

Pleasanton Weekly

NONPROFIT LOCAL NEWS FOR THE TRI-VALLEY

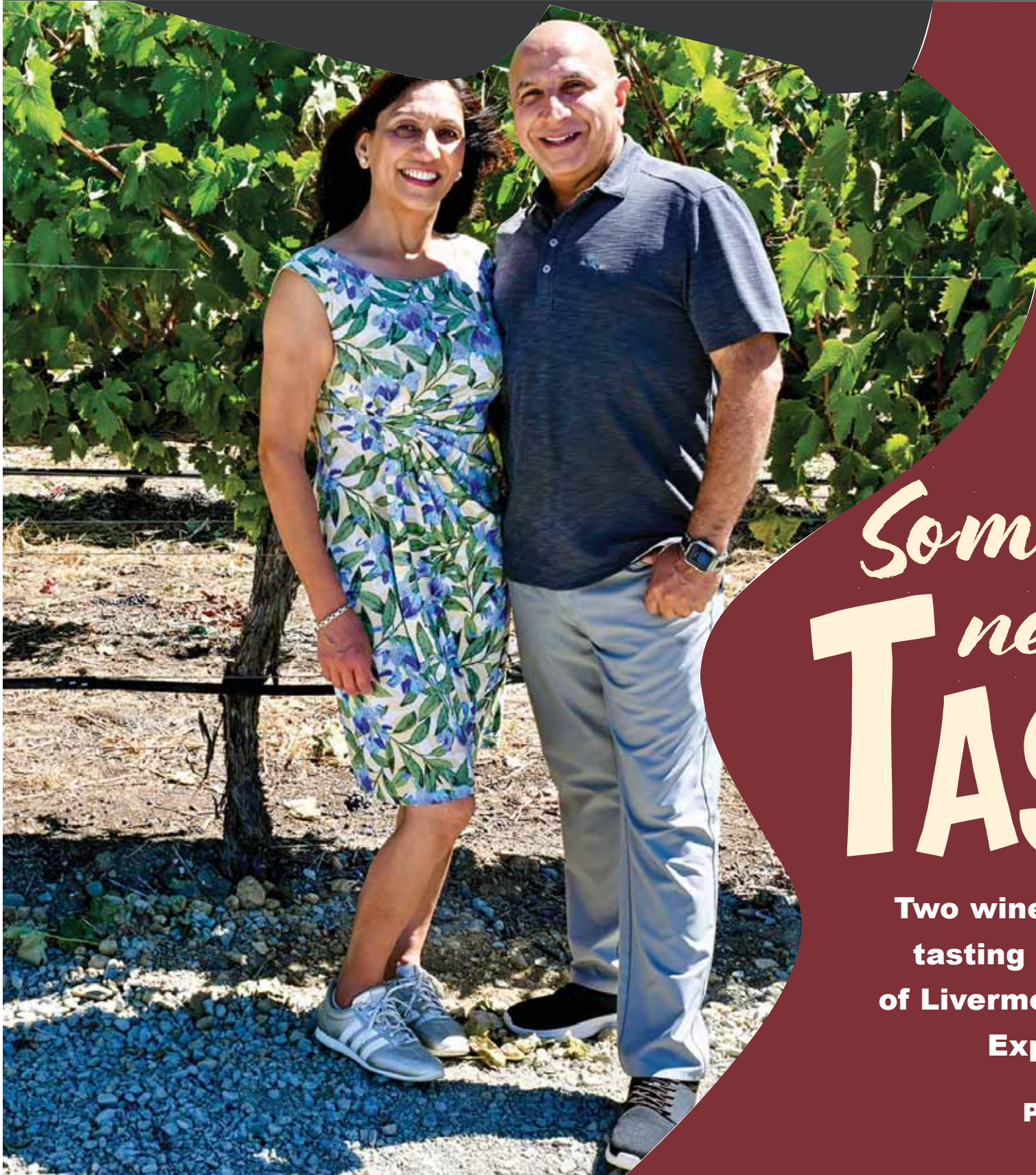
Cultural
celebrations

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Something new to TASTE

Two wineries welcome
tasting rooms ahead
of Livermore Valley Wine
Experience

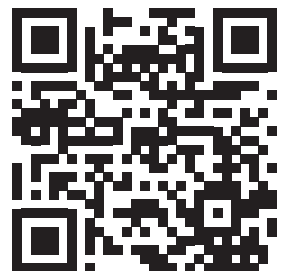
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Governor Newsom Sign AB2222 to Support Local Journalism



California has lost more than 12,000 journalists since 2002.
Contact Governor Newsom and ask him to sign AB 2222 to
support local journalism.



WHAT A WEEK



By JEREMY WALSH

925 GIVES

Today is an important 24 hours for nonprofit fundraising in the Tri-Valley.

Three Valleys Community Foundation is holding its second annual 925 GIVES campaign, which aptly falls on Sept. 25 in reference to the 925 area code that most of the eligible organizations operate out of.

With 85 nonprofits serving residents in Alameda and Contra Costa counties on the participant list (including our very own Embarcadero Media Foundation, East Bay Division), 925 GIVES takes a blitz approach to generate a vital infusion of donations at the end of the third quarter of the year — offering prize incentives, donor matching, friendly challenges including one in honor of the late Dolly Parton, and administrative and branding support to engage nonprofits, their contributors and the community at-large.

“Now, in our second year, our focus is on expanding that movement by welcoming even more first-time donors, introducing people to remarkable nonprofits they may never have discovered otherwise, and demonstrating that philanthropy belongs to everyone,” 3VCF President and CEO Kelly Bowers said in a press release.

“Whether someone gives \$25 or \$2,500, every contribution helps strengthen the organizations that make our communities healthier, more vibrant, and more resilient. Together, thousands of individual acts of generosity become a powerful force for lasting local change,” Bowers added.

3VCF, a community fund for the Tri-Valley, is looking to build on the success of last year’s inaugural 925 GIVES — which raised more than \$117,000 for 87 nonprofits in our area.

The 2026 campaign offers a flexible giving window, open from Aug. 15 through Sept. 30, so fundraising is already underway: 137 donors have contributed \$26,237 to 36 nonprofits as of press time, positioning 3VCF 28% of the way toward its overall goal of (you guessed it) \$92,500.

The main event arrived today, with prize incentives and sponsored matching gifts awarded throughout the day from 12:01 a.m. through midnight.

Real-time donation tracking and a public leaderboard are available on the website. You may notice hashtags on social media designed to draw eyes to the campaign: #925Gives, #GiveWhereYouLive and #925GivesGrantsAndGrows.

In our case, donations up to \$10,000 to Embarcadero Media Foundation via 925 GIVES will be matched dollar for dollar thanks to a generous anonymous supporter. That money will go directly toward our foundation’s high-quality local journalism such as stories produced by the Pleasanton Weekly, reigning General Excellence winner in the California Journalism Awards.

One of the 3VCF contests today pays homage to late singer-songwriter Dolly Parton, a world-renowned philanthropist, since Sept. 25 is now designated as Dolly Parton Day in California — in honor of her hit song and movie, “9 to 5”. The foundation will award \$925 to the nonprofit that receives the highest number of online donations from unique individuals between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

There are so many impactful nonprofits on the 925 GIVES participant list, local organizations large, small and everywhere in between.

“One of our greatest aspirations for 925 GIVES is to broaden the circle of philanthropy while shining a brighter spotlight on the extraordinary nonprofits serving our region every day,” Bowers said.

“Many residents are passionate about giving but simply don’t know the full range of organizations making a difference in their own backyard. 925 GIVES creates that connection, bringing together donors, volunteers, businesses, and nonprofits through a shared commitment to strengthening our communities,” she added. “As this annual tradition continues to grow, so too will its ability to generate sustainable support, deepen civic engagement, and inspire a new generation of local philanthropists.”

Its signature fundraising campaign comes during an important time for 3VCF.

The organization, in partnership with the Tri-Valley Nonprofit Alliance, recently launched its inaugural NextGen Learning and Leadership Program, an immersive experience for 24 area high school students designed to “empower the next generation of community changemakers”.

“Whether participants hope to launch a nonprofit, grow an existing community initiative, or simply become more effective civic leaders, the six-month cohort will provide the practical knowledge, hands-on experiences and professional relationships needed to make a lasting impact,” the nonprofits said in a joint press release this summer.

A key networking experience for the students will be the first NextGen Mixer on Oct. 28, held alongside 3VCF’s 2026 Community Health Impact Grant celebration event from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Roundhouse Market & Conference Center at Bishop Ranch in San Ramon.

“Generous corporations and individuals give, 3VCF grants those resources to worthy nonprofits doing critical frontline work, and together we grow the impact of that collective generosity across our region,” Bowers said. “This evening brings the full circle of community philanthropy together in one place.”

Learn more about the foundation at 3vcf.org. To donate via 925 GIVES, visit 925gives.org. ■

About the Cover

San Ramon residents Dimple and Ray Sharma have opened Shanti Winery in the Livermore Valley. Photo by Chuck Deckert.

Cover design by Mary Watanabe.

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Do you have any good tips for keeping your life well-organized and manageable, so that you feel overwhelmed as infrequently as possible?



Linda Jordan
Retired

Well, now that I’m retired, I try to let go of a lot of things that my lifestyle no longer requires, like my work clothes because I just don’t need them anymore. It feels great to de-clutter and to donate items from my past life to others who can make good use of them.



Alexis Teague
Barber

I always prep the night before, for whatever is coming up the next morning and throughout the day. Being well-prepared for each day and what I can expect it to bring puts a good complexion on how the day is likely to turn out. I also like to say my daily affirmations because they keep me feeling grounded.



David Terry
Retired

I like to take a look around my house at all the things I have and ask myself, “Am I really ever going to use this again?” If the answer is “No”, then I give it away. For example, I just made a large donation of books to the Pleasanton Public Library. At the stage of life I’m in, less is definitely more.



Lloyce Jaunkalnietis
Retired marketing director

Every time I pick something up in my house, I always put it back in the exact same spot I took it from as soon as I’m done using it. Everything has its own particular, designated space. That way I always know where everything is when I’m looking for something. Unfortunately, I didn’t do this for the first 30 years of my life. Instead, I had a mess all the time.

—Compiled by Nancy and Jeff Lewis



Guin Van Dyke
Property manager

My strategic words of wisdom, especially when moving or downsizing, is to remain present and involved. Very present and very involved. For example, hire a reputable mover, but stick around and supervise in order to make sure every box is properly labeled.

Have a Streetwise question? Email editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

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Scan with camera to donate today.

Through our journalism, we have chronicled the history of Pleasanton, held its leaders accountable and kept residents informed for more than 25 years.

Be part of *Three Valleys Community Foundation’s “925 GIVES,”* a regional fundraising campaign, and help our nonprofit newsroom boldly step into the future.

We need your help! Please join our campaign and help us reach our goal of \$25,000.

The first \$10,000 in donations will be matched dollar for dollar.

And get ready to give! You can donate at any time by visiting our Embarcadero Media Foundation / Tri-Valley page on 925Gives.org, but the big day is Sept. 25, with drawings and prizes for donors and nonprofits.



DIGEST

Election forums

The Pleasanton Weekly and Livermore Vine are holding three candidate forums next week as part of this new organization's 11-part series this fall before the Nov. 3 election.

The seven candidates for Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District are participating in a forum from 6-8 p.m. Monday (Sept. 28) in the LVJUSD boardroom at 685 E. Jack London Blvd. This forum will also be livestreamed.

Then on Tuesday (Sept. 29), Pleasanton voters will be able to hear from the two candidates for mayor from 6-7 p.m. and then the four candidates for City Council Districts 1 and 3, speaking together from 7:10-8:30 p.m. The in-person event will be in the council chambers at 200 Old Bernal Ave.

The two candidates for Livermore City Council District 2 will participate in a virtual livestream forum from 6-7 p.m. Wednesday (Sept. 30).

Video recordings will be made available after each event.

Highway 84 work

Caltrans is planning to fully close Highway 84 (also known as Niles Canyon Road) at the Arroyo de la Laguna Bridge in Sunol this weekend for 14 hours so construction crews can install support beams for the new bridge.

According to its website, the transportation agency will be closing the bridge from 6 p.m. this Saturday (Sept. 26) until 8 a.m. the next day.

"Crews will use a crane to lift and place six precast concrete girders that will form the structural support for the new bridge deck," according to Caltrans. "A full closure is necessary to provide crews with a safe work area for the crane operation and girder installation."

This work is part of the agency's overall goal to replace the aging bridge, which was first built in 1939.

POPS on the Green

The Livermore-Amador Symphony is bringing back its free POPS on the Green concert this Saturday afternoon.

Located on the lawn in front of the Bankhead Theater, the annual concert will feature live performances by the symphony orchestra, as well as Element 116, a local teen jazz band from Livermore.

The event is scheduled to take place from 3-4 p.m. ■

Corrections

The Weekly desires to correct all significant errors. To request a correction, call the editor at (925) 600-0840 or email: editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

Pleasanton to rezone three sites for almost 1,500 new housing units

Planning Commission laments recommendation to City Council in line with settlement agreement

By Christian Trujano

The Pleasanton Planning Commission unanimously voted earlier this month to recommend that the City Council rezone three commercial properties in the city for high-density residential housing, which could result in nearly 1,500 new units if developers decide to build at those sites.

The decision, which was heavily debated during the Sept. 9 commission meeting, was not an easy one for the commissioners — but it was one that they all agreed had

to be done in order to satisfy a settlement agreement brought forward by a housing coalition that challenged the city's most recent Housing Element.

"We, the Planning Commission, and city staff are not the ones who came up with the fact that this is what we're doing as a city," Commissioner Dave Jagoe said during the meeting. "What we're here to do is (say) 'OK, we may not agree with this, but if we're going to, these are the three sites that we would like to select.'"

Three years ago, the city adopted

its 2023-2031 Housing Element, a state-mandated document that outlines how the city plans to accommodate new housing for various levels of income. The document was later certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development in September 2023 after the city made additional revisions required by the state.

However, right after the state certified the city's document, the Housing Action Coalition — an affordable housing advocacy nonprofit — sent a letter to the city

which claimed the city's Housing Element was inadequate.

Shweta Bonn, a senior planner with the city, said the fundamental complaint was related to the sites inventory list and the adequacy of the sites. She said the coalition challenged the fact that the city did not obtain approval from the property owners at some of the sites from the original list, even though she said the city was not legally required to do so.

She said the other issue the

See **REZONE** on Page 8



COURTESY PUSD

District officials, administrators and staff pose for a photo during a Sept. 14 ribbon cutting ceremony at Fairlands Elementary School commemorating the completion of two transitional kindergarten and kindergarten expansion projects.

PUSD celebrates TK/K expansions at Fairlands and Donlon schools

'Spaces where they can learn, play, connect and thrive'

By Christian Trujano

Pleasanton Unified School District officials, staff and community members gathered last week to celebrate the opening of new transitional kindergarten and kindergarten facilities at both Donlon and Fairlands elementary schools.

The facilities, which were funded by bond dollars, include new classrooms, playgrounds and other general site improvements at each school site that the district said are designed to support its youngest students.

"The early years provide an important foundation for everything that follows," PUSD Superintendent Maurice Ghysels said in a news release.

"As access to Transitional Kindergarten has expanded, we have also invested in environments designed around the developmental needs of 4- and 5-year-olds, helping ensure that our youngest students begin their PUSD experience in spaces where they can learn, play, connect and thrive," Ghysels added.

The planning and design for

each of the school site projects first started in 2023, according to the district.

Upgrading and expanding transitional kindergarten spaces across all PUSD elementary schools was one of the key projects listed under the \$395 million Measure I school bond program, which voters approved in 2022. Since the bond's approval, the district has been working on the project designs and construction for all the schools.

See **SCHOOLS** on Page 7

Golden mussels detected in Del Valle

New boat rules put in place at Livermore lake

By Christian Trujano

The East Bay Regional Park District has enacted a 30-day quarantine for boats that launch at Lake Del Valle after highly invasive golden mussels were detected in the reservoir in Livermore, the agency announced Monday.

This specific species of bivalve mollusks have been contaminating other bodies of water across the state in the last two years, which is why the park district wants to contain the spread through the quarantine.

"Golden mussels are similar to quagga (*Dreissena bugensis*) and zebra (*Dreissena polymorpha*) mussels but can thrive in water with much lower calcium levels, putting local water sources and aquatic ecosystems at greater risk of invasion," EBRPD said in a press release Monday.

These mussels, according to the park district, are a species native to rivers and creeks in coastal Asia and parts of South America. But despite its seemingly innocuous name, the species can cause quite a number of problems.

According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the spread of golden mussels could lead to a number of environmental, recreational and economic impacts,

See **MUSSELS** on Page 11

Ex-GM sues East Bay Parks for retaliation, discrimination

‘Board is confident the matter will be handled responsibly and effectively,’ district says

By JEREMY WALSH

Nearly a year’s worth of legal dispute between East Bay Regional Park District and its former general manager has reached an apex, with Sabrina Landreth filing a lawsuit this month over her abrupt departure from the public agency late last year.

Landreth, formerly city administrator in Oakland and city manager in Emeryville before leading EBRPD for more than four years, accuses the park district and its Board of Directors of whistleblower retaliation, gender-based discrimination and violation of the California Equal Pay Act, among her five causes of action.

“The retaliatory conduct also included subjecting Plaintiff to a pretextual performance review process designed to manufacture false allegations of bad performance, to undermine her accomplishments at the District and her professional experience otherwise,” Landreth’s attorney, P. Bobby Shukla, wrote in a civil complaint filed in Alameda County Superior Court on Sept. 4.

“The course of retaliatory conduct was intentionally designed to create working conditions that were so intolerable that a reasonable person in Plaintiff’s position

had no reasonable alternative except to resign,” Shukla said, adding that the objectionable actions included board members pressuring Landreth to engage in unlawful conduct.

EBRPD has not yet responded to the lawsuit in court, but a spokesperson offered a comment on behalf of the district when contacted by the Pleasanton Weekly.

“The Park District Board remains focused on serving the public, protecting the extraordinary parks and open spaces that define the East Bay, and strengthening the Park District for the future,” the district stated. “We have strong confidence in the leadership team guiding the organization and in its ability to carry forward the Park District’s mission, values, and long-term vision.”

“While the claims by the former general manager move through the appropriate process, the Board is confident the matter will be handled responsibly and effectively,” the statement concluded.

The two sides are scheduled for



Sabrina Landreth

their first court appearance on April 13 at 2:30 p.m. in Department 16 of the René C. Davidson Courthouse in Oakland.

Landreth — whose representation did not respond to a request for comment by Monday morning — seeks compensatory damages, attorneys fees and costs of the lawsuit, declaratory and injunctive relief ordered by the court, civil penalties, and unpaid wages, interest and liquidated damages.

Joining EBRPD as general manager in March 2021, becoming the first woman to ever hold the post in the history of the agency that touts itself as the largest regional park district in the United States, Landreth worked for more than three years without internal strife and “stellar” performance reviews until problems began to arise in the time after the 2024 election, according to her lawsuit.

After responding to complaints from female staff against two board directors in December 2024 and January 2025, Landreth alleges a pattern of retaliatory conduct ensued for more than a year and half that left her no realistic choice but to resign in the prime of her career.

She stepped down suddenly on Nov. 6, 2025 — two days after her performance evaluation was a key

subject on the board’s closed-session agenda. Her resignation took formal effect in February, while Landreth took paid time off and did not work for the district in interim.

Landreth filed a tort claim with the district on Feb. 11, after her employment officially ended, which laid out many of her initial allegations against EBRPD. The board rejected the claim on March 26, according to her lawsuit. She’s also filed a complaint with the California Civil Rights Department.

The former general manager alleges that her relationship with the board began to deteriorate after she received — and acted upon — complaints from female employees claiming board directors Colin Coffey and Dennis Waespi harassed and bullied them while treating male employees more favorably.

After Landreth moved to provide training to directors in March 2025, Coffey and Waespi conspired with a majority of the board to retaliate against her, according to the lawsuit. That group included Director John Mercurio, whose ward includes the San Ramon Valley, and Director Olivia Sanwong, who represents Pleasanton, Livermore and Dublin.

Landreth’s laundry list of allegations includes the directors refusing to meet with her individually, ignoring her emails, making false claims about her performance,

openly laughing when she spoke and treating her “with open hostility” in public meetings and closed sessions.

Coffey and Waespi both denied the accusations when interviewed by the Pleasanton Weekly in February after Landreth lodged her tort claim.

“I believe what is happening is that Ms. Landreth, now an obviously disgruntled former employee, is seeking to monetize what is otherwise an uncompensated voluntary resignation. To do so she is grasping at the proverbial straws,” Coffey said at the time.

“I’m surprised by the allegations that she’s made against the district and some of my colleagues and myself,” Waespi told the Weekly in February. “I deny any of the accusations of gender bias and retaliation, and being that it’s an act of legal matter, I really can’t comment on specific allegations at this time.”

Landreth also accuses the board of retaliating against her for failing to engage in unlawful conduct, such as awarding large contracts outside of the required legal process, directly hiring the board’s preferred candidate for clerk of the board, violating the Brown Act, engaging in nepotism and providing gifts to public officials such as helicopter ridealongs.

See **PARKS** on Page 11

Tri-Valley Haven’s Pace for Peace back next weekend

Attendees can choose to participate in either 5K walk, 10K run or 500-meter Kids Dash

By CHRISTIAN TRUJANO

Tri-Valley Haven’s annual Pace for Peace walk/run is set to return next month starting from the nonprofit’s community building, located at 3663 Pacific Ave. in Livermore.

Now in its 29th year, the nonprofit’s annual fundraising event seeks to raise money for the many different services it provides to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and homelessness in the Tri-Valley.

“Every step taken at Pace for Peace helps strengthen the safety net for survivors in our community,” Carolina Alaniz, Tri-Valley Haven’s director of domestic violence services, said in a press release.

“Each year, Tri-Valley Haven provides safety, support, and hope to hundreds of women and children seeking refuge from domestic violence,” Alaniz continued. “This

event not only raises critical funds, but also sends a powerful message to survivors that they are not alone and that their community stands with them.”

The event next Saturday (Oct. 3), which is being held during national Domestic Violence Awareness Month, will feature a 5K walk, a 10K run or a 500-meter Kids Dash that attendees can choose from when signing up.

“The wheelchair-accessible event welcomes participants of all ages and abilities, with group and student discounts available,” the press release states.

According to the nonprofit, this year’s theme, “Run to Build Lives,” reflects Tri-Valley Haven’s “commitment to helping survivors and families move toward safety, stability, and brighter futures.”

For more information, or to sign up for the event, visit trivalleyhaven.org. ■

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PUSD advocacy efforts result in AB 1204 not advancing

Ghysels says bill would have compounded Pleasanton's budget challenges

BY CHRISTIAN TRUJANO

The Pleasanton Unified School District, along with many other districts statewide, celebrated the legislative death of Assembly Bill 1204 during this past session in Sacramento.

The bill, which proposed several changes to the way school districts receive state funding, was widely opposed by educators and district leaders who continue to advocate for better funding mechanisms as they face ongoing budget challenges.

"The decision not to advance AB 1204 does not itself provide new funding to PUSD, but it avoids a change that we believed could have compounded an existing structural funding challenge over time," PUSD Superintendent Maurice Ghysels said in a statement to the Pleasanton Weekly.

"That is especially meaningful after three challenging budget years, when comparatively low per-student funding, declining enrollment and rising costs contributed to nearly \$25 million in budget reductions," he continued. "We have taken significant steps to strengthen our fiscal position and remain focused on sustaining that progress."

AB 1204 — authored by

Assemblymember David Alvarez, a Democrat who represents most of the southwestern portion of San Diego County — wanted to make various changes to the state's Local Control Funding Formula.

The LCFF, which was enacted around 2014, established "uniform grade span grants in place of the myriad of previously existing K—12 funding streams, including revenue limits, general purpose block grants, and most state categorical programs," for school districts and charter schools, according to the California Department of Education.

However, that formula hasn't always worked in favor of districts like PUSD that, according to Ghysels, are funded in the bottom 10% of school districts across California. He said this means PUSD receives, "less funding per student than nine out of 10 unified school districts in California, while Pleasanton is one of the highest-cost areas in the state."

"Under California's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), districts receive a base level of per-student funding with additional grant funding provided for low-income students, English learners, and foster youth," he said. "Pleasanton has comparatively fewer students in those

categories and therefore receives less of that additional funding."

This is one of the many reasons PUSD and other school districts across the Tri-Valley and the state joined a coalition called Raise the Base, which calls for legislators to raise the base level of funding for public schools in California.

Part of those advocacy efforts included having district leaders join in opposition against AB 1204.

According to the bill summary, AB 1204 specifically wanted to increase supplemental grant funding and expand concentration grant eligibility; establish a minimum annual LCFF cost-of-living adjustment, along with other future regional cost adjustments; and create a "phased transition towards a revised LCFF funding structure beginning in the 2025-26 fiscal year."

One of those district leaders who joined others like Ghysels at a June 15 Senate Standing Committee on Appropriations meeting to voice their opposition to the bill was Dianne Jones, president of the Fremont Unified School District.

During the meeting, Jones touched on several issues she and her colleagues had with the bill, including one of the main ones being how

Fremont, PUSD and other school districts continue to face budget challenges.

"When LCFF was adopted, only about five school districts were statistically underfunded. Today, that number has grown to more than one third of California school districts serving over 1.2 million students," Jones said during the committee meeting.

"While we are grateful that Assemblymember Alvarez recognizes the need for LCFF reform and the intent of AB 1204 is to raise public school funding, many of our member districts are opposed to the proposed adjustments to supplemental and concentration grants," she added. "These adjustments would severely diminish the funds available to raise the base funding levels of all school districts, including those most underfunded and would cause more extreme funding disparities throughout the state."

Now, almost two years after it was first introduced in February 2025, the state's Senate Standing Committee on Appropriations decided in August to hold the bill, which means it failed to get sufficient votes to pass out of committee and will not advance in this year's legislative session, according to a legislative

information guide.

According to the district's Aug. 26 E-Connect newsletter, the move also means that because this was the second year of the bill's life, it will not move forward in its current form.

For school districts like PUSD, it was seen as a huge win.

"AB 1204 would have increased the share of funding distributed through those additional grants for higher-need students, and our concern was that, over time, this could have widened existing funding disparities and left already underfunded districts like PUSD further behind," Ghysels said.

"We strongly support additional funding for students with greater needs," he added. "We believe the more sustainable and equitable approach is to strengthen the LCFF base grant, which increases funding for all students and, under the existing formula, also results in proportionally greater funding for students with higher needs."

He said that's why PUSD will continue to work with other school districts as part of the Raise the Base coalition to "advocate for stronger LCFF base funding and a more sustainable and equitable approach to funding California's public schools." ■

SCHOOLS

Continued from Page 5

Following the design phase, the district and its contractors began construction around the same time in January 2025, and finished construction right as school came back from summer this year — the school district hosted the ribbon-cutting ceremony long after construction was done at both schools this fall.

Over at Fairlands Elementary, students came back to four new classrooms, which included new student restrooms, and two new playgrounds.

According to the district, these "larger, age-appropriate spaces can serve both TK and Kindergarten students, providing enhanced opportunities for learning, supervision, collaboration, and play while creating a safe and engaging foundation for students' early educational experience."

"For many children, TK and kindergarten are where their relationship with school begins," Fairlands principal Heidi Deeringhoff said in the news release. "These new classrooms and play spaces were created at the scale of our youngest learners, giving them welcoming places to explore, learn, build friendships, and begin to see themselves as part of a school community."

Donlon Elementary similarly received three new classrooms, which also included new student

restrooms, that were larger and "age-appropriate" in order to accommodate both TK and kindergarten students. In addition to the new classrooms, Donlon also saw improvements to the school's parking lot and a new playground.

"These new spaces will be home to so many important firsts for our Donlon Cubs — first friendships, first discoveries, and countless moments of learning and growth," Donlon principal Kristina Brown said in a press statement. "We are incredibly grateful to our staff and families for their flexibility throughout construction and excited to see these facilities serving students for years to come."

According to the district, both projects used funding from Measure I and Measure II, the \$270 million general obligation bond that voters approved in 2016. The total project cost for the Fairlands upgrades was about \$13.5 million, while the total cost for the Donlon improvements was about \$11.8 million.

"These projects serve students at such a formative stage of their lives," Laurie Walker, vice president for the Pleasanton school board, said in the news release. "We are deeply grateful to Pleasanton voters for making these improvements possible through Measures I and II, and to the many teams whose planning, expertise, and hard work brought these wonderful new spaces to life." ■



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Childcare facility expands amid lawsuit over toddler's death

Building Kidz receives permission from state for increased capacity, younger children under fresh license

By JUDE STRZEMP

A childcare center in Dublin, found by the state responsible for the death of a toddler last year, received the green light recently for a change of ownership licensing conversion that also expands its capacity and permitted age range.

The facility at hand is Building Kidz of Dublin, located at 6351 Dublin Blvd.

Last year, the business and associated entities were hit with a wrongful death lawsuit in the case of 2-year-old Matthew Bonneau Jr., who was pronounced dead at a local hospital on April 15, 2025, shortly after being found unresponsive at Building Kidz of Dublin. A company spokesperson previously denied all allegations of the lawsuit.

The California Department of Social Services case tracking system sent an email alert last week

that the facility had closed, but the notification appears to have been triggered by the change in ownership and new license — as Building Kidz looked to be open for business as usual on Sept. 16.

The new ownership structure is unclear.

As a result of the licensing change, the facility is permitted for a capacity of 84 individuals, up from 60. It also gained permission to care for children from birth.

Building Kidz officials did not respond for comment regarding the identity of the business owners.

Officials at the CDSS did not respond for comment either.

“It looks like a technical change, but this is something that we would need to get involved in the litigation and ask them about,” said J. Gary Gwilliam, the family’s attorney. “We just want to make sure that whatever is going on here, they’re not trying to hide the

circumstances of this pretty aggravated case of allowing a child to die when they’re under their custody and control.”

Since its initial licensing in 2022, Building Kidz Family Of Dublin, LLC has been identified by a sole number (No. 015700583). The LLC maintained this code until Sept. 5, wherein the facility “closed” for a single license conversion, according to the CDSS.

Three days prior, CDSS officials visited Building Kidz for a change of ownership pre-licensing inspection and by Sept. 4, the LLC was licensed under a new facility number (No. 015700704), according to the business profile from the CDSS.

Through the licensing change, Building Kidz went from a daycare center to a single licensed childcare center.

The licensee remains as Building Kidz Family Of Dublin, LLC, whose partners have remained

consistent since June 2022, according to company statements currently available from the California Secretary of State.

While under its previous licensing number, the CDSS in April found Building Kidz responsible for the death of a child on April 15, 2025.

The CDSS report did not identify the deceased child, but Gwilliam previously confirmed to the Pleasanton Weekly that the investigation pertained to Bonneau’s death.

Also earlier this year, a spokesperson for Building Kidz said the company would appeal the CDSS determination.

One day after Bonneau’s death, Shubra Gupta was noted in a CDSS report as the facility administrator. Gupta was noted once again in the role in a report Sept. 2 for a change of ownership pre-licensing inspection. In between those periods,

Pallavi Parvataraju was recorded as the facility administrator, as stated in documentation from the CDSS Community Care Licensing Division.

Nearly a year since initiating a wrongful death lawsuit in pursuit of a jury trial for damages, the Bonneau family is looking toward a case management conference next Tuesday (Sept. 29).

The case names entities responsible as Building Kidz Family Of Dublin LLC, doing business as Building Kidz Of Dublin; Building Kidz, Inc.; Building Kidz Worldwide, LLC; Building Kidz Properties, LLC; Brilliant Minds Academy, Inc, Doing Business As Brilliant Minds Academy And Brilliant Minds Investments LLC.

“We believe that this is not only a case of negligence, but a case of gross negligence, possibly even intentional conduct,” Gwilliam told the Weekly. ■

REZONE

Continued from Page 5

coalition had was that some of the sites were not vacant, which suggests that the likelihood of those

sites being turned into housing within the 2023-2031 timeframe is unlikely.

In its letter to the city, the housing coalition threatened to sue the city. So, to avoid litigation, the city

negotiated with the coalition and, as part of a settlement agreement, identified three additional sites to be rezoned for future housing.

Katherine Wisinski, assistant city attorney, said that even though the city strenuously disagreed with the housing coalition’s findings, “the council opted to enter into a settlement agreement to essentially rezone and redesignate three sites that have been selected between the parties.”

The three sites in question are the Hacienda West site, located at 3825 and 3875 Hopyard Road; the Metro 580 site, located at 4515 Rosewood Drive; and the property at 5960 Inglewood Drive. All are within the Hacienda Specific Plan area and within a few miles of each other.

The specifications about the sites are as follows: the Hacienda West site proposes a density of 30 to 40 dwelling units per acre across 14.19 acres and a maximum of 567 units. That site is currently occupied by a 208,806-square-foot commercial building.

The Metro 580 site, 5 acres of which had already been zoned for housing units in the Housing Element, proposed 30 to 60 dwelling units per acre for a total of up to 631 net new units across 10.52 acres. That site is occupied by 167,441 square feet of commercial retail stores.

Lastly, the 5960 Inglewood Drive, which is the smallest of the three sites, proposed 30 to 40 dwelling units per acre across six acres, for a total of 240 units maximum. Similarly, this site is occupied by a 103,600-square-foot commercial office building.

These proposed sites, according to assistant director of community and economic development

and planning manager Derek Farmer, must be rezoned by Dec. 31 as stipulated by the settlement agreement. It does not mean the city or developers have to build anything — nor is anything being proposed for construction at the moment.

“This is just for the land use changes to the three sites,” Farmer said. “There is no development proposed on any of the sites or all of the sites at this time. Whether there is in the future is up to the development community.”

During the Sept. 9 commission meeting, all of the four commissioners on the dais mostly agreed on the fact that their hands were tied, given that the three sites were already negotiated and decided on as part of the settlement agreement.

And for the most part, they agreed that the sites were viable and good locations for additional housing.

“If we’re going to need to pick three sites, and we are required to, in my opinion these are three great sites,” Jagoe said.

What did dominate most of the discussion was how the city even got to the point of the settlement agreement when they thought the Housing Element was, as one commissioner described, “bulletproof.”

Commission Chair Brandon Pace specifically called out the housing coalition and the person who sent that initial letter to the city threatening litigation.

He said, and others agreed, that the city should have done more to challenge those claims that the Housing Element was inadequate because, as they are seeing now, there could be a likelihood that these same groups come back to

do the same thing during the next Housing Element cycle.

“Almost everyone is frustrated with this impacting their neighborhoods,” Pace said. “If there’s ways that we can learn about what we did here that would influence how we’re going to do something in three years, when we’re going to have to go through something like this again ... I think that’s what we’re trying to figure out.”

Others like Commissioner Anurag Jain called out the overall Housing Element process. “No matter how much rezoning we do, ultimately it’s not something which the city can do to meet HCD requirements,” Jain said. “This whole process is just flawed.”

He also said he took issue with how the city simply negotiated with the housing coalition to identify these three additional sites without input from the commission or the public.

But at the end, all four commissioners voted in favor of recommending the council rezone these sites, with the caveat that, at some point in the future, the city should look into whether these three sites could be added to the city’s next Housing Element document.

“Other parties, outbound of us that we’re not a part of, have picked these three sites. Everybody that’s picked them says these are the three best sites that are going to alleviate this issue,” Jagoe said. “It’s our job to vote on these three sites whether we like them or we don’t, but all I hear is a bunch of questions that have nothing to do with what we’re supposed to vote on.”

According to Farmer, the tentative plan is to bring the rezoning item before the council for approval on Oct. 20. ■



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County supes advance \$30 minimum wage to future ballot

Eligible for March 2028 vote, unless special election called first; competing counter-measure possible

BY KILEY RUSSELL /
BAY CITY NEWS SERVICE

Alameda County voters will get to decide the fate of a \$30 minimum wage ballot measure thanks to a procedural vote last week by the Board of Supervisors.

By law, the supervisors were required to put the measure on any ballot for a statewide election no earlier than 88 days following the vote Sept. 15 because it was the result of a signature-gathering drive.

The next such scheduled election is in March 2028, but it could go to voters sooner if the state calls a special election before then.

In July, the Alameda County Living Wage for All coalition completed a drive that netted more than 100,000 signatures from registered voters throughout the county.

The coalition is part of the national One Fair Wage campaign, which aims to establish a living wage at the federal level, in eight states and the District of Columbia.

The proposal could have been placed on the Nov. 3 ballot but supervisors voted 3-2 in August to delay a decision in order to study the potential impacts of a \$30 minimum wage.

Supervisors David Haubert, Nate

Miley and Lena Tam voted to delay, while Elisa Marquez and Nikki Fortunato Bas voted to put the measure on the November ballot.

At last week's meeting, supervisors heard the results of the study, which identified some clear benefits to workers and some potential pitfalls for employers, including the county, whose employees would be covered by the new wage rules.

The measure would apply to all county workers but only private-sector workers in the county's unincorporated areas.

It would raise the minimum wage to \$30 an hour gradually depending on company size — large companies with 100 or more employees or more than \$1 billion in revenue would have until 2030, medium-sized companies with 26 to 99 employees would have until 2035, and small companies with 25 or fewer workers would have until 2037.

"It is quite complicated and when you layer on state and other local jurisdiction requirements, it's even a more kind of complex policy framework," said Paul Peninger of BAE Urban Economics, a consultancy hired by the county to produce the report.

Family childcare workers follow

the small-employer schedule while janitorial workers follow the faster large-employer schedule regardless of their employer's size, according to the report.

The measure forbids employers from offsetting the cost of wage hikes by cutting benefits or other non-management staff pay.

Peninger said there are 26,400 total private sector employees in the unincorporated areas of the county working at 3,100 businesses, and about 2,100 public sector employees.

"What's interesting about the distribution of businesses is that based on our analysis, 76% of all businesses would be considered small businesses under this measure," he said. "At the same time, about 80% of all employees are employed in either medium or large-size businesses."

The report estimates that it would cost the county between \$32.9 to \$34.3 million per year to comply with the measure.

"As noted in the report, these costs would likely be partially offset by tax revenues generated by increased wages and consumer spending associated with the measure," Peninger said.

Also, because higher wages would likely mean more people exiting

public assistance programs like CalFresh or Medi-Cal, the county would save money in those areas as well, as Marquez pointed out.

While the report didn't say how much the measure would cost private-sector employers, it did suggest they would be put at a competitive disadvantage compared to employers in neighboring cities that don't have to abide by the new rules, which could lead to job losses or companies moving to other areas.

As for benefits, the higher wages would lead to improved employee retention, improved household financial security and some increased spending in the local economy.

Also, Peninger said there hasn't been a significant increase in the cost of goods or services in counties that have enacted minimum wage rules in the past.

Several people spoke in favor of the measure Sept. 15, with some proponents saying the report vastly overestimates what it would cost the county to implement.

"I think, in fact, the policy will improve the county's budget overall and along with that goes a judgment that the cost estimates are too high," said Michael Reich, a professor of economics and chair of the Center on

Wage and Employment Dynamics at the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment at University of California, Berkeley.

Other speakers expressed skepticism about the wage hike proposal, with members of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce and the California Restaurant Association saying they prefer the longer lead-up time to the 2028 election over a "rush" to the November ballot.

As required by state elections law, supervisors voted 4-0 to place the measure on the ballot at the end of last week's meeting, with Fortunato Bas absent.

They also, however, voted to begin working on a minimum wage ballot measure of their own that would compete with the one discussed at the meeting.

Supervisors Miley and Haubert said they were unhappy that the measure would only apply to the unincorporated parts of the county and that it is written in such a way as to be vulnerable to legal challenges.

"I just want the public to know that we do feel there's some legal concerns with this measure," Miley said. "So I just want that to be stated, and we will disclose those should the measure pass." ■

Drive-thru coffee stand greenlit in Livermore

Business hours at new 7 Brew Coffee expected to fall below city-approved 24/7 operations

BY JUDE STRZEMP

A drive-thru cafe is set for construction in the parking lot of a shopping center in Livermore, given the Planning Commission's unanimous approval of the project this month.

Operated by Arkansas-born 7 Brew Coffee, the freestanding business is slated for groundbreaking at the plaza anchored by Lowe's Home Improvement, located at First Street and Mines Road.

The approximately 934-square foot cafe — the first of its brand in Livermore — will feature dual drive-thru lanes for a 15-vehicle

queue as well as a walk-up window and patio seating.

Although permitted to operate 24 hours a day, as applied, the new 7 Brew Coffee location will not be open 24/7, according to Mira Gantzert of Core States Group, project applicant and civil engineer.

The Livermore Planning Commission approved the project for construction operations at its Sept. 1 regular meeting with an additional recommendation to improve the bike lane-driveway interface nearest the project.

"This will be a good improvement for the site," Commissioner

Jacob Anderson said.

On the subject of operating hours, 7 Brew Coffee businesses are typically open 5 a.m. to 11 p.m., Gantzert said during the meeting.

"We wanted to have the 24 hours approved, that way in the future, if there's ever a time that's needed to go to the 24 hours, that's what we would request," she explained.

Planned hours of operation, shy of the 24/7 request, was not included in the city staff report prepared before the meeting.

The business is not expected to produce greater amounts of noise or activity than typical at the shopping center, Livermore assistant planner Emily LaDue said during the meeting. The layout was designed to minimize vehicle spill-over to surrounding areas, she added.

The commission's sole concern was a potential conflict between cyclists on First Street and vehicles entering the shopping center at the driveway near the future 7 Brew Coffee.

"I think we might run into some issues where we have drivers very rapidly trying to turn into that (right-hand turn) with an existing bike lane in the middle of the road," Chairperson Tracy Kronzack said.

The commission recommended

staff work with the applicant to improve the bike lane and entrance overlap. The applicant has expressed a willingness to explore solutions, according to LaDue.

In addition to the cafe building, the project is set to include on-site improvements such as a trash and recycling enclosure, directional signage and landscaping. ■



COURTESY CITY OF LIVERMORE

The Livermore Planning Commission this month approved project entitlements for a drive-thru 7 Brew Coffee stand slated for construction in the parking lot of a shopping center anchored by Lowe's Home Improvement.

Reena GUPTA

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Cherrier, Badar debate issues at DUSD Area 5 forum

Incumbent and challenger discuss teachers' strike, district financials, parcel tax and more

BY JUDE STRZEMP

Dublin school board Area 5 candidates Dan Cherrier and Seema Badar put their platforms side by side for the voters last week during an election forum hosted by the Pleasanton Weekly.

Among the differentiating subjects, incumbent Cherrier and challenger Badar expressed opposing viewpoints on labor negotiations and the subject of most importance in Area 5.

The winner of the Nov. 3 general election is slated for four years to represent central-eastern Dublin, bound generally by Tassajara and Fallon roads to the north and Central Parkway to the south.

Held on Wednesday evening (Sept. 16) in the Dublin Unified School District boardroom, the forum involved asking candidates prepared questions as well

as periods for opening and closing statements. The Weekly created its questions with input from a community survey before the event.

The evening also featured candidates running for Area 3 on the school board.

Kicking off the event, each Area 5 hopeful provided opening statements.

Badar, a mother and community volunteer, runs for school board with multiple years of experience serving on parent faculty clubs within the district. She was the organization president at Kolb Elementary School for two years and its vice president at Fallon Middle School for three years. Badar has also served as chairperson and vice chair on the DUSD Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee.

From those experiences, Badar

said she learned that good government is about listening before making decisions.

"Our district needs to focus on two main things—physical responsibility and student advocacy," she said.

During future budgetary challenges, Badar said the board will need to ask tough questions and demand transparency while also looking for ways to make operations more efficient.

"At the same time, we cannot lose sight of why we're here, our students," she added.

A candidate for the Dublin school board election for the first time, Badar did run previously for public office — for Dublin San Ramon Services District in 2022 and Zone 7 Water Agency in June, losing both times.

Introducing himself to the forum

audience, Cherrier recalled moving to the city almost three decades ago because of the schools.

One of the reasons Cherrier said he initially wanted to be involved in the school district was to represent the east side of Dublin.

He was initially elected at-large in 2016, followed by consecutive wins for the Area 5 seat in 2018 and 2022.

"I'd like to get the city politics out of the school board. It's been a huge issue for a long time, especially the last decade and a half about east-west (Dublin)," Cherrier later explained.

Cherrier said he intends to conduct "smart planning" on the board.

Last school year, the Dublin Teachers Association went on a four-day strike with the goal of better pay and benefits, smaller class sizes and maintaining a full-time

counselor at each elementary school.

District negotiators reached a compromise with DTA, which the school board later approved by 4-1 tally. Cherrier cast the dissenting vote.

"I don't think it's something we could support," Cherrier said of the financial weight of the deal, noting that teachers already receive step and column raises.

He added, DUSD has spent all of the \$20 million surplus it had in the 2020-21 school year due to spending beyond its needs. The trend has continued and the district has needed to make reductions.

Cherrier said he intends to restore some previous cuts by maintaining the salary schedule as-is for the next several years.

See **DUSD AREA 5** on Page 11

Newcomers Bhandari, Frye vie for voters in DUSD Area 3

Candidates take on AI policy, top priorities, labor negotiations, budget at Weekly forum

BY JUDE STRZEMP

Dublin school board Area 3 candidates Shalini Bhandari and Tanner Frye presented their platforms before the public eye during a forum last week moderated by the Pleasanton Weekly.

The competitors — each running for public office for the first time — found many points of common ground, but contention arose regarding Dublin Unified School District's artificial intelligence policy.

Voters will decide in the Nov. 3 general election which candidate will represent south central Dublin for a term running into 2028. The victor is poised to succeed Trustee Carolina Martinez, who received a two-year provisional appointment but did not file for the election this fall.

Held on Sept. 16, the public forum took place in the Dublin Unified School District boardroom. The Weekly moderators formulated questions based on their own research and input from a community survey. Candidates for Area 5 also participated in the event.

Ahead of the question period, Bhandari and Frye introduced themselves in opening statements.

As a district parent and property taxpayer, Bhandari said she has a personal stake in the quality of schools and use of taxpayer dollars in Dublin.

Bhandari works as an energy sustainability manager and for over 12 years, she has managed energy sustainability programs. During

her career, Bhandari said she has gained experience budgeting and working on projects with a range of stakeholders.

"A big part of my job is listening and bringing people together and making decisions that balance today's needs with long-term goals," Bhandari said. "I see a lot of the same responsibilities in serving on the school board."

As a trustee, Bhandari said she would focus on transparency in district finances as well as students' career readiness, wellbeing and inclusion.

Bhandari has been endorsed by Martinez, Board President Kristin Speck and former Area 3 trustee William Kuo.

Energy compliance inspector Frye introduced himself as a former teacher and paraprofessional in Oakland who is running for school board because he cares about students.

"I want to bring a lot of the same skills that I learned in helping students to this area as well," Frye said. "Having hands-on experience, actually helping students, is a perspective that we need on our board."

Frye said he prioritizes small class sizes, students' mental health, relationships with teachers and transparency in district decision-making.

The discussion of AI kicked off with a question to candidates regarding which policy or piece of legislation they were tracking for its effects on education in Dublin.

Bhandari noted the district's

administrative policy regarding artificial intelligence as top of mind.

Under the policy, "course-alike" and grade level teams determine whether students can use generative AI and to what extent they can use it. The board last revised the policy this past May.

AI cannot replace fundamental skills, she said, but DUSD should teach students how to use it.

Bhandari later praised the district's policy as being "proactive" and labeled it as one of the success stories coming out of Dublin elementary schools.

Students at a young age can learn how to use AI instead of feeling stressed about it, she explained.

Frye took up the subject of AI during his closing statement, generally expressing opposition to its use in schools.

"It can be useful in some places, but I think we should be extremely cautious about how we use it because it creates a lot of issues for students," Frye said.

He noted generative AI bans in Los Angeles and New York City school districts as inspiration for Dublin.

At the Southern California school district, all students are blocked from using generative AI on district-owned devices this school year, according to reporting from the Los Angeles Times. In New York City, "student-facing" generative AI is banned in public schools through eighth grade, as

See **DUSD AREA 3** on Page 11

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PARKS

Continued from Page 6

Other items on her list of 14 alleged illegal actions demanded of her by directors were providing public money to the “Bay Area Backroads” TV program outside of any procurement process and “redirecting public resources for political purposes in the Tri-Valley to support a Board member’s reelection campaign”.

The lawsuit further alleges 17 examples of gender-based harassment and discrimination, including that she got paid less than her predecessor Robert Doyle despite her more relevant experience leading large public agencies. The catalog also highlights phrases like “go check with the boys,” “macho men,” “only women should be gardeners” and “slow down this work in DEI”.

Landreth claims Mercurio selected a less qualified, cheaper

consultant to facilitate her 2025 performance evaluation that generated a number of criticisms and complaints about her that she was never allowed to see.

Following her Nov. 4, 2025 evaluation in closed session, it became clear to Landreth that a board majority “had already determined to remove her from her position without affording her a fair process,” so she resigned, according to the lawsuit.

Her 16-page civil complaint, which demands a jury trial, hinges on five causes of action: discrimination based on gender, retaliation, failure to prevent discrimination or retaliation, whistleblower retaliation and violation of the California Equal Pay Act.

“Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer severe emotional distress, including loss of sleep, elevated stress, and difficulty concentrating, as well as damage to her professional

reputation, which is central to her career as a public-sector executive,” Shukla wrote in the suit.

“Plaintiff was approximately 49 years old at the time of her constructive discharge, with a reasonable expectation of continuing to work in public service for at least another fifteen to twenty years. Defendant’s conduct has jeopardized her future earnings and public pension,” the attorney added. ■

MUSSELS

Continued from Page 5

including the loss of native and game fish, waterbody closures, increased launch or entry fees, costly boat repairs and a reduced number of fish or shellfish for consumption.

“Mussels can quickly contaminate the waterways and can rapidly spread,” EBRPD stated in its press release. “Golden mussels can attach to nearly any underwater surface, including boats, ropes, buoys and aquatic plants that become entangled on anchors and trailers.”

They could also impact water delivery to homes and flood control by choking off water supplies, like Lake Del Valle, and damaging structures like dams or power plants.

So, when the invasive species first appeared in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta back in October 2024, it set off several alarms at agencies across the state, including the EBRPD.

“According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the mussels are believed to have been introduced by a ship traveling from an international port,” EBRPD stated in its press release.

One of the last actions the park district took to prevent the spread of these mussels was when it transitioned to lake-specific, color-coded bands in May 2025 as part of a change to its boat inspection and banding policies.

Despite the inspection requirement update, the mussels seem to

have made their way to Livermore. It is now the second reservoir within the EBRPD that has detected these mussels.

“Until this week, Contra Loma in Antioch was the only Park District waterbody where golden mussels had been detected,” the park district stated. “Boaters who launch at Contra Loma have been under the same quarantine rules that are now being implemented at Del Valle.”

According to EBRPD, any boats that launch at Lake Del Valle will be “subject to a 30-day quarantine before their watercraft may be permitted at any other waterbody managed by the Park District.”

“Boats are required to quarantine to help prevent the spread of invasive golden mussels to water

bodies where they are not present,” Jen Vanya, EBRPD public information specialist, told the Weekly on Tuesday. “Mussels, including microscopic larvae called veligers, can survive for weeks in water left in boats or equipment. The quarantine provides time for watercraft and equipment to fully dry, reducing the risk of transporting live mussels.”

However, according to the park district, boats that launch exclusively at Lake Del Valle and return with an intact Del Valle boat pass will not be subject to the quarantine. Other agencies that manage waterbodies in the Bay Area and elsewhere might impose their own quarantine requirements so EBRPD is advising boaters to check those

other agency websites.

Boats and other water crafts without a park district boat band will also be subject to inspections for the presence of mussels.

As for what people should do to help limit the spread of these golden mussels, EBRPD said the best thing they can do is remember to “clean, drain and dry”.

“Inspect your watercraft, kayak, life vests, paddles, and anything else that touched the water every time it is removed from a waterbody,” the park district stated. “Remove all debris, animals, and plants, and dispose of them in the trash. Drain all water from ballasts, bilges, and live wells. Finally, allow all equipment to dry completely before entering another waterbody.” ■

DUSD AREA 5

Continued from Page 10

“They’re already some of the highest paid staff of any school district. We need to start putting students’ needs first,” he said.

Among the restorations, Cherrier hopes for new supervisors, assistant principals and day custodians.

Challenger Badar expressed an interest in engaging in labor negotiations.

Noting the damage following an impasse, Badar said she intends to build a culture where disagreements are handled respectfully and financial analysis is a collaborative process.

Students and teachers suffer during a walkout, she said.

“It should never come to a situation again where our teachers are going on strike,” Badar said during

her closing statement. “I want to be someone that’s meeting regularly, that’s creating the accurate communication that causes things like that never to happen again.”

Badar and Cherrier also named different issues of highest importance in Area 5.

Top of mind for Badar: providing students with support for academics, mental health and extracurricular interests.

Badar said listen to the district community and use data to identify where students are falling behind.

“We really have to focus our majority of our decisions on our student advocacy and their mental health and making sure that they have the support that they need to succeed both academically, emotionally, socially and that’s one of the main reasons that I chose to run for the board,” Badar said.

In Cherrier’s perspective, the most important issue is overcrowding at Fallon Middle School. Built for 1,200 students, the campus last year held nearly 1,600 kids, he said.

“It is a huge problem. People are jammed in portables. They have to have multiple lunch periods,” he said. “It’s not the experience middle school students should be having.”

Cherrier suggested a bond measure for east Dublin as a potential solution to overcrowding.

Another option would be a reconfiguration on each side of the city, he added.

“Last time we floated that, it didn’t get a lot of reception, but maybe the time has come,” Cherrier said.

He also anticipates an issue with students living in the future housing along Tassajara Road being bound for Dublin High School,

despite their location near Emerald High School.

The candidates responded to additional questions regarding their perspectives on the district’s financial health, the Measure I parcel tax up for vote in the general election, the quality of campus facilities and state legislation they are following. To hear the candidates’

full answers to all questions, see the forum video available with the online version of this story.

The event was moderated by Pleasanton Weekly associate publisher and editorial director Jeremy Walsh and this reporter. The Dublin Chamber of Commerce provided publicity support, and DUSD provided the venue and video. ■

DUSD AREA 3

Continued from Page 10

announced on Sept. 2.

“I think we should follow suit, except in small situations,” Frye said.

Coding with an understanding of the fundamentals is a place for potential use of AI, he said.

“I don’t think we should be telling our kids that they should be using these chat bots,” he added.

The information oftentimes comes from unknown sources and the technology hallucinates to give incorrect answers, he said.

When asked about the most important issue facing Area 3,

Bhandari pointed to students’ preparation for careers and college.

The preparation goes beyond academics into critical-thinking, adaptability, technology and communication, she added.

“If voted as a trustee, I will be listening to the community and seeing how I can help students be career ready,” she said.

Frye said the district should focus on students’ mental health.

The goal is for students to talk with their teachers and professionals if they are experiencing any difficulties, he said.

“Students burn out,” he said. “I don’t want that to happen. I want

students to understand themselves emotionally.”

During the forum, the two also addressed questions regarding labor negotiations with the teachers union, quality of school facility, the district’s financial health and projections of student enrollment. To hear the candidates’ full answers to all questions, see the forum video online at pleasantonweekly.com.

The event was moderated by Pleasanton Weekly associate publisher and editorial director Jeremy Walsh and this reporter. DUSD provided the venue and video. The Dublin Chamber of Commerce provided publicity support. ■

TAKE US ALONG



Catching the train in Switzerland: Gene and Diane Jordan traveled in Switzerland this spring and brought the Pleasanton Weekly along everywhere they went, posing here with the newspaper while waiting for their train at Lauterbrunnen — which Gene called “a beautiful, Yosemite-like valley in central Switzerland”.

Something new to TASTE

Two wineries welcome tasting rooms ahead of Livermore Valley Wine Experience

Story by Deborah Grossman
Photos by Chuck Deckert



Tis the season to stomp grapes, picnic in a vineyard or sample local sparkling wine.

For an autumn wine country outing, the fourth annual TASTE: The Livermore Valley Wine Experience offers a robust menu of 13 wine and food themed events. Spanning four days in mid-October, most events feature multiple wineries pouring their wines at one location with diverse food selections.

“Put on your cowboy hat for an opportunity to meet winemakers and ranchers, nosh on ranch-inspired bites, and dance to live country music at the ‘Cattle, Cabernet & Country’ event at McGrail Vineyards on Oct. 16. If you want to visit a wine speak-easy, Concannon Vineyard rolls back time during ‘Barrels and Bootleggers’ on Oct. 17,” said Brandi Lombardi, executive director of the Livermore Valley Wine Community.

The signature event of the program is Taste Our Terroir, which kicks off TASTE on Thursday, Oct. 15. At this year’s sold-out event, 20 Livermore Valley wineries will pair with local restaurants or caterers to compete for the top wine and food creation. Attendees and industry judges select the top pairing.

Of the 25 Livermore Valley wineries pouring wine during TASTE, two



are new participants this year. Both minority- and woman-owned, Shanti Winery and Cellar13 Winery recently opened Livermore tasting rooms that are generating buzz — and both are serving their wine at fun events during the program.

“It is exciting to have the mix of heritage wineries with new ones in Livermore,” said Tracy Farhad, president and CEO of Visit Tri-Valley. “I personally like to see how new winemakers express the region’s grapes as they develop unique experiences for our region’s visitors.”

Shanti Winery

Though Ray and Dimple Sharma, owners of Shanti Winery, have never

stomped grapes before, they are eager to host the “Stomp, Pour, & Pair” event on Oct. 18.

After their 2024 purchase of the 8-acre Home Ranch in Livermore and renovation of the former Steven Kent Winery space, the Sharmas launched their second Shanti tasting room on Tesla Road this April.

“We are pleased to offer the stomping event because it will be fun — pretend you are a kid turning your feet grape-purple in a cut-off wine barrel. You can then sample our wines with charcuterie and chocolate,” co-owner Dimple Sharma said.

A decade before launching the Shanti brand, the couple began visiting boutique, family-run wineries in Napa. Here they enjoyed peaceful

hours sipping fine wine in welcoming, relaxed settings. In 2012 the Sharmas launched Shanti Winery in Napa, naming the winery after the Hindi word for “peace.”

The couple purchased grapes from Napa and other California wine regions and operated a now-closed tasting room in Napa. Shanti tastings continue by reservation at the hospitality center located at the winemaking facility they use in the Crusher District of South Napa.

As the reputation for Shanti wines grew, the Sharmas’ East Bay customers asked when they would open a nearby tasting room. Residents of San Ramon, the Sharmas pivoted from tastings in Napa to discover the quality wines and tasting experiences in Livermore Valley.



“We soon realized Livermore was the place for us to purchase grapes and open our winery and event center. In a year, we expect to start wine production on site with Cabernet Sauvignon, Barbera, and Sangiovese grapes from our estate vineyard,” Ray Sharma said.

The Sharmas set out to enable meaningful experiences over a glass of wine. Ray Sharma designed the logo for the wine — a seated woman in a yoga pose. On the wall, a large poster replicates that yoga scene with a light orange background and a brilliant white sun at sunrise or sunset.

“We want our guests to feel the personal service and peace we experienced at winery tastings. We do not hurry guests. There are no time limits once you set the reservation time,” Dimple Sharma said.

Until May, Gary Overton of Livermore traveled to Napa Valley for wine tastings and rarely explored Livermore. Driving along Tesla Road after tastings at two wineries, he noticed the new Shanti entrance signage. Attracted by the bright orange signature imagery, Overton stopped in.

“I met Ray and Dimple that day and liked their Cabernet Sauvignon



Far left: San Ramon residents Dimple and Ray Sharma have opened Shanti Winery in the Livermore Valley, with a selection of their wines shown in photo below the couple. Adjacent left: Darin Winton and fiancée Gail Henderson operate Cellar 13 in Livermore, shown next to photos of Cellar 13's wine selection and new tasting room. (Photo of Cellar 13 tasting room by Deborah Grossman).

Monthly comedy shows regularly sell out. Ray Sharma added that they may soon offer classical Indian music nights with musicians playing in the style of the late, well-known musician Ravi Shankar.

Cellar 13

Another new Livermore tasting room is minority- and woman-owned. Co-owners Darin Winton with his fiancée Gail Henderson are living a dream-come-true harvest season this year as they open their first tasting room in the former Cuda Ridge Winery site.

Producing wine since 2017, they previously poured Cellar 13 wines at venues such as Livermore's Swirl on the Square and at winemaker dinners.

After celebrating their opening this week by hosting the Livermore Valley Wine Wednesday event, Cellar 13 will open for tastings on weekends.

Designed to be casual yet upscale, the renovated main room with contemporary decor is paired with a refreshed, expansive patio. In an unusual move, Winton and Henderson will offer only one tasting option at the reasonable price of \$20 for two white and two red wines with a bonus pour. In the spring, Cellar 13 will present comedy shows and live music on the patio.

"As attendees at previous TASTE events, we always wanted to throw our hat in the ring," Winton said. "This year we will pair our wines with food from Oasis Restaurant at the Taste our Terroir event and pour a new Cabernet Sauvignon during the Cattle, Cabernet, and Country evening at McGrail."

"At the '2 Winemakers, 1 Aromatic Journey' event on Oct. 18, I am pleased to partner with award-winning Las Positas Vineyards winemaker Brett Amos to share how we make white wine from grapes in the same vineyard that are distinct and intriguing," Winton added.

Like the Shanti owners, Winton

and Henderson are well-paired to own a winery.

After retiring from a Tri-Valley water district, Darin took enology classes, interned at local harvests, and assisted winemakers at 3 Steves Winery, Cuda Ridge and Occasio Winery. With a background in sales, marketing and human relations, co-owner Henderson handles the business side of Cellar 13.

Winton's mother is half-Cherokee, and he honors his Native American heritage at Cellar 13. The labels for his Bordeaux blends reflect his background.

Sidanelv, which means "family" in the Cherokee language, is the name for Winton's White Bordeaux Style Blend. Aliheliga, meaning grateful, is Winton's Right Bank blend starring Merlot. The Left Bank blend, named Tsogadu or 13, Winton's lucky number, leads with Cabernet Sauvignon. Winton tapped his uncle, nationally-known artist John Balloue of Hayward, to create original art for the back label of the Bordeaux blends.

The couple launched Cellar 13 in 2017. Winton's first barrel of Chardonnay was awarded Double Gold at a major California wine competition. After winning many awards over the years, Winton received three awards for his 2025 Sidanelv at the 2026 California Signature Wine Award competition: Best of Show and Best in Class, White Blends, and Double Gold.

Currently, Cellar 13 sells over a dozen wines. Next year, they will offer more varietals, including Chardonnay and Merlot, plus a new premiere Bordeaux Blend named The Bison, "Yanasi" in Cherokee.

For several years, Donna Gott of Livermore has tasted Cellar 13 wines at various venues. "Their wine is consistently good, and I look forward to tastings at the new site. I like the stories behind the wines and the Cherokee-inspired art on the labels," Gott said.

Shanti and Cellar 13 wineries present new opportunities to taste fine



wine and appreciate elements of the owners' respective Indian and Cherokee heritage. There are a handful of vintners with Native American descent in the U.S., but Winton noted that he and Gail Henderson may operate the only Cherokee-heritage winery in the U.S.

Running from Oct. 15-18, TASTE

A taste of TASTE highlights

Historically, the harvest celebration for the region was The Livermore Valley Wine Festival held on Labor Day weekend. Guests traveled throughout the valley to attend open houses at participating wineries.

"The best part of TASTE is the collaboration among wineries at each event as they present their top wines with creative food pairings," said Livermore Valley Wine Community board member Brandon Wood, owner of The Cheese Parlor in Livermore and an annual participant in a cheese and wine pairing event.

This year, Wood and winemaker Aaron Luna of Del Valle Winery present an enhanced experience named "Cheese, Chocolates & Cheers!" at Del Valle on Oct. 16. "We added local Bluebirds Chocolate to the tasting with cheese. Each selection will be tasted with both a white and red wine from three wineries. Expect many twists and turns," Wood said.

Wood also looks forward to "Beads, Bottles & Bites: A New Orleans Afternoon in Livermore" at Fenestra Winery on Oct. 17 with multiple wineries, NOLA food bites and a brass band. Another of his top picks is "Bubbles, Brunch & B-Sides" at Almost Famous Wine Co. on Oct. 18, which offers sparkling wine from six Livermore producers and a brunch buffet.



enables attendees to find unique ways to celebrate autumn and the California grape harvest with over two dozen wineries pouring their wine and two new tasting rooms to explore.

"Welcoming Shanti and Cellar 13 amplifies Livermore Valley as a place to discover affordable, accessible food and wine and have a fun time," Farhad said. ■

Other TASTE events

"Sip Around the World - Wineries of the Global AVA" at Martinelli Center on Oct. 17: Founded in Livermore Valley, the Global Artisan Vintners Alliance will present a selection of wines from Mexico's Baja California area; Dalmatia, Croatia; Chianti Rufina, Italy; Chinon, France; and Texas Hill Country.

"From Vine to Glass" at Murrieta's Well on Oct. 17: Discover the storied history of Murrieta's Well and Livermore Valley's signature wines. Explore the vineyard followed by an outdoor tasting led by Niki Wenthe and winemaker Alec Fraser with Wenthe-clone Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Franc paired with cheese and charcuterie.

"Taste YOUR Terroir-A Guided Vineyard Tour, Tasting & Picnic at Casa de Viñas Vineyard" on Oct. 17. Take time for a unique experience in the vineyard of Livermore's legendary grape grower, Julio Covarrubias, who will share stories about his farming experience. At the picnic lunch, meet winemakers who source Casa de Viñas grapes and taste their wines.

Note: Several TASTE events have sold out, including the "Taste Our Terroir," "Sips & Sourdough," and the new "A Taste of Stories". Check the website for up-to-date listings, lvwine.org.



and Zinfandel. The vibe was happy with friendly guests who struck up a conversation with me. I became the first member of their wine club. After bike riding at Del Valle park, I relax on the patio. This is my 'wine ibuprofen' time," Overton said.

The co-founders were both born in India. Ray came to the U.S. at age 8 and grew up in Yuba City. He is now a real estate broker with three offices in the East Bay. Dimple arrived in California at age 20 with a college degree and continues to work as an environmental chemist.

Her role at Shanti is assistant winemaker while Ray handles administrative tasks.

"With our children set in their careers, it was time for us to follow our passion project," Dimple Sharma said.

The couple offer three levels of tasting matching their goals for the winery. The Peace tasting includes three white wines. The Harmony option includes white and red wines, a blend of tastes, as guests connect with each other, while the Joy tasting features all red wines, symbolizing a deeper color and connection.

Yoga classes, scheduled monthly, are led by Livermore teachers.



**Family-friendly events
will celebrate heritage,
tradition and community
in Pleasanton**

COURTESY CITY OF PLEASANTON
A look back at past Cultural Celebration Series
installments in Pleasanton. The 2026 series
debuts with a Diwali event on Oct. 17.

BY CHRISTIAN TRUJANO

Pleasanton's Cultural Celebration Series is returning next month with a list of events and activities throughout the next year that aims to bring residents and community members together to commemorate diversity and cultures from around the world.

Hosted by the city's Library and Recreation Department, the 2026-27 series of free, family-friendly events honors different cultures, traditions and histories through live performances, storytelling and hands-on activities. They will also help bring people of all backgrounds together so they can learn about and appreciate all of these different cultures that make up Pleasanton.

"Community involvement is a key part of the Cultural Celebration Series, with many events shaped in partnership with cultural organizations and community members and sponsored in part by the Friends of the Pleasanton Library," Rachel Prater, recreation manager for the city of Pleasanton, said in a press release. "These collaborations help ensure the series remains inclusive, representative, and community-driven."

The 2026-27 Cultural Celebration Series is set to kick off with a Diwali Celebration on Oct. 17. The event, which takes place from 1-3 p.m. at the Pleasanton Senior Center, will feature music, dance and other cultural activities traditional to the Indian Festival of Lights.

Next is the Día de Los Muertos, which takes place Nov. 7 from 1-3 p.m. at the Pleasanton Senior Center. The celebration will honor loved ones who have died by featuring traditional

altars, storytelling, crafts and other activities rooted in Mexican heritage, according to the city.

Then, on Nov. 14, members of the community will be invited to celebrate Native American Heritage Month at the Alviso Adobe Community Park. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., attendees will be able to learn about the history, culture and traditions of Native American communities.

Following Native American Heritage Month, the city will be hosting a Lunar New Year celebration on Jan. 30, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Lions Wayside Park. The cultural celebration event will feature "outdoor performances, storytelling, crafts, and interactive activities celebrating cultural traditions observed across Asia and beyond."

Almost a month later, the city will celebrate Black History Month at the Pleasanton Public Library by honoring the "history, culture and contributions of African Americans through music, storytelling and activities designed for all ages." This event is scheduled for Feb. 27 from 1 to 3 p.m.

The last installment of the 2026-27 service will be the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month Celebration, which is set to take place May 15, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Lions Wayside Park.

"The outdoor event will feature live performances, art, hands-on crafts, and interactive experiences high-

lighting a wide range of Asian American, and Pacific Native Hawaiian, Islander cultural traditions," the city stated in its press release.

In addition to attending the events, the city of Pleasanton is also encouraging residents of all ages to volunteer, support or participate in any of the upcoming performances and events.

Mariana Vega, a volunteer who helped organize events like the Cultural Celebration Series, said doing so not only helped her learn more about event planning, but it also made her connect with her community in a more meaningful way.

"Being a part of these events made me realize I have a strength in planning and helped me discover new skills simply by interacting with other volunteers," Vega said in the city's press release. "It was really rewarding to be part of a team that brings people together and helps keep the City of Pleasanton vibrant, inclusive and caring!"

All of the 2026-27 series events are free and open to the public. No registration is required.

For more information on volunteering or attending the events, visit firehousearts.org. ■



Community Pulse

POLICE BULLETIN

Police arrest local teen in connection with regional burglary sprees

The Pleasanton Police Department recently teamed up with other agencies to arrest a 19-year-old Pleasanton man they allege is connected to dozens of commercial burglaries across the Tri-Valley and greater Bay Area, including the rash of early-morning crimes in Pleasanton on Sept. 10.

Juan Luis Valdez-Luevano faces multiple criminal conspiracy and burglary charges out of Contra Costa County, as well as seven counts of burglary out of Alameda County, Pleasanton police said Tuesday. According to Lt. Brandon Stocking, police are working on identifying additional suspects behind the recent burglary spree in Pleasanton.

"The investigation remains ongoing and the Pleasanton Police Department will continue working with our regional partners to identify and arrest those responsible," Stocking wrote in a press release Tuesday. "Anyone with information related to this investigation is asked to contact the Pleasanton Police Department at 925-931-5269."

Valdez-Luevano was arrested last week, before meeting his probation officer at the Alameda County Probation Office in Dublin on Sept. 16, according to a separate press release from the San Ramon Police Department on Tuesday afternoon.

Police said they took him into custody on an arrest warrant obtained in Contra Costa County, where he is facing six felony counts of criminal conspiracy to commit a felony and six counts of second-degree burglary. He also faces one county of felony burglary.

While he was being arrested, Pleasanton and San Ramon police said they coordinated to serve a search warrant for Valdez-Luevano's residence on Vineyard Avenue in Pleasanton, as well as his car. There, San Ramon police said they "located evidence at both locations believed to be related to the burglaries."

According to SRPD, Valdez-Luevano was arrested in connection to an "ongoing investigation into dozens of commercial burglaries reported throughout Contra Costa, Alameda and Santa Clara counties."

While the department declined to provide specific details on what cities in Contra Costa County are involved in the Pleasanton teen's case, Lt. Mike Pistello was able to confirm that Valdez-Luevano is "a suspect in several commercial burglaries in San Ramon which is why we had probable cause to arrest him."

Some of the most recent incidents

include burglaries in the Bishop Ranch area and in Danville.

"This is a complicated and lengthy investigation that will take time to conclude," Pistello told the Pleasanton Weekly.

"The San Ramon Police Department's Investigations Division continues to actively pursue this case," the department stated in a press release Tuesday. "Investigators have identified additional potential suspects and are working to establish their involvement. As this is an ongoing investigation, further details are not being released."

In Pleasanton, police suspect Valdez-Luevano to be one of the four people behind the string of burglaries that took place throughout the course of the morning of Sept. 10. The Contra Costa County arrest log shows that Valdez-Luevano turned 19 the same day (Sept. 10) when the nearly two dozen Pleasanton burglaries took place.

Stocking stated in his press release Tuesday that those same suspects are "believed to be responsible for similar crime sprees in multiple cities across at least three counties."

The lieutenant told the Weekly that he was unable to provide further details into the suspect's other alleged criminal activity in other counties where investigations remain open.

Valdez-Luevano is currently being held at the Martinez Detention Facility on a no-bail warrant out of Alameda County. In addition to the seven counts of burglary in Alameda County, Stocking said the teen could face additional charges in connection to the Sept. 10 burglaries as PPD's investigation continues.

He is expected to be transferred to Alameda County sometime in the near future, authorities said.

—Christian Trujano

Plea deal in OD death

More than three years after federal prosecutors brought charges against two then-teenagers for procuring and distributing pills containing fentanyl that led to a Dublin victim's overdose death, the case has come to an end with both defendants pleading guilty to lesser charges for reduced sentences.

Ozymandias Watson pleaded guilty to one count of fentanyl possession with intent to distribute and was sentenced to time-served at the advice of federal prosecutors on Sept. 9 after entering into a plea agreement in March, which has since been sealed by the court.

Watson, then an Alamo resident, and Jianna Coppedge, then a Dublin resident, faced federal charges announced in 2023 for providing an unidentified Dublin resident with fentanyl-laced pills that resulted in an overdose death in 2022 when the pair were 18 and 19, respectively.

"In sum, on July 6, 2022, Mr. Watson supplied his friend, Jianna Coppedge, with several M30 pills," prosecutors wrote in a sentencing memo filed earlier this month. "She owed him money from prior supplies. He sold her the pills and was aware she might then distribute those pills to others."

Coppedge and Watson were both searched by federal authorities later that year as the investigation into the overdose death unfolded, including surveillance footage that showed Coppedge placing the pills in the victim's outstretched hand at a Dublin park the evening prior, and correspondences with Watson about needing pills to supply to a buyer, according to prosecutors.

Coppedge pleaded guilty to one count of possession of fentanyl with intent to distribute last year, and was also sentenced to time-served. Watson's sentencing had been delayed for several months as he dealt with a death in the family and traveled to attend a funeral.

Both defendants were also sentenced to supervised release, with Coppedge's at three years starting in August 2025 and Watson's at two years as of this month's judgment.

Federal prosecutors recommended the reduced sentences for both Coppedge and Watson based on their cooperation with investigators, their admittance of wrongdoing and successful completion of drug treatment programs in the years since charges were brought forward.

In a sentencing memorandum filed ahead of this month's hearing, prosecutors pointed to Watson's young age at the time of the event, difficult home environment and

deep troubles with addiction that they said he has since succeeded in overcoming.

"He was not a trafficker building a business," prosecutors wrote in the Aug. 31 filing. "He was an opioid-dependent teenager selling pills to support a habit that had taken over his life."

That addiction began with prescribed opioids following a medical procedure when Watson was 15 years old, according to prosecutors, which was spurred by a flare up in his mother's mental health troubles the following year.

Prosecutors said they were confident in Watson's continued recovery, noting that he had told probation officials that he has already "gotten further in his recovery than he had imagined" and no longer felt defined by his addiction.

They also emphasized Watson's willingness to take responsibility for the harm caused by his addiction and drug sales.

"Mr. Watson does not ask the Court to overlook what he did," prosecutors wrote. "He sold fentanyl pills to another young person struggling with addiction, and he has said in his own words that he cannot escape the thought that his conduct may have pushed others further down a path he barely survived himself."

"He was eighteen, dependent on opioids that a hospital first put in his hands, and he chose badly and repeatedly," they continued.

Both defendants were facing up to 20-year maximum sentences when the case began making its way through the court in 2023.

—Jeanita Lyman

Another ex-prison official charged with sex abuse

Yet another correctional officer from a now-shuttered women's prison in Dublin has been charged with sexually abusing inmates.

Federal prosecutors filed five felony charges last week against David Perez, who was working as a disciplinary hearing officer at the notorious Federal Correctional Institution, Dublin.

According to court filings, Perez allegedly abused two women, identified as R.M. and S.M., between August 2015 and December 2017.

Using his authority as a prison official, Perez allegedly was able to get each woman alone with him in the prison's "Captain's Complex", where he is accused of touching their breasts and buttocks and, on one occasion, "digitally penetrating" R.M.'s genitals, according to prosecutors.

Perez is facing three counts of abusive sexual contact, one count of sexual abuse of a ward and one count of lying to federal investigators.

If convicted of all charges, he could be sentenced to a maximum of 29 years in prison and could be on the hook for more than \$1.2 million in fines.

Perez has not been arrested and no lawyer is listed for him in court documents. He has not yet entered a plea or filed a response to the charges.

Perez is the 11th official from the prison to be charged with sex-related offenses, including former warden Ray Garcia, who was convicted in 2022 and sentenced to nearly six years in prison.

See BULLETIN on Page 16

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BULLETIN

Continued from Page 15

The former low-security prison closed in April 2024 in the wake of investigations into predatory sexual abuse of female inmates.

—Kiley Russell, Bay City News Service

Financial adviser gets prison for decades-long Ponzi scheme

A disgraced former financial adviser who operated out of the San Ramon Valley for decades is set to be taken into custody next month to serve out a years-long prison sentence after he pleaded guilty to long-running Ponzi scheme that drained millions from nearly a hundred unsuspecting investors far and wide.

Danville resident Edwin Lickiss Jr. — also known as Mike Lickiss Sr. — was sentenced to nine years in prison by a federal judge in Oakland last week, during which many of the 93 victims found to have been defrauded of more than \$9.5 million over the course of more than 20 years gathered to watch the proceedings and emphasize the impacts of the scheme.

“For these victims, the harm caused by Lickiss’s decades-long fraud has upended the final years of their lives and, for some, thrown their spouses and children into financial precarity,” federal prosecutors wrote in filings ahead of the sentencing hearing.

The sentence was in line with recommendations by federal prosecutors, and well above the four-year sentence requested by Lickiss’ attorney Randy Pollock, who called anything longer a “de facto life sentence” given his 78-year-old client’s health issues and advanced age.

Pollock’s recommendation came at the urging of many of Lickiss’ relatives, who described the impacts of the recent federal criminal case and revelations on their own lives, as well as the further impacts of him potentially spending the rest of his life behind bars.

Edwin Lickiss himself also emphasized the impact of his actions and the wide swath of victims such as friends, family — including a nephew who was among the victims testifying in the federal case — and business partners while apologizing for his “indefensible, hypocritical behavior” in a letter submitted by Pollock.

“My failure in character is something I find unbearable to live with whether awake or asleep,” Edwin Lickiss wrote. “I say this because we always tried to teach our children and grandchildren to trust in God. My actions were the ultimate hypocrisy — I trusted in myself instead. I deliberately chose to deceive my son with whom I worked, our four children and their spouses, our seventeen grandchildren, and most importantly my wife of almost 57 years.”

Prosecutors noted that many of the victims were also contending with health conditions and advanced age, with Edwin Lickiss’ scheme taking advantage of them at vulnerable moments and leading to dire outcomes for many as they sought to withdraw money for retirement and healthcare costs, becoming aware only after it was too late that he had failed to make good on his promises of investing their funds in high-yield bonds generating as much as 30% in returns.

They also emphasized the need for deterrence in fraud cases such as this, saying that using age as a mitigating factor “misapprehends the mechanics of large-scale financial fraud.”

“The entire premise of a Ponzi scheme lies in the perpetrator’s belief that he can outlast detection, outlast market cycles, and outlast the legal system,” prosecutors wrote in a Sept. 9 filing. “Scale becomes a prerequisite to survival: more victims feed the engine, and more capital fuels the fraud. To treat age as a basis for judicial leniency is to invert those economic incentives.”

“It creates a moral hazard, signaling that a criminal can hedge their bets, scale up the fraud, and buy at least partial immunity through time,” they continued. “A further reduced sentence would, ironically, signal that maintaining a larger fraud for a longer period with more

victims is not only morally equivalent — it is rational.”

While this month’s hearing marks an end to the federal fraud case that was brought forward last year, fallout from the decades-long Ponzi scheme is continuing with two active cases in Contra Costa County Superior Court.

One of those, filed in March 2025 ahead of the federal indictment brought forward that August, is a civil fraud case from Terrie Wilson, who was among the victims in the criminal case. It names Edwin Lickiss along with his son Michael Lickiss Jr. — who was later dismissed from the case after submitting a bankruptcy notice — Arkaidos Wealth Advisors, Pacific Wealth Advisory Services, and 50 unnamed “Doe” defendants.

Wilson alleges that Edwin Lickiss, whom she had known and invested with for some time, contacted her in 2024 to say he was “thinking of her” after she’d had a heart attack, and about how he could help her generate some additional income during difficult times.

She proceeded to invest \$110,000 in funds from a recent divorce settlement with Edwin Lickiss by meeting him at a Walnut Creek Safeway to hand over a check in person, later having a panic attack about it and seeking to get the money back.

As she continued trying to get the money back months later to no avail, Wilson learned about a previous

lawsuit that Edwin Lickiss and his son had settled in 2024 for \$1.5 million, in which the plaintiffs alleged that Edwin Lickiss had been barred from work in the securities industry in 2014, then proceeded to continue garnering investments from customers for fictitious bonds.

“Plaintiff would have never given any money to Lickiss Sr. if she had known that he had been permanently barred from working in the securities industry in August 2014, and that he had defrauded another former client of his by selling that client fictitious investments,” Wilson’s attorney Melinda Steuer wrote in the 2025 complaint.

After this revelation, Wilson went on to consult with a different financial adviser and to examine her previous investments that were held through Arkaidos Wealth Advisory and Investment Architects, where Michael Lickiss Jr. worked, and at Pacific Wealth Advisory Services where Edwin Lickiss had been a registered agent, noticing that the funds had “significantly underperformed compared to the market” due to alleged poor management.

The 2024 settlement that tipped Wilson off was one of more than a dozen civil lawsuits filed in county court over the years alleging fraud against Edwin Lickiss going back to the early 1990s, despite no criminal charges emerging until last year. ■

—Jeanita Lyman

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☑ **Pleasanton Mayor and City Council**

Tues., Sept. 29 • 6 - 8:30 p.m.
200 Old Bernal Ave.
Pleasanton

☑ **Livermore City Council**

Wed, Sept. 30 • 6 - 7 p.m.
Virtual forum at
tinyurl.com/Livermore-council

☑ **San Ramon Mayor and City Council**

Wed., Oct. 7 • 6 - 8:30 p.m.
The Roundhouse at Bishop Ranch
2600 Camino Ramon, San Ramon

➔ **FUTURE FORUMS:** Dublin Mayor and City Council 10/12 • Sunol Glen School Board 10/14



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NONPROFIT LOCAL NEWS FOR THE TRI-VALLEY

Prop 38 gives my son and others a fighting chance

Nine years ago, my son started limping. He was 4 years old, and within weeks, doctors told me the pain in his wrists and ankles was leukemia, a high-risk form called Philadelphia chromosome-positive acute lymphoblastic leukemia. I sat on a hospital bathroom floor and cried before I could even find the words to tell my husband.

No one could have prepared for what followed: two years of chemotherapy, relapse after relapse and ultimately a bone marrow transplant from his brother.

When standard therapies failed, research gave my son new treatment options and our family new hope. Our family has seized each one as an opportunity to keep going.

A breakthrough doesn't have to answer every question to matter.

It can simply give a doctor a new path when the existing ones have run out. And those options only exist because someone invested in the research years before a child needed it.

That's why I'm voting Yes on Proposition 38, the "Immunology Medical Research and Cures Initiative" on California's November ballot.

Prop 38 would authorize \$8.4 billion in state general obligation bonds for immunology medical research. At least \$4.2 billion would support research related to cancer, heart disease and Alzheimer's, giving patients innovative treatment options and families more time.



Few people realize how little research attention pediatric cancer has historically received. One analysis found that only 4% of federal cancer-research funding went toward studying pediatric cancers. Although rare, cancer remains the leading cause of death by disease after infancy among children in the United States.

Children aren't simply smaller adults, and discoveries in adult cancer research do not automatically translate into safe and effective treatments for them. Last year brought another blow to the entire medical research system when the federal government terminated 181 grants, cutting off an estimated \$317 million in funding.

Despite a portion of the funding being reinstated, the damage was already done: labs closed, researchers fired and clinical trials came to

an abrupt stop. Meaningful, breakthrough research must be supported with reliable, self-sustained funding.

That's why California needs Prop 38: it creates a stable, state-level source of funding that doesn't rise and fall with Washington politics. The measure is designed to pay for itself by returning 10% of licensing revenue to the state to repay the bond, including interest. Once repaid, the proceeds will continue funding the research in perpetuity.

Every dollar goes to California nonprofit universities and research institutions, never to for-profit drug companies. State administrative costs are also capped at 2%. And although we have a long way to go to improve healthcare affordability, any treatments and cures from the research must be sold to Californians at a 20% discount

below the national average.

California already has world-class researchers and hospitals, but if we don't invest in them in a sustainable way, we risk sending not just our researchers elsewhere but our families in search of the care they need.

Loving a child through cancer has taught me to hold two things at once: the fight for one more day and the fight for a future for others.

I'm voting Yes on Prop 38 because whatever comes for my own son, I won't let the next family face this without every tool science can offer. ■

Editor's note: Bhavika Taunk is a Danville resident and mother of two. Her older son was diagnosed with leukemia at age four and is now navigating life as a childhood cancer survivor. She writes and advocates on pediatric cancer, survivorship and disability access.

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LETTERS

A letter to my sons

As your mom, one of the greatest gifts of my life has been watching you grow into the people you are becoming. I know that as you get older, you'll form your own beliefs, make your own choices, and decide what matters most to you. I will always respect that. I never want you to feel that you have to vote the way I do. I simply want you to understand why I choose to vote Democratic.

My choices come from the values I hope I've taught you — freedom, fairness, compassion, and standing up for what you believe is right.

I believe you should have the freedom to make important decisions about your own life, your body, your family, and your future. I want you to live in a country where those freedoms are respected.

I want you to inherit a beautiful, healthy planet, and I believe we have a responsibility to protect it for your children someday.

I believe everyone deserves dignity, equality, opportunity, and to be treated with kindness and respect — regardless of who they are or where they come from.

When it comes to immigration, I believe we can have secure borders while still remembering the humanity behind every person and family.

Most importantly, my hope is that you grow into men who think for yourselves, stand up for others, and lead with both courage and compassion.

These are the values behind my vote. Not simply a political label, but the kind of world I hope you will help create.

— Becky Conners

Clean Air Day is coming

We often take the air we breathe for granted — especially here in the Tri-Valley, where air quality is generally better than it was 20 years ago. But air pollution remains an important public-health concern.

In fact, a 2025 Time magazine article reports that air pollution is linked to 91,000 premature deaths in the U.S. each year. That's a sobering reminder that air quality is a concern for all of us.

California Clean Air Day, officially on Oct. 7, is an opportunity to take a simple step toward cleaner air: take public transit or ride a bike, change your home's air filters, consider electric alternatives to gasoline-powered garden equipment, or simply learn more about the air we share.

The Tri-Valley Air Quality Climate Alliance, together with the City of Livermore, will promote Clean Air Day at the Livermore Farmers Market from 4 to 8 p.m. next Thursday (Oct. 1). Stop by our table to see demonstrations of technologies that can help keep our air clean, including electric leaf blowers and induction cooktops — and enter our free raffle for prizes.

You can also make a Clean Air Day pledge at cleanairday.org.

Cleaner air is something we can all contribute to — one choice at a time.

The Tri-Valley Air Quality Climate Alliance (tvaqca.org) is a local nonprofit helping improve air quality and address climate change issues in the Tri-Valley.

— Phil Bowman

'Hayward PD: On the Record'

My name is Akshara Krishnan, and I'm a high school junior in Dublin. This past summer, I completed a full in person internship with the Hayward Police Department's Records and Property Bureau.

During my internship, I had the opportunity to work alongside staff and interview people across Records, Youth & Family Services, youth diversion, counseling, and mental health response programs. I entered the summer expecting to learn mostly about traditional policing, but I discovered a side

of public safety that receives much less attention.

That experience became my report, "Hayward PD: On the Record". It looks at the people working behind the scenes at HPD, from records staff processing tens of thousands of reports to youth coordinators, counselors, and clinicians helping residents before problems become enforcement issues.

What stayed with me was how much meaningful service happens quietly. Public conversations about police departments tend to focus on officers in uniform, while many of these civilian staff members and services are far less visible. After spending the summer learning from them, I felt their work deserved to be better understood.

— Akshara Krishnan

See **LETTERS** on Page 18

PET OF THE WEEK



TRI-VALLEY ANIMAL RESCUE

Sweet Skipper

Skipper is as cute as he is nice — a good boy with soulful eyes that are often checking in to see if it's time for more cuddles and kisses! He's a young adult who is moderately active, a nice compact companion at 13 pounds. Contact Tri-Valley Animal Rescue via tvar.org.

GUEST OPINION

BY REEM PEERZADA

Reflections on Ray Bradbury's date, Aug. 4, 2026

The day I'm writing this. It also happens to be the date visionary author Ray Bradbury imagined his writing back in 1950 when he published his short story "There Will Come Soft Rains".

In case you have not read this Bradbury fiction, it follows a fully automated, AI-powered house after a nuclear war. Everyone who had once lived there is dead, yet the house carries on as if nothing happened.

Breakfast is made. Bills are announced. The bath is filled. A poem is read before bed. The house continues to do exactly what it was designed to do. It never stops to question anything because questioning



was never part of the program.

Since today was the official "Day of Soft Rains", I decided to revisit Bradbury's work. As I read it again, the theme of never questioning and never stopping stayed with me. It made me wonder what happens when people begin to approach life with that same mindset.

Lately, it feels as if we as a society have started treating our humanity like a flaw we're supposed to outgrow. Just think about the compliments people give.

"She never lets her emotions get in the way."

"He never takes a day off?"

"She's always productive."

It seems as if efficiency and perfection have become our sworn duty as individuals. So when I opened my phone and saw another headline about artificial intelligence becoming more emotionally

aware, I laughed.

We're spending so much time teaching computers to sound like humans while telling people to stop acting like themselves. The house never cries, or hesitates, or misses anything, but it also never loves anyone. Those things come together. You don't get one without the other.

The poet Imru' al-Qais begins one of the oldest surviving Arabic poems by standing in front of the ruins of a home and saying, "Qifa Nabki" or "Stop, let us weep". Not "Let us rebuild". But stop. Remember. Feel it. For someone writing over 1,500 years ago, that's a surprisingly modern thing to say.

Then I thought about "The Little Prince". There's a reason people still read it almost 80 years later. Throughout the story, the Little Prince keeps meeting adults who are so busy counting, measuring,

and proving things that they've forgotten how to notice and feel the world around them. They're successful by every standard except the one that actually matters.

Funny how stories separated by thousands of years end up asking almost the same question. What does it mean to be human?

Bradbury reminds us that being human isn't measured by what we're capable of creating, but by what we're willing to protect. We can build powerful weapons and brilliant machines, but if those inventions outlive our care for one another, we've been mistaken.

Imru' al-Qais reminds us that some places, and some people, are worth stopping for. "The Little Prince" reminds us that the things with the greatest value are usually the ones you can't put a number on. Different centuries, yet the same

reminder to humanity; progress means very little if we lose ourselves along the way.

Today is August 4, 2026.

Bradbury imagined this date as the aftermath of the end of the world. Thankfully for us it's not. Instead it's become a chance to ask whether progress means anything if we leave the best parts of ourselves behind.

Technology will keep changing. But I hope we don't become so fascinated by building something that can imitate a person that we forget what makes a person worth imitating in the first place. ■

Editor's note: Reem Peerzada is a sophomore at Monte Vista High School in Danville who competes in varsity speech and has a love for writing. She is particularly interested in how literature can help us understand technology, humanity and the world around us.

LETTERS

Continued from Page 17

Kathy Narum for City Council

I have had the opportunity to work with Kathy Narum through her service on the Board of Pleasanton Partnerships in Education (PPIE), where I serve as executive director.

One thing I have especially appreciated about working with Kathy is her ability to build relationships and encourage open communication across different parts of our community. I have seen firsthand how she helps create connections among our schools, local government, businesses, and community organizations — relationships that ultimately make all of us stronger.

Pleasanton benefits when our leaders understand the importance of collaboration and are willing to bring people together rather than work in silos. Through my experience with Kathy, I have

seen her do just that.

Kathy has a long history of serving Pleasanton and remains genuinely committed to our community. I value the way she listens, stays engaged, and works to keep communication open among the many organizations and people who care about our city.

For these reasons, I am pleased to support Kathy Narum for Pleasanton City Council and encourage Pleasanton voters to support her as well.

— Andrea Wilson

Igniting Dreams

Igniting Dreams began with a simple idea: every student should have the opportunity to explore science, technology, engineering, arts, and math, regardless of the resources available at their school.

I became involved with Igniting Dreams at an early stage and now serve as co-founder and president. Over the past few years, I have

worked with a team of about 20 student volunteers from schools across the Tri-Valley to expand hands-on STEAM opportunities for younger students.

Together, we have designed and distributed more than 200 interactive STEAM kits, with projects ranging from building model cells to engineering popsicle-stick bridges. We also create activity guides and work directly with schools and after-school programs to provide hands-on enrichment opportunities. So far, our programs have reached hundreds of students.

What has stayed with me most is seeing how different educational opportunities can be between communities that are geographically very close to one another. Some students grow up surrounded by robotics teams, coding programs and engineering camps, while others may have very limited opportunities to explore these subjects.

Our goal is not to convince every student to become an engineer or scientist. We simply want to give them the chance to build something, solve a problem and discover what they are capable of.

We are continuing to expand our school partnerships and welcome local teachers, businesses, students and community members who would like to support or participate in our programs.

— Akshaj Seetharaman

In support of Larry Bird

I am writing to express my strong support for Larry Bird as he runs for a position on the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District Board of Directors.

I have had the privilege of knowing Larry closely, and I can say with

confidence that he is someone who leads with honesty, kindness, and genuine care for the people and community around him.

Larry cares deeply about our community and understands that public service is about putting people first. He would bring integrity, common sense, compassion, and a strong work ethic to the Board. Most importantly, he is someone who can be trusted to follow through on his commitments and to treat people with respect.

LARPD is an important part of what makes our community a great place to live. I believe Larry would be a thoughtful and dedicated voice for residents to help ensure that our parks and recreation programs continue to serve the community well.

I hope you will join me in supporting Larry Bird for the LARPD Board. I truly believe he would be an excellent representative for our community. You can find more information about Larry on his website at Bird4LARPD.com.

— Bonnie Pastrnak

'A Musical Journey' inspires young musicians

On Sunday afternoon, Aug. 30, a group of talented Dougherty Valley High School student musicians came together to share their passion for music with the local community through a special concert,

"A Musical Journey".

The event, which was hosted at the Peace Lutheran Church, featured approximately 90 minutes of live performances with jazz, classical, and contemporary string and piano duets. It was also followed by a 30-minute Q&A session, where the musicians could share their personal musical progress, challenges and experiences.

The concert was created by these high school musicians with a goal to use their talents to give back, inspiring younger students to discover the joy of music and pursue their own musical interests while strengthening music education in their community.

The event raised funds to support local school music programs, which helps create further opportunities for future young musicians.

The organizers represented students from different grades and diverse musical backgrounds. They included me (lead alto saxophonist for the SFJAZZ High School All-Stars) as well as Brandon Gao, violinist, and Donghu Kim, cellist, both of which play with the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra.

They were also joined by Opus 5, a newly formed string quintet of freshmen Victoria Lin, Isabella Feng, Alton Zhao, Aaron Feng, and Leo Li-Leyva.

— Adam Lin

Employment

The Pleasanton Weekly offers employment advertising.

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm.

Visit PleasantonWeekly.com/employment_ads/.

For assistance email LegalNotices@PleasantonWeekly.com.

What's your opinion?

Submit letters to the editor of up to 250 words and guest opinion pieces up to 550 words with a short bio to editor@PleasantonWeekly.com. Submitting a letter to the editor or guest opinion constitutes a granting of permission to the Pleasanton Weekly and Embarcadero Media Foundation to also publish it online, including in our online archives.

Public Notices

COMMON SKY HOUSE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625532
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) COMMON SKY HOUSE , located at 3689 Branding Iron Place Dublin, CA 94568, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
AFSHEEN AFZAL
3689 Branding Iron Place
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 August 21 2026.
(PLW Sep 18, 25, Oct 2 and 9, 2026)

LAM VENTURES
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625633
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Lam Ventures , located at 6706 Corte Santa Maria, Pleasanton, CA 94566, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: a Married Couple.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
KEITH LAM
6706 Corte Santa Maria
Pleasanton, CA 94566
MICHELLE LAM
6706 Corte Santa Maria
Pleasanton, CA 94566
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 August 27 2026.
(PLW Sep 25, Oct 2, 9 and 16, 2026)

DUFFY WILLIAMS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625840
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) DUFFY WILLIAMS , located at 6590 HANSEN DR, PLEASANTON, CA 94566, ALAMEDA County. Mailing Address: 2108 N ST, STE N SACRAMENTO, CA 95816
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
TURTLES & DOLPHINS LLC
2108 N ST, STE N
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816
State of Incorporation/Organization: CALIFORNIA
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 September 08 2026.
(PLW Sep 25, Oct 2, 9 and 16, 2026)

SANALIFE ENERGY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625731
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Sanalife Energy , located at 1015 Sunset Creek Lane Pleasanton, CA 94566, ALAMEDA County. Mailing Address: 4847 HOPYARD RD #4-321 PLEASANTON, CA 94588
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
INTECH ENERGY INC.
4847 HOPYARD RD #4-321
PLEASANTON, CA 94588
State of Incorporation/Organization: DELAWARE
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/01/2014
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on September 01 2026.
(PLW Sep 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 2026)

CORE CRAFT PHYSICAL THERAPY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625636
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Core Craft Physical Therapy , located at 5820 Stoneridge Mall Rd, St. 101, Pleasanton, CA 94588, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.

The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
CORE CRAFT PHYSICAL THERAPY AND REHABILITATION, PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
5820 Stoneridge Mall Rd, St. 101
Pleasanton, CA 94588
State of Incorporation/Organization: California
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/01/2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on August 27 2026.
(PLW Sep 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 2026)

AVERYN STUDIOS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625529
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) AVERYN STUDIOS , located at 7092 Erie Ct. Dublin, CA, 94568, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: a General Partnership.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
DAMASE COLY
2308 Cedarwood Loop
San Ramon, CA 94582
JACOB MILLER
7092 Erie Ct
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 August 20 2026.
(PLW Sep 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 2026)

SEOUL AESTHETIC CLINIC
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 626179
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Seoul Aesthetic Clinic , located at 3951 Finnian Way, 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):
SEOUL AESTHETIC MANAGEMENT LLC
3951 Finnian Way
Dublin, CA 94568
State of Incorporation/Organization: California
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 09/18/2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on September 18 2026.
(PLW Sep 25, Oct 2, 9 and 16, 2026)

JSM GOODS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625745
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) JSM Goods , located at 5670 El Dorado Ln Dublin, CA 94568, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
JOSEPH STEPHEN MAGINN JR
5670 El Dorado Ln
Dublin, CA 94568
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 06/01/26
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on September 02 2026.
(PLW Sep 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 2026)

INDY RESTAURANT & LOUNGE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625599
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) INDY Restaurant & Lounge , located at 780 Main St, Pleasanton, CA 94566 , ALAMEDA County. Mailing Address: 6601 Dublin Blvd, Apt 311 Dublin, CA 94568
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
LUNCH BOX US
6601 Dublin Blvd, Apt 311
Dublin, CA 94568
State of Incorporation/Organization: California
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 August 25 2026.
(PLW Sep 25, Oct 2, 9 and 16, 2026)

SGBC
SGBC OF CA
SGBC OF CA NORTH
SGBC OF CA SOUTH
SOUTHERN GLAZER'S WINE AND SPIRITS OF CALIFORNIA
SOUTHERN GLAZER'S BEVERAGE COMPANY
SOUTHERN GLAZER'S BEVERAGE COMPANY OF CA NORTH
SOUTHERN GLAZER'S BEVERAGE COMPANY OF CA SOUTH
SOUTHERN GLAZER'S BEVERAGE COMPANY OF CALIFORNIA
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625604
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) SGBC , 2.) SGBC OF CA , 3.) SGBC OF CA North , 4.) SGBC OF CA South , 5.) Southern Glazer's Wine And Spirits Of California , 6.) Southern Glazer's Beverage Company , 7.) Southern Glazer's Beverage Company Of CA North , 8.) Southern Glazer's Beverage Company Of CA South , 9.) Southern Glazer's Beverage Company Of California , located at 33321 Dowe Avenue Union City CA 94587 , Alameda County. Mailing Address: 1600 NW 163 Street Suite 300
Miami, FL 33169
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
SOUTHERN GLAZER'S WINE AND SPIRITS, LLC
1600 NW 163 Street - Suite 300
Miami, FL 33169-5641
State of Incorporation/Organization: DE
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 08/03/2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on August 25 2026.
(PLW Sep 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 2026)

LONG POINT CONSTRUCTION
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625388
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Long Point Construction , located at 1073 Kottinger Dr Unit B Pleasanton, CA, 94566, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
WEST OF MERCURY, LLC
1073 Kottinger Dr. Unit B
Pleasanton, CA, 94566
State of Incorporation/Organization: California
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 11/28/2023
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on August 14 2026.
(PLW Sep 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2026)

CREATIVE POTENTIAL
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625744
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Creative Potential , located at 5670 El Dorado Ln Dublin, CA 94568, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
MARIE-CHRISTIN WINDHABER
5670 El Dorado Ln
Dublin, CA 94568
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 06/01/26
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on September 02 2026.
(PLW Sep 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 2026)

MARKS SPOTLESS PANES
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625671
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Marks Spotless Panes , located at 1596 E Gate Way Apt 113 Pleasanton, CA 94566, Alameda County. Mailing Address: 3020 Bernal Ave STE 110 PO#321 Pleasanton CA, 94566
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
MARCOS VERGARA
3020 Bernal Ave STE 110 PO#321

Pleasanton CA, 94566
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 08/28/2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on August 28 2026.
(PLW Sep 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2026)

LUMAE AESTHETICS & WEIGHT LOSS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625787
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Lumae Aesthetics & Weight Loss , located at 4450 Black Ave SUITE A, Pleasanton, CA 94566, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
LUMAE AESTHETICS & WEIGHT LOSS
MEDICAL GROUP
4450 Black Ave SUITE A
Pleasanton, CA 94566
State of Incorporation/Organization: California
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 09/01/2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on September 02 2026.
(PLW Sep 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 2026)

CRESSWELL REAL ESTATE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625706
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Cresswell Real Estate , located at 4695 Chabot Dr. SUITE #200, Pleasanton, CA 94588, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
JANE CRESSWELL
14 Winterhaven Ct
San Ramon, CA 94583
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 08/31/2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on September 01 2026.
(PLW Sep 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 2026)

LITTLE MARKS STUDIO
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625497
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Little Marks Studio , located at 5509 Holly Bay Ave., Dublin, CA 94568, Alameda County.
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
AMITA DATE
5509 Holly Bay Ave.
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 August 20 2026.
(PLW Sep 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2026)

AUTERVELLA
AUTERVELLA AUTO DETAILING
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 625562
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) AUTERVELLA , 2.) AUTERVELLA AUTO DETAILING , located at 6200 STONERIDGE MALL RD #300, PLEASANTON, CA 94588 , ALAMEDA County. Mailing Address: 5080 Haven Place Apt 100 Dublin, CA 94568
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
HANDYFORCEHQ LLC
6200 STONERIDGE MALL RD #300
PLEASANTON, CA 94588
State of Incorporation/Organization: FLORIDA
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 August 24 2026.
(PLW Sep 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2026)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF ALAMEXA
Case No.: 26CV209130
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: Tung Lee Fu filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

TUNG LEE FU to TONY FU
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: 10/30/2026, 9:00am, 514 of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda located at 24405 Amador St, Hayward, CA 94544.
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: 9/8/2026
Michael Markman
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(PLW Sep 18, 25, Oct 2 and 9, 2026)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
Case No.: 26CV208257
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: HYUNG IL NA filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
HYUNG IL NA to HENRY HYUNGIL NA
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: 10/23/2026, 09:00 AM, Alameda Superior Court Hayward Hall of Justice Department 514 of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda located at 24405 Amador Street, Hayward, CA 94544.
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: 09/02/2026
Michael Markman
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(PLW Sep 18, 25, Oct 2 and 9, 2026)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
Case No.: 26CV203246
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: David Russell Fleming filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
DAVID RUSSELL FLEMING to RUSSELL FLEMING
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: Oct 23, 2026, 9:00 AM, Hayward of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda located at 24405 Amador St., Hayward, CA 94544.
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: 08/28/2026
Michael Markman
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(PLW Sep 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 2026)

Continued on next page

Public Notices

Continued from previous page

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: GEORGE Y. (YUNG-CHANG) YEH Case No.: 26PR210395 To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of GEORGE Y. (YUNG-CHANG) YEH. A Petition for Probate has been filed by: Albert A. Yeh in the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda. The Petition for Probate requests that: Albert A. Yeh be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. THE PETITION requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held on October 16 2026 at 9:45 am in Dept. 202 of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda, located at 2120 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley, CA 94704. If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58 (b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. Attorney for Petitioner: Thomas DiPaolo, Attorney at Law DiPaolo Law 9820 Willow Creek Road, Ste 200 San Diego, CA 92131 858-408-0621 (PLW Sep 25, Oct 2 and 9, 2026)

SUMMONS (Family Law) Case No. 26FL178247 (CITACION JUDICIAL) NOTICE TO RESPONDANT (NAME): George Sobhy Azer Falts A VISO AL DEMANDADO (Nombre) You have been sued. Read the information below and on the next page. Lo han demandado. Lea la información a continuación y en la página siguiente. **Petitioner's name is (Nombre del demandante): Rasha Hanna** NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond Within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more Information

at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court. There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case. ¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación. Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia. Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 mas de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desear el caso. The name and address of the court is (El nombre y dirección de la corte es): **Superior Court of California, Alameda County** **Hayward Hall of Justice** **24405 Amador Street** **Hayward CA 94544** The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is (El nombre, la dirección y el numero de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): **Rasha Hanna** **3550 Pacifica Ave., Apt. 605** **Livermore, CA 94550** **(925) 519-4653** DATE (Fecha): **March 27, 2026** **Chad Finke, Clerk,** **by /s/ Jennifer Simton, Deputy Clerk** (Secretario) (Adjunto) NOTICE TO THE PERSON SERVED: You are served (PLW Sep 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2026)

The Pleasanton Weekly is adjudicated to publish in Alameda County.

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 p.m. Visit PleasantonWeekly.com/legal_notices/

Sports



PLEASANTON PREPS

Amador football gets off schneid against Liberty

By Dennis Miller

Also: Foothill girls' water polo makes run to finals as tournament's 15th seed

Finally. There was a collective sigh of relief coming out of Amador Valley, as the Dons football team got both their first points and first win of the season with a 32-28 win over Liberty on Friday night.

"We needed it so bad," first-year coach Duncan Burgermeister said. "With such a young group, you worry about them just giving up."

When Burgermeister got the job of running the football program at Amador following the departure of former coach Danny Jones, I wrote it was the best hire the school could have made.

And I think people are realizing it. A young team where two freshmen and a few sophomores are playing key roles, there were going to be some growing pains. Amador needed a coach that could bring the team along and learn every week.

Instead of panicking, Burgermeister let the team grow and develop. Considering the Dons scored on their first play from scrimmage this year only to see freshman Michael Harrington's 65-yard touchdown called back and then not score any points in the first two games, one could understand if a sense of despair enveloped the team.

"I was wondering if we were cursed because we lined up wrong on the first play," Burgermeister said, with a laugh. "But it was just a case of growing up. Against Livermore we had one senior starting. We knew we would get better as the year went on."

Harrington and fellow freshmen Tyler Foley are not just on the varsity, but both are vital members of the team.

"It's nuts," Burgermeister said of the two freshmen. "You don't see 14-year-olds playing with 18-year-olds too often. They are unique and different. Both are from great families that have a really good gene pool."

Sophomore James Willis is running the offense at quarterback, and along with sophomores like Griffin Kenitzer and Riley Giddings, the team just needed to grow.

And with a young team, there's always the need for a stabilizing influence. That came in the form of senior two-way lineman Calvin Albertson.

Albertson missed the first two games but was back Friday — and it was a big difference.

"That really helped," Burgermeister said

Other older players like senior Jackson Krusi and junior Trent Goldsworthy also paced the Dons win over Liberty.

Willis was injured against Liberty and might miss a couple of games. Senior Ethan Riley, who started the first game for the Dons, came on for Willis and scored the winning touchdown.

"We actually played all three quarterbacks, and all three played well," Burgermeister said of Willis, Riley and Adam Besh.

Next up is San Marin — an 0-4 team coming off a 21-15 loss to Oakland. There will be no letdown following the first win.

"We knew if we kept playing good defense and didn't turn the ball over, good things would happen," Burgermeister said. "But we know we could go back there and lose if we don't play well."

Girls' water polo

The Falcons came into the Sierra Shootout as the 15th seed and went all the way to the finals before falling.

Pleasanton Preps sponsored by



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Calvin Albertson (54) returned for the Dons' win over Liberty after missing the first two games.

Foothill opened the tournament with a 7-6 win over Marin Catholic, and followed up with an 8-2 win over Christian Brothers. In the quarterfinals, the Falcons beat Granada 6-5 in overtime.

In the finals, Foothill came up just short against College Park.

Ashby Clark scored seven goals to lead Foothill, with Elise Chatman and Briana Gavril getting six goals each. Goalie Nandini Mondhe had 20 saves in the tournament and Amelia Fowler had eight steals.

The Amador junior varsity team took part in the Castro Valley CLASH tournament and went 1-2.

The Dons opened the tournament with a 9-6 loss to American but came back to beat Washington 16-5. In their final game, the Dons played well but lost to Castro Valley.

Top scorers of the tournament included Aashni Acharya with seven goals, with Keerthana Simisetty and Ellarie Moorfield getting five each. Diva Malhotra scored three goals. Acharya led the team in steals with eight defensive turnovers, followed by Simisetty with four.

Foothill girls' volleyball

The Falcons split their league matches last week.

They opened the week with a 25-19, 25-12, 25-14 win over Granada. Highlights came from Kait Vogel (18 digs, 10 service points, 8 kills), Ilayda Caglar (11 kills, 10 digs), Olivia So (16 digs, 1 ace), Shreya Patel (15 assists, 6 digs) and Eva Bixler (5 kills, 3 digs).

The loss came in an 18-25, 16-25, 25-22, 26-28 battle with Monte Vista. Highlights here came from Caglar (24 kills, 14 digs), Vogel (27 digs, 12 kills, 10 service points), Makenzie Bulaon (29 assists, 3 digs), Ale Sioco (14 digs, 10 service points) and Addie Boeschstein (7 kills, 2 blocks). ■



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Real Estate

Patisserie opening new location in downtown Pleasanton

Maison Benoit, which launched two years ago, plans to debut new bakery in old bank building in early 2027

By Christian Trujano

Maison Benoit, a burgeoning French bakery based in Danville, is opening up a second location in downtown Pleasanton in the new year, its owner confirmed last week.

Owner Benoit Vialle told the Pleasanton Weekly he is currently in the process of obtaining permits to begin demolition and construction at the former Bank of America building, located at 337 Main St., which closed in August 2024.

"I'm hoping that people will be excited to have this be a new place to go to and to hang out in downtown Pleasanton," he said.

Originally from France, Vialle moved to the United States over two decades ago and settled in the Bay Area around 10 years ago. For most of his professional career he worked at big technology companies like Microsoft, according to his LinkedIn, before pivoting to the wine industry for a few years.

But Vialle said he eventually got the urge to start his own business.

So, after he spent some time at culinary school in France where he met bakers and pastry chefs who he convinced to join him, Vialle opened his bakery, Maison Benoit, on Railroad Avenue in downtown Danville in January 2024.

The classic-style patisserie features a full lineup of pastries, savory dishes, coffee and baked goods like their breads and croissants.

During the past few years, Vialle said his Danville bakery has really cemented itself within the community.

The big, glass windows provide a unique experience where customers can see the chefs and bakers making all of the product, making it a fun attraction for families. He believes the quality of the ingredients and the traditional techniques used to make everything are what

keeps people coming back.

One of the reasons Vialle said he chose to open his second bakery Pleasanton is because he senses Pleasanton residents seem to be similar to those in Danville in that they both appreciate good, authentic food.

Apart from the food scene, he said he was drawn to downtown Pleasanton because it's sort of the epicenter for the Tri-Valley and sees foot traffic from across the region.

"Downtown seems to be very lively, very dynamic, and I think attracts people from nearby towns who don't necessarily have sort of a real downtown like Pleasanton does," Vialle said. "Even if you're not a Pleasanton resident, I think you're more likely to go to Pleasanton for dinner, for breakfast, for lunch."

"For me that's having the right population but also having a population size that attracts ... which is why I'm going bigger than in Danville," he added.

Vialle said his main priority in opening a second location is maintaining the same fundamentals and values he set in his first bakery in Danville. Using top quality ingredients, staying true to the authenticity of the final product.

Apart from the products, Vialle said he also wants to be an integral part of the community, which is something he was able to do with his first location in Danville.

"I don't want to neglect Danville. I think Danville will continue to be a very strong first location for us," he said. "But (we're) really trying to match this in Pleasanton and be this fun place where people will come and hang out."

He said developing those regular customers and being a place where high school students and young people can work their first jobs, get experience in the workforce and



JEREMY WALSH

Maison Benoit, a Danville-based French bakery, is planning on opening a new location in downtown Pleasanton sometime next year.

even possibly discover a new love for the culinary arts, has been really rewarding, which is why he wants to bring that same energy to Pleasanton.

"The piece that I really cherish the most is having those places become a bit of a staple in the community, so I hope it's going to be the same thing in Pleasanton as it is in Danville," Vialle said.

Vialle said while it did take him longer than he wanted, he recently closed on the lease for the new location and has now begun going through the city's permitting process.

He said the new store will be much larger than his Danville location, will retain a

similar design where the kitchen will be viewable through glass windows and will prioritize fresh, quality ingredients. He also said he plans on applying for a liquor license to sell wine and is looking at bringing in new items like freshly made crepes.

However, he said the demolition aspect has been a bit tricky because of the safe in the old bank, which was built inside the building as part of its floor plans. He said the safe is an integral part of the building's structure, which is why things are dragging a bit in the permitting process.

Still, he said he hopes to be able to open as early as the first quarter of 2027. ■

Construction begins on memory care facility in Dublin

Inspiration set to open late next year on west side; assisted living project to follow next door

By Jude Strzemp

A senior housing company broke ground this month on a memory care project in western Dublin, with the goal of opening the facility late next year.

The two-story, approximately 35,000 square-foot building — dubbed Inspiration Memory Care — is being constructed at 7500 Inspiration Drive, just down the hill from Brave Christian Schools.

Costing \$35 million, the memory care project is phase one of a two-part development in which Calson Management and Development plans to build an assisted living facility on a nearby property beginning next year for opening in the second quarter of 2028, according to Calson Management principal Jason Reyes.

"This is really just the beginning of our senior living experience here in Dublin," Reyes said during the groundbreaking ceremony Sept. 9. "There's several years ahead of us that we're looking forward to."

During the ceremony, Dublin Mayor Sherry

Hu applauded the upcoming facilities as being much needed developments in Dublin.

"At city of Dublin, we want to make sure we take care of all our residents," Hu said.

As for separating the memory care and assisted living spaces, Reyes said the development choice benefits both sides.

"There is an enormous amount of focus that gets to go into being a speciality memory care building that you don't always get in a combined building," Reyes told the Pleasanton Weekly.

The building will be specialized for memory care residents with the colors, type of flooring and lighting, he explained.

"We also realize that assisted living residents don't always want to be in the same space as the memory care residents," Reyes added.

Calson Management developed a similar setup 15 years ago in Vacaville, Reyes said.

Inspiration Memory Care is a Linden Collection Memory Care Community, sister to The Linden Collection, which is a senior living community located within The Well @ Sunset neighborhood in Livermore. ■



COURTESY CALSON MANAGEMENT

Rendering shows design concept for Inspiration Memory Care, now under construction at 7500 Inspiration Drive in Dublin.

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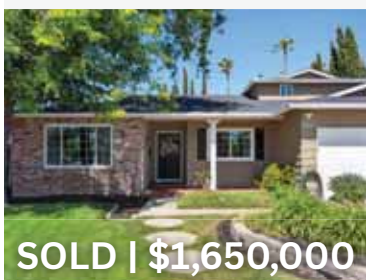
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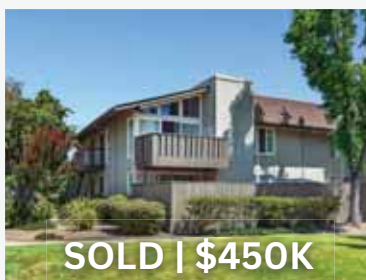
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