

Pleasanton Weekly

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dream machine, not knowing it's for him **PAGE 10**

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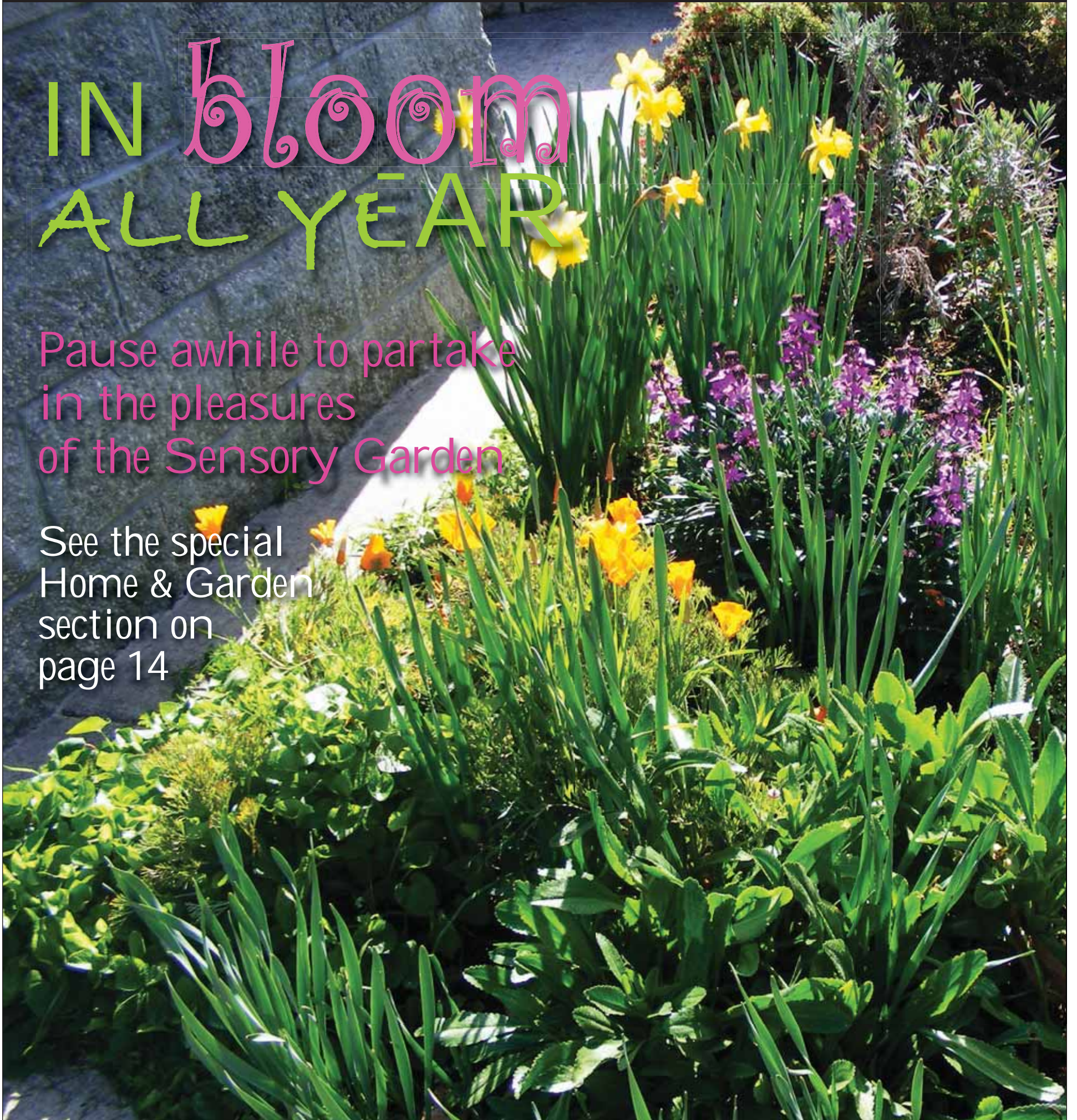
VOL. XII, NUMBER 11 • MARCH 25, 2011

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See the special
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AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING

Once a Marine, always a Marine

Uniformed men and women and other friends filled the Veterans Memorial Building in downtown Pleasanton last Saturday to honor Col. Christopher R. Buescher on his retirement from the Marines. Buescher was smartly attired in a Marine dress uniform that some said was probably the same size as the one he wore in 1981 when he was commissioned as a Marine 2nd Lieutenant. He has the same esprit de corps as he had when he joined the Marines after graduating from Oregon State University, telling the crowd that “once a Marine, always a Marine.” And, as a Marine, he took on a variety of challenging assignments. Selected for jet training, he received his “Wings of Gold” in March 1983, and has been flying fighter planes ever since.

After initial training in piloting the A-6E Intruder, he served 4-1/2 years with the “Green Knights” squadron on the USS Ranger carrier in the Indian Ocean and Western Pacific, flew combat escort missions over Kuwaiti-flagged tankers making their way through the Strait of Hormuz, became an air-strike mission commander and later an instructor pilot training new Intruder pilots in the fine art of formation flying, day/night bombing and visual close air support and air to air combat missions.

The experience paid off for Buescher and the pilots he trained when his reserve unit was called to active duty in 2003 to become the first wave of Marines to invade Iraq. Deployed to Kuwait, Buescher was there two days before the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Buescher was named the air officer for the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center with his unit’s mission to make sure Iraqi civilians has adequate supplies of water, food and other necessities as the Marines passed through their towns on the way to Baghdad.

Buescher left active duty in the Marines in June 1991, joining the active reserves from which he officially retired Saturday. That same June, he was hired as a pilot by American Airlines. Ever since — except for the seven months he was called back to active duty for the invasion of Iraq — piloting Boeing 767 passenger planes, mostly between San Francisco and New York and Miami, has been his full-time job. Just as serving in the Marines was exhilarating, Buescher says flying for American is equally satisfying. He told his celebrants



JEB BING

Marine Col. Christopher Buescher at retirement party.

Saturday that “the view from my office in the sky is always changing, always great.”

Buescher and his wife Tracey moved to Pleasanton’s Birdland community 15 years ago. Earlier this month, they celebrated their 23rd wedding anniversary. They have two daughters. Olivia, who will turn 16 May 16, is a sophomore at Amador Valley High School. Krista, 12, is in the sixth grade at Harvest Park middle school. In story and photo boards at the Veterans Hall retirement party, there were numerous photos of the girls with their mother alone while dad was away, and several photos showing the tearfully happy reunions when he came home for brief furloughs from Marine assignments.

Also at the celebration were men and women Chris Buescher served with, including retired Marines from his first squadron who flew in from the East Coast. Many were there from the Pleasanton Military Families organization, including Chris Miller, who started the group to help families left behind when the son, daughter, parent and often the bread-winner was called into active duty to serve in Iraq. Tracey Buescher, a sales associate with Prudential California Realty, joined that effort in 2003 and is in the forefront of frequent fundraisers for Pleasanton troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. When he’s not piloting another flight to New York, Col. Buescher joins in.

He says that retiring from the Marine reserves will give him more time to volunteer. He talks about the Marines, piloting jets and other topics of interest to Pleasanton school groups. At airports, you can also see him consoling children or even older passengers who are afraid of flying. One volunteer mission he particularly enjoys is the “Snowball Express.” That’s a trip set up in 2006 to honor children of those who gave their lives in the military since Sept. 11, 2001 that American Airlines sponsors. ■

About the Cover

The Pleasanton Sensory Garden offers plants that appeal to all the senses and currently features California poppies, daffodils and purple stock among others in bloom. Cover design by Kristin Herman.

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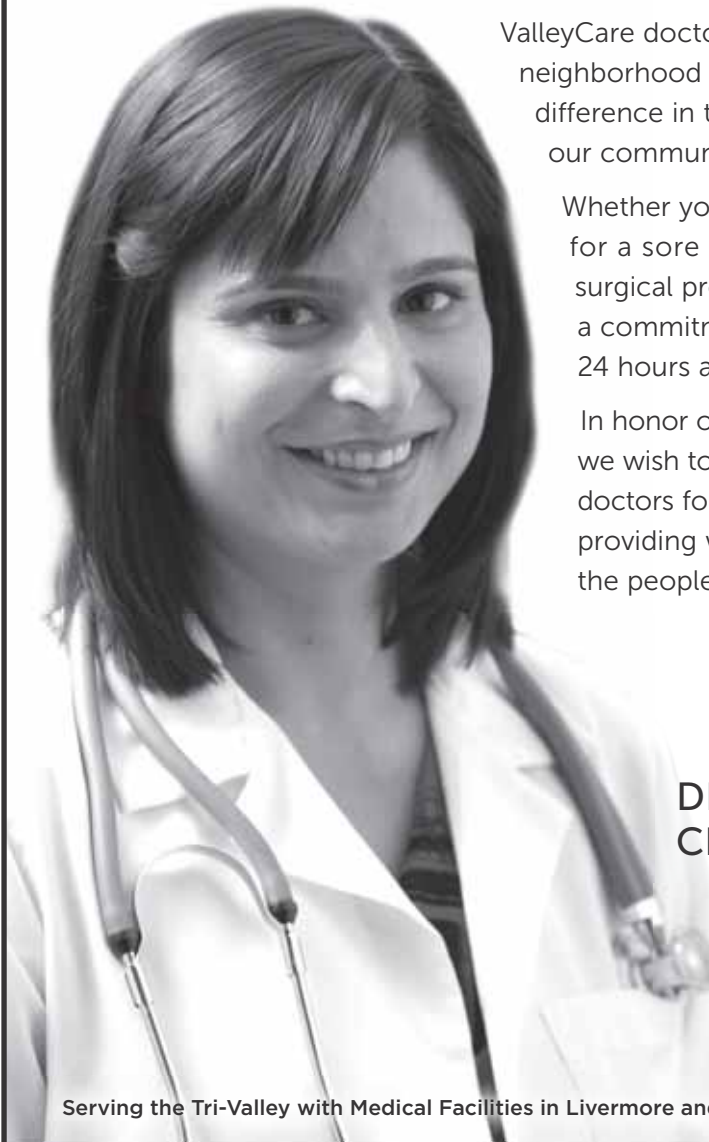


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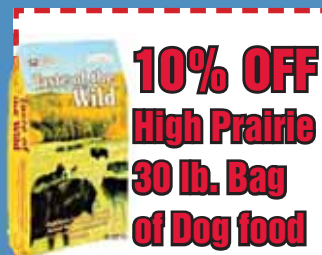
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Streetwise

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IN PLEASANTON LAST WEEKEND

What is the best part about being a Special Olympics athlete?



Larry Phillips

Retired

I've been in the Special Olympics for five years, and I love that we work together as a team. Everyone has passion and a desire to accomplish their goals. It's not how old you are or what ability you have, it's what you have in your heart.

Mike Ahre

In between jobs

I've been playing since I was young. I listen to the coaches, so I've gotten really good. I've made lots of friends.



Dawn Nickels

St. Rose Hospital

I like playing basketball the most. It's really fun. I have lots of friends and I like meeting different people.

Jamie Gadbaugh

Safeway

I like having fun, and basketball is fun. It's my favorite. I get to see all my friends on my team and on all the other teams.



Lauren Lenigan

SPCA Animal Shelter

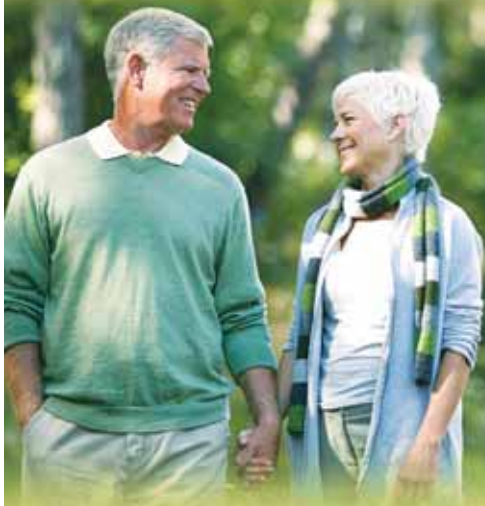
This is perfect. We get to have a great time, and we cheer for each other. My whole family supports me and so does my team. We get to have a pizza party to celebrate the Special Olympics. It'll be great!

—Compiled by Kerry Nally

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

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DIGEST

Classic cars in town

The Goodguys 29th All American Get-Together takes place this weekend at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, with more than 3,000 hot rods, custom cars, classics, trucks and muscle cars as well as a swap meet, sale corral, vendor exhibits, kids play area and entertainment. Competition for the Goodguys West Coast Custom of the Year Award will include 40 highly customized cars from the 1930s through 1972.

Call 838-9876 or visit www.good-guys.com.

Science and engineering fair

Student scientists and engineers are showcasing their work at the annual Tri-Valley Science and Engineering Fair, sponsored by Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, starting Tuesday and ending today at the Robert Livermore Community Center.

Participants include 413 students from grades 7-12 attending schools in Danville, Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, San Ramon and Sunol. The 300 projects, some by teams, were judged by local scientists and engineers, and winners from the senior division will go on to the Intel ISEF in May. Junior Division winners compete at the California State Science Fair.

Transit volunteers

The Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority is recruiting volunteers for two-year terms on the Wheels Accessible Advisory Committee (WAAC) and alternates to represent the cities of Livermore, Dublin and Pleasanton and social/human services agencies. LAVTA operates WHEELS fixed route public transit and Dial-A-Ride paratransit services.

Committee members are expected to provide a forum and advise WHEELS staff on accessibility issues for senior and disabled residents on fixed route buses and Dial-A-Ride. The committee meets six times per year for approximately 90 minutes.

Candidates must be able to solicit and disseminate information effectively to their constituents, be able to meet during regular business hours (usually 3:30-5 p.m.), and be able to analyze complex issues and reports to make recommendations to the LAVTA Board of Directors. Candidates must currently use WHEELS fixed route buses or Dial-A-Ride or represent those who do but do not have to be disabled or over 65.

To apply, call 455-7555 or visit www.wheelsbus.com. Applications are due April 22.

Lins plan 10 'ranchettes' on southeast hills

Landowners nix 51-home plans with parkland, trails

By JEB BING

Proponents of a voter-rejected 51-home development called Oak Grove in Pleasanton's southeast hills filed a new plan Tuesday that would subdivide their 526 acres of hilltop land into 10 residential — or ranch-type — lots.

Brian Dolan, Pleasanton's Community Development Director, said the plan was filed by Attorney Marty Inderbitzen, who represents landowners Jennifer and Frederic Lin.

The new development calls for lots ranging from 14 acres to the largest lot of 205 acres. The home sites would be served by a winding two-lane road that would be an extension of Hearst Drive that now goes through Kottinger Ranch from Bernal Avenue.

The Lins, who have owned the property since

1979, have been rebuffed several times in efforts to develop the land. Most recently, they lost their suit against the city of Pleasanton in Alameda County Superior Court in which they sought to invalidate a voter referendum approved June 8, 2010. That referendum rejected their plan to build 51 homes on part of their property, a development called Oak Grove.

That court judgment has yet to be signed. Once it is, the Lins have 60 days to file an appeal of that decision. Inderbitzen said there has been no decision by the Lins on whether to file an appeal of that court decision and that this new proposal for a 10-lot subdivision does not affect that case.

Gone from the Lins' newest proposal are not only the 51 multi-million-dollar custom homes that were planned for a section of their property

but also their offer to give the rest — 497 adjoining acres — to the city to be used as public land. The Lins also had offered to develop trails and equestrian pathways as well as a staging area for cars and horse trailers.

Gone, too, are the Lins' offers of several million dollars in traffic mitigation fees, which included paying for a traffic signal at Bernal Avenue and Kottinger Drive, a crossing guard on Hearst Drive to serve students from the nearby Vintage Hills Elementary School, a four-wheel firefighting vehicle for use on hillside properties, and at least \$2 million in advance fees to be paid to the Pleasanton school district.

"Unfortunately, when you're developing only 10 lots, those amenities that were part of the

See **RANCHETTES** on Page 7



MICHAEL KECK

Crash! Tree takes out Jeep Cherokee

Phyllis Keck was at home on Fargo Court having breakfast during the storm last Friday morning when she heard a loud thump and looked out the front window: The big eucalyptus tree in front of the house had split in half, smashing her 2001 Jeep Cherokee. The city removed the part of the tree that fell on public property, and the Kecks called a tree service to remove the rest of the fallen tree as well as the standing half that still loomed over the house. "I wanted to get a new car but not quite that way," Keck said.

Castlewood trial nears conclusion

Jury hears closing arguments, receives instructions

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

The jury received its final instructions shortly after 3 p.m. Wednesday in the murder trial of Ernest Scherer III and, as of press time, was expected to go into deliberations soon afterward.

For an update, go to www.PleasantonWeekly.com.

In closing arguments Tuesday, defense attorney Richard Foxall repeatedly called into question testimony from witnesses — including Scherer's family members — claiming they "shaded the truth."

Scherer is accused of two counts of murder for the deaths of his parents, Ernest Scherer Jr., 60, and Charlene Abendroth, 57, inside their Castlewood Country Club home in Pleasanton in March 2008.

During final arguments, Scherer was animated, frequently nodding his head or smiling at points made by his attorney, and frowning or shaking his head during prosecutor Michael Nieto's closing.

Foxall repeatedly stressed what testimony the jury could consider reasonable and unrea-

sonable in his argument, focusing again on his and Scherer's claims that police never looked at any other potential suspects.

Robyn Scherer, for example, was furious with her husband after learning from investigators the extent of Scherer's infidelities.

In addition, Foxall said, "Police had threatened to take their child."

Foxall also focused on differences in what witnesses told police in the initial investigation and how that testimony changed on the witness stand.

Ernest Scherer Sr., for example, didn't mention differences between his son and grandson during his first talk with detectives, but later changed his statement, according to Foxall. Scherer's aunt, Carolyn Oesterle, didn't mention the fist-pumping she claims he did when she told him he couldn't have committed the crime until January 2009, nearly a year after the deaths.

"Mr. Scherer's family embellished the facts," Foxall told the jury, explaining that they were

See **CASTLEWOOD** on Page 6

Bob Cordtz, 'Matt Drudge of Pleasanton,' dies at age 85

OpinionPleasanton.com producer, he ran for mayor in 2000

Bob Cordtz, a longtime businessman and City Council watcher who was once called "the Matt Drudge of Pleasanton" for his lively, informative, online OpinionPleasanton.com newsletter, died Sunday after a long illness. He was 85.

With his wife Joan, he owned two Victorian homes on West Angela Street, living in one and converting the other into a popular bed and breakfast. They served hundreds of visitors to Pleasanton over the 13 years they operated the business, selling that Victorian several years ago but continuing to live in the other.

Cordtz first got involved in Pleasanton political affairs in the late 1980s when some in city government wanted to redevelop part of downtown. That redevelopment would have included his two Victorian houses, an effort he fought successfully.

For years after that, he was a regular commentator and observer at meetings of the City Council and commissions, and twice ran for the Zone 7 water board, losing each time. Disturbed that incumbent Mayor Tom Pico was running unopposed for reelection in 2000, Mr. Cordtz decided to run against him, losing that contest, too.

Called the master of "In your Face" journalism, Cordtz produced his online "newspaper" on a quarterly basis with the help of Jim Jordan, a marketing executive and former Sunset Magazine writer who turned it all into well-written text. At one time, their goal was to publish an issue after every council meeting. That's something Internet pundits would no doubt have enjoyed much more than the politicians.

Billed as "What else you need to know," the online publication included editorials, issue-oriented articles and even guest writers. It could also be quite irreverent, with headlines such as "Politically, Mayor Tom Pico fumbles the ball — big time," "Hosterman is scolded and she likes it," and "Haggerty fakes right, goes left."

He was just as hard on the City Council, giving it "F" scores on Bernal, the Callippe Preserve golf course, Staples Ranch, flood control, traffic and the West Las Positas interchange. When it came to

See **CORDTZ** on Page 7



Bob Cordtz

Man indicted for lying to IRS

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

A Pleasanton man faces two federal charges for allegedly lying to the IRS, according to United States Attorney Melinda Haag.

William A. Hirst was indicted March 17 on two counts of making false statements to the Internal Revenue Service. Hirst first made false statements to IRS agents during a civil estate tax audit concerning three deeds that he fabricated, according to a press release.

The indictment claims that between December 2004 and Feb. 15, 2005, Hirst signed and dated three fabricated deeds in the name of an individual who was deceased.

Hirst falsely claimed that he notarized the deeds on Feb. 12, 2004; that the signature on the deeds was that of the decedent;

and that he did not forge a signature on the deeds, according to the indictment. Hirst also claimed he did not remember why the deeds were filed 14 months after Feb. 12, 2004; that he told officials he discovered the deeds had not been filed with the county recorder when he ran across them in a file; and that the signatures on the deeds were not his writing, the release says.

The indictment also claims that during an investigation in 2008, Hirst told IRS agents that the reason the three deeds were recorded more than a year late was because they were lost. The release says Hirst knew the reason the three deeds were recorded in April 2005 was because those deeds were not fabricated by him until sometime between December 2004 and Feb. 15, 2005.

He could face five years in prison, and fines of up to \$250,000. ■

SCHERER

Continued from Page 5

likely looking for closure and believed the police account of the crime.

He told jury members they had to put emotion aside when considering the case, something he claimed the family was unable to do.

Foxall also created a document that showed Scherer and his wife weren't in the dire financial situation claimed by prosecutor Nieto, and repeatedly mentioned unidentified DNA in "footprint 13-J," referring to crime scene photographs.

In the prosecution closing on Monday, Nieto reviewed his case, which relies entirely on circumstantial evidence, saying,

"A liar stands alone."

That evidence includes a video of a car matching Scherer's Camaro convertible in the area near where police think the murders occurred; an unexplained time that Scherer's cell phone was off around that time; and the purchase, hours earlier, of a bat, sneakers and soccer gloves in Primm, Nev., near the time Scherer was buying gas and fast food in the same town.

Nieto portrayed a man who believed he could get away with murder, and repeated his claim that the motive was for Scherer to get his hands on an inheritance of well over \$1 million.

Members of the family, including Oesterle and Ernest Scherer Sr., were in court this week in anticipation of a verdict. ■

Parcel tax opponents speak out at board meeting

Claim Measure E would still allow employee raises

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

For the first time, opponents of Measure E, the parcel tax to benefit Pleasanton schools, have spoken out against it at a school board meeting.

Tuesday night, opponents David Miller, Doug Miller and Raquel Vargas accused board members of being disingenuous about the tax. While the parcel tax includes wording that bars the proceeds from being used to increase pay for salaries or benefits, that doesn't prevent the district from using other funds to raise pay through the step and column increases that are already part of the teacher's union contract.

"Of course Measure E is a salary tax," Vargas told the board.

David Miller, parent of two children in the Pleasanton Unified School District, said the step and column raises — which are given to teachers based on seniority and continuing education — will cost the district \$15 million in four years, while the parcel tax raises \$8 million.

"To me, the logical sequence of events would be to preserve all positions by freezing pay and perhaps even cutting pay in order not to lay off valuable workers," Miller told the board. "This is standard practice in private industry. Why does this not apply to PUSD?"

Doug Miller said despite "grim financial times" the district has raised pay several times and noted that several former employees have pensions "in excess of \$100,000."

"Until and unless the district freezes pay and eliminates these lavish retirements, I cannot support the parcel tax," he said.

Lisa Lorentz, a member of the California

State Employees Association, said many of her colleagues are part-time workers and most hadn't had a raise in three years.

"We're not big money workers," Lorentz told the board. "We don't get big retirements."

However, 15 former PUSD employees get well over \$100,000 pensions. Merlin Donaldson tops the list at more than \$178,000 a year, with Richard Puppione on the low end at just under \$101,000. A complete list of retirees with pensions over \$100,000 can be found at www.californiapensionreform.com.

Board members later noted that pensions are from the state, not the district, and that some employees are allowed to add their personal savings to boost their retirement pay.

The board also heard another request to restore elementary school physical education specialists, who were issued pink slips earlier in the month.

In other matters at Tuesday's meeting, the school board approved up to \$15 million in short-term borrowing through Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRANS). The money will be used to get the district through times when money is short, such as November when funds are lowest before the district receives taxes collected by the county, and at the end of the school year, because the state budget delays payments to districts statewide as a cost-saving move;

The board also heard an update on the new draft homework policy. Public comment will be taken on the policy in April and will go before the board in final form in May. ■

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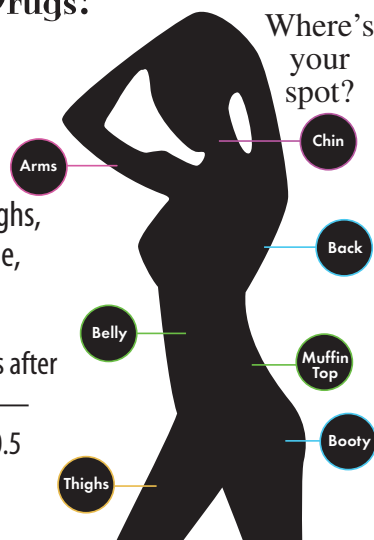
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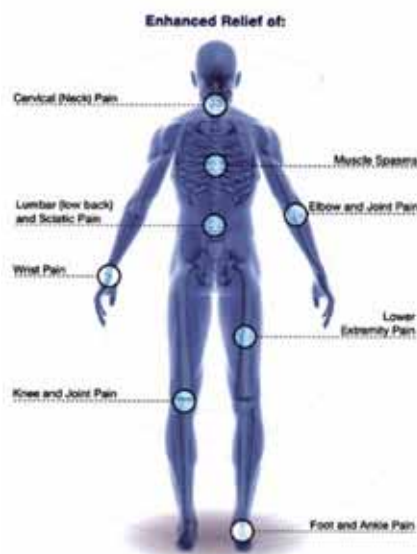


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RANCHETTES

Continued from Page 5

Oak Grove development plan, just don't pencil out," Inderbitzen said.

Dolan said the new 10-lot proposal includes specific plans for individual lot developments, including the size and design of homes likely to be built on those lots and their approximate positions. Water, sewer and other services required for the development also are part of the plan.

Dolan's planning staff now will review the Lins' new plan to see if it will require a new environmental impact report and if it conforms to land use guidelines in the city's General Plan.

Former Councilwoman Kay Ayala, who led the fight against the Oak Grove project, said state law bars anyone on city staff or the City Council from considering any plan submitted by the Lins for at least one year after the June 8 date of the referendum. City Attorney Jonathan Lowell is reviewing the Elections Code law to determine if it applies to this new 10-lot development plan, which appears to be unrelated to the Oak Grove plan that the referendum rejected.

Dolan said the law would not prevent someone from submitting another plan, even if it is similar to the one rejected, but would block the city from acting on the proposal before one year had passed.

However, he added, the question is moot since it's expected planners and others on the plan review staff won't complete their work before June 9, at the earliest.

Others on the city staff also indicated that the Lins' new plan would not be affected by the stringent hillside development rules voters approved two years ago as part of Measures PP and QQ. Those apply to developments on less than 10 acres only.

Inderbitzen said that if the Lins' new plan wins final approval, that will end development on their land holdings in Pleasanton. The family has considerable property in Dublin and other parts of the Tri-Valley with projects awaiting

“Unfortunately, when you’re developing only 10 lots, those amenities that were part of the Oak Grove development plan, just don’t pencil out.”

Attorney Marty Inderbitzen, who represents landowners Jennifer and Frederic Lin

approval and others forthcoming.

The Lins' hillside acreage at one time included Kottinger Ranch, a site they sold to a developer who built the homes there. Later, they proposed an 18-hole public golf course and 98 homes on the 576 acres of the remaining property that they owned. That plan was rejected

by voters in an earlier referendum.

The most recent Oak Grove plan surfaced later as a 98-home development without a golf course. In negotiations with city officials and staff, as well as civic organizations and the board of directors of the Kottinger Ranch Homeowners Association, the number of homes was whittled down to 51 with an agreement that the 497 adjoining acres of the Lins' property would be given free of charge to the city of Pleasanton for trails, public parks, equestrian pathways and open space.

It was that proposal that the City Council approved in a 4-1 vote in late 2007, with only Councilwoman Cindy McGovern opposed.

Ayala then formed the "Save Pleasanton's Hills" citizens' coalition and during the Thanksgiving holiday period in 2007 obtained enough signatures to force a referendum to reverse the council's decision.

Lawsuits by the Lins and countersuits by the citizens' coalition followed, with Ayala's group finally prevailing. The council then took up the issue again and made its decision to let the voters decide the outcome. ■

TAKE US ALONG



Roman holiday: Kevin, Suzy, Tommy and Jack Goon visit the Coliseum in Rome last summer while on a two-week vacation in Italy. Tommy and Jack are students at Walnut Grove Elementary.

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CORDTZ

Continued from Page 5

subsidized housing, his publication called the council "elitist, unwilling to clutter the landscape with houses selling for less than \$1 million."

With Mr. Cordtz's health declining from the effects of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), often referred to as Lou Gehrig's disease, Opinion-Pleasanton.com was produced less frequently. Its most recent issue, still online, comments on Councilman Jerry Thorne's re-election bid last year. Jordan said it's unlikely the online publication will continue.

Mr. Cordtz served in the Marines in World War II and after the war in repatriating efforts in China.

Besides his wife Joan, he is survived by their four children: Greg, Jeff and Lisa Cordtz and Cathy Waite, and six grandchildren. No services are planned although a special Mass will be celebrated later at St. Augustine Catholic Church.

—Jeb Bing

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Opinion

EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

City Hall, school district share issues, opportunities

The Pleasanton City Council and Pleasanton school board will hold their annual joint meeting Monday to discuss issues of joint interest, and there are many. Budgets for fiscal year 2011-12 will be one of them. While cities and school districts face concerns over the state's growing budget deficit, schools so far are taking the brunt of the shortfall. Limits on state aid to education and the threat of deep cuts in the coming months unless Gov. Jerry Brown's proposed tax extensions are approved will affect Pleasanton even if voters approve Measure E, a proposed \$98 a year parcel tax that goes to voters in a mail-in ballot starting April 4.

So far, the city government is in much better shape. Finance Director Emily Wagner will report Monday that Pleasanton's operating budget is balanced for each of the next two fiscal years thanks both to reduced spending and now a slight uptick in sales taxes, one of the city's primary revenue sources. There are ways the city might help the school district to offset its budget woes, such as grounds maintenance and with some services. These possibilities deserve consideration at Monday's meeting.

The two agencies also will look at future school needs. Pleasanton has just approved rezoning land in Hacienda Business Park for another 850 housing units as part of its obligation to meet state requirements for additional low- to middle-income units. With 3,000 units on the state's mandatory housing unit list for Pleasanton in the next few years, both the city and school district need to look at how many school-age children might move into these units and how and where they will be educated. Hacienda, where many of the additional units will likely be located, has no elementary school. Long-range plans may call for moving the school site once intended for Vineyard Avenue near Ruby Hill to Hacienda to accommodate future growth.

Even though these joint meetings are held just once a year, a city-school liaison committee meets monthly. This keeps both taxing districts connected on ongoing issues and opportunities, which has given Pleasanton city-financed gymnasiums at all three middle schools, new soccer fields at Donlon Elementary and a city-financed restoration of the Amador Theater, which is available to the drama groups at both Foothill and Amador Valley high schools. Pleasanton is fortunate in having a unified school district whose boundaries are roughly the same as the city's, making joint City Council-school district meetings such as the one Monday both possible and productive.

The meeting starts at 7 p.m. in the school district's board room. ■



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

Pleasanton Weekly

PUBLISHER

Gina Channell-Allen, Ext. 119

EDITORIAL

Editor

Jeb Bing, Ext. 118

Managing Editor

Dolores Fox Ciardelli, Ext. 111

Online/Community Editor

Jessica Lipsky, Ext. 229

Reporter

Glenn Wohltmann, Ext. 121

Editorial Assistant

Amory Gutierrez, Ext. 221

Contributors

Don Colman
Deborah Grossman
Jerri Pantages Long
Kerry Nally
Joe Ramirez

ART & PRODUCTION

Lead Designer

Katrina Cannon, Ext. 130

Designers

Lili Cao, Ext. 120
Kristin Herman, Ext. 114

ADVERTISING

Account Executives

Carol Cano, Ext. 226
Paul Crawford, Ext. 113
Karen Klein, Ext. 122

Real Estate Sales

Andrea Heggelund, Ext. 110

Ad Services

Cammie Clark, Ext. 116

BUSINESS

Business Associate

Lisa Oefelein, Ext. 126

Circulation Director

Bob Lampkin, Ext. 141

Front Office Coordinator

Kathy Martin, Ext. 124

HOW TO REACH THE WEEKLY

Phone: (925) 600-0840

Fax: (925) 600-9559

Editorial e-mail:

editor@PleasantonWeekly.com
calendar@PleasantonWeekly.com

Display Sales e-mail:

sales@PleasantonWeekly.com

Classifieds Sales e-mail:

ads@PleasantonWeekly.com

Circulation e-mail:

circulation@PleasantonWeekly.com

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LETTERS

No new taxes

Dear Editor,

This is in response to your Editorial in your March 11 issue, "Amazon.com: pay sales taxes."

The notion of cultivating new taxes in the midst of a recession is not only foolish, but reckless. Your recommendation to impose new taxes on thriving retailers is to attack a segment of an already fragile economy. Furthermore, I'm disgusted with your notion that the taxing of Internet retailers in California is necessary to "maintain essential government services,

such as schools, public safety and environmental protection." Repeatedly, the proposed solution for solving the state's fiscal mismanagement and overspending that has hurt these services is to raise taxes wherever possible and dump the burden on the taxpayer. I'm sickened not only by your advocacy of this approach, but that you feel it's justified.

The debate about fairness in the retail space over collecting sales tax is a reasonable discussion to have on the basis of competitiveness and free enterprise. It is not, however, a discussion to be had as a way to collect more money to throw at a state budget in desperate need of reformation, not perpetuation.

Robert Allan

POLICE BULLETIN

\$1,035 in batteries stolen

Batteries worth \$1,035 were stolen this month from WalMart in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive, a po-

lice report said. The theft occurred between 3:41 a.m. March 8 and 3:17 a.m. March 17, according to the report, which said a lock was bypassed to provide entry.

A handgun worth an estimated \$500 was stolen from a car parked in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road, according to a police report, which said the weapon was stolen between noon and 2 p.m. March 12. A computer worth \$600 was also stolen, the report said.

POLICE REPORT

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

March 14

Theft

- 10:03 a.m. in the 5500 block of Springdale Avenue; forgery
- 3:24 p.m. in the 6000 block of Johnson Drive; identity theft
- 6:46 p.m. in the 6000 block of Stoneridge Drive; auto theft

Vandalism

- 9:47 a.m. at the intersection of Bernal Avenue and Roselma Place

March 15

Theft

- 7:49 a.m. in the 2400 block of Via de los Milagros; petty theft
- 8:26 a.m. in the 2400 block of Via de los Milagros; petty theft
- 8:53 a.m. in the 2400 block of Via de los Milagros; petty theft
- 8:49 a.m. in the 6200 block of Roslin Court; petty theft
- 11:07 a.m. in the 1800 block of Santa Rita Road; petty theft
- 2:49 p.m. in the 4600 block of Lakewood Street; identity theft
- 2:56 p.m. in the 2200 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft
- 4:11 p.m. in the 5100 block of Corona Court; petty theft
- 5:07 p.m. in the 400 block of Wimmer Place; identity theft
- 5:40 p.m. in the 6300 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard; petty theft

Burglary

- 12:12 p.m. in the 3600 block of Andrews Drive
- 6:24 p.m. in the 6800 block of Corte de Flores

Vandalism

- 8:39 a.m. in the 200 block of Rose Avenue
- 9:32 a.m. at the intersection of Hopyard Road and Coronado Lane

Prank calls

- 4:21 p.m. in the 3500 block of Bernal Avenue

Drug/alcohol violations

- 8:46 p.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; public drunkenness
- 9:47 p.m. in the 5300 block of Owens Drive; public drunkenness, possession of a non-narcotic controlled substance

March 16

Theft

- 7:36 a.m. in the 4800 block of Bernal Avenue; auto theft

Vandalism

- 2 p.m. at the intersection of Shenandoah Court and Valley Trails Drive

Drug/alcohol violations

- 4:32 p.m. in the 2400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; possession of a hypodermic needle, paraphernalia possession

March 17

Battery

- 3:44 p.m. at the intersection of Main Street and Stanley Boulevard

Vandalism

- 8:24 a.m. in the 1000 block of Serpentine Lane
- 11:15 p.m. in the 5100 block of Springdale Avenue

Drug/alcohol violations

- 12:54 a.m. in the 4800 block of Bernal Avenue; public intoxication on drugs, possession of an intoxicating inhalant

- 2:25 a.m. in the 6100 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard; DUI

- 7:21 p.m. in the 3000 block of Hopyard Road; DUI

- 9:12 p.m. in the 3700 block of Hopyard Road; marijuana possession

- 10:43 p.m. at the intersection of Hopyard Road and Del Valle Parkway; DUI

March 18

Vandalism

- 9:55 a.m. in the 4200 block of Rosewood Drive

- 3:03 p.m. in the 2900 block of E. Ruby Hill Drive

- 7:32 p.m. in the 5800 block of Parkside Drive

- 9:31 p.m. in the 1200 block of Quarry Lane

March 19

Theft

- 8:06 a.m. in the 2700 block of Curlew Court; theft
- 12:09 p.m. in the 4800 block of Bernal Avenue; forgery
- 12:54 p.m. in the 2500 block of Skimmer Court; petty theft

Burglary

- 2:16 p.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive

Battery

- 7:49 p.m. in the 4600 block of First Street

Vandalism

- 6:59 a.m. in the 5800 block of Owens Drive
- 8:50 a.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road

March 20

Theft

- 11:29 a.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft
- 3:34 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; theft

Felony battery

- 12:05 a.m. in the 3000 block of Hopyard Road

Stalking

- 3:36 a.m. in the 4800 block of Muirwood Drive

Brandishing a weapon

- 5:01 p.m. in the 5600 block of San Antonio Street

Vandalism

- 2:55 a.m. in the 4800 block of Hopyard Road
- 10:27 a.m. in the 1700 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

Drug/alcohol violations

- 1:32 a.m. at the intersection of Main Street and St. Mary Street; DUI

- 2:37 a.m. in the 6600 block of Koll Center Parkway; public drunkenness, possession of a controlled substance

- 6:49 p.m. at the intersection of Springdale Avenue and Maywood Drive; possession of a controlled substance



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WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

Bicycle Pedestrian and Trails Committee

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

City of Pleasanton Commission and Committee Recruitment

The City of Pleasanton invites you to apply for vacancies on the following commissions and committees:

- Housing Commission – 1 Alternate
- Human Services Commission – 1 Member, 1 Alternate
- Library Commission – 1 Alternate
- Youth Commission – 7 Youth Members
- Economic Vitality Committee -- 1 representative from each of the following categories:
 - Commercial Services
 - Infrastructure
 - Medical Technology

Bicycle, Pedestrian & Trails – 1 At-Large Youth Member

Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA) Citizens Advisory Committee
1 Pleasanton representative

Altamont Landfill Committee Education Advisory Board
1 Pleasanton representative - Member should be a science, environmental education or vocational education teacher from the Pleasanton Public Schools and a resident of Alameda County.

Applications are available at the City Clerk's Office, 123 Main Street, or on the City's web site at www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/pdf/newcommapp.pdf. For additional information, contact the Office of the City Clerk at (925) 931-5027.

Applications must be received no later than 4:00 p.m., Friday, April 1, 2011. Postmarks are not accepted.

If you are interested in serving on a commission or committee that has no current vacancies listed, you may register your interest in future vacancies by contacting the Office of the City Clerk at (925) 931-5027 or by completing an interest card on our website at www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us.

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

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

OBITUARIES

Harold 'Harry' D. James

Harold "Harry" D. James, 81, died March 16 in Hayward surrounded by family and friends.

He was born April 11, 1929, in Oklahoma. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. For 30 years he owned a clothing store in Fremont called Sir James Clothing for Men. He was an avid golfer, painter and poetry writer.

He is survived by his children Mark James and Rick and Tracy Heidebrecht; four grandchildren; and friend Sharon Luther. Private services are being held tomorrow in Pleasanton.



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BY JOHN DRUMMOND

SUPER NOVA

17-year-old Pleasanton boy builds a dream machine

Johnny Scholz IV will be one of thousands of classic car aficionados waxing up and showing off their vintage American iron at this weekend's Goodguys 29th All American Get-Together car show and swap meet at the Alameda County Fairgrounds. His meticulously restored 1963 Chevrolet Nova will be one of the cleanest cars on the grounds during the two-day show, which is expected to draw over 70,000.

But this isn't your ordinary classic American car story—the kind the Goodguys see over and over and over again throughout their 21-event national tour. This story is different. Much different, due to the fact that Johnny is a junior at Foothill High School and the meticulous restoration came by his own hands.

The most intriguing twist of the plot is that during the entire build, Johnny was told the car he was restoring was for his uncle and it was to be given to him at a special dinner for Nova enthusiasts. It wasn't until the party that the Scholz family broke the news to Johnny that the car he labored over for so many nights and weekends was in fact his own. It was a life-changing moment for him and his father John, also known for showing classic Chevys with Goodguys.

It all started last winter when Johnny's Uncle "Novajoe" found a mothballed 4-door Nova that he could use as a "parts" donor vehicle for a 2-door coupe he was working on. Novajoe thought the 4-door "would be perfect for Johnny."

Like so many Americans, the Scholzes had come upon difficult economic times and were struggling just to pay the bills. A "project" car for Johnny just wasn't in the cards. But Novajoe and the Local Nor Cal

Nova Group supplied an additional Nova carcass and all needed parts to save the 4 door for Johnny from its sure junkyard demise.

That's when Johnny's dad told him about a "project" car he wanted help with and that he would pay Johnny \$5 hour to work on it. The 16-year-old gladly jumped in, excited at the prospect of learning the ins and outs of vehicle restoration.



The long, slow process began by stripping the old paint, replacing the complete drivetrain and cleaning the car's sub frame. Along with help from the online Nova community — known as stevesnovasite.com — the project began to take shape. Parts were refinished and brought back to life. A fresh interior was upholstered. Used

and new stock parts were donated from many of the Nor Cal Nova friends.

While his father was at work, Johnny poured over every detail of a 1963 Nova, researching part numbers, online catalogs and even attending swap meets to hunt for "Nova treasure." He took it one step at a time, progressing little by little. He spent every single day last summer working countless hours on a car he thought he was restoring for his uncle Joe.

"I wanted him to stay focused," his father John said with a laugh. "It was the only way I could think of to make him stay focused and do things correct. He stepped up and then some."

Johnny finished the car in August. The gleaming, stock-appearing '63 Nova, powered by a 194 cubic inch inline 6 cylinder engine, turned out so good it looked as if General Motors technicians had delivered it to Pleasanton themselves. The form was so



PHOTOS COURTESY JOHN DRUMMOND

Johnny Scholz, now 17, worked long and hard to restore a 1963 Chevrolet Nova, including stripping the old paint, replacing the drivetrain, and cleaning the sub frame. Scholz thought he was doing it for his uncle — then found out the classic car was really for him. The teen has plotted out which of his favorite car shows to attend this year to display the Nova, beginning with the Goodguys Get-Together this weekend.

perfect, Auguste Rodin would be pleased.

Then came the night Johnny was to proudly present the car to Uncle Joe at the National Nostalgic Nova's 2010 Mini Nationals dinner at the Pleasanton Hilton. With the entire Scholz family and dozens of Nova collectors from around the country and Canada gathered around, John Scholz stood up, tears in his eyes, and told his son: "This is actually your car, Johnny, and here are the keys ... Congratulations, son. We love you! Oh, and by the way — that \$5 hour I promised you — you going to have to take a rain check on it!"

Johnny was overwhelmed. There wasn't a dry eye in the entire ball room.

The teenager proudly showed his car alongside his father's at the final Goodguys event of the year in November to rave reviews. It was chosen as the "Young Guys Pick" — a special award presented to a hot rodder 25 years or younger.

Goodguys sets aside a special parking area for the Young Guys at every one of their 21 events for kids like Johnny. It's a special place where special cars have wonderful back stories and young imaginations run wild. While most kids are sending text messages at a feverish clip and playing video games, the Johnny Scholzes of the world are hard at work in the garage, learning a valuable skill and experiencing the pride that comes with ac-

complishing a hard earned goal. Johnny's already got his favorite car shows plotted out to attend this season, beginning with this weekend's Goodguys Get-Together.

It's the Young Guys like Johnny Scholz that remind even the hardest, crustiest gray beard car guys the magic and pride involved in restoring something uniquely American. It's why the Goodguys keep comin' back, year after year. ■

Car show this weekend

What: Goodguys 29th All American Get-Together

When: Saturday-Sunday, March 26-27

Where: Alameda County Fairgrounds

Tickets: Adults, \$18; children 7-12, \$6

Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday; 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday

Information: 838-9876; www.good-guys.com

Highlights: Goodguys will crown the "West Coast Custom of the Year" on Sunday during a special awards ceremony. Attendees have the opportunity to win a restored 1969 Chevelle, courtesy of Live 105 FM and Danville's J Rockcliff Realtors.

POETIC PLEASANTON

BY DEBORAH GROSSMAN



Good week to be a poet

This weekend is the 10th annual Pleasanton Poetry, Prose &

Arts Festival. The public is invited to attend the free events from 1-2:30 p.m. tomorrow at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad St. There is a free reception for the Fine Arts Show and Literary Row where you can meet California Poet Laureate Emeritus Al Young, best-selling au-

thor Adair Lara and other Bay Area writers for a book signing.

Poetry evening

We're hosting a special, free poetry evening with Connie Post and Katherine Hastings from 6:30-8 p.m., Tuesday, March 29, at Towne Center Books, 555 Main St. Connie and Katherine will present a "Poets Braided Reading," taking turns reading poems from their new chapbooks.

Connie, Poet Laureate Emerita of Livermore, is leader of the Valona Second Sunday Poetry Series in

Crockett; Katherine is founder of the WordTemple Poetry Series in Sebastopol.

Teen Poet Laureate Poetry

Spring break is upon us, and soon, graduation. As Teen Poet Laureate Mitch Grimes, a senior at Amador Valley High School, contemplates the approach of college, he wrote this poem.

The Waiting Game

BY MITCH GRIMES

Summer is brewing over the horizon line,

I wonder what I'll be doing in another year's time.

I've seen many seasons swept away in piles, another space in time put away in files.

What fate will bring nobody knows so I'm here waiting to see how the story goes.

Deborah Grossman is Pleasanton's Poet Laureate. Email her at pleasantonpoetry@gmail.com.

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AMERICAN

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BARBECUE

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4501 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 734-0307. Home of the Tri Tip and Blue, Red Smoke Grill was Voted Reader's Choice Best 2006, 2007, 2008, 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.

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

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Author Visits

TRI VALLEY TRAILS Nancy Rodrigue and Jacky Poulsen will present a talk about their book, "Tri Valley Trails," at 7 p.m., Thursday, March 31, at Towne Center Books, 555 Main St. It will include park overviews, highlights, and some specific parks, questions and answers, and book signing. Call 846-8826.

Book Clubs

GREAT BOOKS OF PLEASANTON This club will meet at 7:30 p.m., Monday, March 28, at Towne Center Books, 555 Main St. March's book selection is "Second Epilogue

to War and Peace" by Leo Tolstoy. This club meets on the fourth Monday of every month. For information, call Sadie at 846-1658.

Civic Meetings

PLEASANTON RIDGE WORKSHOP The East Bay Regional Park District invites residents to a presentation on the Draft Public Access and Trails Concept Plan Map, a component of the Pleasanton Ridge Park Land Use Plan. The workshop is from 7-8:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 6, at Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St. Call 510-544-2323 or visit www.ebparks.org. An open house follows with opportunities for discussion.



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FROM IDEA TO ENTREPRENEUR Attorney Gerald Prettyman will present "How to Launch and Run a Business" from 6:45-8:30 p.m., Monday, April 4, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. He will discuss what to consider when selecting your form of business, the registrations needed to document and open a business, company marketing and more. This event is free. Call 600-7342 or visit www.GotABrightIdea.com.

Concerts

'MISSING YOU' Rock musician and songwriter John Waite will perform his hit single "Missing You" and many other favorites at 8 p.m., Friday, April 1, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. Waite has produced six solo albums, including his latest, "Rough and Tumble." Tickets \$32-\$45. Call 931-4848 or visit www.firehousearts.org.

SPRING CONCERT Pleasanton Community Concert Band presents its Spring Concert at 2 p.m., Sunday, April 3, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. This concert is free, but donations are appreciated. Call 846-5897 or visit www.pleasantonband.org.

Events

10TH ANNUAL POETRY PROSE & ARTS FESTIVAL Here's a chance to mingle with published authors,

screen writers and poets, and learn from the best, beginning at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, March 26, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. There are workshops for all ages and \$1,200 in prizes for contests in poetry and prose. The festival is sponsored by the Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council and the city of Pleasanton. Cost, depending on how many events are attended, ranges from \$15-\$185. Register by March 15. Visit www.pleasantonarts.org.

ARTIST TO DEMONSTRATE ABSTRACT ART Artist Sherri Kelcourse will demonstrate Abstract Art from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, March 26, at Studio Seven Arts Gallery, 400 Main St. Kelcourse's "Lift" series represents a freedom flight — a breaking away from that which hinders and holds us back from being our all. Call 846-4322 or visit www.studiosevenarts.com.

AVHS PURPLE AND GOLD GALA Amador Valley High School Athletic Boosters are hosting the 25th annual Purple and Gold Gala from 5-11 p.m., Saturday, March 26, at the Casa Real Event Center, 410 Vineyard Ave. All proceeds go towards AVHS athletic team expenses. Dinner includes drinks, dinner, live and silent auction and dancing. Tickets \$125 per person or \$230 per couple. Call 846-9531.

BIRTHDAY DINNER The Widowed Men and Women of Northern California would like you to join them for a birthday dinner at 6 p.m., Saturday, March 26, at La Vite Italian

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DOWNTOWN DISHCRAWL An interactive website to help connect people with food is launching in Pleasanton, and will dishcrawl through four downtown restaurants in one night. Meet at 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 29. Reserve tickets at www.dishcrawl/discoverpl. Cost \$26. Event is family friendly.

SPRING BOOK SALE This huge sale includes thousands of hardback and paperback books, DVDs, CDs, videos and other items. Proceeds support the library and its programs. The sale is from 6-9 p.m., Friday, March 25; 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, March 26; and 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Sunday, March 27, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Bernal Ave. Friday night requires membership in Friends of the Library \$10. Visit www.friendsofhepleasantonlibrary.org. No scanners or strollers are allowed in the sales room.

SPRING WILDFLOWER FESTIVAL Enjoy flowery fun for the whole family! Event is from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, April 2, at Sunol-Ohlone Regional Wilderness Park, 1895 Geary Rd., Sunol. Festivities include short, long and kid-friendly guided hikes; music; crafts to take home; information booths; and nature slideshows. Bring a picnic lunch! Call 510-544-3249 or visit www.ebparks.org.

Exhibits

MEET ARTIST RODEL GONZALEZ Disney Art On Main Street at Alexander's Fine Art Gallery, 608 Main St., is holding its first 2011 Meet the Artist Event, from 6-9 p.m., Friday, March 25. Rodel Gonzalez will unveil his international collection and, from 2-5 p.m., Saturday, March 26, will give a demonstration. The exhibit is free. RSVP 846-6015. Visit www.disneyartonmain.com.

'MARKS OF NATURE: VISUAL NOTES ON THE PHYSICAL WORLD' The current exhibit at the Firehouse Arts Center features works of four artists in diverse media that explore interpretations of the pleasant, abstract qualities of images in nature. The exhibit hours are noon-5 p.m. Wednesday-Friday; and 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturdays, from March 9 through April 2 at the Firehouse Arts Center, Harrington Gallery, 4444 Railroad Ave. The exhibit includes works by Rebecca J. Alex, JoAnn Biagini, Sheila Metcalf Tobin and Ellen Sachtschale. A donation of \$2 is suggested. Call 931-4848 or visit www.firehousearts.org.

Fundraisers

E-WASTE RECYCLING Bring electronic waste to a drive-through fundraiser supporting Hart Middle School from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, March 26, at Lucky parking lot, 6155 W. Las Positas Blvd. \$5 an item to recycle: CPUs, telephones, printers, copiers, fax machines,

VCR/DVD players and stereos. Free to recycle: TV/monitors/cell phones. Cash or check donations welcome. Visit www.hartmiddleschool.org.

PET WASH To support Amador Valley High School Sports and Deca Programs, Pet Food Express will donate all proceeds from pet washes during the month of March to Amador Valley High School. Washing your pets has never been easier with its self-service pet stations, with raised tubs, shampoos, air dryers, towels, aprons and no mess to clean up. Pet Food Express is located at 1737 Santa Rita Rd.

Kids & Teens

ROBOTICS 101 Girl Scouts is hosting a series of hands-on robotics workshops for girls ages 6-14, from 12:30-3 p.m. March 27, April 17 and May 22 at Hart Middle School, 4433 Willow Rd. Build a robot, learn about tournaments and compete in a scrimmage. Call 510-562-8470, ext. 136, or visit www.girlscoutsnorcal.org/documents/Flyer.pdf.

Lectures/ Workshops

'STEPPING STONES ON YOUR GRIEF JOURNEY' The death of a loved one is unlike any other loss. Explore the stepping stones that are part of each grief journey in an eight-week series of workshops, at 7:30 p.m., Thursdays, April 7 through June 2, at St. Elizabeth Seton Church,

4001 Stoneridge Dr. Preregistration is requested and a one-time donation of \$15. Sessions open to all, regardless of religious affiliation. Call Mary Hagerty at 846-5377.

PREPARATION FOR SPRING IN THE GARDEN Master Gardeners will be available from 9:30-11:30 a.m. on the second Saturday of the month from now through April 9 at the Livermore ACMG Earth Friendly Demo Garden, 3575 Greenville Rd., Livermore. They will answer gardening and plant questions, and discuss specifics on tasks to prepare your garden for spring. Call 337-0433 or visit www.facebook.com/pages/Livermore-ACMG-Demonstration-Garden/162288500460164.

Live Music

AMERICAN JAZZ HALL OF FAME Pianist and nine-time Grammy nominee Kenny Barron will be performing at 8 p.m., Thursday, April 7, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. Barron, a musician, composer, arranger and educator who began playing professionally as a teenager, was

influenced by Dizzy Gillespie's band and Latin and Caribbean rhythms. Tickets \$30-\$45. Call 931-4848 or visit www.firehousearts.org.

LATIN JAZZ BAND: SOUL SAUCE Whether you are cooking in the kitchen or on the bandstand, soul sauce is a spicy addition. Soul Sauce will perform a sizzling jazz concert at 2 p.m., Sunday, April 3, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Call 931-3405.

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 "pack outs" of comfort and care items for deployed members of the armed forces; the next pack out is for Easter and takes place March 26. Contact Chairwoman Pat Frizzell at PleasantonMilitaryFamilies@gmail.com or Chris Miller at millercj3@gmail.com.



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IN bloom ALL YEAR

Pause awhile to partake in the pleasures of the sensory garden

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

What a difference a good gardener makes. And the Pleasanton Sensory Garden has an entire garden club to help it flourish and stay in bloom all year.

"Each plant was designed to appeal to at least one of five senses," said Daniel McCright, who organizes the Livermore Amador Valley Garden Club volunteers.

The garden always has plants that look delightful, smell wonderful, and are pleasing to touch. Close your eyes and enjoy the sounds of a breeze riffing through the leaves or perhaps some bees doing their pollination dance. The sense of taste is there also, in the herbs and other plants used in cooking.

"The club worked with the city of Pleasanton when they started the Sensory Garden 18 years ago," McCright said recently at the garden where a bevy of garden enthusiasts worked in the winter sun. "We do the design, and they haul the debris."

"We're there monthly, pulling weeds, pruning — always renovating, replanting plants. We always have new plants. Our members get pretty enthusiastic," he continued. "We have lots of herbs — for texture, aroma and taste."

Some of the garden is in waist-high planters for those who have trouble bending down. Since the garden is viewed close up, they choose plants with interesting forms, foliage, flowers and berries.

"We want more of the cascading plants — our expectations are high," McCright said. "It's designed to be wheelchair accessible."

Indentations allow wheelchairs to pull in and be surrounded on three sides by the beds for the full sensory sensation.

There is a reason the garden was installed in Centennial Park next to the Senior Center, McCright said, as a woman with a walker made her way from Ridge View Commons to the center. She called out a

greeting to the volunteers, who responded with a wave of their gardening gloves.

The Sensory Garden remains an exercise in trial and error.

"We want non-fussy plants," McCright said, that can get by with just the monthly upkeep. "Gardening is at its best when it is experimental."

The gardeners aim for a variety of heights and plant categories. Some attract butterflies. There are annuals for the cool season and for the warm season, and species overlap to bloom at subsequent times.

"It's a gardening trick, to extend the bloom period," McCright said.

The ground near the faucet is referred to as the boggy area, where plants thrive that do well with a lot of water. Day lilies were in bloom and a dogwood shrub was beginning to bud.

"It has red stems all winter long," McCright explained.

Parts of the garden receive irrigation during the dry months while others receive none. Plants such as the California native Manzanita are drought-resistant.

"We've observed where water falls and where it doesn't," McCright noted.

The Sensory Garden is also a place for Pleasanton residents to get ideas for their own yards.

"Everything here will be available and it's an indication of what thrives in our soil," McCright said.

One exception is the bulbinella — a bright yellow plant from South Africa — that was in full bloom. McCright said it is rarely for sale at nurseries in this area, and club member Betty Goosman had donated "starts" of the plants some years ago that began to spread.

The garden also has many varieties of daffodils and, as the warmer weather arrives, more spring bulbs and early perennials will come into bloom.

Although the club members work hard at keeping bloom, they like it to appear natural.

"We don't want this to be formal, like soldiers on parade," said.

Members of the Livermore Amador Valley Garden Club have varied interests such as growing herbs and developing and exchanging recipes.

"We have lots of different affinity groups; some are more into flower arranging, cooking, art in the garden, herbs and recipes," McCright said.

"So many medicines come from herbs and plants, picking the tip off a leaf of an artemisia, which he said liqueur plus has medicinal qualities.

He pointed to a daisy-like bloom and noted it is common and has been used for centuries to lower temperature.

After their monthly efforts at the Sensory Garden, members adjourn to a nearby sandwich shop for lunch and talk.

Among its many service projects, garden club volunteers meet three times a year at Pleasanton Gardens retirement on Kottinger Drive to prune and maintain planting residents over the years. Club members are also to a hillside of daffodils that delights those driving between and Livermore on Stanley Boulevard.

McCright said they always welcome new ideas and suggestions to the Sensory Garden, and he hopes people visit often. It's located just southwest of the center, marked by a couple of wisteria-covered arches at the entrance.

"The best time for scents is in the evening," he said. "We want people to come and linger, at all times of day." ●

en



DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

The Pleasanton Sensory Garden offers plants that appeal to all the senses, including a lamb's ear to touch and a chocolate geranium, lemon grass, anise, mints and other aromatic herbs. From far left: purple stock, Iceland poppies and white daffodils are in bloom; members of the Livermore Amador Valley Garden Club perform monthly maintenance, pulling weeds, pruning and replanting. The tall plant with the yellow flowers is bulbinella, native to South Africa; Daniel McCright of the garden club notes that the Manzanita, with its delicate flowers, is a California native and needs little water.

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JOIN THE CLUB

Interested in gardening? The Livermore Amador Valley Garden Club encourages interest in all phases of home gardening and promotes better horticultural practices, civic beauty and conservation of natural resources. Its monthly meetings feature speakers and are open to visitors. Visit www.lavgc.org or call Daniel McCright at (619) 456-1724.

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County advises: Lose your lawn

*Sustainable landscaping can be
diverse and beautiful*

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence. Until you go take a closer look. Then you may see that your neighbor has the same lawn challenges you do.

The challenge of keeping grass green, thick and healthy leads some folks to re-landscape with smaller lawns, filling in the rest of the area with plants or perhaps rocks, paths and shredded bark. That not only makes a yard more diverse and beautiful but it's also better for the environment.

Smaller lawns have long been promoted by the Master Gardeners, a group of gardening enthusiasts trained through the University of California who then help educate others, said Master Gardener Dianne Tinnes of Alamo.

She cited two reasons:

- To relieve the use of water; and
- To reduce the amount of fertilizer that goes into the water system.

Lush lawns require fertilizers, herbicides and much more water than falls naturally in the Tri-Valley summertimes.

Tinnes said she has noted a trend toward smaller lawns, especially in front yards.

"The trend has been for smaller lawn areas, and some people have decided to remove their lawn altogether and are putting in perennials and drought-tolerant ground covers," said Aires Souto, owner of Western Garden Nursery in Pleasanton. "We've sold sod, mostly for replacing it, but some are making it smaller."

Residents should get rid of their lawns altogether, according to StopWaste.Org, the Alameda County Waste Management Authority and the Alameda County Source Reduction and Recycling Board operating as one public agency. It is holding a Lose Your Lawn workshop May 21 at Western Gar-



The landscaper chose an expansive lawn for this yard in 2002, but when the owners recently replaced the drought-impacted grass, they put in a much smaller lawn, using bark, plants and river rocks for much of the yard.

den as part of its new educational program, Lose Your Lawn the Bay-Friendly Way.

StopWaste.Org defines "Bay-friendly" as a holistic approach to landscaping that harmonizes with the natural conditions of the San Francisco Bay Watershed. In other words, conserving water and preventing pollution from pesticides and other chemicals.

Rather than pulling out old lawns and disposing of them, the agency suggests "sheet mulching" to build healthy soil and plants. Cover the dying grass with layers of cardboard or newspaper, cover that with mulch, then replant the area with shrubbery or drought-tolerant material. This method is also ideal for preventing weeds. Detailed instructions are available at LoseYourLawn.org, or interested people can attend the workshop at Western Garden Nursery, 2756 Vineyard Ave.

Several books have been written on the love of Americans for their lawns, including "History of an American Obsession" by Virginia Scott Jenkins and "American Green" by Ted Steinberg.

"Grass by itself can indeed prevent soil erosion and storm-water run-off but the quest for perfect turf is another story altogether," wrote Steinberg.

Homeowners spend about \$40 billion a year on improving and maintaining their lawns, according to the Environmental Protection Agency's national home and garden survey.

Small lawns also eliminate the need for power mowers, which contribute to air pollution as well as noise pollution.

"Mowing lawns uses hundreds of millions of gallons of gas yearly and puts out 5 percent of U.S. total air pollutants," wrote J. William Thompson and Kim Sorvig in their book, "Sustainable Landscape Construction: A Guide to Green Building Outdoors." "Gas mower noise reaches 90 decibels, beyond levels known to cause hearing damage."

Small lawns can be managed with a push mower and a rake for that old-fashioned sound of churning blades — the aroma of fresh-mowed grass remains the same. ●



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Roller or brush?

Applicator matters for your DIY painting project

In today's tight economy, freshening outdated home interiors can seem like a daunting, budget-breaking task. The good news is that you don't have to spend a lot to remove eyesores such as unattractive paneling, too-dark cabinets or that not-so-charming "retro" fireplace mantel and surround.

Instead of living with these design disasters from another era, there's an easy and inexpensive fix — paint. Quality interior coatings, applied with the proper applicators, can go a long way in giving those design debacles a quick and easy facelift for hundreds of dollars less than a full-scale renovation.

But before you start your paint project, it's important to know the key to success is selecting not only a quality coating, but applying it with a quality painting applicator. If an inferior applicator is used, even the most outstanding paint may not provide the smooth finish you desire. Using superior applicators can streamline a variety of interior painting projects, saving you time and money, and ultimately helping you achieve a fabulous end result.

When to use a mini roller

Premium applicators come in a number of shapes and sizes; however one of today's most popular choices is the mini roller. There are a variety of innovative mini roller choices that are versatile, lightweight, can quickly and easily deliver a perfect finish with smooth rolling action and have the ability to reach tight spaces. These combined features make them the ideal applicator for

an endless number of projects, from painting walls, doors and cabinets, to freshening up tables, chairs and even bedroom furniture.

When to use a brush

Even with all the advantages the mini roller offers, a paint brush is still the hero for most projects especially when trim work is needed. A quality brush is a must when you're aiming to end up with a professional-looking appearance. Most consumers might not know it's also important to use a brush that's the appropriate size for your painting project. So, be certain to keep these tips in mind:

- Use 1- and 2-inch brushes for trim work, touch-ups and smaller projects such as window frames and moldings. Angular 1- and 2-inch brushes are great for painting around windows.

- Choose brushes measuring 2 1/2 and 3 inches for medium-size surfaces such as cabinets, baseboards, doors or steps.

- Paint larger surfaces, like walls, ceilings, and floors with brushes ranging in size from 3 1/2 inches to 6 inches.

"Whether you're using a brush or mini roller, the right applicator can make or break any painting project," says Andrew Marsden, product manager for Purdy applicators. "By paying as much attention to the size and quality of applicator used, in addition to the paint, you're guaranteed to end up with a fantastic finished project that you'll be able to admire and enjoy for years to come."

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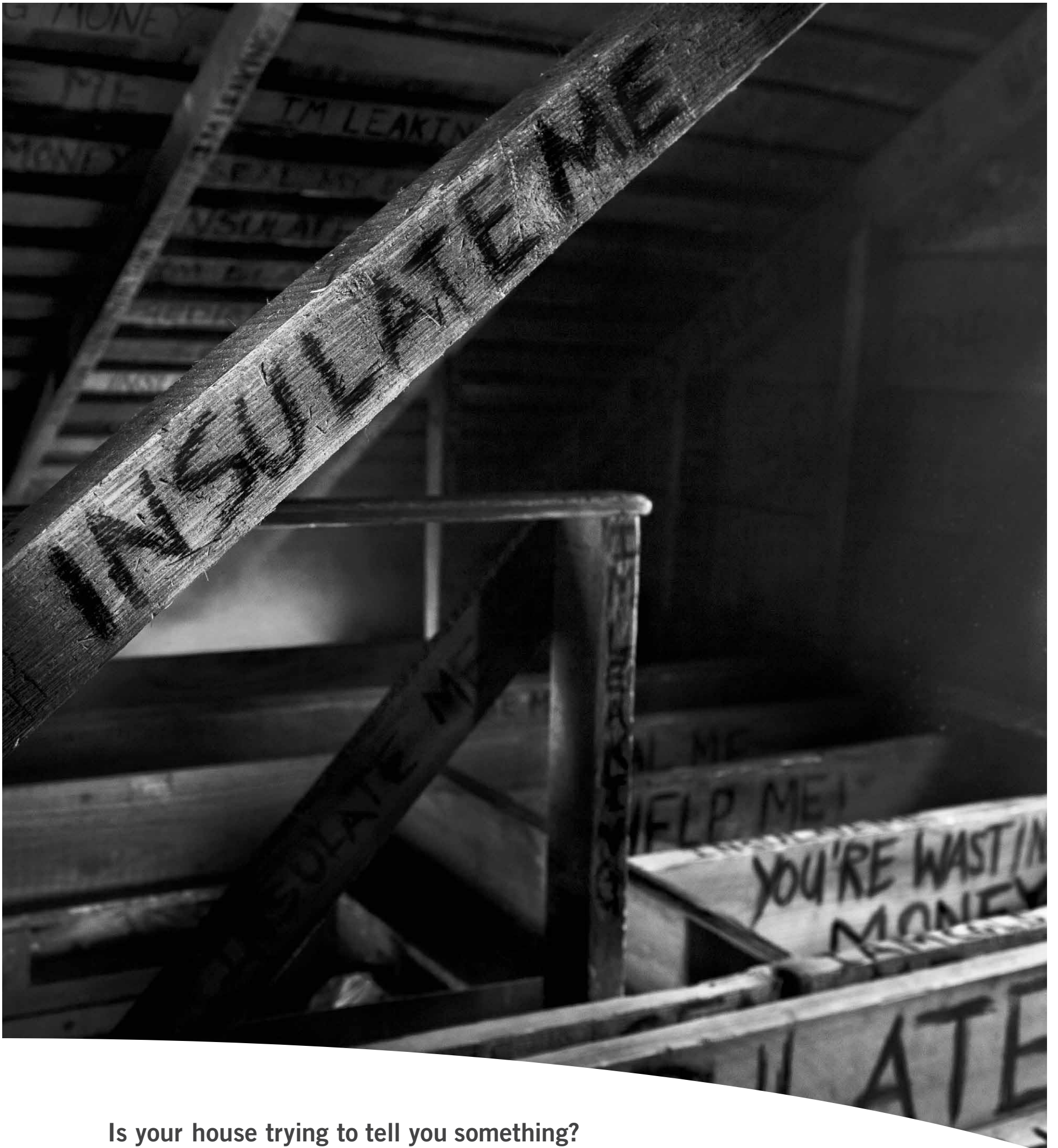
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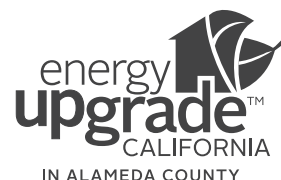
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Real Estate

OPEN HOME GUIDE AND REAL ESTATE LISTINGS

Home sales fall in state

By JEB BING

Following three months of sales gains, California home sales posted a weaker-than-expected performance and declined in February, according to data from the California Association of Realtors.

Closed escrow sales of existing, single-family detached homes in California totaled a seasonally adjusted annualized rate of 497,660 in February, according to information collected by CAR from more than 90 local Realtor associations and MLSs statewide.

February's sales were down 9.0% from January's revised pace of 547,080 and down 4.0% from the 518,390 sales pace recorded in February 2010. The statewide sales figure represents what would be the total number of homes sold during 2011 if sales maintained the February pace throughout the year. It is adjusted to account for seasonal factors that typically influence home sales.

"With continued concerns about both the economy and housing market, consumers remain tentative moving forward with any home buying plans," said CAR President Beth L. Pearce. "Nevertheless, current market conditions and loan rates at some of the lowest of all time continue to present attractive opportunities to those who are in a position to buy."

The statewide median price of an existing, single-family detached home sold in California was \$271,320, down 2.8% from a revised \$279,140 in January and was down 2.5% from the \$278,190 median price recorded

for February 2010. The February 2011 median price was the lowest since May 2009, when it was \$263,440.

"The market pulled back in February, following three months of sales gains, when the ramifications of the robo-signing delays from last fall pushed sales into the period from November of last year to January," said CAR Vice President and Chief Economist Leslie Appleton-Young.

"February's sales drop indicates the effects of the foreclosure freeze are diminishing, and the market is returning to a more moderate sales pace," she said.

Here are other highlights of CAR's resale housing report for February 2011:

■ The Unsold Inventory Index for existing, single-family detached homes was 7.3 months in February, up from 6.7 months in January 2011. The index was 6.0 months in February 2010. The index indicates the number of months needed to deplete the supply of homes on the market at the current sales rate.

■ Thirty-year fixed-mortgage interest rates averaged 4.95% during February 2011, compared with 4.99% in February 2010, according to Freddie Mac. Adjustable-mortgage interest rates averaged 3.35% in February 2011, compared with 4.23% in February 2010.

■ The median number of days it took to sell a single-family home was 64.4 days in February 2011, compared with 39.2 days for the same period a year ago. ■



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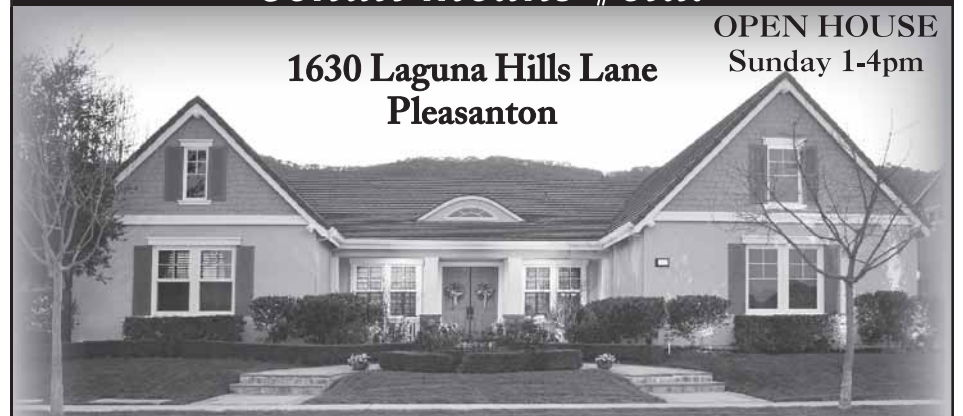
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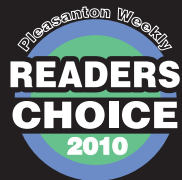
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 IN VOLUME AND SALES

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Gina Cordero
 Loan Officer
 925.575.1535

Gina.Cordero@prospectmtg.com
myprospectmortgage.com/gcordero
 NMLS# 250154

Loan inquiries and applications in states where I am not licensed will be referred to a Loan Officer who is licensed in the property state. Equal Housing Lender Prospect Mortgage, LLC (Unique Identifier #3296) is a Delaware limited liability company licensed by the Department of Corporations under the California Residential Mortgage Lending Act. This is not an offer for extension of credit or a commitment to lend. All loans must satisfy company underwriting guidelines. Information and pricing are subject to change at any time and without notice.



DeAnna Armario
 REALTOR®
 925.260.2220
www.armariohomes.com
 DRE # 01363180



Open Sat/Sun 1-4

495 Neal Street, Pleasanton
 Location! Sharp 3 BR and 2 BA single story on corner lot within walking distance to downtown. Updated kitchen with newer cabinets and granite counters. Spacious family room with fireplace and skylights. Updated bathrooms. Fresh paint. Large covered deck. **Offered at \$649,000**



Open Sunday 1-4

Tom Fox

Broker Associate
 925.872.1275
www.TomFox.com
 Tom@TomFox.com
 DRE # 00630556

1724 Zenato Place, Pleasanton
 French Country custom 4 BR home on private lot with pool, spa, and waterfall. Overlooks vineyards. Master suite on lower level with marble master bath. Hardwood floors throughout. Granite counters, kitchen island and wet bar. Approx. 4000 sq. ft. of living space. **Offered at \$1,725,000**



Coming Soon

Cindy and Gene Williams
 REALTOR®
 925.918.2045
www.williamsteam.net
 DRE # 01370076 and 00607511

6213 Woodvale Terrace, Dublin — Coming Soon
 4 BR, 3 ½ BA, 3800+ sq. ft. Call for details.
3063 Rodeo Lane, Livermore — Open Sat/Sun 1-4
 5 BR, 4 ½ BA, 4190 sq. ft. **Offered at \$852,600**



SOLD! Represented buyer

Dennis Gerlt

Broker Associate
 925.426.5010
www.dennisgerlt.net
 DRE # 01317997

2792 Spotorno Court, Pleasanton
 Well maintained Ruby Hill beauty with quality and style tucked away on a court location. The home features a remodeled kitchen and family room, boasts 4600 square feet of living space including a large second level bonus room, and has a huge backyard. A must see!



Open Sun 1-3

Dave & Sue
Flashberger
 REALTORS®, GRI, CRS, SRES
 925.463.0436
www.SoldinaFlash.com

6320 Benner Court, Pleasanton
 Absolutely Fabulous! This stunning 3 bdrm, 2 bath, one level home sits on a beautifully landscaped lot. Gourmet granite kitchen with custom maple cabinetry, high end appliances. Wonderful great room with arched ceiling & Georgian columns. Too many upgrades to list!



Pending — On Both Homes!

Gail Boal

REALTOR®
 925.577.5787
www.gailboal.com
 DRE # 01276455

2853 Iberis Court, Pleasanton
 3 bed, 2.5 bath. **\$620,000**
3803 Newton Place, Pleasanton
 PRICE REDUCTION! Beautiful single story. **\$558,000**



Fran & Dave Cunningham
 925.202.6898
 DRE # 01226296 & 00930892
Donna Garrison
 925.980.0273
 DRE # 01735040
Susan Schall
 925.519.8226
 DRE # 01713497
www.FabulousProperties.net
www.RubyHill.net



512 Bunker Lane, Castlewood, Pleasanton
 4 bedrooms, 3.5 baths, 4,000 sq. ft. Exquisite home with high end finishes! **Offered at \$1,449,000**

The Fabulous Properties Team
 Cunningham • Garrison • Schall



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1867 SANNITA CT. RUBY HILL, PLEASANTON



UWE MAERCZ (925) 360.8758

\$2,749,000 • 5 Bd • 5(2) Ba • 7,340+/- sq.ft.
Cul-de-sac w/ unobstructed views. Impressive dual entry staircase, Oversized & temp. controlled walk-in wine cellar, wet bar, large Koi pond, built in BBQ.

1976 ARMONDO CT. RUBY HILL, PLEASANTON



UWE MAERCZ (925) 360.8758

\$3,649,000 • 6 Bd • 6(1) Ba • 9,821+/- sq.ft.
This Italian Villa is all about architectural details & refined craftsmanship. Welcoming & grand entry foyer, Located on cul-de-sac, views, private patios & balconies.

4164 VENETO CT. SIENA, PLEASANTON



TODD E. MARTINEZ (925) 251.2571

\$479,950 • 3 Bd • 2(1) Ba • 1,503+/- sq.ft.
Charming town house, nice floor plan, walking distance to BART, close distance to freeway, shopping and more. 2 car garage.

4977 DANA CT. WINDMILL SPRINGS, LIVERMORE



MICHAEL SWIFT (925) 251.2587

\$549,950 • 4 Bd • 2(1) Ba • 2,098+/- sq.ft.
Former Model w/ Upgrades. Court Location, Large lot. Remodeled Kitchen w/ Granite Counters. Exquisite Bathrooms. Open & Airy Floor Plan. Huge Backyard.

219 E ANGELA ST. DOWNTOWN, PLEASANTON



WEINER MCDOWELL GROUP (925) 251.2550

\$1,099,000 • 4 Bd • 3 Ba • 2,278+/- sq.ft.
Classic Tudor architecture, and just 2 blocks from downtown Pleasanton! 300 sq.ft. carriage house. Gourmet kitchen, hardwood floors, solid wood arched doors.

21122 KNUPPE PL. CANYON RIDGE, C.V.



KRISTY AND COMPANY (925) 251.2536

\$1,199,000 • 6 Bd • 5 Ba • 4,591+/- sq.ft.
Desired location off of Jensen Rd. Breathtaking Panaramic views, over 4500 sq. ft. of spacious living, 6 bedrooms and 5 baths, possible in-law set-up or great in home office.

1225 LOZANO CT. RUBY HILL, PLEASANTON



UWE MAERCZ (925) 360.8758

\$4,299,000 • 6 Bd • 7(2) Ba • 8,877+/- sq.ft.
Catch your breath, prepare for what lies beyond the gorgeous entry of this Italian Villa. Unrivaled setting among olive trees & lush landscaping, views of vineyards...

820 SATURN WY. THREE FOUNTAINS, LIVERMORE



TOM E. CHANCE (925) 487.6360

\$574,950 • 4 Bd • 2 Ba • 1,920+/- sq.ft.
South Livermore Location. Dual Side Yard Access. Large Master Suite w/access to refreshing inground pool. Close proximity to Great Schools. walking trails, parks & more.

6605 AMBER LN. CARRIAGE GARD., PLEASANTON



WEINER MCDOWELL GROUP (925) 251.2550

\$1,298,000 • 3,675+/- sq.ft., 0.50+/- Acres
Carriage Gardens single level home! Great floorplan with oversized rooms, 3 fireplaces, Master w/retreat. Salt, solar pool, spa and cabana w/bath, tree house.

5578 BECK LN. LINDENWOOD, LIVERMORE



TOM E. CHANCE (925) 487.6360

\$749,900 • 4 Bd • 3 Ba • 2,776+/- sq.ft.
Cul-de-sac, views of Community Park & hills. Granite counter-tops, hickory flooring, 2 fireplaces, luxurious master suite w/ jetted tub and large walk-in closet.

1159 CANYON HILLS RD. CAN. HILLS, SAN RAMON



WEINER MCDOWELL GROUP (925) 251.2550

\$784,950 • 4 Bd • 2(1) Ba • 2,360+/- sq.ft.
Exceptional home, gated community. Beautifully maintained and upgraded. Excellent curb appeal, great private yard, awesome Master Bath!

1711 COTTSWALD ST. MONTEROSO, DANVILLE



THE DEANS OF REAL ESTATE (925) 251.2553

\$849,950 • 4 Bd • 3(1) Ba • 2,810+/- sq.ft.
Breathtaking views amidst the Danville Hills, this spacious and highly upgraded home. Downstairs bedroom & full bath for your office or guest room.

9877 FOOTHILL RD. SUNOL



KRISTY AND COMPANY (925) 251.2536

\$1,890,000 • 3,027+/- sq.ft., 16.01+/- Acres
Magnificent Sunol Location, next to Pleasanton Ridge. Single story only 2 years new with fabulous views. Horse Barn and much more!

11658 ESTRELLA CT. SILVERGATE, DUBLIN



SUSETTE CLARK-WALKER (925) 251.2547

\$599,000 • 4 Bd • 2 Ba • 2,170+/- sq.ft.
Western Foothills of Dublin. Large 9,200+ sq. ft. lot, Updated Kitchen. Hardwood Floors, HUGE Family Room Addition, Large Park Like Backyard and Corner Lot.

5240 GENOVESIO DR., PLEASANTON



LISA DOYLE (925) 855.4000

\$539,000 • 2 Bd • 2 Ba • 1,156+/- sq.ft.
Court/ Prime location. Open, light & bright floor plan w/ vaulted ceilings, new carpet, new paint, hrdwd flrs & more! Close to freeways, trails, walk to BART & shops.

1819 MADDALENA CT. RUBY HILL, PLEASANTON



UWE MAERCZ (925) 360.8758

\$1,298,000 • Lot and Land • 1.27+/- Acres
Exquisite, oversized PRIME lot in a highly desirable setting with Mt Diablo & vineyard views. The largest lot available in Ruby Hill, to accommodate any size and style home!

Blackhawk East

4105 Blackhawk Plaza Cir.
Danville, CA 94506
925.648.5300

Blackhawk West

3880 Blackhawk Rd.
Danville, CA 94506
925.736.6000

Danville

15 Railroad Ave.
Danville, CA 94526
925.855.4000

Lafayette

3799 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Lafayette, CA 94549
925.385.2330

Livermore

1983 Second St.
Livermore, CA 94550
925.667.2100

Montclair/Piedmont

6116 La Salle Ave., Ste. 200
Oakland, CA 94611
510.339.4800

Pleasanton

5075 Hopyard Rd Ste. 110
Pleasanton, CA 94588
925.251.2500

Orinda

89 Davis Rd.,
Orinda, CA 94563
925.253.7000

Walnut Creek

1700 N. Main St.
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
925.280.8500

Two GREAT Opportunities!



Exceptional Pleasanton Property!
Upgraded and remodeled single story with 2 master suite set up along with a third bedroom that is set up as an office. Hardwood flooring, skylite, vaulted ceilings, updated kitchen on a large corner lot with easy access to the Sports Park, schools, freeways and shopping. This home is priced to sell at \$475,000. Don't miss this one!!

Views, Views and More Views!!

This is a great opportunity for a LARGE home (2438 sq. ft.) on a HUGE lot (10,400 sq. ft.) with views of the Tri Valley and Pleasanton Ridge from almost every room in the house. Add in hardwood floors, skylights, a large Great Room for entertaining and a fenced in pool area AND a location close to Downtown Pleasanton and you have a great package!

Price reduced to \$849,000!
You gotta' see this one !!



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925/463-6175 (Norm) 925/463-6192 (Grace)
norm.nelson@bhghome.com

The **EXPERIENCED TEAM**
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Toughest of Markets!!



Just Listed!

Spacious Val Vista Rancher

Please join us on Sunday 1-4pm to visit this lovely home.



Katie Moe is proud to present 3621 Mason Street, walking distance to both schools and parks. This spacious 1816 sq ft home has been lovingly cared for and presents a wonderful opportunity for a family to move right in or make some changes. It features a 3 bedrooms, 2 full bathrooms, a formal living room as well as an oversize family, kitchen and dining area. Priced at \$519,500.



KATIE MOE
925-216-9083
KATIE@KATIEMOE.COM



TRI-VALLEY
REALTY

DRE: 01507863



W M

weiner &
cDowell
CONCIERGE REAL ESTATE GROUP

PHYLLIS WEINER
925.872.1416
PWeiner@rockcliff.com

PETER McDOWELL
925.209.0343
PMcDowell@rockcliff.com

J. Rockcliff



REALTORS



219 E. ANGELA STREET
DOWNTOWN, PLEASANTON

1159 CANYON HILLS RD
CANYON HILLS, SAN RAMON

NEW PRICE! 6605 AMBER LANE
CARRIAGE GARDENS, PLEASANTON



OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY 1-4

4 Bd 3 Ba • 2,178+/- SQ.FT. TUDOR STYLE! \$1,099,000

INCREDIBLE CHARM AND CHARACTER, CLASSIC TUDOR ARCHITECTURE, AND JUST 2 BLOCKS FROM DOWNTOWN PLEASANTON! 1878 SQ.FT. IN MAIN HOUSE PLUS APPROX. 300 SQ.FT. CARRIAGE HOUSE. GOURMET KITCHEN, VIKING RANGE, GRANITE, CHERRY, HARDWOOD FLOORS, SOLID WOOD ARCHED DOORS, BEAUTIFUL PRIVATE YARD WITH BRICK PATIO.



4 Bd 2.5 Ba • 2,360+/- SQ.FT. UPDATED! \$784,950

WELCOME TO THIS EXCEPTIONAL HOME LOCATED IN THE GATED COMMUNITY. BEAUTIFULLY MAINTAINED AND UPGRADED TO PERFECTION, THIS HOME WILL PLEASE YOUR FUSSIEST BUYERS. EXCELLENT CURB APPEAL WITH PROFESSIONALLY LANDSCAPED YARDS & MUCH MORE!



4 Bd 3.5 Ba • 3,675+/- SQ.FT., 0.47 ACRE LOT \$1,298,000

CARRIAGE GARDENS SINGLE LEVEL HOME, ONE OF BEST LOCATIONS IN PLEASANTON! GREAT FLOORPLAN WITH OVERSIZED ROOMS, 3 FIREPLACES, MASTER W/RETREAT. HUGE PRIVATE FLAT LOT, WITH SALT, SOLAR POOL, SPA, CABANA W/BATH, TREE HOUSE. FUN!

6645 AMBER LN, PLEASANTON
3,475+/- SQ.FT. \$1,398,000

1586 LOGANBERRY WY, PLEASANTON
PENDING REPRESENTING SELLER

9663 CROSBY DR, PLEASANTON
PENDING REPRESENTING BUYER/SELLER



CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

"MY FAMILY AND I RECENTLY RELOCATED FROM THE UK TO THE EAST BAY AREA AND ENGAGED PHYLLIS AND PETER TO ASSIST US WITH FINDING A HOME. THE OUTCOME WAS COMPLETELY SUCCESSFUL. PUT QUITE SIMPLY, WE WOULD NOT HAVE ACHIEVED THIS WITHOUT THEIR HELP. THEY BOTH POSSESS A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE OF THE LOCAL AREA AS WELL AS BEING HIGHLY EXPERT IN THE HOME SALE AND PURCHASE PROCESS. THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PROCESS WE FOUND THEM TO BE PROFESSIONAL, FRIENDLY AND RESPONSIVE! WE CAN NOT RECOMMEND THEM HIGHLY ENOUGH."

- BUYERS

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HOME SALES

This week's data represents homes sold during February 2011

Dublin

- 8119 Cardiff Drive** L. Barhite to A. Carstensen for \$410,000
- 4966 Cerreto Street** S. & B. Sandhu to S. & G. Chen for \$850,000
- 3465 Dublin Boulevard #341** M. Kim to V. Dharmaraj for \$320,000
- 7145 Dublin Meadows Street #H** Kleinjan Trust to S. & J. Hull for \$302,000
- 4281 Fitzwilliam Street** US Bank to Y. Kumar for \$350,000
- 4855 Mangrove Drive #98** Wells Fargo Bank to D. Phan for \$365,000
- 4600 Mirano Court** Sorrento at Dublin Ranch to T. & P. Matthies for \$626,500
- 7606 Ridgeline Drive** Schaefer Dublin Holdings to P. Guo for \$1,100,000
- 7610 Ridgeline Drive** Schaefer Dublin Holdings to Franchi Trust for \$965,000
- 4226 Roscommon Way** J. & R. Panigbatan to A. Shah for \$650,000
- 5601 Saddle Creek Terrace** Churilo Trust to Tang Trust for \$1,230,000
- 3649 Whitworth Drive** A. Goodwin to E. Ashley for \$340,000

Livermore

- 2363 3rd Street** Benton Trust to J. Delacruz for \$350,000
- 1071 Alison Circle** Citigroup Mortgage to C. & R. Birkhahn for \$542,000
- 1153 Apache Street** Tragni Development to J. Heavenston for \$300,000
- 1535 Aria Court** Kuchac Trust to R. Saini for \$805,000
- 1062 Bellflower Street** M. Mehtabuddin to A. Weed for \$365,000
- 51 Bellington Common #506** S. Clare to A. & J. Louie for \$270,000

- 1671 Bluebell Drive** California Housing Finance to R. Lagunas for \$294,000
- 2057 Bluebell Drive** Fresno Investment & Holdings to J. Wnuk for \$325,000
- 994 Del Norte Drive** Bank of America to A. Huang for \$163,000
- 6382 Forget Me Not** Federal National Mortgage to M. & E. Giovanetti for \$225,000
- 188 Heligan Lane #3** Shea Homes to O. & D. Gardiola for \$376,000
- 1791 Jennifer Drive** IRBS Corporation to C. & D. Andrews for \$415,000
- 1219 Locust Street** Arguello Trust to K. & M. McDowell for \$305,000
- 764 Los Alamos Avenue** R. Montano to C. Frates for \$350,000
- 1132 Mt. Whitney Street** C. Kaur to M. Singh for \$465,000
- 263 North K Street** Martinez Trust to Burns Trust for \$171,500
- 728 North L Street** K. & B. Dasher to Leonardini Trust for \$538,500
- 1036 Spring Valley Common** J. & T. Sylvester to C. Denaro for \$190,000
- 2322 Vintage Lane** M. & M. Perreault to K. & H. Sahota for \$1,145,000

Pleasanton

- 7652 Chestnut Way** JP Morgan Chase Bank to Y. Hou for \$605,000
- 6115 Crater Lake Court** D. Carpenter to S. Lorentsen for \$590,000
- 1843 Crestline Road** Kirkpatrick Trust to Y. Yefimova for \$425,000
- 2115 Delucchi Drive** Ormsby Trust to Corso Trust for \$327,500
- 8044 Golden Eagle Way** M. & C. Rivera to J. & P. Scheeler for \$2,458,000
- 1327 Hearst Drive** G. & S. Albin to A. & N. Jamil for \$1,163,500
- 7628 Hillsdale Court** B. & I. Jagger to J. & L. Bolar for \$685,000

- 254 Joseph Lane** D. & J. Norpchen to D. & C. Bourassa for \$1,360,000
- 504 Malbec Court** Wells Fargo Bank to C. & K. Bierdeman for \$580,000
- 7886 Oak Creek Drive** M. & C. Chang to H. Zhang for \$660,000
- 6825 Paseo Santa Cruz** C. Easley to D. Huang for \$780,000
- 3132 Persimmon Circle** L. & L. Franklin to H. Chidipotu for \$610,000
- 1855 Plumeria Court** Wells Fargo Bank to N. Javvaji for \$432,000
- 3541 Rocca Court** Eng Trust to M. Ramasamy for \$505,000
- 1809 Spumante Place** Sasek Trust to R. & L. Hudson for \$2,600,000
- 262 Sullivan Court** Bank of America to V. & J. Sood for \$1,075,000
- 7012 Via Quito** G. & J. Edwards to M. & M. Nader for \$530,000
- 3880 West Las Positas Boulevard** R. & L. Babb to S. Xie for \$667,500

San Ramon

- 8975 Alcosta Boulevard #110** K. Records to H.

- Monteiro for \$116,000
- 2448 Basswood Drive** Wells Fargo Bank to D. & C. Capece for \$585,000
- 375 Bellflower Court** Z. Khoury to G. Alagar for \$476,000
- 470 Bollinger Canyon Lane #181** Central Mortgage to E. & G. Sullivan for \$152,500
- 3030 Browntail Way** S. Rammel to C. Nguyen for \$625,000
- 276 Eastridge Drive** R. Dielissen to J. Gass for \$258,000
- 327 Jamie Court** M. & I. O'Neill to P. Gupta for \$1,000,000
- 3085 Lakemont Drive #3** R. Brayer to R. & J. Coffey for \$363,500
- 127 Maidenhair Court** J. Hou to S. & S. Sanghavi for \$572,000
- 2068 Mornington Lane** Selene Rmof Reo Acquisitions to L. Li for \$815,000
- 2269 Rosemount Lane** N. & S. Jalal to M. & F. Hussain for \$850,000
- 2247 South Donovan Way** M. & A. Tuyay to G. Govindarajulu for \$680,000
- 725 Watson Canyon Court #215** H. Tran to Q. Song for \$150,000

Source: California REsource

SALES AT A GLANCE

Dublin

Total sales reported: 12
Lowest sale reported: \$302,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,230,000
Average sales reported: \$625,708

Livermore

Total sales reported: 19
Lowest sale reported: \$163,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,145,000
Average sales reported: \$399,737

Pleasanton

Total sales reported: 18
Lowest sale reported: \$327,500
Highest sale reported: \$2,600,000
Average sales reported: \$891,861

San Ramon

Total sales reported: 13
Lowest sale reported: \$116,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,000,000
Average sales reported: \$511,000

Source: California REsource

PAY OFF YOUR MORTGAGE IN 10 YEARS

10 Year Fixed Now 3.5% Interest or 3.724% APR
For Example

\$200K	\$1977.72/MONTH
\$300K	\$2966.58/MONTH
\$400K	\$3955.44/MONTH

Call me for more details!

*Interest rates are based on a FICO score of 740+, a loan to value ratio of 80% or less, impound account, and fully documented income. Rates may change without prior notice. Rates quoted are for loan amounts below \$417,000. Program has no prepayment penalties or balloon payments.



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Open Sunday 1-4



Custom home

317 Diamond Court, Pleasanton

4 bedrooms, 3 full bathrooms, 3 car garage. 3544 sq. ft. Stunning interior. Real pride of ownership. Low maintenance yard.
\$1,169,000

www.317DiamondCt.com to view the virtual tour

Mark James

925.216.0454 • markjames@apr.com • DRE# 00697341

apr.com | PLEASANTON 900 Main Street 925.251.1111



The latest from The 680 Blog

Real Estate and "Perfect Information"

The residential Real Estate market is imperfect. What do I mean? In the U.S., the stock and bond markets are based on the concept of "perfect information." Prices of these assets are reported in real time, showing what the latest price paid by investors. It changes... sometimes rapidly. Information is (supposedly) conveyed in an orderly fashion, with forecasts, earnings reports, major developments, and even stock trades for high level executives all widely reported. The idea is to eliminate insider trading, or inherent advantages that stock traders and key executives would have to manipulate the market and generate profits. The SEC of course is charged with the task of monitoring the flow of information and ensuring that there is transparency in the process (allegedly).

In commercial real estate, one could argue that the information, while not "perfect," is easier to quantify since much of the

value is based on a property's net income. An investor can get copies of leases, records of expenses, and verification of income. The variable that is not easy to quantify is the potential future rents, or the value add from changes in use or zoning, or improvements. That's where it gets sticky.

In residential real estate, it is a whole different ballgame. There is no "perfect information." In fact, at times we struggle to get any information (okay, maybe a slight exaggeration). Oh sure, we have Zillow.com, which is basically >>Go to www.680homes.com to read the rest of this article.



Doug Buenz

Office
925.251.1111
Direct
925.463.2000
680Homes.com

CA DRE# 00843458

High Performance Real Estate



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

GOLDEN EAGLE!



Elegant Golden Eagle custom home with 4 BR plus office, 3 1/2 BTH, new cherry & granite kit, plantation shutters, and incredible .42 acre flat lot!
\$1,450,000

OPEN SUN 1-4



Fabulous estate home with 6 BR + loft & office/rec room, 5 BTH, 4 car garage, stone flooring, dream kitchen, and private 1.1 acre lot with pool, sports court, outdoor kitchen and views of valley!
7966 Foothill Knolls Dr
\$1,999,000

PENDING SALE!



Luxurious 4 BR, 3 BTH home with 3 car garage, vaulted ceilings, hardwood floors & stone floors, and resort like yard with pool, outdoor kit, and firepit!
\$929,000

PENDING SALE!



Fabulous single story 4 BR, 3 BTH home on an incredible private .90 acre wooded flat lot with gate. Gourmet kit with island, huge master suite & more!
\$1,299,000

PENDING SALE!



Charming 5 BR, 3 BTH home with stone flooring, vaulted ceilings, designer carpeting, Anderson windows, plantation shutters, and a private 1/4 acre lot with sparkling pebble tech salt water pool & BBQ on cul-de-sac!
\$879,000

JUST SOLD!



Prime Laguna Oaks luxury home with 5 BR plus office, 3 1/2 BTH, 4 car garage, granite kitchen, 3 fireplaces, and .30 Acre flat cul-de-sac lot with sparkling pool, spa, and outdoor kitchen!
\$1,439,000



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BLAISE LOFLAND



925.846.6500
www.blaiselofland.com
blaise@blaiselofland.com
DRE# 00882113
apr.com

PHEASANT RIDGE

COMING SOON



933 LAGUNA CREEK LANE, PLEASANTON
Beautiful Pheasant Ridge home on professionally landscaped .30 acre lot. Panoramic views of Pleasanton Ridge. This semi-custom built by Greenbriar in 2007 has a total square footage of 5,096. Six bedrooms plus bonus (media prepped) (7th), six bathrooms. Upgraded gourmet kitchen with granite and stainless appliances, three car garage, beautiful grounds include built-in BBQ, outdoor fountain, large lawn area & slate meditation area. Walk to neighborhood park, convenient to downtown and award winning Pleasanton schools.
PRICE TO FOLLOW

CANYON MEADOWS

COMING SOON



7860 - G CANYON MEADOWS CIRCLE, PLEASANTON
Beautiful Pleasanton single level condo, spacious floorplan with three bedrooms, two remodeled bathrooms, 1,257 square feet. Excellent condition, completely remodeled kitchen with granite slab countertops, tile & laminate flooring, updated light fixtures. Patio with storage. Walk to community clubhouse, pool/spa, gym/exercise facility & tennis court(s). Close to award winning schools and Stoneridge Mall.
PRICE TO FOLLOW

STONERIDGE PARK



2812 GARDEN CREEK CIRCLE, PLEASANTON
Beautiful Pleasanton single level close to great neighborhood parks & award winning schools. Open floor plan with three bedrooms, two updated bathrooms, 1,720 square feet. Excellent condition remodeled master bathroom, spacious family room/kitchen area. Hardwood flooring, updated fixtures, vaulted ceilings, completely finished garage. Large private rear yard with mature trees and landscaping. 6,264 square foot lot. Convenient to downtown.
OFFERED AT \$599,500

RUBY HILL

OPEN SUNDAY 1-5



4355 CAMPINIA PLACE, PLEASANTON
Gorgeous upgraded single level home on .60 acre premium lot. Located in the desirable Ruby Hill private gated community. Four bedrooms, plus private office, three bathrooms, custom gourmet kitchen with granite countertops. Extensive crown molding & built-ins, Brazilian cherry flooring, expansive master suite. Professional landscaping includes: built-in BBQ, viewing/sitting area, views of surrounding hills & vineyards, covered patio and extensive lawn area. 3-car garage. Ruby Hill community amenities: *clubhouse, golf course, swimming pool, *tennis courts, large park and greenbelts (*discounted memberships now available). Close to several wineries. **OFFERED AT \$1,479,000**

GOLDEN EAGLE ESTATES LOT



8019 GOLDEN EAGLE WAY, PLEASANTON
Beautiful large premium 1.08 acre lot in desirable Golden Eagle Estates gated community. Panoramic views! One of a couple of remaining lots. Build your own dream home or plans are approved and ready to start for a 6,300 sq ft. 5 bedroom, 6 bathroom home with 4 car garage, plans available for custom rock sculpted pool with waterslide and waterfall, pool cabana and custom outdoor kitchen with pizza oven, outdoor shower. Community amenities include: pool, tennis courts and access to Augustin Bernal Park. Located adjacent to Castlewood Country Club. Five minutes from charming downtown Pleasanton. **OFFERED AT \$1,000,000**

PONDEROSA

PENDING



6914 CORTE MADRID, PLEASANTON
Beautiful single level, extensively remodeled home in Ponderosa. Three bedroom, two completely remodeled bathrooms. Remodeled gourmet kitchen with granite slab countertop, expansive center island/breakfast bar and stainless appliances. Hardwood flooring, crown molding and upgraded fixtures. 1,612 square feet. Newer roof. Professional landscaping with brick trimmed aggregate patio and lawn area. Across from Del Prado Park. Close to Pleasanton's Sports Park and minutes from downtown. Award winning schools. **OFFERED AT \$649,500**

KOTTINGER RANCH

SOLD



1327 HEARST DRIVE, PLEASANTON
Great location! Beautiful semi-custom home on .40 acre lot. Expansive deck with panoramic views! Private rear grounds. Five bedrooms, 4.5 bathrooms, 4,026 square feet. Upgraded gourmet kitchen with granite countertops, newer paint & carpeting, extensive hardwood floors. Expansive master suite. Community pool, park, tennis courts and open space. Walk to Main Street and award winning schools! **SOLD FOR \$1,163,500**

DANVILLE RANCHER

SOLD REPRESENTED BUYER



752 TURRINI DRIVE, DANVILLE
Large beautifully updated ranch style home on over 1/3 acre premium lot in Danville! Three bedrooms, private office (4th), three bathrooms. Gourmet kitchen with granite slab countertops and stainless appliances. Large master suite and bath, professionally landscaped with outdoor kitchen, in-ground pool, boat/RV parking, and side yard access.
SOLD FOR \$900,600

PLEASANTON 900 Main Street





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REALTORS

PRESENTING THE PROPERTIES OF OUR *Pleasanton & Livermore* OFFICES...

DOUG BUENZ BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$1,999,000
Exquisite Mediterranean Estate! 6bd + loft + detached office/rec room, 5ba, 4 car garage, tumbled stone & granite, private 1.1 Acre lot. 7966 Foothill Knolls Dr

JO ANN LUISI BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$1,999,999
Rare Opportunity for a Sports Enthusiast! One of a kind estate featuring a spacious custom home, large multi-purpose out building. 8115 Caminotassajara

DANIEL ALPHER BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$1,610,000
Warm & inviting 4391 sq ft estate on a court with over 334k in upgrades. Designer touches embrace this 4 BD, 4.5 BA Home! 3372SagewoodCt.com 3372 Sagewood Ct

MOXLEY TEAM BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$1,599,000
Hardwood flooring throughout, designer touches, amazing rear yard, bonus room upstairs, office. Downstairs suite offers a large closet and full bath. 1226 Shady Pond

LINDA TRAUIG BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$1,524,000
Premium oversized lot, resort like backyard, pool, spa, custom built-ins, private guest suite, gourmet kitchen with large wine refrigerator. 838 Sunny Brook Wy

LINDA TRAUIG SAT & SUN 1-4



PLEASANTON \$1,499,000
5bd/4ba on .50+/-acre lot. South side of Pleasanton. Gorgeous carriage house with full kitchen, bath and laundry. Must See! 727 Vineyard Terrace

BLAISE LOFLAND SUN 1:00-5:00



PLEASANTON \$1,479,000
Upgraded single level, .60 acre premium lot. Ruby Hill gated community, gourmet kitchen w/ granite, 4 BD, 3 BA, office (5th). Professional landscaping. 4355 Campinia Pl

DAN GAMACHE, JR. BY APPT.



PLEASANTON \$849,000
Pristine 5bd/3ba Pleasanton Valley home! Original Country model, 2423+sf, expanded garage, updated throughout. Truly a rare home! 2224 Greenwood Rd

STEVE ELDRIDGE OPEN SUN 2-4



SAN RAMON \$475,000
JUST REDUCED! Charming 4bd, 2ba, single story home with nice yard, living room and separate family room. New interior paint and carpet. 122 Adams Pl.

MOXLEY TEAM SUN 1:00-4:00



PLEASANTON \$465,000
Charming single story contemporary garden style 2 BD 2 BA home. Open FR and LR, Breakfast bar in kitchen, wood flooring, master opens to patio. 4190 Peregrine Wy



A View From The Top

The higher you perch, the farther you can see. When you have exceptional vision to start with, it's no wonder that you can spot opportunities before others do. And capitalize on them.

Alain Pinel Realtors began 20 years ago with vision of changing the way real estate business is conducted. Today, our financial strength, focus and experience enable us to lead the Bay Area real estate industry in home sales. And to plan on being here for a long time to come.

Visit us at apr.com and see what we see.



Don Faught

Vice President
Managing Broker
Pleasanton and Livermore
dfaught@apr.com

