

WaMu makes cuts

Workers laid off, Pleasanton facility to close > **page 5**

Vol. IX, Number 44 • November 28, 2008

www.PleasantonWeekly.com

Got campaign?

Students milk their advertising lesson

> **page 6**

PLEASANTON WEEKLY

Being thankful

Man learns from week on the streets

> **section 2**



SERVING THOSE IN NEED

Holiday Fund will aid Open Heart Kitchen, which is struggling in the face of financial crisis

PAGE 14



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Around Pleasanton

by Jeb Bing

What a town!

If you were among the several thousand last Friday night shopping on a festive Main Street and side streets, you might have thought downtown merchants are in better shape than most national financial and business analysts are saying. You'd also be both right—and wrong. Indeed, the turnout for this year's Magical Holiday Evening, sponsored by the Pleasanton Downtown Association, was one of the best ever. With near-perfect weather and gaily decorated storefronts, stores made their streets into a holiday wonderland. The sidewalks were crowded, but more importantly, so were the stores. It was hard to wedge your way down the aisles of Clover Creek at 670 Main or G.R. Doodlebug at the corner of East Angela and Main. Even Christesen's Tack Room at 633 Main, which usually isn't open to late evening shoppers, had more than a dozen customers picking through Rory Janes' wide assortment of horse and country wear as if this was the start, not the end of the outdoor riding season.

Especially pleased was Melanie Buerle of SonRise Equestrian whose full-grown miniature horses delighted children while they waited to talk to Santa, just off St. Mary Street. Santa and the lighted holiday display were the work of Nickie Hoppe, the PDA's event coordinator, who talked Buerle into bringing her horses to downtown Pleasanton. Parents lined up with their youngsters for a quarter of a block to see Santa and have photos taken of the event. Sitting nearby taking it all in and then greeting customers as they left Santa to head into her Savvy Kids store at 327A St. Mary was Debbie Lopes, Savvy Seconds' owner, who now has her main resale boutique a couple of blocks away at 540 Main. Lopes' business at both sites is flourishing, no doubt because an uncertain economy is driving more nervous customers to classy resale shops such as hers. For anyone trying to stretch their dollars, a perfectly good outfit for a 2-year-old, worn only a few months before she outgrows it, makes for a nice new set of clothes for someone else's child who's just turning 2.

Karen Starkey always has customers in her Gourmet Works

candy (mostly chocolates) store at 420 Main, where I ran into Rick Pickering of the Alameda County Fair and his wife Dawn, Realtor Chris Miller and his wife Marty, and Amador Valley High's head boys soccer coach Ken Villegas. Starkey was busy ringing up the chocolate sales from the entire group, although everyone insisted their open boxes of chocolates, with a few pieces already missing, were gifts. Part of a group of 20 activist merchants who want both the PDA and the city to invest in more aggressive promotion programs for the downtown, Starkey said her group is already focusing on major events next year. Starting tonight, Gourmet Works and the 19 other stores will be open until at least 8 p.m. every Thursday, Friday and Saturday through Christmas to attract shoppers who have long complained that they come downtown to dine, but then find closed stores when they're finished.

Next door at Murphy's Paw, owners Mike and Melanie Sadek agreed. Crowds of pet owners rummaged through tables and displays stacked with Godzilla-like chew toys and others the Sadeks say are virtually indestructible. Sure, just try one on my golden retriever Kramer and it'll be in shreds in an hour. Murphy's Paw just celebrated its first anniversary and business is going gangbusters, Mike Sadek said. No matter how careful shoppers might be over how they spend their dollars, there are always some available for the family pet and bags filled with purchases were signs that the Sadeks were already ringing up holiday sales.

Farther south on Main is another relative newcomer, Pans on Fire, which opened two years ago and launched its popular cooking school just a year ago. Linda Wyner, the celebrated author of "Food for Thought: Musings on the History and Uses of Food," filled in a host of customers on recipes, ingredients and the pans and other utensils they'd need to whip up one of her delicacies, including using a special Mexican vanilla that she sells. Just a whiff of it sent me back out to Main Street to sober up, but not before buying some, of course.

What a town. ■

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About the Cover

Faced with a reduction in donations from both individuals and businesses as well as an increase in demand for the hot meal service it provides, Open Heart Kitchen is struggling. The Pleasanton Weekly has named Open Heart as one of seven organizations that will receive help from the Holiday Fund. Photo by Janet Pelletier.

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Streetwise

Q: In light of the recent economic conditions, what (if anything) are you doing to scale back this holiday season?

Asked at Muirwood Community Park



Vickie Boals

I will definitely be spending less on gifts this year, but I am planning to donate more money to charities since there are so many people worse off than I am during these tough economic times.

Amy Fulmer

We are actually spending more money this year. We usually stay home for the holidays but this year we'll be traveling to see family. Christmas is Christmas and it's inevitable that money will be spent!



Scott Chase

I haven't thought about it much because we've always been kind of modest about our spending around the holidays. We celebrate Hanukkah and our focus is more on playing games with the children and enjoying family during the eight nights of celebration.



Bob Murtagh

We will definitely be more judicious in gift-giving this year and will be more cost-conscious of the quantity, size and cost of each gift we purchase.



Brian Alexander

It's going to be a very different holiday for the family this year because of the economic conditions. I work as a land surveyor and the number of jobs are down due to the slump in real estate development so we have to be careful what we spend this year.

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



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Newsfront

News Digest

Plan for college at LPC

Las Positas College in Livermore invites high school seniors and their parents to an information evening from 7 to 9 p.m. Dec. 2. Hear from campus administration, student leaders and representatives from the University of California and California State University systems. Parking is \$2 and the campus is located at 3000 Campus Hill Drive and the event is held in the gym. To learn more, call Jenna Heath at 424-1487.

Musical event to help the disabled

Carden West School, 4576 Willow Road, hosts the "Music in the Halls" event at 7 p.m. Dec. 5. Supporting the Wine for Wheels Foundation, money raised will go towards providing wheelchairs for those in need. The evening will include wine and chocolate tasting, hors d'oeuvres and music, as well as a charity auction. Call the schools for tickets, 463-6060. A \$25 donation is requested, and any donation of \$75 or more will be matched by the foundation, providing one wheelchair.

County makes gains for mental health

Assemblymember Mary Hayashi (D-Hayward) recently announced the Services and Oversight Accountability Commission approved an allocation of \$4,891,876 for the county's Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) program. PEI will provide county mental health care services to children, transition-aged youth and older adults, with a focus on reducing the stigma of mental illness and reaching diverse communities.

Young artists to display works

The Pleasanton PTA Council presents the sixth annual Reflections Arts Recognition Program Dec. 1 in Harvest Park Middle School's multipurpose room. A reception and showcase of the art will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a ceremony following at 7 p.m. This year's theme, "Wow!" is present in pieces by 350 students in kindergarten through 12th grade in the following categories: photography, visual arts, literature, musical composition, dance choreography and film/video production.

Council votes 3-2 to sign Oak Grove development agreement

McGovern, Sullivan argue unsuccessfully to appeal court decision

by **Jeb Bing**

The City Council voted 3-2 Tuesday against appealing a Superior Court order that City manager Nelson Fialho sign a development agreement with landowners of a 600-acre parcel in the city's southeast hills who want to build 51 custom homes.

Judge Frank Roesch issued the order last week at the request of developers Jennifer Lin and her brother Frederic. Their attorney, Andrew Sabey of the San

Francisco law firm of Cox, Castle & Nicholson, said the city had an obligation to sign the agreement, now more than a year old.

The agreement, part of two measures approved by the council in a 4-1 vote last fall, calls for the Lins to turn over 496 of the 600 hilltop acres they own above Kottinger Ranch to the city free of charge. It also commits the Lins to give the city \$1 million in mitigation fees to pay for traffic and safety measures and provides funds for a special firefighting vehicle capable of bat-

tlung blazes on steep hillsides.

The second measure is a Planned Unit Development agreement for the 51 custom homesites that the Lins want to develop on the remaining acreage. After the council's approval, former Councilwoman Kay Ayala and several colleagues formed the Save Pleasanton's Hills coalition and collected enough signatures to qualify their opposition as a referendum that would ask voters to overturn the council's approval of the Oak Grove project.

That petition, however, was ruled

invalid by the same Judge Roesch in a suit by the Lins that contended that Ayala and petitioners did not carry sufficient supporting documents, including the development agreement, with them when soliciting signatures.

The citizens' group has since asked the state Court of Appeal to overturn Judge Roesch's decision, a case that is pending before the Appellate Court. Even if it agrees with the citizens' group, it's likely

(continued on page 8)



Reuse the shoes

Fairlands Elementary School students Jasmine Dessouky, Alex Bean, Jamal Dessouky, Julian Dessouky, Tanvi Badrinatha and Ankitha Kaki show off the shoes they collected to be recycled as a part of the Go Green Initiative. This year they collected almost 700 shoes, which will be shipped to Oregon to be ground up and used in sports and recreation surfaces.

Family sees support despite vandalism incident

Police continue to follow leads over possible hate crime

by **Emily West**

News of the vandalism to the Patrick family home after Election Day outraged many residents and spurred several to offer care and compassion.

"We are extremely grateful to the many members of the Pleasanton com-

munity for the cards and gifts," said Phil Patrick. "The compassion and concern shown to us has supplanted the anger and fear we felt at first with gratitude and desire to show compassion to others, including the vandals themselves."

They also expressed thanks to those

(continued on page 6)

Workers reeling after WaMu layoffs

1,200 bank employees will lose their jobs by early spring at five building campus

by **Janet Pelletier**

Roughly 1,200 employees at Washington Mutual's Pleasanton operations center are now standing in the ever-growing unemployment line after the bank announced late last week it would close the five building complex off of Johnson and Franklin drives.

Employees were notified Nov. 20 and given 60-day termination notices, the company announced. The Pleasanton center receives customer calls regarding credit cards and consumer banking from across the United States. JPMorgan Chase acquired WaMu in September after the largest bank failure in U.S. history and the Pleasanton closure was due to a need for consolidation, according to a spokesman for Washington Mutual.

"The calls will be rerouted to other facilities across the country," spokesman Gary Kischner said, adding that bank customers won't see any changes in calling customer service.

"We will be offering (workers) outpatient services and creating an online job network, helping those employees learn about other opportunities inside and outside the company," Kischner

continued. "In addition, we'll work with other employers in local markets to seek opportunities for the affected employees. We'll also be offering severance for employees who don't find a job with Chase."

The announcement also included the elimination of about 400 jobs at another operations center in San Francisco, which will also be closed.

Pamela Ott, economic development director for the city of Pleasanton, said while the news is devastating, the city is fortunate to have a good mix of businesses, which will help it weather the storm.

"It is always difficult for a city when you see a company lay off employees, especially in such large numbers as what happened with Washington Mutual," Ott said. "It's a difficult time for (those employees) and we recognize that. But, from the city's perspective, when looking at our entire business community, we know that we spent a lot of years looking at having a very broad base of businesses here that will help guide us through any tough economic times."

It's not clear what will happen to the WaMu com-

(continued on page 8)

Milk does an education good

Amador students miss out on top prize, gain wealth of experience

by Emily West

Not taking home the first place prize, the Amador Valley High School business and marketing students left a San Francisco boardroom with a priceless educational experience and a surprise \$1,000 to boot.

Amador was one of three California high schools chosen to help the California Milk Processor Board revamp milk's image with teens. Earlier this month, five students brought their advertising plan—complete with two video commercials and a rap song—before the CMPB and advertising executives at San Francisco-based Goodby, Silverstein and Partners, who created the Got Milk? campaign 15 years ago.

"The students did a great job," said AVHS instructor Joan Thomas. "They looked very professional.

They also did a great job responding to the questions asked by the judges."

Their presentation supported their theme of Brawn, Beauty and Brains with the slogan YNotMilk? The idea was to show teens that milk helped them when they were young, so why stop? One of their commercials opened with a girl who had been teased because of her looks. She then drinks milk before going to bed and in the morning is transformed into a beautiful girl admired by her peers for her perfect hair and skin. To further reach the technology- and music-loving demographic, they came up with a rap contest about the benefits of drinking milk, along with a cell phone text-in contest, a MySpace and webpage.

In the end, students from Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) in Clovis won

the top prize of \$2,000 with their ideas to make milk exciting, unattainable and even taboo.

Yet, because of their hard work, Amador and Orange County High School were gifted with \$1,000.

"To see what these young people brought to this 15-year-old campaign has been delightful," says Jeff Goodby, GSP co-chairman. "They suggested new twists of design, story and thinking that will definitely inspire us here at the agency for a long time to come."

The Amador presenters set themselves apart from the pack and impressed the judges by sharing what they learned from participating in the challenge and how it will help them reach future educational and business goals.

"The students gained valuable insight into advertising, market research and how to put together a complete campaign," Thomas said.



AVHS students Nicole Villanueva, Tanya Carter, Angela Sibley, Vinny Stefani and Doug Howe represented their business and marketing class when presenting to advertising executives.

Joan Thomas

"They also realized how difficult it can be to turn ideas into a final concept—so many lessons learned. They were disappointed that they did not win, but happy they did it.

"As a teacher, it is so valuable to have a hands-on project that

students can complete," she continued. "We can read the book, take exams, but doing it means each student walks away with a much better understanding of the topic and gains from the project team and the final outcome." ■

Vandalism

(continued from page 5)

who believed the incident to be racist—some reports said police hadn't classified it as a hate

crime—and expressed their outrage to police, which Patrick said "the police department failed to recognize initially."

Cpt. Eric Finn with the Pleasanton Police Department said they've taken it seriously and given it priority and are doing everything they

can to continue following up with leads.

"We encourage the community to continue to come forward with any information," he said.

Patrick's outlook on hope has surprisingly changed since the incident.

"The vandalism was an overt act of racism that we rarely see in California," he said. "Ironically, I'm more hopeful now than before this ugly episode that one day we can become a nation that judges 'not by the color of our skin but by the content of our character.'"

Finn said he didn't believe the incident to be reflective of the community.

"Our response, the community's response, the outpouring of care and the city's response to how seriously we take this incident is reflective of our community," he said. ■

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STUDIO SEVEN

Main Street . Downtown Pleasanton

Andrade-Wax takes over as Parks, Community Services chief

by Jeb Bing

Susan Andrade-Wax started her job Monday as Pleasanton's Director of Parks and Community Services, hitting the ground running with early morning meetings with her staff and then being briefed by Julie Yuan-Miu, assistant city manager, as they looked at the city's 21 parks, sports fields and recreational facilities that the city operates.

Two key stops were at the new \$10-million Firehouse Arts Center that is now under construction on Railroad Avenue, which falls under Andrade-Wax's management responsibility, and the new lighted baseball fields on the Bernal property, the first of a series of lighted sports fields to be built nearby as part of Parks and Community Services expansion of recreational facilities.

"This is quite an impressive city," Andrade-Wax said. "I'm looking forward to helping Pleasanton continue the momentum."

Andrade-Wax comes to Pleasanton



Assistant City Manager Julie Yuan-Miu briefs Susan Andrade-Wax on progress being made at \$10-million Firehouse Arts Center now under construction on Railroad Avenue. The facility, scheduled to open late next year, will be among Andrade-Wax's responsibilities.

from Gilroy, where she was that city's Community Services Director. Prior to that, she worked in recreation and human services for the cities of Santa Clarita, Claremont, Chino Hills and Chino, as well as at UCLA. In Gilroy, she had many of the same

responsibilities that she'll have in Pleasanton, including responsibility for Callippe Preserve Golf Course.

Jim Wolfe, who is retiring as parks director after 11 years, will remain with the department until Dec. 30. ■

Burnin' up

Pleasanton native Juliette Goodrich pens children's book about light bulb

by Janet Pelletier

Believe it or not, there's a light bulb that's been burning in Livermore long before the invention of the automobile, before the Wright brothers took their first solo flight and before America put a man on the moon.

If you haven't heard by now, Fire Station No. 6 on East Avenue is home to the world's longest burning light bulb at 107 years old.

With its age comes notoriety. The famous hand-blown luminary was featured on all the major news networks such as ABC, NBC, FOX, CBS and CNN when it turned the milestone age of 100 in 2001.

Livermore resident Dick Jones remembers it well. Barry Schrader, a Tri-Valley historian and president of the Livermore Heritage Guild, told Jones of the impending

birthday and suggested holding a celebration to commemorate it. So, Jones called a friend, Steve Bunn, and four days later, they put up a website, www.centennialbulb.org.

Juliette Goodrich, who anchors the CBS 5 news at noon, was the emcee for the celebration. Having grown up in Pleasanton, she was familiar with the folklore of the centennial bulb, but had never seen it with her own eyes and was intrigued.

Made by Shelby Electric Co. of Shelby, Ohio, it is a 4-watt carbide filament bulb. It was first installed at the fire department hose cart house on L Street in 1901. In 1976, accompanied by a full police and fire truck escort, it was moved to Fire Station No. 6, where it resides today. The light has been on continuously, except for the times it's been relocated.

Goodrich's interest in the bulb

drew her to write a children's book, called "The Little Light Shines Bright."

"It shows what's happened in the history of the light being on-trains, planes, the automobile, radio, Disneyland opened, the first heart transplant—so kids can see what's happened over the years," she said.

Goodrich will hold a book signing from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday at the Dublin Barnes & Noble bookstore, 4972 Dublin Blvd., where the book will be on sale for \$11.95. Proceeds will go to Dublin Elementary School. The book can be purchased at www.authorhouse.com.

Jones said anyone who's interested can visit the light bulb, which hangs by a wire from the ceiling, depending on the availability of the firefighters on duty. The fire station is located at 4550 East Ave. and the phone number there is 454-2361. ■

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Oak Grove

(continued from page 5)

that the case would be sent back to Alameda County Superior Court for a new trial.

If successful at that time, the citizens' group would still need to seek voter approval of their referendum before the council action—and the Oak Grove project—would be rejected.

City Attorney Roush said there were two motions placed before Mayor Jennifer Hosterman and the other four councilmembers Tuesday. The first called for the city to appeal the Roesch decision calling on Fialho to sign the development agreement, and also to hire outside legal counsel to look at the "poison pill" provision in that agreement and report back to the council.

The poison pill refers to terminology in both the development agreement and the PUD agreement that rules that either measure is voided if the other loses in court or at the ballot box.

The council rejected that motion, with councilmembers Matt Sullivan and Cindy McGovern favoring it, and Hosterman and councilmembers Jerry Thorne and Cheryl Cook-Kallio voting against it.

At that point, Sullivan and McGovern proposed a second motion to have the city appeal the Roesch decision only. That, too, fell by the wayside with the same votes against it.

With the issue of appealing Roesch's ruling over, Fialho signed the agreement, which now becomes a legally binding contract if the Lins are successful in gaining final legal approvals in the Court of Appeal, a decision likely to come early next year. ■

WaMu

(continued from page 5)

plex after it's vacated. The campus was sold earlier this year and Washington Mutual had been leasing it, Kischner said. Ott said the city will assist in any way they can.

Congressman Jerry McNerney (D-Pleasanton) said his office is extending its hand to those who have lost their jobs.

"As we enter the holiday season,

the timing for this announcement could not be worse," he said.

Fortunately, McNerney said, President Bush has signed emergency House legislation extending unemployment benefits to those who have exhausted their benefits or will soon.

"For Californians, it means another 13 weeks of unemployment benefits will be made available to help cushion the impact of job loss," he said, adding that those needing assistance filling out the appropriate forms can call his Pleasanton office at 737-0727. ■

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Of Note

4-year-old names Hazel the Hippo

The tiny tot student body at Gingerbread Preschool has decided upon the name of Hazel the Hippo for the new hippo statue that resides in a mud pit in the new student play yard.

Hazel was chosen from 58 names that were submitted by students and members of the community. The winning name was submitted by Gingerbread Preschool student Lila Hopkins, 4, pictured with Hazel.



Hazel and the mud pit are just one component of Gingerbread's new play yard design, which also includes an art terrace, music wall, hand pump and water trough for water play, resilient play surfaces, sand box, slide, garden area, a new tricycle path and tunnel, outdoor circle area, swings and climbing structure and a story telling circle. The project also includes a separate play area for the Gingersnaps program, which caters to young children ages 21 months to 3 years of age. In its 40-year history in the Pleasanton community, Gingerbread has launched the academic and social lives of more than 8,000 children with a focus on learning through play and participation. For more information, call Becky Hopkins at 931-3432.

Home tours for the holidays

Downtown houses will be decked out to support Valley Humane Society

by Emily West

Six homeowners in historic downtown are opening their decorated doors Dec. 7 in the spirit of giving back to furry friends.

Part of the Holiday Home Tour, the event will guide pedestrian participants through the neighborhood from 2 to 6 p.m. Each home will be decorated for the holidays and feature boutique areas, with vendors including Premier Jewelry Design, CC Kelly Purses, Pans on Fire Gourmet Kitchen Ware, Cat's Meow and Poetry on Canvas Art Gallery. Twenty percent of purchases from these boutiques will go towards VHS.

The Rivara family lives on St. Mary Street and has added about 1,100 square feet of living space to their historical home. One major project was a basement renovation that now serves as an extra guest bedroom.

"It's a cozy little space," Margene Rivara said about the bonus space that's not typical of many California homes. "Most people want to be in the basement."

While she said the family still has more projects to tackle, they were glad to be a part of the tour.

"It's fun to be involved with a good cause," she said. "And we have to get ready for Christmas, so we might as well decorate early."

Kathy Moreno, owner of Three Dog Bakery, also has a home on Pleasanton Avenue that will be featured. It's particularly noteworthy because it's one of only two tudor style homes in the area and having been built in 1929, it has only had four owners.

Moreno said they lived in a Tudor style home on the East Coast prior to moving to Pleasanton. There it was common to put wreaths on all the windows, which they plan to do this year.



The Moreno's tudor home on Pleasanton Avenue is on the tour.

One member of the Moreno family, Ricky Bobby the cat, is glad to welcome in supporters of VHS, as he was adopted from there.

There will also be live music throughout the tour, featuring a harpist, guitarist, pianist as well as a jazz band and carolers.

The tour will begin at A Touch of Health Day Spa, where a wine and beer garden as well as a raffle will kick off the merriment. Anyone needing refreshment during the event can head over to Redcoats Pub, which will be serving free hot tea and warm bread pudding.

Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased at VHS, online at www.valleyhumane.org, and the following downtown stores: The Wine Steward, Murphy's Paw, Towne Center Books, Three Dog Bakery and A Touch of Health Day Spa.

VHS is also a beneficiary of the Pleasanton Weekly's Holiday Fund. Advocating for responsible pet ownership and animal welfare, the organization provides community resources to eliminate unnecessary euthanasia and strengthen the bond between people and humans. ■

Take Us Along



Assisting with the Weekly

The Assistance League of Amador Valley Book Club had lunch and a discussion of the Maltese Falcon at John's Grill in San Francisco. They dined with the Weekly in the Maltese Falcon room naturally. Pictured are: Dixie Johnson, Phyl Buonsante, Marti Silva, Margere Majors, Evelyn Autio, Joan Daly, Ricki Moretanni, Judy Voldgroff, Bev Howell, Carolyn Pitcher, Cathy James, Gene Hill, Anne Hill and Jean Cole.

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*Susan Saul, President and
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We are establishing a distribution network across the United States and in early 2009 will strengthen our focus on the international market while continuing to exhibit at:

- Art Basel, Miami
- HD Expo, Las Vegas
- LightFair, New York
- Light Middle East, Dubai
- Index, Dubai

Azzulina is proud to announce the opening of its 10,000 square foot manufacturing facility in Livermore located at 580 & Vasco road. In early 2009 we will make it possible for our clients to shop wholesale during the last weekend of every month. *For more information, please contact us at the Azzulina Danville showroom.*

Opinion

Editorial

Not all economic news is bad news

News has been pretty grim in the last few weeks with Washington Mutual closing its call center on Washington Mutual Way in northwest Pleasanton and laying off more than 1,200 employees. Across the freeway, Mervyn's, Shoe Pavilion and Circuit City are also closing, reflecting a downturn that is hitting hardest on the banking, real estate and retail industries. Fifty percent of retailers across the Bay Area are reportedly planning layoffs. Still, that news conflicts with some of the better economic news affecting Pleasanton. Wal-Mart, already packed with shoppers almost every day of the week and at any hour of the day, is generating record sales tax dollars for the city at a time when its competitor Target is seeing significantly slower sales. Kohl's sales nationally are up, presumably at the Pleasanton store as well, and will continue to benefit as Mervyn's customers move their business here. Although automobile sales are down across the board, the dip has been far less severe for the high-end foreign luxury car dealers in Pleasanton's auto row, a group that is still planning to move and expand its dealerships to a new auto row planned for Staples Ranch next year.

Also this week, Adept Technologies, Inc. announced that it will move its robotics business from Livermore in January to 57,000 square feet of manufacturing, research and office space in Hacienda Business Park. In another announcement, a familiar figure, Dave Duffield, who chaired PeopleSoft until it was purchased by Oracle, plans to move his Workday software management company and its 500 employees from Walnut Creek into the now empty E-Loan building along I-680 and across from the Stoneridge Shopping Center. For Duffield, it's déjà vu. He also moved PeopleSoft from Walnut Creek to Pleasanton. Oracle, it should be noted, gave Pleasanton workers and city government quite a scare in 2005 when it purchased PeopleSoft for \$10.6 billion with the expectation that it would move the operation to Oracle's headquarters in Redwood Shores. But Oracle executives, who had promised to support PeopleSoft customers during the transition, found both the facilities and public and government support better than they expected, and chose to stay. Today, a new five-story building is under construction on the Oracle campus, boding well for an even larger workforce. Kaiser Permanente also bought two former PeopleSoft buildings from Oracle that the company didn't need and has since moved its entire IT operation here from Walnut Creek and Oakland.

Companies relocating to Pleasanton cite several incentives: the BART station, a transportation hub of I-580/680, the ACE commuter train and a desirable—albeit expensive—community with good schools, parks and recreational programs for employees and their families. Workday was especially attracted by the second BART station—BART West—now being built near its new offices.

Even with this good news, tough economic times are affecting Pleasanton, too, particularly the retail sectors downtown. We weathered these financial storms before in the economic downturns of 1992, 1995-96, after 9/11 and now again today. The municipal government has long had a policy of making sure expenditures never exceed revenue, and puts millions of dollars away each year in reserves if a financial crisis hits City Hall. Now, with its own financial house in order, the city is considering ways it can help downtown Pleasanton where business is lagging. The City Council will consider proposals by its Economic Vitality Committee on Dec. 16. Some steps that could be taken include using municipal funds to better promote the downtown through a more aggressive marketing campaign than small businesses can afford. A program should be considered that would offer brokers special incentives for bringing to downtown retail business that add to the mix and would attract more shoppers, and we don't mean banks. The city, through its means of leveraging improvements, might also encourage property owners to reduce rents for first-time Pleasanton retailers, or for those tenants already here whose rents are unconscionably high. As an example, the proposed rent on the now-vacant Domus store is \$20,000 a month, far more than a downtown retailer can afford. Most important is for all of us to emphasize the "Shop Local" theme downtown merchants are voicing. It's something each of us can do to help our city and ourselves.

Guest Opinion

Why must 'fun' be the 'F-word' in the classroom?

by Nancy Lyness

My second grader came home from school the other day and reported to me that in some of the older elementary grades, the classroom teachers forbid their students to use the word "fun." I was astonished, and discovered upon further inquiry that the reason the word "fun" has been expelled from some classrooms is two-fold. The first reason is that the older students are gearing up for middle school, so it's time for them to become serious students who are serious about their educations. The other reason is that "fun" is a highly over-used word and the students need to become more articulate and precise in their use of the English language.

I agree in principle. However, taking "fun" out of the classroom puts the notion in our children's heads that learning and fun are mutually exclusive. At least in my opinion, that's a big mistake. Back in the day when I was growing up, my best teachers did every-

thing in their power to make school and learning fun. I was a serious student, I learned a lot, and to this day continue to make use of much of what I learned because I still remember it. And the primary reason I still remember so much? Because I had fun, yes fun, learning. So instead of banning "fun" in the classroom, wouldn't a better alternative be to simply post a list of adjectives for "fun" in the classroom, and encourage the students to build their vocabularies by using these words, whenever possible, wherever they had previously used the word fun?

Viable alternatives that come to mind are: enjoyable; interesting; entertaining; lively; exciting; fascinating; captivating; engaging; and amusing.

The students could even be encouraged to make up an acronym to aid their ability to quickly recall these words. "ACE LIFE," for example, could bring seven of these nine synonyms to the tip of any fifth grader's tongue in a heartbeat. Acing life (and school), is not so hard when fun is involved.

Nancy Lyness is a partner in a New York City law firm that focuses its practice on insurance coverage litigation. She lives in Pleasanton with her family.

Letters

Landlords should work with biz owners

Dear Editor,

First off, what a downer of a column ("Empty storefronts an eyesore," Around Pleasanton, Sept. 26, page 3). We all know the economy is bad, but I don't think your article is in the positive vein we are used to in the Weekly.

Next, let's look at the larger problem. These businesses aren't surviving for two reasons: one, we residents are not frequenting them enough. The Silver Palate was a great restaurant that my wife and I loved. But more people need to frequent the small downtown restaurants and get away from the fancy chains like PF Chang's and The Cheesecake Factory (do that many people want to wait two hours to sit down at the Cheesecake Factory?).

The second reason is that many landlords are not working with owners to help them succeed. From what I hear, the going rate of space downtown is a flat rate plus a percentage of net profits. That is gouging; it's taking the business for money at the front and back ends. Wouldn't it make more sense to work with the businesses to help them stay on your property?

I know of one owner who has not had a vacancy in many years, in large part due to not taking a piece of profits, and keeping rents lower than average. I am no business whiz, but it seems to make sense that having renters staying put would help both parties in the short run, and probably in the long run too. You can't make money with empty space.

Paul Stewart

(continued on page 13)

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Letters

(continued from page 12)

One Stop Career Center a valuable service

Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for covering the Tri-Valley One Stop ("Job crisis being felt locally," News, Nov. 14, page 5). As an Alameda County Workforce Investment Board member, I am very pleased to see our local One Stop being given some exposure to let people know about the valuable services available to them at this important resource. Thanks again for your great story.

*James Paxson
Alameda County Workforce
Investment Board*

Too young to vote, but not to have an opinion

Dear Editor,

I am a 16-year-old senior at Foothill who strongly opposed Proposition 8 and continues to protest the ban on gay marriage. I read the letter by the man who believes that people under the age of 18 "do not completely understand" the issues and therefore shouldn't be allowed to voice their opinion ("Participation good, using children not," Letters, Nov. 14, page 10). I was one of the many young

people who stood on the corner of Valley and Hopyard the night before the election, and I am proud to say that I fully understood the issue I was protesting.

In fact, based on several conversations I had throughout the night with proponents of Proposition 8, I can confidently say that I understood the issues much more than most of the adults I spoke to. Although I may be too young to buy cigarettes or a lottery ticket, I, and my fellow minors, are not too young to have an opinion.

As Americans, we have every right to voice that opinion.

Sam Marx

Thank you for support in mayoral bid

Dear Editor,

I want to thank the community for the support I received while running for the mayor of Pleasanton. I ran for mayor to give the community a choice and I appreciate the vote of confidence of the nearly 15,000 of you (and still counting) who voted for me, giving me 46 percent of the vote. My intent, and I succeeded, was to run a grassroots campaign, without any fundraisers, to get my message out there.

The most rewarding part of running for office is meeting new people in the community. The conversations, encouragement, and exchange of ideas were enjoyed and I have truly made new friends.

I need to give special thanks to those who walked neighborhoods, made financial contributions, or assisted my campaign in any way. Your generosity was greatly appreciated. Most of all I thank my family for their assistance, patience, and understanding. Running for office takes an incredible amount of time and keeps the phones ringing.

With the election over, my focus is on family, friends, my business and the Rotary Club of Pleasanton that I lead next year as president. I continue with a full and rewarding life.

Steve Brozosky

Council retreat should be in Pleasanton

Dear Editor,

Mayor Hosterman has said she plans to schedule a retreat for the city council. How about this for a change madam mayor—patronize Pleasanton. Book rooms at the Rose Hotel, they have a conference room as well. Have your meals catered by Pleasanton restaurants. Put some money back into this town since the retreat is supposed to be for the benefit of Pleasanton. Put your money where your mouth is and start spending it here first.

Your taxpayers have financed enough long-distance retreats already. Spend your dollars at home and help the downtown with money not just lip service.

Debbie Donald

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'Tis the season for sharing love and life...



WWW.VMAMAKINGADIFFERENCEFUND.ORG



Serving those in need

Holiday Fund will aid Open Heart Kitchen, which is struggling in the face of financial crisis

by Janet Pelletier

This holiday season is not only hard on banks, the auto industry and the stock market, but also the average middle-income family. And for those who are below the poverty line in a region where the cost of living surpasses most areas of the country, each new day presents the question, "how am I going to eat today?" For many, that answer has been a free, warm and healthy meal served by Open Heart Kitchen.

The soup kitchen is the only service providing hot, nutritious meals free of charge in the Tri-Valley, which has been hit hard recently by the financial crisis. In the month of October, the federal government reported that the nation's unemployment rate rose from 6.1 percent to 6.5 percent, a drastic increase. And there's evidence that job losses are being felt locally.

Open Heart Kitchen Executive Director Linda McKeever describes the dire situation as a perfect storm—fewer people are donating and more are needing the hot meals the nonprofit provides. The circumstances have forced Open Heart to tap into its reserve supply, and if things don't get better, McKeever said it's going to be a particularly rough time. Just a few weeks ago, the organization was in immediate danger of shutting down.

There is an avenue for the public to help. Open Heart, along with six other nonprofits, will be benefiting from the Pleasanton Weekly's annual Holiday Fund. The community-wide campaign started Nov. 21 and will continue through the end of the year to help these organizations to continue helping people in the community. The benefit of donating to the Holiday Fund is that the Weekly's partner, the Tri-Valley Community Foundation, will provide matching donations on the dollar. And there are no overhead costs associated with the fund, unlike most charitable campaigns.

When families lose their main source of income and have trouble paying for the basic necessities of shelter and food, they are turning out in higher numbers to Open Heart for a free meal. This year, food prices have gone up dramatically, making it not only hard for the average person to purchase but also nonprofits who provide food to the needy. Delivery costs for trucks bringing in food for the hot meal service has also added to expenses. Throwing out some numbers, McKeever said that demand for Open Heart's meal service has grown by nearly 25 percent while contributions from the community have decreased by 45 percent. She said this is the first time since the kitchen's launch in 1995 they've been forced to cut programs.

"Businesses are cutting back. Many businesses didn't donate in the fourth quarter," McKeever said, referring to the fourth quarter of the fiscal year. "Individual donations have also declined."

Open Heart held an emergency fundraiser Nov. 20 at Blacksmith Square in Livermore to solicit more funds and McKeever said churches and individual donors have rallied for money in the past few weeks after news of the soup kitchen's circumstances were publicized.

When asked why she thought Open Heart



Ann Champ serves fresh fruit salad for lunch at one of Open Heart Kitchen's hot meal programs in this file photo.

Hot meal service

Mondays

6444 Sierra Court, Dublin
Crosswinds Church
4-6 p.m.

Tuesdays and Wednesdays

4743 East Ave., Livermore
Asbury United Methodist Church
noon-6 p.m.

Thursdays

460 N. Livermore Ave., Livermore

Vineyard Christian Fellowship
4-6 p.m.

Fridays

1225 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton
Trinity Lutheran Church
4:30-6 p.m.

Mondays-Fridays

Senior Meal Program open to all seniors
5200 Case Ave., Pleasanton
Ridge View Commons Cafe
4-5:30 p.m.

was receiving less individual donations this year, she said: "People are worried about their own jobs. News over the past few weeks has been depressing. Many are getting laid off."

An estimated 22,000 people live below the

poverty line in the Tri-Valley. Families, single moms, senior citizens on fixed incomes, homeless and the working poor are among many who are struggling to make ends meet. In addition to hot meal service in Pleasanton,

Dublin and Livermore, Open Heart also provides a children's weekend box lunch program and dinner service to seniors, such as the Monday program at Ridge View Commons.

A large percentage of those whose jobs have been on the chopping block first have been from unskilled labor such as construction and retail.

"I have many unskilled workers coming in, single parent households," McKeever said of the needy visiting the hot meal programs. "The mom who has lost her job—when she loses her job, she also loses her benefits."

A once-happy story recently turned sour. A single mother who, after receiving meals from Open Heart, stopped coming in when she got a job a few months ago. But she lost her job recently and wasn't back to work long enough to be able to file for unemployment benefits, McKeever said.

Last year, the kitchen served 160,000 meals. That was accomplished by a small

Holiday Fund donors

At the launch of the 2008 Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund, 79 donors have contributed \$13,217 to the fund. Fourteen anonymous donors have given \$1,895 of that total. Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, we were unable to update the list of donors this week. This week's and next week's full donation list will be printed in our Dec. 5 issue.

Individuals

| | |
|---|------|
| Rick & Dawn Barraza..... | 250 |
| Verla Becker..... | ** |
| Chris & Glenda Berattis..... | 500 |
| Jan & Jeb Bing..... | 200 |
| James Brice & Carole Peterson..... | ** |
| Mike & Diana Champlin..... | 500 |
| Herbert & Stella Chang..... | ** |
| Vincent Ciccarello..... | 1000 |
| Pauline Coe..... | ** |
| Patrick & Wendy Costanzo..... | 200 |
| The Craig Family..... | 100 |
| Richard & Judy DelTredici..... | 25 |
| Alice Desrosiers..... | 100 |
| Greg & Sue Evans..... | ** |
| Bernice Hansen..... | ** |
| Hank & Corrine Hansen..... | 100 |
| Ryan Brown & Julie Harryman..... | 100 |
| William Herlihy..... | 200 |
| The Huangs..... | 107 |
| Kay & Charles Huff..... | ** |
| Bill & Cathy James..... | ** |
| Rudy & Marge Johnson..... | 100 |
| Jean P. Jones..... | 100 |
| David & Carol Kratky..... | 100 |
| John & Jane Loll..... | ** |
| Srikant, Christina & Ashley Mantha..... | ** |
| Violet Masini..... | 50 |
| Ruth Morlock..... | 100 |
| Greg & Janet O'Connor..... | ** |
| Dr. & Mrs. Joseph F. Pennisi..... | ** |
| Jerry & Josine Pentin..... | 100 |
| Alan & Jean Purves..... | ** |
| Thomas Rasmus..... | 30 |
| Ann & Don Rathjen..... | ** |
| Rose M. Schoop..... | 25 |
| Ted & Dee Slosek..... | ** |
| Debi, Mike & Alison Smith..... | ** |
| Pat & Sue Spangler..... | 100 |
| Duane & Donna Stevens..... | 300 |

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Jim & Debbie Tracy..... | ** |
| Mr. & Mrs. Glenn Wenig..... | 100 |
| Walter & Martha Wensel..... | 100 |
| Bob Williams..... | 500 |

In honor of

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Grandma Adeline..... | ** |
|----------------------|----|

Businesses

| | |
|---|-----|
| DeBernardi Development Construction & Remodeling..... | ** |
| Mission Pipe & Cigar Shop..... | 150 |
| Ponderosa Homes..... | ** |
| The Home Works Group..... | 200 |
| Walt Lupeika Certified Public Accountant..... | 100 |

In Memory of

| | |
|--|-----|
| Bonnie Zenter from Jeff & Debi Zentner..... | 100 |
| Jack Harnett from Michael & Kris Harnett..... | ** |
| Mary L. Erickson from Al Copher..... | ** |
| Grandma Eva..... | ** |
| Tony Paradiso from Dorene Paradiso-Carroll..... | ** |
| Dick Waldron from Virginia Waldron..... | ** |
| Richard Marshall from Jason & Sandy Holliday..... | 100 |
| Bob Williams from Mavis Williams..... | ** |
| Rick Aguiar from Nancy Aguiar-Fargis..... | ** |
| John A. Bell from Phoebe Bell..... | 250 |
| Virginia Finegan from John & Julie Finegan..... | 350 |
| Nicholas Daniel Lesser from Bruce & Kathleen Lesser..... | 25 |
| Gam & Papa Abbott from The Casey Family..... | ** |
| Dan Gabor from Ann Gabor..... | 100 |
| George Speliotopolous, Hank Gomez, Ed Kinney and Roger Dabney from Ken Mercer..... | 300 |
| Beverly Ann Howe-Merrill from Howard Merrill..... | 100 |

**The asterisk designates that the donor did not want to publish the amount of the gift.

The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund

The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund was created to provide financial support from our readers for a select group of local nonprofit organizations to help alleviate the needs that exist, despite our community's prosperity. This marks the sixth year of the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund. It provides an opportunity to aid local groups at a time when the numbers of those without jobs or with low-paying jobs and few if any health benefits have increased.

The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund drive could not exist without the help of the Tri-Valley Community Foundation and its generous donors. This will enable us to double your donation and allow your gift of \$1 to total \$2 to the nonprofits. An added benefit: Neither the Pleasanton Weekly nor the Tri-Valley Community Foundation will take any fees or expenses for administering the fund. One hundred percent of donations go to the intended grantees.

We appreciate your support of the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund and these worthy nonprofits.

staff of two full-time and five part-time workers and hundreds of volunteers. Those who visit the hot meal programs are fed a main dish with protein, a vegetable, bread and a dessert. On a recent evening at Asbury United Methodist Church in Livermore, on the menu was chicken with rice, vegetables, fruit salad, bread and dessert. Patrons are allowed to bring back up to six meals for their families, McKeever said, something Open Heart has had to cut back on.

"We've had to limit the amount of meals already, but we're going to do everything we can to survive," she said.

In addition to funding, volunteers, who McKeever calls the "heart" of Open Heart Kitchen, are always needed. To volunteer or for more information, call 580-1619 or register online at www.openheartkitchen.org/volunteer.html. ■

Weekend box lunch program

Low-income children who receive free school lunches during the week are left without on the weekends. To supplement school lunches, Open Heart distributes a box consisting of two healthy lunches to these children and their families on Friday afternoons.

2:30-3 p.m.

1001 Elaine Ave., Livermore; 800 Marilyn Ave., Livermore; 460 N. Livermore Ave., Livermore

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

6700 Dougherty Road, Dublin



How to give

Your gift helps seniors, children and others in need

Contributions to the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund will be increased by the Tri-Valley Community Foundation. For every \$1 contributed, \$2 will be donated to these local organizations. All contributions will go directly to programs that benefit Pleasanton and Tri-Valley residents. Contributions will be distributed by the Tri-Valley Community Foundation to the seven agencies listed below. No administrative costs will be deducted from the gifts, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law.

This year, due to the tremendous need of all nonprofits, donations will be shared equally among the seven recipient agencies.

For more information call us at 600-0840 or e-mail editor@pleasantonweekly.com.

The following agencies will be supported by the Holiday Fund:

• **Axis Community Health:** Provides medical, mental health, addiction counseling and health education services to more than 20,000 patients and clients each year, regardless of their ability to pay. An estimated 70 percent have no medical insurance or are underinsured, including some that have recently lost their jobs and health benefits. Call 201-6017 or visit www.axishealth.org.

• **Emergency Room Expansion at ValleyCare Medical Center:** ValleyCare, a nonprofit health system, needs funds to expand its emergency room, built in 1991 to accommodate 13,000 patients a year and now handles more than 26,000. It will cost \$6.7 million to replace the facility and upgrade equipment, and the Holiday Fund will help get that started. For more information, contact Ken Mercer at 925-373-4566.

• **Hope Hospice:** Hospice care is unique because it works to not only meet the needs of those at the end of life but also supports the emotional and spiritual needs of the family as well. Hope hospice care is provided regardless of the ability to pay and relies on contributions such as those raised by the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund.

• **Open Heart Kitchen:** As the only nonprofit free soup kitchen in the Tri-Valley area, this service provides nutritious meals for low-income people in the Pleasanton-Livermore area at Trinity Lutheran Church in Pleasanton and Asbury United Methodist Church in Livermore. Visit www.openheartkitchen.org or call 580-1616.

• **Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley:** An independent, nonprofit organization, this group offers a variety of services at no cost to seniors or to their families. Programs include health maintenance, nutrition, fitness, disease prevention, partners-in-safety, in-home counseling, friendly visiting programs and nurses on staff who regularly visit clients.

• **Tri-Valley Haven:** Runs a domestic violence shelter as well as a homeless shelter for families and a rape crisis center. Its mission is to aid those who have experienced abuse and offers counseling, a legal clinic and other practical advice. Call 449-5845; 24-hour hotline: (800) 884-8119 or visit www.trivalleyhaven.org.

• **Valley Humane Society:** This nonprofit group is all volunteers, with the mission to educate on responsible pet ownership. It assists in rescuing and placing abandoned or injured animals and operates an adoption center in downtown Pleasanton. It does not euthanize unless health problems dictate. Call 426-8656.

Name of Donor _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I wish to designate my contribution as follows:

- In my name as shown above OR:
- In honor of: In memory of: As a gift for: _____
(Name of person)
- Business or organization: _____
- I wish to contribute anonymously. Don't publish the amount of my contribution.

Please make checks payable to **The Holiday Fund**

Enclose this coupon and send to: **The Holiday Fund, Pleasanton Weekly**
5506 Sunol Blvd, Suite 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566



The Tri-Valley Community Foundation is located at 5674 Stoneridge Dr., Ste. 112, Pleasanton, CA 94588. More information about the Foundation can be obtained by contacting the organization at the above address, by calling its President David Rice at (925) 734-9965 or through its website: www.tvcfoundation.org. The Pleasanton Weekly will make every effort to publish donor names for donations received before Dec. 31, 2008, unless the donor checks the anonymous box. All donations will be acknowledged by mail.

WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

City Council

Tuesday, December 2, 2008
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Public Hearing: PAP 127 (PDR 715), Steven Jeffrey – Consider an appeal of the Planning Commission's decision upholding PAP 123 and modifying the Zoning Administrator's approval of a design review for rear yard improvements at the existing residence located at 927 Montevino Drive
- Discussion of proposed operational changes and the sale of additional plots for the Pleasanton Pioneer Cemetery
- Selection of Vice Mayor and appointment of Councilmembers to various boards and commissions

Parks & Recreation Commission

The December 11, 2008 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission has been cancelled. The next regularly scheduled Commission meeting will be held on January 8, 2009.

Civic Arts Commission

Monday, December 1, 2008
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Presentation Regarding Proposed Bus Shelter Mural Art Project
- Consideration of Purchasing "One Day in May" by Artist Jimmy Lu
- Commission Reorganization
- Approval of Grantee Site Visit Review Criteria
- Project Reports

Human Services Commission

Wednesday, December 3, 2008
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Introduction of New Parks and Community Services Director
- Commission Reorganization

GENERAL INFORMATION

2009 GRANT APPLICATION WORKSHOPS

The Cities of Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton are co-sponsoring application workshops for the following programs for FY 2009 (09-10): Dublin Community Development Block Grant, Livermore Housing and Human Services Grant, Pleasanton Community Development Block Grant, Pleasanton City Grant. Staff will discuss the application processes, and will distribute application packets. **Attendance is mandatory to apply for City of Livermore funding and strongly encouraged for the Cities of Dublin and Pleasanton.** Please choose one workshop to attend and RSVP as indicated below.

Date: Monday, December 8, 2008
Time: 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm
Location: Pleasanton City Council Chambers
200 Old Bernal Avenue, Pleasanton

Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2008
Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Location: Livermore City Council Chambers
3575 Pacific Avenue, Livermore

To RSVP for a workshop, please contact Tim Shurtleff at 925-960-4016 or tmshurtleff@ci.livermore.ca.us

Employment Opportunities

- Assistant House Manager – Part-Time, Temporary
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- Senior Civil Engineer – Full-Time, Permanent

For more information, visit our employment page at www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/services/employment/opportunities/

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

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

Community Pulse

Police Bulletin

Police look for crash witness

Livermore police are asking for help in locating a possibly critical witness to a collision that killed a 10-year-old San Jose boy Nov. 22. Police received information that a yellow van, possibly a Dodge, was traveling northbound on State Route 84 directly in front of the collision, which took place just south of Ruby Hill Drive at about 2:45 p.m. last Saturday.

The van had side windows that were painted yellow, according to police, who say there is no indication that the vehicle was involved in the collision but may be able to provide information about its cause.

Jonathan Manzo was killed after the 17-year-old driver of a 2006 Toyota Corolla crashed when he attempted to pass another vehicle through the merge and lost control of his car, police said.

The Toyota slid sideways and was broadsided by a 1997 Mercury minivan carrying a woman driving her three children, according to police.

The woman, 55, her 15-year-old son, 12-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son were taken to a local hospital where the youngest child succumbed to his injuries, police said.

The driver of the Toyota, a 17-year-old Lathrop boy, was also taken to a hospital where he is still being

treated for chest injuries. The 12-year-old passenger of the minivan was released from the hospital late Tuesday, police said.

There is no indication that alcohol or drugs were related to this collision, according to police.

Anyone with information should call Officer Glen Robbins at 371-4855.

—Bay City News

Police nab alleged hotel TV thieves

Police have arrested four people believed to have stolen flat screen TVs, as well as other goods, from several hotels in Pleasanton, Dublin and San Ramon last month.

Eric Stage, 30, from Pleasanton; Eric Dennis, 34, from Dublin; and Angela Bartoni, 32, from Danville; and Michael Darrin Jr., 38, from San Ramon; were arrested for possession of stolen property and booked at Santa Rita Jail, after Pleasanton officers allegedly found stolen goods in their homes and vehicles.

Police said the suspects had entered hotel rooms and offices using electronic key cards. Other stolen items included handheld radios, laptop computers, various hand tools and cell phones, police said.

Stage, Dennis and Bartoni are being held on \$10,000 bail. Information was not available on Darrin. Charges are being sought against the suspects with the district attorney's office in both Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

Police Report

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

Nov. 17

•Petty theft:
-5:53 p.m. in the 2300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

•Vehicular burglary:
-1:11 a.m. in the 1100 block of Santa Rita Road

•Vandalism:
-9:15 a.m. in the 4400 block of Valley Avenue; worth less than \$400

•Public drunkenness:
-10:12 a.m. at the intersection of West Angela and Main streets

Nov. 18

•Theft:
-10:08 a.m. in the 7500 block of Rosedale Court; stolen vehicle

-5:03 p.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive; identity theft

-5:52 p.m. in the 1800 block of Rosetree Court; identity theft

Burglary:

-2:39 a.m. in the 7000 block of Commerce Circle

-6:29 a.m. in the 7000 block of Johnson Drive; vehicular

Vandalism:

-8:55 a.m. in the 3200 block of Arbor Drive; worth over \$400

-2:51 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; worth over \$400

Nov. 19

•Theft:

-1:54 a.m. at the intersection of Hacienda and Owens drives; stolen property possession

-11:11 p.m. in the 5100 block of Blackbird Drive; petty theft

•Vandalism:

-11:39 a.m. in the 300 block of Main Street; worth less than \$400

-12:54 p.m. in the 4400 block of Valley Avenue; worth more than \$400

•Public drunkenness:

-11:22 p.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road

Nov. 20

•Theft:

-2:34 p.m. in the 6400 block of Inglewood Drive; identity theft

-3:37 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

-3:42 p.m. in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

•Burglary:

-9:24 a.m. in the 4500 block of Pleasanton Avenue

-9:26 p.m. in the 6200 block of Detjen Court

•Vandalism:

-2:24 p.m. at the intersection of Vineyard and Clara avenues; worth more than \$400

-4:58 p.m. in the 3500 block of Nevada Street

•Controlled substance possession:

-10:57 p.m. in the 6700 block of Santa Rita Road

•Street racing:

-2:48 p.m. at the intersection of Bernal and Valley avenues

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Transitions

Skip Mohatt, longtime Amador teacher, coach dies

by Jeb Bing

Longtime Amador Valley High School teacher and coach Everett (Skip) Mohatt died Nov. 21 in Auburn, where he had lived with his wife Joyce since retiring in 1996.

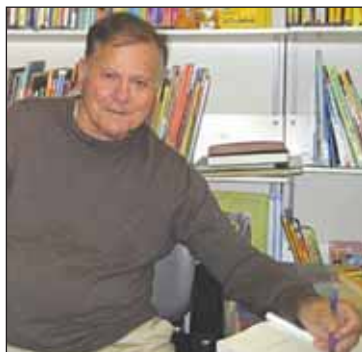
Mr. Mohatt was known to thousands, both students who had studied civics courses he taught at Amador, played on the basketball teams he coached and in Pleasanton where he was a popular education leader. In recent weeks, following an accident that led to pneumonia, he battled increasingly severe lung problems while under treatment at an Auburn hospital. He died there with his wife and family at his side, including daughter Leslee Hart, a third grade teacher at Mohr Elementary School.

"For all us fortunate to know Skip over the years, he is man who will never be forgotten," said Kevin Johnson, senior director of pupil services for the Pleasanton Unified School District and a longtime colleague of Mr. Mohatt. "His life as an educator shows the potential influence that all of us in this profession can have on students."

Mr. Mohatt championed Amador's "We the People" team that he started as an advanced civics class in 1989 and led to a national championship in Washington, D.C. in 1995, a year before he retired. The team has a rich history, winning nine state championships and placing in the top three five times in the national competition. Following Mr. Mohatt's retirement, the advanced civics team was subsequently taught by Bryan Gibb (1997-1999), Matt Campbell (2000-2004) and Brian Ladd through its Washington competition earlier this year.

Mr. Mohatt was last in Pleasanton a year ago for his second book signing at Towne Center Books. The book, "Beyond Ceilings," is the second part of Mr. Mohatt's memoir and continues the story begun in his first book, "Ceilings." "Beyond Ceilings" is the story of one man's triumph over adversity, overcoming both the physical limitations of childhood polio and institutional prejudice against handicapped people to become a successful educator and basketball coach. He was working on his third book and what he said would be his final book, which was to mostly relate his experiences at Amador and in Pleasanton.

Born in 1934 in the heart of the Great Depression, Mohatt faced tragedy and misfortune early on, with his mother dying at the age of 20. Seven years before Jonas Salk's vaccine and four months shy of Mr. Mohatt's 14th birthday, polio struck, crippling him for life. Through perseverance and a stubborn optimism,



he said he moved past these barriers—or "ceilings," which was the idea for his two books—to achieve notoriety in Pleasanton, the town he

said he loved but just couldn't afford in retirement. Earning a bachelor's degree from Cal State Sacramento and a master's in education in 1968 from Southern Oregon University, Mr. Mohatt eventually convinced the Pleasanton school district that he'd make a good and unforgettable high school athletic coach, a job he started in 1957 at Amador. Still today, he is the school's winningest varsity basketball coach and, a few years ago, the boys' gymnasium was named in his honor.

A memorial service will be held at 1 p.m. Dec. 7 at the Amador Valley High School boys' gym, 1155 Santa Rita Road. ■

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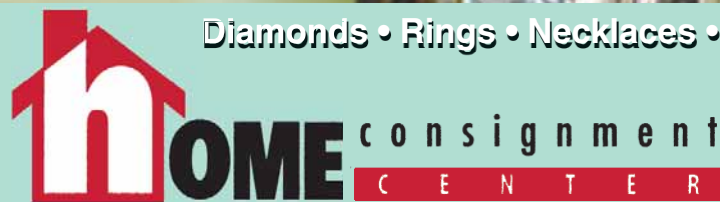
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ON THE TOWN



AMERICAN

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Eddie Papa's American Hangout

4889 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 469-6266. Winner of The Pleasanton Weekly's Reader Choice Awards for "Best American Food Restaurant" and "Best Meal under \$20", Eddie Papa's American Hangout celebrates the regional food and beverage cultures of America. Bring the whole family to enjoy iconic dishes from across the United States, Old World Hospitality, and hand crafted artisan cocktails.

www.eddiepapas.com

Vic's All Star Kitchen

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

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.

BREW/PUB/ALEHOUSE

The Hop Yard American Alehouse and Grill

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

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

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. Now accepting reservations for holiday parties.

CHINESE

Chinese Szechuan

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

Panda Mandarin Cuisine

30 W. Angela St., Pleasanton, 484-4880. Panda offers several delicious specials using fresh ingredients and spices that make traditional northern

Chinese cuisine such a delight. Open for lunch Monday through Friday, dinner Monday through Saturday, closed Sunday. A private banquet room is available. Visit www.pandapleasanton.com.

CONTINENTAL

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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.

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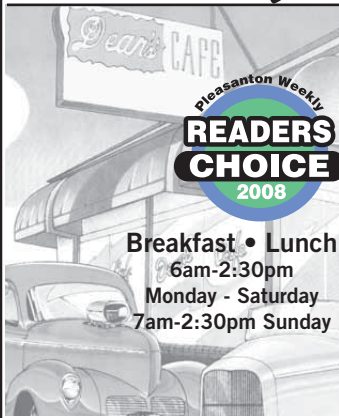
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|-------------------------------------|---------|
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| Full Slab of Ribs & Whole Chicken | \$32.99 |
| One Pound Tri-Tip and Whole Slab | \$36.99 |

Sides

- Small Side Salad
- French Fries
- Roasted Corn Salad
- Potato Salad
- Creamy Cole Slaw
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ON THE TOWN



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www.amaronepleasanton.com

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349 Main St., Pleasanton, 462-9299.

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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.

JAPANESE

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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.

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

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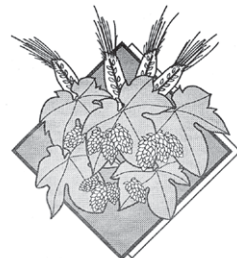
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