



Photo - Doug Jorgensen
Tri-Valley Repertory Theatre is staging the well known musical, "Guys and Dolls" at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., in downtown Livermore. The show opens Jan. 23 and runs Jan. 24, 25, 30, 31, Feb. 1, 6, 7, 8. Curtain time is 8 p.m. on Fri. and Sat. and 2 p.m. on Sun. For tickets, call 925-373-6800 or go online to www.livermoreperformingarts.org. Pictured rehearsing are Chelsea Nenni who portrays Sarah Brown, the upright but uptight "mission doll," out to reform the evildoers of Time Square; and Eric Neiman as Sky Masterson, the slick, high-rolling gambler who woos her on a bet and ends up falling in love. Among the many well known songs in the score is "Luck Be a Lady."

Library Offers Assistance for Job Seekers

The Livermore Library has taken steps to help job seekers in their search. Among them is the creation of the Free2 Succeed Job Center.

Funded by an innovation grant from the Bay Area Library and Information Services network, the Free2 Succeed Job Center offers free one-on-one career advising sessions where patrons can receive assistance with resumes and cover letters, help in completing online applications, interviewing techniques, career assessment, and more.

The library is hosting a variety of workshops and programs featuring employment-related topics.

In conjunction with the Free2 Succeed Job Center, the Library is now providing the Vault Online Career Library, which provides career information for students and professionals through 71 Vault Career Guidebooks. It also includes over 4,000+ Company Profiles and 50 extended Company Profiles customized to Livermore. Sample resumes and cover letters, and interview tips and over 1000 Career advice articles are included.

Another new database is the Learning Express Test Database. This database provides preparation for career and academic exams and skills remediation. It offers online practice tests that pre-

(See [JOBS](#), page 5)



Pictured hanging new yellow ribbons on the tree at the corner of First St. and Livermore Avenue in downtown Livermore are volunteers Kathy and Kristin. The work was accomplished by Phyllis Hall, Julie Quintal, Linda Myers and Kristin Ekvall, the City of Livermore and Kathy of the maintenance. Kristin, of Operation SAM, notes, "Thanks again to the city and the community for all their support and donations. It would be nice to have our troops home and not have to have the yellow ribbons - but they do look wonderful and hopefully it makes everyone stop and think and appreciate what our troops are doing."

Livermore School District Braces for the Worst

Imagine learning that you were going to take a pay cut, and that it's six months retroactive. And next year your earnings would be reduced even more. Your employer promises to pay you back at some unspecified date in the future, only your employer has a very spotty record paying back those IOUs.

That's the situation California public school districts are facing with the proposed budget cuts to school funding. California's budget outlook is so bad that the projected deficit—at least \$40 billion by most estimates—is more than the entire budget of most other states. While the news is

very bad, school districts are still guessing and waiting for the final answer from Sacramento.

Stewart Gary, one of two newly elected members of the Livermore Board of Education, commented that in his 35-year career in public service he has never seen Sacramento this politically gridlocked. He urged everyone to contact their representatives and demand that they finalize the state budget immediately.

"We know cuts are coming. We need to know what those are so we can plan for it," he said. "Tell Sacramento to make a decision. Their delays are costing

us cash and they are dumping the whole thing onto the local community. Stop fiddling, Rome!"

For a running total of the estimated cost of those delays, look at Governor Schwarzenegger's website (<http://gov.ca.gov/>).

Susan Kinder, executive director of fiscal services for the Livermore School District, said districts have been advised to stop spending immediately, even in categorical programs, to prepare for the worst.

"We're being told to freeze all spending and hiring except for health and safety issues," she explained at the Jan. 13 Board of Education meeting. "In the past,

we've frozen unrestricted spending in times of fiscal crisis. This time we're stopping categorical spending as well."

Categorical funding has strict stipulations on how it can be spent, such as for class size reduction, textbooks for certain programs, or classroom aides to support English Language Learners. One of Governor Schwarzenegger's budget proposals is to lift many of the restrictions on categorical spending to soften the blow of the drastic funding cuts.

The Governor's proposal for the current school year would cut funding by an additional 5%,

or, for Livermore, about \$264 per average daily attendance (ADA). State funding is based on ADA, the number of students in seats at school throughout the school year, not the number of students enrolled. This mid-year budget cut would be retroactive to July 2008.

The proposal for the 2009/10 school year is where things get really ugly. There is no cost of living adjustment and a deficit factor of 16.16%. In simple terms, a deficit factor takes away funding and replaces it with an IOU that should be paid back in future years. Deficit factors from (See [LIVERMORE](#), page 4)



Pictured on the steps of the capitol building are (from left) Tim Sbranti, Newell Arnerich, Jennifer Hosterman, Congressman Jerry McNerney, Abram Wilson and John Marchand.

Transportation, Foreclosed Homes, Tech Park Among Issues Raised by Mayors

Local elected officials paid their annual visit to Washington, D.C. to lobby for various projects. Transportation funds, money to rehabilitate foreclosed homes, and a potential technology park were among the topics discussed with Congressional representatives.

Making the trip were mayors Jennifer Hosterman from Pleasanton, Tim Sbranti from Dublin,

Abram Wilson from San Ramon and Newell Arnerich from Danville. Vice mayor John Marchand represented Livermore.

Congressman Jerry McNerney set up a conference call with the local press to discuss issues raised by the mayors.

McNerney said talks focused on keeping transportation

projects moving forward, increasing public benefit from research at the national laboratories in Livermore, retaining the Livermore VA Hospital, and providing funding for the Tri-Valley Opportunity Center.

McNerney described the Opportunity Center, which provides counseling for potential homebuyers, as a model for other (See [VISIT](#), page 12)

Pleasanton Schools Seek Parcel Tax Feedback

By Ron McNicoll

Pleasanton school trustees want community feedback about going to the ballot for a parcel tax to help cure its \$8.7 million deficit over the next 18 months, and for any future state education budget shortfalls.

The board at its meeting Jan. 13 also heard an objection from an African American parent about the teaching of John Steinbeck's novel, "Of Mice and Men," in a high school classroom. Carla Butler said that she objected to exposing high school students to the cursing and the "N" word in the book's dialogue.

On the parcel tax, trustees

heard assistant superintendent Luz Cazares discuss the district's shortfall resulting from the projected state budget deficit of \$41 billion in the next 18 months.

Board president Chris Grant said that the public needs to let the board know what the education priorities are. "We will also need your energy and passion. The solution probably will include cuts, and all will have effects," he said.

Board member Jim Ott said the district might need \$350 per parcel annually to revitalize the district's budget. He pointed out that every \$100 from the parcel tax raises more than \$2 million. (See [PARCEL TAX](#), page 3)

McNerney, Local Dems Praise Obama Inauguration

Valley Democrats cheered the inauguration of President Barack Obama and Vice President Joseph Biden on Tuesday.

The Tri-Valley Democratic Club joined the general public in a big-screen TV viewing of the inauguration at the IBEW hall in Dublin. A second get-together happened at 7 p.m. on Inauguration Day, as a rebroadcast of the ceremony occurred from Washington, D.C. It was introduced by 11th Congressional District Rep. Jerry McNerney.

McNerney said in a press release on Tuesday, "President Obama's inauguration renews faith in the power of ordinary Americans coming together to create monumental change."

McNerney added that he looks forward "to working with President Obama to address our country's urgent priorities: reversing the course of our economy, creating millions of new jobs, especially those through new energy technology, making health care more affordable, and keeping America safe and secure."

"Today, we celebrate an extraordinary moment in American history as Barack Obama becomes America's 44th president, and the first African-American to lead our nation. It is truly a historic day and this is a great new beginning for our country," said McNerney. (See [INAUGURATION](#), page 3)

Lab Retirees Organizing to Resolve Health Care Issue

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory retirees continue to raise concerns regarding the handling of their medical benefits.

One retiree, Joe Requa, is in the process of organizing an effort to explore legal options as well as converse with University of California representatives and elected officials to resolve a situation they see as unfair.

Requa and others believe that since they retired prior to the change in management at the Lab, they are UC retirees. "We had no relationship with LLNS (Lawrence Livermore National

Security, LLC). It's inconceivable that they would be given control of our medical benefits. It is certainly morally wrong, and I believe it is legally wrong," said Requa.

Lab retirees point out that they spent their entire careers at the Lab and retired prior to the change in management. They stayed at the Lab, although they could have made more money in the private sector, because they liked the affiliation with a university. In addition, they believed that health care benefits (See [HEALTH CARE](#), page 4)

Conservationists Want More Species In Watershed Plan

By Ron McNicoll

Environmentalists concerned about the Alameda Creek watershed have submitted their views of what a habitat conservation plan (HCP) covering 36,000 acres in the Sunol Valley should address.

San Francisco, which owns the land as part of its Hetch-Hetchy water project, had representatives of its public utilities commission (PUC) and planning department at the meeting, which was con-

ducted Jan. 13 at the Dublin Civic Center.

San Francisco is in the process of modifying its water project. The city has drawn up a 30-year plan for the modifications, maintenance and operation of its facilities. They include the Calaveras and San Antonio reservoirs and their dams, and a diversion dam upstream from the adjacent Little Yosemite falls in Sunol (See [CONSERVATION](#), page 4)



Photo - Doug Jorgensen
Jack O'Loughlin of Pleasanton took advantage of the warm weather and a holiday to practice tricks at the skateboard facility at the Pleasanton Sports Park.

Pleasanton Joins Brief On Housing Numbers

The Pleasanton City Council voted to join an amicus curiae brief to support the city of Irvine's efforts to challenge its regional housing needs assessment.

Irving filed suit in Orange County to challenge the assessment, which constituted 43 percent of the entire Orange County regional housing need. Irving argued that did not represent a fair share. A trial court dismissed the lawsuit on grounds that the court did not have jurisdiction to decide the issue. Irvine has appealed the decision, arguing that the courts do have jurisdiction.

Pleasanton City Attorney Michael Roush recommended Pleasanton join the appeal. "Pleasanton may at some time wish to challenge the regional housing needs assessment. Pleasanton should join this effort in order to preserve the right of cities to have judicial review over this aspect of local planning," wrote Roush.

In his staff report to the council, Roush notes that the disposition of the appeal has serious implications for all California (See [BRIEF](#), page 3)

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PET OF THE WEEK

Look up the phrase "lap cat" and you will find a photo of Baxter! Baxter has never met a lap he does not like. Looking for someone to snuggle with on those chilly winter nights? Baxter is your guy. To sit a spell with Baxter, visit Valley Humane Society's Kitty City at 3670 Nevada Street in Pleasanton. Open Tues-Sat from 11AM to 5PM. Visit the web site www.valleyhumane.org or call 925-426-8656.

VALLEY ROUNDUP

Congress at Your Corner

Congressman Jerry McNerney (CA-11) will hold the first two 2009 installments of Congress at Your Corner in Dublin on January 24 and in Manteca on January 31.

"Instead of asking community members to come to one of my offices, I am going to go to them to make it as easy as possible for them to see their Member of Congress," Rep. McNerney said.

Congress at Your Corner is part of an effort to reach out to residents of California's 11th District. The program is designed to allow constituents to meet and discuss issues with Rep. McNerney in the places where they already shop and recreate.

In Dublin, McNerney will be at Panera Bread, 7030 Amador Plaza Rd. from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Sat., Jan. 24. He will be in Manteca on Sat., Jan. 31 from 3 to 4 p.m. at the Manteca Bowl and Family Fun Center, 1251 E. Yosemite Ave.

Student Funds Available

Students at Chabot College in Hayward and Las Positas College in Livermore, will not have to worry about not receiving spring Cal grant funds due to the delayed state budget. District officials have identified funds that they will use to cover the grants so students will not have to interrupt their education.

"This continues to be a difficult situation for our students. As we did in the fall, we will provide funds to our students so they can continue their progress toward achieving their goals without the stress of worrying about whether or not their financial aid funds will be available," said Joel Kinnamon, district chancellor.

The district is prepared to advance payment to approximately 500 students.

For information about the spring financial aid disbursements, please call Chabot College's financial aid office at (510) 723-6748 or Las Positas College's financial aid office at (925) 424-1580.

Road Closure

There will be a temporary road closure on E. Airway Blvd. in Livermore. Through traffic will be prohibited on E. Airway between Rutan Drive and Sutter Street now through Feb. 10. Access for emergency vehicles, public services and businesses will be maintained at all times. Traffic will be detoured around the area via Murrietta Blvd. to Jack London Blvd. to Kitty Hawk Road.

The closure will allow for installation of a 42-inch water pipeline associated with the Altamont Treatment Plant and Pipeline (AWTP&P) project.

Zone 7 Water Agency is constructing the project, which will provide a reliable drinking water supply to meet the demand of future planned growth in Pleasanton, Livermore, and Dublin through the year 2035. The Altamont Pipeline - Livermore Reach is a 5-mile stretch extending from Kitty Hawk Road to the vicinity of Vasco Road. Ranger Pipelines is installing the 42-inch pipe and expects to complete the job in summer 2009. For more information, contact (925) 455-0110 or visit www.zone7water.com.

Clarification

Pleasanton City Councilmember Jerry Thorne's vote on a Martial Arts Studio permit was as follows: He voted not to allow Mr. Pfund to open until the child care license has been issued. Thorne stated, "However, I differed with my fellow Council members in that I believe that once that license is issued the facility can be modified to comply with our City's codes."

PARCEL TAX

(continued from page one)

Other districts, such as Livermore, Palo Alto, Berkeley and Piedmont have passed parcel taxes of about \$200 per parcel. "We need to hear from you folks," said Ott.

The district hired a consultant several years ago to study whether a parcel tax could receive the needed two-thirds majority. The conclusion was that it depended on the amount. None of the amounts discussed were as high as \$300.

Trustee Pat Kerman said there is nothing he wants to cut. The district will become inferior if it makes the cuts, he said. "We need to step up as a community, and move with haste, gusto and passion," said Kerman. His remarks drew audience applause.

Trustee Valerie Arkin, who previously served on the district's budget advisory committee, said she doubts a parcel tax "would cover the entire deficit. We would still have to make cuts." She noted a parcel tax is difficult to pass because it requires two-thirds approval. "However, we have a lot of bright people here who can get the word out."

Board member Jamie Hintzke said that teachers can help the board with the tax by sharing their vision.

Three audience speakers backed a parcel tax. One lamented that if class size reduction were lost, people would move out of the district to areas that would still have class size reduction.

Superintendent John Casey noted that the bright side of a recent talk by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is that school districts could utilize some of the class-size-reduction money for other uses, and not be penalized if they fails to meet the currently required 20:1 ratio of students to teachers. In other words, the district wouldn't have to hire another teacher if a class went from 20 to 21 students, as it does under the current rules.

Casey said that ideally the district would like a 15:1 ratio. Going back to 32 or 33 students in a class would be unacceptable.

Since the board meeting, the

district has scheduled two public forums so people can ask more questions about the school budget. The first meeting will be at 7 p.m. Jan. 26 at the Amador Valley High School multipurpose room. The second will be at 7 p.m. Feb. 4 at the Foothill High School multipurpose room.

The district also offers facts about the budget, updated weekly, on its web page, www.Pleasanton.k12.ca.us.

In an action related to the budget, trustees approved a contract for teachers for the current fiscal year, which began July 1. It has no raises for teachers.

OBJECTION TO 'OF MICE AND MEN'

Carla Butler, the parent who objected to the teaching of the 1937 literary classic "Of Mice and Men," told the board that she didn't understand why the district was using it. "It's degrading. It uses (the N word) several times. The Lord's name is taken in vain in several places," said Butler, who is African American.

Butler read the book with her daughter, who had been home from school with an illness, and

became concerned.

In an interview with the Independent, Butler said, "I'm here to say, it's not OK. We don't use that terminology in our home. It upset me."

Butler said that she is not trying to censor books. However, the use of characters' cursing and use of the "N" word contradicts what the school district is trying to achieve with its "community of character" theme, said Butler. "We can't pray in school. We can allow (the book's characters) to say Jesus Christ and Goddam," said Butler. It's inappropriate at the high school level, because, unlike the college level, students have no choice in what they read, she said.

The district has a review process with regard to books. District officials said they would make that process available to Butler.

She said in the interview that she has been contacted, and will be meeting with someone. "I think they are a fabulous school district. I need to give them an opportunity to respond."

INAUGURATION

(continued from page one)

The mood Monday night at the Tri-Valley Democratic Club's meeting, which was playing host to a speech by an aide to Assemblyman Tom Torlakson, was equally celebratory.

Ellis Goldberg, president of the club, said, "I can't watch TV or read a newspaper (about the inauguration), without a tear in my eye." He said that a special broadcast at the Leshner Theater in Walnut Creek already had all 1100 seats reserved for the live inaugural broadcast.

Jim Kohonen, the club's treasurer, said, "It's really exciting. Hope reigns supreme. We will see a considered effort to improve the economy, and a thoughtful plan of withdrawal (from Iraq)."

Dublin resident Greg Bonata, a club member and also a member of IBEW, said "We're excited. The economics will change. The average person is going to be represented."

Club member Joy Montgomery, who lives in Livermore, said she expects strong moves ahead in workforce development and clean energy. Noting that Obama broke the color line on White House politics, Montgomery said, "I didn't think it would happen in my lifetime."

Pleasanton City Councilmember Matt Sullivan referred to the inauguration during opening remarks of the council meeting on Tuesday. The change offers an "opportunity for all of us to meet the challenges with energy, hope and an understanding that we're all in this together," Sullivan stated.

He quoted from Martin Luther King Jr.'s Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, "I believe that what self-centered men have torn down, men other-centered can build up. I still believe that we shall overcome."

BRIEF

(continued from page one)

cities. Currently, there is no forum in the courts for a city to seek relief in the event the housing assessment process fails to comply with state requirements. "If allowed to become the law of the state, the holding in the Irvine lawsuit could have disastrous consequences for all cities. Furthermore, it could be used to establish a precedent with respect to other obligations imposed on cities by regional councils and the state."

Councilmember Jerry Thorne commented that the idea of joining the brief had been considered

carefully by the city and by the League of California Cities. The League decided not to join. There was concern expressed by some members that if the courts do influence allocations, the numbers have to be moved to another city.

"I support joining the brief. There has to be a system of checks and balances. The allocation system is broken and needs to be fixed," declared Thorne.

Councilmember Cindy McGovern added, "Large numbers of units are allocated for construction without the dollars to build them. This is an unfunded

mandate. Cities cannot afford to meet the assigned numbers."

PAINTING PURCHASED

The council approved purchase of the painting, "One Day in May" by Orinda artist Jimmy Lu.

The Civic Arts Commission Award for Artistic Excellence selected the painting.

According to a staff report, public input regarding the acquisition of the painting has been highly favorable.

The purchase price is \$2000. The funds come from the city's Public Arts Acquisition Fund.

Youth Court Completes First Year with a Positive Review

The Tri-Valley Youth Court, a diversion program for teenage offenders of misdemeanor or lesser crimes in the cities of Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton, officially opened its doors January 8, 2008.

In the past year, the Youth Court has processed 47 cases referred from the Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton Police Departments and the Juvenile Division of Alameda County Probation.

The Youth Court has assigned over 1400 hours of volunteer service, as well as 33 apologies, Anger Management classes, counseling (family and individual), Life Choices workshops, drug and alcohol counseling, jail tours, and other restitution using restorative justice principles. The Youth Court has over 140 youth volunteers serving as

Youth Advocates, Court Clerks and Jurors and 30 adult volunteers serving as Judges, Court Attendants, Case Managers, Jury Mentors and Advocate Mentors.

In an effort to ensure that the Youth Court is an effective tool in working with youth, participants, who have successfully completed the program, and their parents are contacted by an adult volunteer to answer anonymous survey questions regarding their experiences.

One hundred percent of parents who responded to the survey said that they would recommend the Tri-Valley Youth Court to a friend who was in a similar situation and 94 percent noticed an improvement in their child's attitude after the Youth Court experience. All of the participants who answered the survey said that they thought the program

was useful and 94 percent said that they would recommend the program to a friend who was in a similar circumstance.

Some complaints were the difficulty in finding community service opportunities, the court only occurring one night a month, the long line to get into the courthouse and jurors dressing inappropriately. The parents said that they believe that the Tri-Valley Youth Court is important to the community, a good process of peer interaction, a good lesson in law and responsibility, and that the kids were treated respectfully and accepted.

In the past year the Tri-Valley Youth Court has also served as a unique learning opportunity. Leadership and Civics classes from Village High School in

Pleasanton and the Athenian School in Danville have participated in the Youth Court to actively learn about the United States Court system and Restorative Justice Principles. In addition, the Attorney General from the State of Victoria, Australia, and his retinue visited the Youth Court in August as part of a whirlwind tour through the United States and Canada to discuss Restorative Justice Principles with a view towards importing innovative new approaches to Victoria.

For more information about the Tri-Valley Youth Court, please visit their website at www.trivalleyyouthcourt.com or you can contact Tonya Clenny at (925) 337-7175 tonyacлены@trivalleyyouthcourt.com.

Livermore Resident Turns 101

Ruby Giddings, who will be 84 next week, had a good time at her mother's birthday party last Saturday.

Her mother, Maude Pierce, celebrated her 101st birthday. It was just a short trip from Ruby's home over to the Colleen Street Care Home in Livermore.

Pierce wasn't available for a phone interview early this week. However, Giddings provided an account of her mom's long life.

Born in Muskogee Oklahoma, Pierce moved with her family to small towns in rural Oklahoma, where they farmed. Eventually Pierce wound up in Oregon, living there many years. She lived independently until about four years ago when she moved to Livermore.

Even in her 80s, Pierce loved to go fishing, and she bowled until she was 84. "She loved to go to dances," said Giddings.

Pierce had two children, Giddings, and her brother, Eugene Norton, who died in 1990.

Norton lived in Oklahoma and ran a tire store on Route 66. Giddings moved to Livermore in the 1950s with her husband, Glen, who obtained a job in procurement and supplies at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. He had retired from the Navy previously, and retired from the lab in 1978.

Pierce's grandmother lived to be 105.

Asked whether genetics is the key to her mother's longevity, Giddings replied, "We're both part Cherokee. However, I don't know if that had to do it. We both like our wine, but she doesn't get hers anymore. Neither one of us smokes."

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EDITORIAL

Lab Retirees Shortchanged

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory retirees are protesting changes that have befallen their health care coverage.

Under a program initiated by LLNL's new management, the coverage has been shifted from a University of California group policy to individual policies.

"In theory, we are UC retirees. However, we are not receiving the same treatment as other UC retirees," explained one of those affected.

Under the management contract now governing the Livermore Lab, privatization has come to the institution. Among other moves, health care coverage has been shifted to an entity named Lawrence Livermore National Security, LLC, and through subcontracts to three other entities.

LLNL employees have wondered how this system, with four different entities involved, each taking its own administrative fee, will do better than the not-for-profit UC program. It turns out that it's not doing better, but instead is shortchanging the retirees.

It should be noted that many Lab employees, by working at LLNL, made less in wages than they would have earned elsewhere. They accepted the lower pay, in part, because the Lab's health care coverage was so good. They now face being without that coverage, while at the same time drawing less in retirement wages.

Much like loyal soldiers, the LLNL retirees have served their country in their work at the Livermore Lab. They've long expected the UC health care coverage will be there for them when they retire. Now facing their retirement years, they deserve nothing less.

HEALTH CARE

(continued from page one)

provided after retirement would balance out the lower salaries during their years at the Lab.

Requa is working with a group of 70 other retirees on the issue. "LLNS has no interest in us. We were foisted on them as part of the new management contract," he added.

Prior to the change in management, retirees were covered by a group plan through UC. The health care coverage was switched to LLNS. Retirees have been placed under a new program, which moves them from a group policy to individual policies. Under the new system, each person (and spouse) with 20 years of service or more at the Lab receives \$2400 placed into a health care reimbursement account. The money, according to some retirees, is not enough to provide the same coverage they currently enjoy. Nor will it cover future increases in health care coverage as retirees age.

Health care management was first subcontracted to Hewett Associates, which in turn subcontracted to Extend Health, Extend Health Inc. acts as a health insurance broker. There is an additional layer of bureaucracy for Lab retirees, YSA (Your Spending Account), which pays the claims.

Many Lab retirees say that neither Extend Health, nor YSA have provided timely information or assistance to retirees. Susan Steinberg said that claim forms were sent out in mid-January. In the meantime, retirees were out-of-pocket if they required medications. In one case, a retiree's records were not entered properly. Even though he had a health care number, the pharmacy would not accept it. He had to pay full price for medications. Steinberg, herself, found that on her 70th birthday, her premiums immediately jumped \$500 per year, even though she had signed up at a different rate in December.

A sore point is that retirees from Los Alamos National Laboratory are treated differently. According to Steve Sandoval of the LANL public affairs office, Los Alamos retirees are under a self-insured group plan.

Los Alamos, while technically managed by a different entity, is overseen by UC and Bechtel National, the same entities that comprise the Livermore's management.

A self-insured group health plan (or a self-funded plan as it is also called) is one in which the employer assumes the financial risk for providing health care benefits. In practical terms, self-insured employers pay for each out of pocket claim as they are incurred instead of paying a fixed premium to an insurance carrier, which is known as a fully-insured plan. Typically, a self-insured employer will set up a special trust fund to earmark money (corporate and employee

contributions) to pay incurred claims.

When the Department of Energy (DOE) wrote the Request for Proposal to replace the University of California (UC) as the manager of the Lab, it specified that the new manager would assume responsibility for retiree medical benefits for Lab retirees. UC has taken the position that the requirement absolved them of any responsibility for retiree medical benefits, according to Requa.

Requa points to the original contract between UC and DOE that he believes argues against that view. The contract included a termination section that, among other things, stated that UC would retain responsibility for pensioners and DOE would be liable for any un-reimbursed costs that occurred as a result of contract termination.

There are three different issues with regard to retiree medical benefits. One involves those who are Medicare eligible, the second those who are not, and the third, those who are currently with Kaiser.

The existence of non-Medicare eligible retirees was caused by a UC policy, established in the 1966 - 1967 time frame, when employees were given the choice of whether or not to coordinate with Social Security. The coordination was offered as a way to let employees exceed the 80% of highest salary cap on pensions in effect at that time. The option was available until the 1990s. Those who took part in the program are not eligible for Medicare.

The Medicare eligible retirees, while having increased and increasing out of pocket expenses, are in a better position than those who are not eligible.

A Medicare eligible retiree is provided a supplement to the base Medicare coverage. A non-eligible retiree starts with zero coverage making the coverage much more expensive.

Kaiser is available to retirees this year. However, negotiations continue between Extend Health and Kaiser as to whether the option will be available in the future.

Requa invites retirees to check the web site at: <http://home.comcast.net/~jrequa/retiree.htm> or send an email to him at llnretiree@comcast.net

"Turning our medical benefits over to a Limited Liability Company (LLC) simply adds insult to injury," said Requa. He described an LLC as legally an artificial person owning only the resources it has earned and those contributed by its sponsors. It is at risk only for those resources; no claims can be made against its sponsors. It is allowed to dissolve at any time shedding any liability not covered by what it owns. "If the Lab were ever to close, retiree medical benefits would disappear along with LLNS," he stated.

Aide Says Drive For Simple Majority Vote Needs To Be Selective

By Ron McNicoll

If Democrats make an attempt to eliminate the two-thirds rule in the Legislature concerning the budget and taxation, they should be careful which target they pick.

That was the word early this week delivered to the Tri-Valley Democratic Club from a representative of Assemblyman Tom Torlakson.

Craig Cheslog, Torlakson's district representative, spoke to the club about the current state budget deadlock. His remarks covered two major topics: reform of the Legislature's two-thirds voting rule, and short-sighted press coverage of the budget stalemate.

Cheslog started his talk after club president Ellis Goldberg said he wanted the club to be the first to start a statewide petition drive to end the two-thirds rule on passing a budget in the Legislature. However, within the club, members asked whether the

two-thirds should be eliminated just for the budget, or for all bills that would raise taxes. The question was enough to postpone the club's discussion of any initiative movement until next month.

Cheslog said that club members raised an important distinction, with one part of it possibly setting a trap for Democrats. Only two states besides California require a two-thirds vote of the Legislature to pass a budget. If that were eliminated, Republicans would be very happy, he said. The reason is that if only a simple majority is needed, the burden would be put solely on Democrats to cut programs for their own constituencies, such as health care, education and welfare measures.

Under the current setup, the Republicans have some responsibility to compromise, and try to bring about a solution. However, if an initiative got rid of a two-thirds vote for all tax increases, requiring only a simple

majority, Democrats would not have to cut their constituencies' needs, he said.

Whether or not such an initiative would pass is not clear. Cheslog noted that a state ballot attempt several years ago to reduce the two-thirds requirement to 55 percent on bonds failed to receive a simple majority. Cheslog also noted that Proposition 13, which has a clause that imposes the two-thirds majority on local tax measures, itself passed by 66.2 percent. It failed to obtain a two-thirds majority, which would have been 66.67 percent.

Cheslog pointed out that some bond measures have garnered a higher percentage than Prop. 13, but failed to attain the two-thirds, he said. Maybe the requirement on bonds should be changed to 66.2 percent, he said.

As for press coverage, especially from pundits, many writers have put Democrats on the same level as Republicans and

the governor. That's unfair, believes Cheslog, because Democrats were willing to cut \$18 billion in expenditures and raise taxes by \$17 billion. It amounts to a 50-50 split in the approach to the budget dilemma.

Even budget reform groups, and definitely the press, have put the blame on the entire Legislature for the impasse. The real blame goes to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, said Cheslog. Although he is willing to raise taxes, he doesn't seem to have the leverage with Republicans to obtain the votes in the Legislature to do so.

The governor needs only three votes more in each house. However, his traction with Republicans is nil, said Cheslog.

The governor's visit to the Assembly Republican caucus earlier in the session was greeted by legislators who wore name tags because they felt he probably didn't know their names, said Cheslog.

Pleasanton Sees Reduction in Revenues

Pleasanton is seeing less revenue coming in to its coffers. The result is that cuts were needed in the operating budget.

The city council on Tuesday approved several actions needed to balance the budget. These included moving \$3 million from the capital improvement project reserve to the recession reserve this would bring the account up to \$10.9 million. Other actions include reducing contributions to the replacement fund, and keeping non-essential positions open.

City Manager Nelson Fialho told the council, "Most, if not all,

California cities are experiencing a reduction in general revenues. Pleasanton is not immune to the situation. We have not yet seen the impacts of the state budget. The worst impacts may not be felt until next year."

Fialho said the city would slowdown spending, in general, maximize the use of current personnel, and make greater use of technology to achieve efficiencies.

David Culver, the city's financial director, noted that while there is a decline in revenues and spending, there would be no reduction in services. The city has

seen a \$4.9 reduction in revenues, including a reduction of \$650,000 in property taxes, \$1.7 million in sales tax, \$1.1 million in development services fees.

Several of the council members expressed concern about reducing the contributions to the replacement fund.

Fialho said that it is overfunded by about \$5 million now. It is possible to slow the contributions at this time.

Councilmember Matt Sullivan said he supported moving the \$3 million to the recession reserve. "All of the proposals seem to be short-term ap-

proaches. What is the strategy for the future," Sullivan asked.

Fialho said that staff would prepare a five year cash flow explaining how to balance the budget and retain core services. There would be a fiscal forecast prepared based on the new general plan, once it is approved. Technology, spending reductions, and development of cost recovery fees for some services are under consideration.

Councilmember Jerry Thorne urged staff to look at worst case scenarios and prepare options to deal with those situations if needed.

CONSERVATION

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gional Wilderness.

Instead of preparing piecemeal environmental impact reports as various projects occur over the 30 years, the HCP will cover the entire plan. It will authorize the taking of certain endangered animal and plant species caused by operation and maintenance of the San Francisco project. It will spell out mitigation requirements for those takes.

As proposed, the HCP would list five federally listed endangered species, all familiar to people who follow species protection in the Valley. They are the callippe butterfly, Alameda whipsnake, California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander, and steelhead trout.

Other species, which are not endangered, but may be on watch lists that may indicate they are heading toward an endangered status, should be added to the HCP, said Doug Bell. He is the wildlife program manager for East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), which operates Sunol Regional Wilderness. He noted that the area has 30 habitats that support golden eagles

Bell said, in support of including the eagles on the list, "Our golden eagles are your golden eagles."

The HCP would have an effect on adjacent species, he said. In addition to including golden eagles, San Francisco should add several more species, including

bald eagles, peregrine falcons, and a fish called the hard head, said Bell.

MORE NATIVE PLANTS ASKED FOR H.C.P.

San Francisco is falling short on listing enough endangered native plants, said Lech Maumovich, Eastbay conservation analyst for the California Native Plant Society.

The HCP lists five species. However, Alameda and Contra Costa counties have a combined 24 endangered native plant species, he told the San Francisco staff representatives. He said the number boils down to many times the national average for a county.

Maumovich named several species that he said should be added. Some of the area has not been explored for species very well, especially in the Santa Clara County portion, Maumovich later told the Independent.

Maumovich also urged San Francisco to outline in the HCP how, as a neighbor, it will take on the approved Apperson Quarry, when that goes into operation.

DAMS HAVE IMPACT ON FISH SPECIES

Jeff Miller, director of the Alameda Creek Alliance, which has 1700 members, said the organization has been working for 12 years on restoration of the creek environment. Miller said the HCP should include impacts

of the three dams on fish species. They interrupt the whole ecosystem of the creek, he pointed out. They affect water temperature downstream, and also have an impact on necessary spawning gravel for steelhead.

Miller also wants the HCP to include the native rainbow trout population, not just steelhead. It's virtually impossible to say which fish are native rainbow trout and which are steelhead, since the only determining factor is which fish go out to sea, said Miller.

The creek alliance wants removal of the diversion dam near Little Yosemite falls, something it has called for in the past. "They ignored us before. This time, they need two federal agencies and one state agency to issue them permits that will authorize them for all of their impacts on species. The mitigation has to be significant. It has to contribute to the recovery of the species," said Miller.

Miller also commented on a herd of tule elk, which sometimes grazes on PUC land, south of the San Antonio reservoir. There is extensive cattle grazing there. That should be eliminated or reduced, he said.

PEER REVIEW OF SCIENCE IS ASKED

The issue of peer review was raised by Jessie Raeder, Bay Area organizer for the Tuolumne River

Trust. The trust is one of many regional conservationist groups that work in concert in the Bay Area on water habitat issues.

Raeder said that the applicant PUC is using only the science findings of its consultant. She called for a peer review by a panel of scientists that would be designated. Extension of the commentary deadline on the scoping report was asked. Comments are due Jan. 22.

Miller said the PUC still hasn't released the final analysis report, which contains the proposed conservation strategy.

Chris Kern, environmental planner for the San Francisco Planning Department, said at the meeting that his department also had not received it. Kern agreed with Miller that it is important to obtain the conservation strategy. "We are all waiting for that. At this point, it (the conservation strategy) is only hypothetical," he said.

Kern told the Independent, it is not true that there is a need for further review of the mitigation plan beyond the PUC's consultant. The consultant is an independent entity itself, he said.

Miller said that having the science in a report from only one source, the department's consultant, isn't really peer review. He agreed with Raeder that a panel of scientists should be appointed by mutual agreement.

LIVERMORE

(continued from page one)

past years have never been fully paid back.

Those reductions add up to a drop in funding of over \$1,000 per ADA from what the District should receive from Proposition 98. This translates into about \$9.4 million less state revenue in the current and 2009/10 school years than what was projected last month. "That leaves us with a negative ending balance of over a million dollars at the end of the 2009/10 school year if we don't make adjustments to the budget," said Kinder.

The outlook is so bad for California schools that the Alameda County Office of Education may not have the personnel to provide fiscal oversight to the number of school districts expected to have negative budget projections. School districts must show they can meet their financial obligations for three years; this means a positive ending balance after meeting the reserve requirement. When school districts can't do this, the Alameda County Office of Education provides fiscal oversight, which is what happened to Livermore several years ago.

The Governor has also proposed reducing the required re-

serve for economic uncertainty from 3% to 1.5%. "I don't think that's a good idea," said Kinder. "It's a Band-Aid and one-time savings."

To add insult to injury, school districts have also been advised that their February funding allotment will likely be deferred to July, and July likely deferred to October. School districts are scrambling to secure lines of credit and loans to cover the gap in funding.

The Livermore School District is looking into a Tax Revenue Anticipation Note (TRAN) to maintain cash flow. "We need to be able to pay our employees," said Kinder. "Our salaries and benefits alone are about \$8 million a month."

The primary concern for the administration at the Livermore Valley Charter School (LVCS) is putting financing in place to cover the anticipated delays in funding. Charter schools are funded differently from school districts, so the budget cuts may be less severe for LVCS. Charter schools do not have access to many of the loans and lines of credit, such as TRAN, that are available to school districts.

"We believe we can weather the budget cuts, this year and

next year. Fortunately we've budgeted very conservatively, built that a healthy reserve, and had good attendance numbers to date," said Bill Batchelor, chief operating officer of the Livermore Charter Learning Corporation (LCLC), which operates LVCS. "However, a three month delay in funding could eat through those reserves pretty quickly, so we're securing an additional line of credit to ensure any delay from the state doesn't impact our day-to-day operation."

Livermore School Superintendent Brenda Miller acknowledged the gravity of the situation. "When superintendents get together now, the only thing to talk about is the budget," she said. "It's hitting us all hard. I don't think many of us are sleeping well at night."

She asked the audience to "keep in mind that we are presenting you with the worst case scenarios. We don't know where the final budget will fall in comparison."

Knowing that severe cuts could happen, Miller said the District is putting itself in a position of greatest flexibility by freezing all spending and hiring. Many district employees will re-

ceive layoff notices in mid-March. The notice does not mean a teacher is being laid off, but it is required if the District wants to continue down that path.

Anyone paid with categorical funding will be notified. This includes 49 teachers at the elementary level and 13 middle and high school teachers funded by Class Size Reduction, as well as seven counselors not funded through the parcel tax.

The trustees were stunned by the dire situation. "I can't even comment on this," said trustee Bill Dunlop when the Board discussion began.

The District has already held two special Board meetings to study the budget situation. "We have two new board members to bring up to speed. The meetings are also a refresher for the rest of us. We're going through the budget line item by line item," said Board president Kate Runyon. "We're not talking about cuts. We're just finding out what we have and what those things cost."

The next special Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 29 from 11:30 am to 1 pm. Check the District's website at <http://lvusd.ca.schoollloop.com> for information on future meetings.

OBITUARIES

Elmo H. Turner

Elmo Henry Turner, a 54 year resident of Livermore and Topock, AZ died Saturday, January 3, 2009 at ValleyCare Medical Center in Pleasanton. He was 90 years old.

Elmo was the youngest of 12 children of Andrew J and Martha (Ambrose) Turner of Green Forest, Arkansas. At the age of 13, Elmo rode a freight train to California seeking adventure and a life away from dairy farming. On Sept. 1, 1944, Elmo enlisted in the Army and served in Burma as a heavy truck driver until the end of WWII. He returned to Hayward to marry the love of his life, Mary Lou Cooper on Sept 7, 1946. Mary and Elmo moved to Livermore in 1955. They purchased a retirement home in Topock, AZ in 1974. They were happily married for 57 years before Mary's death Nov. 3, 2003 in Topock, AZ.

Elmo was employed as a truck driver for Alameda County through the 1960s when he bought his own tractor and became an owner/operator leasing himself and his Peterbuilt to Warren Transportation in Union City, CA. He continued as a teamster until his retirement in 1983.

Elmo loved retirement, rock hunting in the desert, gardening, fishing and telling tall tales to his grandchildren.

Elmo is survived by his sons, Donald E. Turner (partner Brian Fernandez) of Livermore, Gary W. Turner of Newark and Dale R. Turner of San Bruno. He leaves four grandsons including Donald B. Turner (Michelle) and Jeffrey A. Turner both of Pleasanton and two great grandchildren, Trevor and Auburn Turner also of Pleasanton.

A Celebration of the Life of Elmo Turner will be held Thursday, January 22 at 6:30 pm at the First Presbyterian Church, 2020 Fifth Street in Livermore in the Chapel.

Memorial gifts are suggested to the First Presbyterian Church, Livermore.

Funeral arrangements by Graham-Hitch Mortuary, 4176 First Street, Pleasanton. Private inurnment in Topock, AZ.

Eugene Joseph Hammerel

Eugene Joseph Hammerel went home to be with the Lord on January 12, 2009 at the age of 84 years old.

Eugene, a Livermore resident, was a man who loved mixing cement and working with tools; he was always building or fixing something. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, bowling and traveling; especially to Boomtown.

Eugene loved spending time with his children and grandchildren, all of whom were very dear to him.

Eugene was preceded in death by his wife Elizabeth who passed away in 2006. He is survived by his children Gene (Pam) Hammerel of New Mexico, Ken (Kim) Hammerel of Brentwood, Dale Hammerel of Livermore and Bettygene (Mark) Egan of Livermore. Eugene is also survived by five grandchildren Ryan and Jeffery Hammerel of New Mexico, Kelsey Hammerel of Brentwood, Katrina Hole and Travis Egan of Livermore.

Funeral Mass was celebrated Jan 16 at St. Michael's Catholic Church, Livermore. Burial followed at St. Michael's Catholic Cemetery in Livermore Livermore.

Memorial donations can be made to the American Diabetes Association, P.O. Box 11454, Alexandria, VA 22312.

Arrangements by Callaghan Mortuary.

Richard Cook Jr.

Richard Cook, 80, died peacefully in his home on Tuesday, January 13, 2009 in Livermore. He was born June 10, 1928 to Richard Cook Sr. and Katherine Cook in Puyallup Washington. He was an avid fisherman and

especially enjoyed fishing in the Sea of Cortez, Mexico. His fishing adventures began early fishing with his parents throughout the Olympic Peninsula. He always remembered their favorite spot which was Nolan Creek near Olympic National Park.

Richard was an active 4-H leader and also helped advising the Livermore FFA Chapter. Swine Projects were his specialty and he was very involved with Show Pigs at the Alameda County Fair. He enjoyed passing on his swine knowledge to everyone in the county especially his son, daughter and grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his stepson Kent Cook of Livermore. Richard is survived by his wife of 46 years Nanee Cook of Livermore;; sister Betty Stack of Spokane, WA; son Brian Cook of Livermore; daughter Sheryl Clark of Oroville; and grandchildren Wesley Cook, Sarah Peterson, Haley Cook and Garren Cook.

He graduated from both Washington State University and the University of Washington with Civil and Mechanical Engineering degrees. He served in the US Army and then worked for Sandia National Laboratories for 34 years.

Family and friends are invited to attend a memorial service on Friday, January 23, 2009 at 1:00 pm at Callaghan Mortuary Chapel, 3833 East Avenue, Livermore. A reception will follow the service at the Cook's family residence.

Memorial donations can be made to Valley Vista 4-H club, 4-H Resource Center, 1131 Harbor Bay Parkway, Suite #131, Alameda, Calif. 94502, Telephone: 510/639-1370 or a charity of choice.

Hazel (Gramma) Waltjen

Pleasanton resident Hazel Waltjen died January 16, 2009. She was born August 24, 1913 in Berkeley. She was raised in Oakland.

After living in Atwater for twenty years she moved to Casa Sandoval, where she enjoyed numerous activities with her many friends who were her extended family.

Hazel was preceded in death by her husband Bill of 64 years. She is survived by her daughters Diane Brittain (Jim) and Linda Draa (Dan), grandchildren Kris (Brittain) and Dave Snyder, Sheri (Brittain) and Ross Kapp, Jenny and Mitch Laible; and great grandchildren Emilie and Rachael Kapp and Ryan Snyder. She was a devoted mother, grandmother, great grandmother, aunt and a wonderful friend to many. The family wishes to thank the staff at Kaiser Hospital in Antioch for the compassion and special care in her final days.

A celebration of her life with a visitation at Graham-Hitch Mortuary, 4167 First St., Pleasanton, will be held from 9 to 9:30 p.m. Thurs., Jan. 22. A Funeral mass will follow at 10 a.m. at St. Augustine Catholic Church, 3999 Bernal Ave., Pleasanton. Private burial will be at St. Mary's Cemetery in Oakland.

At her request, in lieu of flowers, please send contributions to

the Shriners Hospital, 2425 Stockton Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95817.

Bernice Waddell

Bernice Lucille Peterson Waddell, a resident of Livermore for more than 50 years, passed peacefully on January 16, 2009, at the age of 89.

Bernice was born in South Dakota on July 14, 1919, to Emil and Mavis Peterson. She attended school in Clark County and thereafter maintained a strong work ethic while working various jobs. She was taught that no one owed you a living and as long as it was an honest job it didn't matter what you had to do to help with the expenses at home. Her dad worked very hard for very small wages but always had a few cents and time to help friends or anyone that was in need. Her mom was just as active and had a great compassion for people. The local doctors always knew that if they had to make a house call but no one was available that Mavis would help out. The City of Clark in those days celebrated the national holidays with such honor and on those special days her family would follow the band down Main Street. She had fond memories of her dad playing the sliding trombone in the band. She loved music and enjoyed dancing and playing the organ and accordion for her family. Family, friends, doctors and even strangers were entertained and touched by her fabulous sense of humor.

She married Frank Waddell on March 1, 1940. They lived on a farm in South Dakota until 1956 when they moved to Livermore. She worked at Gussie's Fabric Store for 5 years and began a long career at JCPenney, retiring after 25 years with several life-long friends. For years, the "Penney" girls have enjoyed each other's company meeting every week.

She was a member of the Springtown Women's Club and ValleyCare Hospital Auxiliary Club where she volunteered to work at the Thrift Shop weekly. She enjoyed being around people and keeping busy by involving herself in a number of activities. Her favorite hobbies included endless card games, baking, crossword puzzles, crafts, and traveling. Many summers were spent with her family at Lake Berryessa and traveling the country in the motor home and always stopping in Reno or Tahoe to play a little Keno.

She is survived by a son, Franklin, and wife, Dale, of Florida; three grandchildren, her granddaughter Debora Marchant and her husband, Jim Marchant, of Santa Rosa, her grandson Eric James Waddell and his wife, Suzanne, of Arkansas, and her granddaughter Wendy Waddell from San Ramon; her six great-grandchildren, Danielle Krause, Nick Krause, Jett Waddell, Tyler Krause, Jenna Krause and Sarah Waits; her two loving sisters, Gertrude Beavers and Odella Tibbetts, from Arizona, several nieces, nephews and cousins, and long-time special friend, Genny Murphy.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 60 years, Frank Waddell, two infant daughters, Kay Frances and Myrna Jean, her

father and mother, and a brother Eugene. She has been an active member of Asbury United Methodist Church from 1956, transferring her membership from her church in Garden City, South Dakota.

A funeral service will be held at 3 p.m. on Thurs., Jan 22, at Asbury United Methodist Church, 4743 East Ave., Livermore. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be sent in her name to Asbury United Methodist Church or a charity of choice.

Arrangements by Callaghan Mortuary.

Brent Bradley, Sr.

Brent Bradley, Sr., 86, of Pleasanton, passed away peacefully in his home on January 17, 2009. He was born June 18, 1922 to Ora Niegel and Ed Bradley in Waukena, CA.

He is survived by his wife Josephine, sister Aloha Adams of Cool, CA, and seven children Brent Jr. of Mt. Shasta, Sharon Clarke and husband Michael of Reno, Mark and wife Debi of Concord, Scott and wife Lisa of Pleasanton, Glen of Los Angeles, Barbara Flores and Ron of Livermore and Dave and wife Carrie of Livermore, as well as sixteen grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

Brent was a loving husband and father. He grew up in Ft. Bragg, CA and lived there until his high school graduation. He worked for Bank of America in Danville where he met and fell in love with his wife Josephine. He joined the Marine Corps during World War II and was very proud of being a Marine. Afterward, he attended Cal Berkeley and graduated with a degree in business administration. He was employed at General Motors for 31 years, most of the time in labor relations. He enjoyed spending time at the many family gatherings. His favorite activities were playing golf, traveling, playing bridge and reading. He served as a lector at St. Augustine Catholic Church. During his retirement, he and his wife traveled extensively. He was a member of the SIRS and Pleasant Living Trailer Club. One thing he often said was, "I love the life I lead."

A funeral mass will be celebrated at noon on Fri., Jan. 23 at St. Augustine Catholic Church, 3999 Bernal Ave., Pleasanton. Burial will follow at St. Augustine Cemetery, 5750 Sunol Blvd., Pleasanton.

Arrangements by Graham-Hitch Mortuary.

Teens to Host Workshop on Depression and Suicide

The Teen Health Education Club (THE Club) at Foothill High School is hosting a workshop on depression and suicide on Jan. 29.

The workshop, held in conjunction with the Pleasanton Library, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The workshop includes guest speakers such as, Mercedes Coleman from Teens For Life coordinator Crisis Support Services of Alameda County, with an introduction by Mayor Jennifer Hosterman.

According to Nidhi Mastey, president of THE Club, "The purpose of our event is to make teens aware of the growing problem of depression and suicide and also to let the community know that resources are available. We hope to teach teens the warning signs of suicide and depression so that this knowledge will help them deal with situations they might face in the future."

THE Club received a \$1000 grant from the Youth Venture Organization to fund events to help teens.

The evening will include snacks, door prizes and games. For more information, contact Teen Services Library Teresa Parham at 931-3404. The library is located at 400 Old Bernal Ave.

Pleasanton Teen at Inauguration

Ashley Rodondi, a junior at Amador Valley High School, attended the inauguration of President Obama in Washington, DC as a member of the Presidential Youth Inaugural Conference (PYIC).

Ashley was invited to participate in the five-day program, which focuses on the study of the electoral process and various activities associated with the presidential inauguration.

During her weeklong visit, she attended lectures from keynote speakers such as Former Secretary of State and Founder of America's Promise Alliance, General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.); former Vice President and Nobel Peace Prize Winner Al Gore; Nobel Peace Prize winner and Human Rights Activist, Archbishop Desmond Tutu; Doris Kearns Goodwin, Pulitzer Prize Winner, assistant to President Lyndon Johnson and author of the recently released *Team of Rivals*; and special correspondent to the National Geographic, Lisa Ling.

In addition to attending the inauguration and viewing the inauguration parade, the week concluded with a private black tie gala held for the PYIC at the Air and Space Museum, featuring the group Daughtry.

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A FREE Community Seminar

MINIMALLY INVASIVE TREATMENTS FOR VARICOSE VEINS

Tuesday, February 3, 2009 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Varicose veins and spider veins can be more than a cosmetic concern. They can lead to night cramps, leg swelling, itching, fatigue, and even ulcers. An estimated one in 10 people has varicose veins. Most are women, particularly those who sit or stand for long periods of time, have been pregnant, or do anything else that places pressure on the veins and restricts blood flow. In the past, vein stripping surgery was the only solution. Today we perform minimally invasive laser treatments that usually result in mild discomfort and fast recovery. Vascular Specialist Dr. Soohyun Kim will discuss surgical and non-surgical treatments for varicose veins and how to reduce pain and discomfort. She will be available for your questions.



SPEAKER
Soohyun Kim, M.D., R.V.T.
Vascular and Endovascular Specialist

SEMINAR LOCATION
San Ramon Regional Medical Center
South Conference Room
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LIVERMORE CALIFORNIA

PUBLIC WORKSHOP
Joint Planning Commission and Design Review Committee Workshops

Regional Performing Arts Theater
Tuesday, January 27, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. • City Council Chambers, 3575 Pacific Avenue

The purpose of the workshop will be to study a potential design for a 77,854± square foot multi-purpose Regional Performing Arts Theater with a 41,500± square foot footprint within the former Lucky's Shopping Center site on the west side of South Livermore Avenue between First Street and Railroad Avenue. No actions will be taken by the Planning Commission or the Design Review Committee.

Barry Swenson Builders proposed mixed use project
Thursday, January 29, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. • City Council Chambers, 3575 Pacific Avenue

The purpose of the workshop will be to study a proposed mixed-use redevelopment project on an approximately 4-acre site at the northwest corner of First Street and South L Street. No actions will be taken by the Planning Commission or the Design Review Committee.

For more information, please call the City of Livermore Planning Division, at (925) 960-4450.

Pleasanton's Museum on Main Offers 'Once Upon a Time'

"Once Upon a Time," presented by Pleasanton's Museum on Main, will be held from 5-6:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 25, at the museum, 603 Main Street. The theme is exploration.

The program is designed for pre-school to third graders. The program includes a historical reading and an activity program. The evening weaves three stories through two activities/games and ends with a treat.

The fee for each date is \$5 per child due on date of event, along with forms. Parents or guardians must fill out the Educational Program Registration, Agreement and Release of Liability, and Photograph Permission Forms prior to the event. Forms can be found on the Pleasanton's Museum on Main web site under Public Tours Administrative forms or at the museum, 603 Main Street.

All events are at the museum on Sunday from 5-6:30 p.m. Future dates and themes are as follows: February 22, Presidential Study; March 29, Spring Fling; April 26, Heroes; May 24, Remembrance; June 28, Nature's Cycles; July 26, Transportation; August 23, The Sky and Stars.

Harpist in Concert at Pleasanton Library

A free concert by harpist Angel Firestar Simmons will be presented at the Pleasanton Library on January 25 at 2 p.m.

Angel Firestar Simmons is a performer, teacher and composer celebrating 40 years experience. Her one-hour library concert will feature Celtic harp folk music from around the world. The program is suitable for all ages. Angel has appeared on television and radio and has toured extensively nationally and internationally.

Copies of her award winning CDs will be available after her performance. The program is free and open to all. No registration required.

For more information, call Penny Johnson, 931-3405.

Jazz Benefit Concert Scheduled

The San Ramon Valley High School Winter Jazz Benefit Concert featuring Carlos Reyes with special appearances by SRVHS Instrumental Music Students will be held Sat., Jan. 31. They will perform Latin jazz and traditional folkloric music.

Reyes is an instrumentalist of the highest caliber, equally virtuosic on the Paraguayan harp and the electric violin. His original songs are compositions ranging in styles from beautiful Latin folkloric material, to full-blown Latin fusion rockers. His band, The Electric Symphony, are all veteran performers of both the SF and LA music scenes.

Doors open at 6:15 p.m. with show at 7 p.m. at the SRVHS Performing Arts Center, 501 Danville Blvd. in Danville General admission is \$25 adv/\$30 door, gold circle: \$40, SRVHS students and staff: \$10. For information call 925-229-2710 or go to www.communityconcerts.com.

Proceeds will benefit the San Ramon Valley High School Instrumental Music programs.

Student Marches in Inaugural Parade

The Virginia Military Institute participated in the 2009 Inaugural Parade in Washington, DC on January 20, 2009. It was the 13th inauguration in which VMI cadets have marched. The first was in 1909, when President William Howard Taft was sworn in. Cadet Stephen G. Buescher of Livermore will be participating in the parade.

Livermore Reads Together Opening Event Set

A special Kick-Off Event for *Livermore Reads Together: In Defense of Food* will take place from 2-4pm on Sunday, January 25, at the Livermore Public Library Civic Center, 1188 S. Livermore Avenue.

Christine Wenthe, part of the fifth generation of the Wenthe family and Senior Vice-President of Hospitality at Wenthe Vineyards, will speak on the Wenthe family's leadership role in sustainable agriculture, land use and related sustainable winegrowing practices in the Livermore Valley. The Restaurant at Wenthe Vineyards' philosophy of highlighting locally and estate grown ingredients throughout its menu will be discussed as well.

Local food producers will offer samples and sell products at a Mini Food Festival following Wenthe's presentation.

This program is part of *Livermore Reads Together*, a community-wide reading program featuring Michael Pollan's best-selling book *In Defense of Food: The Myth of Nutrition and the Pleasures of Eating*. The community of Livermore is encouraged to join their neighbors by participating in the *Livermore Reads Together* book discussions and free events for children and adults during the month of February 2009. Copies of books and event schedules are available at all Livermore Public Library locations. *Livermore Reads Together: In Defense of Food* is sponsored by The Friends of the Livermore Library.

For additional events check the library's website at www.livermore.lib.ca.us. For more information contact Rosemary Dukelow at 925-373-5514.

Chamber to Hand Out Honors at Gala

The Livermore Chamber of Commerce is honoring "builders and innovators" for their talents and leadership in the Tri-Valley at the Chamber's 83rd Board Installation and Awards Gala on Saturday February 7, 2009 at The Robert Livermore Community Center. The event will be emceed by Faith Alpher, noted actress and personality.

Each year the Livermore Chamber of Commerce honors individuals who have made an impact on Livermore and the Tri-Valley community.

Honorees this year include the following:

John Chen, Chairman, Chief Executive Officer and President of Sybase since 1998. Located in Dublin, Sybase is a leader in developing and expanding innovative database technology. Today Sybase is the largest enterprise software and services company exclusively focused on managing and mobilizing information. John, a recognized technology industry leader and corporate turnaround specialist, was named Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the year in Northern California for his outstanding leadership in building and leading a dynamic Sybase; John also serves on the board of directors for the Walt Disney Company, Wells Fargo & Co and the U.S Chamber of Commerce.

Barry Shames, Chief Executive Officer of Shames Construction Company is another recipient of an award for excellence from the Chamber. Shames Construction has built several exciting projects in the area including the new Concannon Winery, UNCLE Credit Union headquarters, Zephyr Grill and Bar, Castlewood Country Club Valley Course Clubhouse, Club Sport in Pleasanton, California Speed Sports and the Livermore Valley Tennis Club. Barry is past president of the Retail Contractors Association, a current Board member of the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association Foundation, and is active in numer-

ous charitable organizations throughout the community.

Brian Gates, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Top Grade Construction will also be receiving an award of distinction. Top Grade Construction has been a leader in the grading and paving industry since its founding in 1990. Through a history of innovation and intense customer dedication, the company has become the premier general engineering contractor in California. Brian has over 15 years of business experience and has been instrumental in defining the Top Grade's long-term vision. This includes the adoption of a new business unit model, the hiring of key personnel and the implementation of Oracle's industry leading J.D. Edwards enterprise software system.

Honoree, Ed Moses is the Principal Associate Director of the National Ignition Facility and Photon Science at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. The Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory is the "go-to" laboratory for science and technology solutions to the toughest and most important problems affecting national and global security. They are a leader in transforming scientific breakthroughs and cutting-edge engineering into solutions to real-world problems. Ed is responsible for building and bringing into operation the National Ignition Facility

(NIF), the world's largest and most energetic laser system. Ed is also recognized in laser and optical sciences and holds seven patents in laser technology and computational physics.

The Chamber Gala also include the installation of their Board of Directors. This year the board will be chaired by another nationally recognized Chief Executive Officer, David Kent of The Wine Group. The Wine Group is the third largest wine producer in the world and the first major producer to make a new investment in the Livermore Valley. Under David's leadership The Wine Group has become the world's most cost and carbon efficient vintner and has become the global leader in low waste/light weight packaging and local bottling. David's work with The Wine Group and in the Livermore community continually brands this area as a great wine country.

Everyone is invited to attend Livermore Chamber of Commerce's 83rd Annual Installation Gala; Mardi Gras - A Celebration of New Beginnings being held on February 7. Cocktail reception beginning at 6 pm, dinner and program beginning at 7 pm at the Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave. The cost is \$115 per person, black tie optional. Reservations may be made by calling the Livermore Chamber Office 925-447-1606.

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 418928

The following person(s) doing business as: Good Fuels, 5565 Tesla Road, Livermore Ca 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Portico Arts, Inc., 5565 Tesla Road, Livermore Ca 94550
This business is conducted by: a Corporation
The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name (s) listed above on February 8, 2008.
Signature of Registrant: /s/ Karl Wenthe
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on December 15, 2008. Expires December 15, 2013.
The Independent Legal No. 2428, Publish January 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 2009.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 419421

The following person(s) doing business as: Intellifos, LLC, 2)Intellifos, 333 Lloyd St., Livermore Ca 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Intellifos, LLC, 333 Lloyd Street, Livermore Ca 94550
This business is conducted by: a Corporation
The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name (s) listed above on January 1, 2009.
Signature of Registrant: /s/ Jo Ellen Neuman
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on January 2, 2009. Expires January 2, 2014.
The Independent Legal No. 2430, Publish January 8, 15, 22, 29, 2009.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 419587

The following person(s) doing business as: Pampered

Pooches & Puddy Tats, 7400 Highland Oaks Dr., Pleasanton Ca 94588 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Kristen Clay, 7400 Highland Oaks Dr., Pleasanton Ca 94588

This business is conducted by: an Individual
The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name (s) listed above on December, 2006.

Signature of Registrant: /s/ Kristen Clay
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on January 7, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2432, Publish January 15, 22, 29, February 5, 2009.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 419400

The following person(s) doing business as: Tasty Hoops, 528 Fontonett Ave., Livermore CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
John Conkle, 528 Fontonett Ave., Livermore CA 94550

Jennifer Severo, 528 Fontonett Ave., Livermore CA 94550
This business is conducted by: Husband and wife
The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name (s) listed above on January 1, 2009.

Signature of Registrant: /s/ John Conkle
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on January 2, 2009. Expires January 2, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2433, Publish January 15, 22, 29, February 5, 2009.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 419643

The following person(s) doing business as: Greg's Hardwood Floors, 2218 Bluffs Ct., Livermore Ca 94551 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Michael John Herrera, 138525 Athy Ct., Fremont Ca 94536

This business is conducted by: an Individual
The registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed.

Signature of Registrant: /s/ Michael John Herrera
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on January 14, 2009. Expires January 14, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2436, Publish January 22, 29, February 5, 12, 2009.

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)

CASE NO. 39-2008-00183365-CU-BC-STK

NOTICE TO CROSS-DEFENDANT: (Aviso a Acusado):

DAN LARSEN, individually and doing business as IMPE-RIAL LEASING LTD

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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 a proper legal form. If you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your responses. 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.

Tien 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO despues de que le entreguen esta citacion 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 telefonica no lo pretegen. 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 informacion en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/espanol/), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentacion, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exencion de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podra 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 remision a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpia 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.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/espanol/) o poniendose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales.

The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y direccion de la corte es): **SUPERIOR COURT OF SAN JOAQUIN** 475 East 10th Street Tracy, California 95376 Tracy Branch - Unlimited Civil Division

The name, address, and telephone number of Plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la direccion y el numero de telefono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): **DANIEL H. MCLINDEN #109597 Attorney at Law 616 So. El Camino Real, SteH San Clemente, CA 92672 (949) 492-2529**

DATE: (Fecha) December 17, 2008 Clerk (Secretario) Rosa Junqueiro By/s: Deputy (Adjunto) Polly Khieu

The Independent Legal No. 2429. Publish January 1, 8, 15, 22, 2009.

4)FOUND
FOUND MALE CAT Approx 3yrs, White w/Black Tail and 2 Black Spots on side. Found near Frazee Paints in Livermore New Years Eve. Call David 245-9700

AUTOS/BOATS/RVs/TRUCKS

9)AUTOSWANTED
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90)SALES/MARKETING

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127) LOST/FOUND

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FOUND Ring corner of 1st & So. Livermore January 5th Call to Identify. 926 787-0889

NOTICES/ANNOUNCEMENTS

151)ANNOUNCEMENTS

Axis Health Center 4361 Railroad Ave., Pleasanton. Serves Valley residents with emphasis on those with low income. The center has general medical services, family planning, well baby, prenatal and maternity programs, social services, blood pressure checks, WIC food supplement programs, premarital blood test, sports/camp physicals, TB screening, free transportation available. 462-1755

155)NOTICES

"NOTICETO READERS: California law requires that contractors taking jobs that total \$500 or more (labor and/or materials) be licensed by the Contractors State License Board. State law also requires that contractors include their license numbers on all advertising. Check your contractor's status at www.cslb.ca.gov or 800-321-CSLB (2752). Unlicensed persons taking jobs less than \$500 must state in their advertisements that they are not licensed by the Contractors State License Board."

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How Buyers Find Homes to Purchase

By Cher Wollard

With the stock market volatile more buyers are taking another look at real estate.

Lower prices have boosted the affordability index in the Bay Area to nearly 30 percent. Interest rates are hitting their lowest marks in years - about 5 percent for 30-year fixed conventional mortgages up to \$417,000 for buyers with good credit.

In fact, statewide real estate sales rose 12 percent in 2008 from the year before, and are expected to make similar gains in 2009. December to December sales comparisons show an increase of 14 percent in sales of single-family homes for Livermore and 25 percent for Dublin. Pleasanton sales have decreased slightly. However, that's because they did not experience as strong a downturn as the rest of the Tri-Valley.

So if buyers are back, how are they finding the properties they choose to buy?

A few years ago, the California Association of Realtors started surveying residential buyers on their search habits. The findings offer a fairly clear indication of the pathways buyers follow in finding their homes.

As might be expected, an increasing number of buyers begin their search online - in 2008, 78 percent said they browsed real estate sites before taking the plunge. This compares to 72 percent in 2006 and 20 percent in 2000.

Where are they looking? Google is the entry point of choice for most internet searchers (35 percent begin here). But most visitors used the site to find a specific real estate agent or property. For in-depth searches, Realtor.com, the NAR site that feeds directly from the nation's MLS systems, is by far the most popular site. However, buyers also look at sites such as trulia, aol, yahoo, zillow, as well as proprietary sites of Realtors and real estate companies.

Increasing numbers of newspapers, including this one, also feature online sites with real estate listings, with many moving major components of their advertising to these sites.

Only 12 percent of buyers said they find properties through print advertising, including newspapers and real estate magazines.

Buyers also still drive through neighborhoods they like looking at yard signs and attending open houses.

One statistic that has stayed fairly consistent is the percentage of buyers who find their homes through a real estate agent. Over 90 percent in surveys conducted during the past nine years.

This makes sense. Even those buyers who find properties on their own rely on the expertise of professionals to help them sort through the hundreds of offerings to determine the house style, neighborhood and price point that suits their needs.

For residential sellers, this means that it is important to place their properties in the paths that buyers utilize: Make sure their house is listed on the local MLS and presented at local marketing meetings, where other professionals will be made aware of their property.

Most marketing groups also host brokers' tours, a consistent 3-4 hour window each week in which new listings are held open for agents and other real estate professionals to tour.

In the Tri-Valley, Livermore and San Ramon hold tours Thursday mornings. Pleasanton and Dublin tours are scheduled for Friday mornings.

Touring the homes provides agents with a stronger sense of the features and condition of those properties than they would know simply from seeing them on the MLS. It also helps them compare values.

Signage, lockboxes and, of course, a strong internet presence are also key to ensuring that a property receives the best possible exposure to potential buyers.

Increasing numbers of brokerages are even creating unique URLs to display photos and information about the properties. Most are using e-mail blasts to disperse electronic flyers of their listings to agents both in and out of their MLS.

A few are experimenting with television ads, mostly real estate specific cable programs.

Open houses too can be beneficial. While some properties - notably country property and houses in need of extensive repairs - may not benefit from generating traffic through well-conducted open houses, most do.

Even if many open house visitors are "nosy neighbors" and "looky loos," those folks often know other people who are seriously looking for a new home.

Buyers can take advantage of all of these avenues to gain a sense of what is available in their price range. Smart sellers will work with agents who know and utilize many of the most effective resources for marketing their property.

Senate Approves Next Phase of Bailout Plan

The House of Representatives is expected to vote on the Emergency Economic Stimulus Act approved by the Senate on Jan. 15 to help jump start the credit markets.

The action will allow soon-to-be President Obama to allocate \$350 billion in Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) funds to programs that will help borrowers avoid foreclosure.

The Senate action is similar to a House bill introduced on January 9. Charles McMillan, president of the National Association of Realtors, testified before the House last week, urging passage of the bill, introduced by Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass).

"Realtors agree that by re-focusing TARP on housing finance and that by creating additional incentives for potential homebuyers, we can put our nation's economy on the path to recovery," he said, adding, "We thank Chairman (Barney) Frank for introducing H.R. 384, to help unlock the housing market, and for including provisions to address credit problems in commercial real estate."

He also encouraged the House to eliminate the repayment feature of the first-time homebuyer tax credit and extend it to all homebuyers; reinstate higher mortgage loan limits for FHA, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac; and lower mortgage interest rates through a buy-down program.

"The National Association of REALTORS® and our more than 1 million members stand ready to work with Congress and the new Administration on these proposals," he said.

Cher Wollard is a local Realtor with Windermere Welcome Home.

Alain Pinel Expands

Alain Pinel Realtors (APR) has expanded its presence in Northern California with the opening of two offices in Marin County. Steve Dickason, a 32-year real estate sales and management veteran, will lead the new offices as Vice President, Marin Manager along with Craig Silvestri who brings 22-years of experience to the position of Marin County Operations Manager. The new offices reinforce the company's commitment to serving its clients throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. There are now 26 Alain Pinel Realtors offices in Northern California and over 1,350 agents.

The new Marin County offices are located in Corte Madera at 101 Nellen Avenue and in Novato at 881 Grant Street. The centralized phone number for both offices is 415.755.1111.

Paul Hulme is APR's Founder, Chairman and CEO. Tim Murray is APR's Vice President and Regional Manager of San Francisco and the North Bay, who will oversee the Marin County office and ensure delivery of APR's comprehensive services and support to local management, agents and clients.

Alain Pinel Realtors has a joint venture partnership in the mortgage lending institution Private Mortgage Advisors, which is an affiliate of Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.

Alain Pinel Realtors website is at www.apr.com.

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SHORT NOTES

Drug Trends in Livermore

The Livermore Police Department Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association (CPAAA) next community education presentation is, "Drug Trends in Livermore." The presentation will be Wed., Jan. 28 at 7 p.m. at the Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Avenue.

The presenter will be made by Sergeant Jim Conley who has extensive experience in narcotics enforcement.

He will be discussing a variety of topics related to illegal drugs. Current drug trends, signs of influence, drug identification, drug paraphernalia identification and intervention will be covered. What signs to look for if you believe a family member is using illegal drugs? There will be an opportunity for the audience to ask questions of Sergeant Conley and to share drug related concerns.

"Any opportunity to spend time with community members discussing drug problems is an opportunity to provide education and guidance" said Sgt. Conley. "I know it is important that our community members learn about the types of drugs that are prevalent in our area and what we are doing to combat them. Parents need to be aware of current drug trends and how to be aware of warning signs that their children may be using drugs."

Reservations are required, as seating is limited to the first 70 registrants. To register for the class, please call LARPD at 373-5700.

Newcott-Caldebery Contest

Children, kindergarten through eighth grade, are invited to submit entries in the Livermore Library's Newcott-Caldebery Writing and Illustrating Contest.

Books submitted will be judged by local authors. Medals will be awarded at each grade level for best writing and for best illustrations. A best book for 2009 will also be

chosen. Children may work on a book by themselves or with a friend. Entry forms listing each author and illustrator must be attached to the book when submitted.

Entry forms are available at all Livermore libraries on the library's website. All books entered in the contest will be added to the library's collection and be available to be checked out.

The deadline for entries is Sat., March 7 at 5 p.m. Contest winners will be announced at an awards ceremony to be held on Thurs., April 23 at the Civic Center Library at 7 p.m.

For more information about this program, call the Youth Services Desk at the library, 373-5504 or log on to www.livermore.lib.ca.us.

Nature Programs

Mushroom Madness is the topic of a nature program offered by the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District ranger staff on Sat., Jan. 24. Meet Ranger Amy Wolitzer at 2 p.m. at Veterans Park.

Special guest Debbie Viess, from the Bay Area Mycological Society, will lead the annual search for the "blooms" of the rainy season. The group will hunt along trails, on dead logs, in fields and under trees for weird and wonderful fungi. Boletes, bluets, elfin saddles, puffballs, slime molds and fairy rings Participants will also learn a little about the things that make mushrooms and their kin so different from plants and animals. The walk will probably be less than a mile but will involve some off-trail searching on potentially wet and muddy ground. Mushrooms like the rain, so the program will be going rain or shine.

NATIVE GRASSLANDS
There will be a discussion of Ecological Restoration: Native Grasslands on Tues., Jan. 27 at 7 p.m. at the Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave., Livermore.

Rangers will discuss what restoration means and how to approach at-

tempts to restore degraded habitats. The slide show is intended to be a follow up to November's "Ghosts of the Grass" program and is a precursor to upcoming opportunities for hands-on volunteer projects this spring and summer. It should also be of value to anyone interested in learning about protecting and restoring native habitats. Please call 925-960-2400 to sign up.

There is a \$3 per vehicle parking fee at the park. A \$2 donation is requested to help support the programs. Participants may call 925-960-2400 for more information.

Beef Cook-Off

The California Beef Council (CBC) has announced that the American National CattleWomen, Inc. (ANCW) will be hosting the 28th National Beef Cook-Off (NBCO) in Sonoma, on September 21-23, 2009. Home cooks nationwide, and local professional restaurant chefs working in the San Francisco Bay area and Sacramento area counties are encouraged to enter original, newly-developed, best beef recipes by March 31, 2009.

Fifteen home cook finalists will be selected to compete for prizes totaling \$70,000 on September 23, 2009. One grand prize winner will receive \$25,000, three category winners will each receive \$10,000 and three runner-up winners will each receive \$5,000 in cash prizes.

Professional restaurant chefs working in the San Francisco Bay area and Sacramento area counties can submit their original, newly developed beef dishes. Recipes should yield 24 servings. Six professional restaurant chef finalists will be selected to compete on September 21, 2009, when they will prepare and present their original "Best of Beef" dish in a private Chef/Media Team Challenge, for prizes totaling approximately \$5,000. One grand prize winner will receive one paid registration and trip to the December 2009 Texas A&M University "Beef 101 Seminar;" one People's Choice Award winner will receive one paid registration to the 2009 Culinary Institute of America's Worlds of Flavor International Conference & Festival; and four first place winners will each receive \$500 in cash prizes.

The National Beef Cook-Off requires entrants to enter recipes on-line at www.beefcookoff.org or by postal mail to: National Beef Cook-Off Entries, ANCW, P.O. Box 3881, Englewood, CO 80155 by March 31, 2009. Mailed entries must be post-marked no later than March 31, 2009, and received on or before midnight April 7, 2009. To view the complete contest rules and explore winning recipes from past contests, please visit www.beefcookoff.org.

Backyard Bird Count

Local residents are invited to join the 12th annual "Great Backyard Bird Count" on Feb. 13-16.

A joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society, this free event is an opportunity for families, students, and people of all ages to discover the wonders of nature in backyards, schoolyards, and local parks, and, at the same time, make an important contribution to conservation.

"Anyone who can identify even a few species can contribute to the body of knowledge that is used to inform conservation efforts to protect birds and biodiversity," said Audubon Education Vice-President, Judy Braus.

Volunteers take part by counting birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the event and reporting their sightings online at www.birdcount.org. The data help researchers understand bird population trends across the continent, information that is critical for effective conservation. In 2008, participants submitted more than 85,000 checklists, a new record.

Participants submit thousands of digital images for the GBBC photo contest each year. Last year's winners have been chosen and are now posted on the web site. Participants are also invited to upload their bird videos to YouTube tagged "GBBC." Some of them will also be featured on the GBBC web site. All participants will be entered in a drawing to win dozens of birding items, including stuffed birds, clocks, books, feeders, and more.

Businesses, schools, nature clubs, Scout troops, and other community organizations interested in the GBBC can contact the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at (800) 843-2473 (outside the U.S., call (607) 254-2473), or Audubon at citizenscience@audubon.org or (215) 355-9588, Ext 16.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is made possible, in part, by support from Wild Birds Unlimited.

Nominations Sought

The deadline for nominations to the 2009 Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame has been extended to February 6, 2009.

The deadline has been extended by three weeks to give the public more time to nominate women from the community to receive this honor. This year's inductees will be honored at the 16th Annual Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame awards luncheon on Saturday, April 25, 2009, at Hs Lordships restaurant in Berkeley. The event is hosted this year by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors and the Alameda County Commission on the Status of Women.

Nominations are being accepted for outstanding women in each of 11 categories: Business and Professions; Community Service; Culture and Art; Education; Environment; Health; Justice; Non-Traditional Careers; Science; Sports and Athletics and Youth.

This year's Women's Hall of Fame inductees will be announced in late February, with the winners to be honored at the April 25, 2009 event. Tickets to the luncheon and awards ceremony are \$75, with proceeds going to programs that help women in Alameda County. Nomination forms can be obtained at www.acgov.org, or by calling the Alameda County Commission on the Status of Women at (510) 259-3871.

ZooMobile at Library

The Oakland Zoo's ZooMobile will bring an array of small animals to the Pleasanton Library on Saturday, January 24.

Children from Pre-K through 1st grade learn about appropriate behavior around animals, are introduced to simple facts about animal classes and physical structures, and learn to observe similarities and differences in the appearance and behavior of various animals. An underlying theme is that of appreciating and respecting animals and nature.

No registration is required for this 30 minute program, which will be

offered at 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. Free tickets will be distributed at the Children's Desk 30 minutes prior to each show. Attendance will be limited to 100 per session. Doors will be closed to late arrivals once the program begins. For more information about library programs and events check the library's website at www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/services or call the Children's Desk at (925) 931-3400 ext. 8.

Education Luncheon

Sister Pat Davis, Executive Director of the Learning and Loving Education Center, will be the featured speaker at the American Association of University Women Tri-Branch (Livermore-Pleasanton-Dublin, Hayward-Castro Valley, Fremont) Education Foundation Luncheon on Saturday, February 7.

Sister Davis received an AAUW 2007-8 Community Action Grant for her work since 1994 to improve the plight of immigrant women and their small children who live in the southern region of Santa Clara County. Her program provides weekly educational, vocational, and language-acquisition training and technology-based classes to low-income, ethnic, immigrant, refugee, and limited-English-speaking women and their children who are entering a learning environment for the first time.

The Learning and Loving Education Center is a nondenominational women-focused nonprofit organization, partially sponsored by the Sisters of the Presentation. The Center was established to teach skills, foster hopes, and provide direction to marginalized immigrant students who are limited by illiteracy, poverty, and lack of access to educational opportunities and services to improve their lives and the lives of their families. The programs teach skills that assist under-served populations in overcoming the multiple barriers to education, literacy, employment and self-reliance.

The February 7 luncheon will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Sunol Valley Golf Club, 6900 Mission Road, Sunol. Reservation checks for \$32 should be made out to AAUW Fremont Branch and mailed to Carolyn Hedgecock, 4677 Sterling Ct., Fremont, CA 94536. Specify chicken, salmon or tortellini and mail by January 23. For further information, contact Anne Les, (925) 454-1763.

Rummage Sale

The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District has added a second Rummage Sale to the lineup this winter. Anyone interested in starting spring cleaning early this year is invited to sign up to be a seller at Rummage Sale 2 to be held on Feb. 28.

For \$35, sellers can rent a 10-foot-by-10-foot space with an 8-foot table to showcase their unwanted treasures. Items brought to the Rummage Sale must be of garage sale variety and in working condition (no food, vehicles, vehicle parts, large furniture or new or commercial items). Space for sellers is limited, so early registration is encouraged.

Interested sellers can find the registration form online at www.larpd.dst.ca.us or in person at the Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave., Livermore. The registration deadline for sellers is Monday, Feb. 23, for any spaces still available.

Shoppers are invited to both Rummage Sales, which will be held from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Jan. 31, and Saturday, Feb. 28, at the Barn, 3131 Pacific Ave., Livermore. For more information, call 925-373-5700.

Drivers Sought

The Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley is looking for Volunteer Drivers to transport seniors to their medical appointments.

The Senior Transportation Program supplements existing public and paratransit services by providing rides via volunteer drivers. Volunteers must have a valid driver's license, a registered vehicle and carry personal automobile liability insurance.

Please contact Jennifer Cullen for more information at (925) 931-5387 or email: ja.cullen@yahoo.com.

Photo Contest

The Tri-Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau's 2008 Photo Contest is offering a cash prize to the photographer who can best capture the Tri-Valley, California Experience. Information is available at <http://flickr.com/groups/trivalleyexperience/> Flickr.

Photos subjects should include people enjoying all there is to see and do in the Tri-Valley, including but not limited to the following: sporting activities (hiking, biking, water sports, golfing, team sports); shopping (downtowns, festivals); dining (farmers markets, outdoor dining, food shots); wine tasting (vineyards, tasting rooms, picnics); arts & entertainment (boce, gokart, theatres, performances); and celebrations (weddings, social events, corporate picnics etc).

Winning photos will be showcased in the CVB's marketing campaigns. Cash prizes will be awarded as follows: 1st place prize is \$500, 2nd place is \$250, 3rd place \$150, 4th place \$100.

Eligibility Guidelines 1. Photography must be of a city in the Tri-Valley region, including Pleasanton, Livermore, Dublin, San Ramon, and Danville. 2. Photography must be high-resolution (300 DPI) and submitted on CD to the Tri-Valley CVB offices at 349 Main Street, Suite 203, Pleasanton, CA 94582. 3. All Entries must include a completed entry form.

Questions can be addressed to natalie@trivalleycvb.com.

Scholarship Available

The application period for the Simon Youth Foundation Scholarship Program at Stoneridge Shopping Center Closes January 31, 2009.

Pleasanton area high school seniors are eligible for up to \$1,500 in scholarship money for any accredited college, university, vocational or technical school.

Recipients of the scholarships are chosen by Scholarship America, the third-party administrator of SYF's scholarship program. Students are selected based on a variety of criteria, including financial need, academic performance, leadership skills and participation in school and community activities. Those students who are the first in their family to pursue a post secondary education will also be given close consideration.

Completed application, along with official transcripts and parents' most recently filed tax form, must be sent to Scholarship America by January 31, 2009.

Applications can be found online at www.simonyouthscholarshipamerica.org or picked up as a paper copy by visiting

the Simon Guest Services Center at Stoneridge Shopping Center:

Books and Events

Towne Center Books events:

Read It and Eat with the Holm Family on Friday, Jan. 23. Reservations are required. The well known and lively Holm family arrived in the Livermore Valley in 1869. Their cookbook, the Holm Family Cookbook is a celebration of their Danish roots, family recipes, good times, and a slice of Tri-Valley History. The authors are Marilyn "Tilli" Holm Calhoun, Merry Calhoun Carter, Susie Calhoun, Nancy Calhoun Mueller, Wendy Neely Howe, Patsy Holm Neely. At least 4 of them will be here to share their stories. Social time to gather 11:30-12:00 Lunch

12:00; \$35.00 includes book and lunch (the book is \$29.95 +tax); \$15.00 for lunch only. Call 925-846-8826 or reply to this email to make a reservation.

There will be an open house from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sat., Jan. 24 to celebrate Towne Center's anniversary. The following authors will be on hand from 11-12:00: Cam Inman, author of Best Bay Area Sports Arguments, and Mary-Jo Wainwright author of Pleasanton: Images of America; 1:00 - 2:00 Michelle Richmond, author of No One You Know and Year of Fog; 2:00-3:00 Wona Miniati, author of Cooking With all Things Trader Joes and of course refreshments.

Towne Center Books is located at 555 Main Street, Pleasanton.



Linda and Don Marsic of Pleasanton are pictured in Nerja, Spain, located on the southern coast of Spain, near Malaga. The area is known for its old white washed buildings and narrow winding roads. Don says the couple was on the coast ready to eat lunch and remembered they had brought The Independent with them. They took a moment to snap a photo of them holding the newspaper.

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From everyday collection to environmental protection, Think Green. Think Waste Management.

Q Can you give me any earth-friendly ideas to manage plastic bags and plastic used to package bread, paper towels, toilet paper and other products? Pat

- A** You can help to reduce the amount of plastic that ends up in landfills with these simple eco strategies:
- 1) Reuse plastic bags and carefully-opened plastic packaging to secure pet waste and other messy garbage or reuse as cushioning for shipping.
 - 2) Recycle clean, dry plastic bags and other accepted plastic packaging at retailers' recycling bins. Visit PlasticBagRecycling.org for drop-off locations and more info.
 - 3) Dispose of soiled/unwanted plastic wrapping in Garbage carts.

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GREEN TIPS:
From Livermore resident Wendy Weathers . . .

Visitors to the Livermore Valley wineries may have noticed that several wineries are providing their customers with reusable wine carriers that hold up to six bottles. These carriers are usually made from recycled materials unlike those grocery store bags that can end up in landfills. I recommend storing a wine carrier in your car so you can take it with you when you go shopping.

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Hope's Garden Author Visits Charter School

By Patricia Koning
The Livermore Valley Charter School (LVCS) kicked off its annual read-a-thon fundraiser with a visit from Livermore children's author Stephanie McNinn. Last spring McNinn, who uses the "nom de plume" Sarah Jane, published her first children's book, *Hope's Garden*, and started Tri Valley Children's Publishing (TVCP), an independent publisher based in Livermore.

McNinn's experience working at Alden Lane Nursery inspired *Hope's Garden*. She says

in creating the book, she combined her years of working in a beautiful nursery and equal years working in a bookstore to bring together two passions.

Hope's Garden tells a story about nurturing flower seeds and creating a beautiful garden, and then collecting seeds from the garden and passing them to the next generation. Each copy of the book includes a packet of wildflower seeds that attract butterflies.

McNinn read her book to first through fifth graders at LVCS and then answered questions about

the writing and publishing process. She described how she used the Internet to find the book's illustrator, Angela Ferrigno, who lives in Connecticut. McNinn showed the LVCS students different versions of the storyboards and mockups to explain how she and Ferrigno arrived at the final version of the book.

"Books take an amazing journey to get to the bookstore where you can purchase them," said McNinn. *Hope's Garden* was written in Livermore, illustrated in Connecticut, and printed in China. She had to go through

another printer for the seed packet, and glued all of the packets into the back of the books by hand at her home.

When a student asked what made her want to write books, McNinn replied, "I have a lot of 'what if' thoughts. I read more as a child than as an adult, so that is what I knew intuitively when I started to write."

McNinn is working on several other books about fall, stars, and snowmen, which she hopes to publish soon. She added that she founded TVCP not just to publish her own books, but to pub-

lish many children's books from a variety of authors.

McNinn signed books at LVCS last Tuesday and donated a portion of the purchase price to the school. "As a thank you for the generous hospitality of LVCS and in support of them, I will continue to offer to the school a portion of the proceeds of any orders made by LVCS parents throughout 2009," she said. "My hope is to do these meetings for as many local schools as possible. I have happy memories of being raised and taught in this area and these schools mean a lot to me."

The LVCS read-a-thon lasts through Jan. 25. McNinn visited on read-in day, when students came to school in pajamas with favorite stuffed animals, pillows, blankets, and sleeping bags. The

students spent the day reading and being read to by teachers, parents, and other community members.

Last year LVCS students read for nearly 8,000 hours over a 12-day period, raising approximately \$10,000. For more information on LVCS, visit www.lvcs.org.

Hope's Garden can be purchased at Alden Lane Nursery and CooleyKatz Toys in Livermore and at G R Doodlebug and Towne Center Books in Pleasanton. The book is also available at the TVCP website at www.tvcpublishing.com and at Amazon.com.

For more information on Tri Valley Children's Publishing, visit the website, email tvcp@tvcpublishing.com, or call (877) 445-5660.

VISIT

(continued from page one)

communities. "It has been tremendously successful."

He said of President Obama's proposed stimulus package, "There is potential opportunity for funding for local projects. There will be no earmarks. The formulas to obtain funding need to be understood and local officials made aware of the requirements."

Rep. Ellen Tauscher released the following statement regarding the meeting, "There is no doubt that the Tri-Valley area is hurting. I met with the Tri-Valley Mayors this afternoon to hear their concerns and to make sure we are working together and moving forward."

In addition to the dropping home values and rising foreclosures, improvements to the Bay Area's transportation projects are in jeopardy due to the state budget crisis, Tauscher pointed out. She noted that this year Congress will begin its work to reauthorize legislation funding the nation's transit infrastructure, known as SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users).

Danville Mayor Newell Arnerich said of the visit, "There is a lot of excitement about change in Washington, D.C. From California's viewpoint, change is a gain. Hopefully our issues will be in the forefront when the stimulus dollars are available."

Arnerich added, "We are asking the federal government to step in and guarantee state bonds needed to finance transportation projects, since the state has no ability to bond. We are asking for an immediate quick fix as part of the stimulus package." Arnerich noted that there are projects ready to go along the I-580 corridor. Funding will help get people back to work on them.

He added that using research at the national laboratories pro-

vides an opportunity for the area to benefit from technology transfer.

Marchand noted, "There will never be real national security until we have energy security. We need to use technology coming out of the Lab to work to obtain an open campus."

Asked later about the open campus concept, Marchand explained the idea would be to establish start-up companies using spin-off technology from the national laboratories. The concept being discussed would put together a business plan and a marketing plan to establish a campus for innovation. The goal is to move research out of the laboratories into the marketplace, thereby stimulating the local economy.

Sbranti addressed the idea of using federal funds to rehabilitate homes that have been foreclosed. The mayors are requesting \$3 million in federal funds that would be used to refurbish the homes. The homes would then be sold to moderate and low income people. The program would be administered by the Opportunity Center. Sbranti noted that homebuyers who have gone through the Opportunity Center have a 100 percent success rate in keeping their homes. None are in foreclosure.

All five cities would participate in the program to rehabilitate the homes. The properties in the worst repair would be identified, then fixed up. Sbranti said that would help nearby homes retain their value by removing a blighted property.

Hosterman declared, "It is an exciting time to be here." Her remarks focused on transportation issues, particularly improving freeway infrastructure, which she said would help move both freight and commuters more easily.

Hosterman pointed out that state funds for transportation are

being held up because the budget issues have not been resolved. The state is unable to sell bonds. That impacts federal dollars. She explained that federal dollars are matching dollars. Without the match from the state, they are not available. "First and foremost, we have to put pressure on the state to fix the budget mess so we can garner additional federal dollars."

STIMULUS PACKAGE

In other news out of Washington, D.C., details were released last week about the tax provisions of the stimulus package under consideration in the House. In response to the renewable energy portion, McNerney (CA-11) stated,

"Yesterday, the outline of the stimulus package tax provisions was released. While this was just a preliminary outline, with the details to be worked out over the coming weeks, several pieces of the package are encouraging - in particular the tax incentives for renewable energy production."

"Renewable energy companies are poised to expand, creating hundreds of thousands of stable, family-wage jobs and moving our nation towards energy independence and security. Wind, solar, geothermal and biofuel companies are harnessing natural energy sources while many new companies are conducting innovative research using algae and agricultural waste

products to produce energy. They simply need an additional incentive.

"In particular, I was pleased to see the inclusion of a longer-term extension of the Production Tax Credit for wind energy. I am also committed to working for provisions to aid the immediate financing of new wind projects, some of the most cost-effective renewable energy produced today," McNerney declared.

TAUSCHER COMMITTEES

Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher (D-CA) will continue as Chairman of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee of House Armed Forces Committee during the 111th Congress. In addition, Rep. Tauscher will represent the entire Northern California region on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

"It will be honor to continue my work on both the Armed Services and the Transportation and Infrastructure committees," said Tauscher. "California and the nation face incredible challenges, both at home and abroad. We have to rebuild our economy and create good paying jobs while rehabilitating our reputation around the world. I am humbled by the confidence House leadership and my colleagues have shown in me."

Tauscher is also the California Regional Whip in the House.

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