

## Dispute finalized

School district to pay \$2.6M to settle suit > **page 5**

Vol. IX, Number 46 • December 12, 2008

www.PleasantonWeekly.com

## Fire destroys home

Donations collected as woman recovers

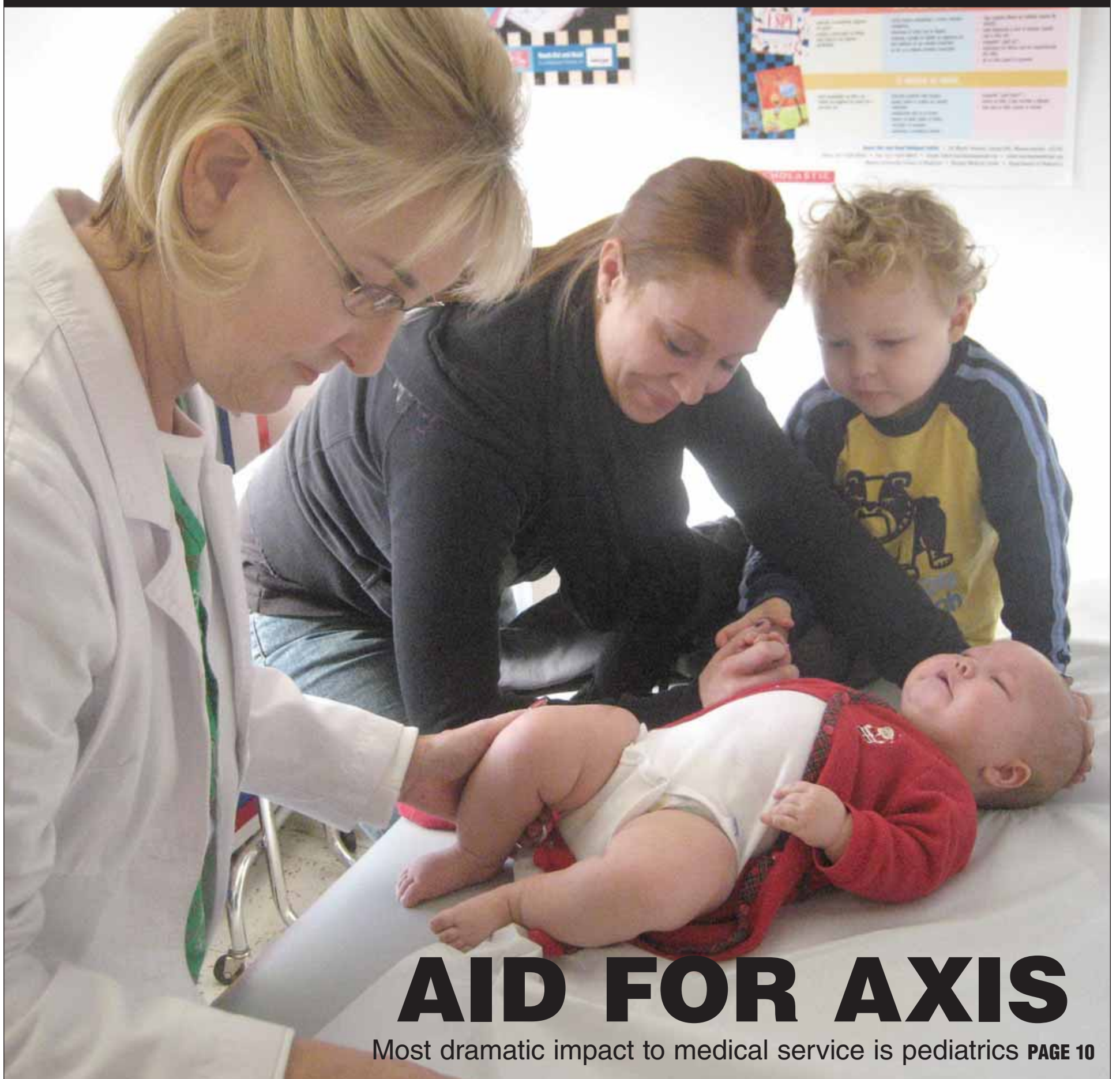
> **page 5**

# PLEASANTON WEEKLY

## Shining bright

Holiday lights website celebrates 10 years

> **section 2**



## AID FOR AXIS

Most dramatic impact to medical service is pediatrics **PAGE 10**

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# Around Pleasanton

by Jeb Bing

## Rebel merchant group boosting downtown appeal, sales

The good news is continuing in downtown Pleasanton now that a group of 20 activist merchants has banded together to attract more shoppers—and profits—to their stores. They're doing what the Pleasanton Downtown Association and its various committees have tried to do for years, but more effectively because it's the shop owners, themselves, who are meeting together after they close their stores at night every two weeks to develop aggressive marketing plans that they then put into play the very next day. No task forces, sub-committees, consultants or the like. Just do it. And it's working. Main Street and the increasing number of stores on the side streets have been doing a brisk business this Christmas shopping season despite the downturn reported at the nation's malls. While it's too early to tally receipts, almost every merchant says business is better than expected and they credit that to the new merchants' group that is keeping their stores open until 8 or 9 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays, at least through Christmas.

Last Friday, my wife Jan and I spent Friday night walking a fairly busy Main Street and especially enjoyed the treats at Studio 7, Gourmet Works and Murphy's Paw, with cheese spreads, candy and, at Murphy's, even special treats for those with dogs. In fact, it's Murphy's Paw's owner, Melanie Sedak, who stopped by the PDA's Downtown Vitality Committee meeting a week ago to talk about what she called these merchant rebels who are working outside the more bureaucratic structure of the PDA. She said that while her group isn't competing with the PDA—in fact all downtown merchants must belong to the organization—they're developing their own promotion strategies and programs faster and more effectively. There's power in numbers, she said, and the 20 unified voices of the "rebels"

have brought renewed and unique enthusiasm to the downtown and shoppers are joining in. Whether it's one merchant needing a register tape or another seeking help on an employee problem, the group of 20 has become a strong support force that now better know each other's business and talks it up with their own store's customers.

Now the group has found another group of businesses who also want more downtown customers: the restaurants. Fiercely individualists with their own recipes and clientele, most restaurant owners, managers and waiters have never shopped in most of the downtown shops that surround them. Until this season, most of those shops, in fact, have been closing about the time restaurants start serving. Not any more. The 20 rebel merchants have brought 14 restaurants into their fold with special promotions, and more now, seeing the program's success, want to join. It works like this. Make a purchase at a retail store and receive a 15 percent off discount card for any of the 14 participating restaurants. Order a meal and get another card good for 15 percent off of an item of your choice at any of the participating retailers. The deal has been the talk of the town this week with Sedak saying that customers in the stores and restaurants have been vowing to come back often.

Sedak and the rebel merchants are now planning an aggressive marketing program for 2009. One plan is to make downtown more dog-friendly with watering bowls along the street and an effort to relax health codes to allow dogs to join their owners at outside eateries downtown, as they do now in Carmel and Monterey. Sedak said the merchants group will continue working with the PDA on the major projects, such as beautifying the south end of Main Street and developing a Division Street walkway to the new Firehouse Arts Center. ■

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#### About the Cover

Mom Jamie Fagundes and 3-year-old son Jackjames comfort 5-month-old Graisie as nurse Karen Martinez administers an immunization at Axis Community Health. The twice monthly clinics are funded with last year's Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund donations and help to meet the increasing pediatric care needs for the un- and under-insured in the Tri-Valley. Photo by Jeb Bing.

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# Streetwise

## Q: Should the Big Three automakers in Detroit get a government bailout?

Asked around town



### Peter Holley

If they are going to bail them out, then it should be under very strict limitations and new direction. The government should only loan them the money on the condition that they start with new leadership for the companies and the unions. Let's not make the same mistake twice.

### Jennifer Daley

I don't think they should be bailed out at all because there are so many other industries that are financially suffering as well. When do we stop? And what gives the automakers the right to receive a government bailout over anybody else who's struggling? It just doesn't seem fair.



### Ross Kapp

I don't agree with bailing them out. They should run their business like any other business and they should succeed or fail just like everybody else.



### Elsie Florian

I don't think we have a choice. The government permitted this to happen because they didn't want to upset the upper class. What I would like to know is who is going to bail me out if I ever need financial assistance?



### Robert Drexel

Absolutely not. If the executives can afford to take private jets everywhere they travel, then they must be making enough money every year to afford to bail themselves out.



Have a Streetwise question? E-mail: [editor@PleasantonWeekly.com](mailto:editor@PleasantonWeekly.com)  
Compiled by Hillary Bessiere



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# Newsfront

## News Digest

### Artist creates Pleasanton ornaments

Miniature versions of classic downtown Pleasanton locations can now be showcased on a Christmas tree. Porcelain ornaments depict the Museum On Main, Pleasanton Hotel and Kolln Hardware, from local artist Nancy Eddinger's popular set of Christmas cards. Next year a new ornament will be added to the series. Proceeds benefit the museum's programs. To learn more, call 462-2766, visit [www.museumonmain.org](http://www.museumonmain.org) or stop by the museum, at 603 Main St., from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday or 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday.

### Pretrial set for Stonebarger

A pretrial hearing has been set for Feb. 25 in the case against Paul Stonebarger, 22, who was charged with supplying alcohol to minors at a party in October 2007. Katie Amanda McKewon, 20, who is serving a four-year prison sentence for the death of Laurel Alice Williams, 19, was with Williams at a party where Stonebarger is said to have supplied the alcohol. In court, the judge will decide if there is enough evidence for it to go to a jury trial, which is tentatively scheduled for March 30.

### Rained out?

With weather forecasters predicting rain this weekend, the city of Pleasanton announced that sports field information can now be accessed online. Go to [www.pleasantonsports.org](http://www.pleasantonsports.org) to see if city or school sports fields will be open. The sports field weather line is still operating at 931-5360.

### Community band spreads cheer

The Pleasanton Community Concert Band presents its free holiday concert "An American Christmas: Bells and Toys" at 2 p.m. Sunday at Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road. There will be a holiday salute to Leroy Anderson and featuring a guest performance by The Cantabella Children's Chorus. Call 846-5897.

### 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](mailto:editor@PleasantonWeekly.com)

## School district to pay developers \$2.6 million to settle Neal Elementary suit

Hires Signature's law firm to seek \$4.5 million-plus from lawyers who drafted court-rejected plan

by Jeb Bing

The Pleasanton school district announced Tuesday that it has agreed to pay \$2.6 million to local developers Signature Properties and Standard Pacific Homes as part of a court-approved settlement of a seven-year-old dispute over financing Neal Elementary School in the Vineyard Corridor.

The long-planned school to serve the Ruby Hill and now the burgeon-

ing Vineyard Corridor communities was estimated to cost \$8.5 million in 2001 when the two developers offered to advance the funds and actually build the school.

The school district even bought 3 acres of property mid-way between Montevino Drive and Ruby Hill as the future Neal site, installed water and sewer lines and the city of Pleasanton



John Casey

spent \$600,000 to design and install traffic circles on its new Vineyard Avenue bypass to accommodate future school traffic.

But when School Superintendent John Casey was hired in 2002, he determined that the cost of Neal had risen to \$13.5 million, \$5 million more than the district could afford to reimburse the developers under what law-

yers had told him was a binding agreement and said the developers should pay the difference, which would not be reimbursed.

The developers said they had never signed such an agreement and initiated court action to clarify their position. Now, five years later, the court has agreed and has ordered the district to reimburse the developers for \$2.1 million in their legal fees plus another \$500,000 for the

(continued on page 9)



Janet Pelletier

A quick-moving fire Monday in the 800 block of East Angela Street destroyed the Zuffa family home and efforts have begun to help the family through cash and gift cards and clothing donations.

## Donations begin to pour in for family displaced by fire

Mother suffers second- and third-degree burns after loud explosion shakes neighborhood

by Janet Pelletier

Officials are still investigating what caused a loud explosion that led to a fire ravaging an East Angela Street home Monday. At home at the time, Deonna "De" Zuffa, 40, suffered second- and third-degree burns and is recovering at St. Francis Memorial Hospital's burn center in San Francisco.

The Zuffa family, which also includes dad Keith, and sons Justin, a junior last year at Amador Valley High School, and Devon, a seventh-grader at Pleasanton Middle School,

has lost all of their belongings, everything from clothing to photographs. The family is staying with a relative.

Devon's friend Andrew Ochoa, also in seventh grade at PMS, was the first to get the bad news after his dad called him at lunch saying the Zuffa home was in flames.

It didn't take long for the 12-year-old to figure out what to do. After leaving school early that day, being so upset, he immediately got on his computer and began designing and printing flyers to post around the neighborhood asking for donations, clothing or monetary.

"They lost everything," Andrew said. "They're going to need a lot of help."

When asked why he wanted to do this for the Zuffas, he said "I knew (Devon) would have done this for me."

The pair have been friends since the third grade. Specifically, Andrew said the family's clothing needs include: shoes sizes 5 1/2 and 10; small or medium-sized boy's youth shirts; 14 regular sized pants; medium or large-size adult men's shirts and size 32 pants.

(continued on page 7)

## For the joy of toys

LPFD starts Toys for Tots collection, hopes to outdo last year's total donations of 15,000

Toy collection is in full swing again at the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department. All donations will be given to children in the Tri-Valley area, through the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation.

Last year the department collected 15,000 toys and has high hopes to make that number higher this year, with there being increased need because of the tough economy. People can drop off unwrapped, unopened gifts to fire stations as well as at the Dublin Toys 'R' Us Toy Collection Day from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday.

Through a partnership with Carl's Jr., anyone donating a gift worth \$5 or more can receive a Western Bacon Cheeseburger. Participating locations, including the restaurant at 4550 Hopyard Road, will have collection bins on site.

This weekend, the Seahawks swim team will be joining with the LPFD and encourage the public to donate a toy and watch the swim meet Saturday and Sunday at the Dolores Bengston Aquatic Center on Black Avenue.

The Pleasanton post office, at Santa Rita Road and Black Avenue, will be collecting unwrapped and unopened toys and cash donations for Toys for Tots Saturday as well.

To learn more about the Toys for Tots organization, visit [www.toysfortots.org](http://www.toysfortots.org).

—Emily West

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## Pleasanton worker arrested in torture case

A fourth suspect was arrested Tuesday at his Pleasanton job in the Tracy torture case that's made national headlines of a 16-year-old boy who escaped to a gym last week.



Anthony Waiters

Tracy police detectives arrested 29-year-old Anthony Waiters where is employed at the Bay East Association of Realtors. He works as part of the Bay East technical support group, taking phone calls from Realtors and helping them access and use technical and software materials.

Waiters was booked at San

Joaquin County Jail on the following charges: torture, conspiracy, child endangerment, corporal injury to a child and false imprisonment.

Tracy Police Department spokesman Matt Robinson declined to answer questions about the case, citing a gag order.

The teen was wearing a shackle and chain around his ankle when he entered a Tracy gym last week asking for help and immediately hidi behind the counter. The other three suspects include Kelly Layne Lau, 30, and her husband, Michael Schumacher, 34, and Caren Ramirez, 43. They are being held in lieu of \$2.2 million bail. No pleas have been made and their next court date is Jan. 5.

—Janet Pelletier

## Nearly 1,100 acres of open space opened

*Five miles of multi-use trails added to 25-mile trail system at Pleasanton Ridge*

If you like hiking, biking or riding horseback atop the Pleasanton Ridge, you can now enjoy an additional 5 miles of trails that have been added.

The East Bay Regional Parks District opened nearly 1,100 acres of open space on the north end of the Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, which features 4,085 acres of undeveloped land.

The new property features steep, wooded ridges that rise to elevations of more than 1,600 feet above the San Ramon Valley and Livermore plain. The Ridge now has a total of 30 miles of trails with the new addition. The trail system is open to hiking, horseback riding and biking through oak/bay woodland, grassland covered rolling hills, and valleys with meandering tree lined creeks.

Reaching the new trails can be rigorous by foot. It's an 8-mile-plus hike one-way from the Foothill Road staging area to the newly opened connections. All trails are accessible to mountain bikes and equestrians. Connections to the new property are from the Foothill staging area via the Ridgeline Trail, which passes through Augustin Bernal Park. North Ridge Trail and Sinbad Creek

Trail then continue into the new property. Until a revised park map can be made available, visitors are asked to be attentive to all signs designating trails and not enter adjacent private property.

The land for the new trails was acquired in the 1990s but only in the past few years was it outfitted for public use. Funding for it came from Measure AA, which expires at the end of this year. In November, voters approved the passage of Measure WW, which will essentially extend the AA tax and grant the parks district funds of up to \$500 million to carry out future parks projects.

The East Bay Regional Parks District adds this tip for the new trail segments: The north end of Pleasanton Ridge is challenging for even the most seasoned hikers. As a rule of thumb, expect to hike no more than 1 to 2 miles an hour due to elevation gains and steep canyons. Plan ahead—let someone know where you're going, bring plenty of water and snacks and always take a map. Remember, it gets dark early now so dress in layers and bring a headlamp or flashlight as an extra precaution.

—Janet Pelletier

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### Of Note

#### In the stage spotlight



English Amore Hills, a sixth grader at Pleasanton Middle School, is making her professional stage debut playing Zonia Loomis in the Berkeley Repertory Theatre's production of "Joe Turner's Come and Gone." The show has been running since Oct. 31 and will continue through Dec. 14 at the Roda Theatre. Hills has previously performed with her school, at Amador Theater's summer drama camp and at the Alameda County Fair, where she took third place in singing and hip-hop competitions. She has also been a model for the David's Bridal wedding show for the past three years.

# Changing of the board

Newly elected school trustees added amidst turbulent budget

by Emily West

Goodbyes were met with hellos Tuesday night as the newly elected Pleasanton school board trustees were sworn in.

Outgoing board members Kris Weaver and Steve Brozosky bid adieu as Valerie Arkin and Jamie Yee Hintzke joined incumbent and now board president Chris Grant.

Weaver has been on the board since November 1999 and was re-elected in November 2003. Over the years, she helped increase the number of counselors in middle and high schools, incorporate character education and put forward several facility improvements.

"I accomplished nothing alone," Weaver said about her work over the years. "Together as a board, we certainly have been striving for excellence."

"It doesn't do any good to educate kids in reading, writing and arithmetic if they can't function in society," she continued. "In order to have well-rounded, productive students, we need to be promoting [character education]. I see more and more of that happening and it's fantastic."

Nov. 17 marked her last official meeting as a board member, which

she described as "somewhat bitter-sweet."

"It's always hard to say goodbye and to let go," she said. "But it's time to turn the reigns over to people who have some fresh energy, enthusiasm and kids in the schools. I'm confident that I'm doing the right thing and I'm excited about going in some other directions."

Her newfound free time will be spent with life coaching and evaluating where to put her efforts. She'll also continue to be on the personal development committee.

As for Brozosky, his time will be spent getting caught up with his software business, assuming the role of president for the Rotary Club of Pleasanton and spending more time with the sister city program with Tulancingo.

Appointed in April 2007 following the death of longtime board member Juanita Haugen, he said he would not seek election as an incumbent to encourage more people to come forward.

Brozosky said he left his experience on the school board feeling good about the accomplishments and interactions with the board. Specifically, he thought his expertise in budgets was well served as the board was, at the time, able to end balanced and

keep cuts away from the classroom. He was also proud of encouraging the district to use the more cost-efficient artificial turf instead of natural grass for the Foothill High School's practice field.

"We had some challenges," he said. "I believe we worked together as a team. We kept politics out of it, we had differences of opinions and we respected everyone's opinions. That's why the board works really well."

The new board members smiled along with their families and supporters as they were sworn in Tuesday night by Assemblywoman Mary Hayashi. Yet, the road ahead will be difficult, as school districts across California prepare to deal with budget cuts to help make up for the estimated \$11.5-billion state deficit.

With the drastic reductions needed, Weaver said she fears that much of the board's hard work won't last.

"It's a huge fear of mine that [the new counselors] are going to go away," she said, "as well as a number of enhancements we've been able to make."

The next regular board meeting will be at 7 p.m. Jan. 13 in the school district board room. ■

## House fire

(continued from page 5)

And the response has so far been very positive. As of press time, Andrew said he's collected \$330 in cash and over \$400 in gift cards and assorted clothing donations. He's put donation boxes at Pleasanton Middle School, Valley View Elementary School and at Tully's coffee shop on Main Street downtown. On Saturday, he plans to set up a table in front of Tully's at the Farmers' Market to solicit more donations.

In addition to Andrew's effort, the Pleasanton Middle School Parent Faculty Association also began collecting donations—cash, checks and gift cards—for the family on Monday afternoon. One man was said to have dropped off a \$1,000 check.

Firefighters got the call about the fire at 10:38 a.m. and responded three minutes later, according to fire spokeswoman Sabina Imrie. A total of five engines and 22 firefighters approached the house, which was engulfed in flames. One neighbor said the flames were as high as the power poles. Imrie said Pleasanton police, who happened to be in the neighborhood at the time, witnessed Deonna Zuffa running out of her home and rushed to help her and put a blanket around her.

Joe Buckovic, a former Pleasanton police sergeant, lives a few houses down from the home, located in the 800 block of East Angela and directly across the street from St. Augustine Catholic Church, and saw the incident unfold.

"I heard a big bang," he said. "It shook the whole block. I saw a woman was laying on the ground in the middle of the street with burns on her body."

Imrie said the family's two dogs weren't home at the time of the fire.

"She was just taking them to the groomers, so the dogs were out of the house," Imrie said.

The fire was contained roughly 50 minutes after firefighters first began attacking the flames. The single-story house, which is valued on some real estate websites at about \$938,000, is considered a total loss. Investigators haven't released a damage estimate.

At least one muscle car was also included in the



Twelve-year-old Andrew Ochoa, a friend of Devon Zuffa's, will be at the Farmers' Market Saturday asking for donations of either cash, gift cards or clothing.

wreckage, Imrie said.

"The fire was significant enough where it actually damaged two houses next door, the one on the left and one on the right," Imrie said. "One had the exterior scorched and the other had roof damage."

To donate to the PMS PFA fund set up for the Zuffa family, call the school, located at 5001 Case Ave., at 426-4390. Clothing donations may also be dropped off at PMS. Look for Andrew Ochoa at the Farmers' Market downtown from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. ■

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## City charged up over battery recycling

*Five locations made available to stop chemical leakage in waterways, soil*

The city of Pleasanton will now accept used and unwanted batteries for recycling in the name of going green.

Mayor Jennifer Hosterman and the City Council have committed to leading the city toward more green alternatives and sustainability.

"Protecting our waterways and soil from contaminants is a way in which we can all participate," Hosterman said. "We hope that the accessibility and convenience of this new recycling program will contribute to its success."

Residents can drop batteries off at one of five sites located throughout the city.

- City of Pleasanton Operations Service Center, 3333 Busch Road
- Pleasanton City Hall lobby, 200 Old Bernal Ave.
- Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd.
- Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave.
- Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Station No. 2, 6300 Stoneridge Mall Road

Each site has been outfitted with a battery recycling station featuring three color-coded containers with posted instructions and appropriate supplies to collect the following: alkaline and carbon zinc (heavy duty) batteries, rechargeable batteries and disposable lithium batteries. Battery recycling has been mandated in California since February 2006

to stem the chemical leaching of used batteries into water supplies and landfills. Most AA, AAA, C, D, 9-volt and button batteries contain heavy metals including lead, cadmium, nickel, mercury and other toxics that can cause reproductive disorders as well as kidney, liver and neurological dysfunctions.

City staff will empty the containers and transfer the collected contents to the Alameda County Household Waste (ACHHW) site in Livermore on a weekly basis. ACHHW has agreed to partner in program under the condition that it can maintain a log of service user's ZIP codes, in order to track the location and volume of batteries generated. To accommodate this request, each battery recycling site will host a log for individuals to record their ZIP code and the number of batteries recycled.

City spokeswoman Joanne Hall said currently, the city will not be accepting compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), just batteries.

"We are exploring having an ongoing recycling program for CFLs, but expect that they will be included in our e-waste weekend held at the fairgrounds April 16-18, 2009," she said. "We included them last year and many, many CFL bulbs and lights came through."

For more information, call the city's Support Services Division at 931-5580.

—Janet Pelletier



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## Shopping for a cause

Cosette Bartholomew, 8, created Cozy's Closet, which is in the back room of downtown boutique Celebrity Bound, 720 Main St.

The clothes are ones she's outgrown over the years and are for sale for a good cause. Cozy's Closet was created by the Rancho Las Positas Elementary School student when she saw a program on TV showing the plight of starving children in Africa.

So, she asked her mom, Karen Bartholomew, if she could sell her old clothes, some of which she never even wore, to help. Her brother's stepdad, who is a cabinet maker in Sacramento, made the closet and engraved a sign made out of wood her great-grandfather left behind. On Tuesday night, a sale/fundraiser for Open Heart Kitchen was held with all the proceeds going to the nonprofit. Through at least the end of this month, all the proceeds from the sale of clothes in Cozy's Closet will go to a charity helping



children in Africa. It's a win-win for store owner Natalie Nunn because it's a good cause and because customers, many who are moms, have been asking when she would be selling children's clothes. People are encouraged to donate their gently worn clothes (infant to 12 years old, boys and girls) to Cozy's Closet by dropping them off at Celebrity Bound. Call 846-7827 for information. To read Cosette's blog, visit <http://cozyscloset.wordpress.com>.

## Tri-Valley Haven needs help

The pinch of economic hard times is being felt by everyone this holiday season, but nowhere is it more evident than at Tri-Valley Haven, a Livermore-based shelter which provides shelter, food and other services to abused homeless and low-income individuals and families. This year, the nonprofit said 1,100 local families have signed up to receive assistance with holiday gifts and food.

The Haven's Holiday Warehouse Program give out its last gifts to the needy on Saturday, the public can still drop off gifts through 5 p.m. today.

Haven Rape Crisis Center coordinator Christine Dillman said gifts are needed for teens, adults and seniors as well as toys for children.

A list of suggested items is available at [www.trivalleyhaven.org](http://www.trivalleyhaven.org) or by calling 449-5845. Gift cards to local stores are also welcome.

New, unwrapped gifts can be delivered to 20 S. L St., Livermore, the Old Railroad Building at the corner of Railroad Avenue. Call Dillman at 667-2707 for information. If those wishing to donate aren't able to drop off a gift by that time, the Haven can accept checks or cash after that time. A coordinator at the shelter said the money can be used to buy gifts if the shelter doesn't receive enough in time.

Tri-Valley Haven is one of seven nonprofits who will benefit from the Pleasanton Weekly's Holiday Fund.

—Janet Pelletier

## Signature

(continued from page 5)

architectural plans the developers prepared.

Besides approving payment of the \$2.6 million to the developers, Casey and the school board Tuesday night also announced that they have hired Signature's legal firm, Bernard, Balgley & Bonaccorsi of Newark, to seek reimbursement of at least \$4.5 million from the district's original law firm, Lozano Smith.

"This is the firm that represented the district in drafting the cooperative and amended fee agreements with the district and the developers and advised us at the time the agreements with the developers were prepared," Casey said. "Their advice was not successful in court and the financial agreement that they prepared with Signature and Standard Pacific was deemed not to be a legal document. We are asking that they pay the \$2.6 million we now owe the developers and also reimburse us for our legal costs and other expenditures related to this case."

Casey estimated that the district has spent \$2 million on its own legal fees, with additional expenses for portable classrooms because Neal was not built as scheduled, on bridge loans related to accommodating the overflow of students from Ruby Hill that were expected to be attending Neal and other costs related to

depositions and fees during the long and costly litigation.

"So we expect Lozano Smith to pay back what we have spent and what we have now agreed to pay Signature and Standard Pacific," he said.

"With the judgment made by Judge Hernandez, we want to basically say to Lozano Smith that their firm needs to step up and help the district here financially because of the work that they did," Casey added. "And the best firm to do that and to get it done as cheaply and quickly as possible, because they know the case, is the firm of Bernard, Balgley & Bonaccorsi. They heard the testimony, they did all the depositions."

"The board of trustees feels that this is the best outcome for the district given the ruling by Judge Hernandez," Casey explained. "The stipulated judgment preserves sections of the amended cooperative fee agreement that are important to the district."

"It also brings to an end many years of uncertainty, and the judgment will enable the district to redirect our resources to other areas," he added. "There is no desire to appeal or otherwise continue with this lawsuit between the district and the two developers."

Casey said that the district intends to keep the Vineyard Corridor acreage the it owns and is zoned for a school, but has no funds to commit at this time to building Neal School. ■

## Take Us Along



### Something fishy about this Weekly

Connor and Sean Iwata read the Weekly while watching kokanee salmon spawning at the Kokanee Salmon Festival in Lake Tahoe.

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# AID FOR AXIS

Most dramatic impact to medical service is pediatrics

by Emily West

It seems like with every new day brings another company announcing drastic reductions to their work force. Lost jobs can also mean lost or drastically reduced health insurance, and Axis Community Health is working hard to make sure these families stay healthy.

"More and more people are coming to our clinic," Axis CEO Sue Compton said. "They have been middle class and good working souls all their life. Many of them never expected to need help."

The clinic, located on Railroad Avenue in downtown Pleasanton, is seeing lines out the door. Each month there are about 200 new patients being added to what seems like mile-long waiting lists.

"We don't turn anyone away," Compton said. "We will get them in, at some point."

With flu season in full swing, patients are experiencing a four-week wait to see a doctor. Axis tries to make special arrangements for those who are very sick, but even then it's difficult as only certain doctors are available for a limited amount of hours.

This past year, Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund dollars were there to help, allowing clinics and pediatric care two Saturdays each



Angelita Mercado, center, comforts 2-year-old son Giovanni Villanueva as Axis medical assistant Maria Rodriguez administers an immunization.

month.

"[The Holiday Fund] gives us money to have more hours of service," Compton said.

The biggest increase in need has been in pediatrics, which has seen a 10 percent increase over the past four months. For people who still have a job, Compton said recently companies are beginning to cut back in health insurance and no longer cover families.

"With the cost of living increasing, people just don't have the money in their budget for health insurance," she added. "They make the obvious choice to feed their children."

Compton also stressed the importance of keeping children healthy. When kids are healthy and immunized, the community is healthy.

"When kids are sick, we're here for them," she said.

Why is it so important to support Axis Community health? Simply stated, there isn't another option for uninsured and under-insured families in the community. The two options are going to Children's Hospital or Highland County Hospital, both of which are in Oakland. With one-third of families without a car, it is five bus transfers just to get to Oakland.

Axis also provides several programs in

## Holiday Fund donors

Since the launch of the 2008 Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund, 243 donors have contributed \$35,731 to the fund, bringing the total to \$71,462 with the match. Forty-one anonymous donors have given \$5,119 of that total.

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## 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.

addition to their medical services. WIC (Women Infants and Children supplemental nutrition program) provides vouchers for pregnant women and mothers of young children, to be used for food from grocery stores and farmers markets. WIC also includes nutrition counseling and education. This program's need has grown so rapidly that Axis was recently approved for additional support from the state.

Also seeing increased participation are the mental health counseling and drug and alcohol programs.

"People are stressed and need help," Compton said. "And a lot of people under stress turn to drugs and alcohol."

With the major need for these programs, Axis is set to open another site in January. Located on Owens Drive, it would be devoted to behavioral services and teen drug and alcohol help. In February, they will be starting construction on a women's clinic, thanks to funding from Alameda County and the city of Pleasanton.

Compton said they've seen a decrease in donations from corporations because they don't have extra money to give away these days, or foundations because much of their funds have dwindled from being invested in the stock markets.

"About half of our funding comes from county contracts," she said. About a quarter to a third comes from medical reimbursements. The rest comes from donations and foundations and anything else we can find."

With their mission of helping people in the community, the Weekly's Holiday Fund is a chance for the community to give back. Each contribution will be matched dollar for dollar, thanks to the generosity of the Tri-Valley Community Foundation.

"We are so appreciative," Compton said, "and the Holiday Fund truly makes a difference."

To learn more about Axis Community Health and its many programs and services, call 417-1503 or visit [www.axishealth.org](http://www.axishealth.org). ■

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



# 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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, partner-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](http://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.

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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](http://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.

# Opinion

## Editorial

### Casey keeps legal battle going as Signature bows out with \$2.6M

It was the best of times and the worst of times for the Pleasanton school board Tuesday as new members were sworn in and Superintendent John Casey announced that the district would have to pay \$2.6 million to finally settle its long-standing dispute with developers Signature Properties and Standard Pacific Homes. Faced with budget challenges in the coming fiscal year that could produce a district shortfall of \$2 million or more, there were no smiles in the district when it realized that much and more would soon be going to the developers.

For the newcomers—Valerie Arkin and Jamie Yee Hintzke—and Chris Grant, who were elected to the school board Nov. 4, their swearing-in was still a celebration. It also marked the first time since 2003 that a full, duly-elected board was in place. In between, board members Jim Ott, Steve Brozosky and Grant were appointed to fill vacated positions, not elected to their posts. Ott actually was elected later following his appointment in 2006 when he ran alongside Patrick Kernan, who was seeking re-election. Since they had no opponents, their election was by default, not by actual votes. Still, according to law, they were elected as were the three officially seated Tuesday night after being sworn in by State Assemblywoman Mary Hayashi (D-Castro Valley).

The five are all talented, committed members of a school board that will face enormous financial challenges in the year ahead. With the state facing an \$18-billion deficit that continues to grow, educators are certain that state funding for schools will take a hit in the 2009-10 fiscal year budget, with legislators poised to start that deliberation early next month.

The likely budget crunch, unfortunately, also comes as \$2.6 million of the school district's funds have to be earmarked for Signature and Standard homes. The money is to repay the developers \$2.1 million for their legal costs and another \$500,000 in architectural fees for Neal Elementary School, which the developers offered to design and build for an estimated \$8.5 million in 2001. When Casey became superintendent in 2002, however, he learned that the school would cost \$13.5 million, \$5 million more than the school had budgeted to pay back the developers and money the district didn't have. He accused the developers of renegeing on their contract, which the districts original legal team—Lozano Smith—had said they had signed, which the developers disputed. The developers sued to clarify their position and last year and again earlier this year, two Alameda County Superior Court judges ruled that the district never had a construction agreement with the developers and ordered it to reimburse the developers for their legal fees.

Signature executives told Casey that the district can take its time in making the reimbursement. That's good because Casey is now going after Lozano Smith to pay the \$2.6 million owed to the developers and also to reimburse the district another \$2 million and more for its own legal fees and other costs related to Neal school. And, he's using the winning law firm from Signature, Bernard, Balgley & Bonaccorsi of Newark, to take on Lozano Smith. If successful, Lozano Smith will repay all of the school district's obligations in the Neal school case and the district will come out whole. Few believe that's likely so the new board—and taxpayers—will have to wait a while longer to see just what the Neal school fiasco has cost us. ■

## Guest Opinion

### Watch yours and others' alcohol intake this holiday season

by Melanie Sadek

The holiday season is a time to celebrate our friends and families. With the increase in social events, we also see an increase in drinking and driving. Who really wants to focus on this negative consequence while we are all enjoying each other? Unfortunately this issue won't resolve itself. Drinking and driving involves all of us.



The reality is drunk drivers rarely kill themselves in crashes. It is frequently the innocent, non-drinking driver and family in the other vehicle who suffers the most injuries and fatalities.

While law enforcement frequently pulls over the repeat offender, more commonly it's the social drinker—someone similar to many of us who thought they were okay or didn't have very far to travel. According to the California Office of Traffic Safety, the Pleasanton Police Department arrested 268 people for DUI last year.

The problem with alcohol is its affect on our judgment. In fact, the first thing to be affected when you drink is your judgment and the consequences are worse for those who have an addiction to alcohol or who are alcohol abusers. It is better for these people to stay away from alcohol all together. Just one drink can lead to numerous drinks, even if they are assigned the designated driver role.

Last year in Pleasanton, 10 people who had been drinking and driving suffer severe or fatal injuries in a collision. Half of these drivers were under the legal drinking age of 21. This is extremely disturbing because it shows us that our teens represent the greatest risk!

What can we do? Be good role models. Our children, regardless of their age, watch and learn from us. Let your children see you designate a driver. Let them hear the conversation. If you are the designated driver, don't drink.

Don't buy alcohol for anyone under 21 and make sure the alcohol in your house is secure. Teens will replace alcohol with water in bottles that are rarely touched.

Talking about teens drinking may bother some people, but the fact is many of them are drinking. Just look at the numbers above. Whether you agree with their decision doesn't matter. They need to know how to be safe and they need to know that you will be there for them. Let them know that you are available if they need a ride home. Make sure your teen understands that a designated driver may lie and secretly drink. Since their judgment is the first thing to go as they drink, they will be less likely to identify a designated driver who is intoxicated. Finally, if you suspect that your teen has a drinking problem, get help. Alcoholism is a disease.

As adults, we need to take responsibility for each other. Identify a designated driver before anyone drinks. If you have a party, offer fun non-alcoholic drinks for the designated drivers. Call cabs for people and make getting their car back in the morning as easy as possible. If we knowingly allow someone to drink and drive, we are just as responsible as the driver.

We can make a difference in our own community. Please have a safe holiday season and a Happy New Year.

*Melanie Sadek is an expert in occupant protection with 14 years experience in the traffic safety field and certifications from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. She owns downtown pet boutique Murphy's Paw.*

## Your Turn

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

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

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

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

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# Letters

## Pentin, campaign staff commendable

Dear Editor,  
We want to commend Jerry Pentin and his campaign staff. We had a Pentin lawn sign that they removed the evening of the election and left a thank you note at the door. They receive our thanks.

Dan and Barbara Ashton

## In agreement on council retreat locale

Dear Editor,  
In response to Debbie Donald's letter, "Council retreat should be in Pleasanton," (Letters, Nov. 28, page 13): Well written, well said!!!

Kay Ivins

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## WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

### City Council

Tuesday, December 16, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Receive informational report regarding the passage of Measures PP and QQ, and provide direction regarding implementation
- **Continued from December 2** - Discussion of proposed operational changes and the sale of additional plots for the Pleasanton Pioneer Cemetery
- Review Fiscal Year 2007-08 Year-End Financial Reports
  - a) Adopt a resolution amending the Fiscal Year 2007-08 Operating Budget
  - b) Adopt a resolution amending the Fiscal Year 2007-08 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget
- **Public Hearing:** PAP-128 (PDRW-6), Jacob Reeves, T Mobile – Consider an appeal of the Planning Commission decision upholding PAP 126, thereby overturning the Zoning Administrator's approval of a design review to redesign the existing tower at the McDonald's Restaurant located at 3001 Bernal Avenue
- **Continued to January 6, 2009** - Public Hearing: PAP-129, City Council - Consider an appeal of the Planning Commission's approval of an application by John Pfund for a conditional use permit (PCUP-229) to allow the operation of (1) a martial arts/childcare facility, Monday through Friday, from 11:30 a.m. to 6:15 p.m.; (2) full time childcare program camps during school breaks and holidays; and (3) evening martial arts classes, Monday through Friday, from 6:45 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., at 1262 Quarry Lane, Suite A

### Housing Commission

Thursday, December 18, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Please visit our website at [www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us](http://www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us) to view the agenda for this meeting.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Annual Leaf Pick Up and New 24/7 Hotline for Residents to Learn Schedule

The Operations Service Center will commence its annual leaf pick up services starting in early November through mid-January of next year. During this time, the City's leaf crew will be busy clearing the path for the street sweeper who sweeps the residential neighborhoods once a month. In order to give residents as much advanced notice as possible regarding their leaf pick up date, the City will advertise the start of the program in a variety of ways. A-frames will be placed in strategic designated areas of the City notifying the residents of their specific leaf pick up date for that area. A new telephone number has been introduced this year which allows residents to call and hear the leaf pickup schedule for that week. Signs will be posted on select City vehicles advertising this new phone number. Residents can call 931-5550 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to hear when their street sweeper and leaf pick up services will be provided.

#### City of Pleasanton Introduces Residential Battery Recycling Program

The City of Pleasanton has implemented a new residential battery recycling program. Pleasanton residents can drop batteries off at one of five sites located throughout the city. Each site has been outfitted with a battery recycling station featuring three color-coded containers with posted instructions and appropriate supplies to collect the following: alkaline and carbon zinc (heavy duty) batteries, rechargeable batteries and disposable lithium batteries. The five designated drop off sites are:

1. City of Pleasanton Operations Service Center – 3333 Busch Road
  2. Pleasanton City Hall Lobby – 200 Old Bernal Avenue
  3. Pleasanton Senior Center – 5353 Sunol Boulevard
  4. Pleasanton Public Library – 400 Old Bernal Avenue
  5. Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Station # 2 – 6300 Stoneridge Mall
- For more information, the public can contact the Support Services Division of the City of Pleasanton at (925) 931-5580.

**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](http://www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/community/calendar)

# Community Pulse

## Police Bulletin

### Neighbor dispute ends in arrest

A Pleasanton man was arrested last Friday evening after allegedly making threats against his neighbor at his home in Vintage Hills, police said.

Officers responded at approximately 3:47 p.m. to an incident involving the suspect Mike Wheeler threatening a neighbor with a gun, according to police.

Verbal abuse took place between the two, after which Wheeler returned to his home, police said.

According to police, Wheeler reemerged outside a short time later and yelled to his son, "Give me the gun!" when he saw his neighbor. Fearing for his safety, the neighbor ran back into his home.

Wheeler returned to his home as well but refused to come out when officers surrounded his house, police

said. He was arrested 45 minutes after the initial call and booked into Santa Rita Jail.

—Bay City News

### Fire damages Alisal Elementary

Police are investigating a fire at Alisal Elementary School across from the post office at 1454 Santa Rita Road, that was first reported at 8:29 p.m. Saturday, shortly after the end of the city's Holiday Parade.

Early reports indicate that there was no significant structural damage. Most of the damage was superficial to the painted wall and ceiling in the hallway. It appeared that vandals started the fire that contained mostly papers, books and possibly backpacks against the stucco wall of the multipurpose room.

The fire is under investigation by both the Pleasanton police and fire departments. Anyone with information is asked to call police at 931-5100.

## Police Report

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

### Nov. 30

- Drug/alcohol violations:
  - 3:21 a.m. in the 8200 block of Regency Drive; public drunkenness
  - 7:11 a.m. in the 4000 block of Schween Court; under the influence of a controlled substance

### Dec. 1

- Theft:
  - 8:48 a.m. in the 7500 block of Canyon Meadows Circle; grand theft
  - 8:34 a.m. in the 3500 block of Kings Canyon Court; petty theft
  - 3:19 p.m. in the 5800 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; identity theft
  - 9:38 p.m. in the 1500 block of

Maple Leaf Drive; stolen vehicle

- Burglary:
  - 8:30 a.m. in the 4500 block of Pleasanton Avenue
  - 9:10 a.m. in the 3500 block of Kings Canyon Court; vehicular
  - 2:53 p.m. in the 3900 block of Petrified Forest Court; vehicular
- Vandalism:
  - 8:39 a.m. in the 7300 block of Johnson Drive
  - 9:24 a.m. at the intersection of Payne Road and Denker Drive
  - 1:50 p.m. in the 4500 block of Lakewood Street
- Robbery:
  - 9:03 a.m. in the 1 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
  - 7:51 p.m. in the 5500 block of Springdale Drive
- Battery:
  - 9:03 a.m. in the 1 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; assault with a weapon

### Dec. 2

- Theft:
  - 1:41 a.m. in the 1000 block of Sunset Creek Lane; stolen vehicle
  - 3:41 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
  - 7:33 p.m. in the 2200 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
- Drug/alcohol violations:
  - 12:11 a.m. in the 6000 block of Johnson Drive; under the influence of a controlled substance, DUI
  - 12:29 a.m. in the 3700 block of Hopyard Road; DUI
  - 1:41 a.m. in the 1000 block of Sunset Creek Lane; DUI; stolen vehicle

### Dec. 3

- Stolen vehicle:
  - 5:32 p.m. in the 4600 block of Willow Road
- Vehicular burglary:
  - 4:03 p.m. in the 7500 block of Ivy Court
- Drug/alcohol violations:
  - 12:15 a.m. in the 4200 block of First Street; public drunkenness
  - 9:34 p.m. in the 4200 block of Valley Avenue; DUI

### Dec. 4

- Theft:
  - 2:32 a.m. in the 4800 block of Hopyard Road; petty theft
  - 3:35 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
  - 7:16 p.m. in the 4500 block of Las Lomitas Drive; petty theft
- Vandalism:
  - 10:39 a.m. in the 4100 block of Pleasanton Avenue
  - 10:16 p.m. in the 7000 block of Commerce Circle
- DUI:
  - 12:12 a.m. at the intersection of Stoneridge and Chabot drives
  - 1:46 a.m. at the intersection of Stoneridge Drive and Stoneridge Mall Road
  - 10:46 p.m. at the intersection of Hopyard Road and Valley Trails Drive

### Dec. 5

- Vandalism:
  - 7:35 a.m. at the intersection of Mohr Avenue and Kolln Street
- DUI:
  - 2:00 a.m. at the intersection of Division and Fair streets

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# Transitions

## Obituaries

### Maxine Marie Smith

Maxine Marie Smith, R.N., a 42-year resident of Pleasanton, died Nov. 27 after a brief illness. She was 87 years old.

Mrs. Smith proudly served as a nurse in the Army during World War II. She practiced nursing for over 50 years in private practice. She was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Pleasanton 2nd Ward and served a two-year mission at the Oakland Family History Center. She also enjoyed a hobby of growing orchids for the past 45 years.



She is survived by her sister, Bernice Dachenhausen; son, Michael Robert Becker; daughter, Alannah Hertle; grandchildren, Denise Snow, Robert Michael Becker, Michaela Hertle and Ashleigh Becker; and four great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her loving husband, Dr. C. Reed Smith.

A service was held Dec. 5 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Burial followed at the Pleasanton Pioneer Cemetery. Memorial contributions can be made to: Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Attn: Gift Management Services, 5005 LBJ Freeway, Ste. 250, Dallas, TX 75244; or the LDS Family History Center, 4766 Lincoln Way, Oakland, CA 94602.

### Elvieta Pauline Wilson

Elvieta Pauline Wilson (Kohler) died Nov. 16 at the age of 95.

Mrs. Wilson was a recent resident of Eden Villa Assisted Care Facility, and a Pleasanton/Livermore area resident for the past 30 years.



She was born on March 27, 1913 to Charles and Kate (Carstensen) Kohler in Clinton, Iowa. Mrs. Wilson loved telling stories of her childhood growing up on a small farm in Iowa in a time when electricity and indoor plumbing were not yet available. Her mother was an incredible gardener and her father an extraordinary handyman, thus the family was fairly self sufficient. Her days as a child were carefree and void of worry.

She met her future husband, Harold, one rainy night when his car got stuck in the mud and he had to hike to her parents' house for help. They were married in Carbon

Cliff, Ill. in 1931.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Harold; son, Bob and daughter-in-law, Kay. She is survived by her three grandchildren and their families: Bill and Dawn Wilson (Chelsea and Ryan) of Pleasanton, Kathi and Steve Finley (Bill Matoza) of Castro Valley, and Trish Wilson and Terry Joy (Katy and Colin Joy) of Arroyo Grande, Calif.

### Lee Parodi

Lee Parodi died Nov. 17 at the age of 87.

She was born in Trenton, N.J. to Joseph and Jeni Natoli and lived there until she was 13 years old. Her family moved to Oakland and she lived there until 1998, when she finally moved to Pleasanton to be close to her children. Known as "Grandma Onion," she loved to make ceramics and was an amazing cook. She could make anything from scratch and was especially known for her homemade raviolis. What she loved most was to be with her family and spending time "babysitting" her "grand-dog" Baby.



Mrs. Parodi was married to Raymond H. Parodi, Senior Master Chief, Navy, in 1942 for 52 wonderful years.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her loving husband; and her sister, Josephine Trincherio. She is survived by her son Raymond Parodi (Gardnerville, Nev.); daughter, Diane Hall (Pleasanton); grandchildren, Robert Means (Hayward), Tony and Katy Parodi (Gardnerville, Nev.), Lisa Davis (Livermore) and Jenny Ebberts (Pleasanton); great-grandchildren, Tami Davis (Livermore), Maizey and Mason Parodi (Gardnerville, Nev.), Alexis Ibarra (Livermore) and Ellen and Kimberly Ebberts (Pleasanton); and numerous nieces and nephews.

A memorial was held Dec. 11. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hope Hospice or the Make a Wish Foundation.

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

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# Calendar

## Author Visits

**Juliette Goodrich** Juliette Goodrich author of "The Little Light Shines Bright," will be signing the book from 2-4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 13, at Barnes & Noble, Hacienda Crossings, 4972 Dublin Blvd., Dublin. The book is about Livermore's Centennial Light Bulb, which has been burning for 107 years at Fire Station No. 6 on East Avenue. Proceeds benefit the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation. Visit [www.authorhouse.com](http://www.authorhouse.com) for more information.

## 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.

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

## Class Reunions

**Granada High School Class of 1989 Reunion** The reunion committee for Granada High School Class of 1989 in Livermore is searching for classmates to celebrate their 20th year reunion. It will be held Sept. 5, 2009. For information, visit [www.GHS1989.net](http://www.GHS1989.net).

## Classes

**American Red Cross Lifeguard Training Class** City of Pleasanton will offer an American Red Cross Lifeguard Training Class from 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, Dec. 22-Jan. 2, at the Dolores Bengtson Aquatic Center, 4455 Black Ave. Cost is \$165 for residents; \$190 for non-residents. To register, visit the Aquatic Center office, 4455 Black Ave.; the Parks and Community Services Department office, 200 Old Bernal Ave.; mail a check to City of Pleasanton, Attn: Aquatics, P.O. Box 520; call 931-3420 or visit [www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/services/recreation](http://www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/services/recreation).

**Pet First Aid and CPR** Murphy's Paw will host a Pet First Aid and CPR class from 9 a.m.-noon, Sunday, Dec. 14, at the store, 410 Main St. Cost is \$35. Learn pet rescue in a low stress hands-on environment. Call 803-1600.

**Yoga For The Holidays** Beth Fox instructs this yoga class during the stressful holiday times that meets from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Mondays until Dec. 15, at Lynnewood United Methodist Church, 4444 Black Ave. No previous yoga experience necessary. Limited class supplies available. Fees are \$12 for drop-in or \$10 for pre-paid series. Inquire about seniors or students rates. Call 200-4060.

## Clubs

**'Finding Your Voice'** California Writers Club Tri-Valley Branch will offer writers of all genres the opportunity to learn about their craft and share their work from 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 20, at Oasis Grille, 780 Main St. Guest speaker is B. Lynn Goodwin, author of, "You Want Me to Do What: Journaling for Caregivers." Cost is \$21 for members; \$27 for non-members, including lunch. Reservations are required by calling Fred at 462-7495 by Dec. 17.

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

**NARFE** The Livermore Chapter 0397 of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association meets at 11:30 a.m. for lunch; 12:30 p.m. for its meeting, the second Thursday monthly, at Emil Villa's Restaurant at the corner of Pacific and S. Livermore avenues in Livermore. Call 484-0813 or 846-7167.

**Pleasanton Job's Daughters** Job's Daughters International is an organization for young ladies (minimum age 10 for full membership) who enjoy dances, sleepovers, parties, social events, snow trips and more.

The girls develop confidence, good character, life-long friendships, moral and spiritual values, and leadership abilities. The group meets at 7 p.m., on the fourth Monday of every month, at Pleasanton Masonic Center, 3370 Hopyard Rd. Visit [www.bethel14.com](http://www.bethel14.com).

**Pleasanton Mothers Club** The Pleasanton Mothers Club provides a social, supportive and educational outlet for moms and their families in the local community. They meet at 7 p.m. the third Tuesday monthly. Call 927-2444 or visit [www.pleasanton-mothersclub.org](http://www.pleasanton-mothersclub.org).

**Widowed Men and Women Social** The Widowed Men and Women of Northern California meets for a happy hour gathering at 5 p.m. the third Friday of the month at the Sheraton Hotel across from JC Penney's at Stoneridge Mall. Guests welcome. RSVP prior to event. Call Lorraine, 846-5695.

**Women's Networking Opportunity** The local ABWA E2S chapter meets at 6 p.m. the third Tuesday monthly at Four Points Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard Road, which focus on personal and professional development for women in business. Meetings include a guest speaker and networking opportunities. Nonmembers are welcome to attend at a cost of \$5 per meeting. Visit [www.expressstosuccess.org](http://www.expressstosuccess.org).

## Concerts

**'Lessons and Carols'** Centerpointe Presbyterian Church and Resurrection Lutheran Church presents "Lessons and Carols" at 7 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 14, at Resurrection Lutheran Church, 7557 Amador Valley Blvd., Dublin. The choir will be accompanied by a string quartet from Sycamore Strings Academy and the church organ. Cost is a \$10 suggested donation to help support the two churches. Call 846-4436 or visit [www.centerpointechurch.info](http://www.centerpointechurch.info).

**'Sing-It-Yourself Messiah'** Valley Concert Chorale will host its annual "Sing-It-Yourself Messiah" at 7 p.m., Friday, Dec. 12, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. Tickets are \$10. Call 866-4003 or visit [www.valleyconcertchorale.org](http://www.valleyconcertchorale.org).

## Events

**Pleasanton Singles Christmas Party** Celebrate Christmas with new single friends from 7-9 p.m., Monday, Dec. 15, at the Pleasanton Hotel, 855 Main St. The night will include a fun Christmas mixer game and complimentary appetizers. Cost is \$10; festive holiday attire is recommended. Call (415) 507-9962.

**Saturday Salon** 4th Street Studio will host its monthly Saturday Salon at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 13, at 4th Street Studio, 2235 Fourth St., Livermore. This month's topic is "A Let the Words Take the Top of Your Head off Kind of Evening." Readers have up to ten minutes to read. The public is welcome. Bring a nosh and something to drink to share. Call 456-3100.

## Exhibits

**Come Home for the Holidays** The exhibit at Museum On Main, 603 Main St., runs through Jan. 11 and will showcase winter holiday traditions in Pleasanton and Pleasanton's sister cities Tulancingo, Mexico, and Blairgowrie, Scotland. The cost is a \$2 donation. Call 462-2766 or visit [www.museumonmain.org](http://www.museumonmain.org).

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## Film

**'Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired?'** Learn how dysfunction of the brain's control center can lead to a variety of pain and symptoms at a free movie screening from 6:15-7:30 p.m., Monday, Dec. 15, at the Pleasanton Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Call 209-9871.

## Fundraisers

**Bay Area Food Bank** LilyAnn's Lingerie is collecting food for the Bay Area Food Bank and will offer a discount when you bring in two cans of food through December, at LilyAnn's, 350 Main St. A barrel is outside the store for donations. Food items that are needed include canned meats, fish, vegetables, fruits, beans and soup; peanut butter; cereal; dry milk and pasta. Call 846-1950.

**Calendars Support the Classrooms** The doorways of downtown Pleasanton are featured in calendars that will help raise money for Foothill High and Lydiksen Elementary schools. The calendars sold out at registration, netting over \$2,000 for the schools; more are being sold at the following downtown businesses: Towne Center Books, The Berry Patch, Milfleur and Sincerely Yours; as well as at the farmers' market Saturday.

## Health

**Holistic Practitioners Networking Meeting** Eclectic Health is a holistic chamber that has been created for holistic practitioners to get together, network and support each other. Meet local Holistic Practitioners and establish a referral from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 16, at Cosmic Dog Yoga, 1923 2nd St., Livermore. Cost is \$10. E-mail a@mentalleverage.com for more information.

**Yoga for Multiple Sclerosis** Every Tuesday through Dec. 30 from 1:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m., Downtown Yoga, 220 B Division St., hosts a series of gentle stretching movements that can help to reduce stress within the body. Call 462-5285.

## Holiday

**'Celebrate the Season the Celtic Way'** Golden Bough presents a festive family program that incorporates old world carols and other Celtic songs of the holidays at 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 20, at Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Rd., Pleasanton. Tickets are \$15, \$20 and \$25. Call 931-3444 or visit www.pleasantoncivcarts.org.

**Breakfast with Santa** Living Vine Fellowship, 4100 First St., hosts a pancake breakfast, storytime with Santa, puppet show by the Fratello Marionettes, face painting, crafts and more from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Dec. 20. Tickets are \$5 before Nov. 20 or \$7 after. Call 727-7094. Register online at www.livingvinefellowship.com.

**Chanukah Party** Come and celebrate Chanukah at a party from 10:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 21, at Bothwell Center, 2466 8th St., Livermore. Games and activities for adults and kids; bring a dish to share for brunch, a potato, and a new or very gently used coat for One Warm Coat. Call 485-1049.

**DHS Alumni Association Holiday Party** The Dublin High Alumni Association is hosting its third annual Holiday Party at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 12 at Lucky Pizza, 7410 Amador Valley Blvd., Dublin. Pizza and refreshments will be provided. Contact DHSAA Chair Eric Swalwell, eswalwell@dublin-highalums.org.

**Holiday Celebrations Around the World** The family show at 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. Dec. 13 at Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road, will include seasonal stories and songs from

around the world with appearances by traditional characters and some surprises. Tickets are \$14-\$20 for adults and \$8-\$16 for children. Call 931-3444 or visit www.civcarts.org.

**Holiday Events at Stoneridge Shopping Center** Stoneridge Shopping Center will host numerous holiday events during the month of December. An appearance by Oakland A's Ryan Sweeney and Travis Buck from 4-6 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 6, at the Santa set in the Grand Court. Cost is \$5 or more to benefit the Simon Youth Foundation. Breakfast with Santa at 10 a.m., Sunday, Dec. 7, in the Grand Court. Pet photos with Santa from 9:45-10:45 a.m., Sunday, Dec. 14. A Chanukah Celebration with Chabad of the Tri-Valley from 4-5:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 28. The mall is located at One Stoneridge Mall Rd. Call 737-4100.

**Holiday Food Drive** Pleasanton CPA firm, JL Consulting, is coordinating a holiday food drive benefiting people in need served by the Alameda County Community Food Bank. Donations of nutritious, non-perishable foods can be dropped off at 1024 Serpentine Lane, Ste. 105 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays until Dec. 12. Call 846-1859 or email info@jlopa.net.

**Holiday Posada** Join the festivities for singing, pinatas and refreshments at the Pleasanton/Tulancingo Sister City Holiday Posada from 7-8 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 21, at Veteran's Hall, Main Street. This event is free, but donations are accepted. For more information, call Sandi Cornfield at 426-5389.

**Pleasanton Community Concert Band Holiday Concert** The Pleasanton Community Concert Band presents its holiday concert "An American Christmas: Bells and Toys" at 2 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 14, at Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Rd. There will be a holiday salute to Leroy Anderson and featuring a

guest performance by The Cantabella Children's Chorus. This concert is free. Call 846-5897.

**Second Annual Festivus Jubilee** Come celebrate the second annual Festivus Jubilee from 6-9 p.m., Tuesday-Wednesday, Dec. 23-24, at Willow Tree Restaurant, 6513 Regional St., Dublin. The night will include great comedians, festivity activities and dinner. Cost is \$37. Call 519-0280.

**Tri-Valley High: Home for the Holidays** Creatures of Impulse, City of Pleasanton Civic Arts' teen improv troupe, presents an interactive and energetic show that is for teenagers, by teenagers and about teenagers and has a holiday theme. The audience will be involved in creating the story from start to finish. Shows are at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 11 and 12 at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Call 931-3444 or visit www.civcarts.org.

**Valley Dance Theatre to Perform The Nutcracker** The Valley Dance Theatre presents "The Nutcracker" with music by the Livermore-Amador Symphony pit orchestra with carols by Harmony Fusion Chorus and the Valley Concert Chorale. Shows are at 7 p.m. Dec. 13, 19 and 20, and at 2 p.m. Dec. 13, 20 and 21, at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Tickets are \$23-\$31 for adults and \$17 for students 17 and younger. Call 373-6800 or visit www.bankheadtheater.org

## Lectures/ Workshops

**'Parenting Your Aging Parent'** The December class of Parenting Your Aging Parent will talk about "Hints for Happy Holidays" from 7-9 p.m.,

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**Debbie Look**  
Campaign Director  
Pleasanton Cultural Arts Foundation



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Wednesday, Dec. 17, at Amador Valley High School, Conference Room B in the Library. The class is free; no previous sign up is required. Call 443-7140.

**On Stage**

**Pan & Wendy** Cal State University East Bay presents Pan & Wendy at 7 p.m. Dec. 12 and 13 and 3 p.m. Dec. 13. Tickets are \$8 or \$6 for youth, seniors and alumni; \$4 for students and children. Call 510-885-3118 or visit class.csueastbay.edu/theatre. Shows are at the University Theatre, 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward.

**Political Notes**

**Potluck Dinner Party** The McNerney Campaign Thank You Party and TVDC Meeting (nomination of 2009 officers) will host its seasonal potluck dinner party from 6:30-9 p.m., Monday, Dec. 15, at IBEW Hall, 6250 Village Pkwy., Dublin. Guest speaker is Leonardo Cerda. This event is free; wheelchair accessible. Call 451-4303 or visit www.trivalleydems.com

**Seniors**

**Deacon Dave's Christmas Lights** Seniors are invited to sing and carol all the way to Deacon Dave's for a Christmas Light Extravaganza in Livermore from 6-8:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 18, meeting at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Meet at the Senior Center for light refreshments, then board Pleasanton Paratransit vans. Tour includes light walking, so dress accordingly. Cost is \$8 for residents; \$10 for non-residents. Reservations are required; call 931-5365.

**Spiritual**

**Christmas Eve Service** Tri-Valley Unity Church will host a Christmas Even Service at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 24, at the Radisson Hotel, 6680 Regional St., Dublin. Celebrate the birth of Jesus and the birthing of a new Christ consciousness in each of us. Call 829-2733 or visit www.trivalleyunity.com.

**Compline with Taize Music** End the day with candlelight, choral song and contemplation at 5:15 p.m. Dec. 14 at St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road. Stay after the service for fellowship of a covered dish supper. Donations accepted. Call 462-4802 or visit www.stclarespleasanton.org.

**Events at Tri-Valley Unity Church** Rev. Steve Maynard will speak about "Being an Expression of Love" at 10 a.m., Sunday, Dec. 14, and a Christmas Sing-A-Long is from 6-8 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 14, both at Tri-Valley Unity Church, meeting at Old St. Raymond's Church, 6600 Donlon Way, Dublin. All are welcome. Call 829-2733 or visit www.trivalleyunity.com.

**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.

**Returning Catholics Program** Inactive & Returning Catholics: Consider this an invitation to take another look at the Catholic church. We provide discussion of important issues in today's church, education on current belief and practice. Tell your story and renew your faith in a supportive and non-judgmental environment. Meetings are from 7 to

## Calendar

9 p.m. Wednesdays at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church, 4001 Stoneridge Dr. Call 474-2760.

**The Longest Night** Come discover God as a light in your personal darkness at a special service of prayers, scripture and meditations at 7 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 21, at St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Rd. Call 462-4802 or visit [www.stclarespleasanton.org](http://www.stclarespleasanton.org).

## Sports

**Cheer Clinic** Foothill High School's nationally ranked cheer squad will be holding a cheer clinic from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Dec. 20. They will teach new dances, cheers, jumps, motions and other fun cheer games. The cost is \$45, which also includes a T-shirt, certificate, prizes and lunch. A parent performance will be at the end of the day. Space is limited. For registration and information, email Suzanne Oliveira at [suz96GT@aol.com](mailto:suz96GT@aol.com) or call 510-226-8832 or Kim DeJoy at [kdejoyfhscheer@comcast.net](mailto:kdejoyfhscheer@comcast.net) or call 360-6102.

**Softball Clinic** Triple Threat Training will host a softball skills clinic from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Monday, Dec. 22, at Amador Valley High School, 1155 Santa Rita Rd. The clinic is for kids from 8 years old through 8th grade. Cost is \$100; there is an additional fee for a hitting video analysis. For information, contact Julie Marshall at [marsh32@yahoo.com](mailto:marsh32@yahoo.com).

**Swim Meet** The Pleasanton Seahawks Swin team will host a two-day swim meet Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 13-14, at Dolores Bengtson Aquatic Center, 4455 Black Ave. The meet will begin at 6:30 a.m., with competition beginning at 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Call Ian Anderson at 931-3423.

## Support Groups

**Death Support Group** The death of a loved one is unlike any other loss. Whether the death was sudden or one with warning, the reality of death leaves most of us in a state of shock. Join this group at 7:30 p.m., on the second and fourth Thursday of every month, at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Dr. The meetings are open to all, regardless of religious orientation. Call Mary at 846-5377.

**Livermore Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group** The Livermore Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group meets at 10 a.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month at Heritage Estates Retirement Community, second floor conference room, 900 E. Stanley Blvd., Livermore. All are welcome. Contact Lorene Stack, 447-6158 or Ann Laye, 443-4098.

**Overeaters Anonymous** Do you worry about the way you eat? You are not alone. Overeaters Anonymous may have the answer for you. This is not a diet club. OA is a fellowship of people recovering from compulsive overeating, starving and/or purging. OA offers mutual support and a helpful plan of action. They meet at 7 p.m. every Tuesday at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, 678 Enos Way, Livermore. Visit [www.diablovalleyyoa.org](http://www.diablovalleyyoa.org).

**Tri-Valley Parkinson's Support Group** The group meets at 10 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., to provide information and support for Parkinson's patients and caregivers. Call 831-9940.

**Vision Support Group** Individuals with low vision, and their loved ones, are invited to join us on the third Tuesday of each month from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Join us for low vision information, speakers, resources, discussions, and day trips. No reservations are required. Nominal fees may apply. Call 931-5369.

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5:00pm Holy Eucharist and Children's Pageant  
8:00pm Christmas Lessons and Carols  
11:00pm Candlelight Eucharist with Chamber Music and Incense

**Christmas Day – December 25**  
11:00am Holy Eucharist

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## Christmas Season at Valley Community Church

Sunday December 14th

### Christmas Musical Worship Service

Sunday 9:00 & 10:45 am  
"The Christmas Card"  
Featuring Sanctuary Choir,  
Orchestra, Children's Choir

Wednesday, December 24th

### Christmas Eve Celebration

3:00, 4:30 & 6:00 pm  
featuring Christmas Carols,  
Nativity Play & Candle Lighting  
Nursery & preschool childcare provided at 3:00 service only

Sunday Worship Services, 9:00 & 10:45 am

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**Crosswinds Church**  
**CHRISTMAS 2008 SERVICES**

Sunday, Dec. 21 at 9:30am; 11:00am  
Wednesday, Dec. 24 at 3:00pm; 4:30pm; 6:15pm  
Wednesday, Dec. 24 at 11:30pm-Communion Service

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Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,

Gina Channell-Allen  
President



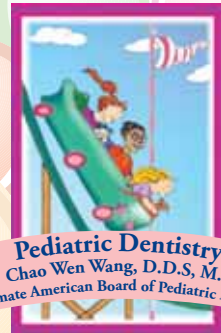
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