

Pleasanton Weekly

Sports in full swing » 22



VOL. XIII, NUMBER 16 • MAY 4, 2012

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Remembering Margaret Lesher



For 15 years,
friends have
been left to
wonder why

PAGE 16

BUSINESS NEWS 10

TRI-VALLEY LIFE 20
Arts & Entertainment

NEW
SECTIONS



INSIDE THIS WEEK

- NEWS: Main Street needs stores not banks, says council 5
- NEWS: High speed I-580 chase leads to arrest 9
- LIVING: Everything's coming up roses at this show 21

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MARK KOTCH

BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$1,699,000
Country French in Castlewood! Custom built home 5 bd 4 ba 5217+/- sq. ft home, 33,840+/- sq. ft lot. Views, Large master bedroom, Great yard. 700+/- sq. ft guest house. 22 CASTLEWOOD DR

MARK KOTCH

BY APPT



DANVILLE \$1,499,949
Country Living, Private gated driveway on 5.18+/- acres. 4bd/3.5ba. Hardwood floors, 1bd/ba on main floor. Back yard with pool, spa and gazebo. 6650 JOHNSTON RD

LINDA GOVEIA & PAT GELLMAN BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$1,425,000
Beautiful Ruby Hill Villa. 4,000+/-sf. Fabulous views of the 18th Fairway. Great for entertaining with built-in BBQ, covered patio and in-ground spa. This is a must see! 3602 OVELLA WAY

MOXLEY TEAM

SUN 1:30-4:30



PLEASANTON \$1,420,000
Newly constructed, private court location, open floor plan, highly upgraded kitchen, vaulted ceilings, 1 bd/office on 1st level w/full bath, rear yard w/pebble tech pool&spa. 1363 BRIONES CT

MOXLEY TEAM

SUN 1:30-4:30



PLEASANTON \$1,295,000
This newly constructed home is highly upgraded & located on a private court. Family & living room offer fireplaces & distressed wood flooring. Rear yard offers privacy & a covered patio. 3351 SAGEWOOD CT

TIMOTHY MCGUIRE

BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$1,049,000
5bd/4.5ba, 3,067+/-sq.ft, Caeserstone/Maple kitchen, stainless appliances, double oven, dual zone AC, DP windows, hardwood floors, full bed/bath downstairs, private yard w/ slate patio. 1138 MILLS CT

TIMOTHY MCGUIRE

BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$824,900
Portico model in Birdland, 4bd/2.5ba, 2,235+/-sq.ft on a 8,102+/-sq.ft lot, renovated kitchen & baths, new carpet/paint and large yard with pool. 5010 BLACKBIRD WAY

DAN GAMACHE, JR.

BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$699,950
Pleasanton Valley, single story, Woodhaven model, master retreat add-on, well cared for home with many nice upgrades. Walk to K-12, downtown, parks and aquatic center! 4575 GATETREE CIR

JOYCE JONES

SUN 2:00-4:00



LIVERMORE \$679,950
Pride of ownership! 4 bd, 3 ba, updated kitchen with granite slab counters, oak cabinets, hardwood floors, 3 car finished garage, side yard access, pool, beautifully landscaped yards! 357 KNOTTINGHAM CIR

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SUN 1:00-4:00



PLEASANTON \$639,000
Wonderful 2,445+/-sf family home in court location. 4bd, 3ba, Master & office on 1st floor, kitchen centrally located with new flooring and eat-in area plus formal dining room. Spacious backyard. 6895 HEATH CT

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AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING

Tomorrow is Comic Book Day downtown

Tomorrow is "Comic Book Day" across the country and Pleasanton's Heroes & Villains' comic book store will celebrate with a day of festivities that should keep its Main Street store a downtown destination for those who want to see Bay Area Ghostbusters and Birds of Prey.

It's an event families and comics aficionados won't want to miss as store owners Jim Cravens and Catherine de Dood introduce us to real-life characters most of us remember from the comic book pages, including Blackhawk, Raven, Catwoman, Robin, Poison Ivy, The Riddler and more. Even better, everyone will leave with two free comic books and, for those who contribute to food barrels for Open Heart Kitchen, Jim and Catherine will add another one or two free comics.

Last year, more than 500 crowded into the 400-square-foot store during the annual national event. Many more are expected tomorrow as the store's customer base has soared. The well-stocked store is jam-packed with a full inventory of comic books, unique board games, statues of favorite characters and trading card games, including Magic the Gathering, Pokemon and Yu-Gi-Oh.

Cravens met de Dood at comic book conventions as they were pursuing college degrees. They opened their first store in Manteca, building the business for five years before selling it in 1993. Cravens took a job offer from a nearby GM dealership, but then found himself on the "cutting edge" as GM faced bankruptcy and started closing dealerships. Seeking a different career, Cravens took de Dood's advice and they found the empty Pleasanton store at 264 Main St. to re-start the comics business they both enjoyed. That was March 30, 2010, and the business has grown its customer base and profitability ever since.

While de Dood runs the store, Cravens "shops" the country for the best values on old comic books that he can buy and bring back to Pleasanton. He just returned this week from a retailers' summit in Chicago where distributors from across the country and publishers met with Cravens and other comic store owners to strategize on beefing up the market. The idea for a national Comic Book Day came out of one of those meetings and more promotions are ahead. Comics in a digital



JEB BING

Catherine de Dood and Jim Cravens in their Heroes & Villains comic book store in downtown Pleasanton.

format are coming, Cravens said, although the many distribution firms in the U.S. have yet to get together on, say, a common app that they all could share. Although we can go to iTunes and download just about any music we want, those who distribute the printed comics aren't there yet.

Even when they achieve that uniform delivery system, Cravens says most of his customers want the printed comic book. A digital version would cost about the same (\$2.99 to \$3.99) but couldn't be shared or printed out. Comic book collectors, who Cravens said are passionate hobbyists similar to those who collect and barter in stamps and coins, want to build their collections, not keep them in a digital format.

Cravens said comics are more than just pages of light reading. They've become even bigger than stamp collecting and are a lot more fun. Just a stroll through the Heroes & Villains store shows why. The numerous stacks of comics bring back great memories for those of us who used to read Superman, Batman and Dick Tracy years ago, and there they are again, in Cravens' store. New artists have continued the work of cartoonists well-known in the 1940s and 1950s with only subtle differences in style and language. Popeye just came back to the new comic book world and he looks just the same. Because the new books are printed on heavier stock and glossy paper, the colors print better and there's less chance of tearing a page, all the better for collectors.

Even newly published comic books are produced independently today instead of in publishers' corporate offices in New York or Los Angeles. Thanks to the Internet and social media, artists, writers and reviewers can do their work at home or in small offices anywhere in the U.S., putting the comics now on the shelves at Heroes & Villains together for comic book lovers to enjoy in Pleasanton.

See you tomorrow at the Comic Book Day festivities. ■

About the Cover

Margaret Leshner and her husband, newspaper magnate Dean Leshner, were admired throughout the Times empire for their philanthropic work and forceful personalities. Her untimely death 15 years ago remains a mystery to her friends and family. Photo courtesy of Michael Simons. Design by Kristin Herman.

Vol. XIII, Number 16

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Do you think parents are too protective these days?



Luke Palfalvi
Fifth-grader

Yes. I'm not allowed to play video games on weekdays and I think I should be able to. I'll let my kids play anytime they want. I also want to get a phone, but my parents think I should be at least 13.

Tosh Scoffield
Graphic designer

I do. Back in my day, we used to ride our bikes to school and walk everywhere. I don't think the risk is necessarily any greater now, but we know more because of the media. We are protective because we need to be, but wouldn't it be wonderful to trust our community enough to allow our children to have the freedom we had growing up?



Kim Kirschner
Teacher in a prior, pre-kid life

When I was a child, we were able to play in the front yard without our parents worrying. Kids can't do that anymore, and that is why they are so scheduled with extracurricular activities during the week. It just doesn't seem safe now. I am one of those over-protective parents; I would never forgive myself if something happened.

Leah Lozano
First-grader

I want to be able to carry my softball bucket on my bike, but my dad worries that I'll tip over. He makes me wear a helmet, too. I also think I should be able to swim in the deep end of the pool, but he won't let me do it by myself. My sister Grace and I want to go to the park by ourselves, but we can't.



Rebecca Choudhry
Sales

I grew up overseas on a military base, so it was much different. I think parents need to be protective, because in today's world they can't be too careful. It would be nice if it was safe enough for kids to be able to play without so much supervision, but it isn't realistic anymore.

—Compiled by Kerry Nally

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

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DIGEST

Saturday fun downtown

The Pleasanton Community Concert Band will play tomorrow morning at the Farmers Market, which takes place downtown from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. each Saturday year-round on West Angela Street between Main and First.

Also downtown tomorrow, the city of Pleasanton and its Energy and Environment Committee will host a free workshop from 10 a.m.-noon at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St., with gardening experts who will provide information on how to design a garden and what to plant. Linda Wyner from Pans on Fire will give a cooking demonstration using fresh food from the garden.

Bike to Work on Thursday

Hacienda Business Park is a sponsor of the San Francisco Bay Area's 18th annual Bike to Work Day that will take place Thursday, May 10, just one day of events during May, which is National Bike Month.

Hacienda is sponsoring an Energizer Station at the East Dublin/Pleasanton BART station, from 6:30-9 a.m. just outside the turnstiles, in conjunction with the cities of Pleasanton and Dublin, Alameda County Public Works, Dublin Cyclery and BART.

The first 350 cyclists to stop by the station will receive a free canvas tote bag filled with cycling gear and more. Cyclists registering will be eligible for prizes; sign up at www.youcanbikethere.com/user/register.

BART and bikes

A new BART bicycle plan defines strategies over the next 10 years to double the number of passengers who access stations by bike. Approximately 4%, or about 14,000 passengers, currently reach BART each weekday by bicycle. The BART Bicycle Plan aims to double this rate by 2022.

The plan focuses on improving circulation for bikers; world-class bicycle parking; better access beyond BART boundaries; optimizing bike accommodations aboard trains; and support programs.

The draft plan is available at www.bart.gov/bikes through May 12.

Corrections

The story "PUSD near districtwide mandates to improve minority test scores" in the April 27 issue should have stated the cost for teachers on special assignment as \$90,000 apiece; also, the district hopes to buy \$300 notebooks with Internet access for students, but the purchase has not been finalized.

Council votes to restrict new banks from locating on Main Street

Rules meant to encourage more retail, restaurants in downtown district

By JEB BING

The Pleasanton City Council voted 5-0 Tuesday night to place restrictions on banks, savings and loan associations and other financial institutions that want to open new facilities on Main Street.

The new amendment to the ordinance governing commercial districts would require those types of businesses to seek conditional use permits, a costly and time-consuming process that would require public hearings before the city's Planning Commission and likely another review by the City Council.

The new rules came at the request of the Pleasanton Downtown Association and were approved in March by the Planning Commission. They do not apply to the seven financial institutions already located downtown.

The ordinance amendment also will not allow

any new financial institutions from locating in any block on Main Street where another similar type business already is located.

As it is, financial institutions, including banks, can open new facilities in any office or commercially zoned district in Pleasanton, including downtown. From 1973 to 1995, in fact, the city government required that banks and savings and loan associations first locate a branch in the downtown district before they would be allowed to open facilities elsewhere in the city.

But the Pleasanton Downtown Association asked for the zoning rule change after Opus Bank reportedly sought to open a branch in the Past Time Pool building on Main Street. That would have added an eighth bank downtown.

Although Opus said it was not interested in the Past Time Pool building, which is for sale, the PDA and others continued with their effort

to change the rules to force a detailed review of any applications for new financial institutions downtown. The PDA wants more retail stores downtown, not banks, and especially seeks to reserve key corner locations on Main Street for new retail operations and restaurants. Banks now are located on seven corner downtown locations.

The PDA argued that banks don't attract shoppers. Bankers' hours from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and often on Saturday mornings are much shorter than those of retail shops and restaurants.

The ordinance amendment essentially asks the Planning Commission to make an "informed decision" about the placement of banks, not ban them outright, explained Nelson Fialho, city manager.

The change would not prohibit banks downtown. See **BANKS** on Page 9



DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Marlene and Bill Rebello with their granddaughters Luna, 7, and Eden, 4, gather around the likeness of Tigo after unveiling it in their garden on Sunday. It was sculpted by Lena Toritch, who also created the Bosco dog statue in Sunol.

Forever in the garden

Bronze of beloved pooch was unveiled Sunday

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

For eight years Tigo, a large black curly-coated Portuguese water dog, romped the 15-acre estate of Marlene and Bill Rebello, their fun-loving, faithful boy.

Tigo died in February 2011, but his likeness lives on in the garden in a bronze statue by sculptor Lena Toritch. The statue was unveiled Sunday before 40 or so of the Rebellos' good friends, who exclaimed over the likeness and reached out to caress the bronze curls. Tigo is short for Rei Antigo do Mar, which is Portuguese for Ancient King of the Sea.

The Rebellos first thought of commissioning the statue when Tigo was alive and well. A few years ago the three of them were at the Barkus Parade of dogs in the French Quarter in New Orleans when they realized anew how special Tigo was.

"He drew people to us," Marlene recalled.

"We were watching the parade and more people were taking his picture than the dogs in the parade."

Residents of Sunol, the Rebellos had always admired the statue of Bosco, a black Lab-Rottweiler mix character around town who was even elected mayor and is now immortalized in a statue by Toritch. His bronze tribute, complete with his signature kerchief and lolling tongue, was unveiled in 2008 next to the post office. Folks give him a rub for good luck.

"Tigo was so special that we thought a statue would be a really neat thing," Marlene said. "We contacted her and got some ideas and the cost, then said go ahead and start it. Shortly after that, he was diagnosed with cancer."

Tigo was a fixture in Pleasanton for many years as Bill, while coping with health problems, took daily hour-long walks downtown,

See **TIGO** on Page 6

Band director named Teacher of Year

Jon Grantham 'brings out the best in people'

The Pleasanton Unified School District has named Amador Valley High School band director Jonathan Grantham as its teacher of the year.

Grantham, who has been with the district for nine years, is described by his colleagues and parents of his students as an amazing teacher who instills confidence and respect in his students. They said in making the selection that Grantham "believes in the talent and skills of his students and expects excellence from them," adding that he is compassionate and understanding and masterfully engages students.

"Mr. Grantham brings out the best in people," Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi



Jonathan Grantham

said. "Observing his students in the classroom and at competitions, there is no doubt they take pride in what they do. Jon is a gift to public education."

Grantham, who's well known to the Amador music community for directing four concert bands, the school's marching band and Jazz B, said he was "humbled" by the award.

"A number of my colleagues have recognized me for my contributions, and that means a lot," he said. "There are a lot of them that deserve the recognition."

Grantham's name will be submitted to the Alameda County Office of Education for the county's Teacher of The Year program.

—Pleasanton Weekly staff

TAKE US ALONG



Friends reunite in France: Long-time Pleasanton residents Conni Felton and Nancee Consos take along their hometown reading to visit Tom and MJ Casper, who also lived here a long time, in Aix en Provence in September.

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El Balazo restaurant couple sentenced for tax evasion, other charges

Pleaded guilty to tax fraud, hiring illegal immigrants

BY GLENN WOHLTANN

Marino Sandoval and his wife Nicole, the Pleasanton couple who owned and ran the El Balazo restaurants in Pleasanton, Danville, San Ramon and in three additional East Bay locations, were sentenced last week for immigration, Social Security and tax charges connected to their restaurants.

Marino Sandoval, 59, was sentenced to 41 months in prison; Nicole Sandoval, 51, was sentenced to five years probation and 12 months of community confinement.

In addition, the pair was ordered to pay more than \$2.2 million in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service.

The Sandovals pleaded guilty in September, admitting they understated employment taxes due the IRS. Marino Sandoval also admitted to hiring employees he knew

were not legally authorized to work in the United States, while Nicole Sandoval admitted that she underreported employee wages to a payroll company.

According to a plea agreement, Marino Sandoval employed more than 100 illegal aliens, many of whom were born outside the U.S., between August 2007 and August 2008.

Nicole Sandoval also pleaded guilty to misusing employee Social Security numbers. She admitted in court that Social Security numbers given the Social Security Administration and the IRS were false and included the names of undocumented aliens.

The case dates back to a raid in 2008, when agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations conducted a search of several El Balazo Restaurants. They found 63

employees who were unauthorized to work in the United States.

After being informed by federal agents of the identities of the unauthorized employees, Marino Sandoval rehired more than 10 of these employees.

The couple was charged in 2010 with harboring and employing illegal aliens, knowingly misusing employees' Social Security numbers and engaging in tax fraud between 2003 and 2005.

Marino Sandoval's brother, Francisco Sandoval, pleaded guilty to tax charges in August 2010. He was sentenced to three years probation for failure to pay payroll taxes and for harboring illegal aliens, and also ordered to pay the IRS \$50,000 in restitution. Francisco Sandoval was the partner and manager of two El Balazo restaurants located in San Francisco. ■

Briefing on water agency legislation

Bill clarifies Zone 7 is separate from Alameda County

A public briefing on Senate Bill 1337 will be held at Zone 7 Water Agency's office on Thursday evening to explain the legislation's purpose, which is to align the Zone 7's scope of authority with the territory it serves.

Zone 7 provides regional flood protection for eastern Alameda County plus supplies wholesale water to retailers who deliver to more than 200,000 people in the cities of Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin and the Dougherty Valley portion of San Ramon.

As long as Zone 7 remains part of the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, residents served in Contra Costa County do not have the right to vote for or serve on Zone 7's board of directors. SB 1337 would establish Zone 7's operations as separate from Alameda County.

The legislation would allow Zone 7 to adopt streamlined business practices, potentially saving customers money and minimizing future water rate increases, according to a press release from Zone 7.

Zone 7 has sponsored the bill, which was introduced in the California State Senate on Feb. 24 by Sen. Mark DeSaulnier, with Sen. Loni Hancock and Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan as co-authors.

The authors' staff members will host the public workshop Thursday. Zone 7 staff also will be available to answer questions.

The meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. at Zone 7's Office, 100 N. Canyons Parkway, in Livermore.

—Pleasanton Weekly staff

TIGO

Continued from Page 5

ending at Tully's coffee house to rest before starting home.

"I would see this young guy sitting there and one day he got up and started walking towards me," Bill said, explaining that the man had some physical problems. "He came over to me and said 'dog,' and he said 'nice,' then proceeded to say 'stroke.' He and I spent about two hours talking, just trying to know each other."

Bill said he'd been feeling sorry for himself due to his own recent health problems — until he met Dave Fassio.

"I came home and told Marlene, 'I just met this guy today, who was only 45 years old when he had a stroke.' I said he had such a positive attitude about life and he changed my whole outlook on life," Bill recalled.

Marlene, who had just retired as a speech pathologist, met Dave at a 50th birthday party for him, six months later. She told the family that she would love to volunteer to work with him one hour a week to improve his speech and now, after seven years, he is much improved,



Dave Fassio remembers admiring Tigo at Tully's, which led to a friendship with owners Bill and Marlene Rebello.

Bill said.

"Tigo was instrumental in that relationship that we have with Dave now," Bill explained, as the dog was in so many of their friendships.

A few years ago, Tigo won Pleasanton's Pooch Parade in the own-

er-dog lookalike contest when Bill donned a black Afro wig and the two marched up and down Main Street in identical scarves.

Marlene and Bill worked closely with Toritch, modifying Tigo's likeness as it took shape.

"It took a little over a year," Marlene said. "We wanted it absolutely to his likeness. We zeroed in on specific areas, the shape of his head, his tail."

The statue is 10% larger than Tigo was, Bill noted.

Toritch, who trained at the St. Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts in Russia and lives in Salt Lake City, said the statue of Tigo is one of her favorites.

"The most important and challenging part was depicting Tigo's intelligent eyes. But I did it," Toritch wrote on her blog.

Now "Tigo" sits at quiet attention in the Rebello's garden, a short walk from the house, upon a brick base.

"We walked down this morning and sat on the bench and had coffee," Bill said Monday morning. "He was so extraordinary; we contemplated what to do and made the decision that he would watch over us all." ■

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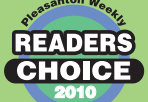
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Rice out as chief of Tri-Valley Community Foundation

Board names Ron Hyde as successor after financial discrepancies found

By JEB BING

David Rice, the longtime president and director of the multi-million-dollar-funded Tri-Valley Community Foundation, was fired Monday after an independent audit found discrepancies in the organization's finances and reserves.

Ron Hyde, chairman of the Foundation's board of directors, was named chief executive and president. A former Alameda County Superior Court judge, Hyde has long been active in both the Foundation's charitable giving work and in other charities and philanthropies throughout the region.

"The board did an independent audit of expenses and other items," Hyde said. "Unfortunately, we found that there were a number of contracts and expenditures made that weren't properly cleared by the board and which we knew nothing

about and never approved.

"So, after a lot of discussion, we decided it would be in the best interest of the board to maintain its integrity and to keep the ship afloat, which we are doing, and to let Dave go."

Hyde said funds committed by the Foundation are intact, including \$150,000 raised in the November-January Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund.

In fact, Rice was scheduled to help Weekly's management in passing out the checks Thursday at a luncheon sponsored by the Rotary Club of Pleasanton. The nine beneficiaries that received the contributions yesterday are:

Axis Community Health, Hope Hospice, Open Heart Kitchen, Pleasanton Partnerships in Education (PPIE) Foundation, Sandra J. Wing Healing Therapies Foundation, Senior Support Program of

the Tri-Valley, Tri-Valley REACH, Valley Humane Society and the ValleyCare Foundation for Ryan Comer Cancer Resource Center.

Rice is credited with building the Tri-Valley Community Foundation into the most enduring organized philanthropy in the Valley. It serves as the catalyst for meeting increasing needs for financial assistance to local charities and for the development and operation of programs that are directly helping those in need.

Hyde said that work will continue uninterrupted by the change in executives.

In recent weeks, two others also have left the Foundation, although neither because of the organization's financial discrepancies. They are Melodie Lane, who was in charge of fundraising events and promotions, and Suzanne Lawless, a doctorate-degreed researcher. ■



RITA ZWIEFEL

They're off to see ... the Magic of Music

Over the Rainbow was the theme for the eighth annual Magic of Music fundraiser for the Amador Valley High School Music Department, and these six students dressed the part: (l-r) Madalyn Baker was Glinda; Austin Harper, the Scarecrow; Anna Baker, Dorothy; Dante Rodandi, the Tin Man; Karina Lee, the Cowardly Lion; and Megan Boyle as the Wicked Witch. The event was sponsored by the Amador Friends of Music to raise funds for instruments, uniforms and other equipment. One of the most successful items of the evening was Fund-a-Need, this year for brass instruments including sousaphones, mellophones and baritones, with thousands of dollars donated for those purchases alone.

BANKS

Continued from Page 5

town but simply allows some evaluation so that shopping, dining and entertainment-related uses such as restaurants and retail are not permanently eliminated from the downtown, Fialho said.

"Banks are vitally important, but the exact location is also a relevant consideration," he added. "The (ordinance) change would provide time for that type of deliberation."

Although no one spoke against the measure during Tuesday night's public hearing, Councilman Jerry Thorne cast a reluctant vote for the ordinance amendment after he and others on the council made word changes in the document. These included changing "discour-

age" banks from locating downtown to "encourage" more retail at downtown properties, particularly corner properties where most of the seven downtown banks are now located.

Property owners of downtown banks also will now have a full year to find similar tenants before a new bank at the same location would have to undergo the conditional use permit process. The earlier ordinance amendment version gave property owners only 180 days.

"While I fully understand the need to have more retail businesses downtown, I still have concern with this ordinance amendment," said Councilman Thorne.

"We already have task forces reviewing the need for more downtown hospitality and another looking at historic buildings down-

town," Thorne said. "Since I came on the council in 2005, we have been looking at ways to streamlining the permitting process. What we are doing tonight is adding to the complications."

But Councilman Matt Sullivan said he not only supports the new rules but would like to see them made even stronger, especially when it comes to saving choice corner locations for retail shops and restaurants.

In the end, the council agreed to adopt the ordinance amendment but also asked Fialho and his staff to develop a long-range plan for the downtown that could lead to an update of the Downtown Specific Plan that guides downtown development and was enacted more than 10 years ago. ■

Two arrested in robbery

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

A 24-year-old man and his 16-year-old female accomplice face felony charges in the beating and robbery of an acquaintance at his Pleasanton motel room that led to a high-speed chase on Interstate 580.

The incident began a little before 3 p.m. May 1 at Tri-Valley Inn and Suites in the 2000 block of Santa Rita Road, when the 19-year-old victim let the pair into his room and the suspect repeatedly punched the victim's face without warning. The two then took a \$2,000 laptop and wallet, a framed picture and a cell phone and fled the scene.

Pleasanton police Officer Erik Silacci arrived on the scene and found the suspects fleeing. The driver evaded a stop then led Silacci on a high-speed pursuit at speeds of up to 90 miles per hour up I-580 westbound and onto Castro Valley Boulevard, where the officer terminated the pursuit.

A Hayward officer overheard the radio calls and recognized the de-

scription, and an Alameda County Sheriff's Deputy spotted the abandoned car, a black 2001 Chevrolet Monte Carlo, in Castro Valley at about 4:30 p.m., with property inside that belonged to the victim.

That led to Bradley Amaral, who was taken into custody near his home in Castro Valley not far from where the car was discovered. Amaral was tasered while resisting arrest after fleeing the back door of his home when approached by police. He sustained minor injuries and was treated at ValleyCare Medical Center and booked into Santa Rita Jail.

Amaral was charged with robbery, evading police and possession of methamphetamine. He was identified by the suspect through a photo lineup and by Silacci as the driver of the car.

The victim also was injured. He was treated at the scene for lacerations to his head.

The girl was arrested at her home in Pleasanton at about 6:08 p.m. the same day and was later released into the custody of her parents. ■

Singing and sliding with Springsteen

Local boy steals show — briefly — from the Boss

It's not easy to upstage the Boss, but that's exactly what a 9-year-old from Pleasanton did — with a little help from his dad — at a recent Bruce Springsteen concert at the HP Pavilion in San Jose.

Jordy Strain is a lifelong fan and his son, Nick, is following in his footsteps.

"He's been listening to Bruce Springsteen with me in the car since he was very young. I think I probably had it on for him since he was 18 months old," said Jordy of his son. "He's enjoyed the music for a long time and once this tour came around, I decided he was old enough to go to his first big show."

It's a Springsteen signature piece to bring a fan onstage at pretty much every show. Nick got that chance, thanks to a sign he and his dad made, which read, "I've been practicing, practicing, practicing."

"I found his YouTube videos, and my dad told me I had to get his attention," Nick said.

The sign worked, and the Boss invited Nick onstage to help sing "Waitin' on a Sunny Day."

"We were on the left wing side," Nick said. "He asked, 'Are you ready?' and he said, 'Come up here.'"

Not only did Nick sing along, he did the Springsteen slide — another signature piece — and at least one reviewer said he briefly stole the show.

The onstage appearance has made Nick a star: He's been interviewed on TV and radio and there are several videos of the performance on the Internet. He's



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Nick Strain performs with the Boss.

also a hit with the other kids at Vintage Hills Elementary, where he's a third-grader.

His teacher, Nancy Day, is also a big Springsteen fan, and Nick and Jordy made sure to bring her a T-shirt from the show.

"The very next day, she wore it to school," Nick said.

While they're both fans, Nick and his dad have pretty different tastes. Jordy likes old-school Springsteen, from the "Born to Run" days, while Nick's favorite is "We Take Care of Our Own."

"For one, it's his newest song and I also like it because I like the beat and rhythm to it," Nick said. "I like songs like that."

Jordy said he would have been happy just having Nick at the show with him.

"Being able to take my son and have him experience that with me, that would have been enough. Having Bruce bring him on stage was the icing on the cake," he said.

—Glenn Wohltmann

How will new fee regulations affect my 401(k) retirement plan?

By GARY ALT

The 401(k) retirement plan is the best way for most people to save for retirement, and for many people their retirement account is their second largest asset next to their home.

Fees and expenses in your 401(k) plan can eat into your retirement savings, but knowing how much you're paying is difficult. Current regulations don't require complete disclosure of these expenses to the investor. Many times it's difficult even for the trustee of the company's



Gary Alt

plan because the fees are buried or hidden in multiple places, such as mutual funds with high expense ratios, 12b-1 fees, asset-based fees, plan administration expenses, insurance costs of a group annuity and record-keeping fees.

In 2012, new regulations from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) will bring greater fee transparency to investors and will be implemented in three phases. The 408(b)(2) regulations require that service providers must fully disclose to the plan sponsor (typically your employer) all fees, including those for administration, record-keeping and investment advice. This first phase of rules goes into effect July 1.

As a plan participant, you may not see these details right away, but

there are two additional dates to be aware of. By Aug. 30, these fees must be disclosed to you, and by Nov. 14 they must begin appearing on your quarterly statements.

There are two important points to make about the new disclosure rules. First, the government doesn't specify a fair and reasonable fee. Plan sponsors will want to benchmark their expenses against similar sized plans to make sure they aren't paying too much. Second, plan sponsors aren't required to have the lowest expenses; they're required to ensure the fees paid are reasonable compared to the level of service they provide. The cheapest service isn't always the best service.

Insurance company 401(k) plans will be impacted the most. They traditionally have had among the

highest expenses in their retirement plans. Rather than selecting the best mutual funds available, they oftentimes use their own in-house brands, which don't have to compete with better funds available. Even when they do use popular mutual funds from other companies, they usually tack on an extra fee. And when a group annuity is used, there is an additional cost of the insurance contract added on, referred to as a "mortality and expense" (M&E) charge.

Some plans have already begun paving the way toward fee transparency over the past few years. When fees are more transparent, it's easier for your company to determine if they're paying a reasonable price and ask, "What do we get for our money?" Do employees receive

assistance in constructing their portfolio? Are additional retirement planning services available? Can employees get advice on other topics, such as long-term care?

The new regulations will pave the way not only for lower costs, but also better investments and more comprehensive service. Employers will benefit by having a more competitive plan to attract talented people and to take care of their people, and employees will win out as they get better investment options and have greater confidence in their ability to retire.

Gary E.D. Alt, AIF(r), CFP(r) is a co-founder of Monterey Private Wealth in Pleasanton. Send your financial questions to gary@montereypw.com.

Walmart Market goes to Pleasanton Council for final vote Monday

Public meeting at Firehouse Arts Center will hear appeal to ban store

By JEB BING

The Pleasanton City Council will hold a special public meeting at 7 p.m. Monday to make a final decision on whether Walmart can open one of its Neighborhood Markets in the long-vacant Nob Hill supermarket building on Santa Rita Road.

So far, both the council and the Planning Commission have endorsed a decision by the city's zoning administrator, who ruled that Walmart could open its market at the site since its proposed market matches the footprint of the Nob Hill store, which the city approved in 1982.

But Councilman Matt Sullivan, a long-time and outspoken foe of the business and employment policies of national retailer Walmart Corp., filed an appeal against that decision by the Planning Commission, which voted 5-0 on March 19 to approve for a second time Walmart's bid. The commission's decision actually was to deny an appeal by two Pleasanton residents, Angela Joe-Willmes and Linda Martin, who has contested the zoning administrator's ruling.

In February, the City Council voted 4-1 to accept the zoning administrator's decision, with Sullivan

casting the one vote against the measure.

More than 150 attended the Planning Commission meeting, which was held in the Firehouse Arts Center because a large crowd was expected. City Manager Nelson Fialho said the council meeting also will be held there, which has seats for 227 people, about 100 more than in the City Council chamber at the Pleasanton Civic Center.

If the council votes to deny Sullivan's appeal, Walmart could file for operating permits at the old Nob Hill store as early as next Tuesday, with the Neighborhood Market opening a few months later. ■




PHOTOS BY JEB BING

T.G.I.F. abruptly closes Pleasanton restaurant

After 17 years, the T.G.I.F. restaurant in Pleasanton's Rosewood Pavilion has closed. The Braid Group in New Jersey which operated the Pleasanton restaurant as well as the TGIF eatery in Union City, which is still open, had no explanation for the closing, suggesting only that customers could still dine at their Union City facility.

Recent visits to the Pleasanton restaurant showed empty tables both at lunch and in the evening, although the numbers increased as late night diners came in. But no one heard the final click of the lock two weeks ago when restaurant management quietly closed the door and turned off the lights for the last time, shutting down the computers and telephones abruptly.



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EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

Just say No to Measure B3

If you like higher taxes, stay here. You're in the right city, the right county and the right state for paying more, and probably forevermore.

The Pleasanton City Council voted 3-2 Tuesday to support a county-wide measure that would ask voters to reauthorize Measure B, a sales tax revenue-supported effort to improve transportation in the Tri-Valley. The 2012 Alameda County Transportation Expenditures Plan (TEP) offers a ballot measure as part of the Nov. 6 General Election asking voters to extend the half-cent sales tax for transportation in the county, to add another half-cent tax through 2022 and extend the tax in perpetuity to fund the transportation programs and projects being advanced by the TEP.

While the projects in the plan are good, including renewed promises to extend BART to Livermore and to widen Highway 84 across Pigeon Pass between I-580 and I-680, the ballot measure itself is not. If this measure qualifies for the ballot and passes, it'll be 20 years before Measure B3, as it's called, comes back to voters for renewal, presumably long after the projects Pleasanton wants are completed. Although a two-thirds vote is required for Measure B3 to pass, it also contains a provision that the next time around — 20 years from now — only a simple majority of votes would be required to extend it for another 20 years...and then another 20 years. That's where the "in perpetuity" comes in, which we don't like.

Nor do Pleasanton City Council members Cindy McGovern and Jerry Thorne, who voted against the proposed ballot measure last Tuesday. They like most of Measure B3's funding plans, as we do, but also want a sunset clause that would give voters a chance to review B3's accomplishments every five or 10 years and then decide if we want to extend it again. Theirs were gutsy votes that astonished Mayor Jennifer Hosterman, who helped draft the proposal, and Council members Cheryl Cook-Kallio and Matt Sullivan who endorse it. The new sales tax would be one of the highest in the state. Add to it another half-cent sales tax being proposed by Governor Jerry Brown and it would be the highest, hurting the poor and those with young families the most.

The first Measure B was approved by voters in 1986, becoming one of the first half-cent county transportation sales tax in the state. The vast majority of the money went for capital projects, with a small portion for AC Transit and paratransit. The measure ran from 1987-2002. The second Measure B was rejected by voters in 1998, no doubt influenced by a weak economy and anemic campaign, and also by strong opposition by the Sierra Club and then-Assemblyman Don Perata.

In 2000, the same measure came back as B2, considered to be a more favorable, politically-correct title for the ballot measure that would last until 2022 with \$1.4 billion in funds to complete a myriad of projects. It passed, with 81% of those voting approving the measure.

In 2010, the Alameda County Transportation Commission began plans to put a new measure — B3 — on the 2012 ballot, raising the sales tax to 1% and extending this new tax in perpetuity. Take out the "in perpetuity" clause measure and it might gain our support. Until then, this is a tax without an end or adequate accountability that we urge voters to reject. ■



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

GUEST OPINION

BY TOM FOLEY

New grocery store for Meadow Plaza

Several years ago Nob Hill Foods closed its doors and left Meadow Plaza Shopping Center without an anchor tenant. After 20 years of being located next to a grocery store, surrounding small businesses found themselves without a magnet retailer.

Fast forward to 2012, and the neighborhood is still suffering from an abandoned, vacant storefront. Needless to say, we have long sought to re-tenant the anchor supermarket space.

We considered ourselves fortunate when Walmart enthusiastically stepped up and offered to open one of its first Neighborhood Market grocery stores in this space. This announcement was met with cheers of hope from Meadow Plaza customers, neighbors and tenants.

The same neighbors that celebrated with us then began to receive anonymous fliers at their homes. These fliers distorted the facts and made baseless threats. It was an unsuccessful effort to divide our community regarding something that has united us since Nob Hill closed.

We thank the city of Pleasanton

and its Planning Commission for carefully considering this issue and agreeing that Meadow Plaza should be able to tenant its vacant supermarket building with another grocery market that is different only in name. We are disappointed that Councilman Matt Sullivan has now appealed this decision to the City Council, offering no reason as to why the city should further consider this matter.

Special interests want to subject our neighborhood and its small businesses to isolation. They are concerned about competition and don't have the best interest of our community and its consumers at heart. This neighborhood will not be deterred by these efforts.

We thank Walmart for investing in the future of northeast Pleasanton. We encourage the City Council to uphold the Planning Commission's decision and allow Meadow Plaza and its tenant businesses a chance to succeed.

One of our neighborhood supporters said it best: "All over Pleasanton there are grocery stores without a neighborhood. We are a neighborhood without a grocery store."

—Tom Foley is the property manager of Meadow Plaza

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WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

City Council – Special Meeting

Monday, May 7, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Avenue

- P12-0113, consider an appeal by Councilmember Sullivan of the planning Commission's decision denying the appeal of Angela Joe-Willmes and Linda Martin, thereby upholding the Director of Community Development's approval of a Zoning certificate to operate a supermarket as a permitted use within the existing building located at 3112 Santa Rita Road, and within the hours of operation and delivery limits as set forth in the existing Conditions of Approval for PUD-84 (Ordinance Nos. 1035, 1165, and 1214 and Planning Commission Resolution 2691)

Planning Commission

Wednesday, May 9, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- P12-0754, City of Pleasanton
Application to recommend approval to the City Council of an amendment to the City of Pleasanton General Plan Housing Element, to amend Program 9.7 and Policy 37, which program and policy apply City-wide.
- P12-0601, Little Ivy League
Application for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a preschool for a total of 120 students within the existing building located at 4160 Hacienda Drive.

Youth Commission

Wednesday, May 9, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
Gingerbread Preschool, 4333 Black Avenue

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

Library Commission

Thursday, May 10, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
Library Conference Room, 400 Old Bernal Avenue

- Introduction to the City's Organization and Structure
- 25th Anniversary of Library Building Plans

Parks & Recreation Commission

Thursday, May 10, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

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

Historic Preservation Task Force

Thursday, May 10, 2012 - Cancelled

Civic Arts Commission

Friday, May 11, 2012 at 8:30 a.m.
Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave

- Approve the location of the public artwork "Wind Song" in Centennial Community Park
- Selection of Civic Arts Commission representatives to the Community Grant Program Review Subcommittee

The Civic Arts Commission will adjourn to a workshop at 9:00 a.m. or immediately following the regular meeting.

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 BULLETIN

Mom asks for return of stolen stroller

Pleasanton police are investigating the case of the stolen stroller.

Tiffany Martin, 25, has two daughters, Chloe, who's 4, and Sophia, who's 2, and about a month ago, picked up a stroller on sale at Toys R Us for a little over \$100.

"I'm employed at KFC, but I used to work at Jack in the Box so I popped in to see some friends," Martin said, explaining she had to leave the stroller outside to bring her daughters in. "I was in there visiting for about 20 or 30 minutes. We came out and my daughter said, 'Mommy, the stroller's gone.' I was kind of surprised, because you have to beak it down (to transport it)."

She searched the area, then called police; Officer Robert Shuffield also searched the area without luck, and no one saw who took it.

Without a car, that double stroller was her only way to get her girls to and from their day care center, La Petite Academy, on Valley Avenue.

"If anyone knows anything that could help, that'd be great. My older daughter (now) has to walk with me to school. It's over a mile," Martin said. She can be reached at Tiffanymartin1987.tm@gmail.com.

In other police reports:
• Jewelry was stolen in three separate incidents reported this week.

In one, a \$19,000 diamond wedding ring and \$350 amethyst ring were reported stolen from Tanning Island in the 4800 block of Hopyard Road. The theft took place between 2:45 and 3:20 p.m. on April 27; the victim took the rings off to apply lotion, and forgot to put them back on. When she realized later that they were missing, she returned to the tanning parlor but the rings were gone.

In another, jewelry worth more than \$26,000 was stolen from a hiding place at a home in the 900 block of Hopkins Way sometime between noon on April 1 and 8 a.m. April 26. Taken were a \$4,700 men's diamond ring, a \$4,150 wedding ring, a \$2,857 gold Rolex watch, diamond earrings worth \$2,700, a \$2,500 diamond and amethyst gold ring, four diamond rings valued at \$2,000 apiece, a \$1,960 diamond ring, a \$1,500 diamond ring, gold bracelets worth \$1,000, a \$1,000 diamond ring and a \$550 pearl ring. The case is under investigation; police have a possible suspect.

Nearly \$10,000 in assorted jewelry was stolen from a home in the 3200 block of Cumberland Gap Court between May 1 2011 and March 1 2012. The jewelry was taken from different spots in the home at different times; taken was a set of diamond earrings valued at \$3,500, a \$2,000 diamond bracelet, an \$1,800 diamond solitaire, diamond bracelets worth \$1,500 and \$300 gold earrings. The case is under investigation and

there is a suspect.

• A Hayward man was tasered by police around 8:17 p.m. April 28 after resisting arrest. William Nentwig, 48, was found intoxicated and lying on the ground at the intersection of Neal and Second streets. He was arrested for public drunkenness, paraphernalia possession and resisting arrest; police learned he had felony and misdemeanor warrants for domestic abuse and threats.

• Michael Florio, 54, of Pleasanton, was arrested at about 10:45 a.m. April 27 for failure to register as a sex offender. Florio was arrested at the Pleasanton Police Department after being taken into custody at his home on Aspen Court.

• A 14-year-old boy was arrested around 3:21 p.m. April 26 at Harvest Park Middle School in the 4900 block of Valley Avenue on a charge of possession of a weapon on school grounds. The boy had been called into the principal's office on an unrelated matter. When he was asked if he had anything he shouldn't have at school, he turned over a pocketknife.

• Two Pleasanton teens were arrested April 29 at around 1:19 p.m. in the 6100 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard for felony shoplifting. The two juveniles, ages 16 and 17 were arrested for the theft of beer at Lucky supermarket.

• The next day, April 30 at 6:57 a.m., a window at Chicago Deli in the same strip mall was reported smashed and an undisclosed amount of cash was taken.

• Three people were arrested May 1 around 3:06 a.m. in the 6700 block of Santa Rita Road. A police officer approached the three in their car, which was parked at the Shell station and discovered three freshly cut catalytic converters and a cutter. Richard Ozuna, 35, of Stockton, Jason Hutchinson, 28, of Visalia and Barbara Zabloski, 34, of Stockton were arrested for possession of stolen property, Ozuna was also arrested for possession of a non-narcotic controlled substance and paraphernalia possession.

• A Santa Clara woman detained by security at about 3:30 p.m. April 29 for shoplifting a shirt and shorts worth \$40 from Penny's at Stoneridge Shopping Center landed in jail on outstanding warrants. Somone Steinhart, 21, was wanted on charges of auto theft, possession of stolen property and driving on a suspended.

• A broken window at Office Max on April 29 netted thieves a Toshiba laptop valued at \$1,049 and an HP laptop worth \$949. The theft in the 5500 block of Springdale Avenue was reported at about 8:44 a.m.

• Tools worth more than \$11,000 along with \$1,500 in copper wire were stolen from Pleasanton's pump station no. 6 in the 6900 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard between 3:30 p.m. April 24 and 6:38 a.m. April 25; a lock was cut to gain access.

Under the law, those arrested are considered innocent until convicted.

POLICE REPORT

The Pleasanton Police Department made the following information available.

April 24

Sexual abuse of a minor

- 3:05 p.m. in the 2000 block of Santa Rita Road

Theft

- 12:22 p.m. in the 5500 block of Springhouse Drive; grand theft
- 12:26 p.m. in the 3400 block of Cornerstone Court; identity theft
- 4:19 p.m. in the 3900 block of Vine street; grand theft

Battery

- 3:37 p.m. in the 4300 block of Foothill Road

April 25

Burglary

- 6:59 a.m. in the 6900 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard

Drug/alcohol violations

- 3:25 a.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue; DUI

April 26

Burglary

- 5:30 p.m. in the 6600 block of Amber Ln

Vandalism

- 11:43 a.m. in the 1100 block of

Santa Rita Road

Drug/alcohol violations

- 1:47 a.m. at the intersection of Hopyard Road and Valley Avenue; DUI, marijuana possession
- 11:24 p.m. in the 6100 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard; DUI

April 27

Theft

- 8:35 a.m. in the 2100 block of Rheem Drive; embezzlement
- 12:01 p.m. in the 5600 block of Owens Drive; grand theft
- 3:59 p.m. in the 900 block of Roselma Place; grand theft

Vandalism

- 6:20 a.m. in the 4500 block of First St

DUI

- 1:19 a.m. in the 5000 block of Hopyard Road
- 2:41 a.m. at the intersection of Dublin Boulevard and Dougherty Rd

April 28

Auto burglary

- 1:44 p.m. in the 6000 block of Johnson Drive
- 1:47 p.m. in the 6000 block of Johnson Drive

Drug/alcohol violations

- 12:42 a.m. at the intersection of

Santa Rita Rd and Black Ave; DUI

- 1:07 a.m. at the intersection of Hopyard Road and Black Avenue; minor on the influence of alcohol
- 1:15 a.m. near the intersection of Santa Rita Rd and Interstate 580; DUI
- 10:18 p.m. in the 5100 block of Hopyard Road; possession of a controlled substance

April 29

Rape

- 1:47 p.m. in the 5300 block of Case Avenue

Burglary

- 8:44 a.m. in the 5500 block of Springdale Avenue

Alcohol violations

- 12:41 a.m. at the intersection of Stanley Boulevard and Main Street; DUI
- 3:49 a.m. at the intersection of Harvest Circle and Del Valle Parkway; minor in possession of alcohol, public drunkenness

April 30

Identity theft

- 12:30 p.m. in the 1100 block of Baur Court

Burglary

- 6:57 a.m. in the 6000 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard

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- Best Place to Walk, Jog or Bike
- Best Yoga / Pilates

Beauty & Style

- Best Consignment Store
- Best Day Spa
- Best Hair Salon for Men
- Best Hair Salon for Women
- Best Jewelry Store

Best Nail Care

- Best New Retail Business 2011
- Best Place to Buy a Gift
- Best Clothing Store for Women

Epicure

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- Best Barbecue
- Best Breakfast
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- Best Burger
- Best Burrito
- Best Chinese Restaurant
- Best Coffee House
- Best French Fries
- Best Grocery Store
- Best Health Food Store
- Best Ice Cream / Yogurt Shop
- Best Italian Restaurant
- Best Kid-Friendly, Non-Chain Restaurant
- Best Main Street Restaurant
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Remembering Margaret Lesher



FOR 15 YEARS, FRIENDS HAVE BEEN LEFT TO WONDER WHY

By Jessica Lipsky



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MICHAEL SIMONS

Left: Margaret Lesher at her wedding party to Collin "T.C." Thorstenson in 1996; above: Lesher with Michael Simons, her confidante, hairdresser and image consultant.

Known to many as larger-than-life, Margaret Lesher left an indelible impact on the East Bay through philanthropic work and her forceful personality. Wife to newspaper magnate Dean Lesher, she and her husband were among Contra Costa County's elite as well as characters admired throughout the Times empire.

A loving wife and mother to four daughters, Margaret was well known for her generosity and vivaciousness. Former state Sen. John Nejedly told San Francisco Chronicle reporters he was originally charmed by her "fetching looks and irrepressible energy," and dated "Maggie" for several years in the early 1970s. The two remained good friends until Margaret's death, and her presence left an impression on Nejedly's family.

"She was like a mom to me. She was very kind, thoughtful and supportive to me as an adolescent young girl," said District 3 County Supervisor Mary Nejedly Piepho, John Nejedly's daughter. "She was beautiful and had a smile that lit up a room. She also

had a keen sense of humor."

Piepho said she and Margaret were in contact over the years and "loved running into each other." Maggie, Piepho said in an e-mail, would always give her a huge hug that felt safe and warm.

Margaret's ultra-femininity was but one of her attributes that didn't quite fit into the official tale of her unexpected death in May 1997. A "girly-girl" who was always smiling, her death aroused suspicions that haven't subsided 15 years later.

On May 13, 1997, Margaret "Margee" Thorstenson drowned in her underwear in Bartlett Lake, north of Phoenix. The 65-year-old had taken an impromptu



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

camping trip with her much younger husband, Collin "T.C." Thorstenson, when she mysteriously disappeared at 3:30 a.m., he told authorities.

Deputies from the Maricopa Sheriff's Department found the Thorstensons' 14-foot jet boat two miles from the campsite and suspected that the boat had become untied and blown by the wind. Margaret's clothes were in the boat, and her body was found later that afternoon in 8 feet of water, 25 feet from shore.

The coroner's report found no drugs or substances besides alcohol in Margaret's system, and ruled the drowning an accident that July. Although Thorstenson, 40, refused to take a polygraph test, he was cleared as a suspect in the case.

"We were stunned. She was larger than life and it was such a void," said Angie Coffee, a Walnut Creek resident who was good friends with Margaret beginning the late 1970s. "All four girls ... were heartbroken."

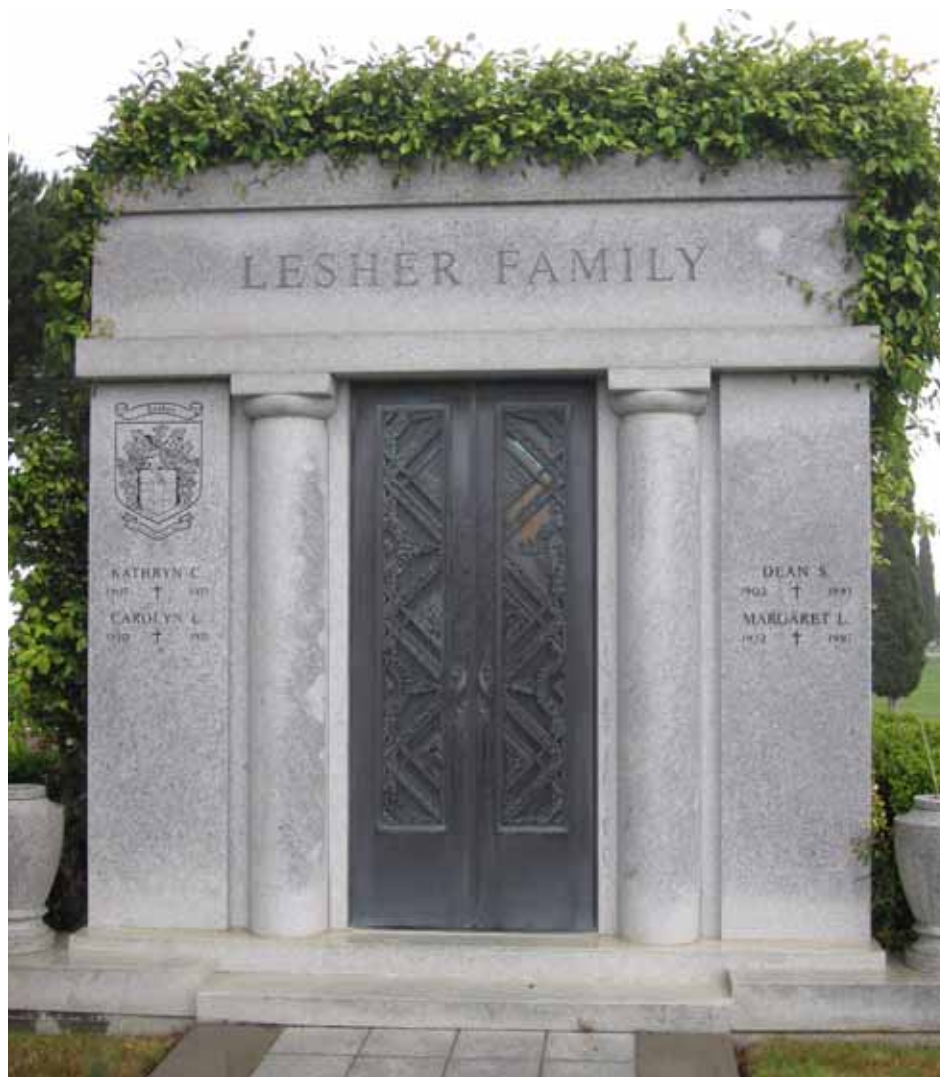
Michael Simons, Margaret's long-time friend, hairdresser and public relations coordinator, said she had called him a week before her death and asked him to visit her at her new ranch in Arizona. Simons was traveling at the time and heard about Margaret's death upon his return from Paris.

"I was in the salon that day and the secretary called me. She said Margaret was found dead. And as a very good friend and with the relationship we had over the years, I was speechless. I was shocked and saddened by the news. I was very curious what the outcome would be," Simons said.

Margaret's death continued to send shockwaves through the East Bay, which had long known her as a force to be reckoned with. But years before she came to the area and ended up reigning as a queen of the social scene, before a lengthy legal battle surrounding her estate and years of heartbreak among family and friends, Margaret was a small-town girl who was crowned Miss Peach.

Born in Texas, Margaret was a knockout who yearned to be a good wife and mother. When her first marriage to Bill Ryan, a telephone company middle-manager and father of her children, ended in the late 1960s, "Maggie" Ryan became a single mother of four who managed the Walnut Creek Wig Boutique and earned \$78 a week.

In 1972, Margaret's marriage to Contra Costa Times Publisher Dean Leshler made her fabulously wealthy. A benefactor to Battered Women's Alternatives (a precursor to STAND! Against Domestic Violence) and, later, the driving force in persuading the city of Walnut Creek to rename its civic arts complex the Dean S. Leshler Regional Center for the Arts, Margaret was known for her sometimes outlandish comments, religious piety — she hosted a show at a Christian television station — and as a devoted wife to Dean until his death in May 1993.



JESSICA LIPSKY

Margaret and Dean Leshler, shown at left, were married for more than 20 years and their commitment to the community lives on in their foundation and Walnut Creek's arts center. They are buried at Oakmont Memorial Park in Lafayette.

A 1997 article in the San Francisco Chronicle likened Margaret to Evita, "a beauty, she was born poor, scarred by lost love, elevated to prominence by attaching herself to a man of great wealth and greater ambition, and ultimately vanquished in tragedy."

But Coffee, who served on the Regional Center for the Arts board with Margaret, said the Evita comparison is far from the truth.

"She was so lovely. She had a quality about her that was totally endearing," Coffee said. "She truly believed in helping those who were less fortunate than she; she was just wonderful."

Simons remembered her as ambitious and an "endless shopper."

"Margaret would come into the salon two or three times a day depending on what her schedule was. It was always something different, color, length, style," he said. "She was a fashion leader in the community."

She was a fixture in the Robert Jenson Salon in Lafayette, Simons said — "Everyone would come in for a fix of Margaret." Fifteen years later, she still has Robert Jenson's abuzz.

Still, Margaret's often ostentatious dress, combined with candid discussions of her various plastic surgery procedures, rubbed some the wrong way. Articles from the time of her death said Margaret had acquired a reputation for being cluelessly cavalier and insensitive in the Contra Costa Times newsroom.

Those closest to Margaret told reporters that she secretly relished giving unsuspecting listeners the shock treatment. Others said Margaret was tickled by the idea of surprising people — though her untimely death could be considered the biggest surprise of all.

Several people close to Margaret believe her death wasn't an open and shut case, while others have referred to it as "the murder." Some

have spent 15 years questioning why Margaret would take a swim in the middle of the night or whether T.C. had a motive for killing his wife, and many remain confused.

"I looked at this gorgeous face (in the paper) and I literally felt like I was going to throw up," Coffee said of reading about Margaret's death in the newspaper. "This just didn't make sense to me."

Coffee noted that Margaret didn't drink much and, on more than one occasion, would nurse one glass of white wine during a fundraiser and never finish it. The alcohol levels in Margaret's blood at the time of her drowning seemed entirely uncharacteristic.

Simons referred to Margaret as a very intuitive woman who "had concerns about Arizona." Among the information that was released after her death, Simons said he was surprised that sheriffs found Margaret's clothes neatly folded on the boat. Margaret never folded her clothes neatly, he said.

It later came out that Thorstenson, a well-known buffalo performer, had a checkered past. T.C. had been subject to allegations of previous spousal abuse, was named in a paternity suit filed by a 25-year-old who gave birth to twins two months after his marriage to Margaret, and had possibly misrepresented his financial status.

"If Margaret had any idea of his history, she would not have spent any time with this man," Coffee said, pointing to Margaret's work with battered women.

Simons recalled how surprised he was to learn of the marriage since Margaret was such a frequent customer and confidante.

"I was surprised ... because it was sudden," he said. "I was dressing her hair and looked down at her finger on a Tuesday morning and I said, 'New purchase?' and she said, 'I got married over the weekend.' I asked

"The good memories stick and it gives us a platform to promote the good things that Margaret actually did for the community. Hopefully, she has laid the groundwork for some incentives for younger generations to follow ... to work toward a better community."

Michael Simons,

Margaret Leshler's long-time friend and hairdresser

where, she said Hawaii. I asked 'to whom?' and she said 'a buffalo trainer.' And that was basically our conversation at that point. I was totally surprised."

Simons later threw Margaret and T.C. a wedding party at her mansion in Orinda with 150 guests — complete with a buffalo-riding demonstration in the foyer.

Some suspect that Thorstenson wanted Margaret's money — he was willed \$5 million in cash — and that he may be culpable in his wife's death. Sources said that he still lives at the \$1.7 million ranch he bought with Margaret in Scottsdale, Ariz., although the house is in a state of disrepair.

In 2002, Thorstenson told The Arizona Republic that "news stories fraught with innuendo made his life hell" and he hoped the speculation would end.

"It's not an unsolved mystery," he told reporters. "It's a tragical thing that happened to someone I loved."

Today Thorstenson's Facebook photo shows him atop a buffalo, having just jumped through a hoop of fire. He did not answer emails.

Simons, who keeps photos of Margaret on his station at the salon, said he does not speculate about the circumstances around Margaret's death.

"I was not there, I only have insight before her death and I have a bit of knowledge from what the press and people have said after her death. I am not judgmental and I cannot make that decision. I don't know what happened," he said, noting that people still come into his salon and ask if Margaret had her hair dressed there.

Margaret continues to be missed by friends and the community, Coffee said, noting that her spirit lives on through her philanthropy.

"She left a beautiful legacy with the Dean and Margaret Leshler Foundation and what it does for the county... It's just that she was such a driving force and that is missed. There is no one else like her, frankly, not in our county," Coffee noted.

"The good memories stick and it gives us a platform to promote the good things that Margaret actually did for the community," Simons added. "Hopefully, she has laid the groundwork for some incentives for younger generations to follow ... to work toward a better community."

On the 15th anniversary of her death, her family will honor Margaret with a quiet, low-key remembrance. Although there is still uncertainty surrounding her death, Piepho said Margaret's family has ultimately decided that they need to move on. Emotionally, they are still hopeful for justice.

"At the end of the day we lost a very beautiful member of our community and we still miss her tremendously," Piepho said. ■



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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Children's author at library

The Pleasanton Public Library will welcome TV news personality and author Juliette Goodrich at 1 p.m. tomorrow to discuss her third children's book, "I Am Special Because I Smile," the story of the Special Olympics and her experience with those very special athletes. Best known as an Emmy award-winning KPIX Channel 5 news anchor and reporter, Juliette Goodrich is also the author of two previous books for children featuring local landmarks. "Little Light Shines: A True Story about the World's Longest Burning Light Bulb" chronicles the story of the famous Livermore Centennial Light, and "The Train of Lights," which was inspired by a family ride aboard the Niles Canyon Railroad Christmas train. No registration is required for this free event.



Author Visits

MYSTERY WRITERS ON THE LOOSE
The Livermore-Pleasanton-Dublin Branch of the AAUW and Livermore Library are co-hosting Penny Warner and Ann Parker in the Livermore library meeting room. They will be speaking about the mysteries they have written. The public is invited. Penny has authored more than 50 books for children and adults. Ann has written "Silver Lies." Wednesday, May 9 from 7-9 p.m. None Livermore Library Civic Center, 1188 S. Livermore Ave., Livermore. 484-3321.

Class Reunions

AMADOR VALLEY HIGH CLASS REUNION The class of 1972 is having its 40th class reunion on July 7. Location and time to be announced shortly. They are also inviting the classes of 1971, 1973 and 1974 and are looking for other class members. Contact Nanci Johnson Lenoci at nlenoci@yahoo.com. 305-4071.

Clubs

LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY GARDEN CLUB The LAV Garden Club will meet at 7 p.m., Thursday, May 10, in the multipurpose room at Alisal School, 1454 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton. Guest speaker Ernesto Sandoral of UC Berkeley will speak on succulents. Visitors are welcome. Contact Bev at 485-7812 or visit www.lavgc.org.

Concerts

TANGONERO! Tangonero is a new Argentine Tango band based in San Francisco. Specializing in classic tango, a genre that fuses intense passion with quiet tenderness, alternating sharp percussive rhythms with slow nostalgic melodies, it will squeeze your heart to tears and set your feet to dancing. The concert is at 2 p.m., Sunday, May 13, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave., sponsored by the Friends of the Pleasanton Library. Doors open at 1:30 p.m. Call 931-3400 or visit www.tangonero.com.

VALLEY CONCERT CHORALE 'BUGS OUT' IN SPRING CONCERT Songs of love, drink, madrigals and bugs featuring music of Rossini, Brahms and Schubert. Reception immediately following.

Saturday, May 12 from 7-9 p.m. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. High school and college students \$10 with valid ID. Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton. 866-4003. www.valley-concertchorale.org/

Events

CALIFORNIA SHARKS TALK World renowned local marine photographer and author Bruce Watkins will give a California Sharks Talk at 7 p.m., Wednesday, May 9, at Dive N Trips, 1032 Serpentine Lane, Suite 108, Pleasanton. Call 462-7234 or visit www.diventrips.com.

COMIC DON FRIESE Don Friesen's act is described as "smart, savvy, highly-caffeinated comedy," a satire of his life as a suburban husband and father of two with little money in the bank. Opener Jason Live is a Los Angeles based standup comic, writer, cartoonist and nationally syndicated humor columnist who has appeared on television's Last Comic Standing and Comedy Central. The event is at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, May 10, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave., Pleasanton. Tickets \$15. Call 931-4848 or visit www.firehousearts.org.

GNON (GIRLS NIGHT OUT NETWORKING) GNON presents WIGS (Women in GNON Seminars): Cold calling - Why it doesn't work. Learn from Nadine Larder of Printer Bees about how to generate leads and follow up on them effectively. She will also touch upon how Social Media can help. The event is from 5:30-6:30 p.m., Monday, May 14, at the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce, 777 Peters Ave., Pleasanton. Cost is free for members and \$15 for non-members. RSVP by May 11 to gnoners@gmail.com.

HIDDEN GARDENS OF THE VALLEY TOUR Follow your love of animals down the garden path at the seventh annual Hidden Gardens of the Valley, a benefit for Valley Humane Society (VHS). Meander at your own pace during this self-guided tour offering ideas, inspiration and a private glimpse of 10 lovely gardens across Pleasanton. Sunday, May 20 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. \$35 advance/\$40 day of event Pleasanton. 426-8656. www.valley-humane.org

JUST BETWEEN FRIENDS HUGE KIDS

SALE JBF maternity and children's consignment events are a savvy shopper's dream. Consignors bring their new and gently-used children's and maternity items to sell. Shoppers can purchase these items at great savings. Unsold donated items benefit Shepherd's Gate. Save 50-90% on retail prices. Saturday and Sunday, May 19-20 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. \$2 Alameda County Fairgrounds, 4501 Pleasanton Ave., Pleasanton. 916-320-1127. www.jbfsale.com

MAIFEST Maifest im Biergarten - San Ramon Valley German School. Saturday, May 19 from 11:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Handles GastroPub, 855 Main St., Pleasanton. www.sanramonvalleygermanschool.com

MAY FAIR FOR MOTHER'S DAY Celebrate Mother's Day with French music, food and wine; dancing, and unique vendors. "Le Hot Jazz Trio" performs from 1:30-4:30 p.m. Bring a blanket and picnic or purchase food, wine and desserts. Activities include hay wagon rides, craft making, museum tours, face painting and French lessons. Saturday, May 12 from noon-5 p.m. Free Dublin Heritage Park & Museums, 6600 Donlon Way, Dublin. 452-2101. www.ci.dublin.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=288

PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL RUN The fourth annual California Peace Officers' Association Memorial Run honoring those who've lost their lives in the line of duty is at 7:30 a.m., Saturday, May 12, at Shadow Cliff Regional Park, 2500 Stanley Blvd. The Memorial Run's 10K and 5K walk and run courses have small rolling hill trails throughout the scenic park. The kid's 1-mile fun run is laid out on the lawn area. Entry fee is from \$20-\$40 depending on the race, and includes T-shirt, beverages and a barbecue lunch. Additional lunch tickets can be purchased for \$12 for adults and \$7 for children. Call 209-795-7832 or visit www.active.com.

Exhibits

CACC PHOTOGRAPHY CLASS EXHIBITION The public is invited to an exhibition of the Chinese American Cooperation Council photography class from 2-4 p.m., Saturday, May 19, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. The class has 17 students and is taught by master teacher photographer Jianzhong Cai. For more information, call 931-3400 or email niuumatters@gmail.com.

Film

'PROJECT NIM' & SPECIAL GUEST BOB INGERSOLL "Project Nim" is a touching film about a baby chimpanzee who was raised as a human child and taught sign language as a linguistic experiment. Bob Ingersoll, primate rescuer and Nim's best friend, will conduct a Q & A after the film. Meet and greet potluck at 6:30 p.m.; film starts at 7 p.m. Saturday, May 5 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. free/\$3 suggested donation IBEW Hall, 6250 Village Parkway, Dublin. 462-3459.

Fundraisers

23RD ANNUAL 'WALK FOR LIFE' The Valley Pregnancy Center is sponsoring a walkathon with the

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Downtown fun walk helps serious battle

You could just make your mom proud by walking down Main Street in your underwear next Saturday night.

It's the seventh annual Bras for the Cause Breast Cancer Walk, being held in Pleasanton on Mother's Day weekend, beginning at 7 p.m. May 12 with a 5:30 p.m. check-in. Hundreds of participants decorate bras to be worn — outside their clothing — for the leisurely paced, 10-kilometer walk in the moonlight.

It's a "group of spirited, supportive sisters and brave bothers. Yes, men have to wear a bra, too," said a press release from Tri-Valley SOCKS (Stepping Out for Cancer Kures). "We have an event that is unique and exciting, with a very compelling purpose — to find a cure for breast cancer now."

The 2012 walk honoree is Letty Najarana, who, at the age of 35, while she was undergoing fertility procedures, was diagnosed with invasive ductile carcinoma in the right breast with an 80% chance it would spread to her left breast. She underwent a double mastectomy a month later and also had 22 lymph nodes removed.

"Although everything that was happening to me seemed so overwhelming, I chose to have a positive attitude and fight with all I had in me," Najarana said.

"Of course there were days when I felt sad, scared and angry," she added. "I let myself go through all the emotions but tried not to stay in that dark place for too long."

She also credited her family, friends and co-workers with the success of her fight against cancer after her treatments officially ended a year ago.

In the last six years, the Bras for the Cause Walk has raised more than \$655,000 toward the fight against breast cancer. Proceeds from this year's walk go to the Tri-Valley's Axis Community Health Center, UCSF's Helen Diller Cancer Center, and the San Francisco Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure. As always, 100% of the money goes directly to the beneficiaries. To register as a walker, visit www.trivalleysocks.org.



goal of raising \$100,000 to support its free services. A short 2-mile walk to downtown Pleasanton. Strollers, wheelchairs and pets are welcome! BBQ - Live Band - Kid's Zone - Prizes Saturday, May 5 from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free Amador Recreation Center, 4451 Black Ave., Pleasanton. 425-0414, ext. 104. www.valleypregnancycenter.org

ANIMAL LOVER'S BOUTIQUE SPRING FLING Shop the Animal Lover's Boutique Spring Fling sale. Proceeds help sick and injured animals through Jackie Barnett's Just Like New Fund, a Valley Humane Society program. Find unique animal-themed items for spring and Mother's Day, including garden and home decor. Saturday, May 5 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Feline Medical Center, 3160 Santa Rita Rd., Pleasanton. 323-8517. www.valleyhumane.org

BENEFITING FIRST TEE TRI-VALLEY Two fundraising events will take place at the Pleasanton Golf Center 9-Hole, on Friday, May 11. First a lunch and golf beginning at 1 p.m. Then at 3 p.m., for the sixth year, Jetter Golf and The Hopyard are teaming up to host The Hopyard 3-stick at the Pleasanton Golf Center 9-Hole, to include golf, dinner, prizes and the "Water Tower Shootout." First Tee Tri-Valley helps youths become productive members of society through golf. Email thefirstteevdan@yahoo.com.

DESTINATION IMAGINATION LEMONADE STAND Pleasanton Destination Imagination team is headed for the Global Final Competition in Knoxville, Tenn. Come and support their Lemonade stand. Check out their props and learn about DI. All proceeds will go toward prop shipment and registration fees. Sunday, May 6 from 2:30-5 p.m. 3798 Fairlands Drive, Pleasanton. 462-9443.

ICF PRIMAVERA DINNER DANCE Italian Catholic Federation Primavera Dinner Dance. Live music by Smooth Sounds. Prize drawings. Reservations required. To benefit Tri-Valley scholarship program and other ICF charities. Saturday, May 5 from 6-11 p.m. \$35 per person St. Micheal's Church Hall, 372 Maple St., Livermore. 846-8436 or 846-6514.

MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY Assistance League of Amador Valley tea party features darling decorated tea tables, yummy food, hat contest, drawing prizes, and champagne bar. Entertainment is a Chico's fashion show. All profits go to buy school clothes for local needy children. Saturday, May 5 from noon-4 p.m. \$50 Aahmes Shrine Event Center, 170 Lindberg Ave., Livermore. 462-5275. www.amadorvalley.assistanceleague.org

Health

NONPROFIT "WALK WITH A DOC" HITS TRI VALLEY "Walk with a Doc" is a unique walking program that allows you to spend time walking with a doctor, giving you the opportunity to have questions answered by local physicians. Put on a pair of comfortable walking shoes and walk for your health. Saturday, May 12 at 10 a.m. Free Pleasanton Sports Park, 5800 Parkside Dr, Pleasanton. 225-0500. www.walkwithadoc.org

Lectures/ Workshops

REVERSE MORTGAGE INFORMATION Attention homeowners age 62 or older: A program is being presented by ECHO Housing, a non-profit Housing Counseling Agency approved by HUD to provide free information regarding reverse mortgages. The lecture is

at 1 p.m., Wednesday, May 23, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave., Pleasanton. Call 931-3405.

Miscellaneous

'LAWYERS IN THE LIBRARY' Members of the Alameda County Bar Association visit the Pleasanton Public Library on the third Tuesday of each month to give free 15 to 20 minute consultations, in a program co-sponsored by the Alameda County Bar Association. Appointments are by lottery. Register from 5:30-5:45 p.m.; names will be selected at 5:50 p.m. and people must be present when names are drawn. Appointments begin at 6 p.m. and end at 8 p.m. Call 931-3400, ext. 7.

PLEASANTONIANS 4 PEACE This group is sponsoring a candlelight vigil at 7 p.m., Wednesday, May 9, in front of the Museum on Main, 603 Main St., Pleasanton. They will reflect on the human monetary costs of the war, honor our veterans who have sacrificed, and visualize ways of moving beyond this conflict to a more peaceful world. Call Cathe Norman at 462-7495 or email Matt Sullivan at mjs7882@gmail.com or visit www.pleasantonians4peace.org.

Recreation

FROM HORA TO ZUMBA: DANCE ISRAEL Join Bay Area Zumba instructor Lara Walklet in a beat-infused montage of dances in celebration of Israel@64. Event will feature a wide variety of Israeli songs - from traditional melodies to contemporary music. Admission is free. Event co-sponsored by Jewish Federation of the East Bay. Wednesday, May 16 from 7:30-9 p.m. Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton. 931-1055. www.bethemek.org

Seniors

NEW EXPRESSIVE WRITING GROUP Register for a new writing group being offered at the Pleasanton Senior Center beginning Thursday, June 7. The class will focus on the art of expression. You will learn by observing and critiquing each others creations. No previous writing experience required. Six sessions will run June-August. 10-11:30 a.m. \$12R/\$15N Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., Pleasanton. 931-5365. www.pleasantonseniorcenter.org

Spiritual

BISHOP TO VISIT ST. CLARE'S Join St. Clare's Episcopal Church as they celebrate life and growth with their bishop, The Right Rev. Marc Andrus and his wife, Dr. Shiela Andrus. The church promises great music, joy-filled celebration, and a brunch after each service (8 a.m. & 10:15 a.m.) All are welcome. Sunday, May 6 No Charge St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton. 462-4802. www.stclarespleasanton.org

Support Groups

TOURETTE SYNDROME MEETING The spring chapter meeting is from 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, May 19, at St. Augustine, 3999 Bernal Ave., Pleasanton. Speakers on Executive Dysfunction, IEP and 504. Creating a marketing plan for your job search plus more. RSVP. Event sponsored by the Northern California Tourette Syndrome Associate. Call 846-8075 or email Gibsonohare@sbcglobal.net.

Volunteering

AMERICAN RED CROSS Volunteer orientation at 5 p.m., Friday, May 18, at the Pleasanton Blood Donation Center, 5556-B Springdale Ave., Pleasanton. Learn to greet, inform and thank the community's blood donors. Advanced sign up required. For more information call Tami at 408-577-2006 or email wethernt@usa.redcross.org.

LITERACY TUTOR TRAINING Pleasanton Library's Project Read needs volunteer tutors to help adults with English skills. Volunteers should be at least 18 years old, fluent in American English but not necessarily a native speaker. You should be able to devote a consistent hour or two weekly to your student for a semester. The training is from 1-4 p.m., Saturday, May 12, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. For more information contact Penny Johnson at 931-3405 or email pennyjohnson@cityofpleasantonca.gov.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS Volunteers are needed to help at the 2012 Special Olympics volleyball and track events Saturday, May 19, at Amador Valley High School. Email avboosters@comcast.net with your name, address, phone number, email address, specify if you are an adult or state age if under 18, indicate group you are with such as AVHS, FHS, Boosters, Leadership, AVID, and NCL. Include the day and times you can work. Call Ken Mano at 846-4381 with questions.

TriValley Life

PEOPLE AND LIFESTYLES
IN OUR COMMUNITY

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

'Tales of the Fourth
Grade Nothing'
opens tonight

Dealing with Fudge

by Dolores Fox Ciardelli

Kids discovered in the 1970s that author Judy Blume understood them. Many of her immediate hits are still being enjoyed today.

"Tales of the Fourth Grade Nothing," published in 1972, is now a play and this year's Spring Production by the city of Pleasanton Civic Arts Stage Company, opening tonight at the Firehouse Arts Center.

The tale is about an older brother's experiences with a younger brother who drives him crazy. From Peter's perspective, his parents' attention and that of most of the adults around him, is unfairly focused on Fudge, his 3-year-old brother. Fudge's bad behavior is too often overlooked, and Peter's good behavior isn't rewarded.

"One of the most important things about this show is that two very young actors, the boys playing Peter, really drive the action and provide all the narration," said Director Paula Wujek. "It's quite a responsibility for a young actor, and Matthew Bessiere and Calvin David are doing an impressive job."

Peter vows to get his parents to pay attention to him for a change. According to Wujek, one of Blume's major talents is telling

a story from a child's perspective and the stage play preserves that aspect of the book.

"One of the most important things about this show is that two very young actors, the boys playing Peter, really drive the action and provide all the narration," Wujek said. "It's quite a responsibility for a young actor, and Matthew Bessiere and Calvin David are doing an impressive job."

In addition to Bessiere and David, the production's two casts include guest artist Sean Robert Garahan playing Dad. Garahan is a San Francisco Shakespeare Festival actor who will perform in this summer's Free Shakespeare in the Park production of "King Henry V."

Civic Arts Stage Company regulars Megan MacAdams (Queen of Hearts in "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland") and Morgan Werder (Duchess in the same show) alternate as Mom.

Peter's younger brother, Fudge, is played by newcomer Maxim Carrel and Kate Derham, who played one of the comical guinea pigs in "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland."

An ensemble of children and adults perform in the supporting roles, some new to Civic Arts Stage Company and some returning actors.

"Every child has felt injustice in his or her life, and Judy Blume really understands how that feels," Wujek noted. "Since Peter is our narrator and guide, we understand how wronged he feels, but we also understand that his family really loves him and that they appreciate him much more than he realizes."

"As a cast, we discussed themes in ad-

dition to sibling rivalry, love for a pet, and classmate squabbles," she continued. "The need to have one's voice heard" emerged as an overarching theme; children often feel not just misunderstood, but unheard.

"Allowing Peter time to reflect on his experiences is valuable as he tries to navigate fourth grade. He emerges less self-centered and more mature because of this reflection."

In addition to Wujek, who also directed past Civic Arts productions "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," "Charlotte's Web," and "Ramona Quimby," the crew includes resident designers Steve Mannshardt (set and lighting), Thalia Cronander (costumes), Kristin Werder (props), and Ryan Short (sound). Rob Dario is stage manager and created the graphic design for this production. Lisa Alba is volunteer coordinator.

"The show is set in 1972, which is when the book was written. We think parents will enjoy sharing this play with their children, since many of them grew up in the 70s and read this book when they were children," Wujek said. ■

Kids onstage

What: "Tales of the Fourth Grade Nothing"

Who: Civic Arts Stage Company

When: May 4-13; at 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays

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

Cost: Adults — \$10, \$15, \$18; children, seniors — \$6, \$9, \$12

Tickets: Online at www.firehousearts.org; call 931-4848, or in person at the Firehouse Arts Center Box Office

Morgan Werder (Mom), Sean Garahan (Dad), Calvin David (Peter) and Kate Derham (Fudge) perform in "Tales of the Fourth Grade Nothing" opening tonight at the Firehouse Arts Center.

AARON ZWIEFEL



Day of wine and roses

Mother's Day weekend, it's time to smell the roses

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

For many years, Pleasanton rose growers have brought the best from their gardens to a community rose show to be enjoyed by others and to be judged against their petaled peers. This year the 72nd annual Pleasanton Rose Show takes place at the Senior Center on May 12.

It all started in the 1930s when banker Harry Harding gave his customers rose bushes in appreciation for their business. Continuing the reciprocation, the customers would bring back blooms in the springtime for him.

The beauty and fragrance inspired Harding to start the Pleasanton Rose Show so everyone could share the loveliness. The show eventually outgrew the bank and moved to other venues including the Century House on Santa Rita Road. Last year it was held at the library.

Also, somewhere along the line, the roses began to be judged.

The show wasn't held for a few years until a trio of women, who call themselves the Rosettes, decided to bring it back six years ago. The women, Feslie Faught, Marti Gilbert and Joyce Jones, are Alain Pinel Realtors, which also sponsors the show. This year the city of Pleasanton has joined in.

"When we first started out about we probably had about 400 people come through



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Blooms at the annual Pleasanton Rose Show display best when they have their leaves intact, advises a judge. Everyone is welcome to enter roses from home gardens.

the Century House, and at the library we've actually had up to 2,000 people come through, over 400 entries," said Jones in an interview on Tri-Valley Community Television. "It's grown, immensely. Now, we actually outgrew the library. That's part of why we're going to the senior center."

"This year to join with the city is huge for us," Gilbert said. "It's allowed us to grow and do the things we haven't been able to do by ourselves."

The event is known as "the people's show" because anyone can bring roses from their home garden to enter. Exhibitor registration

is from 7:30-10 a.m. Judging is 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and the show is open to the public from 1-4 p.m. The awards ceremony is at 1:30 p.m.

This year the event includes wine tasting for \$5 from 1-4 p.m. featuring Little Valley Winery of Pleasanton.

Go to www.thepleasantonroseshow.com for information on entering roses. Tips include cutting the specimens, grooming the entries and transporting them.

"Don't strip the leaves off the roses," advises one judge. "The leaves and roses should be in balance." ■

Let the bells ring

'Mamma Mia!' to Mozart to the opera

Tapestry, the Bay Area's only combined vocal and handbell ensemble, is returning to Asbury United Methodist Church in Livermore to play "Music of the Night — Gems of the Stage," at 7 p.m. tomorrow night.

The program takes a musical journey with best beloved music — from "Mamma Mia!" to Mozart, from the opera, to the Victorian halls of Gilbert and Sullivan and to the glitter and glamour of the London Stage and Broadway. Tapestry will sing and ring everyone's favorite show stoppers.

The concert is free and open to the public. A free-will donation will be collected in support of Open Heart Kitchen, which provides meals for the needy, and Garden of Grace, which uses volunteers to grow fresh vegetables for Open Heart Kitchen.

Tapestry will close its spring concert series with a performance at the Danville Village Theatre in Danville at 7 p.m., Sunday, May 20. This concert is a benefit for the San Ramon Historic Foundation as well as for Tapestry's fundraising events locally, nationally and globally. Tickets are \$25 and include a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception; they may be purchased through the Village theater's website. ■

ShopPleasanton.com

The online guide to Pleasanton businesses

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USTA fun at Fairgrounds tomorrow

Tennis will be part of Girl Scout celebration

USTA's SmashZone Mobile Tour will be at the Girl Scouts 100th Anniversary Celebration at the Alameda County Fairgrounds tomorrow.

SmashZone Mobile Tour has four kid-sized tennis courts with games to introduce children to tennis in a fun way. The trailer, which anchors the courts, has interactive activities such as a Wii Tennis and Touch Screen Kiosks.

The tennis event will feature a special appearance by Cymphonique Miller and Max Schneider, the stars of Nickelodeon's new hit live-action series How to Rock.

"I love tennis," said Miller. "With courts all across the United States, it's a sport that I can play wherever I am."

"I started playing when I was a little kid," Schneider said, "and it's one of those great sports that you can play your entire life and always



have an awesome time."

SmashZone Mobile complements USTA's 10 and Under Tennis, which encourages young people to start playing tennis with shorter and lighter racquets, slower-bouncing balls, smaller courts and simplified scoring. ■

SPORTS DIGEST

Preventing sports injuries

The Sports Performance Institute of San Ramon Regional Medical Center invites student athletes, coaches, trainers and parents to a free educational 2012 Youth Soccer Symposium, Strategies for Healthy Performance, on Saturday, May 12. It will be held in the South Building located on the San Ramon hospital campus at 7777 Norris Canyon Road. Continental breakfast and registration will start at 8 a.m., and the presentation will be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Sports medicine physicians will discuss injury prevention, research updates on performance mechanics, and risk factors for injuries in young soccer players. Following the lectures, participants will move to the SPI gym, where hospital sports trainers and physical therapists will teach exercises and con-

ditioning techniques.

Register by calling 800-284-2878 or at www.OurSanRamonHospital.com.

Fundraiser for Foothill sports

Chicago's Metro Deli, 6003 W. Las Positas Blvd. in Pleasanton, is holding a weeklong special to raise money for sports programs at Foothill High. During the week of May 14-20, 25% of sales from 5-9 p.m. Monday-Friday, and all day Saturday-Sunday, will be donated to the sports department.

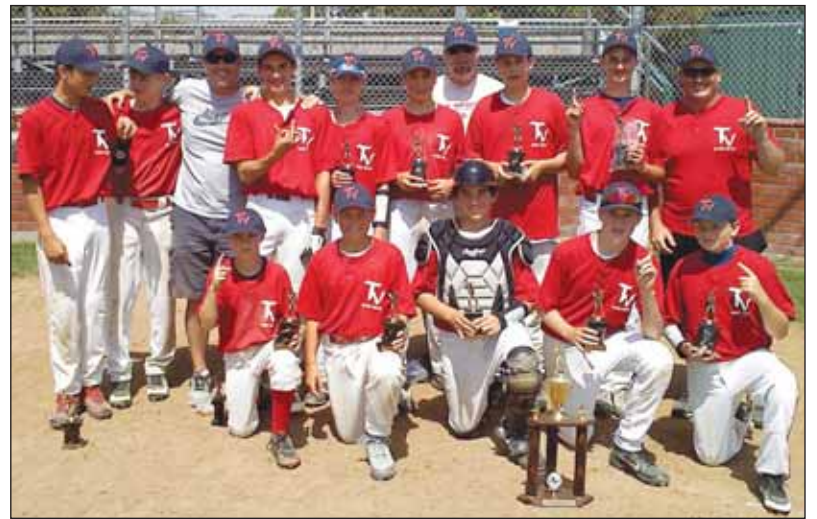
Find the flier to make your purchase at the deli count toward the fundraiser at foothillfalcons.org; Go to upcoming events, calendar, and link to the page to print out.

Send photos and sports news to sports@PleasantonWeekly.com for consideration for our Sports page. Remember to include caption information: who, what, when, where—and the score.

Babe Ruth champs

The Tri-Valley Babe Ruth Red team won the Irvington CABA 13U Tournament Championship on Sunday, going 4-0 and outscoring its opponents 33-13. It was an overall team effort with excellent pitching, superb hitting and solid defense. The Tri-Valley Babe Ruth Red team improved its record for this season to 14-1-1.

Team members are (front, l-r) Josh Moroney, Nic Venezia, Dante Albanese, Connor Redmond, Chris Lonestar, (back) Jack Fryer, Jack Morgan, Coach Rick Fryer, Darroch Koel, Nate White, Joshua Ott, Coach Todd Moore, Max Moore, Clark Eder and Manager Sean Venezia.



Pleasanton golfers on Junior Tour

Competing in the championship flight at the Junior Tour Spring Series V at Oakmont Country Club last weekend were Kelly Shotwell (left), who tied for 12th, and Natalie Bodner, who tied for 18th. Also competing in the flight from Pleasanton were Sierra Saucier, and, on the boys side, Ryan Maund and Ryan Knop, who were in the tie for 12th. The winner of the Girls Championship Flight was Casie Cathrea from Livermore.



CHRIS SCOTT/WWW.CALSPORTSPHOTO.COM

PREP LINE-UP

May 4

- Baseball: 4 p.m., AVHS vs. Monte Vista, away
- Baseball: 4 p.m., Foothill vs. Livermore, away
- Boys Lacrosse: 7 p.m., San Ramon Valley, home
- Girls Lacrosse: 7 p.m., AVHS vs. San Ramon Valley, away
- Boys Swimming: 4 p.m., Foothill vs. AVHS, home

May 7

- Girls Lacrosse: 7 p.m., AVHS vs.

Saint Ignatius, home

May 8

- Boys Lacrosse: 7 p.m., AVHS vs. Livermore, away
- Boys Volleyball: 6 p.m., AVHS vs. Livermore, away
- Softball: TBA, AVHS vs. California, away
- Softball: 4 p.m., Foothill vs. Monte Vista, home

May 9

- Baseball: 4 p.m., AVHS vs. California, away
- Baseball: 4 p.m., Foothill vs. Monte Vista, home

May 10

- Boys Volleyball: 6 p.m., AVHS vs. Foothill, home
- Softball: TBA, AVHS vs. San Ramon Valley, home
- Softball: 4 p.m., Foothill vs. California, home

May 11

- Baseball: 4 p.m., AVHS vs. San Ramon Valley, home
- Baseball: 4 p.m., Foothill vs. California, home
- Boys Lacrosse: 7 p.m., AVHS vs. Foothill, away
- Girls Lacrosse: 7 p.m., AVHS vs. Foothill, away

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115 Announcements

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Pleasanton, 4628 Black Ave., May 5, 9-4
Designer Sisters Garage Sale: Jewelry, Home Decor, Small Furniture, Fashion, Golf Clubs, Misc.

215 Collectibles & Antiques



1970 Chevrolet Chevelle SS
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PET OF THE WEEK

Whole lotta love

Jetta is a 4-month-old female Siamese mix kitten with lots of love to give. She is the last of her littermates to get adopted and is anxiously awaiting a new home. Her siblings and their mom were rescued by Valley Humane Society at a young age from a county shelter. Jetta is absolutely stunning and has a sweet temperament with a loving personality. For more information, call 426-8656 or go online to www.valleyhumane.org. Valley Humane Society is located at 3670 Nevada St. in Pleasanton. Hours are 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays; noon-7 p.m. Thursdays and Friday; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturdays; and noon-4 p.m. Sundays.



AARON CZESZYNSKI

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AARON CZESZYNSKI

OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

Alamo

6 BEDROOMS
1311 Laverock Lane \$2,694,000
 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

4 BEDROOMS
20 Shady Oak Ct \$829,000
 Sun 1-4 Coldwell Banker 837-4100
51 Linda Ct \$1,550,000
 Sun 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors Inc 855-4000

Livermore

3 BEDROOMS
5598 Berwind Ave \$439,000
 Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel Realtors 846-6500
4 BEDROOMS
357 Nottingham Circle \$679,950
 Sun 2-4 Alain Pinel Realtors 251-1111
2046 Pinot Ct \$1,124,000
 Sun 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 583-2173
1545 Yukon Pl \$965,000
 Sun 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors Inc 251-2585

Pleasanton

3 BEDROOMS
7859 Creekside Dr \$489,950
 Sun 1-4 Sonali Sethna 525-2569

4 BEDROOMS

2913 Amoroso Ct \$1,090,000
 Sun 1-4 Keller Williams Tri-valley 463-0436
715 Montevino Dr \$1,190,000
 Sun 1-4 Coldwell Banker 847-2200
640 Varese Ct \$1,950,000
 Sun 1-4 Fabulous Properties 980-0273
3351 Sagewood Ct \$1,295,000
 Sun 1:30-4:30 Moxley Team 600-0990
4300 Bevilacqua Ct \$825,000
 Sat/Sun 1-4 Fabulous Properties 980-0273
7250 Clubhouse Dr \$1,750,000
 Sun 1-4 Keller Williams Tri-valley 397-4200
1988 Via Di Salerno \$1,650,000
 Sun 1-4 Fabulous Properties 980-0273
5937 Ohana Pl \$1,699,000
 Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel Realtors 251-1111
4550 Entrada Ct \$759,000
 Sun 1-4 Mike Carey Investment RE 963-0569

5 BEDROOMS

1363 Briones Ct \$1,420,000
 Sun 1:30-4:30 Moxley Team 600-0990
1138 Mills Ct \$1,049,000
 Sun 1-4 Tim McGuire 251-1111

6 BEDROOMS

4925 Monaco Dr \$899,000
 Sat/Sun 1-4 Keller Williams Tri-valley 260-2220

Find more open home listings at pleasantonweekly.com/real_estate

*For marketing opportunities contact **Andrea Heggelund** at **600-0840 x110**.*

Builder confidence slips in April

Consumers still hesitant to go forward with a purchase

By JEB BING

Builder confidence in the market for newly built, single-family homes declined for the first time in seven months this April, sliding three notches to 25 on the National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index.

The decline brings the index back to where it was in January, which was the highest level since 2007.

"Although builders in many markets are noting increased interest among potential buyers, consumers are still very hesitant to go forward with a purchase, and our members are realigning their expectations somewhat until they see more actual signed sales contracts," noted Barry Rutenberg, chairman of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and a home builder from Gainesville, Fla.

NAHB Chief Economist David Crowe agreed.

"What we're seeing is essentially a pause in what had been a fairly rapid build-up in builder confidence that started last September," he said. "This is partly because interest expressed by buyers in the past few months has yet to translate into expected sales activity, but is also reflective of the ongoing challenges that are slowing the housing recovery — particularly tight credit conditions for builders and buyers, competition

from foreclosures and problems with obtaining accurate appraisals."

Derived from a monthly survey that NAHB has been conducting for 25 years, the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index gauges builder perceptions of current single-family home sales and sales expectations for the next six months as "good," "fair" or "poor."

The survey also asks builders to rate traffic of prospective buyers as "high to very high," "average" or "low to very low."

Scores from each component are then used to calculate a seasonally adjusted index where any number over 50 indicates that more builders view conditions as good than poor.

Each of the index's components registered declines in April. The component gauging current sales conditions and the component gauging sales expectations in the next six months each fell three points, to 26 and 32, respectively, while the component gauging traffic of prospective buyers fell four points to 18.

Regionally, the HMI results were somewhat mixed in April, with the Northeast posting a four-point gain to 29 (its highest level since May of 2010), the West posting no change at 32, the South posting a three-point decline to 24, and the Midwest posting an eight-point decline to 23. ■

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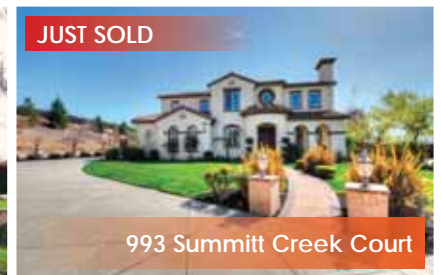
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<p>1225 Lozano Ct Pleasanton</p>  <p>bd 6 ba 8 sqft+/- 8,877 \$3,799,000</p> <p>Stunning, classic Italian Villa in one of Bay Area's most desirable locations. Catch your breath & prepare for what lies beyond the gorgeous entry of this estate. Nestled in an unrivaled setting among olive trees & lush landscaping w/ mile long views of vineyards.</p> <p>Uwe Maercz 925.251.2568</p>	<p>2407 Skylark Way Pleasanton</p>  <p>Open Sun 1-4</p> <p>bd 4 ba 2.5 sqft+/- 3,236 Call for Price</p> <p>The home is in an ideal location of a highly sought after area called Birdland. Again, an appropriate name since you can sit out by the waterfall (your private oasis) in the morning sipping coffee and reading the paper and hear a variety of little birds singing their songs.</p> <p>Michael Swift 925.251.2588</p>	<p>6107 Ledgewood Ter Dublin</p>  <p>bd 5 ba 4 sqft+/- 3,844 \$930,000</p> <p>Views of TriValley, Mt Diablo & Dublin Hills! Dub Ranch Beauty w/ 5 Beds, Bonus/Game Room, 4 Baths. Master & Guest Suite on Main Level. Premium lot location w/ access to open space. Walk to golf course, swim club & award winning schools.</p> <p>Cindy Engel 925.580.5107</p>	<p>3678 Foothill Rd Pleasanton</p>  <p>bd ba acres+/- 5.16 \$899,000</p> <p>Nice 5 acre parcel with Gorgeous Valley Views. West End of Old Foothill Rd. has black Gate entry to private road. 2 containers on property. Home at end of private road not included. Owner will finance, consider trades. All Services to front of parcel.</p> <p>Steve Mattos 925.4267978</p>	<p>2020 Charmont Ct Livermore</p>  <p>Coming Soon</p> <p>bd 5 ba 3.5 sqft+/- 4,900 Call for Price</p> <p>Italian Villa, custom home located within walking distance to the vineyards and downtown restaurants and wineries. Thoughtfully designed throughout to include custom appointed amenities, located in the heart of the Livermore Wine Country.</p> <p>Cindy Engel 925.580.5107</p>
<p>9999 Longview Ln Pleasanton</p>  <p>bd 6 ba 6.5 sqft+/- 8,330 \$3,499,000</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>Uwe Maercz 925.251.2568</p>	<p>8012 Golden Eagle Wy Pleasanton</p>  <p>bd 5 ba 6.5 sqft+/- 8,585 \$3,498,000</p> <p>Fabulous private custom Mediterranean in resort-like setting has it all. Porte Cachere, grand entry, gourmet kitchen, awesome theater w/ theater seating, stunning arcade & exercise rms. Vast lawns & wrap-around decks, guest house, pool/spa.</p> <p>Peggy Cortez 925.209.3451</p>	<p>1545 Yukon Pl Livermore</p>  <p>bd 4 ba 2.5 sqft+/- 3,777 \$965,000</p> <p>An exceptional home in the Portofino neighborhood of desirable South Livermore! This luxurious 4 bedrooms plus office and bonus room with 3777 sq.ft. on a fabulous 1/3 acre lot with pool, spa, playhouse and gorgeous oak tree.</p> <p>Weiner/ McDowell 925.251.2585</p>	<p>1944 Fiorio Cir Pleasanton</p>  <p>bd 2 ba2 sqft+/- 1,369 \$525,000</p> <p>Updated end unit! Vaulted ceiling, skylight, big bedrooms. Full bed&bath downstairs. Granite kitchen, tile floor in kitchen & bath. Recent updates: plantation shutters, laminate wood floors, neutral paint & carpet, H2O heater, lawn & roof! Walk to park, shopping, dining.</p> <p>Daniella Estrada 925.280.6448</p>	<p>8615 Mines Rd Livermore</p>  <p>bd ba acres+/- 16.53 \$1,300,000</p> <p>Extraordinary 16.5 Acre Horse property. Property has 3 wells. A beautiful 5800 William Poole Three Story traditional home has been designed. The plan is negotiable to go with property. Site has been approved for 8 stall barn.</p> <p>Carol Cline 925.683.0488</p>
<p>804 Amberwood Way San Ramon</p>  <p>bd 5 ba 3.5 sqft+/- 3,471 \$1,129,000</p> <p>Grand entrance, dramatic staircase, large marble foyer. Formal dining, elegant living room. Bedroom suite on main level. Updated kitchen, hardwood floors. Spacious master! Huge yard. Large pool & built in BBQ. Located in prestigious Hills at Bent Creek. Court Location.</p> <p>Esther Langhofer 925.855.4078</p>	<p>5901 Topfield Cir Dublin</p>  <p>bd 4 ba 3 sqft+/- 2,376 \$699,900</p> <p>Volume ceilings, wood staircase, light and bright w/ neutral colors. Full bed/ bath on main level. Convenient upstairs laundry room. Alarm system. Spacious rear yard with patio. Corner location offers hillside views! Bright/ Airy/Open floorplan. Tile flooring on lower lvl</p> <p>The Frazzano Team 925.735.7653</p>	<p>3304 Longmeadow Pl Dublin</p>  <p>bd 4 ba 2.5 sqft+/- 2,220 \$689,900</p> <p>Well maintained w/ neutral colors. Spacious kitchen w/ granite countertops & maple cabinets. Large master suite w/ vaulted ceilings & walk in closet. Cul-de-sac location- close to schools, shopping and parks! Diagonally laid tile flooring, custom draperies, 4Bds + loft.</p> <p>The Frazzano Team 925.735.7653</p>	<p>2046 Pinot Ct Livermore</p>  <p>Open Sun 1-4</p> <p>bd 4 ba 4 sqft+/- 4,340 \$1,124,000</p> <p>Beautiful South Livermore Home located in the Exclusive Chardonnay Estates. This home has it all...including 4 Lg Bds, 1 Bd Dwnstrs, Huge Bonus/Media Rm, 4 Baths. Gourmet Kit and Grt Rm. Huge Priv Bckyard with Built in BBQ. Top rated schools. Tennis Court Park.</p> <p>Corey Green 925.583.2173</p>	<p>188 Heligan Ln #5 Livermore</p>  <p>bd 3 ba 3.5 sqft+/- 1,548 \$449,950</p> <p>"Designer Home" Chef's Kitchen: Slab granite, mosaic tile backsplash, stainless appliances, great room and kitchen - balcony off of greatroom, sit up breakfast bar, surround sound, downstairs master suite, 2 car garage, Recreation Center, Activity Park (Pool, tot lot).</p> <p>Cindy Engel 925.580.5107</p>
<p>3100 Terra Granada Rossmoor</p>  <p>bd 2 ba 2 sqft+/- 1,474 \$449,900</p> <p>Unit 2. Park at the front door & enter your updated home with vaulted beam ceilings, gas fireplace, 3 skylights, 2 patios & expansive view. This freshly painted side by side duplex offers a den, bonus room, granite counters in both baths & a walk in SPA tub. Rossmoor Community.</p> <p>Andy Poryes 925.251.2570</p>	<p>6950 Crow Canyon Rd Castro Valley</p>  <p>Open Sun 1-3</p> <p>bd 4 ba 3.5 sqft+/- 2,700 \$883,000</p> <p>Country Colonial Charming This Gated Entrance to this Country Charming property is great. The main home is 2,700+/- sq.ft., updated kitchen and most windows are new, flooring thru out the home is newer and so much more. Cottage which is over 850 sq.ft. all on 1 Acre.</p> <p>Kristy and Company 925.251.2536</p>	<p>867 Trinity Hills Ln Livermore</p>  <p>bd 5 ba 4.5 sqft+/- 3,761 \$824,900</p> <p>Located in the Kristopher Ranch. Vaulted ceilings, crown molding throughout, formal dining rooms, 2 fireplaces. Kitchen features granite counters, cherry cabinets and tile flooring. Detached studio or office! 1 bdrm, 1 full bath on ground floor. Large rear yard with patio.</p> <p>Jon Wood 925.280.6421</p>	<p>6219 Main Branch Rd San Ramon</p>  <p>bd 4 ba 3.5 sqft+/- 2,932 \$869,900</p> <p>Athena neighborhood in Gale Ranch. Upgraded w/ designer accents throughout! Open floor plan w/ gourmet kitchen overlooking family room, huge center island, granite counters, sleek SS appliances, spiral staircase, soaring ceilings, private courtyard & so much more!</p> <p>Khrista Jarvis 925.855.4065</p>	<p>17860 Almond Rd Castro Valley</p>  <p>bd 5 ba 2.5 sqft+/- 1,922 \$699,950</p> <p>Dream Location, Freshly painted, Newer Carpets, Great home larger than it looks, Detached drive through two car garage, Desired school district, Large finished basement, Investor/ Home owners dream property, barn, three parcels with sale of home.</p> <p>Kristy and Company 925.251.2536</p>

Blackhawk East 4105 Blackhawk Plaza Cir. Danville, CA 94506 925.648.5300	Blackhawk West 3880 Blackhawk Rd. Danville, CA 94506 925.736.6000	Danville 15 Railroad Ave. Danville, CA 94526 925.855.4000	Lafayette 3799 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Lafayette, CA 94549 925.385.2330	Livermore 1983 Second St. Livermore, CA 94550 925.667.2100	Montclair/Piedmont 6116 La Salle Ave., Ste. 200 Oakland, CA 94611 510.339.4800	Pleasanton 5075 Hopyard Rd Ste. 110 Pleasanton, CA 94588 925.251.2500	Orinda 89 Davis Rd., Orinda, CA 94563 925.253.7000	Walnut Creek 1700 N. Main St. Walnut Creek, CA 94596 925.280.8500
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HOME SALES

This week's data represents homes sold during April 2012

Dublin

- 6601 Adare Lane** Dublin Tralee II to A. Oraz for \$470,000
- 11641 Amarillo Court** G. & D. Page to A. Palma for \$575,000
- 8462 Beverly Lane** JP Morgan Chase Bank to V. Wong for \$393,000
- 5425 De Marcus Boulevard #222** M. Ezat to Q. Zhao for \$311,000
- 3782 Dunmore Lane** L. & K. Chiu to C. Liu for \$445,000
- 3420 Finnian Way #214** Toll Dublin Limited to Y. Steuben for \$374,000
- 4649 Rimini Court #49** R. & J. Ram to K. & C. Whitehand for \$524,000
- 3637 Rocking Horse Court** TGL Inc. to Lau Trust for \$549,000
- 4509 Sandyford Court** Wells Fargo Bank to Y. Xu for \$402,000
- 5872 Southbridge Way** G. & M. Lopez to R. Abraham for \$535,000
- 4828 Swinford Court** GMAC Mortgage to X. Li for \$395,000

Livermore

- 466 Bell Avenue** Rae Trust to J. & E. Ostien for \$540,000
- 2903 Cabrillo Avenue** Spencer David Company to J. Westbrook for \$400,000
- 1449 Calle De Las Granvas** Price Trust to S. Greer for \$377,500
- 337 Chris Common #103** R. Finlay to C. Wu for \$190,000
- 5179 Crocus Way** Bank of New York to V. & R. Gatewood for \$321,000
- 835 Dana Circle** M. & J. McConvey to E. Vitali for \$535,000
- 3940 Dartmouth Way** M. Linne to D. Pineda for \$299,000
- 2413 Decker Lane** Rod Properties to C. & T. Mullen for \$620,000

- 1516 Juniper Street** P. & T. Clem to A. & J. Weed for \$280,000
- 6432 Laurel Creek Place** Meritage Homes to D. Garnhart for \$611,500
- 4772 Nicol Common #110** Lange Trust to L. & L. Alexander for \$126,000
- 3974 Princeton Way** Patelco Credit Union to P. Biasbas for \$307,000
- 6442 Ramblewood Place** Meritage Homes to Dillon Trust for \$660,500
- 2235 Robinson Circle** Patrick Lyman & Associates to D. Lindauer for \$695,000
- 717 Saddleback Circle** Pietro Trust to C. & C. Williams for \$480,000
- 533 Starling Avenue** Aurora Loan Services to W. Guo for \$270,000
- 6582 Willowview Court** S. Rompicharla to Z. Quan for \$430,000

Pleasanton

- 2706 Alpina Court** J. Mirr to S. & A. Moothedath for \$625,000
- 1206 Bordeaux Street** Citibank to E. & F. Abedin for \$580,000
- 7858 Driftwood Way** S. Harvey to RRS Ventures for \$502,000
- 3880 Eastwood Court** Y. Hu to E. & C. Moniz for \$675,000
- 4277 Echo Court** Wolski Trust to E. & G. Breverman for \$570,000
- 2765 Hartley Gate Court** K. & C. Whitehand to J. Jones for \$815,000
- 7330 Hickorywood Lane** W. Lem to T. Roy for \$1,191,000
- 8055 Mountain View Drive #F** GMAC Mortgage to H. & F. Fatehi for \$237,500
- 5639 Paseo Navarro** Dowding Trust to A. Yanagawa for \$650,000
- 3650 Platt Court #S** E. & L. Haberman to S. Hsu for \$600,000
- 3545 Rocca Court** W. & D. Carrick to D. & M. Kumbhar for \$550,000
- 2517 Via Espada** Woody Trust to F. Xie for \$631,000

- 3841 Vineyard Avenue #18** Federal Home Loan Mortgage to J. Dunn for \$106,000

San Ramon

- 2760 Ashwell Lane** C. Duong to A. Dinh for \$470,000
- 876 Bandol Way** Arch Bay Holdings to S. Sharan for \$910,000
- 101 Begonia Court** S. Khow to V. & S. Sharma for \$705,000
- 460 Blanco Court** Stgermain Trust to A. Shetty for \$400,000
- 7062 Briza Loop** R. Ni to L. Lo for \$470,000
- 7098 Briza Loop** N. Bernal to S. Doniparthi for \$476,500
- 214 Canyon Lakes Place** G. & D. Wagner to S. Martin for \$885,000
- 675 Carrington Court** K. & M. Han to Y. Lu for \$770,000
- 106 Claremont Crest Court** S. Suh to G. Mui for \$643,000
- 3935 Crow Canyon Road** C. & K. Kimball to R. Stone for \$290,000
- 5190 Fioli Loop** M. Tsang to N. Nawabzada for \$549,000
- 21 Gait Court** Nguyen Trust to Y. Song for \$701,000
- 7573 Interlachen Avenue** US Bank to M. Hart for \$540,000
- 1300 Kellybrook Way** Gagui Trust to S. & H. Wong for \$709,000
- 102 Lyndhurst Place** E. & R. Shoemaker to W. & S. Qi for \$1,360,000
- 9963 Mangos Drive** V. & M. Galan to L. Wei for \$540,000
- 2508 McLaren Lane** S. & S. Choudhury to K. Gottam for \$673,000
- 2475 Milford Drive** J. Choi to B. Bora for \$545,000
- 2330 Millenium Lane** A. & M. Puska to P. Boaz for \$647,000
- 518 Montrose Court** J. & M. Le to K. & V. Elliot for \$750,000
- 140 Reflections Drive #16** G. Venturino to S. & J.

- Hayer for \$140,000
- 7439 Sedgefield Avenue** Kuhn Trust to D. & J. Gilstrap for \$700,000
- 282 South Overlook Drive #115** A. Wali to A. Zaharan for \$295,000
- 3700 Vindara Lane** C. Palar to E. & B. Jefferson for \$710,000
- 1098 Vista Pointe Circle** T. Zundel to R. & J. Leichti for \$555,000
- 924 Vista Pointe Drive** F. Munoz to J. & C. Green for \$620,000

SALES AT A GLANCE

- Dublin**
Total sales reported: 11
Lowest sale reported: \$311,000
Highest sale reported: \$575,000
Average sales reported: \$452,091
- Livermore**
Total sales reported: 17
Lowest sale reported: \$126,000
Highest sale reported: \$695,000
Average sales reported: \$420,147
- Pleasanton**
Total sales reported: 13
Lowest sale reported: \$106,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,191,000
Average sales reported: \$594,808
- San Ramon**
Total sales reported: 26
Lowest sale reported: \$140,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,360,000
Average sales reported: \$617,442

Source: California REsource

COLDWELL BANKER presents californiamoves.com



DANVILLE
1250 COUNTRY LANE
CUSTOM RANCHER W/POOL! \$1,499,000
5 BR 3.5 BA Upgraded home w/In-law Apt.Kit/Ba w/Granite.Formal Liv/Din Rrm.5 Stall Barn &raised garden 925.847.2200



LIVERMORE
2468 ALLEGRO ST.
WELL MAINTAINED HOME \$842,950
5 BR 4.5 BA Upgraded Cherry Cabinets.Kit w/ double ovens,gas burner,built-in refrig.Mstr w/ retreat. 925.847.2200



PLEASANTON
Open SUN 1 - 4 715 MONTEVINO DR
GORGEOUS CUSTOM HOME \$1,190,000
4 BR 3.5 BA Incredible Views!Gourmet Kit opens to Fam.Rm Hrdwd Flr. Guest Ste&Office on 1st flr. 925.847.2200



SAN RAMON
145 COPPER RIDGE RD.
CONDOS AVAILABLE PRICING STARTS IN LOWER \$300'S
2 bd condos, Vaulted Ceilings avail, w/Garages, Gated Community, Renovated/Upgraded 925.847.2200

FREMONT
4805 KENTFIELD COMMON
WELCOME TO ARDENWOOD! \$550,000
3 BR 3 BA Beautiful Floor Plan.1Bd/1Ba on 1st flr. Upgraded Kit,Breakfast Bar,New Flrs,Inside Laundry 925.847.2200

578 REGULUS ROAD
BEAUTIFUL CUSTOM HOME! \$879,950
4 BR 3 BA Formal Living & Dining Rms.Gourmet Kit.Huge Family Rm.Stone Fireplace.Pool/Spa & Koi Pond. 925.847.2200

PLEASANT HILL
204 ASTRID DR
RANCH STYLE HOME \$435,000
3 BR 1 BA Near Dwtwn.Property-dual zoned.New Roof.Lrge Bckyard & sideyard access.Must See! 925.847.2200

1122 CONCORD ST
VINTAGE HILLS HOME \$819,000
5 BR 3 BA 1 Bed/Bath Downstairs.Hrdwd Flrs,Upgraded Kit.w/Granite & Oak Cabinets.Private Bkyd w/pool 925.847.2200

34435 BENEDICK LANE
ARDENWOOD HOME! \$535,000
3 BR 2.5 BA Beautiful Spacious Flr.Plan.Lrge Lot. Kit w/granite counters,new carpets,new doors,and more 925.847.2200

2576 ORVIETO CT
STUNNING SINGLE STORY \$799,000
4 BR 2.5 BA Court Location!Upgraded Throughout!Gourmet Kit.Granite Counters,Island,SS Appl.Media Ctr. 925.847.2200

PLEASANTON
7892 FOOTHILL ROAD
BEAUTIFUL CUSTOM HOME \$1,400,000
3 BR 3 BA Spacious Flr Plan.Elegant design.Quiet Location.Close to Parks,Trails,and Castlewood! 925-487-2956

826 BONDE CT
BEAUTIFUL CHARMER! \$739,000
3 BR 2 BA Walking Distance to Dwtwn.Copper Plumbing,Hrdwd Flrs,Recessed Lighting,Remodeled Kit/Mstr 925.847.2200

LIVERMORE
4706 BEL ROMA RD.
LOVELY RANCH HOME! \$1,995,000
4 BR 2.5 BA 6 stall horse barn w/pipe paddocks. Formal Din/Liv.Lg Fam.Rm.Lovely Kit w/granite.Pool. 925.847.2200

OAKLAND
2941 CAPP ST
FIXER UPPER IN GOOD AREA \$179,000
2 BR 1 BA Built in 1900's.Sun-Splashed Lot.De-tached Garage w/Two Storage Units.Easy Access to Fwy's 925.847.2200

1541 WHISPERING OAK WAY
BEAUTIFUL HOME \$949,000
4 BR 3.5 BA Granite Counters,Lg Bdms & Master w/Retreat,3 Car Gar,750 sq ft Studio w/ Kit & Full Bath 925.847.2200

SAN LEANDRO
844 SERRA DRIVE
BEAUTIFUL HOME! \$399,500
3 BR 2 BA Floresta Gardens.Sharp Home.Lrge Family Rm.Dual Paned Windows.Hardwood Floors. Master Bdrm. 925.847.2200



Pleasanton 925.847.2200 | 5980 Stoneridge Drive, Ste. 122



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DRE# 00882113
apr.com

LIVERMORE

OPEN SUN 1-4



5598 BERWIND AVENUE, LIVERMORE

Highly upgraded single level home on premium cul-de-sac, 9927 square foot lot! Three bedroom, two bathrooms, with approximately 1500 square feet. Upgraded kitchen and bathrooms, wood flooring and new carpet. Large park-like private rear yard with extensive custom stamped concrete work and custom patio overhead structure with fan. Spacious grass areas, Side-yard access and separated storage area with spacious shed. **OFFERED AT \$439,000**

OAK LANE



369 OAK LANE, PLEASANTON

Former Friden Estate Hunting Lodge - "Moonlight Oaks." Private driveway leads to 1.2 acre estate lot in premium wooded, secluded location. This is an entertainers dream home. Extensive use of quality reewood timber. Recently upgraded, desirable single level with tastefully maintained historic charm. Panoramic views of nature and historic majestic oaks. Approximately 3800 square feet with three bedrooms, three remodeled bathrooms, large gourmet kitchen, and incredible Great room with large Yosemite style fireplace and open beam ceiling. Large basement for storage and detached two-room wine cottage. **OFFERED AT \$1,479,000**

NEIGHBORHOOD?

JUST CLOSED — REPRESENTED BUYER



3231 VERDE COURT, PLEASANTON

Rare single floor townhome in Pleasanton!!! Former model home and move-in ready condition. Only minutes away from business park, medical facility and hospital, shopping, public transportation, downtown, and parks. Property features 20x20 travertine tiles. Two bedrooms, two baths w/ private yard. **SOLD FOR \$412,500**

OAK MANOR

SOLD



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 Castletown Country Club. **SOLD FOR \$1,550,000**

OAK PARK

SOLD



247 TOMAS WAY, PLEASANTON

Completely remodeled, single level in Oak Park. Remodeled gourmet kitchen, remodeled bathrooms, newer dual pane windows, crown molding, hardwood floors, upgraded baseboards, central air conditioning, and private rear yard. Newer doors, door trim, and hardware, upgraded light fixtures and fans. Close to downtown and shopping. **SOLD FOR \$527,175**

NORTHWAY DOWNS

SOLD — REPRESENTED BUYER



2534 SECRETARIAT DRIVE, PLEASANTON

Great central Pleasanton location that's close to schools & all conveniences. Three bedroom, two bath, 1421 square foot duet. Open family room with vaulted ceilings and cozy fireplace, dining area, & breakfast bar. Expansive master suite with plantation shutters. Private backyard with mature landscaping. **SOLD FOR \$465,000**

VINTAGE HILLS

SOLD — REPRESENTED BUYER

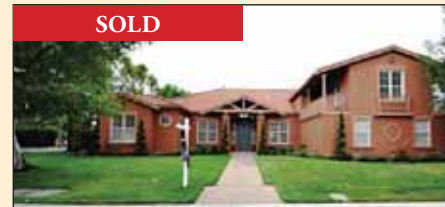


1320 BORDEAUX STREET, PLEASANTON

Completely remodeled, gorgeous custom home with loads of special features. Brazilian cherry hard wood floors & cabinets, granite counters, & stainless steel appliances. Family room, library, large master suite with luxurious bath. Entertainer's backyard with pool & BBQ. **OFFERED AT \$1,190,000**

WALNUT GLEN ESTATES

SOLD



3891 PICARD AVENUE, PLEASANTON

Wow! Better than new because it is done & ready! Extensively designer remodeled, single level, plus upstairs bonus room/au pair/guest quarters! Premium corner .34 acre lot! Four bedrooms plus bonus, four bathrooms, 3588 square feet. Completely remodeled gourmet kitchen with new granite slab countertops, designer backsplash & new stainless appliances. Remodeled bathrooms with granite slab countertops, custom marble flooring & surround. New interior & exterior paint, new carpet, new Travertine flooring! Vaulted ceilings, plantation shutters, crown molding, new door hardware & light fixtures! Security alarm system & intercom! Finished three car garage! Tile roof. Professionally recently upgraded landscaped grounds with spacious lawn area & patios. Award winning Pleasanton schools! Walk to neighborhood parks! **SOLD FOR \$1,205,000**

PLEASANTON 900 Main Street

The latest from The 680 Blog

Can a Seller Cancel a Contract?

If you have practiced real estate for any length of time, you have likely encountered situations where sellers want to cancel a purchase contract during escrow. Sometimes sellers have a change of heart and simply decide they don't want to move any more. Other times, there are circumstances that change such as a job relocation getting canceled or a home the seller has purchased suddenly falling through. No matter what the reason, when a seller decides they would like to cancel a contract, it is a very stressful situation for all involved.

In simple terms, a real estate contract is a bilateral contract. For the seller, there are provisions in the contract dealing with non-performance on the part of the buyer. If the buyer fails to remove a contingency or take other actions that the contract stipulates, the contract can provide the seller the opportunity to cancel the agreement after giving the buyer proper notice. These contingencies are in virtually every contract.

But what if the seller just changes their mind and decides they do not want to go through with the sale? There are generally no provisions in the standard agreement that allow the seller to unilaterally cancel a contract. There are three exceptions to this that come to mind.

One exception would be a seller contingency to locate a replacement property. If this contingency is included in the contract, then the seller would have the right to cancel the agreement if they are unable to locate and secure a replacement property. This is commonly known in the industry as a "reverse contingency", and it is not very common. The reason is simple... most buyers do not want to expend time, energy, and effort on a property if the sale is conditioned on the seller finding another home. And in situations where this does arise, there is usually a fairly tight time frame included to avoid stringing the buyer along for an extended period of time. In fact, often a seller will employ this only if they have a specific property in mind that they will aggressively pursue once they have a ratified contract on their home.

Another situation I have encountered is on bank owned homes. Banks have huge legal departments that often draft contractual language in the form of an addendum to the contract, or even the purchase contract itself. And to no one's surprise, they are heavily slanted in the seller's (bank's) favor. I saw one addendum from a large regional bank on a bank owned property >> **Go to www.680homes.com to read the rest of this article.**



Doug Buenz

Office
925.251.1111
Direct
925.463.2000
680Homes.com

CA DRE# 00843458

High Performance Real Estate



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

OPEN SUN 1-4



Pristine Custom home with 4 bedrooms plus office & loft, 5 baths, state of the art granite & stainless kitchen, travertine flooring, designer finishes and touches throughout, and private. 46 Acre flat lot on a quiet private road! **\$1,699,000**
5739 Ohana Place

PENDING SALE!



A tropical paradise! 3 BR, 2 1/2 BTH home with remodeled granite & stainless kitchen, designer upgrades and finishes throughout, and yard with sparkling pool & spa! **\$675,000**

PENDING SALE!



Stunning Castlewood Mediterranean! Hardwood flooring, huge gourmet granite kitchen, bonus room, and a large private .57 Acre lot with sweeping views! **\$1,379,000**

JUST SOLD!



Fabulous luxury home in pristine country setting! 5 BR plus bonus room, loft, & office, 7 baths, 1 acre flat lot with outdoor kitchen, granite, hardwood floors, and designer features inside & out **\$1,795,000**

JUST SOLD!



Stunning luxury home with 5 BR + office, 5 1/2 BA, hardwood floors, granite & stainless kitchen, and a tropical oasis rear yard with sparkling pool, spa and waterfall. **\$1,525,000**

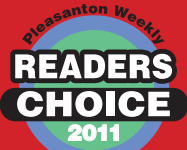
JUST SOLD!



Luxurious 5 BR, 5 1/2 BTH home in The Preserve shows like a model with approx. 5700 sq ft on premium 1/2 Acre view lot! **\$1,595,000**



apr.com | PLEASANTON | 900 Main Street 925.251.1111



VOTE FOR US 2012



KELLER WILLIAMS TRI-VALLEY REALTY

#1 OFFICE IN PLEASANTON IN VOLUME AND SALES



1641 Vetta Dr, Livermore
Outstanding 5 bed (6 potential) & 4.5 ba home w/ 3500+ sq ft. 1 bed/ba downstairs. Upgrades throughout including \$27k in solar (no PG&E), new carpet, crown molding, maple cabinets, plantation shutters & great yard for entertaining. **Offered at \$899,000**
www.williamsteam.net



Cindy and Gene Williams
REALTORS®
DRE # 01370076 and 00607511
925.918.2045

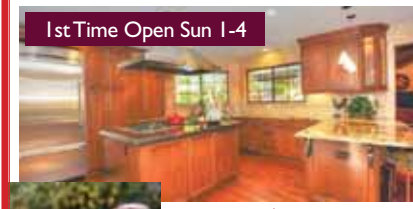


Sold!

1097 Lexington Way, South Livermore
Single story exquisite home! 5 bed/3 bath. Resort style backyard, pool/spa/waterfall/firepit. Sold for \$785,000. There are many beautiful homes on the market — call me for more information!



Gail Boal
REALTOR® DRE # 01276455
925.577.5787
www.gailboal.com



1st Time Open Sun 1-4

2913 Amoroso Ct
Custom 4 bdrm home in Vintage Heights with remodeled kitchen, custom cabinetry, high end appliances, pantry & hardwood floors. Oversized family room, wine bar and fireplace. Private backyard with deck and large lawn area. 3 car garage, wine cellar and court location. Offered at \$1,090,000



Dave & Sue Flashberger
925.463.0436
www.SoldinaFlash.com



Price Reduced

3218 Melanie Circle, Pleasanton
Beautifully expanded Parkside Home featuring **2 master suites** — one on main floor; suited for in laws or au pair; one upstairs with sitting area and balcony; luxurious bath w/heated floors. Large bonus room could be office or 5th bedroom. 500 bottle wine cellar; charming yard and 3 car garage. **Offered at \$918,800**



Ingrid Wetmore
REALTOR® DRE # 00923379
925.918.0986
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COMING SOON!

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Open Sat/Sun 1-4

4300 Bevilacqua Ct, Downtown Pleasanton
1782 sq. ft., 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath home on a 7919 sq. ft. lot. This beautiful home features amazing VIEWS and a pool & spa. **Call Donna for details**



Fran & Dave Cunningham
925.202.6898
Donna Garrison
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Open Sun 1-4

640 Varese Ct, Ruby Hill
Fresh new touches in this beautiful 5665 sq ft. French Country home offers 4 BR, 4.5 BA, bonus room, gourmet kitchen, golf course views, and pool/spa. **Offered at \$1,950,000**



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MAY 10, 2012



Andrew Greenwell
Team Leader/CEO
AGreenwell@kw.com

Every year over 70,000 Keller Williams associates across the nation commit one day to community service. This year Keller Williams Tri-Valley Realty will be stepping up to help senior homeowners in our community with home maintenance repairs, yard work and trash collection. We are excited by this opportunity to get out of the office and **“Give Where We Live”**

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