

# Pleasanton Weekly

**SPORTS**

*Soccer heads to State Cup » 18*



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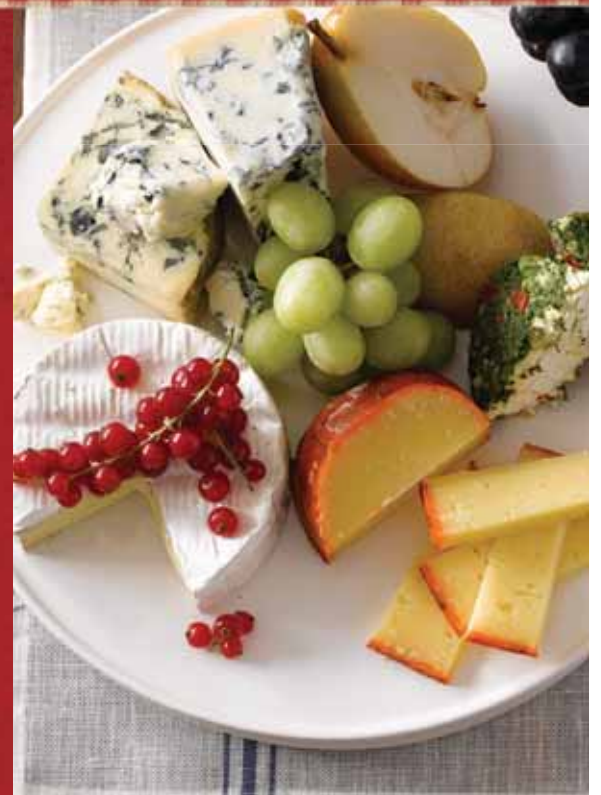


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# AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING

## Let's chip in to the Holiday Fund

Walking the downtown streets last Friday during the Pleasanton Downtown Association's "Magical Holiday Evening" and again Saturday morning for its "Earlier than the Bird" pajama fest, I saw some of the most festive crowds of the year. Customers opened their purses and wallets to take advantage of the pre-Christmas promotions a week before today's Black Friday sales at the larger stores and shopping centers. It sure looked as if the good times were here again.

Later Saturday morning, I stopped by Axis Community Health's clinic on Railroad Avenue where the mood was more somber. As usual when Axis opens its doors, mothers with very sick young children patiently awaited their turn to be seen by an Axis nurse and doctor for medication and advice on how to help their child. These are some of the 14,000 patients Axis will see this year, most of them from the Tri-Valley including Pleasanton who have little or no health insurance, many without jobs and all without the festive smiles I saw a few minutes earlier a block away on Main Street.

Earlier, I talked to Linda McKeever, executive director of Open Heart Kitchen, whose colleagues at the Pleasanton Rotary Club answered her appeal for more than 300 turkeys to feed an overwhelming number of the hungry at hot meal serving lines this Thanksgiving week. Her organization, which served almost 217,000 meals last year and is seeing a 25% increase so far in 2011, is the Tri-Valley's only food bank. As she puts it, Open Heart Kitchen is often the bridge that enables a family to stay on its feet from week to week.

Both Axis and Open Heart Kitchen operate almost in eyesight of the prosperous, festive downtown I saw last weekend and during these past few days leading up to Thanksgiving. These organizations do good work. They are also among the five beneficiaries of this year's Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund. Contributing a few dollars to the Holiday Fund as the holidays approach could go a long way toward helping the neediest



in our community.

The folks I talked to at Axis on Saturday or in the Open Heart Kitchen food line earlier at Trinity Lutheran Church aren't homeless or even necessarily jobless. Some had good company positions before they were laid off and lost both their regular paycheck and health insurance. One man drives a cab, making ends meet with fares he collects driving those with full-time jobs home from BART.

These needs go beyond Axis and Open Heart Kitchen. Three other nonprofits are also on this year's list of Holiday Fund recipients: Hope Hospice, the Ryan Comer Cancer Resource Center at ValleyCare and Valley Humane Society. Each provides special care in our community and deserves our support. A recent survey showed that Americans are giving about 3% less this year compared to 2010. This downward trend affects these five local charities, and at a time when their needs are growing.

That makes contributions to the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund even more important and for at least two reasons:

■ For every \$1 given to the Holiday Fund, the Tri-Valley Community Foundation will provide another \$1 in matching funds up to a total of \$100,000, this year's campaign goal.

■ Second, all administrative costs are covered by the Pleasanton Weekly.

Unlike contributions that may go to national organizations where administrative costs can skim 15-20% off the top, every dollar contributed here stays here. Also, funds contributed to national charities often don't make their way back here again. Pleasanton and the Tri-Valley are not on anyone's list as a demographic area in need of public aid, even though if you're poor in Pleasanton, you're just as poor as those in other parts of the country. Please join me in chipping in to our hometown Holiday Fund. ■

## About the Cover

Shoppers get a jump on holiday shopping at the Stoneridge Shopping Center ahead of Black Friday. Photo by Glenn Wohltmann. Design by Lili Cao.



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# Food Allergies?

Food allergies, particularly in children, are clearly on the rise. According to Dr. Hugh Sampson, a food allergy specialist at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in N.Y. "We are certain that in the future the number of food allergies are going to increase."

Many food allergies are classified as "hidden" allergies due to the fact that an individual may be consuming a food, often times on a daily basis that they have no idea they are allergic to. Frequently, symptoms such as stomach aches, irritable bowel syndrome, acid reflux, indigestion, heartburn and bloating are directly related to food allergies.

Additionally, conditions such as migraine headaches, chronic sinusitis, post nasal drip, rashes, eczema, chronic fatigue, ADD/ADHD, mood swings and difficulty losing weight in many cases can be caused by food allergies.

Fortunately, a new, advanced method of allergy elimination is now available in the United States. Developed over a ten year period in Australia, a new technology called Advanced Allergy Therapeutics (AAT) is giving new hope to millions of allergy sufferers.

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# Streetwise

ASKED ON MAIN STREET

**Do you plan to take advantage of the sales on Black Friday?**



**Cami Baca**  
*Teacher*

No. I'm not a big shopper. I'm one of those last-minute procrastinators that does it all the week before Christmas.

**Chloe Adams**  
*Student*

I probably won't go shopping on Black Friday. I never have. I'm not really one for the rush and big crowds.



**Kathy Johnson**  
*Retired*

Yes. I shop on Black Friday every year with my daughter. We read the ads and plan our route. This year might be a little different since so many stores are opening at midnight. My all-time biggest conquest was a 55-inch flat-panel Sony television several years ago.



**Janice Metzner**  
*Retired*

I don't shop on Black Friday because I usually spend that day cleaning up after celebrating Thanksgiving. This year, I will be going to Tracy to help a friend with a garage sale. When I do shop, I will be shopping in downtown Pleasanton for many of my holiday gift needs.



**Gayla De Selle**  
*Retired*

I shopped on Black Friday once in my life, and after being completely overwhelmed, decided I would never do it again. I shop throughout the year, and when I find something that I think someone on my list would like, I buy it. I also like to shop after Black Friday to get the big discounts many stores offer.



—Compiled by Kerry Nally

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

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## DIGEST

### Parade, tree lighting next weekend

Pleasanton's annual Hometown Holiday Celebration takes place from 5-7:30 p.m. next Saturday, Dec. 3, along Main Street. The centerpiece of this free event, which is hosted by the city, is a festive parade followed by the lighting of a holiday tree in front of the Museum on Main.

The parade always kicks off with one of Pleasanton's high school marching bands, and this year Amador Valley High will lead the parade. The band is followed by dozens of holiday inspired entries including Pleasanton's own Balloon Platoon, the Pleasanton City Council, hundreds of Cub Scouts and Brownies, local car clubs and dog clubs and more.

Main Street will close to traffic at 4 p.m. If it rains that day, a parade cancellation telephone hotline will be updated each hour after 2:30 p.m. Call 931-5352.

### Grant application workshops

The cities of Pleasanton, Dublin and Livermore will co-sponsor two application workshops for all fiscal year 2012-13 Pleasanton Housing and Human Services and Community grants, Dublin Community Development Block grants and Livermore Housing and Human Services grants. The workshops are designed for non-profit organizations that serve Tri-Valley residents.

Staff will discuss the online application process being used for all three city grant programs and will distribute information at the workshops. Attendance at one of the scheduled workshops, which are identical, is mandatory in order to apply for Livermore funding and is strongly encouraged for the cities of Dublin and Pleasanton.

The first workshop is from 10 a.m.-noon, Tuesday, Dec. 6, at the Pleasanton City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave. The second workshop will be from 1:30-3:30 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 7, at the Livermore City Council Chamber, 3575 Pacific Ave.

To RSVP, contact Sheryl Jenkins at 960-4434 or email sljenkins@ci.livermore.ca.us.

### Holiday library hours

The Pleasanton Public Library is open this weekend after being closed yesterday and today for Thanksgiving. It will be closed Dec. 23-26 for the Christmas holidays as well as Jan. 1-2.

The library offers free 20-minute consultations with an experienced employment recruiter for help with resume writing, employment web sites and online applications. Stop by the Reference Desk to schedule a free appointment.

## Safeway opens new Pleasanton Lifestyle store

Supermarket is newest of 270 Safeway stores in Northern California region

By JEB BING

Shoppers continued to fill Safeway's new Lifestyle supermarket at Bernal and Valley avenues in Pleasanton this week as the store marks its first week of operation.

Open 24 hours a day, the 58,000-square-foot store, the second Safeway supermarket in Pleasanton, is the newest of 270 Safeway stores in the company's Northern California division.

Other businesses in the retail center next to Safeway also prepared for opening, including two banks, a restaurant and other retailers. A new McDonald's is planned for the unpaved portion of the property near the northbound I-680 off-ramp at Bernal. Don Wright, senior vice president of real estate for Safeway, also told a real estate



TERRY VANDERHEIDEN - IMAGE LIGHT

Safeway's new Lifestyle supermarket at Valley and Bernal avenues is now open 24 hours a day.

group last month that a Safeway gas station might be added at the site in the near future.

The new store has 250 employees, including 200 just hired who started on opening day.

Steve Burd, president, chief executive officer and chairman of the board of Safeway Inc., which has its headquarters about a mile away on Stoneridge Mall Road in Pleasanton, told a welcoming crowd at opening day ceremonies Nov. 17 that the Pleasanton retail center is one of 37 Safeway-owned shopping centers, making the company one of the largest developers in the business.

He also thanked Pleasanton Mayor Jennifer Hosterman and members of the City Council and the Planning Commission for their help in processing the approvals needed to build the development, pointing out that another recently opened Safeway took 20 years before finally winning the building permits needed. ■



GLENN WOHLTMANN

Dillon Rose, 6, and her 8-year-old brother Cameron offer a sign of encouragement for the family of Joshua "Chachi" Corral, the 19-year-old Marine killed Friday in Afghanistan; mother Denise Corral, right, receives an embrace; hundreds line the street near the family home when they returned from Dover, where their son's body arrived.



## Crowd gathers to honor Danville Marine killed in Afghanistan

Corporal was one of several 2010 SRVHS grads who enlisted together

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

Hundreds of people turned out Monday afternoon to honor the family of Joshua "Chachi" Corral, the 19-year-old Marine from Danville who was killed Friday in Afghanistan.

Lining both sides of the street for about a half mile, friends, neighbors and well wishers talked quietly as they waited for the family's return from Dover, Del., where they claimed Corral's body.

The young marine's father spoke to some of the crowd from the front deck of the family's home on Bountiful Court.

"Thank you for being here today," said Corral's father, Arnie. "It's a bit overwhelming."

Danville Mayor Karen Stepper said the 2010 San Ramon Valley High School graduate volunteered with a number of friends, calling them Danville's own band of brothers.

Family friend Kelly Miller helped organize the homecoming, spreading the word to parents with children on sports teams, as did the Pleasanton Military Families Support Group and the East Bay Blue Star Moms.

Miller said everyone in Danville who's been

See **MARINE** on Page 6

## Crystal bell honors firefighters

Harrington Art Partnership installs bell at Firehouse Arts Center

A stunning optic bell composed of four types of glass has been installed at Pleasanton's Firehouse Arts Center to represent the historical fire bell that was once used in the old fire station at the site to sound a public notice of a fire in the community.

The public art piece is the latest donated through the Harrington Art Partnership. Nancy and Gary Harrington commissioned the 400-pound optic crystal bell, known as the "Firehouse Crystal Bell," which was created by glass artist Jack Storms.

Situated in the lobby of the year-old Firehouse Arts Center, the piece honors all firefighters in a building that once served as the city's first Fire Station No. 1. First constructed in 1929, a section of the old firehouse remains as a key part of the new center.

A plaque with a poetic inscription penned by past Pleasanton Poet Laureate Deborah Grossman is situated at the base of the bell.

The optic bell, which contains more than 8,000 pieces, is composed of four types of glass: optic leaded crystal, optic unleaded glass, starphire and dichoroic glass. A specially designed lathe was made to shape the bell, while the bell's granite base was made by Bob Mattos. The metal stand for the bell was created by Tim Orr of Torr Industries.

The bell has some distinction within the portfolio of its artist, Jack Storms of Red Bluff, whose

See **BELL** on Page 6



DINO VOURNAS

The Firehouse Crystal Bell in its granite base with an inscription by past Poet Laureate Deborah Grossman.

## TAKE US ALONG



**Eiffel Tower fun:** Dan, Andrew, 14, Robbie, 12, and Janeen Brumm visit the Eiffel Tower on a two-week trip touring London, Paris, and Rome. "While in London, we visited our next-door neighbors, the Cranes, who have been living there for three years but are moving home this summer," said Janeen.

## MARINE

Continued from Page 5

on a team knew Corral or one of his three brothers.

"He volunteered to be a (mine) sweeper. He did it voluntarily — he wanted to make a difference with his life," Miller said. "He just had a larger than life personality."

Miller also helped organize a candlelight vigil Tuesday evening at Oak Hill Park in Danville. She said that no church in Danville is big enough to hold all those who'd want to attend.

Members of both the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District and the Danville Police Department turned out to pay their respects to the family.

"We're here just trying to show

support," said Police Chief Steve Simpkins. "They deserve it."

Also among those waiting were members of the Blue Star Moms, the name a reference to World War II, when families with a son killed in action displayed a blue star in a window of their home.

"We're here to honor the Corral family and their sacrifice," said Blue Star Mom Vicki Carlson. "We want them to know how much we love them and support them."

Many of those lining the street awaiting the family's return carried signs; a group of high school friends stood outside the family home carrying a long banner that read, "Legends never die. We love you Chachi. Once a hero, always a hero." ■

## Food pantries to get storage

Nonprofits, city working together to build facility

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Did you have trouble finding room in the fridge for your turkey this week? Now think of the space needed by Open Heart Kitchen, which stores more than 700 turkeys each year between November and December.

The city of Pleasanton and its Human Services Commission is partnering with Open Heart Kitchen to help meet its growing need for a storage facility, given that it has seen a 34% increase in meals served since 2007, last year providing almost 217,000.

"It's all about collaboration when

working on the issue of hunger," said Linda McKeever, executive director of Open Heart Kitchen. "We believe it will get us to this next, critical step to have a central location that would allow all pantries to receive, store and share donated food."

Storage units for dry, refrigerated and frozen goods will be available for all the food pantries, including Tri-Valley Haven and Interfaith Sharing Pantry. Sometimes the nonprofit groups have had to turn away donations for lack of storage.

Safeway just donated \$20,000 to support the project as part of the events to open its new Pleasanton

store. Open Heart Kitchen also allocated \$20,000 toward the project, and another \$11,973 was awarded through the Pleasanton Housing and Human Services grant program.

An estimated \$56,000 is still needed to complete the project, which will eventually house the three storage units at the Pleasanton Operation Services Center on Busch Road. The project includes site preparation (grading, electrical, drainage, asphalt, and fencing) and the purchase of the actual storage units.

For more information, call Community Services Manager Kathleen Yurchak at 931-5346. ■

## Bit of home for the holidays

Pleasanton Military Families send 265 packages to troops in war zones

Members of the Pleasanton Military Families Support Group and other volunteers packed 265 cartons of materials over the weekend to be sent to Pleasanton troops serving in Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf.

The packages contain personal care products, food, snacks, books, cards and Christmas garlands. Among the donations were 14 artificial Christmas trees with lights, which will be sent separately.

Pat Frizzell of the military families' organization said postage for the packages is estimated at \$3,600, which will be paid by the group and \$3,100 in specific cash and check donations for the project, including large donations from the Pleasanton Lions Club and Eagle Scout Jack Reed. ■



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Mikkel Ricafrente is excited about getting to pack a Christmas care package for his father, Army Master Sgt. Erwin Ricafrente of Pleasanton, who is serving in Iraq.

## Thank you for serving the U.S.A.!

Congressman Jerry McNerney and Jennifer Amiel, Director of Education at the Museum on Main, look over Holiday Cards for the Troops that were written Friday night during the Magical Holiday Evening event sponsored by the Pleasanton Downtown Association. The congressman is also collecting cards for the troops at his Pleasanton office. Write a message inside a card to a service member and deliver unsealed cards to 5776 Stoneridge Mall Rd., Suite 175, by Thursday, Dec. 15.



## BELL

Continued from Page 5

internationally sought-after smaller works typically take six to 10 weeks to complete. Storms spent approximately two years working on the optic bell for the Harrington

Art Partnership.

Among his other works was an emissarial gift to the president of Nigeria to observe the opening of the first blood bank on the continent of Africa, and the awards for the Los Angeles Music Awards.


Artist Storm and the Har-

ringtons joined firefighters and city officials Nov. 12 at a ceremony where the new bell was unveiled. The crystal bell can be seen in the lobby of the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave., in downtown Pleasanton.

—Jeb Bing

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## Chamber's 'mixer' a hit with local businesses

Year-end event draws hundreds to check out each other

Several hundred business owners and their employees turned out for the final Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce business mixer earlier this month, held at the Pleasanton Hilton Hotel.

Called a business-to-business networking opportunity at the local level, the mixers are popular among firms that count on doing business with each other or building new relationships with owners and representatives.

"It's part of our service to the members of the chamber to give them a chance to do business with each other, to maintain their contacts, names and brand recognition," said Scott Raty, president and chief executive of the Pleasanton Chamber.

"We have three of these programs each year and our members believe they contribute to the sense of doing business locally," he added.

Earlier this year the chamber also sponsored a "Consumer Showcase" at the Stoneridge Shopping Center, which Raty described as a business-to-consumer event. Because of the popularity of this first-ever event, Raty said the chamber is working to schedule another one in 2012. ■



JEB BING

Top right: At the Chamber's business mixer, Kathy Thibodeaux of E & S Ring Management Corp., shows development plan for a proposed apartment complex and retail center on vacant land at Bernal Avenue and Stanley Boulevard, across from McDonald's. Site is also on the list of parcels identified for rezoning for affordable housing units.

Bottom right: Realtor Tom Fox talks to Aman Prasad, manager of the 1st United Services Credit Union branch, during the Pleasanton Chamber's business mixer earlier this month.

## 3rd quarter earnings up 19% at Pleasanton-based Ross Stores

Company also announced 2-for-1 stock split

Pleasanton-based Ross Stores Inc. has reported earnings per share for the 13 weeks ended Oct. 29 rose 24% to \$1.26, up from \$1.02 for the 13 weeks ended Oct. 30, 2010.

These results reflected an increase on top of 21% and 91% gains in the third quarters of 2010 and 2009, respectively.

Net earnings for the third quarter ended Oct. 29 grew 19% to \$144.0 million, up from \$121.4 million for the third quarter a year ago. Fiscal 2011 third quarter sales increased 9% to \$2.046 billion, with comparable store sales up 5% over the prior year.

"We are pleased with our above-plan sales and earnings in the third quarter and first nine months of 2011, especially considering this growth was achieved on top of exceptional increases in the prior two years," said Michael Balmuth, vice chairman and chief executive officer.

"Our strong revenue gains continue to be driven mainly by our ability to deliver compelling bargains on a wide assortment of exciting name brand fashions for the family and the home to today's increasingly value-focused consumers," he added. "In addition, operating our business on lower in-store inventories is driving faster turns and lower markdowns, which continues to benefit profit margins."

The company also announced that its board of directors has approved a two-for-one stock split to be paid in the form of a 100% stock dividend on Dec. 15 to stockholders of record as of Nov. 29. In addition, the board declared a regular quarterly cash dividend of \$.22 per share, or \$.11 per share post-split, payable on Dec. 30 to stockholders of record as of Nov. 29. ■



# THERE'S NOTHING SMALL ABOUT SHOPPING SMALL.

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## SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

First, there was Black Friday. Then, there was Cyber Monday. Now, there's Small Business Saturday, a day for all the small businesses that fuel the economy and invigorate your community. Show your support by pledging to shop small on November 26. If millions of people shop small, it will be huge.

NOV 26

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# Opinion

## EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

### Hosterman vs. Canada's tar sands

We don't often comment on national or global issues, but since Mayor Jennifer Hosterman is speaking out publicly on behalf of the city of Pleasanton against the Keystone Canadian pipeline crossing into the U.S., we thought we'd chime in, too. Of course, Hosterman, an avowed environmentalist who serves on U.S. Conference of Mayors committees, is entitled to her opinions on national issues. She has supported the Kyoto Accord, smokestack regulations and clean air and climate control measures.

Yet her latest protest may be a bit far afield for the position she was elected to serve. Without any approval (as far as we know) from her colleagues on the City Council or a vote in favor by her constituents, Hosterman joined an outspoken coalition of American mayors in an effort to block the transport of Alberta's tar sands oil across the U.S. to the Texas Gulf Coast through a \$13 billion Keystone XL pipeline. Hearing the mayors and other protestors, President Obama last week put the project on hold until after the 2012 national elections.

A much-relieved Hosterman wrote on Facebook this week: "I spoke against this project and think it needs to be canceled all together. But this is a good start."

Earlier, Hosterman expressed her concerns in a letter signed by 103 mayors: "When the President said recently that he thought 'folks in Nebraska like all across the country' aren't going to trade putting our kids' health at risk from contaminated drinking water, or potentially harming agriculture in our heartlands all for 'a few thousand jobs,' he hit the nail on the head. In fact, we don't need to make the trade at all. Jobs that are actually good for the environment can employ people across the country, whereas the Keystone XL pipeline will create jobs only for a small number of people in a few states, and not necessarily where jobs are needed most."

We're not pipeline or tar sand specialists, so we won't weigh in on whether the Keystone project would help reduce the country's dependence on overseas oil resources as its proponents argue or if it's too dangerous to cross the Sand Hills region of Nebraska, as that state's governor suggests. But at the same time, the issue may also be too far a stretch for Mayor Hosterman's expertise, even with her law degree. It certainly seems disingenuous for her to speak on behalf of the people of Pleasanton about tar sands and oil pipelines when there's so much more at stake right here at home. ■

## LETTERS

### Wanting the best vs. wanting just to walk

Dear Editor,

I found it so disturbing to read last week (Nov. 18) on one page about parents competing to have their children be better than the next and on the other page a story about a young Pleasanton girl recently paralyzed from an accident. I have lived in Pleasanton for 31 years and saw how competitive it could be. But it was even more disturbing because I have a daughter who was paralyzed in 1998 almost in the same way Katie was. This daughter was asked at age 14 to play on a well-known competitive, traveling league. My late husband and I discussed it and decided it would take away from the rest of the family so we told her she could not. She was

paralyzed the next year.

Love your kids, let them play, let them be kids, because you don't know when "life" will add or take away something you took for granted. I raised my three daughters in that neighborhood where the author lives and they are grown with college degrees, but there is a lesson here big time. We all want or wanted the best for our kids but not at the expense of robbing them of their childhood. My daughter was robbed at 14 and Katie now, but it doesn't stop them from achieving amazing things. My daughter is a USC grad and working on a web page making travel for disabled accessible and enjoyable.

How sad I feel for these parents who put such importance in who got the best teacher, the best shoes, the best team, made the best shot, when all Katie's parents, I'm sure, and I want for our daughters is to be able to walk.

Elaine Olson

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# POLICE BULLETIN

## Two employees arrested in Sears thefts

Two Sears employees have been charged with embezzlement in separate thefts that both occurred on Nov. 18.

Jaysn D. Van Asten, 29, was arrested at 3:44 p.m. in connection with the theft of \$44 in pants, a \$30 hatbox, and three polo shirts valued at a total of \$72.

Raquell Erlana Robertson, 23, was arrested at 5:30 p.m. in the theft of \$305 in jewelry, \$105 worth of cloth-

ing, two purses valued at \$36 apiece and nail polish.

In other police reports:

Blake Anthony Garcia, 24, was arrested at about 7:42 p.m. Nov. 15 in the theft of a \$40 Xbox game from Wal-Mart.

A Nov. 17 home burglary in the 8000 block of Canyon Creek Circle netted electronics and video games worth nearly \$9,000.

Taken in the theft was a \$3,500 digital camera with a custom lens, a \$2,000 desktop computer, a \$2,000 flatscreen TV, a Wii video game console worth \$300, a \$300 Xbox video game console and \$400 in games for both. The report was called in at 4:00 p.m.; a bathroom window had been left unlocked.

## POLICE REPORT

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

### Nov. 15

#### Theft

- 1:01 p.m. in the first block of Stoneridge Mall Road; possession of stolen property
- 5:13 p.m. in the 3100 block of Santa Rita Road; misappropriation of property, under the influence of a controlled substance

### Nov. 16

#### Theft

- 12:40 p.m. in the 7000 block of Johnson Drive; petty theft
- 2:38 p.m. in the 4300 block of Foothill Road; petty theft
- 3:32 p.m. in the 1700 block of Santa Rita Road; petty theft
- 4:29 p.m. in the 1700 block of Santa Rita Road; auto theft

#### Auto burglary

- 3:06 p.m. in the 3200 block of Balmoral Court

#### Vandalism

- 12:57 p.m. at the intersection of Bernal Avenue and Tawny Drive

#### Public drunkenness

- 5:41 p.m. in the 5100 block of Golden Road

### Nov. 17

#### Theft

- 4:30 p.m. in the 4100 block of Mohr Avenue; embezzlement, theft from an elder or dependent adult
- 7:32 p.m. in the 5800 block of Owens Drive; auto theft

#### Burglary

- 4 p.m. in the 8000 block of Canyon Creek Circle

#### Vandalism

- 11:04 a.m. in the 4500 block of First Street

#### Under the influence of a controlled substance

- 8:05 a.m. at the intersection of Mohr Avenue and Kamp Drive

### Nov. 18

#### Theft

- 1:02 p.m. in the 6200 block of Wade Court; identity theft
- 1:36 p.m. in the 1700 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; embezzlement
- 3:09 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 3:54 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 4:49 p.m. in the 1700 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; embezzlement
- 5:31 p.m. in the 1100 block of Santa Rita Road; petty theft

#### Auto burglary

- 7:22 a.m. in the 7700 block of Olive Dr

#### Vandalism

- 7 a.m. at the intersection of Main Street and Vervais Avenue

- 9:33 a.m. in the 3700 block of Stoneridge Drive

- 5:39 p.m. in the 400 block of Old Bernal Avenue

- 7:34 p.m. in the 9200 block of Longview Drive

#### Drug/alcohol violations

- 11:34 a.m. at the intersection of Owens Drive and W. Las Positas Boulevard

- 6:35 p.m. in the 2100 block of Armstrong Drive; DUI

- 8:39 p.m. in the 4200 block of First Street; public drunkenness

### Nov. 19

#### Petty theft

- 3 p.m. in the 1700 block of

#### Stoneridge Mall Road

- 5:48 p.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive

- 8 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

#### Battery

- 8:56 p.m. in the 4300 block of First Street

#### Vehicle break-in

- 8:34 a.m. in the 3400 block of Andrews Drive

#### Alcohol violations

- 1:29 a.m. at the intersection of Valley Avenue and Boulder Street; DUI

- 8:41 a.m. in the 4200 block of Rosewood Drive; public drunkenness

- 11:03 p.m. in the 7000 block of Johnson Drive; DUI

### Nov. 20

#### Hit and run

- 1:17 a.m. at the intersection of Bernal Avenue and Meadowlark Drive

#### Public drunkenness

- 2:04 a.m. in the 4100 block of Stanley Boulevard

### Nov. 21

#### Petty theft

- 1:47 p.m. in the first block of Stoneridge Mall Road

- 6:37 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

#### Vandalism

- 9:20 a.m. in the 5900 block of Laurel Creek Drive

- 9:56 a.m. in the 3200 block of Arbor Drive

#### Drug/alcohol violations

- 1:07 a.m. in the 3000 block of Hopyard Road; public drunkenness

- 9:16 p.m. in the 800 block of Main Street; driving with marijuana

# OBITUARIES

## Robert (Bob) Charles Cannon

Former Resident of Pleasanton

Bob Cannon, 52, of Oklahoma passed away unexpectedly Oct. 9, 2011. He was born in Buffalo, New York to Patsy and Charles Cannon on June 20, 1959. He lived in Tonawanda, New York; Denver, Colorado; Placentia, California; Dayton, Ohio; Pleasanton and area cities, California and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He was a member



of the first graduating class of Foothill High School (1977). He excelled in tennis and golf and played on his high school team all 4 years. He traveled competitively for tennis. Bob joined the Army after high school and was stationed in Germany where he met his wife Maggie and married in 1982. He worked 20 years for Farmer's Insurance (Dublin, CA and Oklahoma City). Moving up through the ranks, his last position was as a Software Development Lead. Bob always enjoyed a variety of sports and began running over the last five years. He participated in many marathons, ranking extremely high in many of his races. Even though he moved to Oklahoma 12 years ago, his devotion to the San Francisco 49ers never changed. He loved a variety of music and celebrated anniversaries with his wife at jazz festivals.

Bob is survived by his wife of 29 years, Maggie Cannon of Oklahoma City, OK and their three children Renee, Nathan and Justin, all of Oklahoma; his father, Charles Cannon and step-mother June of Pleasanton, CA; Sisters, Debra (Neil) Cannon Ardoline of Westminster, CO and Karen (Mark) Cannon Hitesman of Pleasanton, CA as well as many nieces, nephews, aunts and uncles. He was predeceased by his mother Patsy Puderbaugh Cannon.

Friends and family are invited to attend a celebration of Bob's life which will be held at Rock Bible Church, 4100 1st Street in Pleasanton, CA on November 26, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. A service will also be held on November 17, 2011 at the family church in Oklahoma City.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to his favorite charity, Samaritans Purse, in Bob's name. [www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org).



## WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

### Planning Commission

Wednesday, November 30, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- **P11 0836, CTR Motors** - Application for a Conditional Use Permit to operate an automobile warehouse for wholesale and internet sales at 2118 Rheem Drive.
- **P11-0709/P11-0717, Dave Cunningham** - Applications for Design Review approval to replace the approximately 482 square foot single story house located at 205 Neal Street with an approximately 1,844 square foot two-story residence; and for Variances from the Pleasanton Municipal Code to: (1) reduce the front yard setback from the required 23 feet to 20 feet to accommodate the new house; (2) allow one required off-street parking space to be located in the required front yard setback; and (3) allow tandem parking.
- **P11-0458, Ron Panich** - Application for Design Review approval to demolish an existing duplex structure located on the west side of the property located at 446 Sycamore Road and to construct an approximately 2,739 square foot addition to the existing residence and related site improvements.

### Energy and Environment Committee - Workshop

Thursday, December 1, 2011 at 5:00 p.m.

Operations Service Center, 3333 Busch Road

- Discussion regarding annual planning

### Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force Meeting

December 1, 2011, 6:30 pm

Operations Service Center, 3333 Busch Road

- The City's Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force will develop a set of guidelines that addresses key elements in creating a positive and responsible environment for downtown vitality. The task force's discussions will be focused on areas including public safety, music and entertainment, outdoor activities and transportation.

To be added to the email list for agenda packets and additional Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force information, please email your request to [tsnyder@ci.pleasanton.ca.us](mailto:tsnyder@ci.pleasanton.ca.us). For further information or questions, see our website at [www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/business/planning/DH/DowntownHospitality.html](http://www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/business/planning/DH/DowntownHospitality.html)

**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](http://www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/community/calendar)

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## BARBECUE

**Red Smoke Grill**  
4501 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, 734-0307. Home of the Tri Tip and Blue, Red Smoke Grill was Voted Reader's Choice Best 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011. Dine in or take out rotisserie chicken, ribs, prawns, salads and tri tip, or pulled pork sandwiches. Relax with a beer or a bottle of wine. Visit www.redsmokegrill.com.

## BREW PUB/ALEHOUSE

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

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## Auditions

**'THE MIKADO'** Role Players Ensemble Theatre will host auditions for "The Mikado" at 7 p.m., Monday, Dec. 5, at Village Theatre, 233 Front St., Danville. The theater needs eight males (ages 20-80) and seven females (ages 20-80). Non-AEA and stipend. Prepare one-min song in the style of Gilbert and Sullivan and one-min monologue. Rehearsals start on Feb. 20 and performances will be April 13-May 5. For more information, call (312) 286-9224 or e-mail efhayes65@yahoo.com.

## Book Clubs

**LIBRARY BOOK CLUB** If you enjoy reading and would like to share your thoughts with others in an informal setting, the Pleasanton Library Book Club, which meets the fourth Monday of the month, may be for you. The club meets next at 7 p.m., Monday, Nov. 28, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave., to discuss "In the Time of Butterflies" by Julia Alvarez. For more information call 931-3400, ext. 7, or visit [www.pleasantonlibrarybookclub.wordpress.com](http://www.pleasantonlibrarybookclub.wordpress.com).

## Concerts

**'WHAT CHILD IS THIS'** The musicians of Centerpointe Church will present "A Festival of Carols" at 5 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 11, in the worship center, 3410 Cornerstone Court. The program will feature carols interspersed with readings and scriptures read by Lee Lipsker. The festival includes carols sung by the audience as well as presentations by the church's chancel choir as well as its handbell choir. There will be a reception after the performance. This event is free. Call 846-4436 or visit [www.centerpointechurch.org](http://www.centerpointechurch.org).

## Events

**GNON'S (GIRLS NIGHT OUT NETWORKING) TRI VALLEY CHAPTER HOLIDAY PARTY** Enjoy holiday menu and drinks! New unwrapped toys will be collected for the Toys for Tots program. Membership/Renewal special renew tonight to save as membership increases in 2012. Event is from 5-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 6 at TGIFridays, 3999 Santa Rita Rd. Cost is \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. Call 487-4748 or visit [www.gnontrivalley.com](http://www.gnontrivalley.com). RSVP by Dec. 2 at [gnoners@gmail.com](mailto:gnoners@gmail.com).

**WIDOWS/WIDOWERS LUNCHEON** The Widowed Men and Women of Northern California would like to invite you to join them for lunch at noon, Wednesday, Nov. 30, at Elephant Bar Restaurant, 7202 Amador Plaza Rd. Cost is your menu choice and beverage. RSVP to Marge by Wednesday, Nov. 23, at 828-5124.

## Fundraisers

**CAFE ART FUNDRAISER TO BENEFIT TRI-VALLEY HAVEN** Cafe Art will donate 10% of all proceeds to Tri-Valley Haven during shopping during Thanksgiving weekend from 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Friday, Nov. 25, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Nov. 25-26, at Cafe Art, 1764 First

St., Livermore. Call Julie or Amelia 373-0222.

**HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE** CPA firm JL Consulting is coordinating a holiday food drive benefiting people in need served by the Alameda County Community Food Bank. Donations of non-perishable foods can be dropped off between 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday at JL Consulting, 1024 Serpentine Ln., Suite #105. It will be accepting donations until Dec. 16. Call 846-1859 or email [info@jlcpa.net](mailto:info@jlcpa.net).

**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD** Garry Linforth is starting work on his Eagle Scout Project, to send shoe boxes filled with toys, school supplies and personal care items to underprivileged children in developing countries. He is organizing this with Centerpointe Church for the relief effort Operation Christmas Child. It costs \$7 for the shipping. Email [garrison\\_linforth@yahoo.com](mailto:garrison_linforth@yahoo.com). The supporting organization is Samaritan's Purse, which will receive any excess funds.

**PLEASANTON MIDDLE SCHOOL CHEER FUNDRAISER** The Pleasanton Middle School Cheerleaders will be selling Mixed Bag Designs, eco-friendly shopping bags, grocery bags, iPad, iPhone and laptop covers, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 26 and Sunday, Nov. 27 at Safeway, 1701 Santa Rita Road. Proceeds benefit the cheer squad. E-mail [pmspanthercheer@gmail.com](mailto:pmspanthercheer@gmail.com).

## Health

**FREE HEALTH FAIR** Receive free medical advice at a free health air that will be held on from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 3, at Livermore Shiva Vishnu Temple, 1232 Arrowhead Road, Livermore. Topics will include internal medicine, cardiology, women's health, nutrition and diet, chiropractic services, physical therapy and eye disorders. There will be free evaluations on blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol. Call 449-6255.

## Holiday

**CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE AND PANCAKE BREAKFAST** Start your day with a pancake breakfast and get some Christmas shopping done all in one location from 9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, Dec. 3, at Harvest Valley Church, 3200 Hopyard Road. Crafters and vendors will have unique, handcrafted items, holiday decor and boutique gift items from local artisans, crafters and home party consultants. Admission is free. Cost for breakfast is \$6. Call 484-2482, ext. 106.

**OPERATION: ONE WARM COAT** Coldwell Banker invites you to warm the spirits of those in our community this season by supporting a coat drive to collect and distribute coats to the less fortunate during the cold winter months. Donations will be accepted until Dec. 16. Drop off at The Coffee Company, 5424 Sunol Blvd #7, or for pick-ups, call 922-0671. Visit [www.camoves.com/emma.lea](http://www.camoves.com/emma.lea).

## Kids & Teens

**FOOTHILL CHEER CAMP** Foothill

Competition Cheerleaders are calling all K-6 cheerleaders to learn new moves, dances and cheers at a class from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 3, at Foothill High School, 4375 Foothill Rd. Includes class, lunch, certificate, T-shirt and mystery gift. Register by Nov 1 and save \$5. Go to [www.foothillsports.com](http://www.foothillsports.com) to download the registration/medical release form. Cost is \$50. Call 699-1149 or email [mjscalise2@comcast.net](mailto:mjscalise2@comcast.net).

## Lectures/ Workshops

**MICHAEL KRASNY TO SPEAK** Award-winning broadcaster Michael Krasny will speak at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 30, at Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court. Tickets are \$10. For festival details or to order tickets, visit [www.jfed.org/bookfestival/](http://www.jfed.org/bookfestival/). For more information, e-mail [riva@jfed.org](mailto:riva@jfed.org).

## Spiritual

**MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS** Under the direction of Cindy Krausgrill, the Magic of Christmas will feature both sacred and secular music for the holiday season, at 7 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 10, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Rd. Admission is free, with refreshments following the concert. A free-will donation will be accepted to benefit Open Heart Kitchen. Visit [www.tapestryingersandsingers.org](http://www.tapestryingersandsingers.org).

# Happy Holidays From PASTAS TRATTORIA!

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story by GLENN WOHLTMANN

# BART a boon for Stoneridge sales

*Retailers report an increase in sales; police predict no increase in shoplifting*

GLENN WOHLTMANN



CAMMIE CLARK

The decorations may have been up for weeks, but today marks the official start of the holiday shopping season with many stores at the Stoneridge Shopping Center opening their doors at 4 a.m., and some that opened at midnight.

Historically, today is Black Friday, a name coined in Philadelphia in 1966, when shoppers would crowd center city, bringing massive traffic jams and over-crowded sidewalks. The name was co-opted by retailers sometime in the 1990s, when today, the busiest shopping day of the year, was repurposed to mean the time of year that they moved from red ink on their books and into the black.

Those who turned out early came out to find giveaways in addition to the bargains that drove them out of their beds in the predawn hours with offerings like free coffee and live entertainment.

The new West Dublin/Pleasanton BART station near Stoneridge Shopping Center opened Feb. 19, and retailers at the mall are hoping for crowds to tumble off the trains and into the stores today. Some said they've already seen a BART-driven spike.

Joe Flores, supervisor at Quiksilver, which

sells clothes to younger men and women, said he noticed a bump in sales almost as soon as the new station opened. At the time, Flores was working at GameStop, which sells video games.

"Off the bat I saw more people coming in. It was a more diverse group," Flores said. "Now we've got people coming in from Richmond or Concord or San Francisco."

He said many of those coming in are younger, too.

"They're in their mid 20s, around there.

There's some older people that come, but mainly mid 20s, early 30s," Flores said, adding that this made a big difference in GameStop's sales for the fiscal year.

"We didn't double our year but we got really close," he continued.

He said he's noticed a huge change in the ethnicity of shoppers as well.

"Before, it was like 80% Caucasian. After BART opened it went like to 50, it's almost half and half. ... It's just really cool seeing people come in from different places."

Store Manager Grace Moreno of women's clothier Forever 21 has seen the same thing.

"It's a lot more diverse than it was before," Moreno said. "The month has been good. There's a lot more people here (and) when it comes to traffic, we're seeing a lot more traffic."

Moreno said sales at her store haven't gone up that much, but said clothing is generally a last-minute item for people to buy.

Carrie Williams, director of marketing and business development for Simon Property Group, which owns Stoneridge, said she's seen an uptick in sales, but couldn't say whether that's because of BART or an improvement in the economy.

"We're happy there's another way for our shoppers to get here. It's hard for us to pinpoint BART," Williams said. "It's hard for us to pinpoint that, whether it's BART or an increase in shopping."

She said she's seen an increase in the number of parking spaces available to customers, and that the holidays may give a better sense

of BART's impact.

"I think it's going to be a very convenient way (to go shopping), because our parking lot gets really full here," Williams said.

She's also made arrangements for the shopping center's holiday train, which picks up customers at the far reaches of the parking area, to swing by the BART station as well.

Damiele Wharton, manager of Hot Dog on a Stick, said she saw a spike in sales right away.

"When it first came, we were really busy. Our sales were up about 10%," Wharton said, adding that sales have leveled off since then.

She added that being able to ride in has made a difference for workers.

"I think it's more for the employees, that they take BART in."

In addition to the usual offerings at Stoneridge, the Red Cross has blank greeting cards at guest services for people to send to soldiers. And gift wrapping will be done at two separate locations, by cheerleaders from California High and volunteers from the Taylor Family Foundation, which operates Camp Arroyo for children with life-threatening and chronic illnesses.

Along with shoppers and employees comes the potential for thieves. Flores said he saw a slight increase in shoplifting when he was at GameStop.

"It wasn't that bad, it went from like 12% to 14%," he said.

However, based on statistics, shoplifting has not gone up at all since Stoneridge BART opened.

"Since BART's opening in February, we have not seen a substantive increase or peak in any criminal activity at the mall, looking at the numbers," said Pleasanton police Lt. Jeff Bretzing.

He said police took 129 shoplifters into



custody in 2010 and 133 in 2009.

"We've had 113 cases to date this year," he said. "With just a little under a month left this year, I'd suspect it will come in right around 130. Again, based on the stats, we don't expect any increase."

That's not because of an increased police presence, Bretzing said, although he added that there will be more officers out from now until the

end of the year.

"As we do every year during the holiday season, we increase our staffing at the mall and we will be doing that this year as well," he said. "The holiday season itself always brings in more shoplifters. I don't think we're going to see a specific increase relative to BART itself, given the statistical data measured thus far. We don't have any reason to believe that the number of shoplifting

arrests will be any higher this year than in any previous year."

Bretzing said he spoke to police in San Leandro before BART opened here, but said the Stoneridge Shopping Center is a very different environment than the Bayfair Mall.

Meanwhile, some retailers at Stoneridge are reporting increased sales for November, which could be a positive sign for the Christmas season or could be simply a sign that people are shopping earlier. ■



CAMMIE CLARK

Opposite page, top: Stoneridge parking lots are just a bit less crowded, thanks to the new West Dublin/Pleasanton BART station that opened in February; shoppers leave a local BART station bearing packages well before the official start of Christmas shopping. Above: Retailers are optimistic that BART will bring an influx of holiday shoppers.

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## On stage for the holidays

*Special productions delight audiences  
with Christmas cheer*

By **DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI**

The holiday spirit is taking to local stages, from a traditional "Nutcracker" to a fun-loving "Sleeping Beauty" and "Nunsense Christmas." Join in a sing-along after a performance by the Valley Concert Choral and don't forget holiday songs played by our own Pleasanton Community Concert Band, a fun afternoon of music usually attended by a visitor from the North Pole.

Pleasanton's Civic Arts Stage Company will present "Sleeping Beauty" from Dec. 9-18 at the Amador Theater, performing the classic fairy tale in the lighthearted British "panto" style with music, dance and magic.

holiday tradition for these kids and parents, one that is unique to Pleasanton.

This version of the story carries the messages that beauty comes from within and that parents need to allow their children some freedom, Ennals said. Princess Beauty is given beauty and brains at birth, but not manners, since the fairy responsible for dispensing manners must use her gift to counteract the spell of the evil Belladonna.

The cast's professional actors are joined by the largest Civic Arts Stage Company cast to date, with returning members and newcomers. Jennifer Meredith, who played Cinderella in 2009, returns as Beauty, sharing the role with Lacey Smith.

It will be the Valley Dance Theatre's fourth year presenting Tchaikovsky's classic, "The Nutcracker." The full-length production features professionally designed costumes, sets and scenery and is accompanied by the Livermore-Amador Symphony pit orchestra.

Some performances will include pre-show festivities including carols by the Cantabella Children's Chorus and Harmony Fusion. The Asbury Ringers will be ringing their handbells in the theater lobby Dec. 16, 17 and 18.

This year "The Nutcracker" role of the Cavalier is danced by Ted Newman, a 19-year-old Pleasanton resident, who majors in computer programming at Las Positas College.

"I have a musical background and play several instruments, but opted to try out for color guard rather than play drums in the marching band at Amador Valley High School," Newman said, recalling his journey to the stage of ballet. "Color guard is influenced greatly by dance and my positive experience with it my senior year led to dance lessons and then to participating on competitive dance teams. One of those, a jazz team, required ballet classes and I found I really liked them. Last year,



AARON ZWIEFEL

Quincy Kumpfert, Claire Wagner and Peyton Cook as fairies and Rae Kerton (front, center) as Little Suds in the Civic Arts Stage Company production of "Sleeping Beauty."

a friend told me about auditions for male roles in 'The Nutcracker' and here I am."

Newman said that studying ballet has made him stronger and more physically fit, but that is not



Dan Levitan will be the harpist when the women of the Valley Concert Chorale and the Las Positas College Chamber Choir sing "Dancing Day."

the primary benefit.

"Since I started dancing, I've been able to concentrate more on school and work and I've been

more relaxed at home," he said. "I've also developed a new circle of friends full of wonderful people."

For lighthearted holiday fare, join the singing nuns and Father Virgil and some of Mt. Saint Helen's most talented students as they tape their first Christmas special in their convent basement in "Nuncrackers: The Nunsense Christmas Musical." It features all new songs including "Twelve Days Prior to Christmas," "Santa Ain't Comin' To Our House," and a humorous take on Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker."

"Nuncrackers will make you laugh and maybe tug at your heartstrings," according to the Tri-Valley Repertory Theatre all volunteer group. "It's the perfect way to ensure your holiday season is merry and bright."

Valley Concert Chorale is presenting this year's holiday concert with the Las Positas College Chamber Choir and the Cantabella Children's Chorus, with guest harpist Daniel Levitan.

"Fun, light and joyful music of carols is what we'll offer audiences to kick off the holiday season," said John Emory Bush, artistic director

of the Valley Concert Chorale.

The women of the Chorale and the Chamber Choir will join together to sing Rutter's "Dancing Day," accompanied by well-known Bay Area harpist Dan Levitan. Bush, himself a harpist, noted that the harp part is extremely difficult.

"I needed the very best and Dan is the best I know," Bush said. "Dan is an incredible, virtuosic harpist and a great collaborator."

Levitan will also accompany the Cantabella Children's Chorus as they perform selections from Britten's "Ceremony of Carols," under the direction of Eileen Chang. Additional songs include "Carol of the Bells" and "Deck the Halls."

The performance will culminate with the traditional audience sing-along of carols.

"It's obvious that the audience is getting in the spirit of the season as we sing the carols. You can see it in their faces and makes the experience extra special for us singers," said Chorale Board President Dave Brunswick.

**See a complete listing of holiday performances on page 16. ■**



GARY CAIN

Angela Arkin plays a floppy doll in this year's Valley Dance Theatre production of "The Nutcracker."

"Every year, our holiday panto inspires kids to dance in the aisles, and often those same kids come back and audition the next year," said Director Rebecca Ennals. "We're starting to create a real



# Holiday Heart and Hearth

## Outings to make the season bright

Yesteryear fun makes for a merry Christmas

Enjoy a Victorian Yuletide at Ravenswood Historic Site where the main house and cottage are decorated to the hilt for the holidays. The yuletide celebration takes place from noon-4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 11, with St. Nicholas, music, entertainment and children's crafts, all for free. Sweets and hot beverages will be available.

The historic site will be decorated with holiday trees and flowers. Costumed volunteers and docents will greet guests, offering tours of the museum cottage house. The old Tank House Gift Shop behind the cottage is featuring special items and handmade crafts.

'Tis also the season to climb aboard the historic Niles Canyon Railway run by the Pacific Locomotive Association for the 2011 Train of Lights running some evenings through Dec. 29.

"Bring large doses of good cheer

and any protective clothing you may need against the weather," said the organizers. "While we don't often have rain, it is frequently cold. A small flashlight may be useful to help you move safely between your vehicle and the train."

Sunol trains depart at 7:15 p.m.; trains depart from Niles at 4:15 p.m., and the trip takes a little over an hour.

Seats are \$25 for everyone over the age of 3. Bargain trains for \$15 will run on Wednesdays, Dec. 7 and 14.

The annual Train of Lights is the largest fundraiser for the Pacific Locomotive Association, which restores historic boxcars for the public to enjoy. Those who work on the trains are all volunteers.

It is also possible to charter the caboose or an entire Train of Lights train. Contact the ticket agent at 510-996-8420.

—Dolores Fox Ciardelli



TOM SILVA

The fireplace in the Cottage at Ravenswood is decorated for an old-fashioned Christmas.

## Five ways to make holiday entertaining easy

Whether hosting a holiday meal for the family or an open house for the neighborhood, entertaining can be stressful, especially during the holidays when there's so much pressure to make everything perfect.

Here are simple tips on how to make entertaining more enjoyable for all involved.

### Make a plan

Take some time to really plan out the event. How many are coming? What's on the menu? How should the house look? Make a to-do list and set deadlines. Doing as much as possible in advance will make the day of the party that much easier.

Better yet, delegate some of the work. Even preschoolers can help put away groceries, wash veggies or fold napkins. If a guest asks if she can bring something, let her. People love to feel useful, and it gives you one less thing to do.

### Gather your tools

Once the menu is set, review your tableware, serving dishes and cookware to make sure you have what you need. Borrow or purchase what you're missing. Among today's options is a growing array of cookware designed to go seamlessly and beautifully from oven or stovetop to even the most formal table, saving time, money and cleanup.

### Make the most of your space

The size of the meal may expand during the holidays, but cooking and serving space doesn't. A countertop toaster oven or high-wattage double burner can be a lifesaver for expanding oven and stovetop



DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Colorful china inspires this festive holiday table setting, which was auctioned off at Christmas Tree Lane last weekend to benefit ValleyCare Foundation.

capacity. On the buffet table, tiered servers hold appetizers and desserts vertically, rather than horizontally, saving valuable space and creating an attractive display.

### Decorate for the senses

Involve all the senses in your decorating scheme. Enlist a spouse or older child to come up with a holiday music playlist or CD. Be sure to include instrumental pieces to play during dinner so it won't impede conversation.

Fill the house with holiday scents, such as cinnamon, mulberry or evergreen. Scented candles are an easy and attractive way to provide fragrance and a warm glow to any room, and candlelight makes your guests look 10 years younger. But don't put candles in high-traffic areas. Today's flameless scented candles are so realistic,

with LED bulbs that glow and flicker like a real flame, chances are your guests won't even notice the difference. And they provide an alternative to placing real candles near curtains, Christmas trees or other decorations.

### Enjoy the results

Don't be so busy playing hostess that you forget to enjoy yourself. Organize the kitchen so that the bulk of the cleanup can be done later. Have storage containers handy for leftovers, designate an area in the kitchen for dirty dishes, and then forget about the rest.

The host sets the tone of the party. Forget about perfection and keep the focus on what matters — family and friends. You may find yours is the party that people look forward to throughout the year.

—ARA Content

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## Holiday Happenings

### 'Creatures of Impulse: Holiday Short'

Firehouse Arts Center  
4444 Railroad Ave., Pleasanton  
Pleasanton's Teen Improv Troupe will take suggestions to inspire holiday-themed games, scenes and audience interactions in the first act. The audience will then vote for which short scene Creatures of Impulse will make into an entire improvised "play" in the second act.  
7:30 p.m. Thu-Fri, Dec. 1-2

### 'Nuncrackers: The Nonsense Christmas Musical'

Tri-Valley Repertory Theatre  
1048 Serpentine Lane, Suite 307, Pleasanton  
8 p.m. Fri/Sat; 2 p.m. Sun; Dec. 2-18  
\$25 adults, \$22 seniors, \$20 for students  
Call 462-2121

### 'Of Carols and Candlelight'

Valley Concert Chorale's Annual Holiday Concert with Las Positas College Chamber Choir and Cantabella Children's Chorus

■ Saturday, Dec. 3, 8 p.m.  
Trinity Lutheran Church,  
1225 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton

■ Sunday, Dec. 4, 3 p.m.  
First Presbyterian Church  
4th and L Streets, Livermore  
\$20 in advance; \$25 at door — Call 866-4003

### Pleasanton Community Concert Band Holiday Concert

Firehouse Arts Center  
2-3:15 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 4  
Free, but donations appreciated — Call 846-5897

### 'Sleeping Beauty'

Pleasanton's Civic Arts Stage Co. 2011 Holiday Show  
Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton  
2 p.m. Sat/Sun; 7 p.m. Fri/Sat; Dec. 9-18  
\$10, \$15, \$18 adult; \$6, \$9 and \$12, children, seniors  
Call 931-4848

### Sing It Yourself 'Messiah' - Valley Concert Choral

Singers and music lovers of all ages and abilities are welcome to sing along or just enjoy.  
Friday, Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m.  
Trinity Lutheran Church,  
1225 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton  
\$10 — Call 1-800-838-3006

### 'The Nutcracker'

Valley Dance Theatre - Bankhead Theater  
2400 First St., Livermore  
2 p.m. Sat/Sun; 7 p.m. Fri/Sat/Sun; Dec. 10-18  
\$33, \$27 and \$24 adults; \$18 for 17 and younger  
Call 373-6800

### Ravenswood Victorian Yuletide

2647 Arroyo Road, Livermore  
Noon- 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 11  
Free

### 2011 Train of Lights on the Historic Niles Canyon Railway

Leaves Sunol station at 7:15 p.m.; leaves Niles at 4:15 p.m.  
\$25 for all; under 3 free  
Go to [www.ncry.org](http://www.ncry.org) to see dates and purchase tickets.

## Don't wait until the holidays to start planning your annual cookie exchange



'Tis the season for delicious treats and festive gatherings. The fun of baking, sharing recipes and getting together for holiday parties, such as a cookie exchange, are what make the season extra special.

For those looking to create the ultimate cookie exchange, Hershey's Kitchens Linda Stahl and Betty Crocker Kitchens Kristen Olson offer the following tips to turn any party into a sweet success:

- Invite guests at least two weeks in advance and ask each guest to RSVP with the recipe they plan to make to avoid duplicates.
- Ask each guest to bring at least a half dozen cookies for each person attending the party.
- Encourage participants to bring an empty, sealable container to take home goodies, along with copies of their recipe to share. Be sure to have extra bags or containers on

hand for guests to transport cookies home.

- Make it personal — showcase the cookies in a decorative arrangement and ask each participant to introduce themselves and explain why they chose their recipe and what ingredients they used.
- Be sure to offer refreshments, such as seasonal beverages, but keep it simple so the cookies are the stars of the show.
- Send guests home with a goodie bag filled with a homemade recipe booklet you've created to commemorate your party. Ask for participants' recipes in advance so you can prepare.

Can't decide what holiday cookie you should make as the host? Try the classic Peanut Butter Blossoms. ■

### Peanut Butter Blossoms

**Ingredients:**  
36 Hershey's Kisses Brand Milk Chocolates  
1 pouch Betty Crocker Peanut Butter Cookie Mix  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
1 tablespoon water  
1 egg  
Granulated sugar

**Directions:**  
Heat oven to 375 degrees. Remove wrappers from chocolates. Stir cookie mix, oil, water and egg in a medium bowl until soft dough forms. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll in granulated sugar; place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake eight to 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Immediately press a chocolate into center of each cookie; cookie will crack around edges. Remove from cookie sheet to wire rack. Cool completely. Makes about three dozen cookies.

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# Holiday Fund 2011

## Free meals needed during hard times

*The hungry benefit directly from the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund*

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

The folks at Open Heart Kitchen are painfully aware that these are bad economic times. The organization serves free meals five days a week to individuals and families in need at four different locations in the Tri-Valley, and some clients actually walk from site to site to receive the meal.

"There is such a need," said Executive Director Linda McKeever. "The people we're serving most right now are under-employed. Lots of times they had two with incomes and now only have part of one income. Do they buy food or pay the light bill?"

"A lot of people have lost their homes, and two or three families are in one home," she added. "More people than ever are living in their cars right now."

In 2010, Open Heart Kitchen served just under 217,000 meals, and this year it will probably be more, McKeever said. By comparison, in 2007, it served 161,000 meals.

"We hit a basic need and really try to do it with dignity, which is why we allow people to take the food home if they want to," she said.

The Holiday Fund money goes directly to the programs, which are the 17,000 hot meals given out monthly at Tri-Valley sites five days a week; the children's box lunch program that provides 1,700 weekend meals for low-income children at school sites each week; and meals for low-income seniors, available at Ridge View Commons on Case Avenue in Pleasanton. Seniors, of course, are also welcome at all the meal sites.

"We survive just by the generosity of the community," McKeever said.

"There are so many stories and so many families," volunteer coordinator Hildie Neumann said. "One day they are living in a hotel and the next day we know they are outside, living in the elements."

"From Springtown in Livermore to Ruby Hill to Castlewood, it affects us all, it depends on our personal circumstances," she continued. "Maybe they're your next door neighbors and you don't know it. Anybody that sees our signs is more than welcome — no questions, no qualifications, they can walk up and ask for a meal."

She noted that a site can serve from 200-700 meals per day so volunteers must be adaptable and able to quickly switch gears, which is the challenge and the fun of it. Sometimes large donations of fresh produce will come unexpectedly.

"We can improvise at the last

"We survive just by the generosity of the community, and we truly couldn't do it without our volunteers."

Linda McKeever,  
Open Heart Kitchen  
Executive Director

minute: We'll cut it up! Sauté it!" she said with a laugh. "We're in continuous prepping mode and cooking mode."

Meals are planned weeks ahead of time by a nutritionist, each with protein, starch, vegetable, green salad, fruit salad, bread, milk, coffee, tea or juice and dessert.

"We're always looking for volunteers," Neumann said, for shopping, cooking, serving and clean-up.

"We truly, truly can't do it without our volunteers, McKeever said. "They're very, very dedicated."

Volunteers range from school, community and church groups to friends who exercise together then come to help with lunch, she said, as well as individuals. Safeway, Trader Joe's and Costco donate food, and Whole Foods allows fundraising activities, she added, plus Wal-mart donates items such as children's shoes when its inventory changes.

McKeever noted that Open Heart Kitchen works with all the Tri-Valley agencies such as Axis Community Health and Shepherd's Gate to share donations of items and to make sure that everyone's basic needs are met.

"We all work to keep community as healthy as possible, and it all starts with the basics of nutrition," she said. In other words, a good hot meal.

Learn more at [www.openheartkitchen.org](http://www.openheartkitchen.org) or call 580-1616. ■

### Feed the hungry

#### Mondays, 4-6 p.m.:

Crosswinds Church, 6444 Sierra Court, Dublin

#### Tuesdays, Wednesdays,

noon-6 p.m.: Asbury United Methodist Church, 4743 East Ave., Livermore

#### Thursdays, 4-6 p.m.:

Vineyard Christian Fellowship, 460 N. Livermore Ave.

#### Friday, 4-6 p.m.:

Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Road

**Seniors (62-plus):** Ridgeview Commons Senior Center, 5200 Case Ave., Pleasanton, 4-6 p.m. every weekday. Optional donation of \$3.



SUE EVANS

Open Heart Kitchen provides 1,700 boxed meals each week for children to have nutritious food to bring home for the weekend.



SUE EVANS

A contribution to the Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund goes directly to fund the 217,000 meals served at five locations in the Tri-Valley to people who might otherwise go hungry. "Do we buy food or pay the light bill?" some people must decide each month.



# How to give

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Axis Community Health
- Ryan Comer Cancer Resource Center at ValleyCare
- Hope Hospice
- Open Heart Kitchen
- Valley Humane Society

Name of Donor \_\_\_\_\_

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As a gift for: \_\_\_\_\_  
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The Tri-Valley Community Foundation is located at 5674 Stoneridge Dr., Ste. 206, Pleasanton, CA 94588. More information about the Foundation can be obtained by contacting the organization at the above address, by calling its President David Rice at (925) 734-9965 or through its website: www.tvcfoundation.org. The Pleasanton Weekly will make every effort to publish donor names for donations received before Dec. 31, 2011, unless the donor checks the anonymous box.

## HOLIDAY FUND

# Holiday Fund donors

Since the launch of the 2011 Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund, 125 donors have contributed \$22,371 to the fund. 17 anonymous donors have given \$3,770 of that total.

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Frank Louwaert from Jeff & Debi Zentner .....	**
Our "5" Grands .....	**

### In Memory of

Betty Patrick from Charles & Joan Brown .....	**
Our Mom Lora from Lada & Dmitriy Kosarikov .....	**
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Robert D. Williams from Mavis E. Williams .....	100
Jo Chapple .....	100

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

# Sports



## First in Norcal

The Pleasanton Rage U13 Grey girls took first place in Norcal league this season, letting only three goals be scored against them in all of league play this year under Coach Dean Freeman. They are now into State Cup play. Players are Vedicka Chaudhri, Maddie Cring, Sami Devette, Emily Gee, Amanda Harding, Meg Macgregor, Emily McKeever, Hannah Myers, Sophie Nethery, Jenna and Jessica O'Neal, Meg Pickett, Hannah Schwartz, Faith Shinnick, Maddie Simmons, Isabelle Skinner and Pam White.



## Slow start, strong finish

Ballistic United U13 Premier Captain Garrett Howell nets his second hat trick of the season against Mustang on Nov. 5 in Danville. Premier 99 got off to a slow first but dominated the second half to defeat Mustang United, 6-0. Top offensive players were Garrett Howell, Ryan Murray, Youki Chiba, Blake Tucker; top defensive were Nick Carreon, Jacob Dremalas, Kyle McClanahan.



## 10-game winning streak

U19 White striker Sasha Greenlee makes a near score as Katie Styles follows the play, when Rage U19 White Team holds Mustang Flash team scoreless for 90 minutes, then closes out its regular season with a 0-0 tie for a third-place finish in CYSA-Cal State Soccer league's U19 bronze division. The team finished league play with a record of 9-2-1, extending their unbeaten streak to 10 games. Players now transition to the high school season or winter training until the team reconvenes in March as they prepare to extend their unbeaten streak in State Association Cup.



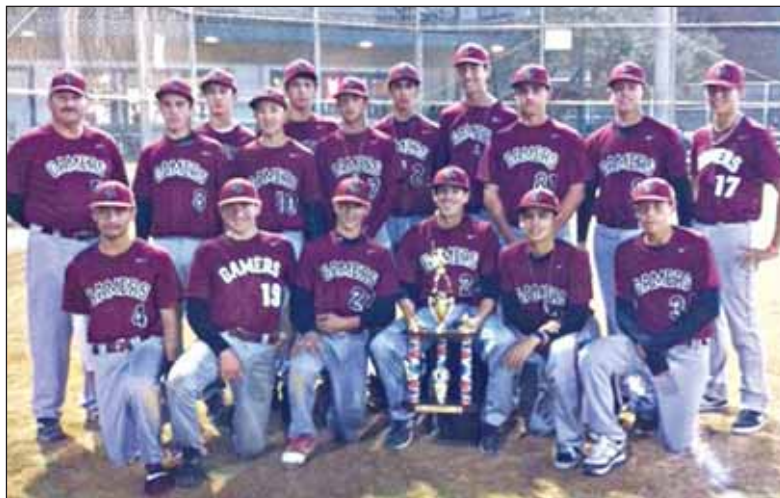
## 4-1 win finishes season

U13 Ballistic Premier 99 head out to face the Tri-Valley Bayern, which they defeated 4-1 in a Division 1 game Nov. 19 in Pleasanton after Premier made four second-half goals in the final game of the season for the two NorCal Gold under 13 soccer teams. Tri-Valley had clinched the league a week prior and brought an untarnished 8-0 record into the game. Ballistic, on the other hand, entered the match with a record of 6 wins, 1 loss, and 1 tie. Ballistic now turns full focus on State Cup; it will host Richmond Sol Cobras at Val Vista on Dec. 3.

## Gamers win one for the Veterans

The Sophomore Head First Gamers baseball team, with members from Castro Valley, Pleasanton, San Ramon, Danville, Livermore, Alameda, Fremont and Clovis, won the Twin Creeks 16U Veterans Day Classic Tournament on Nov. 6. The Gamers won all four games and outscored their opponents, 25-6. JD McDonnell and Carl Cantwell were named Co-MVPs for their outstanding performances.

Team members are (front, l-r) Esias Ortiz, Max Reclus, Kevin Burt, Manager George Athan, Carlos Garcia, Tyler Staniford, (middle) Coach Jeff Hollar, JD McDonnell, Trevor Greenley, Adam Hollar, Jordan Ott, Isaac Cruz, Sam Cabral, Jonathan Freshman, Carl Cantwell, Austen Chauvin and Anthony Coleman. Not pictured: Weston Hatten, Xavier Iglesias, Gabe Tramble and Stone Godi.



*Inspirations*

To advertise your upcoming holiday services

please contact Matt Massaro

Ph: 925-600-0840, ext. 123

Email: [mmassaro@pleasantonweekly.com](mailto:mmassaro@pleasantonweekly.com)

# Marketplace

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Pleasanton, 3231 Vineyard Ave, Current

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## 250 Musical Instruments

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Manual Treadmill - \$75.00



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## PET OF THE WEEK

### Black cat Friday

Meet Macadamia Nut, a 2-year-old female kitty eager for her forever home after living at Valley Humane Society for over six months. Don't be suspicious — black cats are not spooky and are often the best cats out there.

They are cuddly and very attractive little kitties but also are usually the last to find homes. Visit Valley Humane Society from 1-4 p.m. today for Black Cat Friday for discounted animal adoptions. To learn more, call 426-8656 or visit [www.valleyhumane.org](http://www.valleyhumane.org). Valley Humane Society is open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, at 3670 Nevada St.



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# Real Estate

OPEN HOME GUIDE AND REAL ESTATE LISTINGS

## Forum calls for housing to be a 'national priority'

Home ownership important to fabric of society, Realtors say

By JEB BING

The struggling housing market needs to be a priority on the nation's public policy agenda, because housing and homeownership issues affect all Americans.

That was the message from speakers at the Legislative and Political Forum recently at the 2011 Realtors Conference & Expo in Anaheim.

Realtors at the National Association of Realtors (NAR) annual conference heard from Washington Post columnist Eugene Robinson and political media consultant Alex Castellanos, who both agreed the housing market is hurting and needs to be a top priority for the 2012 presidential candidates.

Both speakers said that while much of the debate focuses on the financial aspects of homeownership, there is no denying that owning a home has many social benefits and is important to the fabric of society.

"Owning a home represents the best of America, is a goal for many families and has many benefits beyond the financial," said Castellanos. "We build the economy on homeownership, and until the housing market is restored, the nation and economy can't move forward."

He said that instead of taking money from hardworking, middle-class Americans by reducing or eliminating the mortgage interest deduction, the government should to cut its spending and give back to the American people.

"Taking away the mortgage interest deduction would let even more air out of the balloon and be devastating to the housing market and economy," he added. "I don't anticipate changes to mortgage interest

deduction."

Rep. Gary Miller (R-Calif.) also spoke at the forum and urged Realtors to reach out to their members of Congress and encourage them to get involved in stabilizing the housing market.

"A healthy housing industry helps everyone in the country," Miller said. "The housing market has led this nation out of every downturn we've had in the past."

"Congress needs to focus on stabilizing the market, and that must be dealt with today and in a comprehensive fashion that will serve home owners today and in the future," he added.

He said that legislation and regulations to fix the housing market must do no further harm. Miller said reduced loan limits for conforming loans, proposals that would eliminate Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and calls to eliminate or reduce the mortgage interest deduction are having a negative impact on consumer confidence and the housing industry, and could lead to less liquidity and possibly more foreclosures.

Miller talked about the future of the secondary mortgage market and said that while private capital must be the dominant source of mortgage credit, government involvement is necessary to ensure investor confidence and mortgage liquidity.

NAR leaders said the organization supports the principles of a bill introduced by Congressman Miller and U.S. Representative Carolyn McCarthy (D-N.Y.) earlier this year.

They said that H.R. 2413, the "Secondary Market Facility for Residential Mortgages Act of 2011," offers a comprehensive

See FORUM on Page 22

### SALES AT A GLANCE

Dublin (Oct. 21 - Nov. 2)

**Total sales reported:** 10  
**Lowest sale reported:** \$185,000  
**Highest sale reported:** \$784,000  
**Average sales reported:** \$444,400

Livermore (Oct. 21 - Nov. 2)

**Total sales reported:** 25  
**Lowest sale reported:** \$155,000  
**Highest sale reported:** \$910,000  
**Average sales reported:** \$385,520

Pleasanton (Oct. 21 - Nov. 2)

**Total sales reported:** 23  
**Lowest sale reported:** \$153,500  
**Highest sale reported:** \$1,990,000  
**Average sales reported:** \$599,826

San Ramon (Oct. 30 - Nov. 9)

**Total sales reported:** 15  
**Lowest sale reported:** \$155,000  
**Highest sale reported:** \$950,000  
**Average sales reported:** \$585,533

Source: California REsource

### OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

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Danville

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 Sun 2-4 Alain Pinel Realtors 314-1111



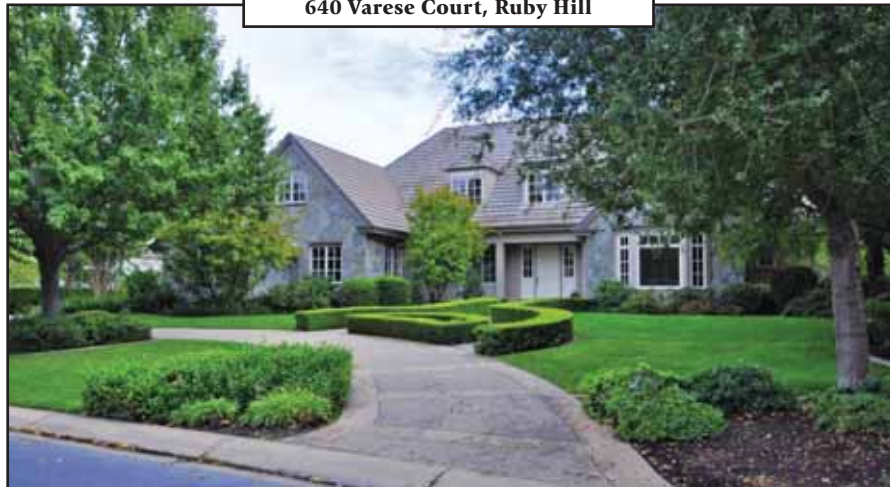
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 Danville, CA 94526  
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 Lafayette, CA 94549  
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**Livermore**  
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 Livermore, CA 94550  
 925.667.2100

**Montclair/Piedmont**  
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 Oakland, CA 94611  
 510.339.4800

**Pleasanton**  
 5075 Hopyard Rd Ste. 110  
 Pleasanton, CA 94588  
 925.251.2500

**Orinda**  
 89 Davis Rd.,  
 Orinda, CA 94563  
 925.253.7000

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

# Landmark opens office in Hacienda Business Park

Mortgage group offers comprehensive approach to residential lending

By JEB BING

Landmark Mortgage Group opened its new Pleasanton office last week at 5075 Hopyard Rd. in the Hacienda Business Park.

"We have been serving Pleasanton for a few years, but wanted to be closer to our real estate partners that we work with on a daily basis," said Todd Utikal, a Landmark Mortgage advisor.

Landmark is a division of Opes Advisors Inc. and also has offices in Livermore, Santa Cruz and Brentwood. Opes is a mortgage bank and wealth management firm offering integrated personal financial services encompassing real estate, real estate financing

and investment management.

"We are looking forward to further the strategic partnerships and create a shared success," Utikal said at Wednesday's ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"We provide a comprehensive approach to residential lending with proven solutions to our clients and referral partners," he added. "Landmark is a total resource for residential mortgage services and considers a home an asset that needs to be managed properly as it is a key to one's overall financial strategy."

For more information about the Landmark Mortgage Group, email info@lmglending.com. ■

## FORUM

Continued from Page 21

strategy for reforming the secondary mortgage market and gives the federal government a continued role to ensure a consistent flow of mortgage credit in all markets and all economic conditions.

California Gov. Jerry Brown was also a featured speaker at the forum and told attendees that while it's important for consumers to live within their means, it also

critical that they invest in their futures, and one important way is through home ownership. He also said there needs to be more help for underwater home owners through refinancing their mortgages or reducing their debt burden.

Brown hopes Congress can come together soon and develop solutions that will solve many of today's housing and economic challenges.

"The nation needs to have restored confidence in the housing market and economy," he said. ■

# Realtor earns designation as 'distressed sales' expert

Works to help homeowners avoid foreclosure

Diana Korpi of RE/MAX Accord has earned the Certified Distressed Property Expert (CDPE) designation, having completed extensive training in foreclosure avoidance and short sales.

Short sales allow the cash-strapped seller to repay the mortgage at the price that the home sells for, even though it is lower than what is owed on the property. With plummeting property values, this can save many people from foreclosure and even bankruptcy. More and more lenders are willing to consider short



Diana Korpi

sales because they are much less costly than foreclosures.

"This CDPE designation has been invaluable as I work with sellers and lenders on complicated short sales," Korpi said. "It is so rewarding to be able to help sellers save their homes from foreclosure."

Alex Charfen, founder of the Distressed Property Institute in Boca Raton, Fla., said that Realtors with the CDPE designation have valuable training in short sales that can offer the homeowner much better alternatives to foreclosure, which virtually destroys the credit rating. CDPE experts also may better understand market conditions and can help sellers through the emotional experience. ■

## HOME SALES

This week's data represents homes sold in October 2011.

### Dublin

- 11654 Amarillo Court** US Bank to B. Frazier for \$495,000
- 7413 Bedford Court** SGT Two Limited to D. & S. Thompson for \$460,000
- 2585 Cipriani** GRIS-HOV Positano Limited to Y. Huang for \$784,000
- 3385 Dublin Boulevard #432** D. Shon to R. Yu for \$310,000
- 7052 Dublin Meadows Street #C** Bank of New York to Arruabarrena Trust for \$185,000
- 7824 Gate Way** Federal National Mortgage to M. Hardman for \$300,000
- 4216 Lorimer Loop** C. & K. Park to S. Chandrasekharan for \$581,000
- 3360 Maguire Way #430** R. Galvin to G. Gu for \$279,000
- 11576 Manzanita Lane** Patelco Credit Union to J. Armerding for \$500,000
- 11582 Manzanita Lane** Wells Fargo Bank to L. Richardson for \$550,000

### Livermore

- 1135 Bannock Street** Bartlett Trust to S. Dovey for \$290,000
- 836 Bellflower Street** J. & N. Shires to R. Werner for \$240,000
- 224 Bellington Common #304** A. & K. Rodrigues to R. Shafiei for \$190,000
- 1435 Columbine Way** S. & S. Toyama to H. & Y. Konno for \$510,000
- 498 Colusa Way** J. Gardner to T. Schall for \$385,000
- 1134 Coronado Way** D. Verdeck to J. & K. Ames for \$427,000
- 104 Diamond Drive** C. & G. Butler to L. Lonnberg-Pardini for \$445,000
- 211 Donner Avenue** M. Desanz to G. & S. Rosenbaum for \$289,000
- 1340 Elm Street** JP Morgan Chase Bank to J. & E. Cotton for \$175,000
- 3162 Golden Crest Common #3** Deutsche Bank to Heule Trust for \$230,000
- 844 Grace Street** Howard Trust to C. Dolin for \$485,000
- 2387 High Castle Court** Aequitas Commercial Finance to T. & S. Stuitzand for \$885,000
- 4884 Kimberley Common** Trivin Realty Group to K. & E. Willes for \$389,000
- 1683 Linden Street** McKinley HP Partners to J. & A. Clark for \$280,000
- 1024 Locust Street** G. Espinoza to T. Lamanna for \$233,000
- 1216 Locust Street** Community Rebuilding Assets Holdings to C. Hanlon for \$315,000
- 1663 Monterey Drive** Filho Trust to G. Bunch for \$190,000
- 1997 Monterey Drive** Federal National Mortgage to H. Carey for \$155,000

- 2340 Normandy Circle** Bergmann Trust to D. & K. Dominguez for \$910,000
- 1851 Park Street** R. Kelly to Morisoli Properties for \$515,000
- 751 Sandpiper Common** Federal Home Loan Mortgage to C. Montoya for \$165,000
- 187 Selby Lane #3** Shea Homes to Y. & F. Reynado for \$355,000
- 21 Sparrow Street** R. & C. Caulk to S. & D. Walter for \$600,000
- 5452 Treeflower Drive** D. Carr to J. Petersdorf for \$255,000
- 2657 Tuscan Court** Citibank to J. & A. Wheeler for \$725,000

### Pleasanton

- 3828 Appian Street** Mehta Trust to J. Cho for \$785,000
- 3243 Arbor Drive** Laflash Trust to R. Kahn for \$905,000
- 2146 Arroyo Court #4** California Housing Finance to R. Lin for \$155,000
- 2182 Arroyo Court #4** M. Nahim to A. Suhail for \$153,500
- 662 Concord Place** M. Annab to M. Lam for \$228,000
- 4300 Del Valle Parkway** M. & J. Rivera to T. & M. Rowell for \$450,000
- 847 Division Street #A** T. & M. Gore to A. Gore for \$197,000
- 6150 Everglades Court** Duke Trust to Y. & P. Lee for \$480,000
- 3399 Harpers Ferry Court** P. & D. Huseman to T. Harris for \$615,000
- 2574 Heatherlark Circle** Ramos Trust to T. Lie for \$405,000
- 437 Mission Drive** L. & Y. Chen to W. Zhang for \$593,000
- 3858 Mohr Avenue** S. Motzko to M. Richardson for \$725,000
- 3217 Monmouth Court** F. Thor to J. Chung for \$564,000
- 1311 Montrose Place** D. & O. Hadjilambris to J. & B. Casilli for \$1,402,000
- 8185 Mountain View Drive #B** L. Zais to M. Saidi for \$245,000
- 5263 Muirwood Drive** L. & C. Lofton to D. Johnson for \$675,000
- 4157 Parma Court** S. & A. Reddi to L. & N. Rios for \$1,990,000
- 3683 Platt Court #S** Bellomo Trust to S. Liu for \$567,000
- 5611 San Antonio Street** Hoig Trust to N. & J. Penney for \$582,500
- 561 St. John Street** Hoge Trust to K. & M. Sargsyan for \$365,000
- 4127 Stanley Boulevard** D. Ha to K. Batstone for \$375,000
- 3374 Vermont Place** M. & P. Elerick to P. Lin for \$700,000
- 7092 Via Quito** Choudhry Trust to Frazee Trust for \$639,000

Source: California REsource

## Exceptional Pleasanton Properties

PENDING!



### 603 Blossom Ct, Pleasanton

5 bedrooms, 4 baths, approx 5000+ sqft, bonus room, separate office and spa room - premium location! Large and flat 31,060 sqft lot.

Offered at \$1,425,000

NEW PRICE!



### 5047 Forest Hill Dr, Pleasanton

Forest Hill Estates — Built in 1996

Beautiful single story home featuring 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, approx 2,547 sqft. New interior paint, new carpet, hardwood floors, marble entry, remodeled master bath. Excellent Westside location with 3 car garage. Large approx. 9889 sqft. flat lot. Walk to schools, parks and shopping.

Offered at \$850,000

For photos and virtual tours visit [www.deloresgragg.com](http://www.deloresgragg.com)

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

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**Client Testimonial for a  
Recent Short Sale Listing**

Julia navigated the complexities of a short sale and successfully sold our home in an incredibly short time period. Her in-depth knowledge of the neighborhoods shows. She priced the house right to get multiple bids and worked with the bank to expedite the short sale, with backup offers in hand.

—Sabrina Wong

**My Buyers Needs:**

**Large family home,  
5 bedrooms, large  
backyard with pool,  
under 1.3 million**

**Smaller family home,  
3+ beds/ can be a  
contractor special,  
under 700k**

**FEATURING**



**6023 STERLING GREEN CIRCLE**

Beautiful home in the "Canyon Oaks" neighborhood of South Pleasanton. This 4 bed/2.5 bath home, is just under 2900 sq ft. Built by KB homes in 2003, on a secluded and premium lot, this home has many wonderful upgrades. Enjoy the oversized backyard, with professional landscaping, custom arbor and views of the Pleasanton Ridge. Walking distance to Hearst Elementary & Pleasanton Middle School, close to downtown, shops, the Bernal sports fields and freeway, vaulted ceilings with formal dining and living room, built with energy conservation features, plantation shutters, upgraded lighting throughout home. Upgraded kitchen with Zodiac counter tops and high end stainless steel appliances.

**REDUCED TO \$849,000**

**PENDING AND RECENTLY SOLD**



**4615 Rimini Court, Dublin Sorrento** at Dublin Ranch built in 2007. \$50k in upgrades, 2160 sq.ft. Short sale. \$520,000



**2650 Chocolate Street, Pleasanton** Wonderful 4 bedroom / 2.5 bathroom home. Built in 2000, located in Mohr Elementary School District. Call for more information.



**4436 Desertwood Place, Pleasanton** Charming 4 BR / 2 BA in Highland Oaks, 1606 sq ft., with a resort-style backyard. \$690,000



**8172 Moller Ranch Dr, Pleasanton** Gorgeous 4 BR home, stunning hardwood floors, upgrades throughout. \$781,000



**5071 Monaco Dr, Pleasanton** 4 BR / 3 BA home features granite kitchen, crown molding and views. \$990,000



**10% OF PLEASANTON'S RESIDENTIAL HOME SALES IN 2011 ARE "SHORT SALES"**

*If you are a home owner thinking of participating in a Short Sale, you need to know this and more.....*

**What is a Short Sale?**

A short sale is a transaction in which the homeowner owes more on the loan than the property is worth. To sell the home, the lien holder or lien holders must approve the sale because the amount owed to the lien holder will be "short" of what is currently owed by the borrower.

**July 18, 2011: California Senate Bill 458 was passed!**

SB 458 brings closure and certainty to the short sale process and ensures that once a lender has agreed to accept a short sale payment on a property, all lienholders – those in first position and in junior positions – will consider the outstanding balance as paid in full and the homeowner will not be held responsible for any additional payments on the property.

Please visit my dedicated website for more information or call me for a confidential conversation. I have helped many Sellers and Buyers in this process!

[JuliaHelpsDistressedSellers.com](http://JuliaHelpsDistressedSellers.com)



# My doctor is my hero

*"In a life-threatening moment,  
my doctor made a great call -  
and saved my life."*

Randy, Firefighter, PAMF patient

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