

# Pleasanton Weekly

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VOL. X, NUMBER 50 • DECEMBER 25, 2009

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Candles of hope still aflame at monthly vigils **PAGE 12**

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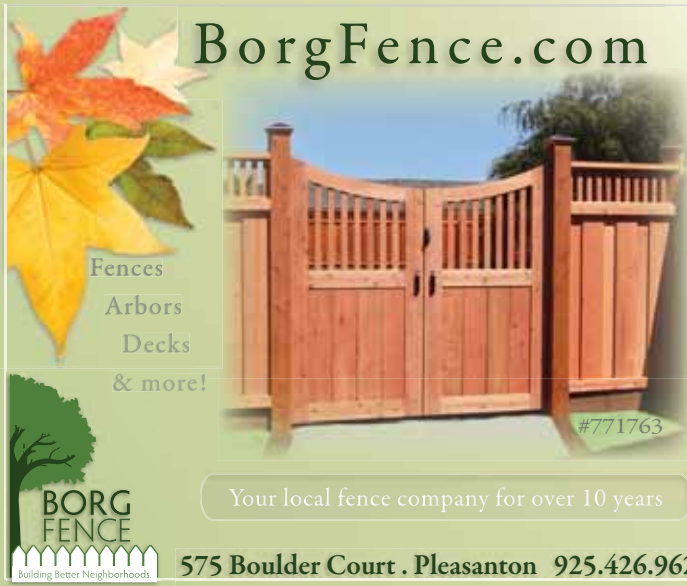
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# AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING

## Pleasanton's own 'Wikipedia' says goodbye

While many of us are celebrating Christmas with family and friends today, Dean and Mary Lu Campbell will spend the day busily packing up their Pleasanton house for their move to Chico next week.

Mary Lu Campbell has been City Hall's executive administrative assistant for the last 16 years, coming here with such an extensive background in legislative affairs and constituent relations that she's often regarded as Pleasanton's own local "Wikipedia." She's retiring next Wednesday and with Dean, who retired Dec. 18, will move to Chico.



Mary Lu Campbell

They moved here in 1986 with their 6-year-old daughter Kelly after Dean was promoted to West Coast sales manager by American Red Ball, a moving company. She worked for Pulte Homes and a real estate company before accepting the city position in October 1993, working first for City Manager Deborah McKeehan and then for McKeehan's successor, City Manager Nelson Fialho. In that period, she has handled administrative affairs for three mayors — Ben Tarver, Tom Pico and for the last five years, Jennifer Hosterman — and 11 councilmembers.

She got her start in government affairs as a junior at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., near her family home, joining a busload of students in 1971 to seek signatures to put the name of Indiana Sen. Vance Hartke on the Democratic presidential ballot in New Hampshire. Although the effort was unsuccessful, Hartke later hired Campbell to be a caseworker in his Washington, D.C. office. She handled constituent calls asking about missing or late Social Security checks, emergency passport and visa applications and hundreds of other queries from Indiana voters. Campbell moved up the ranks in the senator's office to taking charge of special projects, where she researched and prepared reports on major events of interest to Hartke, even attending the Watergate hearings several hours each day. But it was not to last. Hartke suffered a stunning defeat in his bid for a

fourth term in the Senate, losing to Richard Lugar, who is still Indiana's Republican senator. Always loyal to Hartke, she took Kelly back to Washington for Hartke's funeral in July 2003 and his burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

After Hartke's defeat, Campbell worked briefly in the House of Representatives, returning to the Senate to work for newly-elected Arizona Democrat Dennis DeConcini after he was elected in 1977. There, Campbell again handled constituent relations, and then became a legislative assistant assigned to track specific issues and draft policy statements. When Dean left his job with the National Food Processors Association, a trade group to take an executive position with American Red Ball in Indianapolis, the two moved back to their home state, where Kelly was born in 1980.

Those of us who frequent the offices at City Hall or who call there, quickly get to know Mary Lu Campbell. She's become the information guru, parlaying her years of work in handling constituent relations at the federal level to doing much the same at the local level. She fields scores of calls every day for the city manager, his two assistants, the mayor and councilmembers who rely on her to sort through requests and directly resolve those that she can. She'll be missed by the thousands she's helped over the years and she says she'll miss Pleasanton, too. It'll be a new experience living in a less-cosmopolitan town, although they came to like Chico when Kelly was a student at Chico State and they decided to buy a home there. Kelly, who's since graduated, still lives in Chico where she works for the Barry R. Kirshner Wildlife Foundation, a nonprofit organization.

Mary Lu wrote this about leaving Pleasanton:

"I'd just like to say that I've had the privilege to work for the two best city managers in the state of California as well as mayors and councilmembers who may differ in their approaches, but who each hold a deep commitment to our town.

"Life in Pleasanton will be difficult to replace ... it is a rare place. I have come to know and respect many members of this community and their friendships and respect are things I truly treasure. I will also treasure seeing Nelson (Fialho) disco dance with a rainbow wig on his head, Mayor Tarver doing the Macarena at a Mayor's dinner with foam Swiss cheese on his head, Michael Roush's Bay to Breakers outfits, Deborah McKeehan's joy when her daughter Jessica was born and so many other special memories." ■

## About the Cover

Despite the cold temperatures the evening of Dec. 9, a group of about 25 people joined in front of the Museum On Main for the monthly Pleasantonians 4 Peace vigil. The idea of peace is prevalent during the holiday season and the group hopes it will spread throughout the city and beyond with a goal of stopping the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Photo by Emily West.

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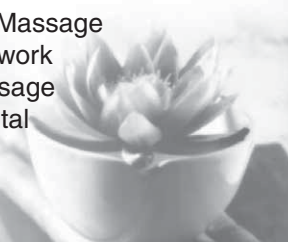
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# Streetwise

ASKED AT YOUTH BASKETBALL GAMES

## Who or what inspires you?



**Jordan Reed**  
Student

The person who inspires me most is probably my dad. I look up to him and I want to be like him.

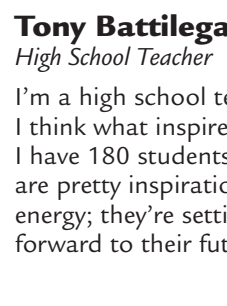
**Brianna Smith**  
Student

My mom inspires me. She inspires me because everything she's done for me, I want to do. She's helped me with everything: gymnastics, homework. I want to be like her.



**Scott Lineberry**  
Pharmaceutical Sales

My kids, because I want to be a great father for them and a great role model. They make me want to be the best I can be.



**Tony Battilega**  
High School Teacher

I'm a high school teacher and a coach, so I think what inspires me is my students. I have 180 students every day, and they are pretty inspirational. They have a good energy; they're setting goals and looking forward to their future.



**Jane Qian**  
Homemaker

My mother. I think she is a very positive person in everything. She has hard times, but during down times, she is always optimistic. That's something I wish I had. She's optimistic, hard working and never gives up.

—Compiled by Elyssa Thome

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

The Pleasanton Weekly is published every Friday by Embarcadero Media, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566; (925) 600-0840. Mailed at Periodicals Postage Rate, USPS 020407. The Weekly is mailed upon request to homes and apartments in Pleasanton. Print subscriptions for businesses or residents of other communities are \$60 per year or \$100 for two years. Go to [www.PleasantonWeekly.com](http://www.PleasantonWeekly.com) to sign up and for more information. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Pleasanton Weekly, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566. © 2009 by Embarcadero Media. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.



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## DIGEST

### Walk away 2009

The third annual World Walk to Wellness will take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. New Year's Eve at the Pleasanton Sports Park. The public is invited to walk the scenic loop around the park from 2,000 steps or all the way around for 10,000 steps. Voluntary donations may be made to Pleasanton Partnerships in Education (PPIE), which would go to support wellness grants for schools. Local business sponsor ACCUSPLIT will match the donations, up to \$20 per participant. In the past two years, the event has raised \$3,600 for PPIE.

Individuals, pairs and groups can walk on their own, or join a special "Walk With Me" group at noon with W. Ron Sutton, president of ACCUSPLIT and known nationally as "Mr. Pedometer." Visit [www.world-walktowellness.org](http://www.world-walktowellness.org) for updated listings of Walk With Me leaders and to download a registration form. Bring the completed form to the registration booth on Dec. 31. The first 200 participants will get a free pedometer.

### Parading on TV30

The Pleasanton Holiday Parade, held Dec. 5, will be broadcast on TV30. According to the schedule, it will air at 8:50 a.m. and 5:50 p.m. Christmas day, 10:50 a.m. and 8:50 p.m. Saturday, and 6:20 p.m. Sunday. Copies of the event may be purchased for \$20, plus shipping and handling. To learn more, visit [www.tri-valleytv.org](http://www.tri-valleytv.org).

### Thinking differently

Creative thinking author Javy Galindo will help people start the New Year off with a fresh start while discussing his new book, "The Power of Thinking Differently: An imaginative guide to creativity, change and the discovery of new ideas." It will be held at 2 p.m. Jan. 3 at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. For more information, visit [www.thinking-differently.com](http://www.thinking-differently.com).

### Temporary closure

A popular, upscale downtown dining establishment was forced to shutter its doors temporarily due to water damage. Mahalo Grille, located at 425 Main St., announced in an email to customers that the seafood restaurant suffered water damage after some recent rain storms and will remain closed through this busy holiday season.

A reopening date has not yet been announced. The eatery was named the Best Seafood Restaurant in the 2009 Pleasanton Weekly Reader's Choice contest.

## Court to rule early next year on validity of Pleasanton housing cap

Judge questions legality of housing cap, although suit is about building affordable homes

By JEB BING

In a three-hour hearing in Alameda County Superior Court, Judge Frank Roesch sparred repeatedly with Pleasanton's legal representative Tom Brown over the city's 29,000-unit housing cap before taking a suit under advisement that claims the cap is illegal.

Roesch, in hearing arguments by representatives of Urban Habitat last Friday, an affordable housing

advocacy group, and a representative of State Attorney General Jerry Brown, whose office joined in the suit, indicated that he believes the cap violates state law.

Brown insisted that Urban Habitat's suit is not about the validity of the housing cap, but whether Pleasanton has used the cap to bar development of workforce and affordable housing that the state insists it should allow.

"We've met every requirement placed on us by the state under the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)," Brown said. "At no time has the city ever rejected a development plan because of the housing cap."

Still, Roesch argued, Pleasanton, which has more than 2,700 apartment and housing units already built or approved, could not meet RHNA's requirement that it add

another 3,277 units as Urban Habitat claims the state is requiring by 2014.

"That's a hypothetical argument," Brown answered. "No one's asking to build those units in Pleasanton."

But Roesch persisted, asking Brown how the city would respond if a developer asked today to build that many units. He said the City

See **HOUSING** on Page 7



JANET PELLETIER

Rich Cimino, right, spots an Anna's hummingbird in a tree above at the Alviso Adobe as city naturalist Eric Nicholas records it as part of the National Christmas Bird Count. Cimino led the effort, which was conducted last Friday, for local volunteers to count bird species as part of the National Christmas Bird Count.

## Avian adventures

National Christmas Bird Count comes to Pleasanton area for the first time

By JANET PELLETIER

Rich Cimino traipsed the grounds of the Alviso Adobe last Friday with his binoculars held up to his eyes. An Anna's hummingbird? Check. A pair of turkey vultures? Check, check.

Cimino was joined by city naturalist Eric Nicholas in their quest to count bird species in Pleasanton's native habitats. It's part of a larger effort that was being conducted this past week — the National Christmas Bird Count — led by the National Audubon Society.

"We're hoping to see over 100 species here," said Cimino, who has been a member of the local Ohlone Audubon Society for more than 40 years.

The national event is in its 113th year, an annual tradition featuring more than 3,000 separate counts that is rich in history. President Theodore Roosevelt participated the first year in Central Park, New York City. But this is the first year the local Tri-Valley area has joined, an effort Cimino has campaigned for a decade to have.

It started 10 years ago when the Pleasanton resident, who teaches courses about birds for Pleasanton Adult Education, was part of a state-sponsored wind energy committee that studied bird species that were native to the Altamont Pass region,

where wind turbines now placate the skyline.

"It was really because birds were being killed by the wind turbines," he said. "I said we've really got to start counting these birds to create a baseline. That was sort of the alarm to stop thinking about it and start doing something."

The data that is compiled on how many birds live in different locations in Pleasanton and what species they belong to will be given to the Audubon Society, and the information will ultimately be added into a national database. Why is that information important?

"The public will be able to use it — naturalists, environmentalists, wind power specialists, developers who may be interested in building something," Cimino said.

That information will be especially helpful to Nicholas, the city's naturalist who operates out of the adobe.

"We're a brand new place here at the adobe," Nicholas said. "Seeing what kinds of birds are migrating here is helpful to know, to see what the local habitat is like. I'll be able to use the information in my programs for kids."

The data will also show where the strongest

See **BIRD COUNT** on Page 7

## School budget on Jan. 5 town hall agenda

Parents group seeking to inform peers on education funding

By EMILY WEST

Millions of dollars in cuts made last year to the Pleasanton Unified School District budget are now being felt and parents aren't happy about it.

Citing concerns over large class sizes, fewer classes being offered, fewer counselors, unclean facilities and the overall quality of Pleasanton schools, some parents have formed a group to do something about the problem of state-funded education. While the group doesn't have a formal name or website, they have been hosting informative presentations on educational funding in hopes to educate parents and the community.

Having raised the concerns to the district, the school board recently scheduled a town hall meeting at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 5 to be held in the Amador Valley High School library, located at 1155 Santa Rita Road. There they plan to discuss the budget and seek public input on alternative funding sources, as well as possibly approving a memorandum of understanding for California's Race to the Top.

"The outlook for state funding for education is likely to be dismal for some time," said parent Teri Banholzer, who is a member of the group. "There is a need for Pleasanton to decide if they are willing to sit idly by until Sacramento gets it right and rescues public education or are we willing to take an active role towards finding an alternative source of funding to maintain the high quality of education in Pleasanton."

Members of the parent group say they are not solely suggesting another parcel tax on the ballot, nor are they asking for any money.

"We want people to be prepared," said parent Barbara Kirk, adding that before becoming involved she was 'woefully ignorant' on state funding for schools. "We want dialogue and input. Many people may think [the presentations] are heading

See **SCHOOL** on Page 7

# Sober living provider in danger of losing home

Seyda Harding Kaynak says she's tried refinancing with no luck, looking into legal action

BY JANET PELLETIER

Nici first started abusing prescription meds at the impressionable age of 14. After entering rehab a few years later and returning home, she learned her uncle had been diagnosed with terminal cancer, causing her to spiral out of control again.

But fast forward to today and she's not only sober, but learning to deal with her emotional issues, which she credits as having just as much of an effect on her dependency as the physical addiction.

"There's so much love and support in this house," she said as she sat at the kitchen table. "We're like a family. We have dinners together and we all have responsibility amongst ourselves."

The 21-year-old is talking about life at Tranquility Sanctuary, a nondescript sober living home located in south Pleasanton that's operated by Seyda Harding Kaynak and her husband Kam, who both work for a well-known real estate firm. Her housemates include a 26-year-old Walnut Creek woman who was living in a crack house and a flight attendant. The home is accredited by the California Association for Addiction Recovery Resources.

But while Nici (who preferred not to use her last name) will be celebrating 60 days of sobriety on New Year's Eve, there may be some bad news on the horizon.

The Kaynaks, who began operating Tranquility in 2008 and have helped 50 women, are in danger of losing their home. A foreclosure date of Dec. 14 was extended to Jan. 14



JANET PELLETIER

Seyda Harding Kaynak, left, and her husband Kam, right, sit in front of the fireplace at their south Pleasanton home with one of their sober living tenants, Nici. The Kaynaks are in danger of losing the home to foreclosure after several unsuccessful attempts to refinance.

at the last minute.

Kaynak, a real estate agent, said she's been fighting the \$1.3-million mortgage with her bank, Chase, to modify her loan agreement, but says she keeps hearing the same boiler plate response. The couple owes more than \$150,000 on the house, built in 2000. She's not alone as thousands upon thousands are facing foreclosure, even in the moderately affluent Tri-Valley. But Kaynak said if Tranquility is forced to shut down, the region will lose

the only women's sober living facility of its kind in the East Bay and eight women staying at their five-bedroom, two-story home will have to figure out other options to maintain their sobriety.

"Essentially, we've gone through a 19-month process of smoke and mirrors," Kaynak said. "Washington Mutual, before they became Chase, was our former bank. When we requested a loan modification, they told me that I should skip three payments."

After WaMu became Chase, she said she contacted and was contacted by nearly 40 bank officials to renegotiate the loan, but was repeatedly rejected.

Seyda Harding Kaynak suffered wage losses as the real estate market tanked, Kam Kaynak has had trouble finding work in mechanical engineering and the two tried to sell their home in 2006, but despite 250 showings and 35 offers, the house did not sell.

The couple has been trying to raise their income level to help the situation. Operating Tranquility has brought in some money (residents pay \$1,000/month) and Kaynak added a third job to her plate at the mall, but it's not enough. She said officials continue to tell her their income is not enough, but don't specify what income level is needed, instead telling her that information was not available.

Kaynak said she's on the phone daily, calling Chase, the state comptroller and others, and has reached out to local elected representatives. A recovering addict herself since 1985, she said Tranquility is unique because it serves suburban women who often hide their addictions. She said Marin has the most comparable type living situation.

Attorney Marc TerBeek, whose office is in Oakland, is working with the Kaynaks to explore their legal avenues. In addition to filing an emergency Chapter 13 bankruptcy declaration, Kaynak said they are also trying to get grant funding to help tenants who can't afford the rent at Tranquility.

"We're just going to fight to keep this going," she said. ■



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## ValleyCare schedules H1N1 clinics beginning Tuesday

Separate events planned for adults, children through Jan. 30

ValleyCare Health System announced it will begin a series of H1N1 vaccination clinics, with its first one slated for Tuesday.

The vaccinations will be given based upon recommended target groups — pregnant women, household members and caregivers for children 6 months and younger, health care and emergency workers

and people 6 months to 24 years old. Cost is \$17.

Adult clinics will be held from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Dec. 29, Jan. 13 and 20 and from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Jan. 16 and 30 at the Occupational Health building, 5565 W. Las Positas Blvd., Ste. 150 in Pleasanton. Family clinics for children 6 months and up will be held from

4:30 to 7 p.m. Jan. 5 and 6 and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Jan. 9 at the Mobile Health Unit in the Valley Memorial Health Center parking lot, 1111 E. Stanley Blvd., Livermore. The Vaccine for Children Program (VFC) or Medi-Cal will be accepted for children under 18.

—Janet Pelletier

## OF NOTE

### Girls hold dance marathon to raise money for charity

Sixty Pleasanton girls, ages 8 to 18, gave it their all recently at a 24-hour dance marathon to raise money for Project Roadrunner.

The girls are part of the J&T competition team at Jazz 'n Taps Dance Studio in Pleasanton. They danced for 24 hours to raise money for Project Roadrunner, which benefits families served by Marilyn Avenue Elementary School in Livermore. The school has a large percentage of students who come from families living far below the poverty level. Dancers raised money by getting people to pledge donations for the marathon. Each dancer was asked to raise at least \$100. The 60 dancers raised a total of \$12,981 for Project Roadrunner. The money will be used for the project's annual holiday gift drive.



# Leadership posts filled at school board, City Council, but not without a few gripes

Grant picked again for president over Arkin; Thorne named vice mayor over Sullivan

By JEB BING

Leadership positions were filled last week by both the City Council and the Pleasanton school board, but not without a bit of angst.

School board member Valerie Arkin's bid to become president of the board in 2010 in a nomination made by fellow trustee Jamie Hintzke was rejected by board members Chris Grant, Pat Kernan and Jim Ott. Instead, they chose Grant to serve a second term as president, with Arkin and Hintzke voting against the nomination.

Across First Street, the City Council had its own dispute after Mayor Jennifer Hosterman appointed Councilman Jerry Thorne to serve as vice mayor in the coming year. That riled Councilwoman Cindy McGovern, who wanted Councilman Matt Sullivan to have the assignment, following what McGovern said has been a tradition of rotating the vice mayor's position "so that we all have the chance to

serve our community."

In the end, the Thorne appointment was approved in a 4-1 vote, with McGovern voting against it. Sullivan, who on a rotational basis would have been next in line for the post, voted to support Thorne.

"I'm voting in favor because I know that Jerry (Thorne) would do a good job as a vice mayor," Sullivan said. "I will say that I did send the mayor and city manager emails requesting that I be appointed because it was my turn. I did not receive any communication back from the mayor, but I won't hold that against Jerry."

Hosterman said that she has been appointed to serve on three more and "very important" committees that will require more meetings outside of Pleasanton each month. She explained that Thorne, who is retired, is in the city most of the time and can fill in for her as needed whereas Sullivan works in San Francisco and has less time to help her

out during the daytime hours.

"So to that end, I've asked Councilman Thorne to serve as vice mayor for the coming year, and he has agreed," Hosterman added. "I agree with Councilwoman McGovern that it's very important to allow everyone serving on the council to have their turn, and everyone now has."

McGovern insisted, however, that the rotation system be honored and followed. When Hosterman again said that she needed a vice mayor who would be in Pleasanton most days, McGovern retorted,

"Well, how about me? I'm here most days, too."

At the Pleasanton school board meeting, the debate over who should serve as president next year was more contentious.

Hintzke said fellow trustee Arkin, who was elected to the school board in November 2008, has the experience and time to devote to the demands of the board president's office.

"The reason I chose Valerie is because we work well together, she really does have the time to talk to people in the community, she gets back to people when they call, she meets with them for coffee, she is in Pleasanton all the time every day," Hintzke said.

Board members agreed that two major issues facing the school district next year — another looming budget shortfall and the June retirement of Supt. John Casey and the hiring of his replacement this spring — will require even a greater time commitment from the board president in 2010.

Arkin said she has the time, is the one board member that doesn't have a job, and "so I would have time during the transition to work with Dr. Casey in transitioning to a new superintendent."

But the other three board members disagreed.

"I want Chris (Grant) to stay on as president," Ott said. "This is

not a popularity contest. It's really about who we think can be president during this time that can do the best job right now."

Added board member Pat Kernan: "I think it's important right now as we are going through a superintendent search that we have some consistency," he said. "Chris has done a good job. I just don't think Valerie is ready in my opinion, but I would definitely support her for board clerk." Ott also recommended Arkin for the clerk's position, but she declined.

Under questioning by other board members, Grant said he would be honored to serve a second term and that he would continue to make whatever time available that was needed to participate in future meetings and discussions.

Kernan was chosen clerk again, a position that usually leads to being named board president in the following year. ■

## SCHOOL

Continued from Page 5

towards a parcel tax, but there are other options as well."

While they want to inform people that some solutions aren't possible — such as taking money from the capital fund, adding sales tax in Pleasanton to cover schools or a usage tax — that there are other ideas like a big foundation. While this and many solutions won't help in the short-run, the group said they simply wish to get ideas for alternative funding.

"At this point, we are really trying to raise awareness," Banholzer said. "We want to make everyone aware of what the actual cuts are that have taken place at each of the schools."

This effort follows two earlier efforts this year, the Save Pleas-

anton Schools campaign for the parcel tax and the school fundraising campaign I Love Pleasanton Schools which followed the failure of Measure G in June. With a goal of bringing in \$2.8 million over the summer, the ILPS fundraiser collected \$463,379 that was put towards counselors, elementary strings and band, and reading specialists. The school board also agreed to delay a payment in order to bring back counselors.

Kirk said that most people don't realize that the programs supported by ILPS won't be supported next year, since the one-time dollars were already spent.

Luz Cazares, assistant superintendent of business services for PUSD, has said that the Legislative Analysts Office has predicted a 20-billion shortfall in the state

budget, meaning further cuts to the school budget are very likely.

Critics have said that any other effort, be it a parcel tax or fundraiser, would suffer the same fate as Measure G and ILPS.

Those involved with the Measure G campaign said the number of "yes" voters don't necessarily reflect the number of people willing to support Pleasanton schools. They said about half of the supporters didn't show up to the polls because of confidence it would pass.

"I'm not discouraged, I'm more invigorated," Kirk said. "I feel there is more energy and more ideas flowing now."

Depending on the Jan. 5 meeting, the school board has said it may consider making these meetings monthly, with updates on the school budget.

As far as the board's support for going forward with a parcel tax, they expressed the desire to debrief and figure out what would need to change in order to garner support from the community. Board member Valerie Arkin said she wanted to survey the community, although the online surveys wouldn't provide extensive and accurate feedback. Her desire is to learn more about the people in between the extremes and figure out what's holding them back.

### Board signs contract

The school board officially signed

with the search firm Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, Ltd. to help find a replacement for Superintendent John Casey, who is retiring at the end of the school year.

Board president Chris Grant and Arkin negotiated the contract and were able to secure several "a la carte" services for free, Grant said. The company charges at base consulting fee of \$21,500 and charges for out-of-pocket expenses such as advertising and traveling to forums and interviews. The total cost Grant expected would be between \$28,000 and \$31,000. ■

## BIRD COUNT

Continued from Page 5

bird populations are and where nesting boxes can be placed to encourage avian residency here.

A total of 89 volunteers helped in the count (57 of them in Pleas-

anton), which spanned Pleasanton, Sunol and Livermore. Areas that were tracked included Harvest Park, Del Valle Creek, the Aquatic Center, the Marilyn Kane Trail, Koll Center, Arroyo Mocho and Shadow Cliffs. Volunteers walked each area in one direc-

tion, armed with binoculars, a bird species book and a checklist to tally what they saw. Cimino said the count will now become a yearly occasion.

For more information on the count, visit <http://ohloneaudubon.org>. ■

## HOUSING

Continued from Page 5

Council would have to turn down the request based on the fact that the housing cap was imposed in 1996 in a referendum approved by a majority of Pleasanton voters. Legally, it can be removed only by another vote or by a court decision declaring the cap illegal.

Brown said Roesch and Urban Habitat can't use speculation as the basis of deciding the validity of the housing cap. The city is not in

violation of the housing numbers so far imposed by the state and there's plenty of time before 2014 for the council to ask voters to change the limit.

City officials already have discussed asking voters to revise the housing cap ordinance to put it more in line with RHNA's requirements. Such a measure could allow that the cap be adjusted every seven years to satisfy state housing numbers.

Curiously, neither Richard Marcantonio, the lead attorney for

Urban Habitat or his assistant Atty. Christopher Mooney, cited Pleasanton's urban growth management policy that limits building permits to 350 a year. Although that number of permits hasn't been used for most of the decade, even if a developer was to seek to build 3,277 units, it would take years to receive building permits — housing cap or not.

Roesch said he will rule on Urban Habitat's suit within the next 90 days. ■

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## EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

### It's Christmas on the job for many

As we enjoy Christmas with our families and friends, let's also praise the extra efforts of those who are working today — police, firefighters and nurses locally and thousands more across the region. We especially salute Pleasanton families whose sons, daughters, wives, husbands and parents are serving in harm's way in Afghanistan and Iraq, leaving an empty spot at the Christmas dinner table that we all hope will be filled quickly when the troops come home.

At ValleyCare Medical Center, 224 will be at work today in nursing, the emergency room, laboratories, pharmacy, at X-ray machines and admissions to care for those who are hospitalized and to serve any of us who might need emergency services. ValleyCare's Vice President Ken Mercer reports that the hospital is opening its cafeteria to serve a special Christmas dinner to all who are working today when they have a break in their duties and can enjoy a home-cooked meal. A number of staff members with seniority that keeps them off holiday schedules are volunteering to serve for their colleagues who have young children so that they can spend Christmas at home.

Although it's a holiday, Mercer points out that hospitals such as ValleyCare operate around the clock, always offering full emergency and other health care whenever needed. In fact, emergency rooms are often busiest at holiday time, treating those suffering from stress and medical conditions accelerated by too much food or chilly outdoor temperatures. ValleyCare also is open for newborns with Mercer pointing out that medical teams are on duty in the maternity ward, delivering babies every day, including Christmas.

Pleasanton police are patrolling the streets today, with three shifts scheduled as usual seven days a week. Captain Dave Spiller points out that with shift changes at 6:30 a.m., 2 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., officers scheduled to work today adjust their family celebrations to accommodate those hours. Still, staffing across the board will be lighter, with motorcycle officers, detectives, school resource officers and clerical staff taking the day off. Unlike other holidays, Christmas tends to be a bit easier on police patrols with fewer cars on the road, most retail stores and offices closed and even local bars shut down. Spiller said alcohol can still be a problem with families serving drinks at home. Anyone who drinks should make sure they have a designated driver who doesn't. He also urged drivers to be especially careful on neighborhood streets, watching out for children who often try out their new bikes and scooters that they received as gifts.

Like police, firefighters are on duty as usual, with scheduled work unchanged by holidays. Assistant City Manager Julie Yuan-Miu reports that 37 in the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department will be on duty, including captains, paramedics and engineers, led by a battalion chief. Clerks and those not associated with fire suppression duties have the day off. Historically, Christmas Day has no more fires than other days, although there are usually an increased number of calls to homes where turkey fryers have gotten out of hand and a firefighter's professional hand is required to douse the flames. Yuan-Miu is overseeing the fire department's activities in Livermore and Pleasanton as well as a search for a new fire chief that is now under way.

Ken Mercer, Capt. Spiller and Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department supervisor Yuan-Miu join all of us at the Pleasanton Weekly in wishing you a Merry — and safe — Christmas. ■

## LETTERS

### Only one dog park in Pleasanton?

Dear Editor,

Being an avid reader of the Weekly, I'd like to thank your newspaper for producing the Info Pleasanton magazine, again. This publication requires many hours to bring to press. Sure, the ads help pay for it ... maybe, but it helps both us older citizens to keep up with the changes in our community.

For the newer residents, you need to get a copy from the Weekly's office on Sunol Boulevard. Just say, "We are new to the community."

There is one comment, which my surprise many of your readers and that concerns the number of dog parks we have in town — one. If your paper would point out that our town has 8,000-plus dogs, most readers would be astounded. When our Park and Recreation Commission tried to establish new dog parks within existing parks, the residents of that park area yelled out, "not in our back yard park."

What is wrong with dog, that people both love and hate them? Case in point: have you seen all those four leggers at the summer "First Wednesday" dog walk? If you have not seen our existing dog park in Muirwood Community Park on the west side of town, take a look, especially if you have a dog.

So, Pleasanton Weekly, take up the challenge for dog parks in our town. Do a survey or an article with all the facts from the police department and the Humane Society.

**Howard Adams Neely**

### From a fan of the Weekly

Dear Editor,

Thanks for another year of your good coverage of Pleasanton affairs.

Other papers with more areas to cover can't monitor our city as well as you do. Your Dec. 11 editorial "Voices of Pleasanton gaining influence far beyond city" was an informative example.

Bless your work.

**Nancy Freedom**

### Larger class sizes worrisome

Dear Editor,

I attended the Dec. 15 Pleasanton school board meeting to get an update on the budget and the potential impact on our schools. I was devastated to hear that things are so bad that they are considering 30:1 class sizes for K-3 classes as well as host of other cuts that will damage our children's education.

We recently moved to Pleasanton (summer 2009) for the schools. My husband commutes quite a distance, but that was fine because we were assured that this community looks after their schools. I love living here, but can't stand the idea of

having my two young kids in 30:1 class sizes.

I'm also worried that once the school system starts spiraling downward, it will be hard to change direction and to restore PUSD's reputation. People will move their kids out of Pleasanton and new people will choose places like San Ramon, where the communities support smaller class sizes.

I can absolutely say that we would not have bought a house here if we had known class sizes could go to 30:1. A ratio of 25:1 is stressing the system (though the teachers are amazing). We are punishing our children, our community and our home values by letting our school system fall apart. We need to stop kicking the can down the road. There is a school board/town hall meeting to discuss these issues at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 5 at Amador Valley High School. The board members sound open to all ideas. Please community, stand up and be counted.

**Christina Hicks**

### Some Happy Valley clarification from a resident

Dear Editor,

Having lived in Happy Valley since 1998, I read with interest your article entitled "Happy Valley: joining Pleasanton lot by lot," (Editorial, Dec. 4, page 10).

I wanted to clarify a few points. Fees for running sewer and water were originally projected to be very expensive. Estimates were over \$80,000 for some parcels (not including connection fees and onsite costs) and 70% of residents were required to commit to connect before infrastructure would be run to spur streets.

As a concession to the neighborhood, private developers put forth a proposal to run the infrastructure throughout the community. After many discussions and meetings, most of the residents were in favor of annexation.

Close to annexation vote, the then Director of Public Works informed the community that the bypass road might not be built. This was a complete turnabout by the city. The bypass road was repeatedly promised by the city council in public forums, in print within the Happy Valley Specific Plan (2/98) and the feeder route was outlined in the North Sycamore Specific Plan (6/92). These repeated commitments were made to garner community support for, or pacify opposition to, the city's own golf course project.

Given that the city appeared at the 11th hour to be backing away from its commitment to help ensure the rural nature of the valley, it is not surprising that the annexation vote failed.

It is disheartening that the city leadership continues to distance themselves from their moral (and legal) obligation to complete the bypass road.

**Vince Barletta**

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The Pleasanton Weekly is published every Friday by Embarcadero Media, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566; (925) 600-0840.

Mailed at Periodicals Postage Rate, USPS 020407.

The Pleasanton Weekly is mailed upon request to homes and apartments in Pleasanton. Community support of the Pleasanton Weekly is welcomed and encouraged through memberships at levels of \$5, \$8 or \$10 per month through automatic credit card charges. Print subscriptions for businesses or residents of other communities are \$60 per year or \$100 for two years. Go to [www.PleasantonWeekly.com](http://www.PleasantonWeekly.com) to sign up and for more information.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Pleasanton Weekly, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566.

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# GUEST OPINION



BY JOHN LEDAHL, TIM SBRANTI AND SCOTT HAGGERTY

## Can local government save California?

For those of us serving as elected officials and trying to make government more responsive, the situation couldn't be clearer: our system of government in California is broken.

How do you want your children to live? What is your vision of our state going forward? How can we pool our money to finance vital services, like education and transportation? These are vital questions that need answers soon, or it will get worse. We believe a realignment of state and local government is needed. A return to more local control of both taxation and spending is essential.

California is facing high unemployment, shrinking revenues, lack of investment in the future, and profound despair that things will not change. Proposed solutions are short-term fixes, while long-term implications are often ignored. It's more than economics; it is a state government structure that can't function in difficult times.

This summer, a remarkable bipartisan summit of more than 500 local government officials from cities, counties and school boards throughout the state met to create action plans. They reviewed survey results from national pollsters revealing that people prefer more local control and trust local government to respond to their needs

more effectively.

No one political party has all the answers, yet in California, minority rule drives budget decisions. California is one of three states requiring a two-thirds vote to put a budget on the governor's desk (which he can 'blue pencil' — cutting almost whatever he wants).

About 75 percent of local money is provided by state government. When the state gets into political and financial paralysis, it inevitably looks to local government for funds — regardless of how well a city council or school board manages its budget. As a result, local investment on infrastructure, economic development and education is hampered.

A stark example of this is the constitutional requirement that public education has first priority on public funds. Regardless, the state has cut education funds repeatedly over the last 20 years, despite who is governor.

At the same time, Sacramento mandates that local governments carry out an array of programs. This severely aggravates local fiscal challenges. The inherent strength of community level government is then dissipated in education and in health care, for small businesses, housing, and senior, child, and family care. Local and state budget sessions degenerate into debates about taking funds from one group to sustain others.

One group at the summit called for a statewide constitutional convention to address the weaknesses in the constitution regarding financial management and budgeting. It will take years but will provide

long-term fixes on how the state manages its finances. Others recommended constitutional amendments or initiatives to address a simple majority for creating state budgets and changes in term limits. We believe a fiscal system that provides increased performance, transparency and accountability is needed.

Let's begin an honest non-rhetorical discussion about a vision of what kind of state we want to live in, and how we can pool our finite resources for the benefit of all. We see that happening with local government moving to the forefront.

This is one of those defining moments where grassroots interest must grow into commitment to change. Town hall meetings are starting to happen in counties throughout the state including the Tri-Valley. Contact us if you want to join. You are needed.

*John Ledahl is a three-term Dublin school board trustee (ledahljohn@dublin.k12.ca.us); Tim Sbranti was elected mayor of Dublin in 2008, (tim.sbranti@ci.dublin.ca.us); and Scott Haggerty was reelected in 2008 as First District Alameda County Supervisor, (district1@acgov.org).*

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## OBITUARIES

### Genevieve Loretta Paradiso



Genevieve (Jennie) Loretta Paradiso died Dec. 1 at the age of 86.

Mrs. Paradiso was born Feb. 18, 1923 in Oakland to Manuel Cabral and Maria Telles. After graduating from Castlemont High School, she was married to Tony Paradiso for 46 years and lived in San Leandro, Twain Harte, Tracy, Pleasanton and Manteca.

She was a homemaker, but she dabbled in the real estate field for a while. In her early years, she loved hosting dinner and holiday parties for her family and friends; team bowling; dancing on Saturday nights (or any night someone played music); growing big, beautiful dahlias in her garden; crafting; sewing; knitting and showering all of the children with many gifts for every occasion. But her greatest gift to her children was passing on family values and traditions.

She is survived by her children, Dorene (Pat), Gerri (Bob), Debbie (Don), Jeff (Marcy) and Mark;

grandchildren, Dean, Danny, Corine, Chase, Amber, Crystin, Anthony, Alex, Daryl, Michael, Monica, Aaron and Daniel; godchildren, Carol, Angela and Todd; and many great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by children, Cory, Gene and George; and grandson, David.

A service was held Dec. 19 at St. Augustine Catholic Church. A private burial was planned to be held at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Hayward.

Donations may be made to her favorite charity, Hannah Boys Center, 17000 Arnold Drive, P.O. Box 100, Sonoma, CA 95476.

### Bobbie Jean Wright

Bobbie Jean Wright died Dec. 6 in Pleasanton after six short weeks of lung cancer. She was 83.

Mrs. Wright was born July 31, 1926 in Appleton, Ark. to Eunice (Turk) and Cora Woods. She moved to California to marry Frank Wright, of Hector, Ark. They lived 66 wonderful years mostly in Southern California, then Tracy and Livermore.

She was a wonderful mother, wife and friend. She never met a stranger and truly touched all around her.



She is survived by her husband, Frank Wright of Livermore; daughter and son-in-law, Cynthia Wright Sund and Steve Sund; grandchildren, Laura, Shawna, Suzanna and Christopher Sund of Pleasanton; Lloyd Woods of Russellville, Ark.; James Woods of Ind.; and nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her beloved sister, Billie Woods Wilson; parents, Turk and Cora Woods, sister-in-law, Mary Woods; niece, Carol Lopez; and nephew, Larry Wilson.

A service was planned to be held Dec. 11 and her final resting place is in Livermore.

As Mrs. Wright was a 17-year breast cancer survivor, donations may be made to the American Cancer Society.

### David Gareth Ash

David Gareth Ash died Dec. 4 in Carrollton, Texas while on business. He was 56.

Mr. Ash was born May 7, 1953 and was raised in San Jose. He later moved to Pleasanton with his wife where they have lived and raised their four children for the past 33 years.

Mr. Ash was involved in the community coaching his children in the sports that they all loved. Over the years, he coached each of his children in soccer, basketball, softball and Little League baseball. He was a familiar face at the Sports Park on the soccer fields. He was also an avid sports fan and spent many happy times cheering on the Giants and Warriors. He also was very active in his church and enjoyed the men's ministry and bible studies.

Mr. Ash was highly respected in the business community where he has been in the electronics sales and distribution industry since graduating from San Jose State University in 1975. Above all, he was a devoted family man and put his wife and children as one of his



top priorities.

He is survived by his wife, Jan; children, Kirsten, Lorien, Jason and Megan; brother, Craig Ash and his wife, Marcia; sister, Janice Roloff and her husband, Phil; father-in-law, Ori DiBenedetto; sister-in-law, Joanne McMillen; and many nieces and nephews.

A service was held Dec. 12. In lieu of flowers a donation can be made to: The Ash Children's College Fund, First Republic Bank, 249 Main St., Pleasanton, CA 94566 ACCT # 80000420027.

### Kathleen Howard Schmitz

Kathleen Howard Schmitz died Dec. 10 at the age of 96.

Mrs. Schmitz was born Sept. 16, 1913.

She is survived by her daughters, Bonnie Krichbaum (husband Fred) of Pleasanton, Deanna Murray (husband Robert) of Kingsville, Texas; Mary Pat Parma (husband Frank) of Richardson, Texas; grandchildren, Katie Thompson, Leigh Ulrich, Scott Krichbaum, Vicki Wilson, Carrie Lemcke, Andrew Parma and Patricia Stepler; and 15 great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her beloved husband, Dean Schmitz; and her great-grandson, Robby Thompson.

A service was held Dec. 13. Donations may be made to St. Jude's Hospital in memory of Kathleen Schmitz.

### Joan P. Accardo

Joan P. Accardo died Dec. 3 after a long and courageous battle with ovarian cancer. She was 62.

Mrs. Accardo was born April 20, 1947 in Oakland. She graduated from San Lorenzo High School in 1965. Over the years she spent her time involved in Jobs Daughters and enjoyed volunteering at the SPCA.



Italian traditions were very important to her, especially during holidays when her cooking was shared. She recently retired from LLNL after 25 years. She enjoyed spending leisure time watching old movies, traveling to South Lake Tahoe and taking rides in the Cobra.

She is survived by her loving husband, Bob; children, Stacy, Gina and Bobby; grandson, DJ; mother, Evelyn; sister, Gloria; best friend, Janis; and many nieces, nephews, extended family and friends. She was preceded in death by father, Melvin; beloved sister, Barbara; and loving dog, Teddy.

A service was held Dec. 21. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the East Bay SPCA, 4651 Gleason Drive, Dublin, CA 94568.

### Mary Frances Jewell-Awtry

Mary Frances Jewell-Awtry died Dec. 14 in Livermore, peacefully and with her daughters by her side. She was 101.


Mrs. Awtry was born May 26, 1908. She witnessed a century's transformation from horse and buggy to cars and other major advances, but it is two basic things — family and food — she credited her longevity.

Mrs. Awtry was a gracious and pleasant woman whose lingering Southern drawl served as testament to her roots. Kentucky-born, she lived in the Valley for more than 40 years, observing Pleasanton's change from a "cow town" to a diverse city for more than 30 years of them. She was an officer in the Pleasanton Women's Club and was involved in the St. Augustine Catholic Church bridge group for 35 years.


She is survived by her daughters, Jeanne Carolyn Lutes and Paula Awtry-Harris; three grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband of 62 years, Henry Paul Awtry.

Burial will take place by her home in Lucas, Ky. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hope Hospice in Dublin.


## Merry Christmas



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## ENGAGEMENTS

### Katharine Stober & Robert Tuck

Katharine Evans Stober and Robert James Tuck have announced their engagement to be married.

Kate is the daughter of Victoria and J.L. Emmons of Pleasanton and Daniel R. Stober and Joan Mendelson of Palo Alto. She graduated from Castilleja School in Palo Alto in 1999. She received her Bachelor of Arts in history with honors in 2003 from Columbia University and her Master of Arts in American Studies in 2006, also from Columbia. She is employed as a public relations manager with the Lower

East Side Tenement Museum in New York City.

Rob is the son of Amanda Tuck of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom and Professor Anthony Tuck of Essex, United Kingdom. He graduated from Hills Road Sixth Form College in Cambridge, United Kingdom in 1997. He received his Master of Arts with honors in Oriental Studies in 2002 from Oxford University; a Master of Arts in 2007 from Columbia, a Master of Philosophy from Columbia in 2008 and a Master of Arts from Waseda University in Japan in 2009. He is a Ph.D. candidate in Modern Japanese Literature from Columbia and anticipates graduation in 2011. He



is employed as a doctoral research student for Columbia University.

The ceremony will be held July 31, 2010 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Walnut Creek. A reception will follow at Castlewood Country Club. The couple plan to honeymoon in Hawaii and resides in New York, N.Y.

# Community Pulse

POLICE BULLETIN & LOG

## POLICE BULLETIN

### Police continue search for Bank of the West robber

Pleasanton police are continuing to search for a man who robbed a Bank of the West's branch in the Raley's shopping center Friday afternoon.

Bank employees said the suspect entered the bank with a garbage bag and demanded that the tellers hand over cash. No weapon was seen or simulated and no one was injured.

The suspect left with an undisclosed amount

of cash before officers arrived, police said, and a search of the area was unsuccessful.

The suspect is described as a white man between 6 feet and 6 feet 3 inches tall who weighs about 160 pounds. He was seen wearing a black sweatshirt with the hood pulled over his head and blue jeans.

Police are looking at surveillance camera tapes in an attempt to identify the robber. Anyone with information on the robbery is asked to call Pleasanton police at 931-5100.

—Bay City News contributed to this report.

## POLICE REPORT

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

### Dec. 13

#### Vehicular burglary

- 1:52 p.m. in the 6200 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

#### DUI

- 1:12 a.m. at the intersection of Hopyard Road and Black Avenue
- 1:57 a.m. in the 4300 block of Black Avenue
- 11:37 p.m. at the intersection of Valley Avenue and Boulder Street

#### Public drunkenness

- 11:05 a.m. in the 5500 block of West Las Positas Boulevard

### Dec. 14

#### Theft

- 12:02 p.m. in the 4200 block of Dundlack Court; identity theft
- 3:06 p.m. in the 4100 block of Rennellwood Way; identity theft
- 7:43 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

#### Vehicular burglary

- 7:19 a.m. in the 2400 block of Heatherlark Court
- 2:49 p.m. in the 7000 block of Johnson Drive

#### Public drunkenness

- 12:12 a.m. in the 6000 block of Corte Calera

#### DUI

- 9:50 p.m. in the 200 block of Spring Street

### Dec. 15

#### Theft

- 11:33 a.m. in the 5600 block of Stoneridge Drive; stolen vehicle
- 3:37 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft
- 8:30 p.m. in the 2700 block of Glen Isle Court; identity theft

#### Vandalism

- 11:35 a.m. at the intersection of Spring Street and Railroad Avenue
- 12:07 p.m. in the 200 block of Spring Street
- 1:24 p.m. in the 4300 block of Diavila Avenue

Marijuana possession

- 5:45 p.m. in the 3000 block of Bernal Avenue

### Dec. 16

#### Theft

- 10:25 a.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 10:25 a.m. in the 1400 block of

Stoneridge Mall Road; stolen vehicle

- 10:26 a.m. in the 4300 block of Rosewood Drive; petty theft

- 8:46 p.m. in the 8000 block of Horizons Court; stolen vehicle

#### Burglary

- 8:27 a.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive; shoplifting
- 9:04 a.m. in the 4000 block of Holland Drive; vehicular
- 9:29 a.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive; vehicular

### Dec. 17

#### Theft

- 8:13 a.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; grand theft
- 10:52 a.m. in the 3300 block of Smoketree Commons Drive; identity theft

- 11:07 a.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue; grand theft

#### Burglary

- 4:07 p.m. in the 5500 block of Springdale Avenue

#### Vandalism

- 12:48 a.m. in the 3100 block of Santa Rita Road
- 3:02 p.m. in the 4800 block of Bernal Avenue

#### Public drunkenness

- 1:06 p.m. in the 5600 block of Stoneridge Drive

#### DUI

- 11:15 p.m. at the intersection of St. John and Main streets

### Dec. 18

#### Theft

- 9:12 a.m. in the 1900 block of Santa Rita Road; petty theft
- 4:42 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 10:03 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft

#### Burglary

- 1:35 p.m. in the 4600 block of Chabot Drive

#### Vandalism

- 9:59 p.m. in the 4000 block of Stoneridge Drive

#### Public drunkenness

- 6:19 p.m. in the 4500 block of Pleasanton Avenue

#### DUI

- 10:15 a.m. at the intersection of Peters Avenue and St. Mary Street

#### Robbery

- 2:46 p.m. in the 5400 block of Sunol Boulevard

### Dec. 19

#### Theft

- 4:34 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft

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THE CITY OF  
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**WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES**

City Hall will be closed on Friday, January 1st.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Additional information regarding the Draft Supplement to the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch Environmental Impact Report.**

**Review Period**  
Written comments on the Draft Supplement to the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch Environmental Impact Report will be accepted by the City of Pleasanton Planning Division, Community Development Department, through **Wednesday, December 30, 2009.**

Please send comments to:  
Robin Giffin, Associate Planner  
Planning Division  
Community Development Department  
P.O. Box 520  
Pleasanton, CA 94566

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

# Peace



Candles of hope still aflame at monthly vigils

By EMILY WEST

With temperatures hovering around the low 40s and high 30s, a group of about 20 people gathered in front of the Museum On Main, clutching candles in plastic cups and yearning for a peaceful world.

Despite the cold, the Pleasantonians 4 Peace group was there to have a moment of silence and share thoughts on peace during a time of war. Peace is a popular topic during the holiday season, one that the group believes contrasts with the current military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan and with President Barack Obama's recent announcement to send more troops overseas.

Kathy Dowding opened the gathering, as she has since they began meeting in March 2007 on the fifth anniversary of the war in Iraq, reading the names of servicemen and women who had died since they last met.

"Stephen L. Murphy, 36, Marine Staff Sergeant, Jaffery, New Jersey," she read. "Justin J. Swanson, 21, Marine Lance Corporal, Anaheim, California. Shawn P. Hefner, 22, Marine Lance Corporal, Hico, Texas."

She remarked that the list was short this time — 20 people and not counting those killed at Fort Hood — but later said that her participation in the group stems from her goal of one day having an empty list. By reading the names of those killed, instead of just the numbers, she hopes it will make it a real, emotional impact for those listening.

"We are hoping to bring about an end to the wars," Dowding said, "and also honor those soldiers and not forgetting those who have lost their lives. The ultimate goal is to stop reading the names because there are no more to read, and to stop having vigils because there are no more wars."

It's an idealistic view, she admits, but one that many share with her.

Dowding credits much of the Pleasantonians 4 Peace effort to Fred Norman. Back in 2007, when he and Dowding first met, Norman was trying to encourage Pleasanton to do something about the war. Having read an article about soldiers dying, he took it as a call to action.

Since then, he's been to almost every City Council meeting, using his public comment time to take a moment of silence to remember the fallen soldiers. When he was unable to appear at one meeting, Dowding came to fill in and began her tradition of reading names. She now also attends most meetings.

With the support of Councilman Matt Sullivan and Norman's wife Cathe, they set out to establish a way for people to support peace and the servicemen and women who had died in Iraq and Afghanistan. The first meeting garnered about 125 people, although the meetings now include about 20 to 35 regulars.

Sullivan said he suggested the monthly meetings in front of the Museum On Main, where people could reflect on the human and monetary costs of the wars, honor the veterans and civilians who have died, and visualize a more peaceful world.

While many of the attendees have similar beliefs on the war and peace, they're not all the same.

"I think peace means different things to different



Kathy Dowding, center in white scarf, reads the names of fallen servicemen and women as a part of the Pleasantonians 4 Peace

people who have been attending," Sullivan said. "For me, it means that we need to try different means to address terrorism and the conflicts in the Middle East than 'war to end terrorism,' which I believe just leads to more of both."

One aspect most people agree on, however, is supporting the troops. While critics may say otherwise, the founding members of Pleasantonians 4 Peace wish to honor them.

"I would say that there are many ways to support the troops," Sullivan said. "One way is to not send them into battle in the first place without just cause."

For Sullivan, both of his parents were Korean war veterans, with his mother being a Navy nurse. He was

also in the Merchant Marine and Navy Reserve, involved in Cold War activities. Many of the group members, Sullivan said, are veterans, including Fred Norman and Dowding's husband Steve.

Another member, Art Tenbrink, said he isn't anti-military and that his son just finished his tour in the service. While he and his son have differing views about the war, Tenbrink said he supported his son's decision. He also feels like a patriot, he said, in "exercising what we're supposedly fighting for" as a member of Pleasantonians 4 Peace as well as other organizations.

"Our attempt is to be visible in our community as an active force for peace," he added. "It's an invitation to others to develop a critical mass that will turn a tide



“We are hoping to bring about an end to the wars and also honor those soldiers and not forgetting those who have lost their lives. The ultimate goal is to stop reading the names because there are no more to read, and to stop having vigils because there are no more wars.”

**Kathy Dowding,**

one of the founders of Pleasantonians 4 Peace



EMILY WEST

the vigil earlier this month.



JANET PELLETIER

While the group meetings usually attract about 20 to 30 people, they had big numbers at their first meeting in March 2007 and on the anniversary of their first meeting (pictured). Fred Norman, center, leads the vigil, and Councilman Matt Sullivan, second from right, looks on.



EMILY WEST

The Pleasantonians 4 Peace vigils are held at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of every month in front of the Museum On Main, at 603 Main St.

for peace.”

This group meeting is just one way for him to exercise the democratic process, he said. Another way to do this, which the group encourages attendees to do as well, is to contact elected officials, both locally, regionally and nationally.

While the City Council decided a few years back not to host a public forum for discussing the war, many in the group wish that it would take some sort of stance for peace.

“I would like [our elected representatives] to all pass a resolution to bring wars to an early end and to stop funding the build-up of the conflict, but to use those funds for necessary domestic improvements,” Tenbrick said.

Sullivan, who was first elected to the City Council in 2004 and was recently re-elected to serve through November 2012, said he wished to represent his constituents.

“I believe that the majority of Pleasanton residents are opposed to these wars, as is a majority in the country,” he said. “City government is as close to the people that you can get. If we don’t provide a venue and opportunity for our citizens to express their beliefs and to influence the government — on any subject — then we have failed as representatives of the people.”

Norman said the polls he’s seen show a majority, if not a vast majority, of people oppose the wars.

“Being opposed and doing something are two different

things,” he said. “Imagine if all those who are opposed in Pleasanton and the Tri-Valley came to the vigils.”

What keeps Norman involved is seeking to actively do something instead of complaining about a war that he feels is morally wrong. To keep himself in check, he said that every night he asks himself what he did that day to stop the wars.

Hope — another theme of the holiday season — is alive within the group, but Norman grounds it in reality.

“I hope that what we’re doing inspires others, but I don’t have an absolute belief that it will,” he said, adding that sometimes thinking about it can be depressing. “I don’t have expectations. In the ninth year of the war, how long do your expectations last? What gives us strength is possibility.”

Despite the low attendance rates, Kathy Dowding remains encouraged.

“The very first vigil had close to 125 people [in attendance],” she said. “It was just phenomenal. Since then, the numbers have dwindled significantly. Even though the numbers are small, these are people who have made a commitment to do something, which is more than the nothing that a lot of people do.”

The group hopes that more visibility will help grow their cause. Kathy Dowding said the group isn’t very computer savvy, and thinks that a website could help spread the word as well.

The group meets at 7 p.m. the second Wednesday of the month in front of the Museum On Main, which is located at 603 Main St. The meetings are ongoing, until the wars are over. For more information on the vigils, call the Normans at 462-7495 or Sullivan at 415-533-8164. ■

## Rockin' in the New Year

Celebrate the New Year with music from rock 'n' roll legends at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Hosted by Tony Russell, the event features famous music from the early days of Doo Wop, including "Only You," "26 Miles (Santa Catalina)," "The Great Pretender," "Image of a Girl" and more. The evening starts at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$78, \$88 and \$98 and can be purchased at [www.livermoreperformingarts.org](http://www.livermoreperformingarts.org) or by calling 373-6800.

## 'Eye Candy' at Aura

Pleasanton's hotspot nightclub, Aura, is going renegade style with its "Eye Candy" New Year's Eve party. From 9 p.m. to 2 a.m., the 21-and-over crowd can enjoy a Cirque-style performance art from Earth Circus, the largest balloon drop in the East Bay, a 'Times Square'-style confetti rain, party favors and a champagne toast. Mixmaster Miguel, DJ Ghost and Scotty Fatal will man the DJ booth for people to dance the night away. Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased at [www.nightclubaura.com](http://www.nightclubaura.com).

## Festivities at The Farmer

The Farmer Restaurant at the Pleasanton Hotel, 855 Main St., will be open on New Year's Eve, featuring radio personality Baltazar and Ed the Karaoke King. There is no cover charge. To learn more, call 399-6690 or visit [www.pleasantonhotel.com](http://www.pleasantonhotel.com).

## Black & White Ball

Consider counting down at the Pleasanton Marriott's Black & White New Year's Eve Ball. The Midnight Hour band will play, with dinner, dancing and a champagne toast for \$75 per person. Special room rates are available for \$89, which includes a breakfast for two. For tickets, call 784-1290 and for reservations, call 847-6000.

## Redcoats revelry

Redcoats British Pub and Restaurant, located at 336 St. Mary St., will take dinner reservations until 8:15 p.m. There will be happy hour specials from 8 to 10 p.m., with a DJ spinning dance hits into the New Year. There is no cover charge. For more information, call 462-6600 or visit [www.redcoatspub.com](http://www.redcoatspub.com).

## Laugh with Anjelah

Anjelah Johnson is back at Tommy T's Comedy Steakhouse, 5104 Hopyard Road. The Bay Area comedienne will perform an early show at 7:30 p.m. as well as a late show at 9:30 p.m. with a champagne toast, party favors, DJ dancing and a big screen countdown. Tickets are \$40 or \$55 for the early show or \$99 or \$115 for the late show. There is a two-item minimum and shows are 17 and older. Call 227-1800 or visit [www.tommyts.com](http://www.tommyts.com).

# Closing out a decade

Say goodbye to 2009 at these New Year's Eve events



## A 'Booming' New Years

Boomers Park at 2400 Kitty Hawk Road in Livermore will be open from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. for a New Year's Eve event. Admission is \$17 and includes unlimited go-karts, laser tag, miniature golf, bumper boats and video games (excludes ticket games). There will also be complimentary tiaras, hats, noise makers and sparkling apple cider for the first 50 guests, as well as a prize balloon drop at midnight. To learn more, call 447-7275.

## Groove at the Hilton

Hilton Pleasanton at the Club, 7050 Johnson Drive, features a live performance by Bay Area group Ryze the Band playing a variety of funk, R&B, Old School and more. DJ Jammin J will keep the dance floor going. A Ryze the Band ticket is \$60, and room packages are \$159 for one person or \$229 for two, both include tickets to the concert, a champagne toast at midnight, a room with late checkout and a full breakfast. To make reservations, call 463-8000 or visit [www.hilton-pleasantonnye.eventbrite.com](http://www.hilton-pleasantonnye.eventbrite.com).

## Party at Faz

Faz Restaurant at the Four Points by Sheraton, 5121 Hopyard Road, hosts a New Year's Eve event with an open bar, hors d'oeuvres, dinner buffet and dancing to The Entertainment Physicians, as well as party favors and a midnight champagne toast. Tickets are \$139 or \$234 for two people. A package includes the party, an overnight stay at the hotel, and a New Year's Day brunch and is \$255 for one person or \$350 for a couple. Call 460-0434 or visit [www.fazrestaurants.com](http://www.fazrestaurants.com).

## Cruise with Hornblower

Hornblower offers dinner cruises departing from Pier 3 in San Francisco. Events include dinner, dancing and party favors, as well as a view for the San Francisco fireworks show. For details, call 415-788-8866 or visit [www.hornblower.com](http://www.hornblower.com).

## All aboard the USS Hornet

Swing in the New Year on the USS Hornet Aircraft Carrier, located in Alameda. From 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., there will be three dance floors, free dance lessons, live music by 3 O'Clock Jump, the Singing Blue Stars Andrews Sisters Tribute, silent auction and food and drinks. Period attire is welcomed. General admission is \$48, captain's seating is \$65 and admiral's seating is \$90, with proceeds benefiting the USS Hornet Museum. For tickets and more information, call 510-521-8448, ext. 282 or visit [www.hornetevents.com](http://www.hornetevents.com).

—Emily West

# POETIC PLEASANTON



BY DEBORAH GROSSMAN

## Finding inspiration

What inspires poets to write poetry? That was the question Amador Valley High School English teacher Stacey Sklar posed to me a few weeks ago. I talked about how poems are created with her sophomore honors English classes in the library with teacher-librarian Erik Scherer. Amador Teen Poet Laureate Vivienne Chen accompanied me to speak to the students. She summed up her most successful trigger to write in one word: “coffee!”

Vivienne also talked about the power of words to make you laugh or cry or make things happen. While struggling to define the topic of her college essay, she was inspired by a rice bowl she ate at Sweet Tomatoes. “It dawned on me that one piece of rice, or one person, is influenced by being part of the larger bowl of rice or larger community,” she said. She also wrote a poem about the human metaphor to rice which she read to the class.

For me, inspiration often comes from diverse experiences. Listening to music, observing the world from an airport lounge or reading the news about a holiday skating rink in the Pleasanton Weekly can motivate me to write. I just hope ice skating is like riding a bike — it’s been

awhile. A new holiday activity and challenge as the New Year begins.

If one of your New Year’s resolutions is to publish some poems you’ve written recently or long ago, consider joining former Livermore Poet Laureate Connie Post’s seminar on “Getting Your Poetry Published: Navigating the Path to Publication” at Towne Center Books from 2 to 4 p.m. Jan. 17. Email info@townecenterbooks.com. Details at www.civcartsliterary.org or www.facebook.com/PleasantonPoetry.

### Skating at Midnight

*The girl wearing  
red velvet  
is on thin ice  
blades flash  
jump into spin  
land  
as the hour  
counts down  
to midnight.  
Hard on ice  
she slips  
finds balance  
for another spin  
around the rink  
as the day month year  
glides from frozen mode  
to fresh start.*

Deborah Grossman is Pleasanton’s poet laureate.

## PET OF THE WEEK

### Ray the Love Bug

Ray cocks his head to listen. Yes, there it is again — the distant sound of hooves on rooftops. Christmas Day is finally here! Ray is a 3-year-old, black and white, 85-pound mix-breed who would happily help Santa pull his sleigh. His head reminds us of a Great Dane and his tail curls like that of an Akita. Ray’s heritage may keep us guessing but there is no doubt he is a sweetheart! Ray may be reserved at first, but he warms up to you quickly and then he is a love bug. He would be suitable for a first time dog owner. Ray walks nicely on a leash and he will require regular exercise. He will help you keep that New Year resolution to get in shape! He gets along fine with other well-matched dogs but he does not care for cats. Visit Ray 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. Learn more about adoptable pets at www.eastbayspca.org. SPCA adoption centers will be closed on Dec. 24, 25, and 31, and Jan. 1 New Year’s Day.



CATHERINE HANSEN RUSH

## NOW SHOWING

REVIEWS OF NEW MOVIES

BY SUSAN TAVERNETTI

### Avatar

★★★

Rated: PG-13 for intense epic battle sequences and warfare, sensuality, language and some smoking Occasionally in the fictional Na’vi language with English subtitles  
2 hours, 42 minutes

James Cameron can crown himself king of the 3-D world. He has crafted a science-fiction fantasy filled with visual wonder that never forgets that story — not digital technology — keeps movies from sinking under the titanic iceberg of spectacle and special effects. An imaginative premise, combined with the fanciful flora and fauna of a faraway moon, plunges the viewer into an otherworldly experience.

Put on those silly 3-D spectacles and have some fun.

Cameron’s plot focuses on Jake Sully (Sam Worthington of “Terminator Salvation”), a disabled ex-Marine lying in a VA hospital. He’s tapped to replace his late twin brother in a multinational corporation’s avatar program, which mixes human DNA with that of the native Na’vi population living on Pandora, the company’s mining colony. The “dumb grunt,” who has no avatar training, must quickly learn how to manage his remotely controlled, 10-foot-tall body in the most hostile environment known to man. The payoff? The jarhead gets his legs back. Things get more complicated when the avatar team headed by Dr. Grace Augustine (Sigourney Weaver) realizes that science and peaceful diplomacy are only part of its mission.

An efficient storyteller, Cameron (“The Terminator,” “Titanic”) makes every detail count. His original narrative recalls familiar archetypes and genres. The underdog on a heroic adventure is a movie staple, but the fantastical creatures and hypnotically beautiful plants of Pandora are unique — and connected in an eco-spiritualism that blends today’s environmental concerns with ancient traditions centered on oneness with nature. The indigenous people share a bond with everything from their ancestors to flying dragons and floating jellyfish-like beings.

Recalling both westerns and war films, “Avatar” pits the corporation’s military muscle against the bow-and-arrow wielding Na’vi. A gung-ho colonel (Stephen Lang of “The Men Who Stare at Goats”) commands the invading forces to destroy the “savages” and their sacred places to gain access to Pandora’s natural resources. Cameron gives the conflict a heart by developing a romance between Jake and Neytiri (Zoe Saldana of “Star Trek”), who teaches him the language and ways of her tribe. Similar to “Dances with Wolves” and “The Last Samurai” in so many ways, this generic hybrid also assumes the patronizing attitude of positioning a white man as savior.

Stereotypes hurt the film, particularly during the battle for Pandora. The Na’vi don war paint and whoop it up like wild Indians on horseback. Hiss-worthy villains are laughably one-dimensional. Females snarl all the time, particularly the feline-like Neytiri and the gum-snapping helicopter pilot played by Michelle Rodriguez (“Fast & Furious”).

Fortunately Mauro Fiore’s cinematography never fits the negative 3-D mold. Don’t expect coming-at-you visuals. Instead he constructs deep space, immersing the viewer in the midst of the action.

The overall result is well worth the price of admission. ■



## TAKE US ALONG



### Hawaiian Weekly

Roland Longboya, Georgi Sneckner-Longboya (of local band Georgi & the Rough Week), Roland’s mom Josephine Longboya and sister Julie Longboya brought the Weekly along to Maui and Kauai. Georgi and Josephine were both celebrating their breast cancer remission.

### And they’re off

Former Pleasanton residents Rich Bailey and Jerry Di Laura, and current residents Allen Aldrich and Jay Nelson took the Weekly along to the races at Remington Park Racetrack in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.



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Little Karol Hernandez scopes out the room as Axis Community Health medical assistant Lidia Tejada (right) discusses the baby's health with mother Yolanda Macias.

EMILY WEST

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Today's top stories & hot picks

**Express** is a weekly update from the Pleasanton Weekly delivered via e-mail every Monday - Friday morning.

**Express** provides the perfect quick-read digest of local news and events in Pleasanton from the last week to the next. And all without any environmental impact.

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**Pleasanton Weekly**  
 PRINT & ONLINE

BY EMILY WEST

Karol Hernandez smiled and wiggled as she was being measured and weighed at her recent check-up at Axis Community Health. While medical assistant Lidia Tejada went through a general healthy check list with mother Yolanda Macias, Karol's bright eyes followed every movement.

The five-month-old baby is one of many to come through the doors of Axis' pediatrics center off of Railroad Avenue. Karen Martinez, nurse manager of pediatrics and women's health, said lately the sounds of crying babies have filled the halls as they receive necessary shots.

Despite the crying, many Tri-Valley families are glad to be able to come to Axis for affordable medical care for the uninsured and underinsured. Beyond typical doctor visits, the community health provider covers many needs, including mental health services, addiction counseling, WIC nutritional services and court-ordered educational programs.

Axis Community Health is one of the major service providers for Tri-Valley residents in need. With its vast offerings, the nonprofit organization provides "wrap around" services for families struggling to make ends meet.

Along with organizations such as Open Heart Kitchen, Tri-Valley Haven and many others, these groups will benefit more than from the Pleasanton Weekly's Holiday Fund, in partnership again with the Tri-Valley Community Foundation. In years past, the fund has had a 2-to-1 match with every dollar donated. This year, however, with the help of federal stimulus funds — a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act TANF Emergency

Contingency Fund — there will be a 4-to-1 match. David Rice, president of the Tri-Valley Community Foundation, said the money collected will be able to provide emergency assistance, while also funding services that will help needy families gain employment, which in-turn benefits the local economy.

With unemployment and lower salaries plaguing many area families, people who may have had health coverage before are turning to Axis Community Health.

Joe Flaherty, chief financial officer at Axis, said the number of medical visits is up 28 percent compared to last year. In the last four months alone, they have seen about 300 new patients each month.

"We have been busy since we received word of our qualifications as a federal qualified health center in March and April," he said.

Axis has had to grow quickly to be able to meet the high levels of community need.

"We've hired additional staff to try to handle the increase in patient counts and visits," Flaherty added. "That's an additional expense on us. We're just trying to accommodate the community needs at this point."

The medical provider has a contract with Alameda County to have 5,500 visits each fiscal year, which starts in July. As of March or April each year, Axis has usually met that number and continues to meet with those beyond their contractual obligation.

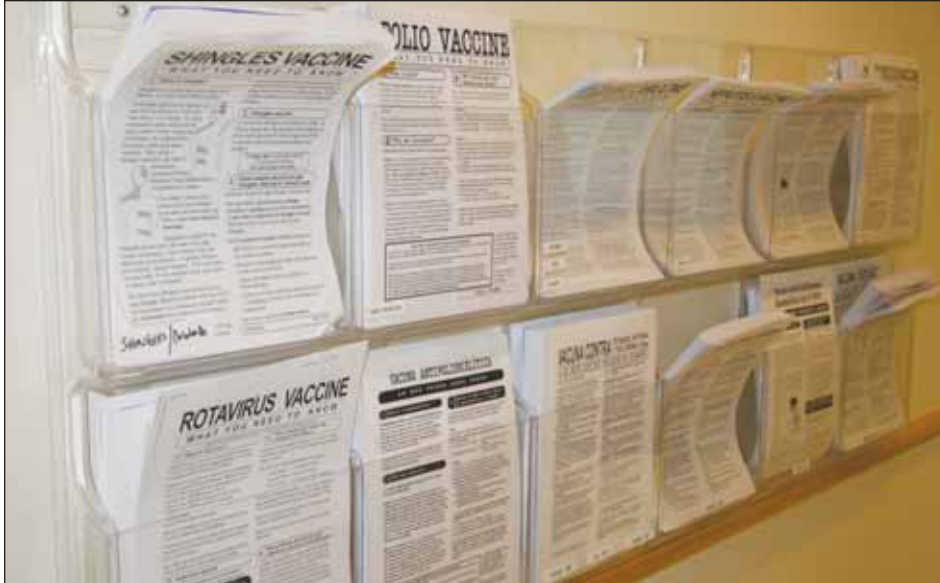
Already, the 2009 Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund has had 258 donors have contribute \$38,461 to the fund and of those, 40 are anonymous contributors who have given \$4,839. With the match, it means \$192,305 is going to help the needy in our area, with all administrative costs being donated by the Pleasanton Weekly. ■

## 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 give will equal a \$5 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.



EMILY WEST

Axis Community Health is stocked full of resources, as it is a provider of medical and mental health services for the under-insured and uninsured in the Tri-Valley.

## Holiday Fund donors

Since the launch of the 2009 Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund, a total of \$273,264 has been raised.

### Individuals

Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Allen.....**	Teddy & Bunny Chang..... 100
Ron & Kathy Anderson ..... 200	Gina Channell-Allen ..... **
Geoff Southworth & Jill Anderson..... 100	The Chase Family..... **
Steve & Cris Annen ..... 100	The Christensen Family..... **
Mark & Amy Arola ..... 250	Mr. & Mrs. Vincent Ciccarello ..... 1500
Andrew Bailey & Lauren Purcell..... 1000	John & Gretchen Clatworthy..... **
Rick & Dawn Barraza..... 250	Pauline Coe ..... **
John & Bonnie Batty..... 250	Alan & Carol Cohen ..... 250
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Beanland ..... 200	Bob & Jean Cole..... **
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Mrs. Terry Messick-Cass & Mr. Barry Cass..... 100	Alice Desrosiers..... 100
Miguel & Julie Castillo..... **	Sean & Joy Doyle.....50
Mike & Diana Champlin ..... 500	Mike & Suzanne Dutra .....50
	Paul & Lorraine Ebright..... **
	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Emberton.....25
	Wayne & Anne Emery..... **



# 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, \$5 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@pleasanton-weekly.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 \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to designate my contribution as follows:

In my name as shown above

### OR

In honor of:  In memory of:  As a gift for: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of person)

Business or organization: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to contribute anonymously.  Don't publish the amount of my contribution.

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

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

Credit card donations will be accepted by calling the  
**Tri-Valley Community Foundation at 734-9965.**



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.

**HOLIDAY FUND**

George & Jeanne Emmett.....**	Mr. & Mrs. Daryn Oxe..... 100	Frank & Ann Lordman..... 100	Matt Rybicki & Michael Conner from Jerry & Josine Pentin..... 100
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Mr. & Mrs. Richard Fredette.....**	Mr. & Mrs. Alan Purves.....**	Our Military from The Gualandri Family...100	Teddy & Arthur Adams.....100
Harold & Gena Gatlin.....**	Marc & Becky Randall.....500	Jana Grant from Steve & Jori Grant.....100	Our Grandparents from The Grimes Family.....**
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Kathleen Glancy.....50	The Ristow Family.....**	My Grandchildren from Doris A. Slater.....**	Hilda Gutierrez from Martin & Amory Gutierrez.....**
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\*\* The asterisk designates that the donor did not want to publish the amount of the gift.

# ON THE TOWN



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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](http://www.hopyard.com).

## ITALIAN

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## Auditions

**AUDITIONS FOR OPERA CHORUS**  
Auditions for the Livermore Valley Opera production of Die Fledermaus are from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Jan. 5 at the Bothwell Performing Arts Center, 2466 8th St., Livermore. Contact Pat Goard, Chorus Coordinator, at goardp@att.net.

**YOUTH MUSIC FESTIVAL AUDITIONS**  
Vocal and instrumental auditions, for ages 18 and under, are from 6 to 9 p.m. Jan. 13 and 14 at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road. Audition to participate in a themed production called "Unique". If chosen, youth may be asked to perform in pre-existing

musical acts. Placement in show not guaranteed; rock bands not included in festival. Appointments required. Call 931-3433.

## Classes

**BASIC YOGA CLASS** Beth Fox instructs this yoga class that meets from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Mondays at Lynnewood United Methodist Church, 4444 Black Ave. No previous yoga experience necessary. Limited class supplies available. Fees are \$12 for drop-in or \$10 for pre-paid series. Inquire about seniors or students rates. Call 200-4060.

**WINTER ART WORKSHOP** This workshop, from 9 a.m. to noon Dec. 28

at the Bothwell Arts Center, 2466 8th St., Livermore, will combine drawing and clay activities to promote artistic study in two and three dimensions. On Dec. 29, there will be a Winter Watercolor Workshop 2. Call 484-0126 or visit www.pleasantonart.com.

## Exhibits

**FIGURATIVE WORK BY BARBARA STANTON** Figurative work by Barbara Stanton will be featured at the Wild Vine, 2187 First St., Livermore from Dec. 10 to 31. Most drawings and paintings are drawn from life at the Figure Drawing Workshop on Friday mornings at the Bothwell Center.

**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. Call 866-561-0838.

## Lectures/ Workshops

**INTERIOR DESIGN WORKSHOP** Ethan Allen hosts a free workshop on tackling home design challenges from 10 a.m. to noon Jan. 16 at 4230 Rosewood Dr. RSVP by Jan. 14 to 734-6675.



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## Miscellaneous

**FOOD PANTRY AT VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH** The Food Pantry at Valley Bible Church, 7106 Johnson Drive, will be closed New Years Eve, but will be open Dec. 27. Call 426-2492.

## On Stage

**JUNGLE BOOK** The Street Ballet melds the familiar storyline with exciting dance movement and special effects, giving the tale a modern and unique twist. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Jan 8 and 9, and at 11 a.m. Jan. 9 at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road. Tickets are \$18-\$35 for adults and \$10-\$25 for children and seniors. Dry Good food

donations to benefit The Haven Food Pantry will be collected in the lobby. Call 931-3444 or visit [www.civcartstickets.org](http://www.civcartstickets.org).

## Scholarships

**AMERICAN LEGION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** The American Legion Pleasanton Post 237 hosts a high school oratorical scholarship program. The Constitutional speech contest will take place at 1 p.m. Jan. 23 at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St. The prizes are \$250 for first place, \$150 for second place and \$75 for third place. The first place winner advances to the district contest in Pacifica and that winner advances to the finals in Modesto. Entry deadline is at 5 p.m. Jan. 15. Contact Norman Houghton at 846-8725 or [norm4064@email.com](mailto:norm4064@email.com) with name, school, age, phone and email.

## Seniors

**PEDDLER SHOPPE AT THE PLEASANTON SENIOR CENTER** The Peddler Shoppe in the lobby of the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. and is where

talented local senior artisans sell their wares. All items are handmade. The Shoppe is staffed by volunteers and is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday evenings, and from 9 a.m. to noon on the second Saturday monthly.

## Sports

**KICK FOR A CURE** The Amador Boys Soccer will hold the first Kick for the Cure game against Richmond to promote breast cancer awareness. It will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Jan. 2 at Amador Valley High School, 1155 Santa Rita Road. ValleyCare will be on hand to provide breast cancer information to the public. Admission is free but donations for the Ryan Comer Library will be accepted. Match times are 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Call 484-3851.

**PLEASANTON BOYS U-9 LACROSSE** Pleasanton Lacrosse Club is looking for new and experienced U-9 players for the 2010 spring season. Learn to play the fastest sport on two feet. Equipment rental available. Email Mark at [mdcranney@gmail.com](mailto:mdcranney@gmail.com).

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## Parent photographers

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



## Rage Rowdies clinch first place

The Rage U-12 Flight Rowdies took first place in the Sunset tournament recently. The Rowdies first took on the San Ramon Dynamite by a score of 5-0. The scoring started on a goal from Gaby Cabrera, and was followed up by a pair of goals each from Aly Isaacs and Sammy Lai. The second game was against a very tough squad from Fremont. Aly Isaacs provided a goal in the first half, and the Rowdies wore them down in the 2nd half with a pair of goals from Erin Overland to cap off a 3-0 victory.

The Rowdies returned the next day, rolling to a 3-1 victory, highlighted by goals from Haley Isaacs, Emma Himsl and Erin Overland.

The championship game against the Mustang Cosmos was a hard fought, back and forth battle that saw the Rowdies come away with a 1-0 victory. The lone goal came in the first half, when a beautifully placed corner kick from Aly Isaacs produced a header from Nicole Wilson that found the back of the net. From that point, the game went back and forth, as the Mustang offense was held scoreless thanks to the defensive efforts of Jessica Granucci, Bridget Moe and Taylor Cruz, who had the difficult task of stopping a very speedy front line for the Mustang team. Paige Ryback had an outstanding tournament in the net, only giving up a single goal over all four games.

## SPORTS DIGEST

### Payne named to NCAA team

Brigham Young University freshman and former Foothill High School grad Carlee Payne was chosen to be named to the 2009 NCAA Division I All-Pacific Region Teams by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, the university announced.

Payne was among four BYU players chosen out of all Pacific Region conferences to be included with 33 other top athletes. She was named to the All-Region second team. She finished the season as an integral part of the Cougar offense, leading the team with 13 goals and 56 shots.

### Foothill grad swimming big at BU

Foothill High School graduate Amanda Schmitz was recently named Boston University's Student-Athlete of the Week.

Schmitz, who is a 2008 alum, is now a sophomore at BU and was cited as playing a big role in the school's weekend triumph at the annual Terrier Invitational, setting three school records.

She opened the weekend with a record-setting performance in the 500 free — breaking a 21-year-old record with a time of 4:56.34. A day later, Schmitz continued her tear with a victory in the 400 IM (4:20.31) — resetting the school mark, which was previously set by Lidija Breznikar in 2006. On the third and final day, Schmitz capped off her weekend with a school-record swim in the 200 fly (2:01.56).

In addition to her athletic accomplishments, Schmitz maintains a 3.75 GPA.



## Seahawks turn in winning swims, earning third in Junior Olympics

The chilly weather didn't hold back the swimmers as the Pleasanton Seahawks hosted the Pacific Swimming Winter Junior Olympics (JO) at the Dolores Bengtson Aquatic Center Dec. 4-6. One thousand swimmers competed with over 100 teams traveling from as far away as Oregon, Nevada and Monterey, CA. The Seahawks turned in many winning swims earning the team third place overall. New records and many new cuts were achieved.

New Team Records: Rachel Knowles 11-12 girls — 200 fly, 400 IM. New Pacific Reportable Times: 11-12 girls — Maggie Kauffeld — 1000 free, Katie Woods — 500 free, 100 fly, 11-12 boys — Maxime Rooney — 50 back, 200 back, 100 fly, 13-14 boys — Kevin McLaughlin 200 breast. New Far Western Cuts: 11-12 girls — Analisa Parker — 100 back, 11-12 boys: Regis Lachance - 50/100/200 free, Jon Ong — 50 back, RJ Scott — 500 free, 13-14 boys — Kevin McLaughlin — 100 back, 400 IM.

Lifetime best: Eva Chung, Hannah Folmar,



Maggie Kauffeld, Rachel Knowles, Analisa Parker, Lillian Sun, Katie Woods, Alex Gilchrist, Regis Lachance, Jon Ong, Kyle Oslund, Maxime Rooney, RJ Scott, Kevin McLaughlin, Samantha Howell.

New sectional times: 13/14 boys — Nick Johnston, Chris Dourov.

13/14 boys relay placed in top three.

In addition to hosting a first-class meet, with the assistance of the local fire department, the Seahawks collected toys for the Toys for Tots program at the JO meet.

## Heat win Junior Olympic Cross Country National Championship

The Heat cross country team, head quartered in Pleasanton, won the youth boys division at the Junior Olympic National Championships held in Reno Dec. 12-13. The Heat had its first five runners finish in the top 40 places and showed great depth by having ten runners in the top 70 spots.

Connor McCarthy, who earned All American honors by placing 10th overall, led the team. Also earning All American status were Caton Avilla (17th place) and Aidan Goltra (21st place). Gabe Arias-Sheridan (27th place) and Nolan Petersen (38th place) rounded out the scoring spots. The Equalizers, an all-star team from Southern California, finished second.

Jacob Schlachte, Brynn Sargent, Tim O'Shea, Adler Faulkner, and Sean Aylward all figured in the scoring.

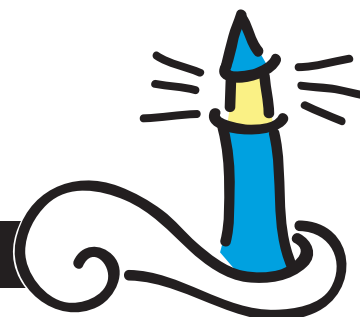
In addition to the national championship win for the youth boys, The Heat also placed third in the under 12 boys division. Peter Schlachte led the way with his 16th place finish, earning All American Honors. Helping put the team on the podium were Michael Dunne, Kahale Warring, Ben Zaeske and Daniel Tang. The Heat had another seven individuals earn All American status, a new team record and one of the best overall team performances at the national championship meet. Julia Bounds was second in the Bantam (under 10) girls division. In the Bantam Boys division The Heat had three All Americans: Tim Falls (seventh), Alex Sokol (16th) and Sam Reynolds (23rd). Sophie Hartley continued her string of All American finishes by placing 12th in the Youth Girls division. In the intermediate girls division (ages 15 -16), Natalie Dimits earned All American honors with her 19th place finish. In the intermediate boys division, Parker Deuel led the way with a 14th place finish. This was his eighth All American award making him one of the most decorated runners in team history.

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This week's data represents homes sold during  
November 2009

### Pleasanton

**3351 Arbor Drive** M. & C. Borgatta to D. Mcallister for \$700,000  
**5511 Calico Lane** Nagengast Trust to J. Park for \$998,500  
**5521 Calico Lane** Indymac Mortgage to R. Huo for \$995,000  
**33 Castledown Road** P. & D. Cornish to Mantor Trust for \$1,300,000  
**7035 Corte Del Mar** Eguina Trust to Q. Zhou for \$658,000  
**5967 Corte Espada** V. Mangahas to Y. & D. Lalwani for \$625,000  
**4144 Georgis Place** A. Wills to S. Lee for \$435,000  
**859 Gray Fox Circle** Howe Trust to Collinson Trust for \$1,275,000  
**1806 Harms Drive** T. & S. Lee to A. Billings for \$375,000  
**3327 Hartwell Court** Y. Zhang to Y. Gao for \$716,000

**1615 Holly Circle** L. Chen to T. Lin for \$497,500  
**2775 Huff Drive** Anand Trust to S. & B. Khunti for \$825,000  
**3970 Kern Court** D. & K. Wafler to S. Chandrasekaran for \$610,000  
**6728 Melody Court** Watt Trust to W. Xu for \$501,000  
**6740 Melody Court** B. & C. Lee to S. Fung for \$540,000  
**750 Mirador Court** Bickley Trust to C. Wolford for \$670,000  
**3302 Rosada Court** S. & J. Seshadri to M. Nourbakhsh for \$385,000  
**5721 San Antonio Street** M. & F. Shaghafi to G. Shaghafi for \$460,000  
**5783 San Carlos Way** Smith Trust to T. Rowland for \$645,000  
**1735 Terra Court** Henry Trust to P. Ganesh for \$2,650,000  
**546 Touriga Court** M. & E. Wheeler to Z. Tang for \$735,000  
**4153 Walnut Drive** J. Mederos to B. & D. Chatham for \$875,000

Source: California REsource

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Happy holidays from  
The Fabulous Properties Team

As the end of the year draws  
near, we count our blessings and  
we thank you for your support.  
We wish you and your family  
the best of holiday happiness  
and success in the New Year!



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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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