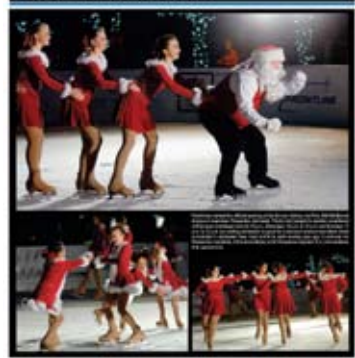


Art, Community, & Education



Find Out What's Happening

Check out the second section

Section II is filled with information about arts, entertainment and special events. There are education stories, a variety of features, and the arts and entertainment and bulletin board listings.

Health Care Talks Slated for Lab Retirees

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory Retirees Association announced it has scheduled two sets of health care presentations for retirees on Friday, December 4. The presentations will be made by Kaiser and by Extend Health. Attendance will be free and open to any Lab retiree, including those who do not belong to the Retirees Association.

The presentations will be made in the Cresta Blanca Room at Robert Livermore Community Center, Livermore. Kaiser representatives are scheduled to discuss their health programs at 8:30 a.m. and again at 1 p.m. Extend Health representatives are scheduled to present their programs at 10:30 a.m. and again at 3 p.m.

The presentations are intended to help explain how to use the health care plans that are scheduled to start on January 1, according to Chuck Meier, chairman of the Retirees Association. That's particularly important for Kaiser, which will start a new system for Lab retirees then. Extend Health has also made improvements and changes that retirees need to understand, Meier said.

Both organizations have made presentations at fully booked Retirees Association luncheons, but the many questions that were raised indicated the need for reaching out to larger retiree audiences. Meier said that those who can't attend may view a video of the luncheon presentations at the Retirees Association's website, <http://www.llnretirees.org/home.html>.

So. Livermore Property Sold to Ponderosa Homes

Floyd Wilson, Executive Director of Facilities for the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District, did not take any chances at last week's Board of Education meeting. He brought a notary to the meeting to ensure that everything would be finalized that night on the sale of the District's South Livermore property.

"This is one of the best nights I've had since I've been with the Livermore School District," said Wilson, who will retire in June 2010.

After the Board of Education unanimously approved the sale of the property to Ponderosa Homes II, Inc. for \$6 million, Wilson and Jeff Schroeder, the Senior Vice President of Land Acquisition and Development for Ponderosa Homes, signed the contract.

The District purchased the 13.55-acre South Livermore property, which is located near Robertson Park, in 1998 as the site for a new school. The student population of Livermore did not increase as expected, in part due to changes to the City of Livermore's General and Master Plans, and the new school was never needed.

The California Department of Education requires that school districts pay an annual 1% fee of the assessed value on unused or

(See PROPERTY, page 2)

Livermore to Layoff Staff; Cut Services

Faced with the need to cut \$3.2 million in spending from its budget, the City of Livermore, for the first time, will layoff staff. Services will be reduced.

The city will eliminate 43.1 full time equivalent (FTE) employees. Currently 31.6 FTE positions are vacant. The vacant positions will be eliminated.

There will be a reduction in library hours at branch libraries. The city attorney's office will reduce the use of outside legal services and use of temporary staff.

In the city manager's office, two jobs will be gone. Economic development will reduce marketing and travel, expenditures for Poet Laureate and the arts commission programs, and remove the job of a retail consultant. Citywide less money will be spent on cleaning up litter and maintenance.

In the area of public safety, there will be a reduction in animal control, information technology, property and records services. There would be no reduction in priority level one service calls.

The proposed reduction in branch library hours drew pleas to the Livermore City Council to find a way to keep them open.

The libraries in Springtown and on Rincon Avenue have been open 6 days, 53 hours a week. They will now be open every other day, 23 hours a week. The civic center library hours will remain the same.

Since 2008, Livermore has had to cut over \$10 million in programs and services from its budget. A \$3.2 million error by

the state in calculating sales tax payment has resulted in the current need for additional cuts.

The city uses a two year budget cycle. It is now in the second year. When the budget was first approved, it was assumed there would be \$28.6 million in property taxes and \$19.8 million in sales tax coming to the city. As of Monday, property taxes were at \$24 million, sales tax at \$14.2 million.

City Manager Linda Barton stated, "Sales and property taxes

continue to decline. We have reached the point where expenditures outpace income. We have to reduce services. That also means a reduction in employees."

Assistant City Manager Troy Brown told the council that all departments have "trimmed the fat," eliminating travel, training and purchase of supplies. Capital outlay has been deferred, which means the city will not be replacing vehicles. Employee incentive programs have been removed.

(See LIVERMORE, page 4)



Cottage Preschool in Livermore held its annual pre-Thanksgiving celebration. Preschoolers were dressed in headbands and Indian necklaces that they made. In the photo, students entertained visitors with a song about the holiday.

Photo - Doug Jorgensen

BART EIR Looks at Options for Extension

Alignments Can Be Mixed and Matched

There has been confusion over exactly what the BART programmatic environmental impact report portrays.

The EIR looks at nine potential alignments to bring BART to Livermore and five potential station sites. According to Marc Roberts, City of Livermore Director of Community Development, "The EIR looks at worst case scenarios, providing enough information to enable interested parties to evaluate each option. The ultimate goal is to select an alignment. At that time, a project environmental review would look at the specific impacts of the alignment."

It is possible that the BART board could select a portion of one alignment and combine it with the portion of another. "The study allows you to mix and match," according to Roberts.

As envisioned now, there are several at-grade alignments, one below and one aerial option. When it comes to noise, the aerial would have the most impact. At grade, the impact would be less and could be mitigated with the use of soundwalls. An under-

(See EIR, page 4)

BART Told to Keep Extension on the Freeway

The majority of those who commented during a public hearing on a BART extension to Livermore were opposed to a station in the downtown.

Several became emotional as they talked about the potential

loss of property values, increase in crime, visual blight, and an increase in noise that they believe would be the result of BART coming into the city.

Those who supported a downtown station, said it would provide

greater access to public transit.

The hearing was held in Livermore to take input on a draft environmental impact review (DEIR). The DEIR studied nine potential alignments.

About 100 people were on hand, with 25 of them speaking. There will be another opportunity to make comments next Wed., Dec. 2. A hearing will be held starting at 6 p.m. at the Robert

(See HEARING, page 4)

Portola a Possible Site For Charter High School

Livermore School Board Rejects Global Tides Petition

By Patricia Koning
The trustees of the Livermore Board of Education discussed two pieces of charter school business at the Nov. 17 meeting. One was the Proposition 39 request for facilities for the Livermore Valley Charter Preparatory (LVCP) high school. The second was the Global Tides charter petition.

Bill Bachelor, president of the Livermore Charter Learning

Corporation (LCLC) that oversees LVCP and the Livermore Valley Charter School (LVCS), presented an update on LCLC's Proposition 39 request for facilities. He said that LCLC is delaying the submittal of the request to give the district and LCLC time to work out details.

Proposition 39 stipulates that local school districts must provide charter schools that reside

(See CHARTER, page 3)

Zone 7 Votes to Stay In Bay-Delta Plan

By Ron McNicoll
Zone 7 Water Agency is renewing its membership in the group that is developing the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDPC). Zone 7 will also continue, for the next year, as administrator of the contract that supports the group.

Directors unanimously approved extending membership in the BDPC for two years when they met Nov. 18.

Board president Dick Quigley reminded the board why Zone 7 is involved. "We need to fix the

Delta. BDPC seems to support the dual conveyance. It will give us better water downstream," he said.

Some 80 percent of Zone 7's water comes from the dam at Lake Oroville, a part of the State Water Project. The water goes through the Delta, where it picks up taste and odor elements and salts, which Zone 7 has to treat.

The dual conveyance, which somewhat resembles the proposed Peripheral Canal of the

(See ZONE 7, page 4)



Photo - Doug Jorgensen

Pictured at the BRT groundbreaking ceremony are (from left) Livermore Councilmember Marj Leider, Pleasanton Councilmember Cindy McGovern, Livermore Mayor Marshall Kamena, Dublin Mayor Tim Sbranti, Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty, Pleasanton Councilmember Jerry Thorne, Congressman Jerry McNerney, and FTA representative Ian Eidlin.

Work Begins on Bus Rapid Transit

A groundbreaking ceremony was held Monday for a transit program that is expected to reduce travel time from Livermore to BART in Dublin-Pleasanton by twenty percent.

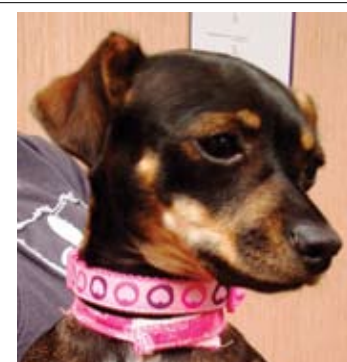
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) would provide faster travel, fewer stops and a more frequent schedule than current bus service. It is expected to begin operations in early 2011.

The route starts at the national laboratories in Livermore, stops at a variety of locations including the transit center in downtown Livermore, both BART sta-

(See BRT, page 3)

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PET OF THE WEEK

Rosalita is a Dachshund/Chihuahua mix who was picked up as a stray. She is only about 2 years old and is as sweet as pumpkin pie! To meet Rosalita, come to Valley Humane Society 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 for more info. Buy your Holiday Home Tour tickets today and support homeless pets like Rosalita! Visit the web site for details.

Livermore School Board Approves Retirement Enhancement Package, Extra Compensation for Assistant Superintendents

By Patricia Koning

The trustees of the Livermore Board of Education approved a retirement enhancement package that could generate savings of \$615,500 to \$1.1 million. The decision came at the Nov. 17 meeting. Employees who accept the package will receive a one-time \$6,000 payment if they are between the ages of 50 and 59. Retirees who are at least 60 years old will receive \$7,000.

"We're viewing this as a trade-off to layoffs," said Superintendent Brenda Miller. The hope is that encouraging older teachers to retire will save the jobs of some newer teachers, who are the first to go in a layoff. The District is expecting to lay off more teachers this spring.

"I'm very much in favor of maintaining as many of our younger teachers as possible," said trustee Bill Dunlop. "They will be the core of our long term staff."

To be eligible, employees must have five years of service credit with the District, have turned 55 by June 30, 2010, and retire between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010. Assistant Superintendent Kelly Bowers explained that the benefit is being offered retroactively. Otherwise teachers who have already indicated that they will retire by the end of the calendar year delay taking advan-

tage of the package. Ultimately, that would cost the district more. This means that Miller, who is retiring effective Feb. 1, 2010, qualifies for the package.

Another incentive for LEA members is the drop in retiree health benefits from \$10,000 to \$7,500 annually, effective July 1, 2010. Employees who are considering participating in the package must inform Human Resources by January 15, 2010 with a final decision by Feb. 1. For the package to generate adequate savings, at least 50 members of the Livermore Education Association (LEA), the teachers' union, must participate. If 50 LEA members do not participate, the offer will be withdrawn.

Assistant Superintendent Mike Martinez said that of the 166 eligible LEA members, 61 are age 61.5 or older. Those teachers have already attained the maximum retirement benefit under the California State Teachers Retirement System (CALSTRS).

Martinez presented data on normal attrition. Typically each year 20 certificated, 10 classified, two management, and one confidential full-time employee (FTE) retire. The package is being offered to all employee groups: LEA, Service Employees International Union, California School Employees Association,

Classified Managers/Confidentials, the Livermore Management Association, and Superintendents.

If 50 certificated, 30 classified, four management, and one confidential FTE retire, the package will generate \$618,510 in savings over normal attrition. With 60 certificated FTE and the same numbers from the other groups that number increases to \$1.1 million. The savings is generated by the salary differential between a retiring employee and new hire.

Trustee Chuck Rogge expressed concern about the District's ability to replace so many senior teachers. "In the past when we've had to hire 40 or 50 teachers we've never had a problem," said Martinez. "However, in this job market, we'd likely find a lot of experienced teachers."

EXTRA COMPENSATION FOR ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS

When Superintendent Brenda Miller retires on Dec. 21, her duties will be distributed among Mike Martinez, the Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services, Kelly Bowers, the Assistant Superintendent of Education Services, and Susan Kinder, the Executive Director of Fiscal Services, until a replacement is found. Miller's effective retirement date is Feb 1, 2010, but

she will begin using accumulated vacation on Dec. 21.

On Nov. 17, the Board of Education approved \$17,000 in additional compensation for Martinez, who will serve as the interim Superintendent. Bowers will receive \$12,000 and Kinder will receive \$7,000. The Board

also approved \$20,000 for consulting fees that will be paid to Miller for help developing the 2010/11 school year budget in the spring.

The remainder of Miller's salary through the end of the school year is \$115,852. After the personnel costs and \$35,000

already approved for recruiting a new Superintendent, the District will realize an estimated \$24,852 in savings. The Cosca Group, who is conducting the executive search, states that a new Superintendent should be in place by April.

PROPERTY

(continued from page one)

surplus sites. The intent behind this requirement is to discourage school districts from being in the real estate business. The South Livermore property is assessed at \$8.9 million, which translates into an annual liability of \$89,000 for the District.

The District began the process of selling the property in April 2007, first advising government entities of the pending sale. The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARPD) expressed interest but ultimately did not have sufficient resources. The Livermore Charter Learning Corporation (LCLC) also pursued the property as a site for both the Livermore Valley Charter School (K-8) and Livermore Valley Charter Preparatory (high school).

After no other government agency expressed meaningful interest in the property, the

District was free to request bids from private entities. Four formal proposals were eventually submitted; the District chose Ponderosa Homes' bid because it best reflects the needs of the District. Ponderosa was brought into the process by LARPD.

"We are very happy with this property. It is a great opportunity," said Schroeder. "We plan to work with LARPD on the development to create something that works for them. We look forward to building houses on this property someday."

Scott Kamena, who serves on the LARPD Board of Directors, said that they are very excited about the chance to expand park facilities, especially in that location because of its proximity to Robertson Park and the Maintenance Service Center. "It's really an ideal place for us to have additional acreage," he added.

"We are actively negotiating with Ponderosa Homes to see what we can do together there."

The money for the property will be paid in two increments. Ponderosa placed a \$100,000 down payment into an escrow account last week. The balance of nearly \$6 million will be paid when the City of Livermore's planning commission approves the new use of the land.

Schroeder said that process will likely take 9 to 12 months, as the property was originally zoned for school use. The proceeds from the sale must be used for capital improvements. "We have a backlog of \$85 to \$100 million in capital improvement projects that we don't have money for right now," said Wilson. "So we have plenty of uses for this money."

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VALLEY ROUNDUP

Garamendi on Committees

Congressman John Garamendi, (D-Walnut Creek, California), announced that the House Democratic Steering Committee has approved recommendations to appoint Garamendi to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and House Science and Technology Committee. The full Democratic Caucus is expected to approve these recommendations at its next meeting.

"I am absolutely delighted to have this opportunity to create quality transportation and technology jobs for residents of the 10th Congressional District and Northern California," Congressman Garamendi said. "I want to thank my colleagues for assigning me to the House Transportation and Infrastructure and House Science and Technology committees."

"I look forward to sitting on the House Science and Technology Committee, where I will be able to steer federal assistance and policy to the critical research potential of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratories, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the University of California, the Joint Genome Institute, and other regional labs and universities," said Garamendi.

Pleasanton Military Families Remembered

Congressman Jerry McNerney (CA-11) spoke on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to recognize Pleasanton Military Families, a group that organizes welcome home celebrations for returning servicemembers, sends care packages to troops overseas, and provides support to the families of active military personnel.

His remarks included the following: "The Pleasanton Military Families leads a public recognition program for our service members by hanging yellow streamers along Main Street marked with the names of residents serving in our Armed Forces. My family was honored that the Pleasanton Military Families hung a yellow pennant for my son Michael while he was serving in the Air Force."

"In addition, Pleasanton Military Families holds warm welcome home ceremonies and sends packages to troops overseas. All of these efforts to support our active duty personnel and their families give due honor to the sacrifice and service of these young men and women."

"I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Pleasanton Military Families for their dedication and commitment to our men and women in uniform."

Park Vandalized

Sometime between Saturday afternoon and Monday morning, the lighting system at Robertson Park's sand-based soccer complex was vandalized, and copper wiring was stolen. Staff for the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District discovered the vandalism on Monday about 12:15 p.m. when inspecting the complex for the day's activities.

Pull boxes along the wiring run were opened and wires were cut and, in some cases, pulled out. Nearly every pull box around the soccer fields had been tampered with. Because of this damage, there was no electrical power to the irrigation controllers or to the field lights.

LARPD has contacted, and filed a report with,

the Livermore Police Department. An electrician was brought in. Power has already been restored to the irrigation controllers. Work is still needed to repair the lighting system. All night practices and games have been canceled until repairs are complete. The damage and repairs are estimated to be a loss of \$25,000 to \$30,000, with repairs expected to take about a week.

If any members of the public has any knowledge about this crime, please contact the Livermore Police Department at 925-371-4900. LARPD encourages neighbors around parks and ball fields to be observant of activities around the park and call the police to report any suspicious activity.

Traffic Enforcement Funds

More traffic enforcement and safer streets are coming to Livermore beginning this month thanks to a recent \$103,750 grant awarded by the California Office of Traffic Safety. Increased special traffic enforcement measures are on tap for the Livermore Police Department as law enforcement continues its commitment to keeping roadways safe through both enforcement and education.

"The safety of our community remains our top priority and that means safer driving conditions for our motoring public", said Lt. Mike Peretti, grant director for this project. "Lives continue to be unnecessarily lost or impacted by improper driving habits and the Livermore Police Department will not tolerate it".

The goal of the Vehicle Impound Program (VIP) grant is to assist in efforts to deal with increased traffic safety problems and reduce the number of persons killed and injured in traffic collisions. The grant activities will specifically target DUI Enforcement, suspended or unlicensed drivers and motorcycle safety. This will be done through the implementation of strategies which may include DUI/driver's license checkpoints, special enforcement operations, and educational efforts.

The grant also provides funding for overtime to conduct special enforcement activities.

New this year is the addition of special Motorcycle Safety Enforcement Operations. Motorcycle fatalities have been on the rise in California, increasing 175 percent statewide in the last decade, from 204 killed in 1998 to 560 killed in 2008.

Livermore Police Officers will be conducting specialized enforcement efforts throughout the course of the next year. Extra officers will be on duty patrolling areas frequented by motorcycles. Officers will be cracking down on traffic violations made by motorcyclists and other vehicle drivers that result in too many motorcycle collisions, injuries and deaths.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Correction

The article on Nottingham Cellars in the Nov. 19 edition of The Independent stated "We are essentially leasing space from Cedar Mountain." That is incorrect. Cedar Mountain does not lease space. Nottingham Cellars processes wine at Cedar Mountain's facilities.



Photo - Doug Jorgensen

The 2nd Annual "Put A Little Love in Your Heart" fundraiser for Open Heart Kitchen was held last Thursday at Blacksmith Square in downtown Livermore. Live music was provided by Roger Kardinal. There was wine tasting and appetizers. In the photo, those attending took part in a silent auction. For more information about Open Heart Kitchen, call 925 580-6793 or go to www.openheartkitchen.org.

BRT

(continued from page one)

tions in Dublin-Pleasanton, and eventually ends at Stoneridge Mall in Pleasanton. The use of bus signal priority would keep lights green for the bus. During peak hours, buses would arrive at stops every 10 minutes and other times during the day every 15 minutes. BRT is an interim solution to a full BART extension to Livermore.

Bids on the project have come in 62 percent below the original engineering estimates. "It's a really good time to bid out public works project," declared Pleasanton City Councilmember Jerry Thorne, chairman of Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority.

He said of the project, "It took a real partnership between many levels of government to fund this project." The federal government provided \$11 million, State Measure 1B \$1.1 million, county and local funds accounted for the remainder of the \$13.8 million.

Thorne said BRT would bring transportation, economic and environmental benefits that would improve the quality of life of those living in the area. "The fast, frequent service we believe will increase ridership. Maybe we can lure some of the people off the freeway," he added.

Economic benefits include 120 construction jobs. About 63 percent of the money will go to Alameda County businesses.

"BRT will be used to bring employees to work sites, students to schools, shoppers to stores, and those going to medical appointments," Thorne continued. From an environmental view, the buses use clean, hybrid technology. There is a low floor design that makes it easier for the elderly and disabled to board the buses. Each bus has a bike rack.

Congressman Jerry McNerney was described as having been instrumental, along with former Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher, in obtaining the federal funding.

McNerney said it was important to have local officials he could work with to obtain funding. "This is a very important project. It will take 400,000 cars off the road each year. It is an investment well made."

The federal funds came through the regular transit budget process. Asked about stimulus funds for a BART extension to Livermore, McNerney said there is money available. He would like to see it come to this area. McNerney said he doesn't expect the BART extension to take the predicted 10 to 25 years to reach Livermore. "That is too long for

my taste," he declared.

The Federal Transit Authority was represented at the groundbreaking by Eric Eidlin, a community planner. He said that the FTA is historically responsible for funding rail systems, such as BART. The interest in funding BRT is that it provides an off-rail-like ride at a much lower cost. The system costs \$22 million, including the new buses. A rail project would cost hundreds of millions and even billions, he added. In addition, there are enhanced amenities at the BRT stops, such as benches, a shelter, bike racks, and a flag sign indicating when the next bus is due to arrive.

Supervisor Scott Haggerty thanked a variety of people for their efforts in making BRT a reality. He called the system, "A viable commute option for our citizens. Community consensus was achieved to allow BRT to move forward." Haggerty also noted that none of the groundbreaking festivities were paid for by tax dollars.

The Nighthawk Jazz Band from Las Positas College provided the entertainment.

CHARTER

(continued from page one)

within their boundaries with substantially equivalent facilities. In 2005, the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District gave LVCS the Sonoma School site, which formerly housed Adult Education to meet the requirement. A decision on the site for LVCP is expected by spring.

LVCP will open at the start of the 2010/11 year with a freshman class of 110 students. One idea was to house the LVCP students in classrooms at either Livermore or Granada High School. "I think both sides agree that shared use at one of the high schools would be very problematic," Bachelor said. "We have discussed the Portola site as an option. I am confident that my board can make that work."

At the Oct. 6 Livermore Board of Education meeting, assistant superintendent Mike Martinez presented a plan for closing Portola Elementary School at the end of this school year and moving the students to Junction Avenue

Middle School, which would become a K-8 site like Joe Michell School. Such a move would fulfill the State-mandated requirement to substantially change the governing structure of Portola, a result of the school being in Year 4 of Program Improvement (PI). A decision by the Board on the fate of the Portola site is expected by mid-March.

LCLC and the Livermore School District also are exploring other options besides Portola that would be suitable for LVCP.

GLOBAL TIDES PETITION REJECTED

The Board also voted unanimously to reject the charter school petition submitted by Global Tides @ Alameda County. There were no representatives from Global Tides at last week's meeting or the public hearing held on Oct. 6. No one spoke in support of the petition at that hearing.

On Sept. 4, Global Tides submitted petitions to 91 school dis-

tricts for an online K-12 school. Alameda County is the only Bay Area county to receive the petition, which was sent to 14 different counties. The Dublin and Pleasanton school districts also rejected the petition, along with many districts across the states such as Hemet, Rocklin, Orange, Riverside, and Los Alamitos.

"To approve a charter school petition, it must present a sound educational program that is likely to succeed," said Jackie McHaney of Thurbon and McHaney, the District's legal counsel. "This is a decision that should be carefully considered because you are handing over the keys to the education of those children. Ninety-one cookie cutter petitions really raises a red flag."

School districts have five criteria they can use to deny a charter school petition; District staff found that the Global Tides petition did not meet three of those criteria. Superintendent Brenda Miller recommended that the Board deny the petition on the grounds that it presents an unsound educational program, that the petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program, and that the petition lacks responsibly specific comprehensive descriptions of certain

specific aspects of the program, such as the governance structure, employee qualifications, health and safety, and special education.

McHaney said the financial documents were the most compelling weakness of the petition. "They were wholly inadequate," she explained. "The revenues were overstated and the expenses understated. They would be operating in the red right out of the chute."

The District's findings are summarized in a 51-slide presentation that is available at www.livermoreschools.com in the agenda for the Nov. 17, 2009 Board meeting. Among the problems, the petition stated that all teachers would meet the definition of "highly qualified" according to No Child Left Behind, but of the six teachers who signed the petition, only one has the necessary certification. The petition also indicates a class size of between 82 to 90 students per teacher, well in excess of state law.

For more information on Charter School Development Systems, which created Global Tides, visit <http://charterschooldevelopment.com>.

County Will Present Report For Greener Living Dec. 1

Alameda County planning staff will present a review of ideas gathered from South County residents about what can be done by individuals and local government to curb climate change. The effort is known as the Community Action Plan (CAP).

The Valley presentation will take place from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Dec. 1 at the Martinelli Event Center, 3585 Greenville Road, Livermore. There will be a second public review in Hayward from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Dec. 2 at Eden United Church of Christ, 21455 Birch St.

The draft report providing grass-roots suggestions about living greener will be distributed at the meetings. They are the result of meetings held in September, in which people sat in small discussion groups and offered

their suggestions. The report is intended to help the county form its pollution reduction policy in unincorporated areas to help meet global warming improvement standards.

The ideas at the previous meetings focused on such things as making it easier to finance solar panels for homes and businesses, planting low-water plants in yards, improving the frequency of Wheels bus service, and promoting ride-sharing.

Minutes of the previous meetings are available at the county's web page, acgov.org. Go to the green box in the upper right corner, click on "Alameda County Community Climate Action Plan," and then scroll down to "documents". There is also a slide show there that outlines the various conservation categories.



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EDITORIAL

Save The Air Race

It's estimated that Bay Area motorists riding alone make seven million trips every day, most by commuting to and from work.

Though a special fast lane is available to carpools, and though carpools can cross the bridges toll-free, the carpool lanes are used by only 17% of Bay Area vehicles.

Hoping to spur carpools and other alternatives to solo driving, such as transit, and bikes, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) sponsors a two-month summer "Spare the Air Race." Our Tri-Valley is an active participant.

The results of this past summer's competition have just been announced. Among the winners are Kaiser Permanente of Pleasanton, the Hacienda Business Park Owners Association, and the City of Pleasanton.

Fourteen Tri-Valley businesses participated, with CO2 savings four times that of last year.

This race is a way to fight smog and have fun. Kudos to BAAQMD and all the winners and participants. You are making a difference.

As Lisa Fasano of BAAQMD observed, "Anytime we can encourage people to reduce their use of single occupancy vehicles, by taking transit or joining a carpool, is a win for air quality. ... These organizations

LIVERMORE

(continued from page one)

Early separation packages have been offered. Maintenance has been reduced "across the board." All temporary positions are gone.

Both Barton and Brown mentioned the contribution of employee bargaining groups in making the cuts. Employees have stepped up to increase contributions to retirement. They have agreed there will be no cost of living increase in wages.

Barton said, "The employees have made significant and important contributions to enable us to close the budget gap."

Brown told the council that staff continues to pursue productivity improvements. "We are not out of the woods yet. The state is predicting a \$15 to \$25 billion shortfall next year."

The concern is that the state will once again come after local funds in an effort to balance the state budget. Barton pointed out, "We have managed our dollars well. Forces outside our control are impacting local budgets."

Steve Stewart, president of the Municipal Employees Negotiating Association, addressed the council. He represents the largest number of Livermore employees. Stewart stated, "Our members made a real tough decision. We voted to contribute the highest amount per employee in concessions. Nine and a half of the 11 positions to be eliminated are our members." He asked the council to make sure there are no other options, such as use of the reserve funds, to avoid layoffs.

Using one time money, such as reserves to retain services or employees, could be an option if the city knew what the next year would look like. Councilmember John Marchand made that observation, noting that the problem is the state has failed to address its budget problems. Next year may be twice as bad. "I have no better ideas than staff has proposed to close the city's budget gap."

Mayor Marshall Kamena added, "It's very, very tough to let people go. I can't support using reserves for ongoing expenses. If things get worse, reserves would provide a lift."

Springtown resident Linda Avila said she was "shocked" by the cutback in library hours at the Springtown branch. "It is used by families and the elderly. Many of the elderly cannot get to the civic center library. Kids need to have the libraries open. It is a place to check out books they cannot afford to buy." She suggested closing the civic center library

on Sundays and both branches on Mondays; then keep them open other days. "We need those small libraries," she declared.

Barton explained that the philosophy behind retaining current hours at the civic center library was that there would always be a library open in the city. The branches would be open alternate days.

Sue Gallinger, head of library services, said, "We did not want to close any library completely. The branches will still provide a full range of services, including storyhour." She said consideration was given to closing the civic center library on Sundays. However, it is the busiest day and the least costly to keep open.

Councilmember Marj Leider suggested that closing the Rincon Branch leaves students in a low income area without access to computers to use for homework assignments. She was concerned about the impact.

Gallinger said that Rincon would still provide the homework program. Students would miss one day, Tuesday.

One speaker suggested volunteers be used to run the libraries.

Mayor Marshall Kamena pointed out that replacing someone's job by a volunteer who works for free is not something that he would support. "It is difficult to close libraries. They would be the first to return to service when monies are available."

Resident Clarence Hoenig suggested the city consider a parcel tax to fill the budget gap.

Councilmember Jeff Williams said that some of the city's advisory boards may be energized to raise money to put back into the system.

Barton said city staff is already moving forward with ideas on how to make changes in the city to reduce spending in the future. Five teams of employees are working on "Transforming 2010." The teams will look at such things as better and active use of volunteers, the potential to share or buy services from other agencies; and green issues to reduce energy costs.

In addition, there will be more citizen input into the next budget. Barton said, "Staff wants to change how we proceed and to engage the community regarding its services and budget priorities."

EIR

(continued from page one)

ground alignment would have the least impact. There are two types of noise connected with BART. One is referred to as "wheel squeal," which occurs when trains go in and out of curves. The second is wind created by the train itself.

If you already live near the freeway or a railroad track, the impacts would differ very little. They can be mitigated, according to Roberts.

Track siting can also have an impact on noise levels. Roberts points out that new homes built at grade along the railroad tracks already have sound walls. On the other side of the tracks in older areas of the city, there are mainly wooden fences. Soundwalls would have to be added. That would provide two benefits. It would take out the BART sound. It would also be helpful in reducing noise impacts from the train traffic that uses the tracks now.

If BART were to come into Livermore, the concern has been what happens to people who have homes near the tracks. There would be a need to build grade separated facilities for BART, possibly the ACE train, and the regular train traffic. Roberts said that each segment is different. One place is very tight. Others range from 100 to 200 feet wide. "At grade, it may be necessary to acquire some of the adjacent properties, including homes," he stated.

An underground alignment would eliminate that need.

However, the proposed underground alignment down Portola

HEARING

(continued from page one)

Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Avenue.

The eventual outcome will be the selection of a preferred alignment to bring BART to Livermore. Three alignments end at Greenville Road, two go to Vasco Road near the current ACE station, two terminate in the downtown. These options would have two stations. Both the Greenville and Vasco routes include one that goes through the downtown. Several going through the downtown leave the freeway at El Charro and go through the quarry area. One exits the freeway near Las Positas Blvd.; another goes along Portola and Junction Avenue into the downtown.

There are also two one-station alignments. One goes down I-580 and ends at Isabel and I-580, the other uses El Charro, goes through the quarry area and stops at Isabel and Stanley Blvd.

Each of the two station alignments is predicted to add 30,000 riders to the system. The one station alignments would add 20,000. "There would be significant improvements in traffic on I-580," according to the DEIR.

(The study allows decision maker to mix and match the alignments.)

One of the criteria MTC has established evaluating the strength of future stations is the amount of transit oriented development (TOD) that could be built within a half mile of the station. The more that can be built, the more likely a station would receive funding through MTC. The Vasco and downtown stations are considered to have

ZONE 7

(continued from page one)

1980s, would carry water around or under the Delta, to Zone 7 and the other 28 state water contractors. Obtaining better water quality would cut expenses for Zone 7, because less money would have to be spent on treating water, said Quigley.

San Francisco and East Bay Municipal Utilities District, whose water is viewed by many Valley residents as superior to that of Zone 7, doesn't send their water through the Delta. They have had their own pipelines for decades.

The dual conveyance would also have the ability to deliver more water to the state water contractors.

Zone 7 has been acting as an administrator for the BDCP. It collects a fee for the service. However, the agency would like to move out of that duty, said assistant general manager Kurt Arends. He said it's likely that that will be possible in the next six months. An individual paid by the BDCP is the likely successor, he explained.

Director Sarah Palmer asked whether giving up the administrative paperwork would diminish

and Junction Avenue would necessitate digging up the streets. A cut and cover process is used. "The area would be a construction zone for 12 to 24 months," said Roberts. The trench would be 40 to 50 feet wide, which would still allow cars to use the right-of-way, which is 110 feet wide.

The City of Livermore is currently conducting workshops to design the stations.

Roberts said that the stations need to be appropriately designed for their surroundings. For example, in the downtown, the amount of parking would be relatively small. A downtown station would match the architecture and style of the downtown, while a station located elsewhere in the community would match its surroundings.

Most of the criteria for selecting an alignment is cumulative over the entire route. In a multiple station alignment, each station would contribute some benefit to the overall extension. There is potential for transit oriented development at the Vasco site and the Greenville site. While Greenville has a conditional TOD designation in the city's general plan, Roberts said the studies are finding that the units would be difficult to build within the half mile walking radius. The urban growth boundary and the freeway limit the possibilities. "Plus, it is not a very nice walking environment. That does matter. If there were a nice environment, people would walk further," commented Roberts.

the greatest potential for TOD. In addition, they both connect to the ACE train, meeting another goal of providing intermodal connections.

When asked what the time frame was for the extension, the reply was 10 to 25 years. BART board member John McPartland said his commitment was to speed up the process. "For today, our mission is to give a good listening to what you have to say. BART has no vested interest in any of the alignments," he said.

The public weighed in following the presentation on potential routes.

Bonnie Hamilton stated, "I am concerned about the impact of BART going through Livermore on a precious species - myself. I live near the railroad tracks. The possibility that BART would use the railroad right-of-way has already had a negative impact on me. People in Livermore want BART to stay where it belongs, on the freeway."

Her comments drew applause and a few boos. Kent Franklin worried that an aerial alignment would impact privacy. He said the extension should be parallel to the freeway.

Linda Jeffrey Sailors wondered if the DEIR took into consideration previous studies that looked at an intermodal connection at Greenville Road. She also wondered whether eminent domain would be used to take both homes and businesses to provide right of way. Sailors wanted to make sure that any noise impact was mitigated.

One of the key issues BART would consider in determining the location of stations and the alignment has to do with potential development.

The downtown specific plan allows 3200 units. Downtown already has sufficient units within a half mile to meet the criteria. If the downtown were combined with a station with development potential, such as Vasco, it would be unlikely that more units would be required. Development at some of the other stations is constrained by the UGB, freeway, airport protection area, and quarries, for example.

The Greenville and Isabel/I-580 stations are adjacent to the urban growth (UGB). In addition, Isabel is impacted by the scenic corridor ordinance, as well as the airport protection area. The Stanley/Isabel site is outside of the UGB. It would require a vote by Livermore residents to move the UGB.

Crime is another issue that has come up at hearings. Roberts said that Police Chief Steve Sweeney plans a presentation at the next station workshop on Dec. 10 on what he has found.

(The meeting begins at 6 p.m. at the Shrine Event Center in Livermore.)

"He looked at stations and talked to BART officials. He found that stations reflect the communities in which they are located. If there were no problems in a community, there would be no problems at stations. BART does not change the character of

Noise was also an issue raised by David Williams. He suggested a recording be made of BART on an elevated track and then played at the next hearing. He declared, "That would get rid of five of your suggested routes."

Henry Shay pointed out that the Greenville terminus would take the greater amount of traffic off of I-580. Land is already available there for a maintenance yard. Shay suggested that the assumption people would walk to BART if it came into the downtown is invalid. "Only a small fraction would walk from the 2000 units there. You would have to build a very large parking garage. Any option other than the freeway would be more costly and attract more controversy."

Martin Eisenberg offered a totally different viewpoint. He had previously lived near the BART Rockridge Station. "I am excited about a station in downtown Livermore. One thing missing there is public transit. If BART only came along the freeway, as soon as parking lots were full, they become useless. It is not really BART to Livermore. It would be for those from Tracy and Stockton." He added that a downtown station should be underground.

Valerie Raymond questioned the projected TOD for the downtown. She suggested that it would be "cheating" to count units outside the half-mile radius that MTC uses to judge TOD. Within the half-mile area are single family homes, schools and churches. In addition, she predicted there

a community," said Roberts. He added that BART does increase the number of people in an area. That does have an impact on the number of calls for service. However, people don't get off of a train, steal a TV, jump back on the train and go home. "If that were the case, the police would just have to wait on the platform to arrest them," said Roberts.

When it comes to a downtown station, Roberts said it would receive more attention from the police, because it is easier to patrol. The presence of officers would deter crime. "When Chief Sweeney looked at the data, there was very little difference in crime before and after a station was built," said Roberts.

Pleasanton has expressed concerns about an alignment that goes down El Charro and through the quarry area. There have been meetings with Pleasanton to gain an understanding of their concerns. In addition, a third public hearing will be scheduled in January to take comments from Pleasanton residents on the EIR.

Asked about the potential for three stations: Isabel, downtown and Vasco, Roberts said, "That would take an additional chunk of dollars. The trick is to add new ridership. There would be questions about whether that would occur with three stations. The pricetag for two stations is already fairly dramatic given the need to build the yard and purchase new vehicles."

would be a parking shortfall if the station were built in the downtown. Raymond added that it is important to build the Isabel/I-580 station.

Bob Baltzer supported a route that came through the downtown and ended at Vasco Road. "It is the only option that comes close to meeting MTC requirements for TOD," he pointed out. If the route were only along the freeway, there would be no TOD and it brings the prospect of attempts to overturn the urban growth boundary. He called the Isabel/I-580 the "worst possible option." There would be no TOD and no ACE connection.

Clark Streeter said he felt that a lot of people would use public transit if there were a station downtown, including himself.

Kathy Streeter talked about crime potential. She noted that when a station came into downtown Hayward, crime dropped. She said that downtown to Vasco makes the most sense, with its opportunity for TOD. She stated, "Whenever change is proposed, people get nervous. They only look at the short term impacts, not the long term benefits. Don't let fear make up your minds. Economic development is good for everyone. It brings money in for things we want."

The comment period on the DEIR ends Dec. 21, 2009. Written comments can be sent to: BART Planning Department, Attn. Malcolm Quint, 300 Lakeshore Dr., Oakland, CA 94612; or by email to info@barttolivermore.org.

were put there, as has been suggested, "We could integrate the environment and water into something that might be pretty special."

The Department of Water "Resources has interpretative centers at Oroville, San Luis Reservoir and Pyramid Lake. We could put one where the water slides would have been," said Quigley.

Director Bill Stevens said that maybe formation of "Friends of the Chain of Lakes" is in order. He thought that although most of the mined-out gravel pits won't be acquired until a few years from now, it may be time to have the public become more aware of the future water and flood control resources.

Along those lines, David Lunn, who retired in October after 29 years on Zone 7's engineering staff, told The Independent this week that Shadow Cliffs would offer an excellent teaching opportunity to the public to show how the water basin is managed.

Lunn, who for years was supervisor of the underground reservoir for Zone 7, said that

students could travel via Shadow Cliffs' paddle boats to the area along the cliff walls of the former Kaiser quarry. There they can see the separations in the aquifers. They could also see the siphon that pulls water out of the Arroyo Del Valle and into Shadow Cliffs, said Lunn.

Visual experiences like those can provide science students and others in the public with a good sense of how the mechanics of water work in the Valley, said Lunn.

Lunn was honored by the board at its meeting in October. Palmer said then that she first knew Lunn many years ago, when as a teacher she brought students to Zone 7. "He worked with many of my students, promoting water education. He was a repository of knowledge of our zone," she said.

Quigley said, "I worked with Dave (privately on trail matters) for 10 years before I got on the board. I ran largely because of his urging. We worked on many trail projects in the Valley. He has knowledge that's unsurpassed. He will be missed at Zone 7."

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Woman With Recovery House Hopes to Save it from Foreclosure

By Ron McNicoll

There are happy endings when it comes to saving homes from foreclosure in the Valley.

Senior citizen Joan Lennon of Livermore has found one of those happy endings, thanks to a reverse mortgage negotiated by Maggie O'Connell of the Reverse Mortgage Store.

Seyda Harding Kaynak hopes for a happy ending, too. She wants to save her spacious south Pleasanton home not only for herself and husband, Kamil, but also for women who live there as a transition in their recovery from drug and alcohol addiction.

The facility, called Tranquility Sanctuary, has served 15 women in the past two years, with a capacity of eight at any one time.

The Kaynaks have been trying to work with lender Chase Bank, and have had some extensions on the foreclosure. However, Dec. 14 looms as the latest deadline. Learning anything about the fate of the home has been frustrating, said Seyda.

In Livermore, Lennon tried dealing directly with a lender in her situation. She was facing foreclosure because she broke her kneecap, and lost her courier job for two local charities.

When the lender wasn't responsive, Lennon turned to O'Connell, who personally waived her own commission, in order to bring down the cost to Lennon. The lender's response of waiving its fees was a direct result of O'Connell's kind and positive attitude, said Lennon.

Saving her duplex has cleared up Lennon's money worries. She has no more house payments. She can live on her Social Security check and the income from a rental on the property.

"I thought my situation was a lost cause.

"She proved me wrong. I am so happy," said Lennon, who signed the papers earlier this week.

The reverse mortgage is based on equity in her home. The lender will take over the property after Lennon dies.

O'Connell said that she hopes word gets out in the senior community that they can look into reverse mortgages as a way to save their homes, if they have sufficient equity in them.

RECOVERY HOME WANTS MIRACLE

Kaynak hopes she has a happy ending about her potential foreclosure, too. She called it "needing a miracle."

Seyda and Kamil converted the house two years ago into a state-recognized facility for aiding women in their transition to

living sober fully on their own. Seyda said that her own experience in recovery from drugs and alcohol convinced her to start the facility, because she saw there was no other transitional housing for women in recovery in the Valley. She said that Livermore does have a facility for men.

Seyda and Kamil now want Chase Bank, which took over the mortgage from Washington Mutual, to recognize a new loan deal that they worked out with a Chase counselor in Oakland. If the bank approves the deal, the house would be saved from slated foreclosure on Dec. 14.

So far, though, Chase has not gotten back to them concerning their status. One of the Chase bank's counselors allegedly told Seyda that there have been communication problems since Chase has had to add thousands of people to its staff on foreclosures. It has been an immense training job. Things do slip through the cracks, the bank counselor allegedly told her.

One possible good sign for Seyda and Kamil has been that they have had extensions on earlier foreclosure dates, as they tried to work out an economic solution with the bank.

The Kaynaks are not poor. Kamil sells real estate. Although Seyda's real estate sales' income went way down several years ago, she has managed to complete some real estate sales. She also is working 40 hours a week at Stoneridge Mall managing a shop, and functions as on-site administrator for the recovery home. She said that she is doing it all to save the home for the women.

'THEY SAVED MY LIFE'

The women are very appreciative about the home. One of them, Robin, has been living there for four months. She told the Independent that "it's a wonderful experience. They are absolutely wonderful people. They saved my life."

Robin had been clean and sober for 11 years, but then was stressed because her husband cheated on her, and her father died. She went on a four-day binge. In her current situation, that wouldn't happen because "there is someone there to catch you. I have a huge family there (at the home). They give you all you need. You don't feel like you've failed."

A woman living there for the past month, Nicole, said, "It's very peaceful here. It's like a family. They have helped my recovery. I can see what is going on with me, and how I was covering up my addiction."

Like the others, Nicole follows the house rules, which include regular attendance at 12-step recovery meetings. She also attends a church fellowship that is welcoming to people in recovery.

"We're all supportive of each other. No one is judging you, or scrutinizing you in any way. I love the environment, the people and how I feel in general," said Nicole.

The tough part for people who abused substances is to make the transition into "normal life," said Nicole. "I don't know how to live a normal life. I'm an addict. I am relearning how to live my life in a responsible and mature way. The house has been a blessing for me."

Taylor, who has lived at the home for three months, said that if she didn't have that place, she would be homeless.

"It's a huge family environment. It supports everything that everyone does. They helped me find a sponsor (in recovery). I go to meetings every day. This saved my life," said Taylor.

"It would be a shame, if anything happens to that home. I know how many they have helped. I don't know that I would still be here, without them," said Taylor.

In the two years that the Kaynaks have operated the home, they have had a total of 15 women staying there, said Seyda. It has been an important transition for them to be successful on their own, she said.

Seyda said she realizes that a bank is a big organization, trying to take care of all the work it needs to do on the immense foreclosure rate in the United States. The people dealing with her on the phone have been personally sympathetic to what she is doing, though they keep saying that their hands are tied.

Livermore Residents Given Preview of High Speed Rail

By Ron McNicoll

Valley residents were given a close-up look at what bringing a high-speed train here would mean when two consultants to the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) appeared at a scoping meeting.

The meeting was held Nov. 10 at the Robert Livermore Community Center. Less than a dozen of the public were on hand in the first hour of the event in mid-afternoon. They asked big-picture questions about the main corridor, which will run from Los Angeles and San Diego to San Francisco.

They also saw maps about how an Eastbay route could be added. If all segments of the link were built, it could take passengers from Fremont, through the Valley, to Stockton, Sacramento and Modesto, where it would hook up to the main route to southern California.

The eastern route once was considered as the way to bring the Southern California route over to San Francisco. However, the high cost of rebuilding bridges in the Fremont area convinced the CHSRA to head to San Francisco from the Central Valley via Pacheco Pass near Gilroy.

Pleasanton also had objected to that route, citing traffic and noise impacts from the train.

The CHSRA consultants, Brent Ogden and Rob Hertz, said there is support locally for an Altamont link to the Central Valley to take care of East Bay passengers only, with no possibility of going across the Bay.

The consultants said that the authority knows that it doesn't want to operate where it is not wanted. Spreading information at the scoping session is part of the process to get feedback about attitudes here about it.

Valley officials have been dealing with the question at

meetings of the Rail Policy Group. The politicians include Livermore Mayor Marshall Kamena, Pleasanton Mayor Jennifer Hosterman, and Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty.

CONGRESS MEMBERS SEEK FUNDS

Voters in November 2008 authorized general obligation bonds of up to \$9 billion to launch the L.A. to San Francisco project. Ogden and Hertz told The Independent that the major plan already designated might have a chance to obtain federal funding in the near future. The Department of Transportation (DOT) has allocated \$8 billion in federal stimulus package money for high-speed rail.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger early last month asked for \$4.7 million in stimulus money. A week later, a letter signed by Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, and 22 California congress members, including Rep. Jerry McNerney, D-Pleasanton, backed the request.

The congressional letter asks the DOT to put California at the head of the funding list. The state has been working on plans for 13 years, and is ahead of any other project in the United States, says the letter.

The letter emphasizes the creation of jobs. The signers told Transportation Sec. Ray LaHood that the project would create 45,300 jobs directly. With a ripple effect creating other jobs, the total number would be 126,900, according to the letter.

Many of the planning and engineering jobs could start immediately, with the remainder beginning by 2012, including some of the construction jobs.

There has been opposition to the rail project. The critics, including the Howard Jarvis

Taxpayers Association, have said that the cost estimates by the authority are not realistic. It will cost many billions more.

SEEKING BASIC INFORMATION

At the Livermore meeting, people asked questions about the general nature of the high-speed project, and how it might be used as an aid for commuting, with links to BART and the ACE train line.

The line would work well in bolstering both ACE and BART, with many riders switching among the three modes of rail transit, said Ogden. It's possible that ACE service could be run all day long, with its own right of way, instead of having to share tracks with Southern Pacific, as it does now.

Fares on the route from San Francisco to Los Angeles are projected to be about one-half those of the commuter airlines. The trip would take three hours or less. That's a time savings for anyone going from downtowns of San Francisco and Los Angeles, because they don't have to travel to the airports.

Travelers also would save time by not having to arrive one hour before a flight for security. While there would be some security on high-speed rail, it wouldn't equal that of air travel.

If the whole system were built out, the line would be so busy that trains at the well-traveled junctions would be leaving every four minutes, said Ogden.

An report in 2005 estimated that it would take from eight to 11 years from initial funding to complete the first segment of the train line. Because the timing of construction depends on raising the funds, it's hard to say now when that will go into operation, said Ogden.

MAILBOX

(Opinions voiced in letters published in Mailbox are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Independent. Letter Policy: The Independent will not publish anonymous letters, nor will it publish letters without names. Frequent letter writers may have publication of their letters delayed.)

More Than Band-Aids

Mary Snell
Health Services Clerk
Walnut Grove
Elementary School
Pleasanton

I am a Health Services Clerk for the Pleasanton Unified School District, one of many Health Services Clerks in this District who take enormous pride in the jobs we do. That being said, I'd like to invite Independent reporter and anyone else who doubts my worth, to spend a typical, three hour day in my Health Office at Walnut Grove Elementary School. Perhaps then they would understand that my job duties involve much more than just "putting on Band Aids." How about screening entire classrooms for lice, calming panicked parents, assisting vomiting students and comforting sick students whose parents or parent designees cannot be reached even after hours of multiple phone calls? Not to mention providing immediate first aid for numerous head injuries, cuts, scrapes, bee stings and possible broken bones, all of which are meticulously documented.

I'm trained and authorized to recognize symptoms and provide treatment for medical conditions including diabetes and serious allergies. Let's not forget managing hundreds of student Health files and the responsibility of assisting

in the administration of approved medications including life saving EpiPens and Glucagon. I update and maintain my CPR and First Aid certifications. None of these tasks require a nursing credential or medical degree. However, all Health Services Clerks provide crucial support to overwhelmed teachers and crowded classrooms. Fortunately, most parents at my school have a clear understanding of my responsibilities to their children. Does Pleasanton need more District nurses? Of course. Do Health Services Clerks need expanded hours? Absolutely. Mr. McNicoll, please get your facts straight before making such misleading public comments about my job.

Thank You

Sally Swanson
Publicity Chairman
Livermore-Amador
Symphony Guild

The Livermore-Amador Symphony Guild would like to extend its thanks to The Independent for publicizing our recent fund-raiser "POPS Travels the World" held at the Barn on November 6th and 7th. This support contributed to a fine turnout at both concerts. We particularly appreciate having our announcement placed in a prominent spot in the October edition of The Independent Magazine and having a photographer come to an orchestra rehearsal to take a picture of soloists Dale Larsen and Wendy Mason and conductor Arthur Barnes. Proceeds from these annual pops concerts benefit our community orchestra which begins its 47th season at The Bankhead Theater with a concert "Hits From Four Centuries" on December 5. The Livermore-Amador Symphony is very much appreciative of being

included in The Independent's generous and ongoing support of local arts groups.

Give Thanks To A Farmer or Rancher Darrel and Karen Sweet Sweet Family Ranches Livermore

The food at the center of your family gatherings this holiday season started on a family farm or ranch like ours. Let us tell you a little bit about our family ranch so that you too will know where your food comes from.

We raise cattle east of Livermore. It's a family business that began in 1868 and now includes three generations and three families that live and work on the ranch. Even four-year old Audrey helps us feed the cows and watch for wildlife.

Our beef cows spend their lives on the pasture. The ten month old calves are shipped to Harris Ranch where they are raised under strict food quality and safety and animal welfare guidelines. The Sweet family is proud of its contribution to your safe and wholesome food supply.

This holiday season join our family in giving thanks for the

wholesome and affordable food supply raised in this country by family farmers and ranchers like us.

Since not everyone in this country has access to high-quality food, you may wish to demonstrate your gratitude by helping those in need.

In the spirit of the holidays, support our local food bank, Open Heart Kitchen.

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Kaiser Grants Aid Sr. Support Program

Three Kaiser grants totaling \$18,000 are helping Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley improve services to the elderly in Livermore, Pleasanton, Sunol and Dublin.

The grants are for nutrition and weight control education, for purchasing educational materials, and for a wellness program for the staff of the nonprofit organization.

They are particularly welcome because funding has declined in several areas while the number of elderly needing help is increasing, according to Marlene Petersen, Executive Director of the Senior Support Program.

"This is the season of Thanksgiving, and we are truly thankful to Kaiser," she said. "The grants make a real difference to the staff and clients alike."

The grants come from the Kaiser Permanente Diablo Area Community Benefit program. They are:

- \$15,000 for a weight control program emphasizing heart and diabetes health for seniors. A pilot program began at one senior site in August and the full program will start at two new senior sites in January. Program coordinator Debbie Whiteside said the program will "provide practical nutrition information" and teach elderly participants to "take responsibility for the

choices they make that affect their health."

- \$1,000 for the purchase of Kaiser Health Education printed materials, to be used in many of the Senior Support programs. The grant "cuts printing costs while providing important health, nutrition and fitness information to our clients," said Carol Garberson, Senior Support Wellness Services Director.

- \$2,000 for a wellness program for Senior Support staff, encouraging them to care for their own health so that they can better serve the senior community. "The stresses of budget cuts, along with an increasing number of seniors in need of help make this wellness grant especially welcome," according to Executive Director Petersen. She particularly thanked Kaiser manager Frank Lattuca, who volunteered to sponsor the wellness effort.

Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley has served seniors 60 and older since 1981. Its programs aim to keep seniors living independently as long as possible. It provides services free of charge.

"We are very grateful to all of our funders, donors and volunteers," said Petersen. "They make a real difference in the lives of the growing senior population in our community."



Climate Action Plan for the Unincorporated Areas of Alameda County

Join us from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on Dec. 1 to provide feedback on measures to improve transportation, reduce waste, and conserve energy. Location: 3585 Greenville Road, Livermore, Martinelli Center. Learn more: www.acgov.org/cda/planning/climate_action_plan.htm

We care for children from birth to 21. Our doctors have expertise handling children with special needs.

Livermore/Pleasanton
Pediatrics
925.455.5050



Looking for Task Force Members

Applications are being accepted for five at-large members of the Hacienda PUD Modification Task Force. Applicants should be residents of the City of Pleasanton with an interest in planning for transit oriented development near the BART station. Each City Councilmember will be selecting one city-wide representative from the applications received.

Applications are available at the Office of the City Clerk, 123 Main Street, or on the City's web site at www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us. For additional information, contact Janice Stern at (925) 931-5606 or jsstern@ci.pleasanton.ca.us

Applications must be received no later than 4:30 p.m., Monday, November 30, 2009.

The Holidays Begin . . .



Shoppers got up early last Saturday to take advantage of special bargains during the Earlier Than the Bird event in downtown Livermore. In the photo in upper left are Victoria Smith, Matty Flores, and Paula Flores. Photo at lower right are Colene Bens and Veronica Bens at In Between Stitches. The upper right photo shows that even husbands got into the act. Photos - Doug Jorgensen

Magical Holiday Evening

In Pleasanton, the Magical Holiday Evening was held Friday. The stores were decked out for the holidays. There was entertainment and fun, along with bargains for shoppers. In the photo at right, enjoying the sights and sounds of the evening, are Vickie LaBarge with her grandchildren Natalie, Avery and Tim LaBarge. The lower left photo is of members of the Valley Concert Chorale, who serenaded visitors with sounds of the season.



SPORTS NOTES



The Livermore Bombers U10B won first place in the 2009 Dublin Crossroads Tournament by defeating the Newark Pumas in the championship match. The championship match came down to a triple overtime shootout where the Bombers came out victorious 3-2. Leading up to the championship match, the Bombers fought through an extremely tough bracket in which all matches were exciting. The Bombers won their first match 4-2 against hosting team, Dublin Fireballs. The second match against the San Ramon Blackhawks ended in a 3-3 tie with the Bombers rallying from a 3-1 deficit to tie it up in the second half. A 2-2 tie with the Fremont Spartans in the final pool match placed the Bombers in the championship game against the Newark Pumas. The team finished the season undefeated and in first place. The Bombers pictured are Coach Gary Arruda, Coach Bobby Jackson, Coach Jeff Bouillercce; players (standing, left to right) Zachary Anderson, Stephen Billowitch, Nick Bouillercce, Manuel Veruzco, Alex Forgatsch, Aaron Eppstein, Jack Perry; (kneeling) Chase Dunn, Drew Arruda, Braden Jackson, and Charlie Ridings. Not present for the photo was Trenton Green.

Pleasanton Rage

Pleasanton Rage U12 Premier came away from their re-match against the Heritage Dynamite with a big 2-0 win. Sami LaBella broke the game open with the first goal, scored on a beautifully placed ball by Makenna Elias. Sophie Santos and Carley

Robertson both took shots on goal before Malissa Shadle came up with the second goal, assisted by Robertson. Kayla Bowers played amazing defense at the mid-spot, and Brookey Villanueva was also strong at mid-field. In addition to scoring goals, LaBella and Shadle played well all around and were a big part of the important win. Top



Pleasanton Ballistic United Soccer Club U10 Barage are the NorCal State Cup Premier Champions. U10 Barage competed in NorCal State Cup Finals over a two weekend period in Manteca to take the title. They won their bracket by defeating the Bay Oaks Roadrunners in the championship Game 3-1. Pictured are Andrew McGinty, Mark Molz, Tommy Kramer, Ben Blackfield, Joe Geasa, Jack Harker, Coach Alec Taylor, Nathan Williams, Neal Inchauspe, Christopher Kilday, Liam Siu, Nico Lemoine, and Ian Slominski.

Offensive Players: Sami LaBella, Malissa Shadle, Brookey Villanueva; Top Defensive Players: Kayla Bowers.

Pleasanton Seahawks

In preparation for the December Junior Olympics (JO), the Pleasanton Seahawks (PLS) turned in many new cuts and times at the Orinda OAPB Last Chance Meet, November 14-15. New B Times: Sara Jeffrey and Michael Martin. New A Times: Samantha Howell, Taylor Park, Aditya Gupta, Wolfgang LaChance, Rishab Nair, Tyler Rhoads, Michael Yao, Madison Burson, Analise Chinn, Stephanie Jeffrey, Dylan Devries, Chloe Bantock, Bridget Booe, Heather Chandler, Elise Cox, Maya Gilchrist, Bernadine Martin, Rosni Nair, Cassidy Booe and Emily Saccullo.

New JO Cuts: Anna Parker, Alex Gilchrist, Regis LaChance, RJ Scott, Brian Lee, Andrew Song, Caleb Wang and Theresa Martin. New Far Westerns (FW) Cuts: Seohyun Kim and Tony Shen. New Pacific

Reportable (PRT) Times: Jason Chen.

Pleasanton Ballistic

The Pleasanton Ballistic United Soccer Club (BUSC) U12 recreational champions represented the league in four games at the Crossroads post seasonal tournament this past Saturday and Sunday. The Rays got off to a great start by beating Newark 5-2. Jeffery Deguchi assisted Keegan Locher, Keegan assisted Jordan Singh, Andrew Bailey assisted Jeffery Deguchi on goals. After half time, with the score 3-1, Rays' Jordan Singh scored twice more on stolen free kicks.

In the second game on Saturday the Rays continued their undefeated streak by besting the Danville Sharks 6-0. When it came to scoring, Keegan Locher assisted Jordan Singh, Damian deguchi assisted Keegan Locher, Damian did the same back to Keegan, Andrew Bailey assisted Joey Brasil and Kevin Yang assisted Joey Brasil for the final score. On Sunday, leading



Pleasanton Rage U9 Orange went 2 and 0 in the final round of the Nor Cal State Cup. They finished #1 in their Super 3 Bracket against two strong opponents and #5 overall in Northern California. The first game posted a score of 3-0 against the Mustang Blast and the second game posted a score of 2-0 against El Dorado Eclipse Luna. With excellent offensive and defensive playing, Rage was able to shut out both teams securing their first place finish. Pictured are (top row) Darin Preszler, Donn Frizzell and Dominique Dourneau; (middle row) Nicolette Trucco, Yasmine Springer, Hope Alley, Emma McLaughlin, Jessica Jensen, Jenna Brown; (front row) Emma Dourneau, Hanna Fleshman, Madison Mole, Kylie Racer, Sarah Baxter, and Maddie Macedo.

their pool, the Rays then faced off against a Scrapy Union city, going down by one in the 1st half on a penalty kick and in the end dropping one more in a 2-0 loss their 1st of the season.

Playing for the consolation prize the boys then took on Livermore and were again bested in a barn burner losing 4-3. Locher scored first on a throw in from Deguchi. Livermore then put in two. Deguchi assisted Singh to even the score. Livermore scored again

just before the half. Then Livermore scored again half way through the second half. Rays retaliated when Bailey assisted Deguchi. The Rays ended tournament play placing fourth in eight Bay Area teams.

CYO Basketball

St. Raymond's 8th grade (818) defeated St. Michael/St. Charles (SM/SC) (814) 39-17 (continued on page 8)

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Study Suggests Reforms Needed in Food Stamp Program

A recently released statewide survey conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) shows that 2,875,000 California adults report struggling with food insecurity, the ability to obtain enough food on a regular basis. Of the households surveyed in Alameda County, 95,000 adults reported suffering from food insecurity. Using data on the surveyed households, the California Food Policy Advo-

cat (CFPA) captured an additional 208,000 people living in these households who are also likely to suffer from food insecurity. "Food insecurity as reported by the adult head of household almost always indicates that the problem affects the rest of the household as well. It makes sense that when an adult is affected it's likely other adults, if not the entire household, are

also food insecure" says Ken Hecht, Executive Director of the CFPA. "Children may not be as vulnerable to food insecurity because parents will do their best to protect their children from these struggles—but they are not always successful". Food insecurity and poor nutrition are pressing problems in California. One of the existing solutions, the federal Food Stamp Program, is severely underutilized. CFPA released a report entitled Lost Dollars, Empty Plates

that details estimates of lost food stamp benefits and the resulting economic impact for counties and the state. Based on these calculations the report estimates that \$126,885,000 in benefits would have gone to eligible Alameda County residents if the participation rate had reached 100%. Furthermore, the additional food stamp benefits would have generated approximately \$233,470,000 in economic activity. The report suggests that increasing Food Stamp Program

participation will not only help Californians in need, but will also bolster economic activity; a win-win situation for all involved. "In times like these we can't afford to let valuable federal resources go unused" says Tia Shimada, Nutrition Policy Advocate at the CFPA. The report outlines solutions aimed at reducing barriers to food stamp participation, such as:

- Removing the asset test, so households don't have to hit rock bottom before qualifying

- Providing a phone or a web based interview process to avoid trips to the food stamp office
 - Joining 46 other states that do not require a fingerprint image to complete enrollment; and
 - Reducing paperwork by converting to a semi-annual simplified reporting system
- The Lost Dollars, Empty Plates report and other information is available at www.cfpa.net/ldep/

Seahawks to Host Junior Olympic Swim Meet

The City of Pleasanton's Dolores Bengtson Aquatic Center will be the host site for a large swim meet in the coming weeks. The Pleasanton Seahawks Swim team will host a three-day Junior Olympic swim meet that begins on Friday, December 4, and continues through Sunday, December 6.

The meet is expected to draw about 2,000 swimmers and guests who will begin to arrive each morning at 6:30 a.m., with competition beginning at 8:00 a.m. The meet will continue each day until approximately 8:30 p.m.

The city of Pleasanton has been working closely with the Seahawks to develop plans for a both a successful competition and reduced impact on the neighborhoods surrounding the Aquatic Center, located at 4455 Black Avenue near Santa Rita Road. Accordingly, City staff has developed a traffic flow system for the Aquatic Center to facilitate competitor drop-off, and participants have been notified of pre-designated parking locations that would reduce the impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Gingerbread Preschool and Alisal Elementary School parking lots will be used as overflow parking. Swim meet parking is prohibited in any of the business lots on the south side of Black Avenue. Swimmers are advised not to park in the Amador Valley High School parking lot on Saturday morning, as the entrance will be blocked by mid-day to accommodate the staging of the Hometown Holiday Parade scheduled that evening in downtown Pleasanton.

For more information, please contact Ian Anderson at (925) 931-3423.

Workshop Provides Information on Grant Application Process

The cities of Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton will co-sponsor two application workshops for all fiscal year 2010-11 Livermore Housing and Human Services grants, Pleasanton Housing and Human Services and Community grants, and Dublin Community Development Block grants. The workshops are designed for non-profit or-

ganizations that serve Tri-Valley residents. The first workshop is slated for Monday, December 7, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Pleasanton City Council Chambers, 200 Old Bernal Avenue in Pleasanton. A second workshop will be held on Wednesday, December 9 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

at the Livermore City Council Chambers, 3575 Pacific Avenue in Livermore. Staff will discuss the application processes and distribute application packets at the workshops. Attendance at one of the scheduled workshops is mandatory in order to apply for City of Livermore funding and is

strongly encouraged for the cities of Dublin and Pleasanton. Both workshops will be identical in format and content. It is only necessary to attend one workshop. To RSVP for attendance at one of the workshops, please contact Fan Ventura at (925) 931-5348, or send an email fventura@ci.pleasanton.ca.us.

LARPD Increases Field Use Fees; Honors Retiring Employees

The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District board approved increases to the reserved sports field use rate for both youth and adult group rentals at its meeting last week.

Effective Dec. 1, youth sports field rentals will increase from \$5 per hour to \$10 per hour. Adult sports field rentals will increase from \$15 per hour to \$20 per hour. A new fee of \$50 per hour for synthetic turf fields was also approved.

This is the first change in sports field fees since July 2004 when rates changed from \$8 per game to \$5 per hour for youth and \$15 per hour for adults. These fee increases are expected to generate about \$25,780 in additional revenue annually for the District.

Director Steve Goodman asked whether staff had been in contact with the sports groups to let them know about the rate increase.

Assistant General Manager John Lawrence replied that the groups had been kept informed.

The Board also acknowledged the retirement of two longtime District employees.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Brian Tibbets is retiring after 26 years with the District. He has supervised aquatics, adult day care, senior services, youth and adult sports, facility rentals, special events, open space, classes and maintenance during his time at LARPD. He managed the Robertson Park Equestrian Center Arena Cover project, as well as oversaw the maintenance of many District facilities.

Park Specialist-Construction Bob Tipton is retiring with 27 years of service to the District. His passion for "safety first" helped develop the Tot Lot Inspection Form for the District. He has coordinated construction and performed hands-on work for

many projects at LARPD parks and trails.

Goodman stated, "The district is losing two valuable employees. We appreciate all their years of service."

Directors also discussed a proposed Master Property Agreement between LARPD and the City of Livermore. The purpose of the agreement is to clarify use and maintenance of facilities including trails, parks and buildings that are owned by the City and managed by LARPD.

An agreement established in 1970 indicated that the city would acquire park property. The district would improve and maintain the parks.

Director David Furst expressed some concerns about the way the agreement is currently written. One was a statement that the city and district would have a relationship akin to landlord/tenant. Furst said that in that case,

the city should be paying for the capital improvements, not the district. As a tenant, the district would pay utilities and make minor improvements.

Director Scott Kamena said there were different types of landlord/tenant relationships. For example, a dentist leasing property would be responsible for all of the improvements.

Goodman noted that there have been issues about who is responsible for improvements. Among them are the handicap restrooms at the Barn. There have been issues at Ravenswood and the Carnegie Building as well. "It is a discussion that needs to take place. Unlike a business, we are serving the same public."

A revised document will be brought back to the Board meeting in December for discussion, with final approval expected in January. The agreement must also be formally considered by the Livermore City Council.

SPORTS NOTES

in CYO basketball action. St. Raymond's went on a 10 point run in the second quarter to open up a 15 point halftime lead. Michael Ditzel's hot shooting led a third quarter comeback but SM/SC couldn't sustain the momentum through the end of the game. Ditzel had 8 points and an assist for SM/SC. Greg Plantenga had 5 points and 3 assists. Grant Perry and Justin McKee hit the boards with 9 and 7 rebounds respectively. Jeffery Warner played tough defense and also contributed 5 rebounds.

SM/SC CYO 7th Grade Girls American League Team hosted Catholic Community of Pleasanton (CCOP) in this year's first round of what's become a great rivalry. Anna Neitzel had another terrific game in the paint with six points to go with her 14 rebounds, and Samantha Trask defended well at the point and ran the offense well at the other end, doing a great job protecting the ball and penetrating off the dribble when she found a seam. Amanda Montano presented an offensive threat on top of her usual tenacious defense. In a game that was close the whole way, CCOP sank the game's last basket at the buzzer, coming away with a 26-24 victory in a great opening game of this year's series between these two teams.

SM/SC 7th grade CYO team #711 edged St. Isidore team #709 31-27 in a hard fought battle Sunday. Ryan Holmes led SM/SC with 13 points, excellent defense, and some very crucial steals. Devin Darden chipped in 9 points while Jordan Murdoch added 5 points, 5 rebounds, and had 2 steals. With both teams in a penalty situation which allowed both teams free throw opportunities, Brandon Cory's 6 rebounds occurred mostly towards the end of the game and helped SM/SC hold on for the win.

The 7th grade girls SM/SC NUTZ brought home a much needed win against a tough St. Joan team. The NUTZ came out hard and fast in the first half with a 22-11 score at the break. But St. Joan's #4 knew how to sink 3 pointers and forced the NUTZ to pull out everything they had just to stay ahead in the 2nd half. A final score of 28-24 brought out the toughest defense SM/SC has had to play this season. Bella "Smurph" Murphy brought her best game to the court when her team needed it most. With 5 attempts, 4 rebounds, 3 steals and 2 points she helped solidify the win for the NUTZ. Kirah VanTrease also brought her skills to the forefront with 5 attempts, 4 rebounds, 2 steals and 4 points. Sarah Partridge led her team with 8 points, 8 steals and 4 rebounds. Natalie Assemi and Jessica Elfin held a strong stance against St. Joan with a combined 14 rebounds, 13 attempts and 6 points. Jordan Volponi and Katie Johnston rounded out the efforts with 3 steals, 4 rebounds, 13 attempts and 4 points.

CYO 5th Grade Boys - SM/SC #514 (Terminators) lost to St. Raymond #515. The score was 20-12. St. Raymond had strong offensive play from Jeremy Santos and Andrew Cabral and great defensive play by Max Ureta and Marco Coronel. Terminators Zach Scribner and Matt Benavidez provided some go offensive plays. Jose Mariscal and Matthew Budrewicz showed some great defense.

The SM/SC Wolves (5th grade boys) played a very close game against a quick St. Isidore team but came up short in the final minutes by a score of 30-26. The Wolves started slowly in the first quarter but picked up offensive momentum in the second quarter on the back of strong shooting from Kavan Bagatelos and Ryan Nunes. A 12 footer from Kevin Prill along with a slashing left hand drive to the basket by Frank Gomez pulled the Wolves to within four points at the half. Coaches Bagatelos and Murdoch adjusted the game plan during the break and the Wolves immediately responded on both ends of the court. Solid defensive play from Kevin Emerson and strong rebounding by Gomez and Nunes turned the tide for the SM/SC squad. At the end of the quarter SMSC evened the score and appeared to have momentum in their favor. In the final period the St. Isidore offense suddenly caught fire as they hit a series of tough shots to pull in front by six points. With a little over a minute remaining a rebound and eight foot jumper from Emerson pulled the SM/SC team to within four. However, even with an aggressive half court trap that resulted in two turnovers, the Wolves were unable to close the scoring gap and time ran out.

SM/SC 5th grade boys "Flying Cows" (#512) had a tough loss 31-6 against CCOP (#509) Sunday. The Cows were decidedly short-handed, only being able to field 6 players total, but Zachariah Eme, Robert Sutter, Andrew Marty, and Noah Kluball really stepped up their games in both offense and defense.

4th grade SM/SC Crushers faced a tough opponent in St. Isidore (4013) on Sunday. From the tip off, SM/SC was able to score with a basket by Emily Trask. With great passing by Katherine Gomez, Regan

Wiedenfeld was able to put up 4 points as well. At halftime SM/SC had a one point lead and came out strong in the second half. Nicole Bartels and Katherine Gomez each scored a basket to strengthen the lead but St. Isidore fought back and with less than two minutes in the game, SM/SC was leading by one. Led by Daniela Walker, Katherine Gomez and Sierra Marshall, the defense held strong and was able to keep their one point lead. Olivia Volponi and Maddison Bjorge provided help off the bench to make the final score 12-11.

SM/SC 3rd grade boys CCOP (330) vs SM/SC Eagles (43-10) Logan Finch, Nicholas Melendez and Aidan Ackerman scored for the Eagles with Alex Clarke and Jonathan Mulrooney on defense.

CCOP (329) - SM/SC vs Eagles 43-13 CCOP were led by Brandon Villanueva and Joshua Valentine on offense and Patrick Gallagher and Cooper Eastman with defensive steals. Brad Couture, Mickie Enad, Nicolas Rodriguez, Parth Gupta and Sharwin Patil all contributed to the team defense. Eagles Tamur Asur, Brent Cisterman and Wyatt Moseley all scored while Michael Gauch and Robert Sandoval contributed to a strong defense.

SM/SC 3rd grade boys Warriors (#336) vs. St. Joan Scorpions (#337). Warriors won 19-16. The Scorpions dominated the first half, holding the Warriors to only 2 points in taking a 12-2 lead. The Warriors, in turn, outscored St. Joan in the 2nd half to take the lead at 17-16 with less than one minute left to play. The Scorpions were unable to equalize in the time remaining, giving SM/SC the win. Key players for St. Joan were Rico Guevara and Carson Griffey on offense, and Alex Johnson and Jacob Smith on defense. Key players for SM/SC were Caleb Hardesty, who also had one successful free throw, and Malini Tia on offense. Key defensive players for SM/SC were Roberto Iacomini and Zach Macintire.

SM/SC 3rd grade boys Destroyers hosted the Livermore Lakers and played a well fought contest on Sunday, 11/21/09. Both teams showed a lot of skills. The Destroyers played strong but fell short to the Lakers with the final score of 10 to 18. Jayden Hurskin, Christian Pitcher, and Xavier Pelican led the Lakers in scoring and rebounding. Gabe Parrish also rebounded well and logged his first assist of the season. Alejandro Cabassa, Matthew Larson, Ryan Heise, and Trevor White all played impressive team defense. Noah Wiesner, RJ Mata, Owen Dawson, and Brandon Harvey added points for the Destroyers while Alec Lewis and Jose Ramos battled hard underneath to lead the team in rebounds. Eric Valdez and Dylan Jess played tough defense.

SM/SC Thunder (3014) 16, CCOP (3011) 11; Thunder Players: Isabella Carrano, Zakiya Clark, Kate Hottinger, Abby Grace Leary, Megan Mossinger, Allison Scheer, Kamy Farro, Mallorie Steiner.

3rd grade SM/SC basketball Cobras 21, CCOP 31. SM/SC Cobras top players: Adam Murphy, Alex Curuna, and Jordan Collom.

The Livermore SM/SC CYO 3rd Grade Boys - "Shooters" faced off against a challenging St. Joan of Arc - "Hoosiers". The "Hoosiers" won the offensive battle although the "Shooters" fought tough under the boards. Top all-around players for the Hoosiers included Kyle Davidson, Sean Kearns, and Jack Hildebrand. Top Defensive Players for the Shooters included Jack Burke, Drew Dillon and Grant Dufek. Top Offensive Players for the Shooters included Jacob Peterson, Ian Partridge and Logan Vinson.

Lacrosse Registration

Girls lacrosse Spring 2010 registration is now open. It is open to girls in grades 2 to 8. Registration is now through the end of November 2009 at www.pleasantongirls-lacrosse.com. Questions? Richard Murphy at rl_murphy@sbcglobal.net. Spring season runs from February to June. (Continued on page 12)

Funds OKed to Purchase Historic Farm

The Livermore City Council voted to accept funds that will allow it to purchase the historic Hagemann Farm.

In September, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development approved funding for up to \$1.8 million for the acquisition.

Hagemann Farm is a 5-acre remnant of the original 60,000 acre Rancho el Valle de San Jose land grant awarded in 1839 to the Bernal, Sunol and Pico families. Buildings on the site include the Pico-Bernal/Mendenhall house, one of the oldest remaining wooden farmhouses in the Tri-Valley. There are fully preserved functional historic barns, workshops, the Mendenhall cow barn,

a working horse area and other outbuildings on site.

The farm is currently the location of Hoofprints on the Heart, an adaptive riding program for disabled persons. Hoofprints operates the only program of its kind for persons with disabilities in the Tri-Valley. Clients range from children with autism and Down Syndrome to adults and seniors suffering from a stroke, dementia or simple the effects of aging. Currently, Hoofprints is working with the Veterans Hospital to expand the Horses for Heroes program. It has been found that adaptive riding therapy provides additional therapeutic benefit to veterans with a variety of brain and body injuries.

The city would repay the loan over a 20 year period. The estimated yearly payment would be \$104,842.

FILM COMMISSION

The council also voted to reallocate \$7500 in tourism and special event grant funds from the California Independent Film Festival to the Livermore Valley Film Commission.

The film festival has moved to Orinda.

The decision was made to give the money to the film commission, because it was related to the film industry.

Dale Kaye, Chamber of Commerce CEO and head of the film commission, noted that filming has a significant impact on the

economy. She pointed out that the state of California, in a very down economy, for the first time created an incentive for filmmakers. "Filming is very lucrative. It is a job creator. There are location fees, purchase of supplies, use of local restaurants and hotels. The impact is huge in Livermore."

There is something shooting every week in this area, she told the council. Mainly, they are commercials and short films. Kaye said that currently the commission is scouting locations for the next Terminator film. "That's the kind of movie, a major feature film, we are trying to bring in," she said.

Research Could Lead to New Treatment for Kidney Stones

By producing some of the highest resolution images of peptides attaching to mineral surfaces, scientists have a deeper understanding how biomolecules manipulate the growth crystals. This research may lead to a new treatment for kidney stones using biomolecules.

The research, which appears in the Nov. 23 online edition of the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, explores how peptides interact with mineral surfaces by accelerating, switching and inhibiting their growth.

The team, made up of researchers from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the Molecular Foundry at Lawrence Berkeley, the University of California, Davis and the University of Alabama, for the first time produced single-molecule resolution images of this peptide-mineral interaction.

Inorganic minerals play an important role in most biological organisms. Bone, teeth, protective shells or the intricate cell walls of marine diatoms are some displays of biomineralization, where living organisms form structures using inorganic material. Some minerals also can have negative effects on an organism such as in kidney and gallstones, which lead to severe suffering and internal damage in humans and other mammals.

Understanding how organisms limit the growth of pathological inorganic minerals is important in developing new treatment strategies. But deciphering the complex pathways that organisms use to create strong and versatile structures from relatively simple materials is no easy feat. To better understand the process, scientists attempt to mimic them

in the laboratory.

By improving the resolution power of an Atomic Force Microscope (AFM), the PNAS authors were able to image individual atomic layers of the crystal interacting with small protein fragments, or peptides, as they fell on the surface of the crystal.

The images also revealed a mechanism that molecules can use to bind to surfaces that would normally repel them. The high resolution images showed that peptides will cluster together on crystal faces that present the same electronic charge. Under certain conditions the peptides would slow down growth, while under other conditions the peptides could speed up growth.

On another face of the crystal, where the peptides were expected

to bind strongly, the researchers found instead that the peptides did not attach to the surface unless the crystal growth slowed. The peptides needed to bind in a specific way to the face, which takes more time than a non-specific attachment. As a result, the growing layers of the crystal were able to shed off the peptides as they attempted to bind.

But when the researchers slowed down the crystal growth rate, the peptides collapsed onto the surface so strongly that they completely stopped growth. The researchers proposed that the phenomenon is due to the unique properties of bio-polymers, such as peptides or polyelectrolytes, which fluctuate in solution before resting in a stable configuration on a surface.

LIVERMORE CINEMAS		2490 FIRST STREET 443-SHOW						
OLD DOGS (PG) DLP	12:20	1:20	2:35	3:30	4:50	5:40		
					7:00	8:00	9:25	
NINJA ASSASSIN (R) DLP	12:25	2:40	4:55	7:20	9:45			
FANTASTIC MR. FOX (PG) DLP	12:05	2:20	4:40	6:50	9:00			
TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON (PG13) DLP	12:00	1:00	1:45	2:45	3:45	4:30	5:30	6:30
	7:15	8:15	9:15	10:00				
PLANET 51 (PG) DLP	12:30	2:50	5:00	7:25	9:35			
THE BLIND SIDE (PG13) DLP	12:15	1:05	3:15	4:05	6:15			
			7:05	9:20	9:50			
2012 (PG13) DLP	1:00	2:00	4:15	5:15	7:30	8:30		
A CHRISTMAS CAROL IN 3D (PG) DLP			12:10	2:30	4:45			
					7:15	9:30		

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Fair Board Taking Applications to Fill Vacancy

The Board of Directors for the Alameda County Agricultural Fair Association announced its intent to fill a position on the Board that is being vacated by a retiring member. All interested parties are required to complete and submit a formal application by January 20th, 2009. Formal Applications are available by calling the CEO's office at (925) 426-7501. Applicants should include information on their community involvement, as

well as brief detail on how their experience and professional expertise would be of benefit to the Fair Association. Applicants must reside within the County of Alameda.

Submissions should be addressed: Alameda County Agricultural Fair Association, Attn: Executive Committee, 4501 Pleasanton Avenue, Pleasanton, CA 94566.

The Board of Directors is

responsible for policy oversight and general operation of the 267-acre Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton. The Fairgrounds is home to more than 300 events year round, with an annual attendance in excess of 3,000,000 patrons. Since the Fair Association is a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Corporation, no compensation is provided to its Board Members. Board Members are requested to invest a minimum

of 10 hours each month.

Retiring Board member, Pete Ruggeri has served on the Board for the past seven years. Ruggeri serves as President and Chairman of the Board of the professional consulting firm Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar & Associates. "Director Ruggeri, with his almost 40 years of professional civil engineering experience, has been a valuable contributor to the success of the Fair Association. We will truly miss his expertise," said Rick Pickering, CEO.

Board Member Anthony Pegram moves into his second term as President. Pegram is a registered engineer and Principal

Contract Specialist at BART, responsible for the selection of Contractors and Consultants and the oversight of contracts for various projects including, the San Francisco Airport Extension, projects associated with the system wide Earthquake Safety Program, technology enhancements related to train control and contracts required for day to day system operation. Pegram was appointed to the Fair Board in 2001 by the Alameda County Board of Supervisor Nate Miley.

Board Member Patrick O'Brien begins his second term as Vice President. O'Brien is

the Chief Financial Officer for Leisure Sports in Pleasanton. His responsibilities include financial planning, debt financing, property sales and acquisitions and legal matters. He also coordinates the entitlement process for development projects. Mr. O'Brien has a strong background in both finance and real estate development, and is a CPA. O'Brien began his service on the Fair Board in 2001.

For more information, please visit our website at www.AlamedaCountyFair.com or call (925) 426-7600.

Police Launch Holiday Click It or Ticket

The Livermore Police Department is letting drivers know that as part of the 2009 holiday *Click It or Ticket* mobilization that started on November 17th and will continue until November 30th, officers will be out in force looking for anyone – driver, passenger or child – not properly restrained.

"There is absolutely no question that seat belts save lives," said Chief Steve Sweeney. "Buckling up will not only save you a heavy fine, it can also save your life."

Currently California has a seat belt usage rate of 95.4 percent, but that still means over 1.5 million people in the state are not buckling up. Properly restrained drivers, passengers and children have a 50 percent better chance of surviving a crash than unbelted occupants. Those ejected from vehicles in crashes or roll-overs are up to 35 times more likely to die than restrained occupants.

"There are no excuses. Nothing is worth risking the lives of you or your family," said Christopher J. Murphy, Director

of the California Office of Traffic Safety. "This should be the season of joy and thanksgiving, not tragedy."

More than 175 local law enforcement agencies statewide and the CHP will be participating in this year's *Click It or Ticket* mobilization. Funding to support California's *Click It or Ticket* campaign was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

2-1-1 Connects to Essential Services

Whether an individual is looking for some extra assistance or someone is looking to help those less fortunate, 2-1-1 is the answer. In Alameda County, questions about local food banks, free Thanksgiving meals and food baskets, canned food drives, volunteer opportunities and more, can all be answered by dialing one simple number: 2-1-1.

2-1-1 is a free, confidential, easy-to-remember number that connects Alameda County residents to essential community information and services, including healthcare, rent and mortgage assistance, food and shelter, job training, transportation, child-

care, senior care, veteran services and much more. Without 2-1-1, callers can make an average of eight phone calls to different numbers before finding the service they need.

For families and individuals in need of extra assistance, 2-1-1 can provide Alameda County residents with information on local food banks and supplemental food programs available both during the holidays and throughout the year, as well as pre-screen callers to determine their eligibility in the Food Stamp Program.

For volunteers, 2-1-1 can help individuals and groups identify

organizations that need help serving and preparing meals; and collecting, sorting, packing, and delivering donations.

For charities and organizations, 2-1-1 can help connect programs with those in need, listing organizations as a possible resource in their area and directing them to donation centers.

For more information about 2-1-1 and the types of resources available, please contact Eden I&R's Executive Director, Barbara Bernstein, at 510-537-2710, ext. 8; bbernstein@edenir.org; or visit the website at www.211alamedacounty.org.

Home at Sunset Seeks Donations

Home at Sunset has been serving the Tri-Valley for five years with free foods, three-four days a week, and toys at Christmas.

Currently, the group is providing 33,000 bags of groceries to those in need. Home at Sunset tries to provide people with enough food for several meals and days. The group mainly serves the "working poor."

Home at Sunset is unique in that it donates to 20 other agencies, programs, shelters and several soup kitchens. When there is enough to go around service is extended to up to 60 agencies.

The goal of Home at Sunset is to have some central storage space and be able to bring semi-trucks of food to this Valley from two well known National level companies (that donate foods at times). All of the the local agencies and churches could then come to one Livermore food storage center and obtain what they can use.

Staff-volunteers currently pick up groceries and take them to alternating agencies, and churches, three times a week; 52 weeks a year; 156 times a year. The program is becoming an 8 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week. Its resource center assists

people in finding help, a church with a free food program, and places to obtain the food and the toys they need at Christmas.

Home at Sunset has been working as a clearing house for the Toys for Tots for 10 years. The current number of volunteers is over 120, and that includes several groups that may include 4000 people such as Cornerstone Church, and nineteen other groups that are not as large, Bethel Church, Sunset Church, Celebration Center, The Fountain Community Church, The Rock Church, Christian World Church, and recently the Livermore Gardens, and Estate Mobile Home Park. Also involved, at times, are Faith Chapel, Vineyard Church and several Spanish Churches and Korean Churches, Discovery Church, and the Soup Kitchen, Tri-Valley Haven, Shepherd's Gate, St. Michael's and St. Vincent De Paul.

The food and toys distribution is so large that there is a need for "paid help" so the program can continue to grow. People have been generous in giving of themselves, their time, fuel, transportation costs, and prayers.

The group has been offered

the use of a loading dock in a warehouse. There is no space to store the food once it is unloaded. All the agencies and churches in town seem to have the same problem. If anyone wants to donate space in a "condo warehouse" or warehouse with a dock, Home at Sunset, Free, Fresh, Foods, will consider giving them a 100% tax write off for the use of the space.

Patricia Carter, founder and CEO, said, "I believe the count for feeding needy people in this Tri-Valley is about 5000 families. So those numbers come out a lot higher if you add the four or six people in each family. Sometimes blended families have eight or twelve people in one household. Many families are all living together in one house."

All local agencies serve from babies to the elderly and all those in between. Home at Sunset is a private non-profit 501 C 3. The group is seeking donations. They can be sent to Home at Sunset, P O Box 1101, Livermore, Ca 94551-1101.

For information, go to www.homeatsunset.com.

OBITUARIES

Franklin Max Gibson

Franklin "Max" Gibson passed away peacefully at his home in Livermore on October 30, 2009, surrounded by family after a long battle with prostate cancer. He was a kind and gentle man who was dearly loved by all who knew him. He relied on his strong Christian faith to help him through his illness. Max was born in Athens, Tennessee on July 24, 1947 to D.C. and Vineta Gibson. At the age of 19 he enlisted in the Navy and was stationed out of Long Beach, California. After two tours in Vietnam, he was honorably discharged in 1970. He lived the next 39 years in California, calling Livermore home for the past five with his wife Georgette.

Max was employed by Federal Express for many years before becoming an employee of Kaiser Permanente's Livermore facility. He loved a good game of baseball and always rooted for the San Francisco Giants and the New York Yankees. When he was able, he enjoyed playing golf. He often volunteered at Harvey Green Elementary School in Fremont, working in the library and teaching art to students. His home was his favorite place to be, and his greatest pleasure in life was spending time with his family and friends and playing with his grandchildren.

He is survived by his wife Georgette, his sons Michael and Aaron (their wives Jennifer and Sara) from his first marriage to Constance L. Gibson; daughters Lori Sipes and Jennifer Porter, and 8 grandchildren: Toby, Talitha, Corey, Barrett, Paige, Kyrie, Audrey, and Aravis. He was preceded in death by his older brother, Gordon, in September 2009 and is survived by his younger sister Karen Drumwright of Riceville, Tennessee.

Donation in his memory can be made to the Disabled Veterans of America or Kaiser Hospice. Arrangements by Callaghan Mortuary.

Arrangements by Callaghan Mortuary.

Laura Kay Mayo

Laura Kay Mayo, who grew up in Pleasanton, died Nov. 12, 2009 in Oakland after a long illness. She was 47.

Born in Oakland, Laura spent

her formative years in Pleasanton and graduated from Amador Valley High School. She loved playing soccer in the youth program and continued as a young adult. She was gifted with an artist's view of the world and the talent that goes with it.

She has two children: a son, Benjamin Wigley, currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Army and a daughter, Sadie Conaty-Mayo of Danville.

Laura also is survived by her parents, George and Dorothy Mayo of Pleasanton, her siblings: Lou Ann Perry and her husband, John of Redlands, CA; Jim Mayo of Pleasanton, Ed Mayo and his wife, Tina, of Livermore and Christina Anderson and her husband, Brian, of Cottonwood, CA; along with many nieces and nephews.

A special companion to Laura was her care dog, Sunny.

Memorial services are pending

Barbara "Joan" Forney

Pleasanton resident Joan entered into eternal rest peacefully, surrounded by her loving family, on Nov 21, 2009. She follows

her lifetime love and husband of 53 years, Wilfred "Will" Forney. She was born May 17, 1932.

She was a loving mother to her children Debbie Griffin, Michael Forney and Linda Coy; sons-in-law Don Griffin and David Coy; and daughter-in-law Cindy Forney. She adored her grandchildren: Jason and Spring Griffin, Barbara and Kai Bilo-bran, Kelly and Kit Adamo, and Lisa and Brenen Miller, Chris Forney, Nichole Coy, Andrew Coy and Jayden Avila, as well as her great grandchildren: Ethan Miller and Camille Adamo.

Joan loved spending time with her family, friends and her dog; Bella. She enjoyed volunteering at Cancer Society/Discovery Shop, shopping, bus trips to the local casinos with her friends, playing cards, reading and gardening.

The family wishes to extend our grateful thanks to the exceptional caregivers at Hillendale Home Care, and the Angels at Hope Hospice that supported Joan and the family throughout the process.

A Celebration of Life will be held Friday Dec 4th at 11:30 a.m. at the Marriott, 11950 Dublin Canyon Rd., Pleasanton.

In lieu of flowers please send donations to Hope Hospice 6377 Clark Ave Ste 100 Dublin, CA 94588 or the American Cancer Society 7000 Village Parkway Ste E Dublin, CA 94568.

Arrangements by Callaghan Mortuary.

Lt. Col. Thomas J. Laut, USAF Ret.

Lt. Col. Thomas J. Laut, USAF Ret. passed away peacefully in his San Ramon home on November 11, 2009, after a short battle with cancer. He was surrounded by family and friends. He was born Dec. 2, 1944.

Tom was the adored father of Jennifer Rice and Aaron Laut. He is also survived by brother Larry Laut, former wife Nina Irvin, and a multitude of other friends, family, and associates.

The son of Ken and Dorothy Laut, both deceased, Tom was born in Massachusetts and grew up in Ohio where he graduated from West Lafayette High School in 1962. During his youth he became an Eagle Scout, was a camp counselor, and spent his summers at his beloved family cabin in the Berkshires.

Tom graduated from Ohio State University in 1968 and entered the U.S. Air Force where

he began a dedicated 32-year military career as both a fixed wing and later a combat helicopter pilot. He became a member of the California Air National Guard's 129th Rescue Wing at Moffett Field where he served as an Instructor Pilot and was involved in humanitarian rescue and life saving efforts over both land and sea until his retirement in 2000. His professional and heroic service throughout his career brought him military awards recognition including the Silver Star and Distinguished Flying Cross.

Tom had a love of road trips, the outdoors, current events, animals, and spending time with

family and friends. He was an avid reader and lifelong learner and enjoyed discussing most any topic with others. His keen insight and warm sense of humor, strength of character and high integrity enriched the lives of those fortunate enough to know him.

A celebration memorial will be held on the NASA parade grounds at Moffett Field on December 5th at 11:00 a.m., followed by a reception beginning at 12:30 at the nearby Tied House in Mountain View. All are welcome to attend. Take the Moffett Blvd exit off Hwy 101 and follow the signs to the Main Gate. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Sacramento SPCA or other favorite charity of choice.



Franklin "Max" Gibson



Laura Kay Mayo

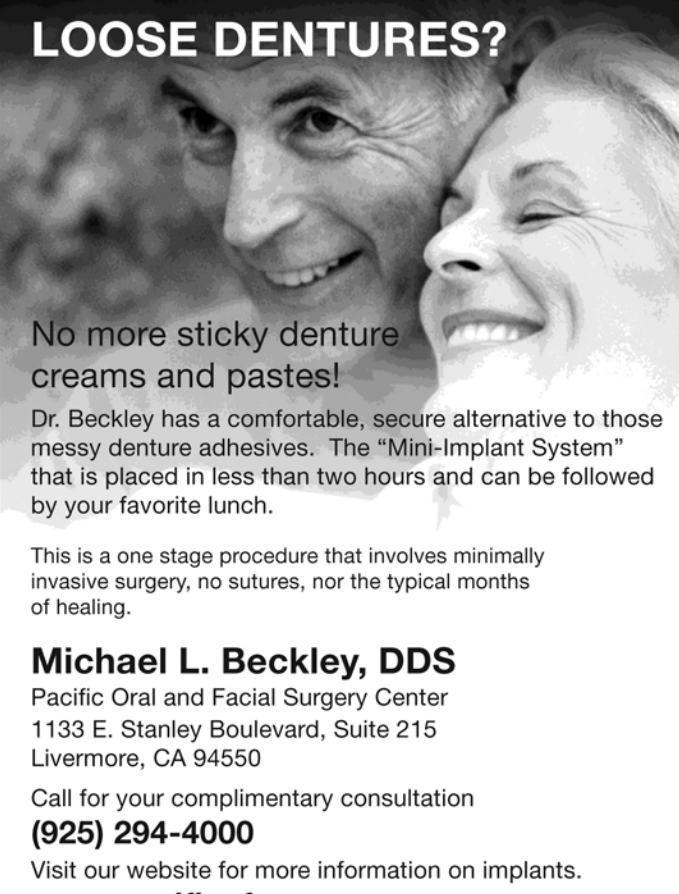


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SHORT NOTES

Annual Toy Drive

Express Fitness is holding its annual toy drive to support the Tri-Valley Haven and their families. Their wish list by age group is available at the Pleasanton club where toys can also be dropped off. The drive goes through December 7th. Express Fitness is located at 4250 Santa Rita Rd., Pleasanton. If information is needed contact Sue Evans at 989-4113 or sueevans-photography@comcast.net

Hike the High Hills

The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District ranger staff will offer a program on "Hiking the High Hills" on Sun., Nov. 29. Meet Ranger Pat Sotelo at 9 a.m. at the Wetmore Road entrance to Sycamore Grove Park.

Need to burn off some of those calories during this time of Thanksgiving feasting? Join LARPD ranger staff on a moderately strenuous hike up to the highest hills in Sycamore Grove Park. Hikers should get some stunning views of the Livermore Valley and the surrounding heights. The ranger guide will point out some of the natural and historical features along the way. Bring plenty of water and snacks. This hike will cover about four miles with some fairly steep climbs and last more than two hours. Canceled if raining.

There is a \$4 per vehicle parking fee. A \$2 donation is requested to help support the programs. Participants may call 925-960-2400 for more information.

Donations Needed

Shepherd's Gate donations are down significantly for November. The community's help is needed to ensure that the vital services and housing for battered and homeless women and children continues at Shepherd's Gate.

Currently donations to Shepherd's Gate are down over 30% for the month of November. The ministry depends on financial gifts collected at this time of year to compensate during times of deficit throughout the rest of the year, so no programs and services are cut.

The organization is working hard to provide the vital care that is necessary to break the cycles of abuse, addiction and homelessness. During this time of year especially, women and children need a safe, warm place to call home and Shepherd's Gate is there for them.

"We are so very grateful for the past giving and support of Shepherd's Gate, and have great faith that the community will respond at this urgent time, to help us continue our mission," said Steve McRee.

Shepherd's Gate, with campuses in Livermore and Brentwood, serve more than 650 battered and home-

less women and children each year. Some arrive with just the clothes on their backs, seeking a fresh start. For more than 25 years, Shepherd's Gate has served over 9,000 women and children, providing Christ-centered housing and services such as professional counseling, drug and alcohol recovery, and job skills training to help women and children rebuild their shattered lives.

Shepherd's Gate is a non-profit organization that receives no government funding, and relies on community donations and support. If you are interested in learning more or helping, contact Steve McRee at (925) 443-4283 ext. 206. Donations can be sent to 1660 Portola Avenue, Livermore, CA 94551 or donate online by going to www.shepherdsgate.org.

Rummage Sale

Clear out your clutter that can be someone else's treasures for the annual Rummage Sale put on by the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District. Sign-ups are open now to sellers seeking a new home for their possessions.

A 10-by-10-foot space with an 8-foot table can be rented for \$35. Here sellers can showcase their belongings that are up for sale. Items for sale must be of garage sale variety and in working condition. No food, candy, car parts, large furniture, cars, motorcycles or any commercial items are allowed.

The LARPD Rummage Sale will be held from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, Jan. 30, at The Barn, 3131 Pacific Ave. Selling space is limited and sells out quickly, so early registration for sellers is recommended. Sellers can sign up by visiting www.larpd.dst.ca.us and printing out and turning in the form along with the space rental fee. Deadline is Jan. 25 for any spaces still available. For more information, call 925-373-5700.

Tree Pickup

Boy Scout Troop 941 in Pleasanton is holding a Christmas tree recycling program. This community service is offered to help with the collection and recycling of trees.

Suggested donation is \$5 for trees up to 8 feet and \$10 for trees over 8 feet or flocked. Donations go directly to support local scouting activities throughout the year.

To arrange for a tree to be picked up in Pleasanton, please call 399-1377 or go to www.troop941.org.

Holiday Book Sale

Friends of the Dublin Library will host a Holiday Book Sale on Sat., Dec. 5 from noon to 3 p.m. at the Library, 200 Civic Plaza.

There will be a great selection of hardcover books in excellent condition, ideal for gift giving. Also offered will be children's books

holiday books, gourmet cookbooks, photographic collections, collectible books, games, and more.

For information, contact the Dublin Library (925) 828-1315

Herzog Achievement

Bob Herzog of Pleasanton, Agent for Farmers Group, Inc. has achieved the company's highest award to district managers and agents for "outstanding overall performance." Herzog joins a select group of fellow achievers as a member of the prestigious President's Council.

Farmers Executive Vice President of Field Operations Jerry Carnahan announced the selection of Herzog at Farmers' Los Angeles-based home office. Presidents Council members will be honored at a conference held at the JW Marriott Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C., September 30 through October 4.

Herzog represents Farmers' member companies in automobiles, homeowners, life and business insurance.

Model Trains

European Train Enthusiasts (ETE) colorful HO scale model trains will be on display at the Blackhawk Museum. Trains travel through an "Old World" countryside. With a handcrafted modular layout, a host of guest engineers, and the rails full of locomotives; the ETE brings a unique model train display every year. This exhibition is open from the Friday following Thanksgiving until the middle of January.

European Train Enthusiasts, Inc. (ETE) is the premiere North American organization focusing on educating the public on the subject of European Railroading. Founded in 1973, ETE serves modelers, railway fans, related organizations, and the community through public events, working model displays, media presentations, and the publication of a quarterly journal, the ETE Express. This is the ninth year that the ETE has been on display at the Museum.

Blackhawk Museum began displaying unique automobiles to the public in 1988, and offers a variety of exhibitions, lectures and programs throughout the year. There are currently eighty classic cars from every automotive era on display in two expansive, granite galleries. Blackhawk Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and is open to the public Wednesday through Sunday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Special holiday hours included the Monday & Tuesday before Christmas and New Year's Eve. Admission to the Museum is \$10 for Adults, \$7 for Seniors and Children 6 and under are free.

Real Estate News

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage announced that Moe Yousofi has joined the company as a sales associate in its Pleasanton

office. In his new position, Yousofi will specialize in residential sales throughout the East Bay.

Prior to joining Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, Yousofi owned California Home Realty and First Financing Group, Inc., where he managed real estate agents and loan officers for five years. He has more than six years experience in financing, real estate, office management and short sales.

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Pleasanton is located at 5980 Stoneridge Drive #122, and can be reached at 925.847.2200. Yousofi may be reached directly at Mustafa.Yousofi@CBNorcal.com or 925.997.7338.

Food and Gift Drive

Mobile Modular in Livermore is conducting a drive to fill a storage container to the brim with food and gifts for local families in need.

Toy and clothing donations may be dropped off until Dec. 8; food until Dec. 17 at McGrath RentCorp headquarters, 5700 Las Positas Rd., Livermore. Please come to the front reception desk.

Food items should be nonperishable. Clothing and toys are needed for all age groups, baby to adult.

Math Whizzes

Harvest Park Middle School students Eugene Chen, Brian Shimanuki, Jerry Li and Ian Zhou competed in Mathleague's first competition of the year at Stanford last month. As a team, they finished first (defeating Miller Middle School and John Hopkins for the first time). Eugene had a perfect score of 46 to win the individual competition, Brian was second with 45, and Jerry and Ian finished with 43 and 41 respectively. They had a perfect score on the team round for an overall score of 64/66. Mathleague is in the same format as MATHCOUNTS - where Eugene will be defending state champion in the countdown round this spring.

These four teamed with Christine Xu and Jeffrey Zhang in the Math Notations third math contest in an international high school geometry contest. Harvest Park Middle School finished second (11/12) to Chiles High School of Tallahassee, Florida (perfect 12/12).

Additionally, the 2009 Fall Start-up Event was held in September. There were several students from Harvest Park who took the test, a 100 problem, 30-minute individual competition. From Harvest Park, Eugene finished first in the nation with a score of 65. Jerry Li finished 4th in the country, Brian Shimanuki was 6th, Ian Zhou was 9th, Christine Xu was 11th and Hansen Shi was 12th.

Surgical Technology

Prospective students are invited to attend a workshop about Las Positas College's Surgical Technology pro-

gram. The free workshop will take place on Monday, December 7, from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Las Positas College, 3000 Campus Hill Drive in Livermore, in Building 1600 in the Staff Lounge. The workshop will provide prospective students with information about career opportunities in surgical technology, the educational commitment involved, and the application process.

Surgical Technologists are members of surgical operating room teams who assist surgeons, registered nurses, or other medical personnel during medical procedures. According to the Employment Development Department Labor Market Information, the Surgical Technician is among the top 20 fastest growing occupations in Alameda County.

Students admitted to the Surgical Technology program may work toward a Certificate of Achievement or Associate in Science Degree in Surgical Technology. For additional information and an application for enrollment, visit the Las Positas College Health Sciences website at www.laspositascollege.edu/SURG/index.php

For registration information please call (925) 424-1554 or go online at www.laspositascollege.edu. Las Positas College is located at 3000 Campus Hill Drive in Livermore.

Cards for Troops

Congressman Jerry McNerney (CA-11) offered a reminder that there is still time to participate in his third annual "Holiday Cards for Our Troops" program before the Wednesday, December 2 deadline.

"The holiday season can be a difficult time of year for the men and women who serve our country," Rep. McNerney said. "Being away from friends, family and the comfort of tradition during the holidays is an incredible sacrifice. Thoughtful words of encouragement and support from our community can make a huge difference in boosting the morale of our brave men and women who serve our country with honor."

Congressman McNerney is collecting cards for service members recovering from injuries and stationed away from their families this holiday season. He will then hand-deliver the cards to soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. and sailors and marines at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD.

Congressman McNerney is also partnering with local organizations to send holiday cards to troops stationed overseas. Cards collected by Congressman McNerney will be included in troop-support packages organized by the Danville Blue Star Moms, Packed With Pride in Stockton and the Pleasanton Military Families and sent to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Last year, Congressman McNerney collected and delivered over 9,000 cards with touching and personal messages of thanks.

To participate in the program make or purchase a holiday card, write a message of thanks inside to a service member, and deliver the card to Rep. McNerney's office in Stockton or Pleasanton by Wednesday, December 2nd. Cards should remain unaddressed and envelopes unsealed.

Cards may be sent in Pleasanton to: 5776 Stoneridge Mall Rd., Suite 175, Pleasanton, CA 94588. Information at (925) 737-0727.

CEO at Fremont Hospital

Fremont Hospital, a 96-bed behavioral health facility serving adolescents and adults, has announced the appointment of Sidney Ono as Chief Executive Officer, effective Nov. 16. Ono has more than 20 years of hospital executive and operations experience at California hospitals, including experience at both private and public facilities. He holds a master's in public administration from the University of Southern California and a master's in business administration from Pepperdine University.

Ono stated, "I am honored to become a member of Fremont Hospital. From the doctors and staff members that I have met already, I can tell we all share the same passion for quality patient care, dynamic staff relations and an overarching results-oriented mentality."

Ono replaces Jay Kellison, who has been CEO at Fremont Hospital, a Psychiatric Solutions, Inc. (PSI) facility, for the past four years. Kellison has been promoted to Division President for PSI and will be responsible for 11 facilities in California, Nevada and Washington.

Fremont Hospital is a private, modern 96-bed behavioral healthcare facility that provides services to adolescents (ages 12-17) and adults.

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.430318

The following person(s) doing business as: Joie de Vie Salon & Day Spa, 3059 Hopyard Rd. Suites J & K, Pleasanton, CA 94588 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Thanh Duong, 1177 Foster City Blvd. #4, Foster City CA 94040
Scott Feldstein, 1177 Foster City Blvd. #4, Foster City CA 94040

This business is conducted by: Co-partners
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed.
Signature of Registrant: /s/Scott Feldstein

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 13, 2009. Expires October 13, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2614. Publish. November 5, 12, 19, 26, 2009.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.431049

The following person(s) doing business as: Stellar Auto, 6214 Thornton Suite A5, Newark CA 94560 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Agha Ilyas Ahsan, 1835 Edgewood Rd., Redwood City CA 94062

This business is conducted by: an individual
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed.
Signature of Registrant: /s/Agha Ilyas Ahsan

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on November 2, 2009. Expires November 2, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2618. Publish. November 12, 19, 26, December 3, 2009.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.430834

The following person(s) doing business as: Memories In A Box Photography, 2048 Pinon Ct., Livermore CA 94551 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Sonia L. Bradley, 2048 Pinon Ct., Livermore CA 94551

This business is conducted by: an individual
The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name (s) listed above on October 12, 2009
Signature of Registrant: /s/Sonia L. Bradley

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 28, 2009. Expires October 28, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2619. Publish November 12, 19, 26, December 3, 2009.

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME FILE NO. 370191

The following person (s) has (have) Abandoned the use of the Fictitious Business Name Spring Training USA located at 1453 First St., Livermore CA 94550
The fictitious business name referred to above was filed on October 12, 2005 in the County of Alameda.
Full name of registrant R.P. Companies, Inc., 1453 First St., Livermore CA 94550
This business was conducted by: Corporation
/s:Richard K. Corbett

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on November 9, 2009. Expires November 9, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2621. Publish November 19, 26, December 3, 10, 2009.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.430592

The following person(s) doing business as: Indian Kabob, 865 E Stanley Blvd., Livermore CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Nader Nafey, 542 Brookfield Dr., Livermore CA 94551

This business is conducted by: an individual
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed.
Signature of Registrant: /s:Nader Nafey

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 21, 2009. Expires October 21, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2622. Publish. November 19, 26, December 3, 10, 2009.

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME FILE NO. 430948

The following person (s) has (have) Abandoned the use of the Fictitious Business Name Charco Enterprises dba Magnetic Mantras, 95 Windward Common Unit 2, Livermore CA 94551
The fictitious business name referred to above was filed on October 30, 2009 in the County of Alameda.
Full name of registrant Nancy K. McKain, 95 Windward Common Unit 2, Livermore CA 94551

This business was conducted by: an individual
/s:Nancy McKain
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda County on November 16, 2009. Expires November 16, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2629. Publish November 26, December 3, 10, 17, 2009.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.431605

The following person(s) doing business as: Hey Nay Nay Ink,

252 Main St., Pleasanton CA 94566 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Nancy K. McKain, 95 Windward Common Unit 2, Livermore CA 94551

This business is conducted by: an individual
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed.
Signature of Registrant: /s:Nancy K. McKain

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on November 16, 2009. Expires November 16, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2630. Publish. November 26, December 3, 10, 17, 2009.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.431721

The following person(s) doing business as: Livermore Gas, 160 Holmes St., Livermore CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s):
Double AA Corp., 1435 Huntington Ave Ste 230, So. San Francisco CA 94080

This business is conducted by: a Corporation
The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name (s) listed above on March 7, 2003
Signature of Registrant: /s/Jamileh Aish

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on November 18, 2009. Expires November 18, 2014.

The Independent Legal No. 2632. Publish November 26, December 3, 10, 17, 2009.

NOTICE OF INVITING BIDS

Notice is hereby given that sealed competitive bids will be accepted in the office of the GSA-Purchasing Department, County of Alameda, 1401 Lakeside Drive, Suite 907, Oakland, CA 94612 NETWORKING/NORTH COUNTY BIDDERS CONFERENCE RFO #900662 for Carpet, Upholstery and Drapery Cleaning Services, Tuesday, December 8, 2009, 10:00 a.m. - Lakeside Plaza Building, 1401 Lakeside Drive, Rm. 222, 2nd Floor, Oakland, CA NETWORKING/SOUTH COUNTY BIDDERS CONFERENCE RFO #900662 for Carpet, Upholstery and Drapery Cleaning Services, Wednesday, December 9, 2009, 2:00 p.m. - Dublin Public Library, 200 Civic Plaza, The Program Room, Dublin, CA Responses Due by 2:00 pm on January 6, 2010 County Contact : Jeff Thomas (510) 208-9613 or via email: jeff.thomas@acgov.org Attendance at Networking Conference is Non-mandatory. Specifications and bid copies regarding the above may be obtained at the Alameda County GSA-Purchasing Department or the Current Contracting Opportunities Internet website at www.acgov.org.

11/26/09 CNS-1741706#

The Independent Legal No. 2623. Publish November 26, 2009

NOTICE OF INVITING BIDS

Notice is hereby given that sealed competitive bids will be accepted in the office of the GSA-Purchasing Department, County of Alameda, 1401 Lakeside Drive, 8th Floor, Suite 800, Oakland, CA 94612 MANDATORY NETWORKING/PROPOSERS CONFERENCE - N. County RFP/SOQ - Highland Hospital ATR Project Inspector of Record Services, Wednesday, December 2, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. - Highland Hospital Cafeteria, 1411 East 31st Street, Oakland, CA Attendance at the Mandatory Networking/Proposers Conference is required Responses Due by 2:00 pm on January 6, 2010 County Contact : Fawaz Khanachet at (510) 208-9824 or via email: fawaz.khanachet@acgov.org Information regarding the above may be obtained at the Current Contracting Opportunities Internet website at www.acgov.org.

11/26/09 CNS-1741746#

The Independent Legal No. 2625. Publish November 26, 2009

NOTICE OF INVITING BIDS

Notice is hereby given that sealed competitive bids will be accepted in the office of the GSA-Purchasing Department, County of Alameda, 1401 Lakeside Drive, 8th Floor, Suite 800, Oakland, CA 94612 MANDATORY NETWORKING/PROPOSERS CONFERENCE - N. County RFP/SOQ - Highland Hospital ATR Project Inspector of Record Services, Wednesday, December 2, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. - Highland Hospital Cafeteria, 1411 East 31st Street, Oakland, CA Attendance at the Mandatory Networking/Proposers Conference is required Responses Due by 2:00 pm on January 6, 2010 County Contact : Fawaz Khanachet at (510) 208-9824 or via email: fawaz.khanachet@acgov.org Information regarding the above may be obtained at the Current Contracting Opportunities Internet website at www.acgov.org.

11/26/09 CNS-1741732#

The Independent Legal No. 2624. Publish November 26, 2009

NOTICE OF INVITING BIDS

Notice is hereby given that sealed competitive bids will be accepted in the office of the GSA-Purchasing Department, County of Alameda, 1401 Lakeside Drive, 8th Floor, Suite 800, Oakland, CA 94612 MANDATORY NETWORKING/PROPOSERS CONFERENCE - N. County RFP/SOQ - Highland Hospital ATR Project Commissioning Services, Wednesday, December 2, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. - Highland Project Office, 393 - 13th Street, Oakland, CA OPTIONAL SITE TOUR - N. County RFP/SOQ - Highland Hospital ATR Project Commissioning Services, Wednesday, December 2, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. - Highland Hospital Cafeteria, 1411 East 31st Street, Oakland, CA Attendance at the Mandatory Networking/Propo-

ers Conference is required Responses Due by 2:00 pm on January 6, 2010 County Contact : Fawaz Khanachet at (510) 208-9824 or via email: fawaz.khanachet@acgov.org

Information regarding the above may be obtained at the Current Contracting Opportunities Internet website at www.acgov.org

11/26/09 CNS-1741746#

The Independent Legal No. 2625. Publish November 26, 2009

NOTICE OF INVITING BIDS

Notice is hereby given that sealed competitive bids will be accepted in the office of the GSA-Purchasing Department, County of Alameda, 1401 Lakeside Drive, 8th Floor, Suite 800, Oakland, CA 94612 MANDATORY NETWORKING/PROPOSERS CONFERENCE - N. County RFP/SOQ - Highland Hospital ATR Project Special Testing & Inspection Services, Wednesday, December 2, 2009 at 11:00 a.m. - Highland Project Office, 393-13th Street, Oakland, CA OPTIONAL SITE TOUR - N. County RFP/SOQ - Highland Hospital ATR Project Special Testing & Inspection Services, Wednesday, December 2, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. - Highland Hospital Cafeteria, 1411 East 31st Street, Oakland, CA Attendance at the Mandatory Networking/Proposers Conference is required Responses Due by 2:00 pm on January 6, 2010 County Contact : Fawaz Khanachet at (510) 208-9824 or via email: fawaz.khanachet@acgov.org Information regarding the above may be obtained at the Current Contracting Opportunities Internet website at www.acgov.org.

11/26/09 CNS-1743983#

The Independent Legal No. 2627. Publish November 26, 2009

NOTICE OF INVITING BIDS

Notice is hereby given that sealed competitive bids will be accepted at the Alameda County Social Services Agency Contracts Office, 2000 San Pablo Avenue, 4th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612 NETWORKING/SOUTH COUNTY BIDDERS CONFERENCE RFP CFS-MTFC 2010 - Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC), Thursday, December 17, 2009, 8:30 a.m. - Alameda County Social Services Agency Eden Area Self-Sufficiency Center, 24130 Amador Street, Shooting Star A, 6th Floor, Room 637, Hayward, CA NETWORKING/NORTH COUNTY BIDDERS CONFERENCE RFP CFS-MTFC 2010 - Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC), Thursday, December 17, 2009, 2:00 p.m. - Alameda County Social Services Agency North Oakland Self-Sufficiency Center, 2000 San Pablo Avenue, Montclair Room, 3rd Floor, Room 350B, Oakland, CA Responses Due by 3:00 pm on January 7, 2010 County Contact : Diane DeVore-Farrugia at (510) 267-8633 or via email: ddevore@acgov.org

Attendance at Networking Conference is Non-mandatory. Specifications regarding the above may be obtained at the Current Contracting

11/26/09 CNS-1741760#

The Independent Legal No. 2626. Publish November 26, 2009

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REAL ESTATE NEWS AND NOTICES

10 Reasons for Buyers, Sellers to be Grateful

By Cher Wollard
This past year has brought its share of clouds for buyers, sellers, homeowners and real estate professionals. Here are 10 silver linings for which we can all be give thanks:

1. Higher affordability index
Last year we could be grateful that the Bay Area housing Affordability Index had risen from a paltry 18 percent in 2007 to about a slightly more reasonable 30 percent.

This year it is 49 percent, according to the California Association of Realtors.
In Alameda County, the outlook for the third quarter of 2009 is even brighter: 52 percent affordability.

That means more than half of all households in the county can afford to purchase an entry-level home here.
When you consider that many families are settled in homes they purchased years ago at much lower prices, the percentage of people being able to achieve the American Dream of homeownership is even higher.

2. Low interest rates
Interest rates have been extraordinarily – historically – low all year.
Conventional mortgages on owner-occupied property over the almost half-century it has been tracked have averaged about 8.5 percent, including a period of double-digit rates in the '80s.

Average conventional mortgage rates have hovered between 5 and 6 percent through most of 2009, and are currently below 5 percent.
Interest rates can have even more impact on the actual cost of homeownership than sales prices.

For example, a home with a conventional 30-year mortgage of \$417,000 at 8.5 percent would run about \$3,200 per month. At 6 percent, that same mortgage would cost \$2,500 and at 4.75 percent, it would cost only \$2,175 per month.

That's a savings of more than \$12,000 per year between current and average interest rates.
Looked at another way, payments on a \$417,000 mortgage at 4.75 percent equal payments on a mortgage of about \$285,000 at 8.5 percent. That's a significant difference.

These bargain rates won't last forever, but while they do, those looking to buy or refinance have an exceptional opportunity to save money.
3. Extension of first-time homebuyers' tax credit

A tax credit for first-time homebuyers that was set to expire this month has been extended through April 30. In fact, homebuyers who are in transaction as of that date may still get the credit, as long as the sale closes before July 1.

Qualified buyers are entitled to credits of 10 percent of the purchase price up to a maximum of \$8,000.
Thus far, an estimated 1.5 million buyers who purchased homes in 2009 are expected to claim the credit.

4. New tax credit for other homebuyers
A similar tax credit – this one maxing out at \$6,500 – is available to other homebuyers.
The property purchased does have to qualify as a primary residence, but the buyers do not have to be first-time homebuyers. This means, current homeowners who want a home that is larger or smaller or in a different location may be eligible for this tax credit.

5. Higher income limits for tax credit
Even better, the income limits on both tax credits are now higher – \$125,000 per year for single homebuyers and \$225,000 for married couples.

That is especially important in the Tri-Valley, where the median household income of about \$100,000 per year is nearly twice the national average, according to most recent available statistics.
6. Extension of higher conforming loan limits

Another benefit from the federal government – one that received less attention but which may ultimately matter more for Bay Area homebuyers – is the extension of higher conforming loan limits.
The basic conforming loan limit is \$417,000. Last year, Congress temporarily increased loan limits for high-cost counties, including Alameda and other Bay Area counties.

This means consumers here can borrow up to \$729,750 before moving into "jumbo" mortgage financing, which is both costlier and more difficult to obtain.
Again, this is especially important in regions such as ours. The national median price of homes sold in October was \$173,000. For the Bay Area, that figure is \$390,000, according to MDA DataQuick.

The median price for home sales that closed during the same period in the Tri-Valley was about \$602,000.
The higher loan limits will apply through 2010. Both senators and many House representatives from California are working to make the change permanent.

7. Homebuyers tax deduction preserved
The National Association of Realtors was instrumental in convincing Congress to maintain the tax deduction for interest on home mortgages.

This popular benefit was on the table during discussions about how to keep the federal budget deficit in check, but is no longer in jeopardy.
Most interest paid on home mortgages up to \$1 million, including "points," may be deducted from the income on which federal taxes are paid. There are exceptions, however, so consult your tax accountant for specifics on how much you are eligible to claim.

In addition, the tax deduction for private mortgage insurance, which many homeowners pay, continues through 2010.
8. Homes are selling
Sellers too had good news in 2009.
More homes are selling, and they are moving more quickly than a year ago.

In fact, nationwide home sales last month rose at the highest pace in two and a half years: a record 10.1 percent in October over September, according to the NAR. These numbers greatly exceeded analysts' expectations.
In Livermore, 909 home sales closed through Nov. 23 this year, compared to 767 during the same period last year.

As in other communities, lower priced homes sold faster, sometimes for more than the list price.
Affordability, attractive tax credits and low interest rates are to thank for increased buyer interest.

9. Fewer foreclosures
California foreclosure rates remain high – too high. But there is evidence of leveling off.
Statewide foreclosure rates held steady from July to August, then fell a dramatic 6 percent from August to September, with another 1 percent decline from September to October.

Troubled homeowners continue to struggle, but more are finding solutions in mortgage modifications and short sales, thus avoiding foreclosure.
10. Tri-Valley delights

And finally, we can be grateful that we get to live in beautiful Tri-Valley communities in the midst of the vibrant diversity of the Bay Area, in the most exciting and innovative state of this great country.
What could be better than that?

Cher Wollard is a Realtor with Windermere Welcome Home in Livermore.

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SPORTS NOTES



Photo - Doug Jorgensen

Amador Valley High School Lady Dons celebrated after defeating Granada, 29 to 7, for the Division 1 North Coast Section Championship. The Dons win puts them into the Division 1 CIF State Volleyball Championships. The Amador hosted Menlo Atherton from the Central Coast Section on Tuesday. Amador is one of fifteen Division 1 schools still in contention for the State Championship.

(continued from page 8)

LGSA Tryouts

Spring 2010 recreation season tryouts will be held on Saturday, December 5 for all registered 10U and Middle School girls. Tryouts will be held at Joe Michell School, 1001 Elaine Avenue, Livermore. For more

information and to download the registration form, visit www.livermoregirlssoftball.org, email registration@livermoregirlssoftball.org or call 925-556-5259.

Baseball Camp

4th Annual Tri-Valley Baseball Camp will be held Sun., Dec. 6, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. It is open to girls and boys ages 5 to 13. The cost

is \$50 per child and half off after the second sibling. Please contact springtrainingcamp@comcast.net for information.

Sharks Tickets

San Jose Sharks hockey tickets are on sale now through the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District.

All tickets are \$51 for seats in the Upper Reserved section at HP Pavilion in San Jose, home of the Sharks. Buy your tickets now for the following games: 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11, vs. the Dallas Stars; 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9, vs. the Detroit Red Wings; or 7 p.m. Saturday, March 27, vs. the Vancouver Canucks.

Proceeds from Sharks tickets purchased through LARPD will help provide class scholarships to low-income children in the community.

Tickets are available for purchase now and make perfect holiday gifts. To buy tickets, call LARPD at 925-373-5700.

PGSL Registration

2010 Registration is now open for all divisions in the Pleasanton Phantom Girls Softball League. All girls living in Pleasanton, Dublin and Sunol are eligible to play PGSL softball. Two ways to register: 1) Online at www.pleasantonsoftball.org; 2) Mail-in: PGSL, P.O. Box 911, Pleasanton, CA 94566 (download a registration form from the website). Late registration fee applies after December 1, 2009. For more information or questions, contact Christine Tanis at christine.t@pleasantonsoftball.org.



Pleasanton Rage U12 Premier League Championship in Menlo Park, defeating the Menlo Park Strikers 4 to 1. In a flurry of activity in the first half, shots-on-goal were taken by Carley Robertson, Kayla Bowers and Sophie Santos. Malissa Shadle also took a shot before Sami LaBella was fouled in the box. Defender Hannah McGillivray placed the Penalty Kick straight into the goal for Rage's first score of the game. Not long after that, mid-fielder Hailey Mann blasted the ball over the heads of the defenders and the keeper for an impressive goal. The second half continued with Rage making an assault on the net with shots-on-goal by Roberston and Bowers and additional shots by Robertson and Makenna Elias. Shortly after the Strikers scored their only goal of the game, Julia Densmore scored on a well-placed ball by Shadle. Then scored a second time with an assist from Katlyn Franciskovich. Bowers, Robertson and Shadle marked their appearances for the day with consistently strong play. The game was won by steady performances by all team members. Photo taken by Rennie Bowers pictures team members (front row) Malissa Shadle, Carley Robertson. Middle Row: Jasmine Dessouky, Makenna Elias, Brookey Villanueva, Sophie Santos, Hailey Mann, Katlyn Franciskovich, Ellis Hegarty; and (back row) Juliana Leedeman, Coach Trisha Gonzales, Julia Densmore, Sophia Brown, Sami

LaBella, Hannah McGillivray, Kayla Bowers, and Christy Jensen.

Bah Humberg, 5k Run/Walk
The City of San Ramon Parks & Community Services Department will host the



Photo - Doug Jorgensen

Opening round of the Division I NCS playoffs saw Amador Valley High School lose to College Park 34 to 21. In the photo, Falcon running back Dalton Turay (33) is grabbed from behind. The other Pleasanton team in the playoffs, Foothill High, advanced to the next round with a 59 to 37 win over Logan of Union City. Foothill will face De La Salle in a Nov. 27, 7 p.m. game.

annual Bah Humberg, 5k Run/Walk on Sat., Dec. 5. This 3.1 mile course is a certified, flat, paved route beginning at 2694 Bishop Drive in the Bishop Ranch Business Park.

Race is open to all ages with medals given to the top 3 finishers in 18 different age groups for those 5 and over. Costume awards will also be given for Most Grinch-Like, Best Holiday Spirit, and Best Group Theme, as well as complimentary holiday ornaments for all participants.

Race day registration begins at 7:30 a.m. and the race starts at 9 a.m. Registration forms and online registration can be accessed from our website: www.SanRamon.ca.gov or by calling 925.973.3200.

Fastpitch Tryouts

The Valley Stompers is putting together a competitive 18u team for the summer season. The team will be playing in both Showcase and Bracket Play tournaments throughout the summer. Tryouts are Sat., Dec. 5 at Monte Vista High School, 3131 Stone Valley Rd., Danville, 9 a.m. to noon. Please arrive early to warm up. Questions? Email stompers_fastpitch@comcast.net

Water Polo

Register now for winter water polo. The LARPD Lazars Water Polo Team is currently registering youth and teens for winter water polo, November 30, 2009 to February 7, 2010. To register, call 925-373-5751, or visit www.larpd.dst.ca.us. For more information about the Lazars, visit lazarswp.clubsplaces.com.

Bowling News

Dale Melberg bowled games of 223-228-177 for a 628 series (120 over) in the Getaway Fours league at the Granada Bowl in Livermore. Dave McGuigan rolled a 246 game in the Tuesday Match Point league, Robert Bourque a 243 game and Mark Eiden a 224. Steve Riddle bowled 67 pins over average with a 226 game and Doug Parker was also 67 over with a 235 game in Donna's Mixers on Thursday morning. Gene Bruhl shot 279 and Ray Salas 278 in the Cheyenne league.

Senior bowler Keith Anderson bowled 69 pins over average with a 210 game. Jo-Ann Braden turned in a 192 game (55 over) in the Monday Primetimers. Chuck Edeal rolled a 206 game and Bill Ormond a 213 and Dick

Greene 211 in the Sirs and Sirettes league. Youth bowler, Shawn Donohue shot a 717 series with games of 233-268-216 in the Generation Gap on Sunday. Eric Alvililar, in the same league, bowled 67 pins over average with a 187 game.

Edge Gymnastics

EDGE Gymnastics competed in the 2009 NorCal Level 5 State Championships hosted by Edge Gymnastics in Livermore November 21-22.

Results: Level 5: 8B Jennifer Daws, 5th all-around 35.75, 4th beam 9.15, 5th bars 9.1, 6th tie floor 9.0, 7th tie vault 8.5; 8C: Skylar Relova, 5th all-around 35.525, 4th vault 8.75, 4th tie floor 9.1, 5th bars 8.875, 6th tie beam 8.8; Jessica Pulver, eighth all-around 34.425, 5th tie vault 8.65, 6th tie bars 8.8, 6th tie beam 8.8; Stephanie Lowe, 9th all-around 34.35, 5th beam 8.9, 8th bars 8.775

9A: Hannah Skepner, 2nd bars 9.3, 7th tie vault 8.675; 9B: Isabella Baldacci, 8th tie bars 9.25; 9C: Brianna Londerece, 6th bar 9.35; 9D: Serena Chan, 2nd all-around 36.675, 2nd bars 9.6, 2nd beam 9.275, 3rd floor 8.95, 4th vault 8.85

10C: Danielle Mullins, 4th all-around 35.675, 4th vault 8.85, 5th floor 8.875, 6th tie beam 9.225; 10D: Rhianna Khwiled, 2nd all-around 36.75, 1st floor 9.5, 2nd beam 9.375, 6th vault 8.775, 7th tie bars 9.1

12A: Julia Morgin, 4th all-around 35.6, 2nd bars 9.425, 2nd floor 9.15, 5th tie vault 8.95; Natalie Mauch, 8th all-around 34.775, 8th vault 8.825, 8th bars 8.85, 9th tie beam 8.775; 13: Claire Koupal, 4th all-around 35.6, 2nd beam 9.15, 5th floor 8.85; 14-15: Lydia Henders, 5th all-around 35.7, 1st bars 9.525, 4th tie beam 9.025, 5th vault 8.9, 9th tie floor 8.25

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Art, Community, & Education



Festivities marked the official opening of the Devcon Holiday Ice Rink, 400 Old Bernal Avenue in downtown Pleasanton, last week. The ice rink (subject to weather conditions) will be open weekdays noon to 10 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sundays 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Ice skating admission is good for a two hour session and skate rental is included in admission fees. Cost is \$14 for adult skating pass age 12 and over for Pleasanton residents, \$16 nonresidents; child Pleasanton resident \$12, nonresidents \$14; seniors \$10.



Holiday Music Fills the Air . . .



Valley Concert Chorale

Valley Concert Chorale Invites People to Sing-It-Yourself Messiah

Valley Concert Chorale will host its fourth annual Sing-It-Yourself Messiah.

It will take place at 7 p.m. on Sun., Dec. 6 at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton.

The community is invited to join in singing Part I of Handel's great choral masterpiece, also known as the Christmas portion of Messiah. The portions conclude with a powerful rendition of the Hallelujah Chorus.

"This is the fourth year we are hosting the event for the community, which has quickly become a holiday tradition for the region," said Valley Concert Chorale President Doris Slater. "Last year's event was a big success, drawing over 100 singers from around the Tri-Valley and beyond. It's great being able to offer this musical

experience to the area, complete with professional soloists and accompaniment by our internationally-known concert pianist Daniel Glover."

Singers are encouraged to bring their own copy of Messiah, though extra copies will be available to borrow. The event is also open to those who wish to listen to the performance.

Tickets are \$10 in advance or at the door. Advance tickets may be ordered by calling (925) 866-4003, or by email to info@valleyconcertchorale.org. Students 18 and under are free if accompanied by a paying adult.

More information about the Valley Concert Chorale is available at www.valleyconcertchorale.org or by calling the general information line at (925) 866-4003.

Chamber Symphony Offers Special Performance of Handel's Messiah

The Pacific Chamber Symphony will present a special performance of Handel's Messiah on Tuesday, December 8, in the Bankhead Theater. The concert will feature a chorus made up of outstanding local soloists and chorus members.

Handel's Messiah is one of the monumental works in all of musical literature. It is probably the most widely performed religious work in the world. It was an instant success when it was first performed in 1742. It was written in just 24 days.

In 1741, Handel was broke, tired, and discouraged. Two unrelated events converged to change all that. First, Handel's wealthy friend, Charles Jensen, gave Handel a libretto that he had written based on the bible and the book of common prayer, and asked him to provide a musical setting. Second, Handel received a commission from a Dublin charity to compose a work for a benefit performance. Handel combined these two commissions, and the result was The Messiah.

On August 22, he started work on the piece, never leaving his house, and barely pausing to eat or sleep. A little over three weeks later, one of the greatest master-



Pacific Chamber Symphony

pieces in the history of music was complete.

The work was first performed at a charitable event in Dublin on April 13, 1742, with Handel himself conducting from the keyboard. It was an immediate success. It raised 400 pounds and freed 142 men from debtor's prison.

Today, The Messiah is often performed in large halls, with a

large chorus and a large orchestra. The original chorus and orchestra, although large by contemporary standards, were of more moderate size. The Pacific Chamber Symphony's interpretation adheres more closely to the earlier performances, and contains many elements from the original Dublin presentation. This approach allows for more subtlety and attention to

detail.

In any version, however, The Messiah is an inspired and inspiring work of art that rarely fails to elicit reverence and joy.

Tickets are \$38/\$32/\$26. They are available at the LVPAC box office at the Bankhead theater, online at the website livermoreperformingarts.org, or by phone at (925) 373 6800.

Concert Band Plans 'Seasonal Surprises' at Performance

The Pleasanton Community Concert Band presents "Seasonal Surprises" featuring works by Mendelssohn, Anderson, Holst and other composers.

The music of the holiday season will include familiar holiday melodies as well as a few musical surprises.

The Holiday Concert will be performed on December 6, at 2:00 p.m. at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton.

The Amador Theater doors will open at 1:40 p.m.

The concert is free though donations are appreciated. For more information call 925-846-5897 or go to the Pleasanton Community Concert Band website www.pleasantonband.org.

Varied Musical Program Opens Livermore-Amador Symphony's 47th Season

The Livermore-Amador Symphony orchestra opens its 47th season under the direction of conductor, Dr. Arthur Barnes at the Bankhead Theater on Saturday December 5, at 8 p.m. Music from four centuries will be featured.

The program opens with the playful and exuberant music from Mozart's overture *The Marriage of Figaro*. Based on Beaumarchais' writings this is a melodic way of poking fun at the aristocracy of that era.



Marilyn Thompson

The mood then changes to one of harmony and order with Brahms' *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*. When composed (1873) it was considered to be innovative in that it was the first set of independent variations for orchestra in the history of music. The initial, somewhat austere, theme is followed by eight variations, each of which has its own distinctive character. The finale is a restatement of the original theme that is gradually built on a repetitive bass rhythm to produce a grand climax.

Joan Tower's award-winning piece entitled *Made in America* is the third work to be featured in this program. She explained that her decision to name this piece was based on her affection for the community orchestra. She was amazed to find how many of these groups existed and how geographically diverse they were. In her view, although less skilled than their professional counterparts, the players are enthusiastic, work hard and play because they enjoy playing.

The second half of the program is dedicated entirely to Rachmaninoff's *Piano Concerto*



Livermore-Amador Symphony (photo, Jim Oliver)

No. 3 to be played by Marilyn Thompson. This popular work has been the theme song in several movies.. Thompson suggests that the reason for such popularity is that it immediately catches at the listener's heart strings. Although, based on simple melodies and rhythms, Rachmaninoff was able to combine them in such a way

that he created music that touches us emotionally.

Thompson has a string of accomplishments - both as a performer and an academic. Her versatile career has included chamber concerts at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and Boston's Symphony Hall. She is the pianist for the Navarro Trio and is Chamber Mu-

sic Director and piano teacher at Sonoma State University.

"Hits from Four Centuries" will be performed Saturday, December 5, at 8 p.m. Bankhead Theater, Livermore. For more information visit the website at www.livamsymph.org. For tickets call (925) 373-6800 or visit livermoreperformingarts.org.

Festival of Carols Performed at Centerpointe Presbyterian Church

A Festival of Carols featuring traditional Christmas music as well as some unusual arrangements will be held at 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13, at Centerpointe Presbyterian Church, 3410 Cornerstone Court.

Performing the music will be the Centerpointe choir and the church's handbell choir. They will be accompanied by musicians playing stringed instruments.

The program includes candle-light singing of "Silent Night," as well as traditional favorites "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," "Angels We Have Heard on High," and

"Joy to the World."

Special Bible readings for the Advent season, including the Nativity story from Luke 2, will be interspersed with musical selections. The audience will be invited to sing-along on some numbers.

Organist and choir director Katie Walda will perform Christmas carol improvisation as well as a French Noel on the church's Allen organ.

"Great Christmas music performed by choirs is one of the traditions of the Advent season," said Walda. "Our choir is pleased

to present this celebration of seasonal music combined with the appropriate Bible readings. It will be a wonderful event for people who enjoy great music."

The handbell choir is directed by Betty Gail Hunt.

A reception will follow the concert in the church's worship center.

The suggested donation is \$10 with proceeds going to support the church's choral music program.

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My Favorite Hike? Well, Since You Asked...

By Bob Coomber



One of the views in the Morgan Territory area.

I see a lot of double takes when I go out to some of my favorite trails. That's easy to understand. Not every day will you come across a hiker in a wheelchair sitting sideways on Mt. Diablo's steepest grades. As a result of these encounters, I get asked "what's your favorite hike?" fairly frequently.

So here goes. It's not easy to find a singular favorite, as bad hikes are a bit like bad chocolate – it's very, very tough to find one. But after reading through notes, reliving all the great hikes right here in our Tri-Valley and looking at them less than objectively, I'll tell you about my all time favorite. It's a long one for me, probably not quite as rough if you're walking it. But plan on taking the most of a day to really savor each twist

and turn.

First off, make sure you have water, a camera, sun screen – all the things you'd bring on a day hike. Pick up a map at the parking lot – since this is an East Bay Regional Park District hike, maps are easily located on line (ebparks.org) or at the trailhead. Look at the weather, too, as a clear fall or winter day will be a great time to go.

My favorite open space, the place where I got my start as a wheelchair hiking enthusiast, is Morgan Territory Regional Preserve. It's fitting that my favorite is within this spacious and quiet local jewel. It's the perfect time of year to visit, as birds and animals are actively preparing for winter. Temps have cooled to the "no sweat" threshold. Activity is all around you as you amble along – stop every once in awhile to listen and

look for critters and bugs. There's no point going if you're trying to set a speed record, right?

Making the long drive up the hill to Morgan Territory's parking area finds me full of anticipation. Where will I have the best chance of finding a quiet trail? I draw a picture of the long loop hike in my head. Then we're here. It's warm, even though it's November. There's only a very slight breeze – not enough to add anything more substantial than a windbreaker to my pack. I notice my chair has broken another brace, and question whether I should be going on as long and rough a trail as I'd planned. Deciding to tempt fate, I roll up the short hill to the interior on the east side of Morgan Territory Road. Today already feels like a winner.

As always, I start on the Volvon Trail, meandering toward my turn to the Blue Oak Trail without a lot of urgency. Overhead, hawks and vultures keep a look out for their own distinctly different tastes in food. Blue Oak Trail is my usual fall Praying Mantis locator, but they were scarce this day. That's OK, too, as it'll give me a reason to come back. I recall how hard some of these gentle hills used to be when I began hiking in the chair, and how silly that now seems. Good conditioning really makes a difference in one's enjoyment level. Blue Oak winds gently around quiet grass fields, and I stop to listen to the breeze playing with the vegetation. Acorns are falling from the big Valley Oaks, as well as the Blue Oaks.

My first real test comes shortly

after Blue Oak and Hummingbird trails diverge. Staying on Blue Oak, I know I'll have a rocky "down" followed by a short, steep "up" – both of which seem blissfully sane today. The "up" is followed by a nice flat stretch beneath a canopy of blue oaks and singing birds. The day is gorgeous. I'm still on the easy part, still steeling myself for what's to come.

Blue Oak meets once again with Volvon, and I return to the relative ease of that trail. There's a nice flat spot at a gate that makes a perfect place to look around and listen (have you noticed a theme yet?). It was warm enough that crickets were still making charming cricket sounds. Large black beetles and I crossed paths several times on this trek, as well as small spiders and big red ants. I could spend a day just watching one square yard of this ground, taking in all that goes on in such a small community. But not today. I've only just begun, and soldier on.

I've now reached Bob Walker Ridge, named for the late outdoors enthusiast whose photographs of local parkland are legendary for their beauty. Bob could capture a moment, and Morgan Territory was one of his favorite subjects. The Volvon Loop circles Bob Walker Ridge. I'm going to circle from the east side of the ridge, since that will allow me to see the Sierra Nevada in the distance. On a windy winter day, if the sun's out, you can clearly see the Sierra, and note some of the landmarks if you're so inclined. Today's a little hazy, but I still stop many times to take in the valley and the distant mountains. This is a really wonderful part of today's hike. Being on the east side of the ridge has an added benefit, as it will shield a hiker from the wind blowing off Mt. Diablo.

Following the Volvon Loop trail is easy, eventually winding down in elevation on the west side of the circuit. Once rain starts in earnest, small, dry rivulets will become tiny creeks and add more to the ambience. As I reach the low point in the loop, I have a choice of two trails – do I go "easy" and follow Stone Corral Trail all the way down to Morgan Territory Road, or...naw, let's live a little. I make a right turn onto the Eagle Trail, sliding over

Make a note to find your way to Morgan Territory and try this hike, or some part of it. Fall is great. Spring is beautiful. Winter is muddy. But there's no "bad" time to be out there.

the piles of acorns dropped from old Valley Oaks. This is a seldom used trail – I've never run across another hiker on Eagle. Most prefer Stone Corral, but that would be too easy. Heading up Eagle, I stop about halfway to take in a view of Highland Peak to the southwest. I see my next intersection just a few yards away. It's the start of the Highland Ridge Trail, most of which is on the west side of the road. This trail has the benefit, for me anyway, of making a long downhill run to its meeting with Stone Corral. After a short rest I let 'er rip, stopping only to ease the burn in my hands from trying to stay under control. One of several advantages for me is there are no foot blisters, no worn shoes. And I don't get calf or quad burn coming down steep hills. I may run into a tree or something, but hey, look Ma, no blisters!

At the bottom of the hill you'll notice some of the vegetation's changed. The oak savannah at the top has turned into creekside tropics – you'll find it cooler and the trees and brush denser. Laurel and alder trees give this part of the journey an aroma so fine it should be bottled and savored on those long winter days when you're stuck indoors. A creek bed meets up with the trail. Although the creek's dry now, in a "normal" rain cycle it's a year round stream. This is a wonderful place in spring. You'll also have blue jays checking in on you, as well as a constant cadre of woodpeckers. I could take a nap here...I *could*, but I'm barely halfway through the trip. Onward we go, west to the Morgan Territory Road crossing.

At Morgan Territory Road I was in No Man's Land...just past halfway with the hilliest part in front of me. The East Bay Regional Park District had the foresight many years ago to place accessible gates on both sides of the road at the Highland Ridge crossing, and I've put them to good use. Once on the west side of the road, you're instantly climbing, though not severely. The laurels are thicker over here, which makes this short section a nice place to rest on a warm day. Highland Ridge Trail is also part of the Diablo Regional Trail – staying on this trail will bring one into Mt. Diablo State Park, which is a good hike for another day. This is another trail that once

challenged me almost to the point of giving up – now the hills are just part of the landscape, not easy, but not too tough, either.

Make a passage through a second gate and the trail opens up a little. There's a short hill, but it soon levels off to a nice little meadow where I've seen coyotes chasing ground squirrels. Again, this part of the park is not heavily used – hikers I meet out here are never there by accident. They know how wonderful this long loop can be. I don't see mountain bikers here, either, which is a shame. It's a challenge whether on foot or pedaling. It's a trail for the explorer in us. Endurance is a quality that isn't innate to us all, and takes work to acquire. Once you do, though, you can do just about anything. Trails like today's make for a perfect excuse to get in shape.

Stopping to watch the meadow and take a quick breather, I park at the final trail turnoff – a left onto the Clyma Trail. This trail is only a few years old, and very few venture down its gentle grade. From here, after a long day of ups and downs, I know I'd have to contend with a long, shallow grade before dropping back to the parking lot, down a couple of roller coaster ride hills. The breeze has picked up now, only to the point of refreshment rather than obnoxiousness. It feels good! Passing an old orchard, I stop to watch some cattle who have stopped to watch me. They don't appear too miffed at my presence in their domain, so I say goodbye as I move onward and upward. I thought I saw a

couple of them shaking their big heads, asking "what the heck is a guy in a wheelchair doing out here?" That's what it sounded like anyway.

Clyma is an interesting trail, winding past a couple of accesses to the single track trails in the canyon below. I tried going down that way once, lived to tell about it (barely) but learned enough not to venture down again. It's difficult in a chair, but a nice walk if you're upright. I'm sticking to the high road today, and it's getting late. Sunlight wanes in the late afternoon, but it's still warm. I have less than two miles to go. My favorite feature is just ahead – a small, man made pond where I'll stop for a few minutes and wait for animals. Certain times of day are better than others, and the pond was almost dry – after a few minutes I heard something rumble through the brush, only to see two dogs run down and jump into the pond. They were just a couple of country hounds out for a good time. They waited, naturally, to get wet and muddy before stopping to say hi to me. Hey, thanks for the shake, guys.

Clyma runs just east of a large section of land banked EBRPD property. It will one day be open, hopefully accessing Highland Peak. I'll let you know how that hike feels once the access and trails are established. Following Clyma to a flat, sharp corner begins the best part – at the top of a short ridge, the parking lot is in view. The trail is now almost completely "down", and since I've done this

stretch many times I descend into the canyon. A grove of California Buckeye trees grows on a flat just between the two hills. It almost looks like it was planted by commercial interests, then abandoned when the buckeye market went south, or some equally silly notion. This is a nice stop on a warm day when the trees are leafed out. But it's getting late, and I've got only a short scamper to the car.

Reaching the lower canyon, the trail becomes a wide single track, winding through lush laurels and across what would be a creek if we had any rain. After a short push to the road, I crossed it back to the parking area. And though it was almost dark, I was sorely tempted to head back out, just for a few minutes to wait for the owls to start up. Shoulders caught me, though, complaining that they'd had enough. I was convinced to load up the chair and pack to head home.

I didn't compute an exact mileage, but believe the trip as I'd finished is a bit more than 8 miles. As the year gets later, bring warmer clothes, too – Morgan Territory

has an uncanny way of dipping far below Livermore or Pleasanton temps once the seasonal cooling begins. Finally, you have my favorite local hike, and there are many variants if you want a shorter hike or wish to take advantage of the Morgan Backpack Camp off of Highland Ridge and west of Clyma. It's a much nicer time of year to hike this one than in July or August. Be prepared – bring a lot of water, a light jacket, and a map, as previously mentioned. I also pack my headlamp, but heck, I'm slow and need it more than you. But be prepared in order to be safe. Make a note to find your way to Morgan Territory and try this hike, or some part of it. Fall is great. Spring is beautiful. Winter is muddy. But there's no "bad" time to be out there. Hope we meet along the trail!

Got a trail you'd like to hike or want to see in print? Please let me know – my e – mail is mr4wheelbob@sbcglobal.net . Have a great time exploring!



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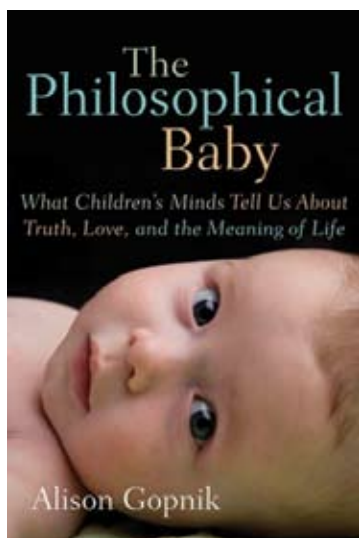
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Talk Title: 'The Philosophical Baby'

Alison Gopnik, a leading child scientist, will give a presentation at the Pleasanton Library on "The Philosophical Baby: What Children's Minds Tell Us About Truth, Love, and the Meaning of Life."

The talk will be at 2 p.m. on Sun., Dec. 6.

Gopnik examines children's imaginations, their consciousness, and their ideas about love and morality, and finds that the way they play, pretend, and explore are actually part of the most profound and fundamental aspects of human nature. In her provocative new book *The Philosophical Baby*, Alison Gopnik asserts that babies and young children are in some ways "actually smarter, more imaginative, more caring, and even more conscious than adults are."

This program was funded by a grant from Fit for Life, an initiative of Libraries for the Future and Metropolitan Life.

For more info regarding the program call Penny Johnson at 931-3405.

The program is free and open to all. No registration required.

Beth Emek to Host Noted Historian, Lecturer

Congregation Beth Emek in Pleasanton will host Fred Rosenbaum, acclaimed historian, teacher and lecturer and founding director of Lehrhaus Judaica, the Adult School for Jewish Studies in the San Francisco Bay Area, speaking about his new book, "Cosmopolitans: A Social and Cultural History of the Jews of the San Francisco Bay Area."

Author at Livermore Library

Gerald S. Henig, Professor Emeritus of History at California State University, East Bay, discusses *Lincoln at 200: In Fact Rather Than Fiction* at 2pm on Sunday, December 6 at the Livermore Public Library 1188 S. Livermore Avenue in Livermore. There is no charge for this event.

Professor Henig commemorates the bicentennial anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth, separating fact from fiction with a lively presentation on our enigmatic sixteenth president, as he focuses on Lincoln as a great emancipator, commander in chief, political leader, constitutionalist, architect of reconstruction, and as an uncommon man.

Gerald S. Henig will soon complete his thirty-ninth year of teaching. One of the most decorated professors on campus, he received the Outstanding Professor Award and was a four-time winner of the Pi Kappa Delta Best Lecturer Award. After graduating from Brooklyn College, Jerry

earned his M.A. from the University of Wisconsin and his Ph.D. in American history from The Graduate Center, City University of New York. He has written numerous articles on the political and military history of the Civil War, and is the author of *Henry Winter Davis: Antebellum and Civil War Congressman from Maryland*, and co-author of *Civil War Firsts: The Legacies of America's Bloodiest Conflict*, which was a selection of the national prestigious History Book Club and the Military Book Club. In April 2007, the book was published in paperback as *A Nation Transformed: How the Civil War Changed America Forever*. In view of his outstanding record, The Graduate Center of the City University of New York honored Jerry with its Annual Alumni Achievement Award for 2008.

The Friends of the Livermore Library have underwritten this program. For additional events, check the library's website at www.livermore.lib.ca.us.

Display Features 20,000 Christmas Lights Programmed to Music

"Livermore Lights" is unlike any other home that is decorated for the holidays. It has 48 independently controlled channels that make over 20,000 Christmas lights, flood lights, and rope lights dance in sync to music.

Matt Phipps started two years ago, at the age of 17, with 16 control channels and a few strings of lights. Today he has created "Livermore Lights" with 48 channels of control and over 20,000 lights. Programming a 2 minute song takes him approximately 16 hours. It involves choreographing the lights to the beat, melody and bass line of the music. Family and friends are helping in the massive set up this year.

The experience starts the day after Thanksgiving and plays every night through Christmas, between the hours of 6:30 PM and 10:00 PM.

Viewers wishing to share in the magic need simply to drive up, tune to the posted radio station and enjoy their own personal light show with friends and family.

Join "Livermore Lights" on Christmas Eve between the hours of 7:00 PM and 9:00 PM to receive a free cup of hot chocolate and a candy cane (while supplies last).

The display will be available for viewing from Nov. 28 to Dec. 25. Hours are 6:30 to 10 p.m. Sunday thru Thursday and 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday at 646 Zermatt, Livermore.

Guests last year said: "It reminded me of Disneyland;" "How did you do that?"; "WOW!;" and "I'm coming back with my whole family."

For more information and directions visit the website www.LivermoreLights.com.

CA 94566 and admission to Mr. Rosenbaum's presentation is \$15.

This event is part of the 21st Annual Contra Costa Jewish Book & Arts Festival, presented by the Jewish Community Federation of the Greater East Bay and the Contra Costa Jewish Community Center, and is co-sponsored by Congregation Beth Emek.



Tricia Poulos Leonard stands in front of her painting, "Midnight on the Boulevard."

Artist to Present Talk Prior to Parks & Rec Commission Meeting

Pleasanton artist Tricia Poulos Leonard will be presenting a talk on "Understanding Abstract Paintings" on December 7 at 6:15 pm at Pleasanton City Offices. Her presentation will take place in front of her abstract painting "Midnight on the Boulevard," which is on display in the lobby of the City Offices at 200 Bernal Avenue. That night, her painting will be on the Parks and Recreation Commission agenda to be considered for purchase by the city.

Tricia is offering the presentation as a free educational event open to the public. According to Tricia, "I find that many people are intimidated by abstract art because they have not been educated in how to look at this type of art. I intend to offer some historical background on the development of the abstract genre and help people understand what the viewer needs to bring to the art in order to understand and enjoy it. I will also give the background and inspiration behind my abstract, "Midnight on the Boulevard".

Tricia is an artist and an educator, with 30 years of experience in Pleasanton Unified School District. She has a BA in Studio Art from UCLA. Tricia's UCLA background in art gave her an ability to create in many different styles. Most recently she has been working in mixed media abstracts. Her abstracts have won numerous awards in the past few months, including the Pleasanton Civic Arts Council 2009 Award of Excellence and Best of Class at the 2009 Alameda County Fair. Her work has been accepted at an International Show in Colorado and won an award at Placerville's Mother Lode National Show.

Tricia's website is www.triciastudio.com and she may be contacted at: tricleonard@comcast.net.

ART & ENTERTAINMENT

ART EXHIBITS



Surrealist Claudette McDermott unveils her latest work "Birth of an Artist," in a solo exhibit presented by Poetry On Canvas at the Berry Patch. Working in layers, Claudette begins with a raw canvas and acrylic to texture her backgrounds with a palette knife. Thick and quick, moving in all directions when the acrylic dries, it takes shape only when she rubs oil, translucent and handmade paint into the nooks and creases. After a creative process of rubbing off, the layers come alive and now the painting begins, with brush in hand and the Artists Visions, the Breath of Life is upon the canvas. Exhibit this week only at 350 Main Street 11-7 daily.

Art and wine crawl, downtown Livermore on Friday, November 27th from 5:30-8 p.m. Over ten galleries, open studios, businesses and tasting rooms will be open. Pick up a map of participating locations at the newly opened Ryan Fine Art Gallery, 171 South J Street. There is no charge. www.lindaryanfineart.com or call 925-243-0424

The Lindsay Dirx Brown Gallery is hosting an exhibit featuring the Livermore Art Association from November 1-30. The gallery is located at 12501 Alcosta Blvd. in San Ramon. Monday-Thursday from 8:30 a.m.-9 p.m. and Fridays from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (925)973-3200 or go to www.sanramon.ca.gov.

An exhibition by oil artist Amy D. Leung at John Christopher Cellars, at Blacksmith Square, 25 South Livermore Ave., Livermore until November 29. Available for viewing every Thursday to Sunday from 12:00 -6:00 PM. For information please call 925-456-9463.

Artists Angela Johal and Katie Caulk works on display at Windermere Welcome Home really through Jan. 4. 1790 First Street, Livermore. The show is open for viewing during regular business hours or by appointment. Contact Cher Wollard at 925 824-4824 or cherw@windermere.com for information.

Flying Solo, a series of exhibits presented by Poetry On Canvas Pleasanton showing in November & December at the Berry Patch in Downtown Pleasanton on Main & Angela. Schedule-Gary Winter-Nov 29-Dec 5; Judi Caplan-Dec 6-12; Dee Haag-Dec 13-19; Claudette McDermott-Dec 20-26; Stan Vierk - Dec 27 - Jan 3.

Eugenia W. Zobel Exhibit, December 2009 AND January 2010, Wente Vineyards Estate Winery, 5565 Tesla Road, Livermore. New works of porcelain paintings. Artist's reception on Sunday, December 13, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. For information call 925-443-7266.

Karen Fleschler will be showing her paintings at Swirl on the Square, 21 South Livermore Ave., Livermore; Cuda Ridge Winery, 5385 East Ave., Livermore; and Tesla Vintners, 5143 Tesla Rd., Livermore through December.

Barbara Stanton's Figurative Work will be featured at the Wild Vine in downtown Livermore, Dec. 10 to 31. Her Figurative work will be on display at the Wild Vine

the entire month of Dec. Works in pastel, oils and a few of her miniatures will be on display. Meet the artist at the reception on Thurs., Dec. 10 from 7:00 - 8:30. For more info call or write Barbara 925-373-9638, micoangelo@earthlink.net, www.barbarastanton.com or the Wild Vine. Information 925-243-0700, events@wildvinelounge.com www.wildvinelounge.com/index.php

WINERY EVENTS

Holiday Preview, Nov. 27-29, 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wente Vineyards will welcome early holiday shoppers for tastings of Wente Vineyards sustainably farmed estate grown wines, including The Nth Degree wines, tours of the cellars, and other gifts available in the Estate Tasting Room. www.wentevineyards.com. Special tasting flights will be developed at no additional charge. Wente Vineyards Estate Tasting Room, 5565 Tesla Road, Livermore.

Thomas Coyne Winery Winter Open House, Nov. 27, 28 and 29, noon to 5 p.m. New varietals will be released: 06 Tannat, 07 Graciano, 06 Mourvèdre, 08 Sweet Emilie (a white port style). Visit the historic tasting room located 51 E. Vallecitos Road., Livermore, Ca. The tasting room was built in 1881 and is a landmark in the Livermore Valley Wine Country. Bring a picnic and enjoy sweeping views of the Livermore Valley Wine Country. Fine fruits and cheeses will be served. For more information call (925) 373-6541 <http://thomascoynewinery.com>

Fenestra Winery Annual Prelude to Christmas, November 27, 28, and 29 from noon to 5 p.m. There is the normal \$5.00 tasting fee for this event. The 130-year-old winery building will be decorated in the Christmas spirit. Taste holiday foods with Fenestra wines. Stained glass art by Ellen Bryant; jewelry by Michele Bucket; knitted stockings and scarves by Jan Bachman; quilts by Marla James; and barrel stave candle holders made from Fenestra barrels by Ken Petersen. For more information, visit the website at www.fenestrawinery.com or email info@fenestrawinery.com. 84 Vallecitos Rd., Livermore. 447-5246 or www.fenestrawinery.com.

Tamas Estates, holiday preview, Nov. 27, 28, 29, 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sample class vintages including library wines and the Barbera Port. Bring a new unwrapped toy for Toys for Tots. 5489 Tesla Rd., Livermore. Information 456-2380, www.tamasesates.com.

Wente Vineyards offers a preview to the holidays with a Thanksgiving weekend tasting, November 27, 28, 29, 11-4:30 pm. Enjoy a fun and relaxing weekend, while you plan your holiday gift-giving. Taste special vintages of handcrafted Nth Degree, plus cellar selections at all the winery locations: Wente Vineyards Estate Winery Tasting Room, Wente Vineyards Vineyard Tasting Room, Murrieta's Well, and Tamás Estates. Wente Vineyards, 5565 Tesla Rd., Livermore. www.wentevineyards.com. (925) 456-0439.

MUSIC/CONCERTS

Livermore Amador Symphony, concert Dec. 2, "Hits from Four Centuries," 8 p.m. Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. Marilyn Thompson, piano. 925-373-6800, www.bankheadtheater.org.

Music Department Recital, Las Positas College, Wed., Dec. 2, 12:30 p.m. Free admission. On campus, 3000 Campus Hill Dr., Livermore. For further information call the Performing Arts Events Line at 925-424-1100 or call Cindy Rosefield at 925-424-1119.

Orchestra and Band Concert, Las Positas College, Wed., Dec. 2, 7:30 p.m. at Resurrection Lutheran Church, Dublin. \$12 general admission and \$8 for students and seniors. For further information call the Performing Arts Events Line at 925-424-1100 or call Cindy Rosefield at 925-424-1119

Golden Bough, Dec. 4, 8 p.m. Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Rd., Pleasanton, Pleasanton Civic Arts Presents, Tickets at <http://civicartstickets.org> or (925) 931-3444.

Hits from Four Centuries, Livermore-Amador Symphony Concert, Sat., Dec. 5, 8 p.m. Bankhead Theater, 2400 First St., Livermore. \$26, \$28. 925-373-6800, www.bankheadtheater.org.

Asbury Christmas Concert - Asbury United Methodist Church will hold its 13th Annual Christmas Concert at 7 PM on Sunday Dec. 6, 2009 in its Sanctuary at 4743 East Ave. in Livermore. All of Asbury's vocal choirs, the Asbury Band and the bell choir will be performing. Asbury's pipe organ will also be part of the evening's musical offerings. The concert is open to the public. A free will offering can be made at the door. There will be a punch and cookie reception immediately following in the Fellowship Hall. For more information call Jean Braun at 449-4168, the church office at 447-1950 or e-mail: JoanneP@asburylive.org.

Christmas Concert, The public is invited to a free Christmas concert at Our Savior Lutheran Ministries, 1385 South Livermore Avenue, in Livermore on Sunday, December 6, at 4:00 pm. This concert is a gift to the community. It will feature choral, handbell, brass, woodwind and string music. Our Savior will begin an effort to collect and donate new shoes and socks at this event. Concert-goers are encouraged to bring shoes or socks of any size; we will be happy to receive them and deliver them to Lutheran Social Services of Sacramento and Shepherd's Gate in Livermore.

Pleasanton Community Concert Band, holiday concert Dec. 6, 2 p.m. Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Rd., Pleasanton. Free admission.

ON THE STAGE

Opera San Jose, performs Cinderella in the Fast Lane: La Cenerentola. Nov. 14-29. Italian with English supertitles. California Theatre, 345 South First St., San Jose. \$51-\$91. www.operasj.org.

Plaid Tidings, holiday edition of Forever Plaid, November 19 to December 6, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. The Douglas Morrisson Theatre, 22311 North Third St., Hayward. \$25 adults, \$22 seniors, \$25 juniors/students. For tickets call the box office at (510) 881-6777 or go on-line to www.dmtonline.org.

DANCE

The Dream Of The Snow Queen, Livermore School of Dance holiday show. Performances will be at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Sat., November 28 at the Bankhead Theater. Original story about a young child trying to find the true meaning of the holidays. \$26, \$20 and \$18; seniors (65 yrs.) and children 12 and under receive \$3.00 discount. 925-373-6800 and on-line at www.bankheadtheater.org.

Ohlone College Winter Dance Showcase, tap, jazz, contemporary, lyrical, hip hop, ballroom, and modern dance. Thurs.-Sat. Dec. 3-5, 8 p.m. Smith Center at Ohlone College, 43600 Mission Boulevard in Fremont. \$10. Proceeds support community outreach, costume needs, and performance supplies. Information

510.659.6031, www.smithcenterprevents.com

Dance Performance, Las Positas College, Dec. 4 and 5, 8 p.m. Las Positas College Theater, 3000 Campus Hill Dr., Livermore. \$12 general admission and \$8 for students and seniors. For further information call the Performing Arts Events Line at 925-424-1100 or call Cindy Rosefield at 925-424-1119.

Valley Dance Theatre, celebrates its 30th Anniversary Season with its annual full-length production of the Tchaikovsky's holiday classic The Nutcracker. Performances Bankhead Theater, 2400 First Street in Livermore. December 12-20. Public performances will be accompanied by the Livermore-Amador Symphony pit orchestra and holiday carols by Harmony Fusion. Evening performances will take place December 12, 18, 19 and 20 at 7:00 p.m. Matinee performances will take place on December 12, 13, 19 and 20 at 2:00 p.m. All seats are reserved. Tickets are \$33, \$27 and \$24 for adults and \$18 for students 17 years and younger. They may be purchased online at www.bankheadtheater.org or by phone at 925-373-6800. Tickets may also be purchased in person at the theater box office, 2400 First St., Livermore, Tuesday-Saturday, 12 noon-6:00 p.m., and for two hours prior to show time. More information is available www.valleydancetheatre.com.

AUDITIONS/VOLUNTEERS

Livermore's 2010 Talent Competition is now accepting applications. Aspiring performers are invited to audition and compete in the next Livermore Talent Competition. Information and applications are available at www.LivermoreTalentCompetition.com. Applications must be received by December 11, 2009. The top winners in each age category - youth (17 and under) and adults (18 and over) - will take home \$2,500. This year's event is open to anyone from anywhere, not just Bay Area residents. The two Rotary Clubs of Livermore are again sponsoring this event. All net proceeds will go to the community grants that are presented by the Rotary clubs throughout the year. Information is available at www.livermoretalentcompetition.com.

Auditions for "Rent," the Pulitzer Prize-Winning musical at Las Positas College. Monday and Tuesday, December 14 and 15 from 7-10 at the LPC Theater. Bring a prepared song appropriate to the show, with sheet music. An accompanist will be provided. Callbacks on December 21. Rehearsals will be on Monday through Friday nights beginning January 19. Performances are April 2 through 18. Ken Ross will be director and producer. For more information, call (925) 424-1166 or email kross@laspositascollege.edu.

MOVIES

White Christmas, Dec. 3, classic film series hosted by Candace Klaschus, Las Positas College. 7:00 p.m. in the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Avenue, Pleasanton. Free. Information: 925-931-3405.

It's a Wonderful Life as part of its new Classic Cinema series Sunday, December 13, at 2:00 p.m. Grand Theatre Center for the Arts, 715 Central Avenue, on the corner of Central and Seventh Street, Tracy. Tickets are \$7.50 for General Admission seating. They may be purchased online at www.atthegrand.org, by phone at (209) 831-6TKT (6858) or in person at the Leona Darr Willis Box Office.

CHORAL

Cantabella Children's Chorus, Saturday,

December 5. 18th annual winter concerts entitled "Gaudete! Gaudete!" (Rejoice! Rejoice!) includes medieval, classical, traditional and contemporary music sung in Latin, Hebrew, Finnish, Basque and English. Singers in grades K-12 will perform choral works accompanied by pianists and guest instrumentalists at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First Street, Livermore. 1:30 p.m. concert features training and performing choirs; 4:00 p.m. concert features performing choirs only. Reserved seating available at the box office or call (925) 373-6800. Seats are \$20, \$15 and \$10. More information, cantabella.org or call (925) 292-2663.

OPERA

Live Theater-Casts from the Met: 10 a.m. Saturdays at Dublin's Royal Hacienda Cinema. Dates: Dec. 19, Tales of Hoffman; Jan. 9, Rosenkavalier; Jan. 16, Carmen; Feb. 6, Simon Boccanegra; March 29, Hamlet; and May 1, Armida. Replays of each opera will be shown on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. as follows: Jan. 6, Hoffman; Jan. 27, Rosenkavalier; Feb. 3, Carmen; Feb. 24, Simon Boccanegra; April 14, Hamlet; and May 19, Armida.

MISCELLANEOUS

Art and wine crawl, downtown Livermore on Friday, November 27th from 5:30-8 p.m. Over ten galleries, open studios, businesses and tasting rooms will be open. Pick up a map of participating locations at the newly opened Ryan Fine Art Gallery, 171 South J Street. There is no charge. www.lindaryanfineart.com or call 925-243-0424

Speech Tournament, Las Positas College, Fri., Dec. 4, 1 to 5 p.m. Las Positas College Theater, 3000 Campus Hill Dr., Livermore. \$12 general admission and \$8 for students and seniors. For further information call the Performing Arts Events Line at 925-424-1100 or call Cindy Rosefield at 925-424-1119.

Walkin' in a Winter Wonderland, a Holiday Home Tour on Sunday, December 6, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in downtown Pleasanton. Benefit for Valley Humane Society. Home tour, shopping, treats, live music. Tickets are \$35 per person. Proceeds go to support the programs of Valley Humane Society, a nonprofit animal rescue organization. Contact Valley Humane Society at (925) 426-8656 or www.valleyhumane.org. Valley Humane Society is located at 3670 Nevada Street, Pleasanton and is open Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets can also be purchased at Towne Center Books and The Wine Steward.

COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Great Western & Atlantic Train Show, Nov. 28-29, Alameda County Fairgrounds, Pleasanton. The show features 200 - 500 tables of train dealers who offer everything from HO scale, N scale, Lionel (0 gauge), G gauge, Z scale, American Flyer (s gauge), hobby tools, die cast vehicles, train whistles, scenery items, Railroadiana Slides, t-shirts, videos, railroad gift item, books, photos and much more. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days. Special: Sell old trains, get free appraisals on site. www.greattrainexpo.com

All Breed Cat Show, Nov. 28-29, Alameda County Fairgrounds, Pleasanton. Presented by Fog City Cat Club. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days. Cat show for over 12 breeds. Lots of vendors with gifts, toys, supplies, cat trees, beds, artwork, clothing, jewelry & more. Special: Pedigreed kittens for sale, rescue kitten and cat adoptions, household pet cat judging too. Adult \$6, Child \$3, Seniors \$5, parking \$8. www.fogcitycatclub.com



The Cantabella Children's Chorus members are preparing for their 18th annual winter holiday concerts, "Gaudete! Gaudete!" (Rejoice! Rejoice!), which will be held for the first time at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore, 2400 First Street, Saturday, December 5. The 1:30 p.m. concert will feature the training choirs and the performing choirs. The 4 p.m. concert will feature the performing choirs only. Director Bee Chow has programmed an unusual mix of choral works from around the world. The program ranges from medieval songs and Handel's classical *Aria Achsah* to LeRoy Anderson's *Sleigh Ride*, from arrangements of traditional carols to contemporary sounds. The Cantabella choristers will sing in Latin, Hebrew, Finnish, Basque and English. Guest artists will add accompaniments on guitar, violin, cello, flute and percussion. Reserved seating is available at the Bankhead box office or call (925) 373-6800. Seats are \$20, \$15 and \$10. For more information, cantabella.org or call (925) 292-2663.



Treasures with Alaina Braatz and Abi Johal, courtesy of Dance Connection.

Pleasanton PTA Council to Recognize Young Artists

The Pleasanton PTA Council will hold its seventh annual Reflections Arts Recognition Program on Wednesday, December 2, at Harvest Park Middle School's Multi-Purpose Room. The reception and showcase will begin at 6:30pm with the ceremony to follow at 7pm.

The Reflections Program, sponsored by the National PTA, is an arts recognition and achievement program for students. It provides opportunities for students to express themselves creatively and to receive positive recognition for original works of art inspired by this year's theme, "Beauty is..." The program also raises community awareness on the importance of the arts in education.

Local students, from kindergarten through 12th grade, entered their work in six categories: photography, visual arts, literature, musical composition, dance choreography, and film/video production. A total of 350 young artists from seven Pleasanton schools submitted entries for this year's program to their local PTA or PTSA sponsored program.

Reflections Committees at each school identified students in each category and age level to represent their school at the Council level.

Over 50 entries were submitted to the Pleasanton PTA Council for recognition. They will be showcased on December 2. Entries advancing to the next level, Peralta PTA District, will be announced at this event.

This is a free event. The community is invited to attend. For more information or to RSVP to the event, please contact Diane Van Wagner at vanwagners@comcast.net.



Livermore School of Dance will perform "The Dream Of The Snow Queen," an original story about a young child trying to find the true meaning of the holidays.

The presentation showcases classical and modern ballet with pointe work, jazz, lyrical jazz, hip hop, and Broadway show-stoppers. There is a variety of music from The Polar Express, Trans Siberian Orchestra, Josh Groban and Charlotte Church to Tchaikovsky classics from the Nutcracker.

The production will be presented at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 28, at the Bankhead Performing Arts Theater, 2400 First Street in Livermore. Ticket prices for assigned seating are \$26.00, \$20.00 and \$18.00. Seniors (65 yrs.) and children 12 and under receive \$3.00

discount. Bankhead theater policy states; Children under the age of 2 will not be admitted. Groups of 10+ receive \$2.00 discount per ticket. Tickets are available at the box office window Tuesday

- Saturday Noon to 6:00 p.m., or call 925-373-6800 and online at www.bankheadtheater.org (\$3.50 per ticket phone and web handling fee), or at the door 2 hours prior to performance.

Dream of the Snow Queen to Be Performed

BANKHEAD THEATER

DREAM OF THE SNOW QUEEN

Livermore School of Dance

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December 5 • 1:30 & 4pm

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HITS FROM FOUR CENTURIES

Livermore-Amador Symphony

December 5 • 8pm

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SmARTs Unlimited Offers Variety of Arts Programs for Kids

SmARTsunlimited will host an open house on Dec. 5 from 1 to 6 p.m.

Within each heart lies a dream - in every soul a sense of purpose. For Deborah McQueen, these fundamentals have been the driving force behind her seminal vision for an accredited children's performing arts school in Livermore. Toward this purpose she has brought to Livermore the talent of Randall Benway, a concert pianist with extensive performing, teaching, and judging experience, to expand the school's upper division piano department.

In 1995 McQueen launched OperaSmARTS, which was designed to teach opera to preschoolers. "Livermore has been a wonderful place to develop innovative arts programming for children" said McQueen. With the success of OperaSmARTS, parents asked for more. She began writing curriculum for general music education classes, piano orchestra, show choir, and film classes

Deborah and Randy hit it off immediately, perhaps because they both share a common childhood in the Midwest.

Randy studied with Theodore Lettvin and Arthur Loesser in Cleveland, Raymond Hanson and Moshe Paranov at Hartt College of Music, and Nadia Boulanger in France. After twice declining a full scholarship offer from the head of the piano department at Juilliard, he moved to London to study piano with Balint Vazsonyi. Later in graduate school at the University of Michigan, he studied piano with Gyorgy Sandor and Louis Nagel and composition with William Bolcom. Presently he performs chamber music as a member of the Redwood Trio, with violinist Jim Potochny and cellist Greg Colburn. He accompanies and coaches singers at SmARTsunlimited and helps singers learn how to better prepare for auditions with a live accompanist. "Deborah's school has it all. Singing, dancing, film, and acting; if it's art, SmARTsunlimited is the place. Deborah and I have developed a great working relationship and have a common bond: the students. We really want to see the students become great musicians. She is one of the best vocal teachers around and really knows how to inspire her students. They are singing, dancing, acting, and



Randy Benway

loving it. It's what we all want for our kids."

Benway plans to develop the advanced piano department. "I am going to assist on the piano side of her school. I help students develop a solid technique so they can play anything," he commented.

The idea of having an accredited performing arts school for children matured slowly for McQueen.

"Many of my students are born artists right from the start," says McQueen. "Grant Lowenstein, for example, who came to me at four and now steals the show from his SAG leads at the Contra Costa Musical Theater. He eats, sleeps, and breathes acting. He has been with us for six years and was given a solid foundation with which to move forward." Children deserve an alternative. They deserve the opportunity to study within an environment where art is the central focus and academic subjects are supported through integrated curriculum.

SmARTsunlimited's mission is to give our young people a vehicle for self-discovery and expression: to provide well-rounded training in the performing arts disciplines; and to reach out to the community, particularly to those children who cannot reach us.

SmARTS is busy this year expanding programming for actors with their upcoming black box

production, "The Secret Life of Girls," which will be held at the Bothwell Center on January 29, 30, and 31. After-school and summer classes are offered in drama, music, and dance for children ages 2-17. ActSmART Children's Theater, a more in-depth performing arts summer camp for children 3-17, culminates in a full scale production at the Bankhead, and this year's Alice in Wonderland camp is nearly sold out. These productions are open to the public and include special low cost tickets for children to attend.

SmARTS has applied for 501C status, after which it hopes to be able to offer financial assistance to children from low income families who would like to attend any of the on-site programs. Parents and prospective students may meet Randy, Deborah, and the entire SmARTS staff on Dec. 5th at the SmARTsunlimited annual Open House. Raffle prizes include a year of free piano lessons, voice lessons, acting, toys for the children, hands-on demos, free assessments of your child's playing, and hot hors d'oeuvres and champagne. Everyone is welcome.

The studio is located at 53 Wright Bros Avenue, Suite D, Livermore. Information at www.SmARTsunlimited.com or (925) 245-0283.

Soroptimist Host Livermore Holiday Home Tour

Soroptimist International of Livermore will host the organization's 26th annual Holiday Christmas Home Tour on Sun., Dec. 6.

Five homes decorated for the holidays will be featured on the tour from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The houses this year are very unique, including an old Victorian and a very new 9000 square foot home in the vineyards.

The tour begins by obtaining a map at Alden Lane Nursery, 981 Alden Lane, Livermore. While at the nursery, there will be an opportunity to win baskets, flowers, trees decorated with cash, etc.

Tickets are \$25, which is tax deductible. Proceeds benefit women and children through local projects and charities.

Tickets are available at Proctor's in downtown Livermore, Alden Lane Nursery and from any Soroptimist member. Tickets may also be purchased the day of the tour.

For information, call 449-4079 or 443-5897.

Holiday Workshop in Dublin

Dublin will host a holiday workshop at the Dublin Heritage Center on Sat., Dec. 5 from 2 to 4 p.m.

Those attending will be able to make old-fashioned holiday crafts such as orange pomander or Victorian Scrap. There will be an opportunity for a holiday sing-along, and to visit with an old fashioned St. Nick. Hot cider and cookies will be served.

The Dublin Heritage Center is located at 6600 Donlon Way. For information, call 452-2100.

Garré to Host Longaberger Kick-off

Longaberger CEO Tami Longaberger and former Cleveland Browns Quarterback Bernie Kosar kick off the holiday season with gift giving ideas, displays, shopping and more at Garré Vineyard & Winery on Wed., Dec. 2.

The Longaberger Company is holding a Holiday Gathering featuring its American craftsmanship, holiday shopping and the Longaberger home business opportunity. It will include the debut of the Debut of the new Hershey's Kisses Sweetheart Basket Set, San Francisco 49ers and Oakland Raiders basket sets from NFL collection, University of Southern California basket sets from collegiate collection, and hundreds of others products, starting as low as \$30.

The event is free and open to the public from 5:30 to 9 p.m. Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

Garré Vineyard & Winery is located at 7986 Tesla Rd., Livermore. For information, call 371-8200.

Carnegie Open House Scheduled

The annual Holiday Open House at the Carnegie Building in Livermore will be held Sat., Dec. 5 from 1 to 4 p.m.

The building houses the Livermore Heritage Guild history center and Livermore Art Association Gallery.

The 2010 Livermore Heritage Guild calendar will be available for purchase along with books, pamphlets, postcards and notecards.

The gallery offers jewelry, paintings, ceramics, textiles, and much more.

Heritage Guild members will receive a 10 percent discount on purchases. Memberships will be available.

The Carnegie Building is located on Third Street between J and K Streets in Livermore. For more information, call 449-9927.

Sister City Organization to Present 'Posada'

Pleasanton-Tulancingo Sister City Organization will host the traditional Mexican "Posada" on Fri., Dec. 18.

It will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Pleasanton Veteran's Hall, 301 Main St., downtown Pleasanton.

The festivities will include carols, traditional Mexican desserts, coffee, hot chocolate and apple cider. There will be pinatas for the kids. The event is for the entire family.

There is no admission charge. Christmas basket donations of cash is optional,

Milestones

Community

Community

YMCA Delegation Participates in Training Conferences

The Tri-Valley YMCA's Youth & Government delegation recently participated in the first of two training and elections conferences at Camp Roberts National Guard Base in Paso Robles. The 19 student delegation was among 2,200 high school students from across the state gathered to discuss political issues and nominate and elect delegates for State offices. These two conferences are in preparation for the Model Legislature & Court conference in February during which the Youth and Government delegates take over Sacramento to enact laws and adjudicate court cases in the actual chambers of our State government.

The Tri-Valley delegation made their mark at Camp Roberts as Vidya Awasty and Grant Bonham, Amador Valley High School freshmen, won statewide positions in the Forum (the freshmen component of Youth & Government).

Vidya was elected Assembly Clerk and Grant Bonham was elected Senate Clerk. The success of the Tri-Valley YMCA delegation did not stop there as Madison Brinnon and Jordan Nally, also Amador Valley High School freshmen, received enough votes to become finalists in their quest to serve as Forum Lt. Governor and Forum Speaker of the Assembly, respectively. They will continue on to the final elections to be held at the second Training & Elections Conference in January.

The weekend also included time for fun and entertainment. At night, students were able to attend the dances, and also participate in the inaugural California Idol in which students sang heartily while "Randy," "Paula" and the infamous "Simon" judged them. The top performers received gold tickets to perform again in Sacramento.



It was a good year for Livermore Youth Football and Cheer (LYFC). The Warrior pee wee cheerleaders, age 9-11, took 1st place this year in two out of three different cheerleading competitions. The girls placed 1st in the USA Regional competition at Santa Cruz at the end of September and again at the Diablo Valley Youth Football and Cheer competition at UC Davis on November 8. Pictured are (left to right) Coach Denise Williams, Jaidyn Gonzales, Emily Johnson, Sophia Jones, Lauren Palma, Lexi Carzoli, Cassie Pierce, Macy Williams, Bailey Smith, Coach Kristi Kilbane, Sara Claypool; (kneeling) Kailey McFadden, Jr. Coach Taylor West, Kennidi Self, Kylie Kilbane and Alexia Burrow.

Education

Math Whizzes from Harvest Park

Harvest Park Middle School students Eugene Chen, Brian Shimanuki, Jerry Li and Ian Zhou competed in Mathleague's first competition of the year at Stanford last month. As a team, they finished first (defeating Miller Middle School and John Hopkins for the first time). Eugene had a perfect score of 46 to win the individual competition, Brian was second with 45, and Jerry and Ian finished with 43 and 41 respectively. They had a perfect score on the team round for an overall score of 64/66. Mathleague is in the same format as MATHCOUNTS - where Eugene will be defending state champion in the countdown round this spring.

These four teamed with Christine Xu and Jeffrey Zhang in the Math Notations third math contest in an international high school geometry contest. Harvest Park Middle School finished second (11/12) to Chiles High School of Tallahassee, Florida (perfect 12/12).

Additionally, the 2009 Fall Start-up Event was held in September. There were several students from Harvest Park who took the test, a 100 problem, 30-minute individual competition. From Harvest Park, Eugene finished first in the nation with a score of 65. Jerry Li finished 4th in the country, Brian Shimanuki was 6th, Ian Zhou was 9th, Christine Xu was 11th and Hansen Shi was 12th.

SwimStrong Raises \$20,000+

SwimStrong, the swim-a-thon held on Oct. 18, raised funds to assist the children and families who are dealing with pediatric cancer. This was the second year the event has been held. Participants raised \$20,000 with money still coming in.

The event was started last year to assist Matt and Dana Croghan, the parents of Korrine Croghan, who passed away a year ago following a battle with cancer. The Croghans felt that by continuing the event in Korrine's name, they were fulfilling her wishes to help others.

The funds earned are assisting families and patients of the Kaiser Pediatric Oncology Department. Funds help with rent and food and with the holidays coming, can

possibly help with gifts and other necessities.

Matt and Dana want to thank all of those who swam, sponsored swimmers or donated either money or prizes.

To find out more about the

Team KC Foundation, which is run through the Tri-Valley Community Foundation, go to www.korrinecroghan.blogspot.com or contact Cindy Gary at TeamKC@comcast.net.

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BULLETIN BOARD

(Organizations wishing to run notices in Bulletin Board, send information to PO Box 1198, Livermore, CA 94551, in care of Bulletin Board. Include name of organization, meeting date, time, place and theme or subject. Phone number and contact person should also be included. Deadline is 5 p.m. Friday.)

Annual Holiday Boutique, Dec. 5, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Veteran's Hall, 522 L Street, Livermore. Hosted by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association. Proceeds from this boutique will be given to the veteran's hospital.

Holiday Boutique, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sat., Dec. 5 at 690 North L St., Livermore. All items sold have been made by clients. Funds benefit GARDEN Tri-Valley, a nonprofit organization for developmentally disabled adults in Livermore.

Silent Auction and Green Boutique, Thursday, December 3 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the San Ramon Library meeting room (Montgomery Street). Come and shop early. Sponsored by the San Ramon AAUW (American Association of University Women). The sale benefits students in San Ramon and former foster girls in the Renaissance Program at CSU East Bay. The event is free to the public. Questions: call Julie at 828-8275.

Holiday Boutique 2009, Donlon Elementary School, 4150 Dorman Road, Pleasanton, Pleasanton on Saturday, December 5, from 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m., in the multipurpose room. Over 25 handcraft vendors with such items as hand designed jewelry, journals, dollhouses, soaps, personalized candy bar wrappers and coffee sleeves, greeting cards, t-shirts, holiday decor, music CDs, dolls, and many other gifts.

Christmas Boutique and Pancake Breakfast, Saturday, Dec 5 from 9 a.m. - Noon. Open to the Public. A pancake breakfast is available for \$6 from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. Hosted by the Livermore Cresta Blanca Girl Scouts. Located in the Fellowship Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 2020 Fifth Street, Livermore. For more information contact Valerie at 925/577-9052.

Christmas Craft Faire, Sunday, Dec. 6, 1 to 6 p.m. St. Clare's Episcopal Church, Pleasanton. Handmade gifts, live holiday music, food and door prizes. Admission is \$8 (kids 5 & under are free) & includes holiday food sampler and one door prize ticket. For more info, contact St. Clare's Episcopal Church at 925-462-4802 or stclare@att.net or visit the church website at www.stclarespleasanton.org

A Holly Day Affair Dance, 7 to 10 p.m. Dec. 5 at the Dublin Senior Center, 7600 Amador Valley Blvd., Dublin. The decorations are up. The fire is delightful. Celebrate the season with friends and the big band sounds of 3 O'Clock Jump. Swing, tango, rumba, waltz and cha cha, too. \$9 Dublin resident, \$10 non-resident by Dec. 4 / \$12 at the door. 925-556-4511, www.DublinSeniorCenter.com

Walkin' in a Winter Wonderland, a Holiday Home Tour on Sunday, December 6, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in downtown Pleasanton. Benefit for Valley Humane Society. Home tour, shopping, treats, live music. Tickets are \$35 per person. Proceeds go to support the programs of Valley Humane Society, a nonprofit animal rescue organization. Each of the eight featured homes on the tour is unique. For more information and to purchase tickets to the Holiday Home Tour, contact Valley Humane Society at (925) 426-8656 or www.valleyhumane.org. Valley Humane Society is located at 3670 Nevada Street, Pleasanton and is open Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets can also be purchased at Towne Center Books and The Wine Steward. Tickets may also be purchased the day of the event at Lions Wayside Park.

A Giving Tree will be set up in the lobby of the Livermore Police Department through Dec. 17, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Those wishing to donate, select a tag from the tree and bring back a new unwrapped gift with the tag attached. Monetary donations cannot be accepted. However, gift cards are always welcome. The Police Department is located at 1110 So. Livermore Avenue. To arrange for a sponsorship or more information, call 371-4976.

16th Annual Holiday Food Drive, drop nonperishable food donations into the food bank barrels available aboard all Wheels buses during the period of Mon., Nov. 30 to Sun., Dec. 6. All food collected will be donated to the Tri-Valley Haven Food Pantry. Unlike in past years, riders will be required to pay a fare even if

they donate food. Collection barrels will also be available at the Livermore Transit Center, 2500 Railroad Ave., Livermore, 5 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and the Wheels Administration Office, 1362 Rutan Ct., Suite 100, Livermore, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. For information about Wheels call 455-7500 or go to www.wheelsbus.com.

Toys for Tots, collection by Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department (LPPFD). Toy collection events and locations: Annual Holiday Parades held in Pleasanton and Livermore. Parades are scheduled for Saturday, December 5, at 6:00 p.m. in Livermore and at 5:30 p.m. in Pleasanton down Main Street. Toys-R-Us Toy Collection Day at Toys-R-Us in Dublin. LPPFD Firefighters will collect toys by the staged antique fire engine. Pacific Swimming 14-Under Junior Olympics Championship Hosted by the Pleasanton Seahawks, Friday to Sunday, December 4 to 6, 2009 Dolores Bengtson Aquatic Center, 4455 Black Ave. Pleasanton. All Livermore and Pleasanton Fire and Police Stations: STATION 1, 3560 Nevada Street, Pleasanton; Station 2, 6300 Stoneridge Mall Road, Pleasanton; Station 3, 3200 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton; Station 4, 1600 Oak Vista Parkway, Pleasanton; Station 5, 1200 Machado Place, Pleasanton; Station 6, 4550 East Avenue, Livermore; Station 7, 951 Rincon Avenue, Livermore; Station 8, 5750 Scenic Avenue, Livermore; Station 9, 1919 Cordoba Street, Livermore; and Station 10, 330 Airway Boulevard, Livermore. Police Departments: Livermore, 1110 South Livermore Avenue; Pleasanton, 4833 Bernal Avenue.

Free Gift Wrapping Party, for seniors only, 2nd annual event hosted by Visiting Angels, Dec. 7, 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave., Livermore. Limit is three gifts per person, maximum size 9"12"x18". Gifts are to be boxed. No boxes provided. For information, call 443-1000.

Friends of the Vineyards Annual Holiday Party, Sunday, December 20, 2 to 5 p.m. Music, good food, and wine at the historic Ravenswood Estate, 2647 Arroyo Road, Livermore. Harpist Dominique Piana will provide holiday music. The board of directors will provide light refreshments. Please bring local wine to share. This invitation is open to all Friends of the Vineyards members and guests.

Valley Spokesmen Bicycle Touring Club, Sat., Nov. 28, 47 miles Scotts Valley to Santa Cruz, meet 10 a.m., Heidi Fraser, 451-1430. Sun., Nov. 29, 30 miles Sunol onto Calaveras summit, meet 9 a.m. at Livermore Cyclery in Dublin, Bob Heady, 980-7989. Wed., Dec. 2, 38 miles Livermore to Pleasanton and Blackhawk back to Livermore, meet 10 a.m. at the airport, Bill Goodwin, 487-0521. Club meeting Wed., Dec. 2, 7 p.m. Round Table Pizza in Dublin, election of officers. Anyone planning to go on a ride is asked to contact the leader for details on where to meet and what to bring.

Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society, meets Tuesday, December 8, at 7:30 p.m. at Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Ct., Pleasanton. Christine Rose will speak on "Military Records Between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars." Visitors welcome, no charge. Map to the site: www.L-AGS.org/maps/PLS-BethEmek.html Marie Ross 925-447-1806

La Leche League International, free woman to woman breast-feeding support. Meets first Monday of each month 10 a.m. to noon, Trinity Baptist Church, 557 Olivina, Building B #205, Livermore. Please RSVP to Stacy Hattori, 373-0987. dshattori@sbcglobal.net, www.LLL.org. 24-hour hotline, 1-877-452-5324. Net meetings: Dec. 7, Jan. 4, Feb. 1.

Book Sale, Friends of the Livermore Library monthly book sale on Sun., Dec. 6, noon to 4 p.m. in front of the former library, 1000 So. Livermore Ave. in Livermore. Fiction and nonfiction books and audiovisuals are sold at deeply discounted prices. There will be a table of free books. From 3 to 4 p.m., books will be sold for \$2 a shopping bag full.

Livermore Adult Education is seeking a Spanish speaking instructor to teach a bilingual beginning computer class for the Winter/Spring session. Need not be credentialed. For further information call 925-606-4722 ext. 7142.

Handling the Holidays, Planning ahead, examining feelings and fears, brainstorming with other family members, and expectations are areas we will explore. Hope Hospice offers a program to discuss strategies that can make a difference in how to manage to "Handle the Holidays." Friday, December 4, 10:00 a.m.

– 12:00 Noon. Hope Hospice Grief Support Center, 6377 Clark Avenue, Suite 100, Dublin, (925) 829-8770. To RSVP, please call Hope Hospice at 925-829-8770. This program is being held in the new location.

Livermore Lions Breakfast Branch invites the public to a breakfast meeting on Tuesday, December 1st from 7:30 to 8:00 a.m. at Poppy Ridge Golf Clubhouse, 4280 Greenville Rd., Livermore. \$10 for breakfast and program – pay at the door. Call Lion Gary Potter at 925-443-4144 for registration.

Ohlone Audubon meets 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 1 at the Pleasanton Middle School Library, 5001 Case Ave., Pleasanton. John Mena and Adam Shawen will tell how artificial platforms benefit nesting Aechmophorus Grebes. Bring slides and cookies for the member slide show and cookie exchange. Refreshments. Information at 510-507-3383.

Livermore Lions Host Club invites the public to the Wednesday, December 9 meeting 7 PM at the Zephyr Grill, 1736 First Street in Livermore for a presentation by Lions in Sight program. Past District Governor Walter Griffin will speak on the Lions role as the eyeglass recycling center for the Western United States which provides used glasses to Lions Clubs worldwide ensuring the glasses are appropriately prescribed and distributed. The program also conducts clinic trips to developing nations to properly dispense the recycled eyeglasses to those in need. All interested individuals are invited to attend - \$20 includes meeting/dinner/talk – pay at the door. Contact Lion Gary Potter at 925-443-4144 for more information

Health & Fitness Fair, Livermore Civic Center Public Library, 1188 So. Livermore Ave., December 12 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. in the Boardroom. Includes refreshments, healthy snacks, protein smoothies and a raffle drawing. Demonstrations on how to use a balance ball, dumbbells and elastic bands. Opportunity to check blood pressure, resting heart rate, body fat composition and provide participants with beginning measurements. To RSVP email tuffgirlfitness@yahoo.com or go to www.tuffgirl.com. There is no admission charge.

Dublin Senior Center, trip to Healdsburg, Dec. 12, 9:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Includes wine country Christmas party, no-host lunch, \$30 resident, \$35 nonresident. 556-4511. www.ci.dublin.ca.us.

Tri-Valley Democratic Club, seasonal party, Sat., Dec. 12, 5 to 7 p.m. IBEW Hall, 6250 Village Pkwy. Dublin. Congressman Jerry McNerney will host the event. Dinner provided by the campaign, you can bring dessert. Volunteers needed to help with the party, contact Doug Graven 530 320 7022, doug@jermymcnerney.org.

The Dream of the Snow Queen, Nov. 28, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Livermore School of Dance presents a holiday story showcasing classical and modern ballet, jazz, hip hop and Broadway showstoppers. The Bankhead Theater, 2400 First Street, Livermore. Tickets: \$26, \$20 and \$18, seniors and children receive \$3 discount. Box Office 925-373-6800 or online at www.bankheadtheater.org. No web/phone fee (\$3.50) at the Box Office.

Tuff Girl Fitness in Livermore is offering a free preview boot camp for women in Livermore on Saturday, December 12 from 8 a.m.-9 a.m. at an indoor location in Livermore (TBA). Morning workout, refreshments, healthy snacks, protein smoothies and a raffle drawing afterwards. To sign up for this free boot camp go to www.tuffgirl.com or send an email to tuffgirlfitness@yahoo.com

Thanksgiving Dance, Single Professionals of all ages are invited to celebrate Thanksgiving with new single friends, Saturday, November 28, 8 p.m.-midnight, at the Pleasanton Marriott, 11950 Dublin Canyon Road, Pleasanton. Adults of all ages are welcome. \$20 at the door includes dancing to current hits and oldies. Coat & tie/dressy attire are recommended. Anyone who wishes more information about this and many more singles parties may visit www.ThePartyHotline.com or call 415/507-9962.

Tri-Valley Seniors: rides available to medical appointments. Seniors who require door-to-door service are now eligible for a ride to their medical appointments. Volunteers use their personal vehicles to drive seniors to and from medical appointments. Seniors must be 60 and over, living in Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton or Sunol, and unable to find a ride (relative, friend, bus, paratransit). For a ride or

to volunteer to provide a ride, contact Jennifer Cullen at (925) 931-5387 or ja.cullen@yahoo.com. Funding for the Senior Transportation Program is provided by Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority and Measure B Funds.

San Ramon Valley Newcomers Club invites new and established residents to their December luncheon on Dec. 10th at Izzy's Steaks & Chops, 200 Montgomery, San Ramon. 11:30 - 2 p.m. Cost is \$19.50. Gift exchange and music by the Sweet Adelines. Call Myrna, 925-560-0656 for info. & res.

Eighth Annual Youth Food Drive, Youth service groups in Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin, Sunol, San Ramon, Alamo, Danville, Walnut Creek and Concord may now volunteer and request collection sites for the Eighth Annual Youth Food Drive to be held on March 6, 2010 by signing up at www.youthservicecouncil.com/Volunteer/Volunteer.html. Girl Scouts, youth ministries, and 4-H Clubs will be participating. Youth Service groups will go door to door to collect nonperishable food and return it to the closest collection site. All donations will go to local food pantries in the Tri-Valley or to the Contra Costa Food Bank. Details of the program and locations of collection sites are available on-line. For more information, call 925-998-6513.

Pleasanton VIP Travelers, Senior Center, 3535 Sunol Blvd., Pleasanton. 931-5370. Trip to see "Beach Blanket Babylon," in San Francisco, Dec. 16, includes dinner at the Crab House, \$126. Victorian Christmas trip to Nevada City, Dec. 20, \$42 members, \$44 nonmembers.

Reading Volunteers Needed, new group forming to start training in January to become a Barton Reading Tutor. No experience is necessary and training is free of charge. Volunteer matched to a student who needs help. All the materials and training provided needed to bring a student's reading and spelling up to grade level or above. For more information about the Barton Reading Program, please contact Christina Clark at Valley View 925/596-0292, or email christina.clark2@comcast.net.

Livermore Moms (formerly Livermore Moms Club) meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and are a great way to meet other members as well as learn more about our community and our roles as mothers. The purpose of the Livermore Moms is to share ideas and talents so that we may grow as parents, learn better ways to understand our children to help them become confident and capable individuals. We frequently invite speakers to make presentations. Meetings are free for members, as well as for first time visitors. Contact moms@livermoremoms.com for more information

Free English Conversation Classes at Pleasanton Public Library on Tuesdays from 7 p.m. to 8:30 pm, Wednesdays from 12 noon to 1 p.m., and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. 400 Old Bernal Ave. The program is free and open to all. No registration required. For more information call Janice Bauman (925)-931-3411

Sons in Retirement (SIRS), informal social group for retired men who meet once a month for lunch. No fees, dues, etc. Variety of activities include golf, chess, hiking, etc. The Livermore SIRS 101 group meets at the Doubletree Hotel, 720 Los Flores Rd., first Tuesday of each month, 11:45 a.m. Contact Chuck Petty, 447-4704 or cpontrail@comcast.net.

Gardens are being sought to participate in

the Going Native Garden Tour, set for Sunday, April 18, 2010, which showcases bird- and butterfly-friendly, pesticide-free, and water conserving gardens. Gardens must be located in Santa Clara County or San Mateo County, and contain 50% or more California native plants. To submit a garden, visit www.GoingNativeGardenTour.org. The deadline is December 1, 2009. For more information, email info@GoingNativeGardenTour.org. The Going Native Garden Tour showcases a wide variety of native gardens: established and mature gardens as well as newly installed ones; large acre lots and townhome gardens and all sizes in between; professionally installed gardens as well as owner-enthusiast inspired ones. Garden contents range from the full horticultural suite of California natives to a mix of natives and Mediterranean plants to locally native plants. If a garden contains 50% or more California native plants, submit the garden by filling out the Garden Submission Form at: http://www.goingnativegardentour.org/

Job Discovery Group, meets Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. at Unitarian Universalist Church in Livermore. Bring resume (and maybe a few extra copies to pass around), ideas, roadblocks & any resources to share in a supportive & proactive atmosphere of networking at UUCiL. Contact Brent Parry or Maureen Hamm (Brent-Parry@aol.com)/(mhamm33@earthlink.net) for more info.

Bingo, every Sunday, Games 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. 18 \$250 pay-outs, 1 \$350 payout, & more! Bingo Ranch, 3070 Pacific Avenue, Livermore. 606-7777. Must be 18 years old to attend. Pacific Avenue, Livermore. 606-7777. Benefits LVCS / CCEF.

RELIGION
Divorce Care, Valley Bible Church, 7106 Johnson Dr., Pleasanton. 13 week seminar and support group for people who are separated or divorced. Meetings Mondays from 7 to 9 p.m. \$25 for workbook and other materials. Preregistration is required. Contact Mark Porter, 846-9693 or mporter@hotmail.com for details or to register.

Advent Extravaganza - St. Charles Borromeo, 1315 Lomitas in Livermore, invites one and all to attend the Advent Extravaganza on Friday, December 4th at 7:00 to 9:00 pm. The evening will include the Nativity story; a Youth Ministry skit; singing carols; creating a family Advent prayer votive; and cookies & cider. Admission price is food goods or a monetary gift which will go to Tri-Valley Food Pantry. For questions contact Julie at upatholic@aol.com or 925-447-4549 ext 114.

St. Charles Borromeo & St. Michael's Catholic Churches, present Fr. Bob Mendonca speaking on "Shepherd and Sheep." The program is Thursday, Dec. 3, between 9:15-11:15 a.m. Childcare is available for a nominal fee. Contact Cheryl at 925-292-0506. Hosted by WINGS (Women In God's Spirit), a group for women of all religious backgrounds. At the St. Charles campus, 1315 Lomitas Ave., Livermore.

Faith Assembly of God, Pleasanton, 6656 Alisal St. Sunday school for all ages 9:30 a.m., workshop 10:30 a.m., children's church (ages 3-12) begins at 11:15 a.m. Last women's Bible study for '90 at 10 a.m., 55+ senior ministry meets first Friday of each month 7 p.m. Women's ministry will host a Christmas luncheon on Sat., Dec. 5 at noon. Cost per person \$12. Bring an ornament to exchange. Please call the church office, 846-8650, if you would like to attend the luncheon.

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