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AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING

From Warriors to BART to Livermore: Haggerty's views

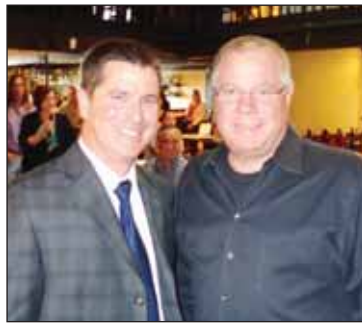
The Oakland A's will eventually leave the Bay Area. The Warriors are unlikely to move to San Francisco. A new stadium for the Raiders will provide space for summertime concerts, events. A system of toll lanes will blanket the 9-county Bay Area. BART to Livermore is a certainty in the next 7-10 years.

So predicted Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty in remarks last Friday to the Valley Real Estate Network, an organization serving Realtors and those who have businesses in the real estate field.

Haggerty was most adamant in talking about Oakland sports teams, a subject he knows as a board member who oversees the Oakland Coliseum. He told Realtors that the A's owner Lew Wolff believes Oakland is no longer a viable market for his team. But the chances of the team moving anywhere else in the Bay Area, where the San Francisco Giants rein supreme, are almost nil. So why barter with the A's over stadium issues when it's the Raiders who want to stay in Oakland? They play and draw crowds in lousy winter weather, meaning that a new stadium sized for football would also be available for revenue-generating concerts, professional soccer and other events in the good weather months.

As for the Warriors, Haggerty also thinks their much-ballyhooed plans for moving into a new arena along the San Francisco waterfront are fraught with problems. Environmental issues and opposition to building an arena along the waterfront are likely to kill the deal. The high cost of the project could also slow down investors who don't like to make long-term commitments in the current economic climate. Even if the Warriors move, the Oakland arena lease arrangement with Alameda County is one of the best ever negotiated, Haggerty said, and that obligates the Warriors to pay all of the debt outstanding on the facility.

Beyond sports, Haggerty, who is on the board of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), said BART to Livermore is certain if voters approve Measure B3 in November. The transportation measure would add another half-cent sales tax in Alameda County, doubling what the earlier Measure B that voters approved some years ago now assesses. In addition to the full penny sales tax, the two measures would provide \$400 million for the BART project with the MTC adding another \$100 million that



Dave Stark chats with Supervisor Scott Haggerty at real estate meeting.

it's already committed. The BART to Livermore project will cost an estimated \$1 billion and another \$400 million is also available in a fund split between Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Haggerty said he might have to give some of that to fund an eBART transit system Contra Costa is planning, but there would be enough left over to proceed here. He's confident federal funds would make up any shortfall.

Haggerty said Measure B was approved by 81% of voters. Polls show Measure B3 is generating support in the 70s, which means it should pass with the required two-thirds majority of those voting in the election. Once in place, both measures will continue their taxing powers in perpetuity, or at least for another 20 years when voters must extend the tax, but at that time with only a simple majority required for approval.

Toll roads also are high on the supervisor's wish list. The I-680 high occupancy toll (HOT) lane on I-680 is now generating \$1 million in revenue with most of it going for operating expenses. Haggerty said a similar HOT lane will replace the current free high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on eastbound I-580 as soon as work starts on a westbound carpool lane. These will be just the start of toll lanes in the Bay Area. The MTC is proposing toll lanes throughout the area with motorists one day able to "pay their way" from San Jose to Napa, Haggerty said.

Speaking of transportation, Haggerty told the real estate group that bus systems such as Wheels and The Rapid in the Tri-Valley and transit systems serving Fremont and the Tri-Cities should be combined to provide better and less costly service. It now costs about \$190 per passenger hour; a jointly operated transit agency could cut those costs in half.

Another project on Haggerty's priority list is the Alameda County "greenway." This would involve the county acquiring an abandoned railroad corridor that slices through the county and spending the money to convert it into a pedestrian trail and possible bicycle paths. ■

About the Cover

Tim Koopmann, widely recognized for his effective land management and ability to build partnerships to tackle environmental issues, talks to folks on a recent tour of his ranch about his conservation practices. Photo by Dolores Fox Ciardelli. Design by Kristin Herman.



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Borg Fence 575 Boulder Ct., Pleasanton, 426-9620	Best Deck and Fencing
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Cardinal Jewelers 3003 Hopyard Rd. Ste. B, Pleasanton, 416-1111	Best Jewelry Store
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Eastern Medical Center 3510 Old Santa Rita Rd. Ste. D, Pleasanton, 847-8889	Best Acupuncture
Eddie Papa's American Hangout 4889 Hopyard Rd, Pleasanton, 469-6266	Best American Food Restaurant; Best Kid-Friendly, Non-Chain Restaurant; Best Meal Under \$20
Foothill Optometric Group 6155 Stoneridge Dr. Ste. 100, Pleasanton, 463-2150	Best Optometrist
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Streetwise

ASKED AT THE FAIRGROUNDS

What do you love about the Alameda County Fair?



Nathan Esparza
High school student

I like the rides; Fireball is my favorite. I've gone every year since I was a baby. Even though it's not such a big deal now, I still remember how excited I was as a little kid to see the big rides going up.

Kathy Bennett
Mom

I love the whole thing. We live around the corner, and I look forward to it every year. It is so fun. I just went and bought a rabbit. I also won \$200 betting on the horses, so that was great. The horse races are definitely my favorite part.



Ashlyn Harris
Part-time real estate administrator

I haven't been since I was 4, so I'm excited to check it out. I'm looking forward to getting a wristband and riding all the rides. My mom wants me to check out the pigs and take some pictures for her, so we'll go over to visit the animal section.

Tony Kawaguchi
Student

I like the food, especially the corndogs. Last year I had the fried pickles, and those were pretty good. I like the concerts, too; tonight we're going to see Lonestar perform.



Cathrine Alioto
Middle school student

I really like the rides. It's also fun to watch everyone having such a good time. It's so great to have a place other than downtown to go with friends and family. I love cotton candy and I get it every year.

—Compiled by Kerry Nally

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

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DIGEST

Dairy dubbed Small Business of the Year

State Senate Majority Leader Ellen M. Corbett (D, San Leandro) honored Meadowlark Dairy, a cultural icon of Pleasanton, as the Senate District 10 "Small Business of the Year."

Corbett presented the award to owner Bruce Takens, a Pleasanton resident whose family has been running the drive-through dairy since 1969. Takens remembers feeding calves and hauling hay on the original dairy, and milking cows as a teenager, when Pleasanton was a sleepy farm town.

"Meadowlark Dairy has served as an important Pleasanton institution, providing jobs to local people and being very gracious in providing assistance to local causes," Corbett said.

2012 Teen Citizens' Police Academy

The Pleasanton Police Department is accepting applications from Pleasanton youths for its annual summer Teen Police Academy, a three-week program beginning July 10. This will be the 10th Teen Academy class and the department has a limited number of openings.

The goal of the Teen Academy is to develop stronger partnerships between the Pleasanton Police Department and youths. Participants will learn about law enforcement procedures from officers with topics including patrol procedures, dispatch communications, SWAT, investigations, juvenile traffic issues, K-9, evidence collection and animal services.

The Academy is offered free to local high school students between 14 and 18, with nine classes held mostly from 2-5 p.m. with exceptions for graduation and field trips. Classes will be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from July 10-25, and will conclude with a graduation dinner Thursday, July 26.

Interested Pleasanton teens can get an application at the front counter of the Police Department, or by calling Academy Coordinator CSO Shannon Revel-Whitaker at 931-5240, or at www.pleasantonpd.org.

Commission meeting canceled

The July 12 Pleasanton Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting has been canceled, and the regularly scheduled meeting for Aug. 9 has been rescheduled to Aug. 23.

The Parks and Recreation Commission normally meets the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Ave.

San Ramon says goodbye to Tri-Valley television viewers

City switches its community broadcasts to Contra Costa TV

By JEB BING

Mayor Bill Clarkson and the San Ramon City Council said goodbye to Tri-Valley viewers last week in their final broadcast on Tri-Valley Community Television's Channel 29, urging their constituents to start watching their meetings on Contra Costa television (CCTV), the public broadcast system the council chose to join starting last Sunday.

CCTV is owned and operated by Contra Costa County and is broadcast locally on Channel 27.

In a letter to Livermore Mayor John Marchand, who is this year's chairman of the Tri-Valley television board of directors, Clarkson said his city's decision to withdraw from the local system was "based on the economic reali-

ties the city is facing in San Ramon. The switch will save San Ramon about \$75,000 a year in broadcast fees."

TV30, as Tri-Valley Community Television is frequently called, broadcasts on channels 28, 29 and 30. With Clarkson gone, the board is now made up of the mayors of Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton.

At a special meeting last week, the TV30 board accepted Clarkson's letter and the mayors agreed to seek their councils' approvals to make up the difference of the \$65,973 impact that the loss of San Ramon's budgeted fees will mean. Under the proposed 2012-13 budget, Dublin was due to contribute \$70,000; Pleasanton, \$118,300; and Livermore, \$122,500. The fees

are based on the number of Comcast subscribers in each city, with additional revenue generated by TV30 sponsors and its foundation.

Melissa Tench-Stevens, TV30's executive director, said the budget for the current fiscal year that started July 1 is \$527,342.

Clarkson joined others on the San Ramon council to vote 5-0 to switch to Contra Costa television with most arguing that TV30 wasn't giving San Ramon enough coverage to warrant the expense. Unlike the other three cities, San Ramon's City Hall is not "hard-wired" for TV30 broadcasts. Instead, a mobile unit is dispatched to the city to videotape each meeting and then

See TV30 on Page 8



GLENN WOHLTMANN

Painting Pleasanton purple

Sabrina Hengehold ties a purple ribbon on Main Street, one of the dozen or so volunteers from the American Cancer Society who took to the streets recently to "paint the town purple" to raise awareness for the annual Relay For Life later this month.

"People say, 'Why the purple ribbons?' and then we can tell them, 'Relay for Life,'" said Florine Johnston, chairwoman for the 24-hour relay, which will be held from 10 a.m. July 21 to 10 a.m. July 22 at the Pleasanton Middle School track in Pleasanton. Worldwide 4 million people will participate to celebrate the lives of those who have fought cancer and to raise money for cancer research.

Tuesday afternoon fire, power failure in Pleasanton blamed on bird

Wings touch two live wires, causing shorts, fire, overhead transformer failure

By JESSICA LIPSKY

Electric power was cut to hundreds of residents in southwest Pleasanton Tuesday afternoon after a bird caused a series of transmission line shorts that led to a fire and a transformer loss.

Battalion Chief Jack Neiman-Kimel of the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department said the bird was perched on a power line on Sycamore Drive at Dalton Creek Way when it spread its wings. The wings touched two lines causing a major short with the electrocuted bird dropping into the field below, causing a fire.

At the same time, the damaged lines triggered an electrical failure at Sycamore Way and Sycamore Creek Road, causing a transformer to burst into flames and fall to the ground from its overhead position to the lawn near 476 Sycamore Drive, causing more outages.

Neiman-Kimel said neighbors heard a loud explosion when the transformer fell and called 911 at 3:53 p.m. Firefighters were on the scene in minutes and extinguished the fires within 15 minutes.

PG&E crews also responded and said power should be restored to the neighborhood by about 6:45 p.m. ■

Tri-Valley Foundation out of headquarters on Stoneridge

2011 audit shows red flags that could have alerted TVCF board members

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

The doors to the Tri-Valley Community Foundation have been locked for more than a week now, and although the lights are on, most of the furniture is gone.

Calls to the foundation go directly to voice-mail and its recently hired PR firm, Full Court Press, has not returned calls or emails, but the foundation did provide financial statements for 2009 and 2010 after a request from the Pleasanton Weekly.

An IRS declaration filed by the TVCF says the charity "makes its governing documents and financial statements available to the public upon request."

A certified public accountant who reviewed the financial statements on the condition of anonymity said it didn't take long to uncover red flags in those documents that should have alerted board members to problems at the foundation long before this year, when it found itself \$3 million in debt.

A May 24, 2011, audit notes "the foundation has suffered significant deficiencies in net assets that raise substantial doubt about its ability to continue as a going concern."

"The 'going concern' mentioned in the auditor's report is a huge red flag that the entity may not be able to continue operating and may go out of business within the next 12 months," the CPA said.

That audit, prepared by Robert Lee and Associates of San Jose, also says, "As of June 30, 2009, the foundation had a decrease in total in net assets of \$550,963. As a result of these deficits, restricted funds from agency funds were used for working capital purposes with the donors' consent. These factors create an uncertainty about the foundation's ability to continue as a going concern."

Operating costs during the 2009-10 fiscal year for the TVCF climbed from nearly \$1.3 million the previous year to \$1.9 million. That same time, salaries and benefits went from \$340,946 to \$417,592, leaving the foundation

See FOUNDATION on Page 8

TAKE US ALONG



At sunny Poipu: Al and Bev Morris of Happy Valley, Pleasanton residents for more than 50 years, visit their son's Kauai restaurant, Dude Dogs, with 10 other family members from Pleasanton. They were pleased to bring the Weekly with the cover photo of Pleasanton's own Giants team member.



Serendipitous find: Allen Roberts and the Weekly enjoy a little summer snow last August atop Muir Pass, at 12,000 feet, which is about midway on the John Muir Trail. Roberts said he forgot to take along the Weekly for a photo but in Tuolumne Meadows he found a copy that had been left at the lodge for use as a fire starter. "I grabbed it and used it a couple of weeks later for the photo," reported Roberts.



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Cook-Kallio launches campaign for Pleasanton mayor

Seeks to succeed Hosterman, who is termed out

By JEB BING

City Councilwoman Cheryl Cook-Kallio has launched her campaign for election to the mayor's post in Pleasanton, telling supporters that she has a long history of getting things done here with the strong, proactive leadership capabilities required to make decisions critical to the city's future.

Cook-Kallio, a longtime Pleasanton resident, teaches civics, government and American history at Irvington High School in Fremont. She was first elected to the City Council in 2006, and then again in 2010.

She is competing in the election for mayor with fellow Councilman Jerry Thorne, who is also in the second year of his final four-year term on the council. So far, they are the only two seeking the mayor's post which is being vacated this year by Mayor Jennifer Hosterman, who is completing the final year of the eight years allowed under Pleasanton's term limits law.

Supporters of Cook-Kallio filled the home and outside patio of the home of Amirra and Dr. Basil Besh on Club House Drive, the road leading to the Callippe Preserve golf course clubhouse. Her supporters include a long list of state, civic, county and city leaders, including Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty, State Senate Majority Leader Ellen Corbett, Assembly members Joan Buchanan and Bob Wieckowski, who represent Pleasanton, Mayor Tim Sbranti of Dublin and former Livermore Mayor Marshall Kamena.

"The upcoming mayor's race is critical to the future of Pleasanton," Cook-Kallio said. "It will determine the direction of our city for the next 10 years and beyond. I am running for mayor to ensure Pleasanton has the strong, proactive leadership required to make decisions critical to our future."

"Quality of life is very important to us all," she added. "The city has to be financially sustainable. This means that we all work together to make sure that we maintain needed city services and continue to maintain a safe community."

"I understand economics and what is important to all of us," she continued. "As mayor, I will take steps to ensure that we make sound fiscal decisions and maintain a healthy reserve while continuing those things that make Pleasanton a wonderful place to live. We want people to live, work and shop in Pleasanton."

She said that because of recent court-ordered and state government imposed rulings, the city has rezoned more than 75 acres of vacant land to accommodate low- to middle-income high density housing.

"As you know the city does not build housing, we only zone for it," she reminded supporters at her election campaign rally. "But once zoned, they will come. It is critical that we plan well and within the law. We can be smart about this. As mayor, I will make sure that all



BELLA LUNA STUDIOS

Councilwoman Cheryl Cook-Kallio (center) talks to supporters at rally where she launched her campaign for mayor of Pleasanton.



BELLA LUNA STUDIOS

Dr. Basil Besh, an orthopedic surgeon, introduces Councilwoman Cheryl Cook-Kallio to scores of supporters at a rally at his home near Callippe Preserve golf course as she launches her campaign for mayor of Pleasanton.

stakeholders are educated in what this means and are involved in the decision making process."

She said that as a public school teacher for more than 35 years, she also understands the impact this housing will have on the city's schools. As a member of the joint city-school liaison committee, she works closely with the school district to find ways both government agencies can cooperate to strengthen the quality of public education in Pleasanton.

"As mayor, I will have a unique insight to the issues facing our city, including locating property and funding for the 10th elementary school when needed," Cook-Kallio said.

Other priorities Cook-Kallio mentioned are the completion of the Stoneridge Drive extension to El Charro Road, which she supported and that is now nearing completion; widening State Route 84 across Pigeon Pass to provide an expressway-type link between I-580 and I-680, thereby reducing cut-through commuter traffic

through Pleasanton; and connecting El Charro Road from 580 to Stanley Boulevard.

"This will take a proactive approach," Cook-Kallio said. "I have those critical relationships with the business community and with surrounding elected officials whose cooperation we will need to gain the necessary approvals and funding."

"This election is about issues and effectiveness," she added. "It is about who has the ability and the relationships to get the job done."

Pleasanton's municipal election will be held along with the General Election on Tuesday, Nov. 6. In addition to Cook-Kallio and Thorne vying for the mayor's post, two candidates have also launched campaigns for seats on the City Council. Planning Commission Chairman Jerry Pentin and Realtor Karla Brown are seeking election to the two seats that will open as council members Cindy McGovern and Matt Sullivan complete their eight years on the council this year. ■

Pleasanton man prepares to sue city over leaked confidential information

Two others face misdemeanor charges in case

By **GLENN WOHLTMANN**

A custody battle involving a Pleasanton man has led to criminal charges against an Alameda County Deputy and a San Ramon attorney and an investigation involving a Pleasanton police officer.

Brian Lancaster has filed a claim against the city of Pleasanton, asking for in excess of \$1 million. Lancaster said the actions of the three led to him losing his job and custody of his kids. Three misdemeanor charges have already been filed against Deputy Ryan Silcocks and Lesley Regina, a San Ramon family law attorney.

Silcocks "was charged and is on administrative leave," said Alameda County Sheriff's Spokesman J.D. Nelson. He said the charges involve "inappropriate accessing information off a computer and

providing that information."

The deputy allegedly entered a court building after hours on two occasions, accessed documents, and forwarded them to Regina, whom he was dating. Regina — who represents Lancaster's ex-wife, Lisa Secord — who lives in Washington state, has been charged with one count of knowingly receiving records that she was not authorized to possess.

Lancaster said the Pleasanton police are conducting an investigation into the actions of Officer Tim Martens.

"I allege the same thing was done between Tim Martens and my ex-wife," Lancaster said.

He said Martens, who was in communication with Secord, later arrested him on a drug possession charge, then forwarded confiden-

tial information to be used in the custody case.

"It says right on the stuff, 'This is confidential information, do not share with anybody,'" Lancaster said.

Pleasanton City Attorney Jonathan Lowell confirms a claim has been filed.

"We are investigating it," Lowell said.

He said he couldn't comment further on an active case.

No charges have been filed against Martens; Silcocks and Regina are set to be arraigned July 9 on the misdemeanor charges.

Lancaster said he'd worked as operations manager for a construction company for 14 years before losing his job as a result of the actions of the three involved. ■



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Chocolate champion

Catherine Shearer, 19, of Pleasanton has won the Ghirardelli Chocolate Championship at the Alameda County Fair for her Beethoven-kugeln (Beethoven-KOOG-ell-in) a marzipan and cherry confection modeled after her favorite Austrian chocolates. For the recipe, go to www.PleasantonWeekly.com.



Spend evening with Bonnie and Clyde

Infamous outlaws speaking on behalf of museum

Protect your pocketbooks! Outlaws Bonnie and Clyde will be in town Tuesday to take part in the Museum on Main's Ed Kinney Lecture Series, which will present "An Evening with Bonnie and Clyde" at 7 p.m. at the Firehouse Arts Center.

The speaker series allows audiences to come face to face with people making history today as well as actors who look and sound as if they have stepped out from the pages of history books.

Bonnie and Clyde, the lawless couple from the 1930s will be portrayed by Alyssa and Ethan Foste, a brother and sister performing team who are both college students at Patrick Henry College in northern Virginia. They have portrayed a variety of characters in the Nevada Humanities' Young Chautauqua program. This event is sponsored by Chuck Deckert.

The speakers series takes place monthly January through October at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave. in downtown Pleasanton. Tickets may be purchased at the door or reserved by calling the museum at 462-2766. Prices are \$10, general admission; \$5, members and seniors; and \$3, students and teachers.

For more information go to www.museumonmain.org or call 462-2766. ■

Alyssa and Ethan Foste portray Bonnie and Clyde at the Ed Kinney Lecture Series on Tuesday evening.



PhotoGallery

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FOUNDATION

Continued from Page 5

owing more than \$172,000.

That debt should also have been a concern to board members, the CPA said.

“Clearly the negative net assets of \$172,334 is very concerning. Liabilities jumped up \$250,000 from the 2009 (audit) to 2010, indicating they are unable to pay certain obligations,” the CPA explained, adding that direct costs for programs climbed \$430,000 from 2009 to 2010. “This is a

huge amount that doesn't really make sense if they are trying to cut costs and stay viable.”

The CPA also pointed to the trend of expenses exceeding revenues year after year as worrisome. Tax forms filed by the TVCF indicate that began in 2006.

“Having negative cash flow from operating activities is always a bad sign that the entity is unable to generate positive cash flow from their day-to-day operations,” the CPA said.

Despite requests, the foundation did not provide a copy of its

most recent audit. That's the one that Board President and CEO Ron Hyde said prompted what he called a “deep audit” into where the money went.

Hyde, who took over running the day-to-day operations at the TVCF after former President Dave Rice was fired in May, said earlier that the foundation is seeking criminal prosecution against Rice.

However, the TVCF's most recent tax form, released last week at the request of the Pleasanton Weekly, indicates that Rice's salary went from \$98,51 in 2009-10 to \$140,116 in 2010-11 — the same time the audit shows the foundation was falling deeper and deeper into a financial hole. Hyde has recommended the TVCF file Chapter 7 liquidation bankruptcy. ■

The Tri-Valley Community Foundation's offices on Stoneridge Drive, with its receptionist's desk gone. Much of its furniture had been moved out Friday.



GLENN WOHLTMANN

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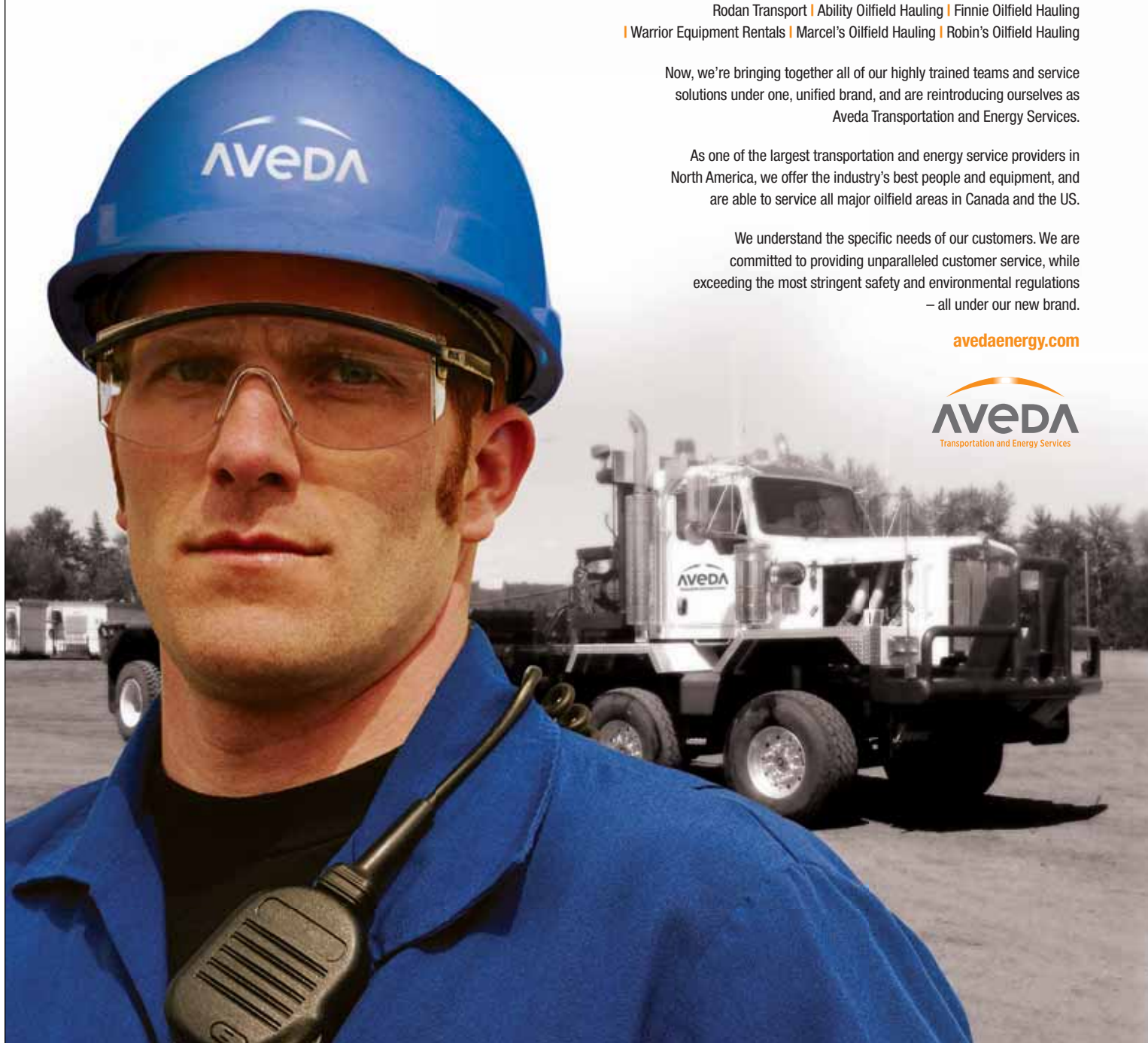
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TV30

Continued from Page 5

broadcast it a day or two later. Clarkson hasn't said how CCTV will broadcast meetings from San Ramon although there was talk at a recent council meeting of buying the cameras and wiring infrastructure needed to broadcast the meetings live.

In leaving TV30, Clarkson will lose his twice-monthly interviews with the other Tri-Valley mayors in a program called “Mayor's Report,” a popular feature on TV 30 that is aired repeatedly after it is taped. The council meetings also have been broadcast frequently on TV30 after they're held. CCTV will rebroadcast them only twice.

Eight studio shows and three field-produced shows currently air on TV30. In addition to the Mayors Report and the council meetings for each city, the other programs include Tri-Valley Sports Final, COPPS, Valley Health Care, Conversations, Slice of Life, In A Word, Valley Gardener, Let's Talk Sports, Your Schools, holiday events and special city meetings.

Although San Ramon cable subscribers will continue to receive TV30 broadcasts over channels 28, 29 and 30, coverage of San Ramon civic, city and community events will no longer be shown on TV30, although some are expected to be picked up by the Contra Costa station.

Sports coverage of San Ramon area high schools also will be discontinued with San Ramon quitting the system, Stevens said.

Mayor Jennifer Hosterman of Pleasanton said she urged Clarkson to persuade his council to stay with TV30, but she was not successful.

“We will miss Mayor Clarkson and his mayor's report on the issues affecting San Ramon,” she said.

Coincidentally, San Ramon's exit comes as TV30 is ramping up its local coverage of community affairs and gaining new sponsors in an effort to reduce the subsidies now provided by the three cities.

“We'll now have the capability to focus even more intensely on the three cities we serve,” TV30 Executive Director Tench-Stevens said. ■

Business News

Edited by Jeb Bing, jbing@pleasantonweekly.com

Safeway sees operating profits growing 'nicely'

Business prospects continue to improve, senior VP tells investors

Pleasanton-based Safeway expects operating profits to "grow nicely going forward" as a result of a refinancing plan and other ongoing initiatives, the chain's senior vice president, finance and investor relations told Supermarket News last week.

Melissa Plaisance told the trade publication in an interview that Safeway believes the temporary shift in financial policy it initiated last November — using incremental leverage for share repurchases at very low interest rates — will enable the company to grow operating income over the next three years, at which point debt ratios will return to the levels they were at late last year.

Safeway adopted the temporary shift because stock prices were at a five-year low, she explained.

Supermarket News said Plaisance's call with investors was arranged on short notice. Plaisance explained that her remarks were "in response to a number of inquiries in the last week" regarding the temporary shift in financial policy and a floating-rate note debt issuance.

"We expect to see operating profit grow nicely going forward as a result of our Just for U (digital) rollout, our work with corporate brands, our investment in natural lines like Open Nature, our fuel rewards and other loyalty programs and our health and welfare initia-

tives," she told Supermarket News.

"We believe the prospects for our business continue to improve, and with the low stock price and the low interest rates, we are confident in the (temporary financial) plan and working hard to bring it to fruition by the end of 2013," she added.

According to the trade journal, Safeway refinanced its \$800 million debt due Aug. 15 at the same time it began buying back shares.

Plaisance said Safeway anticipates reducing debt through the balance of the year.

"Our year-end debt balance should be lower by a significant amount than in the first half of this year," she told investors. ■

Ross donates \$50,000 to Colorado fire victims

Customers also given chance to contribute through July 14

Pleasanton-based Ross Stores Inc. is making a \$50,000 cash donation to the American Red Cross to help those affected by the wildfires throughout Colorado.

In addition, from today through July 14, all 30 Ross Dress for Less stores in Colorado will offer cus-

tomers and associates the ability to make donations at the point of sale to the American Red Cross for the 2012 Colorado Wildfires.

"Our heartfelt sympathies go out to our associates and neighbors throughout Colorado who may have suffered losses

from the wildfires," said Gary Cribb, executive vice president of Stores and Loss Prevention at Ross.

Online donations to the American Red Cross for disaster relief can also be made at www.redcross.org. ■

Should you buy wedding insurance?

Costs only few hundred dollars, but could save thousands

By JASON ALDERMAN

Disastrous wedding mishaps have long been a comedy staple, probably because so many of us can relate.

What bride- or groom-to-be hasn't had nightmares about hurricane-force winds blowing over the reception tent or a drunken cousin falling into the wedding cake?

Besides the potential for embarrassing memories, there's a lot of money at stake: The average wedding in 2012 will cost nearly \$27,000, not including the honeymoon, which is about what you'd pay for a well-appointed new car.

Just as you wouldn't drive off the lot without car insurance, so you might want to consider buying wedding insurance. It usually costs only a few hundred dollars but could save you tens of thousands if horrendous weather, sudden illness or a bankrupt vendor ruins your day.

Many insurance companies now offer wedding insurance. Typically, policies will reimburse you for deposits and charges you've paid to wedding vendors, as well as travel costs and other expenses incurred, if you need to cancel or postpone the wedding for a covered reason.

Wedding attire coverage will pay to repair or replace the bridal gown and groom's tuxedo, whether owned or rented.

Coverage options, costs and limitations vary widely, so read the fine print carefully. When comparing policies, pay attention to deductibles, maximum coverage limits, exclusions and deadlines for purchasing various options.

Probably the most important coverage is personal liability insurance. Many venues require liability insurance and either include it in the rental cost or require you to submit a certificate of insurance from your own policy. Before buying additional liability coverage, check how much coverage your homeowner's insurance provides and whether it applies to wedding events. You may need a special rider or want to buy additional coverage through an umbrella policy.

Make sure all major wedding suppliers maintain their own liability insurance. In addition, any venue providing alcoholic beverages should carry liquor liability insurance. To be safe, you may want to buy your own host liquor liability coverage as well.

Other common options include:

- Extreme weather. If wedding party members or the majority of guests cannot reach the wedding because of severe weather conditions (snowstorm, earthquake, hurricane), rescheduling costs will be covered. Note: Gloomy skies or drizzle don't qualify.

- If a member of the wedding party or immediate family is seriously injured, becomes too ill to attend or dies suddenly, rescheduling costs will be covered. However, illness or injury caused by preexisting conditions may be excluded.

- If an essential vendor goes out of business or doesn't show up, you're covered for deposits paid and possibly for the complete cost to reschedule the event.

- Some policies will pay to restage the wedding (including travel costs, cake and flowers, etc.) with the principal participants and immediate family members if the photographer fails to appear, botches the shots, or the negatives are lost, stolen or damaged; others may only pay an allowance toward reshoots.

- Gift coverage pays to repair or replace lost, stolen or damaged non-monetary gifts.
- Other special attire bought or rented for the bride, groom or attendants, when lost, stolen or damaged.

And finally, some insurers now provide "change of heart" coverage in case the bride or groom gets cold feet. If that's a real possibility, you should probably invest in pre-marital counseling before looking at cakes and bridesmaid dresses.

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs.



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LETTERS

Oppose the wars

Dear Editor,
As of the end of June this year, the number of American military killed in Iraq/Afghanistan since these wars began equals 6,514. The number of American military killed in Afghanistan so far this year equals 164. The number of Pleasantonians protesting these wars at June's Pleasantonians For Peace protest equals three.

Ah, Pleasanton, the city that supports the troops but refuses to oppose the illegal, immoral, unethical and unnecessary wars that kill the troops. Because of that refusal, more troops will be killed. I'm sorry. I'm ashamed. It is so easy to end these wars, to save these lives, but it takes more than three Pleasantonians.

Fred Norman

Let everyone bat

Dear Editor,
As one of those Little League father-coaches, I joined with all the coaches in our age group, and we, together, changed the rules re batting order, because of the Little League's official, really strict rules about substitutions and batting. We said everyone on the team bats in

order, whether on the field or not yet, so that everyone has an equal chance of batting.

We did it, and no one stopped us.

W. Ron Sutton

Ladies say thanks

Dear Editor,

I want to give a Shout Out to the Alameda County Fair for its great support of Ladies' Day at the Races. We have been coming to the Grandstand since 1992, in growing numbers, allowing well over 500 women to have a fun day at the races.

Over the past 21 years, the Fair has done many things to make the ladies feel special — displaying a welcome to us on the sign board, showing a video about our Ladies' Day, and giving each of us special Fair trinkets to take home. In the last few years the Palm Pavilion has let us reserve tables in their area so we can continue to have fun, food and refreshments after our day at the races.

Thank you Alameda County Fair for your recognition and support of our Ladies' Day. We truly appreciate it.

Kay Huff

EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

School district's new strategic plan reflects Pleasanton's high values

"Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it." These words by Alan Lakein, a well-known author on personal time management, serves as a prelude to the Pleasanton school district's recently adopted Strategic Plan. The plan serves as a guide for administrators and teachers as they develop their academic goals, plan instruction, and determine what kind of support students need so that they can reach their fullest potential.

School Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi and her colleagues began the process of updating, revising and rewriting the district's strategic plan last October in a series of meetings with parents, city, civic and business leaders. After much deliberation, the district's governing board agreed on several core beliefs, a vision and a mission statement. Once a draft of the plan was in place, more discussion meetings — or "listening campaigns," as Ahmadi called them — were held to seek further input from the community. Again, educators met with many community groups, including students and district staff, who shared with their expectations of public education in preparing students for the 21st century.

Through the campaign, the district heard from constituents about the critical importance of developing the "whole child" as it continues to push for academic rigor and high academic achievement. This requires a holistic view of 21st century teaching and learning strategies that combine a discrete focus on outcomes (a blending of specific skills, content knowledge, expertise and literacies) with multi-dimensional abilities, required to survive in a global economy. After all, problem-solving, collaboration, cooperation, communication, creativity, organization, technology fluency, self-direction and social responsibility will be required of our students when they enter the workforce.

The key components of "strategic planning" include an understanding of the school district's vision, mission, values and strategies. This is no different than in today's highly competitive business environment where old-style budget-oriented planning methods are insufficient. Businesses, as well as school districts, must engage in strategic planning that clearly defines objectives and assesses both the internal and external situation to formulate strategy, implement the strategy, evaluate the progress, and make adjustments as necessary to stay on track.

The Pleasanton district's new strategic plan addresses the next five to 10 years. It promotes academic goals, instruction and decisions being made in these very tough economic times, even the physical environment at school sites to reflect long-term goals. It also reflects the community's high values in academic achievement, calling for students to be empowered to think critically, be engaged in the community, collaborate with others and value diversity. We agree that in providing learning that is innovative, irresistible, creative, relevant and rigorous, this solid, community-created strategic plan will guide us in this quest. ■

YOUR TURN

The Pleasanton Weekly encourages comments on our coverage or issues of local interest.

Submit letters to the editor of up to 250 words and guest opinion pieces up to 500 words with a short bio to editor@PleasantonWeekly.com. Include your name, address and daytime phone number so we can reach you. We reserve the right to edit contributions for length, objectionable content, libel and factual errors known to us. Anonymous letters will generally not be accepted.

Submitting a letter to the editor or guest opinion constitutes a granting of permission to the Pleasanton Weekly and Embarcadero Media to also publish it online, including in our online archives and as a post on Town Square.

For more information contact Editor Jeb Bing at (925) 600-0840.

Pleasanton Weekly

PUBLISHER

Gina Channell-Allen, Ext. 119

EDITORIAL

Editor

Jeb Bing, Ext. 118

Managing Editor

Dolores Fox Ciardelli, Ext. 111

Online/Community Editor

Jessica Lipsky, Ext. 229

Reporter

Glenn Wohltmann, Ext. 121

Interns

Jamie Altman

Nicole Doi

Contributors

Jay Flachsbarth

Jerri Pantages Long

Kerry Nally

ART & PRODUCTION

Lead Designer

Katrina Cannon, Ext. 130

Designers

Lili Cao, Ext. 120

Kristin Herman, Ext. 114

ADVERTISING

Account Executives

Carol Cano, Ext. 226

Lorraine Guimaraes, Ext. 234

Karen Klein, Ext. 122

Real Estate Sales

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Ad Services

Cammie Clark, Ext. 116

BUSINESS

Business Associate

Lisa Oefelein, Ext. 126

Circulation Director

Bob Lampkin, Ext. 141

Front Office Coordinator

Kathy Martin, Ext. 124

HOW TO REACH THE WEEKLY

Phone: (925) 600-0840

Fax: (925) 600-9559

Editorial e-mail:

editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

calendar@PleasantonWeekly.com

Display Sales e-mail:

sales@PleasantonWeekly.com

Classifieds Sales e-mail:

ads@PleasantonWeekly.com

Circulation e-mail:

circulation@PleasantonWeekly.com

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POLICE BULLETIN

Next door neighbor businesses burglarized

Two adjacent businesses in the 6000 block of West Las Positas Boulevard were burglarized when a thief or thieves broke into one store, then used a sledgehammer to get through the wall into the next store, according to police reports.

The incident took place overnight June 26 at Delatorres Restaurant, the first shop hit. An undisclosed amount of cash was stolen there. A hole was then punched through to Vista Bottle, a liquor store, with an undisclosed amount of cash taken there as well.

In other police reports:

- Police are investigating a fraud involving a Pleasanton woman's debit card at the Bank of America. The woman, a resident of

the 5900 block of Bryce Canyon Court, reported July 1 that four charges had been made in her name at Internet apparel merchants. One was for \$821.55, another was for \$806, a third was for \$614 at Singer22.com and a fourth was for \$1, a charge usually used to check if a credit card is valid.

The woman spoke to a representative at one of the online firms and was told that the same Internet address had been used to order goods in different names that day, and that none of the merchandise ordered was actually shipped.

- In a separate fraud reported at 11:59 a.m. July 2, a resident of the 2500 block of Heatherlark Circle reported that he purchased a magazine subscription for \$10 from a door-to-door solicitor; the

check used for that purchase was changed to \$310 and cashed.

- A June 29 smash-and-grab burglary at Caffinos in the 6700 block of Santa Rita Road netted five 10-pound bags of coffee but no cash. A window was broken in the 4:30 a.m. incident.
- Jewelry was reported stolen in two residential burglaries last week.

In one, reported at about 2:57 p.m. on June 29, \$2,500 in jewelry was stolen along with electronics from a home in the 4600 block of Herrin Way. Taken was a \$1,500 silver and diamond tennis bracelet, \$500 in miscellaneous jewelry, a liquid silver necklace valued at \$300, and a \$200 white gold necklace with diamonds. Also taken was camera equipment valued at \$700 and a \$500 iPad. Entry was gained through a garage door.

In the other, also on June 29, a front window was smashed at a home in the 6400 block of Alford Way. In that incident, which

occurred between 1 and 2 p.m., \$1,000 platinum earrings were stolen, along with a \$500 ruby necklace, a \$200 silver bracelet and a \$50 coin.

- A June 27 burglary in the 3500 block of Kings Canyon Court netted two laptop computers, worth \$650 and \$350, a 47-inch TV valued at \$800, a \$400 32-inch TV, a \$600 camera and lenses valued at \$300, a \$200 video game console, a \$160 video projector, and a \$100 hard drive. Also taken was a wallet with \$100 cash. Entry was gained through an unlocked garage door.

- A San Jose woman was arrested July for the theft of a 1997 Ford Explorer from that same city. April Marie Carbone, 24, was taken into custody near the intersection of Bernal Avenue and Independence Drive after police found the SUV stopped and blocking a lane. A registration showed it was registered in someone else's name.

- A juvenile from Danville was arrested June 29 for burglary and

possession of burglary tools in the theft of about \$50 in clothing. The 17-year-old girl was carrying a pair of scissors to cut tags and a screwdriver to pry dye packs off clothing.

- Two men were arrested June 28 in unrelated drug possession cases.

A mother's call to police after an argument with her son led to the arrest of Thomas Joseph Maurice, 19, of the 3900 block of Kern Court for possession of methamphetamines and paraphernalia possession. Police received that call at about 10:06 p.m.

A 10:28 p.m. call about a suspicious person wandering around a parking lot near East Bay BMW in the 4300 block of Rosewood Drive led to the arrest of Nicholas Craig Thomason, 29, a transient, for possession of methamphetamines and possession of metal knuckles.

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

POLICE REPORT

The Pleasanton Police Department made the following information available.

June 27

Theft

- 9:09 a.m. in the first block of California Avenue; auto theft
- 3:03 p.m. in the 500 block of Main Street; two counts auto theft
- 3:15 p.m. in the 8500 block of Clubhouse Drive; grand theft, petty theft
- 4:07 p.m. in the 800 block of Madierra Drive; grand theft

Burglary

- 9:14 a.m. in the 3500 block of Kings Canyon Court
- 9:28 a.m. in the 6000 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard
- 10:35 a.m. in the 6000 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard

Vandalism

- 7:22 a.m. in the 4500 block of First Street
- 10:52 a.m. in the 6000 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard

Prank calls

- 2:32 p.m. in the 1000 block of Crellin Road

Drug violations

- 4:28 p.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive; possession of a non-narcotic controlled substance
- 6:08 p.m. in the 4300 block of Railroad Avenue; possession of a forged prescription
- 10:23 p.m. in the 100 block of Neal Street; paraphernalia possession, curfew violation
- 11:04 p.m. at the intersection of Old Vineyard Avenue and Vineyard Avenue; paraphernalia possession

June 28

Theft

- 12:47 p.m. in the 1700 block of Santa Rita Road; identity theft, misappropriation of property
- 4:28 p.m. in the 400 block of St. John Street; grand theft

Battery

- 11:06 a.m. in the 6300 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard

Drug/alcohol violations

- 2:27 a.m. at the intersection of Stanley Boulevard and Valley Avenue; DUI
- 2:57 a.m. in the 4300 block of Rosewood Drive; possession of a non-narcotic controlled substance, possession of a metal knuckles

- 1:58 p.m. in the 500 block of Main Street; marijuana possession

- 10:06 p.m. in the 3900 block of Kern Court; possession of a non-narcotic controlled substance, paraphernalia possession

June 29

Burglary

- 4:30 a.m. in the 6700 block of Santa Rita Road
- 2:57 p.m. in the 4600 block of Herrin Way
- 3:11 p.m. in the 6400 block of Alford Way
- 5:18 p.m. in the 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; burglary, possession of burglary tools

Battery

- 7:22 p.m. in the 2700 block of Laramie Gate Circle

Drug/alcohol violations

- 12:28 a.m. at the intersection of Abbie Street and Second Street; public drunkenness

- 3:53 p.m. at the intersection of Stoneridge Drive and Denker Drive; DUI

- 8:17 p.m. in the 300 block of St. Mary Street; public drunkenness, battery

- 10:27 p.m. in the 4400 block of Clovewood Lane; under the influence of a controlled substance

June 30

Drug violations

- 1:36 a.m. in the 4400 block of Valley Avenue; possession of a prescription in another's name
- 6:04 p.m. at the intersection of Old Bernal Avenue and Peters Avenue; possession of a prescription in another's name, possession of an open container of alcohol

July 1

Theft

- 10:45 a.m. in the 5900 block of Bryce Canyon court; grand theft, identity theft
- 4:37 p.m. at the intersection of Bernal Avenue and Independence Drive; auto theft

Burglary

- 3:18 p.m. in the 7900 block of Stoneridge Drive

Drug/alcohol violations

- 2:15 a.m. near the intersection of Airway Boulevard and Interstate 580; DUI
- 9:15 a.m. at the intersection of Deodar Way and Stoneridge Mall Road; driving with marijuana

July 2

Forgery

- 11:59 a.m. in the 2500 block of Heatherlark Circle

Vandalism

- 9:15 a.m. at the intersection of W. Las Positas Boulevard and Muirwood Drive

Public drunkenness

- 6:40 a.m. in the 2500 block of Stanley Boulevard



WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

Planning Commission

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

• City of Pleasanton

Application to establish site development standards and design guidelines for nine sites located at: (1) Dublin/Pleasanton BART station site, 5835 and 5859 Owens Drive; (2) 5758 and 5850 West Las Positas Boulevard; (3) 5725 West Las Positas Boulevard; (4) 4452 Rosewood Drive; (5) 1600 Valley Avenue; (6) 3150 Bernal Avenue; (7) 5990 Stoneridge Mall Road; (8) 1008-2481 Stoneridge Mall Road; and (9) 5620 Stoneridge Mall Road (PUD-92).

• P11-0053, Dan Suva/U-Haul Pleasanton

Application for a Conditional Use Permit to operate an automobile rental business at 3657 Old Santa Rita Road, Suite B.

• Tract 7968, Robert Molinaro & David DiDonato (Donato Builders, Inc.)

Application for a Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map to subdivide an approximately 1.17 acre site located at 4174 and 4189 Stanley Boulevard into 13 residential lots and one common area parcel.

The following meetings have been cancelled for the month of July:

- Library Commission
- Parks & Recreation Commission
- City/PUSD Liaison Committee
- Youth Commission
- Historic Preservation Task Force

**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

HOME ON THE RANGE

RANCHERS,
CONSERVATION
GROUPS UNITE
TO ACT AS STEWARDS
OF THE LAND

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Tim Koopmann is in his element roaming his ranch, the 850 acres of hills off the freeway just south of Pleasanton.

"My grandfather bought this land in 1918," Koopmann said. "We've been adapting, changing, making it work. My children and I are the first to have to hold outside jobs."

Koopmann, 59, is a Watershed Resource Specialist with the city of San Francisco Water Department, and daughter Carrie and son Clayton also work in related fields although they keep cattle at the family ranch.

He noted that things were tough after a winter with scant rains; he had to buy feed for his herd of 150 cattle. He also had to make decisions about selling off young cattle to be raised to maturity at other ranches.

Tim and Melinda Koopmann welcomed 100 visitors to their ranch in the spring for a barbecue lunch in the barn, where a sign hangs stating: "Every day is Earth Day on my ranch."

The visitors then piled into 12 vehicles to travel the rough ranch roads and view Koopmann's conservation projects, which earned him the 2011 California Leopold Conservation Award.

Tim Koopmann stood on the green hillside and pointed out the murky pond in the distance, which he said formed in an indentation resulting from the 1906 earthquake.

"This pond is unsightly by most standards — there's no emerging vegetation or canopy cover," he said.

But it's perfect for salamanders, he explained. Their predators — bullfrogs and bats — can't see them through the dense water.

Ranchers and conservation groups are increasingly building

relationships as those protecting natural resources recognize that ranchers have long been stewards of the earth.

"I'm here to let the general public know that farmers and ranchers are conservationists," Kevin Kiley, director of communications and outreach for Sand County Foundation, told the lunch guests. "The folks in this barn are testament."

He traveled from Madison, Wisc., where Sand County works on the exchange of ideas among environmentalists,

Ed Burton, a California State Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, was on the panel that chose the winners of the 2011 California Leopold Conservation Award.

"There are so many ranchers and families in California that are excellent stewards of the land. It was really hard to judge," Burton said. "Our mission is to help people help the land — they can make money and be in harmony with the land."

"These efforts are more important than ever now," he added. "The population in California is 37 million, and by 2050 has the potential to be 60 million."

Dr. Lynn Huntsinger, professor of Rangeland Ecology and Management at UC Berkeley, noted that Tim and Melinda Koopmann are great educational partners.

"They've met with students and hosted them," she said. "Students have no idea what goes on here. Both of them have made the trek onto the Berkeley campus to teach them."

She explained that the Koopmann ranch is an annual grassland, which grows from seed every year.

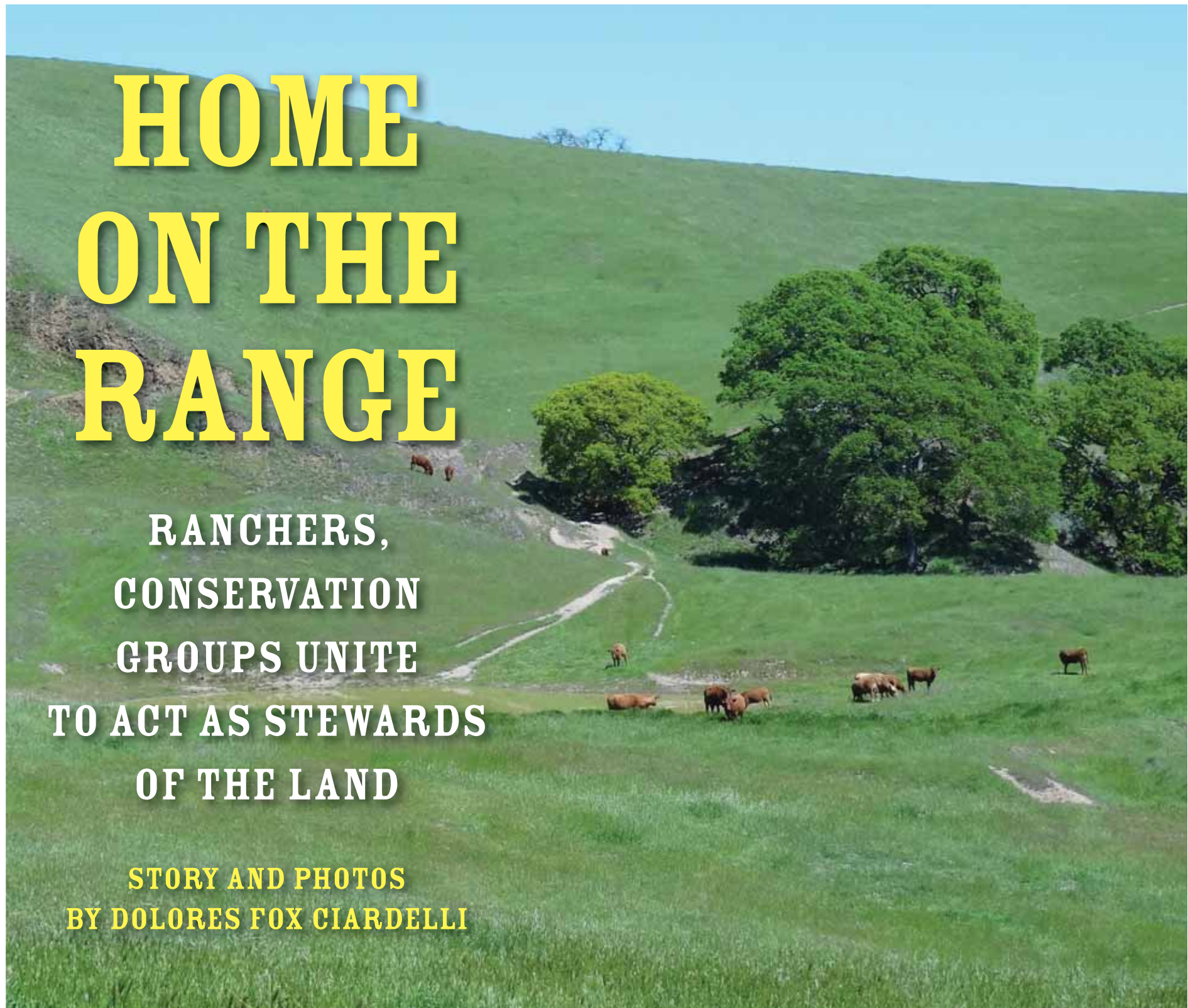
"Grazing is an important conservation tool, and grazing



doesn't happen in a vacuum," Huntsinger said. "You don't have cows helicoptered in, they have to be husbanded — you need a ranching community. Ranchers like this help preserve natural landscape."

"The stewardship effort was ingrained in me by my father and grandfather," Tim Koopmann said. "It's a work ethic."

"I love the land," he added. "We've treated it generation after generation the way it's meant to be treated."



Rancher's cattle graze via a rock conserv



Tim Koopmann was presented the 2011 California Leopold Conservation Award for his effective land management practices and his talent for building partnerships to tackle environmental issues. Clockwise from left, a large pond near a pond, formed when the land dropped in the 1906 earthquake, that is a perfect habitat for the endangered California tiger salamander; Koopmann is especially proud of this large pond, which is spring-fed and has a rock-armored spillway, next to a huge home built on property he sold to help pay his estate tax bill; Koopmann talks to folks on a recent tour about his conservation practices; a Hereford checks out visitors; Koopmann has donated 107 acres in perpetuity in an easement adjacent to Pleasanton's Callippe Preserve Golf Course.

“Grazing is an important conservation tool, and grazing doesn't happen in a vacuum. You don't have cows helicoptered in, they have to be husbanded — you need a ranching community.”

— **Dr. Lynn Huntsinger**, professor of Rangeland Ecology and Management at UC Berkeley

He noted that he owes a debt to conservationists because thanks to the endangered California tiger salamander he was able to sell easements to parcels of his land that is their natural habitat and pay off a huge tax bill.

After his grandfather died in 1968, a federal tax liability of \$125,000 had been the impetus for Koopmann to leave the ranch to earn a degree and begin teaching. He made it back to the ranch after almost 10 years, hoping he was better

equipped to deal with death taxes.

But when his parents, Herman Jr. and Tillyann, died in the early '90s, Koopmann found that he owed \$747,000 to the federal and state governments.

“It took 14 years to pay off,” Koopmann said.

He sold some of his land, which has been developed into ranchettes off Highway 84, and other parcels to owners who built large homes, one with a helipad that he used to commute to Silicon Valley for awhile.

Then Koopmann sold two easements, funded by the city of Pleasanton, the California Department of Fish and Game, and a local developer to satisfy mitigation requirements. Koopmann is being paid to preserve the habitats in perpetuity.

One is the salamander pond on a 30-acre site.

“The California Tiger Salamander — that's the most lucrative livestock,” Koopmann said with a laugh.

The other is a 107-acre easement on the border with Pleasanton's Callippe Preserve Golf Course, which satisfied the environmental needs for that development in 2005.

At first the easement was fenced off to encourage wild flowers, especially violas, to grow, Koopmann recalled.

“None grew there although they were growing on my land,” Koopmann said. “The land needed grazing, it needed management.”

Now a gate allows his cattle to graze the easement, and the wildflowers bloom on the edge of the golf course.

The Koopmann ranch also has 75 bird boxes on the property,

erected by Irv Tiesen of the Ohlone Audubon Society as part of its recovery program.

The placement of the boxes took some experimentation, Koopmann recalled. At first they were placed too low and a bobcat got into all of them.

Koopmann also developed a watershed management plan recognized throughout the state and even the world, according to Alex Karolyi of Sustainable Conservation. Solar-powered pumps draw from a spring for reliable water for the cattle and wildlife at three pastures.

Tim Koopmann was one of the foremost voices in the California Cattlemen's Association and has come to have a leading role in the California Rangeland Trust as he combines his stewardship of the land with actively preserving endangered habitats.

The 30-acre easement to save the salamander was one of the first mitigation deals arranged by the California Rangeland Trust. The preserved habitat on the Koopmann ranch also lessens the value of the land, thereby lowering future tax bills.

“Some people talk about conservation, species protection, and sustainable agriculture. Tim Koopmann gets it done,” Paul Banke of the Alameda County Resource Conservation District said in a letter that recommended Koopmann for the 2011 California Leopold Conservation Award. “He has shown all of us that the environmental community and ranchers can work together and achieve good things.”

“Every rancher I see is a steward of the land,” Koopmann said as he acknowledged his award. “I'm not special in any way.” ■

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- Dining, Arts & Entertainment
- All this and more

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Transitions

Submit a memorial (including photos and video), search recent obituaries and write a remembrance through Pleasanton Weekly's obituary directory at PleasantonWeekly.com/obituaries

OBITUARIES

PAID OBITUARIES

Barbara Alice Burton

A memorial service for Barbara Alice Burton, who passed away February 17, 2012, will be held at 3 p.m., Sunday, July 15 at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. Friends and family are invited to come together and share in celebration of her life.



Alexander Woodruff

Alexander Woodruff died of a heart attack on June 7th in San Francisco at the age of 24. Alex moved to Pleasanton from Thousand Oaks in 2000 with his family, and was a 2006 graduate of Village High School. He was born in 1987. Alex is survived by his parents, his sister Claudine, brother Scot, nieces and nephews, Kate, Wil, Charlie, Chloe, Harrison and Bennett. Donations in his memory will be welcome at mccsf.org.



Sage Lenhart Pattie

Sometimes sorrow comes unexpectedly.

In the midst of a valiant fight against cancer, Pleasanton psychotherapist Sage Lenhart Pattie passed away peacefully in her sleep on May 11, 2012 as a result of complications from the treatment in her battle with colon cancer.

Sage loved life to its fullest and embraced life with gusto even amidst the most difficult of times. Her joy, ready laugh, and deep empathy will be missed by all who crossed her path.

She was a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice in Pleasanton. She was widely known and appreciated for applying her practical therapy techniques along with discerning listening skills to help change lives. People often expressed appreciation for the gentle humor she brought to her work. She had planned to bring to her practice the unique skills developed in recent studies with Cathryn Clerc at Hippocrene Springs integrating horses as partners in the therapeutic process.

Sage was born in Palo Alto and was a graduate of Palo Alto High School.



During this time she was active in both Girl Scouts and Sea Scouts. Sage received her B.S. degree in Nutrition from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. After moving to Southern California, she completed her M.A. degree in Psychology from Fuller Graduate School of Psychology in Pasadena.

She began her career as a Nutrition Education Specialist and later served as a Public Health Nutritionist, working for such organizations as Los Ninos, Santa Barbara Family Care Center, Head Start, WIC, Santa Barbara Health Department, and guest lecturing at Santa Barbara City College.

Upon her move to Pasadena for graduate studies, she was invited to join the professional team of La Vie Counseling Center. There she served as a Nutrition Therapist and helped clients with eating disorders as well as other nutrition related problems.

During her graduate studies she began working with individuals, children, and families at the prestigious Glen Roberts Child Guidance Center in Glendale, California. She later founded Passages Family Therapy Center, a counseling outreach that offered psychotherapy to individuals and families.

Upon graduation she was appointed Program Director for the Wellness Community of Pasadena, a comprehensive psychosocial support treatment center for cancer patients and

their families. She was responsible for the planning and implementation of a variety of community, educational, and social events serving a client base of over 200 people. She facilitated multiple weekly support groups for cancer patients and their families.

Sage is survived by her husband of 32 years, Steven Pattie of Pleasanton, and sons Nathan Norris Pattie of Honolulu and Lucas Ohio Pattie of Martinez; her mother, Gracella (Gee Gee) Anderson Lenhart of Palo Alto, as well as siblings Bill Lenhart of Riggins, Idaho, Laurie iLoui Engelhardt of Boise, Idaho, and Russ Lenhart of Railroad Flat, California; and her parents-in-law Frank and Mary Jane Pattie of Gilroy, and sister-in-law Linda Pattie of Columbia, Missouri. Preceding her in death was her father James (Ted) Lenhart. She was blessed to have many friends, professional colleagues, aunts, uncles and cousins, all of whom will miss her deeply.

A celebration of her life is planned in her honor on Saturday, July 21, at 4:00 P.M., at the family farm in the Santa Cruz Mountains, ten miles west of Gilroy.

In lieu of flowers, friends and others who shared her vision and supported her mission in life will be invited to contribute to the Sage Pattie Foundation, which the family is planning to establish. For more information, write to stevenpattie@hotmail.com.

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TriValley Life

PEOPLE AND LIFESTYLES
IN OUR COMMUNITY

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



story and photos by **DEBORAH GROSSMAN**

During an Italian winemaker dinner in late June, I knocked down a “raviolo” at an elegant restaurant in San Francisco. This singular ravioli was filled with “dry-farmed, organic Comic pears and truffled foie gras.” I heard the vintner describe Gavi, a white wine from Piedmont, hitherto unknown to me, which fit my next writing assignment.

But I was distracted. I wanted foie gras ravioli rather than ravioli. In a few days the law to ban foie gras in California would become effective, and I wanted to savor this taste. Since my mission as a food and drink journalist is to explore gastronomy here and abroad, I daydreamed about reuniting with this delicious, cholesterolly-incorrect treat in Italy.

The next day I reached into our refrigerator groaning under bags of berries, salad and tofu from the farmers market to resume my normal home healthy menu. But I was soon sidetracked by marketing messages about “Food, Fun and Family” at the Alameda County Fair in Pleasanton.

I abandoned the desk, slipped into flip flops and cooked up a plan for culinary adventure at the Fair. I would hunt down new, creative deep-fried grub, validate rumors about gourmet pizza and discover secret menu items.

Speaking of grub, I had read about chocolate-covered crickets in the pre-event literature. I learned that Jungle George and his exotic treats cancelled this year, but I figured there would be plenty of food booths squeezed between fair activities, carnival rides and contests.

In the spirit of dipping into deep-fried foods while genuinely hungry, I headed straight to the Sweet Cheeks trailer. An alumna from fair food shows on the Food Network and Travel Channel, owner Jacqueline Bradbury confirmed that deep-fried fruity pebbles on a stick is the “it” item this year.

I liked the contrast between the colorful, crunchy cereal and the smooth and not-over-the-top breading. But I preferred the deep-fried red velvet cake — I’ll take my cream cheese icing in any form.

Bradbury shared some fun fair wisdom: “What you eat at the Fair stays at the Fair.”

I asked her if she meant indulging in Pleasanton is like being naughty in Las Vegas. She laughed and explained that you walk the calories off at the Fair.

Next up, an investigation into

the “gourmet” aspect of Cardinali Wood Fire Pizza and Grill. Here’s a rare pizza vendor who lists the name of his cheese company on the ingredients, makes his sauce daily, and uses a unique, wood-fired pizza oven. I watched Fair employees line up — a tip that this place might be a keeper.

The large, thin-crust Margherita pizza with fresh ingredients — mozzarella, tomatoes, basil and garlic — tasted like upscale restaurant fare and compared favorably in price at \$18. For the meat pizza, Cardinali grills fresh sausage rather than purchasing frozen crumbles.

Cardinali is new to Pleasanton’s Fair. He noticed the strong lineup of ethnic food from Thai to Chinese and Mexican. What also struck him was the gourmet tooth of his customers.

“I’ve sold more whole Margherita pizzas here than anywhere,” said Cardinali.

I saved room for a triangular slice of Cardinali’s new, deep-fried watermelon and my favorite, deep-fried, upside-down pineapple “cake” with a secret, light batter of five different flours.

As I finished the sweets, Cardinali shared the “secret” vegetarian menu: Simply ask for a veggie sandwich or pizza. Vegetarians can find grilled corn in the Fair’s BBQ Country Corral.

The overhead sign at Juicy’s reads, “World’s Largest Outlaw Grill.” Last year at the Fair, Juicy’s broke the world record for the largest commercially available hamburger with trimmings weighing 777 pounds. On my second visit to the Fair, I demolished a measly, half-pound Outlaw Burger, which quashed my desire to eat for a week.

Thinking Juicy’s was all about meat, I was surprised to see Juicy’s funnel cake trailer. Who could eat the best-selling funnel cake with fresh strawberries, ice cream and whipped cream after that burger, Cowabunga corn dog or turkey leg?

OK, so I had a bite of the vanilla ice cream version. It was hot and sweet with a slightly tart hit from fresh strawberry slices. Other vendors tout real strawberries, but I saw those limp pieces submerged in sweetened strawberry syrup.

I also discovered that, improbably, Juicy’s is a secret spot for romance. Manager Benny Telles shared his secret.

“Ask for the whipped cream in a heart shape. Most guys do this after dark to be ‘smooth’ and to get some brownie points,” Telles said.

The Fair, after all, is a mix of food and fun. From free concerts

See **FAIR GRUB** on Page 16

the *glories* of Fair grub

Culinary journalist finds deep-fried adventure



Top: Juicy’s Outlaw Grill offers Outlaw Burgers and other very large meaty treats but also has a funnel cake trailer. Left: Roger Santos from San Jose eats deep-fried watermelon at Cardinali’s while giving a ride to his son Lucas. Above: Deep-fried fruity pebbles on a stick, available at the Sweet Cheeks trailer, is the hot food item at the Fair this year.





FAIR GRUB

Continued from Page 15

with big names like the Temptations, to live horse racing, the BBQ Ribs-Chicken Cook-off and Gumbo Contest, this weekend is filled with action.

I also paid my annual homage to the All-Alaskan Pig Racing. This year I felt special kinship with the stars, especially 12-week-old Soapy Smith who will soon outgrow piglet status. Unlike most of us fair-goers, Soapy eats a wholesome mix of corn, grains and nutrients. But his feed is coated in a molasses glaze to pump up his appetite.

"These pigs are athletes," owner Donald Noll explained.

Strolling to the exit in a food haze, I spied Colossal Italian Gelato and experienced an unexpected farm-to-table moment. Owner Matt Hognin extolled the virtue of local produce in his preservative-free, creamy fruit creations with cherries from Brentwood and strawberries from Livermore.

Miraculously I found room for a spoonful of peach and champagne gelato.

If only I could get my hands on a foie gras ravioli, this refreshing dessert would be the perfect ending to my fantasy Italian dinner. ■

Far left: Sweet Cheeks makes an art out of deep-frying desserts. Bill Stone from Burlington, Wis., who was visiting family in Oakland, gets ready to chow down on a turkey leg from Juicy's Outlaw Grill.



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ON THE TOWN • CALENDAR

Class Reunions

AMADOR CLASS OF '67 REUNION
The Amador Class of 1967 is holding its 45th Reunion, a three-day event. Friday, Sept 7, will be a golf tournament in the morning, pizza party in the evening; Saturday, Sept 8, will be a dinner dance at the San Ramon Marriott; Sunday, Sept 9, will be a brunch. Sept. 7-9 from 6 p.m.-midnight \$80 per person for Saturday Marriott Hotel, 2600 Bishop Dr., San Ramon. 829-0805.

AMADOR HIGH CLASS OF 1982 REUNION
The Amador Valley High Class of 1982 will be holding its 30-year reunion from 6-10 p.m., Saturday, July 21, at the Mitchell Katz Winery, 1188 Vineyard Ave., Pleasanton. Tickets are \$85, on sale at www.amadorvalleyhsclassof82.com.

myevent.com. Call 548-9931 or email Patrickkraft@comcast.net.

AMADOR VALLEY CLASS OF 1977
Amador Valley High's class of 1977 is celebrating its 35th year reunion. For additional details, contact Elaine Eiden at elaine@caldsl.net or Wayne Singleton at singletonpvf@sbcglobal.net. Saturday, Sept. 8 from 6-10 p.m. \$65 per person. Beeb's Sports Bar, 915 Clubhouse Dr., Livermore.

Classes

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Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Call Mary Luskin at 931-3400, ext. 7. Free and open to all.

Clubs

TRI-VALLEY DIVE CLUB MEETING
Monthly meetings are from 7-9 p.m., the second Wednesday of every month. Meetings are held at Dive N Trips, 1032 Serpentine Ln. Guest speakers provide exciting topics on diving. For further information, call 462-7234 or visit www.diventrips.com.

TRI-VALLEY REPUBLICAN WOMEN FEDERATED DINNER
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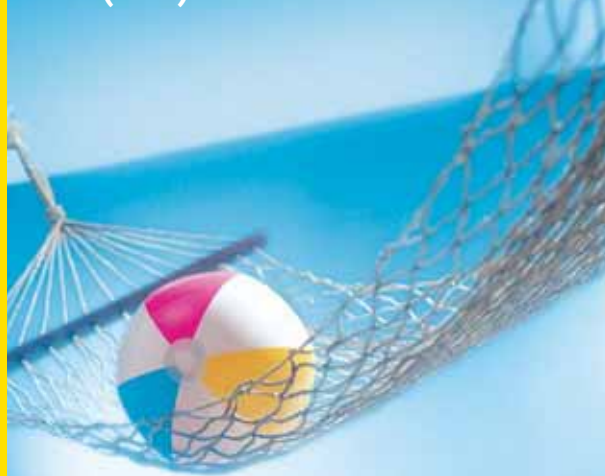
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Thursday, July 12, at Cattlemens Restaurant, 2882 Kitty Hawk Rd., Livermore. Dinners are \$22. For movie and dinner reservations, call Phyllis Couper at 462-4931 or email coupclan1962@pacbell.net. A reservation made is a reservation paid.

Concerts

CONCERTS IN THE PARK Pleasanton Downtown Association presents live concerts throughout the summer from 7-8:30 p.m. Fridays at Lions Wayside Park at the corner of First and Neal streets. Enjoy Classic Rock Hits by The Aerodynes on July 6 then come back July 13 for Rock & Soul by The Houserockers. Visit www.pleasantondowntown.net.

THE HOT FRITTATAS The Hot Frittatas, fiddle, mandolin, accordion, guitar and cello, will play their international cafe music — Italian, French, Mexican, Brazilian — at 2 p.m., Sunday, July 15, at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. The program is free and open to all. Call 931-4305.

Events

EVERYTHING POETRY Poet Laureate, Cynthia Bryant, will host “Everything Poetry” in two parts with “Second Saturday Soup” from 10 a.m.-noon, on the second Saturday of every month, at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Ave.; and “Third Tuesday Trope” from 7-9 p.m., on the third Tuesday of every month, at Towne Center Books, 555 Main St. E-mail Cynthia at pleasantonpoetry@ci.pleasanton.ca.us.

FARMERS MARKET Visit the Pleasanton Farmers Market from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. every Saturday, on East Angela Street between Main and First streets. The Farmers Market is open every Saturday, year-round, rain or shine, to provide the season's freshest fruits and vegetables, sold by the very farmers that planted, nurtured and harvested the crop.

FAST & FURIOUS FESTIVAL The event is an all-day wellness and lifestyle festival designed to bring the world of cycling and running together in one place while highlighting the charm of downtown. Proceeds from the event will be donated to ALS TDI. Sunday, Aug. 5 from 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Free festival admission. Fast & Furious Festival, 830 Main St., Pleasanton. 407-3130. www.fastandfuriouspleasanton.com

FIRST WEDNESDAY'S STREET FAIR First Wednesday will take place from 6-9 p.m., Wednesday, July 11, in downtown Pleasanton. For more information, contact the Pleasanton Downtown Association at 484-2199 or visit www.pleasantondowntown.net.

LADIES OF TRI-VALLEY...TIME FOR FUN! Come for the fun of meeting and chatting with other women at GNON (Girls Night Out Networking). Make new friends while networking and enjoying great food and drinks. RSVP to gnoners@gmail.com by July 23. Wednesday, July 25 from 5-8 p.m. \$10/members & \$15/non-members HealthSpring Chiropractic, 5673 W. Las Positas Blvd, Suite 215, Pleasanton. 487-4748. www.gnon-trivalley.com

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



NARFE TRI-VALLEY CHAPTER 397

Federal Employees and Retirees are invited for food, fun and a chance for prizes. Hotdogs cooked in beer will be the specialty when the Tri-Valley Chapter 397 (formally Livermore) of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) Association hosts its annual picnic, silent auction and bingo party at noon, Thursday, July 12, at Farm Bureau Building, 638 Enos Way, Livermore. No cost or obligation to prospective member guests to attend the picnic. Members, call Vivian at 922-0667 for arrangements to bring a dish to share. For more information, call Gary at 373-6758 or email packrat49er@netscape.net.

RABBIT ADOPTION The event is at the East Bay SPCA in Dublin with adoptable bunnies from six different rescue groups from all over the Bay Area. Rabbit experts will be on hand. Bring your rabbit for a free nail trim, or to find him/her a bunny friend. Saturday, July 7 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free East Bay SPCA, Tri-Valley Adoption Center, 4651 Gleason Dr., Dublin. 415-994-6876. www.harvesthomesanctuary.org

RELAY FOR LIFE 2012 American Cancer Society's 24-hour Relay for Life! is from 10 a.m.-10 a.m., Saturday, July 21 through Sunday, July 22, at Pleasanton Middle School track, 5001 Case Ave., Pleasanton. First lap is for cancer survivors. Special Luminary Ceremony at 9 p.m. honoring cancer survivors and in memory of those who have lost their battle. Survivors, call Sue at 200-1328.

Film

MOVIES IN THE PARK You are invited to enjoy a free movie at dusk, Thursday, July 12, at Amador Valley Community Park, 4301 Black Ave., Pleasanton. “Kung Fu Panda 2” is playing, the sequel to the popular “Kung Fu Panda” film featuring loveable Po and friends with voices by Jack Black, Angelina Jolie and Gary Oldman. Film is rated PG. Seating will be cordoned off in sections with blanket seating in the front, low-back chairs in the center, and camp chairs and other higher positioned seating in the rear, to accommodate the best viewing.

Public Eye to be featured this Wednesday

This month's First Wednesday Street Party will be held from 6-9 p.m., Wednesday, July 11, due to the Fourth of July holiday falling on the first Wednesday of July, with Public Eye performing. First Wednesday is put on by the Pleasanton Downtown Association from May-September.

Fundraisers

PICNIC AND OPERA IN A VINEYARD Enjoy a relaxed summer evening of classic opera and wine to benefit Livermore Valley Opera, in a relaxed setting among the vines from 5-8 p.m., Sunday, July 15, at Retzlaff Vineyards, 1356 S. Livermore Ave., Livermore. Tickets are \$30 through July 9, then \$35. Bring your own picnic dinner or purchase artisan pizzas and salads from Soleil Wood Fired Pizza, as well as organically made Retzlaff wines. Guests will also be able to purchase songs from a “menu of arias” for the four renowned opera singers to perform. Call 960-9210 or visit www.livermorevalleyopera.com.

TEAM IN TRAINING INFORMATION MEETING Join The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Team in Training and become a part of the TEAM that runs, walks, cycles and swims to save lives. With over 2,300 certified coaches they'll get you ready for a full or half marathon, century ride, or triathlon while you raise funds to beat cancer. Tuesday, July 10 at 6:30 p.m. Pleasanton Middle School, 5001 Case Ave., Pleasanton. 800-78-TRAIN. www.Teamtraining.org/sf

Kids & Teens

M.O.M.'S READING TIME Preschoolers and their parents are invited to meet from 10-11 a.m. the second Wednesday of the month at Museum On Main, 603 Main St. Museum On Main introduces your preschooler to books and activities about the unique people, places, and events in our community. Call 462-2766 or visit www.museumonmain.org.

Live Music

'HAIRSPRAY: THE BROADWAY MUSICAL' Wake up to 1962 Baltimore, where the only thing bigger than “The Corny Collins Show” is the big hair and big talent of our plus-size teens heroine, Tracy Turnbald. Join her as she follows her quest for love, stardom and social equality, all without musing her hair. The Pacific Coast Repertory Theatre's actors present a sneak peek — a scene and a song or two from the musical — and a free dance lesson. The event is at 2 p.m., Sunday, July 8 at the

Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Ave., Pleasanton. The program is free and open to all. Call 931-3405.

On Stage

FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK: 'HENRY V' The city of Pleasanton presents the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival's 30th season of Free Shakespeare in the Park with its production of “Henry V” at 7:30 p.m., Saturday and Sundays, June 30-July 15, at Amador Valley Community Park, 4301 Black Ave. Admission is free; everyone is invited to bring blankets and picnic suppers to enjoy during the performance. For more information call 931-5340.

Recreation

WALK IN ORLOFF PARK TOMORROW No matter what the temperature at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, July 7, walkers will have it made in the shade as they enjoy the pathway meandering through L-shaped Orloff Park. Located at the corner of Santa Rita Rd. and Valley Ave., Pleasanton, the park (and curbside parking) is best accessed via the next signal east of that intersection. Wear comfortable shoes, dress in layers for the changing temperature, and consider bringing drinking water. The walk will take an hour on paved, level paths. There is no restroom in this park.

Seniors

LIVING WITH VISION LOSS This six-week course (two hours per class) offered by Lion's Center for the Blind, provides blind and visually impaired clients with a comprehensive overview of vision loss, adjustment, coping strategies, services and resources. Begins July 16. For registration and dates, call 931-5365. Monday, July 16 from 10 a.m.-noon Free. Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., Pleasanton. 931-5365. www.pleasantonseniorcenter.org

Support Groups

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP Caring for a loved one is challenging physically and emotionally. Join this support group to explore resources and generate problem solving ideas from 1-3 p.m., on the second Monday of every month, and from

7-9 p.m. at 5353 Sunol Blvd. Get the support you deserve at the Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley. Call 931-5389.

CHILDREN AND TEENS GRIEF SUPPORT WORKSHOP Children and teens will create a treasure map to illustrate the obstacles they are encountering on their individual grief journeys and design a treasure box to fill with keepsakes as a way to remember and cherish the memories of a loved one. Enrollment is limited; advance registration required. Wednesday, July 18 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. No charge. Hope Hospice, 6377 Clark Ave., Suite 100, Dublin. 829-8770. www.hope-hospice.com/docs/Summer%20Workshops%202012.pdf

CLUTTERLESS SELF HELP GROUP Overwhelmed by clutter? Learn how to deal with it by attending this support group, which meets from 7-8:30 p.m. every Monday at St. Mary & St. John Coptic Orthodox Church, 4300 Mirador Dr., Rm. 7. Call 200-1943 or visit www.clutterless.org.

EAST BAY ESSENTIAL TREMOR SUPPORT GROUP If you have recently been diagnosed with ET or would like to learn more about this common movement disorder in a safe and supportive environment, please join us from 10 a.m.-noon on the third Saturday of each month, in the Blackhawk A and B conference rooms at San Ramon Regional Medical Center, 6001 Norris Canyon Rd. For more information, view their blog at www.eastbayet.com or call 487-5706 or email eastbayet@comcast.net.

Volunteering

BLOOD DONATION CENTER The American Red Cross will be holding volunteer orientations at 5 p.m., Friday, July 20 at the Pleasanton Blood Donation Center, 5556-B Springdale Ave., Pleasanton. Learn about ways to greet, inform and thank the community's blood donors. Advanced sign up required. To sign up Call Tami at 408-577-2006 or email tambra.wethern@redcross.org.

INTERFAITH COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE Faith groups throughout the Bay Area are for the second year teaming with the American Red Cross to help maintain the community's blood supply during the summer months, and they aim to collect more than twice as much blood as last year. One of the four blood drives is from 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, July 7, at St. Elizabeth Seton, John Paul 2 Center, 4005 Stoneridge Dr., Pleasanton. Call 800-733-2767 or visit www.redcrossblood.org. Use sponsor code INTERFAITHCOMMUNITY to schedule an appointment.

LIONESS SEEK NEW MEMBERS The Livermore Lioness Club welcomes new members at its regular monthly meeting on the first Tuesday of each month, at 6:30 p.m. A \$2 to \$5 donation is requested. Participating in the many activities of the group is a great way to meet local people. The Lioness are a service club which helps many worthy causes in our community. Call 443-4543.

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PET OF THE WEEK

Meet little Ariel

Ariel, a young, spayed female Chihuahua mix, is a tiny package of love, love, love: She loves going for walks, rolling in the grass and getting belly rubs. She greets all of her volunteer friends at the shelter with a wagging tail. She likes men as well as women and enjoys children that are gentle with her. If you would like to meet little Ariel, she is living at the East County Animal Shelter, 4595 Gleason Drive, Dublin. The shelter is open from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. seven days a week.



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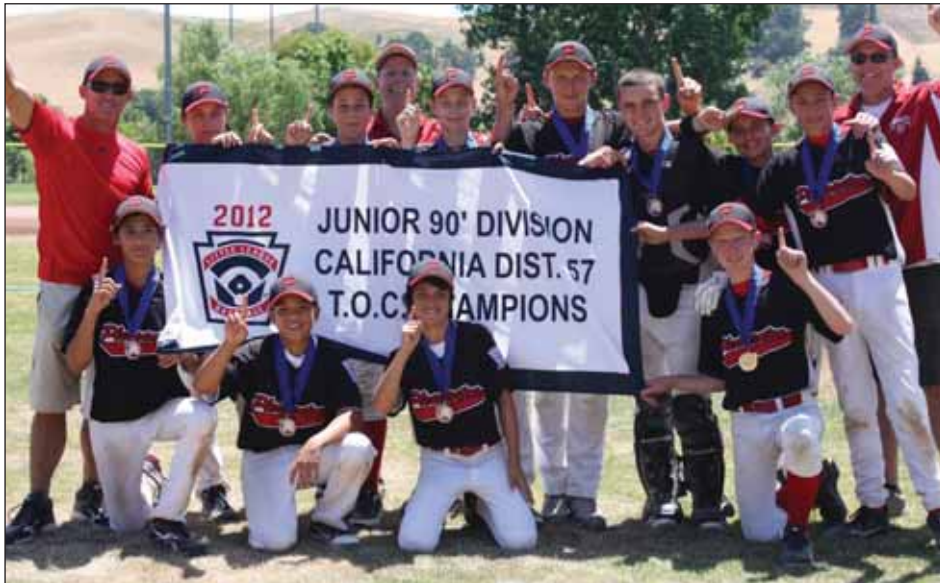
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Still the champs

Pleasanton Foothill Little League Junior 90s defended their 2011 District Championship by beating the Livermore Red Sox, 8-6, on June 17, at the Tournament of Champions at Sycamore Park in Danville. Pictured are (front, l-r) Jadon Gonzaga, Matt Villena, Zach Stubbs, Tyler Wineger, (standing) Coach Greg von Wagoner, Jimmy Thompson, William Hammer, Coach Gary Wineger, Damian Johnson, Jake von Wagoner, Matt Gates, G Caponigro, Nate Gipson, Coach Mike Gipson. Not pictured: Manager Joselito Gonzaga.



Strong season finish

The Pleasanton American AAA A's Team won two elimination games in the playoffs to finish the season strong. Team members are (front, l-r) Andrew Vincent, Keaton Smith, Zack Moresco, Kyle Bautista, Tyler Rocha, Jack Kroll, (middle) Matthew Kenning, Owen Lahr, Ryder Tate, Kyle Shomaker, Brendan Connolly, Trent Pozzi, (back) Coaches Jim Bautista, Mike Kenning and Paul Rocha. Not pictured, Brian Pozzi.



Mets win AAA Tournament

The Pleasanton National Little League AAA Mets finished the season 15-5, including winning the AAA Tournament at the Sports Park on June 9. Players are Griffin Myers, Nate McGinty, Carter Kapp, Karson, Jordan, Michael Cassetti, Ben Schwartz, Jack Bell, Nick Allard, Logan Seitz, Jaxen Gurley, Ryan Kobayashi, and Jeffrey Wisoff. Coaches are Matt Myers, Bryan McGinty and Dan Kapp.



Giants on the field

The ultimate baseball showdown happened June 11 in Pleasanton Foothill Little League when the majors division league co-champions, Giants and Angels, matched up for the championship game. Both teams ended the regular season tied with a record of 16-4, having split four games. At the play-offs, the Giants ended up on top with a 2-0 win, and they went on to represent PFL in the District 57 Tournament of Champions, June 16-19.

Justin Clark pitched a complete game shutout. Anthony Costello drove in the game's first run deep double to center field. Key defensive contributions to the shutout were made by catcher Joey Battilega, third baseman Matthew Crabill, shortstop Nathan Lu, second baseman Jason Dormann, first baseman Anthony Costello and outfielders Dylan Zhou, Julian Meyer, Tyson Payne, Noah Avery and Jack Kay.

Celebrating their win are (back row, l-r) Coaches Kevin Clark, Tony Battilega, John Dormann, Team Dad Ben Lu, (middle) Noah Avery, Jason Dormann, Jack Kay, Nathan Lu, Justin Clark, Anthony Costello, (front) Dylan Zhao, Tyson Payne, Joey Battilega, Matthew Crabill and Julian Meyer.

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Strong gains for state's housing market

Sales at highest level in over 3 years, interest rates at historic lows

By JEB BING

California's housing market continued to improve in May, with home prices posting solid gains for the third straight month and home sales well above last year's pace, the California Association of Realtors has reported.

"California home sales were strong in May, continuing the gradual recovery of the California housing market," said CAR President LeFrancis Arnold. "First-time buyers are recognizing that the housing market has hit bottom and are now seeing a sense of urgency to take advantage of ultra-low interest rates and advantageous home prices."

"Additionally," he said, "trade-up buyers are returning to the market after sitting it out for the past few years to get in on favorable home prices."

Closed escrow sales of existing, single-family detached homes in California climbed 3.4% from April's revised 553,670 to a seasonally adjusted annualized rate of 572,260 in May, according to information collected by CAR from more than 90 local Realtor associations and multiple listing services statewide.

May sales surged 21.5% from May 2011's revised 470,910 pace, marking the highest year-over-year sales increase since May 2009. The statewide sales figure represents what would be the total number of homes sold during 2012 if sales maintained the May pace throughout the year and is adjusted to

account for seasonal factors that typically influence home sales.

The May 2012 sales pace was the highest since February 2009, when 598,770 homes were sold at a seasonally adjusted annualized rate.

Home prices appear to be stabilizing, with the median home price posting both month-over-month and year-over-year gains for the third consecutive month. The statewide median price of an existing, single-family detached home was \$312,110 in May, the highest since September 2010.

May's price was up 1% from a revised \$309,050 in April and 6.6% from a revised \$292,850 recorded in May 2011. The May 2012 figure was 27.3% higher than the cyclical bottom of \$245,230 reached in February 2009. The median price has posted above the \$300,000 level for the second straight month after remaining below that mark for 15 months.

The increase in the median price can be attributed to the strong sales increase in the higher-priced coastal regions, particularly in the Bay Area, where job growth is strong and the economy is growing faster than in other areas of the state.

California's housing inventory sank lower in May, with the Unsold Inventory Index for existing, single-family detached homes dropping to 3.5 months in May, down from 4.2 months in April. May's housing inventory



was down from a revised 5.7 months in May 2011. The index indicates the number of months needed to sell the supply of homes on the market at the current sales rate. A 7-month supply is considered normal.

"Low housing inventory continues to be the critical issue in the California market," said CAR Vice President and Chief Economist Leslie Appleton-Young. "Inventory levels have not been this low since December 2005, when the supply matched the current level."

"The Bay Area has the greatest shortage of homes for sale, with inventory levels in the two- to three-month range for Santa Clara,

San Mateo, Alameda and Contra Costa counties," she added.

Interest rates continued their downward trend in May, with 30-year fixed-mortgage interest rates averaging 3.80%, down from 3.91% in April and 4.64% in May 2011, according to Freddie Mac. Adjustable-mortgage interest rates averaged 2.74% in May, down from 2.78% in April and 3.13% in May 2011.

Homes are moving faster on the market with the median number of days it takes to sell a single-family home dropping to 46.6 days in May, down from a revised 48.9 days in April and 52.0 days in May 2011. ■

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Foreign buyers see U.S. as good place for home ownership

California 2nd only to Florida in attracting foreigners

By JEB BING

Due to low prices and the relative weakness of the dollar, international buyers continue to identify the U.S. as a desirable place to own property and make a profitable investment.

According to the National Association of Realtors' 2012 Profile of International Home Buying Activity, total residential international sales in the U.S. for the past year ending March 2012 equaled \$82.5 billion, up from \$66.4 billion in 2011.

Total international sales were evenly split between non-resident foreigners and recent immigrants.

The survey asked Realtors to report their international business activity within the U.S. for the 12 months ending March 2012.

"Today's advantageous market conditions have drawn more and more foreign buyers to the U.S. in recent years, signaling how desirable and profitable owning property in this country can be," said NAR President Moe Veissi, a broker-owner of Veissi & Associates Inc. in Miami, Fla.

"Low housing prices, a good inventory condition and increased buying power with today's exchange rates help attract international clients," he said. "Foreign buyers also have the advantage of working with Realtors who specialize in serving international clientele. They have a truly global perspective; they know what hurdles foreign buyers face when purchasing property in the U.S., and have the expertise and knowledge that comes from working with clients from different cul-

tures and real estate practices."

International buyers bought homes throughout the country, but four states accounted for 51% of the purchases — Florida, California, Texas and Arizona. Florida has been the fastest growing destination of choice, accounting for 26% of foreign purchases. California was second with 11% and Texas and Arizona accounted for 7%.

Proximity to the home country, the presence of relatives and friends, the convenience of air transportation, and climate and location are all important considerations to prospective foreign buyers.

Locations on the East Coast generally attract European buyers, while Asian buyers tend to purchase on the West Coast, particularly California. Florida attracts a diverse set of international buyers including South Americans, Europeans and Canadians. Meanwhile, Texas remains popular among Mexican buyers.

Within markets in an individual state, it is not unusual to find concentrations of people grouped by nationality.

"Foreign buyers recognize that owning a home in the U.S. has many benefits, both financial and social," said Veissi. "Many purchase property as an investment, vacation home or to diversify their portfolio."

"In addition," he pointed out, "many recent immigrants view homeownership as an important accomplishment. They believe that being a homeowner is one of many ways

they become established in the U.S. and attain stability, security and a sense of community."

International buyers came from all over the globe, but Canada, China (including Hong Kong), Mexico, India and the United Kingdom accounted for 55% of all international transactions, according to the survey. Canada accounted for 24% of international sales while China accounted for 11%, up from 9% in 2011. Mexico was third with 8% of sales, and India and the U.K. both accounted for 6%.

A total of 45% of international purchases were under \$250,000. In addition, there appears to be a gradual increasing trend toward purchases in the \$250,000 to \$500,000 price range. In 2012 this range accounted for 30% of purchases, up from 28% in 2011. The average price paid by an international buyer was \$400,000 compared to the overall U.S. average of \$212,000.

Several reasons account for why the average international home price is higher than the average overall price. The international client is typically wealthier than the domestic buyer and is looking for a property in a specialized niche, for example, a larger property suitable for multi-generational living, or a property that establishes the individual's presence and standing in the community.

Many homes purchased by foreign buyers are used as a primary residence. Vacation and rental use are also major reasons for a pur-

chase. More than half — 66% — of survey respondents reported international buyers purchased detached single-family homes. About half of international buyers, 52%, preferred to buy in a suburban area and about a quarter, 23%, bought in a central city/urban area.

Some 62% of international purchases were all cash, which has increased since 2007. International buyers still experience many financing challenges when purchasing a home in the U.S. In fact, among transactions that failed, Realtors reported that in 26% of the cases financing issues were the problem. The difficulties facing foreign buyers in trying to obtain a mortgage include lack of U.S.-based credit history and hurdles in meeting mortgage requirements.

Other reasons for not purchasing properties were cost/taxes/insurance and immigration laws.

Some 27% of Realtors reported having worked with international clients this year. Of these, 52% of Realtors reported that international transactions accounted for one to 10% of their total transactions, while 27% reported that they made up more than 10% of total transactions.

Realtor specialization on the buyer's side of the market — such as foreign language capabilities, cultural affinity or orientation with the prospective purchaser and experience in explaining the U.S. real estate — appear to be important in working with foreign buyers. ■

The latest from The 680 Blog

5 strategies that will make you a better buyer in today's market

Now that the great real estate recovery seems to be in full force, barring some unforeseen economic setback, buyers are discovering that the market is active, or hot, or downright ridiculous depending on the price range. It seems that there are multiple offers on everything. And the frustration level of the buyers is rising faster than the default rate on the Greek National debt. If you have been in the market, or are contemplating buying a house in the next few months, you need to adjust your strategy if you want to be successful in winning the auction... er, getting your offer accepted. So, with this in mind, here are 5 strategies that will make you a better buyer, and increase the odds of getting your offer accepted.

1. Strong pre-approval letter. Before you even start looking at property, you should get fully pre-approved with a local, reputable lender. Get the lender all documentation they need up front, and get credit approved so that all the lender needs is the appraisal, the contract, and the preliminary title report. And have the lender draft a iron-clad, bullet proof pre-approval letter that states you have excellent credit (hopefully), stable employment, excellent income, and the funds to close escrow. In fact, if you qualify for more than the asking price of the property, go ahead and put the maximum amount you qualify for in the letter. It does not hurt

you if you are over-qualified to buy a given property.

2. Meet the sellers. If possible, try to arrange to see the house when the seller is home, especially if there are going to be multiple offers. A nice, friendly visit to the property giving you a chance to bond with the sellers can have an impact, especially if the seller has strong emotional ties to the house. Be complimentary, gracious, and charming. Yes, tell the seller you absolutely love their dark paneling and the shag green carpeting, even if it you plan to rip it out within 10 minutes of owning the house.

3. Solve the Seller's Problem. If the seller needs a rent back, or needs to close by a certain date, or wants to take the hot tub, or only wants to close in >> Go to www.680homes.com to read the rest of this article.



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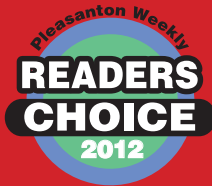
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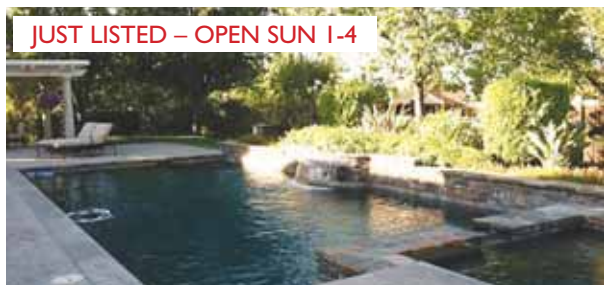
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