

Pleasanton Weekly

Step and column: Two sides still at odds over salary schedule that lays out increases for teachers PAGE 5

Every 15 Minutes: Students and parents simulate tragedy of DUI deaths in dramatic program PAGE 14

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VOL. XII, NUMBER 15 · APRIL 22, 2011

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Easter chicks — all year long

The adventure of raising
chickens in the back yard

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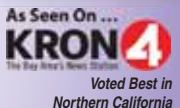
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AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING

Construction starts at long-delayed Stoneridge Creek

There's good news for the nearly 200 senior citizens who have already placed their deposits for homes in Stoneridge Creek, Pleasanton's new retirement community on Staples Ranch. Troy Bourne, vice president of planning and development for Continuing Care Communities, the company that is building and will operate Stoneridge Creek, said bulldozers are now grading the 50 acres his company is acquiring on Staples. A public groundbreaking will be held next month with the Stoneridge Creek health center and the first of 635 independent living condos and homes to be completed next year.

Bourne, who steered CLCs application process through an agonizingly long seven years of public hearings, workshops and environmental-impact discussions, told the Pleasanton Rotary Club last week that the start-up operations were both welcome news and long overdue. In one of his many appeals before the Pleasanton City Council — and to emphasize just how long he had been seeking an approval for Stoneridge Creek — Bourne said that during the process his wife had given birth to three of their children. With construction starting, Bourne has relocated his family from Southern California to Pleasanton.

Many of those who have registered for homes in Stoneridge Creek donned yellow shirts to fill the City Council chamber in a show of support for Stoneridge Creek. For some, there has been a sense of urgency since a requirement of being accepted into the retirement community is good health. During the years since deposits first were accepted, at least one applicant has been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Even so, CLC has agreed to allow the applicant and his spouse to move in because of their deposit and the permitting delays by the city.

Stoneridge Creek will consist of a cluster of 635 homes ranging in size from 700-square-foot condominium apartments to single family homes in 20 different floor plans as large as 2,600 square feet. The complex will include 60 assisted living apartments, and the nearby health center will have 90 skilled nursing beds. Employees to be hired locally will include man-

agers, nurses and staff to handle swimming, fitness and other programs. Security guards will double as First Responders in the complex, all trained in CPR. Surrounded by parkland, other amenities at Stoneridge Creek will include bocce ball, areas for gardening, a dog park, painting, art and dance classes, and water aerobics.

Bourne told Rotarians that the public's image of retirement facilities range from ocean view homes and golf courses for the very rich to stainless steel halls with green linoleum where many may remember visiting as kindergartners to sing Christmas carols. Stoneridge Creek is neither. It will look much like other upscale neighborhoods in Pleasanton, although restricted to those 55 or older. It's also pricey, though not prohibitively so for most Pleasanton homeowners. Costs will range from \$200,000 for the smaller condos to more than \$1 million for the larger homes. Yet unlike a typical development, Stoneridge Creek homes are not purchased or rented. No one actually buys their home, although it feels like that. The move-in costs are paid upfront much like a home purchase. No less than 75% of a "buyer's" investment will be refunded if the home occupant chooses to move out of Stoneridge Creek or, in the case of death, to the resident's estate. There's also a monthly service fee of up to \$2,400 for the first occupant of a larger home, another \$1,400 for a spouse.

After that, though, everything available at Stoneridge Creek is included, from the one meal a day to skilled nursing care whenever and as often as needed. Besides full long-term care, everything else a homeowner used to pay is covered, such as property taxes, home insurance, home maintenance, utility bills, landscaping and more. If a spouse needs care in the skilled nursing center, the other spouse can continue living at the couple's Stoneridge Creek home, which will be a short walk away from the health center.

Stoneridge Creek marks the first of several multi-million-dollar developments planned on Staples Ranch, a 124-acre undeveloped site at the southwest corner of I-580 and El Charro Road that was recently annexed into Pleasanton. An auto mall, retail center and a 17-acre public park that might also include an ice arena also are planned there, along with an extension of Stoneridge Drive through Staples to connect to El Charro Road and an extension of Jack London Boulevard into Livermore. ■

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About the Cover

Buffy, being raised by Emily Esparza in the family's new chicken coop in Pleasanton, looks like a poster chick for Easter. Photo by Jerri Pantages Long. Cover design by Lili Cao.

Vol. XII, Number 15

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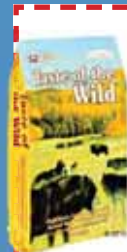


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Streetwise

ASKED AROUND TOWN

What does Easter mean to you and your family?



Craig Ungethiem
Youth pastor

It means everything. Without Easter, the Christian faith would be nothing. It's what our faith hinges on. Easter's pretty sweet.

Joshua Roosa
Administrator/drummer

Easter is the promise of life. Before Christ died for us, we were all going to experience death. But because he suffered, we all get to live.



Helena Stewart
Kindergartner

I like to find all the eggs that the Easter Bunny hides. I really like to dye eggs. We go to church, too.

JD Murphy
Student

Easter is a time for us to be together and celebrate our religious beliefs. We go to my grandparents' house in San Jose to spend time with family. The Easter Bunny still comes, too.



Brigitte Lopez
Housekeeper

We celebrate the Holy Week before by eating only fish and attending church services. On Easter we have a big dinner with the entire family. Though we do hide eggs and give the kids baskets, the true meaning for us is Jesus' resurrection.

—Compiled by Kerry Nally

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

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DIGEST

What's a Pleasanton home worth?

A community meeting about the status of the real estate market in Pleasanton is scheduled for 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 26, at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St. in Pleasanton.

The free event is co-sponsored by the city, the Pleasanton Weekly, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce and the Bay East Association of REALTORS®.

"This town hall is an opportunity for residents to learn how the Pleasanton real estate market has reacted in 2010 and what to expect in 2011," said David Stark, Public Affairs Director for the Bay East Association of Realtors.

A panel of experts in the real estate, lending and economics professions will include Otto Catrina, 2011 president of the Bay East Association of Realtors, and George Duarte of the East Bay Chapter of the California Association of Mortgage Brokers. They will address issues related to home purchase finance, including current mortgage industry conditions, possible changes in mortgage finance rules, loan types and interest rates, and foreclosures.

For more information, call the Bay East Association of Realtors at 730-4068.

Book sale sets record

The Friends of the Pleasanton Library reports that the spring book sale last month netted \$20,035, the most ever. Organizers credit the volunteers who worked at the sale and provided support, including donations of 850 boxes of merchandise to sell.

Visit friendsofthepleasanton-library.org for the latest news and volunteer opportunities.

Bill for rail funds

Congressman Jerry McNerney (D., Pleasanton) introduced legislation last Friday to help fund the Altamont Corridor Rail Project, which will expand rail services between the Central Valley and the Bay Area. Currently, the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) runs weekday trains from the Central Valley to the Bay Area and shares tracks with freight trains and Amtrak. The Altamont Corridor Rail Project establishes a dedicated track for passenger rail services along its 85-mile corridor.

The bill, H.R. 1504, authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to provide up to \$450 million in grants over the next decade for preliminary engineering, final design and construction of the Altamont Corridor Rail Project. It is expected to be referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for further consideration.

Sides still at odds over step and column raises for teachers

Issue may be key in parcel tax vote to raise money for schools

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

As Pleasanton prepares once again to vote on a parcel tax, no single issue has received more attention than step and column, the salary schedule for teachers and other certificated employees.

Opponents of the tax, Measure E, want to stop step and column increases, saying that the higher pay will cost the district \$15 million while the parcel tax will only raise \$8 million. School officials point out that step and column is a fact of life, and not only in California.

"It's something that's been a normal part of school salaries and compensation for many years and it is the norm for school districts around the state and the nation," said Bill Faraghan, district assistant superintendent of human resources. "It is intended to provide recognition for the added experience and professional training that teachers acquire."

Faraghan pointed out the raises amount to 2.7% to 3.5% a year,

and that not every employee gets a raise every year.

"Teachers come in fairly educated, obviously. They have at least 30 or more credits (beyond a bachelor's degree) that they've already completed before they were hired," he said. "So then, what would happen, if somebody got hired by us they would simply move down the column."

This year, a beginning teacher without a teaching credential would start at \$58,739, and go up a dollar for years two through four. In the fifth year, that teacher would go to \$59,564, then to \$61,367 in year six, and would remain there if the teacher doesn't continue his or her education.

Someone beginning with the 30 credits required for a teaching credential would earn \$58,740 and remain there for three years. In the fourth year, it would go to \$60,379 and would jump about \$2,000 a year until the teacher maxed out at \$73,833 in his or her 11th year and stay there un-

less the teacher got additional college credit.

A teacher starting with 45 credits past a bachelor's degree would start at \$58,740 and go to \$58,921 the second year. After that, her or his salary would climb about \$2,000 a year and max out at \$79,322 in the 12th year, where it would remain, again, unless he or she got 60 credits.

A teacher starting with a bachelor's degree and 60 credits would start at \$59,721, with the salary jumping about \$2,000 a year until it maxed out at \$83,796 in year 12. Someone with a bachelor's degree and 75 credits would start at \$62,290 and, again, climb about \$2,000 a year until year 12, where it would remain at \$87,360 for four years before going to \$90,283 in year 16, topping out at \$95,395 for 20 years and beyond.

Faraghan notes teachers pay for their own credits before their salaries go up. He said Cal State East Bay, where many of the teachers get their additional credits, costs

about \$225 per unit.

"That's \$3,400 out of pocket to move across columns, and about \$10,000 out of pocket to move to a bachelor's plus 75, the far end of the columns," Faraghan said. "About 130 fulltime teachers earn the full amount. That's out of a total of 715 fulltime positions."

That doesn't include annual stipends: \$500 a year for a master's degree and \$650 for a doctorate, and as critics are quick to point out, that's for a 180-day work year; Faraghan notes, however, that teachers haven't had a cost of living (COLA) increase in three years.

Doug Miller, an opponent of step and column increases, sees the raises as costs gone out of control.

"Step and column as I understand it has been traditionally how teachers are paid," Miller said. "Do I think it's necessary? No. I'm sure there's other ways to pay teachers. Right now, step and

See **STEP** on Page 6



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ready, set, hunt

Mason Purnell, 6, leads the charge at the 17th annual Family Easter Egg Hunt and Carnival presented by Realtors Dave and Sue Flashberger in Val Vista Park. "We had approximately 150 children," reported Sue Flashberger. "A good time was had by all." See more photos at www.PleasantonWeekly.com.

VFW to host service for Pleasanton soldier

The Pleasanton Veterans of Foreign Affairs post will hold a public memorial service next Saturday, April 30, for Army Specialist Jameson Lynn Lindskog. Lindskog, an Army medic, was killed March 29 when enemy forces attacked his unit in Afghanistan's Konar Province. He was the son of Donna Walker of Pleasanton and Curtis Lindskog of Livermore.

Patrick Leary, public affairs officer for VFW post 6298, said the Veterans building will open at 9 a.m. April 30 for those who want to sign a guest register, express written condolences and remembrances and view displays.

The service will include a VFW Color Guard posting colors, comments by Lindskog's family, a memorial address and a slide show in remembrance of Specialist Lindskog. He was one of six

"Screaming Eagle" soldiers killed by small arms fire that day, all of whom were assigned to 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Born in 1987, he would have turned 24 years old on May 24, and was scheduled to be deployed back to the U.S. in a few weeks and due to be discharged next year.

At Tuesday night's City Council meeting, Councilman Jerry Thorne remembered Specialist Lindskog, leading a standing minute of silence in his memory.

"We will be adjourning our meeting this evening in honor and memory of Jameson, and I will be delivering the council's documentation to his parents at his memorial service on April 30," Thorne said. ■

Weekly wins awards in statewide newspaper contest

Holiday Fund stories, program gain special recognition for Public Service

By JEB BING

The Pleasanton Weekly was recognized by the California Newspaper Publishers Association on Saturday for stories, programs and general excellence in 2010.

The Weekly won second place in the CNPA's prestigious Public Service category among all state weekly newspapers in its circulation category for its 2010 Holiday Fund campaign and the series of stories that supported it. The Alma-

nac in Menlo Park, also published by Embarcadero Media, won the first place award for its series of stories about how Proposition 13 has affected local education.

The Pleasanton Weekly's articles were part of this newspaper's 2010 Holiday Fund series of stories and public campaign effort to support five Tri-Valley nonprofits and their need for financial support to meet their growing obligations in 2011.

The campaign raised just under \$150,000 with nearly \$30,000 being given to the five organizations: Hope Hospice, Open Heart Kitchen, Axis Community Health, Valley Humane Society and the Ryan Comer Cancer Resource Center at ValleyCare Health System.

In addition, the CNPA presented the Pleasanton Weekly with Certificates of Achievement for "General Excellence" for its issues of March 12, 19 and 26 in 2010,

the category in contention, and for "Investigative and Enterprise Reporting" for reporter Glenn Wohltmann's story about Pleasanton public school expulsions, published last July 9.

The "Better Newspaper Contest" awards are based on circulation categories to daily and weekly publications. The Pleasanton Weekly competes with other California weekly newspapers in the 11,001-25,000 circulation category. ■

Dog hoarders ask for help

Valley Humane Society rescues 10 dogs, filmed by Animal Planet

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

A team from Valley Humane Society helped remove 10 mixed-breed dogs in ages ranging from 3 months to 4 years from a home of animal hoarders in the Sacramento area Monday after they asked for assistance.

"The owner voluntarily surrendered his dogs," said Steve Glavan, Valley Humane Society's executive director. "This was not a criminal case, and this individual and his family have taken steps to address this issue with our help."

Valley Humane Society, which is located on Nevada Street in Pleasanton, helped with the dog rescue in cooperation with the Animal Planet for its new hit series, "Confessions: Animal Hoarding." The series explores stories of people who own more pets than they can care for.

"This was situation where the producers contacted us directly," Glavan said.

"We wanted to work with a no-kill shelter with a strong reputation for animal care and placement and Valley Humane came highly recommended," said Jereme Watt, producer for the Animal Planet program.

Valley Humane Society will be working with local experts and its staff to assess the physical and behavioral condition of each of the dogs in the coming days, with the goal of making them available



COURTESY VALLEY HUMANE SOCIETY

Valley Humane Society loads its van to bring 10 mixed-breed dogs to Pleasanton to care for them and find them new homes.

for adoption.

"We know that a lot of people have a passion for animals that come out of situations like this," Glavan said. "These are special dogs, and some may require patience and love to adjust, but we believe we can find a loving home for every one of them."

Glavan noted that taking on this project will stretch Valley Humane's resources, but says the opportunity is too important to pass up.

"We still need to raise a significant amount of money as we move into our new facility, but this is our mission," he said. "We are confident that the community will respond to support this effort."

Local companies, including Murphy's Paw and Pet Food Express, have already stepped up to provide supplies and volunteers to assist with the care of the rescued dogs, he said.

Animal Planet is highlighting the problem of animal hoarding, which Glavan says is little understood and far more common than most people realize. There are over 3,000 reported cases a year, and at least 10 times that number that go unreported.

To learn how to contribute directly to the ongoing care of the Valley Humane rescue dogs, or support Valley Humane Society's ongoing programs, visit www.valleyhumane.org or call 426-8656. ■

Enter now! Mother-Daughter Lookalike Contest

With Mother's Day right around the corner, the Pleasanton Weekly again is holding its annual Mother-Daughter Lookalike contest. Send a digital photo to contest@pleasantonweekly.com by Monday, April 25. Photos can be black and white or color, need to be in JPG format,

at least 300 dpi and no larger than 1 MB. Photos entered for previous contests are not eligible; only digital photos will be accepted.

The staff at the Weekly will choose the finalists, and readers will be able to vote online for which mother and daughter in Pleasanton

look most alike. First-place prize is a \$100 gift certificate for Strizzi's restaurant; second-place prize is four gift certificates to the Vine Cinema in Livermore.

Photos of the winners will be published in the May 6 edition of the Pleasanton Weekly. ■

STEP

Continued from Page 5

column is inappropriate given the circumstances not only of the state's budget but everyone's budget.

"We're going to basically increase pay for teachers, this next year and the year after that. Yes, it's how teachers have been paid, but we need to freeze step and column because it will increase spending in our school district by \$15 million over four years and that money is better spent in the classroom, not on pay increases."

Luz Cazares, assistant superintendent of business services, recently confirmed that step and column increases would cost the district \$1.5 million a year. That \$1.5 million per year must be added to each prior year's increase, Miller said, for a total of \$15 million, the same period the parcel tax would bring in just over \$8 million.

"It's a lot of money and just to say that this is how we pay

teachers is not a reasonable response," Miller said. "Even if the school board can't control everything — and they can't — they need to take a position that they're against step and column. They need to take a position that step and column raises should be frozen for the next several years until the economy improves."

Faraghan said any major changes could have consequences for Pleasanton.

"Pretty much every school I'm aware of in the state — all of our neighboring districts — have a step and column in place. Were we not to have a step and column in place, we would lose teachers because of that," he said.

Miller, though, said putting a reign on spending should be the district's top priority.

"We still have something like 9% unemployment in the nation and something like 12% unemployment in California. There's a lot of people out there who are hurting," he said. ■

Youth volunteer charged with molestation

A Livermore man has been charged with child molestation in a case involving a 16-year-old over the last year, according to a Pleasanton police report.

Carloe Estigo, 35, was arrested April 15; police withheld notification because of the nature of the incident.

The case came to light when the girl's mother notified police she'd discovered her daughter had been molested by Estigo, the report said.

He was known to the family through their church in Castro Valley, where Estigo volunteered with the youth group, according to the report, which said Estigo is being held in the Santa Rita Jail on felony charges of committing a lewd act on a child and sexual assault.

—Glenn Wohltmann

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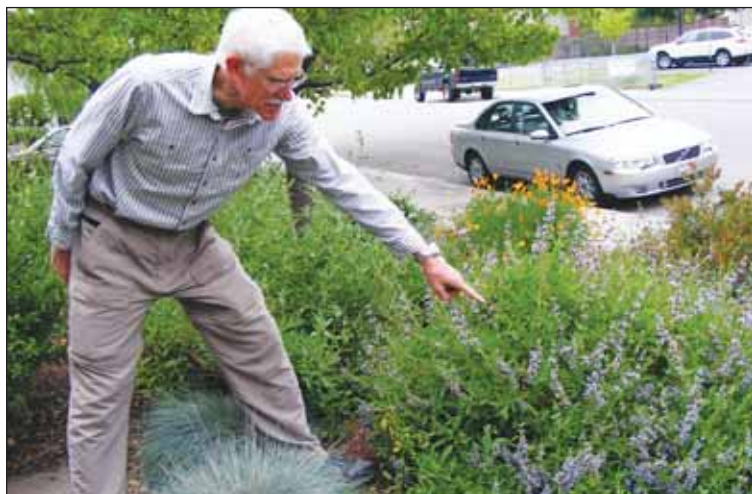
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Pleasanton residents enjoy 'going native'

Neighboring gardeners on tour after replanting their front yards

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Going native seems to be contagious.

Ward and Pat Belding replaced their front lawn on Highland Oaks Drive with native plants several years ago. Now their next-door neighbors, Colleen and Brad Clark, have followed suit, saying they were inspired by the Beldings.

Both homes are on the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, which includes more than 50 private gardens in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, on Sunday, May 1.

The Beldings are on the tour for the third year.

"I first heard about native plant gardening in 2006," Ward Belding recalled.

When he and Pat went on a couple of garden tours, including Bringing Back the Natives, they were impressed to hear of the advantages.

"These include not having to mow your lawn ever again, not having to

put lots of chemical fertilizers and insecticides on it, and even more importantly, cutting your water bill substantially," Belding explained.

Alrie Middlebrook, the owner of the firm that installed their landscaping, will be on hand May 1 to answer questions and sell native plants.

The Beldings' side yard contains their compost bins, and the back yard is dominated by a huge oak tree.

Their garden will also be open for viewing May 15 on the annual Valley Humane Society fundraising tour.

Next door, Colleen Clark not only will open her garden to visitors May 1 but will give talks at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. titled, "How to design and install a native plant garden: With research and patience, you can do it too!"

"Gardening is very much a passion of mine," Clark said. "I used to garden side by side with my great-



grandmother in Woodside."

They moved into their home almost eight years ago, but other projects came first, including redesigning her front walkway and adding a front porch. They also enlarged the back yard and added a play structure for their five children.

Then three years ago, Colleen

got to work on the native plants.

"It took one year to research it," she said with a laugh.

"When you keep it native, you keep the scope smaller," she pointed out, so her choices were narrowed. "Also with natives you don't have to amend the soil."

She said all of her plants are na-

DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Far left: Ward Belding points out the six types of native sages in his front yard. Left: A large oak tree dominates the Belding back yard.

tive to California and about 35 percent are native to Alameda County plus she often opted for hybrids because she wanted color. She kept a 40-year-old olive tree in the front yard that was planted by the developer because she wanted it for the birds. Her garden also attracts butterflies, bees and bugs.

"Because we don't use much water, we don't get snails or earwigs," she said.

"It's far less maintenance than grass," she noted, plus her children enjoy playing and working among the native plants far more than on the lawn in back.

The Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour is free but requires advance registration at www.bringingbackthenatives.net. The Belding home, 7703 Highland Oaks Drive, will serve as a same-day registration site for those who decide to go at the last minute. ■

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Speeding man with wife on hood says not guilty

Accused is found competent to stand trial

By JESSICA LIPSKY

Christopher Michael Carroll, the Manteca man accused of hitting speeds of 100 miles an hour with his wife on the hood of their minivan until they reached Pleasanton, pleaded not guilty to charges of attempted murder and spousal abuse on Tuesday.

San Joaquin County Superior Court Judge Richard Vlavianos found Carroll to be mentally competent to stand trial based on the result of a third psychiatric exam, according to reports. Vlavianos ordered the third exam after two doctors gave differing opinions on Carroll's mental state.

Carroll, 36, was also charged with assault with a deadly weapon after the Feb. 26 incident left his wife with hypothermia and discolored hands. Manteca Police spokesman Rex Osborn said Carroll's wife had tried to stop

him from leaving their home after an argument about Carroll's drug use.

"Friday night before midnight, they're still arguing about his drug use. He demands the keys to the family van ... He assaults her," Osborn said. "She jumps on the front of it. She grabs hold of the wipers. She's actually flung from facing the windshield to his right. She ended up wedged between the antenna and the passenger side window."

Osborn said the woman, whose pants may have become caught in something on the van, clung to a windshield wiper and the wheel well as the minivan wound through Manteca city streets, where police received their first report of the incident.

A 911 caller reported an accident between a pedestrian and a car, but when police arrived, no one was there. Meanwhile, Car-

roll — his wife still holding on — made his way onto Interstate 5 and California Highway 132 and across the Altamont Pass on Interstate 580, where he pulled off onto the Tassajara Road exit in Pleasanton.

At his arraignment on March 3, Carroll demanded a speedy trial and to represent himself before turning to the judge to say, "I'm guilty." The court wouldn't accept the plea because Carroll hadn't been told of the potential penalties involved.

Carroll, who is now represented by attorney Mary Ann Bird, is being held without bail at the San Joaquin County Jail in French Camp. He will return to the Stockton courthouse April 26 to determine a date for his preliminary hearing.

—Glenn Wohltmann
contributed to this story.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Alex Chin, one of two sixth-graders on the Pleasanton Middle School Golf Team, hit his second hole-in-one at practice last week.

Boy hits hole-in-one — again

Feat occurs at PMS golf team practice

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

It's supposed to be the shot of a lifetime but Alex Chin has hit a hole-in-one twice — and he's only 12.

Last summer, at age 11, he aced the 15th hole at Las Positas Golf Course in Livermore. Then Monday he delivered a hole-in-one on the 5th hole at the Pleasanton Golf Center at the Fairgrounds when he was practicing with his teammates on the Pleasanton Middle School golf team.

"It did three bounces, then hit the stick, then went in the hole," Alex recalled. "My teammates were there for team practice and they were really happy for me. One ran around in circles. They said, 'Good job.'"

"I think it was a combination of skill and luck," he added.

Alex, the son of Emily and Alan Chin of Pleasanton, has been golfing since he was 4 years old. He became a Junior Golfer at Las Positas when he was 8 under the Director of Instruction Andy Nisbet.

A sixth-grader, this is the first year for him on the PMS golf team, which is part of the Tri-Valley Middle School league.

"He is one of two sixth-graders that made the team of 12," Emily Chin said.

"I'd like to thank my coaches, Coach Phil (Woolsey) and Coach

Tim (Marchi) for letting us play some rounds at the Pleasanton Fairgrounds," Alex said.

Alex said his accomplishment was announced at school the next day, and kids came up to congratulate him.

Matt McGuire, an employee at the course, said he's been playing for 35 years and has never hit a hole-in-one.

"I've come close," he said, "but they are very rare."

He agreed it was a combination of skill and luck.

"It's skill that you do have to get the ball going in the right direction," McGuire said, "and sometimes you get lucky and it goes in."

Alex said he practices for two hours twice a week with the team, plus practices daily. He also does karate, bowls and sometimes plays basketball.

"But my favorite is golf," he said. "My plan is to get really good grades and go to Stanford and play golf there."

"That sounds like a very good plan," his mother said. "A scholarship would be good."

But first, in honor of the hole-in-one tradition of paying for everyone's drinks after the game, he owes his teammates a round of cokes. ■

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TAKE US ALONG



Enjoying the view: Beverly Buckley and Sue Johnson visit Auckland, New Zealand, with their Weekly. The two women have been friends since they were in high school.

Pleasanton Weekly

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EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

What a difference a recession makes

The Pleasanton City Council, which just a few years ago built its priorities on multi-million-dollar capital improvement projects such as the Callippe Preserve municipal golf course, lighted baseball fields on Bernal Community Park, a renovated Veterans Memorial Building and, most recently, the Firehouse Arts Center, agreed last week to a less costly but still ambitious priority plan for the next two years. As recently as 2004, when city revenues approached the \$100 million mark, and with continued record high property and sales tax receipts, the city's fast-paced spending programs added more new facilities and services to all parts of Pleasanton, including the Alviso Adobe Community Park, Marilyn Kane Trail, restoration of Kottinger Creek, realignment of Vineyard Avenue, a new Gingerbread Preschool, a new fire station on Bernal Avenue across from the Fairgrounds, the widening of the Bernal Avenue bridge over the Arroyo del Valle, and a BMX competition bike facility at the Shadow Cliffs Regional Park.

Last Thursday, with municipal tax revenue down and a current fiscal year budget that has dropped to \$86 million, the council became more cautious in terms of spending, and much more focused on mission, services and projects that aren't capital intensive. This is good because many of the 60-plus work plan items on the new priority list are among those that benefit the community but too often are postponed or neglected in the shadow of the multi-million-dollar projects we've been focused on. That doesn't mean the council has sidetracked consideration of a proposed \$70 million new library or the completion of sports fields and community park amenities on Bernal. Those improvements remain on the new priority list but will have to wait until the recession is over before they can be completed.

The council's 10 goals and objectives beyond Bernal are:

Implementation of the General Plan. Pleasanton must complete a Climate Action Plan and meet a jobs-housing balance both to fulfill its recently adopted General Plan and to meet state requirements. That means completing the Housing Element that shows the city has rezoned enough acreage to accommodate workforce and affordable housing targets. This effort will also mark the start of developing an East Side Specific Plan to cover future development on quarry lands and other industrial sites north of Valley Avenue at Stanley Boulevard.

Fiscal Sustainability. Once the Housing Element plan is accepted by the state, a long-term fiscal analysis will get under way to make sure the city's maintenance and service levels stay at their current high levels both for those now living in Pleasanton as well as the more than 3,000 who will move into the new housing that will be built to accommodate them.

Affordable Housing. With land now rezoned in the Hacienda Business Park for high density housing and more sites to be rezoned by year's end to satisfy a court order, Pleasanton planners will next be working with developers who want to build on these sites to make sure they meet Pleasanton standards and will adequately serve the young couples and singles who move here. That will include retail sites and possibly new schools to meet the needs of these new communities.

Among other City Council priorities for 2011-12 are measures that it believes will continue enhancing Pleasanton's quality of life, including enlarging Lions Wayside Park and new parks on Staples Ranch, working with the Pleasanton Heritage Association to establish preservation guidelines, and developing business incentives and nighttime entertainment allowance in accord with new proposals by the Pleasanton Downtown Association.

The council's decision to pull back on major capital improvement programs to focus on strategic planning for current and future needs is welcome news for taxpayers who see neighboring cities running out of money and cutting back on services. So far, fiscal prudence has kept Pleasanton in a strong financial position that the City Council's action continues, at least for the next two years. ■

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GUEST OPINION

Measure E: separating the myths from the facts

There are certain ideas that most of us can agree on:

1. All Pleasanton students deserve a quality education that prepares them for college and a competitive job market.
2. The outstanding quality of our Pleasanton schools protects our property values.
3. Sacramento does a poor job of funding our schools and we cannot count on them to protect



our students.

These simple yet important ideas are at the heart of Measure E.

To keep our schools among the best and protect our property values, Pleasanton schools need stable funding that cannot be taken away by the state. Measure E will provide stable and predictable funding to protect the most important core academic instructional programs and retain highly qualified teachers. It requires strict taxpayer protections to ensure that the funds are used for only these purposes.

I've heard several recurring myths that are easily dispelled. Before you cast your ballot, remember these important facts:

- Fact No. 1: Every penny goes to the classroom. The legally binding text of Measure E specifically prohibits funds from being spent on increased salaries and

benefits for any school employee. Furthermore, Pleasanton Unified School District has no unfunded pension liability for its teachers, and local school employees already pay 100% of their medical and dental benefit costs.

- Fact No. 2: By law, Measure B bond dollars, which were approved by local voters 14 years ago, cannot be used for instructional programs. As required by law, these funds were used for facility improvements that have been completed on time and on budget. In fact, PUSD saved taxpayers millions by taking advantage of low interest rates and state matching dollars.

- Fact No. 3: This problem cannot be solved through cuts alone. PUSD has already reduced spending by \$19.4 million by cutting programs, eliminating dozens of teachers and staff, negotiating salary and benefit

concessions from employees, and freezing the salary schedule. Additional cuts will directly impact instructional programs and students.

- Fact No. 4: Measure E funds can only be spent for the purposes identified in the measure. Furthermore, annual audits and an independent citizens' oversight committee are mandatory.
- Fact No. 5: Each and every senior who feels the \$98 annual cost of Measure E will be a financial burden may obtain an exemption by filing a one-time application. After the first year, no other forms or applications are required.

When you study the facts, Measure E presents stark alternatives.

We can vote to protect our outstanding local schools. Or we can watch ongoing state budget cuts eliminate the programs and services that make our schools among the best.

We can vote to keep our property values among the strongest in the region. Or we accept the

risk that declining school quality will lead to declining home values.

We can vote to enhance local control of our schools and decrease the degree to which our schools depend on the politicians in Sacramento. Or we can sit back and hope that the Legislature will finally get its act together.

The most respected organizations and leaders in our community, including the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce, the Pleasanton Weekly, and the League of Women Voters, have taken a close look and proudly endorse Measure E.

I'm sure that when you take a close look for yourself, you'll join me in voting Yes on E.

Ken Mercer, a 42-year Pleasanton resident, has two children who graduated from Pleasanton schools and three grandchildren attending Pleasanton schools. He is a former City Councilman and was the first elected mayor in Pleasanton, serving 16 years.

LETTERS

Administrative bloat

Dear Editor,

I am writing in opposition to Measure E. I voted for Measure B in '97, but no more. We will not vote for any more measures to increase our property taxes until the Pleasanton Unified School District has shown that they have already made the hard choices to live with in their means. They have not.

To help illustrate my point, in 1987 my wife and I had a meeting with Steve Maher, then the principal of Alisal Elementary. Our daughter was starting kindergarten and we wanted to get acquainted.

During our conversation, I showed him the roster of staff at Alisal. I compared it to the elementary school I went to in Southern California that was built the same year as Alisal and looked like it was designed by the same architect. In 1956 we had: one principal, one full-time secretary and one part-time secretary, one full-time custodian, one part-time nurse and no teacher's assistants. Besides the teachers, that was it.

There was a long pregnant pause after this communication. Clearly it was out of Steve's hands. The 1987 roster indicated that extreme administrative bloat had become the norm.

The fox is in control of the hen house.

Gary Kinsman

We need Measure E

Dear Editor,

Although I no longer have children in the Pleasanton Schools, as a 30-year resident and business owner I know how important great schools are to the community.

Pleasanton schools need our help. State funding reductions have resulted in nearly \$19.4 million in

cuts to Pleasanton schools. With millions more in new state cuts looming, classroom instruction and teachers are all that remain to be cut. This is the core of the education our children need to succeed.

The fine reputation of the Pleasanton Unified School District is a major attraction to new families relocating to the Bay Area. This helps maintain the value of our homes and keep our business community strong.

We need a stable, local funding source for Pleasanton schools now more than ever. We need a funding measure that supports core academic instruction designed to improve math, science and reading skills. In short, we need Measure E. To learn more, visit SupportPleasantonSchools.com.

Judy Wheeler

Vote Yes on E

Dear Editor,

I am writing to encourage all Pleasanton residents to vote Yes on Measure E. When we were transferred to Northern California some 16 years ago, even though our sons were college graduates, we elected to purchase a home in Pleasanton based upon the reputation of the schools' excellence in education. As a former employee of a neighboring school district and a seasoned citizen, education is the under-scoring path to a bright future for Pleasanton that requires strong community support.

The outstanding schools that we have in Pleasanton need the support of stable funding that Measure E will provide. It is becoming increasingly clear that the state Legislature will not pass a budget with adequate financial funding for quality educational programs that exist here.

Not only will Measure E help support core academic instruction that improves math, science and reading skills, but also there will be an oversight committee to ensure that the funds are used as

described in the proposition.

Prior to the May 3 deadline, I implore you to mail in a Yes vote on your ballot for the passage of Measure E.

Mary Ellen Huey

E won't help programs

Dear Editor,

Measure E supporters claim the proposed Parcel Tax will not fund raises during this fiscal crisis. However, the funds it generates will free up district money to support raises. In fact, during the term of this parcel tax, the district will give out raises totaling \$15 million. This parcel tax will not even cover those raises.

There will be no new money available for instructional programs, libraries or minimizing class size increases even though those are the items advertised by the measure supporters. (For the real facts on Measure E visit www.PleasantonParcelTaxInfo.com.) Most residents are unaware that some specialized instructional programs are not paid for by PUSD. For example, for the last two years, private organizations such as Pleasanton Partners in Education (PPIE) have funded music programs at the elementary level.

We do not want another tax. To really help the children of this community, PUSD needs to show the courage to make the structural changes needed to avert bigger problems down the road, which have to be addressed. Given the facts that PUSD's income has actually increased \$18 million over the last three years, and that we are still paying off the last PUSD bond to the tune of about \$866 per year per parcel, and that the proposed tax increases are not being paired with true budget reform, it is not fiscally responsible to pass this tax. I urge PUSD and the union to propose real reforms prior to seeking more money from over-burdened taxpayers. The solution they have

shown so far — a willingness to fire new teachers to protect raises of senior staff — is unacceptable.

Reg Beer

We voted Yes

Dear Editor,

We have voted to support the four-year \$98 per annum parcel tax.

All local school districts in California will be paying a larger proportion of school costs for years to come. We should get ahead of that curve and address the issue head-on. Local funding will increase regardless of cost-saving measures by the districts.

Excellent local schools increase the value of homes and businesses.

We are voting for our near term local economy as well as long term leadership skills by today's students.

We are eligible for the Senior Citizen exemption, but we will contribute the \$98 per year to the schools for classroom supplies.

Brad and Sandra Hirst

Need real reforms

Dear Editor,

Since the last parcel tax attempt I have spoken with school administrators and school board trustees about my concerns of unsustainable financial practices, partially responsible for our current problems. Two years later, the district has another tax on the ballot while no fiscal reforms have taken place.

The main fiscal problem of the district is giving out automatic raises for longevity. Teachers receive pay increases through what is called "step and column raises." These are typically 3% each year, costing the district an additional \$1.5 million each year. Through compounding, these raises will cost \$15 million over the period of the parcel tax.

When the economy was doing well, the district received additional money from the state which paid the automatic raises. With the economy not doing well, we do not

receive money from the state for these raises; but we are still giving raises. What does that mean? To pay for the raises of some teachers we must fire newer teachers with less seniority, increase class sizes and cut programs.

There are several solutions to this problem and not all require approval from the unions. However, the district is not dealing with this problem. The future of our children's education is in jeopardy unless real reforms are done now.

While the automatic raises are my biggest concern, please read the ballot arguments or go to www.PleasantonParcelTaxInfo.com for other issues like the district's outrageous pensions.

I am voting No on Measure E and once again ask the district for real reforms.

Steve Brozosky, former PUSD trustee; former Pleasanton City Councilman

Teachers' concessions

Dear Editor,

Last year, the teachers union in Pleasanton approved eight furlough days, which resulted in a nearly \$1.9 million savings to the district. But the concessions did not stop there. Teachers also agreed to bigger staffing ratios at the middle and high schools; suspending the seven-period day at high school; suspending voluntary staff development hours; and suspending support and training of new teachers.

Their concessions for the current fiscal year alone total \$3.6 million. Administrators and staff also agreed to concessions. With those funds, many programs were spared. Yet the opponents of Measure E continue to quibble and nitpick, as if the teachers have not sacrificed enough already.

Measure E shows that we as a community recognize that we must play a part in sheltering students from the worst of the continuing

See **LETTERS** on Page 11

LETTERS

Continued from Page 10

cuts. We cannot ask less than 800 teachers to bear the burden. We must do our part — vote Yes on E.

Carol Kato

Education matters

Dear Editor,

I urge the Pleasanton community to vote Yes on Measure E. Like many others, my husband and I chose Pleasanton for its schools and its family friendly environment. California's budget deficit has hit hard and even wonderful places like Pleasanton have been adversely affected.

The money obtained from Measure E will go directly to Pleasanton schools. It is not contingent upon the overall California budget — an unreliable and shrinking funding source. I realize that many are concerned about where the money the state receives for education actually goes. I, too, share these concerns. That is exactly why I believe we need to provide a local, stable fund-

ing source for our schools. Passing Measure E helps ensure we can provide our children with the best possible education. And the quality of Pleasanton schools should be of utmost importance to you, since better schools mean increased property values and a better community for all of the people who live here.

We have the opportunity to show our children that education matters and that a community working together can affect positive change and improvements for the greater good of its people. It's time for Pleasanton to stand up and vote Yes on Measure E.

Kelly Bayani

Concerns about Measure E

Dear Editor,

Before deciding on Measure E, voters should consider whether Pleasanton Unified School District's financial controls are where they should be.

Being an internal controls auditor by trade, I dug deep into the district's 2010 audit report avail-

able online. It described significant deficiencies for handling cash, credit cards, attendance, reporting fraud, and inappropriate expenditures (otherwise satisfactory). If this was for a business where the acceptable number of significant deficiencies is zero, I'd be looking for the alarm button.

A big control gap described how the District lacked procedures for personnel to report fraud and unethical behavior without fear of repercussions. The auditors found that the district had not thoroughly communicated ethical values, and guidance on illegal or negligent behavior. This was less than acceptable.

An anonymous ethics hotline is a key part of Sarbanes-Oxley for businesses, and the school district should have had something similar in place a long time ago.

The district's financial and internal controls deficiencies should have all been fixed before the Measure E tax was requested. I'm recommending a No vote until this gets done with a clean audit report.

Richard Pugh

Support Measure E

Dear Editor,

Having had the wonderful opportunity to serve thousands of families in this community over a bunch of years, I want to encourage all to support Measure E. Please do this not only for what it means to our community but for the message it sends to our children.

It takes a significant majority not a simple majority and the process involves mailing the ballot in on time. This is one of those times where we have an opportunity to set an example for our children, to take responsibility in thinking of others, make an extra effort, and to do it right away. Thanks for all that you do. It's a great community.

Greg Thome, retired CYO

Children pay the price

Dear Editor,

In over 10 years as a PTA volunteer at the local and state level, I can honestly say I've never seen things so dire. As a result of recurring state budget deficits and cuts to educa-

tion funding, our school district has lost nearly \$20 million in two years, and more cuts are ahead of us.

To cope, the Pleasanton Unified School District has already reduced spending by \$19.4 million; eliminated 67 teachers, 25 staff and 17 administrators; increased K-3 class sizes from 20 to 26; reduced the school year with unpaid furlough days at all schools; cut course offerings at high schools; and reduced support for art, libraries and music.

Whether or not you think the district has made the right choices, the facts remain that more state budget cuts are looming, and the group that will pay the price is our children. Our children need stable local funding that can't be taken by the state. Our children need us to protect the quality of education in Pleasanton schools.

Our children need Measure E and since they cannot vote, we must do so on their behalf. Please join me in supporting Measure E by marking Yes on your mail-in ballot.

Debbie Look

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Emily Esparza approaches the chicken coop built by her father and brothers. Feed and water containers hang inside the wire enclosure, and a flower box is attached outside the wire mesh. Below (l-r) the white bantam egg in Emily's hand is noticeably smaller than the tan egg produced by her neighbor's full-size Light Sussex hen; Emily cuddles reddish-brown Paquita, who has become her favorite bantam hen; Paquita has a distinctive rose-colored comb on her head.



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Emily discovered
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Bantams are a qua
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Once at the poultr
Jennifer, and they so
which come in more

"We learned to ex
their eyes, to see th

Easter chicks

venture of raising chickens in the back yard

Story and photos by Jerri Pantages Long

all year long

ave only one Easter egg hunt per year. parza family of Pleasanton: Every day, year round, they seek out own back yard because 9-year-old Emily Esparza has begun rais- as a 4-H Club project. Now the chicken “family” includes three (ature) hens, plus three chicks that will grow to full size.

l her fondness for chickens while visiting her Aunt Missy o lives in Pleasanton and raises chickens. Once Emily decided ickens of her own, the whole family became involved. One of presents was a book about chickens, plus the promise of acquir-

...? It turns out that the answer to that old riddle should be neither out a place to keep them safe.

ny, built an attractive chicken coop r brothers Matthew, 15, and Nathan, ne to see examples of other people’s ed out one they all liked, and tried to nowing the stages of construction that mplete — but the Espazas had only n the job.

he website did not include detailed pplies, so they made lots of trips to said Emily’s mother, Jennifer, with a

inst time: When Emily joined Abbie ed that an excellent source of chickens Poultry Show in Stockton in January. deadline for creating a suitable home adopted chickens.

orce of information about all-things- kYardChickens.com, abbreviated BYC. icken coop should provide 2-3 square per chicken, plus 4-5 square feet per or run.

s usually raised on legs to provide dry, ens to roost and nest. That also means e shady space beneath the hen house and pecking at feed, bugs or weeds.

azing variety of chicken coops, some es or gingerbread trim. A quick look on BYC tells one how widespread this n fact, the cities of Seattle, Wash., each sponsor “coop tours.” People pay guide listing backyard chicken coops icken” with the owners. The money is rities.

nted to make sure that Emily’s chick- rom predators, so they dug down for ould prevent raccoons from burrow- sed run. The top is covered with wire cannot swoop down to endanger the

m the ground to the entrance of the lock can be securely tucked in for the e roosting rod. Also inside are nesting ckens go to lay their eggs. A small side or Emily to search for eggs and to keep the nesting boxes clean and wood shavings.

as ready, painted white and embellished with a flower box at e Esparzas set off for the poultry show. Emily’s 4-H leader advised tnam hens at least a year old.

arter to a half the size of other chickens, which would make them old in one hand, with arm extended, if she chose to show them owny female chicks become feathered pullets from 2-12 months, ature enough to lay eggs.

ry show, there were a bewildering amount of choices, according to ught out a 4-H member for help. BYC shows pictures of 52 breeds, e than a dozen different colors.

xamine the chickens’ wings, to make sure they were not broken; at they were clear and alert; and to count their toes,” said Em-

ily’s mom. “Chickens in that setting, inside small cages, should actually look a little stressed, not docile with a head tucked under a wing.”

The seemingly calm poultry may actually not be healthy, they were told.

FAMILY FLOCK SETTLES IN

“**N**ow we get about two eggs each day,” said Emily proudly, as she introduced LeBeef (a Bantam Polish hen with a striking topknot of black-and-white feathers), Paquita (a Bantam d’Anver with gleaming red-brown feathers), and Jazmen (a Bantam Modern Game Hen with a distinctive, long-legged gait). Her brothers named the first two, and Emily named the third after one of her friends.

What is the best part about owning chickens?

“Actually, I really just like to play with them a lot,” said Emily with a smile.

That’s what the chickens seem to like, too, each following Emily until she picks it up and cuddles it. LeBeef is particularly fond of riding around on Emily’s shoulder, like a parrot with a fluffy Easter bonnet.

Each morning before school, Emily and her father check to make sure that the trio of hens has enough fresh water in the hanging metal container. The adjacent feed container usually needs to be replenished only once every three days. On weekends, Emily and Tony spend about 45 minutes thoroughly cleaning out the coop.

After school, Emily delights in letting out the small flock to roam the back yard under her watchful eye. They make murmuring noises not unlike the cooing of pigeons, sort of a poultry purring sound, as Emily gently picks up each one.

For a special treat, she can feed her chickens “scratch,” which is a mixture of dried corn, milo (a grain sorghum with white, yellow or pinkish seeds) and wheat.

“They really like it,” she said. “They will fly onto my lap to get it.”

Another treat that is an amazing example of recycling is eggshells. When Emily found evidence of a shell-less egg in the nesting box, she was told that it meant her hens might need more calcium. She added it to their diet in two ways: bits of oyster shell mixed in with their feed and also crumbled shells from the eggs eaten by the Esparzas. It takes three of the small bantam eggs to equal two standard eggs.

Now that Emily has had a quarter year of caring for chickens, she is embarking on a new adventure: raising chicks. The family has acquired two Barred (black and white) Leghorn chicks (Cindy and Henny Penny) and a Buff Cochin (Buffy) that looks like a poster chick for Easter.

For their first 2 months of life, chicks must be kept in a brooder — a small box or cage heated by a light bulb. The Esparzas have dedicated a bathtub to this part of the project.

The temperature of their nest-like enclosure can be decreased from 90 degrees by 5 degrees each week, as they begin to sprout feathers, according to BYC. When they are fully feathered, they can be moved into the coop. These

three newcomers will quickly dwarf their bantam coop-mates, because they will grow to be at least twice as big.

The trio of chicks already is being welcomed into the family.

“When we are watching TV, we take turns holding each chick, petting it, so that they will get used to us,” said Jennifer.

FAMILY TRADITION

Emily is a fourth-generation chicken-keeper.

“My grandparents had chickens when I was growing up,” said Emily’s father. “I loved them as pets. This project of Emily’s has been a ton of fun. Even cleaning out the coop is like therapy.”

Watching Emily tenderly care for her flock, one can tell that this might be her best Easter ever. ■



LeBeef, a Bantam Polish hen, likes to ride on Emily’s shoulder, like a parrot with an Easter bonnet or exotic hairdo.

5 good reasons to raise backyard chickens

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3. They provide chemical-free bug and weed control.
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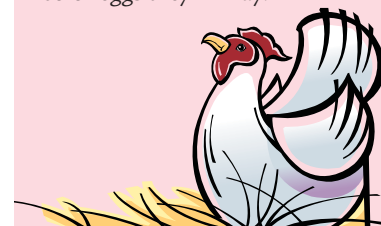
—BackYardChickens.com

Learn about raising chickens

■ BackYardChickens.com tells everything from how to research local ordinances (Pleasanton allows six hens at a single-family dwelling) to how to tell the color of the eggs (who knew to check a chicken’s earlobe color?). It even has a glossary which includes a term that describes the author of this article: “Alektorophobia = fear of chickens.”

■ Not into backyard carpentry? One of the Esparza’s neighbors ordered a customized chicken coop from PaulsRarePoultry.com. The coop was built 25 miles from Pleasanton, disassembled, delivered and reassembled, with chickens included.

■ A local source for chicken feed and other chicken coop needs is Concord Feed at 7100 Dublin Blvd. in Dublin or www.ConcordFeed.com. It is selling springtime chicks until May 27; the website lists the arrival date of each type of chick, also indicating what color eggs they will lay.



STORY AND PHOTOS BY GLENN WOHLTMANN

The sights and sounds of Every 15 Minutes are pretty much the same as any auto accident: two cars crushed by the impact, the sound of someone sobbing, the sight of blood, the wail of police sirens.

For 10 years now, the program has been walking teens through every aspect of an accident, from the first moments after impact to the devastation that follows. Police, firefighters and rescue personnel all respond as they would to any other crash. Teens are loaded into ambulances, or handcuffed and put in the rear of a police car. In some cases, they're zipped inside body bags and loaded into the coroner's van.

Parents are brought to the hospital or a funeral home to deal with the death of their child. The teen arrested for drinking and driving is locked inside a cell.



TERESA CARNS

If the crowd at last week's Every 15 Minutes near Amador Valley High is any indication, the program has an impact. Some teens wept openly, while others sat in silence and watched the scene unfold.

Every 15 Minutes was named for the frequency of fatal alcohol- or drug-related crashes. It might be argued that there's little lasting impact: Teens feel immortal, after all, and half of those who watch the reenactment and next day's assembly are headed off to college in the fall, where drinking is often part of the culture.

But 16-year-old Jenae Poffenbarger, an Amador junior and member of the organizing committee, thinks the two-day event left a lasting impression.

"The reactions of the students and the emotions were so obvious," Poffenbarger said. "The impact it had on so many students — I'm confident it will change their behavior."

Sitting through the program last year was a tipping point in the life of 18-year-old Sabrina Soracco, who recently graduated from Village High.

"It really changed my life, to actually go through it as if I'd passed away and my family wasn't there," Soracco said. "They took away our cell phones. We had to write goodbye letters to our friends and family."

Soracco thanked one man who talked about buying a white coffin for his daughter, the victim of a fatal crash, because he'd never be able to buy her a white wedding dress.

"I'll always remember it because it made an impact between me and my dad," Soracco said. "After his speech I called my dad and tried to make a better relationship with him."

Soracco's mother, Teresa Carns, said Every 15 Minutes marked a turning point in her daughter's life.

"I think Sabrina's weekend fun changed quite a bit because she became extremely responsible after that event, not for herself but for her friends as well," Carns said. "It wasn't just with her extracurricular activities but with her schoolwork, too. It was a huge turning point, from child teen to adult teen."

"It had an impact on both of us," she continued. "The hardest part was writing her obituary. It was mandatory and I did not turn it in until the day of the event. I had to fax it — I didn't want to do it, I cried through the whole thing."

Soracco described drinking as a "big problem" in school, adding, "This program, it really helps teenagers understand the outcome of it."

Carns agreed.

"You have to remember, when you're a teen, you think, 'I'm going to party, I'm going to go dance and have fun.' You don't even think about your consequences. Now she does," Carns said. "Young adults don't grow overnight. They grow through experience. The only thing we can do is try to set the foundation for that experience."

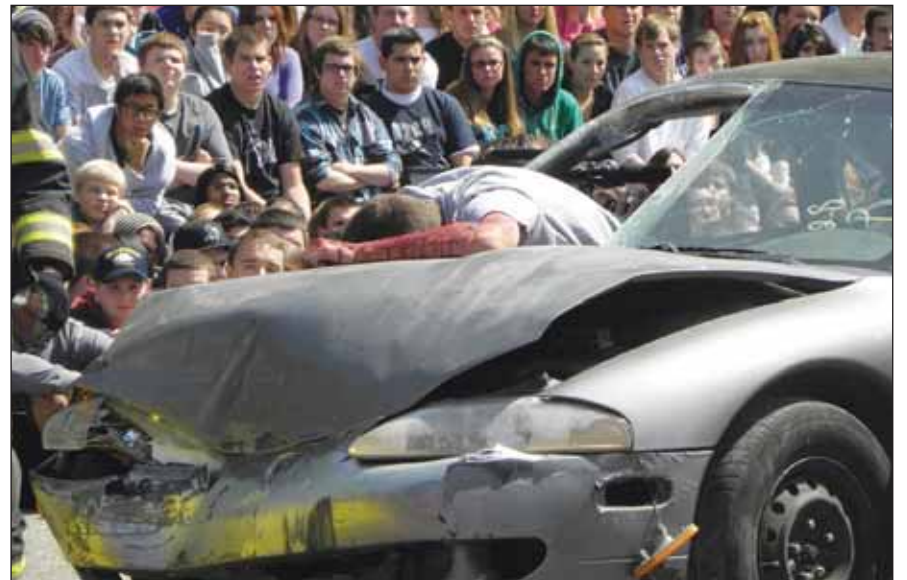
Perhaps programs like Every 15 Minutes do work. In the time since its inception, the statistic has gone from every 15 minutes to about every 30 minutes, Pleasanton police Officer Marty Billdt said during the assembly that followed the crash reenactment. ■



Sabrina Soracco, left, went through Every 15 Minutes as a member of the walking dead last year. Teens watch as Lizzy Fomson, portraying a young driver, sobs and social studies teacher Jill Battilega acts the part of a woman walking her dog who was injured in the accident.

Every 15 Minutes teaches teens through tragedy

Students and parents simulate agony of DUI deaths



Clockwise from left: firefighters extract a mock accident victim from a car; a teen wears a T-shirt with statistics; members of the walking dead symbolize those killed in alcohol- or drug-related accidents; Brett Kalepp plays the victim of a fatal crash.

Pleasanton high schools do well in DECA

Foothill, Amador students named state officers, head to international competition

Nearly 50 students from Pleasanton's high schools are gearing up for the International DECA competition later this month in Orlando, Fla., and both schools now have officers on the California DECA board for the 2012 school year.

DECA, formerly known as Distributive Education Clubs of America, is an international association of students and teachers of marketing, management and entrepreneurship in business, finance, hospitality, and marketing sales and service. Students from both schools will put their business skills to the test when they compete against other DECA members from around the globe — as well as their cross-town rivals.

Amador Valley High School is sending 26 students to the international competition, and Foothill High School is sending 21.

Both schools also have officers



CONTRIBUTED
Foothill High
Max Wang,
Vivian Tsai,
Christine Yi
and Anna
Zhang celebrate with their first place trophies from the state DECA competitions.



Amador Valley High DECA members (back, l-r) Simar Pannu, Kashyap Yechuri, Anirudh Bommireddy, Andre Langenhuizen, Ben Sornsen, Andy Billings, (center) Conor McLeod, Manish Laxman, Ravneet Dhaliwal, Cynthia Hsia, Sri Muppidi, Priyanka Saha, Chris Kang, Chris Amezcua, Laurie Andrews, Jordan Fite, (front) Rachel Hardy, Jessica Sullivan, Aashna Shaikh, Ke Zhao, Megha Lambah, Marie McCoy-Thompson, Nia Gottiparthi, Sruthi Sivandan, Sanjana Seth.

serving on the DECA board for the coming year. Shruti Thundiyl is now the California state president and Siyang Qiu is now the vice president of public relations. Both are from Foothill High. Two of Amador Valley's students, Sri Muppidi and Priyanka Saha, were elected to positions in the

DECA state officer team.

Foothill and Amador also teamed up to hold the first annual city-wide mini DECA Career Development Conference, giving students who are not qualified to travel the opportunity to compete against other DECA members in role-play events. ■

OF NOTE

Good Citizens Award

The Jose Maria Amador Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution recently honored winners of its student essay contests. Sarah Williams of Amador Valley High School won the Good Citizens Award and is advancing to the District Level. Bianca De of Dougherty Valley High in San Ramon won the Christopher Columbus Essay Contest on what lessons we can draw on from his life.

The American History Essay Contest for fifth-eighth-graders, in celebration of the 275th birthday of Paul Revere in 2010, had students write as if they were Paul Revere writing his memoirs. The fifth-



PHYLLIS HOUGHTON

grade winner was Stacy Shimanuki of Connecting Water Charter School; sixth grade, Rupal Nigam of Windemere Ranch Middle

School; seventh grade, Sonya Jain of Gale Ranch Middle School; and eighth grade, Augustine Chemparathy, also of Gale Ranch.



Winter Guard wins

Foothill High School students are all smiles after the NCBA Winter Percussion and Guard Championships on April 2 at Del Oro High School in Loomis — the percussion unit won and the guard unit placed second. Winter Percussion and Guard are similar to indoor marching bands but with only percussion instruments and Color Guard members. The guards perform intricate routines to recorded music.

OF NOTE

Eagle Scout Casey Peters

Scott and Chris Peters have announced that their son Casey Peters has earned the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest honor in the Boy Scouts of America. Casey began his scouting experience with Cub Scout Pack 938 at Vintage Hills Elementary School and earned the rank of Arrow of Light, the highest award in Cub Scouting.

He continued his Boy Scout experience with Troop 948, sponsored by CenterPointe Presbyterian Church. His Eagle Scout Leadership project was planning and building an extension of the sandbox at Sunshine Enrichment Center Preschool, which is an outreach program of Trinity Lutheran Church. Casey attended Sunshine and is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church. His project encompassed more than 140 hours of service. Casey's grandparents,

Harold and Barbara Hubinger of Danville, volunteered their time and talents, as did volunteers from Troop 948.

Casey has earned 24 merit badges and held numerous leadership positions. He participated in two 50-mile High Adventure Training (HAT) activities, hiking 90-plus miles in Philmont, N.M., and taking a 50-plus-mile canoe/kayak trip down the Sacramento River. Both of these activities required conservation service projects, which he completed on the treks and at Yosemite National Park. He has hiked over 200 miles, camped 93 nights, and completed 65 service hours above what is required for the Eagle Project.



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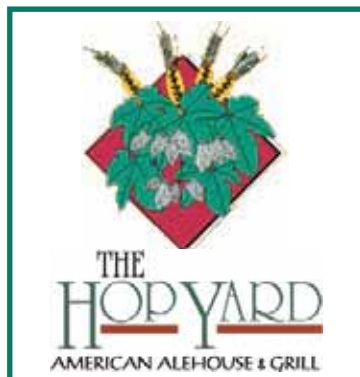
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830 Main St., Pleasanton, 462-8218. Pleasanton's only BrewPub since 1995. Try one of our 6 House Beers brewed FRESH weekly. Full bar and daily happy hour! Watch all sports with friends on our multiple screens. We feature a full menu including lunch and dinner specials. To-go orders are welcome. Facilities available for parties up to 100. Live music every Friday and Saturday. Visit www.mainstreetbrewery.com for activities and special events.

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FREE COFFEE
offer valid until
May 6, 2011



IN THE SPOTLIGHT



DEVIN DEHAVEN

CONGA, CONGA Latin jazz percussionist Poncho Sanchez will perform at the Firehouse Arts Center at 8 p.m. tonight. His music is described as “a kaleidoscopic of hot colors and bright lights from both sides of the border,” and his Latin jazz interpretations contain fragments of swing, bebop, salsa and other music from his youth that inform his creativity today. The Firehouse Arts Center is located at 4444 Railroad Ave. in downtown Pleasanton. Tickets are \$30, \$38 and \$45. Visit www.firehousearts.org or call 931-4848.

‘THE MAN IN BLACK’ James Garner and His Band will perform a Johnny Cash Musical Tribute from 8-10 p.m., Saturday, April 23, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. Garner will take the audience on a journey of the greatest hits of “The Man in Black” and his legendary life. Tickets \$15-\$25 for adults; \$15 for children; and \$22 for seniors. Call 931-4848 or visit www.firehousearts.org.

Concerts

PLEASANTON COMMUNITY CONCERT BAND Pleasanton Community Concert Band will perform a concert at the Farmer’s Market from 9:15 a.m.-noon, Saturday, April 30, at the market in downtown Pleasanton. Call 846-5897 or visit www.pleasantonband.org.

Events

TRAIN TO BEAT CANCER MEETING With the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s Team in Training program you can train with an online coach and support system, hands-on with a local team, or a little of both. The group will meet from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Thursday, April 28, at Pleasanton Middle School, 5001 Case Ave. Call 800-78-TRAIN or visit www.teamintraining.org/sf.

Exhibits

ARTIST FLOY ZITTIN California master illustrator Floy Zittin will be displaying her watercolors on canvas, featuring her signature impressionistic style with oriental flavor - colorful abstract backgrounds with a realistic subject. They will be on display from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, April 23, at Studio Seven Arts Gallery, 400 Main St. Call 846-4322 or visit www.studiosevenarts.com.

Fundraisers

5TH ANNUAL TRI-VALLEY ARTHRITIS WALK The Arthritis Foundation Northern California Chapter will have its fifth annual Tri-Valley Arthritis Walk from 9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, April 30, at Lifestyle RX, 1119 E. Stanley Blvd., Livermore. The arthritis walk raises awareness for arthritic diseases and research. It is a family and dog friendly event. One- or three-mile course. Call 415-356-1230 or visit www.aw2011trivly.kintera.org.

CHEERS! FOR MEASURE E A delightful wine tasting event is being held in support of the campaign for Measure E from 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, April 26, at the Wine Steward, 641 Main St. Fine wines, appetizers and the chance to bid on exciting wines and auction items. Cost \$20. Call 640-4812 or visit www.support-pleasantonschools.com.

EWASTE COLLECTION FOR BARTON READING PROGRAM An ewaste collection to benefit the Barton

Reading Program will take place one day only, rain or shine, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, April 30, at Vintage Hills Shopping Center, 3500 Bernal Ave. Free to recycle: televisions, monitors, laptops, flat screens, cell phones, ink jet cartridges, wire; \$5 each to recycle: CPU’s, telephones, printers, copiers, DVD players, FAX machines, VCRs, stereos, video games, small appliances. Microwaves are \$15-30; dry batteries are \$3 a pound. Make checks payable to PUSD Barton Reading Program. Call 510-590-7510.

TRI-VALLEY YMCA 4TH ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT Help the Tri-Valley YMCA with a fun day of golf, silent and live auctions, dinner, prize drawings and a woman’s beauty event, from 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Friday, April 29, at Callippe Preserve Golf Course, 8500 Club House Dr. Pricing: \$195 for regular player and \$725 for a foursome. Call 263-4444 or visit www.trivalleyymca.org.

Kids & Teens

BUZZING AT THE LIBRARY See live honey bees at work and learn all about bees, honey and the life of a beekeeper at “Uncle Jer’s Traveling Bee Show!” from 2-3 p.m., Saturday, April 23, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. All ages welcome. Free admission tickets distributed at the Children’s Desk one half hour before the start. Call 931-3400, ext. 8.

EL DIA DE LOS NIÑOS/EL DIA DE LOS LIBROS (CHILDREN’S DAY/ BOOK DAY) Bilingual puppeteers Magical Moonshine Theatre pres-

ent “Coyote Sings” in Spanish and in English, a Native American tale of a crazy coyote accompanied by traditional Mexican folk tunes. The free event is from 7-8 p.m., Friday, April 29, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. A free book prize drawing for all children present, preschool through eighth grade, will conclude the event. Call 931-3400, ext. 8, or visit www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/services/library.

Spiritual

COMMUNITY PASSOVER SEDER Tri-Valley Cultural Jews will host a Community Passover Seder from 5-8 p.m., Saturday, April 23, at Bothwell Arts Center, 2466 8th St., Livermore. They will have a potluck dinner and secular progressive Haggadah in English. Children are welcome, though it is not a child-centered seder. For non-TVCJ members, the cost is \$10. They will be collecting canned or boxed food for the food bank. RSVP to Jamie Ireland 510-888-1404.

Workshops

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN City of Pleasanton will host a public workshop about its Climate Action Plan, from 6-8:30 p.m., Monday, April 25, at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St. Participants will review the strategies and measures to be included in the City’s final Climate Action Plan. RSVP to www.pleasanton-greenscene.org.

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POLICE BULLETIN

Auto burglaries abound

Thieves hit eight vehicles in a series of auto burglaries over the last week.

Four vehicles parked at the Residence Inn in the 11900 block of Dublin Canyon Road were hit between 4:30 and 6:22 a.m. April 16, according to police reports, which said the front passenger side window had been broken in all four; 100 CDs valued at \$1,500 and two \$20 CD cases were stolen from one, a ham radio worth an estimated \$250 was taken from another, a gym bag, iPod charger and Bluetooth charger were taken from a third, and a \$250 GPS unit was stolen from the fourth.

Two cars parked at the Ace train lot were hit between 5 p.m. April 14 and 5 a.m. April 15, police reports said. In one, the driver's side window was smashed, a stereo was taken and the dashboard damaged, at an estimated total loss of \$750; the driver's side window of the sec-

ond vehicle, worth about \$150 was also smashed, according to the reports.

Electronics worth \$150 and tennis racquets valued at \$418 were stolen from a car in the in the 4100 block of Trieste Way, according to a police report, which said the theft occurred between 11:30 a.m. April 16 and 6:30 p.m. April 17.

An iPhone worth \$500, a \$30 wallet and a \$20 purse were stolen Monday from a car parked in the 3600 block of Brockton Drive, and a passenger side window worth \$300 was smashed., a police report said.

In other reports, a burglary between noon and 2 p.m. April 17 in the 4200 block of Bevilacqua Court netted \$996 in cash.

A Rolex watch worth more than \$5,000, a \$5,000 wedding ring set and \$30 in jewelry were among the items stolen in a March 29 burglary at a business in the 5500 block of West Las Positas Boulevard, a police report filed April 12 said.

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

April 12

Theft

- 9:38 a.m. in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; grand theft
- 10:07 a.m. in the 4400 block of Rosewood Drive; identity theft
- 10:11 a.m. in the 300 block of N. Wilson Way; forgery
- 4:04 p.m. in the 1500 block of Courtney Avenue; petty theft
- 6:4 p.m. in the 4100 block of Cid Way; identity theft

Burglary

- 11:18 a.m. in the 1700 block of Laguna Creek Lane
- 2:49 p.m. in the 8100 block of War Glory Place

Drug and alcohol violations

- 2:52 p.m. in the 6200 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard; possession of a controlled substance, paraphernalia possession
- 3:47 p.m. near the intersection of Hacienda Drive and I-580; possession of a non-narcotic controlled substance
- 4:28 p.m. in the 5800 block of Laurel Creek Drive; possession of a non-narcotic controlled substance, paraphernalia possession
- 7:18 p.m. near the intersection of Bernal Avenue and I-680; DUI

April 13

Theft

- 9:57 a.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; theft
- 10:23 p.m. in the 2900 block of Liberty Drive; identity theft
- 11:27 p.m. in the 7000 block of Johnson Drive; petty theft

Indecent exposure

- 6:19 p.m. in the 5500 block of Springhouse Drive

Vandalism

- 11:23 a.m. in the 4300 block of Valley Avenue

Drug and alcohol violations

- 12:45 a.m. in the 1800 block of Santa Rita Road; public drunkenness

April 14

Theft

- 3:03 a.m. in the 6400 block of Owens Drive; theft of services

Sexual abuse

- 12:30 p.m. in the 5000 block of Case

POLICE REPORT

Avenue

Vandalism

- 6:36 a.m. in the 400 block of Matthew Court
- 2:12 p.m. at the intersection of Main Street and Del Valle Parkway
- 2:14 p.m. in the 500 block of Main Street

Drug and alcohol violations

- 3:10 a.m. in the 2600 block of Calle Reynoso; under the influence of a controlled substance
- 8:33 a.m. in the 4100 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard; possession of a hypodermic needle, paraphernalia possession
- 4:30 p.m. in the 4800 block of Hopyard Road; possession of a controlled substance, marijuana possession

April 15

Theft

- 11:22 a.m. in the 3600 block of Andrews Drive; theft
- 3:54 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 5:33 p.m. in the 5400 block of Sunol Boulevard; theft
- 7:08 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

Auto burglary

- 5:59 a.m. in the 4900 block of Pleasanton Avenue
- 4:58 p.m. in the 3100 block of Chardonnay Drive
- 6:28 p.m. in the 3800 block of Pinot Court
- 7:29 p.m. in the 3600 block of Andrews Drive

Vandalism

- 3:15 p.m. in the 4200 block of Holland Drive

Public drunkenness

- 11:11 p.m. in the 4800 block of Bernal Avenue
- 11:42 p.m. in the 5300 block of Hopyard Road

April 16

Theft

- 10:49 a.m. in the 2600 block of Monarda Court; identity theft
- 1:35 p.m. in the 4100 block of Peregrine Way; grand theft
- 2:26 p.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; auto theft
- 6:31 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; auto theft

Vandalism

- 9:46 a.m. in the 2500 block of

Tanager Drive

- 9:58 a.m. in the 5800 block of Parkside Drive

Drug and alcohol violations

- 12:31 a.m. in the 5200 block of Hopyard Road; DUI
- 12:34 a.m. in the 1800 block of Valley Avenue; DUI
- 1:42 a.m. at the intersection of Santa Rita Road and Rosewood Drive; DUI
- 2:20 a.m. in the 6700 block of Santa Rita Road; public drunkenness
- 2:36 a.m. at the intersection of Main Street and Abbie Street; public drunkenness
- 2:54 a.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; DUI
- 2:59 a.m. in the 6100 block of Kavala Court; public drunkenness
- 6:39 p.m. in the 4200 block of First Street; marijuana possession
- 8:05 p.m. at the intersection of Happy Valley Road and Riddell Street; minor transporting alcohol, marijuana possession

April 17

Theft

- 2:38 p.m. in the 4200 block of Bevilacqua Court; grand theft

Auto burglary

- 7:01 p.m. in the 4100 block of Trieste Way

Drug and alcohol violations

- 12:10 a.m. near the intersection of Hacienda Drive and Interstate 580; DUI
- 6:52 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; possession of a non-narcotic controlled substance; possession of a hypodermic needle

April 18

Theft

- 7:15 a.m. in the 3600 block of N. Olympic Court; petty theft
- 12:03 p.m. in the 7000 block of Commerce Circle; petty theft
- 3:22 p.m. in the 6000 block of Johnson Drive; auto theft

Burglary

- 6:11 p.m. at the intersection of Vervais Avenue and Main Street

Auto burglary

- 5:58 p.m. in the 3700 block of Brockton Drive

Battery

- 3:12 p.m. in the 5600 block of Stoneridge Drive

Vandalism

- 1:56 p.m. in the 4300 block of Valley Avenue

OBITUARIES

Robert 'Bob' Lincoln Koopmann

Robert "Bob" Lincoln Koopmann, a native of Pleasanton and longtime resident, died April 12 at the age of 84.

He was born March 31, 1927, to Peter and Anna Koopmann on Pleasanton Avenue in Pleasanton. He graduated from Amador High School in 1945. From 1945-47 he was in the U.S. Army, serving in Berlin as a military policeman. When he returned, he married his Elaine Secada in the Methodist Church in Reno, Nev.



They recently celebrated their 64th anniversary.

Mr. Koopmann was a flooring contractor for his own business, Koopmann Linoleum, for 28 years on Main Street in Pleasanton and then on Ray Street. He built the Adobe Plaza shopping center in 1977 where Kottinger Barn is located, which he restored and placed on the National Historic Register. He belonged to Native Sons of the Golden West for 57 years. He was a Pleasanton Volunteer Fireman for 19 years and received the prestigious Helen Keller Fellowship Award from the International Lion's Club. He was also a member in the Amador Valley Historic Society, Hayward Historic Society, 20/30 Club, American Legion and was a 25-year member of Pleasanton/Tulancingo Sister City Association.

He loved fishing, hunting, camping, cooking, building (including four homes), traveling and sports.

Mostly, he loved to be with his family and his friends. Recently he and Elaine moved to Livermore from Murphys, where they had lived in retirement for 25 years. While on a Hawaiian birthday cruise, celebrating his 84th birthday with family, he had a medical emergency and was flown by helicopter to UC San Diego Medical Center where he died April 12.

Mr. Koopmann was preceded in death by two children, Dennis and Marilyn, and two sisters, Ruth Taylor and Nadine Smith. He is survived by his brother Richard Koopmann of San Leandro, his children Sheryl (Virgil Stanger) and Robert "Bob" (Julie); eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Donations may be made to the Native Sons or Daughters of the Golden West. A celebration of his life will be held noon-3 p.m., Thursday, April 28, at the Veteran's Memorial Building, 520 L St. in Livermore.

THE CITY OF PLEASANTON

WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

Planning Commission

Wednesday, April 27, 2011 @ 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- **PGPA-17, City of Pleasanton Housing Element Update**
Status report on the Housing Element Update process, including a summary of input from recent Community Workshops.

Joint Workshop

Parks & Recreation Commission and Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trails Committee

Thursday, April 28, 2011 @ 6:30 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- Presentation by East Bay Regional Park District on the draft Pleasanton Ridge Land Use Plan.

Committee of Energy & Environment

Wednesday, April 27, 2011 @ 6:00 p.m.
Operations Services Center, 3333 Busch Road, Pleasanton

- Opening remarks by Committee Chair, Mark Posson
- Review/approval of February 23, 2011 meeting minutes
- Update on city projects / events
- Climate Action Plan
- Elections – Chair, Vice-Chair
- StopWaste EIR for mandatory recycling and single-use bag reduction ordinances
- Council priorities
- Committee status update – 2011 focus areas
 - a. CAP (Posson/Royer/Jaeel)
 - b. Fleet Modernization (McGinley)
 - c. Natural Resource Management (Kato)
 - d. Community Outreach (Carrick/Jayson)

General Information

- **May 3, 2011 - Pleasanton USD Special Vote by Mail Election**
Ballots can be returned to the Pleasanton City Clerk's office.
Office of the City Clerk
123 Main Street
Pleasanton, CA 94566
(925) 931-5027
Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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

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TERRI DUNCAN

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COMING SOON

Beautiful home in the Gates neighborhood of Pleasanton. This home features newer hardwood floors throughout the kitchen, family room, dining & living room. Granite counters and newer appliances in the kitchen. Lots of natural light throughout the home and a spacious back yard that is great for entertaining. The home has 4 BR and 2 1/2 BA with approximately 2100 sq. ft. Call me for more information.

Real Estate

OPEN HOME GUIDE AND REAL ESTATE LISTINGS

Shaping up for selling

Tips for making your home more attractive to potential buyers

First impressions are important and the same holds true when you are showcasing your home for a potential sale. While larger home improvement projects are often necessary to catch the eye of someone in the market for a new home, they require a great deal of time and money. Sometimes simple cleaning and organization is all that is needed for your home to become more appealing to potential buyers.

Home staging expert and TLC host Lisa Lynch says giving the perception of clean home is of utmost importance for people looking to sell or rent their homes.

"Presenting a sparkling clean property gives the impression that it was well maintained," says Lynch. "This gives potential buyers and renters a feeling of security. Often they will pay a premium for a place that has been well-maintained and has a clean appearance."

Lynch offers these tips to impress your guests and convince potential buyers that you took outstanding care of your home:

Simplify

Begin by de-cluttering your home. By removing personal items that might distract prospective buyers, you'll help them focus on how they think the home might look when they move in. You don't want buyers to focus on possessions that you'll be taking with you when you move.

Neutralize

When showing your home to others, it's best to set your personal tastes aside by decorating in a way that will appeal to a broad range of people. Think about replacing strong patterns with solid colors on items like bedding, carpets and drapes. It might also be a good call to store that dramatic piece of art somewhere out of sight. You can show it off again when you move into your new house.

A photogenic home

Many potential buyers will make decisions on which homes they would like to look at by looking at photos posted online. Do whatever

you can to make your home sparkle in the images you and your real estate agent select for your listing. Focus on glass and metal surfaces that will add shine to your photos. A bath scrubber should be used to remove easy-to-spot and unappealing grime and scum from bathtubs and showers. Thoroughly cleaning these surfaces in bathrooms and kitchens can make your home look fresher and newer.

Areas that must sparkle

While it's important to keep the entire home spotless, there are two rooms in particular that require special attention: the kitchen and the bathroom. In a recent survey, Mr. Clean asked consumers which room they would clean first if moving into a new home. Of the more than 1,000 participants, an impressive 41 percent responded the kitchen and 38 percent said the bathroom. When selling your home, it is always important to make the extra effort in these two rooms; you'll never know if it will be a make or break a deal.

Scent

Whether they know it or not, people entering your home will notice more than just appearances. Attractive scents can create good feelings. Candles, diffusers, potpourri and cookies all offer inviting and familiar aromas. Use a cleaner with a pleasant scent to keep your home smelling fresh.

Details matter

Eliminate any small imperfections that might cause uneasiness with potential buyers by replacing broken light bulbs, fixing loose doorknobs or getting your closet door moving smoothly on its tracks. Even something as minor as a little mess in the microwave could turn off a prospective renter or buyer, so make sure every place you can think of is squeaky clean.

Since first impressions are so important, having your home properly cleaned and staged will help you make a sale or rental more quickly and net the price you deserve.

—ARA Content

OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

Dublin

4 BEDROOMS
4025 Chadwick Place \$589,000
Sat 1:30-4:30 Moxley Team 600-0990

Livermore

3 BEDROOMS
2171 Beech Common \$409,000
Sat 1-4 Keller Williams Tri-Valley 785-8239

4 BEDROOMS
904 Loyola Way \$530,000
Sat 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 251-2554

2256 Lawson Circle \$660,000
Sat 1-4 Fabulous Properties Team 980-0273

2748 Whitehall Court \$980,000
Sat 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 583-2168

Pleasanton

4 BEDROOMS
119 Neal Street \$1,099,000
Sat/Sun 1-4 Fabulous Properties Team 202-6898

3533 Mercato Court \$1,575,000
Sat 1-4 Fabulous Properties Team 980-0273

1724 Zenato Place \$1,689,000
Sun 1-4 Tom Fox 872-1275

5 BEDROOMS
1867 Sannita Court \$2,749,000
Sun 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 251-2585

7967 Limewood Court \$789,000
Sat 1-4 Fabulous Properties Team 202-6898

San Ramon

4 BEDROOMS
3008 Sorrelwood Drive \$998,000
Sat 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 251-2550

To place an ad or open home please contact Andrea Heggelund at (925) 600-0840 x110 or e-mail aheggelund@pleasantonweekly.com.

Ask about online and email advertising

PLEASANTON | 900 Main Street 925.251.1111



HOME SALES

This week's data represents homes sold during March 2011

Dublin

- 3275 Dublin Boulevard #324** T. Moore to S. Lee for \$292,000
- 3245 Dublin Boulevard #429** Y. Ogden to P. Rybak for \$255,000
- 3750 Ferncroft Way** A. & M. Lin to A. & A. Gupta for \$775,000
- 3420 Finnian Way #434** Toll Dublin Limited to G. & A. Harm for \$351,000
- 4319 Foxford Way** A. Tarantino to G. Kuriakose for \$670,000
- 8412 Galindo Drive** J. Siacunco to R. Stoddard for \$414,500
- 10610 Melvich Lane #175** Capital One to M. Hedt for \$400,000
- 7442 Oxford Circle** Bias Trust to W. & D. Simonson for \$386,000
- 3280 Ridgefield Way** K. Ingeneri to S. & K. Morrison for \$860,000
- 7607 Ridgeline Drive** Schaefer Dublin Holdings to D. Varaprasad for \$826,500
- 4627 Rimini Court #8** Sorrento at Dublin Ranch to P. & F. Smith for \$699,000
- 10787 Sornoway Lane #155** J. Choi to K. Tropp for \$418,000
- 4825 Swinford Court** Ing Bank to S. Nord for \$395,000
- 4405 Talle Way** S. Hong to T. & D. Warren for \$630,000
- 4417 Talle Way** P. & S. Guevara to T. & L. Kwon for \$516,000
- 7828 Tuscan Drive** T. Bruno to J. Bell for \$364,000

Livermore

- 713 Austen Way** S. & O. Kang to J. & N. Pestana for \$640,000
- 1465 Calle De Las Granvas** A. & M. Bandiera to

- J. & L. Smith for \$385,000
- 1191 Canton Avenue** Batzer Trust to E. & A. Becker for \$384,000
- 6902 Edgewater Lane** J. & K. Boulware to T. & H. Wiechert for \$525,000
- 325 Garden Common** Federal Home Loan Mortgage to J. Brunicardi for \$232,500
- 932 Hansen Road** Meager Trust to M. & A. Coito for \$1,000,000
- 188 Heligan Lane #6** Shea Homes to S. Raymond for \$368,000
- 379 Holladay Court** Tragni Development to C. & J. Conrad for \$360,000
- 981 Hollice Lane** Aurora Loan Services to S. Perry for \$410,000
- 4771 Kimberley Common** Federal Home Loan Mortgage to G. Souza for \$400,000
- 1033 Lambeth Road** S. & C. Cate to C. & K. Smith for \$439,000
- 1827 Locust Street** Wells Fargo Bank to J. & S. Reichenberg for \$220,000
- 3368 Madeira Way** US Bank to R. Lindahl for \$241,000
- 790 McLeod Street** Deutsche Bank to G. Konjevod for \$475,000
- 271 Snider Court** J. & L. Sibley to S. & T. Sullivan for \$605,000
- 1255 Spring Valley Common** S. Morado to S. Jamal for \$185,000
- 5614 Stockton Loop** P. & L. Kish to R. & L. Gill for \$880,000
- 2654 Superior Drive** Shannon Trust to D. Bowron for \$600,000
- 626 Vivian Drive** J. & D. Yadon to T. Tadrowski for \$600,000

Pleasanton

- 2134 Arroyo Court #2** DSLA Mortgage to J. Liao for \$156,000
- 1012 Bartlett Place** C. & J. Leighty to X. Li for \$960,000

- 1550 Calle Enrique** M. Siegling to Veit Trust for \$353,000
- 2906 Chardonnay Drive** Wells Fargo Bank to J. & D. Boots for \$732,500
- 6936 Corte Monterey** J. Hanson to H. & N. Ross for \$610,000
- 6183 Corte Santiago** Hooper Trust to R. & K. Milelli for \$745,000
- 5252 Dolores Drive #2** L. & R. Nassar to C. Mynatt for \$360,000
- 7848 Foothill Knolls Drive** R. & S. Aberle to G. Hwang for \$1,060,000
- 6280 Guyson Court** J. & M. Chang to P. & S. Smith for \$565,000
- 5667 Hansen Drive** Haff Trust to S. & G. Lachica for \$540,000
- 4949 Hillcrest Way** Murphy Trust to A. & S. Morales for \$889,000
- 3727 Kamp Drive** J. & C. Sketchley to O. Mehrayin for \$595,000
- 1119 Mills Court** S. & T. Simon to L. Li for \$1,025,000
- 5179 Muirwood Drive** S. & P. Menon to Maeda Trust for \$915,000

- 5266 Muirwood Drive** R. & M. Gallagher to I. Barron for \$765,000
- 7649 Paseo Santa Cruz** C. & K. Phan to Y. Feng for \$920,000
- 3767 Reflections Drive** D. & M. Brunk to Hodnefield Trust for \$455,000
- 4487 Seminole Way** DMFS Financial to F. Lee for \$230,000
- 583 St. John Street** K. & C. Luke to L. Roadarmel for \$560,000
- 7371 Stonedale Drive** C. & S. Sanford to Leirer Trust for \$425,000
- 7283 Valley View Court** Milelli Trust to M. & D. Shariff for \$510,000
- 458 Vineyard Place** Rubino Trust to S. Dai for \$465,000
- 1212 Vintner Way** Aiken-Solomon Trust to J. & K. Seay for \$900,000
- 4640 Whiting Street** C. Nugent to G. & J. O'Connor for \$375,000
- 4898 Woodthrush Road** Leirer Trust to Holling Trust for \$600,000

Source: California REsource

SALES AT A GLANCE

Dublin

Total sales reported: 16
 Lowest sale reported: \$255,000
 Highest sale reported: \$860,000
 Average sales reported: \$515,750

Livermore

Total sales reported: 19
 Lowest sale reported: \$185,000
 Highest sale reported: \$1,000,000
 Average sales reported: \$471,026

Pleasanton

Total sales reported: 25
 Lowest sale reported: \$156,000
 Highest sale reported: \$1,060,000
 Average sales reported: \$628,420

San Ramon

Total sales reported: 20
 Lowest sale reported: \$149,000
 Highest sale reported: \$1,450,000
 Average sales reported: \$621,225

Source: California REsource



DRE#01349446



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NEW LISTING

2375 Fairfield Court, Pleasanton
 4bd/2.5ba, "Monterey" model, 2,101+/-sq.ft.
 Granite kitchen, newer appliances, hardwood floors, newer windows, remodeled bath, inside laundry, pool and side yard access.
 Offered at \$799,900



COMING SOON

3279 Picadilly Court, Pleasanton
 Great location, 4bd/3ba, 1,941+/-sq.ft on a court, backing to Greenbelt and Cabana Club.
 New kitchen, windows, inside laundry, side yard access. Please call for details.



COMING SOON

5230 Hummingbird Road, Pleasanton
 4bd/2ba, "Holiday" model in Birdland.
 2,167+/-sq.ft. on a 8,760+/-sq.ft lot, newer roof, windows, Pergo floors, HVAC system, needs cosmetic updating. Please call for details.

BUYERS NEEDS

First time home buyers seeking 3bd/2ba townhouse/detached home with upgrades, up to \$550,000

Young Pleasanton family seeks 2,800+/-sq.ft. home with a large yard, preferably no pool, up to \$1.4M

Family of four seeks 2,000+/-sq.ft., 4bd home, with large yard, quiet street, up to \$1.2M

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1226 SHADY POND LN. PLEASANTON
LOCATED IN PHEASANT RIDGE



Amazing backyard! 6 BD 6 BA 5,096sf. on 15,712sf. lot. Top of the line upgrades throughout. Private location, BD, office & full bath on main level.
\$1,550,000

9632 BROADMOOR DR. SAN RAMON
LOCATED IN SAN RAMON ROYAL VISTA



4 BD + office, 3 BA, 3,195sf. + finished attic. Built in 2010 with top of the line materials. Gourmet kitchen, handmade mouldings, energy efficient & entertainer's dream home.
HIGH \$800,000s

5466 ASPEN ST. DUBLIN
LOCATED IN SUMMERGLEN



3 BD + office 2.5 BA 2,202sf. on a 6,014sf. lot. Rare single story. Kitchen w/ gas cooking & large serving counter. 2+ car garage w/ extra storage.
\$657,000

4025 CHADWICK PLACE, DUBLIN
LOCATED IN TASSAJARA CREEK



4 BD 2.5 BA 1,972sf. on a 3,613sf. lot. Nice open floor plan, great location! Two story, built in 2003. Modern style.
\$589,000

2125 RHEEM DR. PLEASANTON
LOCATED IN MOHR PARK



3 BD 2.5 BA 1,490sf. on a 2,730sf. lot. Open floor plan, vaulted ceilings. Walking distance to Mohr Elementary!
\$429,000

COMING SOON

LOCATED IN PLEASANTON VALLEY
— MONTEREY MODEL
4 BD 2.5 BA 2,047sf. on a 6,500sf. lot. Newly updated kitchen, new roof. Pool in backyard. **HIGH \$700,000s**

LOCATED IN PLEASANTON
4 BD 1.5 BA 2,000sf.+
Spacious, updated home. Close to Mohr Elementary.
LOW \$600,000s

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CHARTER OAKS

JUST LISTED



1549 MAPLE LEAF DRIVE, PLEASANTON
Highly upgraded four bedroom, plus bonus/teen room, three bathrooms. Approximately 2541 square feet. Completely remodeled kitchen with granite slab countertops, custom backsplash, custom cabinets & stainless steel appliances. Brazilian cherry hardwood flooring, upgraded carpet & remodeled master bath. Newer interior paint. Three car garage. Completely re-landscaped private rear grounds with built-in BBQ/kitchen, custom fire pit/sitting area, slate patio, garden and play areas. Tile roof. Convenient to downtown, neighborhood park and award-winning schools! **OFFERED AT \$939,000**

SYCAMORE HEIGHTS

NEW LISTING



1092 SYCAMORE CREEK WAY, PLEASANTON
Wow! Private premium 20,180 sq ft estate lot. Panoramic views of Pleasanton Ridge, the valley and Mount Diablo. Large rear grounds with expansive lawn area and patio. Backs to open space. Five bedrooms, plus den, bonus room option (5th), five and a half bathrooms. Approximately 5,000 sq ft. Large gourmet kitchen with granite slab countertops and stainless steel appliances. Crown molding throughout, new custom flooring, extensive upgraded light fixtures, new interior paint throughout. Close to downtown, Castlewood Country Club, Oak Hills Shopping Center, and Mission Hills Park. Award winning schools! **OFFERED AT \$1,559,000**

PHEASANT RIDGE



933 LAGUNA CREEK LANE, PLEASANTON
Beautiful Pleasanton 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. **OFFERED AT \$1,475,000**

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**

RUBY HILL

PRICE REDUCED



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 \$1,449,000**

STONERIDGE PARK



2812 GARDEN CREEK CIR, 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**

CANYON MEADOWS

PENDING



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. **OFFERED AT \$319,500**

PONDEROSA

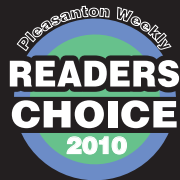
SOLD



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. **SOLD FOR \$645,000**

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SOLD! Represented buyer

2782 Turnstone Dr, Pleasanton

Must see, gorgeous, rarely available one level home on corner lot in BIRDLAND neighborhood! 4BR + den, updated kitchen with granite. New windows with plantation shutters, fresh paint, hardwood floors and private backyard. This home is move in ready!



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



New Listing! Open Sat 1-4

7967 Limewood Ct, Highland Oaks, Pleasanton

2210 sq. ft. .25 acre lot, 5 BR, 3 BA. Large remodeled home with new kitchen, new carpet, updated baths and huge yard. Court location. **Offered at \$789,000**

The Fabulous Properties Team
 Cunningham • Garrison • Schall



Gail Boal

REALTOR®
 925.577.5787
www.gailboal.com
 DRE # 01276455



2123 Myrtle Beach Lane, Danville

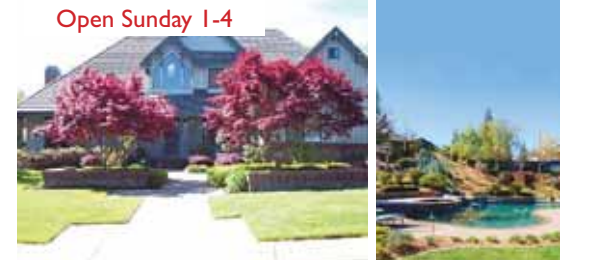
Country Club Living! Townhome with gorgeous golf course views! Single story beauty has 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, and neutral décor. 1364 square feet.

Offered at \$455,000



Tom Fox

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



Open Sunday 1-4

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 \$1,689,000**



Connie Cox

925.766.3198
connie@conniecoxhomes.com
 DRE # 01081927



3650 Platt Ct, Pleasanton

Lovely 4 bedrm, 2 bth in amazing court location only steps from greenbelt, park and playground. Ready for summer

outdoor entertaining with a nice big, landscaped yard and patio deck with shade cover. **\$599,950**



3788 Rocky Mountain Ct, Pleasanton

A designer lives here and it shows! Upgraded and updated wherever you turn. Master suite with slider onto patio

and BIG yard - entertain, play or even build a sportcourt! Extra large 2nd bedroom has mirrored closet doors and decorator features. **\$549,950**



DeAnna Armario

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35 Golf Road, Pleasanton

Stunning 6 BR & 4.5 BA Craftsman style home built in 2010. Hillside home boasts quality construction, luxurious detailing, and a secluded location at the end of one of the most desirable streets in Castlewood Country Club. Features expansive valley views. **Offered at \$1,679,888**



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15303 Orange Blossom Rd., Oakdale

Gorgeous Single Story Ranchette on nearly 10 Acres! Stunning Setting and Magnificent Views! **\$850,000**

3063 Rodeo Lane, Livermore

6213 Woodvale Ter, Dublin



Check out your new San Ramon ER

We're proud to introduce a new era in emergency care and a sparkling new facility for treating everything from cuts and breaks to life-threatening illnesses. The hospital is licensed with Contra Costa and Alameda counties to receive ambulances. Now, we're designated as a STEMI Receiving Center – which means we have the protocols to treat high-risk heart attacks. While we hope you never have to visit us for an emergency, it's reassuring to know our experienced emergency physicians and nurses are here, close to home and around the clock.



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- Large, comfortable waiting room
- Dedicated X-ray suite



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