

Pleasanton Weekly

Spring arrives early
in Pleasanton » **5**



VOL. XV, NUMBER 2 • FEBRUARY 7, 2014

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Facing drought

Water is challenge
of 21st century –
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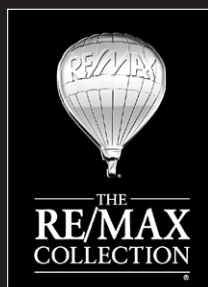
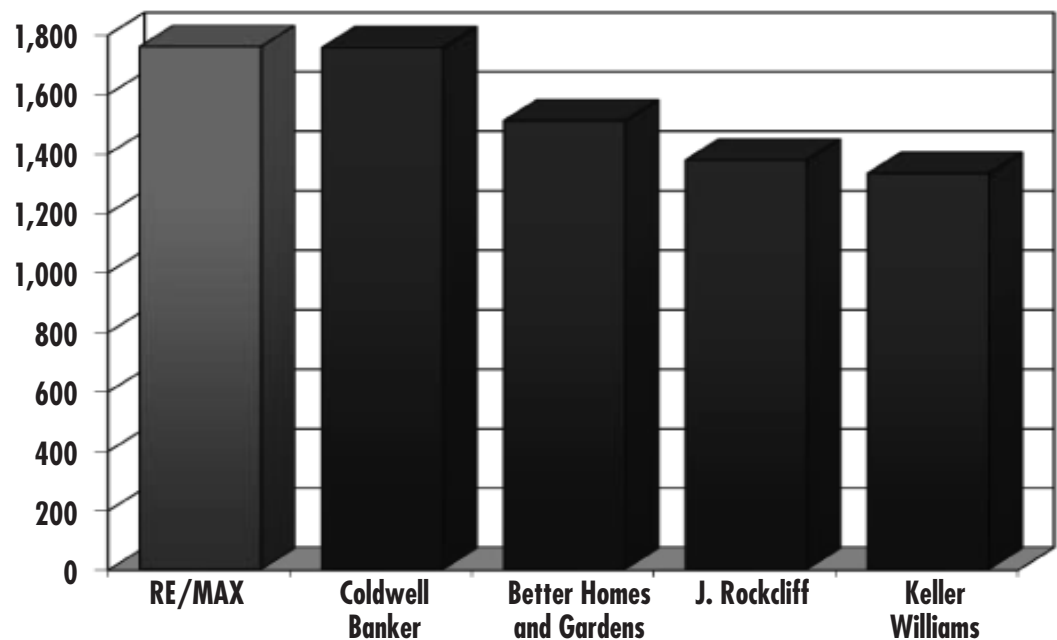
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AROUND PLEASANTON



By JEB BING



FILE PHOTO

Survey shows we like Pleasanton

Whether you're a Realtor, a business seeking to attract top managers or a long-time Pleasanton homeowner trying to persuade Aunt Molly to move here from frigid, snowy Boston, the news this week couldn't be any better. The results of a quality of life survey shows most of us in Pleasanton are ecstatic over our community, its resources, climate, location in the Bay Area and the economy.

Pleasanton residents remain very satisfied with the quality of life here, with the survey conducted last November again producing the highest ratings the survey firm of Fairbank, Maslin, Maulin Metz & Associates (FM3) has seen. The Santa Monica firm has specialized in public policy-oriented opinion research since 1981 and conducts similar surveys throughout the state.

The city of Pleasanton has conducted public opinion surveys four times, starting in 1995, to determine the public's view on a variety of issues, including facilities and services. John Fairbank, president of FM3, told the City Council on Tuesday that the survey is based on telephone interviews with 699 randomly selected Pleasanton voters, including an over-sampling of Latino and Asian voters, using questions and responses from previous surveys as a baseline.

The new survey also included research into where residents obtain their information about the city with 48% of those surveyed saying they get their information about city government and local issues from the Pleasanton Weekly, just under 53% who said they rely on "conversations with family, friends and neighbors" to learn what's going on. The public library came in third at 30% with all other media well below. Those who watch City Council meetings totaled 18% of those surveyed, with only 8% saying they ever actually go to council meetings.

Seven in 10 residents continued to identify Pleasanton as an "excellent" place to live, with 25% using the term "good" and 4% saying it's "fair" or "poor." Another six out of 10 described the quality of

life here as excellent, with 73% of those of us who own our homes saying we're glad to be here.

Residents also believe the city is an excellent place to raise children, with 72% using that term and another 22% saying "good." Also, 76% of those residents with children under 19 living at home described Pleasanton as an excellent place to raise a family.

Fairbank said safety is a major concern in the communities his firm surveys and that an impressive 83% of those surveyed in Pleasanton "feel safe" here. Only 1% told FM3 surveyors they find the city "unsafe."

Education and housing emerged as the most serious issues in the FM3 survey, although small in overall survey percentages. A total of 12% of those surveyed have public school concerns, another 10% over housing costs and the lack of affordable housing, 9% saying there's too much traffic on city streets and 8% complaining about "too much growth and development." Still, concerns about traffic fell dramatically compared to survey results in 2007, down 16%. Surprisingly, only 23% complained about traffic congestion on the freeways around Pleasanton, showing perhaps that only 23% of us drive on I-580 or I-680 during rush hours.

Otherwise, 88% of us think the city is doing a good job of providing local services, giving high marks to fire protection, emergency response services and water quality and safety (93%), police protection (87%) and keeping city facilities such as the library, Dolores Bengtson Aquatic Center and Senior Center in good condition (86%). Street maintenance, library services, business retention and providing good recreational programs also generated high marks, with city parks and youth sports receiving favorable responses in the 90%-plus range.

Also interesting in the FM3 report is that those of us who lived in Pleasanton longer have an increasingly positive view about the city. The survey showed 63% of those here less than five years believe this is a good place to live, compared to 67% in the 6- to 10-year group, 74% in the 11- to 20-year range and 75% who have lived here 21 years or longer. That includes me, and I agree. ■

About the Cover

The hills above Callippe Preserve Golf Course appear parched in late January, with the Bay Area and the rest of California experiencing an abnormally dry winter season. Drought conditions have prompted calls for voluntary water conservation locally. Photo by Mike Sedlak. Cover design by Rosanna Leung.

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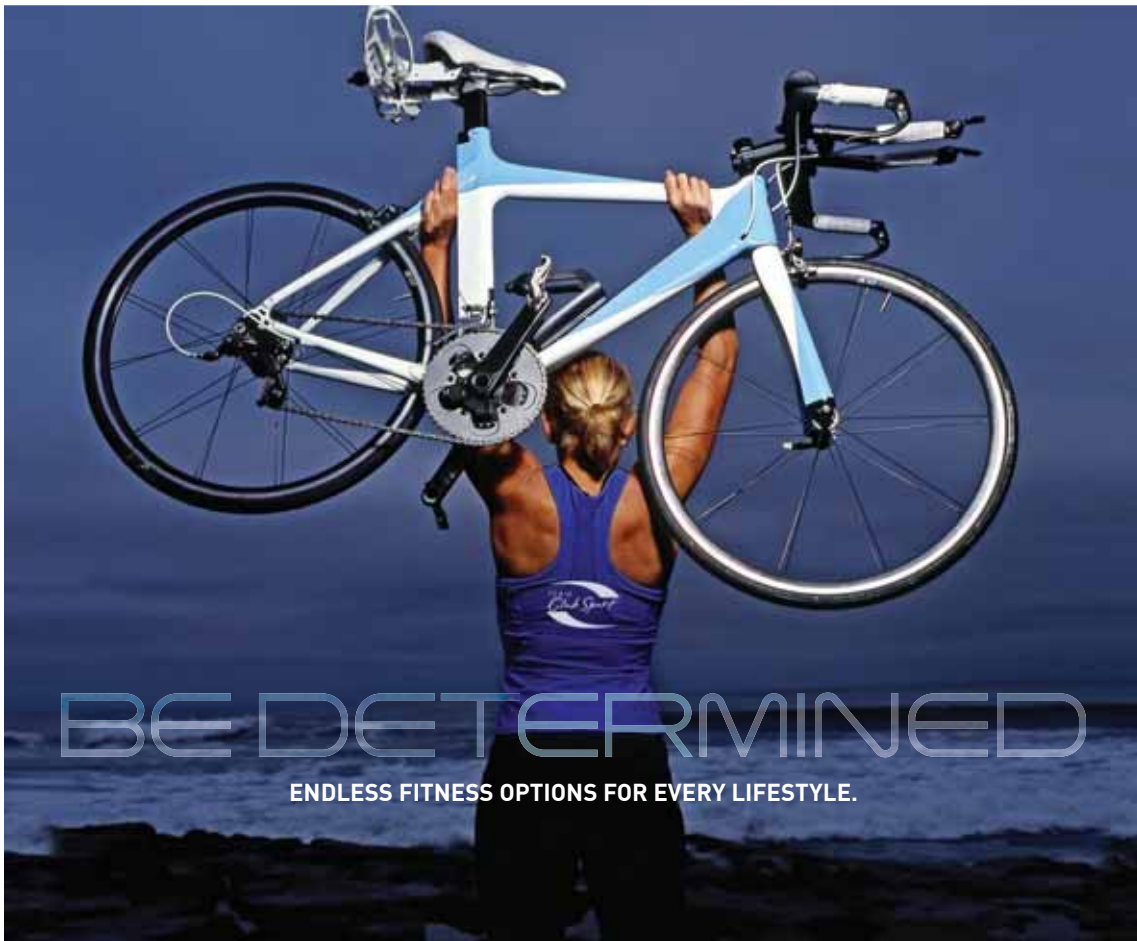
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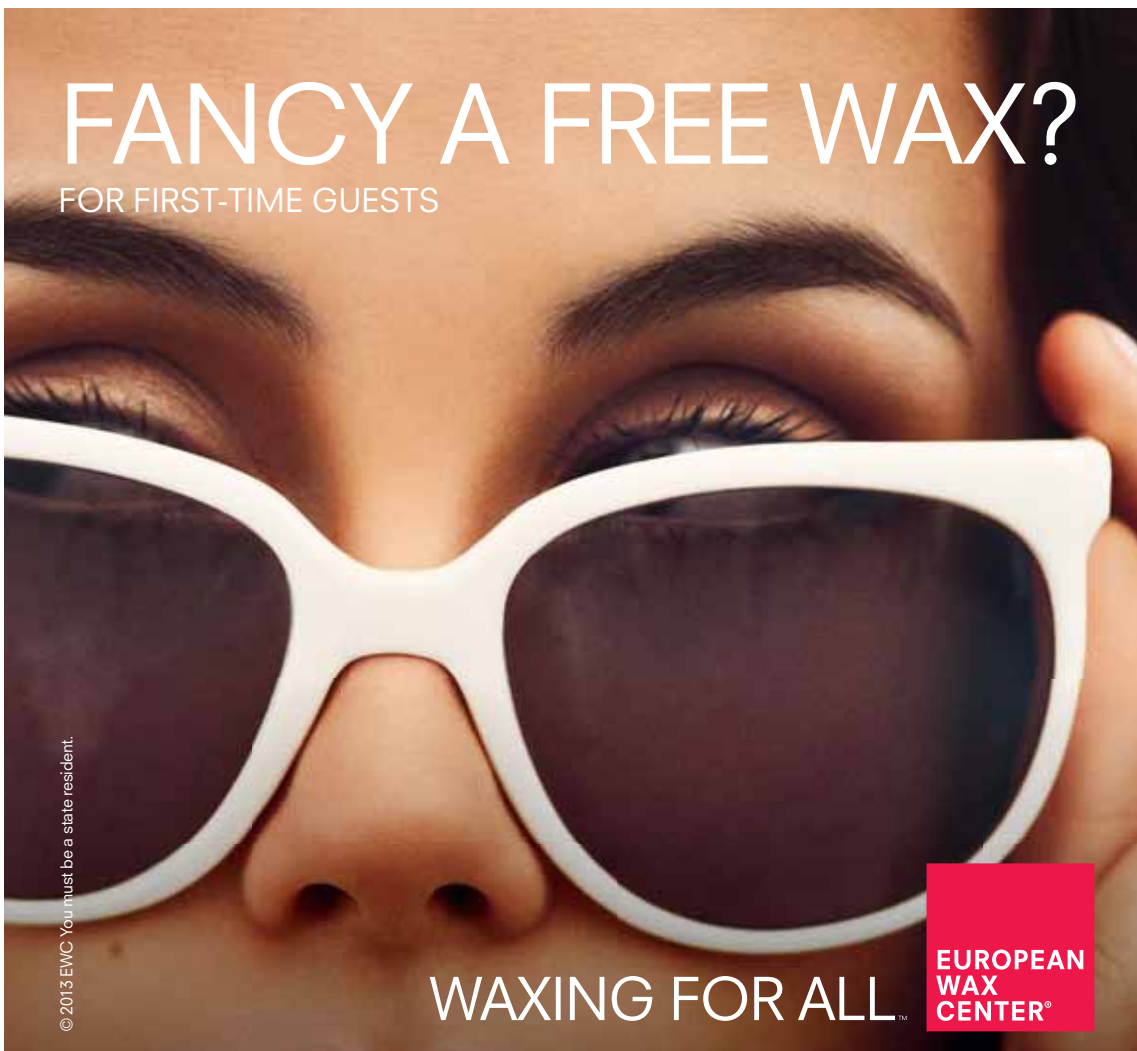
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Streetwise

ASKED AROUND TOWN

What are you doing these days to conserve water?



Sofia Perez

College student/bank teller

I don't let the water run while I'm brushing my teeth, and I holler at my brother to get out of the shower when he is spending too much time in there.

Yvonne Laird

Loan document coordinator

Well, my grass has turned brown and all of my plants are dying. I guess that answers your question. I'll be so happy when we finally get some real rain.



Al Barfield

Mechanic

I'm planning to put a cover on my pool in order to prevent evaporation of the pool water, and I'm also planning to re-landscape my yard with plants and other foliage that doesn't require a lot of water.

Paula Stapert

Record specialist

I've been trying to run only very full loads of laundry in the washing machine, and full loads of dishes and utensils in the dishwasher. I've also started using a timer in order to limit showers to five minutes.



Cy Ogle

High school math teacher

Well, we have little kids, so my wife and I have taught them to "only send it down when it is brown. If it's yellow, let it mellow." We are also making sure to turn the faucet off while we are washing dishes and brushing our teeth, instead of just letting it run unnecessarily.

—Compiled by Nancy, Jenny and Katie Lyness

Have a Streetwise question? Email editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

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DIGEST

Historic fundraiser

Historic Castlewood Country Club is joining with Museum on Main for the seventh annual Wines and Valentines museum fundraiser on Feb. 15. The event will feature special wines with a four-course gourmet dinner, and a Garre Winery representative will describe the pairings.

Live and silent auctions will feature trips to Bodega Bay, Savannah and Hawaii, and a sky-box for a baseball game. Tickets, \$85 per person, are available at the museum, 603 Main St., or by calling 462-2766.

Phoebe Hearst hired Julia Morgan in the 1890s to design the 50-room Spanish-Moorish hacienda above Pleasanton, where she entertained such notable guests as Thomas Edison and Crown Prince Albert of Belgium. The estate was developed into Castlewood in the 1950s; the original house burned to the ground in 1969.

'Education Zone'

Find out from the superintendents what is going on in your school district on "The Education Zone," a new show airing on Tri-Valley TV28 and TV30. Marshall Kamena, TV30 Foundation president, is the host of the hour-long program, which began airing Feb. 4.

"The 'Education Zone' is aimed at the residents of the Tri-Valley including students, parents of students, and even those living beyond the Tri-Valley," Kamena said. "It's an opportunity to hear directly from the school districts' superintendents as they discuss how they work together. They will also analyze local and state issues affecting our schools."

Viewers can email questions for the superintendents to ed-zone@tv30.org. For more information, visit www.tv30.org.

Marathon training

The Tri-Valley Triathlon Club is offering an eight-week training program to prepare participants for the half-marathon being held by Pleasanton Partnership in Education on April 13 to raise money for the schools. The sessions will prepare runners physically for this specific run, plus help to keep them motivated and learn about gear, pacing, nutrition and other relevant topics.

The program will take place from Feb. 12-April 13 with coached practices each Wednesday and Sunday. Cost is \$79. Register online at trivalleytriathlon.com/ppie-half-marathon-training-program.

Find out more about the PPIE half-marathon at ppierun.com.

Pleasanton declares water emergency due to statewide drought

Council asks public to cut water use by 20%

By JEB BING

The Pleasanton City Council declared Stage 1 of water shortage planning at its meeting Tuesday night in response to Gov. Jerry Brown's recent state of emergency proclamation regarding California's drought conditions. (Also see cover story, "Facing Drought," pp. 12-13.)

Brown directed state officials to take all necessary actions to prepare for drought conditions. In addition, he asked all Californians to voluntarily reduce their water usage by 20%.

Following the governor's request, the Zone 7 Water Agency Board of Directors declared a local drought emergency upon learning that State Water Project allocations may be eliminated, pending the continuation of the dry climate. In such cases, water stored in local groundwater basins and Lake Del Valle would be the sole sources

of water to meet the needs of Pleasanton users.

Pleasanton is asking all customers to take immediate steps to reduce water usage during this emergency so the long-term sustainability of the community's water supply can be protected by the elimination of water waste.

Pursuant to the Pleasanton's Water Shortage Contingency Plan and Urban Water Management Plan, the City Council declared Pleasanton at Stage 1 of water shortage contingency planning and called on everyone to voluntarily reduce water usage by 20%. Stage 1 of action is defined as sufficient uncertainty concerning water supplies for the year that it is prudent for water customers to conserve local water supplies.

Water customers are encouraged to review water use in and around their homes and businesses to detect and eliminate wasteful water

loss, as well as implement water-efficient habits.

Daniel Smith, the city's director of operations, said at the council meeting: "It is important to keep in mind that water-efficient habits are important every day, regardless of whether California is in a state of drought."

"Pleasanton's Climate Action Plan (February 2012) stresses the importance of water conservation in reducing the city's annual greenhouse gas emissions to help curtail climate change," he said. "Water conserving practices and eliminating water waste are lifestyle changes necessary to keep Pleasanton a thriving community."

As a result of the council's action, all Pleasanton water customers are asked to:

See **WATER** on Page 6



JEB BING

Spring is bursting out in Pleasanton

It may be bitterly cold with snow and ice that just won't melt back east, but Pleasanton can boast an early spring as seen on this street view of a flowering tree and roses on Montevino Drive in upper Vintage Hills.

Parents quiz experts on new teaching and testing method

Common Core trial tests to be held in spring

Parents last week got a taste of what their kids will be learning in a new educational model known as Common Core State Standards.

The focus, according to presenter Jamie Marantz, is on depth of knowledge, rather than rote memorization or reciting facts.

Marantz, executive director of CORE Learning with the Alameda County Office of Education, told roughly 85 parents at Hearst Elementary that the new standards were designed to get children ready for college.

"They started with the end in mind," Marantz told the crowd. Designers, she said, asked what makes a student succeed in college — then asked, "What skills do you need

to do that?"

Parents also got some first-hand experience, spending about 20 minutes doing sample questions based on the Common Core curriculum.

One model used by Marantz asked questions to demonstrate different depth of knowledge. At the most basic level, students were asked to use their notes to describe three characteristics of plant cells.

A deeper depth-of-knowledge question would ask students to describe differences between plant and animal cells, and a third question, as an even deeper depth-of-knowledge example, would ask students to de-

See **COMMON CORE** on Page 8

Toll lanes could be coming to I-680

Plan would make solo drivers pay during peak hours

By GLENN WOHLTMANN

Nearly 50 people turned out Jan. 30 to learn more about plans to convert parts of HOV lanes on Interstate 680 into toll roads during peak driving hours.

The plan is similar to one already in operation on southbound I-680 south of Sunol. When the project is complete, some north and south lanes from San Ramon to Walnut Creek would have tolls during commute times.

Tolls for solo drivers would vary based on congestion and to help traffic in the express lanes flow smoothly. The fee to drive in the lane would increase as traffic congestion increases and decrease when congestion decreases.

The project — expected to be completed by spring 2016 — would convert existing HOV lanes to express lanes from Rudgear Road in Walnut Creek to Alcosta Boulevard in San Ramon southbound and from Alcosta to Livorna Road northbound. It would create 23 miles of new express lanes through San Ramon, Danville, Alamo and southern Walnut Creek.

I-680 would not be widened or have new lanes added. Instead, the existing HOV lanes would be restriped and have new FasTrak toll readers, traffic monitoring video cameras and equipment, and observation areas to help the California Highway Patrol monitor the lanes.

There are a couple of differences between the toll lanes to be installed in the San Ramon Valley and the toll area in operation near Sunol, according to Pierce Gould, senior planner of express lanes for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC).

Unlike the restrictive access into and out of lanes currently in use on I-680 south, Gould said, "access will be like today's HOV lanes."

That means drivers would be able to move in and out of the lanes rather than waiting for access points on the road.

A new kind of toll tag would be used as well, Gould said. The new FasTrak tag would not have to be hidden away by drivers with mul-

See **TOLL** on Page 8

John Muir, San Ramon Medical to open Pleasanton health clinic

Joint venture acquires building on Owens Drive

By JEB BING

San Ramon Regional Medical Center and John Muir Health have acquired a building with more than 92,000 square feet at 5860 Owens Drive that will hold the new Pleasanton Outpatient Center. The center is expected to open in early 2015.

The acquisition is part of the joint venture partnership announced in 2013 between John Muir Health and Tenet Healthcare, parent company of San Ramon Regional Medical Center.

San Ramon Medical is a 123-bed acute-care hospital in San Ramon, and John Muir Health is a Walnut Creek-based not-for-profit integrated system of doctors, hospitals and other healthcare services.

"We continually evaluate opportunities with healthcare providers,

physician groups and others in our markets to maximize effectiveness, reduce costs and integrate patient care coordination to improve overall care," said Paul Smith, acting chief executive officer of the joint venture. "Together, we will continue to pursue new and innovative ways to improve patient care, access to services and affordability."

San Ramon Regional Medical Center and John Muir Health are purchasing the building for approximately \$19 million.

"The Pleasanton Outpatient Center is another step toward fulfilling our goal to expand and improve care, access and services for patients in the growing Tri-Valley area and surrounding communities," Smith added. "The center will be more convenient for pa-

tients, who can access a full range of services under one roof, and allows us to work better as a team to coordinate care and enhance the patient experience."

The center is projected to house primary-care physicians, specialists, an Urgent Care Center and imaging services. The building is located off Interstate 580 and is a short walk from the East Dublin/Pleasanton BART station. Onsite parking will also be available.

"The design of John Muir Health's recently opened Walnut Creek Outpatient Center was driven by the needs of patients, including convenience, access, cost-effective care, service and quality, the same principles that will drive development of the Pleasanton facility," said Lee Huskins, president and

chief administrative officer of John Muir Health's Physician Network.

"Through our partnership with San Ramon Regional Medical Center, we look forward to providing the Tri-Valley community expanded choices for high-quality, patient-centered care, close to home in a modern, healing environment," he added.

San Ramon Regional Medical Center and John Muir Health announced and completed their joint venture partnership in 2013. As part of the agreement, they will also jointly develop outpatient services, such as the Pleasanton Outpatient Center and other projects in the Tri-Valley area and nearby communities.

"Our partnership with John Muir Health exemplifies our strat-

egy of enhancing and expanding the integrated healthcare services we offer patients in California," Smith said.

Huskins agreed, saying, "With the advent of health care reform, John Muir Health and our partners at San Ramon Regional Medical Center continue to look at ways we can deliver care using different models and best practices."

"The Pleasanton Outpatient Center fits that strategy by offering primary care physicians and specialists in one location, which enhances physician collaboration, knowledge sharing and care management to ensure our patients are getting the right care, in the right location and at the right time," Huskins added.

The Pleasanton purchase was completed on Jan. 31. ■

Campana Jazz Festival set for tomorrow in Pleasanton

Bay Area school bands to offer 36 ensembles

The 39th annual Campana Jazz Festival will be held at Amador Valley High School from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. tomorrow.

The daylong festival will feature 36 ensembles from Pleasanton and other Bay Area schools, including Livermore, Dublin, San Ramon, Danville, Walnut Creek, Fremont, Brentwood, Oakland, Concord, San Mateo and San Jose.

The festival will feature three venues and six divisions, including high school big bands (AA, A, B) and middle school big bands. Also featured this year will be high school and middle school combo divisions.

At 5 p.m. Saturday, the big bands of the Pleasanton middle schools will present a 30-minute Showcase Concert, to be followed by the celebratory Awards Concert at 5:30 p.m. The Awards Concert will include winning bands, Pleasanton high school big bands and the presentation of more than \$12,000 in summer music camp scholarships to outstanding musicians.

This year, the Campana family will honor their father with the inaugural Jim Campana Scholarship. This \$1,000 scholarship will be given to an Amador Valley High jazz musician who exempli-

fies outstanding leadership, character, musicianship and service to the community.

Popular gourmet food trucks featuring an array of cuisines and desserts will be available on the campus from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sponsored by the Amador Friends of Music, the festival is named in honor of Jim Campana, who was the music director at Amador Valley High from 1959 through 1979.

Admission is \$10, \$8 for senior citizens and students, and free for those 5 and younger.

— Jeb Bing

WATER

Continued from Page 5

- Repair all leaks in and around their home and/or business; these include leaky toilets, faucets, showers and sprinkler hardware.
- Eliminate water runoff from pavement, such as from landscape irrigation or car washing.
- Reduce the frequency of outdoor watering to one day a week or less. Regardless of limited rain, plants go dormant in the winter and require little water.
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- Water landscaping only between 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. to reduce water loss from wind and evaporation.
- Turn off water when brushing teeth, shaving or hand dishwash-

ing.

- Wash only full loads of laundry and dishes.

- Install water-efficient devices, such as faucet aerators and showerheads (available for free from the city of Pleasanton).

- Take shorter showers. Reducing showering time from 10 minutes to five can save up to 12.5 gallons if using a water-efficient showerhead.

Smith said 2013 was the driest year on record for much of Northern and Central California. The limited precipitation is compounded by the fact most state reservoir levels are well below their historical average for this time of year.

These factors, combined with the continuation of an unseasonably dry weather pattern in 2014 warrant immediate action of water-saving habits and practices by all Pleasanton water users, he added. ■



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**HERITAGE
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GLENN WOHLTMANN

Vigil marks 25th year since teen's disappearance

Some 100 people gathered Jan. 30 to mark a somber date: the 25th anniversary of the disappearance of 13-year-old Ilene Misheloff. Her father, Mike Misheloff, said the annual event marking her disappearance serves as a way to "make sure everyone knows we are still looking for Ilene."

Walkers last week again traced the two-mile route Ilene took Jan. 30, 1989, the day she was kidnapped in Dublin. They recreated the young teen's walk from Wells Middle School to where she was last seen — near the intersection of San Ramon Road and Amador Valley Boulevard — then continued for a prayer service at St. Raymond Catholic Church.

Ilene would turn 39 in March, her father said, adding thanks to those who still walk in her name. The girl vanished after she was excused early from a physical education class at her school. She was last seen in a pullover polo sweater, a striped shirt, black Keds sneakers and carrying a dark blue backpack.



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Warriors delay timeline for new San Francisco arena

Team pushes proposed opening to at least 2018

The Golden State Warriors' plan to build an arena on the San Francisco waterfront by 2017 is being pushed back by at least a year, project organizers said Monday.

At the same time, proponents of a ballot measure that could impact the arena plan by imposing tighter restrictions on waterfront development submitted signatures to the city's Department of Elections this week to put the measure on the June ballot.

The Warriors in 2012 announced plans to move from their current home at Oakland's Oracle Arena to an 18,000-seat arena at Piers 30-32 between the Bay Bridge and AT&T Park in San Francisco.

The plan was to open the arena by 2017, but based on input from community members, the design for the arena was overhauled twice, which pushed back the project's schedule to allow for state-mandated environmental review, arena spokesman Nathan Ballard said Monday.

"It's really about getting it done right, not getting it done fast," Ballard said.

The team is also facing rising costs to replace the aging piers, he noted.

"It's difficult to build an arena over the water where we're replac-

ing two crumbling piers that are dilapidated and falling into the Bay," he said. "We never said this was going to be easy."

The ballot measure could be another complicating factor.

The initiative would require any proposed height-limit increases along San Francisco's waterfront to be approved by the city's voters.

Jim Stearns, a spokesman for the ballot campaign, said organizers have gathered more than 20,000 signatures — more than double the number required by the city to put the proposal on the ballot.

"There's been a disconnect between City Hall and the voters about waterfront height limits," Stearns said. "We're confident the voters want to have a say in what is developed there."

He said the measure "is not aimed at any one proposal" such as the arena, and other plans for the waterfront include buildings that far exceed the arena's proposed height.

Ballard said the arena project organizers don't have a position yet on the ballot measure.

"We're waiting to see if it qualifies, and if so, what implications it might have for our project," he said.

Bay City News Service

COMMON CORE

Continued from Page 5

scribe a model to represent key relationships between plant and animal cells based on cellular functions.

After answering questions, parents had some questions of their own about how Common Core will work.

One parent wanted to know how computers being used to score the tests will be able to interpret open-ended questions. For now, humans may be called in to do some scoring, according to Marantz and her co-speaker, Dr. Ingrid Roberson, also with the county office of education.

Another parent wanted to know how Common Core would be adapted for special-needs students. Roberson and Marantz said there are built-in accommodations and additional aids that can be programmed based on students' individual education plans, including text-to-speech for those with dyslexia and Braille tests.

Getting teachers up to speed to incorporate Common Core into their classes was another concern. Marantz described the process of implementing the new standards as "paving a road into a foggy place," and said the district, like others across the state, is investing time and money into training teachers.

While one parent worried about the new texts and other

teaching materials needed for Common Core, Marantz said new textbooks are not necessary yet. As an example, she said a teacher might read a story about bats to an elementary school class, then move into bat biology, giving students informational texts as they need them.

The scores and what they will mean was a concern for some parents. This year will be a test of the test, according to Marantz and Roberson, to see what needs to be tweaked. They said refinements will continue, explaining that the test given in 2015 will likely be very different from the one in 2018.

Colleges, they said, are already taking Common Core into consideration, changing tests for college readiness like the ACT. The speakers said AP tests will change too, incorporating deeper depth-of-knowledge questions.

But in response to one parent, there's no need to hire a tutor. Parents can ask, "what did the teacher ask you to do" or "what part of the article supports your answer," and the district is considering workshops with tools for parents who want to help their children. Some pointers are already on the California Department of Education website at www.cde.ca.gov.

Roberson said some 40,000 questions will be tried out this spring as the test gets refined.

— *Glenn Wohlmann*

TOLL

Continued from Page 5

multiple passengers or other cars that can use the road without paying. That tag would have a switch to indicate if the driver is paying to drive the road, in a carpool, or clean air vehicle.

The plan is a product of the Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority (BAIFA), a joint effort between the MTC and the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA). The authority consists of elected officials from Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa and Solano counties.

When the network of express lanes is complete, BAIFA will operate 270 miles of express lanes. BAIFA will start by converting 150 miles of existing HOV lanes to express lanes, then add 120 miles of new lanes to close gaps in the system.

BAIFA says the toll lanes would create a seamless network of HOV lanes that would encourage carpools, vanpools and express buses, make better use of HOV lane capacity, provide more reliable travel times for solo drivers and manage lanes to keep traffic moving more efficiently.

The project is not connected to a plan that would create ramps onto and off HOV lanes in San Ramon. ■



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Kohl's of Pleasanton part of U.S. scholarship program

2 nominees from local store to participate

Kohl's Department Store in Pleasanton, along with other Kohl's stores and the Kohl's Cares Scholarship Program, will award nearly \$400,000 in scholarships and prizes this year to more than 2,300 young volunteers who have made a positive impact in their communities.

Nominations for youths ages of 6-18 will be accepted through March 14 at kohlskids.com.

Kohl's encourages parents, teachers, neighbors and friends to nominate outstanding youth in celebration of their time, energy and passion for helping others.

Two nominees from each of the more than 1,100 Kohl's stores nationwide will win a \$50 Kohl's gift card, and nearly 200 will win regional scholarships worth \$1,000 toward higher education. Ten national winners will be awarded a total of \$10,000 in scholarships for higher education, and Kohl's will donate \$1,000 to a nonprofit organization

on each national winner's behalf.

Since the program began in 2001, Kohl's has recognized more than 19,500 kids with more than \$3.9 million in scholarships and prizes.

Kohl's Cares is the philanthropic platform of Kohl's Department Stores whose mission is to support the health and education of children nationwide, women's health, the fight against breast cancer and environmental initiatives.

Since 2000, Kohl's has raised more than \$231 million for child health and education initiatives through the Kohl's Cares merchandise program and donated more than 2.2 million hours of volunteer time through the Associates in Action volunteer program.

For more information or a list of past Kohl's Cares Scholarship Program winners, visit www.kohlskids.com. ■

Don't fall for Valentine's Day scams

Internet thieves coolly set traps for unsuspecting shoppers

By Jason Alderman

On Valentine's Day, people's emotions run all over the map. Some are head-over-heels and want to shower their loved one with gifts, while others are despondent because currently they have no one special in their life.

Whatever your love status, one thing everyone needs to guard against at this time of year is scams.

Valentine's Day brings out the best, and worst, in human behavior. Our impulse is to be generous and search for the ideal gift. Internet thieves know this and coolly set traps for unsuspecting shoppers. And, not surprisingly, dating websites experience greater activity, along with a corresponding increase in relationship scammers.



Jason Alderman

Here are some of the more common Valentine's Day scams to avoid:

1. Electronic greeting cards are popular year-round, especially near holidays. Scammers count on you not paying attention when you receive an email with an innocuous subject line like, "Someone you know just sent you an e-card."

Unless you're certain someone sent you an e-card, never click on links or follow instructions to download software to open the message. Chances are you'll load a virus or malware onto your computer, dooming you to receive endless spam or even endangering your personal and financial information.

2. Valentine's Day is the busiest day of the year for florists. Since many people now order flowers online, these purchases are a common target for fraud. A few tips when choosing a florist:

- Make sure the physical location, contact information and fees for the florist who's actually fulfilling your order are fully disclosed.
- Pay by credit card so if there's a problem you can dispute it with your card issuer.
- If you receive an email saying there's a problem with your order, call the florist to

make sure it's legitimate; don't click on any links. They could be malware.

3. Beware of emails and social media ads touting great deals on other Valentine-themed gifts such as chocolates, jewelry or lingerie. Unless you've previously done business with a company that legitimately has your email address, be skeptical. Watch out for minor typos in the Web address (e.g. www.macys.com instead of www.macys.com).

4. It's no coincidence that dating websites are busier during the winter holidays and leading up to Valentine's Day. Lonely people's defenses are lowered, making them vulnerable to online romance scams. Before they know it, victims are conned into sharing personal or financial information, or lending money — money they'll never see again.

I'm not saying don't pursue love online at legitimate dating sites. Just watch out for these warning signs:

- They want to move your conversations off the dating site immediately and use personal email or instant messaging, to avoid policing by the site's webmaster.
- Their online profile sounds too good to be true. That's because they've probably shaped it to reflect your stated preferences. Or, conversely, their profile may be suspiciously sketchy on details or their photos don't seem genuine.
- They profess love very quickly, even before you've spoken or met.
- They claim to be a U.S. citizen working overseas — often in the military.
- They make plans to visit but are suddenly prevented by a traumatic family or business event — one which your money can overcome.

Bottom line: Don't let your emotions get the better of your common sense when it comes to matters of the heart.

For more tips on spotting and reporting online scams, visit the Federal Trade Commission website, www.ftc.gov.

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs. To follow Jason Alderman on Twitter, @PracticalMoney.

AC Transit sees boom in ridership

Transbay lines showing remarkable increases

For the second year in a row, AC Transit is experiencing a boom in ridership, with its Transbay lines showing particularly remarkable increases in passengers, including a 37.3% ridership jump on one line.

Systemwide, the agency's average daily ridership has climbed by 8.2% over the past year, from 178,042 to 192,553 daily riders. The analysis shows that 78 of 107 bus lines experienced higher passenger levels, including 46 lines that saw a double-digit percentage increase.

Bus service geared toward specific neighborhoods, along with a sluggish economy and expensive gasoline, may be among several factors luring more commuters onto buses for both long and short trips.

"Whether caused by high fuel prices, greater concern for the environment or just a growing appreciation for the convenience of traveling by bus, we are beginning to notice a steady upward trend in the number of people using our services as their primary means of transportation," said AC Transit Board President Greg Harper.

The surge in ridership has been especially noticeable on the San Francisco transbay routes where the percentage of ridership increased by double digits on 25 of the 27 transbay lines. On the NL-

line, which runs from East Oakland to San Francisco, ridership has increased an astounding 37.3%.

Overall, 20.4% more passengers are hopping aboard transbay buses, boosting the number of daily riders to 13,897 in 2013 compared to 11,545 riders in 2012.

"Over the past two years, we have replaced a third of our fleet with new buses, expanded our workforce and taken steps to become more efficient," said AC Transit General Manager David Armijo. "Our new ridership levels, to some degree, may be a reflection of those efforts."

As part of the A Better Ride campaign, AC Transit has revamped its fleet with 210 buses for more dependability, instituted initiatives to improve service performance, deployed a cleanliness program to keep buses sparkling like new, and created task forces to focus on areas such as:

- On-time performance with teams of street supervisors to ensure adherence to schedules;
- Reducing the number of accidents for both passengers and employees;
- Decreasing road calls so that buses are not pulled out of service for repairs.

If current trends continue, staff may recommend that the board add more service to accommodate the additional ridership. ■

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LETTERS

Story leads to record earnings

Dear Editor,

I'm writing to express appreciation for Publisher Gina Channell Allen's blog on the Discovery Shop on Nov. 1 and the excellent story that ran in the paper on Nov. 15, complete with photos. The Discovery Shop was opened by the American Cancer Society over 40 years ago to raise funds for cancer research, education and support through the sale of quality "gently used" donated merchandise.

Gina was acknowledging the dedication of 107 volunteers at Pleasanton's own Discovery Shop. With our manager of 18 years, Monda Wiseman, being called out of town on a personal situation that demanded her undivided attention, the shop's volunteers came together to prepare for one of our largest events of the year, when the furniture store transforms into a winter

wonderland Holiday Shop. This single event, from Nov. 1 through the holiday season, could make or break our year's financial goal.

The morale boost your article gave us was contagious. Smiles and energy were restored. Volunteers took on extra hours and brought new friends to assist. Repeating customers and those who heard of our cause came marching through our doors, to buy and donate, and some even helped clean up. Most important, the rally was evident at the cash register as our store for the first time broke the far reaching annual goal, raising \$600,000 in 2013. What an accomplishment!

Many thanks to the Pleasanton Weekly staff for knowing that community makes all the difference. The Discovery Shop is at Mission Plaza Shopping Center, 1987 Santa Rita Blvd. Suite L; telephone 462-7374.

**A grateful volunteer,
Carol Olson**


What's your opinion?

Write a Letter to the Editor at Editor@PleasantonWeekly.com or put your opinion on Town Square at www.PleasantonWeekly.com. Letters must be 250 words or less.

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EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY



Oak Woodland to make Bernal a real park

With the economy improved along with higher tax receipts, Pleasanton's long pause on municipally financed projects is over. The City Council Tuesday approved a plan to add more sports fields and create a wooded area to be called Oak Woodland on Bernal Community Park, a 318-acre mostly barren parcel where a lighted baseball field was built four years ago.

The project, when completed, will cost an estimated \$16.5 million and is the first major capital improvement since a city freeze went into effect after the Firehouse Arts Center was completed. Part of the funding will come from a Bernal Community Park reserve that the city government has maintained during the recent recession when sales and property tax revenue tapered off. Another \$810,000 would be available from a Capital Improvement Program reserve, also maintained by the city.

City Manager Nelson Fialho said he expects to receive another \$3.2 million from the East Bay Regional Park District through funds approved by voters when they passed the district's Measure W bond issue.

That would still leave a funding gap of more than \$5 million, which could be raised through a combination of fee assessments for users of the sports fields, contributions from sports organizations, corporate sponsors and a community fundraiser similar to the one that raised more than \$1 million for the Firehouse Arts Center.

Although the major costs associated with this second phase of Bernal Park improvements are for added sports fields, they also include the city's long-awaited commitment to turn Bernal into a real park.

As shown in the schematic above, the Oak Woodland will extend from Bernal Avenue on the north to Valley Avenue on the south with a meandering creek running the length of the lushly landscaped trails, picnic areas and wooded open space. To the east will be three lighted baseball diamonds, including a stadium, and one informal baseball field that could be lighted in the future. Other lighted fields will include three for soccer, also with a small stadium, one for football and lacrosse, play areas and parking.

The Oak Woodland area is the grand open space at the heart of the Bernal property, occupying nearly 40 acres immediately west of the sports fields. It will provide a passive open space not found in many existing parks and will serve as a 800-foot buffer for homes on Oak Vista Way, the residential area where more homes and apartments have been approved for acreage between Valley and I-680.

Even with all the improvements approved this week and scheduled for completion next year, considerably more public Bernal parkland is still available on the southwest side of the site. Here's where we might see a small 4-H "farm," a community center and more trails and parkland to finally complete the Bernal Park land given to the city 14 years ago. ■

Pleasanton Weekly

PUBLISHER

Gina Channell-Allen, Ext. 119

EDITORIAL

Editor

Jeb Bing, Ext. 118

Managing Editor

Dolores Fox Ciardelli, Ext. 111

Online/Community Editor

Jeremy Walsh, Ext. 229

Reporter

Glenn Wohltmann, Ext. 121

Contributors

Jay Flachsbarth

Cathy Jetter

Jerri Pantages Long

Mike Sedlak

Nancy Lyness

ART & PRODUCTION

Lead Designer

Katrina Cannon, Ext. 130

Designers

Kristin Brown, Ext. 114

Rosanna Leung, Ext. 120

ADVERTISING

Multimedia Account Manager

Mary Hantos, Ext. 222

Account Executive

Karen Klein, Ext. 122

Real Estate Sales

Carol Cano, Ext. 226

Ad Services

Cammie Clark, Ext. 116

BUSINESS

Business Associate

Lisa Oefflein, Ext. 126

Circulation Director

Zachary Allen, Ext. 141

Front Office Coordinator

Sierra Rhodes, Ext. 124

HOW TO REACH THE WEEKLY

Phone: (925) 600-0840

Fax: (925) 600-9559

Editorial email:

editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

calendar@PleasantonWeekly.com

Display Sales email:

sales@PleasantonWeekly.com

Classifieds Sales email:

ads@PleasantonWeekly.com

Circulation email: circulation@PleasantonWeekly.com

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POLICE BULLETIN

Truck, tools stolen from construction site

A truck and tools valued at nearly \$58,000 were stolen from a construction site for Stoneridge Creek in a commercial burglary reported at about 8:22 a.m. Jan. 28.

Among the lengthy list of items stolen were four sets of crimping tools valued at a total of \$35,000. A chain on the front gate was cut to provide access for the thief or thieves.

In other police reports:

- An altercation involving two brothers and their girlfriends led to the felony arrest of one brother on Jan. 30. William Hunter Vick, 36, of Pleasanton was arrested at about 9:04 p.m. for assault with a deadly weapon and a probation violation in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue. The victim, his brother's girlfriend, told police he hit her on the head with a small metal safe.
- A threat report was filed by a resident of the 8100 block of Moller Ranch Road at about 8:28 p.m. Jan. 28. The victim reportedly received a text saying someone had been paid to kill her.
- A diamond wedding ring worth \$12,000 was reported stolen from Roche Molecular in the 4300 block of Hacienda Drive. The victim told police she removed the ring to wash her hands and left it in the kitchen area, according to a report filed at about 3:10 p.m. Jan. 28.
- Leanne Renee McCoy, 21, of Union City was arrested at about 5:05 p.m. Jan. 28 on a felony count of embezzlement for taking \$3,946 from Nordstrom in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road. McCoy was reportedly crediting refunds to her own account since November.
- Michael Patrick Stevens, 39, of Pleasanton was arrested at about 12:52 p.m. Jan. 28 in the 3500 block of E. Ruby Hill Drive on a felony warrant for embezzlement out of Utah.
- Heather Joy Hendrix 27, a transient, and Michael

Wade Fox, 48, of Modesto were arrested on a variety of felony counts at about 10:20 p.m. Jan. 30 after a traffic stop near the intersection of Stoneridge Drive and Willow Road.

Hendrix was arrested for felony counts of identity theft, receiving stolen property, possession of methamphetamine and a misdemeanor count of paraphernalia possession. Police found two checkbooks, social security numbers and dates of birth that didn't belong to Hendrix in her car.

Fox was arrested for felony methamphetamine possession and misdemeanor paraphernalia possession.

- A Feb. 2 auto burglary at Taco Bell in the 5500 block of Springdale Avenue netted a \$1,000 gold-and-diamond wedding ring, along with a \$700 laptop and a \$20 gym bag. Entry was made by smashing a window.
- Byron Ovalle, 43, of Oakland was arrested at about 11:33 a.m. Feb. 1 on a felony count of shoplifting and a misdemeanor count of possession of burglary tools in an incident at Macy's in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road. Ovalle was caught by store security with wire cutters and clothing worth \$359.
- A \$189 cellphone was reported stolen from Jack in the Box at about 3:13 a.m. Feb. 1. The victim told police she plugged her phone in to charge it, but it was gone when she returned.
- A Stockton woman said her credit card was used to make a \$182 purchase at Macy's in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road in an incident reported at about 9:28 a.m. Jan. 29.
- A \$50 men's purse, a \$20 vest, a wallet and cellphone were taken from a locked locker at 24 Hour Fitness in the 4700 block of Willow Road in an incident reported at about 2 p.m. Jan. 30.
- A petty theft at Sears in the Stoneridge Shopping Center was elevated to a felony count for Terry Gene Tallman, 58, of Martinez. Tallman was arrested at about 7:33 p.m. Jan. 28 in the theft of \$25 wire cutters, but had prior convictions that boosted the count from a misdemeanor to a felony.

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

—Glenn Wohltmann

POLICE REPORT

The Pleasanton Police Department made the following information available.

Jan. 28

Theft

- 9:22 a.m. in the 3400 block of Dennis Drive; bicycle theft
- 3:10 p.m. in the 4300 block of Hacienda Drive; theft from structure
- 5:05 p.m. in the 1600 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; embezzlement
- 7:08 p.m. in the 1700 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

Commercial burglary

- 8:22 a.m. in the 2900 block of Stoneridge Drive

Threats

- 8:28 p.m. in the 8100 block of Moller Ranch Drive

Jan. 29

Theft

- 9:12 a.m. in the 5700 block of Owens Drive; bicycle theft
- 9:28 a.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; fraud

Auto burglary

- 1:41 p.m. in the 6600 block of Owens Drive

Possession of burglary tools

- 11 p.m. in the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive

Battery

- 3:36 p.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue

Jan. 30

Theft

- 8:55 a.m. in the 4000 block of Page Court; fraud
- 8:59 a.m. in the 2900 block of Martin Avenue; auto theft

- 1:17 p.m. in the 3400 block of Andrews Drive

- 2 p.m. in the 4700 block of Willow Road; theft from structure

Auto burglary

- 2:51 p.m. in the 4900 block of Pleasanton Avenue

Battery

- 6:10 p.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue

Drug violations

- 2:24 a.m. at the intersection of Merlot Court and Norton Way; DUI drugs
- 2:55 p.m. in the 3800 block of Vineyard Avenue; possession of a controlled substance; possession of methamphetamine, paraphernalia possession, driving under the influence of a controlled substance, under the influence of a controlled substance

- 10:20 p.m. at the intersection of Stoneridge Drive and Willow Road; possession of methamphetamine, paraphernalia possession

Jan. 31

Auto burglary

- 4:53 p.m. in the 7700 block of Cottonwood Lane

Alcohol violations

- 1:08 a.m. on I-580 eastbound near Dublin Canyon Road; DUI
- 3:20 p.m. in the 4200 block of Rosewood Drive; public drunkenness
- 7:08 p.m. at the intersection of Bernal Avenue and Amanda Place; public drunkenness
- 9:01 p.m. in the 2100 block of Arroyo Court; public drunkenness

Feb. 1

Theft

- 3:13 a.m. in the 4200 block of Valley Avenue; theft from structure
- 6:32 a.m. in the 3900 block of Vineyard Avenue

- 11:26 a.m. in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

- 3:04 p.m. in the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

- 3:46 p.m. in the 7800 block of Paseo Santa Cruz

- 4:26 p.m. in the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

Vandalism

- 2:14 p.m. in the 2600 block of Vista Diablo Court

DUI

- 11:15 a.m. at the intersection of Bernal Avenue and Hearst Drive

Feb. 2

Battery

- 6:16 p.m. in the 2100 block of Alexander Way

Vandalism

- 4:15 a.m. in the 6400 block of Owens Drive

DUI

- 12:47 a.m. in the 5300 block of Hopyard Road

- 2:57 a.m. at the intersection of Santa Rita Road and Mohr Avenue

- 7:29 p.m. at the intersection of Inglewood Drive and Addison Way

Feb. 3

Auto burglary

- 3:32 p.m. in the 5500 block of Springdale Avenue

Prowling

- 11:03 a.m. in the 3300 block of Stoneridge Creek Way

Vandalism

- 8:04 a.m. in the 4100 block of W. Las Positas Boulevard

Drug/alcohol violations

- 1:44 a.m. at the intersection of Hopyard Road and Owens Drive; public drunkenness

WEEKLY MEETING NOTICES

Planning Commission

Wednesday, February 12, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- **PUD-98-16-10M and P13-2092, Manmohan and Gurpreet Bal**
Applications for: (1) a Major Modification to the approved Development Plan for Mariposa Ranch to reduce the minimum side yard setbacks for the custom home proposed on Lot 14 from the required 10 feet minimum and 25 feet combined total to 5 feet minimum and 12 feet 2 inches combined total and to reduce the building-to-building separation between Lot 14 and Lot 13 (5250 Clubhouse Drive) from 25 feet to 17 feet 11 inches; and (2) Design Review approval for the construction of an approximately 5,860-square-foot two-story single-family custom home on Lot 14 (5270 Clubhouse Drive)
- **PUD-84, Frank Berlogar**
Application for Planned Unit Development (PUD) Development Plan approval to subdivide an approximately 37.4-acre site located at 88 Silver Oaks Court into three single-family residential lots: two lots measuring approximately 1.2 acres and 1.9 acres for custom homes; and one lot measuring approximately 34.3 acres for the existing dwelling and accessory structures
- **P13 2498, Kiddieo Mall Consignment Boutique**
Application for a Conditional Use Permit to establish a children's consignment boutique at 3037 Hopyard Road, Suite E, within the Hopyard Village Shopping Center
- **PUD-98 & P13-2518, CarMax**
Work Session to review and receive comments on applications for PUD Development Plan and Sign Design Review to construct an automobile dealership consisting of an approximately 13,064-square-foot sales and presentation building, approximately 45,000-square-foot service building, vehicle sales display area, non-public car wash, project signage, and related site improvements on approximately 19.66 acres of the Auto Mall site at Staples Ranch
- **P14-0009, Workday, Inc.**
Work Session to review and receive comments on a preliminary application to construct a six-story, approximately 430,000 square foot office building, two parking garages, and related site improvements at 6110 and 6120-6160 Stoneridge Mall Road

Library Commission

Thursday, February 13, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Library Conference Room, 400 Old Bernal Avenue

- City Capital Project Financing Options
- Foundation next steps
- Commission meeting scheduling

Parks & Recreation Commission

Thursday, February 13, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Council Chamber, 200 Old Bernal Avenue

- P13-2059 and PUD-01-16M, Proposed Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan Amendment and Planned Unit Development Major Modification to PUD-01
- Introduction and Overview of the City of Pleasanton Recycled Water Project

Youth Commission

Wednesday, February 12, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Operations Service Center, 3333 Busch Road

- Participation in Tobacco Retail License Opinion Poll and Reasonable Distance Survey
- Community Grant, Youth Category - Applicant Presentation Schedule for March 12, 2014 Youth Commission Meeting.

Commission Vacancies Recruitment

The City Council is accepting applications for the following Commission Vacancies:

Housing Commission

Economic Vitality Committee
1 Member from each of the following categories:
Green Economy/Environmental Industry
Medical Technology
Residential Real Estate Developer

Applications are available at the City Clerk's Office, 123 Main Street, or on the City's website at <http://www.cityofpleasantonca.gov/pdf/CommissionApplication2.pdf>. For additional information, Contact the Office of the City Clerk at (925) 931-5027.

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

Facing drought

Water is challenge of 21st century
— locally and globally

BY JEREMY WALSH



The southeast Pleasanton hills appear parched as the Tri-Valley experienced another dry month in January.

Drought conditions are prompting unprecedented moves at the state level and raising real concerns for water agencies locally.

The California Department of Water Resources announced last Friday that for the first time ever, the State Water Project would allocate no water to its 29 contracting water agencies that serve about 25 million Californians and 750,000 acres of irrigated farmland.

“(The) action is a stark reminder that California’s drought is real. We’re taking every possible step to prepare the state for the continuing dry conditions we face,” Gov. Jerry Brown said.

The SWP accounts for a significant majority of the typical yearly supply for the Zone 7 Water Agency, which helps supply water to more than 200,000 people in Pleasanton, Livermore, Dublin and Dougherty Valley.

The Pleasanton Water Division would normally receive most, but not all, of its annual supply from Zone 7.

In response to supply concerns, the Pleasanton City Council on Tuesday asked its residents and businesses to voluntarily reduce their water usage by 20%. Zone 7 has also called for voluntary 20% reduction and declared a local drought emergency in its service area.

“I think right now we’re going through the biggest crisis we’ve ever had concerning water in this valley,” John Greci, Zone 7 Board of Directors vice president, said during a special meeting Jan. 29 at its headquarters in Livermore. “It’s going to take a cooperative effort by every citizen in this valley.”

Water sources

The next night, California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird spoke at a Jan. 30 public workshop on water that was held in Dublin.

“Probably an overwhelming majority of Californians think their source of water is the tap that they have at their house,” Laird joked.

In the Pleasanton Water Division’s case, 20% of its supply is generated internally from city-maintained wells.

The remaining 80% is purchased from Zone 7, a local wholesaler that also sells water to Livermore Municipal Water, Dublin San Ramon Services District and California Water Service Company, Livermore District.

Zone 7 would normally receive more than 80% of its annual supply from the SWP.

Its local water originates from melted snowpack in the northern Sierra Nevada, which is

captured in Lake Oroville. The fresh water then gets transported through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and is delivered to Zone 7 via the South Bay Aqueduct.

But with the state cutting off water deliveries to its SWP-contracting agencies statewide, Zone 7 is faced with relying on its other water sources — which would typically account for less than 20% of the agency’s annual supply.

One such source is the local groundwater basin, which is about 57% full.

The other is Lake Del Valle, a reservoir southeast of Pleasanton that is currently less than three-quarters full, Zone 7 officials said. But only 47.5% of the water there is reportedly available for use, and that amount would be divvied up among Zone 7 and the Alameda County and Santa Clara Valley water districts, which also are served by South Bay Aqueduct supplies.

Another issue for Zone 7 is that some of the water it’s saved up from wetter years is stored remotely. The agency would not access that water directly, but rather indirectly by getting extra Delta water as a result of exchanges with out-of-area storage facilities and the State Water Project.

So, Zone 7’s ability to call back on that supply “may become impossible” if water isn’t being pumped through the Delta via the SWP system, according to agency officials.

As a result, Zone 7 could face water shortages this year but still meet all health and safety requirements if supplied only by the two regional sources, agency staff said.

State officials could revisit the zero SWP allocation decision if precipitation increases in the coming weeks and months.

Rainfall

California followed a dry 2012 with its driest year on record in 2013.

The same held true locally, with the Livermore and Amador valleys getting 4.5 inches of rain last year, Zone 7 staff members told the board. That total was 31% of the area’s annual average and a new record low by nearly 2 inches.

The northern Sierra — the primary SWP water source — received 16.6 inches of precipitation in 2013, marking the lowest total in the 90-plus years of tracking, Zone 7 officials said. The year 1932 was the only other recorded in which the range saw fewer than 20 inches of precipitation; the yearly average is 50 inches.

The dry spell has continued early in 2014.



JEREMY WALSH

Water lawyer Bob Maddow asks a question from the audience during the Q&A portion at a presentation on the California Water Action Plan in Dublin on Jan. 30.

The Sierra snowpack was 12% of normal Jan. 30, the most recent California Department of Water Resources data available. Additionally, Lake Oroville — the main SWP reservoir — is at 36% capacity, state officials said last week.

The northern Sierra would need more than 3 feet of precipitation to reach the yearly average, officials said.

The rainfall forecast appears optimistic in the short term, with a 40% chance of above-normal precipitation in the Bay Area into next week, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The long-term predictions indicate California would see below-normal precipitation through mid-April, according to the most recent NOAA seasonal outlook.

Local action

“This is much worse than anything on the records, certainly worse than anything the state project has ever seen,” Zone 7 general manager Jill Duerig said Jan. 29.

With no imported water all year and no water conservation, Zone 7 could be facing a 42% shortage for 2014, agency staff said. That shortage could reduce to 27% with voluntary 20% conservation.

However, the prospect of a 20% cut doesn’t seem fair to those who already intensely conserve, Pleasanton resident Ann Montgomery said in a letter to the Zone 7 board.

“I have never been a water pig. I cannot conserve any more than I already do,” she said. “If someone as exemplary as me who



MIKE SEDLAK

ary.



JEREMY WALSH

California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird (back left) talks with attendees after the Dublin event.

can't possibly conserve any more is punished for being good, it is not fair."

Daniel Smith, operations services director for Pleasanton, said city staff is working to develop a base to use as a "level playing field" across the current water-use spectrum, should conservation requests become mandates.

For now, during the voluntary stage, "Whatever we can save now is only going to help us later," Smith added.

Zone 7 would be able to meet safety needs with or without conservation, but the potential shortages underscore the need to explore other water options, according to agency officials.

That message, in part, prompted the Board of Directors to sign off on three system-enhancement projects in Pleasanton on Jan. 29.

The directors approved immediate construction of Well No. 5 at the Chain of Lakes,

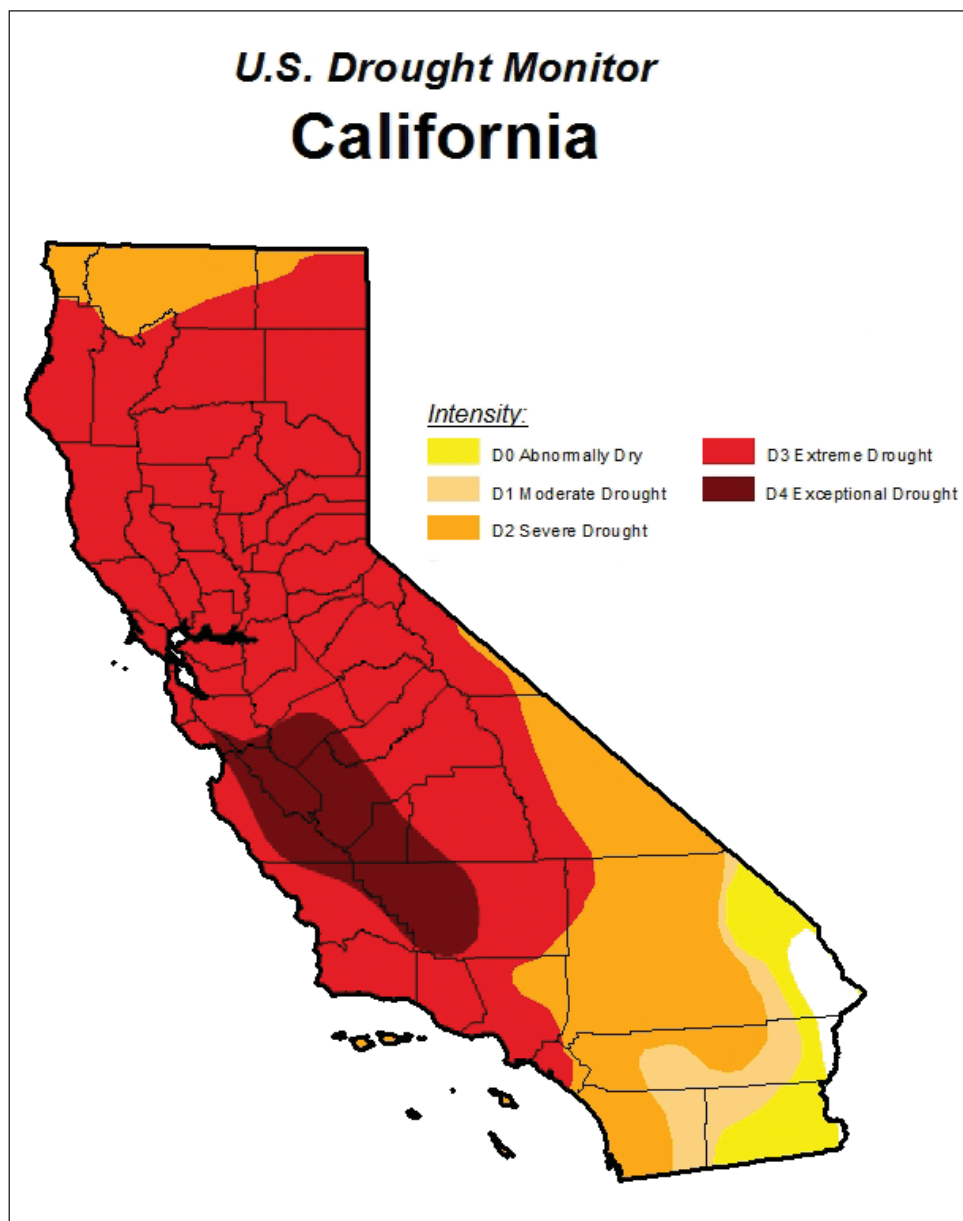
a \$3.6 million project set to be completed by August — almost four years earlier than originally scheduled.

They also moved up installation of a water pipeline between Cope Lake and Lake I to facilitate the Chain of Lakes operation. Set for completion in May, the pipeline could cost as much as \$1.2 million.

Thirdly, the board authorized staff to enter into an estimated \$1.4 million contract for the design phase of a well project on the northwest corner of Valley Avenue and Stanley Boulevard.

Zone 7 has capital-improvement reserves available to pay for each effort, and all of the projects already went through environmental review, according to agency officials.

The board also directed its staff to explore other potential projects as well as the



NATIONAL DROUGHT MITIGATION CENTER

The most recent California drought outlook.

possibility of obtaining water from nearby agencies, such as the East Bay Municipal Utility District and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

The city of Pleasanton has offered its well system as a possible outlet, according to Smith. "That's surely available to work together with the zone to use," he told the Zone 7 board. "We offer that up and we're ready to help in any way we can."

California Water Action Plan

"It seems like with water, the window opens every 20 or 30 years where people are willing to make tough decisions," Laird said at the Jan. 30 meeting in Dublin. "That window is open right now ... so it's the time to make some of those tough decisions."

About 100 local residents, business owners and government officials turned out that night to hear Laird serve as the keynote speaker during a presentation on the California Water Action Plan.

The 22-page document — developed by the state's Natural Resources Agency, Department of Food and Agriculture and Environmental Protection Agency — aims to guide short-term state actions related to California's water resources.

Laird called the plan "a real statement about all the things we have to do together in California."

It calls for actions in 10 key areas, such as making conservation the norm statewide, better preparing for dry periods, protecting and restoring ecosystems, finding sustainable financing opportunities, and increasing regional self-reliance, flood protection and operational and regulatory efficiency.

The need for a multifaceted approach to addressing the state's water issue was a theme throughout the presentation in Dublin.

"The challenge of the 20th century was oil and energy," said Smith, another speaker at the event. "Not that that's not still important, but the challenge of the 21st century is, without a doubt, the global water crisis and our crisis of quality and quantity." ■

Water conservation tips:

- Halve shower times
- Run only full loads in dishwashers and clothes washers
- Don't leave water running when brushing teeth, shaving, rinsing hands or washing dishes
- Install water-efficient devices such as washing machines, toilets, showers and irrigation systems
- Water outdoors when temperatures are cooler, early in morning and late in evening
- Avoid over-watering plants and lawns
- Fix leaking water pipes

Source: Association of California Water Agencies. For more tips, visit www.saveourh2o.org.

ON THE TOWN



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Book Clubs

TOWNE CENTER BOOK CLUB The club meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month at Towne Center Books, 555 Main St. Call 846-8826 or visit www.townecenterbooks.com for the current selection.

Clubs

LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY GARDEN CLUB The Livermore Amador Valley Garden Club will meet at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 13 at Alisal School's multipurpose room. Brian Kemble, curator of the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek, will speak on the agave family, aloes and bromeliads. Visitors welcome. Call Bev at 485-7812.

PLEASANTON MOTHERS CLUB The mission of the Pleasanton Mothers Club is to provide a social, supportive, and educational outlet for moms and their families in the local community. They offer a variety of activities, children's playgroups, special interest groups, and more. For information visit pleasantonmothersclub.org. Contact membership@pleasantonmothersclub.org.

PLEASANTON NEWCOMERS CLUB

This club is a great way for new and established residents to make new friends. It meets for coffee on the first Wednesday of every month and for lunch on the second Wednesday of every month. The group has activities like hiking, walking, Bunco and more. Visit www.pleasantonnewcomers.com. Contact Info@PleasantonNewcomers.com or 215-8405.

Concerts

'SOME ENCHANTED EVENING' Enjoy a romantic night of entertainment with Broadway stars Dale Kristien and Bill Hutton as they perform favorite hits from Broadway musicals and other love songs, at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 14 at Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Tickets are \$36-\$55. Call 373-6800 or go to www.bankheadtheater.org. Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore.

CLAIRDEE: 'A TIME FOR LOVE' See this special Valentine's Day show with the incomparable Clairdee, the internationally acclaimed star with alluring artistry, and trio at 8 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 14 at Firehouse Arts Center. Tickets are \$15-\$25, and available at 931-4848 or www.firehousearts.org. Wine, dine and show packages with Cellar Door Wine Bar available. Call 846-3667.

GLENN STALLER, CLASSICAL GUITAR Enjoy an afternoon performance of solo guitar featuring guitarist Glenn Staller at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 9 at St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road. Performing regional works from France, Spain, Argentina, and Brazil. Free will offering, all are welcome. Call 462-4802 or go to <http://www.stclarespleasanton.org/musicVideo/upcomingMusic.html>.

SONGS OF LONGING AND BELONGING Tenor Greg Allen Friedman and harpist Dominique Piana will present a unique art song program at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15 at the Firehouse Arts Center. Featuring works by Schubert, Strauss, Reidhardt and more, and accompanied by the Cantabella Honors Choir. Tickets are \$15-\$20. Call 931-4848 or go to www.firehousearts.org.

Events

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD

DRIVE Donate blood and save a life! The American Red Cross will have a blood drive from 8 a.m.—2 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11 at Las Positas College, 3000 Campus Hill Drive, Livermore. Call 1-800-733-2767 or go to redcrossblood.org (Sponsor Code: LASPOSITAS) to schedule an appointment.

BUNJO'S COMEDY ALL STAR SHOW

Featuring some of the best comedians from the Bay Area and Beyond, including HBO, Comedy Central, Late Night and more! See the show at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 8 at Vito's Express, 4060 Grafton St., Dublin. Tickets are \$10. Call 264-4413 or go to www.bunjoscmedy.com.

GENERAL MEETING OF THE WIDOWS & WIDOWERS

The Widows and Widowers of Northern California invite you to a General Meeting at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 16 at Elephant Bar, 7202 Amador Plaza Road, Dublin. RSVP to Marge by Feb. 10 at 828-5124 or hskooq@comcast.net.

LUNCH IN LIVERMORE The Widows and Widowers of Northern California invite you to lunch at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11 at Mountain Mike's, 1472 North Vasco Road, Livermore. RSVP to Janet by Feb. 8 at 443-3317 or hskooq@comcast.net.

THE ANTI-VALENTINES DAY COMEDY

BASH Featuring some of the best comedians from the Bay Area and Beyond, singles and couples are welcome to come and help mock others who fall victim to this commercial holiday. Join this hilarious evening from 8:30-10 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 14 at Vito's Express, 4060 Grafton St., Dublin. Tickets are \$10. Call 264-4413 or go to www.bunjoscmedy.com.

TRI-VALLEY HAVEN PRESENTS 'THE

GOOD BODY' Tri-Valley Haven presents "The Good Body," a play by Eve Ensler, at 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 7-8, and 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 9 Las Positas' Mertes Theater in Livermore. Tickets are \$25, \$20 for students. Proceeds benefit TVH. Call 667-2707 or go to <http://thegoodbody.brownpapertickets.com>.

Exhibits

'JUST ADD WATER' — 'BLACK ON WHITE' The Harrington Gallery at 4444 Railroad Ave. presents two new exhibits, "Just Add Water," featuring water color works and "Black on White," featuring works in charcoal, ink and welding, running now-Feb. 22.

Film

FREE TEEN MOVIE AFTER HOURS AT PLEASANTON LIBRARY Teens ages 13 and up are invited to join Free Film after hours from 6:30-9 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15 at the Pleasanton Public Library. Free Popcorn, candy and drinks! Come early for 90's trailers, cartoons and trivia, movie starts at 7 p.m. Call 931-3404.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

A Valentine to
Maya Angelou

New York and San Francisco actress, writer, comedienne and KKKI DJ Faith Alpher will portray Maya Angelou in an energetic and engaging Black History Month celebration, "Kissin' the Chocolate Blues," to include live music by Pleasanton's Jessica Reaber. Pleasanton Poet Laureate Sandra Harrison Kay plays host through a moving, joyous and soul stirring performance of this "living timeline" of Dr. Angelou's amazing and inspiring life and writings. There will be one performance only, from 7-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 11, at Pleasanton's Firehouse Arts Center Theater. Reserved tickets are \$12. Go to www.firehousearts.org, call 931-4848, or visit the center Box Office, 4444 Railroad Ave. (This performance includes some discussion of sexually explicit material.)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fundraisers

PAWS IN NEED VALENTINE CRAB

FEED Come to this amazing crab feed from 6-10 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 8 at the Shannon Community Center in Dublin. Dinner includes fresh cracked crab, pasta, Caesar salad, bread, dessert, and coffee or tea. No-host bar. Awesome raffles and silent auctions. Benefits Paws In Need, a medical fund for community animals. Tickets are \$48 until Jan. 18, \$53 after. Call 323-8517 or go to Paws-In-Need.org.

SLEEP TRAIN'S PAJAMA DRIVE FOR FOSTER KIDS Sleep Train's annual Pajama Drive aims to make nighttime cozier for local foster children ensuring they go to bed wearing their own pair of comfortable pajamas. Donations of new PJs in every size — infant to adult — can be dropped off at any Sleep Train store now through March 2.

WINES AND VALENTINES

FUNRAISER Come to Museum on Main's seventh annual Wines and Valentines Fundraiser on Saturday, Feb. 15 at Castlewood Country Club, 707 Country Club Circle. Wines will be paired with a four-course gourmet dinner with a Garre Winery representative sharing information about the selections. Tickets are \$85, and available at Museum on Main, 603 Main St., or by calling 462-2766. Proceeds benefit the Museum.

Kids & Teens

GYMBOREE PLAY AND MUSIC

SWEETHEART PARTY Bring the whole family to enjoy sweet play activities, music and dancing, heartfelt arts and crafts, snacks and tons of hugs, from 5-6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 12 at Gymboree, 5460 Sunol Blvd. Suite #9. Cost is \$15 per child. Call 249-0006.

KIDS VALENTINE'S COOKIE

DECORATING Stop by with your kids and let them express their artistic talent icing delicious heart shaped cookies, from noon-2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 9 at New Leaf Markets. Free! Call 621-7660, ext. 120 or go to www.newleaf.com.

MONARCH MADNESS What is the life of a Monarch butterfly like? Learn about the habits, habitats, and migration patterns of these beautiful creatures at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15 at Alviso Adobe Community Park. Ages 5-11. Cost is \$3 for residents, \$5 for non-residents. Register at www.pleasantonfun.com using code 56840.

Lectures/
Workshops

AMADOR VALLEY QUILTERS Join Amador Valley Quilters and guest speaker Ann Turley, a lifelong artist who will discuss, "Why am I buying broccoli when I would rather be quilting?" From 1:30-3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 8 at Pleasanton Middle School. Go to www.amadorvalleyquilters.org.

COOKING CLASS: SWEETHEARTS MEAL Give your loved ones the gift of a gourmet meal for Valentine's Day. At this demo-style class you'll learn from Nutritional Educator and Holistic Chef Suzanne Aziz how to cook a special seasonal, gluten and dairy-free meal, from 6-7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 12 at New Leaf Markets. Enjoy recipes which you can take and recreate at home! Free. Call 621-7660 ext. 120 or go to www.newleafpleasanton.eventbrite.com.

GRIEF WORKSHOP The death of a loved one is unlike any other loss. Get guidance and company on your healing journey at 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays, Feb. 13 and 27 at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Drive. Open to all. Call 846-5377 for more information.

QUILTS OF VALOR: ROOKIE QUILT PROJECT Join this free half-day session to make a Quilt of Valor for future presentation to a local veteran, from noon-5 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 16 at the Masonic Center, 3370 Hopyard Road. Materials, machines and personal coaching provided. Go to www.amadorvalleyquilters.org.

BOSCO'S BONES & BREW

Valentine's Day Menu

3 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Dinner includes Entree, soup or salad and dessert

Soup: Cream of Asparagus

Salad: Mixed Greens with Beets & Smoked Salmon

Boneless Half Chicken with Mushroom Wine Sauce	\$16.95
Stuffed Sole with White Cream Sauce	\$18.95
Prime Rib of Beef (10 oz.)	\$21.95
Filet Mignon with Double Mushroom Sauce	\$26.95
Crab Cakes with Lobster Sauce	\$23.95
Maine Lobster Tail Served over Pasta	\$32.95

Reservations Recommended

11930 Main Street, Sunol 925-862-0821

On Stage

'A CHORUS LINE' AT FIREHOUSE ARTS CENTER Pacific Coast Repertory Theatre presents a new production of the musical theater classic "A Chorus Line," at 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, and at 2 p.m. on Sundays, Jan. 24-Feb. 9 at the Firehouse Arts Center. Tickets are \$17-\$38. Call 931-4848 or go to www.firehousearts.org.

'KISSIN' THE CHOCOLATE BLUES' See "Kissin' The Chocolate Blues," an on stage valentine to Dr. Maya Angelou starring Faith Alpher, Sandra Kay and Jessica Reaber. The show will be on Tuesday, Feb. 11 at the Firehouse Arts Center. Tickets are \$12. Go to FirehouseArts.org, or <http://www.SheSaysWithASmile.blogspot.com>.

EMPLOYMENT HELP AFTER 55 Many seniors today are reevaluating the need to return to work. In this presentation, the speaker will focus on factors that contribute to a successful job search and highlight employment trends for seniors, at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11 at

the Pleasanton Senior Center. Go to www.pleasantonseniorcenter.org.

FREE MEMORY SCREENING FOR SENIORS Caring Solutions is sponsoring free memory assessment on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Dublin Senior Center, 7600 Amador Valley Blvd. Call 556-4511 for a 30-minute appointment. Preregister by the Monday prior to reserve an appointment. Informational materials are available at the Senior Center.

MILLS LINE DANCE SOCIAL DJ Millie Dusha will play tunes from the classic oldies at the Mills Line Dance Social from 2-4 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month at the Dublin Senior Center, 7600 Amador Valley Blvd. All levels of dancers are welcome. Cost is \$3. Call 556-4511.

PEDDLER SHOPPE AT THE SENIOR CENTER The Peddler Shoppe in the lobby of the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd., offers the hand-made wares of talented local senior artisans. It's a great place to buy gifts. The Shoppe is staffed by volunteers and is open to the public 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

TRANSCRIBING FOR YOU Transcribing for You has volunteers that will transcribe and print your letters to be sent. The service is located at the Dublin Senior Center, 7600 Amador Valley Blvd, Dublin, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Cost is \$1.50. Call 556-4511 for an appointment or email seniorctr@ci.dublin.us.

ci.dublin.us.

Support Groups

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP The American Cancer Society Breast Cancer Support group meets from 7:30-9 p.m. on the

second and fourth Tuesday of every month at LifeStyleRx, 1111 E. Stanley Blvd., Livermore. Call 833-2784 or visit www.valley-care.com.

Visit pleasantonweekly.com for more event listings.

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Let's Eat

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



Jeannette Smith's barbershop quartet, Craze!, includes (l-r) Julie Baxter, Kristi Bispo, Anushka Seghal and Jeannette Smith.

JOSEPH PACHAN

A life of song

Vocal coach's latest love is barbershop harmony

By Katie Lyness

Pleasanton vocal coach Jeannette Smith did not discover singing —she was born into it. Growing up, she loved to play the piano and sing, as did her two older sisters. The girls would often make up three-part harmonies to musicals and songs they heard on the radio, while their parents founded a musical theater production company.

"When I was in my late teens and early 20s, I started a rock band that produced all original music. I wrote the music, played the keyboards and sang lead vocals," Smith recalls on her website. "I was also very active in community musical theater, not only playing lead roles but also as hired pianist, musical director and/or vocal director."

Graduating from high school in Palo Alto, she attended the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, earning a bachelor of music in vocal performance. She then worked as a vocal coach, starting on the Peninsula, where she lived before moving to Pleasanton in 2006.

At first, Smith travelled to her students' homes for lessons, taught music in the public and private schools, and was an instructor for the well-known San

Francisco Girls Chorus.

Once settled in Pleasanton, she created JS Vocal Studio, which she runs out of her home, training more than 50 students of all ages. She also teaches piano, though mostly considers herself a vocal coach.

Smith said her number of students has grown very quickly, and there is even a waiting list. They range from young children to retirement-aged adults seeking a challenge.

Many of her students from Amador Valley and Foothill high schools are interested in musical theater, and she also works with middle-schoolers from Pleasanton, Dublin, San Ramon and Danville. Her adult students range from worship leaders at churches to chorus members, musical theater performers and hobbyists. Several sing in barbershop quartets that perform all over the Bay Area.

Smith herself recently developed an interest in barbershop-style music after she met two women looking to form a competitive quartet to be part of Sweet Adelines International, a worldwide organization of women singers who sing a capella in the barbershop style,

with tight, four-part harmony. Their quartet Craze! recently performed with the California Pops Orchestra.

This April, Craze! will compete in Reno against women from throughout Region 12, which spans Northern California, Northern Nevada, Southern Oregon, and Hawaii. First-place winners go on to compete internationally.

Smith said she not only enjoys the barbershop style but it provides a supportive and affordable way to learn musicianship skills and a healthy vocal technique. This prompted her to organize an a cappella group, the Stilletones, for women in Pleasanton.

In September, she invited some singers to join and held auditions for additional members. She still is looking for all voice types "from really low to really high."

"They need to be able to sing in tune, be able to hold a harmony line, and be available once a week, on Thursday nights," she explained, adding that they do not need to know how to read music.

Smith has been fortunate the core group is talented, competent singers, she noted. The 15



JOSEPH PACHAN

Stilletones members are (in front) Jeannette Smith; behind her are (l-r) Nadine Flaherty, Sam Achuff, Terry Arellano, Katie Waxman, Jen Pachan and Kelly Gottlieb. In the back row are Sandy Tenborg, Nancy Lyness, Catherine Ostrander, Lisa Xenakis and Courtney Jacobs.

Stilletones currently practice in a home, but she said they will move to a larger location when the group exceeds 18.

So far, they have performed an arrangement of "California Dreamin'" by the Mamas and the Papas at Centerpointe Presbyterian Church in Pleasanton, as part of Smith's studio recital. The women also did a holiday show at Harvest Valley Church, singing traditional Christmas favorites arranged in barbershop style.

Smith is preparing arrangements for the group to get "show-ready" for competitions with songs from the classic tunes of the '30s and '40s to present day pop songs.

"You can basically compete doing any song you want, as long

as there's a good arrangement that meets the Sweet Adelines criteria," she said.

Her goal is to keep the Stilletones growing in number until they can form a chapter of Sweet Adeline's International, and she is hoping they will be eligible to compete in regional competition in 2015.

Smith encourages anyone interested in singing to do so.

"Get into lessons," she advises beginners. "Find a group. Practice. Get involved. Even if you have had little or no experience in singing, don't let that stop you, especially if the desire is there."

Anyone interested in voice lessons or auditioning to become a Stilletone, can contact Smith at sing4me@jsvocalstudio.com. ■

Symphony to present 'American Idols'

Concert features winners of Young Musicians Competition

The Livermore-Amador Symphony's next concert, the second concert of its 51st season, will be "American Idols" on Feb. 22 at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore.

The program includes the "Unfinished Symphony" by Franz Schubert, "Lincoln Portrait" by Aaron Copland (with narration by former U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry) and Howard Hanson's Symphony No. 2, "Romantic."

In addition, the winners of the Symphony's Competition for Young Musicians will be featured: clarinetist Robert Shi from Livermore High School and pianist Arie Chen from Amador Valley High. Conducting will be Dr. Arthur Barnes, who is in his 50th and final season as music director of the symphony.

Shi will perform the first movement of Bernhard Crusell's Clarinet Concerto in F minor. In 2013, Shi was second chair under professors H. Robert Reynolds and Sharon Lavery at New York's Carnegie Hall for the American High School Honors Performance Series. He was selected by audition to study clarinet performance under professor Ethan Sloane at the Tanglewood Institute in Massachusetts. He also studied under the baton of Maestro Jindong Cai in the Stanford Youth Orchestra (SYO).

"Music is a gateway to a culture that has truly changed the way I value my community and society as

a whole," Shi said. "When I perform a piece of music, it is like stepping into the composer's era and interpreting his experiences, from what may be the entirety of his life, within the time-frame of a few minutes."

In 2010, Shi launched the non-profit Livermore-Pleasanton Youth Outreach Symphony with John Ingram to promote classical music and provide entertainment for the community. In 2011, he established the East Bay Association of Visiting Musicians to interact with and comfort hospice residents; the musicians have entertained 140 hospice patients. Early in 2013, along with his teacher, Shi founded the Tri-Valley Youth Clarinet Choir for advanced clarinetists to practice challenging ensemble music.

The son of Michael and Sally Shi, and a senior at Livermore High, Shi is a National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist plus founder and president of the Badminton Club, and vice president of the school's debate team.

Pianist Chen will perform the first movement of Chopin's Concerto No. 2, in F minor. After five years of piano lessons, Chen began to embrace the competition floor. He was chosen for a local Liszt Festival in 2012. A year later he received third place in the U.S. Open Showcase Solo intermediate category.

Chen is the son of Yu-To Chen and Chih-Chien Tsai and a freshman

at Amador Valley, where he pursues his other musical interest, the violin – which he began playing in fourth grade. Since starting violin lessons with Abraham Becker, in 2012, he was selected for the California All-State Junior High Orchestra's debut year and the California Honor High School String Orchestra at the University of Redlands.

Chen also enjoys swimming, and belongs to Tzu-Chi, a group dedicated to improving the environment and society.

"The thing I love most about piano, and music in general, is that whatever emotion you are feeling, whether it be happy or sad, can be expressed through your playing and you can pour it all out and express it however you want," Chen said. "Since the day I first played a Chopin nocturne, Chopin and Romantic music in general have become my favorite to play. I think that piano is something that can stick with you for a lifetime and, in the end, it is an incredibly rewarding choice."

Following Chopin, the orchestra will perform Copland's moving, classical orchestral work, "Lincoln Portrait," commissioned by conductor André Kostelanetz in 1942 as part of the patriotic war effort. Descriptions of Lincoln and words that he said are interspersed with the music. The piece will be narrated

by Perry, who served as U.S. Secretary of Defense from 1994-97 and is currently a professor emeritus at Stanford University.

The final piece will be Howard Hanson's Symphony No. 2, "Romantic." Hanson was an American composer who directed the Eastman

School of Music for 40 years, and then served as the head of the school's Institute for American Music.

The concert begins at 8 p.m. on Feb. 22, with a prelude talk from 7-7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at www.bankheadtheater.org or by calling 373-6800. ■


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Salad Course (choose one per person)

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High-end sales surge 27% in East Bay

Pleasanton sees \$15 million-plus sales in December

By JEB BING

The East Bay's luxury housing market closed out 2013 on a roll with high-end sales surging 27% in December from a year ago and the median price climbing as well, according to a new report by Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage.

The figures are based on Multiple Listing Service data of all homes sold for more than \$1 million last month in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

A total of 160 luxury homes sold last month, up from 126 transactions in December 2012. High-end sales were down from November's 199 units, but a decline from November to December isn't unusual.

Meanwhile, the median sale price of a luxury home in December rose to \$1,310,500, up 6.3% from a year ago when the median stood at \$1,232,000 and up 4.8% from the previous month when it was \$1,250,000.

The upper end of the market was especially strong with 17 sales of more than \$2 million, more than double the seven multi-million-dollar transactions at the same time last year.

Other key market indicators were mixed last month with sellers receiving a higher percentage of their asking price on average, but homes taking slightly longer to sell than they did a year ago.

"The East Bay's luxury housing market



Rick Turley

had a great year in 2013 with sales increasing consistently on a year-over-year basis, especially in the upper end of the market, and prices moving steadily higher," said Rick Turley, president of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage. "The only thing that kept sales from going even higher was the severe shortage of homes on the market."

"We continue to have an imbalance between the supply of homes and the extremely strong demand from buyers in Alameda and Contra Costa counties," he said. "There are signs that is gradually starting to change with more inventory expected to come on the market in the weeks ahead. Hopefully that will bring the market back into a healthier balance in 2014, which will be good for everyone — buyers and sellers alike."

Some key findings from this month's Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage luxury report:

- The most expensive sale in the East Bay last month was a three-bed, four-bath approximately 4,350-square-foot home in Orinda that sold for \$3,376,250;
- Danville boasted the most luxury sales with 26, followed by Berkeley with 19, Fremont and Pleasanton with 15, and Alamo and Lafayette with 11 each;
- Homes sold in an average of 52 days, up from 51 days a year ago and 35 days the previous month;
- Sellers received an average of 102.5% of their asking price, up from 99.6% a year ago but down from 103.9% the previous month. ■

2014 forecast: Mild slowdown nationally but not in Bay Area

By GINA CHANNELL-ALLEN

According to Opes Advisors CEO, co-founder and president Susan McHan, the real estate and mortgage industry will slow a bit nationally in 2014, but "in the Bay Area, we won't even see a blip."

McHan and nationally recognized mortgage expert Rob Chrisman, spoke to approximately 100 Tri-Valley Realtors and mortgage brokers Jan. 29 in a presentation hosted by Opes Advisors. Chrisman is a mortgage industry veteran who, among other pursuits, publishes a widely read daily mortgage market commentary.

McHan said that Opes Advisors, which specializes in residential mortgage banking and investment management, is forecasting 2014 to be "hot because of the lack of inventory" of existing homes. She also predicted a "rash of building in 2014 because we are behind" in new home construction.

Chrisman spoke specifically about the 2014 mortgage industry and how the Qualified Mortgage (QM) rule is going to affect it.

The QM rule became effective Jan. 10. A qualified mortgage is a home loan that meets certain standards set forth by the federal gov-

ernment, including the Ability-to-Repay rule mandated by the Dodd-Frank Act.

Chrisman told the audience, "QM is not excluding buyers" but was instituted to prevent another credit meltdown. "What government interference has done is set barriers."

The Mortgage Bankers Association is forecasting a 30% to 40% decrease in mortgage originations year-over-year, mostly because there was a tremendous number of refinances in 2013 that won't happen this year, and there aren't as many homes on the market.

An audience member brought up that inventory might be down because of a perpetuating cycle; they don't want to move because they don't know where they would go. Another audience member said there is also a perception that it is now too difficult to qualify for a mortgage.

According to Bob Nutter, managing director of Opes Advisors Pleasanton branch, QM is not a hinderance. "If you have good credit, a good work history and money in the bank," Nutter said, "you're going to get a loan." ■

SALES AT A GLANCE

Dublin (Dec. 23-Jan. 7)

Total sales reported: 10
Lowest sale reported: \$398,500
Highest sale reported: \$1,051,000
Average sales reported: \$612,550

Pleasanton (Dec. 23-Jan. 7)

Total sales reported: 7
Lowest sale reported: \$560,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,620,000
Average sales reported: \$1,018,071
Source: California REsource

HOME SALE OF THE WEEK

5284 RIDGEVALE WAY, PLEASANTON, \$1,005,000



This beautifully expanded "Monterey" model home offers 4 bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms with 2,712+/- square feet of living space. Upgrades include glistening hardwood floors, a remodeled granite kitchen with stainless appliances, a 600+/- square foot bonus room/guest suite, granite/marble baths with custom subway shower tile, European texture limestone finished walls with faux paint. The home also includes an inside laundry room with storage, a water softener, a 40 year roof, and an owned solar system. It is located on a quiet street blocks from K-12 schools. Sold by Tim McGuire at Alain Pinel Realtors (925) 462-SOLD (7653).

OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

Alamo

4 BEDROOMS

15 Stone Creek Place \$1,220,000
 Sun 1-4 BHG Tri-Valley Realty 463-9500

6 BEDROOMS

3083 Sandstone Road \$2,795,000
 Sun 1-4 Gail Boal 577-5787

Brentwood

4 BEDROOMS

575 Garnet Terrace \$699,000
 Sun 1:30-4 Heidy Hurst 584-6377

Danville

3 BEDROOMS

1777 Green Valley Road \$975,000
 Sun 1-4 Coldwell Banker 837-4100

4 BEDROOMS

234 Jasmine Way \$969,000
 Sat/Sun 1:30-4 Coldwell Banker 837-4100

Dublin

4 BEDROOMS

4255 Onate Court \$819,000
 Sat/Sun 1-4 Coldwell Banker 847-2200

Livermore

4 BEDROOMS

5704 Rainflower Drive \$672,000
 Sat/Sun 1-4 Keller Williams Tri-Valley 397-4200

1225 Hansen Road \$1,129,000
 Sat/Sun 1-4 Keller Williams Tri-Valley 397-4200

5578 Oakmont Circle \$639,000
 Sat/Sun 1-4 Leslie Faught 784-7979

Pleasanton

2 BEDROOMS

5432 San Juan Way \$704,950
 Sun 1-4 George McKean 998-1798

3 BEDROOMS

575 Del Sol Ave. \$930,000
 Sun 1-4 Moxley Team 600-0990

7 Twelve Oaks Drive \$1,750,000
 Sun 1-4 Tom Fox 872-1275

4 BEDROOMS

5339 Springdale Ave. Call for price.
 Sun 1-4 Weiner McDowell Group 251-2585

5 BEDROOMS

5718 Dalton Creek Way \$1,849,000
 Sat/Sun 1-4 Blaise Lofland 846-6500

HOME SALES

This week's data represents homes sold during Dec. 23-Jan. 15

Dublin

4675 Brannigan Street A. Manansala to H. Park for \$630,000

7654 Cardigan Street Shetterly Trust to C. Cardosa for \$465,000

3583 Central Parkway J. & M. Wong to K. Stafford for \$695,000

8366 Cypress Court White Trust to M. Chang for \$560,000

5501 De Marcus Boulevard #431 C. Kwong to R. & H. Khan for \$480,000

5501 De Marcus Boulevard #448 V. Badhwar to S. Li for \$420,000

5501 De Marcus Boulevard #617 S. Kahlon to L. Peterson for \$398,500

7510 Marshall Canyon Drive S. John to J. & C. Wu for \$1,051,000

7032 Tory Court D. Stanley to C. & S. Cooper for \$596,000

8169 Via Zapata Kmc Trust to F. Chang for \$830,000

Pleasanton

4238 1st Street G. & L. Braker to 3N Land & Building Fund for \$1,140,000

3964 Grand Canyon Court L. & G. Gossett to J. Cederquist for \$560,000

5222 Riverdale Court Kuns Trust to J. Patil for \$621,500

8079 Rockford Place R. & L. Baptista to Medeiros & R. Trust for \$1,610,000

2315 Sandpiper Way N. Garcia-Ganan to J. & K. Bayani for \$860,000

1262 Shady Pond Lane Chaudhry Trust to V. Reddy for \$1,620,000

4752 Woodthrush Court B. & L. Davies to Keller Trust for \$715,000



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RECENTLY SOLD



417 Silver Chief Way, Danville
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4349 2nd Street, Pleasanton
2 bed, 1 bath with charming upgrades. 1300 sq. ft. home on a 5000 sq. ft. lot. **Represented buyers. SOLD FOR \$750,000**



4990 Monaco Drive, Pleasanton
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JULIA'S RECENT LISTING STATS

Property Address	List Price	Sold Price	Over Asking!
7703 Cottonwood Ln, Pleasanton	\$599,000	\$675,000	\$76,000
3147 Catawba Ct, Pleasanton	\$669,000	\$690,000	\$21,000
5029 Forest Hill Dr, Pleasanton	\$1,049,000	\$1,075,000	\$26,000
5204 Iris Wy, Livermore	\$376,000	\$380,000	\$4,000
4718 Pheasant Ct, Pleasanton	\$650,000	\$701,000	\$51,000
7131 Valley Trails Dr, Pleasanton	\$650,000	\$720,000	\$70,000
7109 Valley Trails Dr, Pleasanton	\$749,000	\$770,000	\$21,000
1844 Chestnut St, Livermore	\$299,000	\$311,000	\$12,000
6828 Corte Salcedo, Pleasanton	\$775,000	\$795,116	\$20,116
1598 Bluebell Dr, Livermore	\$429,000	\$432,000	\$3,000
920 Pamela Pl, Pleasanton	\$1,198,000	\$1,215,000	\$17,000
2761 Sanderling Wy, Pleasanton	\$1,049,000	\$1,072,000	\$23,000
4457 Arbutus Ct, Pleasanton	\$849,000	\$860,000	\$11,000

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JUST LISTED 5339 Springdale Avenue, Pleasanton OPEN SUNDAY 1-4

4 Bedroom 2.5 Bathroom +/-1,884 square feet. New Listing in the desirable Stoneridge Townhome neighborhood. Great floor plan! Great location with large backyard that backs to greenbelt and open space! Best HOA with pools, tennis courts, more!

Call for price and showings

COMING SOON 59 Summer Hill Court, Danville Listed At \$788,000

3 Bedroom 2.5 Bathroom +/-1,633 square feet
Beautifully updated California Chateau home in West Danville! Backs to open space with gorgeous oak trees. Priced to sell. Call for private showing.



883 Chateau Heights Court, Pleasanton Sold for \$1,705,000
5 Bedroom 4.5 Bathroom +/-4,183 square feet **Buyer Represented**



7888 Golden Eagle Way, Pleasanton Sold for \$1,750,000
5 Bedroom 3.5 Bathroom +/-4,000 square feet



7930 Raccoon Hollow Court, Pleasanton SOLD \$1,512,000
5 Bedroom 3.5 Bathroom +/-3,670 square feet

This was our **third real estate transaction** with Phyllis, now joined by her partner, Peter McDowell, and once again it was a **total success**, and we couldn't be more pleased.

Phyllis and Peter were patient and knowledgeable, and were able to find us the perfect new home.

We appreciated their honesty, sincerity and professionalism every step of the way, and look forward to working with them again someday.

Phyllis and Peter are awesome make a great team! We highly recommend them to anyone looking to buy or sell their home.

-Scott and Donna / 883 Chateau Heights Court

We were extremely impressed with how hands on both Peter and Phyllis are and how involved they are with every aspect and detail of the process to include preparing the home for sale, staging, photography, marketing and negotiation. They even met every buyer and agent at the house to present the details and attributes of our home in order to ensure that nothing was missed.

We can not say enough good things about Phyllis and Peter and their professionalism, work ethic and experience. Not to mention they are extremely personable and fun to work with. **We now count them amongst our friends** and look forward to staying in touch. If you are ever in the market to sell or buy a home, do yourself a favor and contact this amazing team to represent you."

-Corey & Catherine / 7888 Golden Eagle



Phyllis Weiner
REALTOR®
(925) 251.2585
pweiner@rockcliff.com

Peter McDowell
REALTOR®
(925) 251.2550
pmcdowell@rockcliff.com



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BRIDLE CREEK

5718 DALTON CREEK WAY, PLEASANTON

Highly Upgraded 4,434 Square Foot Home in Like-New Excellent Condition! The elegant foyer offers custom tile flooring with marble inlay and the high plate ceilings. The gourmet kitchen includes stainless steel appliances, granite slab counters, generous cabinets and a spacious eating area. Each of the five bedrooms offers a private adjoining full bathroom; one of which is large and located on the first floor and can be used as a bonus/game room or Au Pair/Guest Suite. There is also a downstairs powder room. An optional office/sixth bedroom has been converted into a wine tasting room with beautiful custom built-in cherry cabinets. This 12,400 square foot professionally landscaped lot includes a private back yard, Pebble Tec Pool, outdoor BBQ/Entertainment area and generous lawn area. Premium location near downtown, neighborhood park and easy access to south bound 680 commute!

OFFERED AT \$1,849,000



See Your Home Here!

Thinking of Selling Your Home? Call me!



897 SUNSET CREEK LANE, PLEASANTON
Gorgeous, highly upgraded, sought after single level in Bridle Creek! Premium location, Panoramic views, solar heated in-ground pool, beautifully landscaped with private brick patio areas. Five bedrooms, four bathrooms, 3,246 square feet on a 12,464 square foot lot. Gourmet kitchen with granite counters and stainless steel appliances. Great Room concept with spacious Family Room. Many upgrades throughout! Don't miss this one!

OFFERED AT \$1,569,000



1185 LAGUNA CREEK LANE, PLEASANTON
With unobstructed views of the Pleasanton Ridge, this five bedroom, five and a half bathroom, 5,329 square foot home sits on a premium 16,321 square foot lot. The gourmet kitchen boasts a large island, granite counters, stainless steel appliances and a six-burner gas range. Grand entrance with large foyer, vaulted ceilings, formal dining room, spacious master suite, laundry room, three car and so much more. The resort-like back yard offers a pool, spa, pool house, outdoor kitchen, and gazebo. Easy access to I-680 and close to schools!

OFFERED AT \$1,897,500 AND SOLD FOR \$1,897,500



831 SUNSET CREEK LANE, PLEASANTON
This highly sought after location offers views of the Pleasanton Ridge and Mt. Diablo on a private approximate 12,131 square foot lot. Four bedrooms plus a bonus room, three bathrooms. The open floor plan with volumed/coffered ceilings offers a gourmet kitchen and expansive master suite. The expansive and professionally landscaped rear yard offers several fruit trees and raised garden beds. Close to schools and library, walking distance to downtown Pleasanton and quick access to 680. Sold in less than 30 days!

OFFERED AT \$1,549,000 AND SOLD FOR \$1,540,000



3701 HILLSIDE AVENUE, LIVERMORE
Blaise represented the buyer in the purchase of this beautifully upgraded home. This four bedroom, two and a half bath, 2,553 square foot home sits on a 8,940 square foot private lot with a three car attached garage. This open floor plan offers vaulted ceilings in living room, dining room and entry. The kitchen offers granite counters, stainless steel appliances, breakfast bar and breakfast nook. The tranquil backyard is surrounded by covered fences and boasts trellises, a large grassy area and a concrete patio. Move in ready and easy freeway access!

OFFERED AT \$765,000 AND SOLD FOR \$765,000



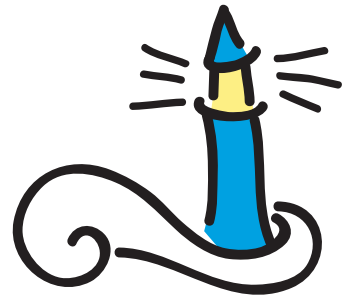
3962 FAIRLANDS DRIVE, PLEASANTON
This home is upgraded throughout and move in ready! Brand new 40 year roof, new carpets, and new hardwood floors. Beautifully and professionally landscaped front and rear yards. Four bedrooms, office/teen room, two and a half baths, 2,460 square feet all on a 6,489 square foot lot. The upgraded kitchen is open to the family room. A formal dining room is located just off the kitchen. The rear yard is private and serene offering a large grassy area and two decks. Close to schools and neighborhood Cabana Club! Call for more information!

OFFERED AT \$839,000 AND SOLD FOR \$839,000



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210 Garage/Estate Sales

Pleasanton, 1006 Shotwell Court, Feb. 8, 8-12

Multi Home Garage Sale at the Reserves of Pleasanton off Vineyard Rd & Manior Ln (new Toll Brothers Development near Ruby Hill). There will be several homes having a garage sale in the neighborhood. Selling furniture, Rainbow swing set, refrigerator, adult & children's clothes/shoes, toys, bikes, window curtains, loads of housewares, Art, Decorations, etc. From Bernal - turn on Vineyard toward Ruby Hill. Turn Right on Manior lane. From 84, turn on Vineyard toward Ruby Hill. Drive past Ruby Hill Dr. & turn left on Manior lane.

245 Miscellaneous

AT&T U-verse for just \$29/mo! BUNDLE & SAVE with AT&T Internet+Phone+TV and get a FREE pre-paid Visa Card! (select plans). HURRY, CALL NOW! 800-319-3280

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751 General Contracting

NOTICE TO READERS It is illegal for an unlicensed person to perform contracting work on any project valued at \$500.00 or more in labor and materials. State law also requires that contractors include their license numbers on all advertising. Check your contractor's status at www.cslb.ca.gov or 800-321-CSLB (2752). Unlicensed persons taking jobs that total less than \$500.00 must state in their advertisements that they are not licensed by the Contractors State License Board

A NOTICE TO READERS: It is illegal for an unlicensed person to perform contracting work on any project valued at \$500.00 or more in labor and materials. State law also requires that contractors include their license numbers on all advertising. Check your contractor's status at www.cslb.ca.gov or 800-321-CSLB (2752). Unlicensed persons taking jobs that total less than \$500.00 must state in their advertisements that they are not licensed by the Contractors State License Board.

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LEGALS

995 Fictitious Name Statement

LYN SALON FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No.: 486303 The following person(s) doing business as: LYN SALON, 830 D MAIN ST., PLEASANTON, CA 94566, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Kim Nguyen, 4143 Littleworth Way, San Jose, CA 95135. This business is conducted by an Individual. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed herein 01/05/2014. Signature of Registrant: Kim Nguyen. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on 12/27/2013. (Pleasanton Weekly, Jan. 17, 24, 31, Feb. 7; 2014)

KUA THAI FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No.: 486746 The following person(s) doing business as: KUA THAI, 610 MAIN ST. SUITE G, PLEASANTON, CA 94566, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Karite Upuia Ahkiang, 456 Amaral Circle, Pleasanton, CA 94566. This business is conducted by an Individual. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed herein 01/10/2014. Signature of Registrant: Karite Upuia Ahkiang. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on 01/10/2014. (Pleasanton Weekly, Jan. 31, Feb. 7, 14, 21; 2014)

LIZUSH FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No.: 486610 The following person(s) doing business as: LIZUSH, 8005 REGENCY DRIVE, PLEASANTON, CA 94588, is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Aliza Siman-Tov, 8005 Regency Drive, Pleasanton, CA 94588. This business is conducted by an Individual. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed herein 01/03/2014. Signature of Registrant: Aliza Siman-Tov. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on 01/07/2014. (Pleasanton Weekly, Jan. 31, Feb. 7, 14, 21; 2014)

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LINDA GOVEIA BY APPT



PLEASANTON \$2,895,000
Elegant Craftsman Style home, the finish work is extraordinary! 7500+/-sf, 5bd/5.5ba, formal living room & library/office. Bonus room with large alcove, court location, private lot and views. 3654 PONTINA CT

BLAISE LOFLAND SAT&SUN 1:00-4:00



PLEASANTON \$1,849,000
Upgraded, 4,434sqft., like-new condition! Built in 2000, 5 BD w/full baths, powder room. Optional office/6th BD is wine tasting room. The 12,400sqft. private lot w/Pebble Tec Pool & BBQ area! 5718 DALTON CREEK WAY

MOXLEY TEAM SUN 1:00-4:00



PLEASANTON \$930,000
Best un-obstructed view in downtown Pleasanton, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, 2,266+/-sf situated on a 6,490+/-lot. This home offers privacy, relaxation & more. 575 DEL SOL AVE.

BRUCE FOCHE BY APPT



SAN RAMON \$769,000
Meticulously maintained 4bd/2.5ba, bed/ba on 1st floor, beautiful laminate flooring, updated kitchen, freshly painted throughout. Home is completely ready for new owners! 9955 BROADMOOR DR.

LINDA FUTRAL BY APPT



LIVERMORE \$699,000
4 bed 2.5 bath 2216 square feet 20,857 sq ft lot (almost half acre) Upgraded and move in ready with hardwood floors, granite kitchen, and incredible yard and pool. 4194 COLGATE WAY

LINDA FUTRAL BY APPT



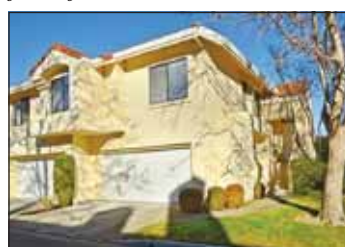
LIVERMORE \$695,000
Come see this custom beauty before it's sold. Plenty of space in this kitchen to entertain and delight your family/friends. Huge lot hosts "Olympic style" pool with custom deck. 1247 DE PAUL WAY

LESLIE FAUGHT SAT & SUN 1-4



LIVERMORE \$639,000
"Almost everything you see is new, some you can't see is new too"! Beautiful remodeled 4bd/2ba, close to schools, shopping and Hwy 580. Move in ready! 5578 OAKMONT CIR

JOYCE JONES BY APPT



SAN RAMON \$570,000
Beautiful condo in The Lakes at Canyon Lakes with spectacular view of hills & Mt. Diablo. Bright 3 bedrooms/plus loft, 2 baths, granite counter in kitchen, indoor laundry, pool, tennis courts & MORE! 3101 LAKEMONT DRIVE #4

TIMOTHY MCGUIRE BY APPT



SAN RAMON \$554,900
Beautiful 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom, single family home in Sunny Glen retirement community. Completely remodeled throughout. An absolute 10! 15 WINTERHAVEN COURT

DIANE SMUGERESKY BY APPT



LIVERMORE \$435,000
Upgraded kitchen cabinets, stainless steel appliances & refrigerator, granite counters, 3bd/2.5ba, 1,401+/-sf, 2 car garage, relax, entertain, this complex is only 10 years young! 6162 FORGET ME NOT



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