and Janet Chalberg of Flagstaff, Ariz. and Tim and Cyn Wildman of Mile City, Mont. She graduated from Forsyth High School in Forsyth, Mont. in 2001. She received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Montana State University in 2006. She is a registered nurse at the University of Colorado Hospital in Denver.

Nathan is the son of Jack and Donna Cook of Sun Lakes, Ariz. He graduated from Foothill High School in 2000. He received his bachelor's degree in business from Montana State University in 2005. He is employed as a financial analyst for Knowledge Learning Corporation in Littleton, Colo.

The ceremony and reception will be held June 21 at Rocking TJ Ranch in Bozeman, Mont.



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Castlewood in cold blood

Double homicide shocks Pleasanton as investigators continue to follow leads

by Janet Pelletier

The golf course community of Castlewood is in a state of shock after a husband and wife were discovered dead in what authorities described as a gruesome crime scene.

The couple was brutally beaten to death, according to police.

At a press conference held Monday afternoon at the Alameda County Sheriff's Department Dublin headquarters, Sgt. Scott Dudek said police weren't releasing any motives to the killings.

Ernest Scherer, Jr., 60, and his wife, Charlene Abendroth, 57, married for 31 years, were found last Friday toward the front part of their 4,000-square-foot, two-story home at 18 Castlewood Drive. Dudek said the sheriff's office received a call that an employee of the Castlewood Country Club had seen Scherer's motionless body from a window of the home. The employee checked on the home after the couple's daughter had asked them to do so. Dudek said the daughter became suspicious and concerned because she spoke with her parents every day and hadn't heard from them in a week. The family is offering a \$25,000 reward for anyone who comes forward with information leading to an arrest or arrests.

Police believe the couple had been dead for a week.

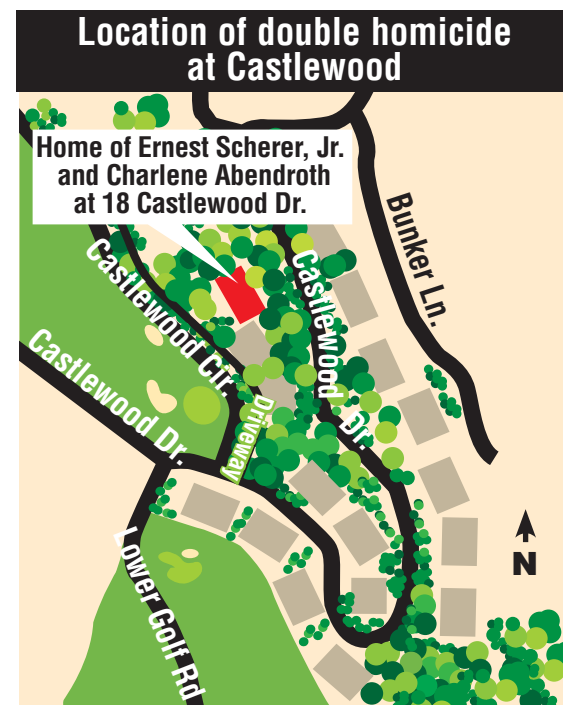
"We believe they left the Castlewood Country Club from dinner at approximately 8 p.m. on March 7," Dudek said. "We believe they were killed sometime after leaving that dinner when they returned to their house at 8 o'clock and Mr. Scherer had missed a meeting that he had scheduled for Saturday morning, so it's very probable that the murder occurred sometime after 8 o'clock."

The couple were found in their pajamas.

Dudek said he doesn't believe that the incident was random, although police haven't ruled that out.

"Do I believe it was random? No. Do I have proof? No," he said.

Police have canvassed the hillside enclave of Castlewood, which is unincorporated, handing out questionnaires in an attempt to see if residents had seen any people not known to the area



or suspicious vehicles.

"There's one way in Castlewood and there's only one way out pretty much to get back to the main road," Dudek said. "That could be a huge factor for us in detecting to solve this double homicide."

Scherer Jr. often tried his hand in poker, but his son was much more involved as a pro poker player who had at least once played in the World Series of Poker. One Web site lists Ernest Scherer III's earnings at more than \$300,000.

Dudek declined to answer a claim that Scherer Jr. kept large amounts of cash in the home.

"I'm not going to confirm or deny that for safety

reasons," Dudek said. "It has been reported on [gambling911.com] and some of the other Web sites that he was in fact being referred to a professional poker player. I don't believe that's accurate that he was a professional poker player. His main business interests were buying and selling property."

Dudek went on to say that there were some items in the house that were disturbed but declined to say if police thought it was a burglary or "made to look like a burglary."

He added that police don't believe that Scherer Jr. had any gambling debts.

Dudek declined to comment on whether the son had any.

The couple had lived in the home for nearly two years. They purchased the home, located near the first hole of the Hill Course, from the parents of profes-



Scherer's 4,000-square-foot, two-story home sits back 100 yards from the street at 18 Castlewood Drive.

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Ernest Scherer, Jr., 60, and his wife, Charlene Abendroth, 57, were married for 31 years. The couple was last seen at the Castlewood Country Club on March 7.

sional LPGA golfer Paula Creamer. Previously, they had lived in San Ramon for a number of years.

Scherer Jr. was a board member of the San Ramon Valley Unified School District from 1988 to 1990, when he was recalled, as well as an active member of the California Republican Party, and police are looking into these leads for possible motives.

Terry Koehne, spokesman for the school district, said investigators came to the district's offices in Danville last Friday.

"When they looked through the home, that there was documentation pertaining to the school district and they wanted information about what Ernie's history was with the school district," he said.

Koehne said he last saw Scherer in the district offices about a week and a half ago.

"He was gathering information about a measure that the school district's putting on the ballot in June—we were just assuming that he was starting to wage an opposition campaign," he said.

While Scherer's visits to the school district declined after he moved to Pleasanton, he still came in from time to time.

"He was an activist for his own personal cause," Koehne, who had known him for 12 years, said. "He had a rather tumultuous past when it came to his relationship with the school district. He was very outspoken. There were times where he would be absolutely relentless and then other times where you would think that he would surface and provide some vocal opposition but didn't."

Scherer donated \$250 in the November 2006 reelection campaign for Danville Councilwoman Karen Stepper, who served on the school board with him.

"It's very disturbing," Stepper said of the news of his

death. "He was passionate about this valley and standing up for his principles."

She said that Abendroth was her instructor at Cal State East Bay when she was studying toward her CPA.

"I probably knew her first but didn't know they were related," Stepper said.

She said the couple had been traveling a lot recently.

In a statement to the media, university officials said they are deeply saddened to hear the news of their deaths.

"This is a heartbreaking tragedy and a tremendous loss for Cal State East Bay," said President Mohammad Qayoumi. "Charlene Abendroth dedicated more than 30 years to teaching Cal State East Bay students and was a friend and valued colleague to countless faculty and staff."

Abendroth was a co-adviser of the Beta Alpha Psi Accounting Association, a Cal State East Bay student organization that has posted a tribute on its Web site, www.cbe.csueastbay.edu/bap/.

Marty Sborov, a resident of the Castlewood neighborhood, said the couple, especially Abendroth, always wanted to live in Castlewood.

"It was their dream to live here, in the wooded environment," she said. "It seems like it became the worst environment."

Sborov said residents in the hillside community of about 170 homes are "devastated and don't know how to react."

Anyone with information is asked to either call Sgt. Dudek at 510-667-7478 or call the anonymous tip line at 510-667-3622. ■

Emily Atwood, Jeb Bing and Dolores Fox Ciardelli contributed to this report.

"Charlene Abendroth dedicated more than 30 years to teaching Cal State East Bay students and was a friend and valued colleague to countless faculty and staff."

— Mohammad Qayoumi, Cal State East Bay president



The media gathered for a press conference with Sgt. Scott Dudek of the Alameda County Sheriff's Department Monday on the investigation into the deaths of Ernest Scherer, Jr. and Charlene Abendroth.

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For a complete list of participating businesses visit our website at www.pleasantondowntown.net and for more information or group purchases contact the Pleasanton Downtown Association (925) 484-2199

Calendar

Book Clubs

Non-Fiction About Our Fantastic Brains This book club meets the at 7:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of the month at Towne Center Books, 555 Main St. "How Doctors Think" by Dr. J Gropman will be discussed in April and May, and "Einstein Never Used Flash Cards" by Drs. Hirsh-Pasek, Golinkoff and Eye. This is not a lecture series; book must be read before discussion. Call 846-8826. The cost is \$2.

Civic Meetings

City Council The Pleasanton City Council meets at 7 p.m. on the first and third Tuesdays at City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave.

Housing Commission The Pleasanton Housing Commission meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month at City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave.

Human Services Commission The Human Services Commission meets at 7 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month at City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave.

Parks & Recreation Commission The Pleasanton Parks & Recreation Commission meets at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month at City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave.

Planning Commission The Planning Commission meets at 7 p.m. the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at the City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave.

School Board The Pleasanton Unified School District Board meets at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday monthly in the district office board room, 4665 Bernal Ave.

Youth Commission The Pleasanton Youth Commission meets 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month at Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd.

Clubs

Amador Valley Toastmaster Club Wake up your career and improve your communication skills by joining the Amador Valley Toastmaster Club. They meet at 7 a.m. Thursdays at Mimi's Cafe in Dublin.

Boutique Textile Art Create home accessories, wearable art or soft sculpture. Learn how to piece, applique and embroider ideas into art from 10 a.m. to noon every Tuesday at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Class is free. Bring fabric scraps, a yard of unbleached muslin, sharp scissors and dressmaker pins.

MOPS—Mothers Of Pre Schoolers If you have children from birth to 6 years old, be refreshed, equipped and encouraged at MOPS. It meets from 9 to 11 a.m. the second and fourth Tuesdays monthly at Valley Bible Church, 7106 Johnson Dr. Enjoy breakfast, crafts and speakers while the kids are in MOPPETS! It's \$60 for the January to May semester. Call Silvia, 560-1411.

Toastmasters Pleasanton Community Toastmasters holds meetings Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Recreation Center, 4530 Sandalwood Drive. Learn the art of public speaking in a fun-filled supportive environment. Call Bobbi at 846-8654 or visit pleasantontostmasters.com.

Tri-Valley Wood Carvers Tri-Valley Wood Carvers meet each Tuesday at the Pleasanton Senior Center, wood shop room, from 12 to 4 p.m. The regular business meeting is held the second Saturday of the month, at the Pleasanton Senior Center, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Call Ken Morgan, 462-6586.

Concerts

Don Lewis & Young Expressions Professional musician and synthesizer pioneer, Don Lewis, will team up with award-winning musicians from Pleasanton high schools to perform an energetic, interactive and uplifting show at 8 p.m. March 29 at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road. Tickets are \$10-\$18 for adults and \$6-\$14 for children and students. Visit www.civcartstickets.org or call 931-3444.

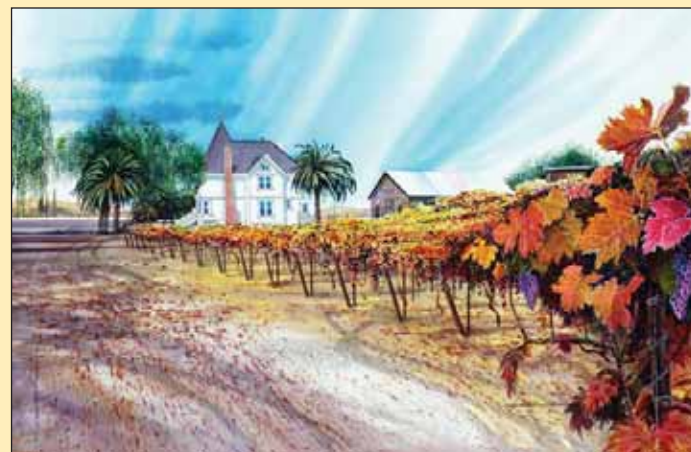
Infusion 2008 An extravagant evening of Indian and Western theater fused together, ranging from Samba to Bharatanatayam, will be held at 4 p.m. March 23 at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road. This involves adults and high schoolers from all over the Bay Area, all working towards raising money in order to sponsor children in Asia and South America. Tickets are \$6.50 presale or \$8 at the door. Visit www.freewebs.com/infusion2008.

Events

80,000-egg Easter Egg Hunt Valley Christian Church, 7500 Inspiration Drive, Dublin, hosts four hunts March 22 at 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. Other activities include pony rides, a petting zoo, inflatable jumpers, a giant slide, and more. Advanced registration is recommended. Visit www.dublinfoegghunt.com.

Goodguys 26th All American Get-Together Car Show The Goodguys 26th All American Get-Together Car Show comes to the Alameda County Fairgrounds, 4501 Pleasanton Ave., from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 29 and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 30. The show features 2,500 hot rods, custom cars, muscle cars and trucks of all years, makes and models. There will also be vendor exhibits, an automotive swap meet, cars for sale coral, live music, kids area and more. Tickets are \$15 or \$6 for children ages 7 to 12. Call 838-9876 or visit www.good-guys.com.

Calendar Spotlight



Gipson Art Exhibition at Wente Gallery

Wente Vineyards Gallery is featuring paintings by artist Larry Gipson in their tasting room on Tesla Road in Livermore from April 1 to 30. Gipson paints in his own style, as seen in this work titled "Concannon Vista," which he calls "selective realism." He works with watercolors and acrylics to paint local scenes such as vineyards and equestrian landscapes. A reception will be from 1 to 3 p.m. April 6.

Fundraisers

Comp Civics Team Looking For Donations The "We the People" team from Amador Valley High School needs to raise \$40,000 to represent California at the national competition in Washington D.C. in early May. Checks can be made to Amador Valley High School Competition Civics and sent to 1155 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton, CA, 94566. Tax ID number: 94-3062524. To learn more, contact Brian Ladd at bladd@pleasanton.k12.ca.us or 461-7520 ext. 40.

Run Like the Wind Half Marathon & 5K Run/Walk The 2nd annual Run Like the Wind in San Ramon half marathon and 5K run/walk will be held March 30 at the San Ramon Dougherty Station Community Center, 17011 Bollinger Canyon Road, San Ramon. It will benefit local middle and high school athletic programs that provide race-day volunteers. Registration is \$45 for half marathon and \$30 for 5K and can be done at www.onyourmarkevents.com/Applications/RLTW.pdf. Race day check in is at 6 a.m., with the half marathon starting at 7:30 a.m. and the 5K at 7:45 a.m. Call 973-3268 or email mjones@sanramon.ca.gov.

Swingin' Bingo The Italian Catholic Federation, branch 285, hosts Swingin' Bingo at 7 p.m. March 29 at St. Michael's Parish Hall, 372 Maple St., Livermore. The event will benefit Children's Hospital and Tri-Valley Scholarships. Tickets are \$10 and includes 1 bingo packet for 10 games. Reserve space by March 27. Call Helen, 462-3798 or Mary, 447-8471. Donations can be mailed to Helen Wirtenson, 4071 Moselle Ct., Pleasanton, CA 94566.

Kids & Teens

Abbie 4-H Meeting 4-H is a nationwide youth organization for ages 5 to 19 that helps young people gain citizenship, leadership and life skills, and participate in community service. The Abbie 4-H club has numerous animal, non-animal and leadership projects. It meets at 7 p.m. the second Wednesday of the month at Mohr Elementary School, 3300 Dennis Drive. Visit www.abbie4h.org.

Easter Rabbit Comes to Stoneridge Mall Mr. Bun E. Rabbit will be at Stoneridge Shopping Center, One Stoneridge Mall Road, from March 1 to 22. He will visit from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. The center's kid's club,

Kidgits, will also host a special event from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 8 that will include crafts and an egg hunt with Mr. Bun E. Rabbit. Call 463-2778 or visit shopstoneridge.com.

Irish Dancers Return to the Library Students from the Moore School of Irish Dance in Walnut Creek perform at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave., at 2 p.m. March 22. Perennial favorites for several years in a row, they will demonstrate traditional and competitive solo and group Irish dances.

Pleasanton Job's Daughters Club Meetings This organization is for young ladies (minimum age 10 for full membership, ask about program for younger girls) who enjoy dances, sleepovers, parties, social events, snow trips, ice skating, camping, traveling and other fun activities. Regular Meetings are held at 7 p.m. the second and fourth Mondays at the Pleasanton Masonic Center, 3370 Hopyard Road. Call 640-4599 or visit www.bethel14.com.

Lectures/ Workshops

Youth Employment Program Are you age 14-21 and looking for a job? Need help writing a resume? Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave., will host a career counselor from the Tri Valley One Stop Career Center the first Monday of each month until June. Call 931-3411.

Miscellaneous

Youth Excellence in Arts (YEA!) Awards The Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council seeks applications for the YEA! Awards. Youth ages 14 to 20 in Pleasanton that are visual artists, writers, musicians or in theater arts may apply. Prizes are \$500 for first place and \$300 for second place. Deadline for entries is March 31. Contact Dave Wright, 484-0614 or dawright@sbcglobeal.net. Visit www.pleasantonarts.org.

Seniors

The Music Man At 6:30 p.m. April 4, begin the evening with dessert at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., then we're off to see one of America's favorite musicals, "The Music Man," performed at the lavish Bankhead Theater in Livermore. Tickets are \$41 for residents or \$47 for non-residents. Call 931-5365.

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Sunday services include: All ages Sunday school at 9:30 a.m., worship at 10:30 a.m., and children's church (ages 2 to 12) at 11:15 a.m. Women's Bible study meetings 10 a.m. Wednesdays. Call 846-8650.

The Power of Story March's message theme, by speaker Dr. Richard Southern, is the Power of Story. He will speak on "Unconditional Surrender," the story of letting go, March 16; "Resurrection and Renewal," the story of Easter, March 23; and "Telling Your Story," the story of purpose, March 30. Tri-Valley Unity Church meets at 10 a.m. Sundays at the Radisson Hotel, 6680 Regional St., Dublin. Call 829-

2733 or visit www.trivalleyunity.com. All are welcome.

Three Steps to Rewriting Your Story

A two-session class that includes discovering your ultimate purpose, seeing what areas of your life have not been in alignment with your purpose, and then rewriting your story. Dr. Richard Southern of the Tri-Valley Unity Church will lead the meeting at the Radisson Hotel, 6680 Regional St., Dublin. Classes are 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. March 30 and April 13. Visit www.trivalleyunity.com or call 829-2733.

Thy Kingdom Come: The Promise of Christian Hope

At 6 p.m. March 24 at St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road, explore Anglican Christianity and the American Episcopal Church in a contemporary context. (Part of Via

Media.) A simple meal at 6 p.m., followed by video and discussion from 6:45 to 8:30. Call 462-4802.

Support Groups

Bipolar Mood Disorder Support Group

Free peer lead support group for those struggling with bipolar, depression, or other mood disorders. We have been there, we can help, come join us from 7:15 to 8:45 p.m. every Wednesday at St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road. Call 462-5481 or visit www.DBSalliance.org/Tri-ValleyBipolar.

Cancer Support Group A free support group for people with cancer and their loved ones. Facilitated by The Wellness Community. The group

meets from 2 to 4 p.m. every Tuesday at the ValleyCare Health Library, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd. Call 933-0107 or visit www.twc-bayarea.org.

ClutterLess (CL) Self Help Group

Is clutter stressing you out? We are a self help support group for those with difficulty disposing of stuff. Cluttering is a psychological issue, not just an organizing issue. If you are ready to change your life, just come to the meeting from 7 to 8:30 p.m. every Monday at Pleasanton Presbyterian Church Rm. 7, 4300 Mirador Drive. Call 297-9246 or 846-5060 Box 2. Visit www.clutterless.org or email clutterlesspleasanton@hotmail.com. The group is free, however \$2 to \$5 donation appreciated.

Domestic Violence Support Group On-going support for women dealing with conflictual issues is available

at Tri-Valley Haven, Livermore, on Thursday evenings. Call Elizabeth, 667-2799.

Fibromyalgia Plus Support Group

Fibromyalgia Plus Support Group meets from 6:30 to 8 p.m. the first Thursday monthly at the ValleyCare Library, 5725 W Las Positas Blvd Suite 270. All are welcome. Call 734-3315.

Grief Share Are you looking for community, understanding and support? If you have lost a spouse, child, family member or friend, you've probably found that there are not many people who understand the deep hurt you feel. The grief support group meets from 7 to 8:30 p.m. every Wednesday at Valley Christian Center, 7500 Inspiration Drive, Dublin. It is \$35.00, with scholarships available. Call 560-6202 or register at www.dublinvcc.org.

BANKHEAD THEATER



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March 21, 22, 23 at 2:00 and 8:00pm

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Tickets \$26, \$36, \$46, \$56

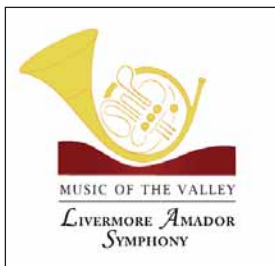
ROMANCE, RHYME AND REMEMBRANCE

Livermore-Amador Symphony

Saturday, March 29 at 8:00pm

Arthur Barnes, Music Director. The concert features Dawn Harms conducting Beethoven's Fourth Symphony and Lawrence Granger performing Elgar's Cello Concerto in E minor. The evening also includes the Overture from Thomas's sentimental opera Mignon and Ravel's Mother Goose Suite depicting popular children's fairy tales. A pre-concert talk begins at 7 p.m.

Tickets \$21, \$26, \$31, students under 18, free



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Wednesday, April 9 at 8:00pm

Distinguished concert pianist and conductor Jeffrey Siegel takes listeners on an intimate journey through classical music and its masters. Siegel creates a unique learning experience, providing lively commentary about the music before performing each work in its entirety, featuring the music of Bernstein, Copland, and Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Tickets \$26, \$31, \$36, \$11 students



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Thursday, April 24 at 8pm

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Living



After shaping balloons and entertaining children at the Pleasanton Farmers Market for nearly a decade, Twee-Twee the clown says goodbye to some of the hundreds of children he has joked with over the years.



A Sad Farewell

Farmers Market favorite quits clowning around

Story and photos by Jeb Bing

Twee-Twee won't be clowning around anymore at the Pleasanton Farmers Market.

The clown, who claims his only other name is Cesare (pronounced Che-sar-e), has attracted thousands of young boys and girls every Saturday for many of the years the market has been opened here.

"He's become a much-admired fixture and everyone will miss him," said Pat Lane, a Farmers Market associate.

But for Twee-Twee, it was just too much. It takes nearly two hours to put on all the face paint, starting at 6 a.m. every Saturday so that he can drive from his home in San Francisco and reach the market when it opens shortly after 9 a.m. It takes even longer to "undress" when he returns home after four-to-five hours of amusing the children in groups of 20-30 at a time, skillfully turning long colored balloons into poodles, cats and airplanes.

One of his favorite balloon shapes is a multi-colored butterfly which he has named the Callippe

for Pleasanton's public golf preserve with that name.

"I have truly enjoyed my time in Pleasanton and performing for all these delightful children," Twee-Twee said after finishing with one group and while waiting for another. "I guess I do a pretty good job. They really think I'm a clown. No one sees the man behind the clown clothes and face."

But Cesare is a typical man who sometimes wears a suit and tie, and always casual clothes with no hint to anyone nearby that he's built a reputation as a clown.

His other job is to entertain at birthday parties and other functions where he's simply a balloon man, doing what he does best by forming creative designs in balloons and also helping youngsters, and often their parents, to learn how to do it on their own. He earns a good living because of the many bookings he has and without the hassle of dressing as a clown.

"I can't go anywhere when I'm all made up as a clown, not even to go into a McDonald's for a cup of coffee," Twee-Twee said. "Kids think I'm Ronald. If I go to the store for groceries, mothers spots

me and send their children over to see my act while they continue shopping. I can't get away from it until I go all the way home, take the time to peel off the clown stuff, shower and become a man again."

Lane said she hopes Twee-Twee will come back to perform as a balloon man, but Twee-Twee's not so sure. He thinks many of the kids might remember him once he starts turning balloons into pieces of art. He plans to give it a try close to Pleasanton tomorrow at the Danville Farmers Market, where fewer children have seen him perform here.

He'll still be in demand, though. Franco at Family Fun Airbrush Tattoos in Martinez has worked with Twee-Twee on numerous occasions at corporate parties where families are invited. Last Saturday, the two performed at Fireman's Fund headquarters in Novato, although he said that was the end of Twee-Twee the clown. From now on, it's just balloons with the technique explained in a normal voice, not the well-known chirp of Twee-Twee that kids are already looking for at the empty space where he used to perform at the Pleasanton Farmers Market. ■



A sad face (top photo) and a "Goodbye" poster signed by his many friends at Farmers Market say it all as Twee-Twee performs for the last time at Pleasanton Farmers Market.

Now Showing

Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears A Who!

★ ★ ★

Rated G.
86 minutes.

The last adaptation was tough to ingest, "The Cat in the Hat" was just horrid at best. The audience pleaded, "Leave poor Seuss alone: You'll ruin the humor, the cadence, the tone!"

The studio said: "We'll make Horton CG! With rich animation, just wait and you'll see!" "No! Stop!" cried the crowd, "For you'll ruin that, too!" And they sat back aghast with no more they could do.

Then out came the film with its pachyderm star, 3D animation with worlds quite bizarre. And a plot—yes, a plot—to go under the hood, And the folks were relieved, for the movie was good.

Blue Sky Studios' ("Ice Age," "Robots") production of "Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears A Who!" is a wonderfully faithful adaptation and expansion of the Seuss universe.

Horton, a good-natured elephant (voiced by Jim Carrey), takes a sudden interest in the well-being of a speck of dust, or rather the world of Who-ville that exists on the speck. But Horton's newly discovered world is in jeopardy when the most bitter kangaroo in recent film history (voiced by Carol Burnett) becomes bent on destroying what she deems a non-existent menace that "has those kids using their imagination."

Meanwhile, on the speck, the mayor of Who-Ville (voiced by Steve Carell) is struggling to convince his town that a giant invisible elephant may be the sav-

ior of their world.

The animation is gorgeous, and purposely short of photo-realism, with an opening sequence that journeys through a detailed jungle environment. With 24 animators working on fur effects alone, Blue Sky has expanded Seuss' drawings into a rich, three-dimensional Seussiverse.

Carrey is thankfully reined in, though he manages to vent some of his trademark zaniness in a short anime sequence seemingly designed for that purpose. Carell's nervous laughter and awkward pauses will be very familiar to those accustomed to his character on "The Office."

In 2003, Hollywood fell under the misguided notion that a comic actor and outrageous set design could be substituted for plot. The result was the unfortunate movie adaptation of "Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat," starring Mike Meyers (coincidentally, his last live-action film appearance to date.)

Audrey Geisel, widow of the late Dr. Seuss (a.k.a. Theodor Seuss Geisel), was allegedly so upset with the adaptation that she prohibited any further live-action productions based on her husband's stories.

Fortunately, "Horton" redeems the Seuss film franchise with a moving tale that has something for every-sized Who.

—Douglas DeVore



Ready to Rent

Atonement

Universal Home Video DVD
2 hours, 10 minutes
Director: Joe Wright

Director Joe Wright's "Atonement" is a wonderful mess of a movie—one designed to win awards but, in the process, forgets some dramatic and emotional cohesion that the audience can follow. It's the kind of formula that was very popular in the '80s: take an accent (preferably English), a period from the past (colonial or World War related), mix in some ill-mannered behavior (preferably sex), angst, tea and viola! The perfect award mix. Ian McEwan, who wrote the book and co-wrote the screenplay (with playwright Christopher Hampton), however, is a sly author that knows, like Waugh and Shaw, the serpents that slither within the gardens of the upper classes, and the delusions of virginity that exist within their progeny. The resultant experience is one that is schizophrenic, the first half being a well-timed thriller and the second a protracted march towards heartbreak.

What makes the first half of this movie so compelling is the pace at which director Wright and editor Paul Tothill move the story along. It's taught, suspenseful and extremely inventive in its use of shifting perspectives especially where age is concerned. They've constructed a whodunnit through the eyes of a 13-year-old girl whose chasm between her and the adult world could be measured in millennia. This intensity could not be possible without the both Wright and Tothill's story management and Academy Award nominee Saoirse Ronan's incredible turn as the teenage Briony Tallis. Hers is a difficult role because it calls for Ronan to simultaneously express the dual role(s) of adolescent profundity and naivety in a way that's organic and believable. To make matters worse, her character at that age is the crux of the story, and Ronan pulls it off perfectly.

The penance that the title implies is one that takes a lifetime to deliver. The movie begins in the '30s during a long hot weekend at the English country estate of the Tallis', through whose halls stalks Briony, methodical and gifted with a writer's imagination to guide her. One afternoon she catches what seems a dangerous drama unfolding involving her sister Cecilia (Keira Knightley) and the gardener Robbie (James McAvoy), whom Briony suspects is up to something extremely indecent. When a guest goes missing, Briony deduces that Robbie is acting out a terrible fantasy that may have lasting implications on the rest of her life.

It is during these scenes towards the beginning that we find something wickedly amusing about being at the mercy of the mind of a child. It is only during the second half, the penance portion that the movie slows down to a crawl because it is where the fun stops and the dictated somberness begins as to extol the "serious" aspects of the story. There is a particularly long side account involving the Dunkirk evacuation that almost stops the movie with its epic quality to which the narrative almost never recovers. However, when the great Vanessa Redgrave takes over the role of Briony 60 years later, she commandeers the story back to where it was going. It is through Redgrave's short but very masterful cameo that the atonement of "Atonement" becomes tragically palpable.

—Joe Ramirez



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Lights, camera, action!

California Independent Film Festival coming soon to Livermore

The red carpet will be rolled out as the 10th annual California Independent Film Festival comes to Livermore April 16 to 20. In addition to seeing some of the finest independent films and interacting with filmmakers, the festivities also include a celebrity poker tournament and gala night.

A sneak peak of the film festival will be held at 7 p.m. April 3 at the Livermore Public Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave. Festival founder Derek Zemrack and festival director Wendy Madden will speak and give audiences a preview of what is to come.

Nominated films will be viewed

throughout the extended weekend. Categories include a Livermore showcase, children's program, best of 10 years, student films and many more. Tickets for each block of films are \$8.

Judges include Mary Lou Belli, an Emmy Award winning producer, writer and director who is currently directing "Girlfriends" on the CW network; Sondra Currie, star of many features including cult favorites "Jessie's Girls" and "Policewomen"; Toshiya Kobu, a media producer and representative of Maverick Creative Works; Jean Lachance, the vice president of worldwide sales of Toon

Boom Animation, Inc.; Alan J. Levi, a noted director and photographer as well as an associate producer at MGM; Don Most, best known for playing Ralph in "Happy Days," he has since garnered much experience in front and behind the camera; Ken Parks, the vice president of MTV and is responsible for developing on-air series and motion pictures; and Danny Rodriguez, co-founder of Polychrome Pictures and experienced producer.

To learn more about the festival and see an extended list of events, visit www.caindiefilmfest.com.

—Emily Atwood



Courtesy Eric K. Wood

Don't flush on 'Urinetown' yet

Steve Yates (Cladwell), Allison Appell Ward (Little Sally), Danny Cozart (Bobby Strong), Liz Caffrey (Hope), and Kyle Burgess (Tiny Tom) fight for their private toilet rights in Pleasanton Playhouse's "Urinetown." The popular comedy about a man standing up to the powers taking away private toilet rights has been extended to a six-week run. The last shows are tonight and tomorrow at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$18 for seniors ages 60 and older and for juniors 18 and younger. Group discounts are available. Shows take place at the Studio Theatre, 1048 Serpentine Lane, Ste. 309. Call 484-4486 or visit www.pleasantonplayhouse.com.

California Independent Film Festival nominees

Best Picture

Broke Sky
Take
The Cake Eaters
The Fly Boys

Best Short

Pismo (The Letter)
Son
Stolen Youth
Terres Noires

Best Mini Short

Oiran Lyrics
On A Tuesday
Struck
Teeth

Best Documentary

24 Solo
Beyond the Call
On The Edge of Black and White
Race to Execution

Best Student Film

Der erste Engel (The First Angel)
Droomtijd
Paul's Opa
Vanished Acres

Best Animation

A Garota
Alien for Christmas
In Memoriam
Simulacra

Best Actress

Alyson Stoner, "Alice Upside Down"
Elizabeth Ashley, "The Cake Eaters"
Kristen Stewart, "The Cake Eaters"
Minnie Driver, "Take"

Best Actor

Aaron Stanford, "The Cake Eaters"
Jeremy Renner, "Take"
Will Wallace, "Broke Sky"
Reiley McClendon, "The Fly Boys"

Best Director

Thomas L. Callaway, "Broke Sky"
Charles Oliver, "Take"
Mary Stuart Masterson, "The Cake Eaters"
Rocco DeVilliers, "The Fly Boys"

Best Score

Duncan Sheik, "The Cake Eaters"
Lisle Moore, "The Fly Boys"
Michael McCuiston, Kristopher Carter, Lolita Ritmanis, "Broke Sky"
Roger Neill, "Take"

Best Editing

Agnieszka 2039
Oiran Lyrics
D.I.Y.
Terres Noires

Best Cinematography

Jim Orr, "The Flyboys"
Peter Masterson, "The Cake Eaters"
Thomas L. Callaway, "Broke Sky"
Tristan Whitman, "Take"

Best Screenplay

The Christmas Gypsy, "Ken White"
National Road, "Chris Zeller"
WONDER DRUG, "Caitlin McCarthy"
My Dirty Secrets, "James Tuverson"

Best Music Video

Companero
Love Granades "Young Lovers"
Scissors For Lefty "Ghetto Ways"
Temporary Virgin

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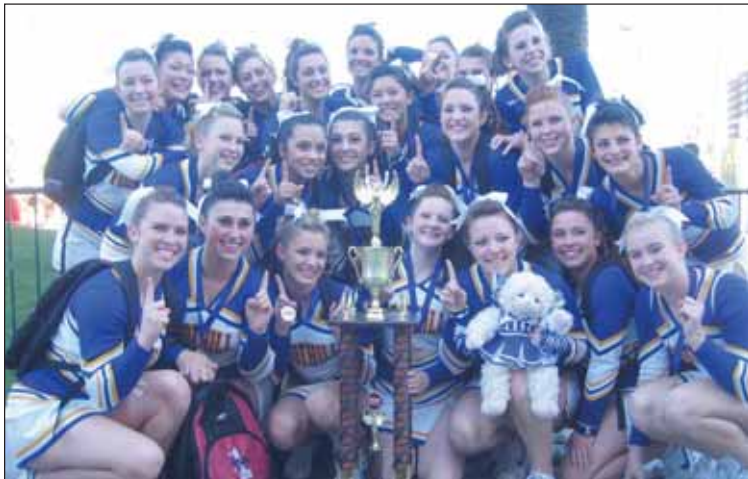
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Sports

Parent photographers

Send a jpeg to Editor@PleasantonWeekly.com of the best action shot from your child's game for consideration for our Sports page. Remember to include caption information: who, what, when, where—and the score.



Foothill cheerleaders win national championship

Foothill High School's Varsity Competition Cheer Squad took first place at the USA Nationals cheer competition March 9 in Anaheim, Calif.

Competing in the Super Intermediate Varsity Show Cheer division, Foothill was the best of the 25 schools in their division.

Months of preparation and practices are required to perfect a routine that must be executed flawlessly in just two minutes and 30 seconds. Despite a few miscues in the preliminary round on March 8, Foothill advanced to the finals. In the final round the next day, when everything was on the line, they performed well with no errors.

The team is coached by Paige Dagen, Kim DeJoy, Cheryl Holy, Megan Moore and Chris Troutt who have taught for the past eight years. Although Foothill's cheer squad has been nationally ranked since 2003, this is the first time that the team has finished first at Nationals. (Foothill's group stunt team won a National Championship in 2005 at USA Nationals.)

The squad includes Sam Aghazarian, Danielle Alvari, Marina Chinn, Shana Cloonan, Caroline Cochran, Erin Collins, Melissa Gandy, Sarah Hadley, Jill Harvey, Casey Heidohrn, Alex Holterhoff, Daniellle Kozel, Angi Lee, Amber Liu, Aria McGuinness, Addie Mantor, Lanie Ota, Marina Polites, Michele Richardson, Nikki Sager, Sarah Sparks, Paige Tabler and Gioia Tornaghi.

—Janet Collins

Sports Briefs

Lydiksen 3rd grader takes first in age group at Dublin 5K

Lydiksen Elementary School third-grader Aaron Zagar took first place in the 5-8-year-old age male age division of the Dublin St. Patrick's Day Shamrock 5K Run/Walk last weekend.

Aaron's father Gordon said his son ran the entire race without stopping as he ran alongside him.

The 8-year-old won first place after the first place winner came forward. The guardian of original first-place winner, Cameron Ching of Castro Valley, 5 years old, notified the judges that Cameron had been pushed in a baby jogger during the race.

Gordon Zagar said he was overjoyed at the sportsmanship they showed that is also a valuable lesson for children as well as adults.

This is his third time that Aaron has participated in the event, having done a little better each time. His time was 26:50. Aaron has played soccer with the Ballistic United Soccer Club over the last two years, having just completed his first season in the U9 competitive division under coach Todd Higley.

12 Seahawks to compete in CA-NV meet

Pleasanton Seahawks swimmers at the Alameda Island Aquatics C/B/A+ SC Meet and the California-Nevada Sectional Meet at Mission Viejo came away with impressive results March 8.

Six swimmers reached 100 percent best personal results in the two-day race: Conor Ryan (12) who competed in three events and dropped his 100 breast by eight seconds; Ryan Vicencio (11) swam five events and obtained personal best in all, reduce his time about 4 percent on average; Alex Wang (12) competed in three events and dropped time significantly and reached new time standard in all; Laura Taylor (13) improved all her three events by more than 10 percent; Kevin Vicencio (15) swam six events and improved his time in all and Alok Virkar (15) competed in three events and improved on average about 7 percent.

Twelve Seahawk swimmers made it to the California-Nevada Sectional meet: Josh Meints, Brandon Fischer, Karen Wang, Neda Nguyen, Kayleigh Foley, Andrew Seitz, Bobby Barrett, Katrina Anderson, Tory Houston, Lisa Narum, Catherine Breed and Chris Guido.

—Yi Zhang

Wrestlers muscle wins in San Leandro

Harvest Park Middle School had an impressive day last Saturday at the San Leandro Bancroft Wrestling Tournament. Out of 11 wrestlers Harvest Park took, nine placed.

The final tally was five gold, one silver, and three bronze. Individual results are as follows:

Tommy Yozzo, 1st place 76 lbs (three pins); Tommy Barrera, 1st

place 85 lbs (one pin); Connor Veit, 1st place 106 lbs (two pins); Nick Gaither, 1st place 110 lbs (one pin); Austin Hamilton, 1st place 115 lbs (two pins); Tim Young, 3rd place 122 lbs (one pin); Desmond Buccola 2nd place 140lbs (one pin); Grant Bonham, 3rd place 150lbs(two pins); Travis Chubb, 1st place 165 lbs (three pins).

—Mark Hamilton

Lady Hustle softball off to great start

Pleasanton's recently formed Lady Hustle Girls U14 Softball team is off to a great start, having competed in the Triple Crown World Series Qualifier in Salinas March 1 and 2 and the USSSA World Series Qualifier March 15 and 16 at Manteca Field of Dreams.

At last weekend's tournament, Lady Hustle earned its first championship, with a dominating 12-3 victory over the Nevada Diamonds. The win earned them a berth to the USSSA World Series at the Disney World Sports Complex in Florida in July. The victory was highlighted by a powerful display of hitting throughout the lineup and included home runs by Katie Mannion and Lu Lu Lanza. Lady Hustle beat Brentwood's Delta Diamonds twice during the tournament with Schiller and Mannion as winning pitchers.

They will compete next in Stockton April 12 and 13.

—Teresa Borchard

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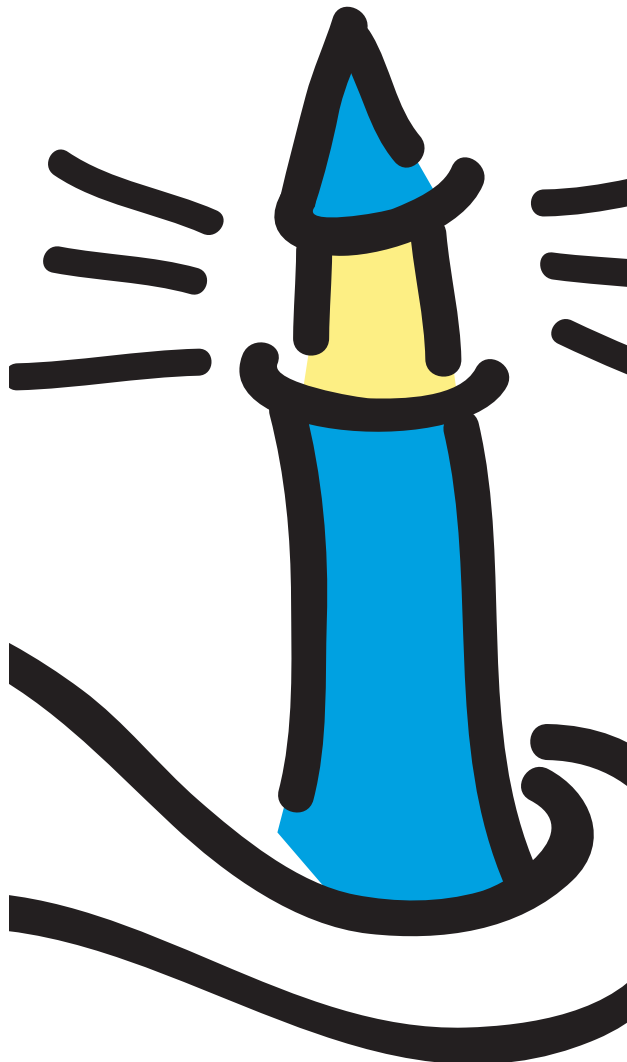
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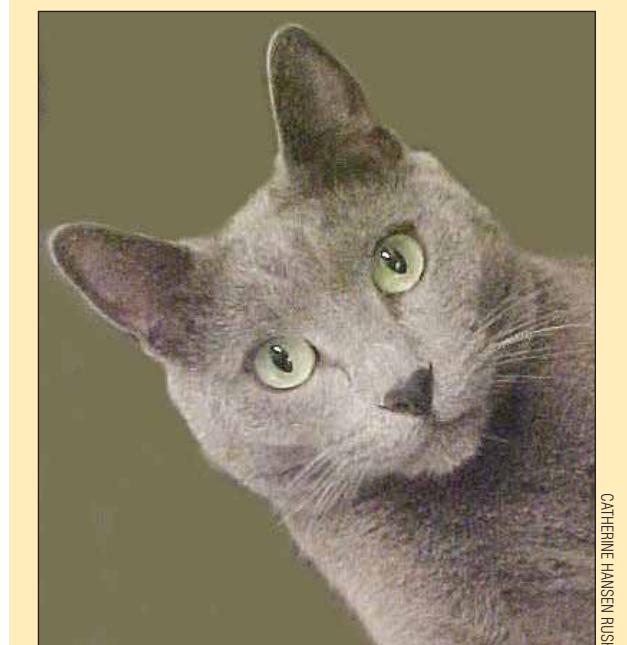
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Real Estate

Builders say inclusionary zoning acts as a tax on housing

Studies show alternatives more effective in meeting affordability goals

by Jeb Bing

Mandatory inclusionary zoning requiring builders to sell a certain number of homes at below-market prices is a complex market intervention that can act like a tax on housing and worsen the affordable housing problem it is meant to solve.

So claims the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) in findings it has made in research projects it commissioned as part of its ongoing efforts to address the nation's growing housing affordability problem.

In a statement, the NAHB said there are many alternatives to inclusionary zoning that can help meet the housing needs of low- and moderate-income families. The three research projects were:

- Abt Associates, of Cambridge, Mass., studied innovative state and local programs designed to address the housing affordability challenge and produced a 350-page report that explains how these strategies work, how they're funded, where they've been used, and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

- The University of Maryland (UMD) Center for Smart Growth conducted research on inclusionary zoning based on data from a large number of jurisdictions in California between 1988 and 2005. Having data for multiple jurisdictions over an extended period of time allowed UMD to investigate the impact of inclusionary zoning on housing production and prices while controlling for differences in market conditions.

- Timothy Hollister, an attorney at Shipman and Goodwin in Hartford, Conn., provides a national survey and perspective on the enabling authority and implementation details that underlie inclusionary zoning ordinances across the country. Hollister found that inclusionary zoning has more variables and potential consequences than drafters realize and must be considered carefully before adoption.

"The reality is that inclusionary zoning may not work at all in many markets, and may actually worsen the shortage of affordable housing in some markets," said Jerry Howard, NAHB's executive vice president and CEO. "The research by Abt Associates demonstrates that there are many alternatives to inclusionary zoning that can have a far greater impact in meeting the housing needs of low- and moderate-income families."

The researchers at Abt Associates documented 30 detailed case studies that explain how state and local governments use a variety of strategies to address their housing affordability needs. This research represents the most comprehensive report ever compiled on the subject of non-federal solutions. Most of these case studies highlight new examples not previously described in other reports by such organizations as HUD, the Center for Housing Policy and the Urban Land Institute.

The Abt Associates study found that local governments most successful in addressing affordability concerns have pursued a variety of strategies to encourage affordable housing,

and that the strategies getting the most press have not necessarily been the most effective. The Abt Associates research identifies the programs that really can make a difference.

A good example is North Kingstown, R.I., which uses a variety of strategies, including state mandates and guidance for local planning, permit streamlining and a significant density bonus program for developers. Another example is Emeryville, which established zoning codes and development regulations to encourage infill and brown-fields development, high-density housing and mixed-use development. Among the successes is Emeryville Warehouse Lofts, which includes 140 lofts, 129 other residential units, 7,000 square feet of retail space, a 4,500 square-foot landscaped courtyard and a renovated parking structure.

The University of Maryland (UMD) study fills a void in research into the long-term effectiveness of inclusionary zoning. The UMD study, conducted by Gerrit Knaap, Antonio Bento, and Scott Lowe, assessed the effects of inclusionary zoning policies on single-family home prices, single-family and multifamily housing starts, and the size of single-family housing units in a number of California jurisdictions from 1988 to 2005.

The study found that in California between 1988 and 2005, imposing inclusionary zoning had virtually no effect on the overall level of housing starts. It neither increased nor reduced overall housing supply, the study showed. However, the results showed measurable effects on other market factors. Inclusionary zoning:

- Increased multifamily housing starts by 7 percent to 12 percent when production shifted away from single-family homes as inclusionary zoning requirements increased;
- Raised the price of new homes by 2 percent to 3 percent, and by as much as 5 percent for more expensive homes, compared to communities without inclusionary zoning;
- Reduced the size of new homes by 48 square feet.

The UMD report states that "no program, of course, is cost free. According to standard economic theory, inclusionary zoning acts like a tax on housing construction. And just like other taxes, the burdens of inclusionary zoning are passed on to housing consumers, housing producers, and landowners. More specifically, economic theory suggests that inclusionary zoning requirements act to decrease the supply of housing at every price, raise housing prices, and slow housing construction. As a result, inclusionary zoning policies could exacerbate the affordable housing problem that they are designed to address."

"Our report says little about whether inclusionary zoning is good or bad public policy," said Knaap, who is director of the National Center for Smart Growth Education. "It does make clear, however, that the benefits of inclusionary zoning are not without cost and that those costs are borne primarily by the consumers and producers of new, market rate housing."

All three reports can be found at www.nahb.org/housingaffordability. ■

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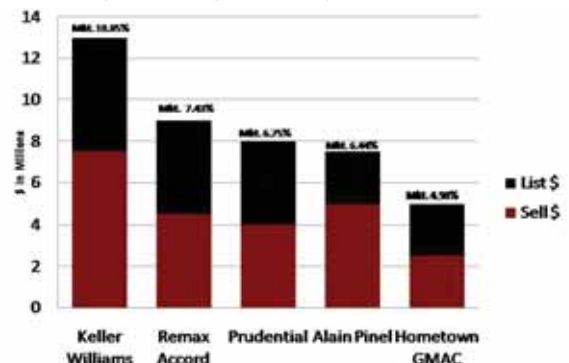
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3 frplcs 925.847.2200



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PLEASANTON



SINGLE STORY IN PRIVATE COURT 3BD/2BA, with upgraded custom finishes thru-out. Open floorplan w/high ceilings, expanded master bdrm.

925.426.3800 \$768,888

PLEASANTON



GREAT LOCATION 4BD/3BA, largest floorplan w/ 1bd/1ba downstairs, 1,900 sq. ft. Newer paint, appliances, granite slab countertops, tile flooring.

925.426.3800 \$734,888

DUBLIN



BEAUTIFULLY UPGRADED & PRICED TO SELL. 3BD/2 1/2 BA, w\decorator touches throughout. Custom paint w\crown moldings. Granite counter-tops.

925.426.3800 \$659,000

SAN RAMON



ENJOY THE CANYON LAKES VIEW in this immaculate 2BD/2BA Luxury Condo with 2-car attached garage. Must see to appreciate views, Italian Tile, and more.

925.426.3800 \$639,950

LIVERMORE



EXQUISITE HOME 4BD/3BA, formal dining room with patio door, living room with hardwood floors, upstairs bedrooms offer walk-in closets & ceiling fans.

925.426.3800 \$609,000

LIVERMORE



SPACIOUS HOME 3BD/2BA, including bonus rooms, gourmet kitchen with granite slab, newer appliances, walking distance to shopping.

925.426.3800 \$349,950

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The latest from The 680 Blog

Pleasanton Mid March Update—More of the Same

The Pleasanton CA real estate market is relatively stable at the mid point in March. Certainly, amidst the drum beat of bad economic news and further turmoil on the financial markets (I guess putting all my money into that Bear Stearns Emerging Markets Fund was a bad move), we are really doing quite well. Inventory is creeping up as we head into Spring, but this is normal. There are 194 total single family homes available in Pleasanton right now, up from 185 at the beginning of the month. Most of the increase is in the \$1 million plus market. Pending sales look to be about on par with February, which was a good showing. There

are 21 pending sales for March so far, compared with 43 for the month of February. So in a nutshell, we are chugging along at a decent clip.

There are some encouraging signs in the marketplace. Some of the outlying areas like Brentwood and Tracy are reporting an increase in sales, and more market activity. New home builders are reporting more traffic across the board, and sales are up fairly significantly at most subdivisions. And the Fed just lowered their short term rates again by 1/4% and then 3/4% two days later. >>Go to www.680homes.com to read the rest of this article.



Doug Buenz

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VIEWES

Custom 5 BR, 4 BTH single story on .41 acre lot with views!
\$1,849,000



POOL & SPA

5 BR, 3 BTH home on cul-de-sac lot with pool, spa, & sports court.
\$1,485,000



COMING SOON

Fabulous Sycamore Heights with 5 BR + office, 5 1/2 Bths, 1/2 Acre lot w/pool, BBQ, & Views!
\$2,125,900



GUEST HOUSE

Elegant 4 BR, 3.5 BTH home plus 2 BR, 1 BTH detached guest house. .43 Acre private lot!
\$1,899,900



JUST LISTED!

Gorgeous single story custom on prime 2.25 acre hilltop lot with views! 4 car garage, wine cellar, and more!
\$1,999,900



CONDO

Walk to Downtown! Sharp 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo in the heart of downtown Pleasanton!
\$419,900

Home Sales

This week's data represents homes sold during February 2008

Pleasanton

4568 1st Street M. & T. Dominguez to M. Bushong for \$1,200,000
3662 Fairlands Drive Tenney Trust to H. Xie for \$618,000
2582 Glen Isle Avenue R. & S. Russo to P. & L. Johnson for \$680,000
5725 Ohana Drive O'Hana Homes to J. Harding for \$1,850,000

Dublin

8897 Bellina Commons Braddock & Logan to C. & S. Ivory for \$505,000
5501 Demarcus Boulevard #433 Western Pacific Housing to R. McGlashan for \$470,500
5501 Demarcus Boulevard #611 Western Pacific Housing to J. & M. Dobrinski for \$370,000
5501 Demarcus Boulevard #675 Western Pacific Housing to K. Tsujimoto for \$381,000
7743 Hillrose Drive Ownit Mortgage to K. Kemp for \$430,000
5139 Hinsdale Court N. Tang to R. Wang for \$705,000
8110 Peppertree Road B. Katherine to R. & E. Witczak for \$585,000
3562 Rocking Horse Court Pfeiffer Ranch Investors to J. Deng for \$635,000
3573 Rocking Horse Court Pfeiffer Ranch Investors to A. Lam for \$650,000
11750 Silvergate Drive S. & A. Crees to M. & J. Thompson for \$561,000
4881 Thorndike Lane Lennar Homes to P. & T. Wong for \$769,500

4883 Thorndike Lane Lennar Homes to R. & K. Lwin for \$699,000

4887 Thorndike Lane Lennar Homes to M. Muzaffar for \$756,000

6864 York Drive Morgan Stanley to J. Flores for \$462,000

Livermore

1364 Arroyo Road Arroyo Crossing to L. & J. Reid for \$859,000
5529 Autumn Way W. & C. Ponce to R. Eddy for \$1,039,500

527 Caliente Avenue E. Fraser to B. Perry for \$500,000

3868 Dartmouth Way T. & L. Owens to C. & J. Patrick for \$435,000

1041 Dublin Avenue J. & C. Lindberg to H. Lin for \$540,000

6768 Edgewater Lane E-Trade Bank to J. & R. Huguet for \$515,000

1547 La Cresta Court J. Bowes to M. Pataki for \$546,000

2152 Lawson Circle F. Quenangan to L. & C. Bilbao for \$760,000

292 Lloyd Street First Franklin Mortgage to C. Forsberg for \$455,000

1946 Locust Street Federal National Mortgage to T. & M. McKinney for \$355,000

276 MacKenzie Court Livermore Grove to T. McAlister for \$894,000

385 Quartz Circle Vanderhaar Trust to J. & S. Sanders for \$580,000

1846 Spruce Street P. Campbell to T. & R. Mills for \$385,000

5701 Stockton Loop South Livermore Development to G. Woltner for \$1,028,500

261 Western Avenue G. Trejos to I. Gonzalez for \$540,000

San Ramon

133 Amaryllis Court R. & M. Lee to P. Chen for \$550,000

130 Avalon Court C. Davenport to A. Subhani for \$1,062,500

6351 Byron Lane Centex Homes to L. & M. Kannappan for \$630,000

9024 Craydon Circle Trent Trust to M. Chaber for \$205,000

2030 East Canyon Woods Drive Ross Trust to S. Guirguis for \$410,000

3327 Ensenada Drive Dickinson Trust to M. Zotos for \$675,000

2123 Feathermint Drive M. & A. Young to J. & S. Thacker for \$1,487,500

4584 Lilac Ridge Road R. Chang to R. Nagesetty for \$2,000,000

2657 Paige Way Centex Homes to X. Han for \$1,009,000

303 Pembroke Court Centex Homes to T. Lin for \$1,075,000

200 Reflections Drive #12 San Ramon Reflections to M. Tiu for \$368,000

5323 Sherwood Way Centex Homes to W. & K. Fernandes for \$615,000

5325 Sherwood Way Centex Homes to S. Maila for \$600,000

5327 Sherwood Way Centex Homes to W. Zou for \$600,000

OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

DUBLIN

1 Bedrooms
3290 Maguire Way \$255,000
 Sun 3-5
 Hometown GMAC Real Estate 699-5041

3 Bedrooms
7256 New Castle Ln. \$685,000
 Sat 12-4 Coldwell Banker 200-4130

LIVERMORE

3 Bedrooms
356 Rincon Ave. \$565,000
 Sat 1-4 Hometown GMAC 487-1427

62 Terra Wy. \$885,000
 Sat 1-4 Keller Williams 918-2045

4 Bedrooms
2648 St. Helena Ct. \$1,150,000
 Sun 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 525-0116

1579 Frankfurt Wy. \$769,000
 Sat 12:30-3:30J. Rockcliff Realtors 251-2523

2043 Lomitas Ct. \$829,000
 Sat 1-4 Alain Pinel 510-882-5312

2825 Caldeira Dr. \$969,000
 Sat 1-5 Keller Williams Realty 846-4663

PLEASANTON

3 Bedrooms
4159 Jensen St. \$724,500
 Sat 1-4 Empire Realty 963-8294

4 Bedrooms
1062 Vinter Wy. \$859,000
 Sat 1-4 Keller Williams 397-4300

5 Bedrooms
2655 Calle Reynoso \$939,000
 Sat 1-4 Alain Pinel Realtors 382-9746

SAN RAMON

3 Bedrooms
2238 S. Donovan Wy. \$659,000
 Sat 1-4 Keller Williams 260-8883

4 Bedrooms
5026 Holborn wy. \$1,019,000
 Sat 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 735-7653

516 Andreas Wy. \$859,000
 Sat 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 735-7653

5 Bedrooms
1416 Allanmere Wy. \$899,990
 Sun 12-3 J. Rockcliff Realtors 735-7653

ALAMO

4 Bedrooms
3084 Lunada Ln. \$1,979,000
 Sun 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 855-4134

DANVILLE

4 Bedrooms
842 Matadera Cir. \$1,099,000
 Sat 1-4 Keller Williams 260-2508

2220 Canyon Oak Ln. \$2,399,000
 Sat 1:30-4:30 J. Rockcliff Realtors 785-8369

WALNUT CREEK

2 Bedrooms
1236 Walker Ave. #310 \$349,990
 Sat 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 735-7653

OAKLAND

1 Bedrooms
525 Canyon Oaks Dr. Unit G \$329,000
 Sat 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 683-7709

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Sheila Cross

485.5701 (private office line)

Sheila@sheilacross.com

350-C Main Street, Pleasanton 94566



Join us Downtown!

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When it comes to your heart, results speak louder than words. And in the eyes of the organizations that statistically measure outcomes, the heart program at San Ramon Regional Medical Center is among the best, not only in the East Bay, but in California. See the outcome studies for yourself at www.oshpd.state.ca.us, at other healthcare rating organizations online, or speak with your physician. After all, when it comes to your heart, it pays to use your head.



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