

Pleasanton Hotel eatery closing

New Year's party will be restaurant's last service > **page 5**

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www.PleasantonWeekly.com

New year, new rules

CHP to enforce latest laws Jan. 1

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PLEASANTON WEEKLY

Traveling with the Weekly

Readers took us along to chilly locales > **Section 2**



PARKS' CHIEF LEAVES QUITE A LEGACY

Jim Wolfe made city a leader in recreation, sports, public park amenities **PAGE 14**

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Around Pleasanton

by Jeb Bing

A teenager's dream ends in Pleasanton

“Auld Lang Syne” will have a somber tone to it Wednesday night when it is sung by New Year's revelers for the last time in Bill Laube's restaurant in the Pleasanton Hotel. Laube, who with his wife Vernie have owned and operated the award-winning downtown restaurant since 1983, lost their lease and are shutting down New Year's Day.

The building's owner Sue Martinovich rejected Laube's bid to keep the restaurant open through May 1 to accommodate 14 banquets and wedding receptions that are already booked for early 2009, including a wedding planned for Jan. 31. She told him to be out by Jan. 1 and he's busy now trying to reach those affected to arrange alternative locations. An auction house has been called in to sell off the furnishings and Laube hopes many of his Pleasanton customers will buy whatever they can as nostalgic reminders of an historical era now passing by.

At age 75, Laube's not sure what he'll do next, although food service and the restaurant business are in his blood. It wouldn't surprise me to see his skills and local appeal surface nearby. A Rotarian, he also has hosted the Pleasanton Rotary (Downtown) Club since buying the restaurant. Rotary will now squeeze back into Hap's Restaurant starting Jan. 15.

Laube became interested in restaurants as a high school teenager in Syracuse, N.Y. when he took a summer job at his uncle's restaurant in Buffalo. For a time, he worked at his uncle's concession stand across the border at a Canadian amusement park. He dreamed someday of owning his own restaurant. Later, he earned a degree in hotel restaurant management at Cornell University, following that with a job in the food service business in Minnesota that catered to local schools. Restless with the daily routine, he moved to Greece for two years with the Army and Air Force exchange service that served all of the military PXs and retail operations. He returned in 1964 to work for Saga Food Service, which was headquartered in Menlo Park.

Still not satisfied, Laube went to work for a Lebanese food service management company in London that wanted him to open a U.S. office. They picked San Diego which traveled extensively in Europe and to Saudi Arabia, where the company was a major supplier to ARAMCO, the American oil consortium. Laube heard about the Pleasanton Hotel opportunity from Martinovich, who had purchased the hotel in 1981, and Laube bought out the existing restaurant two years later.

It's been quite a run, with Vernie helping out during the peak holiday periods, and Bill at the restaurant almost every day. Sunday brunch has always been Laube's busiest and most profitable offering, although, the customer base has been declining recently. His business was especially hard-hit when local wineries opened with banquet halls, caterers and an atmosphere that attracted the wedding reception and banquet business that accounted for much of Laube's profits. Not long ago, Laube would host two weddings every Saturday; that hasn't happened recently.

Other special events have been popular. Laube just finished his 13th year of Thursday night meals and dancing to the "blues" on the patio, which appealed to an older clientele. His "Mystery Dinner Theater," which held its last performance Sunday night, started 15 years ago and has more recently been produced by Jack Gibson from Benicia. The production involves audience participation after the meals are finished and a mystery-environment which Laube's Victorian Room provided. Besides being fun and exciting, especially in a hotel known for its ghosts, it was also profitable.

Now it's over, although Martinovich, whose parents once owned the Elegant Farmer in Oakland, might try opening a restaurant that would appeal to a younger crowd. For the Laubes, who have eight children and 15 grandchildren between them, New Year's Day will at least offer some time to enjoy the family after 25 years of nonstop restaurateuring. ■

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About the Cover
Retiring Parks and Community Services Director Jim Wolfe tees off at Callippe Preserve Golf Course, one of many major amenities built during his 11 years on the job. Wolfe retires next Tuesday when he leaves Pleasanton to join his wife Maureen at their new home in Arroyo Grande, near Pismo Beach. Cover photo by Jeb Bing. Design by Rick Nobles.
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Streetwise

Q: What was your biggest accomplishment in 2008?

Asked around town



Bryan Hilton

I lost 26 pounds this year by exercising regularly (yoga, running and weight training) six days a week and I ate a little bit less.

Bob Stanley (Creator of Bob's World)

I noticed an increase in people who came out to see my haunted mansion during Halloween and I've already seen more new faces this year at Bob's World. The popularity is growing and I love doing this every year just to see the smiles on everybody's faces. That is the biggest accomplishment for me.



Graham Bennett

I am the head coach of the BUSC U-11 DIII Black Soccer Team and we won the Al Caffodio League and District Cup this year. We remained undefeated in 2008 and we are going to the CYSA Association Cup State Championships Jan. 10-11.

Rachel Goble (with fiance Kevin Carey)

The first one was getting engaged on Dec. 3 and the second was launching a scholarship fund for the SOLD Project, a nonprofit that helps children in Thailand continue their education and avoid being sold into child prostitution. I also finished the short documentary "Sold: Cat," about the first little girl in Thailand to receive funds from the program.



Terry Baro

I started my own private practice as a special education advocate. I represent parents at Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to obtain appropriate services and placements for children with special needs. My inspiration for starting my own practice came from my 9-year-old son who has autism.

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

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Newsfront

News Digest

Holiday garbage service

Pleasanton Garbage Service will not pick up garbage or recycling Jan. 1 and the office will be closed that day. Thursday customers will receive service on Friday and Friday customers will receive service on Saturday. The transfer station and recycling center also will be closed Jan. 1.

Women named to fame

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors hosts the 16th annual Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame luncheon April 25 in Berkeley. Nominations are now being accepted for outstanding women in 11 categories: business and professions, community service, culture and art, education, environment, health, justice, non-traditional careers, science, sports and athletics, and youth. Deadline for nominations is Jan. 15. The program raises money for charities addressing health issues affecting women. Visit www.acgov.org or call 510-259-3871 for more information.

Nominate community servants

The Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce invites residents and chamber members to nominate businesses, nonprofit organizations and individuals who have made a significant contribution to the Pleasanton community. An awards ceremony will be held Jan. 30 at the Pleasanton Hilton and is sponsored by UNCLE Credit Union. Download a form, due by Dec. 31, at www.pleasanton.org. The Chamber will be closed through Jan. 2 for the holidays.

Hike with the family

The city's Family Hiking Club will meet at 10 a.m. Jan. 3 at the staging area in The Preserve neighborhood on Foothill Road. City Naturalist Eric Nicholas will lead the leisurely hike, discovering hidden trails and teaching about the plants and animals. The cost is \$9 for residents or \$12 for non-residents. For details, email enicholas@ci.pleasanton.ca.us.

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

Insurance officials begin their own investigation into fire

Police say East Angela Street house fire is 'suspicious,' looking at any and all motives and causes

by Janet Pelletier

Pleasanton police are working through the holidays on what may become a criminal investigation in the house fire on East Angela Street that left a woman with second- and third-degree burns and displaced two families.

Sgt. Jim Knox with the

Pleasanton Police Department said insurance officials are working independently of police on their own investigation into the fire that occurred Dec. 8 in the 800 block of Angela, east of downtown.

Neighbors heard a loud explosion that shook the whole block and saw flames rise to the power poles as firefighters worked for hours to put the fire out. Deonna

Zuffa, 40, who was at home at the time, suffered serious burns and was listed in critical but stable condition at St. Francis Memorial Hospital's burn center in San Francisco.

Knox declined to discuss details of the investigation, but said the fire does have a 'suspicious' nature.

"Our arson investigator met with

the fire department's folks and at this point, all I can say is that the fire appears to be suspicious and so we're looking further into that," he said.

Police and fire investigators have already collected evidence from the home, where, among the damage were muscle cars and go-karts in the garage.

(continued on page 8)



The restaurant inside the historic Pleasanton Hotel will close New Year's Day. Restaurant owner Bill Laube said he was unable to reach a lease-renewal agreement with the building's owner.

Pleasanton Hotel restaurant to close New Year's Day

Building owner plans major renovations to attract younger crowd

by Jeb Bing

The restaurant in the historic Pleasanton Hotel will close Jan. 1 with an auction house coming in to sell off the furnishings Jan. 14.

The Pleasanton Hotel is located at 855 Main St. downtown.

The closing follows the sudden shutdown of the Oak House restaurant, in the Cheese Factory Building across the street. Its

owners left without any public announcement other than posting a "closed" sign on the front door.

Pleasanton Hotel restaurant owner Bill Laube said he was unable to reach a lease-renewal agreement with the hotel building's owner Sue Martinovich of Alamo after several months of negotiations. Up until last week, Laube had been meeting with Martinovich's representa-

tives in hopes of persuading her to extend his lease. He said that would have given him time to honor a number of banquet and wedding reception commitments already made for the restaurant as well as to allow Martinovich to show the facility to the potential restaurant operators she is soliciting while the existing restaurant is still

(continued on page 8)

Hosterman regains seat on LAFCo

Thorne tapped for League of Cities post

Mayor Jennifer Hosterman and Councilman Jerry Thorne have been named to key Bay Area posts.

Hosterman, who was elected to her third term as mayor last month, was named as a full member of the Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCo), the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). She will also serve on the executive committee of the Alameda County Mayors Conference.

LAFCo is a state-mandated local agency that oversees the formation of local government agencies, with an eye toward preserving agricultural and open space lands and discouraging urban sprawl.

"I am honored to join the governing bodies of these three vitally important agencies and look forward to working with my peers to solve some of the looming environmental issues facing the San Francisco Bay Area and the Tri-Valley region," Hosterman said.

Besides LAFCo, Hosterman was also named to the ACTIA governing board, which directs new projects and programs generated by Measure B, Alameda County's half-cent transportation sales tax. The ACTIA project list includes the Altamont Commuter Express Rail service, the Iron Horse transit route, I-580 improvements, and the Route 84 expressway, to name a few.

She will also join the 22-member board of directors that governs the Bay Area, Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), which is committed to achieving clean air to protect public health and the environment.

Meanwhile, Councilman Thorne has assumed the mantle of president of the East Bay division of the League of California Cities. The league's East Bay division is comprised of 33 cities in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

In his new position, Thorne will preside at the meetings of the directors, executive committee and general membership of the East Bay organization.

—Jeb Bing

Public hearings planned on transportation projects

If funds available, \$226B heading this way over next 25 years

by Jeb Bing

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) posted its Draft Transportation 2035 on its website this week and is asking those who live and drive in the Bay Area to post their comments on aspects of the plan that affect them.

The MTC website is www.mtc.ca.gov/T2035.

After nearly two years of dialogue and technical analysis, MTC has prepared for public review and comment that draft document that it considers to be the Bay Area's transportation blueprint for investing \$226 billion in projected revenue expected to flow to the region over the next 25 years, according to Ashley Nguyen of MTC's planning section.

In a statement, Nguyen said the document includes "innovative approaches such as pricing excess capacity on highways, a brand-new Transportation Climate Action Campaign to target greenhouse gases, a major public transit expansion program, a multi-pronged Freeway Performance Initiative to

maximize through-put on existing highways, and an overall emphasis on measurable performance improvements."

"In these ways, the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan attempts to influence, cause or initiate a whole range of actual "changes in motion," she said.

MTC representatives said their plan "charts a course to meet the challenge of balancing limited resources with the mobility demands of a growing population and an aging network of infrastructure."

Hard-copy versions of the documents can be requested via e-mail to library@mtc.ca.gov or by calling the MTC-ABAG Library at (510) 817-5836.

MTC's public hearing on Jan. 27 will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. in Room 609 of San Francisco State University's downtown campus at 835 Market St. A second public hearing is scheduled for 10:05 a.m. Jan. 28 during MTC's regularly scheduled January meeting. The commission meets in the

MetroCenter Auditorium at 101 Eighth St. (across from the Lake Merritt BART station) in Oakland.

MTC is expected to adopt the final Transportation 2035 Plan at its March 25 meeting.

Written comments on the draft Transportation 2035 Plan must be received by MTC no later than 4 p.m. March 2. These may be sent via regular mail to the MTC Public Information section at 101 8th St. Oakland, CA 94607, by fax to (510) 817-5848 or by e-mail to info@mtc.ca.gov.

Additional comments on the draft plan can be made before the Commission at any of its public meetings prior to adoption of the final plan.

MTC is the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area's transportation planning, coordinating and financing agency. Assisting MTC in development of the draft Transportation 2035 Plan are the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission. ■



Jeb Bing

Welcome home

More than 100 well-wishers from the Birdland community joined veterans and military families earlier this month to welcome home Army Specialist Christopher De Pretis (center), back from a 14-month tour in Iraq. Joining him in front of a large American flag are (from left) brother Nate, sister Tessa, dad Matt and mom Cindy De Pretis.

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Mediation lives up to its name for residents, developer

Sunrise Senior Living facility approved by Planning Commission

by Janet Pelletier

Gold Creek residents and a developer that wants to build a senior living complex off Stoneridge Drive and Foothill Road have completed mediation—and it was just what the doctor ordered.

The project, called Sunrise Senior Living, was approved by the Planning Commission Dec. 10.

When all was said and done, aside from a couple lingering concerns, residents were happy with the project and the progress that was made.

Things weren't always so pleasant. In June, Sunrise brought their plans to the commission hoping for a simple approval, but what they got were displeased residents, and commissioners who sided with the neighborhood's concerns, ultimately directing the developer to enter mediation talks with them.

Sunrise's first encounter with the commission was for a plan to construct a four-story senior residential care facility with 132 units and underground parking. They were asking the commission to find the

plan in substantial conformance (meaning it was similar enough in nature) with an earlier 1985 approval that the city's zoning administrator had already approved. But residents said they were concerned about their views of the Pleasanton Ridge, traffic, noise and the project's ability to fit in with the local surroundings.

It was unclear exactly what was approved in 1985 because some planning documents showed a four-story building was acceptable while others said only a structure up to three stories tall was allowed.

Through mediation with an independent facilitator paid for by Sunrise, a selected group of neighbors met with the developer three times over the past few months. Since that time, the plan was whittled down in size (two stories tall) and the number of units (82). Also, the setbacks were increased, the facility was reoriented away from Gold Creek to face Stoneridge Drive, and designed to better fit in with the setting.

"I am delighted with the outcome of the mediation process," said a

representative from Sunrise at the Dec. 10 meeting. "I think we met the neighbors more than the proverbial halfway."

Another concern residents had dealt with whether there was adequate parking. Residents also were skeptical about the number of staff that would be employed, which they said would increase traffic and the need for parking in the neighborhood as well as plans to house people with Alzheimer's and dementia, which would mean a higher level of care than what was originally proposed in 1985.

Sunrise modified its plans through the mediation process to accommodate those concerns, but a few residents who spoke at the Dec. 10 meeting said while they praised the project and the developer's willingness to work with them, they were still not convinced there would be ample parking.

Nonetheless, the commission voted to approve the newly modified plans, saying Sunrise stayed true to their word and made many concessions and compromises. ■

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New positions

Sen. Corbett reappointed to Senate Judiciary Committee

State Senator Ellen Corbett (D-San Leandro) has been reappointed by Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

She has served as chair since she started in the Senate in 2006.

Legislation heard in the committee includes complex environmental law, consumer protection and rights, and landlord-tenant housing issues. As a legislator, Corbett has worked to protect consumers and improve

affordable housing in California. She has also sponsored groundbreaking legislation against toxic food packaging and reforming access laws for Californians with disabilities.

The 10th Senate District stretches from San Leandro in the north, south to San Jose and east to Pleasanton.

Ring in new year with new laws

Texting while driving, GPS device installation and 911 abuse included

With the new year just days away, the California Highway Patrol is reminding motorists of a handful of new laws passed by the state legislature and signed by Gov. Schwarzenegger that go into effect in Jan. 1.

"The overall safety of the motoring public is our primary concern," said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. "Not only will these new laws enhance a motorist's safety, many of them are a step toward ridding the roadways of drunk drivers and the tragedy they cause."

The major changes to driving regulations and vehicle equipment are as follows:

• **Texting While Driving** (SB 28, Simitian) This new law makes it an infraction to write, send, or read text-based communication on an electronic wireless communications device, such as a cell phone, while driving a motor vehicle. Previously this was only illegal for individuals under 18 years of age, but now has been expanded to all drivers.

• **Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Zero Tolerance** (AB 1165, Maze) This new law prohibits a convicted DUI offender from operating a motor vehicle with a blood alcohol level (BAC) of .01 percent or greater while on probation for DUI. The law requires the driver to submit to a Preliminary Alcohol Screening (PAS) test, a portable breath test to determine the presence of alcohol. If the driver refuses, or if the driver submits and has a BAC of .01 or greater, a citation will be issued, the driver's license will be suspended. In addition, the vehicle will be impounded.

• **Global Positioning Systems (GPS)** (SB 1567, Oropeza) This new law allows a portable GPS device to be mounted in a 7-inch square in the lower corner of the windshield on the passenger side of the vehicle, or in a 5-inch square in the lower corner of the windshield on the driver's side. These are the only two locations on a windshield where a GPS device can be mounted. The GPS device

can only be used for navigational purposes while the motor vehicle is being operated, and it is required to be mounted outside of an airbag deployment zone.

• **911 Telephone System Abuse** (AB 1976, Benoit) This new law increases the penalties for any person who knowingly uses, or allows the use of, the 911 telephone system for any reason other than an emergency. Those who misuse, or allow the misuse of, the 911 telephone system are guilty of an infraction, and subject to either a written warning or a fine.

• **Alcohol-Related Reckless Driving** (AB 2802, Houston) This new law requires the court to order a person convicted of alcohol-related reckless driving to participate in a licensed DUI program for at least nine months, if that person has a prior conviction for alcohol-related reckless driving or DUI within ten years. Additionally, the court is required to revoke the person's probation for the failure to enroll in, participate in, or complete a licensed DUI program.

• **Motorcycles** (AB 2272, Fuentes) This new law changes the definition of a motorcycle by deleting the weight limitation and deleting the separate definition for electrically powered motorcycles. The law will now allow fully enclosed, three-wheeled vehicles to have access to high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes regardless of occupancy.

• **Ignition Interlock Devices (IID)** (SB 1190, Oropeza) This new law reduces the BAC from .20 percent to .15 percent or more at the time of arrest to trigger a requirement for the court to give heightened consideration for the installation of an IID for a first-time offender convicted of DUI of an alcoholic beverage.

• **Ignition Interlock Devices** (SB 1388, Torlakson) Effective July 2009, this new law transfers authority for the administration of mandatory IID programs from the state courts to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). This law also authorizes the

DMV to require any driver convicted of driving with a suspended license due to a prior conviction for DUI to install an IID in any vehicle that the offender owns or operates.

• **Clean Air Stickers: Misuse and Penalties** (SB 1720, Lownethal) This new law makes it an infraction for anyone who forges, counterfeits, falsifies, passes, or attempts to pass, acquire possess, sell, or offer for sale a genuine or counterfeit "Clean Air Sticker."

• **Special License Plates** (AB 190, Bass) This new law, when approved by local authorities, allows veterans whose vehicles display plates honoring Pearl Harbor Survivors, Legion of Valor recipients, former American Prisoners of War, Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, or Purple Heart recipients to park their vehicles that weigh not more than 6,000 pounds gross weight, without charge, in any metered parking space.

• **Studded Pneumatic Tires** (AB 1971, Portantino) This new law allows the use of pneumatic tires with retractable metal-type studs, year round, as long as the studs are retracted between May 1 through Oct. 31. However, the law prohibits a tire with retractable metal-type studs on a vehicle from being worn to a point that the metal-type studs protrude beyond the tire thread when retracted.

• **Spilling Cargo Loads** (AB 2714, Keene) This new law eases restrictions on cargo loads of straw or hay to allow individual pieces that do not pose a threat to life or property, to escape from bales of straw or hay that are being transported by a vehicle upon a highway, so long as those bales are loaded and secured according to federal regulations.

• **Assault on Highway Workers** (SB 1509, Lowenthal) This new law provides an increased penalty for assault and battery crimes committed against Caltrans highway workers who are engaged in the performance of their duties.

—Amory Gutierrez

Helping Tri-Valley Haven

40 Assets groups growing, hope to make city a better place

by Emily West

Students at Lydiksen, Alisal, Donlon and Valley View elementary schools have been working hard during their lunch hour for the past few months to help children at Tri-Valley Haven.

As a part of the 40 Club, part of a character education program called 40 Assets, a group of fifth grade students made blankets and dolls to give as Christmas presents.

Abby Johnson, school counselor and advisor for 40 Assets, says the program is becoming more popular in elementary grades, which initially started for middle

and high school students. The idea put out by the Search Institute is that there are 40 essential traits students should have to be successful.

Johnson said they plan to present the program to the city, in hopes that they will join the cause and make it a community-wide effort to support students to reach their full potential. Featured on the homepage of the Search Institute, www.search-institute.org, Pleasanton's growing involvement is making it a model for other cities.

The Tri-Valley YMCA is joining in the "asset craze" by creating a lead-

ership academy for middle school students. Curriculum is based on the institute's developmental assets as well as the YMCA's Character Development initiative. Activities include homework time, club activities, service learning projects, team building games, leadership training, public speaking opportunities and interpersonal communication skills development.

The academy is open Monday through Friday from 3 to 6 p.m. at Hart, Harvest Park and Pleasanton middle schools. Space is limited. Register by contacting Kris Farro at 475-6110 or email kfarro@ymcaeastbay.org.

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Hotel

(continued from page 5)

operating.

Those discussions failed and Laube told his 40 employees Dec. 17 that the restaurant and their jobs will be gone New Year's Day. He also started notifying those who held banquet and reception reservations that they would have to find another facility.

Laube and his wife Vernie are co-owners of the restaurant, while Martinovich owns the building and separately manages the second floor offices, which are not affected by the restaurant closing.

Martinovich plans to renovate the restaurant portion of the building, which is actually not a hotel, with a different kind of restaurant, reportedly one that might appeal to a younger crowd. Over the years, the storied, historic building and restaurant has catered to an increasingly older clientele.

As with other restaurant and retail businesses on Main Street, the Pleasanton Hotel restaurant has seen business soften, perhaps more so than others because of its pricey menu.

Curiously, despite Martinovich's decision to cancel Laube's restaurant lease, his restaurants has consistently rated tops in the annual Pleasanton Weekly's "Readers' Choice" list of downtown places to go, from the best place to have a first date to the favored spot for a wedding reception.

Still Laube admitted to the Weekly that the restaurant doesn't cater to younger crowds—those in their early 20s—and he would be glad to see more of them stop in for a drink or dinner.

Those he sees holding hands and sitting back in the comfortable lounge chairs are a bit beyond "first date" age, he said, but they almost always have that same special gleam in their eyes as they get to know each other for the first time.

The hotel and restaurant also has annually won hands-down as



Janet Pelletier

The Tri-Valley Rotary Club, one of many local service groups who use the Pleasanton Hotel's facilities for outings, takes senior women to the hotel for Mother's Day each year to have tea and dessert. Now, they will likely have to find a new place for the occasion.

the Weekly's readers' choice for the best place to have a wedding and reception. Brides and their parents praised the ambiance of the spacious Victorian banquet room, the separate Garden and Fireside rooms for break-away chats and refreshments, and the hotel's private, exquisitely landscaped outdoor patio, with ample room for photos and dancing.

Because of the ongoing negotiations and what some have described as a longstanding contentious relationship with Martinovich, Laube stopped taking reservations for special functions several weeks ago, although a number of reservations had already been made for 2009 events.

One large group immediately affected by the shut-down is the Rotary Club of Pleasanton (Downtown Rotary), which has announced that it will hold future meetings at Hap's Restaurant, where it used to meet more than 25 years ago. The club held its last meeting at the Pleasanton Hotel Dec. 18.

Built by John Kottinger in 1864,

the hotel was originally named The Farmer's Hotel. A general store was located in the front of the original building. In 1893, board and lodging at the hotel was \$5 per week, and single meals went for 25 cents.

The hotel has had several owners over the years. In 1898, the original Farmer's Hotel burned to the ground. A new hotel was built and in 1915 a second fire destroyed the rear area of the hotel, which at that time was a dining room. In the late 1920s, the name of the hotel was the Riverside Hotel. The name Pleasanton Hotel was taken sometime in the 1940s after the original Pleasanton Hotel (at another location on Main Street) burned. For many years the hotel has been a restaurant only with offices upstairs.

The Laubes purchased the business portion of the hotel in 1983.

Laube said his traditional New Year's Eve dinner-dance festivities will be held on schedule. To make reservations for this event or other luncheons and dinners before the restaurant closes, call 846-8106. ■

Fire

(continued from page 5)

Knox again declined to rule out that the fire was caused by a natural gas line leak, saying, "I'm not an expert, so I can't say that at this point."

Records show the home, located at 839 E. Angela, was sold for \$74,000 in a foreclosure sale Sept. 30 to Marilyn and Richard Greenberg and it's unclear the relationship the Greenbergs have with the Zuffa family, which lives there.

Knox said the fact that the home is a foreclosure is something police are looking into. It's not known how long the investigation will last.

"I can't speculate how long it's going to take to gather all the facts and determine everything," Knox said. "We have to look at all the difference potential motives and

causes and talk to experts, so it's really hard for me to predict, plus we haven't been able to speak to the woman who resides in the home."

Also displaced by the fire is a family living in a two-story home next door, which includes Frank and Patsy DePiero, their daughter, Nancy Duty, and her two teenage children. That family is residing in a local hotel and it's estimated that they won't be able to move back home for up to three months.

Suzanne Hagerty, whose elderly mother lives a few houses down from the Zuffas and the DePieros, said the DePieros have asked people to help the Zuffas, especially their two boys. Hagerty said she hopes the Zuffas are able to find a home, in light of the news that the home is a foreclosure.

"I hope they will be able to find a home, especially after she heals," Hagerty said. "This is the time of year when we need to be so grateful for our health and

safety and not for the 'things' we want to have."

The fire also caused damage to the roof and attic of a home on the other side of the Zuffa home.

Duty said she is thankful for the caring neighbors and firefighters and police, who have done an excellent job.

"My parents are in their 80s and certainly never expected to find themselves in this situation," she said. "Fortunately, they are doing well and we were all touched by everyone's kindness and compassion."

"I will always remember our neighbors who stood with us and offered support as the fire burned," she added. "Our loved ones are safe and our belongings can be replaced. My thoughts and prayers go out to our injured next-door neighbor. Everyone in town who has heard about the fire has shown me great kindness and these are the memories I will keep." ■

PLEASANTON WEEKLY

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Opinion

Editorial

State bankruptcy new concern for city

The city just closed its books on fiscal year 2007-08, realizing a \$3-million surplus by under-spending its operating budget of \$100 million. That surplus has now been added to a temporary recession reserve, which the City Council, on the recommendation of City Manager Nelson Fialho and Finance Director Dave Culver, suggested establishing to protect the revenue stream and needed expenditures in troubled times. The outlook for the current budget year, FY 2008-09, obviously is less rosy. Because of the economy, the upward trend lines with property and sales taxes have dipped and hotel tax revenue is softening. With the revenue trend less bullish than what had been projected last July when the current budget was approved, the finance gurus have trimmed projections—and expenses—by \$4 million. That's this fiscal year. In April the council will consider staff's new two-year municipal budget that will start July 1, 2009. Projections are still being reviewed, but the biggest concern for Pleasanton and other California cities is the growing state deficit and how the governor and legislature might reach out again to take money away from cities and counties to meet Sacramento's needs.

Already, since 1992 when the state shifted the allocation of local property tax revenues from local government to "educational revenue augmentation funds" (ERAFs), cities, counties and special districts have seen \$7.5 billion taken away to meet ongoing state budget crises. This has included \$100 million from Pleasanton, taxpayers' money that otherwise might have been used for a new library or to build out Bernal Community Park. That state grab stopped with Proposition 1A, which voters approved in 2006, a measure that placed strict rules on just how frequently and with what penalties Sacramento could take money from city and county coffers.

Now, however, there's a new concern. With more California cities facing bankruptcy and the state, itself, grappling with a \$41 billion budget crisis that California State Controller John Chiang says gives it less than 70 days from running out of cash, Fialho and Culver have new concerns how state bankruptcy would affect financial agreements with its cities and counties. Not long ago, it was ludicrous to think that a city could go bankrupt, but Vallejo now has and Isleton and Rio Vista, small towns about 30 miles to the northwest, have begun consulting with bankruptcy lawyers. The state's Pooled Money Investment Board has already shut off the flow of \$3.8 billion in loans to finance about 2,000 infrastructure projects. That's expected to idle 200,000 private-sector workers and cost the state economy \$12.5 billion, according to Chiang. Last Monday, Fialho received an email from the League of California Cities notifying him that because of the financial crisis, major capital projects have come to a grinding halt. That no doubt will affect work on new eastbound carpool lanes under construction in Pleasanton's section of Interstate 580. It could also mean a slowdown in other state-financed improvements, including the widening of Highway 84. Fialho has also been told not to expect the second installment of \$187 million from Proposition 1B, money used locally for street resurfacing and other roadway improvement projects.

Even the constitutional protections granted under voter-approved Proposition 1A in 2006 could be threatened under state bankruptcy, similar to how union contracts and pension plans are affected by corporate bankruptcies. It's unclear how desperate state lawmakers might be, especially given Controller Chiang warning about a cash shortfall. Even with a bail out by Washington, which Schwarzenegger has said California needs, the crisis is only moved out another six months or so. If the \$15 billion deficit is paid down now, another \$24 billion deficit will face the Legislature July 1. To address the problem, Schwarzenegger, Democrats, Republicans and the special interest groups that have a commanding presence in Sacramento need to pursue a combination of spending cuts and increased taxes. These might be higher sales taxes on a temporary basis, higher liquor taxes, increased tuition at California colleges and universities (which are among the lowest in the country), or even higher vehicle license fees. In the meantime, it's good to know that Pleasanton's leaders are watching the register to make sure that Sacramento's fiscal irresponsibility does not become our financial loss.

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Guest Opinion

For schools, 2009 will be a challenge

by John Casey

For schools in Pleasanton, along with those in the rest of California, 2009 bodes to be a year of great challenge. Given the economic climate and status of the state budget, Pleasanton Unified School District is bracing for a hard hit. Through careful and conservative money management, we have been able to keep our students from feeling the impact of the \$2 million in cuts made this year. This will change. An anticipated second year of no cost-of-living adjustment means that, at a minimum, our board would have to make spending reductions of another \$2 million. However, it is likely that our state funding will be reduced further, requiring deeper and more damaging cuts. As a result, the board will be forced to consider drastic reductions in services.



What will be the impact of more cuts? All possible reductions would have a detrimental effect on learning

and teaching and could include:

- Dismantling the intervention programs started to help students with reading and math.
- Slowing our work related to equity and continuous improvement for all students.
- Canceling staff development, thus limiting teachers' opportunities to improve their skills to better help students learn.
- Reducing classified personnel ranks, resulting in campuses that are not as clean and well maintained.
- Employing fewer managers who ensure student safety and guide learning.
- Asking families to pay more to participate in co-curricular activities.
- Increasing class sizes for our elementary and ninth grade students.

All of the above are examples of the tough decisions that the board will need to make to balance the budget next year.

Is this the kind of education system we want in Pleasanton? The greatest factor in keeping education funding from being reduced below tolerable levels is the voice of the voters. Call, write or email your legislators and let them know your expectations.

This month, for the first time in my career, the recommendation to the board was to approve our budget with a "qualified" status—a statement that we might not be able to meet our financial obligations over the next three years. Our surrounding districts of Livermore and Dublin were able to approve budgets without this caution. Voters in both communities went to the polls in November and chose to provide budget predictability and stability through a parcel tax. Is this the time that Pleasanton should consider such an action?

I wish the news were better, but even in these troubled financial times, it is gratifying to be able to say that I marvel regularly at the big hearts and generous perspectives that our students and families have. I see examples every day of students supporting their friends and families helping other families who are in need. We can all be proud of the character and caring of our community.

Here's wishing for a happy holiday season to you and yours.

John Casey is the superintendent of Pleasanton schools, where he has served since 2002.

Letters

Later hours are crucial to business

Dear Editor,

So glad to hear the merchants have finally realized how important it is for them to stay open until 8 or 9 p.m.

I was always so disappointed that they closed so early—we would go downtown to dinner and walk around to find the shops all closed. Hooray for the merchants. Let's get downtown and support those merchants.

Joan Fernandes

City leaders should pressure biz owners

Dear Editor,

I am so sad to read your article

(posted Dec. 19 on pleasanton-weekly.com, also seen on page 5 in this issue) about the closing of the Pleasanton Hotel restaurant.

I know times are tough, but I think that our city leaders need to put more pressure on the downtown business owners. In my opinion, it looks like many of these landlords are gold diggers who aren't looking out for the best interest of our downtown.

First Domus, now this? How many more leases are going to expire without renewal because of the high rents and landlords like Sue Martinovich? Don't you think they need to be a little more flexible and open minded in these tough economic times?

Janine Mattison

Thanks for sponsoring Senior Support in Holiday Fund

Dear Editor,

The Board of Directors, staff and the clients that we serve at Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley would like to say thank you for your sponsorship and let you know how greatly we appreciated your articles and promotion for the DeLovely Evening event.

As always, the information printed in the Weekly is accurate, well written and easy to read. Your commitment to support community service organizations sets a standard for others to follow.

Your assistance not only helped to make our very first fundraiser a true success, it allows us to continue providing greatly needed services.

As our senior population increases, the need for our services dramatically increases. Last year, we served over 1,200 seniors.

Your support helped us fulfill our mission of fostering independence, promoting safety and well being, preserving dignity, and improving quality of life.

We extend our best wishes to you and our gratitude for your participation, support and generosity, as we look forward to a continuing relationship with you in the future. We are so thankful to live in a community that continuously gives to those in need.

Marlene Petersen executive director, Senior Support



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Community Pulse



Police Report

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

Dec. 17

- Burglary:
 - 8:02 a.m. in the 7700 block of Fair Oaks Drive
 - 10:34 p.m. in the 1100 block of Hearst Drive; vehicular burglary, lockpicking
- Vandalism:
 - 10:33 a.m. at the intersection of Stoneridge Drive and I-680
 - 12:40 p.m. in the 7300 block of Johnson Drive
- Public drunkenness:
 - 6:23 p.m. at the intersection of Del Valle Parkway and Main Street
 - 7:23 p.m. in the 5800 block of Owens Drive
- Paraphernalia possession:
 - 10:34 p.m. in the 1100 block of Hearst Drive

Dec. 18

- Grand theft:

- 2:46 p.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive
- 5:58 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

•Burglary:

- 12:36 a.m. in the 3600 block of Virgin Islands Court; vehicular
- 9:56 a.m. in the 6000 block of Johnson Drive; vehicular
- 10:56 a.m. in the 7300 block of Tulipwood Circle; vehicular
- 3:09 p.m. in the 5500 block of Springhouse Drive
- 8:46 p.m. in the 400 block of Vineyard Place; vehicular
- 10:18 p.m. in the 4200 block of Sheldon Circle; vehicular

•Drug/alcohol violations:

- 12:24 a.m. in the 5000 block of Hopyard Road; DUI
- 12:30 p.m. at the intersection of Deodar Way and Foothill Road; marijuana possession, DUI
- 6:38 p.m. in the 2300 block of Red Berry Court; under the influence of a controlled substance
- 6:51 p.m. in the 5500 block of Springdale Avenue; public drunkenness

- 11:34 p.m. at the intersection of West Neal Street and Railroad Avenue; DUI

Dec. 19

•Theft:

- 12:26 p.m. in the 3900 block of Vineyard Avenue; identity theft
- 4:03 p.m. in the 3200 block of Cheryl Circle; grand theft, identity theft

•Burglary:

- 5:06 p.m. in the 500 block of Mission Drive
- 7:54 p.m. in the 8000 block of Ensenada Drive; vehicular
- 8:00 p.m. in the 3900 block of Santa Rita Road; vehicular

•DUI:

- 2:41 p.m. at the intersection of Valley Avenue and Santa Rita Road
- 8:01 p.m. in the 5700 block of Stoneridge Drive
- 6:59 p.m. at the intersection of Hopyard Road and Coronado Lane

•Consumption of alcohol by minors:

- 10:59 p.m. in the 4100 block of First Street

Obituaries

Troy F. Watson

Troy F. Watson died Nov. 24 with his family by his side at the age of 70.

Mr. Watson was born Oct. 19, 1938 in Swain, Ark. He moved to Berkeley with his family at 17. He retired in 1998 from Emerald Packaging Inc. after 32 years.

He worked his way up from a printing press operator to vice president of manufacturing. He will be remembered for his sense of fairness and high standards in managing the people who worked for him. He was a member of the American Legion, The Golden Ram Hunting Club, the Livermore-Pleasanton Rod and Gun Club and Ducks Unlimited. He enjoyed camping with family and friends. He was an avid fisherman and loved the sport of hunting.

He enjoyed traveling, especially if it involved a hunting trip. He never missed his grandson's sporting events, until he became ill with Parkinson's disease. He will be missed for his integrity, love of life, enthusiasm for any endeavor he chose to pursue, sense of humor, gentle smile and strength.

He is survived by his devoted wife of 46 years, Patricia; daughter, Renee (Curt) Winter; grandchildren, Tyler Christensen and Madison Winter; brothers, Larry Watson of Oklahoma, Ronald Watson (Cheryl) of Boca Raton,

Fla.; sisters, Deborah Watkins and Rebekah Williams of King City, Calif.; nieces Terrie Crouthers, Cheryl Kay, Danielle and Kalei Garcia, Lindsay Key and Alyssa Roark; nephews, Eric and Tanner Watkins, Dustin Combs and Gavin Roark. He was preceded in death by his father and mother, Alvis and Pearl (Laughter) Watson; and brother, Jerry V. Watson.

A memorial service was held Dec. 13. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Parkinson's Institute of Sunnyvale, 675 Almanor Ave., Sunnyvale CA 94085 (1-800-655-2273).

Harry Palmer Butler

Harry Palmer Butler was surrounded by family when he died Dec. 10 at the age of 71.

Mr. Butler was born June 3, 1937 and spent most of his childhood in San Francisco. He married Judy Beam in 1966, and, although they divorced after 17 years, they remained close friends until the end of his life. He raised his children and lived in Pleasanton for 36 years while enjoying a successful career in the semiconductor industry in technical sales. He greatly enjoyed his Scottish heritage and played bagpipes with the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Pipes and Drums Band and danced as a member of

the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. He also participated in the LDS church in Pleasanton.

Mr. Butler is survived by his two children and their spouses, Heather Kreiser of Folsom, Calif. and Scott Butler of Mountain House; three

grandsons; and his sister, Priscilla. A memorial service was held Dec. 18 at Valley Bible Church in Pleasanton. Donations may be made in lieu of flowers to Hope Hospice, 6500 Dublin Blvd., Ste. 100, Dublin, CA 94568.

Susan Kang

Susan Kang died Dec. 19 at the age of 39.

Mrs. Kang was born Dec. 17, 1969 in South Korea. She married her husband Jonghoon Kang April 30, 1994 and the couple moved to Pleasanton in October 2001.

In college, she majored in the Chinese language and culture. She was a Chinese and Korean translator and taught Chinese to adults. She was a very involved stay-at-home mom to her two children.

She is survived by her loving husband, Jonghoon Kang; son, Andrew Kang, a seventh-grader at Harvest Park Middle School; and daughter, Helen, a third-grader at Fairlands Elementary School. She is also survived by her mother, Younghong Kwack; father, Byung Man Park; sister, Youjung Park; and brothers, In Hyuk Park and Moo Myuk Park, all of South Korea.

A service was held Dec. 23 at Holy Korean Martyrs Catholic Church in Sunnyvale. Tax-deductible, charitable contributions to support the Kang family can be made by cash or check (payable to Kang Family Assistance Fund) to the following address: C/O Tri Valley Community Foundation, 5674 Stoneridge Drive, Ste. 112, Pleasanton CA 94588.



WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

City offices will be closed on January 1, 2009 for the Holidays.

Upcoming Meetings

- Civic Arts Commission – January 5, 2009
- City Council Meeting – January 6, 2009
- Parks & Recreation Commission – January 8, 2009

Cancelled Meetings

- The Human Services Commission meeting scheduled for January 7, 2009 has been cancelled.
- The Library Commission meeting scheduled for January 8, 2009 has been cancelled. A special meeting has been scheduled for January 15, 2009.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Annual Leaf Pick 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 Road

For more information, the public can contact the Support Services Division of the City of Pleasanton at (925) 931-5580.

Pleasanton Sports Field Information is Now Online!

Is your game a rainout—or not? Just visit www.pleasantonsports.org to learn if your city or school sports field is open this winter. Some fields are closed as the result of maintenance, while others close during inclement weather. Get the latest status at www.pleasantonsports.org. You can also call the **Sports Field Weather Line** at (925) 931-5360.

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

Holiday Fund donors

Since the launch of the 2008 Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund, 372 donors have contributed \$53,732 to the fund, bringing the total to \$107,464 with the match. Sixty-three anonymous contributors have given \$7,999.

Individuals

Jon & Janet Allen	**
Ron & Kathy Anderson	100
Jill Anderson & Geoff Southworth	100
Andrew Bailey & Lauren Purcell	1000
Rick & Dawn Barraza	250
Verla Becker	**
Chris & Glenda Beratlis	500
The Bickley Family	140
Robert & Paula Bielby	**
Jan & Jeb Bing	200
Diane Birchell	100
Doug & Beverly Boff	100
Marie Boss	25
James Brice & Carole Peterson	**
Bert & Dee Brook	200
Clay & Jane Cameron	**
Richard & Sue Carson	**
Mike & Diana Champlin	500
Herbert & Stella Chang	**
Bunny & Teddy Chang	100
Gina Channell-Allen	**
Sean Chase	**
Dr. & Mrs. Leonard Cheney	200
The Christensen Family	**
Vincent Ciccarello	1000
John & Gretchen Clatworthy	**
Pauline Coe	**
Chris & Linda Coleman	100
Cheryl Cook-Kallio	100
Pete & Diana Cornish	100
Patrick & Wendy Costanzo	200
The Craig Family	100
Dave Cryer	40
Roseann Csencsits & Mike Kundman	100
The David Family	100
Susan Davis	300
Richard & Judy DelTredici	25
Alice Desrosiers	100
Mike & Suzanne Dutra	100
John & Helen Eberle	100
Paul & Lorraine Ebright	**
Suzanne Emberton	**
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Emery	100
George & Jeanne Emmett	**
Greg & Sue Evans	**
Joan Evans	40
Mitch & Patti Fidziura	**
Nicole, Ana & Michael Fong	150
Alan & Cleo Foster	100
Mr. & Mrs. Rich Fredette	**
Julie Furukawa	500
Judith D. Geiselman	**
John & Fran Glavin	**
Roy & D'Aun Goble	100
R.J. & Marsha Grimes	**
Ms. Carol Guarnaccia	50
Greg Gum & Laura Keller	100
Shaun & Jennifer Haggmark	**
Bernice Hansen	**
Hank & Corrine Hansen	100
Bob & Betsy Harris	400
Roger & Brenda Harris	**
Ryan Brown & Julie Harryman	100
Tim & Sharyn Henshaw	**
William Herlihy	200
Janice Hermann	100
Jourdin Hermann	100
Greg & Charla Hilderbrand	100
Paul & Ann Hill	**
Sharon Hoggatt	**
Sarah Hollister	**
The Huangs	107
Charles & Kay Huff	**
Paige & Austin Hughes	200
Barbara A. Jackson	50
Bill & Cathy James	**
Bill & Dodge Jamieson	100
The Jeffrey Family	50
Steve & Bobby Jensen	500
Rudy & Marge Johnson	100
The Jolley Family	**
Jean P. Jones	100
Don & Jean Kallenberg	**
Jim & Elaine Keysor	250
Mrs. Betty Kirvan	100
David & Carol Kratky	100
Mr. & Mrs. Gary A. Lazarotti	**
Jennifer & Nathaniel Lee	**
Mrs. Tricia Poulos Leonard	250
Mr. & Mrs. Blaise Lofland	250
John & Jane Loll	**
Al & Mary Lombardo	50
Cameron & Jill Lorentz	**
Marc Louderback	100
John & Lisa Loundagin	40
Earl & Dorothy Maddox	100
Al & Lola Malatesta	50
Srikant, Christina & Ashley Mantha	**
Steve & Diana Manuel	**
The Markel Family	**
Doug & Raeia Marshall	100
Violet Masini	50
Pete & Julie Mason	**
Ken & Barbara McDonald	**
Cathy Medich & Robert Horton	100
Howard & Diana Mendenhall	**
Carl & Sharrell Michelotti	100
Evan & Debra Miller	**
Rodger, Laura & Stephanie Miller	50
Tom & Ellie Miller	**
The Min & Luo Family	**
Mr. & Mrs. John Moffat	**
Frank & Teresa Morgan	**
Ruth Morlock	100
Jeff & Kathy Narum	100
Tim & Robin Neal	100
Greg & Janet O'Connor	**
The O'Farrell Family	**
Mr. & Mrs. John O'Neill	**
Jim & Pam Ott	100
Mr. & Mrs. Daryn Oxe	100
Norman & Joyce Pacheco	**
Bruce & Debbie Parelskin	100
Bill & Peggy Paris	**
The Patak Family	**
Brian & Jennifer Pearce	100
Anne Pearson	50
Janet Pelletier	30
Dr. & Mrs. Joseph F. Pennisi	**
Jerry & Josine Pentin	100
Scott & Chris Peters	**
Bob & Orley Philcox	500
Tom & Patty Powers	**
Felice Price	250
Alan & Jean Purves	**
Garrett & Angela Ramirez-Holmes	50
Marc & Becky Randall	250
Thomas Rasmus	30
Don & Ann Rathjen	**
Maxine Regalia	50
Mike & Lori Rice	**
The Ristow Family	**
Maria Robertson	**
Mrs. Rita Rollar	**
Jerry & Carol Rosenblatt	50
Ron & Carol Russo	**
Bill & Pat Ruvalcaba	300
Kevin Salsberry	175
Swati & Manaj Samel	100
John & Sheila Sanches	**
Ron & Marlene Sandberg	**
Owen & Rebecca Saue	**
Rose M. Schoop	25
Jerry & Charlotte Severin	100
Ajay & Sonal Shah	**
Steve & Bonnie Shamblin	100
Larry & Carol Shaw	**
Tien & Sheng Shen	100
John & Jackie Shurtleff	100
Bob Silva	100
Richard & Corrie Simon	**
Ted & Dee Slosek	**

Debi, Mike & Alison Smith	**
Pat & Sue Spangler	100
The Spencer Family	**
Al & Laverne Spotorno & Grandchildren	**
Duane & Donna Stevens	300
John & Kay Stewart	**
Nancy Storch	**
Beverly R. Struthers	**
Harold & Marilyn Swanson	**
Brian & Karen Swift	**
Robert & Carole Sygiel	100
David & Kathleen Thayer	250
Shel & Vivian Thorson	**
Jim & Debbie Tracy	**
Tom & Barb Treto	**
Mark & Kathy Tucker	**
Jerry & Toni Ulrich	**
Mike Underwood	250
Phillip & Kathi Vermont	**
Russell & Linda Wallace	**
Bob & Anne Watson	**
Mr. & Mrs. Glenn Wenig	100
Walter & Martha Wensel	100
The Weston Family	**
Stephen & Marjy Wilcox	100
Steve Wilcox	50
Bob Williams	500
Ralph & Pat Williams	**
George & Carol Withers	100
Mark Worrell	20
Ms. Kathleen Wright	25
The Yamamoto Family	**
Steve & Becky Yeffa	200
Julie Yuan-Miu	200
Jim & Donna Zarrillo	100
The Zong Family	100

As A Gift For

Open Heart Kitchen	
from Hacienda Bunco Group	100
The teachers and staff at Hearst	
Elementary from Kim Hereld	100
Axis Health Center	
from Lee & Clare Carlson	**
Open Heart Kitchen	
from Barbara Daniels	**
Amanda Strickhouser	45
John, Leisa, Jeff & Mike Giguere	
—Merry Christmas	**
Axis Community Health	
from Jeff Ulatoski	150
Hope Hospice	
from Annie & Kevin Sjodahl	150

In Honor of

Grandma Adeline	**
Pleasanton Community Band	
from Jerri & Rob Long	**
Dashell, Desmond, Sarah, Chelsea	
& Karissa	**
Our Mom Lora	**
Teddy & Arthur Adams	50
Alisal Elementary School	
from Chris & Debbie Scott	100
Daggett Children & Grandchildren	500
Our Military	
from The Gualandri Family	100
The Oxe Family	250
John A. Silva	
from Manny & Cathy Silva	100
My Grandchildren from Doris A. Slater	25
The Kearns Family from Randy & Stacey	**
Shurson	**

Businesses

Accusplit Pedometer Wellness Team	160
Allegra Print & Imaging	**
Applied Security Connections	**
B & C Enterprises	100
Bay Valley Medical Group at Civic Center	150
Station	150
California Self - Defense Consultants	300
Chicago Title at Civic Center Station	150
Construction Innovations, Inc. at Civic	150
Center Station	150
DeBernardi Development Construction &	**
Remodeling	**
E Squared Automotive	**
Extensions Physical Therapy at Civic	150
Center Station	150

Friends of Joan	100
Hometown GMAC Real Estate	
at Civic Center Station	150
Isberg Nott Company at Civic Center	
Station	150
Karen E. Morliengo, MFT	75
Landmark Lending at Civic Center Station	150
Livermore - Amador Valley Legal	
Professionals Association	250
Mathnasium at Civic Center Station	150
Mission Pipe & Cigar Shop	150
Pleasanton Kiwanis Club	1000
Pleasanton Pet Sitting	**
Ponderosa Homes	**
Randick, O'Dea & Tooliatos, LLP	**
Attorneys at Law	**
Tahara Detox Weightloss Center at Civic	150
Center Station	150
The Fabulous Properties Team	750
The Home Works Group	200
Tri-Valley YMCA at Civic Center Station	150
Understanding Behavior, Inc. at Civic	150
Center Station	150
UNITS Mobile Storage	**
Walt Lupeika, CPA	100
Walters Financial at Civic Center Station	150
Wholesale Autos "R" Us	**

In Memory of

Bonnie Zentner	
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	**
George Spiliotopolous, Hank Gomez,	
Ed Kinney & Roger Dabney from Ken	300
Mercer	300
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
Beverly Ann Howe-Merrill from Howard	
Merrill	100
Roger Dabney, George Jacobsen, Skip	
Mohatt & Chuck Volante from Don &	**
Carol Bush	**
Gene Strom, Keith Strom & William Kolb	
from Carol (Kolb) Strom	300
John D. Steiner	50
Rich Gluck	100
Kyle J. O'Connor	200
Brian Melin from Patricia Melin	**
Carolyn L. Juniper from Robert Juniper	**
Leo Scully	**
Our Parents from Harold & Gena Gatlin	**
Eleanor M. Powers	
from Tom & Shirley Myers	50
Doris Walberg	100
Kyle O'Connor from The Dadrass Family	**
Harry & Toshiko Stewart	
from Rod, Christina, Alyssa	
& Danielle Browning	100
Marilyn Bowe from Jim Bowe	100
Irene & Theresa Baeta	
from Mr. & Mrs. Jim Teghtmeyer	**
Marv & David DeBernardi	
from Connie DeBernardi	200
Juanita Haugen from The Bob Group	**
Michael & June Carboni from Richard &	
Nancy Shockley	200
John A. Mavridis from Mom & Dad	**
Hank Gomez from Dorothy, Frank & Debra	
Gomez	150
Ruth DeFreece from Joe & Janice Biggs	**
Sandy Hiles, Mary Jancoski & Thom	
Jancoski from John, Cathy & Lauren	**
Brenda Lathlean Faggiano from Bill &	
Ellen Lathlean	100

Emergency room expansion sorely needed

ValleyCare recently completed first phase of construction, beginning second

by Janet Pelletier

If you've ever had the unfortunate circumstance of waiting in the ValleyCare emergency room, you're not the only one feeling squeezed. The Pleasanton hospital's care staff knows firsthand the lack of space and difficulty in caring for patients while at the same time maneuvering in tight quarters.

But signs of improvement are already showing. The first phase in an emergency room expansion began in March and was completed last month, according to Ken Mercer, president of the ValleyCare Foundation, which is the fundraising arm of the medical center. The second phase is now ramping up.

This is the situation: emergency room visits have doubled since 1991, when ValleyCare Medical Center opened. State and local emergency planners have told hospital executives that it needs approximately 10,000 square feet of space. Today, ValleyCare operates in only 4,000 square feet.

At that size, the ER is only meant to serve 13,500 patients per year, but the patient load is more than double that amount. As an example, in 2006, the ER served 26,420 patients. The ever-increasing demand for care is due to the burgeoning growth of the Tri-Valley and it's a daily occurrence to have patients overflowing into the hallways and nearby offices when available.

The entire expansion project is divided in three phases, with a total cost of \$6.7 million. The emergency room will stay open the whole time. Phase one included the addition of nine treatment rooms, an isolation room and a nurse's station. Phase two will include an enlarged reception and waiting area with two private triage areas and a covered ambulance entry. And phase three will include four treating stations, an enlarged nurse's station and a covered ambulance entrance.



Brian Edwards, at left, director of the ER, and many other staff members at ValleyCare Medical Center in Pleasanton are feeling the space limitations, but help is on the way.

When completed, the expansion will bring the total number of treatment rooms from 12 to 23, one triage area to two, two open registration stations to two private stations and from one waiting area that seats 10 to one seating 30.

Alameda County has designated \$1 million toward the cost from Measure A funds. The ValleyCare Foundation is continuing efforts to raise \$4.7 million that's needed to carry out phases two and three. A total of \$500,000 has been raised so far toward that goal, Mercer said.

Proceeds from the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund will help with the cost of the expansion. For every dollar that is contributed, the Tri-Valley Community Foundation will match.

For more information about ValleyCare, visit www.valleycare.com. ■

File photo



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 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, 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.
- **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.

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.

- | | | |
|--|--|-----|
| James Reynolds | from Steve & Pam Grimes | ** |
| from The Riggins Family | Denise Zarcone & Roger Dabney from | |
| Philip Crumpler II from Phil & Shirley | Paul & Marty Zarcone | ** |
| Crumpler | Donald D. Reid from The Reid Family | 100 |
| Our Papa from Jenny, Tommy, Valerie & | Carl & Lottie Arndt | 200 |
| Danny | Ernie Bridges from The Bridges Family .. | ** |
| Tom & Karen Elsnab | Charles Sebahar Sr. | |
| Fred Elling | & Charles Sebahar Jr. | 100 |
| from Mark & Cindy Priscaro | Ron McInnis from The McInnis Family .. | 250 |
| Etsuyo Marshall from John H. Marshall | Nan & Pop from The Rutledge Family .. | 225 |
| Rob Meierding | Betty Patrick & Karen Oldemeyer | |
| from Sue, Dave & Mika | from Chuck & Joan Brown | ** |
| Snooky from Terry & Judy Scavone | Our Parents | 50 |
| George Callahan | Doris Cink & Charles Glass from Vernon | |
| Roselle Grimes & Joe & Evelyn Schrick | & Tracy Cink | 50 |

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

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.

Parks' chief leaves qu

by Jeb Bing

People move to Pleasanton for a variety of reasons: excellent schools, good housing, abundant shopping and a quality of life that community leaders are determined to make even better.

But ask Realtors and community leaders and they'll add that the city's 43 municipal parks, 50 miles of hiking and biking trails, sports fields, an award-winning golf course and public services for all age groups are among Pleasanton's major appeal to newcomers, office workers and longtime residents.

Many of those amenities stem from the work of Jim Wolfe, who for the last 11 years has been the city's director of Parks and Community Services. Wolfe retires next Tuesday. Susan Andrade-Wax, who has 24 years of service in related work and was Community Services director for the city of Gilroy, will be his successor.

Wolfe received commendations this month from both the City Council and the Pleasanton school board, as well as from several hundred co-workers who attended a farewell luncheon and civic leaders who joined in a community reception last Friday at Callippe Preserve Golf Course, which was built and opened under Wolfe's watch.

The school board recognized Wolfe for his work in helping to build middle school gymnasiums that could be used after school by community sports groups, including drop-in night-time and Saturday morning basketball games, and new, lighted tennis courts at Pleasanton Middle School. Soccer fields were also rebuilt at Donlon Elementary School, which students use during the day and city-scheduled soccer club teams use later in the day and on weekends.

Other accomplishments credited to Wolfe and his department include Val Vista Community Park on the city's northwest side, the restoration of the Veterans Memorial Building and Kottinger Creek, and the construction and dedication of the Alviso Adobe Community Park on Foothill Road. The Adobe, which opened this fall, is unique in that it is an historical site more than a community park and is already attracting regional interest.

Wolfe is also credited by arts groups for installing sculptures and other art work throughout the city, including a bronze soldier in front of the Veterans building and colorful benches in the Kottinger Creek and Val Vista areas.

Wolfe is one of a dwindling number of Americans who are retiring in a job that they aspired to while in elementary school. Growing up in Norwalk in Southern California, Wolfe spent his free time at a nearby park.

"I was there so much of the time that my mother would call the park supervisor when it was time for me to come home," he recalls.

But in middle school, Wolfe turned from playing sports in the park to volunteering with the park department, setting up city parks for upcoming games and events. When his family moved to Huntington Beach during Wolfe's freshman year in high

Jim Wolfe made city a leader in recreation, sports, p



Enjoying a day of golf at Callippe Preserve Golf Course in honor of Parks and Community Services Director Jim Wolfe's retirement are (from left) Phillip Grubstick, M



Pleasanton school board recognized Wolfe in statement that praised his 30 years in the profession. Joining Wolfe are (from left) school board members Pat Kernan, Valerie Arkin, Jim Ott and Jamie Yee Hintzke.



Wolfe stands in front of soccer field built.

Write a legacy

public park amenities



Michael Tassano, Wolfe, his wife Maureen, Tom Fullam and Bob Silva.



Wolfe at Val Vista Community Park, which his group designed and

school, Norwalk honored him with a special parks and recreation district award, never given before to a teenager.

After high school, Wolfe was hired by the special services district at Huntington Beach to manage after school recreation activities, with the admonition from the district supervisor that he should continue his education. Wolfe enrolled in the local community college while continuing his recreation job, and then transferred to Fresno State University, where he majored in therapeutic recreation. When he graduated, he was one of few college graduates with a degree in recreation therapy and state and nationally registered in the discipline, which today is generally part of a medical school curriculum.

For a young man who had always sought a career in the recreation field, Wolfe was on his way. He worked for a couple of years in a geriatrics center for the blind in Fresno, and then moved to Ventura in 1979 in his first public sector management job with that city's senior center. His responsibilities, which have continued in Pleasanton, included handling senior programs for the disabled, running a shared housing program for seniors and handling the city's new paratransit service.

From Ventura, Wolfe moved to Simi Valley as a division manager to run that city's community services division, which included a youth employment service, conducting neighborhood councils in public issues affecting these groups and, again, managing a senior transit system.

The Simi Valley job paid off. When Pleasanton hired an executive search agency to seek a successor to longtime Parks and Community Services Director Dolores Bengtson, Bobbie Peckham handled the task. At first she bypassed Wolfe, but the then City Manager Deborah McKeehan, who came from Simi Valley, recognized Wolfe's work there and included him in the interview process. He got the job and has become one of the most recognized city staff managers ever since. Whether it's the Parks and Recreation Commission night-time meetings or public hearings on a Saturday morning, Wolfe has always been there.

"When I was hired, one of the first things my wife Maureen and I did was to move to Pleasanton," Wolfe said. "I feel it's important to live in the community where you work. So often, someone will question one of my decisions or plans and ask if I really know this town. I have always been able to answer that I do, which pretty much diffuses that sort of criticism."

Wolfe also deserves credit for working with city departments, commissions and the council to initiate the first improvements on the Bernal property, where three lighted baseball fields are under construction. They'll be completed in early 2009 and, after the turf is established, could be ready for play late next fall.

He's also championed the Firehouse Arts Center, which is under construction at the site of the old Railroad Avenue firehouse. That, too, will be completed and dedicated after Wolfe packs his bags for the final time Tuesday and heads south to join Maureen at their new home in Arroyo Grande, a small community on the Central Coast just south of Pismo Beach. ■

Photos by Jeb Bing

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Living Take Us Along

You came, you saw, you froze in these winter-themed vacation pictures with the Weekly

Is there a chill in the air or is it just us? In the spirit of the winter season, we thought we'd share a sampling of Take Us Along photos taken in cold climates.

To submit a Take Us Along photo, e-mail a JPEG photo to editor@pleasantonweekly.com or mail to Pleasanton Weekly, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Ste. 100, Pleasanton CA 94566. Keep in mind there is a waiting list, but we will try to publish as many as we can at a time. More photos on page 17.

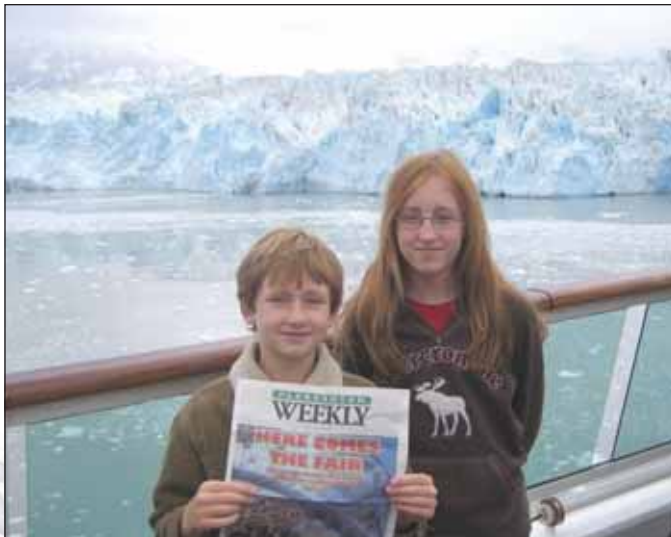


Scaling the Weekly

Former city traffic engineer, Jeff Knowles who's now deputy public works director in Vacaville, took the Weekly with him on a climb up Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. Uhuru Peak, is the highest point on Kilimanjaro's crater rim (19,342 feet in elevation). While there, Knowles went on a six-day safari and ran the Kilimanjaro marathon. Because of Kilimanjaro's equatorial location and high elevation, almost every climate type is represented, including a year-round snow-topped summit.

Glacial Weekly

What would a winter-themed Take Us Along special be without Alaska, the nation's coldest state? Jacob and Caitlin Newman enjoy the Weekly and the sights of Hubbard Glacier in Alaska. The ice at the foot of Hubbard Glacier is about 400 years old. The glacier routinely calves off icebergs the size of a 10-story building.



Come ski with me

The Morss family: Chris, Jenny, Kris and Delaney, took the Weekly on a skiing trip on El Colorado Mountain in the Andes mountains in Chile. Keep in mind, this was July when the photo was taken. Delaney is spending a year as a volunteer English teacher in Los Angeles, Chile (south of Santiago).



The weather outside is frightful

Caroline, Debbie, Thomas and Anders Gjerde took the Weekly along to Voss, Norway. The statue they're standing by is of Knut Rockne, who was born in Voss and became a legendary football coach at Notre Dame University. Anders reports that "we were visiting grandma and grandpa for the holidays. It was about 0 degrees when this picture was taken."



Auto Weekly

Bill Evans brought the Weekly with him to Munich, Germany. Here, he stands in front of the brand new BMW Welt that opened only weeks before. The Welt is a multi-functional customer experience and exhibition facility of the BMW group. It presents the current BMW products, is a distribution center for the cars and is an event forum and conference center. Bill reports that "a chilly breeze and a little snow didn't stop me from reading my Pleasanton Weekly."



Ring in 2009

Have a blast while saying goodbye to 2008

by Emily West

Ready to party like it's 2009? Partygoers are in luck this year, because there are several nearby and not-too-far ways to end the year in style. The following is a sampling of ways to countdown to the New Year.

Aura Nightclub

Pleasanton's young adult hotspot promises a night of "inspirational music and unforgettable memories" at its New Year's Eve Gala of 2009. DJ Momentum will be spinning hits in the Red Room, while David Savior and David Almeida will bring the beats in the Blue Room. When the clock strikes 12 a.m., guests will be showered with the largest midnight balloon drop in the Tri-Valley and a "Times Square style" confetti rain, while sipping on champagne.

Advance tickets start at \$40. VIP packages and bottle service are also available. To learn more, call 416-0777 or visit www.nightclubaura.com.

Tommy T's Comedy Steakhouse

Anjelah Johnson, a San Jose native, and two other comics will bring the laughs Dec. 31 at Tommy T's Comedy Steakhouse off Hopyard Road. Famous for her nail salon act that was one of the most watched clips on YouTube, Johnson has also toured many comedy stages, was named Rookie of the Year and has co-starred alongside Gabrielle Union in "The Box."

Also included in the night's events will be balloon drops, party favors and a champagne toast. A DJ will be at the 9:30 p.m. set.

Two showings are available. The first is at 7 p.m. and tickets are \$65 or \$79 for reserved seating, and the second is at 9:30 p.m. where tickets are \$85 or \$95 for reserved seating. These shows are 17 and older. To learn more, call 227-1800 or visit www.tommyts.com.

The Pleasanton Hotel

The New Year's Eve menu at the Pleasanton Hotel, 855 Main St., is sure to whet your appetite,

with choices like crab and lobster bisque, herb grilled Hawaiian swordfish and citrus-mascarpone cheesecake. Also provided will be party hats, noise makers, a champagne toast and reserved dining room seating for evening dancing to the sounds of five-piece band, South Bay Heat. The party package has seatings from 8 to 9 p.m. and is \$79 plus gratuity and tax.

Anyone wanting to eat early before a big bash at home or away can go to the early dinner, with seatings from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Guests are also invited to the lounge to dance.

Reservations can be made by calling 846-8106. For details and menu choices, visit www.pleasantonhotel.com.

Faz Restaurant and Four Points Sheraton Hotel

Faz and Four Points promise a fab celebration into the New Year. Packages range from \$130 to \$350, with some including a room at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel, open bar, hors d'oeuvres and din-

ner buffet complete with Faz wines, karaoke and dancing, party favors and a New Year's Day brunch. For details, call 460-0434.

The Four Freshman at the Bankhead Theater

The Bankhead Theater hosts The Four Freshman at their gala New Year's Eve Party. The popular act known for pioneering a new style of close-harmony vocals built on the barbershop tradition begins at 7 p.m. Current members of the group include Brian Eichenberger, Curtis Calderon, Vince Johnson and Bob Ferreira.

Champagne and dessert will follow the performance. Tickets are \$60 to \$95. www.bankheadtheater.org or call 373-6800.

Stacey's At Waterford

There will be a lot of eating, dancing and champagne sipping at Stacey's At Waterford restaurant in Dublin. The first dinner service will be at 5 p.m. with an a la carte menu, and the second seating at 8 p.m. features four course dinner specials, a champagne toast, danc-

ing and New Year's Eve favors. DJ Jeff Torres will get the dance floor going from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Call 551-8325 or visit www.eatatstaceys.com for details and ticket information. A \$10 cover charge will start at 10 p.m.

USS Hornet

The USS Hornet beckons partygoers to dance like a star aboard the historic aircraft carrier in Alameda. Big band classics will be played by 3 O'Clock Jump and will be joined by the Singing Blue Stars Andrews Sisters tribute. The party boasts three dance floors with Swing, Rhumba, Cha Cha and Waltz. Don't know how? No need to worry, free dance lessons are provided. There will also be a silent auction, as well as food and drinks.

It all happens from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. New Year's Eve. Tickets are \$45, \$65 and \$85 and are available by calling 510-521-8448, ext. 282 or visiting www.hornetevents.com. Period attire is encouraged and proceeds benefit the USS Hornet Museum. ■



Chillin' with the Weekly

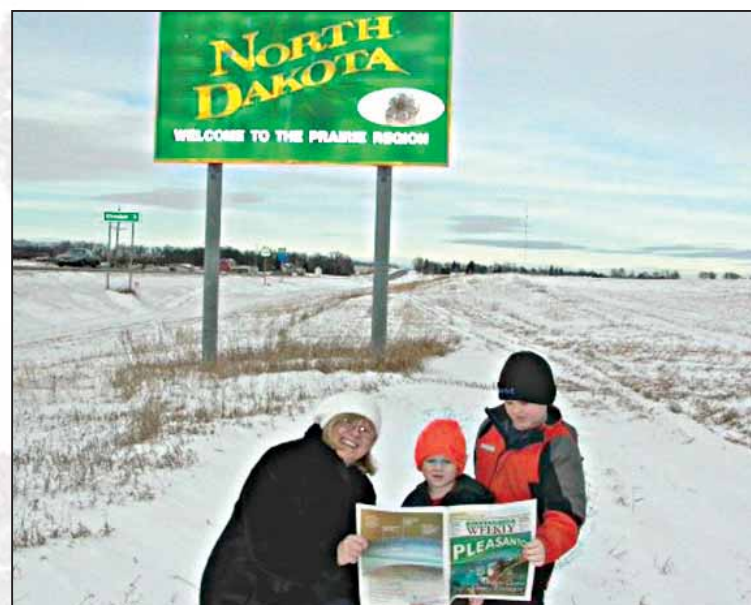
Juniper and Avery Huneke "chill" reading the Weekly while sledding in Bear Valley.

Juneau it's cold out here?

Annette and Debbie Lee read the Weekly in Juneau, Alaska. The pair took a helicopter ride up to the glaciers and posed here with the Alaskan flag.



Take Us Along



A prairie Weekly

Cameron Wyly, who ranches in South Dakota about 20 miles from the border of North Dakota (where they took this photo) visited with his mom, Elaine Sternquist, a Pleasanton resident, and his sons Hunter and James Wyly. Elaine said it was a "rather cold and grey day."



Hear ye, hear ye

Kennedy, Avery and Brayden Mahdavi enjoy sitting in an old-fashioned horse carriage with a new friend from the historic town of Colonial Williamsburg, Va. Williamsburg's coldest month of the year happens to be January (brace yourselves) and the lowest recorded temperature was -7 degrees in 1985—well before these kids were born, lucky for them!



A tale of dueling Matterhorns

Sophie and Olivia Lair and Kevan and Erik Knaggs (right photo) brought the Weekly to a chilly Gornergrat, Switzerland. In the background is the famous Matterhorn, which is 14,692 feet in elevation in the Alps. The Roberts family: Drew, Renee, Nathaniel and Brodie, (left photo) also visited the Matterhorn, though in seemingly warmer weather. Great minds think alike, no?

Calendar

Auditions

'Livermore's Got Talent' 2009 Auditions The auditions are open to all ages and Bay Area residents for all talents (singing, juggling, dancing, bands, piano, etc.). Applications will be accepted until Jan. 3. The finals will be performed on Feb. 28, at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore. Application fee is \$25 and are available at www.livermoresgotalent.com.

Book Clubs

Great Books of Pleasanton The Great Books of Pleasanton book club meets at 7:30 p.m. the fourth Monday monthly at Towne Center Books, 555 Main St. Call Sadie at 846-1658.

Civic Meetings

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Class Reunions

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.

Classes

Basic Yoga Class Beth Fox instructs this yoga class that meets from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Mondays 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

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 dress-maker pins.

Communication Arts Network The East Bay's Communications Arts Network (CommArt) meets from

11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month at Forli Ristorante in Alamo. Tickets are \$20 cash, includes lunch. Call Terry, 462-8083, or visit www.commartnet.org.

Dive Trippers Dive Club Meeting Come join us for the November meeting of the Dive Trippers Dive Club, the Tri-Valley's newest dive club. They meet at 7 p.m. the second Thursday monthly at Dive N Trips Dive Center, 1032 Serpentine Lane, Ste. 108. Call 462-7234 or visit www.diventrips.com.

Dublin 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 second Wednesday of every month, at John Knox Church, 7421 Amarillo Rd., Dublin. Call (510) 352-4292.

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

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.

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.

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

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

Concerts

OpryWest OpryWest, a monthly music series, comes to the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Grand Ol Opry meets Austin City Limits performs at 8 p.m. Dec. 30. Tickets are \$20. Call 373-6800 or visit www.oprywest.com.

Calendar Spotlight



Emily West

Walk for Wellness

Get a head start on fitness resolutions New Year's Eve by joining residents in the second annual World Walk to Wellness. The Live Well Festival, hosted by ACCUSPLIT of Pleasanton, will take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dec. 31 at the Pleasanton Sports Park of Hopyard Road. At noon, Mr. Pedometer Ron Sutton (pictured showing young walkers how to use a pedometer) will lead participants on a 2,000-step walk.

The event is free, but any donations to Pleasanton Partnerships in Education (PPIE) will be matched up to \$20 each by ACCUSPLIT. Last year, 254 people participated and \$2,600 was donated to PPIE. Free pedometers will also be given to the first 500 walkers. To learn more, visit www.worldwalktowellness.org.

Events

Fenestra Winery's Soup and Wine SOUPerbow Weekend Fenestra kicks off the New Year by pairing some warm and tasty soups with our award-winning wines Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 24-25, at Fenestra Winery, 83 Vallecitos Rd., Livermore. Cost is \$10; \$5 for non-drinkers and children, including a glass, buffet plate, soup samples and recipes. Call (800) 789-WINE (789-9463) or visit www.fenestrawinery.com.

Pleasantonians 4 Peace Pleasantonians 4 Peace sponsors a candlelight vigil in front of the Museum on Main, 603 Main St., the second Wednesday of the month. They will reflect on the human and monetary costs of the war, honor veterans who have sacrificed and visualize ways of moving beyond this conflict to a more peaceful world. Following the vigil is a peaceful march to City Hall. Contact Cathie Norman, 462-7495; Matt Sullivan, mjs7882@gmail.com; or kdowding@pacbell.net.

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.

Unifying Threads Experience a variety of handmade textiles suitable to wear, show or give from Nov. 15 to Dec. 31 at Worthington Gallery West, 739 Main St. The show benefits the Cuna Indians as well as Oxfam's: Sisters on the Planet. Call 485-1183.

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.

Claws for Paws Crab Feast Join Tri-Valley Animal Rescue from 6 to 10 p.m. Feb. 7 for all-you-can-eat crab dinner with a no host bar. The event includes a live and silent auction as well as a cash drawing raffle. Tickets are \$45 by Jan. 17 or \$50. Call 323-8517 or visit www.tvrar.org.

Health

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

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

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Holiday

Holiday Events at Stoneridge Shopping Center Stoneridge Shopping Center will host numerous holiday events during the month of December. 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.

Kids & Teens

Library Book Clubs Begin Students are invited to join either our fourth and fifth or sixth to eighth grade book clubs, which meet Wednesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. starting in September at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Come for good books, snacks and lively conversation. Registration begins Aug. 18, and is limited to 18 per club. Call 931-3400 ext. 8.

On Stage

Big Fat Year End Kiss Off Comedy Show Political satirist Will Durst and his comedic troupe will spoof 2008 with stand-up, sketches and improv at 7 p.m., Friday, Dec. 26, at Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Tickets are \$12-\$75. Call (415) 820-9628 or visit www.willdurst.com.

The Four Freshmen Celebrate New Years Eve LVPAC favorites, The Four Freshmen, host a gala New Year's Eve party complete with champagne and dessert in the Bankhead Theater lobby, 2400 First St. in Livermore, following the performance. Fireworks will be at 9 p.m. with community-wide revelers outside. Tickets are \$60-\$95. Call 373-6800 or visit www.livermoreperformingarts.org.

Seniors

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

Pleasanton PC Users Group The PC User Group meets monthly at 10 a.m. on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. You don't need to be an expert to attend, we have all skills levels in our meetings. Call 931-5365 or visit pleasanton.googlepages.com for more info.

Spiritual

'Ringing Out the Old, Bringing in the New' and 'Burning Bowl Service' Rev. Steve Maynard from Tri-Valley Unity Church will talk about "Ringing Out the Old, Bringing in the New" at 10 a.m., Sunday, Dec. 28, at the Radisson, 6680 Regional St., Dublin. The church will also host a Burning Bowl Service at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 30, at the Tri-Valley Church's meeting place, 7567 Amador Valley Blvd., #120, Dublin. Call 829-2733 or visit www.trivalleyunity.com.

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

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

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

Sports

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

Mountain Rides Join cyclists of all levels for this friendly, no-drop mountain ride which lasts approximately two hours. Riders should be in good fitness, have a well-adjusted, safe mountain bike and general knowledge of bike handling skills. Odd-numbered months, the Cyclepath group goes to the Pleasanton Ridge and even-numbered months, they go to Lake Chabot. For the ridge rides, meet the Cyclepath group at the Foothill staging area. Rides are from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information, contact rides@cyclepath.com or call 485-3218.

Saturday Morning Beginner Ride This weekly no-drop ride is for those new to cycling, who haven't been on their bike for a while or just want to ride at a more relaxed pace. Rides depart from Cyclepath Pleasanton and are generally 20 to 25 miles with a climb option. Bring water, spare tube. Plan to attend? Email rides@cyclepath.com.

Sunday Morning Intermediate Ride Join intermediate cyclists every Sunday for this no-drop road ride. Routes vary weekly and last between two and three hours. Riders warm up together and split into smaller groups based on skill level(A: 60 miles, B: 35 to 40 miles). Bring water and a snack. Rides depart from Cyclepath Pleasanton, 337-B Main St.

Support Groups

Alzheimer's Disease Support The Alzheimer's Association has developed a checklist to help recognize the possible warning signs of the disease as well as suggestions to help make the holiday season enjoyable. Call (800) 272-3900 or visit www.alz.org.

Cancer Support Group A general support group for people with cancer and their loved ones meets from 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays at ValleyCare Health Library, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd. Call 933-0107 or visit www.twcba.org.

ClutterLess (CL) Self Help Group ClutterLess (CL) is a nonprofit, peer-based, self-help, support group for people with difficulty discarding unwanted possessions. Cluttering is a psychological issue, not an orga-

nizing issue. They meet at 7 p.m. every Monday at the St. Mary and St. John Coptic Orthodox Church, room 7, 4300 Mirador Drive. Call 200-1943 (woman) or 297-9246 (man) or visit www.clutterless.org.

Crohns and Ulcerative Colitis Support Group This support groups meets at 6:30 p.m. the third Thursday of every month at the ValleyCare Health Library, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd., Ste. 270. Walk-ins are welcome. Feel free to bring a guest. Call 462-6764 or 846-4653.

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.

Domestic Violence Support Group On-going support for women dealing with conflictual issues is available at Tri-Valley Haven, Livermore, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Thursdays. A fee of \$40 for every eight weeks or based on a sliding scale. Call Elizabeth, 667-2799.

Family Members of Frail Elders This group is to support family members as they experience the many emotions involved in supporting, caring for and loving the frail elders in their family. It meets at 7 p.m. the first Wednesday of the month at Eden Villa Assisted Living, 4115 Mohr Ave. Call 872-8721.

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.diablovalleyoa.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.

Twin Valley Mothers of Twins Club General meetings are at 6:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month at John Knox Presbyterian Church, 7421 Amarillo Drive. and include round table discussion and dinner. Visit www.TVMOTC.com.

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.

Volunteering

Tri-Valley Animal Rescue Do you love animals? Become a volunteer or a Foster with Tri-Valley Animal Rescue. Orientations are held at East County Animal Shelter (ECAS) from 1 to 2:30 p.m. the second Saturday and fourth Sunday of each month. Registration is not required to attend the orientation. Call 803-7043 or visit www.tvrar.org.

TV30

Tri-Valley Sports Final Tune in to Channel 30 as hosts Ian Bartholomew, George "Dr. B" Baljevich and Dennis Miller provide

up to the minute sports reporting on Tri-Valley High Schools at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday, Friday and Saturday and at 10 p.m., Sunday. Exciting footage and commentary focusing on local teams.

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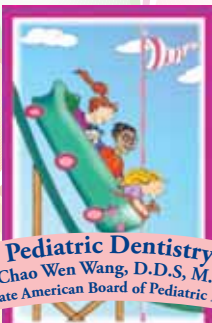
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Eddie Papa's American Hangout

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.

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

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

Barone's

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

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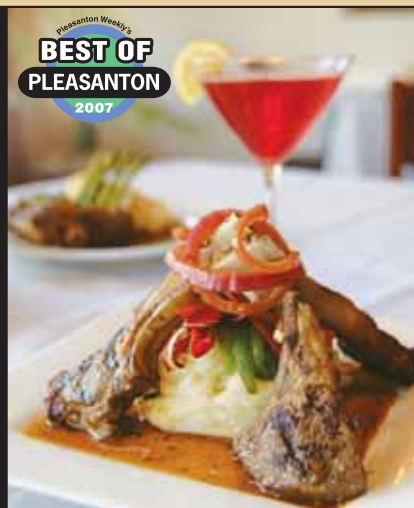
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ON THE TOWN



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349 Main St., Pleasanton, 462-9299.

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

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

Sato Japanese Cuisine

3105-K Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 462-3131. Makoto Sato, Owner

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PIZZA

Gay Nineties Pizza Co.

288 Main St., Pleasanton, 846-2520. Gay Nineties is family-oriented with an

extensive menu, including our renowned pizza, Italian dishes, salads and sandwiches. We also have wine, beer, patio dining and games for kids. Come for groups, take out and call-ahead lunch orders. We're open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

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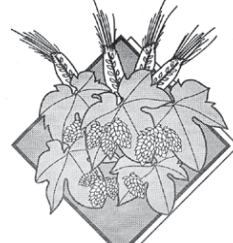


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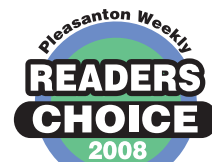


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Pleasanton Real Estate News



by
Gerarda
Stocking

WHY WAIT TO BUY?

"Bottom-fishing": a scary term often used when real estate prices have eased and seem on the verge of easing further. We don't advise it.

Actual bottom-fishing tends to yield up the least attractive fish, the ones who scrape the bottom of the sea and gobble up the most toxic of foods. That's relevant here. Because most buyers who wait anxiously for just the right moment—when home prices reach their cyclical bottom—end up losing far more than they gain. That moment is always impossible to pick out, especially when it is happening. And when it has passed and the market has moved into genuine recovery, there is no "rewind" button. It's gone.

And what, precisely, is gone? Not just the lowest possible price, but also the opportunity to negotiate the most favorable possible terms of purchase. As the market nears recovery, sellers' attitudes and flexibility quite naturally begin to firm. There is a sense that a stronger market is just beyond the horizon, and sellers are less inclined to do back flips for capable buyers.

Not that you want to demand back flips of your seller, but here is the truth about a buyers' market. Though buyers are in the driver's seat in most transactions, there is a kind of equal opportunity at work. The chances of negotiating a transaction that truly benefits all parties are far greater than they are in the heat of a sellers' market, when even the sellers are forced to act and react too quickly to engineer truly constructive terms of purchase.

Rather than waiting, most of us will benefit most greatly by working at the far more thoughtful pace allowed by a buyers' market...and no waiting for the fish on the bottom of the sea. For help call Gerarda Stocking at 846-4000 or visit her website at www.gerardastocking.com.

Gerarda Stocking is the Owner/Broker of Stocking Realty.

Sports

Parent photographers

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



Pictured Rays players: Andrew Bailey, Davin Bokaie, Andrew Bridges, Augustin Chen, Dylan Frades, Ethan Lipsker, Kevin Lin, Connor Locher, Keegan Locher, Will Pickett, Jove Rogers, Jordan Singh, Hector Vega, Tyler Wineger and Timmy Wu.

It's 3rd for Rays in Sunset tournament

The Rays wrapped up an excellent 16-1-2 season with a fine showing in San Ramon's Sunset tournament. The team took a 3-0-1 record, bringing home third place hardware. Defense was key again as the Rays only gave up two goals in the four games. The third-place victory came with a 2-1 victory over the Danville Mustangs. The Mustangs went up 1-0 in the first half on a rocket that goal keeper Hector Vega got a hand on, but couldn't stop. Late in the second half, still trailing 0-1, Dylan Frades was fouled inside the goal box. Davin Bokaie drove the penalty shot past the Mustang keeper to tie it up 1-1. Then with less than a minute left in the match, Andrew Bridges slipped a shot in the lower right hand corner and the Rays pulled off a thrilling come from behind win. The defense held firm the second half, led by goal keeper, Ethan Lipsker and defensemen, Connor Locher, Tyler Wineger and Timmy Wu.



Rage U-12 All-Stars place 2nd in champions' cup

Following an undefeated season in the U-12 flight division, the Pink Panthers were invited to play in an end-of-season tournament hosted by San Ramon that included the eight best teams from around the East Bay.

The girls defeated San Ramon 4-2, tied Fremont 1-1 and defeated Dublin Galaxy 2-0. After those wins, the mighty Panthers earned a berth in the championship match against the Danville Mustangs. A handball penalty in the second half allowed a penalty kick by the Mustangs, giving them the lead and eventually winning the game with a final score of 1-0.



Pictured Pleasanton Heat members are: Raj Sing, Brendon Chui, Jacob Schlachte, Kohlden Hochhaus, Tyler Sorensen, Nolan Petersen, Sean Aylward, Ryan Kinney, Nick Trebes, Coach Kevin McCarthy, Theo Carter, Parker Dueul, Connor McCarthy and Aidan Goltra.

Heat Cross Country team earns 2nd in Junior Olympic championships

The Pleasanton Heat Cross Country team placed second in both the Youth Boys and Youth Girls division at the Junior Olympic National Championships held Dec. 13 in Richmond, Va.

The National Championships drew over 2,400 athletes from all over the country and each athlete had to earn a spot by placing in the top 20 in their region. The Heat had the best overall team performance of any team in the country in the youth division for athletes 13-14 years of age. The boys were led by all-American Parker Deuel, who finished the 4000m course in 13:49 to place 17th overall. The Pleasanton Heat has 56 runners from the East Bay and is coached by Kevin McCarthy.

Also earning all-American honors was Tyler Sorensen (24th in 13:56). Rounding out the top five scoring positions for the Heat were Ryan Kinney (14:19), Connor McCarthy (14:29) and Nolan Petersen (14:35).

Girl's gymnastics team flips the competition

The girl's team at West Coast Olympic Gymnastics' won their fourth 2008 state championship this past week.

The 2008 Nor-Cal level 4 State Championships were held Dec. 6-7 at Technique Gymnastics in Rancho Cordova. Priscilla Cruz had an impressive performance, placing first on bars, second on vault, third on beam and taking the overall high score.

Pleasanton residents and members of the Level 5 team Lauren Kobayashi and Carly Israel were crowned state champions, winning six out of seven competitions. The level 5 state championships were held Nov. 22-23 at Burlingame High School. Patricia Aubel, a sophomore at Amador Valley High School, was crowned level 8 state champion.



Ryan Gordon games are Sunday

The annual Ryan Gordon Alumni Soccer Games will be held Sunday at Amador Valley High School and it's not too late to sign up to play.

The women's games will begin at 2 p.m. and the men's at 4:30 p.m. This is the sixth year of the games, which honor Ryan Gordon, a Foothill student who was killed in a boating accident the summer after graduation in 2003. The games are being held on a Sunday for the first time. The money raised from the games goes directly back to the soccer programs at both Amador and Foothill high schools.

Each game, both the men's and the women's, will be divided into periods for the older players and the younger players. Gate entrance to see the games is \$7 for adults, \$4 for children.

Those who have played soccer for either high school who are interested can register at All-Star Sports, 3037-A Hopyard Road. Another way to register is to download an application at www.busc.org. Curt Gordon can be reached at 426-1540 or curtgordon@comcast.net. Cost to play is \$20.

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PET OF THE WEEK



CATHERINE HANSEN RUSH

Marley, meet Sullivan

Meet Sullivan, an adult, neutered male yellow Labrador Retriever mix who is approximately 3 years old and thinks he's a lap dog. Look at that happy face! Sullivan is a friendly fellow, and like his famous friend Marley, he would benefit from some dog training. TVAR volunteers say Sullivan keeps his kennel clean so he may be housetrained. Sullivan would probably be best for a family with older children as he may knock small children down when he gets excited. Sullivan loves to go for walks and he may just be a fun companion for another compatible dog. TVAR volunteers learn more each day about the shelter dogs they take out for walks and play sessions. They think Sullivan (pet # 82788) is pretty special! We invite you to visit him at the East County Animal Shelter, 4595 Gleason Drive in Dublin, open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Call 803-7040.



Real Estate



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Wishing you a happy, healthy and prosperous new year!

Home sale of the week



**3160 S. Bridgepointe Ln.
Dublin –
\$925,000**

This stunning home in Dublin Ranch offers gorgeous views of the surrounding hills and city lights. This highly upgraded Tamalpais model includes approximately 3,411 square feet of living space with 5 bedrooms, 4 full baths and a three car garage. One bedroom and full bath are conveniently located downstairs. The gourmet kitchen offers beautiful cinnamon maple cabinets, granite slab counters and an island. Sold by Sheri Platter of Hometown GMAC Real Estate. (925) 858-5400



767 Avio Ct., Ruby Hill, Pleasanton

Single story 4 BR (or 3 + office) with amazing views of golf course and hills. NEW pool & spa. 3,918 sq. ft. **New Price \$1,699,000**



836 Piemonte Dr., Ruby Hill, Pleasanton

Located on 11th & 12th fairways of Ruby Hill Golf Course. 4 BR/3.5 BA + Bonus, 3,845 sq. ft. **Offered at \$1,699,000**



2578 Grappa Ct., Ruby Hill, Pleasanton

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Sales at a Glance

Source: California REsource

Dublin	Livermore	Pleasanton	San Ramon
Total sales reported: 12	Total sales reported: 31	Total sales reported: 16	Total sales reported: 29
Lowest sale reported: \$380,000	Lowest sale reported: \$160,000	Lowest sale reported: \$340,000	Lowest sale reported: \$205,000
Highest sale reported: \$800,500	Highest sale reported: \$1,375,000	Highest sale reported: \$2,000,000	Highest sale reported: \$1,280,000
Average sales reported: \$556,542	Average sales reported: \$480,194	Average sales reported: \$759,906	Average sales reported: \$667,431

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5580 PASEO NAVARRO \$1,172,000
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6415 AMBER LANE \$1,048,000
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• 865 Clara Lane, Pleasanton
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Sold for \$480,000



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2619 TOY LANE, SAN JOSE
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Commercial real estate sectors face credit squeeze

Many transactions cancelled, postponed across U.S.

by Jeb Bing

The disruption in the capital markets means many commercial real estate transactions have been cancelled or postponed, while the weak economy has eroded otherwise healthy market fundamentals, according to a commercial market update and forecast presented at the 2008 Realtors Conference & Expo in Orlando, Florida.

Lawrence Yun, National Association of Realtors' chief economist, said the weak economy has shifted the fundamentals in commercial real estate.

"With the exception of the multifamily sector, the loss of jobs is reducing demand in commercial real estate to the point where many markets can expect rents to weaken," he said. "Vacancy rates are trending up, but the completion of new commercial space will decline in response to lower demand."

Yun said the credit crisis has hit the commercial real estate market harder than the residential sector.

"Even sound transactions in healthy markets to buyers with good credit were curtailed," he said. "Credit has started to loosen somewhat, but we have long way to go to get back to normal. In addition, commercial debt rollover is now facing much higher interest rate costs."

In some cases, economic conditions led to properties becoming undervalued.

"Although many people value commercial real estate in diversifying their portfolios, it's important to consult with a Realtor specializing in commercial real estate to learn about options and opportunities in a given area," said Yun.

Doug Duncan, chief economist at Fannie Mae, said the over-leverage of financial firms led to the unraveling of credit on Wall Street.

"Central banks around the world are cooperating as never before to stabilize the credit markets," he said. "Since the beginning of this year, 1.3 million U.S. jobs have been lost. Initially it was confined to the real estate and real estate finance sectors, but it's broadened recently. We've lost a half million jobs in just the past two months."

Duncan said an economic recovery depend on a housing recovery.

"Everything depends on the structure of the economic stimulus," he said. "Mortgage spreads over Treasuries rose from 1.5 percentage points to 2.25 percentage points. In addition, when the commercial paper market stopped, all short-term financing evaporated. We need to be able to securitize loans."

Duncan said commercial mortgage-backed securities have a chance of coming back faster than residential mortgage securities because there is a feedback loop.

"Due to ratings based on performance, there is an incentive to produce well," Duncan said.

As a result of these challenges, transaction volume in commercial real estate fell 70 percent from the second quarter of 2007 to the second quarter of 2008.

Yun's forecast for four major commercial sectors analyzes quarterly data in the office, industrial, retail and multifamily markets. Historic data were provided by Torto Wheaton Research.

Office Market

The loss of jobs is reducing the demand for office space. Office vacancy rates are projected to rise to 14.4 percent in the second quarter of 2009 from 12.9 percent in the second quarter of this year. Annual rent growth in the office sector is likely to be 3.2 percent this year, but it should decline 0.4 percent in 2009; rent grew 8.0 percent last year.

Net absorption of office space in 57 markets tracked, which includes the leasing of new space coming on the market as well as space in existing properties, is expected to be 14.7 million square feet this year and 10.9 million in 2009, contrasted with 57.3 million square feet last year.

Industrial Market

Healthy exports have been offsetting lower demand for industrial space from the economic slowdown, but uncertainty in the current environment could weaken overseas demand, even with relative weakness of the dollar which has been a primary support of export activity. However, American goods remain attractive to overseas buyers.

Vacancy rates in the industrial sector are forecast to rise to 10.8 percent in the second quarter of 2009 from 9.9 percent in the second quarter of this year. Annual rent growth will probably be 1.1 percent this year and 1.0 percent in 2009; it rose 3.6 percent last year.

Net absorption of industrial space in 58 markets tracked is anticipated to be a negative 16.7 million square feet this year, then reversing to grow to 35.3 million in 2009; net absorption totaled 120.3 million last year. A clear pattern of building to suit specific needs remains, leaving many obsolete structures unoccupied.

Retail Market

Consumer spending will continue to tighten for the foreseeable future, with further dampening of the retail market. Vacancy rates in the retail sector should be 10.4 percent in the second quarter of 2009, up from 9.7 percent in the second quarter of this year. Average retail rent is projected to grow 1.2 percent in 2008 before contracting 0.9 percent in 2009; rent grew 3.2 percent last year.

Net absorption of retail space in 53 tracked markets is likely to shrink by 2.6 million square feet this year before increasing by 2.8 million in 2009; last year 11.1 million square feet were absorbed.

Multifamily Market

The outlook for the apartment rental market—multifamily housing—continues to stay fairly positive as many potential first-time home buyers remain on the sidelines. Multifamily vacancy rates are expected to rise to 5.9 percent in the second quarter of 2009 from 5.4 percent in the second quarter of this year. Average rent is forecast to grow 3.9 percent in 2008 and 4.0 percent next year, compared with a 3.1 percent gain in 2007.

Multifamily net absorption is estimated at 61,400 units in 59 tracked metro areas this year and 188,200 in 2009, in contrast with 234,400 last year. ■

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