

THE INDEPENDENT • SECTION A

'Pass in Boots' Holiday Panto Comes to The Amador Theater in Pleasanton



Find Out What's Happening

Check Out Section A

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

Livermore School Board OKs Charter School renewal petition

By Patricia Koning

In a unanimous vote, the trustees of the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District approved the renewal petition for the Livermore Valley Charter School (LVCS). The approval is contingent on the Board of the Tri Valley Learning Corporation (TVLC), which oversees LVCS, approving an amended Memorandum

of Understanding (MOU) as is and delivering the executed version by 5 pm on Friday, Nov. 30.

This marks a first for LVCS and the District, as the District denied both the original LVCS petition in 2004 and the first renewal petition in 2007. The State Board of Education approved both of those petitions.

"We recognize that this

school has community support and an outstanding educational program for its students," said superintendent Kelly Bowers. "This is the beginning of a process to bring together our two communities over common values, the education of our students."

The District provided TVLC with its staff report and MOU on Friday, Nov.

23. TVLC held a special board meeting to review the report and MOU on Monday, Nov. 26. On the afternoon of Tuesday, Nov. 27, TVLC chief operating officer Bill Batchelor met with Bowers and assistant superintendent Chris Van Schaack to discuss proposed changes to the MOU, some of which were implemented in the amended MOU.

"I'm happy that the District worked with us and I think we've made a lot of progress," said Batchelor. "We still need to evaluate this amended version of the MOU."

The MOU covered the District's concerns with the LVCS renewal petition. Those concerns, in general, fell under special education. (See CHARTER, page 4)

Appeals Court Hearing Is Encouraging To Retirees

Retirees from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory who sued to be returned to University of California health and benefits programs were encouraged by an appeals court hearing in Oakland last week. However, the University of California Livermore Retiree Group must wait for the court to rule on a motion by the University that their suit be dismissed.

The Livermore Lab retirees were removed from the UC benefits system in 2008, when a for-profit consortium replaced UC in managing the Laboratory. Several hundred of the retirees organized, established a legal fund and filed suit in Superior Court in Oakland in 2010 to force the University to restore the benefits.

They claimed that an implicit if not explicit contract existed under which UC had repeatedly promised to continue their health benefits after retirement, and that they had made career decisions based on those promises.

Last week's hearing in the First District Court of Appeal in San Francisco responded to the University's

(See RETIREES, page 8)

Pleasanton Allocates Excess Funds

Pleasanton's 2011-2012 general fund budget included excess funds, making it possible to direct \$2.1 million to other projects.

The final revenues were just over \$90 million; expenditures around \$87 million. The city council voted to assign \$1 million of the \$2.1 million to help reduce the city's unfunded pension liability; \$561,000 went towards Phase II of the Bernal Park development; and \$561,000 into the repair and replacement fund.

The city's director of finance, Emily Wagner, told the council last week that property and sales taxes were lower than expected. However, fees for development services were higher, as was the income from the hotel/motel tax. Wagner added that the increase in the hotel/motel tax is a positive sign that the area is coming out of the recession.

Most of the development fees came from the new Continuing Life Communities senior housing under construction on the Staples Ranch.

Pleasanton lost close to \$2 million in sales tax revenues. Of that \$1 million was paid to the City of Livermore as the result of the state incorrectly paying the tax to Pleasanton. The remaining \$1 million involved taxes paid on goods sold in Pleasanton but shipped from

(See FUNDS, page 8)



Photo - Doug Jorgensen

Making the announcement that Livermore will host the Amgen Tour in 2013 are (from left) Tim Toonen, Tri-Valley Tourism Bureau, Livermore Mayor John Marchand, and Dave Best, Shea Homes. Both the visitors bureau and Shea Homes have contributed money to bring the tour to Livermore.

Livermore to Host Amgen Stage in 2013

For the third time, the City of Livermore has been selected to be a host city. For the 2013 race, Livermore will host the Stage 7 Start on Saturday, May 18 that will test the riders' climbing skills with a finish at Mt. Diablo.

On Monday, the city council reversed a decision not to take part in the bicycle

race. The deadline for applying was Mon., Nov. 26.

Following the council vote, Amgen was notified of the decision.

At issue for the council was the use of general fund monies to help finance the race. Staff had requested \$100,000. It was noted that other events, such as the 4th of July, were staged using

funds raised by members of the public.

On Monday, the council agreed to pledge \$35,000 towards funding the race in Livermore. That money will be offset by support from the private sector, according to Rob White, City of Livermore Economic Development Director. The money pays for the cost of

hotel rooms and meals for participants.

White told the council on Monday that the city was contacted by several community organizations asking the city to host the race. He pointed out that \$35,000 had been pledged to date. He expected to collect an additional \$15,000

(See AMGEN, page 2)

Faster, More Efficient Service Envisioned by BART

BART directors liked what they heard concerning the agency's vision to serve more customers and provide more frequent service by 2025.

Motivating the report, which directors heard at their meeting Nov. 15, is a call from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to all transit agencies to plan more efficient, cost-saving service for the future. The goal is to serve 50 percent more riders by 2025, to build on the trend towards increased ridership, and partly the desire to attract even more riders to enhance fare-box revenue.

The BART vision has two general strategies. One involves service to a growing number of planned transit-oriented developments (TOD), in which residents would not only ride BART to work, but also use BART as the preferred transportation to go shopping, dining out and visiting entertainment venues.

The TODs can put passengers on trains for two round-trips in one day, not just one, with the increased off-peak usage contributing

(See BART, page 4)

Two Livermore Schools To Institute Free and Reduced Cost Dinners

By Ron McNicoll

The Livermore school district plans to begin serving free or reduced cost dinners on school days at Marylin Avenue and Junction Avenue schools soon after the first of the year.

While Livermore and other districts offer free and reduced lunches and breakfasts, Livermore will be the first in the Valley, and the second district in Alameda County, to offer the subsidized dinners.

A meeting was set for this week to plan menus and other aspects to prepare for instituting the program, said Barbara Lee, the district's director of campus catering.

Approximately 50 to 75 children at each of the two schools are expected to participate in the program, said Lee. She has been meeting with her counterparts in

Antioch, Pittsburg, West Contra Costa and Oakland about the dinner program. All reported success with adding the dinners.

The other districts, especially Oakland and West Contra Costa, have much larger enrollment numbers eligible for free and reduced lunches. Livermore qualifies for the dinner program because of the percentages of eligible students compared to the total student population at those schools.

At Marylin Avenue, 83 percent of the 485 students are eligible. Some 62 percent of the 813 students at Junction are qualified. By comparison, districtwide 26 percent of the 12,664 students qualify. At Sunset school, 7 percent of the 810 students are eligible.

Lee acknowledged that (See DINNERS, page 8)



Photo - Doug Jorgensen

A new sculpture was recently installed on Sunol Boulevard in Centennial Park north of the Pleasanton Senior Center. The multi-colored sculpture, "Wind Song," was created by Artist Greg Hawthorne. The \$52,000 sculpture is made of stainless steel and painted in cheerful colors. A cement patio will be added shortly to give onlookers a chance to walk around the sculpture. "Wind Song" was presented to Pleasanton by Nancy and Gary Harrington. The Harringtons have created "Another Harrington Art Partnership Piece for You" (HAPPY) as a way to bring more art to the city. Contributions are sought to help to purchase the art. For more information, visit www.harringtonartpartnership.org

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PET OF THE WEEK

Hello everyone! My name is Thumper and boy, am I one cool dog. I am only about a year old, and guess what breed I am - basset hound and Labrador mix. Neat, right? I think so. I am just under 50 pounds and I look a bit like a sausage, but I'm seriously cute. I have such an outgoing personality- everybody I meet is my friend. Will you be my friend? I hope so! For more information, call us at 426-8656 or go online to www.valleyhumane.org or www.facebook.com/ValleyHumaneSociety to see other adoptable dogs and cats. Valley Humane Society is located at 3670 Nevada Street in Pleasanton. Photo by Trina Cort

VALLEY ROUNDUP

Haggerty to Host Open House

Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty will open the doors of his Pleasanton district office, the Heritage House, located on the Alameda County Fairgrounds, for a holiday open house event. The event will take place on Tuesday, December 18, from 5:30pm to 8:00pm.

Supervisor Haggerty and his staff will be on hand to welcome constituents, commissioners, elected officials and anyone who wishes to stop by. This will be an informal social event complete with light refreshments. This open house event will also serve as a great time to drop off a toy or canned food item for donation to local charities, Open Heart Kitchen and Abode Homeless Services.

The historic Heritage house will be decorated with lights and décor through the holidays courtesy of Jim and Brandy Theofanopoulos of the Screen Machine in Livermore.

For more information on this event, please contact Supervisor Haggerty's Outreach Coordinator Leah Doyle-Stevens at (925) 551-6995.

The fairgrounds are located at 4501 Pleasanton Ave., Pleasanton.

Dublin Prepares for Storms

The City of Dublin is preparing for the anticipated series of storms occurring in the Bay Area that were projected to start on Wednesday of this week. City Public Works staff has been preparing for the upcoming storms, including clearing any debris or leaves that have accumulated in the storm drains and inlets. Additionally, crews have checked and cleared the debris racks in the creeks that lead from the hills. Of particular concern with the incoming storms this week are the potential wind gusts on Wednesday morning which weather services have forecast could reach up to 55 mph in Dublin.

Public Works Department staff will continue to monitor the activity during and between storms this week, and staff will be ready to assist should the need arise for clearing streets of broken limbs or any downed street trees, as well as any localized flooding. Residents are reminded to keep their gutters and storm drains clear of debris.

The City offers the following tips and

resources to residents:

- In an emergency, please call 9-1-1
- Public Works Department (925) 833-6630
- After business hours, please contact the police non-emergency number: (925) 462-1212
- For PGE outages contact: 1-800-743-5000

Sandbags are available to local businesses and residents at the City's Public Works Maintenance Facility located at 5777 Scarlett Court in Dublin.

The City of Dublin Police Department, City staff, and Alameda County Fire Department are here to serve the community. For further updates, please refer to the City's website www.dublin.ca.gov.

Swalwell Greets Voters

Eric Swalwell, 15th Congressional District's newly elected representative, was on hand Nov. 22 to thank voters and to hear their top priorities.

"Last Thanksgiving I hit the 'Black Friday' sales to introduce myself to constituents and hear what they expected from their Congressman," said Swalwell. "This Thanksgiving, I'm grateful the voters have put their faith in me to listen to them at home and work for them in Washington."

Swalwell was at Toys R Us in Dublin and Target in Hayward on Nov. 22.

"I promised to be accessible and accountable," said Swalwell. "I learned last year that this is a great way to chat with constituents and I'm excited to be back in line."

Swalwell Selects Chief of Staff

Ricky Le has been tapped by Congressman-elect Eric Swalwell as Chief of Staff. Swalwell stated, "Ricky brings more than six years experience working on Capitol Hill and has strong ties to the Bay Area. He understands the needs of the district and my desire to have an office operation focused on our district and being accessible to constituents."

Le currently works on Capitol Hill as Deputy Chief of Staff and Counsel for U.S. Representative Zoe Lofgren and as a Professional Staffer with the Committee on House Administration handling federal elections and House oversight matters. Previously, he served for three years as Executive Director of

the California Democratic Congressional Delegation where he advised the state's 34 Democratic Members of Congress on statewide policy.

Le has worked on a variety of local, state, and federal campaigns over the last twelve years, including a statewide campaign in California. He was born in Da Nang, Vietnam and came to the United States as a political refugee at the age of five. He became a U.S. citizen in 2002.

Le grew up in San Jose, California, earned a B.A. from the University of California, Santa Cruz and a J.D. from Santa Clara University School of Law.

Amazon Center In Tracy

Amazon, the online retail giant, announced plans to build a distribution center on a 70-acre site in north Tracy. The center is expected to open in the Spring with some 1,000 jobs and projected revenues of \$1 million per year for the city, according to news reports.

It's the second Amazon center announced for the region in recent months. Last May, Amazon began work on a distribution center near Patterson, some 20 miles to the south. That center is expected to generate some 350 jobs and have the potential to grow, according to the state Office of Business and Economic Development.

Amazon last week declined to comment on the reasons for building two centers. However, Tracy mayor Brent Ives was quoted by the Stockton Record as saying that the Patterson facility will focus on bulk distribution while the Tracy one "will make use of advanced robotics and offer better-paying jobs."

Beware of Mail Theft

Livermore postal carrier Angela Flemings thwarted a would-be mail thief. She spotted the suspect, contacted police, then followed the suspect until police could arrive to make the arrest.

The Livermore Post Office urges residents to guard their own mail. The office points out that there has been a rash of thefts recently.

The Livermore Police Department has received reports concerning thefts of delivered packages from front porches and mailboxes. This seasonal trend is not specific to Livermore, theft-related crimes have increased nationally over the holidays.

The following may prevent someone from becoming a victim of mail theft:

- UPS offers a program titled, "UPS My Choice" that provides delivery alerts to electronic devices as well as package tracking. The free service allows a recipient to coordinate delivery to other locations or to a nearby UPS Store. <http://www.ups.com/mychoice/features/>

- The United States Postal Service also provides several methods of protection through package tracking and "hold mail" services. <https://www.usps.com/>

- Some companies provide a "special instructions" category allowing for the possibility of placing packages in a more secure location (ie: "place inside fence on side yard").

The police recommend not allowing valuable packages to be left on porches or in mailboxes for extended periods of time.

Please report crimes and suspicious persons or incidents to the Livermore Police Department (non-emergency: 925-371-4987 / emergency: 911).

Garamendi Named to Ag Committee

Congressman John Garamendi (D-Fairfield, CA) was recommended to serve as a Member of the House Agriculture Committee. He expected official approval during Wednesday's Democratic Caucus meeting. Garamendi, a lifelong rancher and farmer, will join in bicameral negotiations on the farm bill, which could be voted on by the House in December.

"I didn't enter Congress to twiddle my thumbs and sit quietly in the background. I must be where the needs of my district are and that's in the final negotiations for the five-year farm bill. I want to thank Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi for giving me this opportunity to serve where I am needed," said Congressman Garamendi.

"Passing a good farm bill is very important to the family farmers in my district, and the nutrition assistance in the farm bill provides vital help to struggling families throughout California," Garamendi added. "As a farmer and rancher, I know we need to get this done, and I will work around the clock to make sure California specialty crops and commodity programs are protected."

To join the Agriculture Committee, Garamendi is required to resign from the House Natural Resources Committee, which he has done.



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Pleasanton

Mon. 12/03 • 10:00 AM

Campo Di Bocce
75 E. Vineyard Ave.
Livermore

Mon. 12/03 • 1:00 PM

CareMore Care Center
4270 Rosewood Dr.
Pleasanton

Tue. 12/04 • 11:00 AM

Girasole Grill
3180 Santa Rita Rd.
Pleasanton

Wed. 12/05 • 10:30 AM

Hickory Pit
3064 Pacific Ave.
Livermore

Thu. 12/06 • 10:00 AM

Coco's
7505 Dublin Blvd.
Dublin

Fri. 12/07 • 10:00 AM

CareMore Care Center
4270 Rosewood Dr.
Pleasanton

1-877-211-6614
(TTY users should call: 711)

Reference Code: TI_1129

8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., 7 days a week. Se habla Español.



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SHORT NOTES

Holiday Faire

The City of Dublin is preparing for the holiday season with the Holiday Faire at the Heritage Park and Museums on Saturday, December 1 from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. The event will offer families a festive afternoon full of holiday cheer.

Old St. Nick will arrive on a jingle-bell wagon promptly at 12:00 p.m. Families will have the opportunity to visit with St. Nick and take photos throughout the day.

Visitors will experience a rustic holiday outing while shopping for handmade gifts and making traditional holiday crafts. The Merrie Olde Christmas Carolers, dressed in Victorian costume, will perform traditional carols throughout the park.

Guests are also encouraged to tour the 1910 Kolb House which will be decorated for "A Farm Christmas Morning" and the 1850's Murray Schoolhouse.

General admission to Heritage Park and the Holiday Faire is free. The Faire includes both free and paid activities. Wristbands for the Faire activities can be

purchased at the event for \$5, and includes a jingle-bell wagon ride, holiday craft making, and tours of the Murray Schoolhouse and Kolb House Museums.

The Holiday Faire is a program of the City of Dublin's Parks and Community Services Department. For more information, call (925) 556-4500.

Duct Tape Crafts

Duct tape crafts for tweens and teens will be offered on Wednesday, December 5, 2012 at the Livermore Library.

Livermore tweens and teens in grades 3 through 8 are invited to make Holly Jolly Duct Tape Crafts for the holidays. This free program runs from 3:00pm to 4:30pm in the Storytime Room of the Civic Center Library, 1188 South Livermore Avenue, Livermore.

Participants will make bracelets, rings, wallets and much more with a variety of colorful seasonal duct tape. The library supplies the instruction, duct tape and gift wrap, participants supply imagination.

Registration is required for this event. To register please contact Youth Services at (925) 373-5504. For more information contact Sandy at 925-373-5500 ext. 5583, or consult the Library's website: www.livermorelibrary.net.

Cash Mobs in Pleasanton

Downtown Pleasanton's new shopping initiative, Cash Mobs, will return on January 16 and will continue throughout 2013 at 6 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month. In the new year, all Cash Mob participants will be entered into a monthly drawing to win downtown gift cards, accepted at more than 100 downtown businesses.

Cash Mobs are popping up throughout the country as a way to encourage consumers to shop at local, independently-owned retail establishments and thereby strengthen the local economy. Laura Olson, Executive Director of the Pleasanton Downtown Association, said "Cash Mobs will give us all an opportu-

nity to have a measurable impact on the businesses in our downtown."

A Cash Mob is like a Flash Mob, but instead of singing, dancing or rioting, Cash Mobbers join together and each spend \$20 (or more!) at a local business.

Anyone interested in participating in the Cash Mob should meet PDA staff members in front of the Museum on Main (603 Main Street) at 6 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month. The PDA will then announce the business selected by random draw for the Cash Mob.

For more information please visit the PDA's Facebook page or call the PDA at (925) 484-2199.

Book Club for Kids

The Livermore Public Library invites second and third graders to join Mr. Jonathan Hamilton for an afternoon of reading, book discussion and fun at the Civic Center Library, 1188 South Livermore Avenue, Livermore. This free book club will meet from 4:00pm to 5:00pm, the second Wednesday of each month

through March 2013, in the Storytime Room.

On the first club meeting, Mr. Hamilton will present several books for nomination. Book club participants will decide which book to read as a group. Each participant will obtain a copy of the chosen book and then read it.

Registration is required. To register for this program or for more information, please contact the Youth Services Desk at 373-5504, or visit the Library's website located at www.livermorelibrary.net.

A Crime Prevention Seminar to Be Presented at Hindu Temple

The Hindu Community and Cultural Center will host a crime prevention seminar presented by the Livermore Police Department from 1 to 3 p.m. on Sat., Dec. 8.

The information will cover general, personal, vehicle and residential safety.

The presentation will take place at the Temple

Winter Camp

The Tri-Valley YMCA will hold winter camp for K-12th graders.

Two sessions are planned with crazy crafts, snowball fights, the winter Olympics, field trips and more.

The first session is Dec. 26, 27 and 28; the second on January 2, 3 and 4. Hours are 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The camp will be held at 6693 Sierra Lane #F, Dublin.

For registration information, go to www.trivalleyymca.org.

Wish you could see even more photos of local events in our Valley?



Our photographer, Doug Jorgensen, takes more photos each week than we can fit into our Print Edition.

Fortunately, you can see many of these additional photos featured each week on our website www.independentnews.com.

Photo series rotate throughout the week, so you'll want to visit more than once each week to see all the expanded content!

To easily keep up on the rotating content, we've created a facebook page where we link to the new photo series after they appear on the site. You can "Like" us on Facebook to receive notification of new photo series or featured articles.

We hope this gives you a taste of the many WEB ONLY photos that you can see at www.independentnews.com



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For additional photos:

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Deacon Dave to Unveil This Year's Holiday Theme

The biggest and what is considered the best holiday display in Livermore is set to open on Friday, November 30 at 6:30 pm. This holiday tradition is celebrating its 30th year. The front yard of Deacon Dave Rezendes' home at 352 Hillcrest Ave in Livermore, Casa del Pomba, is visited by tens of thousands of guests each year. Deacon Dave is also celebrating his 30th year of his ordination as a deacon in the Catholic Church.

The theme each year changes, and is always kept a secret until opening night ceremonies. On November 30th, the home and yard will be dark as a candlelight procession makes its way down the blocked off street. Members of the community are welcome to join the procession, which will feature the St. Michael's choir leading Deacon Dave and Santa and Mrs. Claus to the home. The Trinity Church choir will also perform. There is a blessing of the lights, the theme is announced, and the lights are turned on. At that time, guests are invited to walk through the yard.

Members of the non-profit group Good News Bears will help Deacon celebrate his special night by serving refreshments. Visitors wishing to support the group are invited to bring a new stuffed animal or cash donation to help them meet the ever-increasing need for "stuffed



Crowds gathered last year to view the annual light display at Deacon Dave's home in Livermore.

Photo - Doug Jorgensen

love" at shelters, hospitals, and emergency services. Find out more about their good work at www.goodnewsbears.org

In 2011, the theme was "Do You Believe." Guests walked through the display and joined "Virginia" from the famous "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus" story as she observed the many symbols of Christmas. Scenes depicting themes such as "Do you believe in giving rather than receiving," "do you believe in the magic in children's eyes," and "do

you believe in charity" were stretched along the driveway building. In the yard, guests were asked if they believed in sweets, angels, and love. One of the most special scenes depicted Mary, Joseph, and Jesus in the manger, and asked "do you believe in the reason for the season." The last scene was a huge lighted "Believe" sign, with Santa and Virginia asking you to join them in believing in all the magic of the season.

This year, each light is not only a prayer for

peace, but also for those who care for our elderly. Over 35 volunteers work hard throughout the year to put on the display. They are from many faiths, and welcome guests of all faiths. Be sure to walk through to gain the total experience. The crew members love to share the spirit of the holidays, and are often on hand to answer any questions. Just look for anyone wearing a red "Casa del Pomba" ball cap or jacket.

Santa loves to visit, and makes times in his busy schedule to stop by often during the season. He often drops in unannounced. Mrs. Claus loves the beautiful lights and story that is told every year, too, so she often joins Santa!

Deacon Dave opens his yard starting on November 30 until January 1. The hours are 6 pm to

9:00 pm Sunday through Thursday, and from 6 pm until 10:00 pm Friday and Saturday. (Costs shown above)

have changed from past years) The gates may be closed during inclement weather, although every effort is made to leave the lights glowing. There is no admission charge. All the donations collected in the coin toss, ponds, and at the door are for Santa's Secret Service. This program has provided a visiting Santa, carolers, and gifts to area nursing homes, shelters, and hospitals for over 50 years. Visit the website www.casadelpomba.com for more information on the display, Santa's Secret Service, and Deacon Dave's family history. A big thank you to Unforgettable Memories for the opening night sound system; Good News Bears for serving refreshments; Davey Tree for a bucket truck to help with the "high work", and the fantastic crew who makes it all happen.

Take East Avenue to Hillcrest, and then follow the glow. Check out the webcam at www.casadelpomba.com/webcam.htm

The Coolest Place in Livermore

CASBAH CAFÉ is one of Livermore's most authentic Middle Eastern eateries. This Mediterranean kitchen churns out classic dishes, including lamb chops, lamb shank, lamb gyros, falafel, and a host of other innovative home-style specialties. Try the Caspian salmon smothered in cumin and tarragon, or the fesenjan chicken, sautéed breast meat with pomegranate sauce and crushed walnuts. And you can't go wrong with the ever-popular kebobs: the Persian (koobideh) features spices so delicious, you'll be transported to another continent. Vegetarian/vegan and gluten free offerings of eggplant and soy meatballs round out a very inviting menu.

Casbah cafe
MEDITERRANEAN KITCHEN & BAR

1770 First Street, Livermore (925) 243-1477
LUNCH AND DINNER DAILY

Annual Holiday Candy Fundraising Effort by Main Street Designs Benefitting the Bothwell Arts Center Now in Full Swing

Celebrating their 25th anniversary and the opening of their seasonal Christmas shop in a new location, Main Street Designs is having its most successful season ever selling See's Candies as a fundraiser, with all proceeds going to the Bothwell Arts Center.

The See's Candies available at the Main Street Designs Christmas Shop include a variety of chocolates (milk, dark, soft centers, nuts and chews, truffles and assorted mixed) plus other gourmet treats such as molasses chips, peanut brittle, Victoria toffee, peppermints, fancy nuts, and gourmet lollipops. Most candies are pre-wrapped for the holidays and a variety of gift sets are in stock ranging from \$6 mini-samplers to a ½ pound gold box of assorted chocolates with the embossed message "Thank You" or "Happy Holidays" to several multi-pound gift packs in beautiful wrapped gift boxes.

In addition, special orders can be placed and fulfilled in just a few days. "We recently ordered 8 cases of assorted gourmet lollipops for one client in time for Thanksgiving and another customer purchased over 200 pounds of chocolate for corporate and employee



gifts," said Dennis Swanson, owner of Main Street Designs.

The Bothwell Arts Center, part of the Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center (LVPAC), nurtures both visual and performing arts, providing individual artists and local arts organizations with studio, classroom, rehearsal, performance and event space. In 2006, the Bothwell Arts Center opened on 8th Street and in 2010, added the Downtown Arts Studios on South L Street, offering artists private and open work spaces that foster interaction. Earlier this year, a monthly event, *Art Happens*, was introduced, adding to the annual *ArtWalk* which blankets downtown Livermore each October with exhibits by artists ranging from long-time professionals to emerging artisans in every type of media. Held on the second Thursday

evening of each month, the smaller-scale *Art Happens* brings together a variety of activities from drop-in craft demonstrations to art exhibits at the Downtown Arts Studios, nearby galleries and local restaurants.

In addition to *ArtWalk* and *Art Happens*, the Center mounts annual fundraising events in support of its facilities and programs, including the popular New Orleans Bash at the Bothwell, a joyous celebration of art and artisans on the Friday before Mardi Gras.

Bothwell Arts Center Upcoming Events:

December 9, 6:00 p.m.: *Celtic Christmas Concert and Gathering* with live music by Pog Mo Thoin and guests at the Bothwell Arts Center.

December 13, 6:00 -8:00 p.m.: *Art Happens* with carolers and holiday cheer at the Downtown Art Studios plus other events throughout downtown.

February 8, 2013, 5:00-10:00 p.m.: *New Orleans Bash at the Bothwell* featuring live music, Southern cuisine, pirate bar, silent auction, art and merchandise for sale, and so much more at this Mardi Gras costume party.

Wente Family to Lead Livermore Holiday Parade

The Wente Family will lead the annual Holiday Sights and Sounds Parade in downtown Livermore this Saturday, December 1.

As the oldest continuously family owned winery in the country and the first to bring Chardonnay cuttings from France to California, Livermore Downtown Inc. elected to honor the family's five generations of commitment to Livermore Valley Wine Country.

During the afternoon, snow will be at Lizzie Fountain for kids 8 and under to play in. Downtown stores will host a holiday open house. A Holiday Village Stroll courtesy of Club 56 will be from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Club has placed miniature Christmas Villages in the windows of some of the downtown stores.

A holiday performance

stage will be located at the Flag Pole Plaza, corner of First Street and S. Livermore Ave. Performances are 1 p.m. Valley Montessorri Choral Group; 2 p.m. Steve Kritzer; 3 p.m. Greg Chambers, saxophone; 4 p.m. recorded music.

Streets will close at 4 p.m. to prepare for the Holiday Sights and Sounds Parade that starts at 6 p.m. The

parade runs on First Street, starting at M Street and ending at McLeod Street.

The Tree Lighting is immediately following the Parade at the Flag Pole Plaza. The ABC Music Course Children's Choir will perform sounds of the seasons as well as a Livermore Christmas composition by Choir Director Kim Luty.

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'Puss in Boots' Holiday Panto Comes to The Amador Theater in Pleasanton



Morgan Werder as Puss and KJ Brown as Theophilus.

The Pleasanton Civic Arts Stage Company presents its annual Holiday Panto two weekends, December 7 through 16, at the Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road in Pleasanton.

This year's fractured fairy-tale musical-comedy production is "Puss in Boots." Shows are Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., and matinees Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m.

Based on the French fairytale by Charles Perrault, this world-premiere panto musical by local playwright Kate Hawley features a sassy cat who promises to solve the problems of a poor miller's son. Dressed in her trademark red leather boots, Puss charms the Queen, befuddles the Prime Minister, defeats the powerful wizard Kazaam, and helps her shy master and Princess Sweetiepie fall madly in love. Featuring original songs by local composer Chris Houston, the positive message about just being yourself makes this musical a wonderful holiday selection.

"Panto" (short for "pantomime") is not to be confused with the silent "mime" performance genre made famous by French mime master Marcel Marceau (think: black tights and white painted faces). Rather Panto is a lively irreverent musical-comedy produc-



David Moore as the Wizard Kazaam.

tion beloved for centuries in Great Britain, and most often performed during the Christmas and New Year season. The British Panto has strong ties to the Italian Commedia dell'Arte, which was a form of "theater for the people" comprised of troupes of professional actors who travelled the country, first in Italy then later in France, performing improvised comedic stories which told lessons using characters familiar to each locale. American

theater from vaudeville to Saturday Night Live owe their existence to the cherished and iconic Pantos of England.

Puss in Boots follows the panto tradition of being based on traditional children's stories. Plot lines are then adapted for comic or satiric effect, and always incorporate audience participation, slapstick, inside jokes, cross-dressing, song, dance, and all kinds of silliness. Other panto traditions to watch for include

(continued on page 4)



Pictured are the 2012 opening party scene with Nutcracker (above left) and Land of the Snow Scene (above right). Photos - Gary Cain

Valley Dance Theatre Stages 33rd Annual Classical Production of The Nutcracker

Valley Dance Theatre presents its 33rd annual full-length, classical production of *The Nutcracker* beginning December 8, 2012 at the Bankhead Theater, 2400 First Street in Livermore. In keeping with tradition, the holiday classic will be accompanied by the Livermore-Amador Symphony. The performance will feature professionally designed costumes, sets and scenery.

This year, the production will feature appearances by prominent members of the local community, including Livermore Mayor John Marchand and award-winning Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) design physicist, Heather Whitley.

Eight public performances of the Tchaikovsky classic will take place with evening shows at 7:00 p.m. on December 8, 14, 15,

and 16, 2012 and 2:00 p.m. matinees on December 8, 9, 15, and 16, 2012. For the fifth straight year, two special performances for local-area school children will take place on Tuesday, December 11, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

This year's festivities include pre-show carols by Cantabella Children's Chorus on December 8 at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m., December 9 at 2:00 and December 16, 2012 at 2:00 p.m., and by Harmony Fusion on December 14 at 7:00 p.m., December 15 at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m. and December 16, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. The Asbury Ringers will be ringing in the theater lobby for selected performances.

Livermore Mayor John Marchand will be performing as a father in the opening party scene on December 8 and 14 at 7:00 p.m. and December 15 and

16 at 2:00 p.m. Marchand first became involved with theater when asked to fill in for an actor in *Much Ado About Magic*, community theater production by Katzenjammer Company, where he discovered that he truly enjoyed the creativity of all of the aspects of theater – set construction, prop design, stage striking, as well as acting and singing. In high school and college, he performed roles ranging from chorus to lead in many musical theater productions, including the Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz* and Mayor Shinn in *The Music Man*. He met his wife when they were cast together in a play.

"There is something magical about live theater," Marchand says, "My wife and I participate whenever we have the opportunity. I love the creativity and the synergy that develops.

When the players respond to the energy from the audience, it boosts the energy in the performance.

"Valley Dance Theatre presents a wonderful production of *The Nutcracker*. As a teacher at Jackson School in Livermore, my wife brought her students to the Bankhead to see the special performances done every year for school children. For many of those children, it was their first live performance. Many of the children were so excited that they couldn't sleep the night before."

Also performing with the corps de ballet in *Snow and Waltz of the Flowers* will be Heather Whitley, one of two young LLNL researchers who recently received a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE). The award is the highest honor bestowed by the

United States government on outstanding scientists and engineers who are early in their independent research careers.

Whitley, who studied dance as a child, resumed ballet classes as a graduate student at UC Berkeley. Upon settling in Livermore in 2007, she found Valley Dance Theatre on Google and began taking classes, training more intensely beginning in 2009. This year marks her third appearance in *The Nutcracker*. "I didn't realize it as a child, but dancing really helped to build my confidence and poise," Whitley says. "Even now, if I'm feeling nervous about giving a presentation at work, I'll think about performing at the Bankhead and realize, if I can handle that, giving a presentation should involve much less apprehension. As a graduate student and now, dance classes were and are a much-needed form

of stress release.

"Ballet is a very precise art form and a very intellectually involved form of motion. When I'm in class, I'm able to leave behind the stresses of the day and focus on the choreography and expressing the emotion of the dance rather than being caught up in outside issues."

Tickets to the eight public performances are \$34, \$28 and \$24 for adults and \$18 for students 17 years and younger. They may be purchased online at www.bankheadtheater.org, by phone at 925-373-6800, or in person at the theater box office, 2400 First St., Livermore. Hours are Tuesday-Saturday, 12 noon-6:00 p.m., and for two hours prior to show time.

For teachers interested in tickets for either of the December 11 school performances, a ticket order form is available at www.valleydancetheatre.com.

Symphony Begins 50th Anniversary Season with Holiday Concert

The Livermore-Amador Symphony opens its Golden Anniversary Season with music that celebrates the orchestra's half-century of musical achievement.

The performance will be Dec. 1 at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore. There will be a prelude talk at 7 p.m. followed by the concert at 8 p.m. Dr. Arthur Barnes will conduct.

The concert will begin with Livermore composer Tom Darter's LAS-commissioned work "Celebrations."

Johannes Brahms' Violin Concerto follows. The evening concludes with Brahms' First Symphony. It captures the revolution of musical technique and

emotion in force during the mid-nineteenth century.

The orchestra will be joined by Stuart Canin, concertmaster of the San Francisco Symphony from 1970

to 1980 and concertmaster of the San Francisco Opera from 1970 to 1972. Born in New York City, Canin studied the violin with famed pedagogue Ivan Galamian.



Stuart Canin performs with symphony.

In 1959, he surpassed 25 other violinists to capture first prize at the Paganini International Violin Competition in Genoa, Italy. One year later he was honored by his native city with its highest cultural award, the Handel Medal, in recognition of his musical achievements.

Both the Livermore and Pleasanton city councils have issued proclamations recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the Livermore-Amador Symphony.

The Bankhead Theater is located at 2400 First Street in downtown Livermore. Tickets may be purchased at the box office, by calling or on-line at www.bankhead-theater.org.

BANKHEAD THEATER

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2013



Handel's Messiah

Pacific Chamber Symphony
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Celebrating 50 Seasons

Livermore-Amador Symphony
SAT DEC 1 8pm



The Nutcracker

Valley Dance Theatre with the Livermore-Amador Symphony
DEC 8,9,14,15,16 2 & 7pm

Chanticleer Christmas

A Glorious Holiday Favorite
WED DEC 19 7:30pm



Willie K's Hawaiian Christmas

with the Kalama Brothers
An Island Holiday Aloha
FRI DEC 21 8pm



Moscow Boys Choir Christmas

Christmas Around the World
SAT DEC 22 7:30pm



Big Fat Kiss Off Comedy Show XX

Will Durst and Friends
FRI DEC 28 8pm

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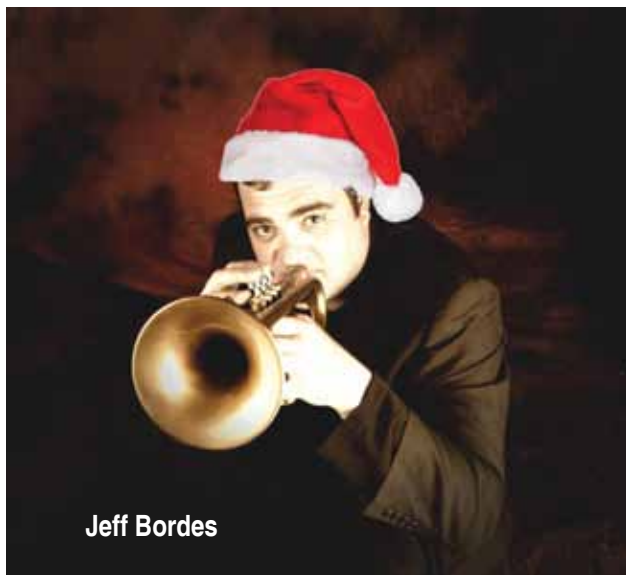
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Jeff Bordes & Friends: A Jazzy-Funky Christmas

Jeff Bordes & Friends returns for the second annual big Holiday Concert at the Firehouse Arts Center on Saturday, December 8, at 8 p.m. This year's theme is *A Jazzy-Funky Christmas*. It will feature special guest artists, including organist and vocalist Don Lewis, a perennial local favorite. Also on the bill is swinging local big band group The CoolTones. Bordes says the program will include a number of other "terrific surprise guests."

Included in the program will be numbers Jeff dubs "bluegrass," merging bluegrass and jazz. "We will be performing some music with a back-porch jazz feel, as if we were hanging out on the porch of a cabin in the swamps of Louisiana, playing holiday music and having a good time . . . This group will feature bluegrass instruments including fiddle and washboard," says Bordes.

Bay Area jazz trumpeter and Pleasanton native Jeff



Jeff Bordes

Bordes needs no introduction to jazz fans. A 1997 graduate of the famed jazz school Berklee College of Music in Boston, Bordes has been not only playing since very young, but changing the face of jazz. Career highlights include live performances and recording

projects with such greats as Branford Marsalis, Alex Acuna, Richie Cole, Tom Petty, Stevie Nicks, Sheryl Crow, and most recently John Mellencamp. He has done performance tours of the US and internationally with a number of groups, including Bill Berry Big

Band and the great Dizzy Gillespie.

In addition to his performance work, Jeff is passionate about spreading the word of Jazz as a featured clinician in schools and music festivals throughout the world, as well as teaching privately. He also writes articles on jazz for numerous music publications, including All About Jazz and Trumpet Player Online. And if that's not enough, Bordes has recently begun a new music career composing for film and commercials, including contributing to the soundtrack of the award-winning documentary "De Colores."

Tickets are \$15, \$20, \$25; child \$12; senior \$22; group discounts available. Tickets can be purchased in advance at www.firehousearts.org, by calling the Box Office at 925-931-4848, or in person from the Firehouse Box Office, 4444 Railroad Avenue in Pleasanton.



PEEPING SCROOGE. Ebenezer Scrooge (Dave Rettinger) looks longingly into the happy Cratchit home, where Mrs. C. (Jenny Moy) and her daughter Martha (Ari Moore) plan a Christmas surprise. Scenes from Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" will be performed throughout the Dickens Faire at St. Bartholomew's Church, 678 Enos Way, Livermore. Victorian "shoppes," music and tea also will be offered. Hours are 10 am to 5 pm Saturday, December 1, and 1-5 pm Sunday, December 2. Photo by Mike Atkin

PUSS IN BOOTS

(continued from front page)

recurring comic characters, such as "the two servants," one crafty and one stupid, "the father," "the lover," "the evil wizard," and "the sweet child."

In this version of Puss in Boots, the role of the Queen was written especially for returning guest actor Paula Wujek. Guest artist David Moore, appearing with Civic Arts Stage Company for the first time, takes on dual roles as the snooty Prime Minister Pratt and the evil wizard Kazaam, which makes him a villain doubly worth booing. According to Director Rebecca Ennals, "It's exciting to work with a cast of over 70 local actors, mostly kids aged 6 and up. We're always thrilled to see our young actors

grow into really seasoned performers. This cast includes (2008 first season actors) Morgan Werder as Puss, and Tommy Herz in the comic supporting role of Brutus."

In addition to returning director Ennals, Katie O'Bryon reprises her role as company choreographer, along with set and lighting designer Steve Mannshardt and sound designer Ryan Lee Short. New staff music director Angela Zullinger and costume designer Sophia Thorsen round out the senior production roster.

"I am so excited to see another fun classic brought to life at the Amador Theater this season," says Mark Duncanson, Civic Arts Stage Com-

pany Coordinator with the City of Pleasanton. "I get energized when I see and hear the rehearsal process; new songs being sung, new dance routines being worked out, and an enthusiastic production staff that loves what they do."

Tickets are \$10, \$15, \$18; Child or Senior: \$6, \$9, \$12. Tickets can be purchased online at www.firehousearts.org, by calling 925-931-4848, and in person at the Firehouse Arts Center Box Office, 4444 Railroad Avenue, Pleasanton. Box Office hours are Wednesday - Friday 12:00 noon-6:00pm and Saturdays 10:00am-4:00pm. Tickets are also available at the Amador Theater 2 hours prior to the performance.

Fire Department Launches Annual Toys for Tots Drive

The Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department (LPFD) conducts the local Toys-for-Tots Campaign for the 2012 Holiday Season. Once again designated as an official Local Community Organization by the Toys-for-Tots Foundation, LPFD firefighters have already begun collecting, storing, and sorting new and unwrapped toys that will benefit and provide holiday cheer for the children of the Tri-Valley. This year, toy donations are most critical because local charitable organizations that participated in the past are unable to due to funding shortages.

The LCO designation gives LPFD recognition as an official toy drop-off loca-



tion by the National Toys for Tots Foundation, which lists LPFD on its website (<http://pleasanton-ca.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/lco-sites/default.asp>) so that businesses and/or individuals can donate toys. Donated toys are given to children who live in the Tri-Valley region and Alameda County. Through the donations of businesses, community organizations, schools and individuals, firefighters exceeded in collecting over 26,000 toys last year.

Many local Livermore and Pleasanton businesses serve as collection points for the Toys for Tots Founda-

tion. All Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department Stations have Toys for Tots containers where the public can drop-off new, unwrapped toys:

Fire Headquarters, 3560 Nevada Street, Pleasanton, (925) 454-2361; Station #6, 4550 East Avenue, Livermore; Station #1, 3560 Nevada Street, Pleasanton; Station #7, 951 Rincon, Livermore; Station #2, 6300 Stoneridge Mall Rd., Pleasanton; Station #8, 5750 Scenic Ave., Livermore; Station #3, 3200 Santa Rita Rd., Pleasanton; Station #9, 1919 Cordoba St., Livermore; Station #4, 1600 Oak Vista Way, Pleasanton; Station #10, 330 Airway Blvd., Livermore.

Celtic Christmas Concert & Gathering at the Bothwell with Special Guest Michael Mullen

The Celtic Christmas Concert & Gathering will celebrate its second year with a special musical treat.

The festivities will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. on Sun., Dec. 9 at the Bothwell Arts Center in Livermore.

Pog Mo Thoin, fronted by Gabe Duffin, is a local band that features lively jigs and Irish folk songs. For this event they will bring in guest Michael Mullen, hailed as a "fiddle demon" in past press releases.

Mullen is widely known for his frenetic, lively fiddling as a member of the Celtic group, Tempest. Tempest has been in the forefront of the groups that "rebirthed" the Celtic sound in the last two decades and breathed new life into its popularity by emphasizing movement, dance, drums, lively electronic fiddling and a healthy grounding in rock and roll. Mullen, schooled originally in classical violin and graduating to two



decades of Irish and Scottish fiddling, comes alive behind the fiddle and the fiddle becomes a live thing in his hands, and a perfect complement to the sound of Pog Mo Thoin.

Tickets are \$15 at the door, pre-sale tickets \$10 are available at ABC Music Source, Panama Red Coffee Company, from members of the band, and through info@bothwellartscenter.org.

This family friendly event will feature live mu-

sic, a potluck meal, cider & tea. Wine and beer will be available for an additional charge. Guests are asked to bring the potluck dish of their choice.

The event is produced by Gabe Duffin with support by the Bothwell Arts Center and LVPAC, and is a fundraiser for the Bothwell.

The Bothwell is located at 2466 8th Street and is a project of Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center, a not-for-profit corporation.

Wineries Open Their Doors for Festive Holiday in the Vineyards Weekend

Visitors Asked to Bring Donation for Toys for Tots

Livermore Valley Wine Country celebrates the season with a weekend of cheer during Holidays in the Vineyards this weekend, December 1 and 2.

Hours at participating wineries are noon to 4:30 p.m. each day. There is no ticket required to attend. However, tasting fees may apply and vary by winery.

During this annual wine country tradition, wineries open their tasting rooms featuring arts and craft vendors, special wines, festive activities, Santa visits, carolers, and more.

Guests are encouraged to bring unwrapped toys or monetary donations. All toys and donations will be donated to the Pleasanton-Livermore Fire Department Association's Toys for Tots Program after the event, directly benefitting children in need throughout Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Some wineries offer discounts on tasting with a toy donation.

For more on the Toys for Tots program, visit <http://pleasanton-ca.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/lco-sites/default.asp>

Many wineries are offering special discounts on wines and cases of wines.

Listed below is just a sampling of what visitors to Livermore Valley wine country will find during Holidays in the Vineyards:

Bent Creek Winery: new release 2009 Livermore Valley Petite Sirah; Two Guys playing light jazz and holiday music - 12:30 - 4:30 pm Saturday and Sunday; arts and



Photo - Doug Jorgensen

Barrel room is decked out for the holidays.

crafts, variety of chocolate truffles paired especially for wine

Big White House & John Evan Cellars: Barrel tasting annual Winter Star; shopping for variety of gifts

Bodegas Aguirre Winery: Reserve wine tasting, photography and prints available, complimentary tasting with Toys for Tots donations

Cedar Mountain Winery: BYOB- Bottle Your Own Port Sunday only 12-4, Complimentary Mulled Wine; Holiday Port and chocolate cups in special packaging at a special price; Holiday Gift Shop - Lots of products.

Charles R Vineyards: Holiday Choir singing traditional holiday songs - Saturday afternoon, S'mores packages for two (\$4) and roasting forks for

a sweet and belly-warming treat. Variety of crafts available for purchase.

Concannon Vineyard: Horse carriage rides through the vineyard with a glass of wine for a fee and hot chocolate for the kids. Pairing Petite Sirah Port with Petite Sirah Chocolate Sauce. Ken's Wood Fired Pizza will be on hand to make his artisanal creations. Gift ideas.

Crooked Vine & Stony Ridge Winery: Cupcake pairings, hot apple cider, wine discounts, and holiday decorations. Gift vendors including recycled wine barrels turned into art.

Cuda Ridge Wines: Release of new wines; Santa Claus will make appearance Sat & Sun. Tim Goes performing Christmas Carols.

Eagle Ridge Vineyard: Selling lavender items for

Valley Humane Society. Accepting monetary donations for Toys for Tots, variety of gifts available for purchase. Tri-tip chili, hot mulled wine, variety of gift items.

Eckert Estates: New wine release of Pinot Noir and Port, variety of crafts including Extra special hand made custom dog clothes by Nikki Goodman

El Sol Winery: Barrel Samples of 2006 Estate Syrah and 2005 Livermore Cabernet Sauvignon. Holiday shopping: hats, scarves, jewelry, jewelry and more jewelry.

Elliston Vineyards: Festive music and décor for enjoyment, craft creations, handmade gifts and novelties

Garré Vineyard and Winery: Garré Sparkling Wine, Red Velvet Port,

Cabernet Sauvignon, variety of arts and crafts and jewelry.

Las Positas Vineyards: Wine and Food Pairing. In addition, desserts, cupcakes, truffles, etc. available for purchase.

Les Chênes Estate Vineyards: Food and cheese pairings

Longevity Wines: Sat. 1-4 pm Santa Visit, Sunday Joey T & Friends Live Music. Food from Winemakers Pourhouse both days, variety of crafts.

McGrail Vineyards and Winery: Posada Catering will be selling food Sat. and Sun., Santa Claus will be visiting on Sunday.

Mitchell Katz Winery: Santa Claus will be visiting 1-4 pm both days, variety of arts and crafts for gift giving.

Murrieta's Well: 2008 Los Tesoros Cabernet Sauvignon & 2009 Los Tesoros Cabernet Franc, Complimentary holiday cookies and hot cider

Nottingham Cellars: Petite Sirah, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, truffles and jewelry for purchase.

Occasio Winery: Verticals of Zinfandel, Petite Sirah and library wines. Introduction of new dessert wine releases and announcement of Occasio Heritage Collection.

Page Mill Winery: Free tastings with Toys for Tots donation, Chili both days 12-4:30 pm, arts and crafts.

Retzlaff Vineyards: Complimentary hot chocolate, cookies, arts and crafts. Holiday clothing, hand made wooden toys,

jewelers

Rios-Lovell Winery: Ports (Sweet ports for the New Year), vendors & hors d'oeuvres.

Tamás Estates: Santa Claus visiting 1-3 pm. Complimentary mulled apple cider

The Singing Winemaker: Assortment of holiday gifts, wine tasting

The Steven Kent Winery and La Rochelle Winery: Wine and cheese pairing stations in the barrel room each day, variety of crafts and truffles.

Wente Vineyards Estate: Santa Claus visit Sunday only from 1-3 pm, Complimentary Mulled Apple Cider

Westover Vineyard & Winery: Pomegranate Sparking Peach Sparking Mataro SF Bay Cabernet Sauvignon, Pleasanton Ridge Chardonnay, Estate LV Petite Sirah Port, Bottle your own port (50% off for members) or Nouveau Wine \$6.00 per bottle, bring your own or \$7.00

White Crane Winery: Santa Claus Visiting 12-4 pm Sat. & Sunday. Complimentary meatballs marinated in Port and wine sauce.

Wood Family Vineyards: New release 2010 Zinfandel "Muy Bien." Limited production tasting offered to all who bring a toy or donation for Toys for Tots 10% off case purchase, Soup and wine pairings. Gourmet foods, arts and crafts vendors.

For a complete list of discounts, fees, crafts, etc., go to www.lvwine.org.

Harry Marku, Author of *Rare Earth* to Present Program at the Livermore Library



Henry Marku to talk about his book at the Library.



Author Henry Marku discusses his novel *Rare Earth* at 2pm on Sunday, December 2, 2012 at the Livermore Public Library Civic Center, 1188 S. Livermore Avenue.

There is no charge for this event. Books will be available for sale and signing.

Yakov, a maverick geologist, makes an extraordinary Rare Earth mineral find in the Canadian sub-Arctic and becomes an unwilling pawn in the hands of a political cartel. His safety relies on Robb, a promising young scientist protecting US interests in the advancing Rare Earth economies. When Robb's personal coincidences connect Yakov's discovery to the public murder of a top-level politician, the youthful analyst launches a quest to prove the link—instantly inserting him in the crossfire alongside the beleaguered Yakov. To survive, he must prove who is behind the assassination and why the Rare Earth minerals are being sought with deadly intent. *Rare Earth* weaves drama, high-tech anecdotes, fictional science, and social conscience to create a novel modeled after those of Michael Crichton.

Harry Marku is the pen

name of a local Livermore scientist working in the field of alternative energy, whose novel is inspired in part by the characters and stories he experienced growing up in the Ukrainian and Romanian immigrant communities of the Western Canadian prairies. Although remotely settled and seemingly mundane, the people of this dying immigrant culture were larger than life, having survived wars, depression and want after risking their lives to escape across the Atlantic to forge a future in the New World. They were well suited to surviving the harsh and unforgiving climate of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Drawing on his workplace experiences as well, Marku explores scientific and social themes in his book, such as the rejection of science as mere hypothesis and devaluation of the human individual.

The Friends of the Livermore Library have underwritten this program as part of the Friends Authors and Arts Series. For additional events, check the library's website at www.livermorelibrary.net.

TurningWheels for Kids Near Goal of 500 New Bikes

For the past seven years TurningWheels for Kids, a Silicon Valley based 501(c)3 non-profit has made underserved children's dreams come true by providing new bicycles at Christmas-time and throughout the year. This year, the new Tri-Valley Chapter will expand on that with the purchase, assembly and donation of almost 500 new bikes to local charities. On December 1st over 150 volunteers will work togeth-

er at the Alameda County Fairgrounds to assemble all the bikes in about 5 hours!

"It's been a lot of work but we have a very committed group of volunteers and have received tremendous support from local businesses and individual donors to help us get this off the ground," stated Rich Sims one of the group's board members.

With an initial grant from the Safeway Foundation

and cash and in-kind donations from Therma Corporation, Cresco Rentals, The First Presbyterian Church, Livermore, both Hayward and Livermore Rotaries and the Alameda County Fairgrounds, the group has already raised a large portion of the needed funds. "We're still about \$10,000 short of the \$40,000 we need to raise, but we're confident that, as the holidays come around, the community and

local businesses will step up and help us reach our goal," claims Cathryn Griggs another board member

TurningWheels for Kids Tri-Valley is a new, local chapter of an already proven, 501(c)3 organization under the auspices of the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center Foundation. Contact Rich Sims at rich@turningwheelsforkids.org. Online information is available at www.turningwheelsforkids.org/tri-valley-group

Combines Centerpointe Choirs Perform Festival of Carols

The combined choirs of Centerpointe Church will present their annual Festival of Carols, The Joy of Christmas, Dec. 8 and Dec. 9 at the church's worship center, 3410 Cornerstone Court.

The Saturday performance starts at 7 p.m. The second performance will be at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 9.

The program will include anthems by both the handbell and chancel choirs accompanied by piano, organ and a string quartet. The audience will have the opportunity to sing along with a number of the best-loved Christmas Carols that tell the story of Christ's birth.

"We welcome all to come

join us as we celebrate the true meaning of Christmas," said chancel choir director Kathryn Walda. "We hope to fill everyone's heart with the joy of the season."

Betty Gail Hunt directs the handbell choir, while Diana Cefalo will be the guest director. Lee Lipsker

will narrate the program.

A reception will follow the Saturday evening performance. There is no admission charge.

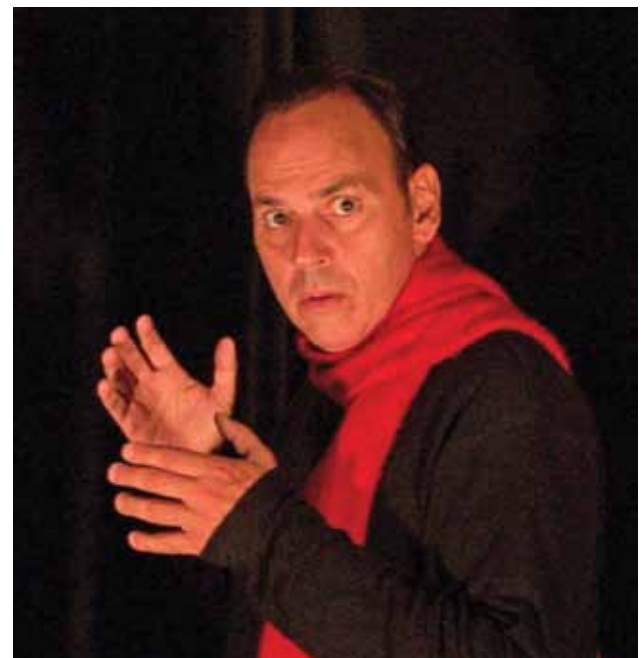
For additional information, please see the web site, www.centerpointechurch.org or call the office at 925-846-4436.

Film and Broadway Actor Duffy Hudson Performs 'A Christmas Carol' at Firehouse Arts Center

Visit the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and yet to come in *A Christmas Carol* on Friday, December 7th at 7pm. Museum on Main brings film and Broadway actor Duffy Hudson back to the Firehouse Arts Center in this unique one-man adaptation of the classic Charles Dickens novella, *A Christmas Carol*.

Nearly 170 years since the first publication of the Dickens tale, Hudson brings the magical story to life as he portrays all 46 characters without the aid of props or costumes. Hudson received standing ovations and praise for his portrayals of Albert Einstein and Edgar Allan Poe at sold-out performances at the Firehouse Arts Center for Museum on Main's Ed Kinney Speakers Series and is sure to draw the same response for this performance.

To purchase reserved seating to this event, please contact the Firehouse Arts Center box office at (925) 931-4848 or go to www.firehousearts.org. Museum member passes or discounts do not apply. Box Office Hours: Wed-Fri- 12-6pm, Sat- 10-4pm. Tickets to the event are \$16 adults, \$12 Youth 12 & under.



Duffy Hudson in *A Christmas Carol*

Do You Remember?

By Anne Homan
Livermore City Historian



Responses from Some Readers

This is the fourth of these columns that I have written. Just as I learned through teaching that the teacher always learns from his/her student, so the writer of a newspaper column learns from his/her readers. Thanks to all of you who have responded.

Rich Buckley wrote about his family's early connections with Yosemite. His grandfather Tom Buckley spent many summers camping in the park with his sons. In the 1930s his parents' home in Livermore was a "hotel" for Native Americans who came all the way down from Yosemite to be treated by Dr. Degnan. Rich said, "Dad used to tell us a story about his father sending him on a trail from where they were camping on Glacier Point to the valley floor. Dad said he'd jog down the mountain to fetch fresh bread (from Degnan's) and scamper back up. None of us believed his story until we read your article."

Anne Longmuir also wrote about Dr. Degnan: "I was pleasantly surprised when thumbing through the recent paper I spied my grandmother's maiden name. I read your article about Dr. John Degnan's time in Livermore. He was my great-uncle. . . . Over the years I heard many stories about Yosemite, the Degnan family and Dr. John but your research and article were new things

that I didn't know."

My column on the Hagemann Ranch triggered a response from Christine Ariizumi. She has lived in the same house for 43 years. It shares a fence line with the ranch. "We have thoroughly enjoyed having the ranch behind us. We were worried sick when the developer purchased the land and it went on the market. . . . Fortunately, all turned out well for those of us who want to keep some of the 'old' around. It is an anchor that holds together the Valley's past and present and should be used as a teaching tool for the citizens of Livermore and their children who think we are just a suburb of the Bay Area's larger towns."

Keith Duffus wrote all the way from Ohio. He started working for the Hagemanns in 1972 when he was 12 years old and continued for two years during the summers. "Mr. Hagemann and his mother would have me do simple chores. The highlight of working there was lunch time. They would always serve me a summer sausage sandwich. They made their own summer sausage, and it was wonderful. I am now 52 and I can still remember those sandwiches like it was yesterday. The experience of working for them was more than just the food. It was starting early, working hard and people treating each other

with respect."

I wrote two columns on chickens. I had asked Ashley Ruzicka about her chickens, but she was so busy that she did not get her information to me in time. "I raise bantam Partridge Wyandottes, large and bantam Golden Laced Wyandottes, a bantam White Faced Black Spanish, a large Rhode Island Red, a large Black Maran, and a bantam White Silkie." In all, she has ten chickens and one Mandarin duck. This past summer with her bantam Spanish, she won Best of Class, Best Bantam, and Reserve (second place) of Show at the Alameda County Fair.

Carolyn Hunt wrote, "I enjoy your historical articles. I'm amazed at how you keep coming up with such interesting material! Some aren't especially interesting to me personally, such as last week's article on the Foscalinas, whom I'd never heard of, until WHOA! I read that Simon and his wife lived in the house I lived in when I first came to Livermore in 1963!"

In one of my columns on the year 1913, I mentioned a KisselKar—a make of car I had never heard of. A friend put me in touch with Lynn Kissel, who lived in Livermore until recently and owns two KisselKars. He invited me for a ride through downtown Livermore in his



Anne Homan poses with the KisselKar. Photo by Lynn Kissel

beautifully restored 1914 KisselKar 40 touring car, one of only four left. He had to use hand signals for his turns. He worried about young drivers who would probably not understand what he was doing. The big car attracted a good deal of attention. I had a great time!

William Lokke came to Livermore as "a fresh wide-eyed Minnesota college graduate" to join the Lab in June 1957. He caught a Greyhound Bus to Livermore, where he and his trunks were "dumped behind the Lutz Hotel into a 110-degree" day. The ho-

tel clerk took him upstairs to his room, "directly over the wheezing bus." The only way he could get any fresh air in the room was to open the window, but that let in all the bus exhaust fumes. Needless to say, he was glad when the Lab housing office found him other quarters a week later.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Rick Sanders worked at La Rochelle's restaurant in Pleasanton and served both Masud Mehran and his son, Alex. "During the Iran hostage crisis, I remember his being verbally harassed by local business men for being Iranian; however, he

ALWAYS held his head up high and maintained his dignity and the respectfulness we as servers had known him for. I am glad to know he is still doing well."

Brett Gregory started working at the Livermore Airport in 1992 and knew Dan Lee. "Whenever he was at the airport he was smiling. You could tell it was his passion. Your article was a fitting tribute to a man who made a difference that we all still benefit from today."

(Readers can reach me at am50homan@yahoo.com.)

Pleasanton Concert Band to Perform Holiday Rhapsode Concert at the Firehouse

The Pleasanton Community Concert Band will perform its annual holiday concert at the Firehouse Arts Center in Pleasanton.

Under the direction of Bob Williams, the band presents the sounds of the holiday season including A Rhapsody For Hanukkah, A Rhapsody on Carols,

and Jingle Bells Rhapsody. There will be many other familiar seasonal tunes, medleys, and an opportunity to Sing-Along. This free concert will be performed on Sunday, December 2, 2012 at 2:00 PM at the Firehouse Arts Center, 4444 Railroad Avenue, Pleasanton.

The Firehouse Arts Center doors will open at 1:40 PM. The concert is free, although donations are appreciated.

For more information call 925-846-5897 or go to the Pleasanton Community Concert Band website. www.pleasantonband.org

Picazo Wine Poured and Sold at McGrail Two Primo Vino Ventures Seal a Deal

by Harry Stoll

Thursday dusk, November 15: the rain can't decide to write on the slated sky, but inside the high wide and bright McGrail Vineyards and Winery tasting room, the decision is clear: Jose and Pam Picazo will continue to grow Merlot in their vineyard on Kalthoff Commons, but are getting out of wine production. Picazo wines are now sold in the McGrail Vineyards and

Tri-Valley Rotary Collects Warm Coats

Tri-Valley Rotary is collecting and distribution coats to local school age children whose family may not be able to afford warm coats for their children.

Donation of a new or gently used coat for children ages 2-16 will benefit those in need. Adult and infant sized coats will also be accepted.

Coats can be dropped off through December 8. Distribution is set for Dec. 15.

Collection locations are the following: Club Sport Pleasanton, 7090 Johnson Drive, Pleasanton; Hairlights Salon, 4307 Valley Ave Suite F, Pleasanton; Bank of America Downtown Pleasanton (on Main); Pacific Coast Seed, 533 Hawthorne Place, Livermore; Casse Croute Bakery, 50 S. Livermore Ave (downtown Livermore near intersection with First St.); Coffee Co., 5424 Sunol Boulevard, Pleasanton in Raley's Shopping Center.

For information send an email to info@trivalleyrotary.org or contact Bonnie at 443-5450 or visit www.trivalleyrotary.org.

Winery's spacious tasting room, alongside McGrail wines.

On Thursday, November 1, a joint press release from Heather McGrail, marketer for McGrail, and Pam Picazo, announced the arrangement. "It's a natural partnership."

Although the Picazo brand intends to concentrate on Livermore Valley grapes, it now offers some Napa Valley products. Celebrants stand at the long polished bar. Pourer Joan Roland, who is friendly, but sans gush, offers a 2010 Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc. The vineyard is cooled by breezes coming off of San Pablo Bay so the fruit matures slowly, say the tasting notes. This is a blend of the familiar Clone 1 and Musque. Honeysuckle plays in the aroma, which is also stimulated by gooseberries. It's not grassy, but a classical example of Sauvignon Blanc. Sells for \$29.

Joan pours three Livermore Valley Merlots—a 2005, a 2006, and a 2007, all from Picazo Livermore Valley vineyards. Some tasters spin their glass high in the light to enjoy the rich ruby color then continue the twirl in front of their chest to free the aroma, eyes closed so only the nose is involved. "Black cherry," is the predominant verdict and sensitive tasters claim cassis and anise. The winemaker notes on the 2007 read, "The wine opens with lavender, cassis, and a ménage of baking spices." Ooo la la, a spicy ménage. All the Merlots are grown in gravelly soil 200 feet above the valley floor. They sell from \$65 to \$80.

Marketer Heather McGrail goes easily from group to group. Behind the very pretty pleasant face is a hair-trigger mind. "This is the perfect marriage," says she, also pointing out that McGrail was success-

ful from day one.

At a counter at the north end of the tasting room, with a view of the headlights on the Altamont searching in the distant dark, tasters try the 2007 Picazo Proprietary Red. It's a Bordeaux blend of Cabernet Sauvignon from both Napa and Livermore valleys, and Merlot from Picazo Vineyards. Oh my, let's hear it for Bordeaux blends and especially for this genius one. It sells for \$45.

Veteran winemaker Mark Clarin is the winemaker for both McGrail Vineyards and Winery and Picazo Vineyards. He wanders easily, looking at home in down home jeans. A ponytail trails down the broad back of his plaid shirt. He made Picazo wine from its inception in 2004, and joined McGrail as a winemaker for the 2009 vintage. Try any wine from these two wineries and you'll know he's ace.

In the barrel room, a nice spread of salads, meats and cheeses invites. Some celebrants are speed eating. An eater points at an inviting browned something wrapped in bacon. "What's that?" Responds a woman, "If it's wrapped in bacon it has got to be good." She was so right.

Near the food, a 2008 Picazo Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa Valley is being poured. This is no time to exhibit envy of that prime spot, this is a rich one replete with those whomping tannins to light up your life. It fills the mouth once more with feeling, and tastes of black currant, cedar, and tobacco. It sells for \$125.

The 2008 McGrail Vineyards and Winery Reserve Livermore Valley Cabernet Sauvignon was named Best Red Wine in the 2012 San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, beating more than 5000 entrants.

When asked by e-mail if there were any difficulty in

offering a Picazo Cabernet Sauvignon when McGrail grows and produces it, Mark wrote, "We plan to bring the focus back to the Livermore Valley appellation."

The tasting room also has a few tall tables with nicely curved small benches, on which sat some tasters. Among them was Livermore Valley eno aficionado Jim Lipman, who had a world of tidbits about the local wine scene, and expressed approval of the Picazo offerings. Also at one the tables were Mark's straightforward parents, Don and Sylvia Clarin. She is forthcoming and considerate in her observations. He is gregarious and plays the banjo.

Picazo wines have been made at a custom crush facility at Caldwell Caves in Napa. Beginning with the 2012 vintage, recently harvested, all Picazo wines will be made by Mark at McGrail Vineyards and Winery.



Members of Brownie Troop 30321 (pictured at left), in conjunction with The Art Glass Studio, spent Black Friday gathering warm coats for fellow Livermore Residents. While others were hitting the malls and shopping stores, Girl Scouts from Livermore troops 30321, 32511, 31733, 30524 and 30309 were conducting a One Warm Coat Drive at the downtown Art Glass Studio Location. The Scouts manned their stations from 9:30 am until 7:30 pm and were able to collect 265 coats. These coats, jackets and sweaters will benefit friends, families and fellow Livermore Residents who need a little extra warmth this holiday season. Troop Leader BaBette Munoz and Jennifer Faria stated, "We plan to undertake more events such as this throughout the year. It's important to teach our girls the meaning of Giving Back. Many Thanks to Roberta, owner of The Art Glass Studio, fellow troops within Cresta Blanca and all the parents that came out to support this successful event."

Milestones

Community

Lab Physicist a Senior Member of IEEE

Mark Rowland, a physicist in Global Security' at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, has been named a senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). Fewer than 8 percent of IEEE members attain this level.

Rowland, who joined the Laboratory in 1984, has worked in the field of radiation detection for much of his 28-year career.

He has led Livermore teams that developed a pair of identification instruments -- the Detective, to detect and measure gamma rays, and the Fission Meter, to detect and measure neutrons. These technologies, both licensed to Tennessee-based ORTEC, assist in meeting the challenges of inspecting cargo.

In March, 2011, within several days of when the tsunami-crippled Fukushima nuclear plant started leaking radiation, four Detective instruments were shipped to Japan. The instruments were moved around the island nation and used to calibrate the



Mark Rowland (Photo by Jacqueline McBride/LLNL)

aerial measurement systems for about two months.

The Detective's mechanically-cooled design was highly practical in comparison with liquid nitrogen-cooled systems because of the disaster conditions that prevailed in Japan at that time and because of supply and transportation problems.

As the number of Detective instruments has reached beyond the hundreds, the instrument has become recognized as the gold standard in real-time performance.

Rowland also has led or worked on the develop-

ment of a number of other instruments, including a gamma-ray camera, a large neutron scintillator multiplicity array, a handheld low-resolution sodium iodide nuclear material identification system and an X-ray fluorescent analyzer. In addition, he led a team that designed and built two robots that were delivered to the Chernobyl nuclear plant for fuel characterization.

The holder of 12 patents, Rowland has served as an adviser and policy expert to the International Atomic Energy Agency since 1990.

Pleasanton Launches New Shop and Dine Website

The City of Pleasanton has launched a new shop local website, www.inPleasanton.com which encourages consumers to shop and dine in Pleasanton as well as discover recreation spots to promote Pleasanton as a destination for an extraordinary experience.

An effort by the City's Economic Vitality Committee to support our businesses and provide one compre-

hensive online resource for shopping, dining and recreation in Pleasanton, www.inPleasanton.com has been in the planning and design stages for the last year. The concept came about from a brainstorming and program prioritization session of the committee as a way to bring other shop-local campaigns already in place, such as those sponsored by the Pleasanton Weekly, Ha-

cienda Business Park, and the Pleasanton Downtown Association, under one "umbrella" resource site. www.inPleasanton.com will provide local retail and dining establishments an opportunity to market themselves and increase awareness of what Pleasanton has to offer to potential visitors as well as residents.

Visitors to the site can look up retail shops by shop-

Eagle Scout Rank Earned

Mac Morgan (pictured at right), a senior at Livermore High School and the son of Barbara and Mark Morgan has earned the rank of Eagle Scout.

He is a member of Troop 903, sponsored by St. Michael's Catholic Church, in Livermore.

Mac built wooden covers for the Long Jump pits at the football stadium at Livermore High School for his Eagle community service project.

In addition to scouting, Mac is a varsity athlete in both wrestling and lacrosse.



Real Estate Leadership Award Given

Ed Krafchow, chairman of the board for Better Homes and Gardens Mason-McDuffie Real Estate, was named the 2012 recipient of RISMEDIA's Real Estate Leadership Award, sponsored by Citibank. Krafchow accepted the award at RISMEDIA's 17th Annual Power Broker Dinner on November 9 in Orlando, Fla., held in conjunction

with the REALTORS® Conference & Expo.

The RISMEDIA Real Estate Leadership Award honors a member of the real estate community who embraces innovation and demonstrates resilience in order to facilitate success for real estate professionals and consumers alike.

"The individuals who were nominated for this award were chosen for their commitment to consistently blazing new paths in real estate," said John Featherston, publisher and CEO of RISMEDIA. "Ed Krafchow has long exemplified innovation and leadership in real estate and is an inspiration for his peers, brokers and sales associates. We are thrilled to present Ed with this year's Real Estate Leadership Award."

Krafchow stated, "I am humbled, and accept this honor on behalf of the agents, managers, and em-

ployees of Mason-McDuffie Real Estate."

Krafchow has been closely involved in the development of the company's proprietary WebTop Intranet, a technology platform that has generated leads and created efficient business processes for his sales associates. Mindful of the changing needs of consumers, Krafchow led his company to a full integration of online transaction management and esignatures in 2010. Krafchow is a frequent national speaker on several industry-related topics, and has been identified by the California Association of REALTORS® as one of California's top brokers and recognized as a technological leader by the Employee Relocation Council. He has consulted on a national as well as local level with many Multiple Listing Services (MLS) as well as strategic real estate planning groups.