

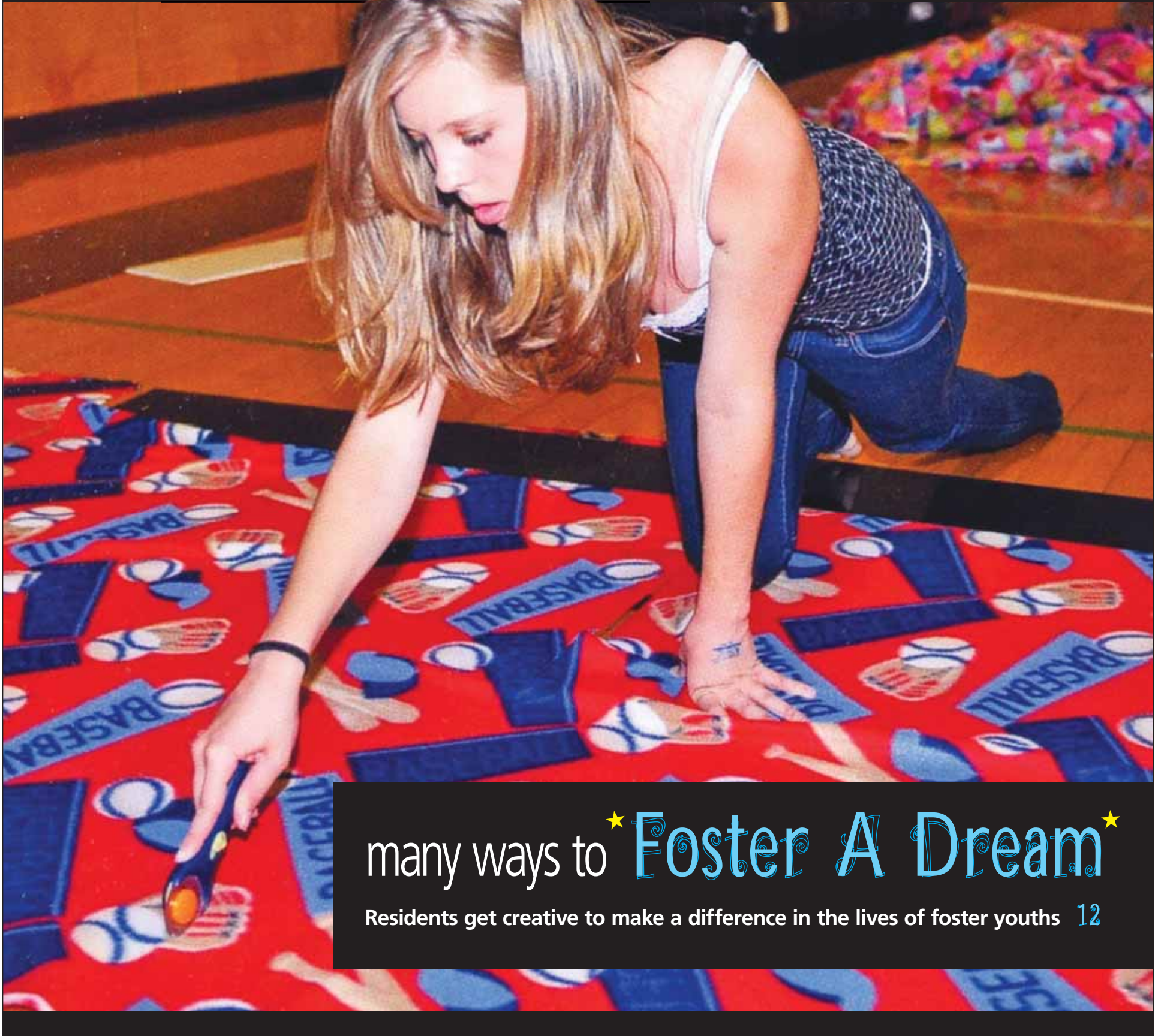
Pleasanton Weekly

*Ho ho horns
herald holiday
season » 15*



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many ways to **Foster A Dream**

Residents get creative to make a difference in the lives of foster youths 12

TRI-VALLEY LIFE 15
Arts & Entertainment

SPORTS 19

NEW
SECTIONS



INSIDE THIS WEEK

- NEWS:** City OKs affordable apartment plan 6
- NEWS:** Robber grabs cash at gunpoint 7
- LIVING:** Keep kids happy for peace and joy 16



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AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING



JEB BING

Publisher Gina Channell-Allen and daughter Ashleigh wave from the Pleasanton Weekly parade car while Editor Jeb Bing jumped out of the car to take this photo. Kirk Allen was the driver again this year.

What a parade!

Riding in the Pleasanton Weekly convertible in last Saturday night's Christmas parade, I had a different perspective on this annual event that now is in its 40th year. Sitting with Gina Channell-Allen, this newspaper's publisher and president, we were among the record-high number of 2,600 people who walked, rode and marched in the parade along Main Street. We saw many of the 25,000 who were shoulder-to-shoulder all along the parade route, cheering, waving and tooting horns. Some wore Christmas hats; many wore colorful holiday clothing as they watched the more than 90 entries (our car was No. 48). The drawback for us is that as the parade passed by, we were in the middle, but we never saw the parade ourselves.

As we moved south on Main Street, I had a chance to tip my Christmas hat to Brian Dutchover, who has volunteered hundreds of hours as the parade chairman for the last 18 years. Dutchover, who with his father Al owns and operates Dutchover & Associates, a landscape architecture firm in Pleasanton, assumed the duties of putting on the annual parade in 1994 with the late Ed Kinney. Al Dutchover, by the way, was the city's landscape architect until Prop. 13 caused the city to drop the position and Al started his own business.

Each year, Brian Dutchover assembles a team of specialists, all volunteers, to take charge of every aspect of the event. They'll have a wrap-up meeting next week to review this year's event and then take a breather until next July, when they

start planning the 2012 parade.

When Dutchover took charge, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce had turned over its parade responsibilities to the new Pleasanton Downtown Association (PDA). At that time, the parade was held on a Thursday evening with the city-sponsored tree-lighting ceremony following. At Dutchover's recommendation, the running of the two separate events was combined and the parade and tree-lighting were moved to Saturday to accommodate a growing number of commuters who had trouble coming back home in time for the parade on a weeknight. At that time, with the city government involved, the name was changed to the more politically-correct Hometown Holiday Parade. From its early days with no more than 40 entries and a crowd of 800 parade-watchers, the event has become the largest in the Valley.

Dutchover counts on 115 volunteers to serve on his event staff, starting with lining up the entries in the Amador Valley High School parking lot and making sure that each step off quickly as scheduled. Everyone loves a parade, he says, but not when there are block-long gaps. The Pleasanton parade is known for its fast pace, starting at 5:30 p.m. sharp and ending in time for everyone to gather near the Museum On Main where the city's mayor and Santa flip the switch to light the "Holiday" (Christmas) tree. Lighting experts are on hand to make sure the lights power on when the switch is pulled and that microphones are in place for choral groups to sing carols and for Santa to wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

So do all of us at the Pleasanton Weekly. ■

About the Cover

Sarah Williams cuts fleece for blankets; her efforts have resulted in 10,000 donated blankets over the past four years after she was inspired to help foster youths by giving them something cuddly of their own. Photo courtesy of Cindy Williams. Design by Lili Cao.

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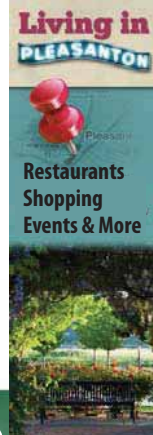


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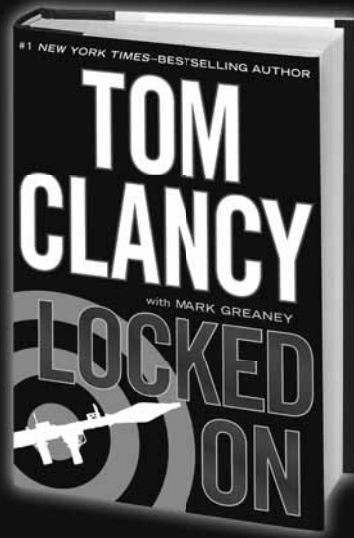
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Streetwise

ASKED AROUND TOWN

Does your family have any holiday traditions?



Tiffany Karaiyan
Marketing

We have a big get-together on Christmas Eve and have a themed white elephant gift exchange. We draw names, and everyone that is able to come for Christmas Eve participates. This year's theme is beverages.

Dawn Chatham
Stay-at-home-mom

We moved to Candy Cane Lane, also known as Walnut Drive, two years ago, and all of the outdoor decorating that goes along with that has become our tradition. Each house has two candy canes, and we chose the Christmas story "Olive, the Other Reindeer" as our home's theme.



Kate Inman
Student

We hide a pickle ornament in our tree and whoever finds it on Christmas morning gets a prize. My mom and I also love to bake "Reindeer Poop," which is made of Oreos, white chocolate and a few other ingredients. We give it to friends and family.

Nikki Trucco
Student

My mom's birthday is on Christmas Eve, so we usually go out with friends to Hana Japan and then celebrate at their house afterward. We also bake peanut butter cookies with chocolate kisses on top every year, and on Christmas morning we open our presents and go to my grandma's house.



Christina Cardenas
Photographer

On Christmas Eve, the kids get to open one present, and we make the rounds visiting family that night so that we are able to stay home and have special family time on Christmas morning. We also have a tradition of having chicken enchiladas for Christmas dinner, and we all really look forward to that meal.

—Compiled by Kerry Nally

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

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DIGEST

Send us your Santa photos

Have your kiddies visited Santa yet? If you took a photo you'd like to share, send it to us at dciardelli@pleasanton-weekly.com. Please write "Santa photo" in the subject line, and we ask that photos be at least 500K. And, yes, we are also considering pets.

Include the names of the children in the photo and the parents, where you ran into Santa, where you live, where the children attend school, and anything else you think might be interesting in the caption.

We plan to use the photos in our Dec. 23 issue.

Trust fund for Johansen girls

A trust fund has been set up to benefit of the two daughters of Jared Johansen, a 2003 graduate of Amador Valley High who unexpectedly died Nov. 30. He is survived by his wife Tiffany, 17-month old Reese, and another daughter due in January; parents Alan and Christy Johansen; and brothers Nick and Nate.

Send donations to: The Jared Johansen Legacy Trust, 405 Boulder Court, Suite 400, Pleasanton 94566, or donate online at www.jaredjohansen-legacy.com.

Guided art walk

Residents can take a free guided walking tour next Saturday to view sculptures and murals that are among the 17 works of art in downtown Pleasanton. The tour will be led by Nancy and Gary Harrington, who have donated much of the funding for the city's public art through their Another HAPPY program, which stands for "Another Harrington Art Partnership Piece for You."

To take the two-hour tour, meet the Harringtons at 9 a.m. Dec. 17 in the Civic Center parking lot at 200 Old Bernal Ave. Maps will be provided listing current art installations and giving information about possible future acquisitions.

The tour is part of the World Walk to Wellness Saturday series of walks, which were held in city parks and other public locations every week in 2011. The Dec. 17 walk will be on paved sidewalks, suitable for strollers or wheelchairs.

Corrections

The Weekly desires to correct all significant errors. To request a correction, call the editor at (925) 600-0840 or e-mail: editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

Three on Pleasanton City Council to rotate vice mayor's duties in 2012

McGovern opts out; Sullivan slams mayor

By JEB BING

Pleasanton Mayor Jennifer Hosterman sidestepped the concern over appointing a possible mayoral candidate to the post of vice mayor for 2012 on Tuesday night by agreeing to rotate the post on a quarterly basis.

Councilman Jerry Thorne, who along with Councilwoman Cheryl Cook-Kallio, has announced he's a candidate for the mayor's job in the next November's municipal election, suggested rotating the vice mayor's assignment so that no candidate would have a political advantage during the full year. Hosterman is termed out next November after serving eight years as mayor.

In supporting Thorne's recommendation, Hosterman said that the other two on the council, Cindy McGovern and Matt Sullivan, also are

eligible to seek the mayor's post so should not have the vice mayor's position on a year-long basis either.

But the plan miffed McGovern, who said the vice mayor appointment should go back to a yearly rotation basis, pointing out that it should be Sullivan's turn to serve.

She said she was appointed to the vice mayor's post only once in the seven years she's been



Jennifer Hosterman



Matt Sullivan



Cindy McGovern

on the council, adding that Hosterman has refused to appoint her again. She said she isn't about to have the honor now for only a quarter of the year.

"I had a lot to give to this community, only to be shut out," McGovern said. "All of these years I was never selected and I don't want to be vice mayor now."

Sullivan agreed, adding that, like McGovern, he's been on the council seven years and only appointed as vice mayor once.

"It's been rotated between Jerry and Cheryl

See **MAYORS** on Page 6



DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

The new energy-efficient light system in the Pleasanton library keeps the building bright and comfortable for the many patrons on Monday afternoon.

New improved library lighting to save 46% in energy use

System continually adjusts for usage and daylight

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Check out the lights at the Pleasanton Public Library. Recently installed wireless controls automatically adjust the lighting based on how many people are in the library and the amount of natural daylight. The new system will reduce the amount of energy used in the library by 46%.

"The space stays bright and comfortable throughout the day and evening with no effort and is reducing library operating costs," said Julie Farnsworth, director of Pleasanton Library Services.

Pleasanton made it a priority to replace or upgrade the lighting in all of its public buildings as part of its Climate Action Plan, and the 30,300-square-foot library, built in 1987, was

chosen for the first upgrade because it used the most energy.

The installation was done by Adura Technologies, a company out of San Francisco that specializes in wireless lighting controls and energy management systems.

"The Adura Wireless Lighting Control System offers a great solution to the unusual challenges presented by libraries," said Mark Golan, Adura CEO. "Adura's proven technology is nimble enough to meet the lighting needs of a public facility with multiple uses."

Libraries have difficulty using lighting controls, such as occupancy sensors, because the sensors typically have to be hard wired to the fixtures they control and tall shelving often

See **LIBRARY** on Page 6

Community Foundation honors Pleasanton Weekly

Named 'Community Champion' for Holiday Fund contributions

The Tri-Valley Community Foundation presented the Pleasanton Weekly with its "Community Champion" award Wednesday for the newspaper's annual Holiday Fund program that raises funds for local nonprofit organizations.

The Weekly was one of five "Champions" recognized by the Foundation at an awards ceremony at the Palm Event Center in Pleasanton.

In making the award, David Rice, president and chief executive of the foundation, said the Pleasanton Weekly's annual Holiday Fund "has raised awareness of the human needs in the Tri-Valley and has raised more than \$1 million to support local charities since its inception nine years ago."

The award was accepted by Gina Channell-Allen, president and publisher of the Pleasanton Weekly, and Jeb Bing, the newspaper's editor.

Others who were recognized at the foundation's first annual Community Champions program were:

■ Bob Tucknott, a local electrical contractor who recently completed his 1,000th "Angel Flight" to transport seriously ill patients to distant hospitals.

■ Bruce Campbell, a "master gardener" who created the "Garden of Grace," a community garden in Livermore that grows huge quantities of food to feed low-income families through organizations such as Open Heart Kitchen and the Asbury United Methodist Church.

■ 1st United Services Credit Union, the original credit union serving Alameda County employees, which has a long track record of charitable giving in support of education and health care, and that has been a huge supporter of local charities since opening its office in Pleasanton.

■ Dana Dornsife, who founded the Lazarex Cancer Foundation, a nationwide charity headquartered in Danville. The Lazarex Foundation provides financial assistance to terminally ill cancer patients who cannot afford the cost of room or board or the cost to travel long distances to participate in clinical trials of experimental cancer treatments. ■

City leaders give 'thumbs up' to affordable apartment plan

Properties set for rezoning could hold 2,300 units in high-density apartment complexes

By JEB BING

The Pleasanton Planning Commission and City Council wrapped up more than a year of community meetings, public hearings and studies Tuesday night on a plan that will rezone 73 acres of available sites throughout the city for high-density affordable and market rate housing.

In a two-hour "workshop" meeting held in a crowded council chamber, the five commissioners and council members indicated their support of a housing element task force and staff recommendation for specific sites where the new apartments could be built.

The sites will be rezoned to accommodate 1,884 apartment units at a ratio of 30 units per acre, with 400 more at 40 units per acre. Most apartment structures in Pleasanton are in the range of 20-25 units per acre.

The proposal now goes to the Planning Commission for a final public hearing and vote next Wednesday, and then back to the City Council for action at a rescheduled meeting on Jan. 4.

The zoning changes to allow

high-density housing come in response to state and court-ordered requirements that Pleasanton provide more housing for low- to very-low income tenants along with more moderately priced housing. The action follows a court ruling that declared the city's 1996 housing cap of allowing no more than 29,000 homes and apartments here to be illegal.

After an Alameda County Superior Court judge ruled in favor of a suit by Urban Habitat, an affordable housing coalition, the City Council chose to accept the ruling and rezone enough acreage to meet the court order as well as state requirements imposed by the state's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Both groups had charged the city with using the housing cap as a means of discouraging developers from building more affordable housing here.

The council created an 11-member task force that included city staff, planners and interested volunteers. The task force held numerous meetings during the year, making its final recommendations

Tuesday night.

The city won't build any of the housing, but the council's final approval of the land use changes expected at its January meeting will make the properties available to developers interested in developing housing that will have a heavy emphasis on affordability for low-income families.

With more than 800 additional affordable housing units recently approved in the Hacienda Business Park, the rezoned land will accommodate more than 3,000 units.

Brian Dolan, director of community development in Pleasanton, said the task force and his staff sent a list of proposed sites on 111 acres to HCD in November for its consideration.

The proposed sites appeared to be acceptable to the agency. In the latest revision, Dolan and his staff trimmed the number to just 73 acres, which will meet the current affordable housing requirements.

By court order, the sites must be rezoned and ready for consideration by interested developers by the end of January. ■

mayor is not fair."

"You don't have the guts to make a decision; it shows a lack of leadership," he told Hosterman.

Nevertheless, Hosterman called for a vote, casting hers with Thorne's and Cook-Kallio's for a 3-2 decision to rotate the vice-mayor's post starting Jan. 1.

With McGovern opting out, it appears that one of the three council members will serve for two quarters.

Along with Hosterman, both McGovern and Sullivan also will complete their allowable eight years on the council next November. ■

MAYORS

Continued from Page 5

ever since," he said.

"Artificially to change the structure because (these) two people announced a year in advance that they're running for

Cops nab bike-riding car burglar

Former resident caught with stolen gift cards

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

A former Pleasanton man faces charges after an alert resident called 9-1-1 to report a prowler near his car.

Anthony Dicorti, 26, was taken into custody in the early morning hours of Dec. 6 after a resident in the 2600 block of Meadowlark Drive called police to say he was watching a man on a bicycle looking into his car, police said.

The caller told police he saw the man trying to open the doors of his car, which was parked in his driveway. Police were on the scene within 30 seconds, and approached Dicorti, who was then stopped in front of another home.

Dicorti told police he was "out for a ride because he couldn't sleep." However, the resident who called police, at 2:22 a.m., was able to provide recorded video of Dicorti looking into vehicles. He was found to be in possession of five gift cards and when officers contacted those at the second house, they told police their vehicle had been broken into and that several gift cards were missing.

The residents gave officers a description of the cards, which matched those in Dicorti's pocket, police said.

Dicorti was arrested on charges of prowling and possession of stolen property. He has a lengthy record for burglary, theft, drugs and assault, police said.

Police say it's important to recognize that this thief was captured not

only because of a fast and effective police response but also in large part due to an alert resident that alerted officers to suspicious activity in his neighborhood.

Among other recent auto burglaries was the theft of a new \$2,500 bridal ring set in its box stolen Dec. 1 from a vehicle parked in the Safeway Corporate parking lot, a police report said. The theft took place between 12:50 p.m. and 3:10 p.m.; a lock punch was used to gain access.

Around the same time, a \$750 car stereo, \$500 speaker and \$150 amplifier were stolen nearby. That theft took place between 2:30 p.m. and 3:10 p.m. in the Stoneridge Mall parking lot; a window was broken to gain entry.

Items valued at more than \$1,000 were stolen in an auto burglary on Andrews Avenue between 10 p.m. Dec. 1 and 9 a.m. Dec. 2. Taken were a \$400 woman's coat, \$325 gold watch, \$300 men's sunglasses, \$250 prescription glasses, woman's Gucci sunglasses and \$25 in cash.

A \$600 Apple iPhone was stolen Nov. 30 from a vehicle in the parking lot at ClubSport. Also taken was a \$200 purse, \$200 makeup in an Ed Hardy bag, \$100 cash and a \$50 gift card.

Police remind residents to remove all valuables from their vehicles, to lock all doors and close windows. Additional crime prevention tips are available from the Crime Prevention Unit at 931-5233. ■

LIBRARY

Continued from Page 5

interferes with their effectiveness.

The Pleasanton library's controls previously were limited to three main switches that controlled most of the building's lighting, and there were no timers or automation. Despite several skylights, large windows and different use of the library at different times by staff and patrons, the library's 661 lights were on from when the first staff arrived in the morning until the last person left at night — approximately 13 hours a day, seven days a week.

Adura's lighting control system uses photocells to make the most use of daylight by detecting when it dims as well as detecting occupancy for a gradual transition from full light to no light. Smart scheduling allows for whether the library is fully occupied or only the staff is there, and with task tuning, the new lamps are set at 80 percent of maximum, which can be adjusted as fixtures age.

With the new system, the high bookshelves in the library are no longer a lighting issue because the wireless mesh network allows lights to receive input from multiple sensors and also for sensors to control multiple lights.

Adura also trained the library staff to use the new system and

software that controls it.

"Watching our lighting energy use fluctuate from between 30% and 70% throughout the day, compared to our previous usage, shows that it is really working," said Chris Rizzoli, Pleasanton Supervisor of Support Services.

Rizzoli noted that energy use and individual fixture light output are displayed on the Adura Enterprise Application, which can be accessed from the Internet.

"The on-screen data allows us to track our daily usage and know exactly where problems occur in real-time," he said.

The project took about one month to complete, at a cost of \$166,000, which will be recouped in just over six years. The library's electricity cost the city approximately \$46,000 each year before the upgrades; the new system savings is estimated at \$21,100 annually.

The city received a PG&E rebate of \$4,800 and a rebate of \$25,500 from the Energy Technology Assistance Program (ETAP), which is part of the Energy Upgrade California program.

"We are happy with the project, and the patrons enjoy excellent lighting at a lower cost," said Library Director Farnsworth.

The library serves just under 1 million visitors each year. ■

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Cannonball pierces Dublin home in Discovery Channel taping stunt

'MythBusters' show's crew fires cannon built 2 years ago

A cannonball damaged a home and vehicle in Dublin late Tuesday afternoon when a "MythBusters" stunt went awry, according to an Alameda County sheriff's sergeant.

A crew was filming the Discovery Channel TV show "MythBusters" at the Alameda County bomb range at around 4:15 p.m., sheriff's Sgt. J.D. Nelson said. They were doing an experiment using a cannon they had built about two years ago and which they have used at least three times before, Nelson said.

In this particular experiment, the projectile was intended to go through several barrels of water and a cinder block wall before striking the hills of the bomb range, Nelson said.

However, the cannonball missed its target.

It missed the water, which was intended to slow the projectile's progress, went through the cinder-block wall and struck the hill.

"It did not bury itself in the hill as you might think it would have," Nelson said.

Instead, it careened off the hill and into a neighborhood in Dublin, Nelson said.

The cannonball passed completely through a house on Cassata Place, creating a softball-sized hole, and continued down the street be-

fore it landed in a parked car, Nelson said.

Three people were at home at the time, including at least one child, but no one was injured, he said.

Nelson said the TV crew responded by sending a senior pro-

"We never even had any kind of an incident let alone anything this terrible."

Sgt. J.D. Nelson,
Alameda County Sheriff's Office

ducer to the home and to the home of the car owner. The producer arranged to meet with their insurance carriers, Nelson said.

"They (the 'MythBusters' crew) are insured for these kinds of things," he said.

Nelson said the television show has used the county's bomb range more than 50 times for experiments and filming.

"We never even had any kind of an incident let alone anything this terrible," Nelson said.

Pratima Dsouza, who lives next door to the house that was hit, said she heard a loud noise and later saw police responding to her neighbor's home but thought there had been some sort of accident inside the house.

It wasn't until she saw it on the news that she learned what had happened.

"Nobody came to our door and told us there was a cannonball that went through our neighbor's house," Dsouza said.

She said the bomb range is some distance from her neighborhood.

"We can hear the sounds but we've never had an experience like that before," she said. She said a family lives in the home that was struck.

Another resident, Mark Hawthorne, said the cannonball bounced off of Cassata Place, leaving a dent in the concrete before crashing into his neighbor's house.

He said neighborhood kids — including his own — often play outside in the cul-de-sac around where the cannonball landed.

"It's a little scary," said Hawthorne, who has watched MythBusters on occasion. "It's easy to laugh at after it's done and no one's hurt."

—*Bay City News Service*



GLENN WOHLTMANN

Gold Chopsticks Chinese Restaurant was robbed at gunpoint Dec. 3; the holdup man ran past the cash register and robbed the owner, taking money from his wallet.

Chinese restaurant robbed at gunpoint

Man passes register, robs owner instead

An armed robber held up Gold Chopsticks Chinese restaurant Dec. 3 but didn't get any money from the register.

Jenny Ling, who runs the restaurant with her husband, said she was sitting behind the take-out counter near the cash register when the holdup man ran in, right past her. Instead, the man approached her husband, who was near some corner tables, not far from where a single table of diners was eating.

Her husband took out his wallet when confronted by the robber.

"He took money from his wallet. ... The guy was crazy," Ling said, explaining that her husband

gave the man several twenties.

She said the man was unhappy with what he was given and grabbed the remainder of the money from the wallet.

"I got mad and said, 'Why'd you take all the money?' and he pointed the gun at me," she said.

The man then ran from the restaurant, which is on Santa Rita Road near West Las Positas Boulevard. Ling described him as a thin black man, 18 to 25 years old. A complete description was not available from the Police Department.

A K-9 search was ordered, according to a police report. No arrest was made.

—*Glenn Wohlmann*

Homeless man found dead near I-580 overpass

Coroner withholds ID pending family notification

BY GLENN WOHLTMANN

A homeless man was found dead Monday afternoon in a sleeping bag beneath Interstate 580 near the Hopyard Road exit, according to Pleasanton police.

The man was found by a bicyclist on Zone 7 property known as the Alamo Canal, not far from Johnson Drive; police do not believe foul play was involved.

The bicyclist called police after finding the man, in his late 30s or early 40s, lying dead in a sleeping bag.

The man has been identified by the Alameda County Coroner's Office, but his name and the cause of death are being withheld until his family can be notified.

The bicyclist who found the body told police he had seen the same person, alive, about one week ago.

The man was found in an area that appears to be a homeless encampment. The site is not far from the Pleasanton Hilton Hotel and ClubSport, across Johnson Drive.

A sleeping bag, blankets, coolers, bicycle, guitar, clothing and camping gear are scattered though the area, directly below the highway. Cars and trucks rumble overhead and graffiti marks nearly every flat surface. A bag of garbage lies nearby, along with empty food containers and liquor bottles.

The man is the second homeless



GLENN WOHLTMANN

Everything from a bicycle to blankets to bottles litter the area near where a homeless man was found dead on Monday. The man has been identified, but his name is not being released until his family is notified.

person found dead in Pleasanton this year. In February, the body of a man was found down a railroad easement near Case and Valley avenues.

An autopsy in that case ruled there was no foul play. As in the current case, the identity was withheld because the family had not been notified. In that case,

police conjectured the man may have been walking toward an encampment somewhere in the area while returning from Raley's on Sunol Boulevard.

Anyone with information that could help in the investigation into the current case is asked to contact the Pleasanton Police Department at 931-5100. ■

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EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

Wal-Mart market heading for Nob Hill



Now-closed Nob Hill market on Santa Rita Road

Wal-Mart is putting the finishing touches on design and equipment changes it plans to put in place as it prepares to open its new Neighborhood Market at the long-empty former Nob Hill supermarket on Santa Rita Road near Stoneridge Drive. And the sooner the better, say retail store owners and their customers at the Santa Rita Center where their sales have slumped since Nob Hill closed early last year. Tom Foley, who manages the retail center, says the shopping center has lost customers. Nob Hill provided an economic anchor for those businesses, which want the supermarket reopened.

Wal-Mart, which first opened its Neighborhood Markets in 1998, now has nearly 200 of them across the country. A typical store is 30,000-40,000 square feet in floor space, much less than newer markets such as Safeway's Lifestyle store in Pleasanton that just opened. That makes the Nob Hill site a perfect fit and especially attractive in a neighborhood that lacks a nearby store. These markets feature a wide variety of products with prices generally lower than the larger stores, which is why they've gained such appeal in Chicago and New York where several Neighborhood Markets recently opened, even though those cities have generally been anti-Wal-Mart in their political positioning.

That could be Wal-Mart's concern in Pleasanton, too, even though the regular Wal-Mart discount store in the Hacienda Business Park is one of the city's largest sources of sales tax revenue. Several members of the Pleasanton City Council are openly hostile toward Wal-Mart and have already indicated they will look closely at any new application for a Wal-Mart Neighborhood Market.

It's not clear just how much control they'll have over Wal-Mart's bid to replace Nob Hill. Early indications are that its new market would be much the same as Nob Hill's in terms of operating space, with the only changes in the color of the paint, new front doors and added refrigeration capacity. That could mean that all Wal-Mart needs is "discretionary approval" from city inspectors and planners in January, when Wal-Mart is expected to provide final documentation to the plans it has already submitted. If the plans meet city requirements, the Neighborhood Market would open in April.

Based on what we've heard from customers in other cities, the Neighborhood Market will give former Nob Hill customers an appealing place to do their grocery shopping again. The city will gain, too. About a third of the sales in supermarkets are non-food purchases, with hundreds of thousands of sales tax dollars going into city coffers, which Pleasanton lost when Nob Hill closed. Here's a chance to gain those tax receipts back while boosting grocery buying opportunities at the Santa Rita Center. ■



Visit Town Square at PleasantonWeekly.com to comment on the editorial.

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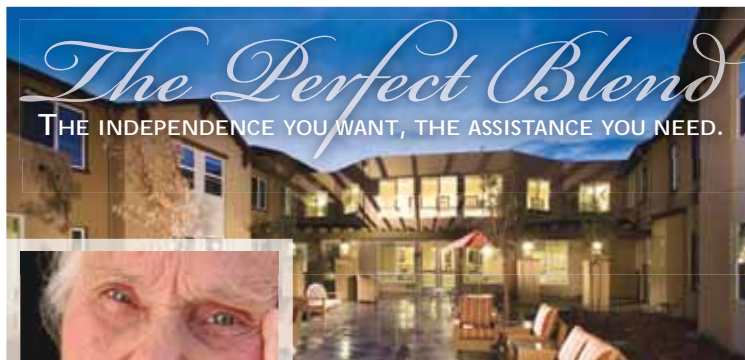
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ENDANGERED SPECIES Come find out how you can protect our local endangered species and see some cool artifacts about ones that have recently gone extinct from 1-2 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 11, at Alviso Adobe Community Park, 3465 Old Foothill Road. Create some cool crafts and taste what a local endangered species eats! Cost is \$3 for residents; \$5 for non-residents. Pre-registration is required; call 931-3479.

GO WILD, GO BIRDING! Come bird watching at the Alviso Adobe Community Park and learn some birding basics from 1-2 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 15, at the park, 3465 Old Foothill Road. Make your own bird book and birdhouse and discover the fun sport of birding! Cost is \$3 for residents; \$5 for non-residents. Pre-registration is required; call 931-3479.

Clubs

AMADOR VALLEY QUILTERS GUILD MEETING AVQ will have a holiday brunch from 9:45 a.m.-noon, Saturday, Dec. 10, at Pleasanton Middle School, 5001 Case Ave., with a parade of quilts, made by members for local service agencies to distribute to clients. Join them for an inspiring and touching program and brunch. Call 510-292-5635 or email laniluisa@comcast.net.

DEMOCRATIC POTLUCK DINNER PARTY Congressmen Pete Stark and Jerry McNerney, Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan, state Sen. Mark

DeSaulnier, TriValley, Diablo Valley & San Ramon Valley Democratic Clubs invite you to a seasonal potluck dinner party. The event is from 7-9:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 10, at IBEW 595, 6250 Village Parkway, Dublin. The elected officials will provide the main courses. RSVP to Ellis at 451-4303. Visit www.trivalleydems.com.

PLEASANTONIANS 4 PEACE This group will sponsor a candlelight vigil at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 14, in front of the Museum on Main, 603 Main St. The vigil will reflect on the human and monetary costs of the war, honor our veterans who have sacrificed, and visualize ways of moving beyond this conflict to a more peaceful world. Visit www.Pleasantonians4Peace.org.

Concerts

'EARLY ELVIS PRESLEY TRIBUTE' Celebrate Elvis with Jim Anderson and the Rebels at their "Early Elvis Presley Tribute," at 8 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 7-8, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. Tickets are \$25, \$20 and \$15. Call 931-4848 or visit www.jimandersonmusic.net.

Events

'LAUREATES SPEAK OF THE WORLD' Pleasanton Poet Laureate Cynthia Bryant will host Poets Laureate and Poets Laureate Emeritus for "Laureates Speak of the World" at 2 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 18, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. Admission is \$5; free to students. Fourteen past and present Poets Laureate from around California will gather for poetry readings followed by a reception, book sales and signing. For more information, call Michelle Russo at 931-4847.

GROOVY ENTERTAINERS VARIETY SHOW A local mother, son and daughter act will perform magic, and sing popular Disney songs from 3-4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 10, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Fun for all ages kids to adults. Their vision is to spread joy to the world. Call 366-3495 or e-mail groovyentertainers@yahoo.com.

SOLAR ENCOUNTER Celebrate the coming of the end of winter as we greet the emerging sun with a 'solar encounter' from 12:30-1:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 10, at Alviso Adobe Community Park, 3465 Old Foothill Road. Learn about how life on planet Earth benefits from our nearest stellar neighbor. Cost is \$5 for residents; \$7 for non-residents. Pre-registration is required; call 931-3479.

Fundraisers

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.

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Seniors

BRAIN MATTERS Enjoy a morning of fun while learning how to keep your brain active and your memory sharp. The class is held from 10-11:30 a.m. the first and third Fridays of every month at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Word games, puzzles, challenging activities, reminiscing and more, geared to help you age-proof your mind. Cost \$1.75 for resident and \$2.25 for non-resident. Call 931-5365 or visit www.pleasantonseniorcenter.org.

PEDDLER SHOPPE AT THE SENIOR CENTER

The Peddler Shoppe in the lobby of the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., offers the handmade wares of talented local senior artisans. It's a great place to buy gifts. The Shoppe is staffed by volunteers and is open to the public 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday; 6 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday evenings; and 9 a.m. to noon on the second Saturday monthly.

Sports

MORNING GROUP RIDE - CYCLING

A group ride starts at 8:30 a.m. every Saturday from Cycle Pros Bike Shop, 728 Main St., and meeting in the parking lot. The ride breaks into groups based on skill and distance. The regular ride usually covers 25-40 miles at speeds of 14-18 mph. The long ride covers 35-60 miles at a brisker pace. Routes vary each week. On Sundays mornings, there is a group ride for everyone, same time, same place, broken down into levels based on ability and distance. Call 400-4336 or visit www.thecyclepros.com.

Support Groups

BEYOND TREATMENT BREAST CANCER

This group provides a safe place to express and share thoughts, concerns and experiences of living with the uncertainty after treatment for breast cancer. The group meets from 6-8 p.m. the fourth Thursday of the month at ValleyCare Health Library and Ryan Comer Cancer Resource Center, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd., Suite #270. The group is facilitated by Mary Prishtina, RN, and Estee Goren, MFT. Call 399-1177.

Workshops

WIGS (WOMEN IN GNON)

SEMINARS GNON will present Blueprint for Financial Success from 5:30-6:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 15, at New York Life, Bishop Ranch 3, 2633 Camino Ramon, #525, San Ramon. You will learn helpful ways to budget and help become debt free, and basic components of building a financial foundation. Free for members and \$10 for non-members. RSVP at gnoners@gmail.com.

TAKE US ALONG



Breakfast with the senator:

Nicolas Rodriguez, 9, and his sister Camille, 7, of Lydiksen Elementary enjoy their Weekly at the U.S. Capitol after breakfasting earlier with Sen. Dianne Feinstein. They did not mention whether the senator reads the Weekly.

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MANY WAYS TO ★ Foster A Dream ★

BY JERRI PANTAGES LONG

Kayla was in her sixth-grade math class when she was summoned to the principal's office where two uniformed police officers were waiting. They put Kayla in the back of their patrol car and drove away. Away from her school and friends. Away from her neighborhood and family. She did not have the chance to say goodbye.

Kayla (not her real name) did not know until later that she had just entered into foster care. At age 12, she was considered unlikely to be adopted, so she would live with a series of strangers until her 18th birthday. After that, she would be on her own. She might be among the many foster youths to suffer either post-traumatic stress disorder or re-attachment disorder, which is not bonding with the adults in her life.

Foster care is provided to children who have been orphaned and have no relatives to care for them, or whose parents have been incarcerated; the majority of children enter foster care because they have been either abused or neglected by their birth parents.

Currently there are about 1,500 youths in foster care in Alameda County; 10 of them reside in Pleasanton, according to the county's Children's Placement Services and Adoptive Foster Care department. Foster care providers are given financial stipends to provide the basics — food, clothing, shelter, medical care.

One organization exists to provide the "extras" that can make a huge difference in a young person's quality of life: Foster A Dream was created in 2002 by Lori Cohen, who had herself been in foster care growing up. After she was married and raising her own children, she was reminded of the many things that foster youths are likely to miss out on.

"Our mission is to provide programs and resources that build the hopes, dreams and futures of Bay Area foster children, and be a guiding source for successful transition into the adult world," states the Foster A Dream website. "We plant seeds of promise in children who are underrepresented. Children who are thrust, as innocents, into a system which in its present condition simply cannot develop them, but rather merely sustains them until they are released as young adults into a world for which they are not prepared."

The group has a staff of two, plus lots of volunteers, who reach about 1,600 foster youths in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa and Solano counties, helping out in ways great and small.

Cohen recalled rolling up her sweatshirt as a makeshift pillow in a foster home. Now Foster A Dream's Pillow Pals make sure that foster youths have their own pillows, with special, handmade, colorful pillowcases — a small but important comfort. At the other end of the scale, Foster A Dream each spring awards scholarships to help foster youths just out of high school go to college.

"We're kind of like the family part," said Executive Director Kim Castaneda. "We provide the mentoring and supplemental services that the county cannot offer. Our foster kids can call us, like you would a parent, for advice or help."

One recent example was a young man who had won a scholarship but discovered that the funds would not be available in time to make a deposit to secure a dorm room. He called Fos-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kelly Dixon organized a summer drive to provide new backpacks filled with school supplies for foster youths.

ter A Dream, and it was quickly able to help.

"Our core program targets those foster youth ages 13 and up," Castaneda said. "They are getting ready for emancipation and need the most help."

Whereas many teenagers celebrate high school graduation at age 18 with parties and gifts and a sense of freedom, it has been a different story for foster youths. Under current law, they leave the system — and the support — at age 18. That law is being revised, to allow support for a few years longer.

W. Chance Tarver, Livermore High School

Class of 2009, wrote about graduating from high school and turning 18:

"I was forced to speak with case lawyers, sit down with social workers, my foster parent, and a county worker whom I had never met to discuss my 'unpleasant' situation," Tarver explained. "I signed stacks of papers I didn't understand, without any explanation of what I was signing, yet I signed, checked and initialed as I was instructed."



Children can pick from a variety of cool backpacks, which are an important part of every student's life.

"Instead of sending graduation invitations and receiving gifts from family and friends, I was awarded with my father's death certificate. I was handed a manila folder that explained why I originally entered foster care — events I have suppressed or can't remember due to being only 4 when I entered the system. The contents of the manila folder made sure I remembered what happened."

Tarver needed help from Foster A Dream to go to college because his relatives, alcoholic mother and deceased father could not help him.

Last summer, Foster A Dream launched "Get Set," which Program Director Tamara Earl describes as a two-week, all-day "impactful and intense hands-on summer camp to help with career, academic and personal exploration."

The eight foster youths involved ranged in ages from 17 to 24. Guest speakers helped them practice survival skills such as writing a resume, shopping for what to wear for an interview, participating in mock interviews, exploring college options, visiting corporations, learning the value of teamwork, and taking personality assessment tests.

"We wish we had the funding to spread this kind of workshop over the year to reach more kids," Earl said. "We were opening their eyes to opportunities."

Pleasanton resident Kathy Steyaert has been a weekly volunteer at Foster A Dream since her retirement from teaching five years ago. She helped three of the "Get Set" participants translate their \$100 gift cards into outfits suitable for a job interview, including one young man who managed to find enough bargains for three outfits.

"Nothing compares to that smiling face you see when a need is met, a dream fulfilled. The adage 'you get more than you give' is so true," Steyaert said.

Another Pleasanton resident who has helped Foster A Dream is Kelly Dixon, cur-



New backpacks are just some of the presents given out each year at Wonderland, a holiday event for foster youths.

rently a freshman at Foothill High School. She spent a large part of her summer filling new backpacks for foster youths.

"I started out by handing out fliers to summer school students attending Amador Valley High School," said Dixon. "I gave them a list of needed supplies with the prices, plus a due date for bringing them to their classrooms. Then I sent out a letter to close friends and family members, asking them

Residents get creative to make a difference in the lives of foster youths

for either supplies or donations to buy them.”

Kelly and her mother Erin went shopping for notebooks, folders, binders and other useful things like colored pencils and glue sticks, and Dixon was able to provide 15 backpacks to be distributed by Foster A Dream.

Foster A Dream's biggest event of the year is Wonderland, when staff members, interns and volunteers transform an empty warehouse into an enchanting place for foster youths of all ages to get winter holiday gifts.

About 1,000 foster youths visit Wonderland

Williams and fellow student volunteers were on their hands and knees in the school gymnasium, cutting up 2,000 yards of fleece for the no-sew project.

Williams was wondering how she would get the blankets to foster youths, and the answer came from on high — literally. As Williams was unloading the blankets in her driveway, Juan Castro was overhead, trimming the family's trees. Castro has been Foster A Dream's Volunteer of the Year more than once, for sewing pillowcases and helping set up Wonderland. He called down to Williams, advising how to donate the blankets to Wonderland.

Since that time, by teaching blanket-making in schools, to Girl Scouts, at National Charity League and Interact Club, seniors groups and others, Williams has been able to donate more than 10,000 fleece blankets to foster youths in three counties, and her Creative Kindness blanket project has spread to cities across the USA. Williams has received a \$10,000 grant to teach the cut-and-knot technique of blanket-making to 20,000 Girl Scouts at a jamboree in May.

“I know that I want to continue helping the thousands of foster children in this country who wake up each morning without their parents

but everyone can help a foster child,” said executive director Castaneda.

A donation of money can ensure that a foster youth is not left out of a high school yearbook because he or she can't afford a senior portrait. It can mean the difference in being able to play an instrument in the school band or to join a sports team. Funds can allow a foster youth to attend a school prom or have a new pair of shoes that fit.

Jen Herrick, a nurse at John Muir Medical Center, raised over \$1,500 so that one young lady in foster care could get orthodontic work. She heard about Foster A Dream through her employee newsletter and vol-

birth-days are not overlooked.

Volunteers are also important: One hundred are needed to build Wonderland, and then 60 for each of three shifts on four days in December. Mentors also are needed, especially men since most Alameda County foster care providers are single mothers.

Sleep Train holds six drives each year for foster children, collecting clothing, shoes, pajamas, school supplies, holiday gifts and cash. Donations come from individuals, business, churches, social groups, schools and sports clubs.

“We will be collecting unwrapped books, toys and games through Dec. 11,” said Mauri Knowles, marketing and community relations coordinator. “The holidays should be a magical time for a child, but, for over 60,000 California foster children, the holidays can be an especially difficult time away from family and friends.”

May is Foster Youth Awareness Month, and Foster A Dream hosts a breakfast for about 300 people to see college scholarships given to graduating high school seniors. Last year, on that one morning, participants donated or pledged nearly \$90,000 to help Foster A Dream continue its programs.

Special guest speaker at that event was Lily Eagle Dorman-Colby, who has gone from being a Bay Area foster youth to becoming a graduate of Yale University, class of 2010 — with help from a Foster A Dream scholarship — and who now has a graduate fellowship for law school at UC Berkeley.

“Despite being a high-achieving student, in one foster care home I was treated more like a criminal, as if I didn't deserve to be cared for,” Dorman-Colby told the audience. “Getting tossed from home to home without a loving family was difficult. Fortunately, later, while living in more supportive foster homes, I was able to find a stronger sense of self. School became my second home.”

All the Lilys, Chances and Kaylas who are growing up without their parents deserve to have dreams, and Foster A Dream helps them hope that they might come true. ■



Colorful fleece blankets are attractively bundled for kids to pick out their favorite to claim as their own.

during two weekends in December. They are greeted by volunteer “elves,” who escort them to stations to choose stuffers for their own holiday stockings then toys and jackets; teens receive gift cards. They also can have their pictures taken, since that is one of the things missing from the lives of most foster youths. At one special station, the youths can select their very own fleece cuddle blanket, plus a stuffed animal — two forms of comfort when their own parents are not there to tuck them in at night.

Amador Valley High School graduate Sarah Williams took on the task of fleece blankets in a big way, after being inspired by “Hope's Child,” an autobiography of Andrew Bridge and his years in foster care.

“Once I learned that there are 80,000 (foster) children in California alone and that many of them have only the clothes on their backs, I knew that giving as many of them as possible a blanket of their own was something I needed to do,” Sarah wrote in the album that details her Girl Scout Gold Award project.

Williams had made colorful fleece blankets as part of her volleyball team and her first goal was 800 fleece blankets, or one from every student attending Valley Christian School at the time. From Lions and Rotary service clubs, Sarah obtained \$3,000 to purchase 500 bolts of fleecy material in vivid patterns. During the hot summer months,



Toys are piled high at Wonderland. For some foster youths, these will be their only holiday gifts.

and are brave enough to do the best they can on their own,” Williams said. “These children have inspired me, and humbled me, and set me on a path of service — local, national and global — that I intend to follow throughout my life.”

Sarah's younger sister Claire, a junior at Amador, impressed with Wonderland, organized a similar event last year in Pleasanton, at the Veterans Memorial Building. Foster youths attended for an enjoyable day and carried home bags of gifts, including warm jackets and backpacks filled with school supplies. This year Claire collected books to be given as gifts.

“Not everyone can become a foster parent,



Wonderland is not just about the gifts; it's a fun event for children given each year by Foster A Dream.

unteered with a co-worker at Wonderland. About that same time, her church challenged members to take \$100 and “pay it forward and watch it grow,” Herrick said.

She learned of the foster girl's dream of straightened teeth, found out how much it would cost, and decided to give a garage sale with her Touriga Drive neighbors.

“It was fun to see others get involved,” Herrick said.

She invested her \$100 to purchase gift cards for stores, restaurants and gas stations so she could offer drawing tickets to supplement what was sold at the sale.

Her neighbors came through with an astounding array of items to sell, which brought in more than \$1,200 in just one day in August. The drawing brought in another \$600, enabling Herrick to write a check to Foster A Dream to create a beautiful smile for someone she likely will never meet.

Other donations can offer the possibility of attending a summer camp to help with challenges like diabetes or autism, and allow foster youths to join group celebrations so their

Want to help?

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WHAT “Inspiring foster youth to believe and achieve.”

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WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE VALLEY — MUSIC, THEATER, ART, MOVIES AND MORE

ENJOY a jazzy Christmas AT THE FIREHOUSE

Trumpeter Jeff Bordes & Friends to feature Zakiya Hooker, Don Lewis

Trumpeter Jeff Bordes & Friends will host "A Jazzy Soulful Christmas" tomorrow night at the Firehouse Arts Center featuring Zakiya Hooker, Don Lewis and the CoolTones Big Band. The artists will merge the sounds of New Orleans, the swing of big band, and the soul of the blues with the spirit of Christmas.

"My last performance in Pleasanton was in January, and it was nearly sold out," said Bordes, who is a 1992 graduate of Amador Valley High. "That performance was pushing the envelope a little, and fortunately Pleasanton came to like it."

For tomorrow's show, he said he's put together something more "audience-friendly" with the CoolTones Big Band, which performs mostly old swing style.

"I'm using them because some of my favorite Christmas tunes have a big band," Bordes said. "You hear them so much, I love when I hear a new arrangement. I've had a big interest lately in blues, New Orleans music, and I'm looking forward to taking that twist."

Bordes picked up the trumpet in elementary school and never looked back, although he said he uses the piano for composing. He went to

Vintage Hills Elementary and Valley View in the fifth grade, continued at Wells Middle School in Dublin for its music program, and then Amador Valley High School. He went on to study at Berklee College of Music in Boston, graduating in 1997.

"I spent quite a few years on the road touring professionally with various groups, then settled in the Bay Area," Bordes said. "Then I got married and had kids. We just had No. 3."

He has toured in Japan and across the United States with groups such as the Bill Berry Big Band and Dizzy Gillespie, and teaches in schools and music festivals. He's also performed live and on recordings with jazz artists Branford Marsalis, Alex Acuna, Giovanni Hidalgo, Tom Petty, Stevie Nicks, Sheryl Crow, Dana Carvey and, most recently, John Mellencamp.

Also on stage tomorrow night will be Zakiya Hooker, who made her debut performance in 1991 with her father, John Lee Hooker, at the Kaiser Center Theatre in Oakland. Since that time, she has performed with artists such as Etta James, Charles Brown, John Hammond and Taj Mahal.

Local musician Don Lewis, who

will round out the program, performed with the Tuskegee Chorus at Tuskegee Institute and played for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Freedom Rallies. Later, combining his interest in engineering with his musical talent, Lewis became one of the pioneers in synthesizer use and technology.

In 1987, Lewis created Say "Yes" to Music!, which has brought inspiring musical assemblies to thousands of students and teachers across the United States and Canada.

"I saw Don Lewis as a kid in elementary school, and I always remembered that assembly," Bordes said. "Then he took me under his wing in high school and taught me a few things."

Bordes lives with his family in Tracy, and his day job is director of sales and marketing for Frog Hollow Farm in Brentwood. He performs frequently, mainly with his Jeff Bordes & the Jazz Desperadoes.

"I'm playing all over the place, up and down the coast and in San Francisco," he said.

But tomorrow night will find him returning home to Pleasanton, with a jazzy, funky, bluesy holiday celebration.

—Dolores Fox Ciardelli



Jazzin' up the holidays

What: "A Jazzy Soulful Christmas"

When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 10

Where: Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave., Pleasanton

Tickets: adult: \$15, \$20 and \$25; child: \$12; senior: \$20. Purchase online at www.firehousearts.org; call 931-4848; or go to the box office from noon-6 p.m. Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, and for two hours prior to the performance.

Holiday Happenings

SING IT YOURSELF MESSIAH Valley Concert Chorale will host its annual "Sing It Yourself Messiah" at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 9, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Road. Singers and music lovers of all ages and abilities are welcome to sing along or just enjoy. Tickets are \$10. Call 1-800-838-3006.

'SLEEPING BEAUTY' Pleasanton's Civic Arts Stage Company is presenting the classic tale "Sleeping Beauty" in the comedic "panto" style, filled with music, dance and magic, at 7:30 p.m., Friday-Saturday, Dec. 9-10 and 16-17; 2 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 10-11 and 17-18, at Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road. Tickets are \$10, \$15 and \$18 for adults; \$6, \$9 and \$12 for children and seniors. Call 931-4848 or visit www.firehousearts.org.

VALLEY DANCE THEATRE'S 'THE NUTCRACKER' Valley Dance Theatre will present "The Nutcracker" at 7 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 10 and 16-18; and at 2 p.m., Saturday-

Sunday, Dec. 10-11 and 17-18, at Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Cantabella Children's Chorus and Harmony Fusion will perform the pre-show carols, and the Asbury Ringers will ring in the theater lobby Dec. 16-18. Tickets are \$24, \$27 and \$33 for adults; \$18 for students 17 and younger. Call 373-6800 or visit www.valleydancetheatre.com.

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.tapestryringersandsingers.org.

RAVENSWOOD VICTORIAN YULETIDE Visit the beautiful 1885 vineyard historical site, decorated with lovely holiday trees and flowers, from noon-4 p.m., Sunday, Dec.

11 at 2647 Arroyo Rd., Livermore. Costumed volunteers and docents will greet guests and offer free tours of the museum cottage house. Visit the tank house gift shop, filled with wonderful gift items and handmade crafts. Enjoy the yuletide music and entertainers, as well as tasty sweets and hot beverages that will be available. Call 462-7324.

'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.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS CONCERT Enjoy the diverse music of the various choirs at the Catholic Community

of Pleasanton. The concert is from 7-8:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 16, at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Drive. Food, fellowship and caroling will follow the concert at the Activity Center. For more information, call Mark Sullivan at 474-2776 or email jsullivan@catholicofpleasanton.org.

CASH COUNTRY CHRISTMAS Firehouse Arts Center will host "Cash Country Christmas" with James Garner and his band in a tribute to Johnny Cash at 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 17, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. Tickets are \$15, \$20 and \$25 for adults; \$20 for seniors; and \$12 for children. Call 931-4848 or visit www.firehousearts.org.

'THE GREAT CHRISTMAS GETAWAY' This musical follows the detours and temptations that challenge Brody, Ashley and other class officers as they search the mall for the perfect gift for their home-room teacher. The performance, to help the entire family celebrate the Christmas season, is free and

begins at 5 p.m. Dec. 18 and Dec. 24 in the worship center at Centerpointe Church, 3410 Cornerstone Ct. Call 846-4436 or visit www.centerpointechurch.org.

'CHRISTMAS AT THE MISSION' Under the direction of their new conductor, Michael Morris, the Ohlone Chamber Singers proudly present its 26th annual Christmas at the Mission Concert featuring Schubert's Magnificat and Rutter's Gloria with a full, 10-piece brass ensemble. See it at 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 17, or at 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 18, at Old Mission San Jose, 43300 Mission Blvd., Fremont. Tickets are \$8-\$15. Call (510) 659-6031 or visit www.smithcenter.com.

TRAIN OF LIGHTS Enjoy this year's Train of Lights on the Historic Niles Canyon Railway. It leaves the Sunol station at 7:15 p.m.; and leaves Niles at 4:15 p.m. Cost is \$25 for all; under 3 free. Go to www.ncry.org to see dates and purchase tickets.



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Holiday Heart and Hearth

Keep the kids happy for peace and joy

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

December is an exciting time for children, and families should remember to relax and enjoy each other as they prepare for Christmas. Holiday activities naturally present chances to make memories and have fun.

Even during breaks from school, kids like to stay active, mentally and physically. What might seem like a chore to you could be a fun adventure for your children, plus it will turn the chore into cheer for you, too.

Baking

Cooking and baking are fun and educational, as children learn to measure and mix and see firsthand how water and oil separate in a bowl.

Remember that there are many things to bake besides cookies and spicy breads. Basic dough is used for pretzels, which can be coated with cinnamon sugar for a sweet goodie or seasoned with spices for a savory treat. The dough also can be twisted into shapes, such as initials or numbers. Homemade pizzas are fun. Make mini-crusts then put out the toppings for children to assemble their own favorites.

You can also fry dough then

add sweetness with chocolate, caramel or cinnamon and sugar. Apple dumplings are a crisp, sweet seasonal treat.

Christmas shopping

Involve your children in finding the perfect gift for grandma and grandpa. Are they tech-savvy enough to appreciate the latest gadgets? For those who haven't even acquired a cell phone, check out those that have large buttons, bright screens and emergency call functions — they aren't necessarily expensive.

How about giving a family outing? Or a specially made scrapbook that can double as a brag book? A gift certificate to their favorite restaurant might be a treat. If you all share what you know about these special people and what they mean to you, you'll come up with something perfect and individualized.

Wrapping presents

Turning gifts into colorful packages is a great creative outlet. If you cut the wrapping paper, almost any age child can wrap the gift.

Be creative in what you use as wrapping paper. Is there any old wallpaper in the garage? Do you have old road maps, calendars,

sheet music? How about fabrics, old tablecloths, napkins or scarves? Fabric makes it easier to wrap those difficult shapes.

Children can also decorate their own wrapping paper. Old magazines are perfect for cutting out colorful patterns to decorate plain white butcher paper, or kids can draw and color with markers. Don't forget about stickers, and old photographs will personalize the wrappings.

Reading and writing

This vacation might allow time to read with your child, and what could be better than snuggling up together to enjoy a good book?

It also might be a good time to encourage children in their writing. Start with writing holiday shopping lists together or writing down menus. Then keep a journal, writing brief descriptions of holiday activities and pictures.

If your child is too young to write, let him dictate his story into a tape recorder, then write it down and read it back. Perhaps he can illustrate the story himself and then you'll have a book to cherish: "Celebrating Christmas 2011." Or children can draw holiday photos first and then dictate the words.

Start new traditions

It's always nice to start new traditions because in analyzing your holiday activities you may decide you want to drop an old tradition.

■ Organize a visit from Santa. Encourage your family or friends to come over for a potluck breakfast or lunch. As the festivities get into full swing, have Santa join in the fun and provide him with goodie bags for the children. Have a camera on hand for that perfect Santa moment.

■ Build a gingerbread house with your family. Kits are available if you don't want to bake it from scratch. Or graham crackers can be used for cute mini-houses, held together with frosting and decorated with small candies.

■ Cookies are a favorite tradition — both baking and eating. Kids can be involved in this at any age. Even if they've only helped add some of the ingredients, they'll be proud as they share "their" cookies with others.

■ Give back to your community. Volunteer at a local soup kitchen. Sing holiday carols in nursing homes and senior centers. Organize a food drive for the food bank. Have young children go through their toys and pick one or two to donate to a local shelter. This will help children participate in the joy of giving.

■ Create a video or online photo album. This tradition can be especially meaningful for families with loved ones who don't live nearby if you can mail it to them in time to enjoy with their holiday celebrations.

Find fun things to do with the family on pages 15 and 17.

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'Nun-crackers' a sell-out hit

Audience joins in with singing and laughing

By Glenn Wohltmann

If you were looking forward to a night with the nuns of Mount Saint Helen's in the current Tri-Valley Repertory Theatre's show of "Nun-crackers," you're out of luck. The show's sold out for its entire run.

"Nun-crackers" is writer Dan Goggin's fourth stage play featuring the little sisters of Hoboken, this time doing a cable-access TV special in their convent basement.

If you've seen TVRT's two other "Nunsense" productions, you have an idea of the humor involved and will probably recognize the cast, since a number of them seem to have gotten into the habit of playing nuns.

If you haven't seen "Nunsense," think "The Sound of Music" on laughing gas. You don't have to know that Mother Superior Mary Regina (Peggy Coleman) is a former circus performer, or that second-in-command Sister Mary Hubert (Shari Oret) hopes to become Mother Superior, or that Sister Mary Paul Amnesia (Joan Evans) lost her memory when a crucifix fell on her head, to enjoy "Nun-crackers."

The members of the audience serve as the people in the studio for the cable access show, getting rid of theater's fourth wall by inviting the audience to sing along,



MIKE PADUA

The nuns of Mount St. Helens: Sister Robert Anne (Suzanne Henry); Mother Superior (Peggy Coleman); Sister Hubert (Shari Oret); Sister Mary Leo (Shauna James); Sister Mary Paul Amnesia (Joan Evans).

talking with them before the show starts, and involving them in Secret Santa drawings.

The show, which runs through Dec. 18, may be short on plot — finding a last-minute replacement after the injury of Sister Mary Leo (Shawna James), who wants to be the world's first Ballerina nun, and a search for stolen Christmas gifts — but makes up for it in comedy.

Of note was "All I Want for Christmas (is a one-night stand)" by streetwise Brooklyn nun Sister Robert Anne (Suzanne Henry),

which is about her dreams for an appearance at Carnegie Hall; "In the Convent," a parody of the Village Peoples' "In the Navy," complete with hats; and Father Virgil (Brian FitzMaurice) as Julia Child.

The showstopper was the penultimate song, "It's Better to Give," which showcased Oret's singing talent.

Coleman, Oret, Evans and Henry may by now be familiar to TVRT audiences; all are reprising their prior roles as nuns of Mount Saint Helens convent.

Also worth noting is the handful of talented young singers and dancers, most of them from middle schools in Pleasanton, who made up the Mount Saint Helens chorus; Maria (Emily Joy Kessel) in particular, stood out as much for being cute as for her performance.

One more thing worth mentioning is the value of a willing audience. Laughter is contagious — which is why laugh tracks came about — and it seemed the entire audience was infected at Saturday night's performance at the Studio Theatre on Serpentine Lane in Pleasanton.

With "Nun-crackers" sold out and a hit, TVRT is looking toward its next big production, "Annie," which begins next month. ■

Family fun

Posada with piñatas

What: Community holiday celebration in the Mexican tradition, with music, singing, drama, food and a special guest

Who: Pleasanton-Tulancingo Sister City Association

Where: Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave.

When: 6-9 p.m., Friday, Dec. 16

Cost: Free

Puppet fun

What: Nick Barone Puppets present "Holiday Treats," an original comedy variety show. The wacky cast of loveable, friendly monsters will give a zany and festive show



where almost everything that can go wrong does go wrong. The show features a roster of holiday-themed songs and a comical story that will delight

the entire family

When: 2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 17

Where: Pleasanton library

Cost: Free

Call: at 931-3400, ext. 8

Winter camps

What: Winter Ramblers Nature Day Camp for ages 6-12. Nature crafts, skills and games will keep campers warm and toasty while they learn some cool new stuff.

Where: Alviso Adobe Community

Park Instructor: Eric Nicholas, City Naturalist

When: 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 28

Cost: \$116 for residents; \$128 non-residents

Contact: enicholas@ci.pleasanton.ca.us or call 931-5357

What: Winter camp show: "A Pirate Christmas," for grades 2-8

Who: Tri-Valley Repertory Theatre

Dates: 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Dec. 26-Dec. 30

Performances: 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 31

Fee: \$200 per camper, sibling discount available; high school internships available (no charge for interns)

Sign-ups: trivalleyrep.org

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WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

Planning Commission

Wednesday, December 14, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- **P11-0664. Carl Pretzel (Appellant); Todd Deike (Applicant)**
Appeal of the Zoning Administrator's approval of an application to retain the existing fencing along the rear and side yards, measuring up to seven feet, one inch tall, at the existing residence located at 3642 Carlsbad Court.
- **P11-0731. Carl Pretzel (Appellant); Robert Baker (Applicant)**
Appeal of the Zoning Administrator's approval of an application to construct an approximately 74-foot long, 72- to 83-inch tall fence between 3647 and 3633 Glacier Court North.
- **PUD-85-08-02D-03M. Mercedes Benz**
Application for PUD Design Review approval to construct an approximately 170,065 square-foot, five-story automobile service center and parking structure and to remodel the existing Mercedes Benz dealership building located at 5885 Owens Drive.
- **PGPA-17 and P11-0904 through P11-0937. City of Pleasanton**
Recommend approval to the City Council of: (1) the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report documents for the General Plan Housing Element and Climate Action Plan; (2) the Draft Housing Element of the General Plan; (3) General Plan amendments (GPA), Specific Plan amendments (SPA) and/or rezonings of 17 sites to allow multifamily or single family residential development or mixed use (including multifamily residential development).

Youth Commission

Wednesday, December 14, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
Gingerbread Preschool, 4333 Black Avenue

- Approval of Youth in Government Day 2012 – Program Concept

Kottinger Task Force

Wednesday, December 14, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.
Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd.

- Discussion regarding the potential future renovation and replacement of Kottinger Place (240 Kottinger Drive) and Pleasanton Gardens (251 Kottinger Drive) senior's apartments.

Housing Commission - Cancelled

Thursday, December 15, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

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

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

POLICE REPORT

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

Nov. 29

Theft

- 8:13 a.m. in the 5800 block of Stoneridge Drive; petty theft
- 10:58 a.m. in the 3900 block of Promenade Way; theft
- 6:07 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; theft

Auto burglary

- 10:34 a.m. in the 5600 block of Owens Drive

Vandalism

- 7:40 a.m. at the intersection of Bernal Avenue and Interstate 680

Prank calls

- 4:39 p.m. in the 6200 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

Nov. 30

Theft

- 8:37 a.m. in the 200 block of Trenton Circle; petty theft
- 12:53 p.m. in the 3900 block of Kern Court; identity theft
- 3:32 p.m. in the 2800 block of Arronia Court; identity theft
- 4:01 p.m. in the 1200 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; identity theft
- 7:04 p.m. in the 600 block of Main Street; petty theft
- 9:04 p.m. in the 6800 block of Santa Rita Road; auto theft, petty theft

Battery

- 3:14 p.m. in the 1800 block of Santa Rita Road

Drug/alcohol violations

- 8:50 p.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue; possession of a hypodermic needle, paraphernalia possession
- 11:38 p.m. at the intersection of W. Neal Street and Railroad Avenue; public drunkenness

Dec. 1

Theft

- 8:26 a.m. in the 7400 block of Stonedale Drive; auto theft
- 8:26 a.m. in the 3900 block of Stoneridge Drive; auto theft
- 5:35 p.m. in the 3900 block of Stoneridge Drive; grand theft
- 6:24 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 7:09 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall road; petty theft, possession of stolen property
- 9:14 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

Auto burglary

- 3:45 p.m. in the 5900 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
- 6:08 p.m. in the 3000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
- 7:24 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
- 7:38 p.m. in the 1000 block of Serpentine Lane

Prank calls

- 11:47 a.m. in the 2900 block of Moreno Avenue

Dec. 2

Theft

- 3:17 p.m. in the 4300 block of Rosewood Drive; auto theft
- 5:20 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft

Burglary

- 1:42 a.m. in the 4300 block of Railroad Avenue

Auto burglary

- 11:15 a.m. in the 3600 block of Andrews Drive
- 12:13 p.m. in the 5900 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

Drug/alcohol violations

- 3:45 p.m. in the 7500 block of Driftwood Way; possession of a controlled substance, hypodermic needle possession, paraphernalia possession
- 8:19 p.m. in the 500 block of Main Street; public drunkenness

Dec. 3

Robbery

- 9:41 p.m. in the 3100 block of Santa Rita Road

Theft

- 1:28 a.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; embezzlement
- 3:05 p.m. in the 1700 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; petty theft
- 6:22 p.m. in the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall road; petty theft

Auto burglary

- 2:46 p.m. in the 700 block of Bonde Ct

Drug/alcohol violations

- 1:19 a.m. at the intersection of Kolln Street and Mohr Avenue; public drunkenness
- 2:43 p.m. at the intersection of Old Vineyard Avenue and Yolanda Court; minor transporting alcohol
- 11:17 p.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue; under the influence of a controlled substance, public intoxication on drugs and alcohol

Dec. 4

Petty theft

- 8:01 p.m. in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

Battery

- 1:30 a.m. in the 4800 block of Hopyard Rd; battery, public drunkenness

Auto burglary

- 3:12 a.m. in the 9500 block of MacDonald Court

- 3:59 a.m. in the 9600 block of Crosby Drive

- 8:39 a.m. in the 3600 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard

- 11:37 a.m. in the 9500 block of MacDonald Court

Drug violations

- 10:04 p.m. at the intersection of Main Street and Vervais Avenue; hypodermic needle possession

Dec. 5

Theft

- 10:50 a.m. in the 2500 block of Secretariat Drive; theft, forgery

OBITUARIES

Robert "Bob" Werner

Aug. 5, 1929 - Nov. 30, 2011

Robert "Bob" Werner, longtime resident of Pleasanton, peacefully passed away Nov. 30, 2011. He was born in Oakland on Aug. 5, 1929. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with a degree in electrical engineering and became an army lieutenant when he graduated. He went on to work at the Lawrence Livermore Lab for 30 years, during which time he made trips to the Bikini atoll and the Nevada test site. He was a ham radio operator, had his pilot's license, and liked to snorkel and ski.

For the past 13 years his face lit up whenever he was with his eleven grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife of 40 years, Janet Huffman Werner. He is survived by his three daughters, Holly (Sergio) Arce, Krista (Chad) Friesen, and Anjanette (Greg) Lundell, his grandchildren, Linda, Lisa, Joshua, Lucinda and Lydia Arce; Caleb, Katie, Daniel and Isaac Friesen; James and Calvin Lundell. He will be missed by his brother, Bill (Nancy) Werner, and

by his sister, Nelda Olson.

Friends and family are invited to attend services. Burial is planned for Dec. 9 at 2 p.m. at the Felton Cemetery. A memorial service will be held on Dec. 10 at 10 am at Cedar Grove Church in Livermore. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Mt. Hermon Christian Conference Center in Bob's name.

Jared Alan Johansen

Oct. 14, 1984 - Nov. 30, 2011

Jared Alan Johansen, beloved son of Alan and Christy Johansen unexpectedly passed away in his sleep early Wednesday morning November 30, 2011 at his home in Pleasanton, California. He was 27 years old.

Jared grew up in Pleasanton and loved his many friends and teachers at Walnut Grove Elementary, Harvest Park Middle School, and Amador Valley High School. Jared was well known for his fun sense of humor and wit and his love of learning. He was a great brother, husband, father, son, a gifted athlete, dedicated scholar and respected friend. Jared was



an avid fan of the San Francisco 49ers, Giants and the Warriors. He spoke Spanish fluently and served a two year voluntary mission for his church in Washington D.C. Jared attended college at both BYU and the University of Utah, earning a degree in Economics in 2009.

He was married in the Portland Oregon LDS temple in 2008 to his adoring wife Tiffany Bleak. During the past 2 years, Jared loved his work and associates at the law firm of Gunderson Dettmer in Redwood City. He and Tiffany were happily looking forward to law school next year. Jared is survived by his wife, his 17 month old daughter Reese and another baby daughter Jaelyn (due to arrive in January). Jared is also survived by his parents and his two younger brothers Nick and Nate Johansen.

A memorial service to honor Jared took place on Tuesday, December 6th in the chapel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Pleasanton. A viewing for friends and community was held Monday, December 5th at the Graham-Hitch Mortuary in Pleasanton. In lieu of flowers for the benefit of Jared and Tiff's baby daughters' education, contributions can be sent to: The Jared Johansen Legacy Trust, 405 Boulder Court (Suite 400) Pleasanton, California 94566.



State Cup winners

Pleasanton Rage Orange U10 girls soccer team won the Premier 1 Division NorCal State Cup in late November. Orange advanced to the finals after beating ACC Mavericks in the quarterfinals in Sacramento and GSC Gryphons in the semifinals in Manteca.

For the final game against Redwood City's Juventus team it was cold and windy in Manteca. Bella Foster from Pleasanton scored the first goal of the game. The game was tied, 1-1, just before the half and Michaela Riter got a corner kick up in the air and bent in into the goal. In the second half the wind was against Pleasanton and it got down, 2-3. Julia Gonsman tied it up with two minutes left in the game. No one scored in the 10 minutes of overtime.

Juventus kicked first for penalty kicks and its first kick went wide. Foster and Gonsman put Pleasanton's first two penalty kicks in, then Pleasanton's goalie, Isabella Mendoza, stopped Juventus' next three penalty kicks for the win.

PREP LINE-UP

Dec. 10

■ Boys Soccer: 1:30 p.m., Foothill vs. Richmond, away

Dec. 13

■ Boys Basketball: 7 p.m., Foothill vs. Mt. Eden, away

■ Boys Soccer: 6 p.m., Foothill vs. Granada, home

■ Girls Soccer: 6 p.m., Foothill vs. Granada, away

Dec. 15

■ Boys Basketball: 7 p.m., Foothill

vs. Antioch, away

■ Boys Soccer: 6 p.m., Foothill vs. San Ramon, away

■ Girls Soccer: 6 p.m., Foothill vs. San Ramon Valley, home

Dec. 17

■ Boys Soccer: 1 p.m., Foothill vs. Alameda, home

■ Girls Soccer: 11 a.m., Foothill vs. Clayton Valley, away

■ Wrestling: 9 a.m., Foothill at Bill Martell Tournament, away

SPORTS DIGEST

Seahawks collecting Toys for Tots at swim meet

The Pleasanton Seahawks Swim Team will host an age group swim meet this weekend at the Dolores Bengtson Aquatic Center on Black Avenue and at the event will collect new, unwrapped toys for the annual Toys for Tots program.

The meet is expected to draw about 1,200 swimmers plus their families who will begin to arrive each morning at 7 a.m., with competition beginning at 9 a.m. The meet will continue each day until approximately 6:30 p.m. The city of Pleasanton has been working closely with the Seahawks to develop plans for a reduced impact on the neighborhoods surrounding the Aquatic Center. Call 931-3423.

Pleasanton grads help Chico soccer advance to Final Four

Amador 2008 graduate Melissa Pease and Foothill 2011 graduate Megan Tabler helped the Chico State women's soccer team advance to the NCAA Final Four for the first time in the college's history.

Going into the NCAA D2 tournament, Chico State was the fifth seed in the West Region. The Wildcats upset 4th-seeded Cal State Stanislaus to open the tournament, knocked out top-seeded UC San Diego to advance past the second



Melissa Pease



Megan Tabler

round for the first time in school history, and then beat No. 2 seed Cal State L.A. to win the West Region. In the quarterfinal game, Chico beat Abilene Christian of Texas to advance to the final four.

Chico State then moved on to the NCAA Championship Tournament semifinals in Pensacola, Fla., where the Wildcats were defeated Dec. 1 by Grand Valley State in a shootout to end a 1-1 tie.

Pleasanton goalkeeper makes GSAC

Lindsey Smith of Pleasanton, sophomore goalkeeper, has been named to the 2011 All-Golden State Athletic Conference team from Westmont Women's Soccer, along with three of her teammates.

"I have thought of Lindsey as an All-American prospect from the moment she arrived here," said Westmont head coach Kristi Kiely. "She has grown and developed in her fitness. She has vision and she has confidence that the entire goal box is hers. She has great hands, incredible distribution and enjoys leading from the back. She has been recognized by our conference and nationally as a

defensive player of the week."

Westmont College is located in Santa Barbara.

PGSL registration

Registration is open for the 2012 season with the Pleasanton Girls Softball League (PGSL). Girls living in Pleasanton, Dublin and Sunol are eligible. Register either online at www.pleasantonsoftball.org or by mailing a registration form from the website to: PGSL, P.O. Box 911, Pleasanton, CA 94566.

Wrestling up victories

All seven Amador wrestlers placed at the tough McNair Tourney in Stockton the weekend of Dec. 3-4. Tourney MVP Richard Nevearez and Travis Chubb were champions, while Tomm Yozzo finished second in the toughest weight class of the tourney.

Tommy Barrera finished third, losing a close semifinal match to his weight's eventual champion. Austin Hamilton and Brett Lewis lost close consolation finals to place fourth. Connor Oleary finished sixth to close out the scoring.

Amador champs at Irvington

Amador Valley girls basketball won the Irvington Classic Championship on Dec. 3, and Kathleen Wagner was named tournament MVP. Alysse Ketner was named to the All Tournament Team, and Blair Guilfoile was awarded the Tournament Sportsmanship Award.



White to State Cup

The RAGE U11 White closed its regular season with four straight victories to earn first place in the U11 Division 1 Gold League. The team, coached by Jen Mello, capped a furious sprint to the finish by knocking off the Mission Valley United, 1-0, last month to ride the momentum into State Cup play.

Pictured are (back, l-r) Quinn Lombardi, Leila Shafi, Coach Jen Mello, Allison Hunter, Allison Jenezon, (middle) Addyson Mapes, Kiera Hegarty, Holly Judson, (front) Kasey Cring, Delaney Soble, Abby Fried and Lilly Fehrmann.





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Dic Brake kit 75 -79
Toyota Corolla - \$12

202 Vehicles Wanted

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to Heritage for the Blind. Free 3 Day Vacation, Tax Deductible, Free Towing, All Paperwork Taken Care Of. 888-902-6851. (Cal-SCAN)

210 Garage/Estate Sales

Pleasanton, 3231 Vineyard Ave, Current

235 Wanted to Buy

CASH FOR GUNS!
Eddy's, Mtn.View
(650)969-GUNS

240 Furnishings/ Household items

Vietname Era Electronics - \$550

245 Miscellaneous

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Portable. Save up to 50 percent off your next heating bill. Heat 1000 sq. ft. for about 5 cents an hour! Free Shipping! Call 1-888-807-5741. (Cal-SCAN)

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330 Child Care Offered

HS Student Babysitter Available



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PET OF THE WEEK

Just stunning

Georgia (left) is a 2-year-old Calico cat with a calm demeanor and a beautiful face. Her best friend is Tazzie, a 4-year-old tortoiseshell. Georgia is a quiet feline who loves napping and curling up with her favorite person; Tazzie loves lounging in the sun and playing with toy mice. To learn more, call 426-8656 or visit www.valleyhumane.org. Valley Humane Society is located at 3670 Nevada St., in Pleasanton; it's open from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday.



COURTESY OF MELISSA BONNEL

Real Estate

OPEN HOME GUIDE AND REAL ESTATE LISTINGS

Realtor group launches Spanish-language property website

New website serves market potential for growing Spanish-speaking home buyer population

By JEB BING

In an effort to meet the needs of Spanish-speaking home buyers in California, the California Association of Realtors has launched Sucasa.net (<http://www.sucasa.net>), a new Spanish-language property search website.

Sucasa.net shares the same multiple listing service data as its sister website, California Living Network, <http://ca.realtor.com>, a national Realtors site.

Sucasa.net offers Spanish-speaking home buyers an opportunity to search for homes using common sorting characteristics such as city, price range and number of bedrooms and bathrooms. Results appear in a list or on a map, with driving directions available in Spanish.

Additionally, Realtors posting on the

ca.realtor.com site can forward property links to their clients in Spanish. The Sucasa.net property search is available for the entire state of California.

"With Spanish ranking as the second most widely spoken language in the U.S. and Spanish speakers making up nearly 35% of California's population, we recognize the market potential for this home buyer population," said CAR President LeFrancis Arnold.

Among features at sucasa.net are property search results that show how many listings are available for each bedroom (available listings are shown in parenthesis after the number of bedrooms), and a brief property description (in Spanish) can be seen if searching for properties on the map view. ■

OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

Alamo

6 BEDROOMS
1311 Laverock Lane \$2,950,000
 Sun 1-4 Michael Hatfield Broker 984-1339

Blackhawk

3 BEDROOMS
306 Live Oak Drive \$879,000
 Sun 1-4:30 Alain Pinel Realtors 314-1111

Danville

5 BEDROOMS
755 El Pintado Rd \$1,945,000
 Sun 1:30-3:30 Alain Pinel Realtors 314-1111

Livermore

4 BEDROOMS
1092 Geneva Street \$575,000
 Sun 1-4 Keller Williams Tri-valley 200-2457
7793 Peppertree Rd \$629,000
 Sun 1-4 J Rockcliff Realtors 200-4130
2889 Rutherford Ct \$849,000
 Sun 1-4 J Rockcliff Realtors 200-4130

5 BEDROOMS
2459 French Oak Place \$860,000
 Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel Realtors 251-1111

Pleasanton

3 BEDROOMS
665 Oak Circle \$640,000
 Sun 1-4 Fabulous Properties 202-6898
4099 Nevis Street \$510,500
 Sun 1-4 Coldwell Banker 847-2200

4 BEDROOMS
7923 Sawgrass Ct \$1,849,000
 Sun 1-4 J Rockcliff Realtors 251-2585

5 BEDROOMS
7235 Valley Trails Dr \$725,000
 Sun 1-4 Keller Williams Tri-valley 397-4200

San Ramon

4 BEDROOMS
1868 Barossa Dr \$749,950
 Sat/Sun 1-4 Keller Williams Realty 855-8333

Find more open home listings at pleasantonweekly.com/real_estate
 For marketing opportunities contact Andrea Heggelund at 600-0840 x110.

BRAND NEW LISTING!
 BRAND NEW ROOF!

1092 Geneva Street, Livermore
 Desirable Sunset East
 4 bedroom 2 bath and 3-car garage
 2024 sqft. and corner lot. Dual pane
 windows, remodeled kitchen, inside
 laundry, fireplace. Great curb appeal,
 private beautiful yards, built in BBQ,
 garden sheds. Excellent Location!
Offered at \$575,000



Louise Davis
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665 Oak Circle, Downtown Pleasanton
 1641 sq. ft. of living space, single story, 3 bedroom, 2 bath, with pool. Convenient location, walk to town. Offered at \$640,000 OPEN SUN 1-4



640 Varese Court, Ruby Hill
 Beautiful 4 bedroom, 4.5 bath, 5665 sq. ft. home in Ruby Hill with bonus room, pool/spa, golf course lot & views. Offered at \$1,950,000

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Donna Garrison
 925-980-0273
 DRE License #01735040

Susan Schall
 925-519-8226
 DRE License #01713497

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



PENDING!

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**



SOLD!

4691 Finch Way, Dublin
 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, approx 2400+ sqft,
 separate office, loft (4th bedroom)
 and bonus room.
SOLD at \$668,000

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7843 Cypress Creek Court, Pleasanton

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\$799,000

3 BR 2 BA Hrdwd Flrs thru-out. Newer Kit. cabinets, Eat-In Kit. New Paint inside/out. Top Rated Schools! 925.847.2200

CASTRO VALLEY

5167 CHESNEY GLEN DRIVE

GORGEOUS HOME!

\$510,000

4 BR 2.5 BA Modern Decor. Laminate Flring on Main Flr. Spacious Kitchen w/Maple Cabinet & Pantry Closet 925.847.2200

CONCORD

1739 BERRYWOOD DRIVE

WONDERFUL HOME!

\$379,000

4 BR 2.5 BA Remodeled kitchen with new appli. Lrge Fam. Rm, Liv. Rm & Formal Dining. Rm. Private backyard 925.847.2200

DUBLIN

3475 RIMINI LN

UPGRADED AND IMMACULATE!

\$699,999

4 BR 3 BA Kit w/Granite Slab, Cntr Island w/brkfst bar. Oversized Mstr Ste. & bath. Crown Molding, & More 925.847.2200

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2223 KALENDA CMN

BEAUTIFUL HOME!

\$568,888

3 BR 2 BA Remodeled Bath & Kit. w/maple cabinets, granite counters. Hardwood Flrs. Dual Pane Windows. 925.847.2200

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BEAUTIFUL CONDO!

\$293,000

2 BR 2 BA Move In Ready! No Neighbors below or above. One Car Garage w/Carport. HOA includes Cable. 925.847.2200

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1457 MACATERA AVE #250

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SANTA CLARA COUNTY

17065 COPPER HILL DR

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\$599,000

4 BR 2.5 BA Backyard w/pavers & backs up to open space. Vaulted ceilings, Lrge Fam. Rm. w/ Fireplace 925.847.2200

PLEASANTON

5128 BLACKBIRD DRIVE

GREAT LOCATION BY PARK

\$789,000

4 BR 2.5 BA 2364 Sq.Ft. Upgraded Kit w/beautiful cabinetry, hrdwd flrs, granite counters. Expanded Fam Rm. 925.847.2200

Open SUN 1 - 4

REMODELED HOME!

\$510,500

3 BR 2 BA Dual Pane Windows. Granite counter tops, Fireplace, Ceiling Fan. Easy access to major freeways 925.847.2200

SAN LEANDRO

942 WOODLAND AVE

UPGRADED CRAFTSMAN

\$589,000

4 BR 3 BA Fabulous Kit. w/Granite, work island, commercial range SS, custom cabinets. Mstr Ste w/deck. 925.847.2200

SAN RAMON

6902 EMERSON LANE

BEAUTIFUL HOME!!

\$1,035,000

5 BR 4.5 BA Lrge Family Rm w/gas fireplace. Eat-in Kit w/sliding door to bkyrd. Mstr Ste w/Balcony. 925.847.2200

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WELL MAINTAINED HOME!

\$799,000

3 BR 2 BA Hrdwd Flrs thru-out. Newer Kit. cabinets, Eat-In Kit. New Paint inside/out. Top Rated Schools! 925.847.2200



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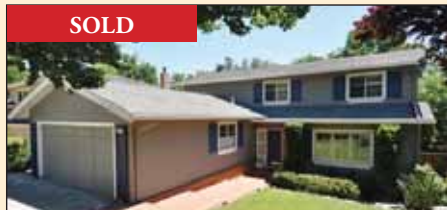
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3891 PICARD AVENUE, PLEASANTON
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OFFERED AT \$1,269,000

DOWNTOWN



335 DEL SOL AVENUE, PLEASANTON
 Location, location, location. Desirable downtown quiet court location! Beautiful upgraded home, 5 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms with 2350 square feet. Remodeled kitchen with granite slab countertops, custom backsplash and stainless appliances. Newer upgraded hardwood flooring, plantation shutters, dual pane windows, newer brushed nickel hardware and fixtures. Lots of upgrades including 30 year roof. Elevated lot with private secluded tranquil grounds includes TimberTech deck, mature trees. Walk around the corner at Neal and in one minute you are at the Farmers Market and can also enjoy all the other downtown amenities! Award winning schools!
SOLD FOR \$830,000

ESTATES OF MOHR PARK



2248 KAMP COURT, PLEASANTON
 Premium private large (12,691 sq ft) lot in excellent court location with in-ground pool & spa! Highly upgraded five bedrooms, three bathrooms. Approximately 3,369 square feet. Completely remodeled kitchen with granite slab countertops, custom cabinets & stainless steel appliances. Remodeled master bathroom with new granite & tile. Three car garage. Professionally landscaped private rear grounds with in-ground pool, spacious deck and large lawn area. Just a few minutes to downtown. Just around the corner from Nielsen Park. Award winning schools!
OFFERED AT \$1,149,000

KOTTINGER RANCH



1348 HEARST DRIVE, PLEASANTON
 Excellent location!!! Panoramic views of surrounding hills. Backs to open space, no rear neighbors. Great condition, move in ready! Five bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms, 3300 square feet. Recently updated gourmet kitchen with granite slab countertops! Spacious master suite with fireplace & large bathroom. Open living room, family room and formal dining room. French doors, hardwood flooring. Three car garage. Beautiful, professionally landscaped grounds include, in-ground pool, spacious deck, gazebo, large lawn areas and 135 wine producing grape vines, private vineyard! Community amenities include tennis courts & pool! Walking distance to Main Street and downtown! Award winning Pleasanton schools!
SOLD FOR \$1,400,000

OAK MANOR



819 OAK MANOR COURT, PLEASANTON
 As soon as you enter you will be impressed with the unique elegance. Gorgeous custom home on private .62 acre lot. Approximately 4,541 square feet, four bedrooms (two master suites) plus office/wine room and bonus loft area and 5.5 bathrooms. Quality, high end equipment and finishes throughout. Gourmet kitchen with granite slab counters and stainless steel appliances. Hardwood floors. Oversized four car garage. Beautifully landscaped Tahoe-like grounds with mature trees. Two minutes to Castlewood Country Club. **OFFERED AT \$1,565,000**

FOOTHILL KNOLLS



7863 FOOTHILL KNOLLS, PLEASANTON
 Beautiful single story on private premium .35 acre lot. Three bedrooms, two bathrooms, approximately 2,150 sf. Completely remodeled kitchen with granite slab countertops, custom backsplash, custom cabinetry and high end European appliances. Hardwood flooring, French doors, vaulted ceilings, newer windows, newer tile roof. Master suite includes custom built-in closet/dresser area, French doors to rear grounds, private bathroom with dual sinks. Very private professionally landscaped rear grounds, with no rear neighbors. Recently re-plastered and tiled pool/spa with new equipment. Built-in kitchen/BBQ island with refrigerator. Mature trees, patios and lawn areas.
OFFERED AT AND SOLD FOR \$949,000

CANYON OAKS



5809 STONECLIFF VISTA LN, PLEASANTON
 Newer beautiful home built in 2004. Great location, backs to open space with views of Mount Diablo, Pleasanton Ridge & surrounding open space! Three bedrooms plus loft/office, two & a half bathrooms, 2401 square feet. Custom tile flooring. Gourmet kitchen with granite countertops, stainless appliances. Spacious master suite. Oversized two car garage. Beautiful landscaping. Walk to new sports park & award winning Hearst Elementary, Pleasanton Middle School, Oak Hill Shopping Center & Main Street! Convenient to Callippe Golf Course & Castlewood Country Club.
SOLD FOR \$810,000

LAGUNA OAKS



2505 ARLOTTA PLACE, PLEASANTON
 Best location in Laguna Oaks! Desirable Newport model on premium .40 acre lot. Quiet premium court location. Four bedrooms, bonus room, plus formal office. Private guest/in law/au pair quarters (4th). Three and a half bathrooms. Approximately 3,830 square feet. Large gourmet kitchen, granite countertops, custom backsplash, tile flooring and large eating area. Spacious master suite with views of Pleasanton Ridge, and large walk in closet. Beautifully landscaped rear yard with ultimate privacy. Expansive lawn areas (pool site). A short walk to the community pool, park, and tennis courts.
SOLD FOR \$1,300,000

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<p>1225 LOZANO COURT RUBY HILL</p>  <p>BED 6 BA 7(2) 8,877+/- Sq.Ft. 0.65+/- ACRES</p> <p>Stunning, classic Italian Villa in one of Bay Area's most desirable locations. Catch your breath & prepare for what lies beyond the gorgeous entry of this estate. Nestled in an unrivaled setting among olive trees & lush landscaping w/ mile long views of vineyards.</p> <p>THE UWE MAERCZ TEAM 925.251.2568</p>	<p>9999 LONGVIEW LN PLEASANTON</p>  <p>BED 6 BA 5(3) 8,330+/- Sq.Ft. 3.85+/- ACRES</p> <p>A gated westside French Chateau custom estate with stunning grounds, elevator, private tennis court, indoor pool, casino/theater, 450 gal salt water fish tank, finished attic, vista terrace etc. Incredible level of detail!</p> <p>THE UWE MAERCZ TEAM 925.251.2568</p>	<p>7930 RACON HOLLOW CT PLEASANTON</p>  <p>BED 6 BA 3.5 3,670+/- Sq.Ft. 0.80+/- ACRES</p> <p>Spectacular private park-like setting for this beautiful updated cstm home w/ amazing valley views. Open layout w/ grand entry & luxurious master suite. Remodeled kitchen. Crown molding & cstm designer features throughout. Pool & waterfall.</p> <p>CORTEZ & PESTAL 925.648.5300</p>	<p>8012 GOLDEN EAGLE WAY GOLDEN EAGLE</p>  <p>BED 4 BA 3 2,500+/- Sq.Ft. 0.20+/- ACRES</p> <p>Profess Remodel! Chef's Kit w S/S top of line equip, Granite Counters, Cust Mill-work thru out, Cust 2 station office w/ cherry cabs, Baths w/ cherrywd, granite, tumbled marble, Newer windows, Plantation shutters, Bonus room w/ built-ins, fireplace.</p> <p>CORTEZ & PESTAL 925.648.5300</p>	<p>7923 SAWGRASS CT GOLDEN EAGLE</p> <p>OPEN SUN 1-4PM</p>  <p>BED 4 BA 3.5 4,320+/- Sq.Ft. 0.68+/- ACRES</p> <p>Welcome to this exceptional home located in the prestigious gated community of Golden Eagle in Pleasanton. Remodeled and upgraded throughout with exquisite attention to detail.</p> <p>WEINER McDOWELL GROUP 925.251.2550</p>
<p>1695 GERMANO WAY RUBY HILL</p>  <p>BED 5 BA 6.5 7,330+/- Sq.Ft. 0.65+/- ACRES</p> <p>Elaborate Italian Villa with +/-7,330 sf, 5 bedrooms, 6/1 bathrooms, stunning tile work and built less than four years ago. This home offers an impressive entry foyer, stately office, movie theatre, expansive kitchen, walk-in wine cellar and more.</p> <p>THE UWE MAERCZ TEAM 925.251.2568</p>	<p>4614 BLACK AVE PLEASANT VALLEY</p>  <p>BED 3 BA 2 1,377+/- Sq.Ft. 0.17+/- ACRES</p> <p>A rare find for a single level home on a corner lot in the Pleasant Valley District. Upgraded windows and roof last six years. Walking distance to schools, Amador Community Park and Post Office. Close to downtown.</p> <p>TOM BRAMELL 925.583.2180</p>	<p>3545 CALLE ALEGRE COUNTRY FAIRE</p>  <p>BED 4 BA 3 2,916+/- Sq.Ft. 0.29+/- ACRES</p> <p>Wonderful remodeled and upgraded Trinity model in Original Country Fair! Perfect location, floorplan and amazing backyard including saline pool, spa, waterfalls and spillways. Downstairs bedroom and full bath, maple cabinetry, newer roof and windows.</p> <p>WEINER McDOWELL GROUP 925.251.2550</p>	<p>7781 CLIFDEN COURT THE RIDGE</p>  <p>BED 5 BA 5 4,606+/- Sq.Ft. 0.47+/- ACRES</p> <p>Magnificent Former Model Estate built by Taylor Woodrow! Every option you could imagine; natural stone, marble, hardwood, wood paneling, crown moldings, built-in speakers & more! Master suite w/ retreat & balcony. Panoramic views. a kind</p> <p>THE JOE FRAZZANO TEAM 925.735.7653</p>	<p>5775 JOHNSTON RD PLEASANTON</p>  <p>BED 3 BA 2 2,474+/- Sq.Ft. 4.10+/- ACRES</p> <p>Come Experience Country Living - prestigious Tassajara Ranches, mins to vibrant Shopping & Entertainment. Newer roof, paint & carpet.+office, plantation shutters, central vaccum, bath/heated floors, new irrigation system. Barn/Garage w/ 2+ stalls.</p> <p>TESS FOLSTER 925.984.7733</p>
<p>3056 RIVERS BEND CIR ARROYO</p>  <p>BED 5 BA 3.5 2,878+/- Sq.Ft. 0.12+/- ACRES</p> <p>Gorgeous. 5th bed room converted into suite and attached to master bedroom, to relax, to watch movie privately/withfriends of choice. Has formal living room and family room, travertine/carpet floor, granite counter top, shutters, fully landscaped.</p> <p>MAX DE VRIES 925.251.2514</p>	<p>140 LEE AVENUE LIVERMORE</p>  <p>BED 4 BA 3 2,080+/- Sq.Ft. 0.13+/- ACRES</p> <p>Spacious 2 Story Home w/ Lovely added Bonus Room & Bedroom w/ Separate Entry. 4 Bed - 3 updated Ba. Refinished Hardwood Floors. Relaxing family rm adjacent to Updated Eat-In Kitchen. Mature Landscaping & even a Balcony for your relaxation.</p> <p>MICHAEL SWIFT & ASSOCIATES 925.251.2588</p>	<p>533 STARLING AVE LIVERMORE</p>  <p>BED 3 BA 2 1,328+/- Sq.Ft. 0.15+/- ACRES</p> <p>Come see this 3 bedroom 2 bath Corner lot home, before its to late! It also has side yard access. REO/ Bank owned.</p> <p>DAVID AZIMI 925.251.2580</p>	<p>7903 DRY CREEK DR DUBLIN</p>  <p>BED 4 BA 3.5 3,449+/- Sq.Ft. 0.20+/- ACRES</p> <p>Resort style backyard with pool. 4 bedrooms + large loft, 3 car garage, cul-de-sac location, numerous upgrades including cherry cabinets, slab granite, upgraded flooring, wrought iron, Brazilian cherry-wood flooring. Don't miss this one!</p> <p>THE JOE FRAZZANO TEAM 925.735.7653</p>	<p>2889 RUTHERFORD CT LIVERMORE</p> <p>OPEN SUN 1-4PM</p>  <p>BED 4 BA 3.5 3,504+/- Sq.Ft. 0.30+/- ACRES</p> <p>Wonderfully location at the end of a cul-de-sac, near vineyards & open fields. Spacious entry way, gourmet kitchen & grand master bedroom suite. This home has a large backyard w/ a private apartment/office above the garage.</p> <p>SARAH ARNOLD 925.253.7074</p>
<p>3322 EAST AVENUE LIVERMORE</p>  <p>BED 1 BA 1 432+/- Sq.Ft. 0.51+/- ACRES</p> <p>Great development opportunity on this half acre lot. Zoned RG-16 - up to 8 units possible.</p> <p>UWE MAERCZ 925.251.2568</p>	<p>7793 PEPPERTREE RD SILVERGATE</p> <p>OPEN SUN 1-4PM</p>  <p>BED 4 BA 3 2,240+/- Sq.Ft. 0.21+/- ACRES</p> <p>Desirable Westside in Silvergate Highlands! Laminate & wood flrs, dual pane windows, updated kit & baths. Master bd downstairs w/ private bath. Amazing parklike yard on 2 lots with RV access. Minutes to 580/680 & BART, schools, shopping & restaurants.</p> <p>CATHY DEAN & KARI WAHL 925.200.4130</p>	<p>3429 ASHBOURNE CIRCLE NORRIS CANYON</p>  <p>BED 5 BA 5.5 5,017+/- Sq.Ft. 0.33+/- ACRES</p> <p>This Norris Canyon, San Ramon beauty backs up to open space and the Bishop Ranch Regional Open Space. Features a wonderful pool and waterfall, spa and an excellent space for outdoor entertaining.</p> <p>DAVID AZIMI 925.251.2580</p>	<p>5875 CRESTMONT AVE SPRINGTOWN</p>  <p>BED 3 BA 2 1,269+/- Sq.Ft. 0.14+/- ACRES</p> <p>Tastefully updated home w/ laminate flooring, permitted bonus rm w/ 2 sliders, side yard access, eat in kitchen, romantic wood burning fireplace, close to Croce Elem. and Christensen Middle, close to 580, close to Livermore National Laboratory and more!</p> <p>MICHAEL SWIFT & ASSOCIATES 925.251.2589</p>	<p>1524 GREEN VALLEY DANVILLE</p>  <p>BED 4 BA 2.5 2,402+/- Sq.Ft. 0.23+/- ACRES</p> <p>Custom built rancher completed in 2007. Open floor plan. Chef's kitchen w/custom island, walnut cabinets, granite slab, + SS appl. Distressed walnut hrdwd floors. Amazing bathrooms. Ringed-shaped extended gated driveway/ detached oversized gar.</p> <p>MICHAEL SWIFT & ASSOCIATES 925.251.2588</p>

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