

# Pleasanton Weekly

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## Stoneridge at 30

*Mall celebrates with new stores, New Year's Eve 'Ball at the Mall'*

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# AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING

## Axis needs our help

Drive by Axis Community Health's aging facilities on Railroad Avenue any weekday morning and you're likely to see patients waiting to see a doctor or nurse that Axis provides. They are among the thousands of needy in the Tri-Valley who rely on this community health organization and its clinics for basic health care. They are not all poor, although many are. Some have lost their jobs and the health insurance that came with them and now can't afford private care. Others work in hourly jobs where health care is not offered or too expensive.

But no matter what their reasons, Axis, with an annual budget of \$9 million, serves more than 14,000 members of our community at its Railroad Avenue clinic and at four other sites in the Tri-Valley. It's supported by local, state and federal funding, foundation grants, patient and clinic fees from those able to pay, and from the generosity of individuals, families, foundations and the business community.

Among these, the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund is a regular contributor, with donations from our readers and matching funds from the Tri-Valley Community Foundation now totaling more than a quarter-million-dollars since the annual giving program was launched in 2002 with Axis as a charter beneficiary. This year, with the Holiday Fund's goal of \$100,000, including matching funds, Axis should receive another \$20,000. That will provide additional pediatric care and cover rising administrative expenses, including utility and communications bills, according to Sue Compton, Axis' chief executive officer. It will also help cover part of the costs of new patients, which number about 400 each month in these recessionary times.

The biggest increase has been in pediatrics, which has seen a 10 percent increase in need over the past four months. Even though parents still have jobs, many of those work for companies that have had to cut back on health



Nurse practitioner Corey Cutler tends an Axis medical clinic patient.

insurance just to stay in business. If one spouse loses the job, there's even less money available for health care and parents make the obvious choice to feed their children. When kids are sick, Axis is there for them. The non-profit goes beyond urgent care, however. It also makes sure that these children stay healthy and immunized. That's one less worry

for parents who can't afford the higher cost of daycare for sick children.

To meet its higher patient care load, the Axis staff has increased to 130 providers and support workers. Christina McFadden, Axis' director

of clinical operations, said she would hire more if Axis had more space. A study group is evaluating the cost and funding abilities for rebuilding the Railroad Avenue site or establishing a larger facility nearby. Yet, despite its bursting-at-the-seams situation, Axis serves every newcomer. It never turns anyone away, although the lines you see on weekday mornings show that there's a bit of a wait usually. A few more dollars in this year's Holiday Fund grant could help. Please join me in becoming a 2010 Holiday Fund contributor. ■

## About the Cover

This colorfully decorated, two-story Christmas tree dominates the Grand Court at Stoneridge Shopping Center where Santa visits with children through Christmas Eve. Special programs, including a New Year's Eve "Ball at the Mall," are marking Stoneridge's 30th year since opening in 1980 in Pleasanton. Photo courtesy of Stoneridge Shopping Center. Cover design by Trina Cannon.

Vol. XI, Number 46

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# Streetwise

ASKED AROUND TOWN

## Do you think airport security has gone too far?



**Susie Steele**  
*Realtor, Alain Pinel*

I think we need to continuously improve security because of safety concerns at our airports. We have to protect ourselves. While at times it may be uncomfortable, it is necessary.

**Rachel McElhinney**  
*Homemaker*

No, I don't. We have a choice whether to fly or not, and I don't feel embarrassed by any of the methods they use to keep us safe. The pat-downs and body scans don't bother me.



**Bob Britton**  
*Union organizer*

Yes, because the odds are so small that something will happen. They wouldn't expect us to take all of our clothes off even if that was the best thing to do. The idea that we have to have X-rays or be patted down just seems unnecessary.

**Lena Clark**  
*Bookkeeper*

I don't know, because I don't go to the airport very much. If I did travel often, I probably would be opposed to the body scan. It seems like a bit of an invasion of privacy.



**Bob Ditter**  
*Co-owner, Towne Center Books*

No. I flew to Denver last month and had to do the full body scan in Oakland. My wife Judy went through three days before and wasn't asked to do it. I didn't find it to be a big deal at all, but it did slow down the security lines.

—Compiled by Kerry Nally

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

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## DIGEST

### Hometown Holiday Parade

Pleasanton's annual Hometown Holiday Celebration will be held from 5-7:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 4, along Main Street starting with the festive community parade followed by the lighting of a holiday tree in front of the Museum On Main. Either Amador Valley High School or Foothill High School marching band will lead the parade, followed by dozens of holiday inspired entries.

Main Street will close to traffic at 4 p.m. that day. Parade viewers are encouraged to shop and dine in historic Downtown Pleasanton after staking out their viewing turf. In the event of rain, call the hotline, which will be updated each hour after 2:30 p.m. on parade day: 931-5352.

### 'Nutcracker' free for nonprofit groups

Members of major Tri-Valley nonprofit organizations will be treated this year to a free performance of Valley Dance Theatre's annual full-length production of the Tchaikovsky's classic "The Nutcracker." The special Community Performance, made possible by corporate, family and individual sponsors, will take place Dec. 15 at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St. in Livermore.

"It is a worthwhile cause," says Karin Bunnell, board president of the Valley Dance Theatre. "It is part of our tradition."

Cantabella Children's Chorus and Tri-Valley Repertory Theatre's Broadway Chorus will add vocal artistry to selected performances. For information, visit [www.valleydancetheatre.com](http://www.valleydancetheatre.com).

### Grants workshops

Two grant application workshops will be held for nonprofit organizations to apply for 2011-12 Pleasanton Housing and Human Services and Community grants, Dublin Community Development Block grants, and Livermore Housing and Human Services grants. Staff will discuss the application processes and distribute application packets at the workshops. Attendance is mandatory to apply for Livermore funding and strongly encouraged for Dublin and Pleasanton.

The first workshop is slated for 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Dec. 7 at the Livermore City Council Chamber, 3575 Pacific Ave. The second workshop will be held from 10 a.m.-noon Dec. 8 at the Pleasanton City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave. They are identical in content. RSVP to Sheryl Jenkins at 960-4434.

## City must trim employee benefits, council warned

Resident cites 'exploding entitlement expense' facing city

By JEB BING

A Pleasanton resident has asked the Pleasanton City Council to make employee pension and health care reform a top priority in 2011 or face a citizens' initiative that could force major changes in municipal employee benefit plans.

Bart Hughes, in his second appearance before the council in as many weeks, said his study of the city's benefit costs shows Pleasanton is heading toward a fiscal crisis by funding all costs of employee pension and health care contributions.

He cited an article in an October 2002 issue of the Pleasanton Weekly that reported on the city's approval of a plan giving its employees a retirement plan that would cost taxpayers \$13 million over the next eight years, and \$20 million over the next 20 years.

"My research has shown that the cost now is actually \$97 million against that initial esti-

mate," Hughes said, adding that this "exploding entitlement expense" far exceeds Pleasanton's ability to pay for it.

"Supposedly this is a financially responsible city and council," Hughes said. "Just recently you required the (Livermore-Pleasanton) Fire Department to contribute 2% toward health care. But that's been it. For the entire time over these eight years with this gross miscalculation, the taxpayers have picked up almost 100% of that. Employees have picked up almost none of that."

"There's been a lot of news out there with regards to the frustration that the taxpaying public has with regards to out-of-control pensions," Hughes said. "I didn't think it was happening here in Pleasanton but the more I dug into this, I've been amazed at how important this matter has become."

He continued:

"Back in 2002, retirement costs were less than 1% of the general budget. Today they are 21%. So that's \$16 million every year that doesn't go to the services of the city, but it goes to compensate employees. I agree that employees should be compensated, but this plan was never intended to be so generous.

"In the last election, there were 10 entitlement reform bills on the ballot. Nine out of the 10 passed. The only one that didn't pass was in San Francisco. And they passed with huge margins, 70% and up.

"But the patience is running very thin here. Something needs to be done for the sake of the future of Pleasanton residents and the future of employees. As citizens we always have the initiative process and we will pursue that if need be."

Although council members did not respond

See **BENEFITS** on Page 9



COURTESY UNITEHERE!

Locked-out workers from Castlewood Country Club follow a horse-drawn wagon in a parade through Pleasanton on Sunday. After more than nine months, the union and Castlewood management are farther apart than ever.

## Castlewood management, union farther apart than ever

Workers parade through Pleasanton as lockout continues

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

With the lockout at Castlewood Country Club now well into its ninth month, the 57 full- and part-time workers are reminding people they haven't given up.

The workers, union representatives from UniteHERE local 2850 and some local officials held a parade Sunday through Pleasanton, complete with a marching band, a horse-drawn carriage and an inflatable turkey. The parade stepped off from the Main Street Park at Bernal Avenue and Main Street and made its way west on Sunol Boulevard to the country club near Castlewood Drive and Foothill Road.

But when it comes to negotiations, the two sides are farther apart than they were when the lockout began.

The latest move backward came when Castlewood management proposed bringing the workers back — as long as they were allowed to fire or lay people off without taking senior-

ity into consideration.

Club management, according to UniteHERE organizer Sarah Norr, said the club is happier with its current staff than it was with its locked out employees.

"The club came in with a bunch of proposals that were not part of the original last and final offer, and that we see as very negative for the workers, so basically they're moving backwards instead of forwards," Norr said. "We discussed it with the workers ... they said, 'Why would we sign a contract that would put us out of work?'"

The two sides have had few face to face meetings in recent months, with just one in September and one in August. They met again on Nov. 11 and agreed to another meeting later this month.

"We have another negotiating appointment set up for Nov. 29 and we're really hoping that

See **CASTLEWOOD** on Page 9

## Tully's Plaza developer set to do it again

Buys south Main St. building for new retail, restaurant

South Main Street is about to get a major facelift with new retail stores and a restaurant in an empty building abandoned after Guaranty Bank declared bankruptcy in August 2009.

Craig Semmelmeier, whose Main Street Property Services developed the popular Tully's Coffee Shop site at Main and Angela streets, has purchased the building at 234 Main St.

Guaranty Bank reportedly paid \$2.5 million for the property, but other than putting signs in the window never moved in before it was seized by the FDIC. At the time, Guaranty had 103 branches in Texas and 59 branches in California.

Semmelmeier's firm reportedly paid \$500,000 to acquire the 234 Main St. property.

Semmelmeier said plans are being prepared to renovate the building for retail tenants and a restaurant that will offer different services and cuisine than what's now available downtown.

Fleet Feet, now located a block up Main Street, has already signed a lease to move into larger space at the 234 Main St. building, more than doubling its current space.

The 234 Main St. building has about 5,000 square feet of tenant space. Semmelmeier said that at one time it was actually two buildings and his redesign of the structure will make it look again like two separate facilities when reconstruction work is completed in the first quarter of next year.

"I plan to put a restaurant on the site, one that will be unique and will attract diners to downtown Pleasanton who don't come today," Semmelmeier said. "I'd like to have outdoor seating that along with other tenants will bring some energy to the 200 block of south Main Street."

Main Street Property services rebuilt the properties at the corner of Main and Angela where Tully's, Coldstone Creamery, Bibiane Bakery and Fontina Restaurant are located. That corner, with its outside courtyard, has become a favorite meeting place in Pleasanton's downtown. The Tri-Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau has its offices on the building's second floor.

Fleet Feet Sports is located across the street at 310 Main St., in property also owned by Semmelmeier's firm.

—Jeb Bing

## Two nabbed in attempted Pleasanton break-in

Alert woman sees suspicious SUV, calls cops

BY GLENN WOHLTMANN

Pleasanton police may have a break in a string of robberies over the last couple of weeks — with the help of a local mom.

According to a police report, early Monday afternoon an alert Pleasanton woman noticed a suspicious dark-colored SUV outside her home on Brienne Court and called police. While the woman, who was alone with her 2-year-old daughter, was on the phone with a dispatcher, two men came to her front door and began knocking and repeatedly ringing the door bell.

With police already on their way, the woman discovered the men in her back yard and attempting to enter her home through a sliding glass door. The two men spotted her and drove off — but not before she

got their license plate number, which she quickly reported to police.

Officer Jarrod Yee saw the dark SUV near the woman's home and gave chase, following it onto Interstate 680 toward San Ramon; additional officers caught up and stopped the SUV at the Bollinger Canyon exit.

The two men, Terry Shumlai, 26, of Oakland and Pedro Contreras, 20, of San Leandro, were arrested for attempted burglary. In addition, Shumlai, who was on parole for earlier burglaries, was charged with parole violation. Both men were booked at Santa Rita Jail.

Police are commending the unnamed woman for stopping the men before they could commit other burglaries.

Pleasanton police have also made

a second arrest in connection with an earlier investigation that led to charges against a Castro Valley man. That man, Peter Grgurevic III, 19, of Castro Valley was arrested Nov. 4 in a string of residential burglaries in northwest Pleasanton and in Castro Valley. Police said they'd tentatively identified 10 burglaries expected to tie Grgurevic to others as their investigation continues.

Sgt. Jim Knox said the investigation has led to the arrest of a second Castro Valley man. Jacob Jagoda, 20, faces charges of possession of stolen property.

The area has been hit by an unusual number of burglaries over the last few weeks. Between Nov. 8 and Nov. 21, there have been 20 burglaries and at least nine automotive burglaries. ■

## Renovations complete on historic Mount Diablo building

Grand reopening being held for public Dec. 4

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

As the two inches of weekend snow slowly melts away, Mt. Diablo State Park celebrates the renovation of the Summit Visitor Center.

The project included adding new exhibits and better access to the visitor information, and the public is invited to a grand reopening event from noon-4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 4.

"All of the exhibits will be open," said Steve Elliott, docent manager. "We have new videos and a computer terminal to do a virtual tour of the park."

The Summit Visitor Center, located at the top of the 3,849-foot mountain, was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1940s and is recognized as a National Historic Landmark. It is built from fossil-laden sandstone quarried in the park.

"When doing a renovation everything gets a close review," Elliott noted. "It's important that it comes across symbolic of historic times."

Mt. Diablo State Park is most popular in the spring, said Elliott, when the wildflowers are in bloom. Visitors also flock to the mountain to see the tarantulas in the fall, when the males migrate in search of mates. In the wintertime, the big draw is snow.

"Even the two inches they had yesterday attracted a load of people," Elliott said Monday. "Then this morning people were making snowmen out in the parking lot, about 10 o'clock."

The renovated Summit Visitor Center will have its new electric fireplace lit all winter, Elliott promised. It also has a reading nook with a stack of kids books, as well as new hands-on exhibits about the history, geology and flora and fauna



COURTESY MDIA

The upstairs of the renovated Summit Visitor Center on Mount Diablo includes exhibits and an electric fireplace surrounded by seating.

of Mount Diablo.

"The inside has been renovated to the craftsman style matching the era of when the visitor center was built," said Park Superintendent Roland Gaebert.

The renovation was funded by the California Department of Parks and Recreation through deferred maintenance funds allocated to the park in 2008. In addition to the exhibit renovation, the Mt. Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA) raised more than \$28,000 from individuals and corporate donors. This funding added new visitor information facilities and visuals.

The navigation beacon on top of

the center dates from 1928 when it was installed on top of the mountain to assist with the early days of commercial air travel to San Francisco. Each year veterans gather at the center Dec. 7 to light the beacon for Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

"We light the beacon at dusk at the rotunda," Elliott said. "I like to do it outside but it depends on the weather. Last year we had really bad weather and had to cancel."

Visitors with disabilities who need assistance to visit the Summit Visitor Center should call the park office at 673-2891 in advance. For more information and virtual tours of the park, go to mdia.org. ■

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# Christmas downtown turns a profit

Shoppers fill the streets in back-to-back festivities

By JEB BING

Although retailers in the Bay Area are promoting deep discounts and hoping for big sales on Black Friday, downtown merchants in Pleasanton were a week ahead of the pack with their own special holiday events last weekend.

First, it was downtown's festive "Magical Holiday Evening" last Friday night where, despite a light drizzle, nearly 2,000 shoppers filled the streets to enjoy carolers, Christmas decorations and special sales.

Then Saturday, in a first for Pleasanton, merchants and some restaurants opened their doors at 7 a.m. for the city's jump-start on Black Friday, traditionally the busiest shopping day of the year on the Friday after Thanksgiving. And the discounts were deep, as much as 50%, with scratch-off discount coupons passed out by the Pleasanton Downtown Association, the sponsor of the event.

The PDA partnered with Livermore Downtown Inc. in staging the "Earlier than the Bird" extravaganza with those wearing their pajamas getting even bigger discounts and a few gifts. Many merchants donned their pajamas, too, and at least one store had a sleepover so that those selling until the lights went out Friday night could catch a few winks before the 7 a.m. Saturday opening.

Store owners reported strong sales, which could mean better profits for the season. ■



PHOTOS BY JEB BING

Steve and Barb Pittl make a few holiday purchases from Robin Ehrman at Sincerely Yours Cards and Gifts at 711 Main St. during Pleasanton's "Magical Holiday Evening" extravaganza.



Trying on colorful bracelets at Studio Seven Arts during Pleasanton's "Magical Holiday Evening" extravaganza are shoppers Annette Fleerer (left) and Karin Holt. Studio Seven Arts is located at 400 Main St.



Brittany Ellison (left) and Jessica Starkey take time away from the cash register they're handling this holiday season at Gourmet Works, located at 420 Main St.



Pleasanton's director of Economic Development Pamela Ott and Kelsey Ott are among the early morning shoppers downtown last Saturday for the "Earlier than the Bird" extravaganza that started at 7 a.m.



Linda Wyner's festive holiday garb tells customers it's all about giving as she shows Christmas specials at her Pans on Fire cookware and cooking classes store at 310-B Main St.



Mary Terese Costello (right) hosts holiday crowds in front of her Rising Loafer Cafe & Bakery at 428 Main St. during Pleasanton downtown's "Magical Holiday Evening" last Friday.

## School district looks at student stress, homework

Movie, forums, educational days part of the process

By **GLENN WOHLTMANN**

A months-long look into whether Pleasanton expects too much from its young people began Nov. 17 with a showing of the movie "Race to Nowhere."

The movie focuses on the lives of high school students and some younger kids — one in the fourth grade, for example — to highlight the stress they're under to achieve. It includes the story of 13-year-old Devon Marvin, a San Ramon Valley middle school girl who committed suicide, apparently over poor math scores.

The drive to achieve chronicled in "Race" can also lead to students staying up late at night to complete homework, depression, anxiety, drug use and an epidemic of cheating, something many of the students in the film described as routine.

Kiley Johnson, a 17-year-old Amador Valley High student, said after the viewing, held at her high school, that she herself is not overwhelmed with homework, but she has many friends who are, and she could relate to the film's message.

"I think there was so much truth to what they were saying," Johnson said. "I take AP classes but I know how to balance my life. My parents don't pressure me — it's nobody but myself."

Like Johnson, many of the students in the movie but the pressure on themselves. Although Johnson said she could balance her life, some of the students in "Race" spoke of staying up late to complete assignments — one, despite being told by her parents not to worry, because she thought the teacher would be upset with her.

Part of the movie focused on the idea that the pressure on students didn't even apply to college success but was for the application process, to get into a top-tier school.

"That's completely true," Johnson said, pointing to things like community service projects done by her peers just to have on their application, and participating in sports in addition to taking ad-

vanced placement classes.

In fact, one of the speakers in the film noted that many students have to take remedial math and English courses after entering a top school.

The issues in "Race to Nowhere" seemed to resonate with local parents, whose emotions were obvious during parts of the screening.

However, some parents, like Jodie Fialho, have more realistic expectations from their children. Fialho, who said her 14-year-old son, Jackson, couldn't attend the screening because he was rewriting an essay for school, said she doesn't pressure her kids.

"I truly believe in everything they say (in the movie)," Fialho said. "I don't believe in the over-scheduling."

Fialho also has a 12-year-old, Bryson, who does work extra hard, but she said, "That's just who he is."

"We never ask him, 'Is your homework done?'" she said.

The school district conducted a homework survey last spring and expects to rewrite its homework policy by early next year.

Eric Carr, with children in first and fourth grades, is years away from seeing the kind of homework and performance stress detailed in "Race," but came to the showing to see what he may be up against some day.

"It's good to know about the pressures children have, especially when they get older," Carr said.

The two showings of "Race to Nowhere" last week are just a part of the Pleasanton school district's look into what kids are facing.

One of the speakers from the movie, Dr. Kenneth Ginsberg, will speak in Pleasanton in March.

A parent educational night on teen stress, depression and anxiety is set for 7 p.m. Dec. 8 at Amador Valley High, and three homework forums have been scheduled from 7-8:30 p.m. The first, for elementary school students, is Jan. 27 at Hearst Elementary School; the middle school forum is Feb. 2 at Pleasanton Middle School; and the third is Feb. 9 at Amador Valley. ■



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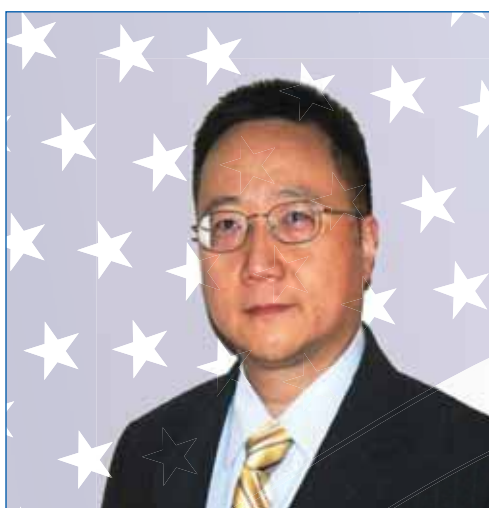
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# TAKE US ALONG



**Day at the racetrack:** Pleasanton residents (l-r) Emily Winding, Carly Sanders, Chanelle Sanders, Stephanie Wang, Tiffany Bianchi, Olivia Chang, Leia Wolfee and Sarah Winding enjoy their Weekly on a trip last year to Golden Gate Fields in Berkeley.

## CASTLEWOOD

Continued from Page 5

Castlewood would move forward toward a fair compromise instead of moving back in negotiations," Norr said.

She said most of the workers have gotten other jobs, but often not full-time and often for less than they were earning at Castlewood.

"Most of them are working in local establishments that are non-union," Norr said.

The union has two current cases before the National Labor Relations Board because of company practices — refusing to meet to

bargain at reasonable times and the proposal to bring people back out of order of seniority.

"In the United States, you're not allowed to replace locked out workers," Norr said.

She made the argument that allowing the company to decide who to bring back and how many hours to give them was bad faith bargaining.

Castlewood's General Manager, Jerry Olson could not be reached for comment. A recorded message at the country club said he'll be out of the office until Nov. 29, which is just in time for another negotiating session with the union. ■



COURTESY UNITEHERE!  
Peggy Duthie, 82, a 25-year veteran Castlewood worker during Sunday's parade in Pleasanton.

## BENEFITS

Continued from Page 5

directly to Hughes, they agreed to make the process of preparing the next budget more transparent. This would include public discussions as budget data is considered, which would include employee health and pension costs.

City Manager Nelson Fialho said work on the city's next two-year budget for fiscal years 2011-12 and 2012-13 would begin early in 2011.

Hughes' plea for the Pleasanton council to take action to stem employee entitlement costs comes a few weeks after a national study found several Bay Area counties are being driven toward bankruptcy because of ballooning pension costs. Four of the 10 counties in

the worst trouble nationwide are in Northern California: Contra Costa, Sonoma, San Joaquin and San Mateo counties.

The study by the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University found \$3 trillion in unfunded "legacy" liabilities from state-sponsored pension plans. However, new research finds additional liabilities from municipalities that magnify the growing public pension crisis with an additional \$574 billion in unfunded liabilities from pension plans at the city and county levels.

The paper, "The Crisis in Local Government Pensions in the United States," was co-authored by Joshua Rauh of the Kellogg School and Robert Novy-Marx of the University of Rochester. ■

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## LETTERS

### Thanks, Pleasanton North Rotary

Dear Editor,

REACH could not exist without the support of our community partners. Recently, work teams from Pleasanton North Rotary performed annual maintenance and projects at REACH's six Pleasanton and three Livermore properties. The work crews replaced toilets, installed light fixtures, replaced furnace filters, cleaned out dryer vents and so much more.

REACH is an all volunteer non-profit, dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of each individual we support by helping them achieve their fullest potential. Our mission is to provide resources, education, activities, community participation and housing opportunities that will enable adults with developmental challenges to approximate the pattern of everyday living available to people without disabilities.

Julie Testa

### Not 'Waiting for Superman'

Dear Editor,

As if teachers did not have enough to deal with already with budget cuts, lay-offs and steadily rising class-sizes, they now find themselves the object of a savage attack in the form of a new movie by Davis Guggenheim called "Waiting for Superman."

The movie, which is stirring up a national debate over the effectiveness of public schools, lays the blame squarely at the feet of teachers and their unions. Sadly, the movie ignores much of our multi-

faceted education system and focuses instead on charter schools. Its simplistic approach fails to provide a glimpse of the real challenges and successes in America's public school system. Instead it scapegoats teachers and their unions.

Has anyone in our community stopped to consider how many millions of dollars have been cut from our budget over the last two years? Class sizes have risen alarmingly and teacher workloads have increased as a result. Despite everything the District's API scores rose yet again last year and they remain among the highest in the state.

The students in California classrooms are not waiting for Superman. They are just waiting for safe facilities, updated textbooks and basic school supplies that are needed in order to focus on learning.

Trevor Knaggs, President,  
Association of Pleasanton  
Teachers

### OMI thanks

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the great review for my school, Oakland Military Institute College Preparatory Academy (Nov. 12, "Dave Ham: The man behind the parade). We were glad to participate in your parade. I am a seventh-grade cadet at OMI.

Once again, thank you very much.

Elizabeth Navarro

### What's your opinion?

Write a Letter to the Editor at [editor@PleasantonWeekly.com](mailto:editor@PleasantonWeekly.com) or put your opinion on Town Square at [www.PleasantonWeekly.com](http://www.PleasantonWeekly.com). Letters must be 250 words or less.

## EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

### Hacienda Task Force wraps it up

**K**udos to the 25 volunteers on the Hacienda Task Force who have worked with city staff and an outside consulting agency to work out development standards and design guidelines for an 850-unit, transit-oriented housing project in the Hacienda Business Park. The complex of two-, three- and some four-story buildings will be constructed on some or all of the properties owned by W.P. Carey, Roche and BRE, a national multi-family building organization. The three sites are located along Hacienda, Gibraltar and Owens drives close to the Pleasanton BART station with nearby access to I-580.

The task force was organized 10 months ago by the City Council to provide an orderly, systematic approach to rezoning properties once intended for corporate use. The new mixed use zoning of these sites still makes them available for commercial use if they are not fully used for affordable and market rate housing. At its final meeting last week, the task force adopted a vision statement to complement this assignment. It provides direction for property owners and associated developers of the city's planning intent. It is a vision that now must be translated by the property owners when preparing a proposed project for consideration by city planners.

Paramount in the task force's final ruling is the livability of these developments. They must not only address housing needs for families of all income types but also provide a supply of workforce housing in Pleasanton to accommodate mandated regional housing allocations by the state. In so doing, the task force listed amenities to consider: nicely designed places to live that will stay that way; and attractively designed landscape with ample open space, play areas, trail connections, a fitness facility and community meeting rooms for residents. The developments by their location are transit-oriented but developers must also ensure "inviting access" to all modes of transportation, including bus lines and bike connections. The task force also wants public plazas, water features and other areas created to make this new Hacienda neighborhood inviting and eye-appealing.

The task force also asked developers to create live-work units and retail space in the apartment buildings for those who want to live, work and spend their free time right at home.

It's a tall order for developers who view high density housing more like we see across the freeway in Dublin with more brick and mortar and less green space. Don Reber of BRE Properties said his company has concerns over how the project might pencil out if all of the task force guidelines are enforced, especially those calling for more retail, and greater building setbacks are required. Still, the fact that Reber's firm along with representatives of other developers, the Hacienda Business Park, BART, and a multitude of apartment and single family neighborhoods already in the park sat at the same table deliberating for 10 months is a good sign that a final agreement will be forthcoming. By court order, Pleasanton must have sufficient zoning in place this spring to meet the state's affordable housing requirements. The Hacienda Task Force has made that possible. ■



Visit Town Square at [PleasantonWeekly.com](http://PleasantonWeekly.com) to comment on the editorial.

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**POLICE REPORT**

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

**Nov. 15**

**Theft**

- 8:57 a.m. in the 7000 block of Commerce Circle; auto theft
- 9:43 a.m. in the 3900 block of Vineyard Avenue; grand theft
- 11:42 a.m. in the 1700 block of Stoneridge Mall; petty theft
- 2:34 p.m. in the first block of Angela Street; identity theft
- 6:08 p.m. in the 1700 block of Baywood Court; petty theft
- 7:18 p.m. in the 3200 block of Runnymede Court; grand theft

**Burglary**

- 7:01 p.m. in the 3800 block of Vine Street

**Vandalism**

- 7:55 a.m. in the 5600 block of Black Avenue
- 1:23 p.m. in the 1900 block of Santa Rita Road
- 5:28 p.m. in the 5400 block of Montalvo Court

**Drug/alcohol charges**

- 1:48 p.m. in the 4300 block of Foothill Road; possession of marijuana
- 9:34 p.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Road; public drunkenness

**Nov. 16**

**Theft**

- 6:31 a.m. in the 7100 block of Johnson Drive; auto theft
- 1:26 p.m. in the 200 block of Kottinger Road; petty theft
- 3:39 p.m. in the 5600 block of Owens Drive; grand theft
- 7:47 p.m. in the 6000 block of Johnson Drive; theft
- 10:27 p.m. in the 5300 block of Case Avenue; identity theft

**Burglary**

- 11:11 a.m. in the 6900 block of Corte Barcelona

**Vandalism**

- 1:44 p.m. in the 4600 block of First Street

**Drug/alcohol charges**

- 11:02 p.m. in the 3900 block of Stoneridge Drive; DUI

**Nov. 17**

**Theft**

- 12:28 p.m. in the 3000 block of Hopyard Road; theft, forgery
- 2:46 p.m. in the 2600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft
- 5:33 p.m. in the 7200 block of Johnson Drive; grand theft
- 9:30 p.m. in the 4500 block of Lin Gate Street; identity theft

**Burglary**

- 8:04 p.m. in the 1600 block of Whispering Oaks Way

**Vandalism**

- 8:42 p.m. in the 700 block of Palomino Drive; forcible entry vandalism

**Nov. 18**

**Theft**

- 12:45 a.m. in the 3300 block of Norton Way; grand theft
- 1:56 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 2:10 p.m. in the 1400 block of Whispering Oaks Way; identity theft
- 2:43 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft
- 8:53 p.m. in the 1900 block of Brooktree Way; grand theft

**Forgery**

- 5:30 p.m. in the 3400 block of Stanley Boulevard

**Possession of false ID**

- 2:40 p.m. at the intersection of Pleasant Hill Road and Knollbrook Drive

**Vandalism**

- 7:44 a.m. in the 3900 block of Santa Rita Road
- 7:51 a.m. at the intersection of Valley Avenue and Paseo Santa Cruz
- 9:39 a.m. in the 5500 block of Springhouse Drive
- 2:07 p.m. in the 600 block of Main Street

**Drug/alcohol charges**

- 3:44 p.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue; public drunkenness

**Nov 19**

**Theft**

- 10:47 a.m. in the 6700 block of Arlington Drive; petty theft
- 3:10 p.m. in the 11900 block of Dublin Canyon Road; grand theft

- 5:41 p.m. in the 200 block of Birch Creek Drive; grand theft
- 4:21 p.m. in the 6000 block of Sequoia Court; grand theft

**Burglary**

- 12:08 p.m. in the 5100 block of Mt. Tam Circle
- 3:46 p.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive
- 4:14 p.m. in the 4300 block of Addison Drive
- 6:26 p.m. in the 6200 block of Stoneridge Mall Drive; automotive burglary

**Drug/alcohol charges**

- 5:16 p.m. in the 4200 block of First Street; public drunkenness
- 7:21 p.m. at the intersection of Paseo Santa Cruz and Corte Barcelona; DUI
- 9:50 p.m. at the intersection of Glynis Rose Drive and Roscommon Way; DUI, hit-and-run
- 11:25 p.m. in the 1800 block of Santa Rita Road; public drunkenness

**Nov. 20**

**Theft**

- 4:11 p.m. in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft

**Drug/alcohol violations**

- 6:41 p.m. in the 4800 block of Bernal Avenue; possession of a controlled substance
- 8:57 p.m. in the 6700 block of Santa Rita Road; possession of a controlled substance with intent to sell

**Nov. 21**

**Theft**

- 2:19 p.m. in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft, shoplifting
- 4 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft
- 5:09 p.m. in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

**Burglary**

- 7:48 a.m. in the 4200 block of Rosewood Drive

**Drug/alcohol violations**

- 1:10 a.m. in the 1800 block of Santa Rita Road; public drunkenness
- 1:35 a.m. in the 4500 block of Chabot Drive; public drunkenness
- 6:54 p.m. in the 4000 block of Pimlico Drive; public drunkenness

**POLICE BULLETIN**

**Would-be robbers flee in two separate incidents**

Police in Pleasanton are following up on two robbery attempts that occurred last week.

The first took place at about 8:40 p.m. Nov. 17 near Macy's in the Stoneridge Shopping Center. According to Sgt. Jim Knox, a 22-year-old Pleasanton woman was walking toward her car when a red Volvo pulled up alongside her and the passenger, a Hispanic or white female adult in her early 20s, grabbed the victim's purse and dragged her on the ground alongside the car. The victim held on to her purse as the car drove toward the mall's ring road. Although the victim sustained abrasions to her right arm and hip, she did not let go of the purse and did not lose anything.

The second incident occurred at about 6:25 p.m. Nov. 18. Officers were called to a fight in the parking lot of Caffino, a drive-through coffee stand in the 6700 block of Santa Rita Road. The victim, a 23-year-old male, told police he was confronted by two suspects who demanded his car keys and wallet. The man fought off his attackers and was struck numerous times in the head and face but held on to his belongings. During the incident, the man shouted for help and the two suspects fled on foot.

One suspect is described as a white adult male in his mid 20s, about 6 feet 1 inch tall, and weighing about 190 pounds. He was wearing a black knit cap and a black zippered sweatshirt.

The other suspect is described as a Hispanic male adult, also in his mid 20s, about 5 feet 7 inch-

es tall, and weighing about 170 pounds. He was wearing a red hooded sweatshirt at the time of the attack.

The victim was left swollen and bruised but was otherwise unhurt.

Both cases remain under investigation. Anyone with information about either incident can call police at 931-5100.

Despite the two incidents in a single week, Knox said the number of robberies for 2010 is at about the same level as last year. ■

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**OBITUARIES**

**Judy Perko**

Judy Perko died at home Nov. 15 after a courageous battle with ALS.

She was born in Illinois, and spent her school years in Los Altos. She earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from San Jose State and worked as



a special education aide for the Pleasanton Unified School District for 10 years prior to her illness and tutored many elementary students. She loved children, dogs, making friends, the beach, First Wednesdays in downtown Pleasanton, and shopping.

She is survived by her husband Bob; sons Greg and Garrett; her father Don Leutz of Daytona Beach, Fla.; her mother Kay Leutz of San Ramon; brother Don and his wife

Sylvia of Lake Tahoe; and numerous friends.

A service celebrating her life will be held at 1 p.m. Monday at Valley Community Church, 4455 Del Valle Parkway in Pleasanton, with a reception to follow. Donations may be made to the ALS Association, Golden West Chapter, 1 Embarcadero Center, Suite 1530, San Francisco 94111.

**Lorus L. (Kirk) Kirkbride**

Lorus L. (Kirk) Kirkbride recently died at his home in Pleasanton at the age of 97.

He was born Nov 10, 1913, in Smithfield, Utah, and lived for several years in San Jose and Pacific Grove before moving to Pleasanton. He was an avid golfer and loved traveling with his wife, Sophie, who preceded him in death as did his first wife, Wanda.

Mr. Kirkbride is survived by daughter Connie, son Wayne, two sisters and one brother, and several grandchildren and great-grandchild-

dren. A private family burial will be held in Pacific Grove. A memorial service will be announced at a later date.

**Danny Michael Hamilton**

Danny Michael Hamilton, a Pleasanton resident, died Nov. 13 at the age of 48.

He was born July 20, 1962, in Fremont, and raised in Pleasanton where he lived his short, but very active life. His career was in Information Technology, which enabled him to travel the world. He was also an avid sports fan.



Mr. Hamilton is survived by his wife Nan; brother Guy; mother and stepfather Dolly and Robert Mays; and father and stepmother Don and Marnie Hamilton. Services will be held at 10 a.m. Monday at St. Augustine Catholic Church in Pleasanton.



**WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES**

In observance of the Thanksgiving holiday, City offices will be closed on Thursday & Friday, November 25th & 26th.

**Housing Task Force**

December 1, 2010 @ 7:00 p.m.  
 Operations Services, 3333 Busch Road

- Preliminary review of housing needs
- Discussion of possible housing sites evaluation criteria
- Review of preliminary housing sites

**Human Services Commission**

- The regularly scheduled meetings of the Human Services Commission for December 2010 and January 2011 have been canceled.
- There will be a special joint meeting with Livermore Human Services Commission on January 12, 2011, 7:00 pm, Pleasanton Senior Center.
- The next regularly scheduled Human Services Commission meeting will be held on February 2, 2011.

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)

# Stoneridge at 30



Aerial view of Stoneridge Shopping Center under construction in 1979. Mall opened the following year.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF STONERIDGE SHOPPING CENTER

## *Mall celebrates with new stores, New Year's Eve 'Ball at the Mall'*

By JEB BING

Stoneridge Shopping Center is celebrating its 30th year as a premier regional mall with new store openings and what's expected to be its busiest shopping day ever on the day after Thanksgiving.

Although the main mall opened at 5 a.m. to accommodate the expected crush of shoppers, Macy's, JC Penney and Sears opened their doors at 4 a.m. for early bird customers determined to buy clothing, cosmetics, electronics and even Christmas decorations that were marked down as much as 50%. These stores and others throughout the Tri-Valley have a tradition of making deep discounts available during the first few hours of a day known as Black Friday, not just the busiest shopping day of the year but also the most profitable for merchants.

Stoneridge has been through this ever since it opened in 1980 as a premier shopping center operated by the Taubman group that also owned Eastridge Mall in San Jose, Hilltop Mall in Richmond and Sunvalley Mall in Concord. Up to then, Pleasanton residents traveled to Hayward to shop at a mall.

Stoneridge was originally planned by the Stoneson Development Corp. that had built Stonestown Galleria near San Francisco State University. Stoneson won out in obtaining Pleasanton City Council approval over Sears, Roebuck, which wanted to build a shopping center on the newly built I-580 at Hopyard Road.

Hundreds stood in line for the grand opening to be the first to shop at the anchor stores at Stoneridge, which included Macy's, Penney's and Emporium-Capwell. Nordstrom opened its Stoneridge store in 1990, and six

years later the Emporium was acquired by Macy's, which turned that store into its second Stoneridge store, focusing on men's and home furnishings departments. Sears opened its Stoneridge store in 1996.

Today, with 165 stores and more opening this month and next, Stoneridge is the largest mall in the East Bay and among the largest in northern California. Since being acquired by the Simon Property Group, it has added more programs for children and shopper services, including its Kidgits Club, entertainment and trackless shopper shuttle trams. This year, jazz groups will perform from 4 to 6 p.m. every Thursday before Christmas, Oakland A's players will greet shoppers on Dec. 4, with the Tony Hawk SHRED tour Dec. 18-19.

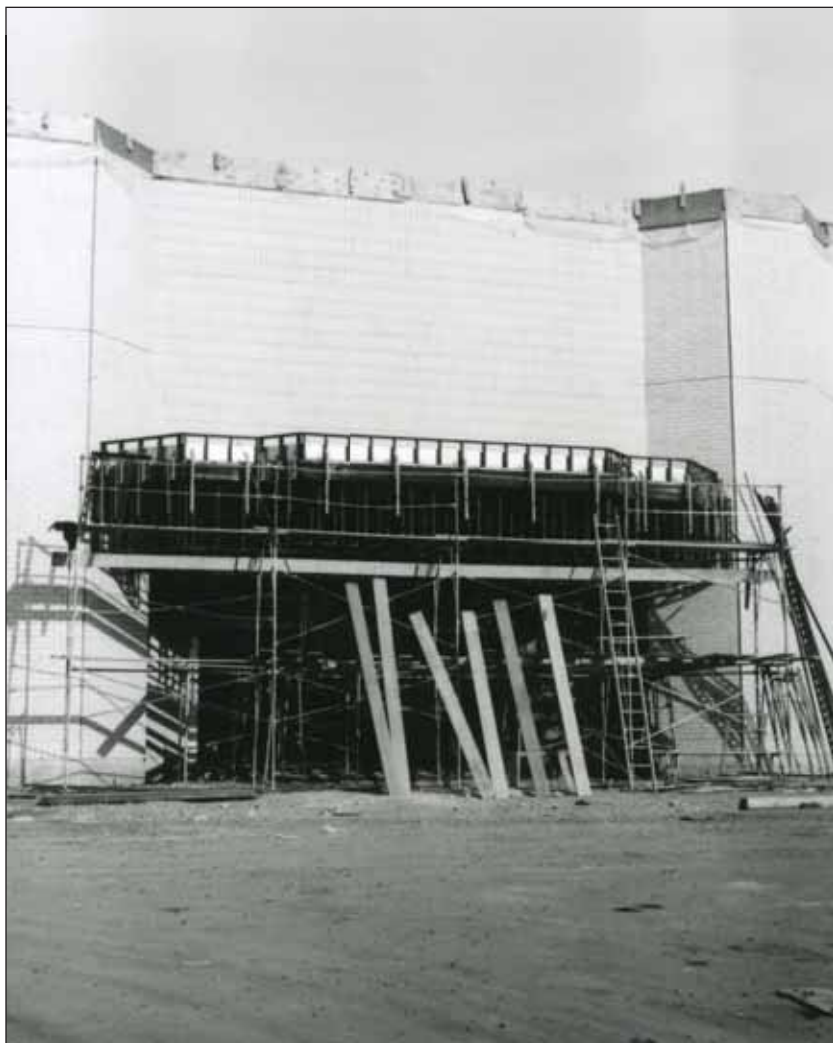
Cheerleaders from California High in San Ramon are partnering with the Taylor Family Foundation to operate

gift wrap stations set free with donations to Cal High and the Tri-Valley.

On Dec. 1, Rabbits from Santa at the Tri-Valley will perform from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Of course, Santa Claus will be at the mall's color guard and the tree in the shopping area are available as Christmas decorations.

The Kidgits Factory will have one of its "Destination" activities, games and



West end of Macy's Department Store under construction in 1979.



Grand Court in center of Stoneridge Shopping Center under construction in late 1979



Music of Christmas today makes Stoneridge Shopping Center's Grand Court a popular place to congregate.



Stoneridge Shopping Center's Grand Court after completion.

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 ...tory is located on the other side of the...  
 ...nd offers children a chance to visit on...  
 ...ation Stations" that offer a variety of...  
 ...nd product samplings.

Wrapping up the 30th year celebration will be the first "Ball at the Mall," scheduled New Year's Eve. A fundraiser to benefit nonprofit organizations, it is being held in cooperation with Stoneridge Shopping Center by the Pleasanton North Rotary Club. Sponsors and beneficiaries include Axis Community Health, School of Imagination, and the Partners in Education organizations from both Dublin and Pleasanton. Expected to draw thousands to Stoneridge, the ball will be a dance party that has something for everyone — a live band, a DJ (local favorite Brad Kinney) and a piano bar, as well as casino games, wine country hors d'oeuvres, wine tasting and cocktail bars. Tickets are \$75-\$100 each, while babysitter links are on the organization's site (<http://theballatthemall.org>). ■

# ON THE TOWN




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4501 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 734-0307. Home of the Tri Tip and Blue, Red Smoke Grill was Voted Reader's Choice Best 2006, 2007,

2008, and 2010. Dine in or take out rotisserie chicken, ribs, prawns, salads and tri tip, or pulled pork sandwiches. Relax with a beer or a bottle of wine. Visit [www.redsmokegrill.com](http://www.redsmokegrill.com).

## BREW PUB/ALEHOUSE

### The Hop Yard American Alehouse and Grill

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

470 Market Place, San Ramon, 277-9600. Featuring a giant 8-foot

projection screen for major sporting events, they also feature 30 beers on tap and a great grill. Go in for the beer, go back for the food. More at [www.hopyard.com](http://www.hopyard.com).

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## Auditions

**'ALL SHOOK UP'** Auditions for "All Shook Up" will be held at 7:30 p.m., Monday, Nov. 29, and Thursday, Dec. 2, at Studio Theatre, 1048 Serpentine Ln., #303. Callbacks will be by invitation only. Prepare a brief song (16-32 bars), be prepared to dance and bring sheet music; an accompanist will be provided. Also, bring a picture and resume, stapled together. Call 462-2121 or visit [www.trivalleyrep.com](http://www.trivalleyrep.com).

## Author Visits

**'IMPRESSIONIST MOVEMENT'** Marlene Aron will present a beautiful and inspiring slide presentation of over one hundred works of art by artists of the Impressionist Movement at 2 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 5, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. View the art of Monet, Renoir, Degas, Cezanne, Cassatt, Toulouse-Lautrec, Van Gogh and others, as they celebrate the work of artists who forever changed the way we look at art. This program is free and open to all. Call 931-3405.

## Careers

**FROM IDEA TO ENTREPRENEUR** Come to a free seminar and learn how to protect an idea for development and how to make and market-test a prototype. The first seminar, "How to Protect an Idea," covers the differences and requirements of patents, copyrights and trademarks and will be held from 7-8:30 p.m., Monday, Nov. 29, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Call 600-7342 or visit [www.gotabrightidea.com](http://www.gotabrightidea.com).

**ONE-ON-ONE RESUME CRITIQUE** Looking for a job? Consider setting up a 20-minute session with a job search professional who will give you sound advice on how to make your resume more attractive to potential employers. Call the Dublin Library at 803-7275 for dates, times and to schedule an appointment.

## Concerts

**'THREE CHEERS FOR BEETHOVEN'** Livermore-Amador Symphony presents an all-Beethoven program featuring "Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Piano" and "Symphony No. 5" from 8-10 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 4, at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Tickets are \$22-\$28 for adults, \$20-\$26 for seniors and \$10 for youths. Call 373-6824 or visit [www.livamsymph.org](http://www.livamsymph.org).

**BAY BELLS** One of the nation's longest running community hand-bell ensembles will perform a special holiday concert entitled "Silver Bells" from 3:30-4:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 12, at the Dublin Senior Center, 7600 Amador Valley Blvd., Dublin. The whole family will be thoroughly entertained by the 100 bells and chimes. Cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children, and \$3 for 5 and under. Call 556-4500 or email [john.hartnett@dublin.ca.gov](mailto:john.hartnett@dublin.ca.gov).

**CAROLS OF COMFORT AND JOY** Enjoy carols that give comfort and carols

that spread joy from 8-9:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 4, and 3-4:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 5, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Rd. Audience sing-a-long of traditional carols. Food drive for Open Heart Kitchen. Cost \$20 if purchased in advance, \$25 at the door. High school and college students \$10 with valid student ID. Call 866-4003 or visit [www.valleyconcertchorale.org](http://www.valleyconcertchorale.org).

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT AND DESSERT** Experience the Spirit of the Season through song and word at the Christmas Concert and Dessert from 7-9 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 5, at Valley Community Church, 4455 Del Valle Parkway, with Sylvia Lange of Crimson Bridge. Tickets are \$10; call 846-6622.

**GUITARIST ROGER MCGUINN** Roger McGuinn, who along with Clark and Crosby formed the rock band "The Byrds," will perform at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 28, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. Tickets are \$25, \$30 and \$35 for adults; \$12 for children; and \$30 for seniors. Purchase online at [www.firehousearts.org](http://www.firehousearts.org) or by phone at 931-4848.

**JAZZ PIANIST DAVID LANZ** David Lanz will perform selections from his latest CD, "Liverpool," which spotlights two of his greatest role models, John Lennon and Paul McCartney, at 8 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 27, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. Tickets are \$18, \$22 and \$27 for adults; \$12 for children; and \$22 for seniors. Purchase online at [www.firehousearts.org](http://www.firehousearts.org) or call 931-4848.

## Events

**ALL STAR COMEDY SHOW** Jeff Applebaum, Craig Ferguson and Rat Pack will be featured at the show from 7:30-9 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 27, at Bunjo's Comedy Lounge, 6513 Regional St., Dublin. Also appearing are Deepak Srivastava, Richard Kiss, Wesley Hoffman and special guests. Tickets \$10 plus two-item minimum. Call 264-4413 or visit [www.bunjoscody.com](http://www.bunjoscody.com).

**CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH** The Widowed Men and Women of Northern California would like to invite you to join them for a champagne brunch at 11 a.m., Sunday, Nov. 28, at Poppy Ridge Golf Course Restaurant, 4280 Greenville Rd., Livermore. RSVP to Hilda at 398-8808 by Friday, Nov. 26. Cost menu item choice.

**FOG CITY CAT SHOW** Enjoy beautiful rescued or pedigreed cats competing in different categories from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Nov. 27-28, at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, 4501 Pleasanton Ave. Admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors, and \$4 for children 12 and under (Children 6 and under are free). Call 707-338-1261 or visit [www.fogcitycatclub.com](http://www.fogcitycatclub.com).

**GREAT WESTERN & ATLANTIC TRAIN SHOW** The Great Train Expo is Nov. 27-28 at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, 4501 Pleasanton Ave. This national traveling show caters to the model railroad enthusiast. Call (630) 383-2017 or visit [www.greattrainexpo.com](http://www.greattrainexpo.com).

## Exhibits

**TRY-VALLEY TOYBOX COMES TO MUSEUM** Toy aficionados will share their collections at the third "Treasures of the Tri-Valley" exhibit from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Wednesdays through Sundays, from Nov. 10 through Jan. 30, at Museum On Main, 603 Main St. There will be toy-making crafts and opportunities to meet the collectors. Call 462-2766 or e-mail [education@museumonmain.org](mailto:education@museumonmain.org).

## Fundraisers

**HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE** JL Consulting is coordinating a holiday food drive benefiting people in need served by the Alameda County Community Food Bank. Donations of nutritious non-perishable foods can be dropped off at 1024 Serpentine Ln., Suite 105, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday until Dec. 10. Call 846-1859 or email [info@jlcpa.net](mailto:info@jlcpa.net).

**SECRET SANTA TOY DRIVE** In an effort to make sure every child enjoys a bright holiday season, Sleep Train is collecting new, unwrapped gifts for California's 80,000 foster children. Become a "Secret Santa" and make a donation from Nov. 1 through Dec. 12 at Sleep Train, 6050 Johnson Drive, Suite C. Call 1-800-378-2337 or visit [www.sleeptrain.com](http://www.sleeptrain.com).

**THE GINGERBREAD PROJECT** More than 300 volunteers will bake, decorate and package thousands of gingerbread boys, girls and babies to raise funds to support Tri-Valley Haven, which helps abused and homeless adults and children. Each 7-inch gingerbread boy and girl is hand-decorated, with names inscribed, for only \$5 each. A bag of 13 gingerbread babies is \$5. The deadline to order cookies is Monday, Dec. 1. To obtain an order form, visit [www.trivalleyhaven.org](http://www.trivalleyhaven.org) or call 449-5845.

## Workshops

**HANDLING THE HOLIDAYS** Learn how to cope with the loss of a loved one during the holidays from 1-3 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 2, at Hope Hospice, 6377 Clark Ave., Dublin. This workshop will provide ways to manage grief at events, explore fears and strong emotions, and more. These workshops are free. Call 829-8770 or visit [www.hopehospice.com](http://www.hopehospice.com).

## On Stage

**'HOLIDAY SHORTS: A LONG WINTER'S TALE'** Creatures of Impulse will stage "Holiday Shorts: A Long Winter's Tale" and audience interaction during the first act will inspire holiday-themed games and scenes. The winning short scene will advance to the second act. The show is from 7:30-9:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 2, and Friday, Dec. 3 at Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. Cost is \$5 for students with valid student I.D., \$8 for general admission in advance or \$10 at the door. Call 931-4848 or visit [www.firehousearts.org](http://www.firehousearts.org)

## Recreation

**MEET MY AUNT AMPHIBIAN** Millions of years ago, Great Aunt Amphibian came out of the sea and formed an important part of life on earth. Explore the wonderful world of amphibians from 11 a.m.-noon Dec. 4 at Alviso Adobe Park, 3465 Foothill Rd. Children under 7 must be accompanied by an adult through the entire class. Cost: \$9 resident; \$12 non-resident. Call 931-3483 or email [enicholas@ci.pleasanton.ca.us](mailto:enicholas@ci.pleasanton.ca.us).

## Support Groups

**PLEASANTON MILITARY FAMILIES SUPPORT GROUP** Formed in 2003

this support group's mission is to provide support and comfort to the families of Pleasanton residents whose loved ones are deployed in the combat zones of Afghanistan and Iraq. This group has monthly meetings and other events such as the upcoming Dec. 5 Christmas/Holiday "pack out" of comfort and care items to be sent to these deployed members of the armed forces. The group also sponsors the Yellow Streamer program on Main Street where these personnel have yellow streamers displayed with their name, rank and branch of service. Contact Pat Frizzell, Chairman at [PleasantonMilitaryFamilies@gmail.com](mailto:PleasantonMilitaryFamilies@gmail.com) or Chris Miller at [millercj3@gmail.com](mailto:millercj3@gmail.com).



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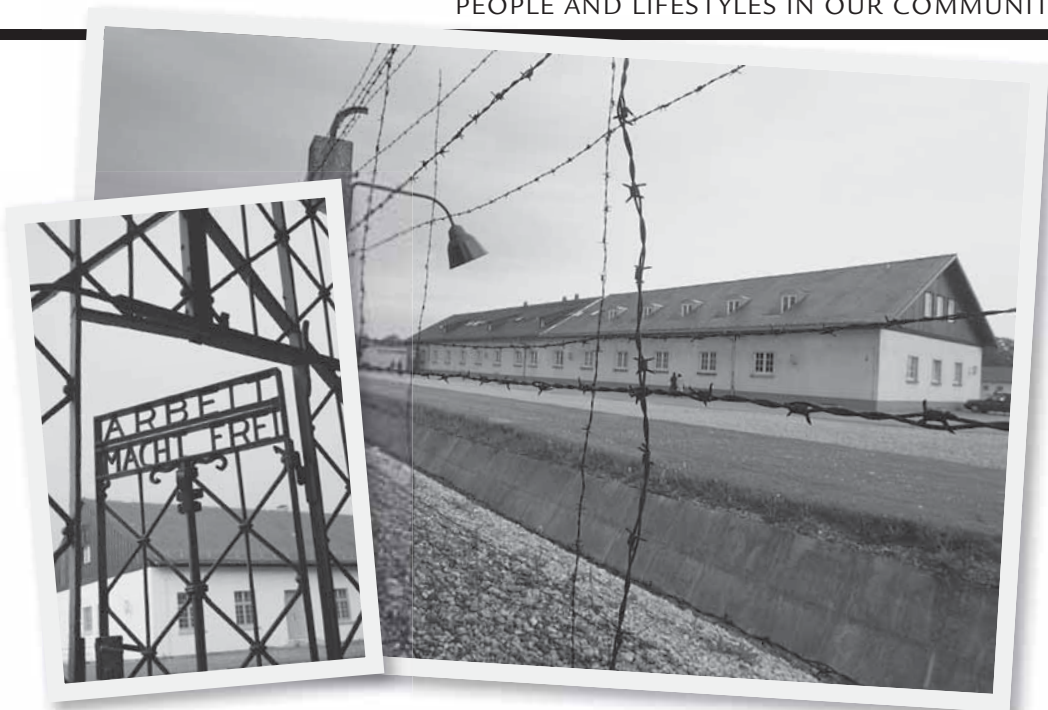
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## Survivor recalls Holocaust for Foothill students

Speakers shares the horrors so they will not happen again

BY GLENN WOHLTMANN



Never again. Holocaust survivor Susan Greenwald told Foothill High School honors English students that they need to remember the past to prevent it happening again.

"My story takes us back to the first part of the 20th century," Greenwald began her hour-long narrative, describing encounters with Nazis, as well as Hungarian, American and Russian soldiers.

Incorporating a geography lesson into her personal history, Greenwald explained that when Germany was divided following World War I, Czechoslovakia — her home country, which she described as democratic and freedom loving — was created.

Greenwald described a number of factors that contributed to the outbreak of the Second World War, including British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's attempts to appease Hitler by allowing it to annex Czechoslovakia.

"The Allies (England and France) that tried to avoid World War II," Greenwald said, "allowed him to demolish our little country."

Germany, "just couldn't pull itself together" after World War I, she said, due to a bad economy and political upheavals and the rise of Adolph Hitler.

"The number of his followers grew and grew and so did his popularity," Greenwald said, and people grew envious of successful businessmen. "Hitler's followers looked with envy at those people. That envy changed to jealousy, then jealousy turned to hate."

On Nov. 9, 1938, "a terrible thing happened in Germany. It was called Kristallnacht," she said. "The brownshirts (Hitler's followers) went out and broke all the shop windows of Jewish shop owners."

Two days later, she said, Czechoslovakia was divided between Germany and Hungary, which joined the Nazis, and led to a rise in anti-Semitism.

Greenwald described being segregated in school; during class outings, students would sing racist songs directed at her and the other Jewish students. War was declared and as it progressed, she said, life became more difficult for Jewish families in her small town. They couldn't get jobs and were kicked out of school.

In 1944 — the day after Greenwald's 19th birthday — German troops crossed the border. Two days later, Jews were ordered to wear yellow stars of David when they went outside, prompting a mix of reactions from others in the town.

"Some laughed. Some crossed the street," Greenwald said. "There were some who treated us as before, treated us with respect."

They were forced to move into ghettos, segregated areas walled off from the rest of her town.

"We were not allowed to go through the gate into the rest of town," she said.

One day, she said, "the old, sick, pregnant women were all put into trucks."

"The streets were full of people and they were looking at us. Some laughed," Greenwald continued.

"There were those who cried and you could see their horror and sorrow."

Her stepfather — a doctor — was shipped away. Greenwald, her mother and brother were ultimately loaded onto trains.

"We had no idea where we were going," she said. After traveling two or three days, "the doors opened. We saw lots of S.S. soldiers with dogs... later we found out we were in Auschwitz."

Greenwald noted the infamous sign that hung over the entrance to the death camp — "Arbeit macht frei," or work will set you free.

She said men and women were split up, and she



GLENN WOHLTMANN

Susan Greenwald talks to a Foothill High School class about surviving concentration camps during World War II.

and her mother were separated from her brother, not knowing it was the last time they'd see him.

"We let him go without a hug, without a kiss," Greenwald said.

The women were forced to strip and had their heads shaved, then led to the showers.

"S.S. soldiers were standing there with guns and we were there naked and bald," she said. They were given dresses by a Jewish trusty, then led to barracks, which consisted of wood planking without blankets or pillows.

The food was a sort of gray porridge, and Greenwald said, "That was our only food for the day and we had to eat it to survive."

They were ordered to stand in lines for roll call several times a day.

"If somebody sat down or fell down, soldiers would take them away. We never saw them again," she said.

At night, the women could see flames and smell a strange odor. They were told it was a chemical factory.

"Later, we found out that was the crematorium, working day and night, seven days a week," Greenwald said.

After three months in Auschwitz, she, her moth-

er and an aunt were among 1,500 women taken to another camp, where they were provided with shoes and clean clothes for the first time in three months.

While a third of the women were forced to work in a munitions factory underground and subject to almost daily bombings by British planes, Greenwald, her aunt and mother were among the group that got the less dangerous job of cleaning construction debris from apartments being built for Germans.

For her 20th birthday, her gift was a used toothbrush, which she described as a luxury after not being able to brush her teeth from May to the following March.

In April, German soldiers disappeared overnight from the camp. She and the others were driven 30 kilometers by Germans in street clothes to another death camp, Bergen-Belsen, where they unknowingly spent the night in a barracks filled with dead bodies.

After several days without water, she said, "We gave up all hope, seeing all the death around us."

When she and the other women were ordered to dig a mass grave, they refused, and ran off, less worried about being shot than what could have happened had they stayed.

The area was soon liberated by the British army, which immediately set up mobile kitchens, although Greenwald and the others couldn't eat much because their stomachs had shrunk. All 1,500 contracted typhoid fever.

On a train headed home, she said she saw what the war had done to Germany.

"I tell you, there was hardly a home left standing," she said. They were handed off to Russian troops in Budapest, who didn't provide them with food and reduced the women to begging.

They arrived home to find her stepfather awaiting the train as he had every day since arriving home. They later found out that her brother had survived Buchenwald, another death camp, only to die of tuberculosis nine days after the end of the war.

Greenwald's narrative seemed to provoke some uncomfortable reactions for the students, with some shifting in their seats uncomfortably while she spoke.

While most of the students have read about the holocaust, listening to someone who lived though it makes a big difference, according to sophomore Benjamin Dunn.

"When you hear someone, you can feel the emotion and you can feel how they express it," Dunn said. ■

*"We had no idea where we were going ... the doors opened. We saw lots of S.S. soldiers with dogs... later we found out we were in Auschwitz."*

Susan Greenwald,  
Holocaust survivor

## Pleasanton names new Teen Poets Laureate

'Writing makes everything more beautiful, even the painful parts of my life,' says Teen Poet Laureate Vivian Tsai

The city of Pleasanton has selected high school seniors Vivian Tsai of Foothill High School and Mitch Grimes of Amador Valley High School as its new Teen Poets Laureate. At the same time, Amador Valley High student Noelle Malindzak has been designated as Teen Poet Laureate-Community Programs.

"This year we selected the teens from an outstanding pool of junior and senior candidates at Pleasanton high schools," said Pleasanton Poet Laureate Deborah Grossman. "We have added the position of Teen Poet Laureate-Community Programs to broaden our program's reach to more teens who are interested in writing and to coordinate community teen poetry programs with the Teen Poets Laureate and literary groups at both Amador Valley and Foothill High Schools."

"Noelle will partner with Mark Duncanson, city of Pleasanton se-



**Vivian Tsai**

nior recreation program specialist for teen programs, to develop teen open mic and other events," she added.

The selection was based on the quality of their essays about their goals for the program, their poems, their references and their interviews.

Teen Poet Laureate Vivian Tsai came to Pleasanton from Taiwan. She entered Pleasanton Middle School in the seventh grade as a student in the English Language Learners program. During the eighth grade, she transferred to standard English classes and wrote her first poem in English.

"Through poetry and literature, we are able to see not only the reflection of ourselves, but also that of

the outer world. Writing makes everything more beautiful, even the painful parts of life," said Tsai.



**Mitch Grimes**

She is active in the We the People program and the DECA business club at Foothill and is a member of the Foothill Science Olympiad.

Mitch Grimes has written poetry since the sixth grade when he also began playing guitar. He is the leader and songwriter of his band, "Unholy Grail." Grimes attended Mohr Elementary and Harvest Park Middle School and supports various community service programs throughout the year.

"As Teen Poet Laureate, I want to show students how writing can be a great way to release feelings



**Noelle Malindzak**

by putting them down on paper," Grimes said. Noelle Malindzak is a native Pleasantonian who attended Alisal Elementary and Harvest Park Middle School. She participates in golf, soccer and basketball and is a Pleasanton Youth Commissioner as well as a participant in the DECA business club and other programs. Writing is an important outlet for her.

"Writing is a way for me to take a break from social drama and courses like calculus and physics and reflect on my day and relax with a poem," said Malindzak. "I want to increase the number of kids who know about the different events and get people excited about

poetry and the literary arts."

"We look forward to hearing their poetry and seeing how Mitch, Vivian and Noelle inspire Pleasanton students," Grossman said.

The purpose of the Teen Poet Laureate program is to promote writing among students at their high schools and beyond. The Teen Poets Laureate make occasional visits to schools in the Pleasanton Unified School District with the Pleasanton Poet Laureate plus they participate in the Pleasanton Poetry, Prose & Arts Festival in March and help plan community-wide poetry programs during the school year.

For information about the Poet Laureate program, contact Michelle Russo at [mrusso@ci.pleasanton.ca.us](mailto:mrusso@ci.pleasanton.ca.us) or 931-4847 or Deborah Grossman at [pleasantonpoetry@gmail.com](mailto:pleasantonpoetry@gmail.com). Additional information about the Poet Laureate program is available at <http://firehousearts.org/programs/literary-arts>. ■

## OF NOTE

### Las Positas College students win 24 journalism awards

Las Positas College students won 24 awards at the Journalism Association of Community Colleges NorCal Conference held last month at San Jose State University.

"My co-adviser Nolan O'Brien and I were especially gratified that all students who attended the conference with us competed in at least one contest," said Mass Communications faculty adviser Melissa Korber.

Las Positas College students gain practical journalism experience through the student magazine "Naked," student newspaper "Express," and Radio Las Positas. The publications and radio station support the award-winning Mass Communications program, which offers a Certificate of Achievement, a Certificate of Completion in Radio, and transfer classes to four-year colleges.

Following are the conference award winners:

■ Julian Lim, of Tracy, Editor in Chief of "Express" and "Naked": 1st Place for Profile Feature Story; 1st Place for Photo Illustration; 1st Place for Bring-in Advertisement; 1st Place for On-the-spot Editorial Cartoon; 2nd Place for On-the-spot News Judgment/Layout; Honorable Mention for Student-designed Advertisement; Honorable Mention for Editorial Cartoon; Editor Recognition Certificate

■ Jeff Bennett, of Livermore, Express Staff: 3rd Place for Sports Feature Photo; 4th Place for Sports Feature Photo; General Excellence for Video Journalism, two awards; General Excellence for Online Photo Essay; Honorable Mention for Sports Action Photo

■ Jeff Bennett and Kish Singh, both of Livermore: 2nd Place for Inside



ALTON RICHARDSON

Las Positas College student Julian Lim is the Editor in Chief of the award-winning Las Positas College student newspaper and magazine.

Page Layout, Tabloid

■ Brittney Barsotti, of Livermore: Honorable Mention for Editorial; Honorable Mention for News Feature

■ Meradith Loggins, of Livermore, Radio Las Positas: 1st Place for Web/Broadcast News

■ Adam Foster, of Sunol, Radio Las Positas: 2nd Place for Web/Broadcast News

■ Brenda Cruz, of Pleasanton, Executive Editor "Naked": Honorable Mention for Opinion Story

■ Matt Burris, of Livermore, Express News Editor: Honorable Mention for On-the-spot Opinion Writing

■ Mackenzie Luther, of Pleasanton: Honorable Mention for On-the-spot News Story

■ James Rose, of Castro Valley: Honorable Mention for Infographic

■ Kelly Sheeran, of Livermore: Honorable Mention for News Story

■ Jon Lytle: Honorable Mention for Profile Feature Story

The following students from the "Express" staff also participated in the event: Trevin Smith, of Castro Valley, Arts and Entertainment Editor; Courtney Sipel, of Livermore, Features Editor; Andre Principe, of Dublin, Sport Editor; Darshan Dixit, of Livermore, staff; and Shaun Packer, of Hayward, staff. ■

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## Thank you to our Holiday Fund donors

At the launch of the 2010 Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund, 122 donors have contributed \$19,729 to the fund. Thirteen anonymous donors have given \$1,215 of that total.

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Gene Riga from Edward W. McCauley .....	25
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## The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund

The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund was created to provide financial support from our readers for a select group of local nonprofit organizations to help alleviate the needs that exist, despite our community's prosperity. This marks the eighth year of the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund. It provides an opportunity to aid local groups at a time when the numbers of those without jobs or with low-paying jobs and few if any health benefits have increased.

The Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund drive could not exist without the help of the Tri-Valley Community Foundation and its generous donors. This will enable us to double your donation and allow your gift of \$1 to total \$2 to the nonprofits. An added benefit: Neither the Pleasanton Weekly nor the Tri-Valley Community Foundation will take any fees or expenses for administering the fund. One hundred percent of donations go to the intended grantees.

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

Allan Hillman, Randy & Margie Warner from Sharon Hillman .....	150
Dan Gabor from Ann Gabor .....	150
Rick Aguiar from Nancy Aguiar Fargis .....	**
John A. Mavridis from Ted Mavridis .....	**
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Barbara Severini .....	500
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Ruth DeFreece from Mr. & Mrs. Joe Biggs .....	**
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Robert Kilpatrick .....	50
David DeBernardi from	
Connie DeBernardi .....	250
John Davis .....	100
Roselle Grimes, Evelyn Schrick & Verna Plummer from Steve, Pam & Mitch	
Grimes .....	**

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



# How to give

## Your gift helps seniors, children and others in need

Contributions to the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund will be increased by the Tri-Valley Community Foundation. For every \$1 contributed, \$2 will be donated to these local organizations. All contributions will go directly to programs that benefit Pleasanton and Tri-Valley residents. Contributions will be distributed by the Tri-Valley Community Foundation to the five agencies listed below. No administrative costs will be deducted from the gifts, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law.

This year, due to the tremendous need of all nonprofits, donations will be shared equally among the five recipient agencies.

For more information call us at 600-0840 or e-mail editor@pleasantonweekly.com.

## The following agencies will be supported by the Holiday Fund:

■ **Axis Community Health:** Provides medical, mental health, addiction counseling and health education services to more than 20,000 patients and clients each year, regardless of their ability to pay. An estimated 70 percent have no medical insurance or are underinsured, including some that have recently lost their jobs and health benefits. Call 462-1755 or visit [www.axishealth.org](http://www.axishealth.org).

■ **Ryan Comer Cancer Resource Center at ValleyCare:** The ValleyCare Health Library and Ryan Comer Cancer Resource Center, established in 1991, offers free access to easy to understand, up-to-date health and medical information. Open to the public, the library is located in the ValleyCare Medical Plaza, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd., Suite 270, Pleasanton. The center is named for Ryan Comer, a star baseball player at Amador Valley High School who died of a rare form of pediatric cancer known as rhabdomyosarcoma in 1991 at age 17.

■ **Hope Hospice:** Hospice care is unique because it works to not only meet the needs of those at the end of life but also supports the emotional and spiritual needs of the family as well. Hope hospice care is provided regardless of the ability to pay and relies on contributions such as those raised by the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund.

■ **Open Heart Kitchen:** As the only nonprofit free soup kitchen in the Tri-Valley area, this service provides nutritious meals for low-income people in the area at Trinity Lutheran Church in Pleasanton, Holy Cross Lutheran and Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Livermore, and CrossWinds Church in Dublin. Visit [www.openheartkitchen.org](http://www.openheartkitchen.org) or call 580-1616.

■ **Valley Humane Society:** This nonprofit group's mission is to teach responsible pet ownership. It assists in rescuing and placing abandoned or injured animals and operates an adoption center on Nevada Street in Pleasanton. It does not euthanize unless health problems dictate. Call 426-8656.

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The Tri-Valley Community Foundation is located at 5674 Stoneridge Dr., Ste. 112, Pleasanton, CA 94588. More information about the Foundation can be obtained by contacting the organization at the above address, by calling its President David Rice at (925) 734-9965 or through its website: [www.tvcfoundation.org](http://www.tvcfoundation.org). The Pleasanton Weekly will make every effort to publish donor names for donations received before Dec. 31, 2010, unless the donor checks the anonymous box. All donations will be acknowledged by mail.



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**Daisy, Daisy**

Daisy is a wonderfully sweet and playful young adult gray and white tabby who's just got one wish. She wants a home for the holidays! If you're looking for a fun companion to help you decorate the tree and wrap the gifts, Daisy is your girl. If you ask, she probably will wait up for Santa with you! Daisy is just one of the many wonderful cats available for adoption at the East County Animal Shelter located at 4595 Gleason Drive in Dublin. Can you open your heart and home to a gorgeous feline who's just waiting to meet you? For more information about the cats currently at the East County Animal Shelter, please contact Alayna at (832) 928-7831.



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**ALL AREAS - ROOMMATES.COM**  
Browse hundreds of online listings with photos and maps. Find your roommate with a click of the mouse! Visit: <http://www.Roommates.com> (AAN CAN)

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TERRI DUNCAN

# Real Estate

OPEN HOME GUIDE AND REAL ESTATE LISTINGS

## Existing home sales decline across U.S. after 2 months of gains

Year-to-date sales down 2.9% from year ago

By JEB BING

Existing-home sales retreated in October on the heels of two strong monthly gains, according to the National Association of Realtors.

Existing-home sales, which are completed transactions that include single-family, town-homes, condominiums and co-ops, declined 2.2% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.43 million in October from 4.53 million in September, and are 25.9% below the 5.98 million-unit level in October 2009 when sales were surging prior to the initial deadline for the first-time buyer tax credit.

Year-to-date there were 4.149 million existing-home sales, down 2.9% from 4.272 million at this time in 2009.

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, said the recent sales pattern can be expected to continue.

"The housing market is experiencing an uneven recovery, and a temporary foreclosure stoppage in some states is likely to have held back a number of completed sales," he said. "Still, sales activity is clearly off the bottom and is attempting to settle into normal sustainable levels."

"Based on current and improving job market conditions, and from attractive affordability conditions, sales should steadily improve to healthier levels of above 5 million by spring of next year," Yun added.

According to Freddie Mac, the national average commitment rate for a 30-year, conventional, fixed-rate mortgage fell to a record low 4.23% in October from 4.35% in September; the rate was 4.95% in October 2009.

The national median existing-home price for all housing types was \$170,500 in October, down 0.9% from October 2009. Distressed homes accounted for 34% of sales in October, compared with 35% in September and 30% of sales in October 2009.

NAR President Ron Phipps, broker-president of Phipps Realty in Warwick, R.I., clarified that several factors are restraining a housing recovery, even with great affordability conditions.

"We'll likely see some impact from the foreclosure moratorium in the months ahead, but overly tight credit is making it difficult for some creditworthy borrowers to qualify for a mortgage, and we are continuing to deal with a notable share of appraisals coming in below a price negotiated between a buyer and seller," he said.

"A return to common sense loan underwriting standards would go a long way toward achieving responsible, sustainable homeownership," he added. "In addition, all home valuations should be made by competent professionals with local expertise and full access to market data. There remains an elevated level of appraisals that fail to provide accurate valuation, which is causing a steady level of sales to be cancelled or postponed."

A parallel NAR practitioner survey shows 10% of Realtors in October report they had a contract cancelled as a result of a low appraisal, and 13% report they had a contract delayed; 16% said a contract was negotiated to a lower sales price as a result

of a low appraisal.

According to Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), Fannie- and Freddie-backed mortgages that were recently originated show an outstanding performance, even better than during the pre-housing bubble years.

"A review of recently originated loans suggests that they have overly stringent underwriting standards, with only the highest creditworthy borrowers able to tap into historically low mortgage interest rates," Yun explained. "There could be an upside surprise to sales activity if credit availability is opened to more qualified home buyers who are willing to stay well within budget."

Total housing inventory at the end of October fell 3.4% to 3.86 million existing homes available for sale, which represents a 10.5-month supply at the current sales pace, down from a 10.6-month supply in September.

First-time buyers purchased 32% of homes in October, unchanged from September, but down from 50% a year ago during the initial surge for the first-time buyer tax credit. Investors, who accounted for 19% of transactions in October, accounted for 18% in September and 14% in October 2009. The balance of sales were to repeat buyers.

All-cash sales were at 29% in October, unchanged from September, but up from 20% a year ago.

Single-family home sales declined 2.0% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 3.89 million in October from 3.97 million in September, and are 25.6% below the 5.23 million surge in October 2009. The median existing single-family home price was \$171,100 in October, which is 0.5% below a year ago.

Existing condominium and co-op sales fell 3.6% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 540,000 in October from 560,000 in September, and are 27.6% below the 746,000-unit sales rush a year ago. The median existing condo price was \$166,000 in October, down 4.2% from October 2009.

Regionally, existing-home sales in the West declined 1.9% to an annual level of 1.03 million in October and are 21.4% below the sales rush in October 2009. The median price in the West was \$209,300, which is 4.8% below a year ago.

Existing-home sales in the Northeast declined 1.3% to an annual pace of 750,000 in October and are 27.2% below the surge in October 2009. The median price in the Northeast was \$240,200, which is 1.9% higher than a year ago.

Existing-home sales in the Midwest slipped 1.1% in October to a level of 940,000 and are 32.4% below the tax credit rush one year ago. The median price in the Midwest was \$139,500, down 3.6% from October 2009.

In the South, existing-home sales fell 3.4% to an annual pace of 1.71 million in October and are 24.0% below the year-ago surge. The median price in the South was \$148,700, down 0.7% from October 2009. ■



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3637 Pontina Court, Ruby Hill, Pleasanton



Gorgeous Italian Villa features 4 BR, 3.5 BA, formal office, huge bonus room, custom millwork and more. End of cul de sac location. Lovely. Offered at \$1,699,000

6535 Singletree Way, Pleasanton



Val Vista charmer. 3 BR, 2 BA, 1,560 sq. ft. fully updated home with tile and hardwood throughout, remodeled kitchen, inside laundry, large yard. Offered at \$598,000

3557 Ballantyne Drive, Pleasanton Meadows



Entertain & relax in updated 4 BR, 3 BA home with loft, gourmet custom kit, new carpet, new paint, and lush gardens with fruit trees in private backyard. Offered at \$785,000

Wishing Everyone a Happy Healthy Holiday Season!

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101 Goldstone Common • Livermore

This former Model Home is loaded with custom upgrades, Granite Slab Counters, Surround Sound, Brazilian Cherry wood floors. 3 bedrooms 2.5 baths, approx. 2105 sq. ft.

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If you are thinking of selling or buying a home, call me for information on current market conditions and options available to you.

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## HOME SALES

This week's data represents homes sold during September 2010

### Dublin

- 7626 Arbor Creek Circle** Federal National Mortgage to T. & H. Fowler for \$343,000
- 4750 Central Parkway** Pass Line Investments to S. Aini for \$380,500
- 8216 Elgin Lane** HSBC Bank to M. & S. Hampton for \$355,000
- 4729 Finch Way** Hockett Trust to H. Qiu for \$645,000
- 4404 Fitzwilliam Street** E. McAllister to D. & J. Tse for \$364,000
- 8055 Holanda Court** M. & K. Finley to A. Wanden-Lundquist for \$449,000
- 7786 Ironwood Drive** Passline Investments to R. & P. Timm for \$434,500
- 4752 Mahogany Street** W. Hirsch to S. Sam for \$627,000
- 5512 North Dublin Ranch Drive** J. & J. Yoon to A. & K. Demos for \$720,000
- 4714 Persimmon Drive** G. Fu to I. Aniszewski for \$870,000
- 4735 Perugia Street** Sorrento at Dublin Ranch to A. Szilgyi for \$457,000
- 4749 Perugia Street** Sorrento at Dublin Ranch to Y. & S. Kim for \$485,000
- 4767 Perugia Street** Sorrento at Dublin Ranch to C. Darrimon for \$521,500
- 4771 Perugia Street** Sorrento at Dublin Ranch to B. & K. Veronesi for \$473,000
- 4773 Perugia Street** Sorrento at Dublin Ranch to D. & P. Thompson for \$489,500
- 4779 Perugia Street** Sorrento at Dublin Ranch to P. & M. Brilovich for \$502,000
- 4783 Perugia Street** Sorrento at Dublin Ranch to S. & L. O'Connor for \$598,500
- 4191 Preciado Drive** Lau Trust to TGL Inc. for \$610,000
- 7619 Ridgeline Drive** Schaefer Dublin Holdings to J. & J. Clough for \$925,000

**7016 Stagecoach Road #A** Bac Home Loans to E. Loera for \$140,000

**7524 Sutton Lane** Structured Asset Mortgage to M. & A. Reimbold for \$371,000

**8079 Via Zapata** B. & J. Fenz to S. Jenkins for \$565,000

### Livermore

- 5583 Arlene Way** Ing Bank to Thompson Trust for \$355,000
- 4760 Bel Roma Road** N. & D. Bettencourt to D. & E. Docking for \$1,100,000
- 675 Curlew Road** J. & L. Hector to K. & A. Harper for \$430,000
- 2075 Elm Street** Lxs Trust Fund to D. Collins for \$250,000
- 527 Falcon Way** R. & C. Strobe to A. Montojo for \$350,000
- 3068 Faltings Court** Munroe-Linares Trust to B. & J. Virgin for \$690,000
- 1082 Glenn Common** Bank of New York to J. Arguello for \$171,000
- 4030 Hillcrest Common** Structured Asset Mortgage to M. & T. McKee for \$279,000
- 1224 Nice Court** J. & A. Beeman to T. & A. Rybak for \$440,000
- 1818 Pine Street** US Bank to N. Turner for \$257,000
- 4132 Pinon Way** C. O'Neill to S. Gehl for \$321,000

### Pleasanton

- 856 Aramon Court** Bishop Trust to R. & H. Bishop for \$550,000
- 2649 Calle Alegre** T. & P. Hayhurst to D. & K. Judson for \$970,000
- 4593 Del Valle Parkway** R. & S. Retsch to B. Pelham for \$895,000
- 1151 Donahue Drive** Hollis Trust to K. Csongor for \$795,000

See SALES on Page 23



#### 530 DOLORES PLACE, PLEASANTON

- Fabulously Remodeled "Pleasanton Hills" Home
  - 3 Bedrooms, 3 Full Baths, Over 3000 sq ft
  - Sparkling Pool and Spa w/ Waterfalls, Private Rear Yard
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- Offered at \$1,099,000**



#### 211 RACHAEL PLACE, PLEASANTON

- Beautiful "Country Roads" Townhome
  - 3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, 2 Car Attached Garage
  - Cherry Cabinetry, Granite Counters, Hardwood Flooring
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- Offered at \$399,900**



#### 2957 W CASTLE PINES TERR, DUBLIN

- Desirable "Dublin Ranch"
  - Awesome Newer 5 BR, 4.5 BA, 3600+ sq ft Home
  - Highly Upgraded w/ Maple Cabinets, Granite, SS Appliances
  - Close to Schools, Shopping & Dublin Ranch Golf Course
- Offered at \$836,400**



#### 5835 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE, DUBLIN

- "Dublin Ranch" Golf Course Home
- Beautiful 6 Bedroom, 4.5 Bath, 4800+ sq ft Home
- Highly Upgraded w/ Cherry Cabinets, Granite, Stainless Appliances
- Large Lot and Backing to the Golf Course



For additional information, photos and virtual tours for any of these properties, visit [www.TomIvarson.com](http://www.TomIvarson.com) or call 925-200-3600

**SALES**

Continued from Page 22

**110 East Angela Street** Emmett Trust to J. Li for \$1,150,000  
**3435 Gravina Place** J. & U. Cligny to A. & C. Schwartz for \$1,055,000  
**5202 Independence Drive** G. & E. Bayramoglu to K. Naing for \$1,100,000  
**911 Kottinger Drive** K. & K. Mueller to C. & N. Gieringer for \$849,000  
**7875 Meadowbrook Court** F. Guckel to K. Bauer for \$605,000  
**4920 Muirwood Drive** R. & K. Iliff to D. & K. Limato for \$640,000  
**4229 Wells Street** Bayholdings Inc. to R. Roehl for \$411,000  
**San Ramon**  
**1149 Arrowfield Way** M. & C. Kauffman to K. & R. Feinstein for \$880,000  
**3859 Ayers Way** A. Smith to N. & S. Chauhan for \$720,000

**523 Balmoral Court** Brookfield Santorini to R. & M. Nagarajan for \$1,249,500  
**746 Birdwood Court** M. Kallas to S. Krishnan for \$710,000  
**7073 Briza Loop** J. & K. Patry to S. Zhou for \$518,000  
**7328 Briza Loop** Wells Fargo Bank to R. & M. Devera for \$523,500  
**3685 Crow Canyon Road** V. & K. Johnson to H. Dear for \$245,500  
**9554 Davona Drive** C. & L. Nabours to J. & C. Snow for \$531,000  
**6008 Hedgecrest Circle** Robinson Trust to L. Han for \$975,000  
**3331 Roma Place** D. Sylvester to D. & B. Houghtelling for \$555,000  
**3135 Sweetviolet Drive** Shapell Industries to B. Lee for \$870,000  
**9566 Velvet Leaf Circle** Arents Trust to R. & R. Colbert for \$1,260,000  
**4009 West Lakeshore Drive** M. Drobshoff to C. Thomas for \$465,000

Source: California REsource

**SALES AT A GLANCE**

**Dublin**

**Total sales reported:** 22  
**Lowest sale reported:** \$140,000  
**Highest sale reported:** \$925,000  
**Average sales reported:** \$514,795

**Livermore**

**Total sales reported:** 11  
**Lowest sale reported:** \$171,000  
**Highest sale reported:** \$1,100,000  
**Average sales reported:** \$438,455

**Pleasanton**

**Total sales reported:** 11  
**Lowest sale reported:** \$411,000  
**Highest sale reported:** \$1,150,000  
**Average sales reported:** \$820,000

**San Ramon**

**Total sales reported:** 13  
**Lowest sale reported:** \$245,500  
**Highest sale reported:** \$1,260,000  
**Average sales reported:** \$730,962

Source: California REsource



5023 Blackbird Way, Pleasanton. Located in desirable Birdland, this home features 5bd/3ba, close to award winning schools, sports park, downtown and much more! **Offered at \$875,000**



Division St., Location, location, location. This adorable 1bd/1ba condo is 2 blocks from downtown Pleasanton and 'Coming Soon'!

**I want to thank all my wonderful clients, friends and family for helping me have such a terrific 2010 and wish you all a very wonderful Holiday season!**



**Anni Hagfeldt**  
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The market is continually changing. Now more than ever it is important to talk to a Real Estate Professional. Please feel free to contact me for an update of the market value in your neighborhood.

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**Tivoli model in the Avila development**

**3541 Rocca Court, Pleasanton**

3 Bd, 2.5 Baths, 2 car garage. Built in 1999. Loads of upgrades, designer flooring, freshly painted, new carpet and appliances. Shows like a model.

**\$559,000**



**Custom home**

**317 Diamond Court, Pleasanton**

4 Bd, 3 Full Baths, 3 car garage. 3544 Sq. Ft. Stunning interior. Real pride of ownership. Low maintenance yard

**\$1,225,000**

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## BENEFITS

- Holiday buyers are particularly serious, committed and focused.
- Corporate executive transferees have more free time to shop for a home during the holiday season than at any other time of the year.
- Over the holidays there are fewer homes available, therefore supply and demand works in your favor.
- Family-oriented homes (lifestyle) are seasonally radiant during the decorative holiday period.
- The holiday season is a period of unmatched consumer confidence and retail frenzy.
- Interest rates are very low at this time.
- Some home buyers purchase homes as gifts

## FEATURES

- All showings are by appointment and only to qualified buyers.
- No "For Sale" signs.
- No advertising that identifies the home.
- No lock box.
- No feature or highlight sheets in the home.
- No inside-the-home display information.
- No home phone number in MLS information.
- No open house for either public or REALTORS. (Unless home owner requests otherwise)

The Intero Holiday Marketing Program is designed to capitalize on selling to serious home buyers who are shopping over the holidays while at the same time preserving the privacy and dignity of home sellers.



*Michael Tessaro*

REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Vice President, Manager

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