Pleasanton Weekly

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'The Wise Old Tree'

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Keeping it steady

Interim Superintendent Ghysels ruminates on priorities, challenges for his year at Pleasanton Unified

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WE'RE PROUD TO BRING OUR READERS SOME OF THE BEST JOURNALISM IN THE STATE.

The annual **California Journalism Awards** competition, which celebrates excellence in reporting, design, photography and multimedia recognized our team with **7 awards** in the following categories:

1st - Coverage of Youth and Education
1st - Feature Story
2nd - In-Depth Reporting
2nd - Columns
3rd - Health Reporting
3rd - Profile Story
5th - Coverage of Local Government

HERE'S WHAT SOME OF THE JUDGES OF THE 2023 CALIFORNIA JOURNALISM AWARDS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR WORK —

Very thorough and balances policy explanations and the personal experiences of families. The writer does a good job giving context, and the story is structured well with sections that make sense and flow well.

— First Place, Coverage of Youth and Education

School systems are bleeding teachers; perhaps nowhere more than in high-cost communities where educators can no longer afford to live. This piece looks at the issue from the district and teacher points of view. This was a very solid look at the issue.

— Second Place, In-Depth Reporting

Catalytic converter theft story was nicely reported with lots of details and facts. This story surprised me with how interesting — and timely — it was.

— First Place, Feature Story

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Pleasanton Weekly

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BECOME A MEMBER

WHAT A WEEK

By Jeremy Walsh

Pan-Mass Challenge

How often do you get the chance to spend the weekend riding your bike nearly the length of a U.S. state?

Well if it's for charity (and you're in a state the size of Massachusetts), the opportunity suddenly can become attainable.

David Lowry, a native of The Bay State who now lives in our Bay Area in Pleasanton, and his wife Debbie Stone Lowry are Back East with their bikes as I write preparing for their second go at the annual Pan-Mass Challenge, a fundraising ride benefiting the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

"The experience of 'being there' and participating with 6,500 riders is exciting, to be part of such a worthy event," David told me by email from Cape Cod this week. "It's also a fun event for Debbie and I to do together for such a great cause."

Debbie added, "We are all affected by cancer whether it's ourselves, our family members, our friends, and so this lets me spread awareness about Dana Farber Cancer Institute. This also helps me contribute to Dana Farber through our fundraising efforts."

The Lowrys are the Tri-Valley's lone representatives among 87 California residents hopping on their bikes to support cancer research this weekend for the 45th Pan-Mass Challenge. It's a milestone year for the event, which eclipsed the $1 billion mark overall since its founding in 1980 during the lead-up to the 2024 ride.

David and Debbie are gearing up to ride 188 miles in total, Sturbridge to Bourne (109 miles) on Saturday and then Bourne to Provincetown (79 miles) on Sunday.

"The number of people on the side of the roads that are cheering you on throughout the ride is simply amazing! It's like our own Tour de France," Debbie joked. "The number of volunteers is also incredible. Everyone is thanking each other for riding, volunteering, helping with traffic, etc."

It's a cause particularly close to David's heart.

His mother died from cancer in 1989, he's originally from Massachusetts and he's well-versed in long-distance athletic endeavors, having completed nine Boston Marathons in his life and now cycling five days a week in retirement.

In fact, it was his final step away from work that opened the door for the couple to participate in the Pan-Mass Challenge.

David, who first moved to the Bay Area in 1992 for a job at Cisco Systems, found a second career in the classroom, teaching math in public schools in Pleasanton, Newark and Livermore for 15 years before retiring for good last year.

The couple, who married 10 years ago and now live in downtown Pleasanton with their 3-year-old Bernese mountain dog Logan, have been visiting friends and family in Marblehead, Mass., annually in the summertime, so Debbie became aware of and interested in the fundraising ride.

It was right in her athletic wheelhouse, as she competed in triathlons for 18 years earlier in her life, but it didn't exactly fit into their calendar.

"With Dave's previous school schedule, it was challenging to commit since he would need to be at school preparing for the school year the weekend of the PMC ride," said Debbie, who still works in a second career of her own. After decades in the hospitality industry, including more than 25 years with Pebble Beach Resorts, she shifted to residential real estate in the Tri-Valley four years ago.

"Once I knew he was retiring in 2023, I researched the event in detail and signed us up," Debbie added. "I then connected with a longtime friend Mark Oliver in Mill Valley, who invited us to his PMC Biking Team. We were welcomed as new members of Team Brut Force and we are so grateful to this team."

Both are still actively raising funds as part of their participation in the 2024 challenge, closing in on their respective goals of $6,000 (David) and $10,000 (Debbie). Visit their donation pages at give.pmc.org.

Their Team Brut Force also has a "pedal partner" this year, a pediatric patient through the institute's Jimmy Fund.

Three-year-old Caleb Ordonez is being treated for acute lymphoblastic leukemia by Dr. Melissa Burns at the clinic, according to Debbie. The team is set to meet with Caleb and his parents at the Lakeville Water Stop (about mile 70) on Saturday.

"The overall PMC organization does an amazing job with so many logistics and so many routes offered to participants," Debbie said. "This is one of the best organized rides I have done throughout my racing and riding career." ■

About the Cover

Pleasanton Unified School District Interim Superintendent Maurice Ghysels poses in front of the new science buildings at Hart Middle School on July 26. Ghysels was hired to hold down the fort while the district recruits for a new permanent leader. Photo by Christian Trujano. Cover design by Doug Young.

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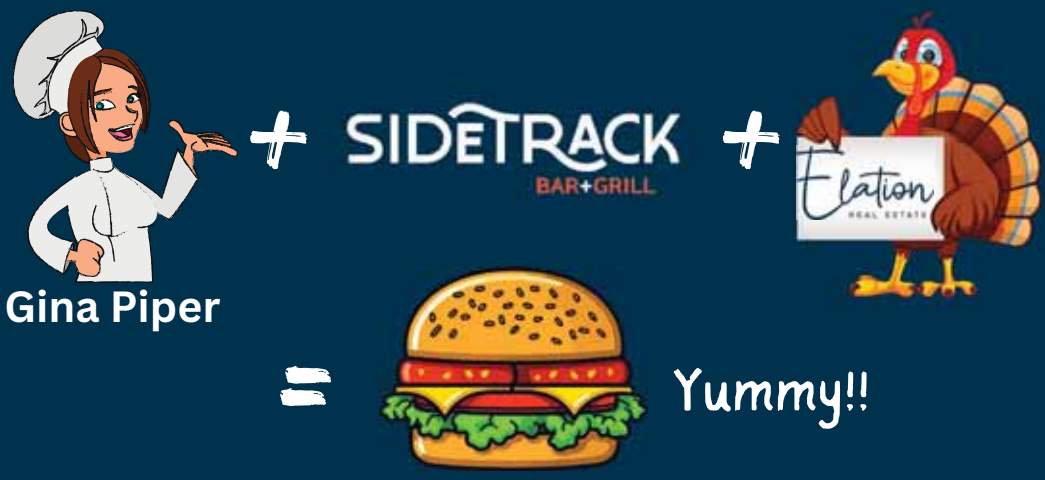
Gina Piper
Elation Real Estate

Elation REAL ESTATE



Announcing the Gina Piper Elation Burger at Sidetrack!

I recently won Sidetrack's "Name Your Burger For A Year" at the Pleasanton North Rotary fundraising gala, and am happy to announce it's unveiling today. This is my favorite turkey burger recipe and sure to be yours as well, so give it a try the next time you're dining at Sidetrack...and tell them Gina sent you!

MY RECENT LISTINGS

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Heart of the Tri-Valley IN WONDERLAND
a gala fundraiser benefitting
OPENheart KITCHEN

Friday, September 6th, at 6PM
Palm Event Center, Pleasanton
$150 per ticket

Scan for gala tickets & more information

openheartkitchen.org/gala

Streetwise

ASKED AROUND TOWN

Is there something you remember from your childhood, that no longer exists, that you really loved and would like to have back?

Rithanya Paka, with Leo
College student

The thing I miss most is my innocence. As a child I saw everything in a positive, rosy light. But as I've gotten older and matured, I've discovered and faced life's harsh realities and see so many things that are wrong and unjust in our world. I miss those innocent days.

Melissa Castañeda
Police dispatcher

What I miss the most is the feeling of safety and security I had as a child. I was allowed to play outside with friends, with no adult supervision. Those experiences gave me the freedom to grow and develop into an independent person who can think for and take care of herself. That world no longer exists.

David Allen
Technology

We used to take long family road trips with the four of us kids in the backseat, and of course, no seat belts! We loved being all together, and a bit uncertain as to where we were going. People just don't travel that way anymore. Everything has to be structured and planned for months ahead of time. I miss that simpler way of life.

Jon Tucker, with Jett *Sales*

I miss when "curfew" was when the street lights came on. When that happened, we all knew it meant it was time to go home for dinner. We had no cellphones or any other visible indications of the precise time, and we spent our afternoons and early evenings outdoors, getting scraped up and dirty with one another, rather than just pressing buttons playing virtual games.

Rob MacDonell
Software development manager

I grew up going camping every summer with my family. I enjoyed it tremendously. We'd just get up, pack up and go, practically on a whim. Today though, because things have become more congested, everything requires all sorts of plans and reservations ahead of time. It has become such a hassle that we just don't do these kinds of trips anymore.

—Compiled by Nancy and Jeff Lewis

Have a Streetwise question? Email editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

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DIGEST

Porsches & Mimosas

The Pleasanton Downtown Association's upcoming First Weekend on Main is set to feature special events both days: the second annual Porsches on Main on Saturday and the inaugural "Totally Mimosa" stroll at brunch-time Sunday.

The First Weekend on Main will see Main Street closed to vehicular traffic from 5 p.m. Friday (Aug. 2) until 9 p.m. Sunday (Aug. 4), to allow pedestrians and cyclists to roam the downtown roadway freely between shopping, dining or drinking.

More than 100 Porsches will line downtown from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday for Porsches on Main, with live music on both ends of the street. Then from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, adults of drinking age can visit 10 locations participating in the '80s-themed mimosa tasting event.

For more information, go to pleasantondowntown.net.

Dublin Commons

Dublin city officials are hosting virtual community meetings next week on the proposed Dublin Commons project.

Applicant Hines, on behalf of property owner ASVRF Dublin Place, is looking to redevelop the Dublin Plaza Shopping Center into the reimagined Dublin Commons as part of implementation of the Downtown Dublin Preferred Vision.

The mixed-use project on the west side of town calls for up to 275,000 square feet of retail (155,000 square feet of new retail and 120,000 square feet of existing retail), 535,000 square feet of research and development (life science) buildings, 1,510 multifamily residential units, and a new town square and park.

The Zoom meetings, which will feature the same presentation, are set for Wednesday (Aug. 7) at 7 p.m. and Thursday (Aug. 8) at 6 p.m. Visit dublin.ca.gov.

Zone 7 board

The Zone 7 Water Agency Board of Directors have picked Dennis Gambs to serve as board president and Dawn Benson to serve as vice president for the 2024-25 fiscal year. ■

Clarification

The train pictured on last week's cover was the Union Pacific 3985, formally known as a "Challenger" engine, although it was loosely referred to as a "Big Boy" during its 1992 run through town because it was the heaviest steam train in operation at that time — there was no UP 4884 in operable shape in 1992, the train type officially nicknamed "Big Boy". Embarcadero Media regrets any confusion. ■

New temporary Sunol school board revises controversial flag resolution

Two county trustees join Romo to knock out key business in first meeting after recall election

By Christian Trujano

After the successful recall of former Sunol Glen school board trustees Ryan Jergensen and Linda Hurley, a temporary quorum made up of Trustee Peter (Ted) Romo and two Alameda County Board of Education trustees repealed the district's contentious flag resolution last week.

In its place will be an updated resolution that limits the main flagpole at Sunol Glen School to only fly the U.S. and state flag — same as the previous resolution — but allows teachers and staff to fly their own flags and banners throughout the school site, which was not allowed under the old resolution.

"At its heart, it's reasonable," Romo said during the July 24 board meeting. "It's balanced and it addresses the needs and desires of all groups in the Sunol Glen community."

The special session was considerably different than past meetings for various reasons. It was the first meeting following the July 2 recall election where a majority of participating residents voted to remove Jergensen and Hurley from the three-member board.

It was also Shay Galletti's first meeting as the new superintendent and principal of Sunol Glen.

Per education code, Alameda County Office of Education Board President Cheryl Cook-Kallio of Pleasanton has appointed herself and Alameda County Area 4 Trustee Aisha Knowles to temporarily serve on the Sunol board until the seats are filled. Both have already been sworn in to the Sunol board.

Cook-Kallio said she was honored to work with Galletti and Romo to better serve the students of Sunol.

"I know it is a very special place," she said. "I did appoint myself, not lightly, because ... I am your trustee in Area 7 so, you are my people also. You are the people I take care of as part of my responsibilities on the county Board of Education."

Cook-Kallio also said she has a personal history with the school because her older children attended the small-town school from

See **FLAGS** on Page **6**

COURTESY ACFD

A look at the Creek Fire that broke out in the Sunol Regional Wilderness last Friday afternoon. The wildfire has burned 744 acres in all to date.

Fire ignites in Sunol Wilderness

Crews gain upper hand on Creek Fire; evacuations lifted

By Jeremy Walsh

Firefighters got help from cooler summer weather last weekend and stopped forward progress of the wildfire burning in the Sunol Regional Wilderness within about 24 hours, according to Cal Fire.

The Creek Fire, which was still actively burning as of press time Wednesday, stood at 744 acres with 75% containment at last report before the Weekly's print deadline, according to Cal Fire.

The wildfire in Sunol made an initial jump at a moderate rate of spread after starting for unknown reasons just before 4 p.m. last Friday southeast of the intersection of Welch Creek and Calaveras roads in Sunol, according to the Alameda County Fire Department.

It grew to 577 acres with zero containment by the final report on Friday night, but as Saturday morning arrived after cool overnight weather, the rate of spread had slowed and the wildfire sat at 595 acres and 5% contained, according to Cal Fire.

As Saturday evening arrived, ACFD shared what Cal Fire would later confirm — that firefighters had stopped the blaze's forward progress with overall totals at 734 acres and 10% containment.

"Forward progress stopped. Structure threat and threat to critical infrastructure remains. Road closures and evacuations remain in place," Cal Fire stated in its update report Sunday morning. "Good progress was made overnight aided by favorable weather conditions. Firefighters continue to actively work to mitigate hazards, and implement and improve containment lines."

The acreage held at 734 acres overnight Saturday and containment improved to 15% come Sunday morning and then 25%

See **FIRE** on Page **11**

Brown takes reins at Donlon

Principal change follows turnover at district office

By Christian Trujano

Donlon Elementary School will start the school year with a new principal after Janet Gates, the Pleasanton school's former longtime principal, accepted a higher administrative job at the district office.

Gates is being replaced by Kristina Brown, the vice principal at Walnut Grove Elementary School for the last two years. Brown has already started in her new role and is set to be formally appointed to the position during the regular school board meeting next Thursday (Aug. 8).

"I am truly honored to join this community and work alongside a team of wonderful staff, students and families that have such a long-standing tradition of excellence," Brown told the Pleasanton Weekly. "I am excited to support and continue the incredible work already taking place at Donlon to ensure students have the academic and social-emotional skills that are essential for their success in elementary school and beyond."

Kristina Brown

Brown had previously served as the vice principal at Walnut Grove

See **DONLON** on Page **8**

Kiick won't run for reelection to Livermore City Council

District 3 rep's decision means both regular council seats are guaranteed to turn over in November

By Jeremy Walsh

Livermore District 3 Councilmember Brittni Kiick has confirmed she will not seek a second term, meaning the second regular City Council position on the ballot this fall will also be wide open without the incumbent in the race.

Brittni Kiick

Kiick — who took pride in standing as an example for under-represented voices in office including as a young mother, a renter and a queer, Latina woman — cited family and professional commitments among her reasons for stepping aside, as well as the level of in-person requirements of her post compared to after she was first elected during the pandemic in November 2020.

"I plan to lean into hyper local community involvement, like working at my kids' school garden and volunteering with their extracurricular activities. My kids need me right now, which was the main driver in my decision to step down," Kiick told Livermore Vine on Monday.

"I also start a new position at Vagaro soon, a member of Innovation Tri-Valley," she said. "I am excited to join a company that is crucial to economic development in the region, providing good jobs for local families. Their mission is to support small business with technology, and I am thrilled to be a part of that."

Kiick added, "When it comes to council decisions moving forward, I'm really looking forward to speaking on the other side of dais. I know how important it is for there to be multiple voices of support on projects that keep Livermore moving forward, like the approval of our General Plan and prioritizing affordable housing."

As the incumbent bows out, three residents have pulled papers to pursue candidacy for the District 3 seat representing the southeast part of the city, although none had filed and qualified as of Tuesday morning, according to the city clerk's office. Those prospective candidates are David Farley, Jeffrey Kaskey and Steven Dunbar — the latter of whom Kiick is throwing her support behind.

Both regular seats on the City Council are now guaranteed to change hands in the Nov. 5 election, as Vice Mayor Bob Carling is termed out of City Council District 4 on the southwest side of town. (Mayor John Marchand is unchallenged in his reelection bid so far.)

Kiick herself represented change when voters selected her four years ago to become the first openly queer person to serve on the council and the youngest elected councilmember on record in city history at 30 years old.

She pointed to the digital flexibility afforded to local governments during the COVID-19 pandemic as among the key factors that helped her to feel comfortable running for council as a young mother — allowances that have by and large waned in 2024.

"Because of the pandemic, the state lifted Brown Act Restrictions, increasing digital access and allowing leaders to vote via Zoom rather than require us all to be under the same roof. That access allowed me the opportunity to run for office — something I had never considered due to the ages of my young children," Kiick said in a press release last week announcing her decision not to seek reelection.

"I truly believed that we could learn from this period and leverage technology for the benefit of all. Unfortunately, the state did not make the inclusionary policies of digital governance a permanent reality," she added.

While being proud of what she helped the city accomplish during her lone term, Kiick acknowledged that work remains to be done on her goals for creating a more inclusive Livermore, particularly in her priority areas of housing for all, diverse representation in local government and community engagement.

"I learned the value of patience and teamwork in government," Kiick told Livermore Vine. "The reality is four years into my term, there's a whole lot unfinished that I'd hoped to achieve. Eden Housing still isn't built, and it looks like the General Plan will not be approved in my tenure."

"This realization has further instilled the importance of viewing public service as a team sport," Kiick added. "I took a turn and I'm happy to pass the torch along to Steven to continue to fight for the things that matter to our community, like affordable housing, climate action and maintaining a fiscally stable city." ■

FLAGS

Continued from Page 5

kindergarten to eighth grade.

Sunol teacher Rebecca Radulovich said during public comment that while she saw people on Facebook sharing their concerns over two county board trustees serving on the Sunol board, she actually taught both of Cook-Kallio's kids and said she knows the county board president will do what's best for the school.

"Cheryl brought a lot to Sunol," Radulovich said. "She's really no stranger, plus she knows the ed code inside and out ... whatever comes up in the next few months, you've got an expert here. I just want everyone in the community to feel at ease that the school is in really good hands."

Cook-Kallio said she chose Knowles because she is the county trustee for most of the other unincorporated areas of Alameda County and she has been in the community and knows its needs.

"I am thankful for the opportunity to serve in this role," Knowles said. "It's nice to be back in the Sunol community and I look forward to doing whatever is necessary in support of students here so they can begin the new school year in a positive manner."

Cook-Kallio also assured the community that the county office did its research to make sure it was following state education code exactly throughout the whole procedure of filling the empty seats following the successful recall.

"It is our job to provide stability so that you can start school, you can do things that you need to do to make sure that your school is operating," she said. "What we want is what's best for the students and we will turn this back over to the Sunol community as quickly as we possibly can."

Thomas Knutsen, an attorney from the Dublin-based Knutsen Law Offices who represented Jergensen and Hurley in a failed lawsuit that tried to get the county registrar's office to stop the recall process after alleging election code errors, spoke during public comment to question the appointment process for the temporary Sunol board members.

"I think you should slow down a little bit," he said. "It would be naive to think that this town is not still divided and if there is going to be any effort to heal whatever wounds that may exist, it's not going to come from the outside."

He added that while he meant no disrespect to the two county board members, he didn't think they had any "skin in the game," which is why he suggested the board form a committee of citizens who would decide two temporary trustees who are also Sunol residents or to put the two seats on the November election ballot.

Romo noted that from his understanding, placing both seats on the November ballot wouldn't be possible time-wise, per the law.

Instead, the board unanimously agreed to solicit applications from the community for the long-term seat set to expire in 2026, which is temporarily being filled by Knowles.

Romo said the goal would be to consider potential candidates at the next board meeting in August. He was appointed by the board majority to serve on a one-person subcommittee to work with Galletti on using a rubric to determine whether or not the applicants are eligible for board membership and who would be the best fit to fill the seat for the next two years.

Cook-Kallio would remain on the Sunol board until the two-year term expires and a new trustee is elected this November.

Apart from some procedural items, one of the first main decisions this new temporary board made was repealing the infamous flag resolution that brought in local and national attention to the small town after Hurley and Jergensen approved it last September.

The resolution stated the district and its lone school could only fly the U.S. and state flag on the school's flagpole, which both Hurley and Jergensen argued was a way for the district to avoid potential lawsuits from people who wanted to fly their own flags, while others said it was a move to make members of the LBGTQ+ community feel unwelcome because it effectively disallowed displays of the Pride flag.

The newly approved resolution will keep the language of only allowing the two flags on the flagpole, but will also allow the district to authorize expressions of support in the form of flags or banners on the school grounds, which represent the interests of the district, including supporting marginalized communities.

Peggy Carpenter, a longtime Sunol resident, former trustee and teacher, said during the July 24 meeting that the old resolution was unnecessary, hurtful to many and embarrassing to many people in the community for being the only school in the county to pass such a flag resolution, which was a sentiment that resonated with others in the room.

It was also one of the first meetings where nobody who previously supported the old resolution spoke.

"Get rid of this draconian resolution and let's go for the more moderate (one)," Radulovich said in her comments.

Radulovich pointed out that the majority of people — including people who supported the old resolution — who spoke at the May 14 board meeting had actually agreed with the updated resolution and thought it was time to finally reach a compromise. The previous board had not brought back Romo's updated resolution since that May 14 meeting, which is why it returned Wednesday.

"Both sides agree, let's keep it off of the flagpole," she said. "But all of those wonderful flag holders that you gave the teachers ... they can go back to putting (personal flags) back on their flag holders. Whether it's kindness, or climate change or pride (flags), they can fly outside their classroom."

Former Sunol trustee Denise Kent Romo, who is married to current Trustee Romo, also said that in addition to reaching a compromise, the new flag resolution will allow for more students and community members to feel welcome.

"I would like to see this resolution approved so that teachers will not have to have anxiety wondering if they will be caught using unauthorized teaching materials, teachers and staff will not have to have their first amendment rights challenged and because (supporting) our marginalized LGBTQ+ students is just the right thing to do," she said.

In other business

- The board approved a resolution that represents the district's support for the school's teachers and staff following almost a year of animosity and divisiveness.

Kent Romo said the resolution reflects the desire to form a positive relationship with teachers and staff.

"It acknowledges the challenges, chaos and workplace toxicity that most teachers and staff faced over the last year," she said. "It reinforces that this current board going forward recognizes and respects their professionalism, talent and experience as valued members of the school community."

- The board unanimously agreed to bring back Fagen Friedman & Fulfrost LLP as the district's legal counsel, which many in the community said during public comment was the right move because of the legal team's long history with and knowledge of Sunol.

"They were the district's legal counsel for over a decade until this past fall when the prior (school) board determined to change the course with respect to outside counsel," Romo said.

He said services would be based on hourly rates and work actually performed and that they are not firing any other legal counsels for bond or facilities, they are simply allowing the re-engaging with Fagen Friedman & Fulfrost LLP — which is also known as F3.

"F3 provides knowledge and institutional history with this district," Romo said. ■

FCI Dublin fallout: Biden signs Federal Prison Oversight Act

New law follows string of prominent scandals nationwide, including sex abuse at local women's prison

By Jeanita Lyman

As scrutiny of the federal prison system continues to grow amid a mounting number of scandals, many of which were centered in the Tri-Valley at the now-shuttered FCI Dublin, new legislation has been approved by the White House aiming to increase and formalize oversight mechanisms throughout the system.

The Federal Prison Oversight Act, signed into law by President Joe Biden on July 25, "establishes an inspections regime for the Bureau of Prisons and an Ombudsman office in the Department of Justice," according to a description from the White House. The bill — co-sponsored by local U.S. Rep. Mark DeSaulnier (D-Concord) — passed the House of Representatives in May and the Senate on July 10.

"The bipartisan Federal Prison Oversight Act, which I was proud to co-sponsor in the House, is an important, long-overdue first step to prevent this kind of abuse at correctional facilities across the country, protect incarcerated people, and ensure accountability for bad actors," DeSaulnier told the Pleasanton Weekly. "I am pleased that the President has signed it into law and hopeful it will send a message to the BOP that Congress is watching."

Fellow Tri-Valley Rep. Eric Swalwell (D-Livermore), the former Dublin councilman whose congressional district included FCI Dublin prior to the most recent redistricting process that placed it in DeSaulnier's 10th District, did not respond to a request for comment on the new legislation.

DeSaulnier said that the need for additional oversight in the federal prison system had been clear to him prior to the passage of the law in Congress in May amid the escalating reports of abuse of inmates at the all-women's Federal Correctional Institution Dublin, leading to criminal charges against multiple staff members and the facility's abrupt closure in April.

"Since the disturbing reports of abuse at FCI Dublin came to light, I have been committed to conducting federal oversight and bringing accountability to the perpetrators by demanding answers from the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and requesting hearings and an investigation into the matter in the House," DeSaulnier said.

FCI Dublin came under increasing fire and scrutiny in recent years following widespread media reports, internal investigations and criminal charges against multiple employees of the agency.

One high-profile case included the sentencing of former prison chaplain James Highhouse in August 2022 to seven years in federal prison himself for repeatedly sexually abusing an incarcerated woman at the facility. Months later, former warden Ray Garcia was sentenced to nearly six years in prison for sexually abusing three incarcerated women, having been initially charged in 2021 and convicted in December 2022.

In September 2022, a prison worker facing allegations of sexual assault died by suicide.

By this March, a total of seven former employees of the prison had been sentenced for sex crimes against inmates, one of whom formerly lived in Pleasanton — John Bellhouse, who was found guilty on two counts of sexual abuse and three counts of abusive sexual contact.

Also in March, now-former warden Art Duglov — Garcia's successor — was ousted himself after just months on the job amid allegations of retaliating against an inmate who had brought complaints about the facility forward in a lawsuit, which she'd appeared in court for in January.

The continuous stream of scandals emerging from government and media investigations into the facility culminated that month with the FBI descending upon the prison upon Duglov's departure and the appointment of his interim successor, N.T. McKinney.

The closure of the facility was announced the following month on April 15, with all inmates having been cleared out by the first week of May.

Prior to its closure, FCI Dublin had been one of the five all-women's federal prisons in the system, housing 605 inmates at the time it was ordered to be abruptly shut down by the Bureau of Prisons earlier this year. Since then, those inmates have been dispersed to other facilities throughout the state, with just four other federal women's prisons now remaining.

But that was not the end of the road for the embattled prison, despite its closure and the departure of those incarcerated from the Tri-Valley. On May 24, 10 members of Congress, including DeSaulnier and Swalwell, signed a joint letter to the House Judiciary Committee and House Committee on Oversight and Accountability citing concerns about the "frantic" nature of the closure and relocation of former FCI Dublin inmates, and that the closure could "delay or deny much-needed accountability.

New details have continued to emerge about sexual abuse and misconduct at FCI Dublin since its closure. One former guard, Darrell Smith, is now facing a total of 15 counts of sexual abuse and misconduct in a new indictment that was filed on July 25 — the same day as the Federal Prison Oversight Act was cleared by Biden — with two more victims and three additional counts. ■

Last Big Lots! location in Tri-Valley closing its doors

Customers taken aback by retailer choosing to shutter Livermore store

By Jude Strzemp

Big Lots! in Livermore is shutting down, much to the surprise and disappointment of shoppers.

Closure of the store on 4484 Las Positas Road follows in the footsteps of the discount retailer's Dublin location, which shut its door in January 2023.

As the last Big Lots! in the Tri-Valley, the company's exit from Livermore means the next closest location is about 19 miles east in Tracy.

"It's kind of a shock actually," customer Venky Thammadaboina said last week. "I never thought it would get closed."

The location's impending closure is advertised on the Big Lots! website and by countless signs inside and outside the building that read "Store Closing: this location only", "Nothing Held Back" and "Entire Store Up to 20% off." No final date was advertised at the store.

"It's a great option for low prices, so it's a bummer to lose a discount store," Bonnie Iglesias said.

Once the Livermore location shuts down, she and another shopper named Lisa Sallia said they are likely to move on to other retailers like Walmart and Dollar Tree.

Representatives of Big Lots! did not respond for comment on the store's closure as of Wednesday morning. ■

JUDE STRZEMP

The Big Lots! store on Las Positas Road in Livermore is closing.

Dunbar launches campaign for Livermore council

Cites top priorities of connectivity, safety and inclusivity in District 3 bid

By Jude Strzemp

Livermore Planning Commissioner Steven Dunbar said he intends to join the race for the District 3 seat on City Council to represent the southeastern portion of the city.

In a statement announcing his candidacy last week, Dunbar highlighted the importance of connectivity, safety and inclusivity for the city's future as it works to create affordable homes and forge a strong local economy.

Other top goals include maintaining a diligent budget that funds essential services and long-term maintenance for community needs and investing in traffic-reduction and safer routes to school, he told Livermore Vine.

Steven Dunbar

"Even if we don't agree, I will listen, consider all views and represent the community to the best of my ability," Dunbar said in the announcement.

As of this week, Dunbar is one of three prospective candidates who've pulled papers to vie for the District 3 seat currently held by Brittni Kiick, who confirmed last week that she will not seek reelection. So far, the hopefuls have filed their intent for candidacy but have not yet formally qualified for the ballot, according to city staff.

Dunbar brings a total of six years experience on city advisory bodies to his candidacy. During that time, he also ran unsuccessfully for the local seat on the BART Board of Directors in 2020.

He began accumulating this experience as a member of the Livermore Community Asset Management Program Outreach Committee. Later, he took on his current role as a member of the Planning Commission.

Dunbar has received endorsements from Mayor John Marchand, former mayor Bob Woerner, the Alameda County Building Trades, and current and former councilmembers, including Kiick, Trish Munro and Gina Bonanno.

Dunbar has additional experience in leadership as a board member and former board secretary of Bike East Bay, a bicycle advocacy group with an eye for equity, according to the organization's website. He works as an engineering supervisor at GILLIG, a Livermore-based manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses.

To learn more about Dunbar and his campaign, visit dunbarforlivermore.com. ■

Lanza announces reelection bid for college district board

Strong fiscal management, increasing industry partnerships among incumbent's campaign priorities

By Jude Strzemp

Steve Lanza is running to reclaim his seat on the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District Board of Trustees for Area 7, which serves Livermore, areas of east Dublin and southeast San Ramon.

In a statement announcing his candidacy, Lanza said he intends to combine his decades of educational and corporate experiences and apply them to another term on the college district board.

"As a trustee of the CLPCCD, my priorities will be strong fiscal management of the district during a time of significant change, accelerating our ability to prepare our students for the opportunities available and drive increased partnerships with the many employers in our region," Lanza said in the announcement.

He has served on the board since 2022 and is also currently a member of the Las Positas College Foundation.

Lanza is among three CLPCCD incumbents to file nomination papers to run for reelection. Area 1 Trustee Luis Reynoso and Area 4 Trustee Maria Heredia have both completed their filings as of this week. So far, there are no challengers listed for any of the three seats, according to the Alameda County Registrar of Voters website.

Steve Lanza

With a background in education, Lanza has instructed graduate MBA business courses at Golden Gate University and the University of San Francisco and undergraduate courses at the community college level.

He prioritized time for supporting education as an advisor or trustee, even while he ran an advisory business and worked a corporate career, he said.

As vice president of Lam Research, a global Fortune 300 semiconductor equipment provider, he was part of the company's Global Leadership Team that increased annual sales to over $10 billion and grew the company 400%.

He also served as board chair of the Innovation Tri-Valley Leadership Group, where he led a collaborative effort for the Innovation Tri-Valley 2040 Vision Plan, which promotes a green environment and green economy in the area, he said. At ITV, Lanza co-led the Education and Workforce Development Committee, which built bridges between regional educational institutions and the private sector.

"My time on the Board of Trustees, along with twenty years of service as a college educator and advisor, combined with twenty years of experience as a technology executive delivering strategies in challenging economic times, prepared me to serve CLPCCD and our community," Lanza said. ■

Enchanted Garden Gala benefiting Sunflower Hill

Fundraiser set for Sept. 21 at Blackhawk Museum

By Jude Strzemp

Gala guests can eat, drink, and take part in auctions and more later this September all in the name of Sunflower Hill, a Tri-Valley nonprofit that supports adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through a range of residential and vocational programs.

Set at the Blackhawk Museum in Danville, the Enchanted Garden Gala fundraiser will include wine, hors d'oeuvres, dinner, games, raffles and an auction.

"The gala is our biggest event of the year. It is critical to the mission of our organization and our continued ability to provide our programs and services free of charge," said Jennifer Oxe, operations director at Sunflower Hill.

The Sunflower Hill Garden at Hagemann Ranch in Livermore opens up educational and vocational opportunities for people with developmental disabilities and volunteer days for community organizations and corporate groups. On a weekly basis, day programs and high school transition classes from the Tri-Valley also attend the garden.

Since 2014, the garden has also

See **GARDEN GALA** on Page **9**

DONLON

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since 2022. Before that, she was the vice principal at the Manteca Unified School District for a couple of years.

In Manteca, she also worked as a program coordinator who provided professional development for teachers, conducted data analysis to address student needs and developed curriculum design and instructional programs, according to PUSD.

She had also worked as an elementary school teacher in Manteca, and she holds a doctorate in educational leadership and a masters degree in elementary curriculum and instruction.

Patrick Gannon, Pleasanton Unified School District's director of communications, told the Weekly the Donlon principal position was posted on EDJOIN, a job site for educators, and that Brown was interviewed and chosen as the finalist before officially getting the position.

"We are thrilled to have Dr. Kristina Brown step into the leadership role as principal for our Donlon community," Interim Superintendent Maurice Ghysels said in a statement to the Donlon community earlier in July.

Brown said that her goal as the new Donlon principal is to "provide the best educational opportunities for our students and to provide the support necessary for them to be and feel successful."

"In order to accomplish this, we must work collaboratively for continuous improvement of our learning community," she said.

Brown will be stepping in as the school's new leader after Gates decided to pursue the director of student services position at PUSD following a seven-year run as principal at Donlon.

Gates started the administrative role three weeks ago after Leslie Heller, who previously held the director position, moved to the Fremont Unified School District to serve as the director of secondary education.

According to Heller's LinkedIn, she left PUSD this month after 25 years in the district. She had previously served as a teacher, principal, coordinator and most recently as the director of student services.

Gannon said Heller "resigned on her own accord."

"We appreciate all she's done for PUSD and wish her well in her next chapter," Gannon added.

Heller has not responded to requests for comments as of time of publication.

While Gates said the she loved Donlon for the students, community and all that they have taught her, once she saw that the director position opened up she knew she had to pursue the director role — even if it meant having to make the hard decision to leave Donlon.

She said given her extensive background in various fields, and the fact that most of her family members were educators in administrative positions, she almost felt it was her duty to move up into the director role.

"I just felt like it was time for me to try something new," Gates said. "It was exciting thinking about moving up in this field."

She said her goals and aspirations as the new director of student services is to support students and families as much as she can by finding new funding sources such as grants to help out the community as the district struggles with budget challenges.

"That's my aspiration, that every child who goes through Pleasanton and graduates from Pleasanton schools has whatever it is they need to access their learning," Gates said.

But as Gates get settled in her new director position, she did get a little emotional thinking about her Donlon family and while she knows Brown will do a great job as the school's new leader, she still wanted to thank the Donlon community for opening its arms to her and being a part of her life.

"Once a Cub, always a Cub," Gates said. "I have not given up all of my blue shirts yet." ■

City seeks volunteers for committees, commissions

Those interested have until Aug. 26 to submit applications

By Christian Trujano

The city of Pleasanton has begun accepting applications for volunteer residents who want to serve on some of the city's various commissions and committees. Those who wish to apply must do so by Aug. 26.

The city government recruits and appoints residents to a variety of commissions and committees so that the public can "contribute to and influence decisions affecting the city, providing advice and feedback on important community issues," according to the recruitment advertisement form the city.

These committees and commissions oversee specific areas in the city government and make recommendations to the City Council.

According to a press release from the city, there are currently 12 open positions across six commissions and committees.

There is one vacant position in the Civic Arts Commission; one opening in the Human Services Commission; another opening in the Parks and Recreation Commission; two openings in the Library Commission; and two vacancies in the Energy and the Environment Commission — one regular and one alternate position.

The city is also looking for five members to serve on different categories in the Economic Vitality Committee: the at-large representative, commercial real estate, life sciences, commercial services and professional services, according to the city.

While all of the applicants for the commission positions must be Pleasanton residents, those interested in the Economic Vitality Committee positions — except for the at-large representative — don't have to live in Pleasanton.

The terms for each of the commissions and committees will be four-year terms with a two-term maximum.

The city is also looking for 13 students to serve on the city's Youth Commission. There are three openings for middle school students, six for freshmen and sophomore students, and four vacancies for juniors and seniors.

Eighth graders, sophomores and seniors would serve a one-year term while the other grade levels would serve a two-year term, according to the city's press release.

Finally, the city will be looking for someone to participate on the Altamont Education Advisory Board which, according to the board's website, provides oversight on funds used to promote waste prevention and recycling, job training and education both in schools and in the community.

The applicant for the advisory board also does not have to be a Pleasanton resident, but they do have to be a science, environmental education or vocational education teacher from the Pleasanton Unified School District.

Those interested in any of the open positions will have until 4 p.m. on Aug. 26 to apply via the city's website. ■

Supervisors finalize agreements on youth voting, but maybe not in time for November

Deals years in making follow ballot measures in Berkeley, Oakland for school board elections

By Kiley Russell / BCN

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors voted last week to approve the final agreements allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to cast ballots in Oakland and Berkeley school board elections but it's unclear if it can be implemented in time for the November ballots.

The vote codifies agreements between the county, the registrar of voters, Oakland, Berkeley and the Berkeley Unified School District that spell out funding and implementation responsibilities.

In April, supervisors voted to approve a $113,000 contract increase with a third-party election services company, among other things, with an eye to implementing Oakland's Measure QQ, which voters approved in 2020, and Berkeley's Measure Y1, which passed in 2016.

The July 23 vote paves the way for BUSD and Oakland to reimburse the registrar for costs associated with setting up the youth vote system and for ongoing costs associated with running the elections, which are expected to be somewhere between $19 and $21 per voter.

The agreements also protect the county from certain types of lawsuits aimed at preventing youth voting.

Before the vote, several people spoke in favor of the plan, some of whom are high school and college students who have been working to get it off the ground for years.

"I am an Oakland resident and Oakland High alumni entering my second year of college and I have been working on Measure QQ from the very beginning and I'm hopeful of how far we've come," said Allyson Chen.

"I appreciate your commitment thus far to advancing Measure QQ and Berkeley's Measure Y1, allowing 16 -and 17-year-olds to finally vote in local school board elections this November after years of advocacy and effort," Chen said.

Sam Davis, board president of the Oakland Unified School District, also urged the supervisors to approve the agreements and said the plan might add 10,000 high school juniors and seniors to the voter rolls.

"We don't expect this to be a massive number of voters," Davis said. "If we get to 2,000 per election that will be great, but it will be very, very significant across the country when we see so many other jurisdictions restricting the right to vote for disenfranchised communities, that here in Alameda County, or in Oakland and Berkeley, we're expanding the franchise."

Still, it's unclear if the necessary preparations can happen in time for the November election.

Registrar of Voters Tim Dupuis said in an email the week before that his office continues to work through various issues, including testing the computer code that will allow him to administer the youth vote in future elections.

On July 23, he told the supervisors that it's currently "not technically feasible to implement youth voting."

"We're continuing to work with our vendor, but as of today, we are not technically feasible based upon the requirements that we've been given by the jurisdictions," Dupuis said.

This drew a heated rebuke from Supervisor Keith Carson, who pointed out that the county has had eight years to come up with a way to make youth voting happen.

He also noted that large majorities of voters in Berkeley (70.3%) and Oakland (nearly 68%) voted to approve youth voting and have been waiting for years for implementation.

Also, in 2023, the board voted to direct Dupuis to implement the plan in the next election, which has since come and gone.

"We had eight years to prepare for this. I don't accept the fact that we're not ready to implement this," Carson said. "I question whether or not, you know, a department head that knew it was coming, you know, adequately is addressing their job in a fundamental way."

Four supervisors ultimately voted to approve the agreements, with Supervisor David Haubert not in support after he questioned the legality of allowing people under 18 to vote. ■

GARDEN GALA

Continued from Page 8

boosted food security in the area by providing organically grown and culturally relevant produce to local nonprofits, including Tri-Valley Haven, Shepherd's Gate, Culinary Angels, Heritage Estates Senior Center, Open Heart Kitchen and Hope Hospice.

Just last year, the program harvested and donated over 3,800 pounds of produce, eggs and flowers to local nonprofits, according to Kristen Barker, educational garden manager at the organization. Over the course of 10 years, donations have racked up to over 50,000 pounds.

"Without Sunflower Hill and their garden produce, Tri-Valley Haven's food pantry would be without produce at critical times," said Christine Dillman, executive director of Tri-Valley Haven. "Their produce is vital. It allows families in great need to select healthy items grown locally."

Programs at Sunflower Hill and its ability to provide fresh produce depend on grants, donations and funds raised from this gala, Oxe said in a statement.

The community can support Sunflower Hill on Sept. 21, from 6-10 p.m. at the museum at 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Cir. in Danville. For gala tickets and more information, visit sunflowerhill.org. ■

COURTESY SUNFLOWER HILL

Sunflower Hill operations depend on donations and sponsorships from fundraising activities like its annual gala.

Dr. Chirag Pandya, board certified in Pulmonology, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, has moved to a new location.

He has been serving the patients in the Tri-Valley area for the last 15 years and has held several leadership roles at Stanford Tri-Valley (ValleyCare) hospital.

Dr. Pandya specializes in asthma, emphysema/COPD, trouble breathing, lung infections, lung cancer, interstitial lung disease, snoring, sleep apnea, trouble sleeping (insomnia), narcolepsy and restless leg syndrome.

Dr. Pandya is happy to help existing and new patients by providing care at ***two new locations!***

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Two seats on LARPD board up for grabs

Boswell, Palajac pull papers to run for another term each

By Jude Strzemp

In this year's general election, voters will determine who fills two seats on the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District's Board of Directors.

The positions at stake are both four-year terms that will run from December 2024 to December 2028, seats currently occupied by Vice Chair Jan Palajac and Director James Boswell.

Since the nomination period's opening on July 15, incumbents Palajac and Boswell have declared their intent to run for reelection but haven't been qualified for the race yet, according to the Alameda County Registrar of Voters' Office website. As of this week no other filings have been submitted, but nominees will have until Aug. 9 to file for candidacy.

Afterward, candidates will compete in the special district's election on Nov. 5 — unless the two incumbents are unchallenged, in which case they could be appointed directly in lieu of LARPD holding an uncontested election.

The winning candidates will join a legislative body composed of five members that "establishes policy, and provides broad guidance and general direction to the staff for district operation," according to the LARPD website.

Prospective candidates can visit the ROV website to verify their eligibility and the requirements to file for a run at office at www.acvote.org. ■

San Ramon council places 1% sales tax hike on November ballot

Citing pervasive budget deficit, city asks voters to raise local sales tax to 9.75% overall

By Jeanita Lyman

For the first time in the city's history, voters in San Ramon are set to decide on a ballot measure this November that would increase sales tax following months of discussions on the topic and amid a growing budget crisis and cuts to city services in recent months.

The San Ramon City Council voted unanimously at their regular meeting on July 23 to approve a resolution placing a 1% sales tax increase for 10 years on the ballot in this year's general election.

The move came following an initial discussion on the potential of passing a tax measure and how it would affect the city's financial outlook at the June 25 council meeting, during which councilmembers directed staff to pursue a measure that was outlined and advocated for by a recently formed citizens group — specifically, the 1% increase with a 10-year sunset and a mechanism for citizen oversight.

That group, now officially called "Residents for San Ramon", was also present at the council meeting, expressing support for the measure as it was proposed that evening and promising to lead the campaign for the measure ahead of November's election.

Out of the five public comments, three were from members of Residents for San Ramon and two were from other residents critical of the move that would raise the sales tax citywide to 9.75% if approved, including former mayor Greg Carr.

"I do not think taking a single percent this year is worth it," Carr said. "It will come back to haunt us. What's going to happen in a year or two is people are going to find we still don't have enough money because we haven't really solved how did we get $17 million all of a sudden, seemingly overnight, and we haven't really gone structurally."

"When I say structurally, I'm not talking about unfilled positions," he continued. "I'm talking about reorganization. I'm talking about riffs, talking about salary freezes, salary cuts, whatever it takes."

With the council having expressed support for the measure at previous meetings, Carr said that moving forward with the election, he would like to see Residents for San Ramon take on the task of formulating the arguments for the measure, and volunteered to draft a counter argument himself.

Kyle Levy was among the members of Residents for San Ramon who voiced support for the measure at that night's meeting.

"San Ramon is a terrific place to live," Levy said. "I feel very fortunate that I'm able to do so, and I know that most residents of San Ramon feel exactly the same way. I felt strongly enough about the importance of this to seek out those others that felt the same way and to do whatever I could to help this effort."

Levy said that the budget crisis facing the city was caused by external forces, and lauded the council and staff for their fiscal responsibility and careful budgeting.

"The fact is, even with that care San Ramon has run into a perfect storm of high inflation, restrictive legacy agreements, growing population, a limited retail footprint — all kinds of factors which have brought us to this situation that none of us wanted to see," Levy said.

Robert Bickel, another member of Residents for San Ramon, said that the group had come to the decision to advocate for a sales tax after careful analysis of the city's finances and spending and comparisons with neighboring communities.

"I consider myself to be fiscally conservative, and I think that perspective is shared by other members of our committee," Bickel said. "As such, the bar was set very high for us to consider getting involved in this effort to support an increase in the sales tax."

He added that the group's analysis had led to several conclusions.

"No. 1, city staff are highly efficient, providing services with less staff and money compared to neighboring towns and cities," Bickel said. "No. 2, city staff have explored every possible way to increase revenue and decrease spending without compromising services and public safety."

"No. 3, city staff operate with a level of openness and transparency that would make any fortune 500 company blush, and I know that from experience," he continued. "No. 4, the city faces an untenable financial situation due to factors outside of its control, such as small sales tax base, limited new revenue sources and rising costs."

Bickel added that he did not want to see additional cuts to the city's budget like the $8.1 million that was approved by the council during the budgeting process for the current fiscal year.

"Unless the situation is stabilized, the likelihood of death by a thousand cuts may be the norm going forward," Bickel said.

The group's communications lead, Robert Maser, said that it was his first time getting so heavily involved in the city's affairs after a lifetime of living in San Ramon.

"I've never been involved in an initiative like this that's going on the ballot, even though I've been in this city, raised our family here, but I'm now seeing what the potential budget deficits could be coming up — as much as $22 million in 2028, 2029 — and without some sort of significant revenue opportunity the city has other than a sales tax measure," Maser said.

District 2 Councilmember Mark Armstrong emphasized that the city had taken all possible other measures to balance the budget, including budget cuts approved earlier in the year and an increase in user fees, but that those steps would not be sufficient to contend with the shortfall currently facing the city.

"We've listened to the thoughtful input from all our residents about what they think is important and how they think we ought to go about fixing the issue, and I think this revenue measure will help us get there," Armstrong said. "I think even with it, we may not be able to immediately restore all the cuts that we already made, but I think we'll be in a better position to get there and at least provide the level of services that our residents have come to expect."

He added that a benefit of the tax measure would be that any new revenue it generates would go entirely into the city's coffers, as well as the ability to generate revenue from all shoppers in the city, not just residents.

Vice Mayor Scott Perkins noted that this was the first time in the city's history that officials were asking for residents to approve an increase in taxes.

"I think that says a lot about the quality of the staff and the council in managing the revenues we do have, in spite of the state and other mandates that we keep getting that put pressure on us from all sides," Perkins said. "But yet we still have a city that people want to live in. Other cities were having trouble selling their homes, but you go down here to City Village and they can't build them fast enough."

District 3 Councilmember Sridhar Verose pointed to the transparency and community engagement in the budgeting process so far as signs of a potentially brighter financial future for the city.

"The beauty of this process is the transparency," Verose said. "From day one we made sure that we communicated what's happening through social media, through all available media, and also we reached out to our residents to make sure we understand what they are looking for to continue the quality of services that they are looking for."

District 4 Councilmember Marisol Rubio echoed the sentiments of her fellow councilmembers and voiced appreciation for residents engaging in that evening's discussion and talks over the past year as the city navigated its current financial crisis.

"It's not every day that we have residents step forward to want to really be part of the city and support the city in meeting its goals and being successful in doing that," Rubio said. "We are very fortunate to have a community that cares so deeply about its city."

Perkins motioned to adopt the resolution placing the sales tax measure on the Nov. 5 ballot citywide, which was seconded by Verose and approved unanimously by the council. ■

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Mental health grant

The Tri-Valley school districts are among those set to benefit from an $8.4 million grant awarded to the Alameda County Office of Education from the California Department of Health Care Access and Information.

With funding designed to go toward wellness coaches, interns and supervisors to support students' mental and behavioral health needs, the Pleasanton Unified School District is set to receive $569,400, Livermore Valley at $280,350, Dublin at $97,800 and Sunol Glen at $74,750, according to county officials.

"This opportunity allows us to begin closing a historic gap in providing much needed prevention and behavioral health services to students and families attending schools in Alameda County," said Kristin Nelson, director of behavioral health services for the county.

Dodocaca Festival

The Dodocaca Festival (short for "dog dog cat cat") is taking over the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton for the next week and a half.

"An imaginative, inflatable world that is fun for the whole family," fair officials said. "The event offers bounce houses and mazes, ball pits, giant inflatable characters, a train, vendors, food and picnic areas."

The festival is open from this Friday (Aug. 2) through Aug. 11, except for closure days on Monday and Tuesday. Admission is free for children 7 years old and younger. Visit alamedacountyfair.com.

The fairgrounds is also hosting Thrift Fest this Saturday (Aug. 3) from 12-6 p.m. with more than 100 vendors selling vintage, handmade or curated items such as jewelry, accessories, home goods and more, according to organizers.

AAA ratings

The East Bay Regional Park District recently received AAA ratings from both Moody's and Standard and Poor's.

"The AAA rating is very rare for government agencies and shows that taxpayer funds are being spent wisely and efficiently," EBRPD General Manager Sabrina Landreth said. "The ratings recognize the Park District's long history of strong fiscal management, solid funding base, and robust financial reporting and transparency."

State funds Sparkz

Electric vehicle battery manufacturer Sparkz earned approval for $15 million in sales and use tax exclusions (STE) funds from the California Alternative Energy and Advanced Transportation Financing Authority last month to scale up the company's facilities in Livermore and Sacramento.

The projects are expected to support 737 jobs, according to the state. ■

TVNPA distributes grants, calls for award nominees

Power of Giving Awards seek to honor selfless initiatives, demonstrations of generosity

By Olivia Penney

The Tri-Valley Nonprofit Alliance has put out a call for nominations for its 2024 Power of Giving Impact Maker Awards, seeking to shed light on the individuals, nonprofits and corporate philanthropists who have consistently proven their devotion to helping the broader community through their efforts.

TVNPA officials are looking for the help of Tri-Valley community members to nominate key players in the community responsible for selfless initiatives and demonstrations of generosity. The award categories, as described by the alliance, are as follows:

Unsung Heroes: "Recognizes individuals within nonprofit organizations who tirelessly contribute but often receive little to no recognition."

Lifetime Achievement: "Celebrates decades-long commitment to nonprofit causes and remarkable accomplishments in the nonprofit sector."

Corporate Contributor/Philanthropic Partner: "Honors for-profit organizations that have substantially impacted one or more nonprofit organizations through financial contributions, fundraising efforts and volunteerism."

Arts and Culture: "Recognizes nonprofit organizations that have positively influenced their communities through dedication to arts and culture."

Excellence in Impact: "Distinguishes both large (operating budget $1 million and above) and small (operating budget under $1 million) nonprofit organizations that have made a significant and positive impact on our communities."

Government leaders, media members and esteemed community members will comprise a panel of judges to determine the winners. Additionally, TVNPA members will vote in the Lifetime Achievement and Corporate Contributor/Philanthropic Partner category.

Nominations are due by this Friday (Aug. 2); winners will be announced Nov. 13 at the Power of Giving Celebration.

To submit a nomination, click on the chosen category and fill out the form at tvnpa.org. Everyone is eligible to vote, self-nominations are allowed, and 2023 winners are ineligible for this year's awards. One vote is allowed per category, per organization.

Also recently, the Tri-Valley Nonprofit Fund awarded $30,000 to a number of organizations as part of the alliance's second round of grants of the year, with a check presentation held on July 11 at TVNPA's CommonPoint Nonprofit Center in Livermore.

Each year, the TVNPA strives to grant $100,000 or more to local nonprofits in the Tri-Valley area.

"Thanks to our donors' incredible generosity and our community's support, the Tri-Valley Nonprofit Fund continues to expand. Each year, we face the tough task of choosing among many deserving applications. We are thrilled to be able to support so many wonderful nonprofits through the fund," TVNPA CEO Kathy Young said.

The following is a list of this year's recipients, as described by TVNPA:

"Partners for Change Tri-Valley will use their grant to provide weekly education and mentorship classes at Vineyard Resource Center. These classes aim to empower individuals and families by offering support and resources to help them achieve self-sufficiency."

"Christensen Middle School PTA will create the first Miyawaki Forest in the Tri-Valley area, a project designed to educate students and the community about biodiversity and the importance of native ecosystems."

"CityServe of the Tri-Valley will offer a wellness retreat for the dedicated staff of CityServe, Open Heart Kitchen and Tri-Valley Haven. This retreat aims to support the wellbeing of nonprofit staff who are on the front lines, providing essential services to community members every day. Ensuring their mental and physical health is vital for maintaining the high level of care and support they offer to those in need."

"Tri-Valley REACH will use their grant to enhance their community programs for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), providing them with valuable resources and opportunities for engagement and growth."

"Tri-Valley Conservancy will launch a Youth in Nature program, offering young people the chance to connect with and learn about the natural environment, fostering a sense of stewardship and appreciation for local conservation efforts."

"Contra Costa Crisis Center will allocate their grant towards staffing for the 211 crisis line, ensuring that critical support services are available to individuals in crisis, providing them with the help they need when they need it most."

"The Sisterhood of Sobriety will provide scholarships and addiction support services, helping individuals on their path to recovery and offering the necessary resources for a sober and healthy lifestyle."

"Junction Ave PTA will revitalize their school garden, creating a space that produces free food for families in need. This project not only provides sustenance but also serves as an educational tool for students to learn about gardening and sustainability."

"Royal Theater Academy will renovate their studio space in the Tri-Valley area, allowing for the continuation and expansion of local classes in the performing arts, fostering creativity and artistic expression in the community."

"Chorus Eclectic will renovate their studio space in the Tri-Valley area, allowing for the continuation and expansion of local classes in the performing arts, fostering creativity and artistic expression in the community."

"These grants reflect a commitment to enhancing the quality of life in the Tri-Valley area through education, support services, environmental stewardship, and cultural enrichment. By funding these initiatives, the Tri-Valley Nonprofit Fund aims to create a more resilient, informed, and connected community," said Marti Sutton, TVNPA board chair. ■

FIRE

Continued from Page 5

by Sunday evening, according to Cal Fire. The impacted area ticked up to 744 acres by Monday, and containment has improved each day.

Evacuation orders remained in effect for properties along Welch Creek Road in Sunol until Monday evening, when the orders were downgraded to evacuation warnings. The Sunol Regional Wilderness public park and open space were also evacuated because of the fire.

Cal Fire also reported final containment of the other vegetation blaze in the Tri-Valley last week. The 389-acre Flynn Fire that ignited on the Altamont Pass in unincorporated Livermore on July 25 reached 100% containment by Sunday evening.

Before the Flynn Fire was put out, both Tri-Valley blazes were among the 15 largest wildfires active in California over the weekend.

The Creek Fire ranked as high as No. 10 statewide by acreage. At the top of the list is the 389,791-acre Park Fire raging with 18% containment outside of Chico in Butte County and three other surrounding counties, as of press time.

The fire response in Sunol has been a unified command involving Cal Fire, ACFD and the East Bay Regional Park District Fire Department, with crews fighting the fire from the ground and the air.

"Access and steep terrain continue to present issues; however, firefighters are making good progress in mitigating hazards, and improving and reinforcing containment lines," Cal Fire said of the Creek Fire on Wednesday morning. No structure damage nor injuries to residents or firefighters had been reported as of press time. ■

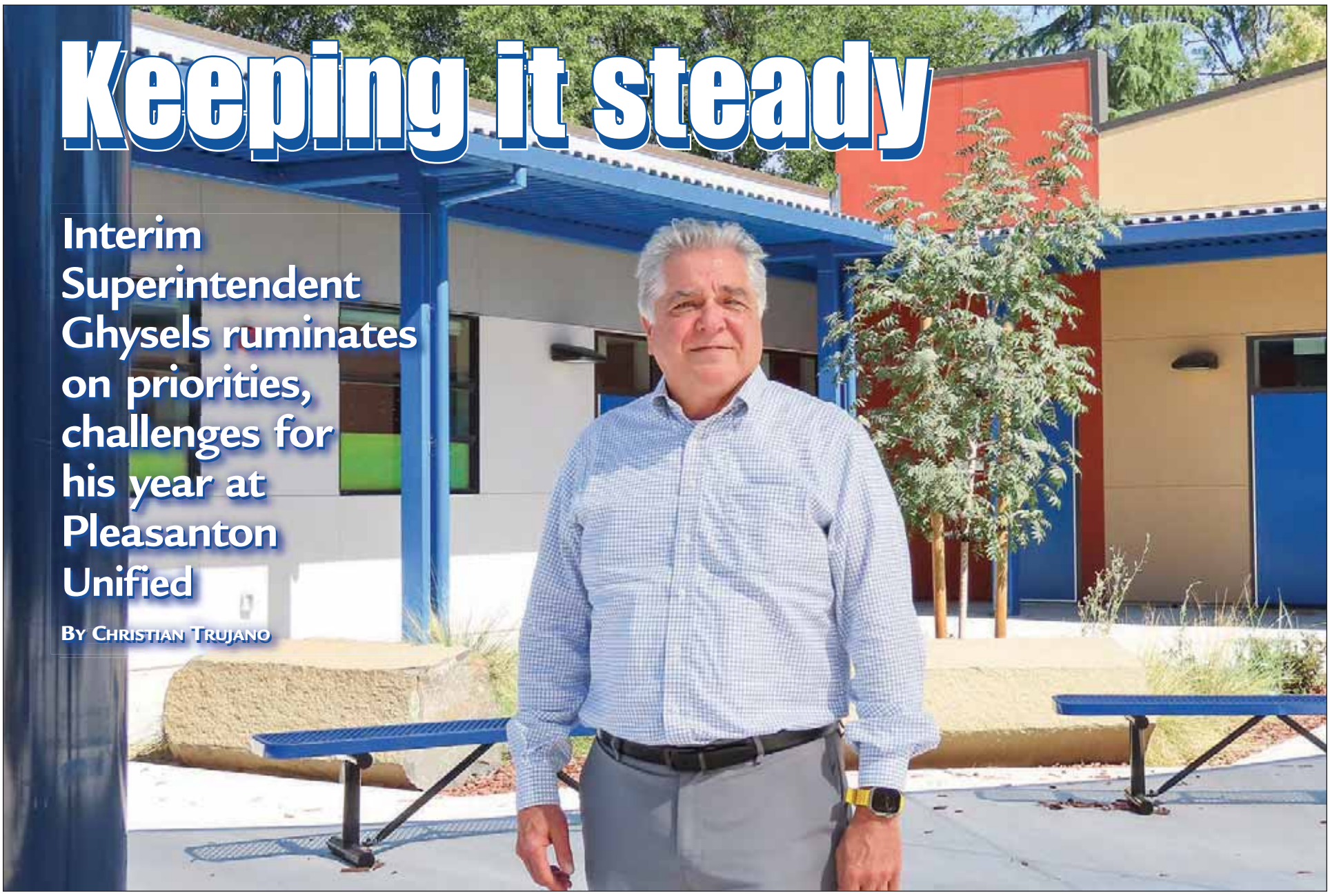
TAKE US ALONG

Lisa in London: Pleasanton Weekly business associate Lisa Oefelein and husband Joe recently enjoyed a trip to London, visiting many of the famous sites (like Big Ben here) and even got a glimpse of King Charles III as his car drove out of Buckingham Palace.

Keeping it steady

Interim Superintendent Ghysels ruminates on priorities, challenges for his year at Pleasanton Unified

By Christian Trujano



CHRISTIAN TRUJANO

PUSD Interim Superintendent Maurice Ghysels has spent his first month on the job getting familiar with the district and meeting with administrators so that he could begin to build relationships with staff ahead of the first day of school.

With the first day of school just around the corner, students, teachers, support staff and administrators are all getting set for a new academic year filled with some big changes and decisions that will affect the entire Pleasanton Unified School District.

However, Aug. 8 won't just be the first day for families and faculty — it will also be the first chance for Maurice Ghysels to experience back-to-school day and meet with students across the city he grew up in as interim superintendent.

"I have an appropriate level of anxiety," Ghysels said regarding the first day of school. "You got almost 14,000 kids, all of their families ... it's a lot of people. It's a lot of interaction, it's a lot of culture and politics."

Apart from opening day jitters, Ghysels told the Weekly during a sit-down interview that he is ready to get to work on some big-ticket items at PUSD such as helping the district find a permanent superintendent, repairing relationships with families and faculty, and working with the community as the district continues to tackle ongoing budget challenges.

"Do I worry as much about outcomes like are we going to make it through this? No," he said. "I have high hopes that we can pull (through this) together."

Introducing the interim superintendent

Ghysels has had a long career in education that actually started right here in Pleasanton.

After his family moved to the city when he was 15 years old, Ghysels graduated from Amador Valley High School in 1974. He was originally planning on pursuing a career in economics but while he was in college, he decided to take on a substituting job at Foothill High School so he could make some extra money.

It was there that he fell in love with teaching and he decided to pursue it as a career. Before long, he accepted a job at Amador.

He said he loved his teaching job and had no intention of becoming an administrator until he eventually was persuaded to do so.

Since then Ghysels has gone on to become the Mountain View Whisman School District superintendent from 2005 to 2010; the Menlo Park City School District superintendent from 2011 to 2016; and the chief innovations officer in the Ravenswood City School District from 2017 to 2018.

While he formally retired from public employment in 2018, that did not stop Ghysels from continuing to contribute to the education world. He founded the Ghysels Group, which works with school districts on strategic planning, management and leadership change, and organizational development. He has continued to "keep his chops up", as he said, while working with other districts.

So when he heard that PUSD was searching for an interim superintendent following the news that superintendent David Haglund was retiring at the end of June, Ghysels thought it would be a good idea to end his career the same way he started — being a substitute.

"I started as a substitute teacher and now, I'm ending as a substitute superintendent," he said. "It's just truly an honor."

However, some community members have taken to social media over the past few months to criticize the district's move to appoint Ghysels, who might not be as familiar with some of the current issues the district is facing.

One such resident is Kathleen Ruegsegger, a former school board member who pointed out how the district posted a job opening on EDJOIN, a recruitment site for educators, for the interim position. The job opening was posted on May 24 and was closed on June 5.

This was after Haglund first announced that he will be moving back to Southern California in order to be closer to family back in late April.

"I have never seen an interim superintendent position listed this way, and I do not know how many people applied or were ultimately interviewed," Ruegsegger said. "It does seem like this selection was preordained ... Ultimately, I do not know this gentleman."

Others had also asked why didn't the district appoint deputy superintendent Ed Diolazo as the new superintendent in accordance with the district's succession plan in the case Haglund left the district. But as PUSD Board President Mary Jo Carreon previously explained that the district needed Diolazo in other departments and she believed the community deserved to be a part of the conversation in hiring its new superintendent.

That's why the board decided to hire Ghysels — and so far, Carreon said it is encouraging to see him beginning to build relationships and foster culture with staff and other educational partners throughout the district so that he can better understand the issues the district is facing.

Challenges facing the district

One of the main issues Ghysels will have to quickly catch up on this school year is the budget deficit that the district has been trying to tackle over the past year.

"After two fiscal years of declining revenues, the state faces significant challenges that will directly impact public education funding," according to the 2024-25 PUSD annual budget report. "The proposed 2024-25 budget meets the required 3% reserves for economic uncertainties for 2024-25 but will not meet those requirements for 2025-26 and 2026-27 as required by the state for a positive certification."

The recently approved budget also had to take into account the new collective bargaining agreement between the district and the Association of Pleasanton Teachers, which included raises and better benefits for teachers that also increased the district's expenditures.

That's why since January, the district has been in discussions with the board regarding layoffs, reductions and any right-sizing it could do to save money over the next few years. This included a reduction in force process that was initiated in February where the district eliminated temporary positions and reduced its stay by about 57 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for this new school year.

"All reductions/right sizing and changes for the 2024/25 school year are in the implementation process," PUSD assistant superintendent of business services Ahmad Sheikholeslami told the Weekly. "We have also made further reductions in non-staffing costs to reduce our expenditures.

According to the 2024-25 budget report, six FTE positions were cut from management, 12.54 positions were cut from classified staff and 38.57 certificated positions were cut.

He added that the final number of reductions will be known during the first interim budget update later this year.

"This board is committed to being open and transparent throughout this difficult process," Carreon said.

However, Ruegsegger said that the district needs to prioritize cutting management positions rather than certificated positions, which typically include teachers, so that the public can see it is putting its students and faculty before district staff.

"I think the amount of staff at the district office needs to be looked at, particularly with a tighter budget," she said. "Rebuilding trust already is a big order, but it will be most important to carry any improvements made through to the new superintendent."

While Ghysels called out the declining enrollment, low cost-of-living adjustments from the state, depleting COVID relief funds and the overall discrepancy between how much employees are making and how much it costs to live in the Bay Area, he also said the only way he and the district will be able to address these budget issues is by listening to the community.

"I've been here for three weeks and I'm not going to come in with a bunch of top-down decrees," he said. "I want to go back to the culture of building relationships, building trust, cohesion, working on this together, being transparent. And that's going to take some time."

One thing that PUSD is currently doing in the spirit of working together to address these budget issues is continuing to work with the district's Budget Advisory Committee to plan for future reductions and rightsizing in the 2025-26 budget that will be necessary in order for the district to remain fiscally solvent.

"This dynamic committee is made up of Pleasanton community members, parents/guardians and PUSD certificated and classified staff," Carreon said. "I am planning for either a special board meeting or town hall to discuss these budget reductions so our community can be well informed and provide input as well."

Sheikholeslami said the committee's next meeting will be scheduled for Aug. 13 where it will begin analyzing data and finalize a framework to evaluate reductions and revenue options.

Ghysels also said it is important to remember that due to inflation, people like PUSD teachers are not making enough money to survive and said they need to continue to pay teachers well in order to retain them, which is why he also wants to address another main issue at the district level: rebuilding the district's relationship with faculty and the community.

"I have often spoken about the lack of trust, communication, and how decisions are made which is affecting teachers, students, and parents," Ruegsegger said. "While it is a tall order for an interim, Dr. Ghysels needs to be highly visible to these groups. He needs to listen to those willing to speak. Being on social media is nice, but it is insufficient for our community."

Ghysels said teachers are who make the biggest impact on the students' education and lives, which is why he wants to address the contentious negotiations between the district and the APT last year, which resulted in the threat of a strike, so that the entire community can begin to heal and move forward in a more positive direction.

"APT is looking forward to working with Maurice Ghysels to foster solutions that will best serve our students, teachers and staff," APT President Evan Branning told the Weekly.

COURTESY CTA

Association of Pleasanton Teachers members rally outside of the district office on Feb. 26 to support the union amid the contentious contract negotiations last school year.

COURTESY PUSD

Rendering of the new transitional kindergarten classroom building slated to be constructed at Donlon Elementary School. The district completed the design of the project and is waiting for the permit to be approved by the state.

Looking ahead to the future

Ghysels said his main goal is to set up Pleasanton with the permanent superintendent it deserves and because he came on as an interim, he believes he is in the best position to do so because he isn't doing this job for money, he is doing it for the district.

Carreon also said finding the district's new leader will be the school board's most important job this school year and that they are taking the responsibility very seriously.

But finding that new superintendent will take some time.

In June, the Board of Trustees approved a contract with a search firm that will begin gathering input from the community in the next couple of months in order to create what's known as a leadership profile, which basically outlines the desired characteristics of what the community wants in the future superintendent.

A subcommittee made up of Carreon and Board Vice President Justin Brown has been working with the search firm to address any issues leading up to the engagement efforts, which is set to continue until Oct. 10, which is when the board will vote to approve the leadership profile before continuing with the search process.

"Our subcommittee has met over the summer and in a few weeks will begin the process of listening to what our community wants in our next superintendent," Carreon said. "I encourage everyone to look for upcoming announcements of when/where to attend these important meetings. After listening to community input we will decide the next steps."

Ghysels will also be a part of the district's ongoing discussion regarding Measure I and Measure I1 projects that have been underway for quite some time now, which are either set to be completed or will begin construction during this next year.

"We are very excited to have foundational work underway for the design and planning process for the Amador and Foothill performing arts centers and gyms as well as our expansion at elementary schools to support our youngest learners in early education and transitional kindergarten," Carreon said.

She was referring to the facility renovation plans that were part of the $390 million Measure I bond, which plan to build completely new theaters and athletic facilities at both high schools.

According to Sheikholeslami, the district has issued a request for proposal for the designing of both projects and is working with three firms who will compete to win the design build competition. He said the district is planning to select the firms that will create the design for each project by the fourth quarter of the year.

As for the elementary school expansion projects that Carreon mentioned, Sheikholeslami said the design of the new three-classroom transitional kindergarten complex at Donlon Elementary School is complete. He also said the design for similar transitional kindergarten complexes at Fairlands Elementary School — which will have four new classrooms and at Walnut Grove Elementary School — which will have three new classrooms — are also complete.

The project designs for Donlon and Fairlands have been submitted to the Division of the State Architect for plan review and permit and the district expects construction for both projects to begin in the first quarter of this school year. Sheikholeslami said the design for Walnut Grove will be complete in the first quarter of 2025 and construction will be set to begin in the second half of 2025.

Over at Pleasanton Middle School, Sheikholeslami said the construction of the new asphalt play surface is currently underway and will be completed in August. The project consists of new basketball courts, futsal courts, pickleball courts and four square courts.

The design to create a new synthetic field and track at PMS will be completed toward the end of the year with construction set to begin in the second quarter of the school year.

Another big Measure I project is to tear down the existing Village High School and old district offices at Bernal Avenue in order to build the Educational Options Center. Sheikholeslami said the district has issued a request for qualifications for the design of the new building that will act as a replacement for Village as well as a home for the district's other services like the Pleasanton Virtual Academy.

Over the summer, temporary classrooms for Village students and staff were constructed so that folks can begin occupying them this year.

He said a design build competition is expected to be complete toward the end of 2024 with a firm selected and design beginning in 2025.

As for projects that were part of the 2016 Measure I1 bond, Sheikholeslami said the district is finishing up the last three fire alarm upgrade projects at Foothill, Amador and Hart Middle School, which he said should be completed by September or October. He also said heating, ventilation and air conditioning replacements for PMS will be completed in August and later in the fall the district will work on replacing the systems at the gym in Harvest Park Middle School.

And while all of this might seem a lot for an interim superintendent who hasn't been around for any of these past discussions, Ghysels said he will do his best to work alongside the community to do what's necessary for PUSD during his time at the helm.

"I'll do what it takes to keep the ship going smoothly and with steadiness," he said. "And along the way, use it as a reason to build a stronger culture, a more positive culture, trust and relationships." ■

Dublin teacher shares life lessons in new book

'The Wise Old Tree' — author's passion project — boosted by creative illustrations from school librarian

Kathryn Varner

By Jeremy Walsh

Kathryn Varner has spent much of her professional life helping kids learn lessons in the classroom. Her messages are now reaching new heights.

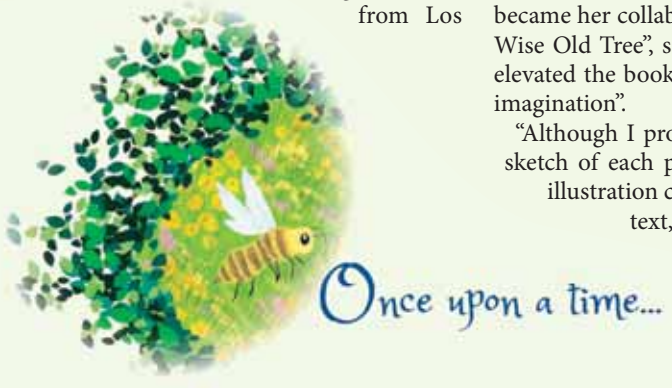
The Dublin resident and Kolb Elementary School teacher has released her debut book, "The Wise Old Tree", a passion project that took more than a decade to grow from the seed of an idea into an evergreen guide to share the wisdom of her lifetime.

"Though illustrated as a children's tale, its wisdom resonates across all ages, offering valuable insights to every reader, especially those navigating the labyrinth of adolescence," Varner told the Pleasanton Weekly over the weekend.

"Growing up I was confused with all the various messages that I was being told or shown by a variety of adults and experts in my life," she said. "Having seen the changes over the last 20 years and how much social media has added to this confusion of growing up and learning about the world, I wanted to create a guidebook of sorts. Why did someone need to wait until they were in their 30s to figure out how to live in this world more fully, blissfully and abundantly?"

"With all the wisdom I had accumulated, I wanted to create a book that would cut the readers' learning curve in half," she added.

A Southern California native, Varner spent the first 10 years of her teaching career in Title I, inner-city schools before moving to the East Bay in 2013 — while also pursuing a relationship and expanding a business from Los Angeles to the Bay Area, she said. She taught at San Leandro and Mt. Diablo unified school districts before finding a home with Dublin Unified in 2016.



The inspiration for "The Wise Old Tree" first flickered for Varner in 2011, but it wasn't for another seven years that she really started to focus her writing hobby on bringing that story to the page.

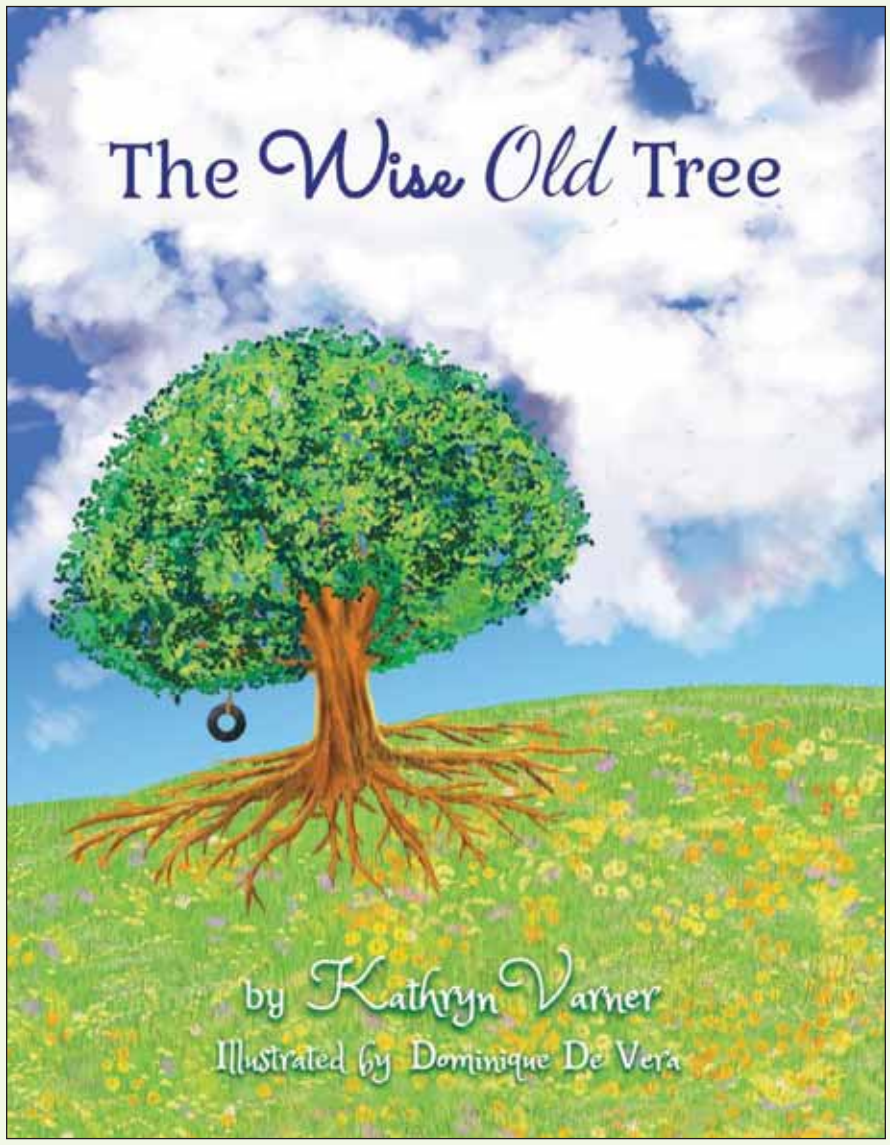
"Encouragement came from a variety of sources," she said. "I am grateful for the support of friends and family and listening to my own intuition, as these combined, allowed me to write the story to fruition."

"I really had no idea what the bookmaking process looked like; I just knew and trusted that the universe would provide me with whatever it is that needed to be done in order to make this dream a reality," Varner continued, later adding:

"As the universe would have it, in the middle of the school year, a librarian started at my school site who just so happened to be an illustrator and animator. Learning about her and getting to know her through class visits, I approached her about the possibility of collaborating in creating my first book."

Varner spoke highly of Dominique De Vera, the Dublin school librarian who became her collaborative partner on "The Wise Old Tree", saying the amateur artist elevated the book "beyond my scope and imagination".

"Although I provided her with a rough sketch of each page and how I saw the illustration coming together with the text, she put her own, creative artistry and flare into it and allowed the illustrations to really come to life," Varner said. "Unlike a professional illustrator, De Vera worked on the pages in her free time as well. With this, and given that family, health and living always come first, the process took much longer than anticipated, but I knew it would get done in due time and at the right time."



VERONICA LANE BOOKS

"The Wise Old Tree" is the debut book for author Kathryn Varner and illustrator Dominique De Vera, who met each other while working at Dublin Unified School District.

"The Wise Old Tree" is now on book shelves and on sale online, published by Veronica Lane Books. The tale follows young Lee, a boy who works through life's ups and downs with the help of a wisdom-imparting tree on his favorite hill to play on.

"Its core mission lies in imparting invaluable life skills, fostering values, and nurturing attitudes essential for the lifelong journey of personal and social development," Varner said. "Delving deeper, the narrative spotlights the transformative power of truly universal wisdom which will ultimately help shape and guide young minds for adept decision-making, ingenious problem-solving, heightened emotional intelligence, and the finesse of critical thinking."

In recent weeks, Varner has been busy experiencing "the marketing journey that first-time authors inevitably endure ... During my travels this summer I encountered people and bookstores that are now helping to promote my book or selling it from Vietnam, to Canada and across the U.S. It has been an adventure, learning as I go."

She's also had her eye on starting her next book, which she said will be about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The academic calendar beckons too, as the first day of school is just around the corner for her new second grade class at Kolb on the east side of Dublin.

"Teaching is still what fulfills me ... In a couple weeks I will again be excited to start another school year full of fun and learning, while also trying to dedicate time to all my passion projects," Varner said. ■

'Though illustrated as a children's tale, its wisdom resonates across all ages, offering valuable insights to every reader, especially those navigating the labyrinth of adolescence.'

Kathryn Varner

Art installation celebrates Livermore Lab fusion ignition

'Bringing Star Power to Earth' panel series hanging at City Center Bishop Ranch for next year

By Jude Strzemp

An art display dedicated to Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's world-renowned fusion ignition achievement is on show at City Center Bishop Ranch in San Ramon.

The collection, "Bringing Star Power to Earth", is composed of nine, 23-foot-tall banners that will decorate the center's exterior walls with the lab's success story until at least May 2025. It went up this spring as part of City Center's "Slate Art Program", which combines culture, civic life and commerce into visual displays.

"My hope is that people feel a sense of awe and pride at what we create here at the lab," said James Wickboldt, LLNL graphic designer and artist of the display. "The lab brings in people from all around the Bay Area, the country and the world to do some incredible science. And we had an amazing result with ignition — something that had been multiple decades in the making — and it's something that we as an area, as a country, should be proud of."

COURTESY LLNL

The newest installation at City Center Bishop Ranch is dedicated to LLNL's successful fusion ignition experiment in 2022, a series of banners created by artist and lab graphic designer James Wickboldt.

LLNL made its breakthrough on Dec. 5, 2022 at the National Ignition Facility (NIF), opening the door for advancement in national defense and clean energy. It was the first time in history scientists achieved fusion ignition in the lab, meaning the amount of energy released from combining two light nuclei was greater than the energy put in by lasers — it's also the process that powers the sun.

"With something this monumental happening in our own backyard, we were very excited to share this story in a new way," said Alex Mehran Jr., CEO of Sunset Development Company, which owns and operates City Center Bishop Ranch.

When the lab first announced its successful experiment, it released celebratory artwork; this artwork had regained public attention as the main banner at City Center.

Other banners on display illustrate the necessary aspects to the experiment like lasers, computer modeling and simulation, experimental design, diagnostics, optics and target fabrication. They also display the human element of scientific success: collaboration, partners and people.

Creation of the installation started at the beginning of this year when Julie Lovett, the senior vice president of marketing for Bishop Ranch, reached out to LLNL with the idea of showcasing fusion ignition as an installation.

"By partnering with LLNL, we aimed to bring this groundbreaking work into the public eye, recognizing our local scientists and fostering a sense of pride within our community," Mehran said in a press release.

Wickboldt was honored by interest from Bishop Ranch and began designing the banners with contributions by John Jett, group leader of the NIF and photon science document services team at LLNL. They drew inspiration from "Art of Fusion," an art series by the lab's Document Services that commemorates successful ignition.

"This installation is not just about celebrating a scientific breakthrough; it's about inspiring the community, igniting curiosity, and showcasing the collaborative spirit that drives innovation forward," Mehran Jr. told Embarcadero Media Foundation.

Bishop Ranch is set to commemorate the lab's achievement with the community on Sept. 29 from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. The event will include family-friendly science activities and special guests including Lab Director Kim Budil, Bishop Ranch leadership and local dignitaries. ■

Investing in tomorrow: Sandia donates advanced machines to LPC

New manufacturing equipment aims to help education revert to fundamental practices

By Olivia Penney

Sandia National Laboratories recently donated two cutting-edge manufacturing machines complete with full attachments to the advanced manufacturing and transportation program at Las Positas College.

The donation was part of a broader movement to adapt to the new economic challenges facing the United States.

"We are very grateful for our partnership with Sandia National Laboratories and their generous donation of CNC machines, which not only provides valuable cutting-edge equipment to our college but also aligns perfectly with our mission to equip students with the skills needed to succeed in today's manufacturing industry," said Las Positas President Dyrell Foster in a statement.

Chris Bergh, spearhead of the donation and Sandia manufacturing engineer, told Livermore Vine that the U.S. economy has departed from its traditional tendencies to build, create and fix. Presently, the economy is characterized by widgets and high-tech gadgets made cheaply and efficiently abroad, requiring no motherland substantial building techniques or human manufacturing intelligence, according to Bergh.

"As a country, we used to be innovators and producers," Bergh said in an announcement from Sandia. "We don't repair things anymore. It's cheaper to buy the widget because it's completely made than take it out and fix it. We were the industrial drivers of the world, and we've really gotten away from that, and other countries have seized that."

This donation, according to Bergh, is a step in the right direction of reverting back to fundamental practices to ensure that the occupations will be geared to adapt with the changing times to establish an ultimately stronger, more centralized future.

"If you're going to teach, you want to teach what's happening in the real world," Bergh said in the announcement. "This is going to give them the ability there, especially with such a well-known U.S. brand, to learn this machine and then translate into the real world much easier using those technologies."

"The donation includes two Haas VF-2 computerized numeric controls and a coordinate measuring machine, along with all necessary attachments — tool holders, power transformers and trunnions. These state-of-the-art machines, valued at more than $220,000 if new, will allow students to gain hands-on experience in vertical machining and precision measurement," Sandia officials said.

Bergh emphasized that generationally, younger people, like the students at Las Positas, will be the drivers of evolving with and boosting a national economy that aligns with modern technology.

"The younger generation is a new talent pool if you will," he said.

"There is still a skill that is desperately needed, especially in the metrology world where inspecting parts is just as important as manufacturing the part," Bergh added.

As such, the donation serves as an exciting step toward traditional hands-on learning promoting futures for the manufacturing industry.

"It's very exciting once you get into the world and see what you can do. I myself, from 39 years in the business, all of the stuff I have been able to manufacture are from telecommunication to flat panel displays to parts in space to parts on other planets. It's fascinating. It's exciting," Bergh said.

The recent donation of the machines was not the first collaborative effort between Las Positas and Sandia.

COURTESY SANDIA

From left: Sandia engineer Chris Bergh and Las Positas College dean of welding Scott Miner stand in front of the machines as they were being packed up at Sandia for delivery to the college.

"We have a very deep and abiding collaboration with the college, dating back more than 20 years," Michael Langey, corporate communications specialist at Sandia told Livermore Vine.

"When Sandia needed to develop cybersecurity experts, we turned to Las Positas students to recruit and train the first generation of experts. Our STEM Day for Girls on March 9 was held at Las Positas, which shares our commitment to developing the finest minds. We have been participants in the Tri-Valley Educational Collaborative for years. They host and partner with us for the Science Bowl and during their commencement this year, the college honored us with the Friend of the College Award."

The advanced manufacturing and transportation program at Las Positas College is one of the first players in the Tri-Valley making significant strides in the education of manufacturing. Similar endeavors could help to revitalize the economy and generate the next greatest innovators. ■

Community Pulse

POLICE BULLETIN

Police arrest man sleeping in vehicle after standoff

Pleasanton police arrested a man with a knife in his car last week after a standoff that lasted more than 90 minutes.

At approximately 6:50 a.m. July 25, police received a call requesting a welfare check on a person who appeared to be unconscious in the driver's seat of a white car, which was blocking the road near Muirwood Drive and West Las Positas Boulevard.

Officers arrived and found a male asleep behind the wheel. Noticing the condition of the car and a damaged tire, police assumed it was in a collision.

When police asked the man to step out of the car, they said he refused and appeared intoxicated. Officers spotted a knife on the car's floor near the driver, prompting police to ask dispatch for additional officers, clinicians, and a trained crisis negotiator.

Police said they spent more than 90 minutes negotiating, but the man remained uncooperative.

COURTESY PPD

The knife found inside the vehicle where a man suspected of being intoxicated was sleeping in Pleasanton on the morning of July 25.

Officers eventually safely removed the man from the car and took him into custody without injury.

They took him to Santa Rita Jail, where he was booked on suspicion of driving under the influence and resisting arrest.

—Tony Hicks, Bay City News

In other news

• The Alameda County Coroner's Bureau has confirmed the identities of a mother and young daughter from Manteca who died in a car crash along South Vasco Road in Livermore two weekends ago.

The victims were 24-year-old Tahlaynah Casuga and 4-year-old Katana Casuga, according to the coroner's bureau. The Livermore Police Department continues to investigate the early-morning wreck that also seriously injured the girl's father.

Tahlaynah Casuga's grieving mother has launched a GoFundMe page to raise funds for funeral services for her daughter and granddaughter — the effort had raised more than $10,000 as of Wednesday.

"My family and I are devistated (sic) and heartbroken over the whole situation. I am asking for your support in laying them to rest and giving them a proper burial," Tamra Casuga wrote on the webpage. "Thank u from the bottom of my heart..means everything to me.. God Bless."

The situation unfolded just before 2:30 a.m. July 21 when a black Hyundai carrying the family of three was traveling northbound on South Vasco Road not far from Interstate 580 when, for unknown reasons, the vehicle went off the roadway, crashed into a tree and caught fire near the Naylor Avenue intersection, according to police.

The woman — later identified as Tahlaynah Casuga — was pronounced dead at the scene while her young daughter succumbed to her injuries at an area hospital, according to police. LPD originally reported Katana Casuga's age as 5 years old, but the coroner's bureau confirmed the girl was 4.

First responders, who arrived to find the Hyundai engulfed in flames, pulled a 25-year-old man with critical injuries from the wreckage at the scene. His name has not been released, but police said he was the girl's father and in a dating relationship with her mother. An update on the man's condition was not immediately available.

LPD is still actively investigating the circumstances of the fatal crash, with no new updates on the case available publicly as of Tuesday.

—Jeremy Walsh

• Livermore police said that officers have arrested four teens for shooting at a family as they came home from a gym.

Around 11 p.m. on July 15, a victim called police to report he was being followed by a black truck. He said he just left a gym on Railroad Avenue with his mother and sister.

The victim told police they drove toward Park and North I streets and when they arrived at the intersection, occupants of the black truck fired several shots at their car.

The suspect vehicle then drove away. Officers arrived and found the family uninjured.

Investigators reported locating the black truck at a home in Tracy and identifying the suspects.

Police said they arrested 18-year-old Angel Nietokalandrely of Tracy and a 16-year-old male from Livermore on July 16.

On July 18, police arrested 18-year-old Damien Henriquez of Livermore and a 17-year-old male from Livermore. Police also recovered a 9mm handgun.

Police said the victim and suspects are familiar with each other and the shooting is possibly gang-related.

The suspects were arrested on suspicion of attempted murder. The case was turned over to the Alameda County District Attorney's Office for charging.

—Tony Hicks, Bay City News

See **BULLETIN** on Page **17**

Susan Purchas Gordon

July 29, 1939 – July 11, 2024

Susan Gordon passed away on Thursday, July 11 in her home. Susan was a joyful, positive person who spent most of her time with her beloved family and friends. Susan was born in Detroit, MI, moving to Scottsdale, AZ with her mother for high school. She graduated from the University of Arizona and attended graduate school at Arizona State University and UC Berkeley. She was married to LaVern A. Bladon (Clearfield, IA) and then to Archie Thomas Gordon (Tucumcari, NM). In the early 1960s, Susan broke traditional conventions by fighting for women's rights and being one of the few women in the world to earn a private pilot's license. In the 90s, Susan worked in Silicon Valley for several high-tech companies. She left after 10 years to start her own small business in Pleasanton, which she ran for 30 years, tutoring and counseling hundreds of Pleasanton students to improve their grades and create successful college applications. Susan was an avid animal rescuer, helping to fund the Tri-Valley Human Society, and volunteering and donating to countless animal rescue organizations. She also loved music, reading, flying, and traveling internationally. Susan is survived by her five children: Christopher Bladon of Atlanta, GA; Rebecca Bladon Kuykendall (Dale) of Woodland, CA; James Bladon (Angela), of Tarzana, CA; Lea Reed (James) of Scotts Valley, CA; and Stephanie Gordon of Virginia Beach, VA. She is also survived by many grandchildren: Alexander and Gabi (Christopher) Bladon; William and Elizabeth (Rebecca) Kuykendall; George, Charles, and Christopher (James) Bladon; and Jimmy, Willa, David, and Ava (Lea) Reed. Susan's friends and family are invited to gather for memories and refreshments on Saturday, August 3rd from 11:30am - 12:30pm at the Graham Hitch Funeral Home.

PAID OBITUARY

POLICE REPORT

The Pleasanton Police Department made the following information available.

July 29

Fire

- 6:49 a.m on the 300 block of Rose Avenue

Vandalism

- 9:37 a.m on the 6800 block of Corte De Flores

Burglary

- 4:17 p.m. on the 200 block of Spring Street

Drug violation

- 9:26 p.m. on the 5100 block of Hopyard Road

July 28

Domestic battery

- 12:04 a.m on Stoneridge Mall Road

Theft

- 1:54 p.m. on the 5700 block of Owens Drive

July 27

DUI

- 1:52 a.m at First and Abbie streets

Domestic battery

- 1:37 p.m. on Passeggi Court
- 4:03 p.m. on Owens Drive

July 26

Fraud

- 9:58 a.m. on the 1600 block of Whispering Oaks Way

Theft

- 10:14 a.m. on the 200 block of Birch Creek Drive

Alcohol violation

- 12:44 p.m. on the 4200 block of First Street

Vandalism

- 3:56 p.m. on the 7300 block of Johnson Drive

Warrant arrest

- 7:18 p.m. at Spring and First streets

July 25

DUI

- 6:49 a.m. at Muirwood Drive and Palm Court

Fraud

- 11:05 a.m. on the 6100 block of West Las Positas Boulevard

Vandalism

- 4:07 p.m. on the 5100 block of Hopyard Road

July 24

Warrant arrest

- 3:56 a.m. on the 5500 block of West Las Positas Boulevard

Theft

- 8:30 a.m., 000 block of Mission Drive; auto theft
- 1:04 p.m. on the 000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
- 1:58 p.m. on the 1100 block of Stoneridge Mall Road
- 2:14 p.m., 1000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; auto theft
- 2:50 p.m., 000 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

Vandalism

- 2:29 p.m. on the 5100 block of Hopyard Road
- 2:29 p.m. on the 5700 block of Gibraltar Drive

Drug violation

- 7:53 p.m. on the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive

July 23

Vandalism

- 2:03 p.m. at Carducci Drive and Appian Street

Fraud

- 2:40 p.m. on the 5100 block of Monaco Drive

Warrant arrest

- 3:24 p.m. on the 4500 block of Rosewood Drive

Assault/battery

- 5:53 p.m. on the 4700 block of Willow Road

July 22

Theft

- 10:04 a.m. on the 1200 block of Quarry Lane
- 12:31 p.m. on the 3500 block of Ballantyne Drive
- 2:39 p.m. on the 5600 block of Black Avenue
- 4:15 p.m., 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting

Warrant arrest

- 11:07 a.m. on the 600 block of Division Street

Drug violation

- 5:03 p.m. on the 1700 block of Santa Rita Road

Fire

- 8:11 p.m. on the 7000 block of Pleasanton Avenue

County judge recuses from Oakland mayor recall case

Judge Spain also sets aside tentative ruling in favor of OUST in lawsuit from ethics commission

By Kiley Russell / BCN

An Alameda County Superior Court judge recused herself Friday from a case brought by the Oakland Public Ethics Commission against the group backing the recall of Mayor Sheng Thao.

Without explicitly saying why, Judge Julia Spain also set aside her tentative ruling from two days earlier in favor of Oakland United to Remove Sheng Thao (OUST) and postponed a hearing on the matter until a new judge is assigned.

The Public Ethics Commission filed the suit in order to get OUST and an organization called Foundational Oakland Unites to comply with subpoenas seeking communications between the two groups and from various individuals, including communications related to financial and non-monetary contributions to OUST from Foundational Oakland Unites.

The Public Ethics Commission seemed particularly interested in communications that could demonstrate "the earmarking of contributions or payments," according to Spain's tentative ruling.

KILEY RUSSELL / BAY CITY NEWS

Members of the group Oakland United to Recall Sheng Thao hold a press conference in Oakland on June 19 to announce that they have enough signatures to place a recall on the November 2024 ballot.

In the original complaint, an Ethics Commission investigator wrote that OUST "appears to be using a newly-created nonprofit called Foundational Oakland Unites (FOU) and/or its associated general purpose PAC (similar name) as a pass-through (dark money) vehicle to either receive unitemized/conduit contributions and/or fail to report earmarked/intermediary contributions within the period of time required."

In response, leaders of the recall effort said the subpoenas were unenforceable because they didn't provide enough time for compliance as required by state law, the documents in question were protected by attorney-client privilege, the requests for documents were overly broad and that they violated their members' constitutional right to privacy, according to Spain's ruling.

In issuing her tentative ruling July 24, Spain largely agreed with OUST leadership and denied the city's motion to compel them to comply with its subpoenas.

On Friday (July 26), however, Spain vacated her ruling and disqualified herself from the case just hours before the city was scheduled to tell the court that it would be issuing revised subpoenas based on that ruling "and to seek clarity on: (1) the constitutional findings in the tentative; and (2) to request that the matter remain open pending any further dispute over compliance with revised subpoenas," according to a filing from the city's lawyer.

Spain didn't say why she recused herself in her order but did cite a section of California's Code of Civil Procedure, which says that, in part, "a person aware of the facts might reasonably entertain a doubt that the judge would be able to be impartial."

It's unclear what the new timeline for the case will be or how long it might take to appoint a new judge, but the city will then be able to make its arguments in favor of the subpoenas and, if unable to convince a new judge, can still rewrite them to comply with his or her ruling.

Public Ethics Commission representatives declined to comment on the judge's recusal and a spokesperson for the recall effort didn't immediately respond to requests for comment. ■

BULLETIN

Continued from Page 16

• A former correctional officer at the since-closed federal women's prison in Dublin now faces 15 counts of sexual abuse, including a civil rights violation, after prosecutors added two new victims and three new counts to the indictment.

The initial indictment against Darrell Wayne Smith, now 55 and living in Florida, was filed on April 13, 2023, and charged him with engaging in illegal sexual acts with three female inmates while he was employed at FCI Dublin as a correctional officer.

The indictment covered 12 alleged acts occurring between May 2019 and May 2021, when Smith allegedly engaged in separate sexual conduct with each of the three inmate victims.

The new indictment filed on July 25 supplants the initial indictment and identifies two additional victims and charges Smith with 15 counts.

Each additional victim is described as being an inmate at FCI Dublin who suffered abusive sexual conduct by Smith while under his custodial and disciplinary control. Smith's charged sexual conduct is now alleged to have begun as early as August 2016.

The latest indictment also charges a third new count alleging a federal civil rights violation by Smith involving aggravated sexual abuse.

Smith now faces six counts of sexual abuse of a ward, seven counts of abusive sexual contact, one count of aggravated sexual abuse, and one count of deprivation of rights under color of law.

"As alleged, officer Daryl Smith engaged in appalling criminal acts when he sexually abused those in his care and custody," deputy attorney general Lisa Monaco said. "This superseding indictment is the latest product of the department's ongoing work to seek justice for victims of sexual assault at FCI Dublin.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to root out sexual assault within the BOP and hold to account those who so egregiously violate their duty," Monaco said.

Smith's arraignment on the superseding indictment has not yet been set. However, Smith is currently set to begin jury trial on March 17 in front of U.S. District Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers for the Northern District of California.

If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of life in prison for each count of aggravated sexual abuse and deprivation of rights under color of law. Smith also faces a statutory maximum penalty of 15 years in prison for each count of sexual abuse of a ward and a maximum penalty of two years in prison for each count of abusive sexual contact.

As part of any sentence, the court will order a term of supervised release and may order a fine of up to $250,000 for each count in restitution and additional assessments.

—Tony Hicks, Bay City News

• Danville police are looking for three men who allegedly robbed a bank last week.

Police responded at 12:28 p.m. July 24 to a report of an armed robbery at the Wells Fargo branch at 585 San Ramon Valley Blvd.

Three males entered the bank armed with handguns and demanded items from customers and cash from tellers, according to police.

The suspects fled the scene with cash in a gray SUV, which was later recovered in a nearby city, police said. The vehicle has been taken in as evidence.

Police said no injuries were reported during the robbery.

Anyone with information regarding the robbery can contact Sgt. Dan Lynch at 925-314-3703 or dlynch@danville.ca.gov.

—Tony Hicks, Bay City News

• Livermore police arrested two people from Washington last week after an officer stopped to help when their vehicle broke down and a police dog alerted them to drugs in the vehicle.

At 12:45 p.m. July 23, an officer, along with K9 Drake, was patrolling the area of Airway Boulevard and North Canyons Parkway when they came across a vehicle with Washington plates on the side of the road.

LIVERMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT VIA BAY CITY NEWS

Livermore Police Department K9 Drake photographed with the drug paraphernalia, methamphetamine, and 4 ounces of fentanyl he alerted his handler to during a stop to assist a driver in Livermore on July 23.

The driver had the hood open and was checking the vehicle, prompting the officer to ask if they needed help. They said they were traveling to San Jose from Washington. The occupants then walked away and into a store.

K9 Drake alerted his handler of narcotics in the vehicle. Police found 4 ounces of fentanyl, methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia.

Police arrested the two people, ages 38 and 31. Police alleged the pair admitted to purchasing the fentanyl earlier that morning in the Central Valley with the intent to sell in Washington.

Police arrested them on suspicion of transporting/selling a narcotic or controlled substance, possessing/purchasing for sale a narcotic or controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance. ■

—Tony Hicks, Bay City News

Lasting Memories

An online directory of obituaries and remembrances.
Search obituaries, submit a memorial, share a photo.

Go to: PleasantonWeekly.com/obituaries

Opinion

LETTERS

In support of the half-cent tax measure

Folks, it is becoming increasingly clear that the half-cent tax measure on this November's ballot is the best way we can go about balancing our city's budget.

Consider this: If you were to spend $1,000 on taxable purchases, with the half-cent tax, you would pay just $5 on top of the existing sales tax. That $5 is about the same price as a single iced coffee at Inkling's Coffee Shop.

Half a cent in added sales tax is insignificant. All the additional revenue collected through the half-cent tax measure stays in Pleasanton. Of the current 10.25% sales tax rate, only 1% currently stays in Pleasanton. The other 9.25% is split between the county and state.

If voters were to approve the half-cent tax measure the amount of sales tax that stays in Pleasanton would be increased by 50%. I would happily pay this added sales tax knowing it goes towards funding public safety.

The value the half-cent tax can add to the community is tremendous! With added revenue, the city can minimize cuts to the budget. We all benefit by keeping crossing guards in this city. I worry about the added costs to homeowners' monthly insurance premiums if the city were forced to close Fire Station No. 2, as has been previously discussed in council chambers. I know insurance companies are ruthlessly terminating coverage or jacking up the cost of premiums for any possible reason.

Please keep Pleasanton a safe and wonderful place to call home. It's an easy choice; vote Yes on the half-cent tax.

—Matthew Gray

Unleashed dogs causing menace in parks

I am writing to report a concerning situation in the Amador Valley Park on Black Avenue in Pleasanton that requires your immediate attention.

There have been several incidents involving dogs that are not on a leash, despite the park's clear requirement for dogs to be leashed at all times. On July 20, my child and I were in the park when we were approached by an unleashed dog. The dog pounced on us multiple times, causing significant distress and minor injuries. My son was scratched during the encounter, which required medical attention.

The presence of unleashed dogs in the park poses a serious risk to the safety and well-being of park visitors. I respectfully request that increased enforcement measures be taken to ensure that all dogs in the park are leashed as required by law.

This will help prevent any future incidents and ensure the safety of all park-goers. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

—Piyush Sharma

Blatant infringement of parents' rights

Signing of AB 1955 by Gov. Newsom is an insane move forward, as it disregards parental rights and irks the majority of parental population and groups in an attempt to pose to protect a rarity of cases.

While I totally respect schools trying to address specific rare issues stemming from dysfunctional families, I believe the state has to not make laws that would threaten the parental rights until their children turn 18.

Besides, whatever happens to the FERPA that cites no federal funding for schools that fail to protect the privacy of kids that needs to be indeed "signed" by parents?! In other words, the schools are not allowed to document or share anything to anybody without the "signed " consent of parents, the stark opposite.

Now I am sure the new law found some loopholes that allowed it to make its way through. But it makes no sense where school authorities could assume guardianship of the kids' choices when they don't have a knowledge about the cultural, traditional and social-structures of the kids' families.

I wish they spent the time and money instead in making laws that would reduce drug addictions, teen pregnancies, single-parenthood families and other serious issues that are the true seeds of creating a confused next-generation.

I am sure California would see a decline of enrollment in public schools. I hope a prop to ban this law makes its way to ballots and lets the public decide what they think instead of a bunch of public politicians making prohibitive laws a norm.

—Sangeetha Krishnamoorthy

Merritt property water usage

A 2018 report from California's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) gives a target of 1.8 million new housing units to be constructed by 2025. The actual number of new housing units constructed each year in California is 80,000 each year.

In California, with increased conservation efforts, an acre-foot of water is estimated to provide the indoor and outdoor needs of three typical urban households for a year: 1.8 million homes times 1 acre-foot per three households equals 600,000 acre-feet. An acre-foot is equal to 325,000 gallons of water or approximately 1,233 cubic meters.

Determining the water needs for 111 new luxury homes (Merritt property) on 45 acres, considering household size, landscaping and climate. The average water usage for a single-family home in the United States is around 100,000 gallons per year. The 111 new luxury homes on 45 acres will require 33-acre feet of water per year.

Pleasanton groundwater well's maximum capacity can provide up to 3,500 acre-feet of water per year. Typically, when used the groundwater wells provide 20% to 25% 700 to 875 acre-feet of water per year for Pleasanton. Zone 7 provides 100% of all Pleasanton water needs when wells are shut down.

Without throwing contamination (PFAS) in the mix, the city with its current history will have to do something to meet the water needs for this city. Buying water from Zone 7 is a spending problem. There is a Zone 7 litigation issue pending against the city of Pleasanton.

—Michael Austin

Rushed vote without proper input

At about midnight last month, the Dublin City Council voted to put a referendum on the November ballot to try to get approval to not only extend Dublin Boulevard to meet the road in Livermore, but also to advance the Crosby land along the freeway for commercial/light industrial development.

Doing that would block important open space corridors for wildlife. It is being rushed in without public input or environmental studies.

Please have someone contact Ian Howell or Dr. Farley Connelly at the Alameda County Resource Conservation District for more information on why this is a very damaging plan. We are hoping that you can print an editorial opposing it and educating the public as to what the council approved without public input. It was the last thing on the agenda.

—Carol Garberson, ACRCD board member

Employment

Tekion Corp. has openings in Pleasanton, CA for a Product Manager [PMPG624] to conduct research in automotive dealership industry to understand customer need. Wage Range: $143,800 - $194,600 / yr. & a Product Manager [PMAP624] to conduct user research w/ automotive dealerships to understand the nature of their business workflows & the reqs necessary to streamline them by creating protocols & implementing research studies. Wage Range: $169,800 - $229,800 / yr. To apply, submit resume by email to mfeist@tekion.com. Must reference job title & job code.

Tax Sr. Associate w/ Sensiba LLP in Pleasanton, CA. 100% Remote. Email resume w/ Code: #SL-0414 to Talent@Sensiba.com Pay: $113,900 - $130,000/yr. may vary based on skills, role, and location. EOE

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Sports

PLEASANTON PREPS

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By Dennis Miller

Baseball coach Cesario reflects on leaving Amador program for Northgate

'It has pumped some life into me. It's new faces, new schools and new rivals'

One of the constants over the last 20-plus years of my life was that Lou Cesario would be the baseball coach at Amador Valley High School.

Cesario started when I was the local sports editor at the Tri-Valley Herald, and has stayed through my leaving the Herald and resurfacing at the Pleasanton Weekly.

When spring sports rolled around each year, I would look forward to our conversations relating to not just baseball, but life in general.

I am sure moving forward we will continue to talk, but it just won't be about Amador Valley baseball. In June, Cesario made the decision to step away from the Dons program, opting to head up the program at Northgate High School.

More than anything, it's a logistical decision.

"I am retiring from teaching next May, but I still wanted to coach," Cesario explained. "I live in Walnut Creek and our house is right by (Northgate). The job came open, I applied, and was offered the job."

The timing may not have been perfect, but it was a move he needed to make.

"I would have loved to have one more year at Amador, but if I didn't take the Northgate job this year, it wouldn't have been there. I didn't want to leave but this is a good thing for me," he said.

In his 24 years at Amador, Cesario built a highly respected program, winning a pair of North Coast Section titles and putting out one of the top playing fields in the East Bay Athletic League.

"It was always a grind to keep those playing fields in great shape," Cesario said.

The first NCS title came in 2010, with arguably one of the top teams Cesario coached.

Behind players like Chris Keck, Tony Olguin, Tommy Pluschkell, Nick Piscotty and Michael Mallory, the Dons finished 25-3, beating Foothill 12-1 in the NCS finals.

The second NCS crown came in 2013 and was a different title run. The Dons finished 7-7 in EBAL play and was the No. 4 seed in NCS. This team caught fire at the right time, beating top-seeded Granada — the Mats were 24-1 and ranked No. 1 in California — by a 9-7 final.

In the title game Amador faced No. 2 De La Salle, and the Dons got their second NCS title in four years with a 5-1 win.

MIKE SEDLAK

Former Amador Valley varsity baseball coach Lou Cesario, shown here during a game early in the 2018 season with the Dons.

This group was led by Bradley Pluschkell, Jake Dronkers, Michael Echavia, Daniel Jackson, Connor Casperson and Chase Hennings.

One thing moving forward that Cesario will, and won't, miss is coaching in the talent-laden EBAL.

"It is relentless — you can never take your foot off the gas," Cesario said of the EBAL schedule. "But, coaching in the EBAL makes you a better coach. You always have to figure things out. You can play well and lose for three to four weeks. It's the best league around."

One of Cesario's favorite memories of his time at Amador was also one of his first, and it involved a big piece of humble pie.

He came to Amador from Alhambra in Martinez where he found a level of success albeit in a league not as tough as the EBAL.

"I thought I was a hot shot," Cesario said of when he came to Amador. "I was thinking I was going to tear up the EBAL. Then we had our first game at San Ramon Valley and coach Rick Steen. We got no-hit and lost 12-0."

Now the challenge lying in front of Cesario is vastly different. Northgate was 3-21 last year, including a 0-10 mark in the Diablo Athletic League. The year before the Broncos went 9-15.

Cesario has got a blank slate in front of him.

"It's a program in need of some strong direction," Cesario said. "It's all new — it's been incredible so far. The school has some good bones, and it has pumped some life into me. It's new faces, new schools and new rivals."

Editor's note: Dennis Miller is a contributing sports writer for Embarcadero Media Foundation's East Bay Division. To contact him about his Pleasanton Preps column, email acesmag@aol.com.

Calendar

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY • POST CALENDAR ITEMS AT PLEASANTONWEEKLY.COM

Entertainment

Concerts in the Park Join the fun Friday night at Pleasanton Downtown Association's Concert in the Park featuring live music spanning various genres. 7-8:30 p.m., Aug. 2. Lions Wayside Park.

Keiko Matsui at the Bankhead Pianist Keiko Matsui's transcendent and haunting melodies have long sought to build bridges and her sonic cultural exchanges have reached the hearts and minds of fans throughout the world. 8 p.m., Aug. 2. Tickets $25-$65. Visit livermorearts.org.

PYTC Staff Cabaret Pleasanton Youth Theater Company returns with another Staff Cabaret. Watch the staff show off skills and talent featuring songs across the musical theater genre. 7 p.m., Aug. 2. Tickets $10. Visit firehousearts.org.

10th Annual Desi Comedy Fest Laugh until your sides hurt as Desi Comedy Fest, North America's biggest South Asian comedy festival, hits the Firehouse Arts Center in Pleasanton for its 10th anniversary celebration. 8 p.m., Aug. 3. Tickets $30. Visit firehousearts.org.

Livermore Library presents Shruti Abhishek Shruti Abhishek is an Indian dancer and choreographer of Bharatanatyam, a South Indian dance, characterized by precise movements, dynamic hand gestures and facial expressions. This free event is part of the Authors & Arts series. 2 p.m., Aug. 4. Civic Center Library Storytime Room.

Tuesday Tunes Tuesday Tunes are every Tuesday night, 6:45 p.m., through Aug. 20. Shea Homes Stage, Livermore Plaza. 2400 First St., Livermore.

Freddy Jones Band Experience a night of alternative rock nostalgia like never before for an electrifying celebration of the Freddy Jones Band's 30th anniversary of their timeless hit, In a Daydream. 8 p.m., Aug. 9. Tickets $25-$60. Visit livermorearts.org.

ILLEAGLES (Eagles Tribute) at Wente This San Francisco Bay Area tribute band delivers engaging and captivating performances that leave crowds enthralled from start to finish, founded by six talented musicians driven by their love for Eagles music. 5 p.m., Aug. 9. Tickets $50. Visit wentevineyards.com.

Jazz at Inklings The next free Jazz at Inklings features vocalist Sandra Agora and the Matt Finders Trio. 6:30 p.m., Aug. 10. Seating is limited. For reservations visit meetup.com/pleasanton-jazz-society.

Opera in the Vineyard Escape to a world of music and merriment at Opera in the Vineyard and enjoy unique performances of opera arias, show tunes and cabaret. Door open 4:15 p.m., Aug. 18. Individual tickets $80. Garré Vineyard & Winery. Visit livermorevalleyopera.com.

A Tribute to Toby Keith This electrifying show is guaranteed to leave audiences on their feet, singing along to hit after hit of great country music, all brought to life by the Hollywood Yates. 8 p.m., Aug. 16. Tickets $55-$75. Visit livermorearts.org.

Piano Men Generations This celebration of the legendary Billy Joel and Elton John is brought to life by the father and son duo of Terry and Nick Davies and their band, taking you on a journey through the timeless hits that have captured the hearts of music lovers for decades. 7:30 p.m., Aug. 22. Tickets $45-$65. Visit livermorearts.org.

Mike Super at the Bankhead Mike Super has taken the performance of magic to new, mainstream levels turning the magic show on its side and dumping it out into the audience where you become Mike's onstage assistant. 8 p.m., Aug. 23. Tickets $25-$75. Visit livermorearts.org.

Evolution at Wente San Francisco's ultimate tribute to Journey, comprised of exceptionally skilled musicians from the Bay Area, showcases a profound reverence for Journey's music while delivering high-energy performances to fans across the country. 5 p.m., Aug. 24. Tickets $50. Visit wentevineyards.com.

Mamma Mia Movie Sing-A-Long Valley Concert Chorale presents this experience to sing favorite ABBA songs from the romantic comedy film Mamma Mia! Join and sing-along to amazing songs at Vine Cinema and Alehouse. 10 a.m., Aug. 24. Tickets $10-$15. Visit valleyconcertchorale.org.

Exhibits

Faces of our Community Exhibit This exhibit reveals the impactful work and the human stories behind the many Tri-Valley non-profits that contribute to the well-being and fabric of the Tri-Valley community. Now through Aug. 4. UNCLE Credit Union Art Gallery, 2400 First St., Livermore.

Textures of Remembrance This exhibit explores a date that impacts many Vietnamese Americans: April 30, 1975, the end of the Vietnam War featuring works by 25 Vietnamese artists and writers. Through Sept. 21. Visit museumonmain.org.

Festivals

Dodocaca Festival This festival is a thrilling fusion of art, entertainment and stimulating activities to ignite the spark of creativity in children, fueling their imagination with fun, art and adventure-filled activities. Aug. 2-11. Visit alamedacountyfair.com.

Thrift Fest Thrift Fest is a celebration of vintage and maker vendors featuring clothing from years gone by as well as featuring one-of-a-kind jewelry, collectibles, home goods and more where vintage vendors and creators will be on display. 12-6 p.m., Aug. 3. Visit alamedacountyfair.com.

Brick Fest Live Join the largest hands-on event of its kind with over a million LEGO bricks on display and ready for play. Brick Fest Live allows families to enjoy creations from all over the world made entirely of this timeless toy. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Aug. 17; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Aug. 18. Visit alamedacountyfair.com.

Goodguys West Coast Nationals America's Favorite Car Show returns to its roots for a celebration of cool cars, cool people and good times bringing over 3,000 of the country's finest 1999 and older hot rods, trucks, customs, lowriders, muscle cars and classics together. Aug. 23-25. Visit alamedacountyfair.com.

Fundraisers

Enchanted Garden Gala Join Sunflower Hill for their biggest fundraiser of the year and experience an unforgettable evening filled with magic and wonder. Step into the beauty of an Enchanted Garden where dreams blossom and possibilities are endless. 6-10 p.m., Sept. 21. Tickets $175. Blackhawk Museum. Visit paybee.io/in-person-event/sunflowerhil/5.

Community of Character Summer BBQ Join the Pleasanton Community of Character Collaborative Summer BBQ for great food, music and fun. All funds raised go to the Juanita Huagen Scholarship fund. 6 p.m., Aug. 17. Tickets $75. For more information, visit bit.ly/2024-cc-bbq.

Outdoors

Wild Rainforest Animals In this wildlife science event for all ages learn about science and the environment while viewing rescued wild animals. 10:15 a.m., Aug. 7. Livermore Civic Center Library Lawn.

Night of the Bats Bats are some of the most thrilling animals to see and dusk is the perfect time to see them in action. Watch them emerge from sleep and start to feast on insects. 7:30-9 p.m., Aug. 8. $6 parking fee. Del Valle Regional Park. Registration is required. Visit ebparks.org.

Ranger Program: Tarantulas Join an LARPD Ranger for a presentation about these unique arachnids and meet their pet tarantula, Peaches. Face fears, increase knowledge and grow to appreciate the role tarantulas play in ecosystems. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., Aug. 10. Visit larpd.org.

Park After Dark: UV Hike Explore biofluorescence, bioluminescence and nighttime pollinators with a LARPD Ranger during this special UV night hike. This will be a slow 1.5-2 mile hike up into the hills. 9:30 p.m., Aug. 18. Holdener Park, 2995 Hansen Road, Livermore. To register call 925-373-5505.

PET OF THE WEEK

EAST BAY SPCA

Search no further than Firefox

A fluffy, smart Husky mix, Firefox lives up to his name with his red coat and poofy tail perfect for curling up into. This 3-year-old loves to play and engages well with other pups after a polite meet-and-greet. Firefox can go from sleepy to zoomies at the drop of a hat, and he'd love to bring you all the fun and sweet devotion that comes with his breed. Meet this stunning pup at East Bay SPCA's Dublin Adoption Center. More information at eastbayspca.org.

Movies

Movie Madness in the Vintage Lounge Join the Senior Services crew for a movie in the Vintage Lounge at the Robert Livermore Community Center. No registration required. 1 p.m., Aug. 5.

Talks

Congregation Beth Emek Open House Whether new to the area or just new to Beth Emek, all are invited to drop by their open house to learn about worship opportunities, the community and educational programs for all ages. Congregation Beth Emek is an inclusive Reform synagogue with an open and participatory atmosphere. 12 p.m., Aug. 3. 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton.

Armchair Travelers at Livermore Library Vicki Stephens will present an Armchair Travelers program entitled "Morocco: God, Country, King" where she will share photos and stories from her 2023 tour of Morocco. 1:30 p.m., Aug. 8. Civic Center Library Storytime Room.

Amador Valley Quilters Speaker Jenny Lyon has been teaching the art of quilting since 2006. Her lecture is "My Tippy Top Tips for Successful and Joyful Free Motion Quilting". 1:30-3:30 p.m., Aug. 10. Pleasanton Middle School, 5001 Case Ave. Visit amadorvalleyquilters.org/Wordpress.

Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society Thomas MacEntee presents "AI and Genealogy: Trouble Ahead?" Learn how AI is currently being used to improve the genealogy experience and whether or not you should seek out other uses of artificial intelligence for your own genealogy research. 7-8:30, Aug. 12. Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton. Visit l-ags.org.

An Afternoon or Evening With Ernest Shackleton Sir Ernest Shackleton led three expeditions to Antarctica yet his Endurance expedition is renowned as the most glorious of failures. Shackleton demonstrated courage, resilience, and leadership in the face of overwhelming natural obstacles. 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Aug. 13. Firehouse Arts Center. Visit museumonmain.org.

An Evening of Bliss Join for an Evening of Bliss with renowned author John Gray, the best-selling author of over 23 books on love and relationships. Choose bliss in the midst of chaos through science backed shortcuts. 7 p.m., Aug. 16. Tickets $22-$33. Visit firehousearts.org.

Meet Author Susan Casey In this free author event Susan Casey will discuss her book "The Underworld: Journeys to the Depths of the Ocean". 7 p.m., Aug. 22. Livermore Civic Center Library.

Cruising Down Memory Lane Community members are invited to enjoy stories from five of the 38 storytellers featured in "Cruising Down Memory Lane: Stories of Pleasanton in the 1950s". Copies of the book will be available for sale and signing. 2 p.m., Aug. 25. Livermore Civic Center Library.

Hacienda Park Toastmasters Hacienda Park Toastmasters Club meets in-person and virtually via Zoom. Overcome fear of speaking in a friendly, supportive atmosphere. Visit haciendapark.toastmastersclubs.org.

Government

Pleasanton Unified School District Regular Board meetings of the Pleasanton Unified School District are scheduled the second and fourth Thursday of each month and are open to the public. The next meeting is 6 p.m., Aug. 8. Visit pleasantonusd.net.

Pleasanton City Council Pleasanton City Council Meetings are held in the City Council

Chambers, 200 Old Bernal Ave. The next meeting is 7 p.m., Aug. 20. Visit cityofpleasantonca.gov.

Livermore Planning Commission Livermore Planning Commission meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of the month at the Civic Center Meeting Hall, Mendenhall Room, unless otherwise posted. 7 p.m., Aug. 6. Visit livermoreca.gov.

Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District Regular meetings are at the District Office, 685 E. Jack London Blvd. The next meeting is 7 p.m., Aug. 6. Visit livermoreschools.org.

Farmers' Markets

Pleasanton Farmers' Market The Pleasanton Farmers' Market is Saturday year round featuring vendors with seasonal fruits and vegetables, plus artisan goods. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. W. Angela St.

Livermore Thursday Farmers' Market The Livermore Thursday Night Farmers' Market is 4-8 p.m. at Carnegie Park with over 60 vendors. Rain or shine. 2155 3rd St.

Livermore Sunday Farmers' Market Gather for music, food and fresh local and organic products directly from producers. Support small businesses and local sustainable agriculture. 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Sundays. Between J St. and L St.

Seniors

Evolution of the Modern Wristwatch Presentation This free presentation at the Pleasanton Senior Center is 11 a.m., Aug. 6. Senior Center Lobby.

An Overview of Long Term Care Insurance This free HICAP presentation at the Pleasanton Senior Center is 1 p.m., Aug. 7. Call 925-931-5365.

Sensational Seniors Workshop Sensational Seniors Workshops presents "Your Life, Your House, Your Choice: Difficult Conversations". This free seminar is designed to empower older adults with the skills and resources necessary to navigate challenging conversations with loved ones. 1-2 p.m., Aug 8. To register, call 925-373-5700 or visit larpd.org.

A Day at the Zoo Join Pleasanton VIP Travel for a day at the San Francisco Zoo. Tour includes motorcoach and lunch. 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Aug. 13. Cost $115-$120. Visit the Pleasanton Senior Center VIP Travel desk for more information.

2025 Trip Presentation This 2025 Trip Presentation from Pleasanton Senior Center VIP Travel is 1-3 p.m., Aug. 16. RSVP at 925-931-5370.

Lunches at the Senior Center Senior Lunches (60+) are served in the Main Hall. 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., Mondays to Fridays. Call Open Heart Kitchen at 925-500-8241 for more information.

Pleasanton Rides Pleasanton Rides is a door-to-door, shared-ride transportation service for Pleasanton Seniors. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays to Fridays. Call 925-398-1045.

Public Notices

NOTICE TO ALL CREDITORS OF SMALL PRESS DISTRIBUTION, INC., 2625 Alcatraz Ave, Suite 514, Berkeley, CA 94705: If you are a creditor of Small Press Distribution, Inc., or if Small Press Distribution, Inc. is in debt to you in any way, take notice that Small Press Distribution, Inc. has commenced proceedings to voluntarily wind up its affairs and dissolve. If you have a claim against Small Press Distribution, you must prove and submit such claim in writing to legal counsel for Small Press Distribution, Inc. at Tovella Dowling, PC, 600 W Broadway, Suite 660, San Diego, CA 92101. All claims must include the following: (1) Your legal name and address; (2) Amount of the claim; (3) Basis for the claim; and (4) any other information you believe may be useful to verify the nature and amount of the claim, including copies of any relevant documents. Failure to submit your claim by August 8, 2024 may result in the barring of any future claims against Small Press Distribution, Inc.
(PLW Jul 19, 26 and Aug 2, 2024)

ECO TINY HOUSES
ADU PREMIUM
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 608242
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) ECO TINY HOUSES, 2.) ADU PREMIUM, located at 3421 HOLLIS ST UNIT A1 OAKLAND, CA 94608, ALAMEDA County.
Mailing Address: 964 46th St APT 233 Emeryville, CA 94608
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
SUPPLYOR LLC
3421 HOLLIS ST UNIT A1
Emeryville, CA 94608
State of Incorporation/Organization: WYOMING
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 06/02/2023
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on July 26 2024.
(PLW Aug 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2024)

GOLDEN BAY MECHANICAL CO.
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 607757
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Golden Bay Mechanical Co., located at 6117 Ledgewood Terrace, Dublin, CA 94568, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
ANDREW YOUNGMIN PAK
6117 Ledgewood Terrace
Dublin, CA, 94568
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on July 08 2024.
(PLW Jul 26, Aug 2, 9 and 16, 2024)

OASIN CLEANING SERVICES
OASIN SERVICES
OASIN LANDSCAPE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 607867
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Oasin Cleaning Services, 2.) Oasin Services, 3.) Oasin Landscape, located at 14568 Chickasaw Way Manteca, CA 95336, San Joaquin County.
This business is conducted by: a Married Couple.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
ANTONIO HERNANDEZ BAUTISTA
14568 Chickasaw Way
Manteca, CA 95336
BERTHA A VEGA MONTOYA
14568 Chickasaw Way
Manteca, CA 95336
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 7/11/2011
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on July 11 2024.
(PLW Jul 26, Aug 2, 9 and 16, 2024)

BYOG
BUILD YOUR OWN GARMENT
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 607331
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) BYOG, 2.) Build Your Own Garment, located at 6918 Sierra Ct. Dublin, CA 94568, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
PRINT INK LLC
6918 Sierra Ct
Dublin, CA 94568
State of Incorporation/Organization: California
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 4/30/2024
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on June 17 2024.
(PLW Jul 12, 19, 26 and Aug 2, 2024)

KORNER'S ROLL N BOWL
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: #607222
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Korner's Roll N Bowl, located at 4363 1st St, Livermore, CA 94551, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
JONG SEOK CHOI
4363 1st St
Livermore, Ca 94551
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on June 11 2024.
(PLW Jul 12, 19, 26 and Aug 2, 2024)

INNOVATIONS HAIR SALON
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 607430
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Innovations Hair Salon, located at 19581 Center Street, Castro Valley, CA 94546, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
ASHLEY KURTZ
8265 Norris Canyon Rd
Castro Valley, CA 94552
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 6/20/24
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on June 24 2024.
(PLW Aug 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2024)

HAYWARD SELF STORAGE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 607983
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Hayward Self Storage, located at 24801 Industrial Blvd. Hayward, CA 94545, Alameda County. Mailing Address: Brinkman Investments LP PO BOX 1769, Cave Creek, AZ 85327.
This business is conducted by: a Limited Partnership.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
SHERI LEE CHEFALO
41311 N. 54th St.
Cave Creek, AZ 85331
VICKI MONTANA
1039 E. Caroline Lane
Tempe, AZ 85284
State of Incorporation/Organization: California
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12/01/2006
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on July 16 2024.
(PLW Aug 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2024)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
Case No.: 24CV079587
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: Mithila Joshi; Chinmay Soman filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
SUHANI MITHILA SOMAN to SUHANI MITHILA JOSHI-SOMAN
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING: 10/11/2024, 9:30am, Dept. 1B of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda located at 1225 Fallon Street, 2nd FL, Oakland, CA 94612.
A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:
PLEASANTON WEEKLY
Date: 6/13/2024
Thomas Nixon
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(PLW Aug 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2024)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
Case No.: 24CV084691
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: KIRA INOUYE filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
TREY DAVID MCINTOSH to TREY DAVID INOUYE-MCINTOSH
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING: 11/15/2024, 9:30am, RENE C. DAVIDSON COURTHOUSE of the Superior Court of California, County of ALAMEDA located at 1225 FALLON STREET, 2ND FL, OAKLAND, CA 94553.
A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:
PLEASANTON WEEKLY
Date: 7/25/2024
THOMAS NIXON
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(PLW Aug 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2024)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
Case No.: 24CV084701
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: Shih Hung Liu filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
JIE YU LIU to ANNIE LIU
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING: 11/22/2024, 9:30 AM, René C. Davidson Courthouse of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda located at 1225 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA 94612.
A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:
PLEASANTON WEEKLY
Date: 7/25/2024
Thomas I. Nixon
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(PLW Aug 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2024)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
Case No.: 24CV083326
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: Kimberly Faye Pangborn filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
KIMBERLY FAYE PANGBORN to KIMBERLY FAYE DREMALAS
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING: November 15, 2024, 9:30 AM, Superior Court of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda County located at Rene C. Davidson Courthouse, 1225 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA 94612.
A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:
PLEASANTON WEEKLY
Date: July 15, 2024
Thomas J. Nixon
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(PLW Jul 26, Aug 2, 9 and 16, 2024)

The Pleasanton Weekly is adjudicated to publish in Alameda County.

- Fictitious Business Name
- Abandonment of Fictitious Business Name
- Name Change
- Partnership Withdrawal or Dissolution
- Petition to Administer Estate - Probate Hearing
- Notice of Bulk Sale
- Legal Summons
- Trustee Sale

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm.

Visit PleasantonWeekly.com/legal_notices/

For assistance email LegalNotices@PleasantonWeekly.com.

Real Estate

Board delays discussion on just-cause evictions, frustrating activists

Following multiple holdups, issue is now set to return to supervisors on Sept. 17

By Cole Reynolds / BCN

A small group of about 25 activists gathered in the plaza outside of the Alameda County Administration Building last week with hand-drawn signs, boxes of sandwiches and plans to persuade the county's Board of Supervisors to pass just-cause protections for tenants of single-family homes.

But just as the rally started, word came in that the supervisors had pushed their discussion on the topic until September. A smattering of boos came from the small crowd as Kristen Hackett, an organizer for My Eden Voice, the tenants' rights group behind the rally, announced the decision.

The board's decision on July 23 to further delay discussion was a gut punch for the group, which organizers said has been pushing for legislation since 2019. And at the rally, the tone shifted as activists scrambled to remake their signs and rewrite their speeches. Hackett encouraged the crowd to bring their anger and their frustration when the rally resumed.

"It's frustrating, and it's really obvious that they don't care," said Les Morones, one of the speakers at the rally. "If they did care, they wouldn't be holding it up all of the time."

COLE REYNOLDS/BAY CITY NEWS

Activist Elena Torres holds a handmade sign outside of the County of Alameda Administration Building on July 23. The Alameda County Board of Supervisors pushed discussions on just cause evictions until September 2024.

In 2019, California passed a statewide bill that prohibits landlords from evicting tenants on a whim, requiring them to provide "just cause" for the eviction. But renters of single-family and mobile homes weren't covered by the just-cause bill, and the state left it up to local governments to extend these protections to those types of renters.

Some Bay Area municipalities have done just that. For example, Hayward passed a bill in 2019 that required just cause evictions for all renters. But renters living in unincorporated communities in the Bay Area don't have a local council to issue those protections. There, arbitrary evictions are rampant, activists said, especially in mobile home communities. So, housing activists from My Eden Voice turned to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

"A lot of renters in unincorporated areas fall through the cracks of the state policy," Hackett said.

The group thought that the board was poised to adopt just-cause protections for single-family renters in March. But with the board deadlocked on the issue, Supervisor Nate Miley, who could have cast a tie-breaking vote, instead abstained, recommending that activists, supervisors and landlords enter a series of meetings to iron out the proposal.

Over the past three months, My Eden Voice had participated in multiple of these ad hoc meetings, Hackett said. Last week's regular meeting was where the board was supposed to present the findings of this process and determine a timeline to vote on the just-cause proposal.

Hackett said that she was frustrated that the process was delayed again, but that the ad hoc meetings weren't very productive anyway. Morones echoed Hackett's frustration at the apparent lack of movement on just cause.

"We've been fighting, and we have gotten not one thing from them," Morones said.

But My Eden Voice is hoping to leverage state pressure to force the board to decide on just-cause protections. California mandates that all of its local governments pass Housing Elements, eight-year plans explaining how they will meet housing needs for all residents.

Alameda County's last plan expired in 2022, and it hasn't implemented a new one since, even as the deadline to do so passed in January 2023. The California Department of Housing and Community Development rejected the county's recent draft of its Housing Element, suggesting, among numerous other things, that it work toward "increasing tenant protections," according to a July 9 letter.

My Eden Voice hopes to convince the Alameda County board that adding extended just-cause protections will help its overdue Housing Element get approved by the state.

"It's time to get this passed," Clancy said. "We don't need to wait any longer."

The board will discuss the just cause protections at its Sept. 17 meeting. But there was a sense of uneasiness amongst some of the My Eden Voice activists who were unsure how the rest of the process would play out. In the meantime, the group's message would stay the same, but it might shout it a little louder and with a little more aggression, said My Eden Voice organizer Maria Miranda.

Many of the speakers at the July 23 rally echoed this urgency, including Elena Torres. In comments translated from Spanish by Miranda, Torres described feeling trapped in seemingly endless cycle of evictions.

"If we keep waiting, if we keep delaying, how much longer until our children are up here fighting for the same thing?" asked Torres. ■

HOME SALES

This week's data represents homes sold during May 13-17 for Pleasanton, Livermore and Dublin, and July 1-5 for San Ramon.

Pleasanton

3079 Bolero Court L. Ware to S. & S. Tnpathy for $1,010,000

827 Bonde Court Afeyan-Mardirian Trust to P. & T. Murphy for $1,780,000

2720 Corte Vera Cruz Sunkad Family Trust to X. & X. Shan for $2,035,000

505 Gerard Court Ragsdale Living Trust to L. & G. Caudle for $1,487,500

3548 Glacier Court K. & J. Jenezon to K. & R. Abeyrathna for $1,485,000

1191 Kolln Street Inman Trust to E. & R. Patel for $1,330,000

2683 Lin Gate Court B. Xiao to X. & X. Jiang for $2,201,000

2652 Maria Street Visenio Family Trust to Y. & R. Xu for $1,765,000

3555 Norton Way #U15 S. Setra to C. Hansen for $910,000

1192 Paladin Way Chang & Jang Family Trust to Zepeda Living Trust for $4,708,000

1980 Palmer Drive B. & T. Wilson to R. & A. Jayanthilal for $2,655,000

3827 Phoebe Court B. Garcia to Cerri Trust for $2,350,000

2428 Via De Los Milagros K. & S. Macmanus to Rao & Formanova Living Trust for $2,560,000

789 View Drive L. & P. Jupp to J. & B. Mccloskey for $2,630,000

Livermore

870 Alison Circle Marshall Trust to G. & L. Pereira for $1,535,000

4344 Bellmawr Drive M. & G. Block to S. & I. Yusuf for $1,850,000

512 Brookfield Drive Stanley Trust to Godfrey Trust for $1,000,000

1430 Calvary Lane H. Hanneken to A. & J. Wheeler for $2,540,000

315 Garden Common C. Hwang to A. & A. Forseth for $715,000

5880 Idlewild Avenue K. Le to R. & L. Mandadapu for $1,125,000

1171 Innsbruck Street S. & S. Hundal to S. & R. Bussa for $1,551,000

741 South K Street M. & W. Dean to L. & D. Chi for $1,690,000

4844 Kimberley Common Meloy Trust to J. & Q. Fang for $970,000

404 Knottingham Circle C. Marshall to T. & D. Ensminger for $1,600,000

4844 Libra Court S. & J. Knoles to A. & M. Sivanandham for $1,151,000

1957 Linden Street Lynn Family Trust to M. Miehe for $770,000

3816 Loch Lomand Way A. Koth to Kumar Trust for $1,480,000

804 Lucerne Street Riggin Trust to T. Trisno for $1,785,000

1379 Meadow Court Cooper Family Trust to Salas Living Trust for $1,400,000

1402 Melanie Way M. Weaver to V. & A. Ranganath for $1,690,000

15 Meritage Common #203 Baldini Trust to A. Nguyen for $935,000

1929 Monterey Drive K. & C. St.Pierre to J. & D. Hu for $620,000

1001 Murrieta Boulevard #52 X. Guo to L. Munoz for $560,000

170 North N Street #100 Thomas Family Trust to Z. & M. Wahab for $690,000

6395 Owl Way Silva Trust to R. & P. Pal for $1,550,000

1301 Pegan Common L. Farhat-Corbett to T. & A. Cohn for $1,750,000

1003 Redondo Way L. & J. Ruckteschler to M. Diaz for $1,370,000

2216 Ryan Street Foreverhome Properties LLC to L. & J. Dominguez for $2,650,000

581 Selby Lane #1 T. Ho to S. & M. Barakzai for $1,050,000

1430 Spruce Street Q. Truong to W. & T. Cheung for $1,052,000

1726 Spruce Street Boschetti Living Trust to B. & S. Feinberg for $1,100,000

963 Ventura Avenue Paisley Family Trust to Avery Property Management LLC for $750,000

Dublin

5438 Arnold Road E. Choi to M. & J. Lee for $1,190,000.00

7771 Bloomfield Terrace Dasilva-Desouza Trust to R. & A. Jiao for $2,720,000

8325 Creekside Drive T. & C. Pickett to N. & J. Emmanuel for $2,615,000

6854 Doreen Court Ruland Family Trust to D. Radi for $1,436,000

8429 Locust Place V. Ruskovoloshin to R. & S. Raman for $1,315,000

7568 Silvertree Lane #17 M. & J. Metcalf to A. Bellotti for $850,000

4843 Swinford Court N. Carpenter to J. & C. Wilson for $1,065,000

4359 Table Mountain Road J. Lee to S. & K. Goenka for $1,960,000

2202 Valentano Drive G. Sankararaman to Pankaj & Dena Trust for $2,735,000

San Ramon

9085 Alcosta Boulevard #409 W. Wu to F. Nekoogar for $525,000

1036 Applewood Drive U. Kalavathi to N. & K. Shaligram for $1,155,000

469 Bridle Court Forkash Living Trust to A. & B. Puli for $3,200,000

Source: California REsource

SALES AT A GLANCE

Pleasanton (May 13-17)

Total sales reported: 14
Lowest sale reported: $910,000
Highest sale reported: $4,708,000
Average sales reported: $2,064,750

Livermore (May 13-17)

Total sales reported: 28
Lowest sale reported: $560,000
Highest sale reported: $2,650,000
Average sales reported: $1,318,892

Dublin (May 13-17)

Total sales reported: 9
Lowest sale reported: $850,000
Highest sale reported: $2,735,000
Average sales reported: $1,765,111

San Ramon (July 1-5)

Total sales reported: 14
Lowest sale reported: $525,000
Highest sale reported: $3,200,000
Average sales reported: $1,449,500

Source: California REsource

VENEMA HOMES

EXPERIENCE ✦ EXCELLENCE

It Matters Who You Work With

Transformation Specialists...

"We had a fantastic experience with Liz Venema, Alexis Venema, and the entire Venema Homes team. From our initial meeting regarding selling our home to closing on our current home we had a stress free and seamless experience. The team is knowledgable, professional, detail oriented, focused, kind, and caring. I recommend Venema Homes to anyone buying or selling property! You truly will experience excellence."

-Kristen M.

Expertise.com 2024 | Pleasanton Weekly Readers' Choice | NCHR Elite Agent KW | KELLERWILLIAMS Luxury INTERNATIONAL | Keller Williams Top 1% Agent Tri-Valley | Neighborhood Favorite nextdoor

LIZ VENEMA, FOUNDING LUXURY MEMBER, KWTV

VenemaHomes.com | Liz@VenemaHomes.com | 925.413.6544 | 660 Main Street, Pleasanton | DRE# 01922957

JUST LISTED — OPEN HOUSE 8/3 & 8/4 FROM 1-4PM

455 Covellite Lane, Livermore

A 3 BD, 2 BA home with an updated open floor plan on a spacious 10,157 SqFt Lot. Offers side yard access and wonderful evening sunset views from the backyard.

Presented at $1,300,000

KRIS MOXLEY REAL ESTATE

NEW PRICE REDUCTION
OPEN 8/3 & 8/4 1-4PM

138 Avocado Ct, San Ramon

Located within a court is this 4 BD, 2 BA with 2,003 SqFt. Enhanced with the home's family room addition offering vaulted open wood beam ceilings.

Original list price $1,750,000
New price $1,680,000

SOLD IN ONE DAY

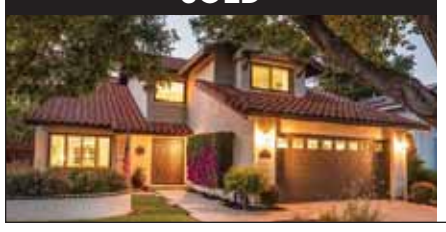
"My sellers are thrilled to have sold so quickly"

4231 Jensen St, Pleasanton

A one-story charmer starter home offering an open floor plan with original hardwood floors. 3 BD, 2 BA with 1,160 SqFt.

SOLD at $1,150,000

SOLD

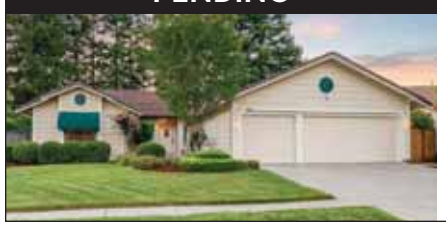


6259 Corte Fuego, Pleasanton

This wonderful home will soon welcome the new homeowners. A 4 BD, 3 BA with 2,381 SqFt, featuring one BD and full BA on the main level, that has been updated throughout.

Listed at $2,250,000
SOLD at $2,260,000

PENDING



5943 Arthur Dr, Pleasanton

Welcome to this 3 BD, 2 BA with 1,907 SqFt & updated throughout. The private backyard is an oasis to enjoy. All resting on a 9,392 SqFt lot. Complimented with a 3-CAR GARAGE. A block from Pleasanton's Sports Park and its 2.5 mi. walking path.

Presented at $1,900,000

COMING SOON

Pleasanton 3 BD | 2 BA starter home with 1,400 SqFt

Pleasanton 3 BD | 2 BA highly updated both inside and out

Kris Moxley

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COMPASS