

# Pleasanton Weekly

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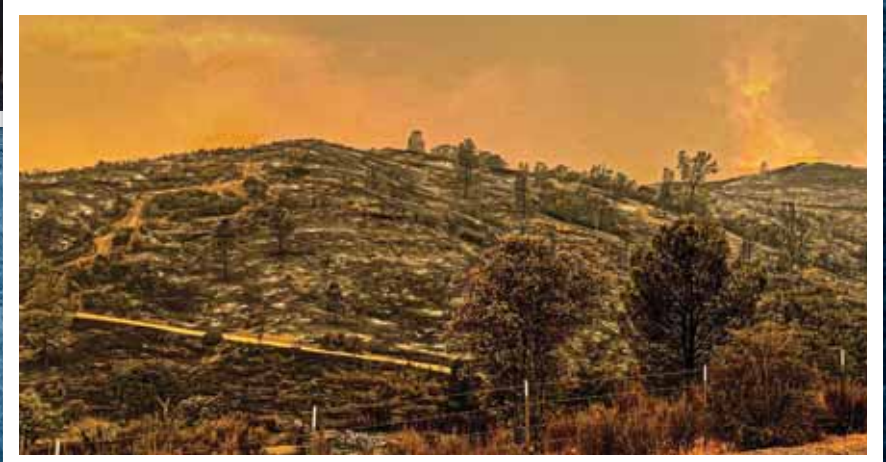


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## Year in Review: Part II

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# TIM TALK



By TIM HUNT

## Many more questions than answers for 2021

As the New Year dawned at midnight, I'm hard pressed to find a time with so many more questions than answers.

Yes, there's great news about vaccines against the COVID-19 virus and health care workers already are being immunized. That's an amazing tribute to the scientists and other researchers in Big Pharma and some of their partners that delivered a safe vaccine years earlier than skeptics predicted. Go back and look at some internet news clips when Operation Warp Speed was announced — the president and his administration deserve lots of credit as well.

But big questions remain as more and more people are immunized. When will people be comfortable flying on airplanes, particularly on the long-haul international flights that have been the bread-and-butter for the airlines? Has business travel — a lucrative revenue source for airlines — shifted forever?

Will employers continue to allow their employees to work remotely, whether full-time or part-time? What will that mean for the "class A" office space in San Francisco and other job hubs? The San Francisco Business Times reported Monday that leasing activity in San Francisco is down 75% year-over-year, hitting a low last seen 20 years ago.

Here in the Tri-Valley, an area known for its quality of life and as an ideal place to raise a family, the business future also has plenty of questions.

The Livermore Valley will benefit from its strong cluster of life science and advanced manufacturing companies. The life science firms require lab space so remote work for the entire employee pool doesn't play — the same for manufacturing facilities such as Topcon, Gillig and Lam Research.

What the lessons learned this year will mean for the valley's strong software companies and demand for office space is a big question. Workday gave an early hint this year after the pandemic hit when it walked away from a deal to take the 14-acre retail site next to Stoneridge Shopping Center. 10x Genomics, with its headquarters a block away, scooped it up and has submitted plans to the city.

The other big question facing Pleasanton is what the new majority on the City Council will do about housing. The prior City Council established the two-year work plan that included as a high priority re-summing planning on the east side. It was suspended during the drought. Ponderosa Homes has optioned one key parcel land and worked out a contract with the other big landowner to master plan the area.

The concept for the 1,100 acres includes a school site, an extension of the popular Ironwood active adult community and more than 500 affordable housing units. City staff leadership held the agreement with Ponderosa through the election season, and now it's a question of what new Mayor Karla Brown and councilwomen Julie Testa and Valerie Arkin will do about it.

They will face significant pressure from the state. The governor promised, pre-pandemic, aggressive action to address the state's chronic housing shortage. That got derailed, but, as the pandemic eases, it will be back on the front burner in Sacramento.

Testa is a founder of California Alliance of Electeds, as well as active in Liveable California, both groups that are committed to local control. In this case, you can translate local control to strict limits on housing.

That will run afoul of the upcoming new regional housing goal numbers that are due this year. Pleasanton's goal is expected to be in the 4,000-unit range, significantly more than the current cycle. With its strong job base and two BART stations, Pleasanton is exactly the type of community where regional planners expect more high-density housing to be built close to public transit. The city, with the ACE train and its downtown station is correctly concerned about high-density in a single-family neighborhood.

2021 brings lots of questions with a fuzzy crystal ball when it comes to answers. ■

*Editor's note: Opinion columnist Tim Hunt has written columns on the Tri-Valley community for more than 40 years. He grew up in the valley and lives in Pleasanton. His "Tim Talk" blog appears twice a week at PleasantonWeekly.com.*

### About the Cover

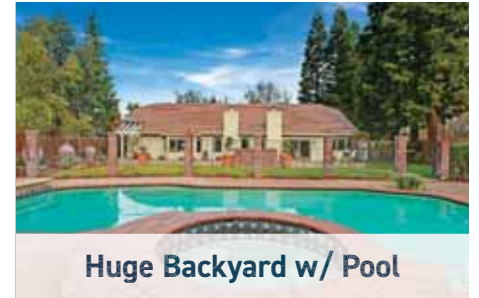
We're back with the second half of our annual retrospective. Reflect on all the big news in the Tri-Valley from July through December in our Year in Review: Part II, inside from Pages 12-18. File photos. Cover design by Paul Llewellyn.

Vol. XXI, Number 39

## COMING SOON IN PLEASANTON



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Huge Backyard w/ Pool

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COMPASS

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

## From Our Family To Yours, Happy New Year!

We hope that you & your family have an amazing 2021. As we move into the new year, we'd like to reflect on how this previous year had been in the real estate market & what we're seeing now. Contrary to the early expectations of the impact of COVID-19, the local real estate market has been & remains red hot with mortgage rates at an all-time-low.

While inventory is highly limited, buyer demand is through the roof. This has caused some homeowners to see double digit appreciation this year alone. With **Prop 19** passing in November, we may see some new inventory come to the market, but it's unlikely to be sufficient to match buyer demand.

If 2021 is the year for you to achieve your goal of downsizing, up-sizing, or relocating, we'd love to hear from you! As a courtesy, we'd be happy to schedule a real estate check-up with you to discuss your current situation, 2021 goals, and answer any real estate related questions.

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# Streetwise

ASKED AROUND TOWN

## What are you looking forward to doing in the new year?



### Marie Riccio

*Law school student*

I am looking forward to doing everything I haven't been able to do since March of this year, like going to classes in person as opposed to online, spending time with friends and saying goodbye to social distancing. I've been very careful, but I'm just so tired of it.



### Paul Johnson

*Marine*

My wife and I are really eager to travel across the country to visit our parents. We haven't seen them in almost a year, and they are so excited to meet our baby. Once we are all vaccinated some time in 2021, we are going to have the most wonderful family reunion.



### Maryam Avdiu

*College student*

Believe it or not, I'm really excited to be able to get back to the gym. My gym has been closed for months. I miss the camaraderie of my workout buddies who do spin classes with me twice a week.



### Bob Jones

*Retired*

I'm looking forward to doing some of the traveling I'd been planning to do during my retirement. I was supposed to go to Paris with my wife last March, but of course our trip got canceled due to COVID. We are hopeful that we will be able to go in 2021.



### Rosalinda Chang, with Bosco

*Human resources*

I am looking forward to being able to go out to the movies and ball games, as well as plays and indoor dining. Pretty much anything that has been off limits for so many months.

—Compiled by Nancy and Jeff Lewis

**Have a Streetwise question?** Email [editor@PleasantonWeekly.com](mailto:editor@PleasantonWeekly.com)

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## DIGEST

### Tree disposal

Signups are underway for the annual Christmas Tree Pickup and Recycling Day this month benefiting Boy Scouts Troop 941 in Pleasanton.

Money raised by the effort is used to help buy camping equipment and fund the troop's scouting activities such as summer camp and weekend outings.

The Scouts' holiday tree pickups will take place Jan. 9 between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., and are restricted to Pleasanton addresses. All trees must be curbside when pickups start that morning, and all ornaments, lights and tree stands must be removed. No flocked or artificial trees will be picked up.

Register by Tuesday (Jan. 5). To sign up, visit [www.Troop941.org](http://www.Troop941.org).

### Talk Hawks

Las Positas College's champion forensics team, Talk Hawk, won first place and took second in two tournaments in December.

The team attended the 2020 Off Broadway Swing, which was held virtually over the weekend of Dec. 5, in two tournaments. Overall, Talk Hawk received second place at the Nassau Community College tournament — beaten out only by Cornell University — and won first place in the other tournament held by Hofstra University.

Both tournaments were held virtually this year, allowing the entire Talk Hawk team to participate, and featured competitors from 30 colleges and universities from 15 different states. The team's novice competitors were also able to compete in open level competition for the first time.

In a statement, Talk Hawk coaching staffer and LPC communications studies instructor Jim Dobson called his students "amazing."

"We are certainly making a lot of noise around the country," Dobson said. "This small community college is doing something very unique. We just went against an Ivy League school in an academic activity and won."

### Nonprofit of the Year

Tri-Valley State Senator Steve Glazer (D-Orinda) this fall awarded the 2020 Nonprofit of the Year honor for his District 7 to Trinity Center, a nonprofit organization based in Walnut Creek that supports homeless and very-low-income individuals.

Trinity Center served 970 different individuals and provided more than 56,000 services in 2019-20. It operates during the day and offers services such as meals, showers, laundry, clothing, and mail and telephone access, coupled with case management for benefits, housing, employment and substance use counseling. ■

## COVID-19 spreads in group housing

Tri-Valley nursing homes grapple with virus; outbreak at Dublin women's prison

By JULIA BAUM

The Vineyards Healthcare Center in Livermore was No. 9 among skilled nursing facilities with the most resident cases of COVID-19 in Alameda County, according to data from local public health officials on Monday.

The rising totals at the facility on Fenton Street come as other group living settings in the Tri-Valley face the winter trend of increased COVID-19 cases, including an ongoing outbreak at the federal prison for women in Dublin.

In total, 53 resident and 38 staff cases at The Vineyards are listed

on the Alameda County Public Health Department website as of Monday afternoon.

There has been at least one resident death at the facility attributed to COVID-19, but none among employees to date. The public data does not include an exact number of cases or deaths if a facility has 10 or fewer on record (otherwise it is tracked as "less than 11," with no precise number as a "de-identification" strategy).

Representatives of The Vineyards did not respond to request for comment as of Monday afternoon.

Though the only facility in the

Tri-Valley currently in the top 10 for most COVID-19 cases among residents in skilled nursing facilities countywide, several other nursing homes in Livermore and Pleasanton have reported cases and deaths as well. In all but one facility, resident cases outnumbered employee cases.

Pleasanton Nursing and Rehabilitation Center remains just outside the top 10 most COVID resident cases in an Alameda County skilled nursing facility. The center is currently No. 11 with 51 resident cases and 49 employee cases — most of which happened during an outbreak of more than 90

cases in the facility this summer.

More recent cases have been reported, but Pleasanton Nursing and Rehab officials had not responded to a request for comment.

Twelve resident deaths are also documented for Pleasanton Nursing and Rehab, which date back to the summer outbreak. The death of one employee due to COVID-19 was confirmed around the same time; the facility's death count is still reported as less than 11 so an exact total remains unclear.

Four other Tri-Valley skilled nursing facilities are listed farther

See COVID-19 on Page 9



Memorial display alongside Las Positas Road honors three teenage boys from Livermore who died in a crash with a big-rig on the night of Dec. 21.

## Fatal crashes rock Livermore

Memorial honors teens killed on Dec. 21, among three deadly collisions last week

By JEREMY WALSH

The Livermore community is reeling after three separate traffic collisions killed five people within a 33-hour period last week, including the nighttime crash along Las Positas Road that claimed the lives of three teenage boys.

Rahul Brar, 18; Shej Kumar, 16; and Ian Ericksen, 16 — all Livermore residents — died after their vehicle struck a big-rig trailer that was blocking the intersection at a business driveway

around 10:30 p.m. on Dec. 21.

It was the second of the three fatal crashes in Livermore between Dec. 21 and 22.

Earlier on Dec. 21, Livermore resident Christine Boyle died at a nearby hospital hours after being hit by a gravel truck while trying to ride across an intersection on her bicycle on Stanley Boulevard that morning.

And the next evening, Stockton school teacher Julie Ownbey died in a solo-vehicle rollover along North Livermore Avenue

outside the city limits.

The crashes have left family, friends and colleagues mourning during the holiday season — and the three incidents occurring in seemingly rapid succession rocked the Livermore Valley.

### Three teens killed

Brar's family said on social media that the 18-year-old was driving his cousin Kumar and friend Ericksen home after

See CRASHES on Page 10

## Janitor dead, another ill at Fallon MS

Strange chemical odor, fentanyl at scene, per Dublin police

By JEREMY WALSH

Dublin police continue to investigate the death of a Fallon Middle School janitor and the illness befalling his fiancée, also a custodian at the school, when the engaged couple were found by police in severe medical distress in the library early in the morning after not returning home after their shift last week.

The decedent has been identified by the Alameda County Coroner's Bureau at James Covington, 32, of Pittsburg. His fiancée and colleague, identified online as Shameka Wilbon, had been treated at a local hospital and was expected to make a full recovery.

Investigators are still unsure what caused both to be left ailing at Fallon on the morning of Dec. 23, as well as the source of the strange chemical-like odor responding officers reported smelling in the library. Officers did locate apparent fentanyl at the scene later that day, Capt. Nate Schmidt told the Weekly on Monday.

The pending results toxicology testing, which could take several weeks or more to process through external laboratories, will shed more light on exactly what took place, according to the captain.

"No matter how you look at it, this is very, very sad," Schmidt

See JANITOR on Page 7

# County delays appeal hearing for Aramis solar plant project

Postponement gives Haubert more time for community meetings

By JULIA BAUM

One month after a 410-acre solar power plant north of Livermore was initially approved, Alameda County officials have postponed an appeal hearing for the project until early February.

Proponents and opponents of the Aramis solar project both recently requested to delay the originally scheduled Jan. 12 hearing before the county Board of Supervisors, according to Shawn Wilson, chief of staff for outgoing Supervisor Scott Haggerty, whose District 1 includes the project area.

The postponement “makes more prudent sense,” Wilson said, noting that Haggerty’s successor, former Dublin mayor and now Supervisor-elect David Haubert, will have more time to become familiarized with plans after being sworn in Jan. 4.

“The neighbors in particular that live in close proximity and also some of the Livermore organizations said ‘let’s take some time and meet with



Project areas of the Sunwalker industrial solar power plant in the foreground (in orange) and the larger Aramis solar plant (in red), totaling 700-plus acres.

the new supervisor and let’s talk to him,” Wilson told the Weekly.

Instead, the Board of Supervisors will consider the proposal at their next meeting in February, Wilson said.

With only a week between Haubert’s induction and the original hearing date, Wilson said there would have been little time for the new supervisor to meet with the applicants, neighbors and other community

members.

“It’s not something that deserves to be rushed. We’re talking about a 400-plus acre project,” he added.

In late November, the East County Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) approved the Aramis solar project by Intersect Power in the northern Livermore Valley — a separate smaller solar power plant by Sunwalker Energy in the same area was approved weeks later.

Friends of Livermore solar committee chair Michael Fredrich and Tamara Reus, president of Friends of Open Space and Vineyards, said in a joint letter to county planning director Albert Lopez that they only learned about the original Aramis appeal hearing date informally from county staff on Dec. 11.

Fredrich and Reus argued holding a hearing in mid-January also would have placed “a significant burden” on volunteers for both groups to prepare, especially during the holidays.

“The compressed time frame in which the solar hearings have occurred has put additional pressure on us to be able to keep up with the applicants and the county,” they said.

Another grassroots organization also fighting both projects, including appealing the recent zoning board’s decision on Aramis and requesting time extensions for the hearing, praised the delayed hearing.

Chris O’Brien, steering committee

chairman for Save North Livermore Valley, said in a statement, “We are pleased that Intersect Power will no longer be allowed to rush the review of its massive Aramis industrial solar power plant proposed for the scenic North Livermore Valley, an area specifically designated by voters for the preservation of agriculture and open space.”

The organization also supports Haubert’s call for a moratorium on reviewing new solar plants on agricultural land “until the county completes a comprehensive study and mapping project on the appropriate siting, scale, and operation of solar power plants, if any, on agricultural land, and incorporates this work in a solar ordinance and General Plan Amendment,” O’Brien said.

Aramis developer Intersect Power also filed an appeal, challenging county-imposed conditions of approval around increased wildlife buffer, setbacks and agricultural plantings. ■

## DUSD invites public to apply for superintendent’s Interview Committee

Members will ‘play a key role’ in selecting the district’s next permanent leader

By JULIA BAUM

The Dublin Unified School District is creating a committee of community members in its search for the next permanent superintendent, with the hopes of selecting a viable candidate before the 2021-22 school year.

The Community Interview Committee’s 15 members will “play a key role” in the district’s recruitment process by interviewing candidates and providing the Board of

Trustees with feedback that will be used when making the final hiring decision.

Each of the five Board of Trustees members will appoint one member, as well as the Dublin Teachers Association, California Schools Employees and student school boards representing Dublin and Valley high schools.

The remaining six committee members will be selected through a board subcommittee application

process and approved by the trustees. Prospective candidates must complete and submit an application form by Jan. 25.

The search process has been continuing amid the COVID-19 pandemic and in the wake of former short-term superintendent Dave Marken abruptly giving his resignation to the board in late June. Marken came out of retirement in April 2019, and later agreed to stay on through the 2020-21 school

year so the district would have sufficient time to find a permanent superintendent.

It was the second time in over a year that a superintendent suddenly left DUSD. Prior to Marken’s tenure, Leslie Boozer and the board mutually parted ways in March 2019.

Interim Superintendent Daniel Moirao has been leading the district since Marken’s departure.

Key dates for the superintendent search process include:

- Jan. 25: Deadline to submit application form
- Feb. 23: Board appoints committee members
- March 25: Committee orientation session
- April 22: Committee interviews superintendent candidates and provides feedback
- May 11: Board hires new superintendent (tentative).

For more information, visit [dublin.k12.ca.us](http://dublin.k12.ca.us). ■

## LAVTA seeks input on pandemic service changes

Residents have through Jan. 20 to submit comments

Community feedback is wanted on the Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority’s changes to service that were brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The public input process is required “when emergency service changes have been in place for more than 180 days,” officials said.

LAVTA was forced to reduce or eliminate services with low use in order to maintain essential functions after overall ridership plummeted by approximately 90% during the first week of Alameda County’s shelter-in-place order in March.

Currently, two regular and three express routes have been discontinued, and service on

six routes has been reduced. All service after 11 p.m. is discontinued.

Details about LAVTA’s actions to operate during the pandemic and emergency service changes, as well as the public input process, are available at [wheelsbus.com/covid](http://wheelsbus.com/covid).

Comments received will be summarized and given to the Board of Directors. Submit comments by email to [info@lavta.org](mailto:info@lavta.org) or by postal mail to COVID Service Change Comments, LAVTA, 1362 Rutan Court, Suite 100, Livermore. Comments may also be faxed: 443-1375.

The deadline to submit commentary is Jan. 20 at 5 p.m. ■

—Julia Baum



HIVELY

## Hively helps this holiday season

Staff from local nonprofit Hively, along with 40 volunteers, distributed items outside its offices in Pleasanton to more than 600 children living throughout Alameda County, including toys, warm clothing, food, diapers, baby wipes, children’s books and gift cards to purchase essential items.



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# Holiday Fund

### The following agencies will benefit from the Holiday Fund:

- Axis Community Health
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- Hope Hospice
- Open Heart Kitchen
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# 'Save Scrooge' in online escape room

Virtual activity offers family-friendly puzzle solving fun

BY RYAN J. DEGAN

Infamous misanthrope and cold-hearted miser Ebenezer Scrooge is back to his holiday-hating ways, and Tri-Valley residents may be the only ones who can help by signing up for the virtual adventure "Saving Scrooge: A Holiday Haunt."

Created by Fantasy Escape Games, Saving Scrooge takes inspiration from Charles Dickens' famous novella "A Christmas Carol," blending together traditional escape room puzzling and problem solving with interactive narrative adventure in an online format.

An entirely virtual experience, the game allows groups of participants to work together to solve puzzles during a one-hour private experience held over Zoom.

"The game was so much fun to design. The story is inspired by Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol,' where grumpy old Scrooge refuses to participate in the holiday season. But this has a twist," said Jack McCarthy, a local escape room designer and director at Fantasy Escape Games.

In this version, Scrooge has cast away the Christmas spirits and this time has magical traps to stop them



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Residents are invited to a virtual holiday-themed escape room challenge for the "Saving Scrooge: A Holiday Haunt."

from disturbing him. Players act as the Christmas spirits and will work together, along with a Game Master Guide, to solve puzzles and help Scrooge learn the true meaning of the holiday season.

The Game Master will serve as facilitator of the game and act as different characters to set the tone of the adventure while displaying puzzles on their screen for players to solve.

"Alongside using their logical skills to solve puzzles, players use their creative instincts to navigate the realities of being a spirit

and interactions with characters. The virtual experience allows for limitless creative choices that can change the course of players' adventures," McCarthy said.

Puzzle difficulty is adjustable, making it an experience accessible for kids as well as adults.

Tickets are between \$15 to \$18 per person, and private group games are available seven days a week, including the weekend. Saving Scrooge: A Holiday Haunt is set to run through Jan. 10. Residents can purchase tickets or learn more online at [www.fantasyescapegames.com](http://www.fantasyescapegames.com). ■

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Our "Fabulous" 5 Grandkids, from	
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Emery & E. Anne Emery.....	**
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## COVID-19

Continued from Page 5

down on the list of more than 70 in Alameda County, including Stratford Villa Post Acute in Livermore at No. 32 with 22 resident cases and less than a dozen employee cases. Stratford Villa has had at least one resident death, however, but none among staff members.

Valley Memorial Hospital Skilled Nursing Facility — also in Livermore — was listed at No. 42, but had no recently reported COVID cases for any residents or staff. In Pleasanton, CreekView Health Center made the list at No. 60 with at least one resident case, 16 employee cases and no deaths at all.

There are 1,645 skilled nursing facility resident cases in Alameda County, as well as 187 resident deaths attributed to COVID-19.

Sunrise of Pleasanton administration informed resident families last week that one employee assigned to the Terrace Club Neighborhood tested positive for the virus. No other residents or employees had symptoms, and all were set to be tested.

Meanwhile, one in five inmates incarcerated at the low-security women's federal prison in Dublin had tested positive for COVID-19 last week.

The active coronavirus outbreak



at the Federal Correctional Institution in Dublin — which climbed to 185 inmates and three staff members as of Dec. 23 — stood at 169 inmates and three staffers as of Monday afternoon, according to the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

FCI Dublin is housing approximately 865 prisoners between its main facility and adjacent satellite camp, according to the prisons bureau.

There had been no COVID-19 deaths reported among inmates or staff at the Dublin prison throughout the pandemic as of Monday, according to federal officials. They said previously 115 inmates and seven staff members have recovered from COVID-19 over the course of the pandemic.

FCI Dublin is a minimum-security facility for female inmates

located not far from the Santa Rita Jail. Its inmate population sometimes includes celebrity convicts; TV actress Lori Loughlin this week just completed a two-month sentence stemming from her conviction in the college admissions bribery scandal. Her COVID-status was not known.

All visitations at FCI Dublin have been suspended indefinitely, according to prisons bureau.

More broadly for the Tri-Valley, the overall number of COVID-19 cases in Livermore, including skilled nursing facilities and other residents, is nearly double that of Pleasanton. The count was 2,520 cases compared to 1,306 in Pleasanton, while the city of Dublin had 1,113 as of Monday afternoon. ■

Editor Jeremy Walsh contributed to this story.

## CRASHES

Continued from Page 5

picking up the pair after their shift ended at a local Baskin-Robbins ice cream store on the night of Dec. 21.

The collision happened around 10:30 p.m. when a semi-truck driver turned into a business driveway in the 5600 block of Las Positas Road but left the trailer stopped blocking the roadway. The eastbound passenger vehicle carrying the three teens then struck the big-rig, according to Livermore police Sgt. Steve Goard.

Two of the victims were pronounced dead at the scene while the third occupant succumbed to his injuries at a local hospital, according to Goard.

Speed and impairment are not considered to be factors at this point, but the investigation is still pending and police have not made a final determination about the cause and probable factors, Goard said. The name of the truck driver has not yet been released publicly.

Erickson was a junior at Livermore High School, Kumar attended Del Valle Continuation High School, and Brar was an alumnus of Vineyard Alternative High School.

A roadside memorial has been put up in recent days with flowers, balloons, handwritten messages and other items of remembrance at the crash site in eastern Livermore to honor the two high school juniors and recent high school alumnus.

“At this time of year when we take time to celebrate, appreciate and cherish our family and friendships, it is particularly somber that we instead acknowledge such a devastating loss to our schools and community,” Superintendent Kelly Bowers, of the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District, said in a statement to the school community last week.

“As always, during periods of crisis, the LVJUSD and our entire Livermore community will pull together. We have built a strong network of support at Livermore, Del Valle and Vineyard High Schools. I know we will come together during this time to bolster and comfort one another. We are mobilizing our district crisis team to provide grief and trauma counseling to students, faculty, and support staff,” Bowers continued, adding:

“Let’s keep their families in our minds and hearts, as they have suffered such an unimaginable and heartbreaking loss. Our community’s strength and sheer love will help them through.”

Investigators continue to actively search for information, and anyone who witnessed the crash or has relevant details about the case can contact Sgt. Justin Lash at Livermore PD, 925-371-4857.

Brar’s family has started a GoFundMe page to raise funds for funeral and related costs for all three teenagers, vowing to split the money equally among the families.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Christine Boyle, shown here in a previous photo while cycling in Lake Tahoe, died on Dec. 21 after a crash on Stanley Boulevard. The Livermore resident was 63.

It had generated just over \$29,000 as of Monday afternoon.

The situation left the Tri-Valley reeling as the loss of three students in one night during the holiday season was all too familiar — eerily reminiscent of a similar tragedy that occurred in Pleasanton on Christmas Night the previous year.

It was around 10 p.m. on Dec. 25, 2019, when a car carrying five Dublin teens lost control and crashed into a power pole and then a large tree alongside Foothill Road. Dublin High students Javier Ramirez and twin brothers Mark Anthony Urista and Michael Angelo Urista (all 16 years old) died at the scene.

(Note: When confirming the Livermore victims’ identities this week, the Alameda County Coroner’s Bureau said Brar’s first name was officially listed as Rahal — though family and other sources said his first name was Rahul.)

**Truck strikes cyclist**

On the morning of Dec. 21, Boyle was riding along Stanley Boulevard when she collided with a gravel truck that was making a right-hand turn at an intersection. The Livermore resident sustained serious injuries, and died at the hospital hours later.

Boyle, 63, was a mother and retired phone company worker who loved the outdoors and her daily bike rides, according to family.

“Just a tragedy,” Barbara Clibbens, Boyle’s niece, told the Weekly on Monday.

“She was a good person, just a wonderful person,” Clibbens said of her aunt. “She loved her son, Colin. Family was everything to her ... She loved to do photography. She loved to ride her bicycle. She loved being outdoors. She loved exploring. She was a huge Pittsburgh Steelers fan.”

Livermore police are still working to locate the truck driver, who left the scene, according to Goard.

The sergeant said the collision occurred just after 8 a.m. Dec. 21 along eastbound Stanley Boulevard within the Livermore city limits.

A gravel truck with trailer was making a right turn toward the Isabel Avenue/Highway 84 connector, when at the same time, Boyle was riding off the sidewalk to cross straight at the intersection within the crosswalk. A final determination about who was at fault is still pending as the investigation continues, Goard said.

Clibbens said a witness told the family that Boyle attempted to avoid a serious collision by pushing off the truck but she fell and was run over by the tires. Boyle was treated at the scene and transported to Eden Medical Center in Castro Valley, where she died that afternoon.

“She held on; she tried to fight as long as she could,” Clibbens said. “She fought with everything she had for (her son).”

The niece said the family was especially grateful for the support provided by bystander Jessica Benavidez, who stayed with Boyle at the scene until first responders arrived.

Livermore police are continuing to investigate the crash and locate potential witnesses to interview. Investigators are also still working to identify the trucker, who drove away from the scene without stopping, and “it is unclear if the driver was aware of the collision or not,” Goard said.

Clibbens implored the truck driver to come forward. “If it was just a horrible accident and he didn’t know, that’s OK; we understand,” she said. “But if he left for another reason ... we want to know.”

Boyle, who was one of 11 children, grew up in Mount Washington in Pittsburgh, Penn. She moved to California in her early 20s and worked for years at Pacific Bell -- and its subsequent companies after

mergers — taking trouble calls from technicians in the field until retiring, according to Clibbens.

She is survived by her adult son Colin, whom she loved deeply and cared for as he lived with autism, according to Clibbens.

**Teacher dies in rollover**

On the evening of Dec. 22, Ownbey was driving on North Livermore Avenue when she lost control for unknown reasons and was thrown out of the sedan as it rolled end-over-end into a nearby field, according to the California Highway Patrol. The 52-year-old was pronounced dead at the scene.

Her LinkedIn profile confirmed Ownbey worked as a fourth-grade teacher in the Manteca Unified School District.

“We are deeply saddened by the death of one of our beloved teachers from August Knodt Elementary School,” Manteca Superintendent Clark Burke said in a statement to media the next morning.

“The elementary school staff, students and entire school community are deeply saddened by this news. Our thoughts, prayers and condolences are with the family during this difficult time,” August Knodt principal Jillian Friend added.

The MUSD statement did not identify Ownbey by name for privacy reasons. But Ownbey had been listed as a teacher at August Knodt Jr. School, a K-8 school in the Weston Ranch area of Stockton served by Manteca Unified.

“We encourage families to be especially sensitive and prepared to offer support to their children during this time. District Health Services staff and Valley Community Counseling are available to offer support for students and staff,” MUSD officials said.

Excessive speed and the lack of a seatbelt were key factors in the fatal crash, according to Officer Tyler Hahn of the CHP-Dublin office.

The situation unfolded at approximately 5:25 p.m. Dec. 22 after the driver of a 2006 Lexus ES 330 — later identified as Ownbey — traveling at a high rate of speed southbound on North Livermore Avenue, south of Hartman Road, failed to negotiate a right-hand curve in the road, according to Hahn.

Out of control, the Lexus went across the northbound lanes, off the roadway and into a barbed-wire fence. “After colliding with the fence, the vehicle began to overturn and cartwheeled into the field to the east of the roadway,” eventually coming to rest on its roof about 50 feet away from the road, according to Hahn.

Ownbey, who was unrestrained in the sedan, was ejected and landed in the field as the vehicle flipped over and over. She was pronounced dead at the scene, according to Hahn.

CHP officials identified the driver as from Stockton, but the coroner’s bureau said Ownbey’s residence was listed in Antioch.

Anyone who may have witnessed the crash or has other relevant details can contact CHP-Dublin at 925-828-0466 and ask for Hahn.

“This is a sad reminder that excessive speed combined with not wearing your seatbelt can be deadly,” the officer said. “It is also a reason why we, as law enforcement, are out enforcing traffic violations that cause deadly collisions. As we enter the holiday season, please, as always, don’t drink and drive, slow down and wear your seatbelt.” ■

## PET OF THE WEEK



VALLEY HUMANE SOCIETY/J. SAMPAT

**Rockin’ Robyn**

Robyn is a female bully mix puppy; puppies are a handful but they can bring your family lots of joy and years of companionship. If your New Year’s resolution is to add a canine to your household, check out Robyn and other adoptable dogs at valleyhumane.org. If you are interested adopting Robyn, contact Valley Humane Society via email at info@valleyhumane.org.

## Young performers take top honors in Australian theater fest

Technology allows East Bay talent to compete internationally

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Students in the advanced performers program of Bay Area Children's Theatre traveled virtually to this year's Junior Theatre Festival Australia.

The local participants — sixth- to 12th-graders from Pleasanton, Livermore, San Ramon, Orinda, Berkeley, Oakland and Alameda — learned their song and dance routines online, recorded their parts individually in their own homes, then competed long-distance.

"The students had to be much more self-directed and had to work with technology because we weren't all in the room together," BACT artistic director Khalia Davis said. "And we had to lean into the Zoom medium to make

the performance better."

The young performers competed in two groups. One team took top honors for Outstanding Acting Performance for excerpts from "Elf The Musical JR." The other won Outstanding Vocal Performance for excerpts from "Madagascar — A Musical Adventure JR."

"We had 10 minutes to impress the judges, so we tried to tell the story, showcase different styles of songs, and play with the Zoom medium to see what fun we could have," said Davis, who directed the "Madagascar" team.

JTF Australia, the largest celebration of musical theater for young people in Australia, took place Oct. 30-31 in Newcastle, New South Wales. Student groups were

permitted to perform in person or digitally, depending on public health restrictions in their home locations. BACT was one of three American student theatre groups invited to compete in the festival — all, digitally.

For advanced performer director Amber Dyson, who led the "Elf" team, this competition was the first opportunity to direct online.

"I felt that my existing relationships with the students made it easier to convey the vision for 'Elf Jr.,' and the adjudicators definitely picked up on the joy and hope that we wanted our performance to convey," Dyson said. "I have to give a special shout out to Cicily Gruber, our amazing video editor — nothing would have been possible without her."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Artistic director Khalia Davis and music director Angel Adedokun with students, hearing comments online from JTF Australia adjudicators.

For information about BACT's classes online during the pandemic, visit [bactheatre.org/#/academy](http://bactheatre.org/#/academy). ■

## Presenting science through performance

Shakespeare Festival contributing to global narrative on pandemic, climate change

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

The Livermore Shakespeare Festival has launched a program, "Science at Play," to bring the scientific process to life through literature and performance. It begins with live-streamed productions of known science-related plays, including David Auburn's "Proof" and Michael Frayne's "Copenhagen."

The festival has also commissioned playwright Diana Burbano to write a new play to educate the public about the COVID-19 crisis, how science is helping develop a vaccine, and about climate change.

"With the uncertainty of live gatherings still looming, this is a moment for arts organizations to enlighten their audiences and contribute to a global narrative by showcasing the minds and spirits of the folks in the middle of today's scientific breakthroughs," said Lisa A. Tromovitch, founding artistic director of Livermore Shakespeare Festival.

In writing the play, Burbano will partner with scientists at Lawrence Livermore and Sandia national laboratories who are engaged in using science and data to develop a vaccine. The scientists also will give science-related talks and

demonstrations for the public as part of the yearlong program.

Livermore Shakespeare Festival's resident director Michael Wayne Rice is leading the project, assisted by Tromovitch.

"Art illuminates," Tromovitch said.

Burbano, a Colombian immigrant, is an Equity actor and a teaching artist at South Coast Repertory and Breath of Fire Latina Theatre Ensemble in Orange County. Her long list of writing credits includes "Policarpa," written for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

For more information, visit [livermoreshakes.org/scienceatplay](http://livermoreshakes.org/scienceatplay). ■



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Diana Burbano has been commissioned by Livermore Shakespeare Festival to write for "Science at Play."

## Zone 7 opens watershed lands for annual Christmas Bird Count

Bird-watching enthusiasts spent day surveying scores of avian species

By JULIA BAUM

Zone 7 Water Agency opened its land before the holidays to continue a tradition now running 12 years of scouting for different bird species in eastern Alameda County.

Following the recommended COVID-19 safety protocols, three volunteers from the Ohlone Audubon Chapter were granted access from Zone 7 to its watershed lands that are normally off limits to the public for the annual Christmas Bird Count.

The national bird survey aims "to promote bird conservation and assess long-term trends in winter bird populations," according to officials.

"The bird count is fun and

educational, hones your observational skills, provides friendly competition, contributes to conservation efforts, and gets you outside into some gorgeous areas during the holidays," said Jeff Miller, director of the Alameda Creek Alliance.

Important information about bird populations and trends, as well as data alerting to environmental threats, was sought out by the birders on Dec. 18.

Locally, the count is done in a 15-mile radius encompassing Pleasanton, Livermore and Sunol, as well as five East Bay regional parks, "birding hotspots" like Sunol Wilderness, Sycamore Grove and lower Mines Road, and watershed lands managed by Zone 7.

The birders spent the day "armed with binoculars and spotting scopes to obtain a count of various birds in the sky, on the ground, tucked away in shrubs and trees, and in the waterways," Zone 7 representatives said, calling the Dec. 18 event "citizen science at its finest."

"These expert hobbyists with their keen attention to detail and vast knowledge of birds spent all day identifying species, sometimes just by the slight difference of a tail feather, the note of a chirp or a hint of color, even from hundreds of feet away," officials said.

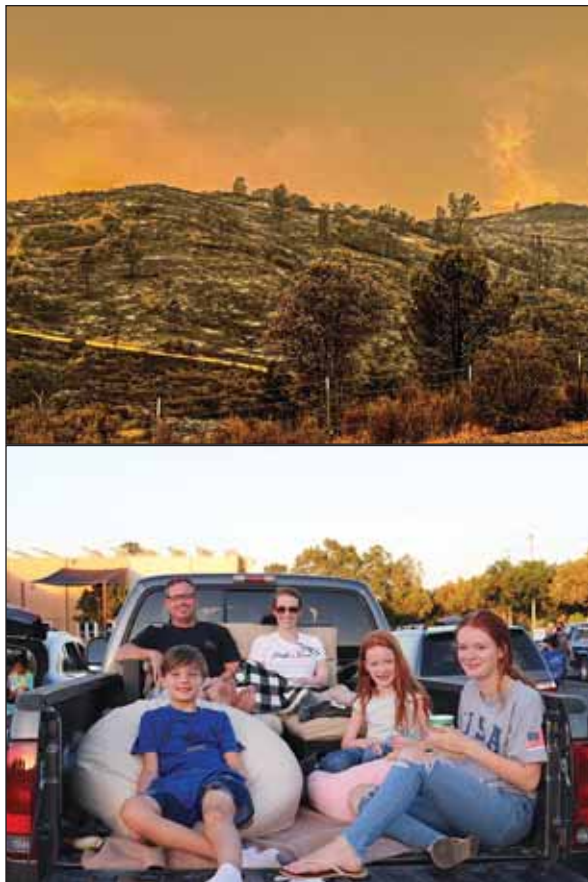
More information and the final results of the 2020 Christmas Bird Count can be found at [ohlone-audubon.org](http://ohlone-audubon.org). ■



DARCY DECOITE/PNR

## Turkey Burn goes virtual

Pleasanton North Rotary continued its annual fundraiser, the Tri-Valley Turkey Burn Family Fun Run, with coronavirus-conscious changes over Thanksgiving weekend, generating more than \$7,000 with 225 registrants to support local youth services and COVID-19 relief efforts. Participants were encouraged to pledge money and walk or run on their own, or with their immediate family members, all while keeping to COVID-19 safety protocols. Shown: Darcy DeCoite joined father Ed and mother Diane to express what they were thankful for on Thanksgiving, using the traditional Turkey Burn "I'm thankful for" bibs.



# YEAR IN REVIEW:

## PART II

Last six months of 2020 went from fortitude to longing to hope

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI



By July, we began to realize things were not getting back to normal any time soon, and folks found ways to cope with inconveniences and find enjoyment where they might. By the second half of the year, everything was happening virtually, from business to school to clubs to entertainment to fundraising.

Then deep into the pandemic, the wildfires struck, smoky air filling the Tri-Valley, and residents preparing to evacuate. As the fires were extinguished, the holidays neared and health officials begged us to stay in place for this one year's celebrations.

As the pandemic and quarantining continued, residents looked for — and found — more and more ways to help those suffering loss of income and other challenges. We ran myriad stories about individuals reaching out to help others.

Pleasanton, known for its planning, has also shown that it can quickly change gears to cope with the unexpected. The library initiated curbside service, then let patrons inside for a while. Pleasanton's Hometown Holiday celebration became an entertaining production on community television.

December stories include the first doses given of vaccination against COVID-19 so there is light at the end of the tunnel although we now realize the tunnel may be long and dark. We look ahead to the challenges and hopes of 2021. Happy New Year!

Clockwise from top left: The Weekly's Aug. 28 Cover image offers a look inside the Calaveras Zone of the SCU Lightning Complex fires, which burned across multiple counties including Alameda County south from Sunol from Aug. 16 to Oct. 1. (Photo courtesy of ACFD/Editing design by Doug Young). ER physician Dr. Howard Yoshioka was the first staff member at Stanford Health Care-ValleyCare to receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine on Dec. 18. (Photo courtesy of Stanford-ValleyCare). Fairlands Elementary third-grade teacher Allison McCutcheon shows off her virtual workspace for remote education that includes two laptops plus additional monitor for multitasking, a high-end microphone and a ring light for optimal lighting. (Photo courtesy of PUSD). The social distancing summer: From left, Chris, Parker, Michelle, Olivia and Emma Davis prepare for a drive-in screening of "Pitch Perfect" at the Alameda County Fairgrounds. (Photo by Ryan J. Degan).

### JULY

- **After canceling Alameda County Fair** because of COVID-19, the fairgrounds offer drive-in concerts and movies, and create a space for fair food trucks.

- **Vegetation fire** breaks out near the Sunol Regional Wilderness off Sheridan Road and grows to an estimated 108 acres, one of 43 fires battled by Alameda County Fire Department on the Fourth of July. Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department responds to 51 calls that day, some confirmed or likely to have been related to fireworks — despite pleas from fire officials for residents to avoid illegal fireworks this year in the interest of public safety.

- **Danville resident Dr. Ari Gershman** is fatally shot while off-roading with his teenage son in an apparent random attack in a rural area in Sierra County during the Fourth of July weekend. His son Jack, 15, is rescued after spending more than a day lost in the forest land after running for his life away from the danger. The story of Dr. Gershman's death and young Jack's escape makes national headlines.

- **Alameda County Public Health postpones indefinitely** its reopening timeline for businesses that had been on track to return in July, citing the need to better contain the COVID-19 pandemic amid recent upticks in local cases and hospitalizations.

- **Cal Fire** reports that so far this year, California has had 3,000

wildland fire incidents, so preparing for wildfire season is an increased priority.

- **Dublin City Council** denies the At Dublin project, a proposed retail and housing development spanning 76.9 acres in eastern Dublin that has been a source of contention in the community for several years. The project will be given a life line later in the year, when the council denial is changed to "without prejudice."

- **Pleasanton Unified School District (PUSD)** reviews possible strategies for students in the fall, including attendance on a staggered schedule several days per week, a flexible hybrid option, and the district's long-term independent study program.

- **PUSD offers no-cost meal service** to families in need in July and August via the federal

meal program, Seamless Summer Option.

- **Las Positas College** announces classes will be online in the upcoming semester, combined with some in-person labs.

- **Pleasanton city officials** urge residents to wear face masks in public after a week of halted reopenings and an increase of COVID-19 cases locally and countywide.

- **A Bay Area attorney representing several sexual abuse victims** demands the removal of a youth swim coach from USA Swimming, Steve Morsilli, longtime coach for the Pleasanton Seahawks, for allegedly failing to report claims of abuse by other coaches. Morsilli denies the accusations.

- **Daniel Moirao** is appointed interim superintendent of Dublin Unified School District in the

wake of Dave Marken's abrupt resignation.

- **Community Association for Preschool Education (CAPE)** joins forces with preschool provider Kidango to expand child care services for low-income families in Pleasanton, Dublin and Livermore, with a grant from Child, Family, and Community Services.

- **Livermore community reacts** to news that the drunk-driving murder conviction of Brian Jones is overturned on appeal, with the appellate court majority reasoning his right to a fair trial was violated due to an improper juror dismissal. Jones, 40, was convicted for the 2015 crash that killed Esperanza Morales Rodriguez and her 14-month-old daughter Yulida Perez-Morales in Livermore.

- **Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association and Livermore Valley Winegrowers Foundation** hold Taste Our Terroir and the Livermore Valley Wine Auction online and in July rather than September to raise money for meals for children in need.

- **PUSD decides**, after a four-hour discussion, that students will be learning online until further notice when the new school year starts next month.

- **Livermore Area Recreation and Park District** adjusts its hours around daylight savings time, changing from a static time year-round.



Filmmakers Darwin Clark (left) and Chris De Pretis work on Main Street to film "Death Blood 4," a B-movie released in 2020 that is also a nod to growing up in Pleasanton.

DEATH BLOOD 4



# YEAR IN REVIEW: Part II



SAVE NORTH LIVERMORE VALLEY

Project areas of the Sunwalker industrial solar power plant in the foreground (in orange) and the larger Aramis solar plant (in red), totaling 700-plus acres. The areas are divided by North Livermore Avenue. Photo taken from above Bel Roma Road.

• **Tri-Valley sees three marquee retirement announcements** this month: Livermore Police Chief Michael Harris, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory Director Bill Goldstein and Alameda County Fire Chief David Rocha.

• **Pleasanton Public Library** begins curbside pickup for patrons who pre-order books on the website to be delivered to their vehicles.

• **Las Vegas Fire and Rescue Chief Willie McDonald** is named the new fire chief for the Alameda County Fire Department.

• **Ninety-eight residents** weigh in about the overall performance and service of the Pleasanton Police Department at a virtual community listening session, following a recent spate of public discussions triggered by the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. The open-mic session is part of an action plan that also calls for future review of police policies and procedures.

• **Abbie 4-H Club member Hailey Maggy**, 9, participates in the fair's virtual Livestock Show and Auction where her steer Johnny is named Supreme Champion Market Beef.

• **Livermore community mourns** the death of Joseph "The Jet" Cairel, a Granada High School alum and professional indoor soccer player who drowned in a boating accident in the Delta near Discovery Bay this summer. He was 29.

• **Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce** hosts a virtual trade show for members to showcase their business, products and services in a visually appealing, user-friendly online setting.

• **Museum on Main** presents its second virtual exhibit, "Water/Ways," which explores the importance of water, its impacts on climate, and how it sculpts the landscape.

• **State and local officials announce timelines** that postpone fall sports until likely the second semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The California Interscholastic

Federation releases a statement saying there would be no sports played this fall, with those sports moved back until January 2021, with practices starting in mid-December.

• **Alameda County Sheriff's Office** loses two longtime employees at different hospitals less than 24 hours apart from complications caused by COVID-19 — Deputy Oscar Rocha and sheriff's technician Valerie Leon.

• **Nottingham Cellars in Livermore** discontinues its flagship red blend, Supremacy, upon deciding that the name is insensitive to the Black community.

• **A small group campaigning for local congressional candidate Alison Hayden**, the Republican candidate looking to unseat incumbent Rep. Eric Swalwell (D-Livermore), causes a stir by not wearing face masks at the Pleasanton Farmers' Market.

• **PleasantonWeekly.com limits comments** in its popular Town Square reader forum to those who have registered on the site with their name and email address, in an experiment to determine if requiring registration will lead to more respectful discussions of local issues.

• **Former Pleasanton police chief David Spiller** comes out of retirement to become interim chief of the Menlo Park Police Department.

## AUGUST

• **Pleasanton Senior Center is closed** to visitors but many programs are still run to help support senior residents this summer, including drive-thru meal pickups.

• **City Council approves a design concept** to overhaul the corner of Bernal Avenue where Sunol Boulevard becomes First Street for a more pedestrian-friendly intersection with improved traffic flow.

• **Pleasanton hair stylists and salon owners protest** to reopen their businesses, at the Alameda

County Public Health Department in Oakland, saying they can provide services safely.

• **Livermore police** make a renewed call for information to help solve the suspicious death of James Vincent Naples, 24, who was found dead in a local hotel room over the Memorial Day weekend.

• **Alameda County Fairgrounds** announces that the drive-in movies and food truck series have been extended through Labor Day weekend, and it's also added new music shows and educational programming.

• **Tri-Valley Nonprofit Fund (TVNF)** completes its second round of fundraising, donating \$10,000 each in unrestricted funds to six local organizations that have been identified as key safety-net service providers: Axis Community Health, Open Heart Kitchen, City-Serve of the Tri-Valley, Tri-Valley Haven, Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley and Spectrum Community Services (Meals on Wheels).



ACSO

Alameda County Sheriff's Deputy Oscar Rocha (left) died on July 23 from COVID-19 complications at the age of 57. Less than 24 hours later, sheriff's technician Valerie Leon (right) succumbed to the virus. She was 61.

• **Citing a lack of physical distancing** among residents and losses for local businesses, the city of Livermore halts its downtown street closures. Meanwhile, Pleasanton extends its Main Street closures through the Labor Day weekend.

• **Bay Area nuclear war protesters** hold their annual rally at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory virtually last week on the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima to call for an end to nuclear weapons.

• **Ultra camp film "Death Blood 4"** is released, a sci-fi B-movie that pays homage to Pleasanton, where it is filmed.

• **Pleasanton Weekly holds its first forum** of the fall election season, featuring the candidates for Alameda County Board of Supervisors District 1: Dublin Mayor David Haubert and Fremont City Councilman Vinnie Bacon. Weekly



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

The Nov. 3 election brought a sea change to local Pleasanton offices. Top row: New Mayor Karla Brown, City Councilwoman Valerie Arkin and Councilman Jack Balch. Bottom row: Re-elected PUSD Trustee Steve Maher and new trustees Mary Jo Carreon and Kelly Mokashi.

See 2020 on Page 14



## YEAR IN REVIEW: Part II



JEREMY WALSH

Tenant improvements were underway in October inside the empty supermarket space in the Vintage Hills Shopping Center, with Grocery Outlet signing a lease to take over the unit.

### 2020

Continued from Page 13

the start of full-time distance learning for the foreseeable future due to the coronavirus pandemic.

- **Vegetation fires near the Sunol Regional Wilderness and the Calaveras Reservoir** during lightning strikes prompt an evacuation warning for Kilkare Canyon residents. Cal Fire reports 20 separate fires it dubs the "SCU Lightning Complex," and smoky skies blanket Pleasanton for more than a week.

- **PUSD plans a budget** while looking at a net operating loss of about \$1.44 million and a net projected funding decrease of \$2.8 million. The district, however, has nearly \$10.4 million in undesignated reserve funds and around \$5.6 million in restricted funds.

- **Bob Athenour**, 91, a retired Amador Valley High foreign language teacher who later helped form the Pleasanton-Tulancingo Sister City Association, dies after an illness.

- **At a special five-hour online City Council meeting**, Pleasanton residents ask for changes to the Pleasanton Police Department's use-of-force policies, to establish a mental health response program, and to eliminate both school resource officers and the "D.A.R.E." anti-drug program from local campuses.

- **Alameda County public health order** says some personal services can resume commercial operations outside and communal outdoor swimming pools can reopen but people are urged to wear face coverings, wash hands often, and stay 6 feet away from others.

- **Dublin Unified School District** selects Emerald High School as

the official name for its second comprehensive high school, which is expected to break ground next month.

- **PUSD and the Association of Pleasanton Teachers** confirms a formal agreement over hybrid and remote learning during a special online board meeting.

- **City Council updates the city's COVID-19 Business Assistance Program**, which means extra financial relief for some locally owned businesses negatively impacted by the novel coronavirus.

- **Stanford Health Care-Valley-Care** captures national acclaim, receiving awards and recognition from various accreditation groups for its exemplary general care and excellence in several specialties.

- **Bay Area transit agencies** release a joint "Riding Together" plan to assuage riders' fears of contracting COVID-19 and suggesting ways for them to keep healthy as they return to public transit.

- **Cal Fire reports** there have been nearly 14,000 lightning strikes

causing more than 700 new wildfires statewide that burned over 1.32 million acres with seven fatalities reported and nearly 1,700 structures destroyed.

- **Culinary Angels** puts out a call for volunteers to help prepare and deliver two deliveries a month of nutrient-rich meals, using organic, locally grown produce to people fighting serious disease.

- **Pleasanton's Nico Lemoine**, 20, continues the family tradition of success on the soccer field as a member of the Houston Dynamo in Major League Soccer.

- **Joseph DeAngelo**, probably better known as the **Golden State Killer**, is sentenced in Sacramento to 12 life terms for the killings, rapes and other crimes committed in California, including some in the Tri-Valley.

### SEPTEMBER

- **Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center** launches a series of virtual Sunday evening concerts called "Vineyard Vibes."



DUSD

A new gem coming to Dublin: DUSD officials, community leaders and select students gathered on Sept. 30 for a socially distanced groundbreaking ceremony for Emerald High School.



HOUSTON DYNAMO

Pleasanton native Nico Lemoine dons the Houston Dynamo orange during his MLS debut this summer.

- **Pleasanton extends the closure of Main Street** to vehicular traffic on weekends to run through October, including an extra day on Labor Day weekend.

- **Twelve young theater enthusiasts** comprise the inaugural class of the Actors Conservatory at Las Positas College.

- **COVID-19 outbreak at Pleasanton Nursing and Rehabilitation Center** kills 12 residents and at least one employee and results in nearly 90 other infections at the facility, after surfacing last month.

- **One of Pleasanton's oldest and largest trees, a eucalyptus** at Lions Wayside Park behind the Firehouse Arts Center, is removed after it becomes infected with an incurable sulphur fungus that could result in falling branches and is classified a public safety hazard.

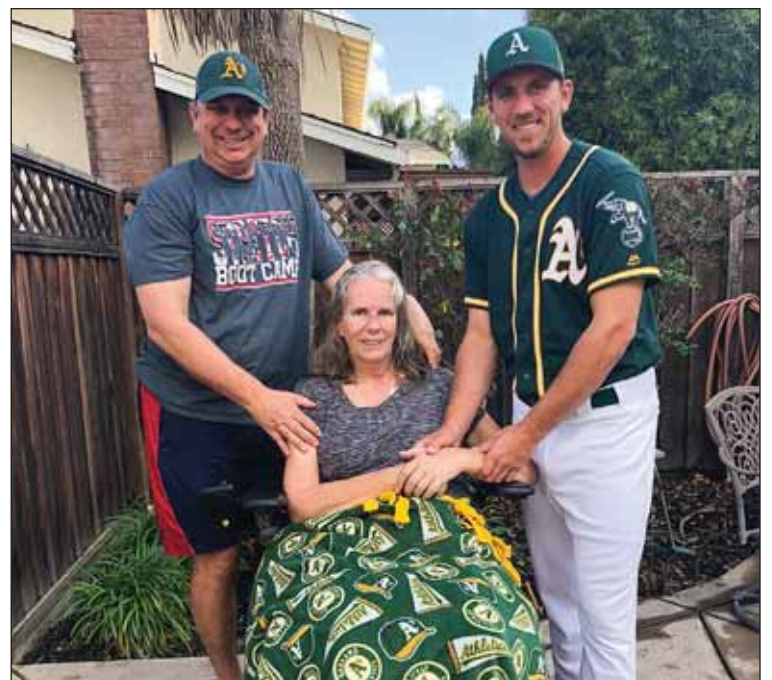
- **Helen Tirsell, an equal rights advocate and public policy leader**

who left her mark on Livermore history in the 1970s when she served as the city's first female mayor, dies in her modern hometown of Oakland. She was 85.

- **City Council votes to ban** the retail sale of flavored tobacco products within city limits and establish a tobacco retailer license, effective in 2021, and joins more than 150 other cities in banning flavored tobacco sales and the establishment of new tobacco retailers within 1,000 feet of a public school, park or recreation center.

- **While the Tri-Valley's census self-response rates** remain above the state and national average, there are still roughly 15% to 30% unaccounted for.

- **Fire crews continue to make headway** against the SCU Lightning Complex, in what has become the state's second-largest wildfire on record, and Cal Fire lifts all evacuation orders and



PISCOTTY FAMILY

Mike, Gretchen and Stephen Piscotty pose in Oakland A's gear nearly three years ago. Pleasanton's Piscotty family launched the ALS Cure Project in 2018 to help support research to cure the deadly disease that took Gretchen's life that May.



# YEAR IN REVIEW: Part II



RYAN J. DEGAN

From left: "We Are Pleasanton" founder Todd Utikal points out plans for renovating the Pleasanton Middle School athletic fields to Pleasanton Unified School District Superintendent David Haglund and principal Joe Nguyen.

warnings for parts of Alameda County, including unincorporated Tri-Valley.

• **Livermore's Vine Cinema**, which opened in 1956, faces new challenges to survive the pandemic after it was closed March 16.

• **Two Foothill High brother grads, Kwans and Yujin Kim**, are announced winners in the young adult category of "Reimagining Brooklyn Bridge," an international design competition.

• **Gregory Jonathon Stephens**, 38, is arrested after a standoff for allegedly killing his girlfriend — 51-year-old Kellie Henry — at a ranch property in rural Livermore over Labor Day weekend.

• **Tri-Valley hospitals urge residents** not to postpone routine or recommended medical appointments and procedures during the pandemic, noting a decrease in patient turnout since March.

• **LFPD commemorates the 19th anniversary of the Sept. 11** terrorist attacks with a livestreamed flag-raising and remembrance. Las Positas College also holds its 9/11 remembrance ceremony online.

• **City Council approves the design phase** of the city's first all-abilities playground, to be located at the site of the current playground near the softball fields at Ken Mercer Sports Park.

• **A male's decomposing body is discovered** near the Marilyn Murphy Kane Trail in southwestern Pleasanton, in a brush area a number of yards away from the path. Over a month later, family members will identify the victim as Robert Hilker, a chef at a downtown restaurant who'd been reported missing.

• **Dr. Jennifer Penney of Axis Community Health** in Pleasanton reports she has observed an increase in the need for mental health and counseling services.

• **Niles Canyon Railway operates special trips** using a classic steam engine two weekends in September, after being closed since March.

• **Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA)** wins the 2020 Outstanding Public Transportation System Achievement Award, beating other bus and rail systems around the U.S. and Canada that also provide up to 4 million passenger trips annually.

• **Pleasanton introduces robot cleaners** for its city facilities to supplement sanitization done by human cleaners, especially targeting airborne particles.

• **Annual Paint Pleasanton**, sponsored by Pleasanton Art League, takes place virtually for one week rather than in person during a weekend for artists to share works depicting places in Pleasanton. The results are its first online exhibit, with 51 artworks created by 23 artists.

• **Congregation Beth Emek** in Pleasanton meets online for the holiest days on the Jewish calendar, and Rabbi Dr. Laurence Elis Milder notes that although they will be praying in a Zoom room, "The prayers will be as real as ever."

• **Area 4 Rotary clubs** work together for a \$96,850 Rotary International Global Grant to assist the community health care response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Alameda County.

• **Alameda County advances out of the purple tier** and into the red tier in the state's COVID-19

blueprint, indicating some improving local metrics, but county health officials said no new reopenings will occur yet.

• **Another attempt to put face mask enforcement** as an action item on a future council agenda falls short at a Pleasanton City Council meeting, after only Mayor Jerry Thorne and Councilwoman Julie Testa support agendaing the item.

• **Livermore police bid a somber farewell** to one of their own during a memorial procession and service for Officer Maximiliano "Max" Messina, who died this month after battling pancreatic cancer. He was 47.

• **Tri-Valley Teachers of the Year** are biomedical science instructor Josh Hill from Foothill High School in Pleasanton, English and AVID teacher Nicole Meyer at Fallon Middle School in Dublin, and Miguel Baez for teaching computer arts and IT at Granada High in Livermore.

• **Pleasanton may need to plan for about 4,800 new housing units** over the next decade and a half, according to a staff update during a City Council online meeting.

• **Alameda County supervisors** pass a temporary ordinance that caps fees charged to restaurants by food-delivery services at 15% of each order's price.

• **Valley Link now has nearly a third of funds** needed to build out the planned regional transit system, after the Alameda County Transportation Commission agrees to reallocate \$400 million in Measure BB funding toward the project.

• **Amador Valley High grad Catherine Breed**, 27, swims from Santa Cruz to Monterey, 25 miles, in a record time of 12 hours and 42 minutes.



CITY OF PLEASANTON

The July 10 Cover of the Weekly featured these headshots of city leaders (but organized "Brady Bunch" style) to highlight the city video encouraging residents to "Mask up, Pleasanton!"

• **Mike Biondi, an assistant superintendent** in the Livermore school district who also worked as a principal in San Ramon earlier in his career, is found dead near a lake in western Nevada after being reported missing for more than a week.

396,624 acres across six counties, according to Cal Fire.

• **City Council hosts its second online community meeting** on policing, set to focus on a revised implementation plan for key strategies from the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, part of a series of city meetings on social justice reform and community policing in response to civil unrest after the George Floyd killing.

## OCTOBER

• **The SCU Lightning Complex fires** that raged for weeks south of the Tri-Valley is declared to be 100% contained after charring

See 2020 on Page 16



## YEAR IN REVIEW: Part II



RYAN J. DEGAN

Kimberly and Jay West held a vigil in Pleasanton in October to help get out the word about their missing daughter, Syd West. Her whereabouts were still unknown as of this week.

### 2020

Continued from Page 15

- **Dublin school and community leaders break ground** for the new Emerald High School on its east side, an event that is livestreamed.
- **East Bay Regional Park District** announces it will be reopening several parks to a limited number of visitors, including Del Valle Regional Park in Livermore.
- **Eugene O'Neill Foundation** presents three one-act Eugene O'Neill plays filmed in the Old Barn theater at Tao House in a series of rolling weekly premieres online.
- **Tri-Valley Haven holds a Virtual Pace for Peace** from Oct. 17-31, for supporters to walk or run 5K or 10K in support of local survivors of domestic violence.

- **PUSD plans a small cohort supervision pilot program**, which is not instructional but will allow staff to provide physical supervision and support for certain students at PUSD sites.
- **LAVTA resumes collecting fares** for all Wheels, Rapid and Dial-a-Ride paratransit services, after temporary barriers are installed to shield drivers when passengers resume boarding at the front of the bus.
- **Nail salons open in Alameda County** for indoor operations, following county and state guidelines for operating.
- **PPIE holds its Week of the Stars** to "raise community spirit and funds" for schools.
- **Las Positas College Department of Theater Arts** presents a

digital retelling of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," which means crash courses in home lighting and remote costume design, digital filmmaking and camera angles, and the intricacies of live streaming.

• **Alameda County is upgraded** to the orange tier in the state's COVID-19 blueprint.

• **New community group "We Are Pleasanton"** forms to generate funds for several key school improvement projects in the wake of PUSD's Measure M failing in the March primary.

• **Pleasanton city officials** pull the plug on the 2020 Hometown Holiday Parade, planning a televised tree-lighting ceremony to broadcast Dec. 5, the original parade date.

• **Grocery Outlet** plans to open a store in the supermarket space in the Vintage Hills Shopping Center that has sat empty since New Leaf Community Markets left nearly four years ago.

• **PUSD trustees debate** whether to pause plans to build the future \$48 million school for grades 4 and 5 at the Donlon Elementary site or stay the course.

• **City Council approves** a nearly \$1.5 million purchase of upgraded body cameras and tasers for local law enforcement.

• **LARPD has taken a financial hit** during the COVID-19 pandemic that results in the implementation of a restructuring plan, which includes a round of layoffs among other budget cuts.



FILE PHOTO

Convicted killer Steven Carlson confessed in October to the 1984 murder of Tina Faelz (shown).



RYAN J. DEGAN

New Pleasanton Police Chief David Swing.

• **Tri-Valley Adopt a Creek Spot** and Living Arroyos are presented with the statewide Outstanding Sustainable Stormwater Program Award to recognize volunteers for picking up more than 45,000 gallons of litter and planting nearly 7,000 California native plant species near local creeks and rivers.

• **Pleasanton artist Usha Shukla**, who finds inspiration for her vivid abstract paintings from nature, is awarded a 2020 Alameda County Arts Leadership Award.

• **PUSD trustees vote 3-2 to support reopening** local elementary schools for students in transitional kindergarten through fifth grade starting Jan. 4.

• **City Council increases maximum loan amounts** and agrees to make other modifications to a little-used loan program offered by the city down payment assistance (DPA) program.

• **Livermore Acting Police Chief Jeremy Young** has his interim tag removed and is appointed to the permanent position.

• **Visit Tri-Valley's Tri-Valley Beer trail**, featuring 17 breweries, alehouses, taprooms and restaurants, reopens for participants to explore the best brews the region has to offer, with a touchless beer passport system to help prevent possible COVID-19 exposure.

• **Museum on Main offers its annual Ghost Walk** live via Zoom, featuring spirits telling their stories at haunted sites downtown.

• **Livermore Valley Opera** kicks off its "Triple Treat" of free online concerts featuring professional opera singers, while Livermore wineries offer special wine pairings to complement them.

• **Pleasanton resident Domenica Maurice**, 33, dies in a solo-vehicle crash down an embankment

on San Pablo Dam Road in Orinda around 12:20 a.m. on a Monday.

• **Family and friends hold an evening vigil** downtown in a show of support for former Foothill High student Sydney "Syd" West, 19, who has been missing for three weeks.

• **Convicted killer Steven Carlson confesses** to the murder of 14-year-old Tina Faelz as she was walking home from Foothill High School in Pleasanton on April 5, 1984, when he was 16. He was convicted of the crime six years ago.

• **Public health officials say "naturally socially distanced" indoor activities** such as bowling alleys and climbing walls may open for business, and also limited indoor dining, movie theaters and worship services, admitting 25% or fewer than 100 people, whichever is less.

• **Local and county officials outline options to celebrate Halloween** as safely and responsibly as possible, noting that trick-or-treating and outside parties are high-risk activities.

• **Zone 7 Water Agency Board of Directors** unanimously rejects a 1.7% connection fee increase in an effort to support the local economy through hardships caused by the pandemic.

• **Safeway Inc. agrees to settle a consumer protection case** with two local district attorneys for price gouging with the sales of certain hand sanitizer brands early in the coronavirus pandemic.

### NOVEMBER

• **Pleasanton elects Karla Brown for mayor**; Valerie Arkin and Jack Balch for City Council; school board members Mary Jo Carreon and Kelly Mokashi; and re-elects school board president Steve Maher.



MUSEUM ON MAIN

The annual Ghost Walks were reinvented for 2020. The online program included Gertrude Ellis (Cynthia Lagodzinski), the Rose Hotel ghost, telling of her life after she married into the prominent Ellis family, who built the large general merchandise store on Main and St. John streets.



## YEAR IN REVIEW: Part II



- **Livermore voters elect City Councilman Bob Woerner** as their new mayor and newcomer Brittini Kiick as the City Council District 3 representative in the city's first district-based election. (Councilman Bob Carling wins re-election unopposed for District 4.) For Livermore Valley school board, voters chose Kristie Wang and Yanira Guzmán.

- **Dublin Unified School District's Area 1** elects Kristin Pelham as a new trustee; Area 4 re-elects Gabi Blackman. Incumbent Catherine Kuo earns a full term for Area 3 after going unchallenged.

- **After serving one term on the council, Melissa Hernandez** is Dublin's new mayor-elect; newly elected council members are Sherry Hu and Michael McCorriston.

- **Current Dublin Mayor David Haubert** is elected to Alameda County Board of Supervisors for District 1, succeeding retiring Livermore Supervisor Scott Haggerty.

- **Measure W, the countywide half-cent sales tax**, and Measure X, the \$90 million fire facilities bond, both pass narrowly. Measure W is 50.09% Yes, while Measure X is 66.78% Yes (needing two-thirds).

- **Actress Lori Loughlin reports to the minimum-security federal prison** for women in Dublin to begin serving a two-month sentence stemming from her conviction in the college admissions bribery scandal.

- **Pleasanton Library reopens** to the public, offering socially distanced internet stations in addition to the usual array of books and other library materials and services. No chairs or tables for reading or studying are available, nor any interactive toys for children.

- **PUSD leaders break ground** for new science classroom buildings at Amador Valley and Foothill high schools, livestreamed on the district's Facebook page.

- **LAVTA invites the public** to hop aboard its shared autonomous vehicle (SAV) after the self-driving vehicle starts service Nov. 16 providing rides from the eastern Dublin-Pleasanton BART Station to nearby locations.

- **Annual Tri-Valley Veterans Day Parade** and Ceremony through downtown Pleasanton is canceled, but Tri-Valley Community Television highlights former military service members in its



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pleasanton's Lauren Swenson-Lennox became the Tri-Valley's first female Eagle Scout this fall.

new "Spotlight on Veterans" program for Veterans Day.

- **Pleasanton police respond to an uncommon "emu-gency" situation** after receiving a call about a stray emu wandering in west Pleasanton.

- **California DMV opens a second office** in Pleasanton at the Stoneridge Shopping Center after closing its Walnut Creek field office, while encouraging customers to use its expanded virtual services.

- **Dinosaur Adventure Drive-Thru** arrives at the Alameda County Fairgrounds for a three-weekend stay in Pleasanton.

- **The robotics club at Dublin High** designs a high-tech drone to be built and used to sanitize the football stadium and other facilities at the school but certain high-priced parts need to be bought first.

- **California Department of Public Health** places Alameda County into the most-restrictive purple tier of the state's Blueprint for a Safer Economy, resulting in the end of indoor dining, worship services and gym activities for the time being, as well the closure of bars and reduced indoor capacity for retail stores and shopping malls.

- **PUSD considers scrapping plans** for the planned new school for grades 4 and 5 at the Donlon Elementary site and starting over with a newly developed alternative proposal to address overgrowth issues.

- **An Alameda County Superior Court judge** rules against petitioners suing Pleasanton for a second time over environmental approvals for the proposed Costco and overarching Johnson Drive Economic Development Zone, potentially ending the lawsuit and clearing the way for the project to move forward.



CIERRA BAILEY

The Sept. 4 Cover Story highlighted Vine Cinema, a boutique film theater in downtown Livermore that turned to creative strategies to try to survive its pandemic-induced closure, including selling snacks curbside and holding a well-supported GoFundMe campaign.



MIKE SEDLAK

The city of Pleasanton received a favorable ruling in November as it battles a lawsuit challenging the environmental approvals for the Johnson Drive Economic Development Zone. Costco and a hotel developer are aiming to build on the 20-acre vacant portion (in yellow oval) near the top right of this aerial photo.

- **Bay Area health officials implore residents** to celebrate Thanksgiving responsibly, such as getting together with family and friends virtually and staying physically distanced.

- **Pleasanton Downtown Association unveils program** to encourage Pleasanton residents to shop, dine and otherwise support local businesses this holiday season — "Shop Small — Support Local."

- **The 2020-21 Pleasanton Weekly Holiday Fund** kicks off to benefit six core Tri-Valley nonprofit organizations: Axis Community Health, CityServe of the Tri-Valley, Hope Hospice, Open Heart Kitchen, Valley Humane Society and ValleyCare Charitable Foundation. The fundraising drive will continue until Jan. 17.

- **This year November and December** prove to be a good time to put homes on the market, with fourth-quarter sellers serious and motivated.

- **Livermore resident Gregory Paul Vien, 61**, who is facing charges for two cold-case sexual assaults

in the East Bay, dies from injuries sustained in a suicide attempt that occurred one week prior in the hours after the crimes' survivors testified against him in court. Vien had been out of custody due to a controversial COVID release.

- **City Council hears an update on the city's Climate Action Plan (CAP 2.0)** regarding Pleasanton's long-term outlook for addressing climate change that could entail the city producing its own renewable energy and investing in green infrastructure.

- **Pleasanton Mayor Jerry Thorne** hands out the final Mayor's Award of his four-term tenure during a virtual ceremony, recognizing Chris Miller, a longtime leader in the local military veteran community.

- **Castlewood Country Club**, which dates back to 1924, is renamed The Club at Castlewood to herald its \$16 million remodeling and upgrading project scheduled to launch in the spring.

- **Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center** raises \$200,000 with

"Best of the Bankhead," a fundraiser with catered dinner and wine enjoyed along with virtual entertainment by Bankhead Theater favorites.

- **City Council increases funding** for a city-run rental assistance program to help Pleasanton residents who have struggled to pay their rent during statewide COVID-19 lockdown restrictions and are experiencing "significantly reduced" household incomes.

- **BART Board of Directors** votes to forge ahead with an incentivized retirement program intended to help with its failing financial outlook due to the coronavirus pandemic.

- **Livermore Public Works Department** successfully comes to the aid of resident Jenna Madrid after she accidentally flushes her wedding ring down the toilet, from where it begins its journey to the wastewater treatment plant where it is found.

See 2020 on Page 18



## YEAR IN REVIEW: Part II



LIL YASE'S IG

Rising Bay Area rapper Lil Yase died on Nov. 28 after being shot multiple times in Dublin. He was 26.

### 2020

Continued from Page 17

• **State officials delay the start of high school sports** this school year, pushing out the Dec. 7 start date indefinitely amid surges of COVID-19.

• **Lauren Swenson-Lennox of Pleasanton** becomes the Tri-Valley's first female Eagle Scout.

• **Playground equipment at two Pleasanton parks is set on fire** in apparent arson incidents, at Hansen Park and at Creekside Park. Police say they might be related.

• **Rising Bay Area rapper Lil Yase — stage name of Alexander Mark Antonyo Jr., 26** — dies at a local hospital after being shot multiple times near the eastern Dublin-Pleasanton BART Station. The circumstances are still unknown.

• **East County Board of Zoning Adjustments** approves developing a 410-acre utility-scale solar power plant north of Livermore, the "Aramis Project."

• **Resident group Save the Hill**, who have spent a decade objecting to a proposed residential development



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jenna Madrid, who accidentally flushed her wedding ring down the toilet, was reunited with it after Livermore city workers worked to find the lost band.

in northern Livermore, files a notice of appeal following a recent ruling by Alameda County Superior Court in their environmental lawsuit over the project.

• **Pleasanton-based biotech company 10x Genomics, Inc.**, is ready to expand its corporate and research presence in the city by developing a new campus across Stoneridge Mall Road from its current headquarters. Planning Commission discusses early plans at a public workshop.

• **Pleasanton high schools** announce they will be pausing all voluntary in-person extracurricular activities until at least the end of the semester after some students attended a party over Thanksgiving break that officials say may have resulted in potential positive cases and exposure to COVID-19.

• **Tri-Valley residents** have the next month and a half to weigh in during the 50-day public comment period for the Valley Link transit project's draft environmental impact report recently released by the Tri-Valley/San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority.

### DECEMBER



TV30

With the holiday parade canceled due to the pandemic, Pleasanton officials shifted to a prerecorded broadcast with TV30, "2020 Pleasanton Virtual Hometown Holiday Celebration & Tree Lighting."

• **The beacon on Mount Diablo** is lit Dec. 7 as part of a special prerecorded ceremony in recognition of Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, and shown in a streaming video at [www.savemountdiablo.org](http://www.savemountdiablo.org) that includes three East Bay residents who survived the Pearl Harbor attack.

• **Livermore-Amador Symphony** celebrates Beethoven's 250th birthday by releasing video projects virtually.

• **Encore Players** present "It's a Wonderful Life, A Live Radio Play" on Zoom, sponsored partly by the Livermore Public Library.

• **City Council agrees to begin design process** for a new skate park in Pleasanton, which will be located at Ken Mercer Sports Park.

• **The alarming rate of spread of the COVID-19 virus** prompts Bay Area health officers to implement the state's new regional stay-at-home order now through Jan. 4 rather than wait until hospitals are near crisis.

• **Three advocacy groups file appeals** to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors opposing the decision to approve the proposed 410-acre, utility-scale solar Aramis power plant north of Livermore. The proponent files an appeal too, over county-imposed conditions of approval.

• **Black Tie Transportation** takes over Pleasanton Paratransit Service (PPS) after City Council approves a \$896,400 agreement to take over daily operations starting Feb. 1.

• **Sunwalkwer's Livermore Community Solar Energy Facility** is approved by the East County Board of Zoning Adjustment. It's the second large solar power plant

proposal approved for North Livermore in recent weeks; resident group vows to appeal.

• **Tense controversy arrives in Livermore** after pro-police media group Law Enforcement Today writes a scathing opinion article over public meetings notes of a city Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee working group introducing a discussion of whether the Thin Blue Line flag is a symbol of hate.

• **The Pleasanton school board** unanimously agrees to reopen all 15 elementary and secondary schools within several weeks of each other, as soon as Alameda County is officially back in the red tier of the state's COVID-19 case monitoring system — though nobody knows when that might happen.

• **The four sitting Livermore City Council members vote** for an interview and appointment process, as opposed to calling for a costly special election, to fill the vacancy on the dais created upon Bob Wornner's ascension from councilman to mayor.

• **National news outlet Axios releases an expose story** after a year-long investigation into the actions of a Chinese national accused of being a covert spy targeting young American politicians between 2011 and 2015, including Tri-Valley Congressman Eric Swalwell.

• **ALS Cure Project**, founded in honor of late Pleasanton resident Gretchen Piscotty, promote new research partnerships with Livermore Lab Foundation and LLNL to help discover new treatments and a cure for ALS.

• **Homes are colorfully illuminated** across the Tri-Valley to help residents enjoy the season from a

safe distance amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

• **Holiday shows are offered virtually**, including Valley Dance Theatre's "The Nutcracker," which performs every year at the Bankhead Theater.

• **Executive Director Chris Chandler**, the longest-serving leader of the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association, is retiring.

• **Dublin attorney and former two-term California assemblywoman Catharine Baker** is appointed to the state's Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC).

• **The first shipments of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine** arrive in Alameda County and the first doses are administered to hospital workers and first responders.

• **Two LVJUSD high-schoolers and one recent alum die** in a late-night crash on Las Positas Road. This marks the second of three fatal crashes in Livermore within about 33 hours.

• **One custodian dies** and another is being treated at a local hospital after being found in medical distress amid a strange chemical smell and fentanyl at the scene at Fallon Middle School, Dublin police say.

• **Pleasanton sends a letter to residents** stating in part, "We have reached a critical point in the pandemic, and now more than ever we must each do our part by following the new Regional Stay-At-Home Order to slow the spread of the Coronavirus and protect our Pleasanton community," urging everyone to "Wear a mask, and stay well and healthy," and to shop local. ■



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pleasanton artist Usha Shukla, winner of a 2020 Alameda County Arts Leadership Award, says she creates abstract paintings that distill the light, the intense colors and the constant movement in nature.

# Community Pulse

## POLICE BULLETIN

### Remembering Ron Scott, retired Livermore police chief

The Livermore Police Department is mourning the loss of former chief Ron Scott, who died surrounded by family on Dec. 22 after battling an undisclosed medical illness. He was 73.

Scott, who led Livermore PD from 1990 to 2002, left a lasting impact on the department and remained an active city resident during retirement, including with the Livermore Rotary Club and Livermore Rodeo, according to police officials.

"Chief Ron Scott was not only a great chief, but even a better person. He cared deeply about the Livermore community and the people working under his command," retired Sgt.



Ron Scott

Wayne Jacobs told the Weekly.

"During his tenure at the Livermore Police Department, he led the department through some difficult times, and we became a stronger and better department as a result of his leadership. Chief Ron Scott will always be remembered and dearly missed," Jacobs added.

Scott was born in Monterey County in 1947 and raised in Salinas. After serving in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserves, he attended Hartnell Junior College — including playing on the Hartnell Panthers state champion football team in 1967. While attending night school, Scott earned a bachelor's degree and later a master's degree in public administration from Golden Gate University.

Scott worked in law enforcement for more than 30 years, including at the Monterey County Probation Department and the Salinas Police Department, where he rose to the rank of captain. He was hired as Livermore police chief in 1990 and served for 12 years until retiring.

Police officials noted Scott's leadership included overseeing the development and construction of the

current Livermore Police Department headquarters.

"Throughout Chief Scott's tenure, the Livermore Police Department received countless awards and recognitions to include the ranking of Livermore as one of the Top 15 Safest Cities Nationwide and one of the top Five Safest Cities in California," police officials said.

Even more than that, Scott was a well-regarded and well-respected leader in the eyes of those who served under his leadership, according to Officer Dave Morris, who has worked for Livermore PD for the past 27 years.

"For me, he gave a young 26-year-old a chance at a dream to become a police officer and make something of himself. I didn't have experience and didn't have a college degree. Without Chief Scott, I wouldn't be where I am today," Morris told the Weekly.

"I was able to live out my dream of being a police officer and serving this great community! He will be missed and it is such a huge loss," Morris added.

### In other news

• Two men were arrested in San Joaquin County last week on charges related to a Pleasanton gas station burglary that happened earlier in the morning.

The Pleasanton Police Department alleges Joseph Salcido, 46, and Hector Amparo, 47, shattered a window at the Shell gas station convenience store at 3790 Hopyard Road at 5 a.m. Dec. 23.

The pair allegedly then entered the store and "proceeded directly to a CA lottery ticket display case," where "one of the suspects forcibly removed the case from the counter," police said.

"After removing numerous rolls of lottery tickets and several other items, the suspects fled the store," they added.

The culprits were gone by the time officers arrived, but within a few

hours, the Ripon Police Department contacted PPD with news that three people were in "possession of stolen property related to a Pleasanton commercial burglary," including "a large amount of CA lotto tickets" that were traced back to the gas station.

Both agencies conducted a follow up investigation and determined the suspects were "directly related to the Pleasanton burglary" and crimes in other jurisdictions. All three suspects were arrested on charges in San Joaquin County, with charges for the burglary pending in Alameda County, and booked into the San Joaquin County Jail.

The identity of the third arrestee, as well as information on whether they were also tied to the Pleasanton crime, were not revealed.

Anyone with information about the case can call the PPD at 931-5100. ■

—Jeremy Walsh and Julia Baum

## POLICE REPORT

The Pleasanton Police Department made the following information available.

### Dec. 26

#### Burglary

■ 11:22 a.m. on the 4600 block of Fall Court

#### Theft

■ 3:47 p.m., 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

■ 6:38 p.m. on the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

#### Drug violation

■ 8:13 p.m. on the 6800 block of Santa Rita Road

■ 8:31 p.m. on the 5500 block of Johnson Drive

### Dec. 25

#### DUI

■ 2:50 a.m. at Hopyard and Owens drives

#### Burglary

■ 4:23 a.m. on the 6200 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

### Dec. 24

#### Drug violation

■ 1:09 a.m. at Stoneridge and Franklin drives

#### Burglary

■ 2:21 a.m. on the 5100 block of Hopyard Road

■ 10:34 a.m. on the 4400 block of Hacienda Drive

#### Theft

■ 6:23 a.m., 4800 block of Bernal Avenue; theft from auto

■ 8:17 a.m., 5500 block of San Jose Drive; theft from auto

■ 11:57 a.m., 6200 block Stoneridge Mall Road; bicycle theft

■ 12:22 p.m., 5100 block of Hopyard Road; auto theft

■ 3:10 p.m., 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

■ 6:33 p.m., 5500 block of Spinghouse Drive; theft from auto

### Dec. 23

#### Burglary

■ 5:09 a.m. on the 3700 block of Hopyard Road

#### Theft

■ 4:49 p.m. on the 4400 block of Hacienda Drive

■ 10:39 p.m. on the 3300 block of Smoketree Commons

### Dec. 22

#### Vandalism

■ 12:15 p.m. on the 000 block of Shore Drive

#### Embezzlement

■ 1:00 p.m. on the 2500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

#### Burglary

■ 2:47 p.m. on the 6200 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

#### Theft

■ 3:49 p.m., 2800 block of Hopyard Road; shoplifting

■ 4:09 p.m. on the 4700 block of Hopyard Road

■ 5:59 p.m., 6700 block of Bernal Avenue; theft from auto

■ 6:39 p.m., 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

#### Warrant arrest

■ 9:16 p.m. at Brookline Loop and Freeman Lane

#### Criminal threats

■ 4:48 p.m. on the 3400 block of Andrews Drive

### Dec. 21

#### Fraud

■ 2:04 p.m. on the 700 block of Sycamore Road

#### Theft

■ 2:40 p.m., 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

■ 9:31 p.m., 1000 block of Crellin Road; theft from auto

### Dec. 20

#### Drug violation

■ 11:49 a.m. on the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive

#### Domestic battery

■ 12:29 p.m. on Stoneridge Drive

### Dec. 19

#### Theft from auto

■ 6:43 a.m. on the 400 block of Los Rios Court

■ 7:16 a.m. on the 5400 block of Dudley Court

■ 10:01 a.m. on the 7000 block of Johnson Drive

■ 12:46 p.m. on the 6300 block of Benner Court

#### Shoplifting

■ 8:48 p.m. on the 1500 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

#### Warrant arrest

■ 11:39 a.m. on the 6000 block of Johnson Drive

■ 12:18 p.m. on the 4200 block of Mirador Drive

#### Domestic battery

■ 1:27 p.m. on Hopyard Road

### Dec. 18

#### Theft

■ 8:55 a.m. on the 2200 block of Vineyard Heights Lane

■ 12:31 p.m., 600 block of Palomino Drive; theft from auto

■ 12:44 p.m., 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

■ 8:30 p.m. on the 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

#### Vandalism

■ 11:29 a.m. on the 4100 block of Churchill Drive

#### DUI

■ 4:16 p.m. at East Ruby Hill Drive and Ruby Hill Boulevard

## Public Notices

### 995 Fictitious Name Statement

Ashoka Indian Cuisine  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 574754

The following person doing business as: Ashoka Indian Cuisine, 3550 Stanley Blvd., Ste. 4, Pleasanton, CA 94566, County of Alameda, is hereby registered by the following owner: Ashok Maan, 3111 Maguire Way, Apt. 409, Dublin, CA 94568. This business is conducted by Ashok Maan, an Individual. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name listed herein October 8, 2010. Signature of Registrant: Ashok Maan, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on November 24, 2020. (Pleasanton Weekly, December 18, 25, January 1, 8, 2021.)

Hill Mortgage  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 574903

The following person doing business as: Hill Mortgage, 350 Main Street, Ste. H., Pleasanton, CA 94566, County of Alameda, is hereby registered by the following owner: Scott Hill, 6966 Paseo Santa Cruz, Pleasanton, CA 94566. This business is conducted by Scott Hill, an Individual. Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein. Signature of Registrant: Scott Hill, Broker/Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on December 2, 2020. (Pleasanton Weekly, Dec. 18, 25, Jan. 1, 8, 2021.)

### 997 All Other Legals

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: AGNES HWUN-GIAT YAO KWAN, also known as AGNES HWUN-GIAT YAO KWAN and AGNES Y KWAN and AGNES H KWAN and AGNES KWAN. Case No.: RP20082162. To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of AGNES HWUN-GIAT YAO KWAN, also known as AGNES HWUN-GIAT YAO KWAN and AGNES Y KWAN and AGNES H KWAN and AGNES KWAN. A Petition for Probate has been filed by: REGINA KWAN PETERSON in the Superior Court of California, County of ALAMEDA. The Petition for Probate requests that: REGINA KWAN PETERSON be appointed as personal representative

to administer the estate of the decedent. The petition requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court. The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held on FEBRUARY 8, 2021, at 9:45 a.m. in Dept.: 202 of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda, located 2120 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Berkeley, CA 94704. If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58 (b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. The Petitioner: Regina Kwan Peterson, Pro Per, 605 Blossom Court, Pleasanton, CA 94566. (708) 646-4331. (Pleasanton Weekly, December 25, 2020, January 1, 8, 2021.)

Call (925) 600-0840 for assistance with your legal advertising needs.

### We appreciate your financial and emotional support

With the pandemic and its impacts of economic stress and isolation, protests, wildfires and a chaotic election season, most people are ready to see the end of 2020. Yet 2021 will begin where 2020 ended, with everyone at home adhering to the directives from county and state health officials.

As anxiety levels continue to rise in the region over the rapidly escalating number of COVID-19 cases and deaths, so does “pandemic fatigue” from being under lockdowns of different variations for more than nine months.

Our office continues to be closed to the public and our staff is working from home — often while taking care of children or other family members — making our work all the more challenging. Nonetheless, serving our readers during times of crisis or natural disasters with accurate and timely reporting is one of the most important functions of a local news organization.

But when our coverage is needed most, we are struggling financially. Like most local news organizations, our revenue from advertising is only a fraction of what it was pre-pandemic, and that was down significantly from a scant five years ago.

At the onset of this health crisis, we were humbled and grateful when hundreds of readers stepped up to help us by becoming subscribing members. The revenue was obviously needed, but our staff members also benefited from the message these new members sent — that your local news source is important and its staff is appreciated.

That lifted our spirits and words cannot express how thankful we are.

We don't know how long this crisis will last. We do know that our business model was changing before this pandemic and the local economy will continue to suffer even after the shelter-in-place order is lifted. We need thousands more of you to become members or renew when the time comes. Subscribing members receive access to PleasantonWeekly.com and all our sister publications, home delivery of the newspaper and other perks.

With your help, now and in the future, we'll proudly be bringing you important news about Pleasanton and the Tri-Valley region for decades to come. Please join your neighbors in sustaining local journalism by subscribing today at PleasantonWeekly.com/subscribe.

Our best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year. ■

## LETTERS

### The other pandemic

While our lives have been radically altered by the coronavirus pandemic, the CDC is reporting another and more serious epidemic: the 480,000 U.S. deaths every year from tobacco use.

It is not just lung and other cancers, but also heart attack, stroke, emphysema, tuberculosis and COPD. Smokeless tobacco — vape and chew — increase the risk for sudden death from irregular heartbeat.

Persons who vape are more likely to contract both influenza and the COVID-19 virus. Menthol and other flavored tobaccos which are targeted at teenagers and African Americans are especially insidious products.

So, protect yourself and others by neither smoking nor vaping, but rather by staying home, wearing masks, washing hands and keeping distance from persons not in our household. It's a small effort in order to stay alive.

More information on this other pandemic is on the CDC website listed under “tobacco data.”

—Bruce Fiedler

### How about some positivity and perspective?

The last several political “talks” that Tim has written I find so negative and very one-sided. The state/country is already so divided we don't need more division being

thrown out to the universe.

I generally enjoy the Pleasanton Weekly and already avoid listening to the news, but now I find myself being upset with the PW — mostly because of Tim Talk. I don't agree with all decisions that our political leaders have made, but they are human and I believe that most are trying to make the best decisions for the greater good, and to keep us safe.

No matter what decision anyone makes, someone is always going to be upset. How about some positivity and seeing the good in people/decisions made rather than calling names?

If we could “trust people to make smart decisions themselves,” we wouldn't be where we are now. Clearly the people at large will not behave without rules being enforced. What a lovely idea, but we have nine months of proof that that doesn't work.

Complaining about so-called draconian rules ... what an irresponsible thing to approve for print while people are dying, families are ruined and no one can get back to work because people refuse to behave.

There aren't two sides to every story. It's not journalism's job to present the truth on an even level with outright damaging lies. One person screaming that the world is flat does not deserve equal time when the truth clearly states otherwise.

—Debbie Wallace

### What's your opinion?

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

## Employment

### Sr. Site Reliability Engineer

Workday, Inc., Pleasanton, CA. Design, analyze & troubleshoot large-scale distributed systems. To apply, please mail resume to ATTN: Jessica Thurston, 6110 Stoneridge Mall Rd, Pleasanton, CA 94588. Please refer to Job #20637.880.

### Manufacturing Engineer:

Req. 5 yrs. exp/w ultra-high vacuum systems, 3D software, ECO w.r.t. ERP/MRP, imaging systems, Python & design lean manufacturing processes for X-ray microscopes production. Carl Zeiss X-ray Microscopy, LLC. Pleasanton, CA. F/T. Email resume to Zeissjobs4@zeiss.com and ref. Job 6577. No calls/agents/visa sponsorship

To place an ad call 650.223.6597 or email digitalads@pawebly.com.

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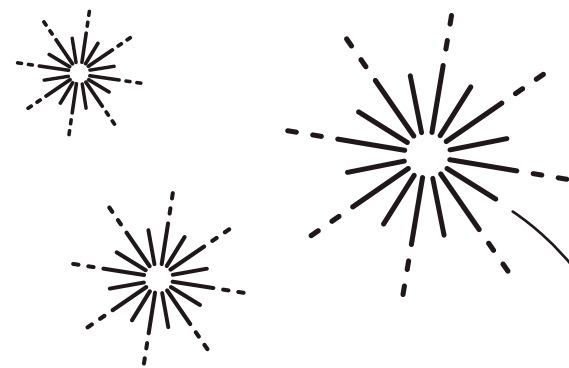


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2550 Jolene Court PLEASANTON  
4530 Lilac Ridge Road SAN RAMON  
301 Kalthoff Common LIVERMORE  
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491 Trebbiano Place PLEASANTON  
480 Montori Court PLEASANTON  
463 Montori Court PLEASANTON  
1 Brozosky Hill Lane PLEASANTON  
5551 Greenwich Avenue LIVERMORE  
7855 Canyon Meadow Circle PLEASANTON  
3906 Rockingham Drive PLEASANTON  
3128 Hansen Road LIVERMORE  
694 Peters Avenue PLEASANTON  
2279 Montarossa Court LIVERMORE  
431 Trebbiano Place PLEASANTON  
1026 Pineto Place PLEASANTON  
515 Kalthoff Common LIVERMORE  
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8211 Moller Ranch Drive PLEASANTON  
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2452 Choisser Court TRACY

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3274 Balmoral Court PLEASANTON  
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5062 Carducci Drive PLEASANTON  
1304 Brookline Loop PLEASANTON  
3725 W. Ruby Hill Drive PLEASANTON  
3602 Whitworth Drive DUBLIN  
1539 E Gate Way PLEASANTON  
301 Holbrook Place SAN RAMON  
2312 Cabana Lane TRACY  
2775 Chablis Way LIVERMORE  
3851 Appian Street PLEASANTON  
8173 War Glory Place PLEASANTON  
3903 Vierra Street PLEASANTON  
3847 Vineyard Avenue PLEASANTON  
225 East Vallecitos Road LIVERMORE  
3423 Torlano Place PLEASANTON  
4336 Fairlands Drive PLEASANTON  
5057 Piper Glen Terrace DUBLIN  
3370 W. Las Positas Blvd. PLEASANTON  
3170 Malvasia Court PLEASANTON  
2954 Liberty Drive PLEASANTON  
3828 Keneland Way PLEASANTON  
259 Birch Creek Drive PLEASANTON  
2402 Pomino Way PLEASANTON  
4848 Treewood Court PLEASANTON

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# THE Murtagh TEAM

TRI-VALLEY LUXURY REAL ESTATE

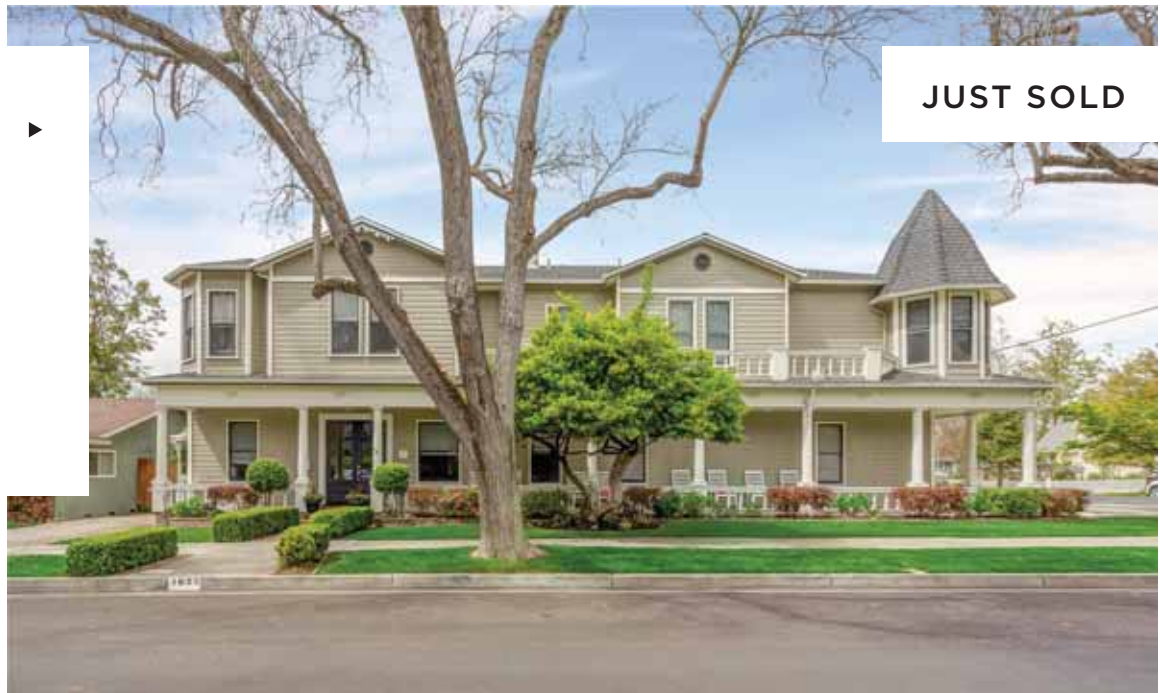
**Happy New Year! Looking forward to a bright and successful 2021!**

## 4625 2ND STREET PLEASANTON

6 Bedrooms + 4.5 Bathrooms  
5,760+/- Sq. Ft.

Sold for \$3,299,000

4625SecondSt.com



## 309 DRAYTON COURT WALNUT CREEK

4 Bedrooms + 2.5 Bathrooms  
2,470+/- Sq. Ft.

Sold for \$1,381,000



It is an incredible time to sell your home! The average days on market is less than 7 days. Homes are selling for a large % over asking prices. Now is the time to get started and we are ready and able to help!



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Amy Mayerson, Julia Murtagh,  
Kristy Heyne & Veronica Peter



Available Mid January in Pleasanton



5 bdr, 4.5 bath home with 4,129 sqft of living space. Enhanced with its Library, Courtyard, low maintenance yards. Presented in the \$2,000,000 range.



This 4 BD 3.5 BA home has been extensively updated and expanded, offering 2,487 sqft, with a BD and full bath on the main level. The backyard welcomes you with a deck and BBQ area, and a serene and private setting. Pleasanton's extensive sports park, as well as your local neighborhood park are within a short walking distance. **Available Mid January 2021**



A charming updated single story home in the heart of Livermore offers 3 BDR 2 Bath. New wood floors, recessed lighting, updated baths, attached sun room for additional family space. **Presented in the mid \$800,000**



17396 Grand Island Rd, Walnut Grove  
3BR | 2BA home on waterfront of the Sacramento River "Delta Area"  
**\$1,140,000**



1362 Orloff, Pleasanton  
A Pleasanton home with 4 bdr 3 ba. and 2,042 sqft with a lot size of 13,091 and pool. Listed at \$1,290,000 **SOLD at \$1,400,000**



**A Note from the Sellers:**

We have worked with Kris Moxley twice when selling our homes. We appreciate her professionalism, her years of experience and knowledge, and her continued level of communication that kept us current and up to date on the selling process. She is tireless when it comes to making sure the decisions being made are in her client's best interests. We give Kris 5 stars and are confident you cannot go wrong engaging her services.

— Steve and Claire



**Kris Moxley**

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DRE 00790463  
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