

In a budget bind

School board discusses parcel tax, \$8.7M in cuts > **page 5**

Vol. X, Number 1 • January 30, 2009

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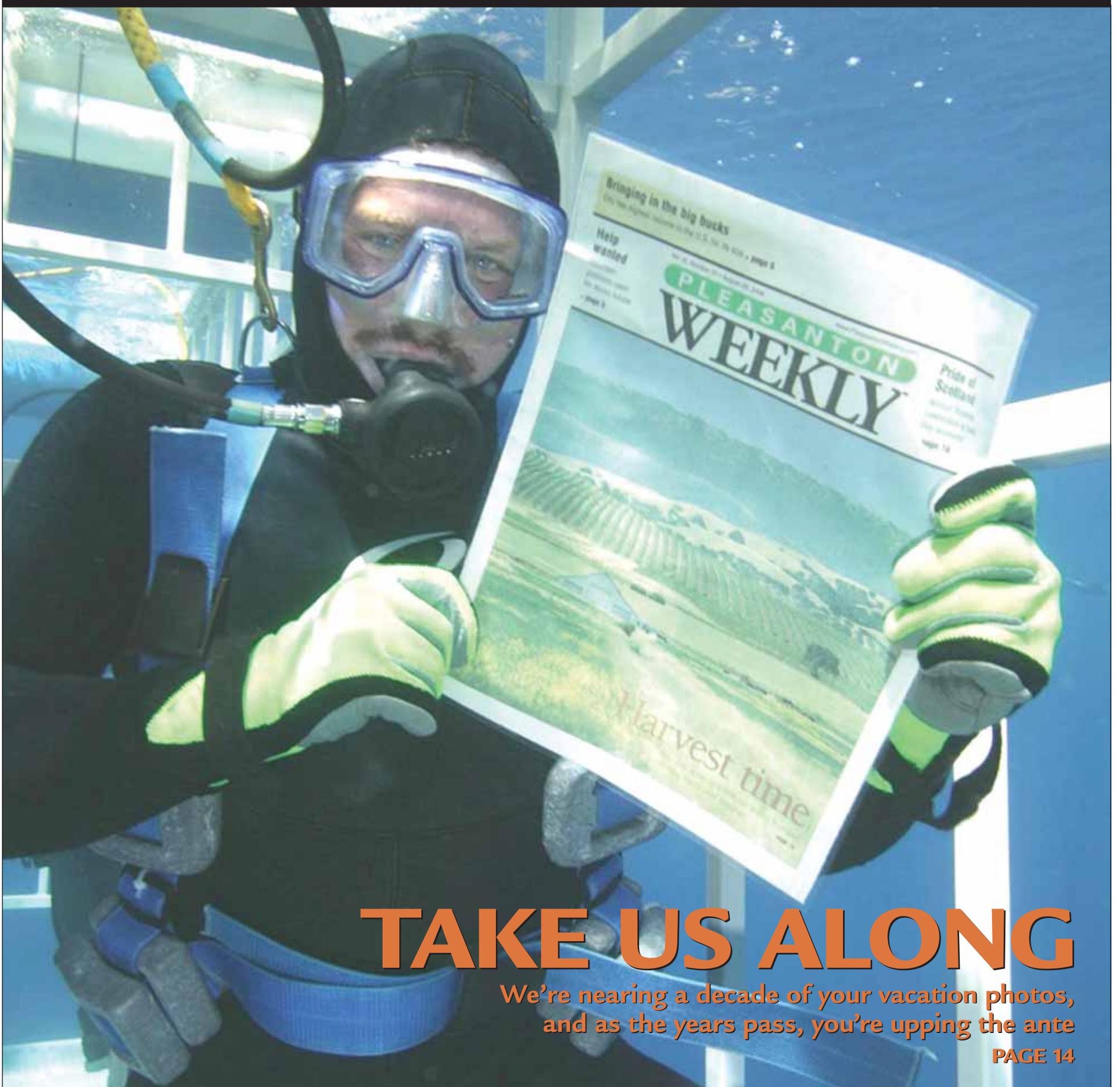
Dream team

ESPN ranks FHS girls' soccer No. 1
> **page 5**

PLEASANTON WEEKLY

Jazzed about Sophie

Talented young vocalist hits Amador stage
> **page 16**



TAKE US ALONG

We're nearing a decade of your vacation photos, and as the years pass, you're upping the ante

PAGE 14

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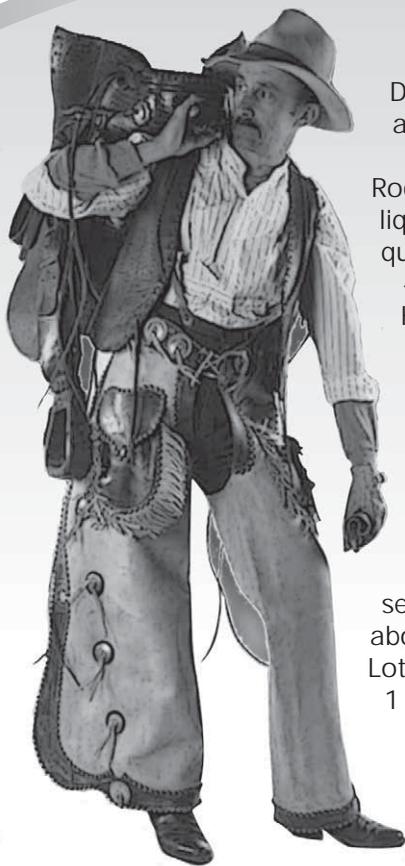
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TACK N SADDLE AUCTION

After 25 Years in Business!! Family Illness Forces Liquidation



Due to family illness - Murphy Auctioneers has been asked to sell at public auction a complete inventory of western saddles and horse equipment from Rocky Mountain saddle shop. This is a great business liquidating a very nice collection of high end and top quality saddlery. Including over 60 top quality saddles - Billy Cook, SimCo, Big W, Texas Saddlery, Saddle King, Silver Royal, King, Outback, Wintec, and more! Saddles from 12" to 18" in seat size. Over 100 Wolf Creek and Yucca Flat wool saddle blankets, and Equip-Sport memory core saddle pads. Winter blankets: Canvas and StormBuster. Leather goods of all kinds, over 100 brindles by Billy Cook, Billy Martin, Silver Royal, McPherson, and others! Nylon and leather halters, lots of nice roping breast collars, Cowboy Up bridle and breast collar show sets, over 40 silver bits and spurs. This auction has about 400 lots making it impossible to list every item. Lots and lots of new and used, plus many unique and 1 of a kind items! This is a very complete inventory. To be sold to the highest bidder, piece by piece.

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The Symphony continues its bicentennial tribute to Felix Mendelssohn with his incidental music written for Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." American-born composer Howard Hanson, was influenced by the music of Jean Sibelius. The Nordic symphony, composed in 1923, reflects his impressions of his Swedish heritage. LAS hosts the Competition for Young Musicians in the fall of every year. Winners of the 36th Competition, Annie Sandholtz on violin and Bronwyn Hagerty on cello, will perform with the symphony.

Feb 14 - 8pm \$28/\$24/\$20/\$18/\$8 students

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Punch Brothers

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Featuring a quintet of brilliant young musicians, ten torrid dancers and one of Argentina's finest singers, Tango Fire traces the history of Tango, from its origins in the red light district of Buenos Aires to the glamour of the Roaring Twenties, and its evolution to the world of contemporary ballroom, accompanied by the music of Astor Piazzolla and many others.

Feb 18 - 8pm \$55/\$40/\$35/\$30/\$12 students



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Pacific Chamber
Symphony
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\$38/\$32/\$26/\$7

The Vagina Monologues
Performance Benefits
Tri-Valley Haven
Feb 27 & Mar 6, 7 - 2/8pm
\$41/\$31/\$26

Livermore's Got Talent
Winners Take Home
\$2500
Feb 28 - 7pm
\$125/\$45/\$25



Around Pleasanton

by Jeb Bing

What Dr. King might have said today

The Tri-Valley YMCA traditionally holds its community-wide breakfast honoring the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. a week after the national holiday so that more people will come. This year, last Monday's ninth annual breakfast was even timelier, coming just six days after Barack Obama was sworn in as president and with a top Kaiser Permanente executive to talk about it. Bernard Tyson, who as chief operating officer and also executive vice president for health plan and hospital operations for the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals is also the organization's senior African-American officer. He was active early on in Obama's presidential campaign. He saw Obama speak at the Democratic National Convention in 2004 and heard MSNBC commentator Chris Matthews talk about how the Illinois politician just might become America's first black president.

The possibility spurred Tyson to become involved in that effort, working the California circuit when he could to help the candidate. Up to then, Tyson told us, he never doubted that an African-American could one day become president, but thought that wouldn't happen in his lifetime. He saw generational changes taking place with his own children growing up colorblind, inviting friends of all colors and nationalities to their home. For sure times were changing, Tyson added, only much faster than he had predicted.

Tyson saw the change even more dramatically during his week in Washington, D.C. for the inauguration festivities. With front section seats at various programs and the swearing-in ceremony as well, "this was truly unbelievable," he said. At a concert at the Lincoln Memorial, he was only a few rows down from Obama, although he joked that it was also a bit uncomfortable with six plain-clothed sharpshooters also facing him.

His special seats for the inaugura-

tion were in a section that 250,000 others shared, but given the shoulder-to-shoulder standing crowd of 2 million behind them, Tyson felt honored at being so close. It was indeed a festive gathering with strangers hugging, kissing, crying and screaming, Tyson said. Then, all at once as Obama went to the rostrum to receive the oath of office, there was absolute silence. Two million people stood in complete silence, so quiet that they could hear birds chirping. Tyson said he'd never seen anything like it: Two million people crowded together in the 2-mile long National Mall with no arrests, no violence and no disruptions, and then with slow, rolling shouts of cheers, hand-clapping and high-fives as Barack Obama became the country's first African-American president.

What would Dr. King think of America today if somehow he could come back for a visit? He would say, "Oh my God, this is what I've been talking about," Tyson said. "We have placed this African-American in the White House not because he's black, but because he was the better candidate, because he had a better agenda, and because the American people voted for him."

If he had come to Monday's breakfast, Dr. King would have been just as surprised and delighted to see Tyson at the lectern—another African-American at the helm of one of the country's top health care establishments, the chief operating officer with a \$40-billion payroll.

"I think he'd look at me and my job and say, 'You have to be kidding,'" Tyson said. "He would look over and see my beautiful fiancée, Denise Bradley (who was at the breakfast) and learn that she is a Harvard graduate, and say, 'Harvard where?' Then he would look at all of us in this room, people of different races, and color and ethnic backgrounds, people who represent the fabric of this great country, and see us breaking bread together in his honor, and he would be elated and pleased." ■

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About the Cover

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About the Cover

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Man stabbed at his house by uninvited guest

A 22-year-old Pleasanton man is recovering, listed in stable condition, after sustaining three stab wounds Saturday at his house party.

READ MORE/COMMENT

Town Square Forum

PLEASANTON WEEKLY .COM

Streetwise

Q: What type of business would you like to see open on Main Street?

Asked at the Rose Hotel



Bobbie MacKenzie

A higher-end bar or restaurant that offers ladies nights, a piano bar, or other different themes. There are times when I like to go out with my friends and go dancing, but the bars and restaurants in downtown aren't suitable for that. They are either too loud, too small, or they cater to a younger crowd. Even though people are downsizing in this economy, they still want to have fun.

Mike Ridout

It would be nice if downtown had a restaurant that is similar to Bing Crosby's in Walnut Creek. It's a great set-up. There are a lot of people in Pleasanton between the ages of 40 and 50 who have children who are moving out of the house—therefore they have more time to go out with friends.



Charlotte Anderson

It would be nice to have more eclectic, smaller boutiques that carry things you can't find at a mall, but downtown should also allow an anchor store such as Crate & Barrel or Pottery Barn. Name brand recognition always brings in business but preserving the current downtown look and feel is key.



Kristin Goedert

It would be great if there was a cupcake bakery on Main Street. I work at EMC in Pleasanton and my co-workers and I celebrate many birthdays or other special occasions. It would be a nice change to buy fancy, unique cupcakes for those occasions instead of a cake.



Janelle Gunther

I would like to see a place where I can purchase fast, healthy and fresh lunch items. The "grab and go" concept works for me because I am always on the go. I would also like to see an authentic bagel store open up in downtown. I am from New York and the bagels that are sold here are just bread in the shape of a bagel.



The Pleasanton Downtown Association presents

Truffles, Tidbits & Wine Tasting

Thursday,
February 5th
6-9 pm

Downtown Pleasanton

TICKETS:

\$25 through February 4th
\$30 at the Door, IF NOT SOLD OUT

Tickets are available for purchase in advance at the following locations:

Clover Creek, 670 Main St.

Pleasanton Downtown Association, 830-A Main St.

Studio 7 Fine Arts, 400 Main St.

The Rose Hotel, 807 Main St.

Cash or checks only. No credit cards.

Price includes wine glass, event map and tastings

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

Compiled by Hillary Bessiere

Newsfront

News Digest

On the silver screen

Las Positas College and the Pleasanton Public Library have teamed up to present "Great Performances: A Classic Film Series." Dr. Candy Klaschus, film historian and humanities program coordinator at LPC, will be on hand to discuss the film. Next up is "Now, Voyager" at 7 p.m. Feb. 5 at the library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. The series continues at the same time every first Thursday evening through June.

Donate a dress

The Princess Project is collecting new and nearly new formal gowns and accessories between Feb. 8 and 14 for this year's dress drive. The organization provides formal dresses and accessories to girls in the Bay Area unable to buy them for proms. Since it began in 2002, The Princess Project has helped over 9,000 girls and hopes to help 1,000 girls this year. For more information on dress collection locations, visit www.princessproject.org.

'STAND' for human rights

Amador Valley High School's human rights club, STAND, which focuses on raising awareness about and helping to end genocide, presents two events in February. Carl Wilkens was the only American to remain in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide and will make a presentation at 7 p.m. Feb. 5 at the Harvest Park Middle School multipurpose room. The second annual Human Rights Conference will be from 9 a.m. to noon Feb. 28 at Amador. This year's event will focus on genocide in the Burma, Congo and in Darfur. Tickets to the conference are \$5. For more information, email amador-youth4hr@yahoo.com.

Free tax help for seniors

Free tax assistance is provided to Pleasanton seniors seeking help with their income tax forms. Call the Pleasanton Senior Center at 931-5365 to make an appointment with an AARP tax counselor through April 13.

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

Dream season

Foothill girls' soccer team, made up of mostly seniors, tries to take it one game at a time

by Janet Pelletier

Ron Lambert knows his girls soccer team is having the best season of their lives, but he doesn't want the pressure that comes with the territory to cloud their focus on the playing field.

Going into this past Wednesday's game at home against Cal High, the Foothill High School varsity team has been undefeated with a record of 13-0-0 and they are 8-0-0 in East Bay Athletic League play.

"I just try to keep them focused," Coach Lambert said. "We take it one game at a time."

Compounding the pressure, but

not necessarily in a bad way, is that ESPN has ranked the team No. 1 for the past two weeks out of all high schools across the country.

Lambert's tried to shield his team from letting the news get into their heads, saying he's "kept it on the down low."

So what makes this team so special and unique?

"They've been staying focused," Lambert said. "A lot of people ask me what's different from last year to this year. I just think they've noticed the last couple of years that we've come up short by just a little bit, whether it be league or NCS, and these guys are focused on win-

ning it all."

Winning it all and trying to block out the naysayers. Recently, the team was given a hard time for their overpowering 9-0 win against cross-town rivals Amador Valley Jan. 21 with some suggesting players should have been changed around in the second half of the game. But Lambert said the team isn't letting the critics get them down, rather it's fueling their drive and energy.

"I tell them that we'll worry about it when the season's over," he said.

Out of the 19-member team, 13 are seniors.

"Out of the 13, 12 are committed

to Division 1 schools," Lambert said.

And if the coach is proud, so is the technical director for the Pleasanton Rage girls' soccer club, where nine of the seniors play on the same U18 team.

"We're one of the top clubs in the country," said director Phillippe Blin. "Everybody knows that because of these girls, and these seniors. This is a group of seniors that puts the Rage kids on the map. Our club is a big club, about 2,000 kids, and these girls have definitely become role models for

(continued on page 7)



About 200 people attended the budget forum at Amador Valley High School's multipurpose room Monday night. It was the first of two meetings held by the district. The second will be at 7 p.m. Feb. 4 at Foothill High School.

Emily West

Emotions run high with school cuts on the line

Board trustees discuss possibility of parcel tax to help with \$8.7-million budget shortfall

by Emily West

With the elimination of class-size reductions on their worry lists, parents, educators and others packed a school district meeting Tuesday night as the board discussed two hot topics: cuts and a parcel tax. Both are needed to balance the district budget, according to the board.

California faces a \$41.6-billion deficit. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's budget proposal would require the Pleasanton Unified School District to cut \$8.7 million from its budget. This includes a \$4-million reduction needed halfway through the current school year, as well as a \$2.7-million reduction in

additional revenue for 2009-10. The state has also denied the district \$2 million for a cost of living adjustment (COLA), which it needs to "roll over" into the next year, even if there were no changes to the budget.

The governor's proposal has yet to be adopted, which means the \$8.7-million problem could get better, or worse.

At Tuesday's meeting, Luz Cazares, assistant superintendent of business services, said there was another revenue shortfall facing the district. Having borrowed money in the past to help with facility improvements, the district first pays the debt back through

(continued on page 8)

Holiday Fund exceeds goal

Even in tough economy, donors step forward with \$138,711

by Jeb Bing

The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund closed its 2008 campaign this week with donations totaling \$138,711, well above the \$100,000 goal set for the sixth annual community drive.

Donations came from more than 200 individual, corporate and organization donors, with the Tri-Valley Community Foundation matching the first \$50,000 received. Besides the \$138,711 total, which included the match, another \$4,000 was received by the fund in specific contributions earmarked for Open Heart Kitchen.

Gina Channell-Allen, president of the Pleasanton Weekly, said checks in equal amounts will be distributed to the seven recipients targeted in the 2008 campaign after a final audit by both the Weekly and the community foundation.

Besides Open Heart Kitchen, the other beneficiaries are Axis Community Health, Hope Hospice, Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley, Tri-Valley Haven, Valley Humane Society and the Emergency Room expansion program at ValleyCare Medical Center.

Each of the organizations will receive checks totaling \$19,245 once the final audit is completed in mid-February, with the additional \$4,000 that is specifically designated for Open Heart Kitchen.

"It's a credit to the compassion in our community that so many dug deep into their pockets during very difficult economic times to help these nonprofits where the need has become even greater," Channell-Allen said. "While some gave generous contributions of \$1,000 and more, many others sent us checks for \$25 or \$50, some with notes thanking us for providing a fund where they can join in helping those in need."

Again this year, the largest contribution came from the Valley Marketing Association, a Pleasanton-based organization of Realtors, real estate specialists and real estate-related professionals that serve the Tri-Valley. Led by Realtor Roy Dronkers, the group's president, the VMA contributed all of its receipts from a December holiday party and additional contributions, rais-

(continued on page 6)

Community welcomes home Capt. Sullenberger

Danville thanks pilot for his grace under fire

by Geoff Gillette

Threatening skies didn't dampen the enthusiasm of thousands who turned out Saturday to welcome home Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger III, the "Hero of the Hudson."

Sullenberger, the pilot who safely landed US Airways flight 1549 in the Hudson River after it struck a flock of geese, disabling both engines, received a hero's welcome in Danville, complete with marching bands and proclamations.

Mayor Newell Arnerich presided over the event, which was held on the Town Green near Danville Library.

"Clearly there are 155 reasons," a smiling Arnerich stated, "why our town is celebrating his courage under extreme circumstances."

Arnerich said he'd been contacted by people from all over the world offering their congratulations to Sullenberger. Included in those calls were Sir Richard Branson and Arnerich's own son, a member of the U.S. Marine Corps. "My son said to tell you, Captain, that his unit would fly with you anywhere, anytime."

Arnerich presented Sullenberger with a key to the city, only the second time such an honor had been bestowed in the 150-year history of Danville.

Congressman Jerry McNerney (D-Pleasanton) praised the courage and dedication of Sullenberger and his flight crew. He said that pilots and crew are trained to handle trouble, but there is always the question of what they will do when that day comes.

"On Jan. 15, trouble found Capt. Sullenberger. He had no more than two minutes to safely set that aircraft down. He did what he was trained to do," McNerney said.

McNerney said it was Sullenberger's calm and leadership which made that landing happen, and



Congressman Jerry McNerney, left, sits with Lorrie and Chesley Sullenberger at a homecoming celebration for the pilot.

he applauded the captain's dedication to duty in staying with the aircraft until all passengers were safely off.

The huge crowd roared its approval when Sullenberger's wife Lorrie took the stage. Due to a request from the US Airline Pilots Association, the family is still restricted from speaking about the crash itself, but it didn't stop Lorrie Sullenberger from talking about the man flying the plane.

"I knew when I married Sully that he was the most honorable man I've ever met," she said through tears. She went on to say that she had no doubt of the outcome of the plane crash, because she knows what kind of pilot her husband is.

Sullenberger said she and her family had been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support and praise they've received. "There's no words to express how grateful we are for all of you. We were so thrilled to come home to Danville. I have to say, we love Danville."

Finally, Capt. Sullenberger himself took the podium, amid standing ovations and thunderous applause.

After thanking everyone for coming he said simply, "Circumstance determined that it was this experienced crew that was scheduled to fly that particular plane on that particular day. But I know I can speak for the entire crew when I tell you we were simply doing the jobs we were trained to do."

Many of those who came couldn't see well due to the enormous crowds, estimated by police at 5,000, but it didn't alter their joy at being there.

Monte Vista High School Junior Megan Gordon said knowing Sullenberger was from Danville made her proud, and seeing all the people who turned out for the celebration was a testament to the type of town Danville is. "It kind of makes me feel like I live in this small town," she said. "I don't know everyone in my class but look at this, how everyone is coming together to honor him."

Danville resident Peter Adams agreed. "It makes me nostalgic about the way small town America is. Everyone knows each other, and helps each other out." ■

Holiday

(continued from page 5)

ing \$20,613 in direct donations and, with the Community Foundation match, totaling \$41,226.

"As everyone knows, these are tough times for Realtors and others in our industry," Dronkers said. "Even so, helping others is a key mission of the Valley Marketing Association and we're proud to be the top contributor to the important work of the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund."

Dave Rice, president and chief executive of the Tri-Valley Community Foundation, said his group supports the Weekly's Holiday Fund because the beneficiaries are among the many needy organizations the foundation also helps fund.

"This is truly a community-wide effort by the Pleasanton Weekly that serves a growing need in the

Tri-Valley," Rice said. "While those who contribute have jobs or other income and most have health insurance, the Holiday Fund contributes to organizations that help those who don't. The Tri-Valley Community Foundation is honored to be part of this effort."

Unlike most other fundraising drives by individual organizations, the 2008 Holiday Fund had no administrative expenses or other overhead. The Pleasanton Weekly and the Tri-Valley Community Foundation donated all the support services so that all money raised would support local non-profit groups.

All funds are held in trust by the Tri-Valley Community Foundation pending the final audit and are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Those who contributed since the last list of donors was published include:

- Individuals:**
 Shirley & Jack Butler \$50
 Barry Cass & Terry Messiek Cass \$250
 Mr. & Mrs. Carlo Vecchiarelli \$100
 Amy & Frank Jones \$300
 Lonie & Ron Shaw \$50
Organizations:
 The Karena Lee Sanford Charitable Foundation \$50
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Youth court praised by participants, parents

Over past year, diversion program has processed 47 cases, assigned over 1,400 hours of volunteer service

It's been just over a year since the Tri-Valley Youth Court opened its doors and participants and their parents are lauding the program for the difference they feel it's made in the community.

The youth court is a diversion program for teenage offenders with misdemeanor or lesser charges in Pleasanton, Dublin and Livermore that began operating Jan. 8, 2008. Types of offenses heard include cyber-bullying, traffic, curfew, tobacco, disorderly conduct, vandalism, theft and truancy.

The court has more than 140 student volunteers serving as youth advocates, court clerks and jurors and 30 adult volunteers serving as judges, court attendants, case managers, jury mentors and advocate mentors.

Over 12 months, the court has

processed a total of 47 cases referred from the Pleasanton, Dublin and Livermore police departments and the juvenile division of Alameda County Probation. Also in that time, the court has assigned more than 1,400 hours of community service, 33 apologies, anger management classes, family and individual counseling, life choice workshops, drug and alcohol counseling, jail tours and other forms of restitution.

A survey conducted by the court assessed how offenders and their parents viewed the program and the results showed they felt it was a resounding success. All, 100 percent, of parents surveyed said they would recommend the court to a friend in a similar situation and 94 percent said they noticed an improvement in their child's

attitude. All, 100 percent, of participants of the program said they thought the court was useful and 94 percent said they would recommend it to a friend.

Over the past year, the court has also included participation from leadership and civics classes of Village High School and the Athenian School in Danville, students who are learning about the U.S. court system and restorative justice principles.

The youth court is held the first Tuesday of the month at the Pleasanton courthouse, 5672 Stoneridge Drive. For more information about the Tri-Valley Youth Court, visit www.trivalleyyouthcourt.com or contact Tonya Clenney at 337-7175.

—Janet Pelletier

Foothill participating in Regional Science Bowl Saturday at LPC

Winners go on to compete in U.S. Energy Department bowl in April

On Saturday, Sandia National Laboratories and Las Positas College will host the first of three high school Regional Science Bowls scheduled for the Bay Area, with Foothill High one of the many competing for top honors.

The competition will take place at the Las Positas College campus in Livermore, with 25 teams from 11 local high schools scheduled to compete.

Registration begins at 8 a.m., with round-robin competition scheduled from 9 a.m. to noon. Following lunch and the elimination rounds from 1 to 4 p.m., an awards ceremony will take place at 4.

The Science Bowl is a question-and-answer competition with buzzers, judges and timekeepers for high school teams consisting of five students and one faculty coach. A format of round-robin and modified double elimination will be used in the regional competitions. A total of 25 local teams will participate. High schools scheduled to compete include Foothill, Monte Vista (Danville), Irvington (Fremont), Mission San Jose (Fremont), Granada (Livermore), Livermore (Livermore), Milpitas (Milpitas), Andrew Hill (San Jose), Chinese Christian Schools (San Leandro),

California (San Ramon) and Santa Clara (Santa Clara).

Additional Science Bowl regional competitions in the Bay Area will take place at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory on Feb. 7 and at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center on Feb. 28. Each winner of a regional competition qualifies to compete in the 19th annual U.S. Department of Energy's National Science Bowl from April 30-May 5 in Washington, D.C. Only those students who competed on the winning regional team are eligible to compete in the National Science Bowl.

—Janet Pelletier

Soccer

(continued from page 5)

the younger age group. They have a huge impact."

Carlee Payne co-captains the team along with Sophie Metz. Payne, a senior, will sign a letter of intent next week to play soccer for Brigham Young University. And while she's excited to attend the university next fall, she's making sure to cherish this moment in her life.

"All of us seniors have been together since we were under-7s, under-8s," Payne said. "We've grown a bond that is so close. We're basically a family—we're best friends on the field, off the field. We all want to play for each other, win for each other."

And while she and her teammates feel the pressure that's been placed on their backs, they're not

taking any game lightly.

"All of us are nervous before any game," she said. "We don't come out light for any game. In soccer, you can lose to anyone. You just gotta come out hard and play your game no matter what."

The team's next game is at 6 p.m. Saturday at Carondelet High School in Concord. For more sports news, turn to page 21.

Rage hosts Letters of Intent signing Feb. 5

Joining the 12 Foothill High School senior girls signing scholarship letters of intent are nine other graduating seniors for a special Pleasanton Rage signing night at 7 p.m. Feb. 5 at the Pleasanton Marriott, 11950 Dublin Canyon Road.

Since 2001, Rage has had 133 graduates sign letters of intent to play for national colleges and universities.

Foothill High School

Megan Barrett—UC Davis
Krista Bormann—Southern Oregon University
Samantha Cloutier—George Washington University
Olivia Klei—Santa Clara University
Ashley Loughmiller—Washington State University
Amanda Luxford—Arizona State University
Ashlyn Mazur—University of San Francisco
Rachel McGlinchy—San Diego State University
Sophie Metz—UCLA
Carlee Payne—BYU
Amanda Simat—San Jose State University

Amador Valley High School

Marissa Fraticelli—San Diego State University
Caitlyn Harper—Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

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School

(continued from page 5)

developer fee funds. It expected to receive \$2.7 million in this fiscal year, which ends June 30, but with little development, those fee funds aren't coming in as anticipated. To date, Cazares said, the district has received just over \$300,000. This means the difference could impact the general fund.

The lack of developer fees would not directly impact the \$8.7-million shortfall, according to Superintendent John Casey. Instead, he said, they could be borrowed from the Sycamore Property Fund, which currently has \$5.6 million from the sale of a potential high school site near Happy Valley and typically funds technology. It would, however, possibly limit another source of revenue.

One piece of hope could potentially come from the federal government. It has released portions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Bill, with early estimates saying \$10 billion could go to California. Portions could help PUSD in special education and facilities, and to "soften the blow" of impacts to school districts. It would be a one-time only deal that is intended to be used over two years.

A possible parcel tax

Generally, a parcel tax is collected annually from a property owner. There are several variables that can be factored into creating a parcel tax, including an expiration date, a varied rate depending on the size of the parcel and exemptions. In order to pass, there must be a two-thirds majority vote by those voting on the measure.

Several nearby districts have passed parcel taxes, such as Dublin (\$96 per parcel), Livermore (\$138, which passed in November) and San Ramon (currently \$90, but a May initiative seeks \$144). Casey said Dublin schools receive more money from the state than PUSD, as a result of the unification of school districts several years ago.

The school district has calculated that a tax of \$100 per parcel could equal \$2.4 million for the district, with a \$300 per parcel totaling \$7.2 million. If passed, the district said the money would be available for the 2009-10 school year, so cuts would still be needed to cover the current \$8.7 million in reductions as defined in the governor's recent budget proposal.

One particular suggestion to save some programming came from board member Valerie Arkin. She asked if Sycamore Fund dollars could be used to pay off bond Measures A and B being paid by taxpayers. Measure B passed in 1998 and the current rate is \$76 per \$100,000 of assessed value. The rate will gradually decrease to be \$2 per \$100,000 in 2021. The bond money can only be used for building projects, not operational expenses. With Arkin's suggestion, paying off the measures would decrease the school-related tax burden on

residents and potentially encourage voters to pass a parcel tax.

She also suggested putting two tax amounts on a June ballot, as well as looking into a utility tax similar to districts in Southern California.

In addition to the "hundreds" of emails received by board members, 14 people addressed the trustees with their ideas and concerns over the budget situation. Loud applause was the response to most of speakers' comments who were in favor of a parcel tax; some represented school PTA groups.

Kay Ayala, former city councilwoman, said she was disappointed in the approach taken at Monday night's budget forum, held at Amador Valley High School. As part of the population without children in the district, she said it appears the superintendent is campaigning for the parcel tax. She added that it is a mistake to rush to get it on the June ballot and she has received several responses from those not supporting the tax.

It is believed that the number of Pleasanton voters without children currently enrolled in Pleasanton schools is about 60 percent, which could be a challenge in getting a parcel tax passed.

Lessening the cuts

The school district has compiled a list of items, totaling \$9.7 million in potential cuts. Of the many items on the list, the standouts are the elimination of class-size reduction, and cuts in the number of counselors and reading specialists. Just combining classes which now have 20 students into 30-student classrooms could cut 70 teaching positions. For the full list of potential cuts, visit PleasantonWeekly.com.

Speakers at the meeting, as well as posters on Pleasanton Weekly's online Town Square forum, have called for salary freezes, if not salary reductions. Casey said there are district-wide freezes on the COLA and salary reductions "are likely to happen." Last year, he added, the teachers accepted less than the COLA to help the district put \$500,000 towards science specialists.

The current list of potential reductions would include 158 jobs lost, totaling 12.6 percent of non-credentialed employees, 10 percent of credentialed employees and 29.1 percent of the management team.

Board trustee Jim Ott presented research about the ratio of students to staff in surrounding districts. The results showed that PUSD is in the middle. The California Department of Education's 2007-08 data shows the ratio in Newark to be 123-to-1 and Livermore to be 269-to-1, with Pleasanton coming in at 221-to-1.

Using information from eddata.org, board member Jamie Yee Hintzke researched the dollar amount spent on administration per student in various districts. She said PUSD spends an average of \$567 per pupil on administration. Looking at similar cities, she said Palo Alto spends \$721 per student, Laguna Beach spends \$1,077 per student and Santa Monica spends \$624 per

student on administration.

"We're in the middle," she said. "It looks like we're okay. We're certainly not bloated."

Hintzke asked the district to look into the possibility of saving money by imposing two lunch periods in the high schools. She also suggested reducing the board stipends of \$400 per month and renegotiating management contracts.

One option allowed by the state is cutting the school year by five days, for a total of 175 days of instruction, which the board members said they were not in favor of for fear they wouldn't get those days back.

Previous parcel tax discussion

In June 2007, the Lew Edwards Group and EMC Research presented findings from a survey asking residents their opinion on a parcel tax. The big difference between then and now, however, is the reasons for a tax. Originally, it would have gone towards funding additional programs recommended by the Excellence Committee.

At that time, the survey results showed that while residents were supportive of the schools, there wasn't a "super majority" who thought the district needed more money. Alex Evans, president of EMC Research, told the board that while education was not a big worry, voters would support a tax that would address class-size reduction, vocational education and upgraded technology.

At Tuesday night's meeting, Jessica Reynolds of Lew Edwards said the same survey showed 53 percent would support a \$190 per parcel tax.

In the end, the board voted 4-1 (with Arkin dissenting) not to conduct another parcel tax survey, which would cost an estimated \$30,000.

Looking ahead

While the district welcomes creative ideas for new revenue sources, it faces some challenging deadlines. The board will need to identify reductions for 2009-10 at its Feb. 10 meeting. By Feb. 24, it will need to consider identifying which positions would be cut. Notices of possible layoffs would be sent March 15 and final layoff notices would be sent May 15.

Should the board decide to pursue a parcel tax initiative, they would need to finalize the ballot language and call for an election by Feb. 24 to be held in June. The board cannot campaign for the parcel tax, but individual trustees can so long as they're not speaking on behalf of the district.

In addition to the regular board meetings Feb. 10 and 24, a special meeting will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. this Tuesday at the district offices, 4665 Bernal Ave. There will also be a budget forum at 7 p.m. Wednesday in Foothill High School's multipurpose room. All meetings are open to the public.

A list of frequently asked questions addressing the budget can be found on the district's website, www.pleasanton.k12.ca.us. ■

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Opinion

Editorial

Let's beautify Stanley Boulevard some other time

What is it that county officials don't understand about the word Recession? Despite layoffs, corporate downsizing and looming program cuts because of a \$41-billion state budget deficit, Alameda County is moving forward with a \$15.5-million plan to "beautify" and improve a short stretch of Stanley Boulevard between Pleasanton and Livermore. While the roadway could use some work, now's not the time. Even if the county is flush with funds, the perception of a multi-million tree-planting effort sends the wrong message to taxpayers who are already being asked to dig a little deeper to bail out local school districts, including Pleasanton's, and the state in its budget crisis. Hearing about the county's beautification plans for Stanley, Timothy T. wrote on the Pleasanton Weekly's Town Square Forum last Thursday: "I'd like the county of Alameda to send a letter to every child in our school district apologizing for not being able to get the supplies and teachers they need because they really wanted to underground some cables on Stanley in case someone who shouldn't be driving veers off the road."

In fairness, part of the Stanley project involves undergrounding the overhead electric, telephone and cable television wires strung from poles along Stanley. That money, about \$5.5 million, presumably would come mostly from a special California Public Utilities Commission "Rule 20A" fund that PG&E collects from ratepayers over time. The rest—\$10 million by current estimates—would come from taxpayers to pay for trees, median strip landscaping and separate bicycle and pedestrian lanes along the south edge of Stanley. In the best of times, this might be a worthwhile project, although with the railroad tracks, gravel operations and cement and asphalt plants, Stanley probably will never be designated a scenic highway. The Alameda County Board has scheduled a public hearing on the utility undergrounding for 11 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10. If you can't make the trip to Oakland, you can convey your thoughts about the Stanley Boulevard beautification project to our District 1 Supervisor Scott Haggerty. His email is scott.haggerty@acgov.org.

Goodbye Jerry

Longtime city planner Jerry Iserson was feted at a city-sponsored luncheon last week as he retired after more than 30 years of experience in urban planning and development, including the last 20 in Pleasanton. Here, he closed out his career as director of planning and community development. A familiar face at workshop and regular meetings of the Pleasanton Planning Commission and City Council, he was also well known on Main Street, which he frequently walked to talk to business owners, employees and customers on issues affecting the downtown. With advanced degrees in urban planning, urban studies and sociology from San Jose State and the University of Michigan, Iserson was the "go to" guy on almost any issue affecting local planning and development. His fingerprint is everywhere in city planning with the completion of the city's General Plan update, scheduled for approval this spring, serving as his lasting legacy. He'll be missed. ■

Letters

Budget cuts have human consequences

Dear Editor,

At a recent Amador Valley School Site Council meeting, the committee discussed the wide ranging implications of the budget cuts to the campus. As we were reviewing the dreary outlook given the cuts, the subject of counselor reductions was broached.

A recent incident was discussed in which a student came to school feeling suicidal and spent four hours with the counselor. Various resources were called in to help mitigate this critical situation and subsequently the student was dissuaded of their impulse.

Upon discussing this with the administration, the following comments were made that I feel is critical to share with the community.

"I think an important point is that parents use the counselors as resources for their families outside of the school or academic reasons. Often times, a parent will call stating that their son/daughter has mentioned they are suicidal or their son/daughter won't get out of bed and they need our help. Frequently, the student has stated they are suicidal at home and the parents will bring them into the school counselor first thing in the morning for the counselor's assessment/intervention. I just think that often times, community members don't realize that counselors are also supporting the social/emotional needs of our youth that have an impact on academics but are not directly related. I think the counseling pertains specifically to academic guidance counseling"

The community needs to understand that these cuts have real human consequences beyond expense reduction.

Al Cohen

Hope? How ironic

"We all awoke with hope"—a highly ironic Weekly headline for last Jan. 24 (Cover, pages 16-17).

Why? Because on this day, President Obama chose to use the most powerful office in the world to send a message fully lacking in hope. He used his office and misused the goodwill of the people toward him to reverse the ban on funding abortion abroad.

Did any Obama supporter dream this would be his first expression of hope? Did supporters envision restoring our "damaged reputation" with nations abroad...by helping them kill their unborn children? Spending our tax money in this fashion is horrific in light of the economic crisis and the expectation Americans have had regarding the administration's promises to

help with "crises" in the mortgage, banking, health care and auto industries. Many expected these to be top priorities. And yet what did he move on first? Abortion abroad...funded by our tax dollars. I don't want my taxes spent this way.

The message Mr. Obama sends is one of heartless cruelty, not hope. If you voted for Mr. Obama, never dreaming he would take your money and spend your hope to end the lives of the unborn in Africa, tell him so. Death by abortion has no comparison to the loss of life in the war. We were attacked by an enemy. We have a duty to defend ourselves and our way of life. Unborn babies are not enemies. They are the hope of the future, the hope we must keep alive.

Candyce Roberts

Obama lovefest will come to an end

Dear Editor,

I did not awake with hope...I awoke to a dope and his initials are B.O.

I know 47 percent of America agrees with me. The lovefest will end and that 47 percent number will increase with time when the independents have had their fill of liberal policy. Enjoy the party now because you will need those memories when you want to look back on the good 'ole days. The first casualty will be Representative McNerney, who will suffer a defeat in 2010 after Obama's policies have been failing for two years. Guy Houston would be a great congressman for our district.

Help is on the way America.

Michael Duarte

Pleasanton Hotel support appreciated

Dear Editor,

We find it very difficult to speak of the Pleasanton Hotel in the past tense.

It's very hard to understand why we were forced to close our restaurant and end our 25 years of service to Pleasanton and surrounding communities. We were overwhelmed with the number of emails, letters and visitors during our closing days. We want each of you who spoke or wrote of your "Hotel" experiences and remembrances to know that we appreciated your sharing them with us. That was very special.

Perhaps the "Hotel" will once again open and continue its history of hospitality to the Pleasanton and surrounding communities. We all hope so. Thank you for your past support. We miss you.

*Bill and Vernie Laube
former owners of Pleasanton
Hotel restaurant*

WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

City Council

Tuesday, February 3, 2009 @ 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- **Public Hearing:** PSP-11 and PRZ-44, Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch Project: Consider approval of Staples Ranch Development related documents including the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Environmental Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment (Staples Ranch Project), Rezoning/Pre-zoning of Staples Ranch Property to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) District.
- **Public Hearing:** PAP-131 (PCUP 224), Little Ivy League School – Consider an appeal of the Planning Commission's approval of a conditional use permit to operate a tutorial school with a maximum of 90 students at 5925 West Las Positas Boulevard, Suite 200

Civic Arts Commission

Monday, February 2, 2009 @ 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Recommendation to Purchase Bike Rack Sculptures for Firehouse Arts Center
- FY 2008/09 City Grant Mid-Term Reports
- Project Reports

Human Services Commission

Wednesday, February 4, 2009 @ 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Introduction of New Parks and Community Services Director
- FY 2008/09 Service Contract Mid-Term Reports and Presentations
- FY 2008/09 City Grant Mid-Term Reports
- Review FY 2008/09 Grant Recipient Agency Visit List
- Human Services/Housing Commission Workshop
- Commission Reorganization

Library Commission

Thursday, February 5, 2009 @ 6:30 p.m.
Council Conference Room, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

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

GENERAL INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

Community Pulse

Police Bulletin

Police name employees of the year

Officer Roy Gamez and Shannon Revel were recently recognized by the Pleasanton Police Department in its annual program honoring superior performance.

Gamez came to the department in 2005 from the Riverside Sheriff's Department. He currently serves as the school resource officer at Amador Valley and Village high schools, Community Day School and Pleasanton Middle School. Fluent in Spanish, he also helps with Spanish translation requests and is said to

log more than 40 hours a week working for the department and school district.

Gamez can be found at school events and has also served as a head coach and assistant coach to the Amador wrestling team.

Revel joined the department three years ago and is a part of numerous public outreach programs, including the curriculum for the Teen Academy, Pleasanton's National Night Out activities and crime prevention. She also regularly speaks to the public about patrol functions, crime prevention, youth and other issues.

Employees nominated peers for their contributions, which were reviewed by a committee. The final selections were made by Police Chief Michael Fraser.

Police Report

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

Jan. 17

- Burglary: -8:55 p.m. in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

•DUI:

- 5:31 a.m. at the intersection of Santa Rita Road and Valley Avenue
- 7:18 p.m. at the intersection of Owens Drive and Oracle Lane

•Death investigation:

- 7:26 a.m. in the 2400 block of Romano Circe

Jan. 18

- Vandalism: -5:23 p.m. at the intersection of West Las Positas Boulevard and Santa Rita Road; worth less than \$400

•DUI:

- 12:29 a.m. at the intersection of Rose Avenue and Main Street
- 2:06 a.m. at the intersection of Eastbound I-580 and Hopyard Road

•Public drunkenness:

- 5:53 p.m. in the 600 block of Main Street
- 7:02 p.m. in the 600 block of Junipero Street

Jan. 19

•Embezzlement:

- 8:10 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

•Burglary:

- 4:52 p.m. in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

•Vandalism:

- 8:12 a.m. in the 7500 block of Maywood Drive; worth over \$400

•Littering:

- 8:51 a.m. in the 5600 block of West Las Positas Boulevard

•Missing person:

- 2:20 p.m. in the 1100 block of Donahue Drive

Jan. 20

•Theft:

- 12:13 p.m. in the 1900 block of Santa Rita Road; forgery, identity theft
- 1:48 p.m. in the 6200 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 2:39 p.m. in the 6400 block of Owens Drive; grand theft

•Public intoxication:

- 11:47 p.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; drugs

Jan. 21

•Theft:

- 1:17 p.m. in the 200 block of Tomas Way; identity theft
- 6:01 p.m. in the 5000 block of Franklin Drive; grand theft
- 6:43 p.m. in the 3600 block of Andrews Drive; petty theft

•Burglary:

- 10:15 p.m. in the 1000 block of Serpentine Lane

•Vandalism:

- 3:42 p.m. in the 4200 block of First Street

Jan. 22

•Theft:

- 3:35 p.m. in the 5000 block of Owens Drive; grand theft
- 5:23 p.m. in the 2800 block of Hopyard Road; petty theft

- 8:14 p.m. in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

•Burglary:

- 10:33 a.m. in the 7200 block of Stonedale Drive
- 8:37 p.m. in the 3900 block of Santa Rita Road; vehicular

•Vandalism:

- 8:23 a.m. in the 4300 block of Black Avenue; worth over \$400
- 12:11 p.m. in the 1100 block of Santa Rita Road; worth less than \$400

- 3:04 p.m. in the 3400 block of Andrews Drive

- 3:27 p.m. in the 8000 block of Regency Drive

•Drug/alcohol violations:

- 9:08 a.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; paraphernalia possession
- 5:23 p.m. in the 2800 block of Hopyard Road; public drunkenness

- 7:13 p.m. in the 6700 block of Santa Rita Road; under the influence of a controlled substance, controlled substance possession

•Battery:

- 5:23 p.m. in the 2800 block of Hopyard Road

•Recovered vehicle:

- 4:45 p.m. at the intersection of Driftwood Way and Highland Oaks Drive

Jan. 23

•Theft:

- 1:07 p.m. at the intersection of Trottery Way and Meadowlark Drive; stolen vehicle

- 3:06 p.m. in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft

- 5:41 p.m. in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft

•Burglary:

- 8:10 a.m. in the 400 block of Trebbiano Place
- 11:10 a.m. in the 7000 block of Johnson Drive; vehicular

•Vandalism:

- 2:19 p.m. in the 500 block of Kottinger Drive

•DUI:

- 12:35 a.m. in the 4300 block of Valley Avenue

•Public drunkenness:

- 2:06 a.m. in the 5000 block of Hopyard Road

- 10:50 p.m. in the 5500 block of West Las Positas Boulevard

•Missing person:

- 7:46 p.m. in the 3400 block of Zion Canyon Court

•Disturbing the peace:

- 4:04 p.m. in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

See Your Best! Look Your Best!

Valley EyeCare Center Welcomes Jimmy Yip, O.D.

Valley EyeCare Center is pleased to announce that Jimmy Yip, O.D. has joined the practice. A graduate of UC Berkeley School of Optometry, Dr. Yip is committed to exceptional patient care and is available to see patients in Pleasanton and Livermore.



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Transitions

Obituaries

Hazel (Gramma) Waltjen

Hazel Waltjen died Jan. 16 at the age of 95.

She was born Aug. 24, 1913 in Berkeley and was raised in Oakland.

After living in Atwater for 20 years, she moved to Casa Sandoval where she enjoyed numerous activities with her many friends who were here extended family.

She was a devoted mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt and a wonderful friend.

She is survived by her daughters, Diane Brittain (Jim) and Linda Draa (Dan); grandchildren, Kris (Brittain) and Dave Snyder, Sheri (Brittain) and Ross Kapp, Jenny and Mitch Laible; great-grandchildren, Emilie and Rachael Kapp and Ryan Snyder.

The family thanks the caring staff at Kaiser Hospital in Antioch for the compassion and care in her final days.



A service was held Jan. 22 at St. Augustine Catholic Church. Private burial will be held at St. Mary's Cemetery in Oakland. Per Mrs. Waltjen's request, in lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent to Shriners' Hospital, 2425 Stockton Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95817.

Lila Gail Manning

A memorial service will be held Saturday for Lila Gail Manning, who died Dec. 22 in Pleasanton at the age of 82. The service will be held at 4 p.m. at Centerpointe Presbyterian Church, 3410 Cornerstone Court.

Mrs. Manning lived virtually all of her life in Arvada, Colo. before moving to Pleasanton in 2006 to live with her niece, Betty Gail Hunt and her husband, Tim, as well as Gail's brother-in-law, Morris Mote. She outlived 49 cousins, two husbands and her son, James Anderson and her only sibling, Eleanor Mote. Mrs. Manning's only son, James Anderson fell victim to Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS) when he was 35 and died six years later. Her husbands, Cliff Anderson and Dave Manning, also died prematurely—Jim's dad Cliff to cancer and Dave to an accidental gunshot wound. Her sister, Eleanor Mote, also died prematurely.

Her mother, Evalina Campbell, had attended teacher's college and taught school before she married. Mrs. Manning was the first in her

family to attend college and graduate with a degree. She taught business classes in the Jefferson County (Colorado) school district at the high school level for more than 25 years until she retired in 1986. She led the Future Business Leaders of America chapter at the high schools and helped establish chapters at other schools.

She was a longtime member of the United Methodist Church in Arvada. After retiring, she traveled widely, but particularly loved spending time in Lauai Beach, Poipu on the Hawaiian island of Kauai. She enjoyed attending the performing arts in Arvada and downtown Denver. She was a docent at the Arvada History Museum and at the performing arts center there.

One of her "travel buddies," Donna Staley, met Mrs. Manning when they were both teaching business and remained a close friend. They traveled together from 1973 to 2006 when Mrs. Manning moved to California. During her retirement years, Mrs. Manning volunteered to tutor elementary students in math and reading. She was active with the Jefferson County Retired Teachers Association and prepared the monthly newsletter for many years.

She met regularly with a group of fellow Arvada students with whom she attended school and graduated from high school. They set up

reunions for more than 60 years.

After moving to Pleasanton, she attended Centerpointe Presbyterian Church.

The family thanks Betty Gail and Tim Hunt and Morris Mote for sharing their home and the teams at Senior Support (Jodie Landsittel) in Pleasanton and Hope Hospice (Jeanie Olivero) in Dublin.

In Colorado, Mrs. Manning is survived by many nieces and neph-

ews of her husband, Dave Manning, and many cousins, sons and daughters of her first cousins. In the Bay Area, she is survived by her nieces, Glenna Mote of Point Richmond, Betty Gail Hunt of Pleasanton, Nora Mote of Montara and Sally Mote-Yaffe of Livermore.

The family prefers contributions in her memory to Hope Hospice, 6500 Dublin Blvd., Ste. 100, Dublin, CA 94568-3151.

ADVERTISEMENT

Pleasanton Real Estate News



by Gerarda Stocking

WHEN TO BUY?

Financial advisors in our newspapers and magazines love to write about this subject, suggesting that we buy when sellers are willing to negotiate, when interest rates are low, when others are buying, etc., etc.

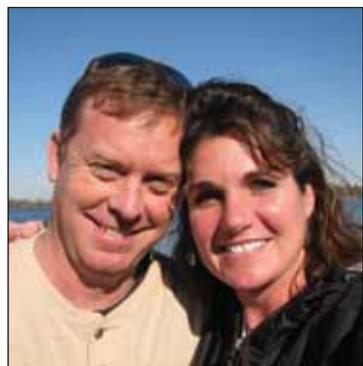
The reality is that there is no ideal time—in the abstract—to buy your home. The best time to buy is when you can afford to buy, and need to buy a home that suits the needs of your household, and have found the right home to fulfill your needs and wishes.

It's true that we've seen home prices skyrocket in certain years, and that people who bought when home prices reached their peak weren't always pleased with the results. But the problem didn't reside in the home, nor did problems show up in the real estate deals, nor even position of the stars in the heavens. The problem showed up when people bought more than they could afford to buy, particularly when they used a mortgage loan they didn't understand and found, months after the deal closed, that the monthly payment started to rise insidiously.

There may be no better time to buy than that magical moment when very few people think they should, and interest rates are low, and the market is coming into recovery. But that is a moving target, very hard to hit. A good home at a fair price with financing that fits the buyers' profile—that is surely the definition of a good deal for a buyer. For assistance call Gerarda Stocking at 846-4000 or visit her website at www.gerardastocking.com

Gerarda Stocking is the Owner/Broker of Stocking Realty.

Engagements



Jennifer Hall Schwartz & James Arthur Bjork

Samantha, Katy, Benjamin and Jacob Schwartz and June, James and Jessa Bjork are pleased to announce the engagement of their parents, Jennifer Hall Schwartz and James Arthur Bjork, both residents of Duluth, Minn.

Jennifer is the daughter of Marvel and Bob Hall, formerly of Altoona and Mitchellville, Iowa. Jim is the son of Linda Kelly of Pleasanton and G. L. Bjork of Arizona.

Jennifer is employed by Northern Lights Elementary School in Superior, Wis., where she teaches first grade. James, a 1981 graduate of Foothill High

School, is employed as assistant scientist with the Kendall Wallace Toxicology Lab at the University of Minnesota.

Following their Feb. 21 wedding at Bayfront Family Center in Duluth, the blended families will make their home in Duluth.

Jory Ryan & Luke Peterson

Luke David Peterson, a Pleasanton native and the son of David and Rebecca Peterson, is engaged to marry Jory Micah Ryan, daughter of Kevin and April Ryan of Washington, Pa. on Feb. 15 at Oglebay Resort in Wheeling, W. Va.

The two met at graduate school at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va.

Luke recently graduated with an MA in public administration and Jory is currently working on her MA in Christian doctrine and history.

Luke graduated from Amador Valley High School in 2001 and received his undergraduate degree from Biola University in 2005. He is employed as a housing coordinator for Green County, Pa.

Jory graduated from Washington High School in 2002 and received her undergraduate degree from Southwestern Assemblies of God University in 2006.

The couple lives in Washington, Pa. and will honeymoon in the Dominican Republic.



Luke Peterson and Jory Ryan

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

Transitions
Pleasanton Weekly
5506 Sunol Blvd., Ste. 100
Pleasanton, CA 94566
Or fax: (925) 600-9559
Or e-mail:
editor@PleasantonWeekly.com (subject: Transitions)

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

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

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Calendar

Author Visits

Century House Poetry Readings

Century House hosts ongoing poetry readings from 1-3 p.m., one Sunday during even numbered months, year-round, at the Century House, 2401 Santa Rita Rd. Cost is \$5. The Feb. 1 reading will feature Sam Pierstorff, the Modesto Poet Laureate. For information, call 931-5350 or visit www.civicsartsliteracy.org.

Classes

'Co-Parenting' Pleasanton Unified School District and Amador Valley Adult and Community Education presents "Co-Parenting, Living Apart-Parenting Together" from 7-9 p.m., Thursdays, Feb. 5-March 26 and April 2-June 4, at Pleasanton Middle School, Room 801, 5001 Case Ave. These classes are free, but registration is required by calling 426-4280.

Kaplan's ACT/SAT Workshop Pleasanton Public Library is hosting Kaplans ACT/SAT combo test free

from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 31, at the library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Register at www.kaptest.com/practicetest.

Quest for Excellence Series Tri-Valley Conservancy and Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association will host an education series for wine growers from 5:30-8 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 10, at the Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave. Cost is \$10. Reservations are required by visiting www.lvwine.org by Feb. 6.

Clubs

AAUW Educational Foundation Lunch Sister Pat Davis, Executive Director of Learning and Loving Education Center, and recipient of an AAUW 2007-08 Community Action Grant, will speak at the Tri-Branch Educational Foundation Lunch at 11:30 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 7, at Sunol Valley Golf Club, 6900 Mission Rd. Cost is \$32, including lunch. Reservations are required; call Anne at 454-1763.

Tri-Valley Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind This club will meet from 1-3 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 7, at Valley Memorial Hospital, Cafeteria Room 2, 1111 East Stanley Blvd., Livermore. The organization can help people to adjust. Any visually impaired or blind person is urged to attend. Call Carl at 449-9362.

Women's Council of Realtors This group meets from 11:15 a.m.-1:30 p.m., on the second Tuesday of every month, at the Radisson Hotel, 6680 Regional St., Dublin. Networking is from 11:15-11:45 then the meeting is from 11:45-1:30. Key note speakers are at every meeting. Cost is \$25 for members with reservations; \$30 for guests, including lunch. Call 455-7000.

Concerts

34th Annual Campana Jazz Festival Annual all-day educational jazz festival featuring 43 ensembles, 25 schools and over 800 students from 8 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 14, at Amador Valley High School, 1155 Santa Rita Rd. Admission is \$6; children under 5 years old are free. Call 426-7223 or visit www.amadorband.org.

AVHS Invitational Winter Guard Show Forty teams will compete in a dual competition of Winter Percussion and Winter Guard performances from 5:30-10 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 7, at Amador Valley High School, 1155 Santa Rita Rd. Admission is \$10 for adults; \$8 for students and seniors; children under 5 years old are free. Visit www.amadorband.org.

Broadway Chorus Registration The Broadway Chorus is looking for new, enthusiastic singers. Come and sing from 6-8 p.m., Sundays, until March 8, at 5200 Case St. Prior musical experience is not necessary and auditions are not required. Cost is \$50. Call 462-2121 or visit www.broadwaychorus.org. Registration Sunday, Feb. 8 at 5200 Case St. Pleasanton.

Events

Artists at Work Grab your artsy buddies and head over to Deer Ridge Vineyards for the Artists At Work Weekend from 1-4 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 7-8, at 1828 Wetmore Rd., Livermore. Local artists will demonstrate their craft while you taste wine. Admission is free. Call (866) 561-0838.

Barrel Tasting Get a taste of the future by sampling un-released wines right from the barrel from noon-5 p.m., Saturday-Monday, Feb. 14-16, at Fenestra Winery, 83 Vallecitos Rd., Livermore. Winemaker Brent Amos and owner Lanny Replogle will share interesting tid-bits and facts. This event

is free. Call (800) 789-WINE (789-9463) or visit www.fenestrawinery.com.

Carden West School Open House Carden West School will host an Open House during current open enrollment for the 2009-2010 school year from 6:30-8 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 11, at Carden West, 4576 Willow Rd. Parents of prospective students may also tour the school any Wednesday or Saturday morning from 10 a.m.-noon; elementary students may choose to spend a day at school. Advance notice is requested by calling 463-6060.

Resource Conservation Plan Tri-Valley Conservancy will host a presentation on the Draft North Livermore Resource Conservation Plan from 7-8:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 5, at the Robert Livermore Community Center, Cresta Blanca Room, North, 4444 East Ave. Reservations are required; call 449-8706.

Thomas Coyne Winter Open House This winery plans to release four exciting new wines and will host an Open House from noon-5 p.m., Saturday-Monday, Feb. 14-16, at the Historical Tasting Room, 51 East Vallecitos Rd., Livermore. Bottle your own wine; your bottle for \$4.50 or ours for \$5. Call 373-6541.

Truffles, Tidbits and Wine Tasting Pleasanton Downtown Association presents "Truffles, Tidbits and Wine Tasting" from 6-9 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 5, in downtown Pleasanton. Call 484-2199.

Fundraisers

14th Hats Off America Run and Walk On February 7, join Sparky George at the 14th annual Hats Off American Run and Walk from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 7, at Sycamore Valley Park, 1211 Holbrook Dr., Danville. Cost is \$35. Proceeds benefit Gold Star Military families. Call 855-1950.

Bingo Bash Italian Catholic Federation Branch #285 will host a Bingo Bash at 7 p.m., Friday, Feb. 20, at St. Michael's Parish Hall, 372 Maple St., Livermore. Cost is \$10 per person, including one bingo packet for 10 games. Proceeds benefit Children's Hospital-Oakland, Cooley Anemia Research and Tri-Valley Scholarship. Reservations are due by Feb. 17; call Rose at 846-4227 or Helen at 462-3798.

Book Locker Books Fundraiser BookLockerBooks.com sponsors several local charities including Amador Valley High School. During January from 3-7 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, if you order a pizza from You-Be's Pizza, 6280 W. Las Positas Blvd., Suite C, 20% of your purchase will go to the school. Visit www.booklockerbooks.com or

call You-Be's at 462-3500.

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.tv-ar.org.

Health

Minimally Invasive Treatments for Varicose Veins Free Seminar Soohyun Kim, M.D. will discuss surgical and non-surgical treatments for varicose veins, and how to reduce pain and discomfort from 7:30-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 3, at San Ramon Regional Medical Center, south building conference room, 7777 Norris Canyon Rd. This event is free. Call 275-8230.

Pet Nutrition If you truly love your pet, then you will take another look at what you feed them. Come to a free seminar by Cynthia Easton, DVM, from 6-7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 10, at Bishop Ranch Veterinary Center, 2000 Bishop Dr., San Ramon. Learn how proper diet for your pet can help prevent diabetes, cancer, obesity, kidney disease and more. Call 866-8387.

Take Charge of Your Health Do you know how to properly take the medication the doctor prescribed for you? Pleasanton Senior Center will host a series of four free classes from 1-2 p.m., every Wednesday, Feb. 4-25, at 5353 Sunol Blvd. Call 931-5379.

Holiday

Tu B'Shvat Seder Tri-Valley Cultural Jews will host a Tu B'Shvat seder and potluck lunch from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 8, at Bothwell Center, 2466 8th St., Livermore. Guest speaker will be environmental educator David Darlington. Cost is \$5 for non-members; free for members. Bring a dish for eight to share. Call 485-1049.

Kids & Teens

Preschool Open Registration Sonshine Preschool will have open registration for the 2009-10 school year at 7 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 11, at the school, 1225 Hopyard Rd. Forms will be available and there will be a non-refundable registration fee required. For more information, call 417-8411.

Seal Team Club If you have a child 8 to 12 years old who is interested in scuba diving, then come to a meeting from 7-9 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 5, at Dive N Trips, 1032 Serpentine Lane, Suite 108. Kids will scuba dive in the pool and will conduct AquaMissions each month. Cost varies. Call 462-7234 or visit www.diventrips.com.

Lectures/ Workshops

Carl Wilkens Speaking Engagement Amador High School's STAND Club (formerly Amnesty International) will host guest speaker Carl Wilkens at 7 p.m., Friday, Feb. 5, at Harvest Park Middle School Multi-Purpose Room, 4900 Valley Ave. Wilkens was the only American to remain in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide. This event is free. Call 461-6100.

Distinguish Yourself: How to Stand Out in a Tight Job Market Whether you are actively searching for your next opportunity or want to be more prepared for your next career move, this is the program for you and will meet from 7:30-9 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 11, at ADP, 4125 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. Cost is \$35 for NCHRA

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Calendar

members; \$55 for non-members. Call (415) 491-1992 or visit www.nchra.org.

Science on Saturday Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory will host its popular lecture series "Science on Saturday" at 9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m., Saturdays, until Feb. 28, at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Future presentations include "Order From Chaos" on Feb. 7; "Avoiding Armageddon: Diverting Asteroids With Nuclear Explosives" on Feb. 14; "Star Power on Earth: The Path to a Limitless Clean Energy Future" on Feb. 21; and "It's a Breeze: Using the Wind to Power Our Future" on Feb. 28. Admission is free and is limited on a first-come, first-served basis. Call 422-5059.

Live Music

Wicker Vault at Bosco's Come on out for an evening of classic rock and other listening and dancing favorites from 8 p.m.-midnight, Friday, Jan. 30, at the Saloon at Bosco's Bones and Brew, 11922 Main St., Sunol. Admission is free. Call 862-0821.

Miscellaneous

Blood Drives American Red Cross will host blood drives from 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 4, at Safeway, Employee Gym, 5858 Stoneridge Mall Rd and from 1-7 p.m., Friday, Feb. 13, at the Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave. For an appointment, call (800) 448-3543 or visit www.beadonor.com.

Political Notes

Tri-Valley Republican Women Meeting This club will host humanitarian relief worker, Mike Jarchow, of The Cuba AIDS Project, at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 12, at Frankie, Johnnie and Luigi Too Restaurant, 11891 Dublin Blvd., Dublin. Cost is \$26 for members; \$30 for non-members. Reservations are required by Feb. 8. Call 846-5944.

Recreation

Family Hiking Club Come join the hiking club as it explores the many hidden trails to be discovered in Pleasanton at 10 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 7, meeting at Kottinger Creek. Learn about the plants and animals that share the area. Cost is \$9 for residents; \$12 for non-residents. Bring water and a camera; wear appropriate clothes and footwear. Call 931-3483.

Scholarships

Educators' Scholarship Four scholarships, each worth \$1,250, will be offered to high school graduating seniors and college students. Requirements are applicants must be residents in

Pleasanton, Livermore, Dublin or Sunol who are planning a career in education; must be planning to attend college in the fall of 2009; and college applicants must be sophomores who will continue as Juniors in the fall of 2009. Deadline for applications is March 6. Call 443-6097 or visit www.trvt.info.

Seniors

Nintendo Wii for Seniors Pleasanton Senior Center will host a Wii Kickoff Party from 3:30-5 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 11, at 5353 Sunol Blvd. Games will include bowling, tennis and baseball. This event is free. Training will be provided by the Amador Valley High's Leadership class. Call 931-5365.

Preventive Health Screening & Care Learn about the recommended health screenings; when and how often we need them; preventive measures you can take to avoid major illness; and how to navigate the maze of vitamins, minerals, and supplements. Class is Feb. 10 at the senior center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Fee is \$1.50 for residents or \$2 for non-residents. Call 931-5365.

Spiritual

'The Third Jesus' Sermon Series Rev. Steve Maynard of Tri-Valley Unity Church will apply concepts from Dr. Deepak Chopra's book, "The Third Jesus" in his Sunday morning talks at 10 a.m., Sundays, at the Dublin Radisson, 6680 Regional St. Ongoing classes and groups are available. Call 829-2733 or visit www.trivalleyunity.com.

Compline with Taize Music St. Clare's Episcopal Church invites you to a traditional Compline service with songs and prayers from the Taize community at 5:15 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 8, at St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Rd. End the day with candlelight, choral song and contemplation, then stay for a potluck supper. This event is free, but donations are welcome. Call 462-4802 or visit www.stclarespleasanton.org.

Volunteering

New Literacy Tutor Orientation Pleasanton Public Library needs literacy tutors to teach adults to read and write English. The new tutor training is from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 7, at 400 Old Bernal Ave. Registration is required; call 931-3411 or e-mail jbaum@ci.pleasanton.ca.us.

TV30

Tri-Valley Sports Final Tune in as hosts Ian Bartholomew, George "Dr. B" Baljevich and Dennis Miller provide up to the minute sports reporting on Tri-Valley High Schools. Exciting footage and commentary covering basketball and soccer is on at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., daily; also, Monday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 10 p.m.



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AAA Travel Fair—Dublin/Livermore

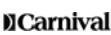



Join AAA Travel - Dublin/Livermore for our Travel Fair. Meet representatives from our preferred partners.

When: Saturday, February 7, 2009
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Where: 4460 Tassajara Rd, Suite B
Dublin, CA 94568
Time: 11:00 am - 2:00 pm
RSVP: (925) 479-7884
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- Exclusive AAA Member benefits*
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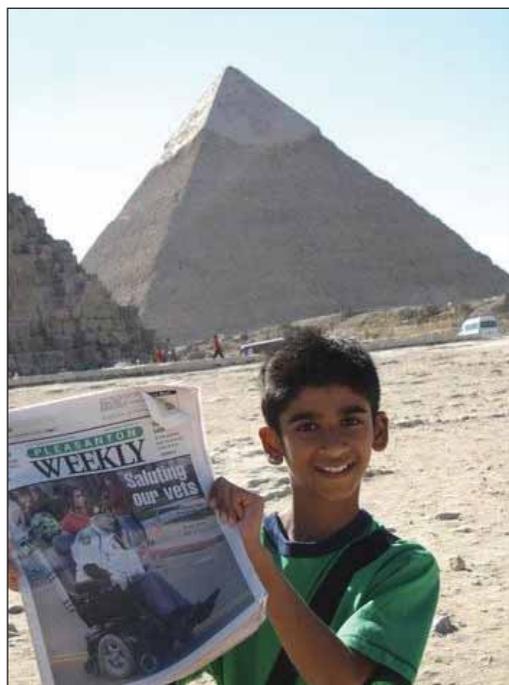
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Egyptian education: Jash Vora took the Weekly to the Great Pyramids Of The Ghiza in Cairo, Egypt with his parents and grandparents. Jash especially enjoyed his Egyptian vacation because he had just finished studying about Ancient Egypt in history at Harvest Park Middle School.



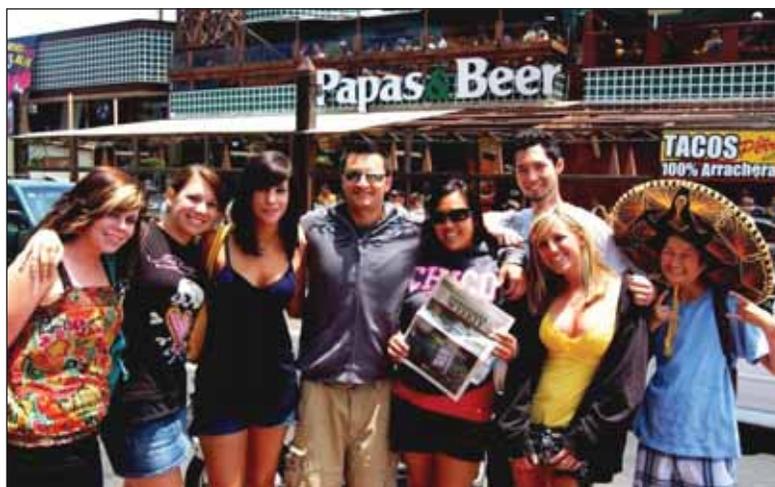
When in Rome, read the Weekly: Jane Kobayashi, who works in the City Clerk's office for the city of Pleasanton, sent us this photo of her and the Weekly near the Fontana del Moro at Piazza Navona, Rome.



Weekly waverunner: Amador Valley High manages to keep his copy of the Weekly line wakeboarding with the other on Lake Shasta. Chris was a bit of a waverunner in such distracting conditions! Chris was a waverunner for their annual summer houseboating trip.

Graduating the Weekly:

Katie Reilly, Michelle Jones, Rachel Mclean, Jason Louie, Tiffany Louie, Josh Buck, Katelyn Drumm and Zac Aufdermaur pose with the Weekly in Ensenada, Mexico. The teens were on a cruise to Mexico for their graduation from Amador Valley High School.



TAKE US

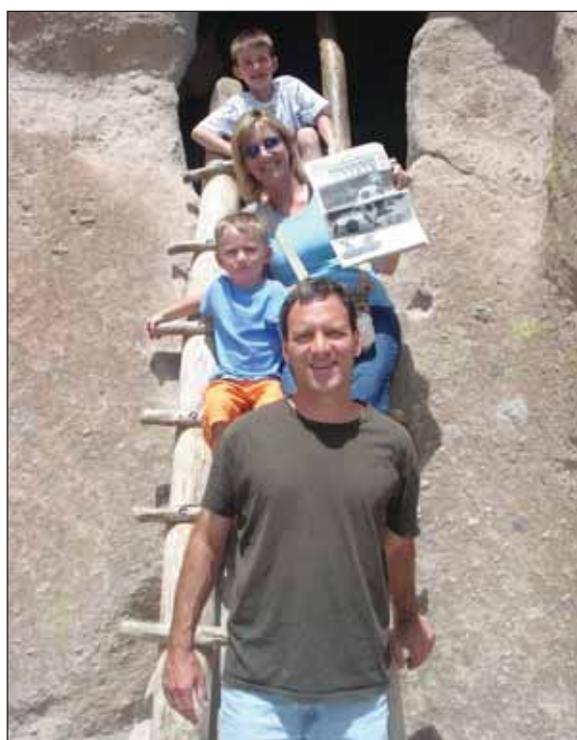
We're nearing a decade of your vacation photos

Inside a cage in shark-infested waters. In the hand of a wakeboarder on Lake Shasta. With President Barack Obama (okay, so it's only a cut-out, but hey, it's an A for effort). Those are just a few of the places the Pleasanton Weekly has been to in our eighth anniversary edition of Take Us Along, seen here in this spread of some of the best

we've received over the past year.

As we near a decade of your vacation photos, Take Us Along has remained popular and in fact, the competition is getting stiffer with readers finding more creative and imaginative ways to include their copy of the Weekly on their trip.

It all started unofficially when for-



A Weekly climb: Nick, 9, Alec, 4, and parents Laura and Rob took the Weekly with them to New Mexico. First, they went to Bishop's Lodge in Santa Fe, then to a national monument in Bandalier. While in Bandalier, they climbed a 140-foot ladder to cave dwellings where Indians lived over 400 years ago.



Count Weekly: Daniela Hansell poses with the Weekly at Bran's Castle in Transylvania, Romania, which is known as Dracula's Castle, near Brasov. Daniela reports "luckily, I had all that garlic at lunch to keep Dracula at bay!"



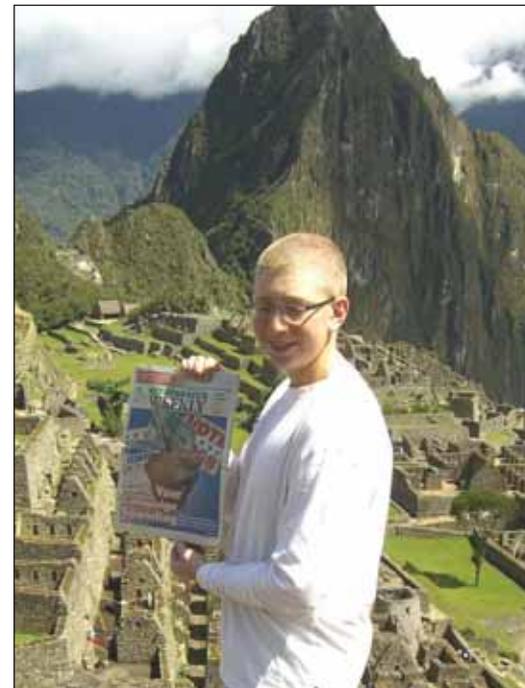
Two-wheeling Weekly: Heidi White of Cyclebath bicycle shop downtown sent us this photo of a weekly group ride. Can you guess how many wheels are in this photo? Neither can we.



School senior Chris Connolly somehow stays dry in one hand while he holds the Weekly of course in the other. It's no easy feat and we're proud of him—and focus—to be able to read in the surf at the lake with his and another family on a trip.



The Italian Job: Tonni Chandler, a local Realtor, poses with her daughter Courtney (and the Weekly of course) in Portofino, Italy. Chandler, her daughters and friends Evette and Danielle Pope traveled for two weeks across northern Italy: Milano, Lake Como, Venice, Siena, San Gimignano, Castellina, Greve, Pisa, Cinque Terre, Santa Margherita and Portofino. Chandler adds that the highlight for her girls was a gondola ride in Venice, naturally.



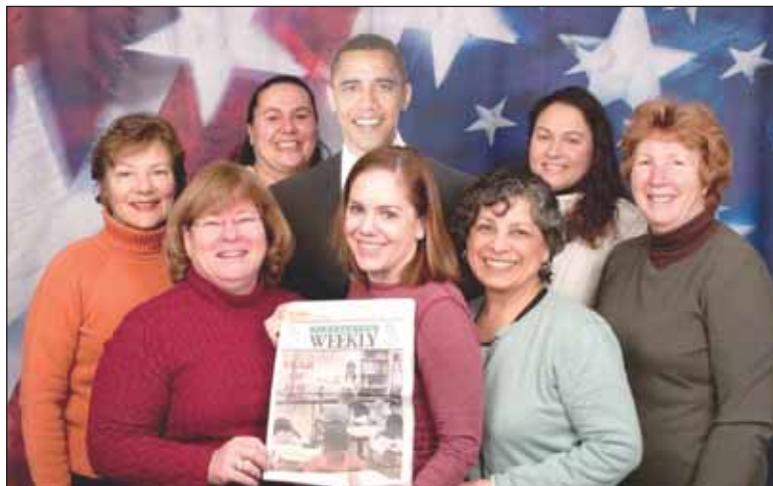
Lost Weekly: Brandon James traveled with the Weekly on a school trip to Machu Picchu in Peru. Often referred to as the "Lost City of the Incas," it was built around 1460, but was abandoned as an official site for Incan rulers a hundred years later, at the time of the Spanish conquest of the Inca Empire.

TRAVELING ALONG

As you travel and as the years pass, you're upping the ante

Our former Police Chief Tim Neal sent us a snapshot of him, the Weekly and the Statue of Liberty and eight years later and a waiting list to boot, you continue to elicit smiles around our office with your photos. In fact, we even have some "return customers" if you will, and we enjoy recognizing faces of people we've seen around town.

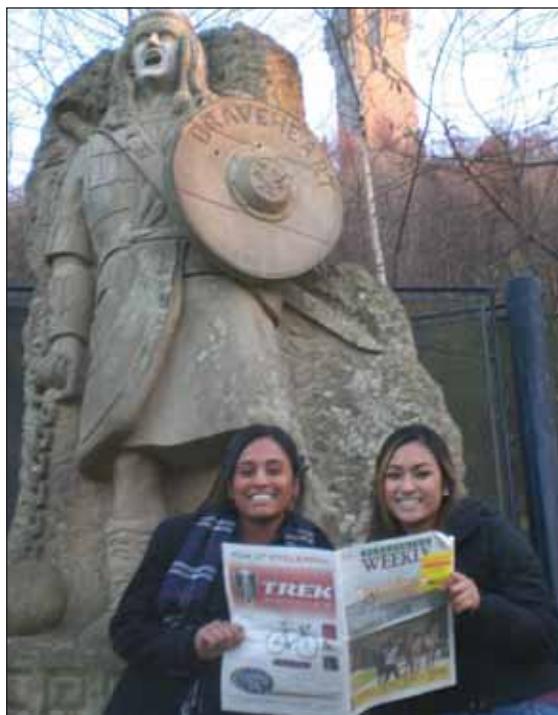
Keep 'em coming: Send photos to editor@pleasantonweekly.com, subject line "Take Us Along," or mail to Pleasanton Weekly, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Ste. 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566. Any caption information such as who is in the photo, where you are and anything fun you did on your trip is appreciated. Happy travels!



Weekly-in-chief: Mary Jane Casper, Andrea Ramirez, Angela Ramirez Holmes, Peggy Herndon, Cheryl Cook-Kallio, Susan Piekarski and Gloria Dyer share a copy of the Weekly with President Obama (okay, so it may be just his likeness) in Washington, D.C. during the inauguration.



Members of the Cyclepath Pleasanton riding group ready to depart on one of the shop's free



Braving Scotland: Robin Brozosky and her friend Shilpa Girimalji, both from Pleasanton and students at UC Santa Barbara, brought the Weekly along to Scotland. Here they are in front of the William Wallace Monument and the Braveheart statue. The pair spent the fall semester studying abroad in Stirling, Scotland.



Aruba, Jamaica, ooh I wanna take ya...: Kyle, Janet, Steve and Troy Bachand took the Weekly along to scenic Aruba. Here they are at the Natural Bridge.

Living

Get jazzed

Award-winning vocalist Sophie Milman performs at the Amador Theater



Sophie Milman is a 25-year-old up-and-coming jazz vocalist. She will be performing at the Amador Theater Feb. 6.

by Emily West



At 25, jazz vocalist Sophie Milman has toured the world, won a Juno and sold more than 100,000 records.

Local audiences have the opportunity to catch this star on the rise when she makes a stop at the Amador Theater Feb. 6. Jazz enthusiasts may be familiar with the

Russian-born singer who emigrated to Israel then to Canada, where she blossomed into a glamorous vocalist. Her music has been on the Billboard Top 15 in the United States and the Billboard Top 5 in Canada, as well as the iTunes jazz charts in five different territories.

She recently added a Juno for her most recent album, "Make Someone Happy," which won for best vocal jazz album of 2008. All this praise has landed her features in Hello!, Q, Jazz Times, Elle magazine and "Entertainment Tonight," to name a few.

Rob Vogt, Amador Theater supervisor, said it was Milman's rich tone that impressed him about a year and a half ago, when she performed at Yoshi's in Oakland.

"She does an American songbook," he said. "She has a really rich, mellow sound and is very engaging with the audience."

Adding her to the Civic Arts season lineup is part of a future goal of expanded jazz offerings.

"We're trying to develop our jazz program in preparation for the Firehouse Arts Center," Vogt added. "There we hope to have a full series of jazz programs."

In the past few years, Civic Arts has offered one or two jazz music events in a season. Following Milman's performance will be the Brubeck Brothers Quartet at 8 p.m. Feb. 13, which leads into the Campana Jazz Festival on Feb. 14.

Milman's Pleasanton debut will begin at 8 p.m. Feb. 6 at the Amador Theater, located at 1155 Santa Rita Road. Tickets are \$20, \$25 and \$30 and may be purchased at www.civictickets.org up to three hours prior to the performance, by phone at 931-3444 or in person at the Amador Theater box office, open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday and two hours prior to the performance.

Hear a sampling of Milman's work at www.myspace.com/sophiemilman. ■

Make it a date night

Don't forget the kids! While parents can enjoy the Sophie Milman Concert, kids can look forward to rocking out at the Kids Create a Night of Musical Fun.

Drop off the little ones, first through fifth-graders, and they will be in for a night of music food and games.

Mark Duncanson, recreation program specialist for the city of Pleasanton, said the night will be akin to "School of Rock." There will be a sing-along, high school musicians, a drum set, karaoke—basically it will be a night devoid of silence.

"It's going to be a good night of silly fun," he said.

Parents can drop kids off at the Amador Recreation Center before Sophie Milman takes the stage.

For more information about Civic Arts programs, visit www.pleasantoncivicsarts.org.

CIVIC ARTS

Now Showing

Waltz with Bashir

★★★★

Rated: R for some disturbing images of atrocities, strong violence, brief nudity and a scene of graphic sexual content
In Hebrew with English subtitles
1 hour, 27 minutes

Israeli writer-director Ari Folman has created a fascinating, haunting animated feature about the shock-and-awe inflicted on the human psyche by the horrors of war. The 2008 Cannes Film Festival hit and Israel's official submission to the foreign-language category of the 81st Academy Awards unspools like a fever dream—in hallucinatory images and vivid hues—that can't be shaken from waking life. Folman joins arms with the great anti-war filmmakers of cinema history to pronounce that war is hell.

And animation isn't just for kids anymore.

A pack of snarling black dogs, yellow eyes glaring, bounds towards the camera like beasts from hell—an opening image that conveys the recurring nightmare of a former Israeli soldier who recounts the frightening dream to Folman, in a bar, in the middle of the night. The army buddies conclude that the persistent nightmare must be connected to their Lebanon War experience. Since Folman seems to have repressed his own memories of the 1982 invasion, he sets out to discover the truth by talking with other veterans who had served with him.

The eight eyewitnesses chase the ghosts of memory, adding to the steadily growing flow of information about the attack on Beirut and subsequent Sabra and Shatila refugee camp massacres committed by the Lebanese Christian Phalangists. Are the accounts reportage or fantasy? Sociological expose or psychosis? One of the many layers of the film addresses the timeless question: What is truth?

Rarely does a movie raise so many complex issues in such a short time. The only female in a major role,

Professor Zahava Solomon (voiced by herself), brings psychological expertise to the philosophical introspection about truth and memory. The post-traumatic stress expert discusses the disassociative disorder that protected the psyches of the Israeli soldiers but also blinded them, making them complicit in the killing of Palestinian civilians. Representing Israel's collective amnesia, Folman and his friends must sift through their memory banks of historical fact and fancy to acknowledge their wartime roles and reclaim their lives.

Truth may be elusive, but palpable are the 20-plus years of post-traumatic stress and pain suffered by Boaz Rein Buskila (acted and voiced by Mickey Leon), Ori Sivan (himself), Roni Dayg (himself), Carmi Cnaa'n (acted and voiced by Yehezkel Lazarov), Shmuel Frenkel (himself), Ron Ben Yisahi (himself), Dror Harzi (himself) and Folman (himself). Their interviews are illustrated in simple, stark images that give way to the stylized flashbacks of their memories. The different animation styles separate current reality from the remembered past, as the former soldiers dredge up dreadful recollections.

A key scene gives the film its title and political context. As though in a trance, Frenkel grabs a machine gun and rushes into a street, dancing amidst the gunfire while crazily firing his weapon. The poster of Bashir Gemayel, the Lebanese president whose assassination triggered the loyalist Phalangist militia's anti-Muslim attacks, looms over the Israeli soldier's insane behavior.

But dodging bullets, while spraying gunfire everywhere, is not dancing. Instead of madly waltzing with Bashir, Folman urges individuals and nations to stop gliding into warfare and say "never again"—not in three-quarter's time but for all time.

Don't miss one of the most powerful, thought-provoking movies of the year.

—Susan Tavernetti

Ready to Rent

RocknRolla

Warner DVD

1 hour, 54 minutes

Director: Guy Ritchie

Once upon a time, before he was Mr. Madonna, director Guy Ritchie was known for making hyperbolic, independent-minded British gangster movies that were equal parts MTV-styled action laced with cockney comedy. With Ritchie's latest, "RocknRolla," it feels like the reawakening of a comatose man who has been out of touch for so long his manners, although skewed, are something of a comfort to those who still harbor fond memories. The movie has all the familiar ingredients of the Ritchie oeuvre—a complex heist, double-and-triple crosses, evil gangsters and cryptic, London street dialog—but there's an underlying feeling of exhaustion at its heart, as if the writer-director knew what he had to do, but the thrill had gone. Despite its indifference, "RocknRolla" still has a chirpy impudence that will make Ritchie fans not so much happy, but more contented that he's still remembers what we liked best about his movies.

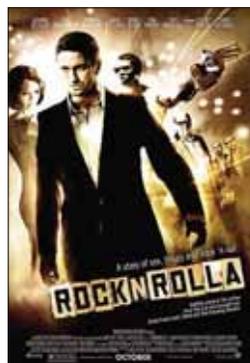
Guy Ritchie announced himself, loudly, with 1998's "Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels," whose sentiments were more of a summation of sleek Brit-styles that had been evolving throughout the nineties. With the help of Sting and his wife, Ritchie made a very small budgeted movie a huge hit in England and a cult classic in the United States, while introducing both Jason Stratham and Vinne Jones to us. It was 2000's "Snatch," however, that really sealed Ritchie's resume; it was "Lock Stock" redux, with a bigger budget, a tighter scrip, and a realized feeling of cheeky anarchy, a feeling that gave fans a glimpse of what fun may come. That fun was sapped, however, mysteriously coinciding with his marriage to a certain mega-popstar, where fare like Ritchie's "Swept Away" (2003) made the superstitious believe that he

was under an evil curse. "RocknRolla" feels like that curse has been lifted, but not without its price.

It is another mega-popstar, Johnny Quid (appropriately daffy Toby Kebbell), whose associates may believe he's harboring a curse as well, as that all who come in contact with him appear doomed. Johnny has been missing, believed murdered by his gangster-father Lenny Cole (a dastardly Tom Wilkinson), who's also trying to do some shady business with Russian businessman Uri (Karel Roden). Lenny, however, is also attempting to double-cross Uri—selling land to him which Lenny (unbeknownst to Uri) already owns. To make things even more complicated, Uri's lawyer Stella (Thandie Newton) also is scamming Uri, employing a gang headed by One-Two (Gerard "Freedom!" Butler) to steal Uri's down payments to Lenny. Meanwhile, Johnny is very much alive, surviving on drugs and rock 'n' roll in a dilapidated flat, and whose exile takes on a new dimension when a priceless painting owned by Uri winds up in his arms.

What works in "RocknRolla" is the movie's willingness to take its time, albeit at the expense of our attention. The plot is complex, but Ritchie makes it fun to unravel while providing some throwaway scenes to keep us entertained. While there are some strong actors here, it is Kebbell's Johnny that charges the screen every time he's on. With his gaunt frame and stylized street bard, Johnny is a hellion, although a moldy one, and Kebbell plays him as a strung out Hamlet in a purgatory of glam.

—Joe Ramirez



Concert pianist opens arts, music academy

Classes offered in piano, voice, guitar, music theory

Pleasanton is now the home of Inspire Academy of Music and Arts. Founded by award-winning concert pianist and Pleasanton resident Tamriko Siprashvili, it offers group and private lessons in piano, guitar, voice and advanced placement music theory. Opening Jan. 19, the academy is still accepting students for the winter/spring semester.

Joining Siprashvili, a Steingway Artist who has performed in concerts around the world, are voice teacher Sarah Franklin, classical guitarist Ben Barron, and piano teachers Debbie Boyden, Danielle Naler and Victoria Ball.

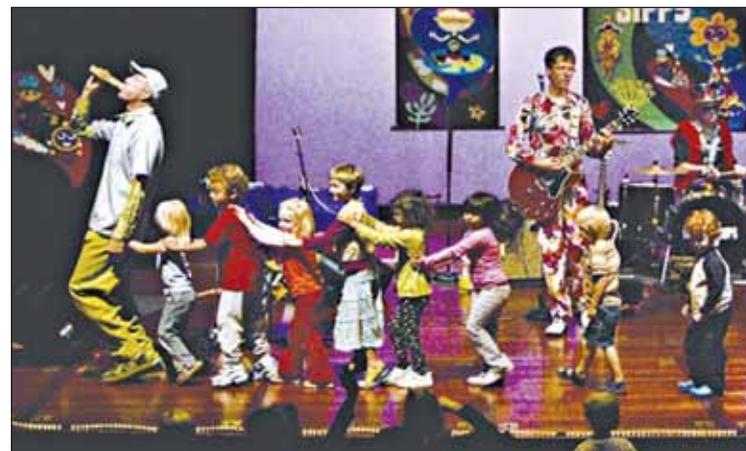
Classes are available for all ages, including group piano lessons for children ages 4 to 6 following the "Music for Little Mozarts" curriculum.

To learn more about Inspire Academy of Music and Arts, call 461-3266 or visit www.inspiremusicacademy.com.



Tamriko Siprashvili

—Emily West



Rock out with The Sippy Cups

Family rock band The Sippy Cups will be the fourth and final show in the Civic Arts SaturYAY! series. The 11 a.m. matinee Feb. 7 at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road, is a family show promoting wholesome principles. It also features a circus performer and large-scale puppets.

Tickets are \$10, \$14 and \$18 for adults and \$6, \$10 and \$14 for children. Purchase them at www.civicartstickets.org, by calling 931-3444 or in person at the Amador Theater box office.



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ON THE TOWN



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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.

MEDITERRANEAN

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Pleasanton Weekly's BEST OF PLEASANTON 2007



Wine Makers Dinner
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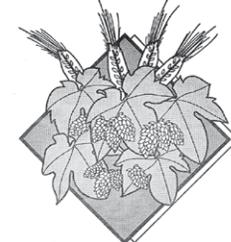
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ON THE TOWN



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ITALIAN

Amarone Ristorante

680 Main St, Downtown Pleasanton, 270-0500. Cucina Italiana! Freshly prepared authentic Italian specials on a full-course menu that changes often! A special Vegetarian and Vegan menu also. Owner Matteo Pasotto is from Verona and he wanted to name his restaurant after the famous Amarone wines from the Valpolicella region. Amarone is a very peculiar wine, not easy to produce. The final result is a very ripe, big-bodied wine with very little acid. Come and experience unique dining at Amarone Ristorante. Buon Appetito!
www.amaronepleasanton.com

Fontina Ristorante

349 Main St., Pleasanton, 462-9299. This popular downtown restaurant gets rave reviews from both locals and visitors. Fontina

offers a changing, seasonal menu and daily specials—including homemade soups, pastas, seafood, chicken and veal—served in a comfortably elegant atmosphere. We have indoor and outdoor seating. Join us for Saturday and Sunday champagne brunch.

La Vite Ristorante

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3105-K Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 462-3131. Makoto Sato, Owner Operator has been serving traditional Japanese cuisine for over 25 years in Pleasanton. Enjoy the variety of our sushi bar and Japanese tempura and teriyaki sushi. We are open for lunch and dinner. We

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Sports

Parent photographers

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

CCOP girls conquer shootout

CCOP's sixth and seventh-grade girls won their first and second round games in the 23rd annual Sierra Valley Shootout Tournament Jan. 17 and 18 in Loyalton, Calif. The championship games pitted CCOP against teams from Little Flower in Reno, Nev. who also won their respective brackets easily. The seventh graders avenged a loss in last year's championship by defeating the Little Flower team 28-22.

Pressure defense, strong rebounding and an improved press made the difference. In their first year in the tournament, and despite suiting up only five players, the sixth graders played up tempo and used great ball movement to run past Little Flower's sixth-graders bringing home the championship.

Pictured: Front row (l-r): Sara Pease, Olivia Brown, Cambi Cukar, Vanessa Villanueva, Sabrina Ehlert, Nikki Costello and Emily Christensen; back: Bailey Costello, Emily Barrett, Aria Mack,



Courtney Seams, Marianne Fernandez and Nisha Kale; not pictured Juliana Amante.



Seahawks' Silverthorn sets new records

Pleasanton Seahawks swimmer Nick Silverthorn set three new USA Swimming Individual National Age Group Records. In addition, he has also set 10 new Pacific Swimming Records and was a member of six National All Star Relay Records.

Swimming World Magazine has selected Silverthorn as Age Group Swimmer of the Month and will run a feature piece in March. In January, he was named Pacific Swimming outstanding athlete for 11-12 boys in both long and short course season's. He is also currently ranked No. 1 in the country in many events.



Ballistic are now the "Batman"

The Ballistic U-13 Boys soccer team built on their success as Golden State Soccer League season champs to advance out of pool play in the CYSA State Cup Jan. 24-25. The team now moves on to the round of 16.

The Ballistic boys, who have taken on the team nickname of the Batman, traveled to Hanford over the weekend. The first game Saturday was against the Madera Scorpions and Ballistic took an early lead and won 9-0. The second game was much tighter against Elk Grove Everton and they won 3-1. Joey Devivo put Ballistic up 1-0 on a goal about halfway through the first half, Everton came right back to tie the game

at one. In the second half, Eric Toombs scored to put Ballistic up to stay and Devivo added an insurance goal near the end.

On Sunday, Ballistic played the North Fresno Cyclones. Halfway through the first half, Marco Neves broke a scoreless tie by splitting through the Cyclones back line and drilling a shot into the lower left corner of the net to make the score 1-0. After the halftime break, Ballistic broke the game open with three goals in the first seven minutes of the second half. Goals were scored by Devivo, Toombs, and a second by Neves. Ballistic played solid to the end with Nate Grixti and Brandon Inchauspe adding a goal each while the Cyclones got on the board at the end to make the final 6-1.



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- and much more.

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PLEASANTON WEEKLY.COM

Purchase Your Home in '09!

Max has plenty of homes ready for you!

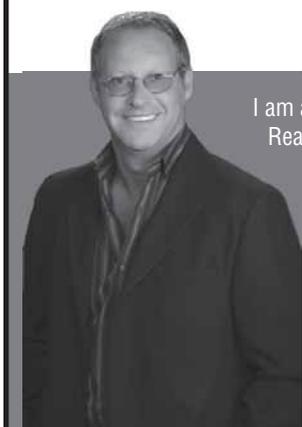


Lowry Park, Fremont
33057 Lake Michigan St
\$387,000

4BR/2BA home. Bank owned property in a great neighborhood.

Suisun City
614 Wigeon Way
\$160,000

4BR/2BA home. Nice clean bank owned property on a huge lot.



I am a full time Realtor. I specialize in REOs, short sales and residential Real Estate in the East Bay. For more information please contact my website www.maxdevries.com.

Max de Vries
Your Preferred REALTOR®

925.525.0116
max@schubb.com
CA Real Estate License #01373199



Real Estate

Home sale of the week



**737 Vineyard Terrace
Pleasanton –
\$1,568,000**

This brand new home offers 5 bedrooms, 4.5 bathrooms and sits on a .68 acre lot in a country vineyard setting. The designer granite kitchen features stainless steel appliances and hardwood flooring. The backyard has been professionally landscaped. Sold by Tim McGuire with Alain Pinel Realtors. (925) 462-7653

Real estate in 2009

What's in store for the new year?

by Joe Brown

The year 2008 was one of ups and downs for the Bay Area real estate market. So, the question likely on the minds of many this new year is what's in store for 2009?

Of course, much of the real estate prognosis is dependent on the state of the financial system



in general and real estate finance situation, in particular. The fact is, we really can't find traction until the financial markets stabilize.

Knowing this, many experts are predicting that once the fiscal stimulus being created by lawmakers and aggressive action by the Federal Reserve kick in, the economy is likely to improve. According to the California Association of Realtors' California Housing Market Forecast for 2009, "Home prices throughout most areas of California will post

(continued on page 26)

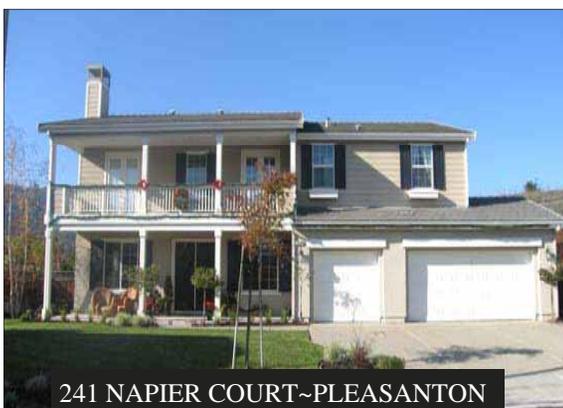


Emily Barraclough and Peter McDowell

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Concierge Real Estate OPEN THE DOOR TO FULL SERVICE



241 NAPIER COURT~PLEASANTON

Stunning Castlewood Heights home. 5 Bedrooms, 4 Baths, + a spacious bonus room. Huge great room with vaulted ceilings, and lots of natural light. Gorgeous kitchen. Bed/Bath down. Amazing Foothill views from front porch. Large resort like backyard with pool & spa.

Offered at \$1,469,000



5517 CORTE SONORA~ PLEASANTON

Spacious 3 Bedroom 2.5 Bath home located in the popular Del Prado neighborhood. Light and bright kitchen with breakfast nook area. Lovely formal dining and living rooms. Large backyard with side yard access and covered patio. Great value for Pleasanton.

Offered at \$664,000



3552 VINE STREET~PLEASANTON

Absolutely stunning custom home on a large lot close to historic downtown, with upgrades galore, 3 Bedrooms, 3 baths, + office/den. Approx. 2668 sq. ft. of comfortable living space. 2-car attached garage plus a 1200 +/- sq.ft. workshop garage in back. Fabulous pool & spa.

Offered at \$1,275,000



35 FAWN DRIVE~LIVERMORE

Wonderful home with a nice open floor plan and designer paint colors. Formal living and dining rooms. Kitchen opens to family room with fireplace. Beautifully landscaped yards. Spacious 3-car garage. Great location, close to shopping and EZ freeway access.

Offered at \$460,000

J. Rockcliff



REALTORS

THE EAST BAY'S PREMIER
REAL ESTATE COMPANY.

www.DeniseIvaldi.com

FREMONT
44763 AGUILA TER \$3,100,000
Gorgeous custom home! Awesome views!! Lots of upgrades, exclusive neighborhood, top rated schools, perfect home for entertaining, large gourmet kitchen, full wet bar, built in bbq, inground pool/spa, formal dining room, extra large family room, office/library, loft w/ deck upstairs, must see!
DENISEIVALDI 925.846.7997

www.RubyHillLiving.com

PLEASANTON
2156 CANOSA CT \$2,799,000
Experience vineyard living in this gorgeous Mediterranean home. Premium cul-de-sac location with expansive city views from the front and hills in the back. Grand marble foyer with wrought iron stairway. Enjoy the privacy of pool-sized yard with covered patio nestled among sloping hills
ANJU BHATIA 925.577.2658

www.KristyandCompany.com

CASTRO VALLEY
32777 PALOMARES RD \$1,110,000
Bay Area Canyon Living at its Best. This property is nestled in Beautiful Palomares Canyon, Dreams can come true. This nice home offers a large living room, Views from every window, Privacy, Nice peaceful setting, Animals and Nature at its Best, Gated entrance, This property has over 5 acres
KRISTY PEIXOTO 925.251.2536

www.DavidAzimi.com

SAN RAMON
2024 FEATHERMINT DR \$1,299,999
Previous Model Home in Gale Ranch, Beautiful Kitchen, Amazing Views of Dougherty Valley, In-Law Quarters with Separate Kitchen! The home is missing various elements and will require work.
DAVID AZIMI 925.251.2580

www.StaciArmario.com

PLEASANTON
5648 BELLEZA DRIVE \$389,000
You have to see it to believe it. Corner unit with decorator touches. Perfect condition. Attached 1 car garage. Upstairs unit with patio. Community pool and spa and club house. This is resort living at its finest.
STACI ARMARIO 925.251.2526

Wine Country Unique Opportunity

LIVERMORE
HANSEN ROAD \$1,499,000
Under the South Livermore Valley Specific Plan this site is designated for a "Wine Country Retail". Conceptual drawings for 25,000 SF conservatory/retail/event center are available. Owners interested in joint-venture or partnership Carry-back possible. Seller RE agt.
THOMAS BRAMELL 925.583.2180

www.RebeccaLEvans.com

LIVERMORE
5665 VICTORIA LN \$1,299,950
Sharp horse property located on a private road nestled amongst custom estates in the heart of the Livermore wine country Almost 6 flat acres with 4 barns & fenced pastures Updated Kitchen w hickory cabinets, newer s/s appl, laminate flooring throughout.
ELIA VALENCIA 925.784.0667

RUBY HILL LAND

PLEASANTON
3748 SELVANTE ST \$868,000
Incredible Views of Mt. Diablo and Pleasanton Hills. Located on a Quiet St. with Complete Approved Building Plans for a 6300+ Sq Ft Mediterranean Style Dream Home. Bldg Prmit Pd. New Retaining Wall is Securely in Place. Owner Financing for Lot.
COREY GREEN 925.899.6011

www.GailHenderson.com

LIVERMORE
776 TRAVISO CIR \$899,000
Gorgeous, stunning, it has it all and at a great price! 5 BR/4.5 Baths, GAME ROOM/home gym, den, formal dining, formal living, LARGE family room. SYA. Slab granite, stainless steel 2bl ovens, WOLF cook top, blt in refrigerator. Crown molding. Huge yard. Don't miss it!!
GAIL HENDERSON 925.980.5648

www.MadelineWalker.com

LIVERMORE
937 VIA SEVILLE \$499,000
Unbelievable 5-bedroom, 3 bath home for the price. Like new inside. Remodeled & updated in 2004. 50-yr roof. Energy efficient - solar electric powered. Almost no PG&E bill! A/C plus attic fan + whole house fan. Dual-pane windows. New patio & walkways. Mini vineyard- make wine with the neighbors!
MADLINE WALKER 1.800.319.8991

REO/Bank Owned

BRENTWOOD
1231 EXETER WAY \$352,900
Great One Story Home in an Established Neighborhood! Walk to the park and expanded Greenbelt! Open Floor Plan. Fully Landscaped, 3 car garage. THIS IS A MUST SEE!
VERONICA CLYATT 925.989.4968

www.wilson-fontaine.com

LIVERMORE
878 WAVERLY CMN \$513,799
Serene sanctuary in the rolling hills! It is also the perfect home for entertaining with high ceilings, a flowing floor plan, a gourmet A&E with a hardwood floor and open living-dining room with a private glassed atrium featuring the tinkling sound of a water fountain. Sanctuary or Party?
KAREN WILSON-FONTAINE 925.583.2171

Single Story

LIVERMORE
2752 CHABLIS WAY \$855,000
This beauty is located in one of Livermore's few custom built home locations. Quiet, very private, and just a ten minute walk to town. There is beautiful curb appeal, warmth when you walk in, and lots of beautiful wood. Ideal for family gatherings. A small park and pool are shared only by owners.
ANGELA ADAMS 925.580.4513

www.MadelineWalker.com

LIVERMORE
302 ALDEN LN \$1,100,000
Former Model home with many custom extras by builder. Fam. Rm w/surround sound. Soft water system. Backyard re-landscaped in 2006 w/custom self-maintained free-form pool. Outdoor kitchen w/BBQ, 2 refrig's, wine kegger, lights, music! Custom Gazebo. Tropical paradise! 1 story + loft! No HOA
MADLINE WALKER 1.800.319.8991

www.TomChance.com

LIVERMORE
564 ANDREA CIR \$675,000
Simply Beautiful! Quality built and impeccably maintained. Move right into this 4 bedroom 2 bath home on private circle. Loaded with upgrades including New Roof 06; New Furnace/AC in 07; Hickory Laminate Flooring, Andersen Windows & More. Close to all conveniences: Parks, Shopping, Labs, Schools.
TOM E. CHANCE 925.487.6360

www.StaciArmario.com

FREMONT
4561 BIANCA DR \$400,000
Great Fremont home at a great price with newer landscaped front and back yard, newer Roof, double pane windows, and central heat, in a quiet neighborhood.
STACI ARMARIO 925.251.2526

Blackhawk 4105 Blackhawk Plaza Cir. Danville, CA 94506 925.648.5300	Blackhawk West 3880 Blackhawk Rd. Danville, CA 94506 925.736.6000	Danville 15 Railroad Ave. Danville, CA 94526 925.855.4000	Lafayette 3799 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Ste. 100 Lafayette, CA 94549 925.253.7001	Livermore 1983 Second Street Livermore, CA 94550 925.667.2100	Orinda 89 Davis Rd., Ste. 100 Orinda, CA 94563 925.253.7000	Pleasanton 5075 Hopyard Rd., #110 Pleasanton, CA 94588 925.251.2500	Walnut Creek 100 N. Main St. Walnut Creek, CA 94596 925.280.8500
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www.rockcliff.com

OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

ALAMO

4 Bedrooms
70 Zand Lane \$1,165,000
 Sun 1-4 Remax Accord 895-2804

DUBLIN

4 Bedrooms
4917 Redwood Avenue \$678,888
 Sat 1-4 Hometown GMAC 858-5400

PLEASANTON

3 Bedrooms
1485 Trimmingham Drive \$498,888
 Sun 1-4 Investment Real Estate Co. 963-0569

7748 Creekside Drive \$549,999
 Sun 1-4 Hometown GMAC 989-5695

6038 Corte Encinas \$639,000
 Sat 1-4 Prudential CA Realty 858-4198

4 Bedrooms
4914 Middleton Place \$1,475,000
 Sat 1-4 Prudential CA Realty 462-9175

2320 Crestline \$645,000
 Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel Realtors 519-9080

1766 Orchard \$699,000
 Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel Realtors 519-9080

4263 Croce Court \$729,950
 Sat 1-4 Investment Real Estate Co. 963-0569

5114 Mt. Tam Circle \$949,000
 Sun 12-2:30 Alain Pinel Realtors 997-2411

5 Bedrooms
1368 Royal Creek Court \$1,238,888
 Sun 1-4 Keller Williams Realty 260-2508

LIVERMORE

3 Bedrooms
3637 Carrigan Common \$199,000
 Sun 12-2 J Rockcliff 583-2169

2155 Shetland Road \$399,950
 Sat 1-4 J Rockcliff Realtors 583-2177

4 Bedrooms
2690 Tuscany Court \$1,047,000
 Sat 1-4 Prudential Ruby Hill Realty 417-2250

Sales at a Glance

Source: California REsource

Dublin	Livermore	Pleasanton	San Ramon
Total sales reported: 10	Total sales reported: 16	Total sales reported: 5	Total sales reported: 7
Lowest sale reported: \$220,000	Lowest sale reported: \$205,000	Lowest sale reported: \$569,000	Lowest sale reported: \$200,000
Highest sale reported: \$940,000	Highest sale reported: \$870,000	Highest sale reported: \$2,625,000	Highest sale reported: \$959,000
Average sales reported: \$502,700	Average sales reported: \$440,000	Average sales reported: \$1,233,800	Average sales reported: \$573,428

2009 real estate

(continued from page 24)

declines next year while sales of existing homes will continue to rise."

The Oct. 15 report predicts that the median home prices in California will decline 6 percent from 2008 expectations to \$358,000 in 2009, but sales are projected to increase 12.5 percent to 445,000 units.

According to the National Association of Realtors' third quarter 2008 housing market update, "The U.S. economy has entered a recession and will contract for the next three quarters. The recovery, beginning in the second half of 2009, will be tepid. The unemployment rate will peak at 6.7 percent by mid-next year before steadily holding down. Despite these challenging economic times, existing home sales will be rising."

Possibly the most important ingredient in the 2009 real estate correction is the fact that real estate makes up 20 percent of the Gross Domestic Product in this country and, regardless of which side of the political fence you fall on, our country cannot be fixed without first fixing the housing sector. With this important information in tow, there are currently several key indicators that may position our country for a real estate recovery in 2009:

- **Dropping Interest Rates**—According to NAR's Dec. 17, 2008 article entitled "Fed Action Creates Best Interest Rates in 50 Years," mortgage rates which had averaged 6.3 percent in the third quarter, have recently fallen into the 4 percent range in some parts of the country. The article went on to report, "NAR has estimated that a one percentage point decrease in mortgage rates will increase home sales by more than 500,000 homes."

- **Improving Affordability**—The CAR

reports that the percentage of households that could afford to buy an entry level home in California stood at 53 percent in the third quarter of 2008, compared with 24 percent for the same period a year ago. In December's report from DataQuick News, a total of 5,754 new and resale homes and condos closed escrow in the Bay Area in November. That was up 12.3 percent from 5,127 sales in November 2007.

- **Government Intervention**—The government is currently looking at a number of corrector options including tax benefits, home ownership credits, subsidies or interest rate stabilization, to name a few. President Obama and his economic team are in the process of developing an economic recovery plan designed to help Main Street and Wall Street with an ultimate goal of creating at least 2.5 million jobs while rebuilding our infrastructure, improving our schools, reducing our dependence on oil and saving billions of dollars.

- **Slowing of Distressed Properties**—The timing of our price recovery may depend on how quickly the government takes steps to mitigate foreclosures. According to CAR, "We expect sales of distressed properties to peak in early 2009, a critical factor in the housing market that directly impacts the timeframe for stabilization in the median price." NAR also reported that lower interest rates coupled with increased foreclosure mitigation are the key ingredients to stabilizing the housing market and preserving communities and home ownership.

Many experts agree that the financial system will begin to show signs of stabilization in early 2009 and we may begin to see a real estate turnaround by the summer.

Joe Brown is president and chief operating officer of Coldwell Banker in Silicon Valley, Monterey Bay and the East Bay.

Featured Properties



Brentwood – Gorgeous 5 Bedroom, 4 Bathroom Home With Over 3000 Square Feet of Living Space That's Been Highly Upgraded! Beautiful Hardwood Floors in the Entry, Family Room and Kitchen. Plantation Shutters, Solid Granite Counters, Designer Paints, Travertine Floor in Master Bath. 3 Car Tandem Garage. Fully Landscaped Yards, Beautiful In-Ground Salt Water Pool with Waterfall and Spa.
1041 Citron Drive \$449,950



Livermore – Beautiful, well maintained 4 bedroom 3 bathroom home with approximately 2141 square feet, located on a cul-de-sac. Light, bright and open floor plan with newer paint in various rooms. Large Family Room, Dining Room and Kitchen. One full bed and bath on the main floor. Newer furnace and air conditioning. Large rear yard with hot tub and gazebo. Does not back to Vasco.
1141 Baltusrol Court \$659,900



Livermore – Beautiful 4 bedroom, 3 bathroom home with approximately 3000 square feet of living space located on approximately a 1/2 acre lot. Some of the features include Granite counters, maple cabinets, a double oven, wide plank flooring, plantation shutters, and a bonus room. Gorgeous yard with gated pool, sports court, play area, and mature trees. You won't want to miss it!
2690 Tuscany Court \$1,047,000



Pleasanton – Nicely appointed 5 bedroom, 4 bathroom home with almost 3500 square feet that features cherry laminate floors, granite slab, stainless steel appliances, plantation shutters, built-ins and a large bonus room/5th bedroom. Great views of the Pleasanton Hills, open space across the street, hot tub with stereo system stays. Large rear yard with arbor.
2100 Laguna Creek Lane \$1,169,900



Livermore – Living in the vineyards has never been better! Gorgeous 5 bedroom, 4 1/2 bathroom home with a guest suite above the garage. Incredible gourmet kitchen with stainless steel Viking appliances, Granite slab counters, tile floors and accents through-out. Tall, soaring ceilings, crown molding and surround sound. Beautiful Pebble Tec pool and spa, RV/Boat parking, and so much more!
3205 Derby Court \$1,324,900



Pleasanton – Gorgeous 5 bedroom, 4.5 bathroom Ruby Hill home with unbelievable views of the golf course and Mt. Diablo as well as great privacy. Located on approximately a half acre lot, this home should be considered if you're looking for a single story. The downstairs features 4 of the bedrooms as well as an office plus there's 1 bedroom and full bath upstairs.
1297 Via Di Salerno \$2,199,000



Pleasanton – Clawson-built custom estate overlooking Ruby Hill and the Livermore Wine Country. Thoughtful design and fine execution are combined to create a classic beauty. The 5 bedroom, 5 1/2 bathroom floor plan features outstanding décor, an enormous great room, formal dining room with adjoining butler's pantry and a temperature controlled wine storage.
2227 Manzano Court \$3,599,000



Pleasanton – Extraordinary Homes Sets New Standards with this "Brand New" Ruby Hill Custom Home. A Classic "Italian Villa" located on the Golf Course with Views, Privacy and Luxury Beyond Compare! From the Grand Foyer to the Twelve Seat Theater to the Pool, Spa, Game Room and Elevator, this Six Bedroom, Six Full Bathroom, Three Half Bathroom Property is a True Masterpiece!
1181 Germano Way \$5,888,888



Ruby Hill Division - 101 E. Vineyard Ave., Suite 103, Livermore, CA 94550

925.417.2250



The latest from The 680 Blog

YIKES! The Value of Your Home Dropped 44% Last Year!



According to ABC 7/KGO TV "Bay Area Home Prices Fall by 44%". Wow. I mean, I know the market is down, but 44%?? Really? In the last year?

They go on to explain: "DataQuick earlier reported that the median home price in the nine-county San Francisco Bay area fell nearly 44 percent, from \$587,500 in December 2007 to \$330,000 last month."

They did note that sales activity was also up sharply in December, up 18% from

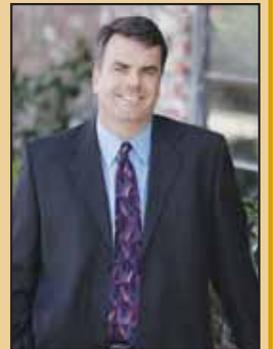
November and 48% from December 2007.

Now before you go out and mail your keys to the lender in lieu of the next mortgage payment, let me assure you that if you live in the Tri-Valley, your home has not dropped 44% since last December. What they are talking about is the Median Home Price. As discussed several times on this blog, the Median Home Price is a statistic that represents the mid-point of home sales prices (there are an equal number of home sales above and below this point). It is used to eliminate extreme sales (low or high) that would skew the Average Sales Price. The problem is that the Median Home Price represents.. well the median home price. It is not the same thing as Property Values. Statistically, if the market sees more activity on the lower end of the price scale, the Median Home Price will drop, perhaps markedly as in this case. While the Median Home Price can be useful in indicating major trends in >>Go to www.680Homes.com to read the rest of this article.



Doug Buenz

Office
925.251.1111
Direct
925.463.2000
680Homes.com



Expert real estate services

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



Fabulous Mediterranean style home with 5 BD + office, 4 1/2 BA w/gourmet maple/granite kitchen, luxurious master suite, 3 fireplaces, and incredible private .92 acre creek side lot.
Offered at \$1,645,000



Stunning 4 bedroom, 3 bath single story with huge bonus room. Over \$300k in recent upgrades, large private yard with outdoor kitchen & sparkling pool, and more!
Offered at \$1,499,000



Luxurious single story with 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, and a 1/3 acre cul-de-sac lot with views. Represented buyers.
Sold for \$1,025,000

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BLAISE LOFLAND



925.846.6500
www.blaiselofland.com
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apr.com

PLEASANTON HEIGHTS

NEW LISTING



857 (UPPER) ABBIE STREET, PLEASANTON

Private upgraded custom single story home on the crest of a hill with floor to ceiling windows to take in panoramic views of Pleasanton Ridge, oak studded hills and gorgeous sunsets. You are secluded yet in the heart of Pleasanton. Walk to Main Street and enjoy downtown Pleasanton. Large private grounds (16,308 sq. ft.) with exceptional views, guest unit/cabana, large patio areas with spa, and sitting/viewing deck for relaxing or entertaining! Save money in your solar powered home. 4 bd, downstairs bonus room (5th bd option). Approx. 3,437 sq. ft. including separate guest unit/cabana. Option to expand lower level within existing house footprint! Don't miss it! **OFFERED AT \$1,295,000**

PRIVATE CUSTOM ESTATE



3752 TRENERY DRIVE, PLEASANTON

Gorgeous Mediterranean custom home on premium +/- one acre estate lot. Private secluded location. This home has approximately 8,402 square feet (6,141 on main level), seven bedrooms plus private office, and seven and a half bathrooms. Expansive gourmet kitchen. Antique marble, and Brazilian cherry hardwood floors. Extremely private rear grounds—great for entertaining with in-ground swimming pool. Expansive lawn area and beautiful mature landscaping. Circular driveway and oversized four plus car garage. Conveniently located in town near services, activities, and walking distance to desirable Mohr Elementary! **OFFERED AT \$3,795,000**

SHADOW CLIFF

NEW LISTING

OPEN SAT 1-4



2860 EL CAPITAN DRIVE, PLEASANTON

Check out this updated single story home with three bedrooms, two baths, and approximately 1,140 square feet. Great starter home or investment property! Excellent condition! Lots of additional features including, new interior paint, new carpet and blinds throughout. Wilsonart wood flooring. New kitchen appliances. Central heat/air. Tile Roof. Private rear yard. Neighborhood park.
OFFERED AT \$549,500

OLDE TOWNE

PENDING



673 ABBIE STREET, PLEASANTON

Premium secluded location in desirable Olde Towne on .30 acre lot. Walk to Downtown Pleasanton! Professionally landscaped, private rear yard with finished decks and your own personal vineyard! Three bedrooms, two and a half baths. Approximately 2,000 square feet. Hardwood flooring. Newer roof. Three car garage. Excellent condition!
OFFERED AT \$899,500

Silver Oaks Estates

SOLD



BRAND NEW SINGLE LEVEL CUSTOM HOME

Brand new single level custom home. This premium .45 acre lot is surrounded by Oak studded open space. At the gateway to the Wine Country. Panoramic views of Mt. Diablo/the Valley. 4 bd/4.5 ba, formal office, plus/bonus room. Approx. 4,716 sq ft. Lg gourmet kitchen with granite slab/stainless steel appliances. Lg master suite with fireplace. Hardwood and marble flooring. Photovoltaic (5 kw) solar system. Professionally landscaped front yard. **OFFERED AT \$1,899,000**

SILVER OAKS PREMIUM LOTS ALSO AVAILABLE

- Wine Country Location
- Premium Level Lots
- Expansive Views
- Build Your Dream Home!

LOT	SIZE	HOME STYLE	PRICE
1	34,400	Single Story	\$649,000
2	23,670	Two Story	\$649,000
3	30,030	Two Story	SOLD!
4	20,300	Single Story	\$649,000
6	19,547	Single Story	SOLD!
7	22,494	Single Story	PENDING!

Visit www.SilverOaksEstates.com for more information

PLEASANTON 900 Main Street



Thinking of selling your home?
Let Alain Pinel Realtors list your property.
We have qualified buyers. Contact us today.



BLAISE LOFLAND BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$3,795,000
Gorgeous Mediterranean custom home. Private secluded location. Gourmet kitchen. Antique marble/hardwood floors. Private rear grounds—great for entertaining. In-ground pool/spa. Beautiful landscaping.

MOXLEY TEAM BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$2,395,000
Views of Pleasanton and backs to open space. Open floorplan, 4.5 car garage, 500+/-sf. Guest house, private cul-de-sac. Amazing entertaining home with high end finishes. Media room and office.

SYLVIA DESIN BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$1,695,000
Immaculate 6bd/5.5ba home. 4689+/-sf on a 18,708+/-sf lot. Solar pool/spa. Detached guest cottage. 4 car garage. Gourmet kitchen, stainless steel appliances. 1bd/1ba downstairs. Backs to open space.

MOXLEY TEAM BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$1,675,000
Sub-dividable 1.67+/-acre lot in central Pleasanton. 5bd/3.5ba 4,196+/-sf main house. Lot split 43,846+/-sf and 27,642+/-sf. Rare opportunity!

BLAISE LOFLAND BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$1,295,000
Private upgraded custom single story. Large Private grounds (16,308+/-sf). Solar powered home. 4bd, downstairs bonus room (5th bed opt). 3,437+/-sf including separate guest unit/cabana.

SALLY MARTIN BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$999,900
Adjusted price. Terrific value. 5bd/2.5ba, 3,250+/-sf. Great home! Granite kitchen/stainless appliances/island/cherry cabinets. Travertine floors. Custom millwork. Crown molding/upgraded carpets. Spa.

MOXLEY TEAM BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$899,000
Open floor plan features 5bd/bonus room (1bd/1ba downstairs), 2913+/-sf, formal DR, FR has fireplace. Kitchen has granite slab counters with service island. Pool/spa and fireplace.

TIM MCGUIRE BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$875,000
4bd/2.5ba, 2164+/-sf home on a court. Remodeled custom kitchen with granite, maple wood floors, updated baths. 9000+/-sf lot with pool.

TIM MCGUIRE BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$819,000
4bd/3ba 2146+/-sf in Pleasanton Valley. Maple Kitchen cabinets with corian counters. New dual pane windows and French doors.

SUE MCKINLEY BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$755,000
Look at this 5bd/3ba, 2471+/-sf home. Court location. Custom crown moulding/lighting and paint. Updated kitchen, bath, flooring, A/C, roof. Pool with removable child safe fence. Award winning schools.

JOYCE JONES BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$735,000
Updates galore! 4bd/2.5ba, upstairs bonus room, updated kitchen with granite counters, Brazilian Cherry wood floors, Cherry cabinets, Plantation shutters, surround sound, plush yards and pool.

MARK LAFFERTY BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$729,950
This Del Prado home is absolutely gorgeous. Features include dual pane windows/plantation shutters/beautiful swimming pool/downstairs master has walk-in closet/formal LR/DR/central heat and air.

TIM MCGUIRE BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$729,000
3bd 2ba 1815+/-sf home on a court one block from the sports park. New Island Kitchen with Quartz counters, maple cabinets.

SUE MCKINLEY BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$690,000
Completely updated; court location, 3-car garage; side access. 4bd/3ba. 2 master bed; 1 up and 1 down. Detached in-law unit with permits. Close to award-winning schools, 580/680 freeways.

JOYCE JONES BY APPOINTMENT



PLEASANTON \$675,000
4bd/3ba plus family/bonus room with pellet burning stove, kitchen features; granite slab counter tops, tumble stone backsplash, stainless appliances, alarm, indoor laundry, updated baths, side yard.

MARK LAFFERTY BY APPOINTMENT



LIVERMORE \$509,950
Beautiful 5bd/2ba Sunset West property. Features include updated baths/formal LR with bay window/custom two-tone paint/central heat and air/dual pane windows/plus a newer roof.

