

Staying Healthy

FALL 2022

Inside:

Moonshots for Unicorns

Page 12

Pace for Peace

Page 14

75 years of LARPD

In spite of challenges, Livermore parks district stands 'healthy' and 'efficient', GM says

By CIERRA BAILEY

For the past 75 years, Livermore Area Recreation and Park District has provided the community with activities, programs, facilities and services to help all residents enjoy open space, remain active and give youth opportunities to learn and explore nature. “We take care of people from early childhood all the way through their senior years — we have something for every age group,” said LARPD General Manager Mat Fuzie, adding, “We have a couple of taglines here, ‘We’re your quality of life special district’ and ‘LARPD, making memories and changing lives’ which we use to explain to people what we do.”

LARPD is an independent special district. As such, it is a political subdivision of the state — a completely independent governmental agency, according to its website.

While he’s only been with LARPD since 2018, Fuzie said that he has researched LARPD history and from his perspective, “The biggest achievement for LARPD and the city of Livermore is that it’s been a good relationship that has sustained arts and recreation better

than most communities.”

He added that the reason for that success is because LARPD is a special district and their funding is separate.

The legacy of LARPD began with a special election on June 10, 1947, in which Livermore voters ratified a resolution of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to form the Livermore Area Park, Recreation and Parkway District.

The county passed a resolution that provided for a special election to be held in the Livermore Area Park, Recreation and Parkway District on Jan. 21, 1958 for the purpose of deciding whether or not the district should be governed by its own Board of Directors and providing for the first Board of Directors of the district.

On Dec. 8, 1959, the Board of Directors changed the name of the district to the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District.

The work that LARPD does is under the guidance of the district’s motto, “To provide the people of the Livermore Area with outstanding recreation programs and a system of parks, trails, recreation



COURTESY LARPD

Since 2005, the Robert Livermore Community Center has been the main hub for the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District’s offices and program facilities.

areas, and facilities that promote enjoyment, lifelong learning, and healthy, active lifestyles.”

In addition to offering numerous fitness and recreation programs, LARPD also organizes and operates Extended Student Services, a licensed child development program serving children transitional kindergarten through fifth grade in Livermore. Fuzie said the ESS program has been a big part of LARPD’s community support initiatives.

With its meal service partnership with Open Heart Kitchen, LARPD also helps support the senior population and the unhoused community in Livermore.

In recent years, LARPD has become synonymous with the Robert Livermore Community Center, which serves as the hub for the district’s offices and many of its program facilities, including its popular year-round aquatics center.

However, the complex has only been open since 2005.

Prior to that, Fuzie said the district would hold their programs at various other properties throughout the city including Veterans Memorial Hall, which belongs to the county.

“We had two buildings on Trevarno (Road) that were our headquarters prior to RLCC. Bothwell was a teen center and was programmed,

but now it’s the Bothwell Arts Center,” Fuzie added as additional examples. He said that several of the agreements they’ve had with other entities to program at their facilities are still in place today.

Operating for 75 years, however, has not come without its fair share of challenges.

Fuzie said that the district faces funding obstacles.

“Almost 40% of our revenue goes to ERAF (educational revenue augmentation fund), so we don’t have the same percentage of funding that the taxpayers intended in 1947,” he said.

There are some steps the district has taken to account for this issue, including a structural reorganization to reduce management and overhead costs, which Fuzie said happened to also coincide with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He said they have also changed their budgeting practices and are doing more service-based budgeting. “We’re pushing our funding sources out to services which does two things: it reduces your overhead and it increases your revenue and that has allowed us to get a very realistic look at what our future needs are going to be,” he said.

Although citizens have suggested that LARPD should make a push for a bond act or new parcel tax for

maintenance, Fuzie said they are not comfortable taking that step just yet until they’ve completely evaluated their efficiencies.

Projects that funding is needed for include replacing equipment at some of the city’s oldest parks, irrigation systems and other infrastructure improvements.

The COVID-19 pandemic also proved challenging for LARPD.

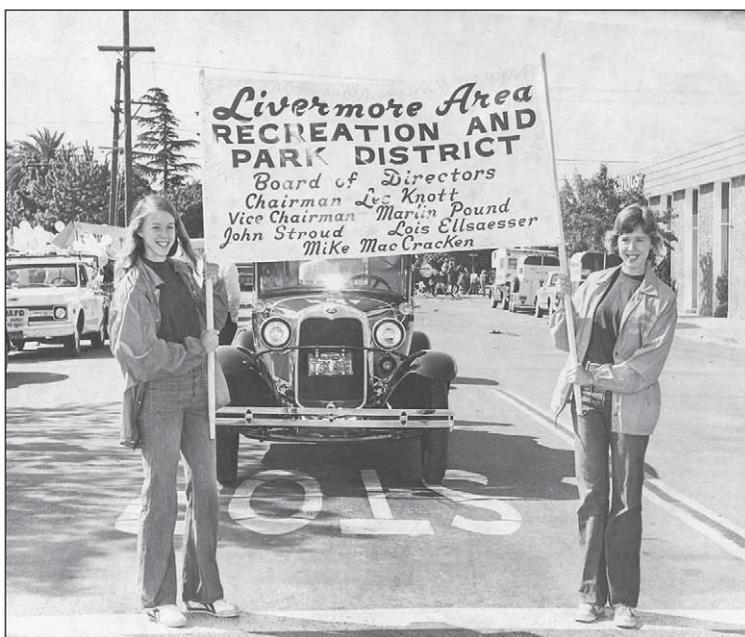
“It was a very complex time with very complex solutions,” Fuzie said.

In addition to laying off all of the temporary staff, the district also had to let go of more than 20% of its full-time staff. “We lost approximately \$6 million in revenue out of a \$21 million budget, so we were hit really hard,” Fuzie said.

The district also significantly reduced its services and pivoted others to outdoors, which put them up against weather and air quality challenges.

However, they were able to sustain their meal program for seniors and provide childcare services to essential workers.

The district officials used the time to reevaluate their offerings and assess ways they could better serve the community with the resources and staff that they had.



COURTESY LARPD

Flying an LARPD banner in the 1975 Livermore Rodeo parade.

See LARPD on Page 14

Moonshots for Unicorns seeks to treat ultra-rare conditions

Nonprofit founded by Danville physicians to find cure for daughter's disorder

By JEANITA LYMAN

Two Danville physicians have merged their professional and personal lives in the wake of their young daughter's diagnosis of an ultra-rare genetic disorder, seeking to address a void in modern medicine that they've become especially sensitive to in the past year.

Geri and Zachary Landman's youngest daughter Lucy — now 14 months old — was diagnosed with a disorder in her PGAP3 gene that has no treatment or cure on the market, making her one of approximately 50 patients worldwide.

While living with their daughter's disorder and launching the nonprofit Moonshots for Unicorns have come to be focal points of the Landmans' lives ever since, with numerous hurdles to clear in seeking to develop a treatment and cure, they said that getting a diagnosis in the first place was a challenge.

"Kind of one of the tenets of medicine is if something's not going to change what you do, then why waste the cost or time of testing for it," Zachary Landman said. "It's a chicken and the egg situation because we don't test for it because there's no treatment for it, and there's no treatment because there's no testing for it."

It was Geri Landman's expertise as a pediatrician, and the couple's professional connections in the medical world, that led to their persistence in finding a diagnosis for their daughter paying off.

"Geri was really concerned," Zachary Landman said. "She was like 'I'm not just a mother,

I'm not crazy, I'm a pediatrician' and sent multiple videos of her doing weirder and weirder stuff, like falling over and not being able to sit up on her own."

He added that in many cases, the disorder results in diagnoses of autism and epilepsy, with no further exploration into the root cause of symptoms.

"If Geri hadn't been a pediatrician, and if I hadn't been working at Stanford, and if our neurologist didn't happen to have a personal connection to Geri while we were in the hospital, and also happened to be a neurologist specializing in genetics, Lucy never would have gotten this diagnosis," Zachary Landman said.

But despite their luck in getting a diagnosis, the Landman family was devastated by the result, with no hope in sight at first.

"Initially we didn't believe it, but it's of course true, and the follow-up testing showed that it was true. So we took a week off work and we cried, and her older sisters cried a lot too," he said.

The Landmans would go on to learn that the sense of helplessness they felt was all too common for families of patients with ultra-rare disorders. But unlike most, both physicians were able to use their expertise to push for solutions.

"I turned to Geri and said we can lay in bed the rest of our lives and feel sorry for ourselves, feel sorry for Lucy, or we can do something about it," Zachary Landman said.



MOONSHOTS FOR UNICORNS

Geri and Zachary Landman, shown here with their three daughters, launched Moonshots for Unicorns with the goal of offering treatments and cures for ultra-rare genetic disorders, such as the one their youngest daughter Lucy was recently diagnosed with.

The couple, who had met while attending UCSF, quickly jumped back into action.

"We just basically read every single research paper there was about PGAP3, and we just emailed basically every author, every scientist in the world working on it in a two to three week period," Zachary Landman said. "We understood the science, we understood the pathophysiology of the condition about as well as anyone else at the time."

Their efforts resulted in a whirlwind of meetings with doctors, scientists, and pharmacy CEOs across the world, and an upcoming meeting with White House representatives.

The good news, the Landmans discovered, was that gene therapy offered great promise for treating PGAP3, as well as other ultra-rare genetic conditions. The bad news, however, was that the rareness of the disorder meant a lack of market demand.

"Ultimately, our healthcare system is designed around for-profit, market-size developments, so it's not the fault of the people or the scientists that work on developing medicines, but we've been told multiple times that ... PGAP3 would be perfect if you could find 1,000 kids in the world — even better in the United States because they can afford it then we can absolutely cover the cost of developing the medicine," Zachary Landman said.

With the goal of both developing treatment for their daughter, as well as addressing the lack of access to gene therapy for ultra-rare disorders, the Landmans launched the nonprofit Moonshots for Unicorns.

"Unfortunately, because there are simply not enough kids known to have Lucy's genetic disorder, no pharma company, government, or investor is interested in funding this research — it has to be us," Geri Landman said on a GoFundMe page for the endeavor.

Geri Landman also emphasized that she and her husband's positions as physicians puts their daughter in a unique position for developing and receiving treatment.

"No child in the world with her condition has had the opportunity to have an effective treatment so early in life, which means that the sky is the limit to what we can do for her," Geri Landman said.

Zachary Landman noted that while the couple is fortunate to be in a position to address the lack of treatment, the organization's mission is to make the same opportunity available to all.

"We're looking at Lucy and saying we want to get a treatment into her as soon as possible," Zachary Landman said. "(It's) about \$2.5 million to get a treatment developed. That's why we created Moonshots — to hopefully have it so that no parent ever has to go to sleep at night being told what we were told, which was being told there's no treatment and no cure, and nothing you can do for your child."

With Moonshots for Unicorns, the Landmans are also seeking to help other families of loved ones with ultra-rare genetic disorders to feel less alone, and to find power in numbers. Zachary Landman, who comes from a family of physicians, said that he was also seeking to spread a message his father had left him with.

"My father actually throughout his career was a pediatrician and he took care of ... probably kids just like Lucy his whole career," Zachary Landman said. "The piece of advice he gave me was he said 'Look, it really sucks and you can't see it now but over time what I found by working with families for years is that oftentimes your family will grow closer together and be much stronger because of this.'"

Zachary Landman said this had proven to be the case for his own family, and that the renewed connections between them were serving as further fuel for Moonshots for Unicorns.

"For anyone that is recently diagnosed or just having gone through this for the first time, we're only five months into this but we're really grateful for the way it's brought our family together and the way it's kind of aligned us," he said. "It gives you a kind of completely different perspective in life, and that's certainly true for Geri and me."

More information on Moonshots for Unicorns, and updates on the latest developments in the research at the organization's pop-up lab, is available at moonshotsforunicorns.org. ■



What's More Beautiful than Vibrant Health?

- Authentic beauty is not something you can fake
- Take good care of yourself & live a balanced life
 - You'll never be more beautiful than when you're feeling & functioning your best
- Get the help you need to become the healthiest, most beautiful version of yourself



Dr. Godwin Sammut

Lifetime Wellness Holistic Health Center

4125 Mohr Ave., Suite K, Pleasanton

(925) 429-8009

DrSammut.com

BRANDEIS MD[®]

MALE REJUVENATION CENTER

We help men feel great, look good and have better relationships

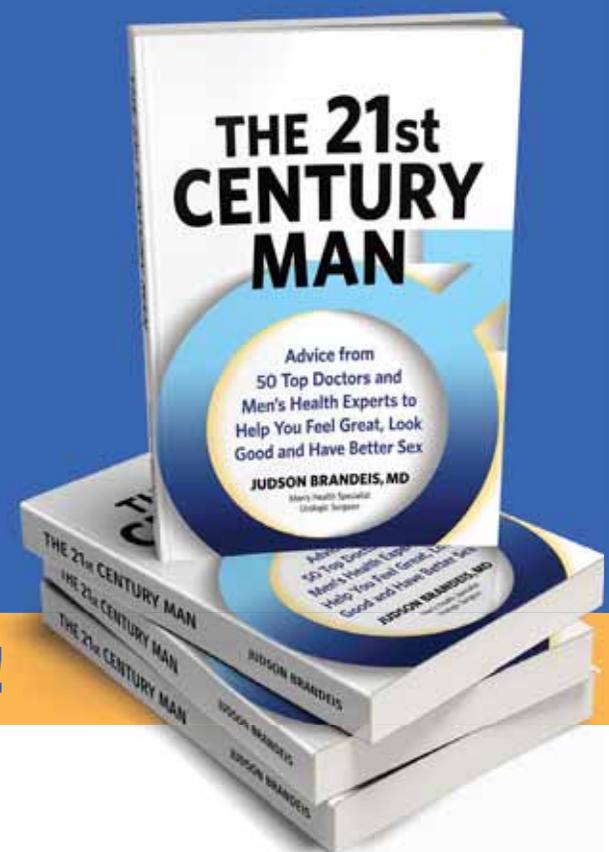


1. Voted Top Urologist in SF Bay Area 2012-2022
2. Male sexual medicine national authority
3. Full range of treatments for Erectile Dysfunction
4. Testosterone replacement expert
5. Emsculpt High Tech muscle building center
6. Circumcision and vasectomy in office
7. Sexual medicine research center
8. Guest on TV, radio and dozens of podcasts
9. Award winning men's health book author
10. Comfortable, private and male oriented office

DR. JUDSON BRANDEIS M.D.
Board Certified Urologist

If you do not make time for your wellness, you will be forced to make time for your illness

Scan to visit the website



It is finally time to optimize your health!

925.255.7867 • www.BrandeisMD.com

100 Park Place, Suite 140 • San Ramon
appointments@brandeismd.com



Running to support survivors of domestic violence

Tri-Valley Haven celebrating 25th anniversary of Pace for Peace

BY NICOLE GONZALES

Participants of an upcoming run hosted in Livermore will be running, walking and jogging to provide proceeds to individuals impacted by domestic violence.

The annual Pace for Peace race will be hosted by Tri-Valley Haven, a Livermore-based nonprofit that aims to give resources to survivors of domestic violence and those fleeing from it. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the fundraising event.

Pace for Peace is a great way to begin October, which is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, according to Tri-Valley Haven Executive Director Christine Dillman.

“The Haven’s Pace is a fun way to support an important, local cause,” Dillman said. “The Pace raises both awareness and vital funds that help Tri-Valley Haven’s domestic violence programs and the clients in need who we serve.”

Over the years, Pace for Peace has helped to fund many programs the organization offers. Proceeds from this year’s event will go toward funding resources such as counseling, shelter and case management for survivors and their children.

“The funds from the Pace for Peace event go towards funding Tri-Valley Haven’s domestic violence services and to local families fleeing abuse. Tri-Valley Haven runs the only confidential domestic violence shelter in the Tri-Valley

and the only shelter that takes boys older than 11 years of age as part of families,” Dillman said.

“We provide a myriad of other services including individual counseling, support groups, restraining order assistance and prevention education,” she added.

Nonprofit staff also aim to provide prevention workshops that can decrease the cycle of domestic abuse. They often teach anti-dating-violence and healthy relationship classes to high school and teenaged students in the area.

Tri-Valley Haven has been active in the community since 1977 and began its Pace for Peace event in 1997.

“Each year the event has grown due to the strong support from our supporters, volunteers, clients, local businesses and the Tri-Valley community,” Dillman said of the race’s longevity. “We cannot do this important work alone. Tri-Valley Haven is so very grateful to the Tri-Valley community.”

Businesses will have the opportunity to assist Tri-Valley Haven and the larger community by sponsoring or donating to the organization.

“The Pace for Peace is a chance to bring awareness and to make sure everyone knows that Tri-Valley Haven is here to help,” Dillman said. “Unfortunately, Pleasanton, Livermore, Dublin and Sunol are not immune to domestic violence.”



COURTESY TRI-VALLEY HAVEN

Walkers participate in a past Pace for Peace. The fundraising walk/run, which benefits Tri-Valley Haven, is set to return to Livermore on Oct. 1.

Dillman emphasized the importance of awareness for the cause, explaining that in California alone one in three women and one in five men will experience some form of physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

Dillman shared that Tri-Valley Haven’s 24-hour crisis line receives approximately 4,000 calls for help from local survivors each year.

“The prevalence of domestic violence has dramatically increased since the COVID-19 pandemic began,” Dillman said.

As a nod to the 25th anniversary, the organization will have raffles, awards and a bounce house, as well as free T-shirts designed by local students from previous pace races.

Scheduled to start at 8 a.m. Oct. 1, Pace for Peace participants will be able to choose 5 or

10K distances that run through the Livermore Valley along the Arroyo bike trail.

“Tri-Valley Haven believes in empowering survivors,” Dillman said. “Over the past four decades, Tri-Valley Haven has assisted thousands of individuals and families fleeing abuse to become safe, empowered and self-sufficient.”

Organizers of the event seek to ensure that individuals of all activity levels will be able to enjoy themselves, whether they be competitive runners or beginners.

“The Pace for Peace has something for everyone. It is a great way to support this vital, local cause,” Dillman said.

More information about the race or programs can be found at the nonprofit’s website, trivalleyhaven.org. ■



HOPE

HOSPICE AND HEALTH SERVICES

Compassion and quality when it matters most.

CONNECT WITH OUR TEAM

(925) 829-8770 | HopeHospice.com

When your loved one is faced with a life-limiting illness, you want a care team that treats them with compassion, dignity, and respect. Hope Hospice has been that trusted resource for families in the East Bay Area since 1980.



Programs & Services

- ✓ Hospice care
- ✓ Palliative care COMING SOON!
- ✓ Dementia education
- ✓ Senior-care classes
- ✓ Caregiver resources
- ✓ Grief support
- ✓ Volunteering

What Our Clients Say

Customer service is our top priority. Below are data* from HospiceCompare.org, the federal website that posts resulting quality scores from Medicare surveys.

90%

Say they would recommend Hope Hospice.

92%

Say staff treated the patient with respect.

99%

Report that the patient received a timely and thorough pain assessment.



*Data collection period: 10/2018 - 12/2019 and 7/2020 - 3/2021

“Hope Hospice gets an A+++ from our family for the care they gave our loved one before he passed away.”

—Marty W.

LARPD

Continued from Page 11

“We built back smarter which incredibly, we have more cash than we’ve ever had. We’re operating at an incredibly efficient rate,” Fuzie said. “We’re providing more programs now than we were providing prior to the pandemic,” he added.

LARPD also played a major role in getting Livermore residents vaccinated by partnering with the city and the school district to roll out COVID-19 vaccines as early as possible and using some of their facilities for vaccination clinics.

“We were one of the biggest contributors of vaccination sites in the city. In fact, we were

(vaccinating) about 1,000 people at every clinic at one point when we were rolling the strongest,” Fuzie said.

With so much uncertainty still looming as 2022 approached, LARPD decided it would not plan to make a big splash for its 75th anniversary.

“Coming out of COVID this year, we weren’t sure how long it was going to linger or how successful we were going to be, so we figured it might be a bad idea to be spending money celebrating us rather than spending money providing for the public,” Fuzie said.

However, Fuzie noted that so far the district has come out “healthy in almost every aspect.” ■



COURTESY LARPD

The LARPD aquatics center offers “Toddler Time,” a recreational program for children 5 years old and younger to play at the zero-depth-entry activity pool.