

Pleasanton Weekly

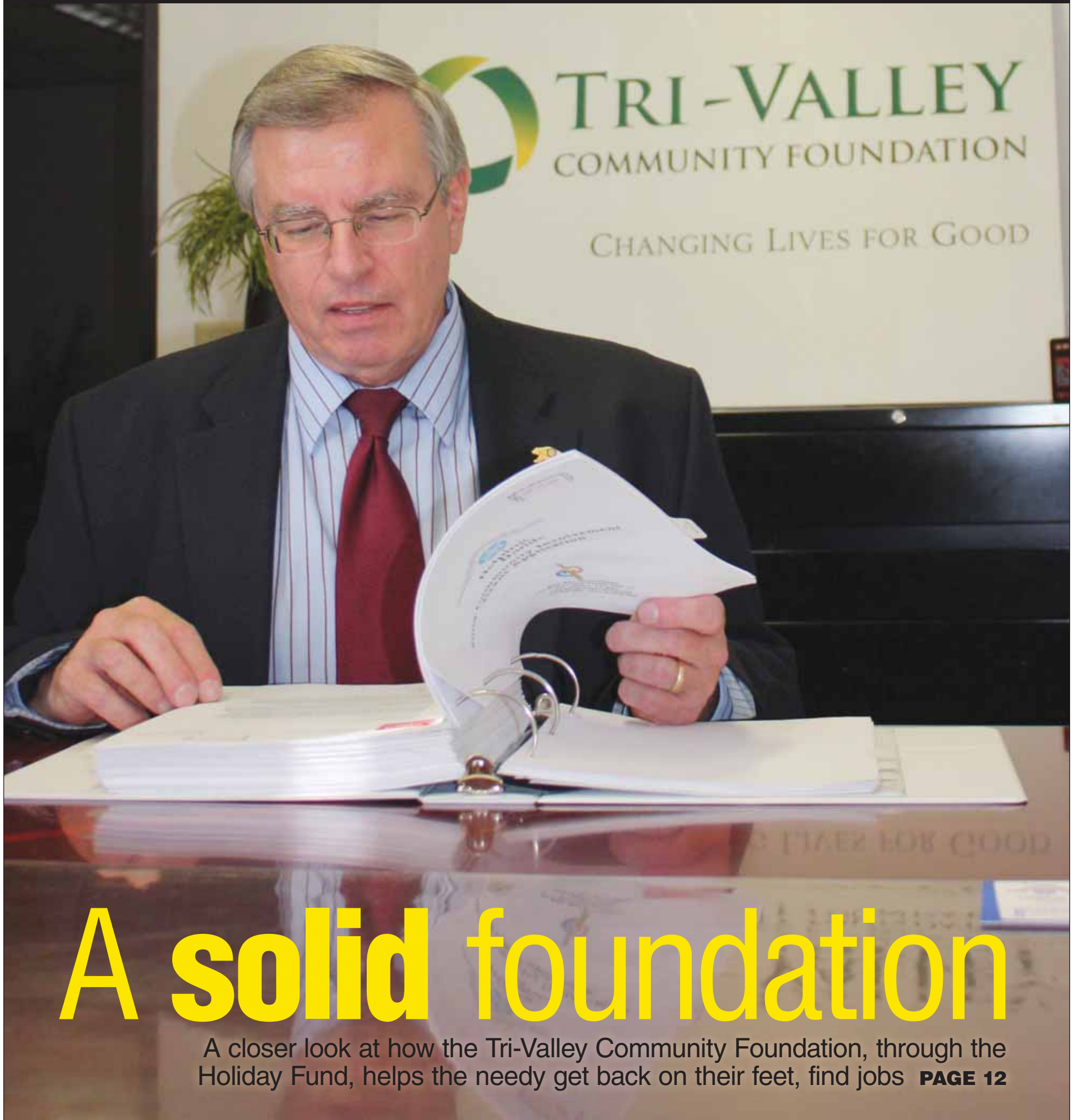
Alleviating I-580: Clean technology buses to travel on the new route from Pleasanton to Livermore **PAGE 5**

Plie for the holiday: 'The Nutcracker' classic ballet has several showings throughout the Bay Area **PAGE 14**

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VOL. X, NUMBER 46 • NOVEMBER 27, 2009

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A solid foundation

A closer look at how the Tri-Valley Community Foundation, through the Holiday Fund, helps the needy get back on their feet, find jobs **PAGE 12**



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7⁹⁹

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AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING

Torrico brings his campaign for AG here

State Assembly Majority Leader Alberto Torrico brought his campaign for California attorney general to Pleasanton the other day, greeting scores of well-heeled supporters who gathered for the \$250-a-ticket fundraiser on the colonnade behind Joe Johal's multi-million-dollar home high in the hills in the Grey Eagle estates. Torrico has represented the 20th Assembly District, which includes about a third of Pleasanton east and south of downtown since 2004. Being termed out next year after completing three terms in office, Torrico, who has strong Democratic Party support, chose to seek the attorney general's office after Atty. Gen. Jerry Brown indicated he might run for governor in 2010. At this time, Brown appears to be the only serious contender for the nomination in the June 8 Democratic primary next year and would be likely to back Torrico for his current job.

Not many politicians spend much time in Pleasanton. Until recently, it was largely a Republican stronghold although that has changed this decade and Democrats now lead in voter registration. Because of political gerrymandering over the years, the city is also broken into three Assembly districts, with Democrats Mary Hayashi (18th) and Joan Buchanan (15th) representing the other parts. Democrat Ellen Corbett represents Pleasanton as the 10th District senator, and Congressman Jerry McNerney (D-Pleasanton) was re-elected last year with strong Democratic Party support from Pleasanton.

So for Democrats like Torrico, Pleasanton with its hundreds of affluent party supporters and contributors is becoming a major stop on the road to Sacramento. There was no report on how much the Torrico campaign raised at Johal's home, but the invitation list handled by long-time local Democrat booster Angela Ramirez suggested \$2,500 for those who wanted to be designated sponsors, \$1,000 for "hosts," \$500 for co-hosts and \$250 just to attend. Several hundred came early and stayed long into the evening with off-duty firefighters directing traffic and helping with parking on the hilly, winding Golden Eagle Way. Other volunteers brought food and Johal provided an open bar that, like the food, appeared to have bottomless resources.

Although a few of Torrico's closest supporters were from the Tri-City area and his hometown

of Newark, most were from Pleasanton, including Mayor Jennifer Hosterman and Torrico's close friend and campaign coordinator Councilwoman Cheryl Cook-Kallio, who introduced the assemblyman.

"I have known Alberto for quite some time and know him to be a man who cares about the people of this state," she said.

Torrico has been a great representative for Pleasanton, she added, and is a friend of education, which is important to Cook-Kallio, who teaches history and civics at Irvington High in Fremont, where Torrico went to high school.

Torrico has earned a reputation for hard work in Sacramento, where he has gained the respect of both Democrats and Republicans for his commitment to improving the quality of life for Californians and his passion for getting bills passed that have dealt with education, water issues, prison reform, energy efficiency and toxic chemicals. In addition to being chosen majority leader of the Assembly last year, he has also served as chair of the Governmental Organization Committee, director of Majority Affairs, and chair of the Assembly Committee on Public Employees, Retirement and Social Security (PERSS). Torrico's ability to build successful coalitions has led to the passage of the 38 legislative measures he's authored, with 27 of them being signed into law by the state's Republican governor. These include requiring 60-day notice for no-fault evictions of renters; removing barriers to the development of affordable housing for working families; maintaining health care benefits for foster children; protecting the assets of public, community hospitals; preserving \$50 to \$100 million in funding for local transportation projects, and restricting the use of pesticides in day care centers.

At the fundraiser, Torrico told his supporters that he became the first member of his family to graduate from college when he earned his bachelor's degree at Santa Clara University and later his law degree from Hastings College of the Law. Growing up poor, his mother, a Japanese immigrant, and his father, a Central American immigrant, worked various jobs to support their family, including jobs as janitors. Torrico, too, worked as a janitor during his days off from school. He recalled that when he was sworn in he especially thought how the words he said at the end of the Pledge of Allegiance — "with liberty and justice for all" — applied to his situation, the son of janitors and a janitor himself, now sitting in the Assembly of the state of California. ■

About the Cover

David Rice, president of the Tri-Valley Community Foundation, is seen working in his office in Pleasanton. We take a closer look at how the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund, administered by the foundation, will directly help the needy. Photo by Janet Pelletier.

Vol. X, Number 46

Town Square Forum

Pleasanton Weekly

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Streetwise

ASKED DOWNTOWN

What is the best thing that happened to you this week?



Sheila Cotter

Math tutor

Foothill won the football game [against Amador]! It's my son's senior year and he's in Foothill's band. I am just thrilled because Amador has such a great team, but the boys pulled it off.

Sean Murphy

Finance

My baby girl slept through the night this week — in her own room! And she turned one month old.



Rhonda Sorochak

Marketing

My good friend Trudy, a fellow Pleasantonian, came home to visit and celebrate her 40th birthday with friends. There's nowhere else she'd rather celebrate her birthday. It was great because we've all missed her a lot.

Andre Diler

Engineer

I spent some time with a childhood friend that I hadn't seen in about 10 years. I searched him out on the Internet and I found him.



Robin Anglin

Human Resources

I saw "Wicked" this week. It was fantastic. We got to sit in the fourth row. The costumes were fantastic. There was really great detail. I really enjoyed it.

—Compiled by Elyssa Thome

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

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DIGEST

Gingerbread tradition continues

Nonprofit Tri-Valley Haven will continue the Gingerbread Cookie Project tradition by baking several thousand cookies to be decorated and packaged for delivery. Funds raised will benefit TVH's programs, including the shelter for battered women and their children, community outreach counseling and the 24-hour crisis hotline. Cookies are \$5 each and can be customized. Orders must be received by Dec. 1. To order, visit www.trivalleyhaven.org.

Axis granted \$40K from SF foundation

Axis Community Health recently received a \$40,000 grant from the San Francisco Foundation. The funds will enable Axis to provide an additional 250 medical visits for low income Tri-Valley residents who otherwise would not be able to receive care. Axis also provides mental health services, substance abuse counseling and health education services to the uninsured and underinsured. To learn more, visit www.axishealth.org.

'Shift gears' at LPC

High school seniors and parents are invited to "shift gears" at Las Positas College from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Dec. 2 in the college's physical education complex, 3000 Campus Hill Road. The event will help seniors learn about the college's academic transfer, career technical programs and other services offered to students. For more information, call Jenna Heath at 424-1487.

Learn about baby brains

Dr. Alison Gopnik, leading child psychologist and philosopher, will speak on "The Philosophical Baby: What children's minds tell us about truth, love and the meaning of life" at 2 p.m. Dec. 6 at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Gopnik asserts that babies and young children are in some ways smarter, more imaginative and more caring than adults. The program is funded by a grant from Fit for Life. Call Penny Johnson at 931-3406 to learn more.

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

Rapid transit buses expected to reduce travel time, I-580 congestion

A revamped Route 10, set to be operational in early 2011, will transport passengers from Stoneridge Shopping Center out to the Livermore labs

A new rapid bus transit system will travel from Pleasanton to Livermore and is expected to shave several minutes off of riders' commute times.

The Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority held a ceremony Monday at the Livermore Transit Center, marking the start of work on the system that is planned to run from Stoneridge Shopping Center,

up and east through Dublin and ending at the Lawrence Livermore and Sandia national laboratories.

It will be a revision of the current Route 10 that officials say will cut the drive time by 20 percent. It will feature a fleet of 14 clean technology buses that will stop at stations every 10 minutes during peak times. It's estimated to double ridership by offering such perks as

fewer stops (27 instead of 70), new energy-efficient buses with low-flooring designed to better accommodate seniors and the disabled, and bus shelters equipped with digital arrival signs and bike racks.

The buses, in addition to being low-emission hybrids, will utilize traffic signal prioritization technology that will allow them to reduce travel time by getting more green

lights as the signals "communicate" with sensors placed on each bus. "The Rapid" will have the same fare as regular local bus service — \$2.

Pleasanton City Councilman Jerry Thorne, who is chair of the LAVTA board of directors, said the rapid bus route will help Tri-Valley residents travel efficiently until a BART extension to Livermore is realized. That

See **TRANSIT** on Page 7



JANET PELLETIER

The downtown holiday ice rink was officially opened with a ceremony Nov. 19, which included a performance by the Golden Skate synchronized skating team.

Skaters, shoppers keep downtown busy

Horse-drawn carriage rides add to holiday spirit continuing through this Thanksgiving week

By JEB BING

Hundreds of skaters kept Pleasanton's new outdoor ice rink busy over the weekend as many families took advantage of free horse-drawn carriage rides between the rink on Old Bernal Avenue and the Museum On Main downtown.

The weather helped, with sunny skies and temperatures in the mid-60s, drawing big pre-Thanksgiving crowds to the Farmers' Market and downtown stores and restaurants where special discounts were being offered. The good-weather weekend partly made up for a smaller number of shoppers Friday night when strong winds and rain moved into Pleasanton.

The city held a ceremony celebrating the rink's opening Nov. 19 where several hundred were in attendance to watch the Golden Skate synchronized skating team from San Jose perform on the ice a medley of holiday music, dress in red velvet with white fur trim. They were joined by two young pair skaters and Santa Claus. San Jose Sharks announcer Randy

Hahn, who is a Pleasanton resident, emceed the event, which also featured Sharks mascot Sharky and comments by Mayor Jennifer Hosterman.

The city's first seasonal rink will operate through Jan. 10 on a portion of the public parking lot that serves the Pleasanton Library and Civic Center on Old Bernal Avenue.

Throughout the rink's operation, skaters will receive a 'Skater's Special' coupon in which they can receive gifts or discounts from more than 50 downtown Pleasanton retailers and restaurants.

The free horse-drawn carriage rides operate on Friday and Saturday nights through Dec. 12. For more information, contact the Pleasanton Downtown Association at 484-2199.

The Pleasanton rink is being operated and managed by San Jose Arena Management, which owns the San Jose Sharks, in a deal that was announced a few months ago between SJAM and the city of Pleasanton. ■

Commission OKs weeknight music at Redcoats downtown

British restaurant and pub seeks to attract more customers Wednesdays, Thursdays

By JANET PELLETIER

Redcoats British Pub will now be allowed to offer music and dancing from Thursday through Sunday after the Planning Commission unanimously approved their request to add two additional days of entertainment during the week.

The restaurant, located at 336 St. Mary St., had been offering DJ music for its patrons, who are mainly 20-somethings, Friday and Saturday nights but was looking to extend the entertainment to draw a wider age group and more sales as the business has seen its profits decline in the current economic downturn.

Redcoats owner Mari Kennard said she opened her restaurant in 2005 with 50 employees; now with the economy she has just 21.

"If you talk to all of the merchants downtown, you'll find that we're all in survival mode," she told the commission. "There is a demand for this. My hope is that with Wednesday and Thursday music, it will attract more people and expand it to those who are not in the younger age group."

Kennard added that she's gone above and beyond to be courteous to her neighboring business and Gene and Genie Finch, who live 30 feet from the restaurant.

But while Gene Finch said he's supported Redcoats since they opened, he couldn't back the proposal to have the indoor music until midnight on Wednesdays and Thursdays, asking instead that the commission limit the entertainment to 10 p.m. Music is currently allowed through 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday nights.

"All we're asking for is a good neighbor policy," he said. "The music vibrates."

In addition, Finch said he keeps all his windows and skylights closed because the smell of smoke is always emanating.

But Kennard, who was backed by her security staff and other downtown business owners, said it can be difficult to police people on where they smoke and dump their cigarette butts.

As part of the commission's approval, a condition was added that Redcoats must provide signage to direct smokers to the side of the building, as well as replace a smoking receptacle that was stolen. ■

BART agrees to add Pleasanton in its Livermore expansion planning

Agency to meet with council, hold discussions in both cities

By JEB BING

In a welcome turnaround, BART officials this week agreed to include Pleasanton city representatives in planning an extension of the rapid transit system to Livermore, which could take the tracks through northeast Pleasanton.

The agreement came after Pleasanton City Manager Nelson Fialho complained to Malcolm Quint, BART project manager, about planning meetings held in Livermore in recent weeks to discuss a 2,000-page Environmental Impact Report that Pleasanton officials had never seen. Although some Pleasanton business leaders were invited to the discussion meetings, as well as city representatives from other communities, no one from the Pleasanton council or city staff were advised of the meetings or asked to participate.

That brought a blistering letter from Fialho, who asked Quint if he was "intentionally leaving Pleasanton out of the policy/land use discussion" even though several alignments for an extension of BART to Livermore's downtown called for placing elevated tracks over Staples Ranch, where millions of dollars in development projects are planned. Two developers, one of a 37-acre auto mall that would fall right under the elevated transit system, and another a 600- to 800-unit senior housing and care facil-



District 4 BART Director John McPartland (left) speaks to a crowd at a Livermore public hearing, as BART Project Manager Malcolm Quint (right) looks on.

ity, indicated they were unhappy with the BART plan.

Fialho said Quint agreed to schedule meetings in Pleasanton and Livermore on an alternating basis and scheduled a major presentation about BART's plans before the Pleasanton City Council on Dec. 15. Assistant City Manager Steve Bocian was designated as the city's official representative to the BART planning process.

BART has developed a series of alternate plans for extending the trains to Livermore, a long-sought goal. Up to now, the only discussed route had been extending the tracks from the Pleasanton-Dublin station east to Greenville Road with BART tracks continuing in the center or alongside Interstate 580 as they now do to Pleasanton. That's still

an option, in fact it's the shortest and cheapest of all the routes under consideration and would attract the most riders — 31,700 new daily BART riders by the year 2035.

At a station planning meeting held in Livermore last week, most reviewers panned the route that would take BART into downtown Livermore, saying they preferred the I-580 route.

However, Livermore officials want trains to be routed through its downtown. The city is in the midst of a massive downtown redevelopment that will include a 2,000-seat performing arts center, partly financed by Wente Bros. It needs BART to be downtown, too, to carry riders from other cities BART serves to its new downtown and theater. ■

Safeway flu shot paperwork missing

Consent form patients may have filled out included health ID number, other health information

By JANET PELLETIER

Safeway is reaching out to anyone who received a flu shot at the Santa Rita Road grocery store's mobile clinic in late September because some paperwork has gone missing.

According to Safeway spokeswoman Susan Houghton, consent forms that patients may have filled out when they went for a shot on Sept. 29 have been lost.

"Unfortunately we had a situation where the forms that these individuals filled out have been lost and it's not something we're happy about," she said. "We just wanted to alert people to the situation."

Houghton said 30 people received shots that day, half of whom are Safeway employees. The forms contain personal information such as name, address, telephone number, health insurance identification number and other health information.

"The good news is there were no social security numbers or anything like that on the form," Houghton said. "We know they weren't stolen."

The Santa Rita Road store does not have a pharmacy, so Safeway operates a mobile clinic that stations itself in the parking lot occasionally, where a hired pharmacist administers the shots.

Houghton added that while Safeway doesn't believe the information has been used improperly, she recommends the people affected check their health and credit accounts for any unusual activity.

"We are asking people to go ahead and give us a call so we can explain the situation individually and go from there," she said.

The number to call is 877-SAFEWAY (723-3929). ■



Castlewood Country Club

New Talent for a New Year



Tracy Flores

Executive Chef — Tracy Flores joins Castlewood on December 1st. Her experience includes Executive Chef positions with Hilton Hotels, San Jose Country Club, Silver Creek Valley Country Club and The Villages Golf and Country Club in San Jose. Ms. Flores is a member of the Chef's Association of the Pacific Coast and has volunteered at many non-profit fundraisers — including Special Olympics.



Dariusz Linette

Tennis Director — Dariusz Linette has been a certified United States Professional Tennis Registry for the last 14 years and a competitive player for 16 years before that.

Mr. Linette comes to Castlewood from Tompkins Tennis Academy. He also was a Tennis Director at Lake Geneva Country Club. Dariusz was a top ranked junior in Poland as well as on a national team. He also coached nationally ranked juniors in the United States.

Mr. Linette will direct the tennis staff and will be responsible for organizing internal and external tennis tournaments, providing lessons for juniors, women and men players at all skill levels, operating the junior summer camp and cardio tennis.



Heidi Lekan

Director of Communications — Heidi Lekan has extensive country club administrative experience. She joins Castlewood from Anthem, Arizona where she worked six years for Fellowship Church. Mrs. Lekan also worked at Anthem Country Club in Henderson, Nevada and Terravita Country Club in Scottsdale, Arizona with current General Manager Jerry Olson. She will be responsible for upgrading and maintaining the Club's website among other duties.

707 Country Club Circle • Pleasanton, CA 94566 • (925) 846-2871 • info@castlewoodcc.org

TRANSIT

Continued from Page 5

project, which is currently undergoing an environmental review process, could be at least 10 to 25 years away.

"Maybe we'll lure some people away from 580 and the congestion," Thorne said.

The system is anticipated to be operational in January 2011 and will cost \$14 million to design and construct. Funds are coming from the federal government, of which \$11 million Congressman Jerry McNerney (D-Pleasanton) was credited with securing. The service is projected to cost \$1.4 million per year to operate, and operating revenues will come from bridge tolls, the Measure B sales tax and passenger fares.

The project is expected to create 120 jobs, which will go to people who live in Alameda County.

The bus stops on Route 10 are from west to east:

Stoneridge Mall, West Dublin/Pleasanton BART station, Kaiser/Springdale Avenue, Stoneridge Drive, Canyon Way, Regional Street, Golden Gate Drive, Village Parkway, Clark Avenue, Shops at Tralee/Dublin Court, East Dublin/Pleasanton BART station, Hacienda Crossings/Hacienda Drive, John Monago Court/Glynnis Rose Drive, Grafton Street, Keegan Street, Murdell Lane, Murrieta Boulevard, Valley Memorial Medical Center, I Street, Livermore Transit Center/Downtown Parking Garage/ACE, Livermore High School/Maple Street, Community Center/Madison Avenue, Charlotte Way and Sandia/Lawrence Livermore national laboratories. As part of the project, two additional stops will be added between El Charro Road and Isabel Avenue once the planned Jack London Boulevard extension and Fallon Road interchange are completed.

Also in attendance at the ceremony representing Pleasanton were Mayor Jennifer Hosterman and City Councilwoman Cindy McGovern.

—Janet Pelletier



JANET PELLETIER

Top: Pleasanton Councilman Jerry Thorne, flanked by Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty, far left, and Congressman Jerry McNerney, said he hopes the rapid transit line will lure people off Interstate 580. Above: A woman gets ready to board a Route 10 bus at the Livermore Transit Center.

Do you recognize them?

When Robert Thomas was closing his longtime downtown photo studio a few years ago, he was tossing a few large portraits that had been kept for display purposes. Resident Gretchen Zaballos asked that some be saved and given to the families. Having located families for three portraits she saved, she still has yet to find the people photographed in the picture above. Anyone with information that could help Zaballos track down the family should call her at 846-1480.



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Pharmacy at SAFEWAY

Dear Pleasanton Safeway Flu Vaccination Customers,

If you received a flu shot on September 29, 2009, in Safeway's Pleasanton store on Santa Rita Rd., the consent form you may have filled out to provide personal information including your name, address, telephone number, health insurance identification number and other health information has been lost. We have no information indicating that your personal information has been or will be used for improper purposes. Nevertheless, we recommend that you review your health and credit accounts for any unusual activity. For additional information, please call the Safeway Customer Care Service Center Monday through Friday 8 am to 9 pm mountain time at 877-SAFEWAY.

NC

OF NOTE



SUE EVANS

Hike for the Haven

Olivia Brown, Paige Hughes and their RAGE U14AC soccer team raised \$1,025 for the Tri-Valley Haven — just exceeding their original goal of \$1,000. As a community service project for the RAGE Leadership Program, Olivia and Paige, with the help of naturalist and photographer Sue Evans, organized the morning hike up the Pleasanton Ridge and into Augustin Bernal Park on Nov. 8.

Safeway honored as a 'fit business'

Pleasanton-based Safeway was recently honored with a gold medal for the 2009 Fit Business Awards, put on by the California State Task Force for Workplace Wellness.

According to the task force, Safeway's focus on health and wellness is manifested through a variety of programs. One such program is the campaign to promote healthy eating in the workplace; others include providing access to a free, on-site fitness center or a discount membership at a fitness center chain; and a family-friendly, market-based healthcare plan for employees.

Safeway also implemented Healthy Measures in 2008, a voluntary program that encouraged employees to identify and understand their health risks. Participants have their cholesterol, blood pressure and body mass index calculations recorded. If all measures are good, employees can save \$780 in healthcare premiums.

Business Awards are sponsored by Kaiser Permanente and the annual awards program was first launched in 2003. To learn more, visit www.wellnesstaskforce.org.

McNerney recognizes Pleasanton military support group

Congressman Jerry McNerney (D-Pleasanton) recently spoke on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to recognize Pleasanton Military Families, a group that organizes welcome home celebrations for returning service members, sends care packages to troops overseas and provides support to the families of active military personnel.

In his address, McNerney cited the group's "tireless efforts" on behalf of the men and women in the Armed Services.

"The Pleasanton Military Families leads a public recognition program for our service members by hanging yellow streamers along Main Street marked with the names of residents serving in our Armed Forces," he said. My family was honored that the Pleas-

anton Military Families hung a yellow pennant for my son Michael while he was serving in the Air Force.

"In addition," he continued, "Pleasanton Military Families holds warm welcome home ceremonies and sends packages to troops overseas. All of these efforts to support our active duty personnel and their families give due honor to the sacrifice and service of these young men and women."

YMCA Youth and Government shows well in state competition

The Tri-Valley YMCA's Youth and Government delegation recently participated in the first of two training and elections conferences at Camp Roberts National Guard Base in Paso Robles. The 19-student delegation was among 2,200 high school students from across the state gathered to discuss political issues and nominate and elect delegates for state offices. These two conferences are in preparation for the Model Legislature and Court conference in February where delegates will take over Sacramento to enact laws and adjudicate court cases in the actual chambers of state government.

The Tri-Valley delegation made their mark at Camp Roberts as Vidya Awasty and Grant Bonham, Amador Valley High School freshmen, won statewide positions in the Forum (the freshmen component). Vidya was elected Assembly Clerk and Grant Bonham was elected Senate Clerk.

Brannon and Jordan Nally, also Amador Valley freshmen, received enough votes to become finalists in their quest to serve as Forum Lt. Governor and Forum Speaker of the Assembly, respectively. They will continue on to the final elections to be held at the second conference in January.

The students also attended the ever popular dances and also participated in the inaugural California Idol in which students sang heartily while "Randy," "Paula" and the infamous "Simon" judged them. The top performers received gold tickets to perform again in Sacramento. ■



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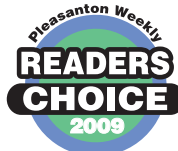
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Recycling TIP #1

FROM THE CITY OF PLEASANTON

Protect the Environment this Holiday Season

Congratulations Pleasanton on the success of the new three-cart recycling program! We are working to meet the County mandate to divert 75% of our waste from the landfill.

It's important to keep recyclables separated from trash, something that is easy to do with the three-cart program.

Here are some ways to re-use plastic bags:



- ✓ Bring your own canvas or reusable bag to the store. The California bag recycling law requires stores to sell reusable bags, which are also great gift bags for the holidays (or any time) that serve a multi-function!
- ✓ Use plastic bags as packing material instead of foam packing peanuts
- ✓ Reuse plastic bags for shopping and to pack lunches
- ✓ Keep a few in your car to store unexpectedly dirty shoes or hold supplies



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EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

Caution lights are on for Tri-Valley cities as tax revenue slips

In the last two years, we've seen how the state's multi-billion-dollar budget deficit has adversely affected schools and education programs throughout the state, not just in Pleasanton where lower state funding has caused K-3 classes to increase in size from 20:1 to 25:1, but also at the community college and state university systems where fees are being raised and new enrollment registrations tightened. Now with California facing yet another massive budget deficit as the economy stays soft and tax revenue shrinks, the state is facing an additional \$21-billion shortfall over the next 18 months. As a result, state take-aways from municipal coffers are moving the financial crisis to city halls and county buildings up and down the state along with growing threats of even more cuts in state education funding. Monday night, the Livermore City Council began grappling with an 8 percent decline in its sales tax revenues and an unprecedented drop in assessed valuations, placing the city's \$81-million General Fund expenditures planned for the current fiscal year under tremendous strain. At least 11 full-time employees are likely to be laid off and other reductions are under consideration to keep Livermore solvent. In Dublin, the revenue crisis caused by the loss of sales tax revenue from the now-closed Circuit City, Expo and Mervyn's big-box stores, along with lower property tax revenue from foreclosed home mortgages that have reduced valuations, may cause the city to seek voter approval of revenue measures or parcel taxes to make up for the losses.

At the same time, the city of Pleasanton finds itself in better shape, at least for now. Cutbacks last year in all but essential expenditures and in filling job vacancies along with a slight drop in revenue as projected in the city's 2008-09 fiscal year budget gave the city a \$2.5-million surplus, according to a final audit that will be presented to the City Council next month. That surplus has been added to the city's reserves which were started in the early 1990s to provide rainy day reserves in the event of a weakened economy. Altogether, that reserve now totals \$25 million, enough to meet financial emergencies if they occur and to cover the \$4-million-plus that the state will start taking away from Pleasanton in January to help meet Sacramento's deficit. That bill, supposedly a one-time loan the state is authorized to demand in tough times, amounts to approximately 8 percent of the property taxes levied by local agencies. In Livermore, which unlike Pleasanton has no special reserve fund to draw from, the "loan" will take \$2.8 million from that city's already decreasing General Fund budget.

Housing foreclosures have been especially devastating, not only for mortgage holders who have lost their homes but also for neighbors and government agencies that are seeing the values of whole blocks of homes and their assessed valuations drop precipitously. With housing development largely at a standstill in Pleasanton for the last few years, there were also few sales in the subprime mortgage market where foreclosures have been rampant. That's not true in Dublin and Livermore, where foreclosures continue and both cities see their tax revenues based on those dropping assessed valuation also decreasing. Dublin has offsetting help from sales tax revenue from Hacienda Crossings, but Livermore's biggest employer, the Livermore Lab, pays no property taxes and many of its 7,000 employees don't live in Livermore. Looking ahead, the city's revenue base is in peril.

Even though retail sales and automobile sales are down, property tax revenue — Pleasanton's biggest chunk that supports its budget — is holding with only a slight dip in overall receipts in the first quarter of the 2009-10 fiscal year, which includes the months of last July, August and September. Cities, and the state, will be watching closely and hoping for better returns this quarter when holiday sales usually provide major increases. If they don't, many cities will have to make greater cuts in the last six months of their fiscal budgets. Pleasanton plans to review the figures when they become available in early January and make adjustments then. With its reserves, a hiring freeze and a halt in capital spending already in place, the city probably won't have to make personnel reductions. But the caution light is on for fiscal 2010-11 that starts next July 1. ■

LETTERS

Budget crisis has had lasting impacts on schools

Dear Editor,

I would like to respectfully bring to your attention the budget crisis that is looming over Pleasanton schools. For the 2009-10 year, we received a substantial amount (around \$10 million) of one-time monies to help maintain the quality of education. These monies will not be available in the future. I am part of a concerned citizens' group that is trying to educate the community on the nature, extent and impact of the budget cuts thus far and to do what is necessary — pass an adequate parcel tax — to plug the widening funding gap. We presented our concerns to the PUSD board of trustees on Nov. 10, and will continue work-

ing on this issue until our community has the educational quality it deserves. We are also starting a series of educational forums at the school sites across the district.

As the mother of four children in grades K-3, I volunteer for several hours a week in the classroom, and every spare minute of help parents can offer teachers is desperately needed and appreciated. Imagine trying to help children during math time when you have one teacher, two parent volunteers, and six kids with their hands up needing help. I teach art to a K-1 class because there is no art teacher. My children have diminished access to the school library, and my kindergartener does not have P.E. like his older siblings did. My children now only go to the computer lab once a week. In the science lab, there aren't enough microscopes for each child to have their own because the classes are larger (25 vs. 20 students).

Elizabeth Lester



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Community Pulse

POLICE BULLETIN & LOG

POLICE REPORT

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

Nov. 14

Theft

- 8:36 a.m. in the 7400 block of Hillview Court
- 2:16 p.m. in the 2100 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft
- 6:10 p.m. in the 7600 block of Canyon Meadows Circle; identity theft
- 10:01 p.m. in the 4300 block of Valley Avenue; shoplifting

Vehicular burglary

- 5:06 a.m. at the intersection of Treewood Court and Highland Oaks Drive

Vandalism

- 10:23 a.m. in the 3300 block of Hopyard Road

Drug/alcohol violations

- 1:54 a.m. at the intersection of Valley Trails Drive and National Park Road; driving with marijuana
- 5:24 p.m. at the intersection of East Angela and First street; DUI
- 10:01 p.m. at the 4300 block of Valley Avenue; public drunkenness

Nov. 15

Theft

- 6:07 p.m. in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 12:06 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

Vehicular burglary

- 3:54 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

Drug/alcohol violations

- 5:06 p.m. at the intersection of Bernal and Old Bernal avenues; public drunkenness

- 9:21 p.m. at the intersection of Valley and Bernal avenues; DUI

Battery

- 12:55 a.m. in the 4800 block of Hopyard Road
- 8:10 a.m. in the 4500 block of Pleasanton Avenue

Nov. 16

Theft

- 7:37 a.m. in the 8000 block of Horizons Court; stolen vehicle
- 8:49 a.m. in the 700 block of Rolling Hills Lane; grand theft
- 11:41 a.m. in the 2300 block of Vineyard Heights Lane; grand theft
- 6:03 p.m. in the 1100 block of Santa Rita Road; petty theft

Vandalism

- 2:19 p.m. in the 5000 block of Foothill Road
- 5:13 p.m. in the 4700 block of Saginaw Circle

Battery

- 7:02 p.m. in the 500 block of Main Street
- 10:35 p.m. in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

Animal bite

- 8:22 a.m. in the 5600 block of Black Avenue
- 2:15 p.m. in the 6100 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

Nov. 17

Theft

- 12:22 p.m. in the 2400 block of Via Espada; identity theft
- 7:52 p.m. in the 4600 block of Chabot Drive; petty theft, grand theft

Vehicular burglary

- 3:20 a.m. in the 7600 block of Canyon Meadow Circle

Robbery

- 7:23 p.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; false imprisonment

Nov 18

Theft

- 12:26 a.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 12:17 p.m. in the 5100 block of Northway Road; identity theft
- 3:36 p.m. in the 1700 block of Santa Rita Road; petty theft
- 5:12 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 8:02 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

Burglary

- 12:03 a.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; vehicular
- 11:39 a.m. in the 2400 block of Via de los Milagros
- 7:07 p.m. in the 7400 block of Stonedale Drive

Vandalism

- 2:23 a.m. in the 5300 block of Sunol Boulevard

Public drunkenness

- 2:21 a.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road

Nov. 19

Identity theft

- 9:48 a.m. in the 1400 block of Oak Vista Way; identity theft
- 12:15 p.m. in the 5400 block of Dudley Court; identity theft

Grand theft

- 12:20 p.m. in the 6000 block of Johnson Drive
- 2:34 p.m. in the 5000 block of Touriga Court
- 4:02 p.m. in the 6000 block of Johnson Drive
- 7:46 p.m. at the intersection of Johnson and Stoneridge drives

Stolen vehicle

- 8:58 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

Vehicular burglary

- 2:13 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
- 7:48 p.m. in the 5600 block of Owens Drive
- 9:44 p.m. in the 4400 block of Rosewood Drive

DUI

- 12:40 p.m. at the intersection of Sunol Boulevard and Sycamore Road; under the influence of a controlled substance
- 4:51 at the intersection of Chardonay Drive and Sauterne Way

Nov. 20

Theft

- 9:16 a.m. in the 6100 block of Corte del Ray; identity theft
- 5:39 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

Vandalism

- 11:33 a.m. in the 6200 block of Corte Altamira

Public drunkenness

- 2:43 a.m. in the 5200 block of Hopyard Road
- 6:23 p.m. in the 6200 block of West Las Positas Boulevard
- 10:00 p.m. at the intersection of Owens and Johnson drives
- 10:49 p.m. in the 3700 block of Vineyard Avenue

DUI

- 10:09 p.m. at the intersection of Bernal Avenue and Foothill Road

THE CITY OF PLEASANTON

WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

City Council

Tuesday, December 1, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Joint Workshop of the City Council and Kottinger Task Force for the purpose of reviewing and discussing the joint Predevelopment Report and Task Force recommendation to begin a development process for a new 150 unit low-income senior development at 240 Kottinger Drive

GENERAL INFORMATION

The City Council is "Looking for Task Force Members." Applications are being accepted for five at-large members of the Hacienda PUD Modification Task Force. Applicants should be residents of the City of Pleasanton with an interest in planning for transit oriented development near the BART station. Each City Councilmember will be selecting one city-wide representative from the applications received.

Applications are available at the Office of the City Clerk, 123 Main Street, or on the City's web site at www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us. For additional information, contact Janice Stern at (925) 931-5606 or jsstern@ci.pleasanton.ca.us

**Applications must be received no later than 4:30 p.m.,
Monday, November 30, 2009.**

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

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OBITUARIES

Laura Kay Mayo



Laura Kay Mayo, who grew up in Pleasanton, died Nov. 12 in Oakdale after a long illness. She was 47.

Born in Oakland, Ms. Mayo spent her formative years in Pleasanton and graduated from Amador Valley High School. She loved playing soccer in the youth program and continued as a young adult. She was gifted with an artist's view of the world and the talent that goes with it.

She has two children: a son, Benjamin Wigley, currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Army; and a daughter, Sadie Conaty-Mayo of Danville.

She also is survived by her parents, George and Dorothy Mayo of Pleasanton; her siblings, Lou Ann Perry and her husband, John of Redlands, Calif.; Jim Mayo of Pleasanton; Ed Mayo and his wife, Tina, of Livermore; and Christina Anderson and her husband, Brian, of Cottonwood, Calif.; along with many nieces and nephews.

A special companion to her was her care dog, Sunny.

Memorial services are pending.

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By JANET PELLETIER

Holiday Fund

The face of hunger is changing in the Tri-Valley. Open Heart Kitchen Executive Director Linda McKeever sees it firsthand.

"The new face of hunger could be your neighbor quietly suffering and in need," McKeever said. "One family Open Heart Kitchen serves was one of our donors just a short time ago."

The family crossed over from donor to being needy of free, hot meals after the husband lost his job and his wife's hours were cut to just part time — all while the economy tanked and still struggles to bounce back. As a result of the recession, their home's value dropped and the mortgage became unaffordable, and they subsequently lost their home. The family moved in with a relative, a single mother, who is also struggling to make ends meet. This scenario is playing out every day in the community.

Through the seventh annual Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund, families like the aforementioned will be helped with such basic needs as a meal at Open Heart, or medical care at Axis Community Health, which has two Pleasanton facilities. Other families who are dealing with domestic abuse situations can be assisted through Tri-Valley Haven.

These are just some of the ways the truly needy in the local community can be helped through the fund, which this year is a 4-to-1 match of all donations that come in.

Taking a closer look at how the fund helps people, the monies can provide this type of emergency assistance, while also funding services that will help needy families gain employment, which in-turn benefits the local economy. While in the past the Holiday Fund has been a 2-to-1 match (for every \$1 that's donated, a total of \$2 is given), this year's quadruple match is made possible through a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act TANF Emergency Contingency Fund — federal stimulus funds. These funds will go directly to needy families through a unique opportunity presented this year, rather than through a specific nonprofit organization, with the goal of giving them some of life's basic necessities and the tools to gain and maintain employment.

The Tri-Valley Regional Initiative was formed this year for this purpose and the Pleasanton Weekly, through the Tri-Valley Community Foundation, will distribute the funds to help families in the region living below 200 percent of the federal poverty line. The focus is to help stabilize these families during the current economic downturn, meeting short-term or one-time needs, such as acquiring rental housing, and at the same time helping the wage earners in these families re-enter the workforce and strengthen their job skills through job-seeking and job-readiness training, employment-related education and vocational training, paid internships and subsidized employment.

During the project period, the Tri-Valley Community Foundation will expand its existing team of community outreach workers already engaged with the target population to identify and make contact with qualified families in need of project services. Working with each qualified family, they will



JANET PELLETIER

Tri-Valley Community Foundation President David Rice, left, is seated with former judge Ron Hyde, who chairs the foundation's board of directors. The foundation is working with the Pleasanton Weekly on the Holiday Fund to distribute monies to help needy families with food, shelter, medical care and attaining employment.

A solid foundation

A closer look at how the Tri-Valley Community Foundation, through the Holiday Fund, helps the needy get back on their feet, find jobs

utilize financial resources provided by the Holiday Fund, including the 4-to-1 matching components, to identify and deliver those forms of assistance and services that will have the most impact on family stability and employment development within the limited project period, which ends in September 2010.

The foundation currently staffs school-based community outreach workers at some local schools and a school-based food pantry serving low-income families in the community. The 2009 Tri-Valley Regional Initiative

and the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund will build on what the foundation is already doing, which will include supporting the addition of mental health outreach workers to the foundation's outreach team already working with low-income Tri-Valley families.

Here is how the process will work: the outreach worker will refer the wage earner(s) and family members to partner organizations that will provide the identified assistance and services, following up with the family and partner organizations to ensure that referrals are successful, to provide

ongoing support for the family, and to document wage earner and family outcomes. Partner organizations will invoice the foundation for assistance and services provided; families will not receive cash to procure goods and services as part of this project. In addition to identifying the short-term assistance and services to be provided during the project period, the action plan for each family will include longer term wage-earner and family goals and a well-defined plan for reaching those goals, developed through consultation with the outreach worker and

Holiday Fund donors

Since the launch of the 2009 Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund, 105 donors have contributed \$14,446 to the fund. Nineteen anonymous contributors have given \$2,569.

Individuals

Sycamore Heights Bunco Babes.....	**
Ron & Kathy Anderson.....	200
Andrew Bailey & Lauren Purcell.....	1000
Rick & Dawn Barraza.....	250
Chris & Glenda Berattis.....	500
Jan & Jeb Bing.....	200
Ryan Brown & Julie Harryman.....	100
Mrs. Terry Messick-Cass & Mr. Barry Cass	100
Miguel & Julie Castillo.....	**
Gina Channell-Allen.....	**
Pauline Coe.....	**
Chris & Linda Coleman.....	200
Stuart & Cheryl Craig.....	250
Dave Cryer.....	50
Isabel Curry.....	**
The Darrin Family.....	50
Randall & Elizabeth Davidson.....	500
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**The asterisk designates that the donor did not want to publish the amount of the gift.



How to give

Your gift will help needy families

Contributions to the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund Will be increased through a unique partnership of the 2009 Tri-Valley Regional Initiative and administered by the Tri-Valley Community Foundation. For every \$1 contributed, \$4 will go to families in Pleasanton and the Tri-Valley who are in need of some of life's basic necessities. No administrative costs will be deducted from the gifts, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law.

For more information, call us at 600-0840 or email editor@pleasantonweekly.com.

As we launch our 2009-10 Holiday Fund campaign, we want to express that we have a unique opportunity this year to provide assistance to some of the poorest families in the Tri-Valley through the 2009 Tri-Valley Regional Initiative, a collaborative economic recovery initiative sponsored through the Tri-Valley Community Foundation, the Tri-Valley Business Council and Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty. A quadruple match is possible through federal stimulus funds designated for temporary assistance to needy families, including a strong employment development component. The matched funds will be used to identify and evaluate the needs of families hardest hit by the economic downturn and help them directly with housing, job training, medical care and other basic necessities.

We feel that in this time of economic crisis, it is imperative that we take advantage of the opportunity to receive federal funds to assist the largest number of families and individuals in our community.

In addition to a wider base of needy recipients, the Weekly's campaign will continue to provide grants to Pleasanton and Tri-Valley nonprofit organizations that provide "wrap around" services for families, including Axis Community Health, Open Heart Kitchen and Tri-Valley Haven. This year, these groups will benefit more than ever by the 4-to-1 match of your contribution to help them provide necessary services to families in need.

Name of Donor

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I wish to designate my contribution as follows:

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(Name of person)

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Please make checks payable to **Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund**

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



The Tri-Valley Community Foundation is located at 5674 Stoneridge Dr., Ste. 112, Pleasanton, CA 94588. More information about the Foundation can be obtained by contacting the organization at the above address, by calling its President David Rice at (925) 734-9965 or through its website: www.tvcfoundation.org. The Pleasanton Weekly will make every effort to publish donor names for donations received before Dec. 31, 2009, unless the donor checks the anonymous box. All donations will be acknowledged by mail.

The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund

The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund was created to provide financial support from our readers for a select group of people in need to lend a helping hand, despite our community's prosperity. This marks the seventh year of the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund. It provides us an opportunity to aid local families at a time when the numbers of those without such basic necessities as food, shelter and medical care have increased in this economic downturn.

The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund drive could not exist without the help of the Tri-Valley Community Foundation and its generous donors. We have a unique opportunity this year that will allow the Holiday Fund to offer a 4-to-1 match, meaning every \$1 you gift will equal a \$4 donation. This will provide assistance to some of the poorest families in the Tri-Valley area through the 2009 Tri-Valley Regional Initiative, sponsored through TVCF, the Tri-Valley Business Council and Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty. An added benefit: Neither the Pleasanton Weekly nor the Tri-Valley Community Foundation will take any fees or expenses for administering the fund.

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

“The new face of hunger could be your neighbor quietly suffering and in need. One family Open Heart Kitchen serves was one of our donors just a short time ago.”

Linda McKeever,
Executive Director, Open Heart Kitchen

through a weekly support group for families participating in the project.

In addition to working with the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund to seek public donations, the foundation will also partner with the Tri-Valley Business Council to identify and develop opportunities for subsidized employment and paid internships, and with Las Positas College and its on-campus CalWORKs program to identify and develop job training and work-related education opportunities for project participants. Together, we are also partnering with

Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty and his staff to streamline coordination with county agencies providing assistance and services to families served by the project.

“Since the economic downturn, my office has experienced a significant increase in calls from Tri-Valley residents seeking assistance with basic needs,” Haggerty said. “The ARRA Emergency Contingency Fund will provide us with additional resources to assist Tri-Valley families in times of crisis by providing emergency food, emergency housing, utility costs, and school supplies.” ■

‘Nutcracker’ on stages near and far

Valley Dance Theatre rings in 30 years with the annual ballet classic



KEN JOHNSON

The Valley Dance Theatre celebrates 30 years of performing “The Nutcracker.” This year, shows are held at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore.

Tchaikovsky’s ballet Classic, “The Nutcracker,” has long enchanted audiences and has become a holiday tradition for many. While there are several performances across the Bay Area, the one at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore has special meaning this year.

For the Valley Dance Theatre, a dance company and school based in Livermore, this year marks the

30th anniversary of bringing “The Nutcracker” to the stage. One of the few full length productions, the shows are accompanied by the Livermore-Amador Symphony pit orchestra. This year, there will also be holiday carols by the Harmony Fusion Chorus and the Valley Concert Chorale prior to the opening curtain and during the snow scene. The Asbury United Bell Ringers will also perform in

the lobby prior to select shows.

The Valley Dance Theatre is also known for its costuming. This year, the costumes, which are professionally and originally designed in-house, have been donated.

In keeping another tradition, the dance company was again given a grant from the Lawrence Livermore National Security’s Community Gift Program to allow women and chil-

dren served at Tri-Valley Haven to see the show.

Performances are at 7 p.m. Dec. 12, 18, 19 and 20, and 2 p.m. matinee shows are Dec. 12, 13, 19 and 20. Tickets are \$24, \$27 and \$33 for adults and \$18 for students 17 years old and younger. To purchase, visit www.livermoreperformingarts.org, call 373-6800 or visit the theater box office at 2400 First St., Livermore. ■

Other ‘Nutcracker’ showings

Walnut Creek

■ Contra Costa Ballet

Leshner Center for the Arts — Hoffman Theatre, 1601 Civic Drive

Shows are 7:30 p.m. Dec. 3, 4 and 5; 4:30 p.m. Dec. 4 and 5; and 2 p.m. Dec. 5

Tickets are \$28 for adults and \$23 for children and seniors

Call 943-SHOW or visit www.lesherartscenter.org

■ Community Youth Center

Leshner Center for the Arts — Del Valle Theatre, 1601 Civic Drive

Shows are 7 p.m. Dec. 5 and 2 p.m. Dec. 6

Tickets are \$15 for adults and free for children

Call 943-SHOW or visit www.lesherartscenter.org

Oakland

■ Oakland Ballet

Paramount Theatre, 2025 Broadway

Shows are 11 a.m. Dec. 24, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 26, and 2 p.m. Dec. 27

Tickets are \$15-\$50 for adults, \$12-\$40 for children 12 and under, and \$11.25-\$37.50 for seniors 62 and older

Call Ticketmaster at 800-745-3000 or visit www.oaklandballet.org

San Francisco

■ San Francisco Ballet

War Memorial Opera House, 301 Van Ness Ave.

Shows are at 7 p.m. Dec. 8-13, 15-23, 26-27; 2 p.m. Dec. 11-13, 17-23, 26-27; and 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Dec. 24

Tickets are \$18-\$182

Call 415-865-2000 or visit www.sfballet.org



Tour homes filled with holiday cheer

Eight homes will be opening their doors for the annual Holiday Home Tour to support animals at Valley Humane Society. From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dec. 6, select downtown homes will feature holiday décor, treats, live music and shopping boutiques. Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased at VHS, 3670 Nevada St.; Towne Center Books, 555 Main St.; or the Wine Steward, 641 Main St. For more information, call 426-8656 or visit www.valleyhumanesociety.org.

POETIC PLEASANTON



BY DEBORAH GROSSMAN

From fashion to festivities

Who knew poetry was so fashionable in Pleasanton? At the True Blue Fashion and Poetry Festival at Foothill High School on Nov. 8, 25 students participated in the fashion show and 13 teens participated in the finals for the poetry contest. Covering a variety of humorous and serious topics, the poems were appreciated by the enthusiastic audience.

In a poem entitled "I am Me," Troy Maxoutopoulos described the influences on his life from the San Francisco Giants to his family. Cal Dutrow wrote an ode to his shoes in "My Vans," with the punch line, "They feel good on my feet/my Vans are so sweet." Natasha Landicho's poem "Next Step" included the lines, "like the hands of the clock, you must keep going...and reach for the sky." The winning poets in the contest were Anna Dotson, Theodore Wu and Stephanie Holmes.

Speaking of time ticking by, the speed, sounds and backdrop for daily activities alter during the holidays. The grand displays at the mall and around town can resemble a cinematic soundstage.

The Holiday Project

The Holiday Project is a script in two acts. The early part is easy, linear, like opening credits for a blockbuster people hurry down busy street action overlaid with harmonious music and a neat, rolling list of credits producer director stars as if the creation of an Oscar-ready film

or the Holiday Project is a simple sequence of task. But later, after we invite the players, dust off the tunes, arrange the time and place, the orderly list of producers and director is downsized to one executive do-it-all marching to the holiday iPod making lists updating adjusting lists lists sprouting organically green beans potato pancakes tofu turkey

lists growing for non-perishables wrapping paper the buying of presents for those who scamper down red carpet to receive seasonal treasure and another list for those with no carpet and few CDs to set the scene.

Deborah Grossman is Pleasanton poet laureate. Contact her at pleasantonpoetry@gmail.com or through www.facebook.com/PleasantonPoetry.

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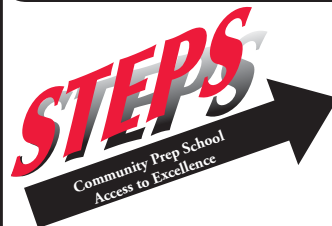
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BARBECUE

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

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

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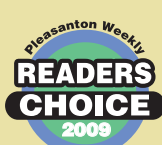
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Author Visits

CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE BAY AREA'S JEWS Noted author Fred Rosenbaum, founder of Lehrhaus Judaica, speaks on his new book, "Cosmopolitans: A Social and Cultural History of the Jews of the San Francisco Bay Area" at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 3, at Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court. Cost is \$15. Call 462-7279.

Concerts

ANDY Z CHILDREN'S MUSICIAN Wild and zany Andy Z will be peppering up the holidays with his wonder-

ful kids music at 5 p.m. Dec. 4 at Golden Apple Learning Store, 4807 Hopyard Road. Call 460-5163 or visit www.goldenappletoys.com.

CANTABELLA CHILDREN'S CHORUS Cantabella Children's Chorus performs Dec. 5 at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. The 1:30 p.m. concert features training and performing choirs and the 4 p.m. concert features performing choirs only. Tickets are \$10, \$15 and \$20. Call 373-6800 or visit cantabella.org.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH The Pacific Chamber Symphony will perform the 'original' Handel's Messiah at 8 p.m. Dec. 8 at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Tickets are \$26-\$38 for adults and \$7 for students. Call 373-6800 or visit www.pacificchambersymphony.org.

HOLIDAY CONCERT The Pleasanton Community Concert Band presents "Seasonal Surprises" featuring works by Mendelssohn, Anderson, Holst and other composers at 2 p.m. Dec. 6 at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road. Enjoy the

music of the holiday season as you listen to familiar holiday melodies including a few musical surprises. Call 846-5897 or visit www.pleasantonband.org.

SING-IT-YOURSELF MESSIAH: VALLEY CONCERT CHORALE'S FOURTH ANNUAL EVENT Join in singing Part I of Handel's choral masterpiece from 7 to 9 p.m. Dec. 6 at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Road. Tickets are \$10, 18 and under free with paying adult. Call 866-4003 or visit www.valleyconcertchorale.org.

Events

ART & WINE CRAWL Enjoy local art and wine as you make your way to over 10 galleries, open studios, businesses and tasting rooms from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Nov. 27 in downtown Livermore. Pick up a map of participating locations at the Ryan Fine Art Gallery, 171 South J St.; at Panama Red Coffee, corner of First and K streets; or at www.lindaryan-fineart.com. Call 243-0424.

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CONSUL GENERAL OF ISRAEL TO SPEAK Akiva Tor, the Consul General of Israel for the Pacific Northwest region will be speaking at Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, at 7 p.m. Dec. 6. The topic is "Israel: Challenges and Opportunities." Call 462-7279.

HOLIDAY IN THE VINEYARDS Elliston Vineyards, 463 Kilkare Road in Sunol, will be participating in Holiday in the Vineyards, hosted by Livermore Valley Winegrowers (www.lvwine.org). There will be crafts and gifts for purchase in addition to free wine tasting Dec. 5 and 6.

HOLIDAY IN THE VINEYARDS AT RM WINERY Rodrigue Molyneaux will have live music, free tastings, free pumpkin soup and shopping for Holiday in the Vineyards, from noon to 5 p.m. Dec. 5 and 6. The winery is located at 3053 Marina Ave. in Livermore. Call 443-1998 or visit www.rmwinery.com.

THOMAS COYNE WINERY WINTER OPEN HOUSE The historical tasting room located at 51 E. Vallicetos Road in Livermore will be open from noon to 5 p.m. Nov. 27 to 29 for a winter open house. Fine fruits and cheeses will be served along with new releases. Call 373-6541 or visit <http://thomascynewinery.com>.

Exhibits

HEAVENLY VISTAS This exhibit features photography with encaustic wax painting and encaustic landscape paintings from contemporary California artists Thea Schrack and Paula Wenzl Bellacera. It is open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays through Dec. 26 at Deer Ridge Vineyards, 1828 Wetmore Road, Livermore. A reception is from 2 to 4 p.m. Dec. 5. Call 866-561-0838.

OIL PAINTINGS BY NORMA WEBB Norma Webb will show oil paintings during the month of November

in the Tasting Room at Wente Vineyard Estate Winery, 5565 Tesla Road, Livermore. The winery is open daily from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Fundraisers

EXPRESS FITNESS TRI-VALLEY HAVEN TOY DRIVE Express Fitness, 4250 Santa Rita Road, is holding its annual toy drive to support the Tri-Valley Haven and their families. The wish list by age group is at the club where toys can also be dropped off by Dec. 7. Call Sue, 989-4113. Pleasanton.

XMAS TREES FOR WISHES Support the Greater Bay Area Make-A-Wish Foundation by purchasing a tree from Nov. 27 to Dec. 22 at Alpine Christmas Trees, 6407 Tassajara Road, Dublin. Proceeds will help grant wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses.

Holiday

CARDS FOR TROOPS Congressman Jerry McNerney (D-Pleasanton) hosts the third annual Holiday Cards for Our Troops program. Residents are encouraged to drop off cards by Dec. 2 for service members recovering from injuries and stationed away from their families this holiday season. Cards may be dropped off at 5776 Stoneridge Mall Road, Ste. 175. For details, call 737-0727.

CELEBRATE THE SEASON WITH LONGABERGER CEO Tami Longaberger and former Cleveland Browns Quarterback Bernie Kosar will be at a holiday gathering from 5:30 to 9 p.m. Dec. 2 at Garre Vineyard and Winery, 7986 Tesla Road. There will be food and drinks available for purchase along with shopping opportunities. Call 371-8200.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIRE St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard



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Road, hosts an old-fashioned Christmas Craft Faire from 1 to 6 p.m. Dec. 6. It includes handmade gifts, live holiday music, food and door prizes. Admission is \$8 and includes holiday food sampler and one door prize ticket. Proceeds benefit church ministries. Call 462-4802.

DONLON ELEMENTARY HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE Donlon's Parent-Faculty Club is hosting a Holiday Boutique from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 5 at the school, 4150 Dorman Road.

GOLDEN BOUGH Golden Bough's festive family program combines old world carols, Celtic holiday songs and original compositions played on an array of unique acoustic instruments. They perform at 8 p.m. Dec. 4 at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road. Tickets are \$15 to \$25 for adults and \$10 to \$20 for children and seniors. The audience is encouraged to bring food donations to the theater to benefit The Haven Food Pantry. Call 931-3444 or visit www.civictartstickers.org.

HOLIDAY BOOK SALE The Friends of the Dublin Library present a Holiday Book Sale from noon to 2 p.m. Dec. 5 at the library, 200 Civic Plaza, Dublin. There will be hardcover, children's and holiday books, as well as cookbooks, photographic collections, collectible books, game and more. Call 828-1315.

HOLIDAY SHORTS Join teen improv team Creatures of Impulse as they perform Holiday Shorts at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 10 and 11 at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St. Audience suggestions will inspire holiday themed games, scenes and audience interactions. Tickets are \$8 or \$5 for students with ID in advance, or \$10 at the door. Call 931-3444 or visit www.civictartstickers.org.

PET & FAMILY PHOTOS WITH SANTA Create a holiday remembrance of your pet from 1 to 5 p.m. Dec. 5 at Pet Extreme, 4500 Arroyo Vista Drive, Livermore. Cost is \$20 for two 4x6 photos and supports the animals at Tri-Valley Animal Rescue. No appointment needed. All animals must be on a leash or in a carrier.

Kids & Teens

FOOTHILL MINI CHEER CAMP Foothill Mini Cheer Camp for kids in K-6th grade is from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Dec. 5 at the Foothill High School small gym, 5848 Foothill Drive. Cost is \$45 and includes T-shirt, lunch and a parent performance at the end of the day. Contact Marti at mjscalise2@comcast.net.

Lectures/Workshops

ART TALK FROM TRICIA POULOS LEONARD Award-winning artist and educator Tricia Poulos Leonard will present a talk on "Understanding Abstract Paintings" at 6:15 p.m. Dec. 7 at the Pleasanton City Offices, 250 Bernal Ave. Her abstract painting, "Midnight on the Boulevard," is on display in the

lobby and will be considered for purchase by the city. For details, visit www.triciastudio.com.

Miscellaneous

CARE PACKAGES FOR TYPHOON VICTIMS Mandarin-speaking members of the Pleasanton Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are sponsoring a service project putting together care packages for victims of the recent typhoon which devastated portions of Taiwan. All items will be provided, including shipping materials and customs forms. Packaging is from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Nov. 28 at 8203 Village Pkwy., Dublin, and from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 5 at 3574 Vineyard Ave. A donation of \$15 is suggested. Contact Jim Doxey (jdoxey@gmail.com), Rich Ambrose (richard.ambrose@comcast.net), or Tim Bean (megahallred@yahoo.com).

CLOTHING DRIVE Tri-Valley Unity Church is collecting men's warm clothing and blankets for veterans and the homeless, as well as business attire for men and women (on wire hangars please) for Wardrobe for Opportunity. Drop off before the 10 a.m. services on Dec. 6 and 13, held at 2260 Camino Ramon, San Ramon. Contact Michele Day, 829-1239 or michele_day@comcast.net.

FOOD PANTRY AT VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH The Food Pantry at Valley Bible Church, 7106 Johnson Drive, will be closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and New Years Eve, but will be open the Sunday before the holidays from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Nov. 22, Dec. 20 and 27. Call 426-2492.

Seniors

WHAT IS WELLNESS? Wellness is the ultimate solution to America's health care crisis. Dr. Walsh will define wellness and present common sense, time tested proven advice for better health through better living at 10 a.m. Dec. 8 and 7 p.m. Dec. 10 at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Call 931-5365.

Spiritual

ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS At 10:15 a.m. Dec. 6 at 3350 Hopyard Road, St. Clare's Episcopal Church will have readings and carols that tell the story of redemption, from prophecy to Christ's coming. All are welcome. Call 462-4802 or visit www.stclare-spleasanton.org.

Volunteering

AMERICAN RED CROSS PUBLIC BLOOD DRIVE The American Red Cross is holding a public blood drive from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 2 at State Compensation Insurance Fund, 5890 Owens Drive. Call 800-GIVE-LIFE (800-448-3543) or go to HelpSaveALife.org/NC (Sponsor Code: STATECOMP) to schedule an appointment. One donation can help save the lives of up to three people.



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Sports

Parent photographers

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Ballistic U14 Select brings home District Cup trophy

The Ballistic U14 Select Team participated in the District Cup Tournament held at the Pleasanton Sports Park Nov. 15, proudly taking home the first place trophy. The team, coached by Pablo Espinosa, won both preliminary games to move onto the championship game. In the championship game, the team played a tough opponent, Livermore Thunder, but came out on top with a win of 1-0. The Ballistic U14 Team, made up of Mick Cuffe, Nick Goldstein, Zac Lander, Michael Lamos, Steven Morgan, Spencer Petty, Willie Stafford, Kevin Vigallon, Albert Wiseman, Connor Veit, Kenny Rockwood, Conner Neads, Collin Laporte, A.K.Kang, Chris Ford and Elijah Caluya, have now won two tournaments, won their Al Cafo-dio League and now District Cup. Their next challenge will be in January to defend their Association Cup Champion title.



BUSC U12 top Union City Diablos

The Ballistic United U12 Premier team finished league play undefeated, as they prevailed 2-1 over the Union City Diablos Nov. 14 in Union City, and clean-sheeted the Walnut Creek Menace 4-0.

Jackson Still and Nathan Esparza both scored against the Diablos, and Keeper Omeed Ziari had three saves. Jeffrey Klei and Sam Molz were all over the field defensively for BUSC, and Max Gershman had a crucial clearance out of the area.

Against the Menace, Tylor Silva scored twice, and Carsen Paynter joined the scoring with a goal. Cameron Ritchie would add the final goal of the game.

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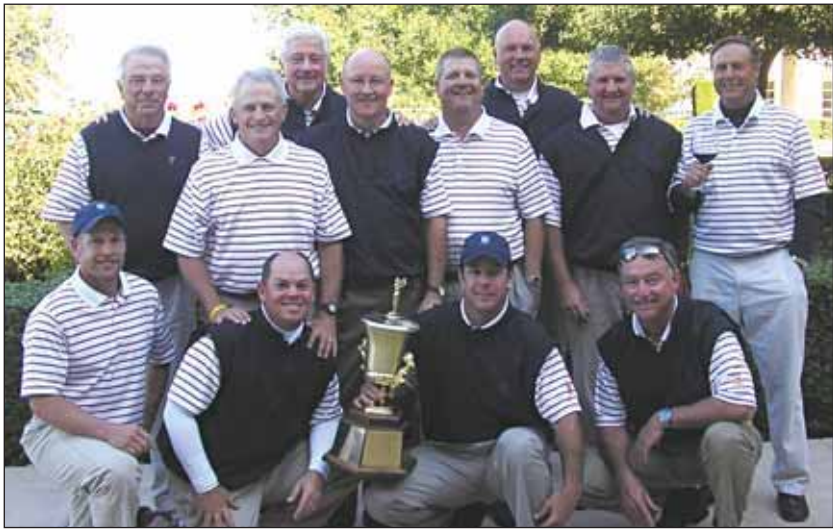
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Phantom 14-As are tourney champions

In its inaugural season, the Phantom 14U-A team has won back-to-back 15U tournaments. Pleasanton Girls Softball League's (PGSL) A-ball traveling team has garnered early success. PGSL and Phantom partnered with TPC Softball of Pleasanton for training and have played three tournaments in the fall, winning the last two.

Recently, the Phantom charges swept through the 15U-A USSSA State Qualifier held in Hayward for the championship. Phantom won five straight and out-scored their opponents amazingly 37-1. The championship game ended after five innings as Phantom beat a good Fremont Flyers team 9-1.



Victory at last

Pictured: Jim Galbraith, John Hughes, Dana Jetter, Rick Lindsey, Tom Lyons, Ken Noonan, Bryan Payne, Marshall Raymer, Bob Rowland, Rob Schneider, J.J. West and Tony Wilmer — all members of the Castlewood Country Club golf team participated recently in The Pleasanton Cup, competing against Ruby Hill Country Club. This year, Castlewood won the cup back after Ruby Hill owned it for the past two years.

SPORTS DIGEST

Foothill grad Carlee Payne recognized for soccer play

Mountain West Conference Freshman of the Year and 2008 Foothill grad Carlee Payne has been recognized by TopDrawer-Soccer.com for her performances this year.

Payne was named to TDS's Freshman Team of the Season after leading the team with a total of 13 goals, 10 assists and 52 shots. Payne has scored in 13 of Brigham Young University's 23 games and was also recently named the 2009 MWC Freshman of the Year.

RAGE U12 Grey Division 1

RAGE U12 Grey dominated the game against Fire and Ice Nov. 14.

RAGE U12 Grey Megan Shackley and Avery Jones pressured the Fire and Ice goalie throughout the game, but it was Taylor Campbell getting fouled in the box and Avery Jones taking the penalty kick that finally hit the net and scored the lone goal. Jenna Crawford moved the ball skillfully through the mid-field connecting her passes and speeding by the opposing players.

Darcy Kron was also a midfield standout, and Miranda Spring played a solid defense.

Pitbull unleashed

I just want to bring to your attention and the Pleasanton community.

READ MORE/COMMENT

Town Square Forum

Pleasanton Weekly.com

The phone number for the Baci menu inserted in the Nov. 20th issue was printed incorrectly. The correct phone number should be (925) 425-9708. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused.

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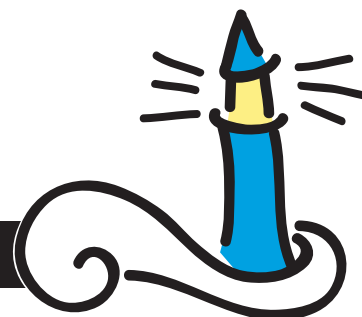
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Pleasanton Girls Lacrosse Sign Ups for 2010 Lacrosse Season are happening NOW! Go to www.pleasanton-girlslacrosse.com to sign up and find out more about our "No Cost" upcoming New Player Clinic & Returning Player Clinic on December 5th, 10-12 at Hearst Elementary in Pleasanton. Pleasanton Girls Lacrosse will be fielding teams for U15, U13, U11 and now U9 ages. Team Placements for U13 & U15 will be on Sunday, December 13th from 10-1pm at Foothill High School on their all weather field. Placements will be held Rain or Shine. Go to our website www.pleasantongirlslacrosse.com to Register and find out more details. Players must register for events to participate. Space is limited and the Deadline is fast approaching, so register now!

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TAKE US ALONG

Darling Duchess

Meet Duchess. I told her to sit perfectly still and for heavens sake, don't smile! She really had to suppress a grin but Duchess did it. Isn't she a good girl? Duchess loves cookies and she sits on command for them. Take her for a walk and she has her nose to the ground like any good hound dog. Duchess is very sweet natured, she gives kisses and loves to be around people. She is polite with most other dogs and may do well living with cats (with supervision). Duchess is about 8-years-old, is well-trained and hopes to spend her golden years in a loving home. We recommend Duchess have a yearly veterinary exam to monitor a heart murmur which hasn't stopped this spry senior dog from enjoying life. To learn more about Duchess, visit her at the East Bay SPCA — Tri-Valley Adoption Center, 4651 Gleason Drive in Dublin, open from 1 to 8 p.m. Wednesday through Thursday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Call 479-9670. See a smiling photo of Duchess at www.eastbayspca.org (they obviously forgot to tell her not to smile!).



CATHERINE HANSEN RUSH

Get in line

Charles Ferreira gets in line with the Weekly with the Company E.U.S. Honor Guard's firing squad at Arlington Cemetery in Washington, D.C., who preside over the funerals, presidential inaugurations and other special events.



TAKE US ALONG



Sharing is caring

Don and Lorna Kruse shared their Weekly (how courteous!) with two Estonian girls in Tallin on their summer visit.



Weekly pilgrimage

Members of the Catholic Community of Pleasanton took the Weekly on a pilgrimage to France, Spain and Portugal. Pictured are: Fr. Jim, Mark and Hilda Jacops, Rose Holmes, Frieda McCrary, Leona Jackson and Donna Sousa in front of the Basilica at Fatima.

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Coming Soon to Ruby Hill, Pleasanton



Coming soon! Beautiful 5,455 sq. ft. home featuring 4 BR, 3 1/2 BA, executive office, huge gourmet kitchen, backs to golf course and views beyond. *Call for pricing.*

2175 Pomezia Court, Ruby Hill, Pleasanton



Lovely family home with 5 bedrooms, (or 4 plus office), 3BA, 3,850 sq. ft., located on a quiet cul-de-sac. **NEW PRICE! \$1,249,000**

2309 Romano Circle, Pleasanton



French Country style home, 3,851 sq. ft. 5 BR, 3 BA, with beautiful pool and hot tub in the backyard. **Offered at \$1,285,000 OPEN SUN 1-4**



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It's Black Friday...
add a home to your shopping list!



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**Susan
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Real Estate

OPEN HOME GUIDE AND REAL ESTATE LISTINGS

HOME SALE OF THE WEEK

859 GRAY FOX CIR., PLEASANTON, **\$1,275,000**



This executive home is nestled in the hills of Pleasanton and often referred to as "One of Pleasanton's best kept secrets." Located in the quiet tree-lined neighborhood known as Foxbrough Estates, with extensive upgrades and captivating charm and elegance, this home was truly a rare find. Sold within 7 days, with two offers, by Dave & Sue Flashberger of Keller Williams Tri-Valley Realty. (925) 463-0436

OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

Pleasanton

4 BEDROOMS

3033 Warrenton Court

Sat/Sun 1-4 Re/Max

\$758,000

600-7653

Pleasanton

4 BEDROOMS

557 East Angela Street

Sat/Sun 1-4 Prudential CA

\$799,900

463-6110

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Mr. Pickle's is a unique franchise opportunity in the fast casual restaurant category. This is a great "turn-key" package business opportunity for the right single investor, owner/operator or investor group.

This Mr. Pickle's is a brand new location in Pleasanton. Great location, great food and a great opportunity for the right person. If you haven't tried Mr. Pickles, visit the Livermore store on 4th Street and wait in the line that extends out the door EVERYDAY. You will see why this is such a successful franchise.

Don't miss this opportunity!

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***Other locations are also available for this rapidly growing franchise and SBA funding may be available**
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Home buyers win big with federal tax credit extension

Isn't it nice to get some good news? Well, we have excellent news from CAR (the California Association of Realtors). As it now stands, the federal tax credit will be extended through April 30, 2010. First-time home buyers will continue to be eligible for a tax credit of up to \$8,000, while existing homeowners will be eligible for a reduced credit of up to \$6,500.

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