

Bringing in the big bucks

City has highest income in the U.S. for its size > **page 5**

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www.PleasantonWeekly.com

Help wanted

Volunteer positions open for Alviso Adobe > **page 5**

PLEASANTON WEEKLY

Pride of Scotland

Annual Scottish celebration is back this weekend > **page 16**



Harvest time

Two-day wine celebration starts Sunday, offering tours and tastings

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Around Pleasanton

by Jeb Bing

For Lydiksen teacher, it's 1977 all over again

Most teachers I know age quietly with little to remind them of the years going by. After all, the kids are still 6 or 10 or 14 at the start of every school year. Only the faces have changed. So imagine the age-jolt third grade teacher Ann Kyle had earlier this week when Kent Tierney brought his 9-year-old son Liam to class, one of 20 new students Kyle met on Tuesday. It was déjà vu with both remembering that it was 31 years ago that Kent Tierney sat in Mrs. Kyle's second grade classroom at Lydiksen. Kyle thought it wasn't all that long ago, but Tierney recalled that it was 1977, the last year that Pleasanton had a significant snow-storm, and he has pictures to prove it.

It's not unusual for teachers to have the sons and daughters of parents they've taught, but, as Kyle told me, it does remind you how long you've been teaching. She can also turn on the TV and see Juliette Goodrich on Channel 5, who was in one of her classes. Even Kevin Henry, the son of Lydiksen Principal Colleen Henry was in her class. He's now married, lives in Southern California, and has his own third-grader in school there. Kyle says that most of her former students have moved away or no longer live in the Lydiksen district so she doesn't run into them as much as high school teachers who have larger and multiple classes in schools with 2,000 or more students. Lydiksen is smaller with about 700 students and serves a neighborhood that includes Stoneridge apartments and condos with a more transient population. Few are probably like Kyle who lives with her husband, attorney Mike Kyle, less than a mile away in

the first house they ever owned and which, she says proudly, is all paid for.

With no children of her own, Ann Kyle smiles and points to the 20 students walking into her classroom and says, "They're my kids for a year." And she goes all out for them. Coming to school a week early, she joined Principal Henry and other teachers in putting classrooms back together after a summer when floors were scrubbed, desks and chairs stacked on counters and old lesson plans and bulletin board memos discarded.



Liam Tierney with dad, Kent and Lydiksen 3rd grade teacher Ann Kyle.

Teachers at Lydiksen hang colorful, often seasonal banners in the hallways outside their classrooms, changing them once a month. For Kyle, it also took time to sort out the seven books each student will use this year and put them on desks. Only a workbook and paper assignments go home. The books, including arithmetic, science and social studies are far more advanced than when Kyle started teaching with third graders today doing the work that fourth graders mastered just a decade ago. Classrooms that included movie projectors, screens and chalk blackboards are now technology centers, even in Kyle's third grade with its computer desk, printers, photo disk readers and more. New this year in all Pleasanton schools is a software program called Zangle, which tracks students from kindergarten through high school. That will give Kyle a foolproof system of checking out other students to see if she also taught one of their parents in her early years at Lydiksen. ■

Pleasanton Real Estate News



by Gerarda Stocking

A NEGOTIATOR'S MARKET

In a seller's market, it goes without saying that buyers will do all they can to keep from ruffling the pride of the seller. For example, most buyers won't come in with lowball offers, because they rightly expect sellers to simply throw such offers out the front door. When so many people want to buy your home, who needs to go through the sometimes arduous process of negotiating a deal everyone can live with?

In a buyer's market, though, sellers very often do need to go through such an arduous process. If, for example, the seller receives what seems to be a "lowball" offer, it probably isn't time to throw it out with the week's garbage.

Realize first that someone is actually making a binding offer to buy the home, and that some careful analysis and communications could result in a sale. Go back to the comparable sales analysis. Homes in the area could be selling for slightly less than they did when you first visited the data on recent sales. Look, too, at the direction of the market and the possibility that home values will be relatively stagnant for a time.

Then look closely at exactly what you need to accomplish and what you want to accomplish with the proceeds from the sale of the home. And then make a counter-offer, replete with praise for the original offer, that represents what you would want to receive in the sale. The buyer will probably counter your counter-offer, giving you the chance to take your price as low as will work for you—and also probably bringing out the buyers' bottom line. At this point, deals are very often put together, and all parties to the transactions end up satisfied. 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.

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Town Square Forum

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About the Cover

Winegrower's barn holds equipment used in maintaining this expanse of vineyards in south Livermore in this serene view by photographer Steven F. Kelly. The 27th annual Harvest Wine Celebration gets under way at noon Sunday. Cover design by Rick Nobles.

Vol. IX, Number 31

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. © 2008 by Embarcadero Publishing Co. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

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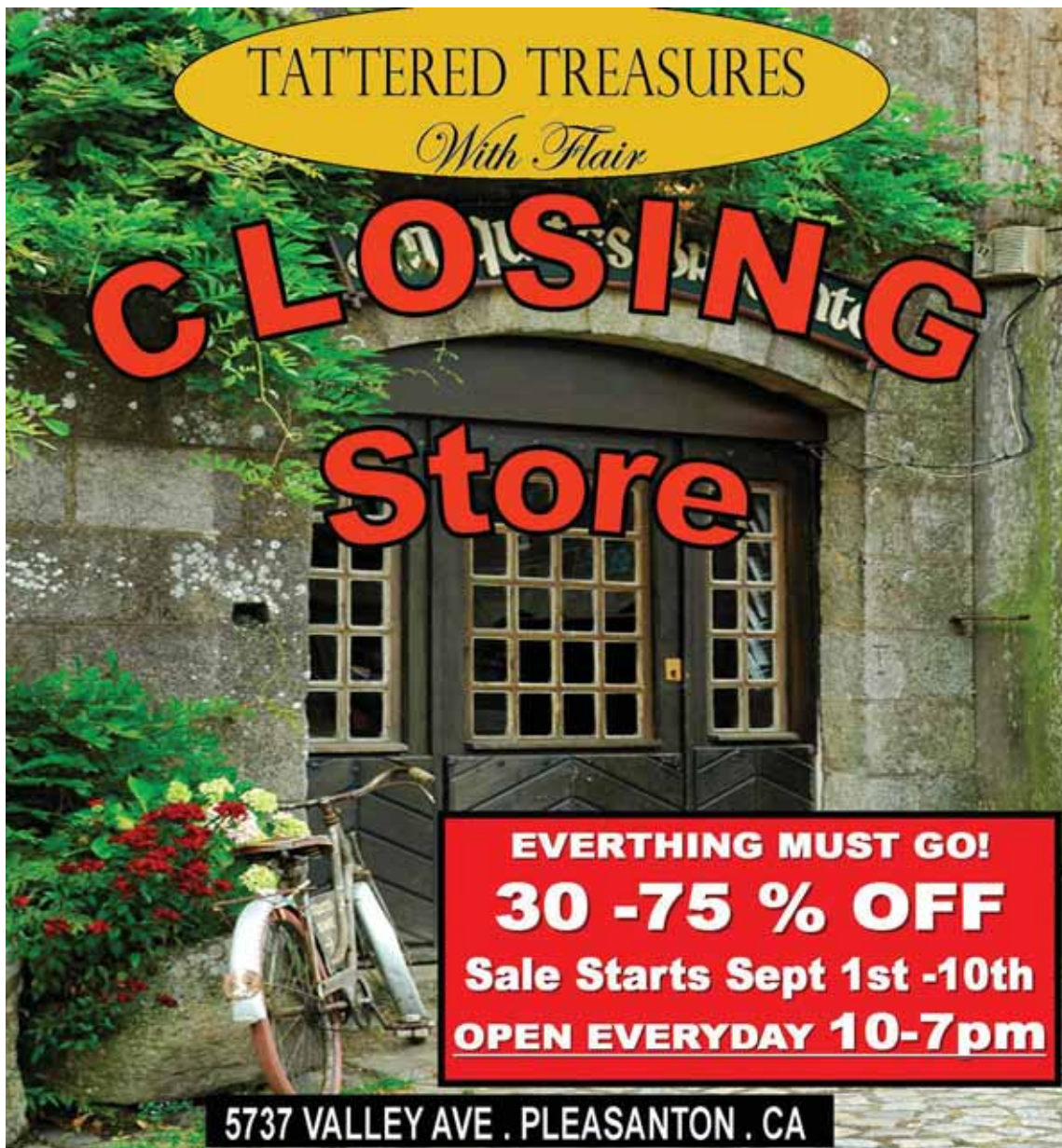
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Streetwise

Q: Which is a better process for choosing a president—electoral votes or popular votes?

Asked Around Town



Eric Harpell
College Professor

Definitely the popular vote. There is no other system, especially in a democracy, where a small number of people get equal representation with a large number of people. Basically, this is letting the land vote. States like Nevada or Wyoming have certain representation above the number of people living in the state.

Judy Wheeler

Owner, Towne Center Books

I think the popular vote seems like a more direct route from the will of the people to the end result. It's hard to discount all of those years of the Electoral College but the country is so much larger I think the concept is obsolete.



Isobel Thompson
Retired

I understand why small states support the electoral voting system, but it seems to me that the number of votes by the people should override the few. I feel voters are turning over their individual choice to an Electoral College delegate.

Shelia Yott

Homemaker

We should let the people as a whole speak, not the individual states. The entire country should vote and then winner takes all.



Tim Waters

Manager, Pleasanton Bicycles

Popular vote. It seems in the most recent elections the electoral vote has become less representative to what the people actually want. That system seems to be failing. The popular vote really speaks for the people.

Have a Streetwise question? E-mail: editor@PleasantonWeekly.com
Compiled by Cybele Ryan

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Newsfront

News Digest

Grandparents honored at Rose Hotel

For the third year the Rose Hotel, 807 Main St., will host Roses to Grandparents Sept. 7. Grandparents and their families will gather in the hotel lobby for cake, coffee and conversation from 2 to 4 p.m. There will also be hotel tours and a chance to win a free night's stay. Admission is free and grandparents will receive a rose. For more information, call 846-8802.

Learn about Midrasha and its new leader

Midrasha Tri-Valley/Tri-Cities recently named a new director, Day Schildkret. The Jewish teen school meets Sundays at 7:15 p.m. at Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Ct. Midrasha TV/TC presents parent gatherings throughout the year, the first held Sept. 7 in the evening that will include wine, cheese and dessert. To learn more, call 549-1664 or email director.tvtcmidrasha@gmail.com.

Last call for First Wednesday fun

The last First Wednesday Street Party of 2008 will be Sept. 3. From 6 to 9 p.m. booths will line Main Street with food, shopping and other fun activities. The Pleasanton Downtown Association added a musical guest, guitarist Jeff Reed, who will be playing near Main and St. John streets. Magic Moments, a popular '50s band, will be playing in the beer and wine garden, which is restricted to ages 21 and over. For more details, visit www.pleasantondowntown.net.

A fling for the firehouse

Families are invited to join in some hometown fun to benefit the Firehouse Arts Center. There will be carnival games, pony rides, contests, sack races, a petting zoo and more from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sept. 14 at Lions Wayside Park at First and Neal streets. Some activities require tickets or a wristband. Volunteers are also needed. More information can be found by calling 846-1007.

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

Candidates launch campaigns in mayoral, council races

Measures PP, QQ bewilder audience at first forum for Nov. 4 local election

by Jeb Bing

If audience bewilderment over Measures PP and QQ that will be on the Nov. 4 municipal ballot is any sign of the outcome of these competing initiatives on hillside development, Pleasanton mayoral and City Council candidates who are hitching their election chances to these issues may have trouble projecting their own voter strengths.

At least half of the 75 who attended the kick-off forum for candidates Monday night at Pleasanton Gardens looked quizzically at each other when the candidates started answering why they were backing PP or QQ. Their answers

made sense if everyone knew what the two sets of double letters signified, and by the end of the one hour discussion most probably did.

For the record, Measure PP will appear on the ballot as: "Shall the Save Pleasanton's Hills & Housing Cap Citizens' Initiative be Adopted?" That initiative, placed on the ballot by the Save Pleasanton's Hills citizens coalition, would immediately ban development on ridgelines and hill-sides with a 25 degree slope or greater. It would also tighten rules governing what constitutes a living unit that should be counted toward the city's voter-mandated 29,000-unit housing cap.

Measure QQ has a similar title: "Shall the

Pleasanton Ridgelines Protection and Growth Control Initiative be Adopted?" Placed on the ballot by a majority of the City Council—Mayor Jennifer Hosterman and council members Cheryl Cook-Kallio and Jerry Thorne—it could do much the same as the citizens' initiative, but only after detailed review by various city commissions, a citizens' task force, an environmental impact report and final council action.

Candidates who answered questions and addressed municipal issues Monday included Hosterman and her challenger Steve Brozosky, currently a member of the Pleasanton school

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Janet Pelletier

Look mom, I'm going to school

It was the first day of school Tuesday for more than 14,000 students in the Pleasanton Unified School District who headed back to the 16 public schools, including nearly 2,500 at Amador Valley High School and more than 2,300 at Foothill High School. Fairlands Elementary, with more than 700 students, became the largest elementary school this year. Above, Audrey Morse, a fourth-grader, her brother John, a first-grader, and their mom Heidi Morse, walk to class at Fairlands. As expected, traffic was gridlocked in the morning and evening rush hour periods. Colleen Henry, principal of Lydiksen Elementary School, said most schools see their heaviest traffic on opening day when parents usually drive. Despite the festive moods on the campuses, there were also a few unhappy motorists as Pleasanton police pressed extra officers into service to ticket speeders and illegally parked cars.

Few good volunteers needed for Alviso Adobe

Historic, renovated park nearing opening in October

As the historic Alviso Adobe Community Park readies for its heralded October opening, the museum that will operate it is looking for a few good volunteers in a range of areas.

At the 7-acre park, soon to open on Foothill Road, docents and volunteers will help visitors of all ages gain insight into the site's history and people. The historical events begin in 3420 BCE with the Hokan language family of Native Americans and continue to the days of

the thriving Mexican ranchos, the time when tenant farmers tended the land, to the early and mid-twentieth century when the property was managed as a dairy.

Volunteer positions include the following:

- historically attired docents (re-enactor) will supply his or her own costume and can choose from the Rancho or Early Settler eras
- naturalist docents to lead tours throughout

(continued on page 7)

Still No. 1

Pleasanton has highest income among mid-sized cities

by Janet Pelletier

With an estimated annual median household income of \$113,345, Pleasanton still ranks No. 1 out of all mid-sized cities in the country.

The findings were released in the Census Bureau's American Community Survey this week. Newton, Mass. (\$110,885) was second, followed by Newport Beach, Calif. (\$110,511) in third, Yorba Linda, Calif. (\$109,681) fourth and Flower Mound, Texas (\$105,812) in fifth place.

Pleasanton, which nearly 68,000 residents call home, is categorized under cities with populations between 65,000 and 249,000. It was named to the top of the list two years ago in the same survey. The city of Livermore, with a population of about 88,000, had a median household income of \$92,300. Alameda County had a median household income of \$68,740. The median household income in the United States as a whole climbed 1.3 percent between 2006 and 2007, reaching \$50,233.

Pleasanton has been the leader in income for some time, and city officials have said it's good schools, a strong business climate, low crime rate, central location in the Bay Area and a highly-skilled and educated workforce that contribute to the quality of life.

Mayor Jennifer Hosterman said the high income level puts Pleasanton in a better position than other area cities who are riding an economic downturn. She said the quality of life is due to a hard-working city staff which has been diligent about planning.

Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce CEO Scott Raty agreed.

"It's worth a tip of the hat to the private sector to the leadership of 25 years ago that really laid down the infrastructure and the foundation for the community's success, the Ken Mercers and the Joe Callahans," Raty said. "There are a lot of other folks too."

But the issue is two-fold, Raty said, because a strong economy is great, but balancing it with housing affordability is better.

"There's a strong employment base here," he said. "If we are by far a very affluent community, but housing is totally unaffordable for the workforce, that creates challenges and can be

(continued on page 7)

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Police contract, ice rink on agenda

Agreement trims retiree benefits by 50%

by Jeb Bing

The City Council will consider proposals Tuesday for a multi-million-dollar, four-rink ice skating facility on public land in Staples Ranch and a new three-year contract with the police union that includes a breakthrough agreement aimed at reducing future police pension obligations.

The police contract was shelved two weeks ago at Councilwoman Cindy McGovern's request to give both the council and the public time to review terms of the new agreement. Basically, the contract calls for a 4 percent salary increase in each of the next three years for the 70 police officers and sergeants that the contract covers. If approved, the new salaries and benefits would be retroactive to May 31, when the old contract expired.

A major change in the proposed contract would provide lifetime medical benefits only to police employees at retirement, but not to their spouses. The change would take effect Jan. 1, 2009 and apply only to newly-hired officers after that time. Until then, spouses of retiring employees will be entitled to the same benefits as the employees, which accrue at 4 percent for each year of service.

In other words, an officer who retires after 10 years of service would receive 40 percent of the pension benefits, including health care. After 25 years of service or longer, employees and their spouses receive full benefits.

"It wasn't an easy discussion but we were able to get there because we were able to work with the Police Officers Association's representatives in recognizing the long-term liabilities of proceeding with what we have

in place," said City Manager Nelson Fialho. "We found that the only way to work our way out of these liabilities was by shifting our philosophies as it related to new hires."

"By not providing two-party coverage for retirees for new hires after Jan. 1, we will be cutting our costs by 50 percent," Fialho added.

Although co-pays for medical visits are being increased in line with medical insurance standards, the new contract for the first time puts a cap on premium increases. If premiums are increased by the insurance carrier by 15 percent or more in any one year, employees must cover the additional cost.

As for the ice facility, the council asked Fialho and city planners to develop a master plan process for the proposed 17-acre Staples Ranch Community Park that would include 7 acres for the ice rink and parking. The two-story, 140,000-square-foot facility would be built and operated by San Jose Arena Management (SJAM), a subsidiary of the San Jose Sharks organization. It would include four rinks, a family style sports restaurant and sports bar, a pro shop and public meeting rooms. The plan to be discussed Tuesday calls for a 30-year ground lease at \$1 a year with the understanding that the facility will be constructed in accord with the city's green building standards.

As part of the operating agreement, the city wants SJAM to provide a wide range of ice skating-related activities at a discount for Pleasanton residents, to work with the Pleasanton school district to provide ice time for school recreational programs and team uses and to contribute financially to building out sports fields and facilities on the Bernal property. ■

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More funds needed to help seniors

Friends of Pleasanton Seniors hopes to open computer lab

by Elyssa Thome

The Friends of Pleasanton Seniors wants to give back to our community's seniors, but they need help. This summer, the organization has been running a drive to raise funds, but they have fallen short of the goal so far.

The goal of this drive was to raise \$10,000 by Monday for a computer lab at the Pleasanton Senior Center. The lab would give seniors free access to computers and provide a location and means for computer classes for seniors.

As of Tuesday, Friends of Pleasanton Seniors has raised \$1,000 for the cause. While some attribute the lower-than-expected figure to the problems the economy as a whole is facing, Friends still hopes to achieve its goal. Donations will be accepted beyond the original Sept. 1 date, but those interested in contributing should still do it as soon as possible.

Donations are tax-deductible through Friends' affiliation with the Tri-Valley Community Foundation. To donate cash or equipment, contact the Friends of Pleasanton Seniors at 398-8155, or send your

check to the Friends of Pleasanton Seniors, 5353 Sunol Boulevard, Pleasanton, CA 94566. Credit card donations can also be accepted by calling 398-8155.

The Friends of Pleasanton Seniors is an organization committed to expanding and enhancing services to the local senior community, primarily through the Pleasanton Senior Center. So far the group has provided a laptop computer, a digital camera, a movie screen, high-quality art easels and several items for the woodworking shop. ■

Income

(continued from page 5)

detrimental to our economy."

Also included in the Census report were statistics on poverty. The nation's poverty rate in 2007 was 12.5 percent, not statistically different from 2006. Pleasanton had the fifth lowest poverty rate among mid-sized cities, with 2.1 percent of households below the poverty line.

But while Pleasanton's poverty rate is one of the lowest, many are still struggling. Linda McKeever,

executive director of Open Heart Kitchen, which serves free meals to those who can't afford them, said in the past nine months she has seen an increase in those needing Open Heart's services.

"A lot of the people who are in homes currently, one or the other who's employed in the home have lost their jobs and so many people have been literally living paycheck to paycheck," she said.

"We're going through a really hard time right now because the amount of service we need to do has increased 25 percent and the funding has decreased significant-

ly," she added. "Because of the fact that property values have dropped significantly, people don't feel that there's any room to give to charity anymore."

Last month, Open Heart served 6,800 hot meals at a cost of \$1.10 per meal. As the cost of living increases in the Tri-Valley, low-income working families, single parent families, and seniors on fixed income, struggle to make ends meet, McKeever said. Rising cost of food prices have also added to the burden.

For more on the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, visit www.census.gov. ■



Giving hair with care

Four-year-old Caroline Surridge, left, recently donated her waist-length hair to her best friend, Makenna Okamoto, also 4, to make a hair piece for her. Makenna has alopecia areata, an autoimmune disorder that prevents her hair follicles from growing. Caroline's haircut, the first one she's ever had, was done by stylist Melissa Cox, center, of Gary Patrick Salon in Pleasanton. Makenna's mother Michelle said "it is something we will always treasure and a true display of friendship at such a young age." To learn more about alopecia, visit www.naaf.org.

Adobe

(continued from page 7)

the park

- garden volunteers to help maintain the gardens
- historical tools volunteers
- display production volunteers
- office volunteers for editing, working on interpretive displays and historic artifacts, logistics, inventory, grants and outreach
- junior volunteers/home school student volunteers/grandparent and parent volunteers for a variety of activities including carpenter, electrician, blacksmith/metal work and painting.
- craft area volunteers

Training sessions will be conducted for all volunteers. The volunteer program is jointly managed by the City of Pleasanton and the Museum On Main Street. Volunteers are also needed for special events throughout the year. Applications are available at the Museum On Main, 603 Main St., and the Pleasanton Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. For more information and an application form, contact Heather H. Rizzoli, volunteer coordinator, at 462-2766 or email volunteers@museumonmain.org or Eric Nicholas, city naturalist, 931-5351 and enicholas@ci.pleasanton.ca.us

—Janet Pelletier

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Candidates

(continued from page 5)

board who lost in his bid to unseat Hosterman two years ago by only 188 votes. City Council candidates included incumbent councilmembers Cindy McGovern and Matt Sullivan, both seeking re-election to four-year terms, and their challengers: businessman Jerry Pentin, a member of the city's Park and Recreation Commission and its chairman two years ago, and retired school teacher Howard Neely, who has served on the Parks and Recreation and Housing commissions and currently is on the Task Force for Senior Housing.

All have a stake in the Nov. 4 initiative debate and, except for Neely and Pentin, have helped write and signed ballot arguments for one of the measures. Hosterman helped prepare and signed the ballot argument in favor of Measure QQ; Brozosky, McGovern and Sullivan signed in favor of Measure PP.

At Monday's forum, Neely and Pentin said they support the council majority's initiative, QQ.

With an audience dominated by older Pleasanton residents, including many from Pleasanton Gardens and the city's senior complex across Kottinger Drive, Kottinger Place, much of the discussion Monday concerned how candidates would meet the needs of seniors if elected—or re-elected.

Brozosky, citing the city's nearing buildout of 29,000 housing units, said he would require most new housing to be smaller, more affordable homes. He opposed the council majority's approval last year of a 51-home development called Oak Grove in the hills above Kottinger Ranch, which he said will be mansions and will subtract from the number of units that can be built to serve seniors.

"In fact, the council just approved construction of a house that's bigger than this entire (Pleasanton Gardens) complex," he said. "I'm a big advocate of a public-private partnership to address the city's housing needs for seniors."

Sullivan said he, too, favors public-private partnerships to build "affordable by design" housing, especially on sites close to the BART station transportation hubs, both at the East Pleasanton-Dublin station next to Hacienda Business Park, and at the new west station currently under construction.

"We need to be pro-active on the council and not wait until developers come in with plans to see what we can get," Sullivan said. "We need to get together as a community and prioritize our needs."

McGovern said she has long advocated more affordable housing for Pleasanton, which is why she has consistently voted against new developments of large, expensive homes, including those planned in Oak Grove.

Hosterman said she has long supported the construction of more senior housing, but added that she believes there is much more to helping the growing senior popula-

tion in Pleasanton to ensure ever-better quality of life standards.

"For me, serving our seniors is not just about housing," Hosterman said. "For example, we set up cooling centers during the recent heat waves for seniors who don't have home air conditioners and even provided free transportation so they could get there and back again for relief."

Pentin, who owns Spring Street Studios and has been a member of the Pleasanton North Rotary Club since 1991, when he and his family moved here, is also a member of a task force that is considering ways to expand and improve Kottinger Place. He also wants to promote the construction of more affordable housing for those who work in Pleasanton but can't afford to live here.

"The fact is that only 20 percent of those who work in Pleasanton also live here," Pentin said. "That leaves 80 percent who come to work here from someplace else. We need to provide more housing that they can afford."

Neely said he has volunteered his services in Pleasanton since 1966 and has served many years on commissions and task forces seeking more and better housing for seniors.

"I moved to Pleasanton when housing was affordable," he said, "but as we know, that went away. As a city, we need to take the offensive and say here's what we want in the way of affordable housing, and then work to make it happen. We shouldn't wait for developers to come to us with their own plans."

"My record on the council demonstrates that I stand up for the people of Pleasanton and to make sure that their voices are heard in the decision-making process," Sullivan said. "City councils are important, but what makes them special is when they have active participation by many in the community. My goal is to ensure good government and plan for a sustainable future for our city. This remains my motivation and why I am seeking re-election." ■

Back to School

Pleasanton Weekly

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Take Us Along

Mountainous Weekly

Alan and Lorna Belluomini read the Weekly at Half Dome in Yosemite. It can be good reading material on that long hike. we're guessing.

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**PLEASANTON
WEEKLY**

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circulation@PleasantonWeekly.com

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

Where's the leadership? It's here!

Those who think term limits in the state legislature are the greatest thing since sliced bread might want to talk to a few of the financial officers in counties and cities across the state. With legislators and the governor at loggerheads over reducing a \$16-billion-plus budget deficit and at the same time drafting and approving a budget for the fiscal year that started last July 1, it's anybody's guess where revenue will come from to pay the bills. The Democrats want tax increases; the Republicans want cost cuts; the governor is in between, but disappointingly this week signed a \$9.9-billion bond measure to go to voters Nov. 4 for construction of a high-speed rail system from Los Angeles to San Francisco. That, along with more billions in proposed bonds for water, levees and other needed capital expenditures, if approved by voters, would put the state deeper in debt with no leadership in Sacramento to stop the bleeding. By voice vote with no opposition, the State Senate formally elected Sen. Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento) as the new Senate President Pro Tem, the leader of the State Senate, to succeed Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata (D-Oakland), who is being forced out of the legislature this year due to term limits. Steinberg will join Assembly Speaker Karen Bass (D-Los Angeles) as part of the new leadership for the new legislative session that begins in December. Even if Democrats sweep the state elections on Nov. 4 and seize more than two-thirds control of both houses in Sacramento, it will be January before all are installed and even later before new budget proposals can be drafted and approved.

More seasoned administrators at the local level rue the day that term limits took effect and Willy Brown and his compatriots went away. Not that any of them are lobbying to get Brown back, but they fear that a lack of experienced legislators, particularly in leadership positions, is giving us new leaders every two years who don't know how to reach compromises, to win votes on both sides of the aisle, to craft and draft legislation that while not pleasing everyone will reach an accord that brings fiscal sense to the Capitol. These local leaders have reason to worry. When faced with financial crises, state lawmakers have turned to county and municipal governments for funds to pay the bills. Look at Pleasanton. Since 1993, this city has lost \$74 million in revenue shifted over to Sacramento. It could have been worse. Voters, alarmed at what was happening to their cities, approved Proposition 1A in 2001, a measure called the "Protection of Local Government Revenues." That has stopped most of the takeaways and imposed stiff rules for repayment of sales taxes, property taxes, vehicle license fees and other municipal takeaways. In order for the state to grab local property taxes, for example, the governor has to declare a fiscal hardship, both houses of the state legislature, by a two-thirds majority vote, must approve an emergency statute for temporarily bypassing the Prop. 1A protections, and then the legislature and governor must adopt a law providing full repayment within three years, plus interest set at 7 percent.

Pleasanton is now working through the second half of a two-year municipal operating budget of \$175.6 million, which includes a General Fund budget of \$92.8 million. Known as a fiscally conservative city, the City Council, in concert with Finance Director Dave Culver, reduced this fiscal year's budget by \$4.5 million because of projected revenue shortfall caused by slower growth in projected property tax and sales tax gains. With fewer houses being built and sold, the higher property taxes these homes would bring have gone away. Still, with few foreclosures and rainy-day reserves of \$22 million, Pleasanton is better positioned than most municipalities to weather, temporarily, state money grabs without cutting programs. Perhaps it's the leadership at the local level that needs to show the lawmakers in Sacramento how to run a fiscally sound state government.

Letters

Buck an excellent ambassador

Dear Editor,

Jill Buck is an excellent ambassador for the environment in Pleasanton as well as state-wide and nationwide ("Around Pleasanton," Aug. 8).

To the extent that Mrs. Buck is effective in the above venues, without using city, state or other government subsidies, or without infringement on American individual's freedoms, a Pleasanton Committee on the Environment is unnecessary. Governmental committees tend only to restrict individual freedoms and waste taxpayer dollars.

Thanks, Jill, for your efforts.

*Jack Hovingh
Pleasanton*

We need to solve state budget problems

Dear Editor,

Firefighters, police officers, health inspectors, nurses, and other state employees work hard to keep us safe and make our state work. We chose to work in the public sector as we believe in public service. The elected politicians who have not balanced the budget when due should have their salaries cut to \$6.55 per hour during the budget stalemate with no payback when they accomplish the job they were elected to complete. They should not be the pawns in a political game, because politicians can't work together and compromise.

We need to be practical and solve this budget problem, but Republican legislators are holding out and saying they will never compromise. There is a compromise budget on the table—it includes cuts and taxes—and we are going to have to have both. The gridlock has created a complete mess. Hospitals, nursing homes, and community health clinics are no longer being paid. Schools are trying to plan a new school year without knowing how many staff they will be able to keep.

This is irresponsible. It has to stop.

*John Hillman
Pleasanton*

Mayor Tarver a valuable civic leader

Dear Editor,

Notwithstanding Gerry Brunken's election file, his letter (Letters, "Editorial right on the money," Aug. 15, page 11) doesn't stand up to Pleasanton

history. Mr. Brunken uses the 1999 CAPP initiative, which would have required voter approval for development projects of 10 or more units or commercial developments exceeding 55 feet in height, as an example of Ben Tarver's late '90s "no growth coattail group."

In 1999, of those cited as members of this "coattail group" by Mr. Brunken, Kay Ayala had already been elected to the City Council in 1996; Cindy McGovern had been serving on the Pleasanton school board since 1993; and Mary Roberts had actually signed the ballot argument against the CAPP initiative.

Mayor Tarver was part of the citizen-led effort to protect the beautiful Pleasanton Ridge from development. As mayor he personally spearheaded the redevelopment project that transformed our downtown into the tree lined, pedestrian-friendly environment we all enjoy today and went toe-to-toe with San Francisco's PUC to halt a plan for 2,500 homes on the Bernal Property. Pleasanton now has 318 acres of parkland there. Based on these achievements, Mayor Tarver is the most valuable civic leader Pleasanton has had in over 25 years.

*Matt Morrison
Pleasanton*

Senior Support thanks Supervisor Haggerty

Dear Editor,

The staff and clients of Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley would like to thank Supervisor Scott Haggerty for the grant from Measure A funds that has allowed us to provide a major enhancement to our Partners in Safety Falls Prevention Program for the past year.

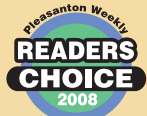
With it we have been able to train police and firefighters in Livermore, Pleasanton and Dublin on how to refer seniors in crisis encountered on emergency calls, fund a case manager to work with the referrals, provide in-home exercise for frail homebound seniors and have pharmacists help educate seniors on managing their medicines. This program has decreased the number of repeat calls that emergency responders receive for seniors who have fallen or who are in crisis; decreased ambulance, emergency room and hospital costs; and improved the quality of life for seniors in our communities.

Thank you Scott Haggerty for making this all possible.

*Marlene Petersen
executive director, Senior Support
Program of the Tri-Valley*

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Transitions

Obituaries

Gene Upshaw

Former Pleasanton resident and longtime executive director of the NFL Players Association Gene Upshaw died Aug. 20. He was 63 years old.

Mr. Upshaw died at his Lake Tahoe home with his wife Terri and three sons, Eugene, Justin and Daniel by his side. The former Oakland Raider was diagnosed days earlier with pancreatic cancer, according to the players' association.

Mr. Upshaw was the head of the union for 25 years.

He was born Aug. 15, 1945 in Robstown, Texas. He was drafted to the National Football League in 1967 and his career lasted until 1981, playing a total of 217 games. During that time, he was a guard for the Raiders, wearing jersey No. 63, playing in both the NFL and American Football League.

He was a seven-time Pro Bowler, selected All-Pro 11 times and a two-time Super Bowl champion.



In 1987, Mr. Upshaw was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame for his achievements as a player and later, a union leader.

Upshaw's family will hold a private service. There will be a more public memorial service sometime in September, most likely in the Washington, D.C. area, where the players' association is headquartered, according to ESPN.

Imogene M. Carter

Surrounded by family and love, Imogene "Gene" M. Carter died Aug. 19 in Pleasanton. She was 81.

Mrs. Carter was born Mary Jennet Means on July 13, 1927 in Fort Yates, N.D. to Alma Short and Wesley William Means. She was a Lakota (Ogalala) Sioux and member of the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Tribe. Her mother died when she was only 5 and she was raised by her grandmother in Martin, S.D.

She moved to Vallejo in the early 1940s with her Aunt Theo and Uncle Hank. Modest and shy, yet strikingly beautiful and a terrific dancer, she captivated a bold, exciting young man from Richmond, Richard R. Carter. In 1946, he swept her off her feet and made her his wife. They had five children together. As well as a stay-at-home mom, Mrs. Carter also became a beautician and hair salon owner. She and husband Richard separated in 1966. She then pursued a career in nursing and was a licensed vocational nurse for 30 years, working in several Bay Area hospitals until her



retirement.

As graceful as she was beautiful, she was a trophy-winning swing dancer and inventive seamstress, but she was most happy when with her children and grandchildren and made any sacrifice to be available to them. She will be remembered by her family, friends and her sister, Lisette Montgomery of Ventura, Calif. for her style and creativity, her happy laugh, patience, tolerance and unconditional acceptance.

She is also survived by family members: Carolyn and Paul Mecozzi, Robert and Carole Carter, Janet and Paul Romero, Cheryl Russo and Gary Moore, Jill and Steven Bradley, 12 grandchildren and their spouses and 15 great-grandchildren. She will be honored with a memorial celebration at noon Saturday at the home of Paul and Carolyn Mecozzi. The family asks that any kind acts of charity be made to the "Gene Carter Education Trust" set up for her great-grandchildren, (Wells Fargo #5917315946). She was preceded in death by her parents; her sister, Lavinia "Babe" Guerin; and brother, Wesley William "Tody" Means.

Fred L. Brown

Fred Brown, a Castlewood resident, died after a short illness on Aug. 25 at the age of 93.

Mr. Brown, an Oakland native, was born Dec. 11, 1914. He loved to play golf and he and his wife enjoyed their home in Castlewood.

He is survived by his loving family, wife of 4 1/2 years, Maria Brown; son, Robert Brown and wife, Joan of Santa Clara; and five cherished grandchildren.

Services were held Aug. 27 at Graham-Hitch Mortuary. Burial will be private.

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Community Pulse

Police Bulletin

Bronze memorial stolen from Kottinger Park

A bronze plaque was stolen from Kottinger Park sometime between Aug. 9 and 16, according to police. Saying it was unusual, Sgt. Jim Knox said there were other similar incidents where metal has been stolen from residential signs. Knox said he was unsure the value of the plaque as well as plans to replace it.

Ammonia tank leaks at Zone 7 Water Agency

Two gallons of diluted ammonia leaked from a 300-gallon tank at Zone 7 Water Agency Tuesday, according to the fire department. Around 10 a.m., an employee noticed ammonia dripping out from the tank, and called 911. A hazardous materials team was able to stop the leak in a matter of minutes. Nearby residents were told to stay inside as crews tested for traces of ammonia in the air.

Boni Brewer, spokeswoman for Zone 7, said no traces were found and the leak posed no threat to employees or nearby residents. Combined with chlorine, the ammonia is added to the groundwater distribution system as a disinfectant.

Police Report

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

Aug. 20

•Burglary:

- 7:50 a.m. in the 4400 block of Willow Road
- 9:24 a.m. in the 5400 block of Sunol Boulevard

•Alcohol violations:

- 1:14 p.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; public drunkenness; battery
- 9:29 p.m. in the 6300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; minor in possession of alcohol
- 11:29 p.m. in the 5800 block of Valley Avenue; DUI

•Trespassing:

- 3:28 a.m. in the 4100 block of Amberwood Circle

•Forgery:

- 3:25 p.m. in the 6000 block of Stoneridge Drive

Aug. 21

•Grand theft:

- 2:40 p.m. in the 4800 block of Bernal Avenue

- 4:36 p.m. in the 7000 block of Johnson Drive

•Vandalism:

- 10:02 a.m. in the 5800 block of Parkside Drive; worth less than \$400

- 12:00 p.m. in the 7300 block of Johnson Drive; worth less than \$400

- 1:46 p.m. in the 7300 block of Johnson Drive; worth less than \$400

•Burglary:

- 7:13 a.m. in the 4300 block of Rosewood Drive

•Drug/alcohol violations:

- 1:07 a.m. at the intersection of Hopyard Road and Stoneridge Drive; public drunkenness
- 11:24 a.m. in the 5800 block of Laurel Creek Drive; paraphernalia possession; possession of a non-narcotic controlled substance

•Battery:

- 8:46 p.m. in the 3600 block of Andrews Drive
- 9:56 p.m. in the 4200 block of

Pleasanton Avenue

Aug. 22

•Theft:

- 11:09 a.m. in the 7100 block of Koll Center Parkway; identity theft

- 2:57 p.m. in the 1000 block of Kottinger Drive; grand theft

- 6:30 p.m. in the 7200 block of Johnson Drive; grand theft

•Vandalism:

- 9:46 a.m. at the intersection of Case and Valley avenues; worth less than \$400

•Vehicular Burglary:

- 5:52 p.m. on West Angela Street

•Public Drunkenness:

- 9:32 p.m. in the 8000 block of Mountain View Drive

•Robbery:

- 4:52 p.m. at the intersection of Alameda Drive and Brooktree Way

•Indecent Exposure:

- 2:45 p.m. in the 3900 block of Stoneridge Drive

THE CITY OF

PLEASANTON

WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

City Hall offices will be closed Monday September 1st in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

City Council

Tuesday, September 2, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave

- Continued from August 19 - Consider a resolution amending the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Pleasanton and the Pleasanton Police Officers Association for the term June 1, 2008 to May 31, 2011
- Review and approval of core objectives pertaining to a potential ground lease with the San Jose Arena Management, LLC for use of the Staples Ranch Community Park for an ice skating facility
- Consider a resolution adopting the Tri-Valley Transportation Development Fee

Human Services Commission

Wednesday, September 3, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave.

- Receive citizens' comments concerning allocated federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for Fiscal Year 2007 (07/08).

GENERAL INFORMATION

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Bridges

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

Pleasanton Hotel Restaurant

855 Main St., Pleasanton, 846-8106. Executive Chef Chris Smith offers exciting contemporary American cooking at lunch and dinner, featuring a wide selection of fresh fish entrees. Also offering our famous Sunday Champagne Buffet Brunch full bar and patio service. Visit us at www.pleasantonhotel.com for menus and private party and catering details.

Barbecue

Red Smoke Grill

4501 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 734-0307. Home of the Tri Tip and Blue, Red Smoke Grill was Voted Reader's Choice Best 2006, 2007, 2008. Dine in or take out rotisserie chicken, ribs, prawns, salads and tri tip, or pulled

pork sandwiches. Relax with a beer or a bottle of wine. Visit www.redsmokegrill.com.

Brewpub/Alehouse

Main Street Brewery

830 Main St., Pleasanton, 462-8218. Pleasanton's only BrewPub, some ales (Attaboy IPA) are brewed with locally grown hops. We also have a rotating selection of guest brews and seasonal ales. To-go orders welcome and we're available for parties up to 100. Live music every Friday and Saturday, visit www.mainstreetbrewery.com for activities and specials.

The Hop Yard American Alehouse and Grill

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

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

California Cuisine

Stacey's Cafe

310 Main St., Pleasanton, 461-3113.

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

Catering

Fontina's Catering

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

Girasole Grill/Pampered Palate Catering

831-4888. Offering affordable and elegant catering, Girasole Grill/Pampered Palate provides quality food and generous portions at a fair price. Services include: decorated buffets with hors d'oeuvres and carving stations; sit down meal service; strictly hors d'oeuvres, both buffet and server passed; and a variety of beverage packages with no corkage fees. Visit www.ppceastbay.com.

Pleasanton Hotel Catering

846-8112. The Pleasanton Hotel Restaurant has proudly provided our fine-dining restaurant, banquet and catering services in the Tri-Valley for over 25 years. We have multiple catering packages to choose from to fit any event & budget; we also tailor menus to fit client's needs. Executive Chef Chris Smith also offers an array of creative events from In-Home Personal Chef to Cooking Classes. Our commitment to provide the highest quality of food plus prompt and attentive service has given us a reputation we are very proud of. Contact Gerard Lek for more information 846-8112.

Chinese

Chinese Szechuan

3059 Hopyard Road #G, Pleasanton, 846-5251. Chinese Szechuan is Pleasanton's best-loved Chinese res-

taurant. Family owned and run since 1987, it has friendly service, delicious food and great prices, including lunch specials and carry-out. A banquet room is available.

Panda Mandarin Cuisine

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

Continental

Barone's

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

Fusion

Oasis Grille

780 Main St., Pleasanton, 417-8438. Visit downtown Pleasanton's exotic dining destination. Oasis features kabobs, rice and vegetarian dishes, to name a few. Check out our updated wine and exotic cocktail menus. We also cater! Visit www.OasisGrille.com.

Italian

Fontina Ristorante

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

La Vite Ristorante

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

Girasole Grill

3180 Santa Rita Road at West Las Positas Boulevard, Pleasanton, 484-1001. Girasole, a locally owned family business, is an award winning California style Italian restaurant. It was voted Best Italian Restaurant by Pleasanton Weekly readers for 2007. We feature signature cuisine such as Scoozzi, Absolut! prawns, chicken gorgi, ppinach for Veronica, Tuscan pork and signature fresh seafood...just to name a few. We are upscale, but California casual with friendly prices.

Silver Palate Restaurant & Market

680 Main St Downtown Pleasanton, 417-5900. The ambiance of this restaurant evokes the light-filled expanse of a European marketplace, while the outdoor patio captures the best in al fresco dining. Choose from a wide selection of flavorful entrees and side accompaniments ... Just \$14.95 or less everyday! We also feature a special dinner menu. Kids eat FREE with each paying adult. Now open for breakfast! Country Brunch Buffet every Sunday. Open seven days a week.

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Sato Japanese Cuisine

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2007

Dining Out

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Pizza

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

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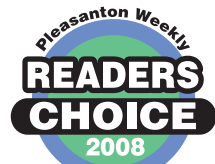
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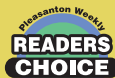
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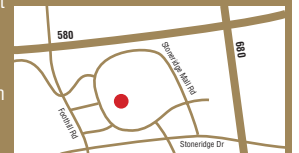
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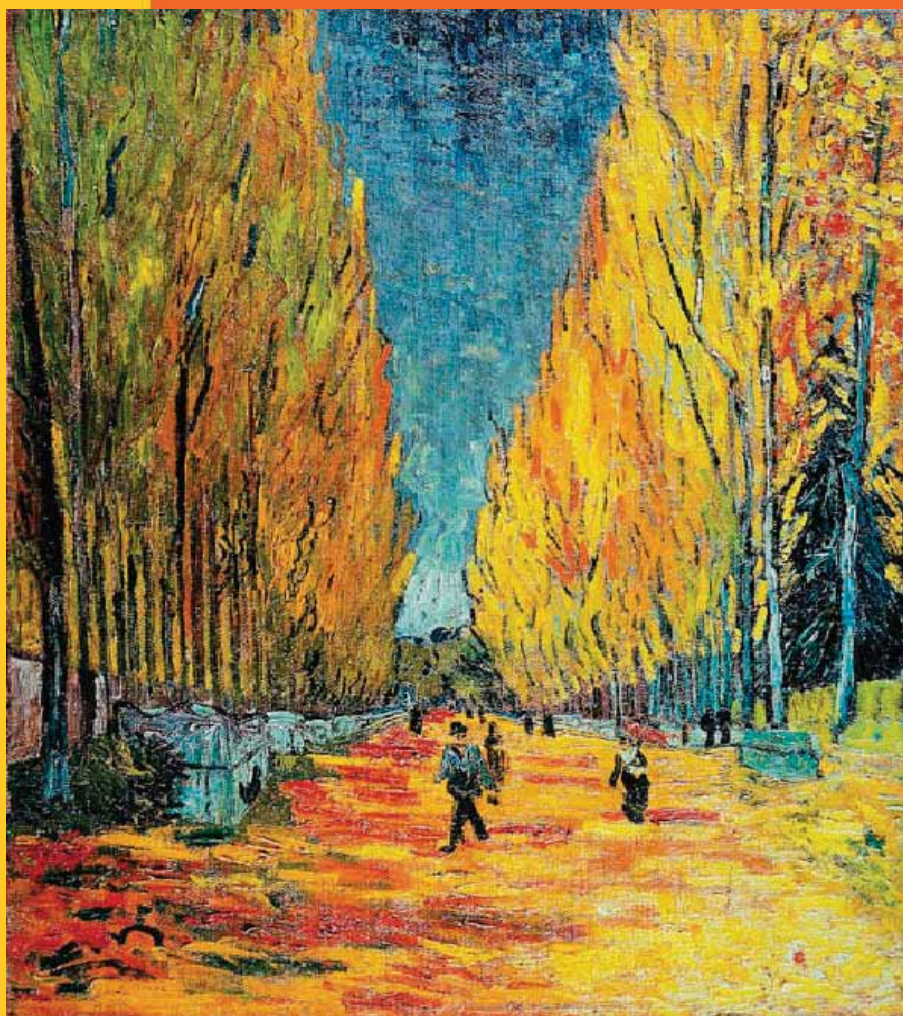
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Thomas Coyne Winery, nestled among hillside vineyards, awaits the start of the season.

Photos by Steven F. Kelly

The details

Purchase tickets online at www.lvwine.org; at the wineries; or call the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association at 925.447.WINE (447-9463). Advance sales, \$50. Day of event tickets, \$55. Monday only, \$45.

Participating wineries

Battalion Cellars
 Bent Creek Winery
 Big White House and John Evan
 Bodegas Aguirre Winery
 Cedar Mountain Winery
 Charles R Vineyards
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 Hidden Creek Winery
 John Christopher Cellars
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 Les Chenes Estate Vineyards
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 Livermore Valley Cellars
 Longevity Wines
 McGrail Vineyards and Winery
 Mitchell Katz Winery
 Murrieta's Well Winery
 Page Mill Winery
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 Red Feather Winery
 Red Skye Winery
 Retzlaff Estate Vineyards
 Ryhan Estate Vineyards
 Ruby Hill Winery
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 The Singing Winemaker
 Thomas Coyne Winery
 Wente Vineyards Estate Winery
 White Crane Winery
 Wood Family Vineyards

Harvest time

Two-day Livermore Harvest Wine Festival starts Sunday, offering tours and tastings

by **Jeb Bing**

The 27th annual Harvest Wine Celebration gets under way at noon Sunday for a two-day opportunity to visit winery open houses and sample some of the best wines in the country.

A total of 43 wineries will each host a slate of events that include wine tastings, seminars, entertainment, foods, arts and crafts. Well-known local bands have been commissioned to play during the two-day event with music from country and rock to jazz and reggae.

"It's a wine country weekend event with a lot of history and tradition," said Chris Chandler, executive director of the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association. "It celebrates the annual winegrape harvest, the busiest time of year in all wine regions."

"We're expecting thousands of wine lovers from around the Bay to join us," she added. "It's a one-of-a-kind opportunity to meet winemakers, growers, musicians and local craft artisans."

The wineries are located in Pleasanton, Livermore and Castro Valley. Visitors can park and start their adventure at any winery, or at the main transportation hub in Robertson Park in Livermore, and travel on shuttle buses between participating wineries.

This annual celebration of the grape harvest takes place from noon to 5 p.m. Sunday and on Monday, Labor Day. Tickets are \$50 in advance for a two-day pass or \$55 if purchased on the first day

of the event. A Monday-only ticket costs \$45. There are no Sunday-only tickets.

These tickets include entry into the wineries, complimentary wine tasting at each winery, live music, free parking, free shuttle bus transportation, a collectable souvenir glass and an official event program.

Non-drinking tickets are also available for "designated drivers" and children who will not be sipping any wine, with those tickets also including entrance into the wineries, three non-alcoholic drinks, complimentary transportation on the shuttle buses that travel to each winery throughout the day, and complimentary parking at the Robertson Park hub. They are \$10.

Tickets can be reserved by calling 447-9463 or visit the association's website at www.lvwine.org. Tickets also are available at:

- Participating wineries.
- First Street Wine Company, 2211 First Street, Livermore.
- Vino Cellars, 1772 First Street, Livermore.
- Wine Steward, 641 Main Street, Pleasanton.
- PW Markets throughout the Bay Area.

Because of the anticipated crowds, Chandler suggests taking one of the shuttle buses from the Robertson Park hub at 3200 Robertson Park Road, where L Street becomes Arroyo Road.

"It's the complimentary shuttle buses that circulate between the wineries for two days that make this Labor Day weekend event unique," Chandler said. "No other

wine region offers transportation. And, in spite of high gas prices, we are offering the buses again this year. We hope our guests and visitors will take advantage of them during the weekend."

An added benefit this year is that five Livermore wineries will be gathered together in one shady location at Robertson Park to pour samples of their wines, with live music at the park both Sunday and Monday.

Some 30 shuttles will use six different routes stopping at their specified wineries along each route. Winery-goers will receive a map outlining the six different shuttle routes, so they can choose which one to take. In addition, most routes will cross with at least one other so ticket-bearers can transfer to another shuttle route and group of wineries, if they choose. All shuttles will return to the hub at the end of their route.

Wine event organizers said each winery will offer live music, including several well-known local bands playing reggae to classic rock, and acoustic guitar to rockabilly and good old blues. Food will also be available for purchase at each location with cuisine to tempt every palate, from Mexican to Mediterranean, Hawaiian style to hummus, prime rib to pulled pork sandwiches, plus ice cream, brownies and, of course, barbecue.

Chandler said that while sipping and nibbling, guests will be able to peruse the jewelry, pottery, glass and metal craft of many local artisans at the various wineries, taste the abundant olive oils from the Livermore Valley region, enjoy fine art displays and take in winery edu-

cation and special history exhibits.

With a record-high number of 43 wineries participating in the Harvest Wine Celebration this year, participants are being urged to start their day closest to the wineries they want to visit, choosing a shuttle that goes to those locations. There are a total of seven different routes with at least four wineries on each shuttle stop. From past experience, wine visitors take about an hour at each location.

"The two-day celebration is the Winegrowers Associations' annual fundraising event," Chandler said. "Many events of this size and caliber hire event planning firms, but we keep the planning and logistics in-house and rely on the generous support of volunteers to make sure the proceeds benefit our nonprofit association directly. Many of our volunteers have been involved in this event for several years now."

"It's a fun weekend," she added. "We get calls year 'round asking when the 'event with the buses going to each of the wineries' takes place. This is it!"

The Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association was founded in 1981 by a small group of vintners and growers, as development pressure threatened their valley. Today, with a growing membership, the LVWA is dedicated to showcasing the world-class wine and visitor amenities of the Livermore Valley Wine Country and attracts more than half a million visitors annually to this unique appellation. Besides the wineries, the valley is home to 3,600 acres of grapes, 3,200 of which are protected as vineyards in perpetuity. ■



Sign post in Livermore Valley guides visitors to local wineries.

Living



The Scottish Gathering and Games take place this weekend at the Alameda County Fairgrounds and is said to be the largest of its kind in North America.

GREAT SCOT

Fairgrounds host the 143rd annual Scottish Highland Gathering and Games this weekend

by Emily West

Touted as the world's largest Celtic gatherings, the annual Scottish Highland Games is back at the fairgrounds this weekend. In its 143rd year, the celebration of Scottish culture is packed with athletic competitions, dancing, shopping and, of course, bagpipes.

Alan Purves, Pleasanton resident and chief of the Caledonian Club of San Francisco which sponsors the event, said that even if there isn't a Scot in the family lineage, people can adopt the heritage for the weekend.

"It's a family festival," he said, adding that many people may find they do have similar origins and could be linked to one of the hundreds of clans.

"You can look up your family name and find your great uncle in a castle back in Scotland," Purves said.

The Caledonian Club held its first games in 1866, keeping a long-held Scottish tradition of celebrating their heritage that goes back before recorded history. The Pleasanton gathering is now the largest in North America and draws more than 30,000 participants, many from all over the United States, Canada, Scotland and beyond.

New to the gathering this year is the Red Lion Pub, located at the Palm Pavilion, where adults can sample the many ales and beers, as well as ethnic foods. "Taste the Whiskey at the Games" is a chance for adults to try top single malts and blended whiskies, with a seminar to learn more about Scotland's spirits.

The Red Lion Pub will also be home to a ceilidh (a Scottish party) and barbecue Saturday night. Starting at 6:30, there will be dancing, karaoke, open mic and guest appearances. Admission is free, and the barbecue is \$15 for adults and \$7.50 for children, if



Traditional Scottish dancers parade down Main Street.

purchased in advance, or \$20 at the door.

One of the biggest draws to the games is the athletic competitions, where men and women show feats of strength and power. Perhaps the most popu-

lar and well-known event is the caber toss, where a 130-pound, 22-foot-long log is thrown in the air. This weekend will also include the World Hammer Championship, where athletes throw a weighted ball on a stick for distance. Many of the participants and judges come all the way from Scotland.

The opening and closing events are filled with music and traditional dancing, with more than 25 pipe bands of more than 700 bagpipers and drummers perform. In between, Celtic music of all types and styles are played on eight stages.

With a contract between the club and the fairgrounds ending this year, some wondered whether this would be the last year for the event to be in Pleasanton.

"Santa Rosa, which is where the games were until 1993, did make an effort to woo us back this year," Purves said. "But the club has decided to stay in Pleasanton [for five more years]."

Festivities will officially kick off with a "March Under the Arch" at 6 p.m. tonight, where dancers, bagpipers and athletes will give a preview of what's to come the next couple days. Following the parade, the group will head to Concerts in the Park at First and Neal streets to hear Pladdohg, which fuses Celtic traditional sounds with American.

The Scottish Highland Gathering and Games starts at 9 a.m. Saturday and Sunday at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, 4501 Pleasanton Ave. Admission is \$17 for an adult one-day ticket or \$25 for two days. Youth from 8 to 16 and the disabled are \$12. Seniors 65 and older and children under 8 are free.

To learn more about the event, visit www.caledonian.org. ■

'Best men' flock to Pleasanton

Singles party has women supplying eligible bachelors for each other

by Emily West



Cyclocross racing

The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District presents the Cyclocross Race Series, starting Sept. 6 and continuing through Dec. 20. At Robertson Community Park, located at 3200 Robertson Park Road in Livermore, riders can enter the bike races that have riders on a lapped course that often is comprised of different terrain, such as dirt, mud, trails, stairs and obstacles. Open to beginners and experts, the races are open to men and women from children to adults. Participants must sign waivers and have a USCF license, which is \$60 for the year or \$10 for one day. To learn more, visit www.livermorebmx.com or call 525-3571.

Single and ready to mingle? The Society of Single Professionals is here, throwing a party that's sure to get the most eligible men of the Tri-Valley into a single Pleasanton location.

Called the Best of the Men party, the idea is that single women will bring the best men they know who they aren't romantically linked to—brothers, fathers, sons, co-workers, ex-husbands, etc.—in hopes that another woman may find a connection. A tradition done by single women in France, this is the first time SSP has brought this party to the Tri-Valley.

Rich Gosse, chairman of SSP and author of "A Good Man is Easy to Find," says women in the Bay Area are crybabies when they say they can't find a good man.

"They tell you all men are either married, gay or dead," he said. "We're going to prove them wrong."

As a bonus to ladies bringing an eligible guy, Gosse said they will receive a free copy of his book, which Oprah held up on her show saying, "This is a great book."

Guys are welcome to come unaccompanied as well.

"Men can come by themselves," Gosse said. "Especially if they think they're the best, but the women are the best judge."

SSP puts on about 150 events in the Bay Area throughout the year, several of which are held in the Tri-Valley.

These events are open to adults of all ages, but are catered to those who are tired of the bar scene and looking for alternative ways to meet a potential match.

Gosse said singles in the Bay Area are at an advantage, with so many singles organizations and single people.

"I've spent all my time convincing women that they're lucky to be in the Bay Area," he said, add-

ing that a women-to-men matchup in New York City leaves 700,000 single women.

"If you can't meet a good man in the Bay Area, you might as well head for the nunnery," he joked.

The Best of the Men party will be from 8 p.m. to midnight Sept. 6 at the Marriott Hotel, 11950 Dublin Canyon Road. The cost is \$20 at the door and includes dancing. For more information about this party and others, including links to other singles organizations, visit www.theparty-hotline.com. ■

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Calendar

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.

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.

Class Reunions

Amador Class of 1988 Reunion Calling all Dons: The Amador Valley High School Class of 1988 is holding its 20th reunion. Come see old friends and make new memories together. Dinner, entertainment, a photo booth, cigar bar, visual entertainment and baby pictures included. Group hotel rates available at the Radisson Hotel in Dublin. Reunion is from 6 p.m. to midnight Sept. 13 at Barone's Restaurant & Garden, 475 St. John St. Cost is \$90-97. For more information, visit <http://avhs1988.myevent.com> or call Marti Gilbert at 846-5607.

Classes

Adult Beginner Piano Class Presented by Community Education at Las Positas College, 3033 Collier Canyon in Livermore, the class lets students explore every type of music while learning how to read notes, timing and key signatures. Class is \$69 and meets from 6 to 7 p.m. Fridays Sept. 5 to Oct. 3. Call 424-1467 or visit www.laspositascollege.edu/communityed.

Cantabella Children's Chorus Quality choral instruction with excellent teacher/student ratio is available for children of the Tri-Valley. Openings now available in the 3-level training choir's for singers K-5 and auditions for openings in performing choir fifth grade to high school. Go to www.cantabella.org for more information.

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.

Livermore Lioness Club The Livermore Lioness Club welcomes new members at their regular monthly meeting at 6:30 p.m. the first Tuesday monthly. The Lioness Club is a service club, sponsored by the Livermore Lions Club, that helps many worthy causes in our community. Lioness main focus areas are women, children and family issues, in addition to helping the blind. Call 443-4543 for more information.

Tri-Valley Rotary Club Meeting The Tri-Valley Rotary Club is one of the newest and most diverse Rotary Clubs. Club members meet Tuesday nights from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Girasole Grill, 3180 Santa Rita Road. The cost is \$20. Email info@trivalley-rotary.org.

Widowed Men and Women The Widowed Men and Women of Northern California will meet for dinner at the Elephant Bar at 5 p.m. Aug. 30 at the Elephant Bar, 7202 Amador Plaza Road in Dublin. Cost will be your menu choice. Advance reservations are required. Call 846-0111.

Concerts

Annual Piano Recital An annual recital at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 6 at Asbury United Methodist Church, 4743 East Ave., Livermore, co-sponsored by the Alameda County East Branch of the Music Teachers' Association of California and Asbury, features MTAC Young Artist Guild member Ian Counts of Rancho Palos Verde, freshman at Stanford, performing Beethoven, Rzewski and Gershwin. No charge for admission; refreshments served. Call 443-2514.

Concerts in the Park The Pleasanton Downtown Association presents the 2008 Concert in the Park series. Each concert is from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Lions Wayside Park at First and Neal streets.

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Events

First Wednesday Street Party The First Wednesday Street Party is from 6 to 9 p.m. Sept. 3 on Main Street with live music by Magic Moments, family activities and a beer and wine garden.

Imagination Expressed The Pleasanton Art League and the Museum on Main Street present an art exhibit from Aug. 10 to Oct. 5 at the museum, 603 Main St. A variety of local artists will be showcased, with works for sale. A reception from 3 to 5 p.m. Aug. 10 includes refreshments.

Mystery of the Missing Bootlegger's Shipment Visit the Pleasanton Library booth at the First Wednesday Street Fair Sept. 3 and pick up your first clue for the Mystery of the Missing Bootlegger's Shipment. Collect the clues and try and solve the mystery. Fun for the whole family.

Pleasanton Harvest Festival The Pleasanton Harvest Festival is from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sept. 12 to 14 at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, 4501 Pleasanton Ave. Over 24,000 different handmade items will be showcased by hundreds of artisans. Tickets are \$9 for adults, \$7 for seniors and \$4 for teens. Free for kids 12 and under. Visit www.harvestfestival.com.

Roses to Grandparents From 2 to 4 p.m. Sept. 7, grandparents and families are invited to gather in the Rose Hotel lobby, 807 Main St., for cake, coffee and conversation. They will be treated to tours of the hotel and will be eligible to win a free night's stay at the 4 p.m. drawing. Each grandparent will receive a long stemmed rose. Call 846-8802.

Spiritual Experience Workshop Have you ever experienced a dream with a departed loved one? A near-death or out-of-body adventure? A sense you've lived before? This free workshop, from 2 to 4 p.m. Sept. 7 at the Four Points Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard Road, helps to go beyond faith to direct spiritual experience. Call 800-485-8129 or visit www.haveaspiritualexperience.org.

The Big Read Gatsby Extravaganza The Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave., presents the kickoff party The Big Read from 1 to 4 p.m. Sept. 7. The Gatsby Extravaganza includes Sara and Swingtime playing hot jazz. Dr. Philip Manwell delivering a keynote

address, food, games and prizes. Call 931-3405.

Wag 'N Walk The two-mile, all-breed dog walk for the entire family will be held at 9 a.m. Sept. 13 at Shadow Cliffs Regional Park, 2400 Stanley Blvd. Hosted by the NORCAL Golden Retriever Rescue, it will feature an "alumni parade" of dogs rescued by NGRV volunteers followed by the walk (with a swim break) for all breeds and humans. Registration is \$20. Children 14 and under are free. Visit www.golden-rescue.org.

Exhibits

Imagination Expressed The Pleasanton Art League has an exhibit, "Imagination Expressed," in the Phoebe Hearst room of the Museum On Main Street, 603 Main St., which runs through Oct. 5. It features paintings, wood, ceramics, jewelry and textile artworks. Open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$2.

Film

Blood and Oil This film documents how oil has been at the core of American foreign policy for over 60 years. This non-partisan public event at 7 p.m. Aug. 30 at the IBEW Hall, 6250 Village Pkwy., Dublin, provides refreshments and wheelchair access. Meet and greet starts at 6:30 p.m., while a short discussion follows the film. A \$3 donation is accepted.

The Big Read 'Great Gatsby' Film As part of "The Big Read" Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave., presents "The Great Gatsby" starring Robert Redford and Mia Farrow at 7 p.m. Sept. 4. Call 931-3405.

Fundraisers

3 Day Walk Team Unraveled will be participating in the Breast Cancer 3-Day Walk from Sept. 5-7 in San Francisco. The team consist of women from the Tri-Valley Area who's common thread is knitting. This group of outstanding women met at the local yarn shop, "Knit This, Purl That!" at 205A Main St. where donations can be made.

Foothill Marching Band Fundraiser The Foothill High School Marching

Band hosts a breakfast fundraiser from 7 to 11 a.m. Sept. 1 at the Foothill multipurpose room. Pancakes, eggs, sausage, fruit, coffee and juice will be served. Adults are \$7 and children 10 and under are \$4. There will also be a 50/50 raffle. Call 200-2209.

That's Amore Tri-Valley Animal Rescue's biggest fundraiser of the year will be held from 6 to 10 p.m. Oct. 11 at the Dublin Senior Center, 7600 Amador Valley Road. There will be live and silent auctions and Girasole Restaurant catering. Tickets are \$60. To purchase, visit www.tvr.org and click on Pay Pal. Call 803-7044.

Health

Diabetes Support Group Free support group meets the second Wednesday of the month at the Dublin Senior Center, 7600 Amador Valley Blvd. Topics will cover travel, stress, medications, food, emotions and general living with diabetes. Call 510-383-5185.

Gentle Yoga for 55+ Are you an active person 55+ years young? This free, gentle yoga class helps stress, flexibility, balance and overall health and is excellent for special/chronic conditions. Call Pleasanton school district at 426-4280 for times and locations.

Living a Long Healthy Life At 7:30 p.m. Sept. 11 at the Front Row Theater, 17011 Bollinger Canyon Road, San Ramon, Lowell Kleinman, M.D., will discuss facts and myths about health and wellness, and present some simple everyday steps to help prevent illness. Call 275-8230 or visit www.sanramonmedctr.com.

Summer Immunization Clinics for Children Saturday clinics, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. July 12, Aug. 2 and Sept. 6 at Axis Community Health, 4361 Railroad Ave., are open to Tri-Valley families who are low income or uninsured, including Medi-Cal and Medi-Cal Managed Care. Parents should bring child's immunization records, information about family income and medical insurance. There is a fee for some immunizations. Call 462-1755.

Holiday

Non-Religious Rosh Hashanah celebration Tri-Valley Cultural Jews

sponsors a child-friendly, non-religious celebration of the Jewish New Year from 7 p.m. to Sept. 29 at the Bothwell Center, 2466 8th St., Livermore. Program is comprised of readings and music, followed by apples and honey and honeycake baked by Jewish Culture School students. Food for the Alameda County Food Bank will be collected. Tickets are \$10 for adult non-members and kids are free. Call 485-1049.

Kids & Teens

Library Book Clubs Begin Students are invited to join either our fourth and fifth or sixth to eighth grade book clubs, which meet Wednesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. starting in September at the Pleasanton Public Library,

400 Old Bernal Ave. Come for good books, snacks and lively conversation. Registration begins Aug. 18, and is limited to 18 per club. Call 931-3400 ext. 8.

The Hipwaders at Kidsfaire! Award-winning band, The Hipwaders, will be performing "hip music for kids" and families at KidsFaire, Sept. 6 at the county fairgrounds, 4501 Pleasanton Ave. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for children 2-12. Call 866-283-8600 or visit www.hipwaders.net.

Lectures/ Workshops

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Calendar

in the month of September. Topics include the basics, healthy soil, year-round edible gardens and managing pests naturally. Registration for these classes is required. Call 510-444-SOIL (7645) or visit www.bayfriendly.org.

Small Business Seminars East Bay Small Business Development Center hosts seminars in Dublin Aug. 19 and Livermore Sept. 11. Seminars can help small business owners and entrepreneurs seeking the knowledge needed to grow sales, increase profits and get started in business the right way. Visit www.eastbaysbdc.org to register.

What's Your Creative Process? Writer, artist and creativity coach, Lisa Gentile will host a discussion of creative processes Sept. 4 at the Museum On Main, 603 Main St. Those interested in any creative genre are invited to share the stories behind their work. Call 462-2766.

Live Music

Chris Bradley's Jazz Band Chris Bradley's Jazz Band plays music of the '20s, '30s, and '40s every second and fourth Wednesday of the month at the Pleasanton Hotel, 855 Main St. No cover.

The Jambalaya Swing Band Dance to the oldies as performed by the 11-piece Jambalaya Swing Band on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at the Pleasanton Hotel, 855 Main St.

Seniors

Brain Matters Our brains are vital organs that deserve the same attention to care and maintenance as our hearts. Engaging in active learning will help maintain brain health. This new weekly program, meeting at 10 a.m. every Friday starting Sept. 5, combines lectures and interactive workshops dedicated to improving brain health and function. The cost is \$1.50 for residents or \$2 for non-residents. Call 931-5365.

Cut Down the Salt Want to use less salt in your cooking? Learn much you should consume, and how to get started with salt-free cooking from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Sept. 9 at the senior center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Cost

is \$1.50 for residents or \$2 for non-residents. Call 931-5365.

Sons in Retirement (SIR) SIR is an organization for retired men. The Pleasanton SIR holds a luncheon meeting at 11 a.m. the first Thursday of the month with golf, bridge, bocce, fishing and other activities and trips. Call 606-7189.

Spiritual

Bible Study Fellowship The 33-week study of The Life of Moses begins Sept. 8. Women's classes meet at 9:25 a.m. Wednesdays at Cedar Grove Church, Livermore; and 6:55 p.m. Mondays at Valley Community Church, Pleasanton. Men's class meets at 6:55 p.m. Tuesdays at Community Presbyterian Church in Danville. Call 877-273-3228.

Community Bible Study Join CBS for a nondenominational, in-depth study of the book of Revelation for women, along with a children's program (infant to elementary age), for 30 weeks. The class will begin at 9:30 a.m. Sept. 11 at Centerpointe Presbyterian Church, 3410 Cornerstone Court. The women's and children's classes run concurrently. The cost is \$25 for adults and \$10 for children. Call 209-0242 or visit www.communitybiblestudy.org.

Faith Chapel Assembly of God Faith Chapel Assembly of God, 6656 Alisal St., has Sunday school for all ages at 9:30 a.m. and worship at 10:30 a.m., with nursery for both services. Children's church, ages 3-12, meets at 11:15 a.m. Women's Bible study meets at 10 a.m. Wednesdays. A prayer at 6 p.m. is held the first and third Monday of the month. Call 846-8650 for more programs.

Tri-Valley Unity Church Tri-Valley Unity Church welcomes guest speaker Mr. Bob Hardy, LUT, at 10 a.m. Aug. 31, speaking on "The Magic Life." When the Christ Spirit is realized within, the magic in life expands. All are welcome. Service at the Radisson, 6680 Regional St., Dublin. Visit www.trivalleyunity.com or call 829-2733.

Women's Christian 12 Step Discover how much comfort there is in the journey of recovery walking with the Good Shepherd every STEP of the way! This group meets at noon every Friday and Saturday at Shepherd's Gate, 1660 Portola Ave., Livermore. Call 443-4283.

Sports

Callippe Niners Callippe Niners is a fun group of nine-hole women golfers. We are currently welcoming new members into our group. Our play days are Tuesday mornings. Call Joan, 462-1054.

Fastpitch Tryouts Lady Hustle Fastpitch will be holding tryouts in August for the fall season. Tournaments begin Sept. 6. For session details, visit www.ladyhustlefastpitch.com.

High School Mini Baseball Camp Tigers Baseball is sponsoring a back to school high school mini camp to be held at the Foothill High School varsity baseball field Sept. 6 to 7. All high school players and their parents are invited to learn what it takes to play collegiate baseball. Players will have a chance to training under the guidance of Coach Robert "Skip" Clapgood. Register at www.livermorepony.com.

Tigers Fall Ball Registration is open for Tigers Baseball's third annual fall ball program. Players ages 10 to 14 from all leagues are invited. The 10-weekend training includes two weekends with Coach Robert "Skip" Clapgood, a collegiate coach hall of famer. The program starts Sept. 13. Download a form at www.livermorepony.com.

Support Groups

Cancer Support Group A free support group for people with cancer and their loved ones is held from 2 to 4 p.m. every Tuesday at the Valley Care Health Library, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd., Ste. 270. This group is facilitated by The Wellness Community. For information, call 933-0107 or email jbblazin@twcba.org.

Pleasanton Military Families Pleasanton Military Families, a support group for families of service members, meets at 7 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month. The group includes families who have loved ones serving in Iraq, Afghanistan and in the Global War on Terrorism. Meetings are held at a different group member's home each month. Call Chris Miller for information on the placement of a yellow streamer for the military person on Main Street and for information on the group, 730-1604.

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Seahawks make waves

Pleasanton swim club sets records, competes in all-star meets

by Elyssa Thome

Thanks to Michael Phelps, Natalie Coughlin and the rest of the USA swim team, the pool has been on the news and on peoples' minds more than ever. For an elite group of young athletes, however, swimming dominated their brainwaves well before it hit television waves this year. And it's paid off.

The Seahawks, a year-round competitive swim team based at Dolores Bengtson Aquatic Center, had another great year, sending swimmers to top competitions around the country—and outside of it—setting records and just generally swimming fast.

In addition to other high-profile meets, Seahawks recently sent five swimmers to the North American Challenge Cup in Canada and four other swimmers to Western Zones in Oregon to represent Pacific Swimming.

Of more than 100 teams representing Pacific swimming, Seahawks with nine swimmers was one of only five teams to send eight or more swimmers to the All-Star Teams.

In addition to the swimmers sent to the meets, Seahawks also sent staff. Seahawks coach Jon Pallesen went to the NACC as Pacific's head coach and the coach of the 15-16 girls, while Seahawks club president Gary Knowles was the Pacific Team Coordinator at Western Zones.

"To take a bunch of young, relatively inexperienced swimmers to this caliber of tournament is phenomenal," Knowles said. "It was a phenomenal experience for me and a phenomenal experience for them. They all stepped up to the challenge and did incredibly."

The swimmers facing that challenge were Nick Silverthorn, Bryan Hughes, Marissa Brown, Andrew Seitz and Tory Houston at the North

American Challenge Cup, and Maxime Rooney, Rachel Knowles, Natalie Wong and Brianna Neumayr at Western Zones.

"I went for the experience," Houston said of the NACC trip. "It was about trying to win as a team and get the experience."



Nick Silverthorn

Both meets are designed to give young swimmers the trials/finals experience. This format is somewhat familiar to those that have been watching Olympic swimming, as swimmers race to qualify then race for medals later in the day.

"You have to have that finals experience," Pallesen said. "They have to swim fast in the morning and even better in the evening."

In keeping with the Olympic spirit, Pallesen said the international NACC featured different national anthems each night and small medal ceremonies for swimmers that placed in the top three of their event. Pacific, Canada, Mexico

and Southern California participated in the NACC, while Pacific swimmers at Western Zones were up against Pacific Northwest and Oregon. While Pacific didn't win either meet this year, the swimmers all performed well, setting personal bests and making it to the podium, when that applied.

Silverthorn made the most trips to the podium, as the 12 year-old won eight gold medals in Canada. "The North American Challenge Cup was different than any meet that I've been to," Silverthorn said. "The best part was swimming fast and being with all your friends."

Three swimmers also set records for Pacific swimming in these meets and others this season. Catherine Breed, 14, set four new Pacific Swimming Records; Brandon Fisher, 18, set one new Pacific Swimming Record; and Silverthorn, 12, broke seven Pacific Swimming Records this year and set five NACC records.

"It just felt good," Silverthorn said about his many records. "All the races felt good."

Seitz, 15, has had the trial experience before, so the format of the NACC was more familiar. Even so, he said the international aspect was fun.

"It really wasn't too much different but it was still cool racing against and meeting swimmers from Mexico and Canada," he said.

At the NACC, Canada took first with 5,227 points; Southern California came in second with 4,596 points; Pacific took third with 4,182 and Mexico followed with 1,841.

At Western Zones, the competition was fierce and the results close. Pacific Northwest barely won with 1,070 points while Pacific put 1,061 points on the board for second. Oregon came in third with 1,014 points. ■



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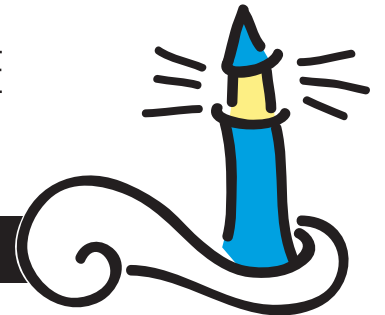
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210 Garage/Estate Sales

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230 Freebies

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245 Miscellaneous

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2794 Calle Alegre, Lisa 461-9663

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Arizona Land Bargain
36 Acres - \$29,900. Beautiful mountain property in Arizona's Wine Country. Price reduced in buyers market. Won't last! Good access & views. Eureka Springs Ranch offered by AZLR. ADWR report & financing available. 1-877-301-5263. (Cal-SCAN)

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Priced to Sell. 35 acres- \$39,900. Majestic lake and Mountain views, adjacent to national forest for camping or hiking, close to conveniences. EZ terms. 1-866-353-4807. (Cal-SCAN)

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20 acre ranches. Roads Surveyed. \$15,900, \$200 Down, \$159/month. Money Back Guarantee. Free Maps & Pictures. 1-800-343-9444. No Credit Checks!! (Cal-SCAN)

Montana's Best Land Deal
20 AC- Ponderosa Pines, County Road and Utilities. Was: \$99,900. Now: \$79,900. 160AC w/New Log Cabin Was: \$199,900. Now: \$149,900. 208AC w/ Huge Storage Barn Was: \$299,900. NOW: \$249,900. Affordable financing, discounted prices. Absolutely beautiful land. Call 877-229-7840. Visit www.WesternSkiesLand.com while we talk! (Cal-SCAN)

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Nevada's 3rd Largest Lake. Approx. 2 hrs. South of Carson City. 1 ac Dockable \$149,900. 1 ac Lake Access \$49,900. 38,000 ac Walker Lake, very rare. Home sites on paved road with city water. Magnificent views, very limited supply. New to market. www.NVLR.com Call 1-877-542-6628. (Cal-SCAN)

New Mexico Land Dispersal
New to market: 140 acres - \$89,900. River Access. Northern New Mexico. Cool 6,000' elevation with stunning views. Great tree cover including Ponderosa, rolling grassland and rock outcroppings. Abundant wildlife, great hunting. EZ terms. Call NML&R, Inc. 1-866-360-5263. (Cal-SCAN)

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Buy bulk: 40 AC just \$29,900. Your own gorgeous ranch. Stunning land, inspiring views, great location, 2 hours east of Salt Lake in ideal outdoor recreational area. County maintained roads, ready to build or just hold and enjoy. Priced at bulk acreage prices for quick sale. Must sell. EZ Terms. Call UTLR 1-888-693-5263. (Cal-SCAN)

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Almost heaven! 6 ac just \$49,900. Calendar cover beauty in Palouse Country. Rare acreage in an area where land is rarely available. Rolling hills, river access, near town & golf, close to WSU. Has it all including great price, must see. EZ terms. Call WALR 1-866-836-9152. (Cal-SCAN)

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PET OF THE WEEK



CATHERINE HANSEN RUSH

Twice as nice

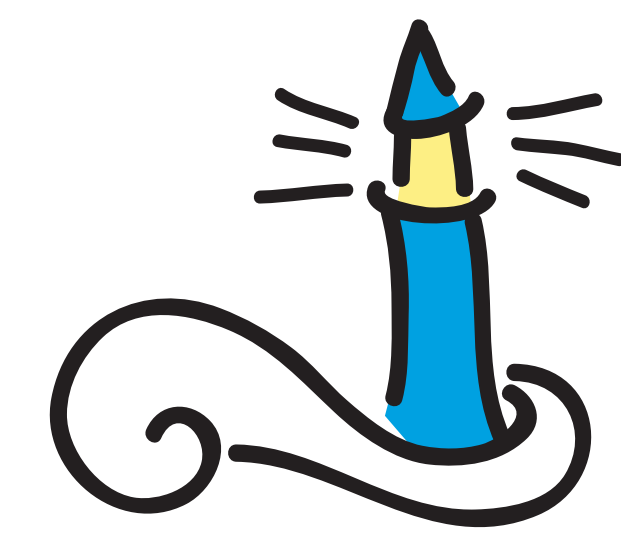
Meet Ricky. Or is it his twin brother Randy? As I entered Valley Humane Society I saw this mischievous pair sitting side by side with curious looks on their faces. I thought what a cute picture that would be! With my camera poised, Ricky went left and Randy went right! Or Ricky went up and Randy went down! Or Ricky came forward and Randy went backward! Whew! I had to settle for one of them. So meet Ricky, or Randy, 12-week-old, neutered male Tabbies who are loads of fun and quick on their feet. They are just two of several adorable kittens and beautiful housecats that currently call VHS home. As I left the adoption center I looked back. And there they sat, side by side, like two peas in a pod. Those rascals! Visit Ricky and Randy at Valley Humane Society, 3670 Nevada St. It's open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Call 426-8656. Visit www.valleyhumane.org for more information about both cat and dog adoptions.

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Real Estate

Home sale of the week



**5757 Hanifen Way
Pleasanton –
\$1,840,000**

This gorgeous home has 5 bedrooms and 5½ bathrooms. It offers approximately 4300 square feet of living space on a flat 1/3 acre lot. The yard features a pool, spa, outdoor fireplace, and kitchen. Sold by Doug Buenz of Alain Pinel Realtors.



**7886 MEDINAH COURT, PLEASANTON
Listed for \$1,089,000**

Elegance, pride of ownership, location, this home has it all! This approx. 3,021 sq.ft. beauty with 4 bedrooms and 3 full baths is nestled on a private court in the prestigious Golden Eagle Estates just minutes from charming downtown Pleasanton. You will fall in love in love with this pristine property with its lush landscaping, majestic views, and sheer tranquility. Maintained with the utmost quality this home boasts beautiful, new hardwood floors, custom paint, built-ins and newer appliances.



**1701 CURTNER ROAD, FREMONT
Listed for \$2,499,000**

Incredible views of the mountains in this brand new luxury estate in the Fremont Hills. This impressive approx. 5,000 sq. ft. 4 bedroom, 3 full bath property is nestled on a half acre parcel. This property presents a perfect opportunity for refined country living yet close to the city and freeways. The home features marble and wood floors, a walk around panoramic fireplace, hand plastered walls, crown molding throughout, and Anderson double sliders leading to the lush backyard and pool area. Truly for the discriminating buyer who yearns for the epitome of elegance and refinement in the Bay Area.



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Sales at a Glance

Source: California REsource

| Pleasanton | Dublin | Livermore | San Ramon |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Total sales reported: 11 | Total sales reported: 13 | Total sales reported: 28 | Total sales reported: 18 |
| Lowest sale reported: \$523,000 | Lowest sale reported: \$368,000 | Lowest sale reported: \$233,000 | Lowest sale reported: \$301,000 |
| Highest sale reported: \$2,325,000 | Highest sale reported: \$639,000 | Highest sale reported: \$1,050,000 | Highest sale reported: \$1,140,000 |
| Average sales reported: \$954,909 | Average sales reported: \$492,769 | Average sales reported: \$486,768 | Average sales reported: \$699,111 |



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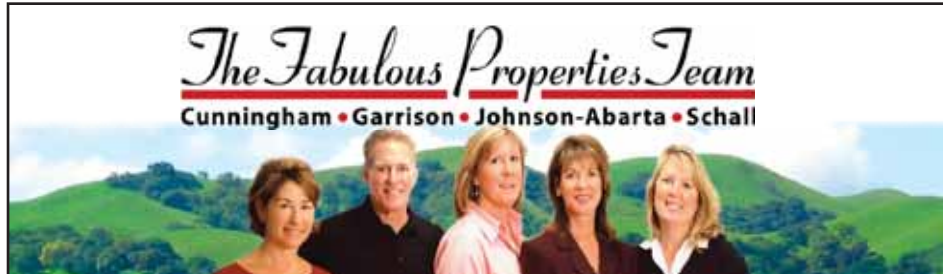
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**3206 Novara Wy. Ruby Hill
Offered at \$1,875,000**

Beautiful Italian Villa with 4 BR, 3½ BA, and executive study. Located on a corner lot, in cul-de-sac. Spa-like backyard includes pool, hot tub, and built-in BBQ!

NEW LISTING! OPEN SUN 1-4



OPEN SUN 1-4

532 Rosso Ct. Ruby Hill

Beautiful & Classic home features 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2,806 sq. ft. Lush landscaping, built-in BBQ!
Offered at \$1,149,000



NEW LISTING

3533 Mercato Ct. Ruby Hill

SINGLE STORY French Country style 4 BR/3.5 BA custom home offers 3,907 sq. ft. on a quiet cul-de-sac.
Offered at \$1,699,000



NEW LISTING

3173 Pellaro Ct. Ruby Hill

4 BR, 4½ bath, 5,300 sq. ft. home includes outdoor Casita. Located on Golf Course, and large lot with pool/spa.
Offered at \$2,499,000

3435 Gravina Ct. Ruby Hill - \$1,539,000
3533 Valenza Wy. Ruby Hill - \$1,545,000
1951 Nicosia Ct. Ruby Hill - \$1,590,000



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62 Medlyn Ln. \$2,695,000
Sun 1:30-4:30 Alain Pinel 577-4004

5 Bedrooms

75 Candleston Pl. \$1,499,000
Sun 1-4 Pacific Union 997-3966

74 Medlyn Ln. \$3,048,000
Sun 1:30-4:30 Alain Pinel 577-0525

LIVERMORE

4 Bedrooms

93 Raccolio Wy. \$1,119,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 397-4173

PLEASANTON

3 Bedrooms

532 Rosso Ct. \$1,149,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams - Donna Garrison 397-4165

4010 Francisco St. \$578,000
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel - Moxley Team 621-4064

246 Trenton Cir. \$614,900
Sat/Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 596-1918

8080 Canyon Creek Cir. \$779,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 397-4173

4 Bedrooms

4576 Del Valle Pkwy. \$1,190,000
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel - Moxley Team 621-4064

39 Castledown Rd. \$1,300,000
Sun 1-5 Byerly Properties Inc. 846-1234

1404 Briones Ln. \$1,349,500
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel - Moxley Team 621-4064

3206 Novara Wy. \$1,875,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams - Donna Garrison 397-4165

6522 Inglewood Dr. \$619,950
Sun 1-4 Re/Max Accord Kathy Westernoff 577-2600

1053 Riesling \$795,000
Sun 1-4 Allied Brokers 846-3755

3902 Kral Pl. \$849,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 577-5787

1557 Whispering Oak wy. \$899,000
Sun 1-5 Byerly Properties Inc. 846-1234

5 Bedrooms

5580 Paseo Navarro \$1,172,000
Sun 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 251-2585

2215 Martin Ave. \$2,149,000
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel - Moxley Team 621-4064

2156 Canosa Ct. \$2,990,000
Sun 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 577-2658

6 Bedrooms

9451 Blessing Dr. \$1,775,000
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel Realtors 621-4070

SAN RAMON

5 Bedrooms

554 Wycombe Ct. \$1,699,000
Sat/Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 397-4173

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213 E. Angela St., Pleasanton

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Downtown Pleasanton Buildable Lot!

Location, Location, Location! Just 2 blocks off Main St! 9200 square foot lot with approved plans for 3100 square foot Craftsman-style home, including lap pool. Walk to everything! Call for more information – not on MLS.

\$989,000

- **Pending in 3 days!** Totally updated Downtown 3br, 2ba home. 302 Kottinger Dr., Pleasanton \$789,000
- 10 Acre Property near Downtown w/Panoramic Views, Horses OK. 900 Roselma Pl., Pleasanton \$1,289,000
- 9-Year-Old Downtown Home. Move Right In! 1 block off Main Street! 15 Benjamin Ct., Pleasanton \$716,000
- Giant 22,000 sq. ft. downtown lot with existing home. Dev. Poss. 383 Christina Ct., Pleasanton \$899,000
- Convenient Dublin Condo, Single Story End Unit, 2 pools + Gym! 7003 Stagecoach Rd #A, Dublin \$346,000

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New Listing in Pleasanton Just Move In!



230 Tomas Way

This ultimate move-in ready home has 3BR/2 full baths, slab quartz kitchen with cherry cabinets and 5 sky lights. Appliances, furnace, A/C, water heater, all less than 3 years old.

Offered at \$679,000



Emil Oxsen
925.872.8286
emiloxsen@aol.com
Allied Brokers
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Jackie!

Castlewood Country Club 4 BR 3 BA
2904 sq ft, 1/2-acre lot.
Fantastic great room.
Flier & Slide Tour at
39castledown.com



OPEN
SUNDAY

Stoneridge Place 3 BR
Single-level perfection!
Walk to Nielsen Park &
Mohr School. Flier &
Slide Tour at
2538Glenisle.com



SOLD

Bonde Ranch 4 BR
Single-level by Shapell.
Gorgeous home, shows
like a model. Flier &
Slide Tour at
836genevieve.com



SOLD

The Preserve in Pleasanton

**9451 Blessing Dr.,
Pleasanton**

Beautiful 4,689 sq.ft. home with 6 bedrooms plus den, and 5.5 baths. Closet Organizer. Gourmet kitchen with stainless steel appliances. 3 fireplaces. Detached guest cottage included in sq.ft. Gorgeous solar heated pool and spa. Backs to open space. Professionally landscaped yard great for entertaining. 4 car garage.
Offered at \$1,775,000



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from beginning
to end.*



748 St. John Circle, Pleasanton
Downtown living in Pleasanton. 4bd/2.5ba home in desirable St. John Court. Privacy is the key to this charming home, backs to creek. A must see!
Available now at \$939,000



2527 Corte Bella, Pleasanton
Court living in this 5bd/3ba home in Country Fair. Park like backyard is quiet and private. Close to shopping, tennis courts, parks, cabana clubs and award winning schools.
Available now at \$1,249,000



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PLEASANTON



REDUCED

ONE OF A KIND MEDITERRANEAN
Single story on 1.91 acres with 360° panoramic views. 3BD/3½BA + office + bonus, pool & spa. **\$3,250,000**
925.548.8641 Karen Muccio

LIVERMORE



14 ACRE PRIVATE COUNTRY ESTATE
Panoramic Views of Livermore Valley. 3BD/3BA+ office in main house, + 2nd home & 10 horse stall barn. **\$2,999,000**
925.337.2989 Kim Buerke

PLEASANTON



NEW

COURT LOCATION IN THE GATES
4BD/2½BA, 2,103 sq.ft w/updated kitchen, granite counters & hardwood floors. Lg yard w/pool & spa. **\$829,900**
925.426.3824 Ann Walker

TRACY



REDUCED

STUNNING HIDDEN LAKES BEAUTY
5BD/3BA, master suite w/balcony overlooking backyard, swimming pool & spa. Gourmet Kitchen. **\$799,500**
925.200.2142 Carla Hunter

PLEASANTON



REDUCED

OVER HALF ACRE CUSTOM HOME LOT on Callippe Golf Course. All flat w/utilities to site. Backs to #3 fairway. Reduced, owner must sell. **\$799,000**
925.426.3818 Roger Manning

PLEASANTON



REDUCED

DOWNTOWN COMPLEX Spacious 2 Master Suites + 2 full baths, Remodeled kitchen w/Red Birch cabinetry, slab granite counters & much more. **\$519,500**
925.200.1909 Karla Brown

WALNUT CREEK



REDUCED

CONDO NEAR BART 1BD/1BA, 683 sq.ft., freshly painted, new carpets & flooring, granite counter top, new dishwasher & refrigerator. **\$239,500**
925.413.4278 Jo Hunter

TRACY



REDUCED

NEWLY CONSTRUCTED IN 2004
3BD/2BA, new slab foundation, sewer system, copper plumbing, water heater, central heat/air, siding & trim. **\$250,000**
925.200.2142 Carla Hunter

The latest from The 680 Blog

Open Houses Can Be Fools Gold



I remember meeting with a seller who's listing with another agent had expired. I asked the seller how the traffic had been. "Great!" the seller exclaimed. "We have had an open house every weekend, and we are getting tons of traffic!" "How about showings by Realtors?" I asked. The seller looked puzzled. "Well... er... not too many" was the reply. "Okay, so what has the feedback been from the open house traffic?" I inquired. Here comes the puzzled look again. "Well, er, I'm not really sure. I think they all liked it". "Then why no offers?" I asked. The seller had no answer. In real estate, not all traffic is equal. Showings from brokers

is the best traffic you can get. And Open Houses can be fools gold. They often trick a seller into thinking they are in the game, when in reality they may have no chance of selling. In fact, if you want to get a real read on where your house is in the marketplace, stop doing open houses.

The difference is this; In order to see a home that is for sale but not open on weekends, the potential buyer has to take some action. They have to contact the listing agent, or contact their own agent, or send an email, or take another step to arrange a viewing. And each step is a litmus test for the buyer's motivation level. So as a seller, when you get a showing from an agent, at least you know there was some effort involved in the decision to see your home.

On the flip side, you don't need to take any action to see an open >>Go to www.680Homes.com to read the rest of this article.



Doug Buenz

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Go to 680Homes.com for more information on these homes and other properties.



Gorgeous 5 BR, 3 BTH home on .41 acre cul-de-sac lot with pool, spa, and sports court.
\$1,369,000



JUST LISTED!
Charming Cape Cod style home with granite/maple/stainless kitchen, remodeled baths, and private shady park-like yard!
\$749,900



Large single story 4 BR, 2 BTH on approx 8000 sq ft lot in great neighborhood!
\$699,900



Gorgeous 4 BR, 3.5 BTH home with granite kitchen, hardwood floors, and spectacular wooded 1.72 acre lot.
\$1,549,900

Recent Pending & Sold Homes

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
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| 5757 Hanifen Way | \$1,999,900 |
| 2872 Gray Fox Ct | \$1,999,900 |
| 198A Peters Ave | \$399,900 |
| 5725 Ohana Place | \$1,850,000 |
| 2877 Sombrero Circle | \$735,000 |
| 4055 Stone Valley Oaks..... | \$2,399,000 |
| 2642 Corte Vida | \$1,349,000 |

*I can sell your home too!
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2215 MARTIN AVE., PLEASANTON—LOCATED IN MOHR ESTATES



MAIN LOT (43,846 SF. LOT)

SUB-DIVIDABLE LOT 1.67 ACRES
 MAIN LOT- EXISTING 4,196 SF. HOME
 WITH 5 BEDROOMS
 PARCEL 2
 BACK LOT ACCESS FROM DENNIS DR.
 \$2,149,000



PARCEL 2 LAND (27,642 SF. LOT)

7193 ROSECLIFF CT., PLEASANTON
 LOCATED IN PHEASANT RIDGE



6BD / 6BA 5,096 SF. 14,519 SF. LOT, HOME
 OFFICE, MEDIA ROOM, SALT WATER POOL
 \$1,797,000

1404 BRIONES CT., PLEASANTON
 LOCATED IN IRONWOOD ESTATES



4BD / 3.5BA 3,182 SF. 10,363 SF. LOT.
 SINGLE STORY BUILT IN 2006
 \$1,330,000

4149 CRISTOBAL WY., PLEASANTON
 LOCATED IN JENSEN/AMADOR



3BD / 2BA, 1,459 SF. 6,600 SF. LOT.
 PERFECT 10! UPDATED TOP TO BOTTOM
 \$659,000

BUYER NEEDS

SINGLE LEVEL, ANY LOCATION
 IN PLEASANTON UNDER
 3,000 SF.

3-4 BEDROOM "FIXER"
 ANYWHERE IN PLEASANTON

4 BEDROOM SINGLE STORY,
 CENTRAL LOCATION

HOLIDAY MODEL IN
 BIRDLAND/PLS. VALLEY

LAND ABLE TO BE SUBDIVIDED
 INTO 3 LOTS MIN.

2965 DANIELLE LN., LIVERMORE
 LOCATED IN LEGACY



4BD / 4.5BA 4,451 SF. 17,381 SF. LOT
 OFFICE & 2 BEDROOMS DOWNSTAIRS
 \$1,390,000

4576 DEL VALLE PKWY.
 LOCATED IN PLEASANTON VALLEY



4BD / 2.5BA 3,357 SF. 9,541 SF. LOT.,
 UPGRADED & REMODELED
 \$1,150,000

4010 FRANCISCO ST., PLEASANTON
 LOCATED IN JENSEN/AMADOR



3BD / 2BA 1,159 SF. 6,575 SF. LOT.
 ROOM TO EXPAND, WOOD FLOORS
 \$578,000

3600 WHITWORTH DR., DUBLIN
 LOCATED IN DUBLIN RANCH



2BD / 2BA 1,300 SF. NO STAIRS-SINGLE LEVEL
 ATTACHED GARAGE AND INDOOR LAUNDRY
 \$420,000



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