

More than a babysitter

Au pairs worked out great for this youngster > page 16

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Project denied

County planners say no to grading for Humphrey Ranch

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Danville

W E E K L Y

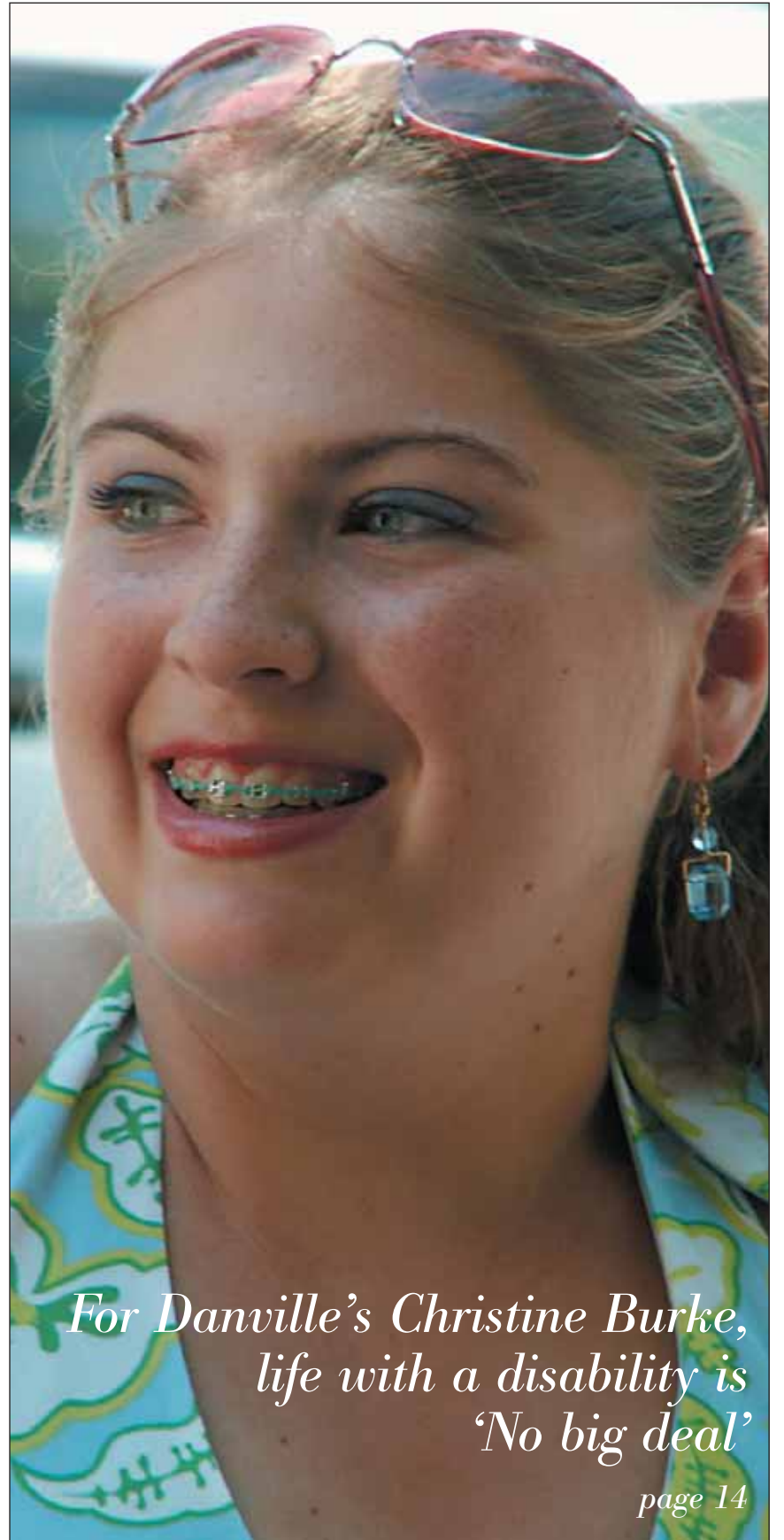
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Conflicts on campus

Middle-school students get tips on dealing with playground bullies

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In the mainstream

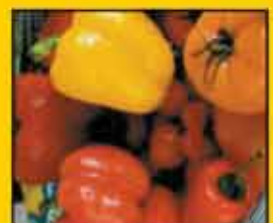


For Danville's Christine Burke, life with a disability is 'No big deal'

page 14

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Q: Danville is considering placing a time capsule in the monument in front of the Veterans Hall. What would you want to put in a time capsule?



I would place newspaper articles that reflected both sides of the war in Iraq. I think it's important to look at all perspectives. I also think it would be interesting to see how much home prices in our area have escalated in recent years.

Carol Gordon
retired from U.S. Postal Service



I would include a really good aerial photograph that showed how much growth and change has occurred.

Mike Watson
V.P. Marketing



A picture showing what the town looks like now so you could see the growth that occurs. I enjoy all the new shops, there is more to do, the downtown is more inviting; however, I am concerned about the population growth, increases in home prices and traffic.

Karen Ehlers (and Patch)
Student at Chico State



I would put in a killer pair of shoes so people could see what the styles were like in the early 21st century. Goodness knows what will be in style then.

Terri Klobas
Boutique owner



I would include some writing, perhaps a poem that reflected our times. It should be something deep and contemplative that would tie the future and the past together because the written word is timeless.

Lauren Duensing
Boutique owner

COMPILED BY JUDY STEINER

ABOUT THE COVER

Christine Burke, a junior at San Ramon Valley High School, doesn't let her physical challenges stop her from being an athlete and a leader. Portrait by Casey Reivich. Cover designed by Jason Lind.

Vol. I, Number 17

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“ They won't be walking around with a clipboard. This is not a tattle-tale club. ”

—Nancy Schubb, counselor at Los Cerros Middle School, describing student-driven conflict mediation program

Thursday Farmers Market to begin

Are you always wishing you could make it to the Saturday morning farmers market in Danville? Well, for the month of September, people seeking fresh fruits and vegetables straight from the farmer will get a second chance. The first Thursday night Danville farmers market will take place from 4-8 p.m. this coming Thursday, Sept. 1.

The farmers market will be set up on Hartz Avenue between Prospect Avenue and Church Street. Because the farmers need time to set up and take down, there will be no parking on Hartz between Prospect and Church from 2-9 p.m. Hartz Avenue traffic will be detoured onto Railroad Avenue.

The Thursday evening farmers market is on a trial run basis only and will be offered all five Thursdays in September. Depending on how it is received, the town will consider making the Thursday night farmers market a permanent Thursday night event. The regular Saturday market will continue to operate.

Art Studio moving next to Primo's

The former ARTrageous Child is moving downtown. The studio, which used to be located at 704 San Ramon Valley Blvd., next to Albertson's, is moving to 290 Hartz Ave. The new studio, call ARTrageous Art Studio and Café, will officially open Sept. 6 next to Primo's Pizza & Pasta at the corner of Diablo Road and Hartz Avenue.

The studio will also be expanding its range of classes. It will still offer art classes for children ages 3 to adult, but will also offer drop-in classes and a teen night with live music on Fridays. Owner Melinda Margolis hopes the new space will be a place where the whole family can hang out and be creative. It will be serving coffee and tea, as well as pastries.

Alamo committee openings

District III Supervisor Mary N. Piepho is seeking applicants for the county service area R7A, Alamo Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Committee; and the steering committee for Alamo beautification, Zone 36, county Landscaping and Lighting District. Piepho recently ended the terms of all of the previous R7A and Zone 36 members. Anyone who is interested in serving on the committees is encouraged to apply.

For more information, visit www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/maddybook/ or call the County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors at 335-1900. Applications must be submitted to the County Clerk by 5 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 30.

Joe Combs to head AMPA

The Alamo Merchants and Professional Association has elected Joe Combs to serve as president for the 2005-06 year. He and his wife Nancy P. Combs are Remax Accord Realtors who work out of the Danville office. He also used to be the owner/publisher of Alamo Today.

“My focus will be on working closely with our board of directors to bring more value to our members by raising AMPA's visibility in the community and increasing the level of voice for the business people we represent with local government,” said Joe Combs. He has held various board posts with AMPA, serving most recently as membership chairman. He said membership is about one-third of Alamo businesses and the organization must find a way to increase its value to them.

For more information, visit www.alamobusiness.com.

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SALAD OF HEIRLOOM TOMATOES Applewood Smoked Bacon, Stillon Blue Cheese, Skyhawk EVOO & Balsamic Drizzle	PAN SEARED CRISP MUSCOVY DUCK BREAST Sweet Potato Hash, Fried Leeks and Bing Cherry-Port Reduction
SONOMA FIELD GREENS Toasted Almonds and Blueberry-Basil Vinaigrette	TRIO OF BURGERS: Kobe Beef with Cheddar, Classic Accompaniments and Sweet Onion Remoulade Lamb with Oven Roasted Tomato, Feta and Mint-Lemon Aioli Housemade Veggie with Sunflower Sprouts and Sundried Tomato Mayonnaise Buttermilk Battered Onion Rings
CITRUS BRAISED 'N GLAZED BEETS Spicy Candied Pecans, Chevre and Watercress	PETITE FILET "ARGENTINE" Chipotle Mashed Potatoes, Crispy Sweet Plantains and Chimichurri Sauce
BAKED BRIE Roasted Garlic and Basil Encrusted Miniature Brie in Puff Pastry with French Baguette and Fuji Apple Slices	MARINATED NEW ZEALAND LAMB LOLLICHOPS Rosemary Shoestring Fries, Crispy Spinach and Zinfandel Essence
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AHI SASHIMI TOWER Avocado, Yuzu-Caviar Cream, Wasabi Sorbet, Daikon Sprouts and Taro Chips	AURA CHOCOLATE LAVA CAKE Tahitian Vanilla Ice Cream
GRILLED MARGARITA PRAWNS Cilantro Lime Slaw, Garlic Chips and Toasted Corn-Cumin Vinaigrette	GRILLED PEACH MELBA Sweet Buttermilk Biscuit & Raspberry Coulis
GRILLED PORTABELLA AND ROASTED RED PEPPER NAPOLEON Rosemary Ricotta, Smoked Mozzarella, Tomato Jam and Pesto Oil	TROPICAL SORBET MIMOSA
PANINI TRIO: Bufala Mozzarella, Proscuitto and Fig Jam Roasted Summer Vegetables, Brie and Sundried Tomato Pesto Grilled Chicken, Anaheim Chile, Queso Fresco and Aged Gouda	TRIO OF CRÈME BRULEE: White Chocolate Mint Toasted Coconut Cream Classic Vanilla Bean

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Thursday nights a success

Despite high turn out, events have not encouraged people to shop more downtown

by Casey Reivich

Doggie Night in early July was an unqualified success. Pooches and people crowded the sidewalks of downtown Hartz Avenue and the parking lot between the Wine Sellars and Molly's-Pup-Purr-ee. Even a few shy dogs and no-show owners could not deter the crowd gathered at the pet trick competition.

The Old Town Wine Tasting in early August was also an overwhelming success. The event was oversold by 30 glasses, said Wayne Wickham, owner of the Wine Sellars. The event was supposed to cap at 250 glasses, but Wickham sold around 280 glasses. A line of merry wine-tasters spilled out of the Wine Sellars onto the sidewalk, even the oppressive August heat not dampening their spirits. The wine tasting took people all over town, visiting Handworks on Railroad, Flaunt on Prospect, and Christie James on Hartz, among other locations.

Last Thursday, families came out for Sports Night on Hartz, again in the parking lot between Molly's-Pup-Purr-ee and the Wine Sellars. Children, and some adults, got to show off their baseball pitching skills and soccer kicks.

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CASEY REIVICH

Downtown bouncin'

Hannah Vaughn, 4, enjoys bouncing around in a large jumper while other children pitched baseballs, kicked soccer balls, and bounced around downtown at Thursday night's Sports Night. The event, which took place in the parking lot between Molly's-Pup-Purr-ee and the Wine Sellars, offered fun athletic activities for kids and some adults. It was sponsored by Discover Danville and the town of Danville.

County planning commission denies Humphrey Ranch project

Commissioners feel project has too many unknowns

by Casey Reivich

Plans by Davidon Homes to build 39 high end homes on the former Humphrey Ranch across from Monte Vista High School have hit a snag. On Aug. 17, the Valley Planning Commission unanimously voted against approving grading for the project.

Davidon will file an appeal to the County Board of Supervisors, said Jeff Thayer, vice president of development.

"I was disappointed that they weren't able to separate our project and analyze it on its own merits," said Thayer.

Davidon Homes' project to build homes on 24 acres of the 96-acre Humphrey parcel seems simple enough, but the project has been mired in controversy because of its association with school district plans to build a parking lot and practice soccer field on 10 of the acres.

Because Alamo is an unincorporated area, Contra Costa County oversees the project. The San Ramon Valley Unified School District, however, has maintained that projects on school district land are not under county jurisdiction but state agencies. The school district is also proposing a stoplight and crosswalk between the entrance to the new student parking lot and the existing lot across the street.

Six homes on Monte Sereno Drive would back up against the

proposed parking lot. Many Monte Sereno residents and others from neighboring Alamo neighborhoods such as Stone Valley Oaks and Bryan Ranch believe the playing field and parking lot will cause a great deal of noise and disruption. Residents are also concerned that the stoplight will back up traffic on Stone Valley Road and that having students cross the busy road two times a day is a safety hazard.

When Davidon Homes purchased the land from Marge Humphrey it took on the obligation of selling 10 acres of the land to the school district. Davidon is contractually obligated to grade the school district's parcel as well as its own, and the environment review, which was approved September 2004, includes both Davidon's project and that of the school district.

Davidon had hoped that the Valley Planning Commission, which has been discussing this project all summer, would give the housing development the green light. At previous meetings, commissioners Karen McPherson and Mike Gibson, both of Alamo, expressed the most concern over the housing development's links to the school district plans. All of the commissioners asked county staff to confirm for the third time if the county had any jurisdiction over school district plans.

At the Aug. 17 meeting, county staff told the commissioners that

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National Jamboree a rewarding experience

Danville Scout overcomes sadness at fatal accident to benefit from 10-day gathering

by Dolores Fox Ciardelli

Kenny Frazier, 14, found the 2005 National Scout Jamboree in Virginia a rewarding experience, although it was dampened by the deaths of four Scout masters from Alaska. They were electrocuted July 25, the first day of the Jamboree, when they were erecting a large tent and the main pole they were gripping made contact with a power line. A fifth man was saved by his 15-year-old son, who saw the smoke billowing from the tent, ran in and managed to pull him away from the pole.

"Our Scoutmaster told everybody," Kenny recalled. There was

a memorial service for the four, and the Scoutmaster, Mike Dubrall, attended to represent his troop. Kenny and fellow troop members gave the Alaska boys patches so they would not have to trade for them.

Perhaps it was more alarming for Kenny's family back in Danville—mom Diane, dad Ken and younger brother Bobby.

"My heart is broken for the Scouts and families of the Alaska group who must cope with all of this," Diane Frazier wrote in e-mail to friends. She did not rest easy until she heard from Kenny. Cell

phones were not allowed but he had brought a calling card with him and called home on the third day.

The Scouts also battled a heat index of 110-115 degrees. "Three hundred people were carried away, of heat exhaustion," Kenny said. "I didn't expect that." He wore something called a Camelback pack on his back, with a long tube to be used like a straw, to keep himself hydrated. There were also electrical storms.

But mainly the Jamboree was a wonderful experience, a chance to

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DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Kenny Lewis, 14, shows one of the daily newspapers published during the 10-day 2005 National Scout Jamboree in Fort A.P. Hill, Va., attended by 43,000 Scouts. He said there was a memorial service for the four Scout leaders electrocuted on the first day, and his troop donated some of their badges to the Alaska Scouts who suffered the loss.

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Thursdays

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Sports Night wasn't as crowded as Doggie Night, but the event still brought many families downtown on a Thursday night.

Despite the high turnout for all of these events, Wickham noted at a recent meeting between the merchants' association Discover Danville and the town of Danville that business was down and the Thursday night events have not resulted in an increase in shopping.

"Doggie Night was beyond our expectations. The winetasting was over-subscribed," Wickham said at the meeting. "We are getting people downtown, but we need to get people shopping downtown."

Wickham also shared, however, that even though there hasn't been an obvious surge in spending, stores are meeting new customers.

Councilwoman Karen Stepper and the town's economic development coordinator Bonnie Gutmann discussed ways to lure people back to downtown after an event. They discussed the efficacy of coupons and drawings.

Wickham thought coupons were a dubious lure for shoppers.

"People don't care about coupons at all," he said.

All three agreed, however, that downtown businesses should take advantage of these events and stay

open. Wickham suggested that Town Council members personally approach merchants about staying open later.

"If a council person could say, 'We would really like you to stay open.' We really need the personal touch," said Wickham.

While all agreed it was a good idea to stay open, Stepper pointed out that for many small businesses it was a personnel issue.

The town and Discover Danville hope people continue to come to downtown events in the fall. They are hopeful about the Thursday night farmers market, which is having its trial run the entire month of September.

Wickham believes it will bring a whole different set of people downtown.

"It's going to be very successful. It's going to be another thing to bring people downtown," said Wickham.

Presently, many people have the idea the downtown is only useful for eclectic gifts, said Stepper. The town and merchant associations like Discover Danville are working to change that image.

Wickham also noted that Discover Danville will not be hosting its "Holiday Season Thursday Nights" this year. They were poorly attended last year, he said. Instead, Discover Danville is hoping to get shoppers in the spending spirit by transforming downtown into a "winter wonderland" with Christmas lights and decorations. ■

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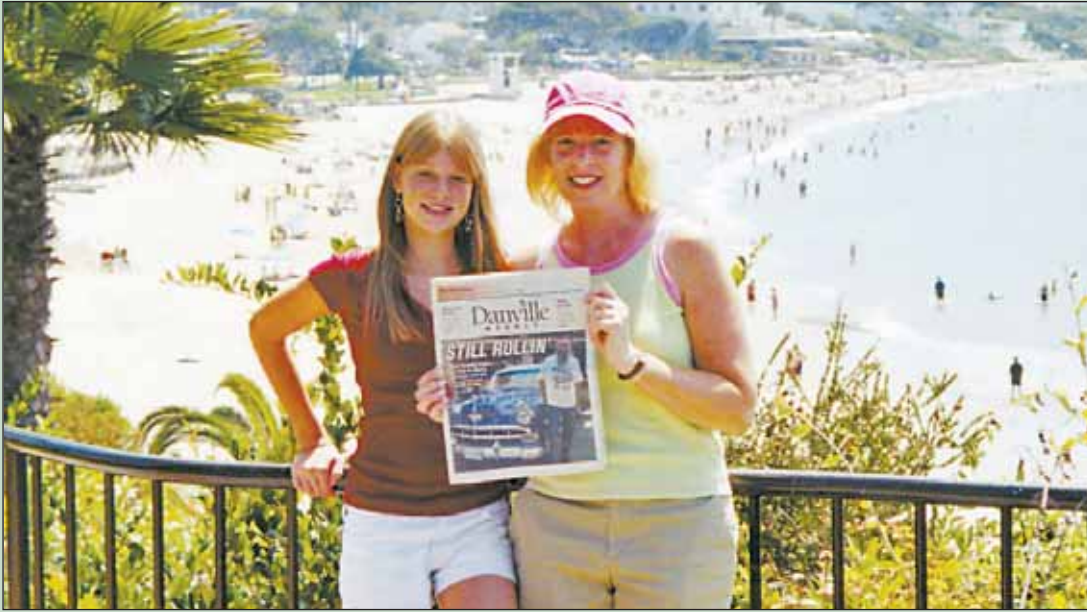
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TAKE US ALONG



Danville Weekly hits the beach

Lesley Johnson, a student at Charlotte Wood Middle School, and her mom Linda brought along their Weekly for a week's vacation in Laguna Beach with dad Neal and brother Scott, 16. They also enjoyed the boogie boarding—but not the stinging jellyfish.

Jamboree

► Continued from page 5

earn merit badges and have fun, too, Kenny said. He earned several merit badges, including Dentistry and Fire Safety, and began on his badge for World Citizenship. He also used the BMX trails, plus enjoyed meeting Scouts from other areas. On the way to the camp, the Bay Area contingent spent the day in Washington, D.C., where Kenny said his favorite site was the Korean War Memorial.

More than 43,000 Boy Scouts from all over the country attended the National Scout Jamboree, usually held every four years and planned as a once-in-a-lifetime event. During its 10 days, the site becomes the sixth largest city in the state of Virginia, said Kenny, and Fort A.P. Hill even gets a temporary ZIP code.

Kenny said his group of 10 was responsible for its own meals. "We picked up the food by 6, then two cooked for 10 people," he explained. "Two did cleanup, two did campsite cleanup, and there was one water man." Their days

started at 6 a.m. although they never woke up to reveille. "Our bugler didn't wake up and play it," Kenny explained, with a laugh.

A highlight was when President Bush made a visit. Besides the 43,000 Scouts at the Jamboree, another 5,000 people came to hear him speak for about 15 minutes.

"It was cool," said Kenny. "He landed in a helicopter, then took a car to the stage. The Texas troops were going wild." He reported that the president told the Scouts that he, too, had been a Scout and urged them to stay with it.

Kenny, a member of Danville's Troop 1630, just finished Diablo Vista Middle School and is starting Monte Vista High School next week. He plans to continue with Scouting, all the way to Eagle Scout. His dad, Ken, is an Eagle Scout.

The next Jamboree takes place in 2010, and will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Boy Scouts of America. But it's the 2005 National Scout Jamboree that will always be special to Kenny Frazier, despite the tragedy in its opening days. ■



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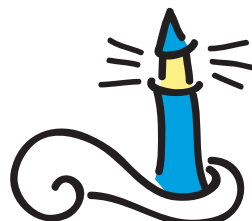


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Humphrey

► Continued from page 5

county counsel had yet to come up with a final answer to the jurisdiction question.

Both Davidon Homes and the school district had attorneys at the meeting to speak on their behalf. At previous meetings, no attorneys had been present.

"We are asking the commission to decide tonight," said Marie Cooper, attorney for Davidon Homes. She also urged the commission not to focus on extraneous issues that Davidon could not control.

School district attorney Dina Harris spoke to the commission to remind them that the district's property was not the issue before them.

"The use of the school district's property is not part of this application," said Harris. For the commission to even discuss the school district project is outside of the commission's scope, said Harris.

The commission also heard again from the public. No one spoke on the project's behalf. Alamo residents and members of the Alamo Improvement Association spoke against the project. Steve Creel, a Monte Sereno resident, compared the two projects to Siamese twins.

"One heart and one set of lungs. You can't separate the two," said Creel.



DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

After public input, Thayer made a final appeal to the commission to approve Davidon's project.

"I implore the commission to consider our project. I think the parking lot is going to happen.

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Jeff McClung and Sally Smith watch as Alamo resident Kathy Marke signs a petition Sunday questioning the plans to build a parking lot and soccer field across Stone Valley Road from Monte Vista High School and to add a stoplight. Volunteers gathered signatures Saturday and Sunday in front of the Alamo Safeway.

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Humphrey

► Continued from page 8

Having said that, we have exerted influence on the district to mitigate impacts. I believe I have the commitment of the district to do that," said Thayer.

He pointed out that the school district agreed to create a buffer zone between the parking lot and the Monte Sereno homes and would also coordinate with Davidson on frontage improvements.

Even though the Valley Planning Commission had asked for the county counsel's opinion on jurisdiction, both Chairman Neil Matsunaga and Commissioner McPherson believed the counsel would also find that the county had no jurisdiction over the school district project.

"It's a waste of time. We should move forward. County counsel will come back with the same opinion," said Matsunaga. He argued that nothing would change in a month and the commission should try to come to some decision about the grading.

Commissioner Sherry Neely expressed concerns about coming to a decision that night.

"We're grasping at straws. It has to be tight or else it's going to be reversed," Neely said, referring to the fact that Davidson would most likely ask the Board of

Supervisors to appeal the commission's decision.

The commissioners agreed they wanted to deny approving grading for the project, but they struggled to define the grounds. After some

"I didn't see that they had any real problems with our project. Unfortunately, the commission saw this as their only shot to do damage on the parking lot."

—John Wyro,
Humphrey family spokesman

policy guidance from Catherine Kutsuris, Deputy Director of Community Development for the county, all four commissioners agreed they could not find that Davidson's project would be in harmony with the character of the nearby community.

"We're asking to approve grading on a property we can't approve," said McPherson, who has always maintained she does not

oppose the homes but is uncomfortable with the school district's

autonomous stance. In an interview after the meeting, McPherson expressed her disappointment with the school district's attitude.

"The school district could have been more neighborly in telling us what they're going to do. The project would have gone smoother," said McPherson. "We were clearly grading this site for something we weren't supposed to address."

Chairman Matsunaga, who personally agrees that the school has a parking problem and the community needs more playing fields, stated that the commission didn't know enough of what the school district was going to do on its share of the land to approve grading.

"I didn't see that they had any real problems with our project. It's still the parking lot," said Humphrey family spokesman John Wyro. "Unfortunately, the commission saw this as their only shot to do damage on the parking lot. They were casting to make these findings."

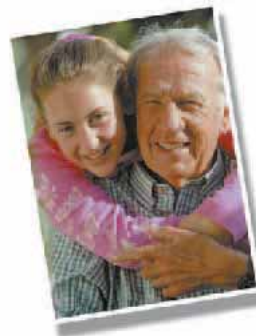
Opponents of the projects were pleased with the commission's findings but are aware that their fight is far from over.

Kathy Levit, a resident of Monte Sereno Drive, said she and other opponents of the project plan to speak to all the county supervisors and tell them they agree with the commission's decision.

"(The commission) did a very thorough job of investigating and uncovering the facts," said Levit. ■

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CASEY REIVICH

Safe School Ambassadors (l-r) Allison Young, Joshua Ng, Curtis Simoneou and Brie Hiramine work hard on one of their last remaining summer days to learn how to recognize and mediate student conflict.

Middle school students learn to stand up for their peers

Safe School Ambassadors program gives tools to mediate student conflicts

by Casey Reivich

Last Monday, around 40 middle school students gathered in the multi-purpose room at Los Cerros Middle School. They weren't there for an arts and crafts or sports camp. These children were going to spend two whole days discussing the subjects of bullying and cruelty at their middle school and learn ways to mediate student conflicts. They were training to become Safe School Ambassadors.

Giving up two of their last precious days of summer freedom, these students sat inside around a table and contemplated times where they witnessed students being cruel to one another and

heard about ways they, not a teacher or an adult, could effectively respond to cruelty or aggression.

The Safe School Ambassadors program is new to Los Cerros. A recent student survey at Los Cerros revealed that 70 percent of the students do not know what to do if they witness students being cruel or mean to one another, said Nancy Schubb, counselor at Los Cerros.

"We don't have a problem here," she said. "But we always want to improve their experience."

The program began in earnest last school year when students completed a survey identifying who they would go to if they had a problem and who the leader of their group is. Based on results from the survey and teacher input, 70 students were identified as potential candidates for the Safe School Ambassadors program.

These students then attended an orientation where they were told about the program and the commitment they would have to make to it. They would have to give up one lunch period per week during the school year to meet with fellow Safe School Ambassadors and a teacher, and they would have to attend two days of training during their summer holiday.

"We showed a video that explained to them that they won't be walking around with a clipboard. This is not a tattle-tale club," said Schubb. The pool of interested students was narrowed down to 40 students, due to some students dropping out and resource constraints.

Safe School Ambassadors is a research-based program. Students are shown ways to resolve conflicts on their own. They will record in a log what has happened and what has been successful. Through keeping a log they can identify for themselves which skills were helpful.

"We're asking the students to take responsibility for how they treat each other," said Schubb. "For as many adults as there are, there will always be things we can't hear or see. We're training the students in conflict mediation skills."

At the training session Monday, it was emphasized repeatedly by moderator Sally Clapper that it wasn't important to name names. She helped the students identify tense situations and encouraged the students to take an active role in standing up for their peers. The program is meant to give the students tools to help them affect change.

Schubb believes being a Safe School Ambassador is an honor. These are all students regarded by other students and teachers as leaders. But they are all from different crowds, she noted. These aren't solely the straight A students or the athletic students. They represent the student body's diversity.

At the end of the year, everyone who participates in the Safe School Ambassadors program will be acknowledged, Schubb said. ■

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Diablo Views

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI



Benit bucks stop here

Although my children are grown, I must have back-to-school fever—last Friday I stopped in at Alamo Elementary to check out the preparations for the new school year. I ended up spending more than an hour with Sue Benit, now a fourth-grade teacher, who was my daughter's second-grade teacher in 1985. That was Sue's first year at Alamo, having transferred from Stone Valley, which had grades 2-8 at the time. The change allowed Sue to job-share, with Barbara Cockerton, leaving her more time for her own children, Kelly and Mark. She said communication between the two teachers was key in job-sharing, and she and Barbara left copious notes for each other; students would be stunned to learn from her that they'd had a great day in her absence. She believes the children benefited from always having a rested teacher. Only one parent complained in 15 years! But she likes having her own classroom, too, and complete control.

This is Sue's 35th year of teaching, and she plans to keep going for 40. She started out at a middle school in Modesto after earning her credential at UC Santa Barbara. She recalled her first assignments—one class of English, yearbook, and remedial reading and English—and called them "typical first-year teacher" courses, the odds and ends. After two years she got married and moved to Walnut Creek, and found the job at Stone Valley teaching girls PE. Being an athlete herself, she loved the PE classes and thought teaching middle school was her calling. But she discovered something: "I'm a warm and fuzzy person—and middle schoolers are not warm and fuzzy." So she went to UC Berkeley at night for her credential in elementary education and the rest is history.

Sue has gone from teaching second grade to third and then fourth. The fourth grade is more challenging—it's 32 students as opposed to 20, plus essays are much longer. But it has different rewards. "In second grade, they are still babies," she said. "Third-graders still need to get individualized attention. But fourth-graders do silent reading for a half hour. And they do projects. And they have a sense of humor." She likes to tell them that she was Sue Foulk for 25 years, Sue Hafen for 25 years, and now she is Sue Benit and hopes she will be Sue Benit for 25 years. She can see their wheels turn as they figure out she is saying she hopes to live to age 75.

For 13 years, Sue has had the assistance of para-educator (aka

teacher's aide) Rosemary West. Rosemary also has a teaching credential, so when Sue takes a few days off, she does not need a substitute teacher, Rosemary can continue the class work without a hitch. Sue said sometimes Rosemary reports back that some students took advantage of her absence. That is occasion for Sue to speak to them in a very quiet voice, which makes them pay close attention, saying, "I'm very disappointed. I heard you weren't nice with Mrs. West." Immediately the kids who were well behaved begin to wave their hands, anxious to tell about the "problems." She laughed in relating this, obviously relishing her job and loving her students.

"She thought teaching middle school was her calling. But she discovered something: 'I'm a warm and fuzzy person—and middle schoolers are not warm and fuzzy.'"

Sue has an important rule in her classroom: Learning should be fun. She said teaching has changed through the years with the amount of testing, which sometimes makes her rule hard to enforce. She keenly feels that her job is to raise caring, responsible people. She reinforces this lesson in many ways—with a different student each week chosen as the class VIP, role-playing on how to resolve conflicts, and by rewarding good deeds with Benit Bucks redeemable for extra credit or good for drawings.

The classroom was almost ready, even last week. A bulletin board had huge blue gingham letters saying "Mrs. Benit's All Stars." She was looking forward to greeting her new students, noting that they are still basically third-graders at the beginning of the year. "I'll start out by saying, 'I know you're kind of nervous. I'm nervous, too. Do you ever get that feeling in your tummy? I do, too.'" she said. Sue made the classroom work sound stimulating—and fun. I wouldn't mind being in the fourth grade again, with Mrs. Benit as the teacher. ■

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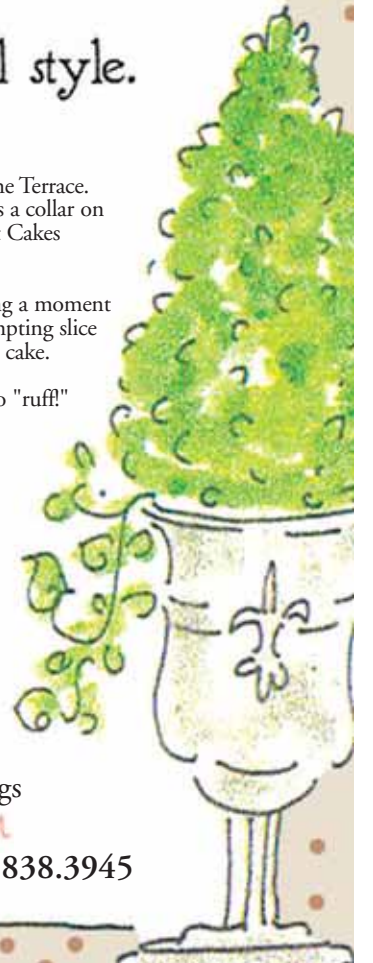
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EDITORIAL • THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

Gotta have heart

Sad as it may be to see the end of the funky old false fronts and the quaint shops behind the historic Danville Hotel, that block provides a wonderful opportunity to create some economic buzz in the heart of downtown.

So far, redevelopment plans call for the front of the block on Hartz Avenue to remain the same. The Wine Sellars is in the historic McCauley Hotel, and Lisa B's next door is in the equally historic Danville Hotel, which the McCauley family owned and operated from the 1890s to the 1940s. This attractive row of shops and restaurants from the parking lot to the corner will stay intact. It is the courtyard with its assorted little structures that will be redeveloped, as well as the larger building housing Celia's, which many people confuse with the historic Danville Hotel. The whole block was dubbed the Danville Hotel Territory when it was built in 1962.

The Territory may have been a tourist draw in its day but the old ghost town is looking tired. Also, times have changed. Downtown Danville is now quite charming, with interesting boutiques and quality restaurants, and its merchants are continually looking for ways to bring more pedestrian traffic to their shops. This was the goal of this summer's Thursday evening events. With the same purpose, the developer is looking for a "national" anchor, meaning a store that everyone will recognize and patronize. This would be a draw to shoppers who would then discover Danville's unique shops. A national could bring consistent foot traffic to the area, summer or winter.

Plans for this block will probably call for retail downstairs and offices upstairs. The owner also said he plans to include some sort of pedestrian walkway. We like this idea; such walkways have contributed positively to the ambiance of the downtown, such as the one next to the Uptown Café that ties Hartz to Railroad Avenue. We think it's a great idea to replace the gingerbread of Celia's with a design that fits in better with Danville today: Let's leave Virginia City to Nevada.

"The developer is looking for a national anchor, meaning a store that everyone will recognize and patronize."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Imagining in Alamo

Dear Editor:

Take an imaginary trip with me. As you drive from Walnut Creek on Danville Boulevard toward Alamo, notice that the road is a two lane "country" road; however, at Jackson Way, Danville Boulevard widens into five lanes, which has been the subject of many public meetings regarding safety and congestion. As you approach the Safeway on your right, imagine it to be Monte Vista High School. On your left, imagine that a 400-car parking lot (full of newly licensed children) replaces the Shell Station, Longs Drugs, and the small strip mall. Now, look around you as you're stopped at the light in the left-turn lane during rush hour traffic and imagine 400 to 800 children crossing that five-lane highway to get to school.

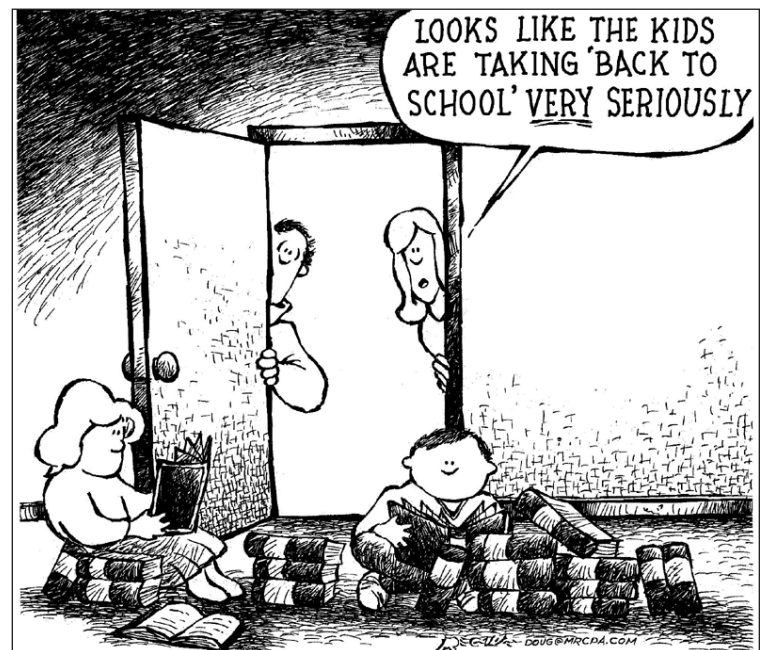
That is exactly what Davidon Homes and the San Ramon Valley School District are going to build on Stone Valley Road at Monte Vista High School. The two-lane "country" road will be gone and replaced with five lanes plus turnouts and a new stoplight. Also imagine 39 more homes with associated cars and children. Now imagine your child crossing five lanes of traffic twice a day to get to school. Now imagine everyone driving the speed limit.

S.A. Smith

Mountain Canyon Place, Alamo

Editor's note: Currently, Davidon Homes' plans for changes on Stone Valley Road in front of Monte Vista High School call for two bicycle lanes; two travel lanes; two left-turn lanes; and one 16-foot landscaped median.

THE POINT OF THE PEN



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POLICE BULLETIN

Danville woman rescued from creek bed

A 49-year-old Danville woman slipped off a hiking trail on the morning of Aug. 15 near Highland Drive and Sky Terrace, falling approximately 100-120 feet into a creek bed. Her husband eventually found her and called emergency services at 10:10 a.m. Twelve personnel, including Battalion Chief Boyd Clegg, paramedics and a technical rescue unit from the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District,

arrived at the scene and were able to lift the woman out of the creek bed. They completed the rescue by 11:28 a.m.

The woman was taken to the San Ramon Regional Medical Center in an ambulance. She was badly bruised and had fractured her left thighbone and left arm in the fall. She was released from San Ramon Regional on Thursday, Aug. 18, said hospital spokeswoman Sandra Ryan.

BIRTHS



Addie Lynn Pulliam

Addie Lynn, weighing 7 pounds 4 ounces and 19 inches long, was born at John Muir Medical Center, at 12:51 p.m., Thursday, July 7, to Terri and John Pulliam of Danville.

POLICE LOG

The Danville Police Department made the following information available. Under the law, those charged with offenses are considered innocent until convicted.

Aug. 15

- Interfering with public officer: on Winfield Ln. at 1:11 a.m.
- Burglary-commercial: on Railroad Ave. at 3:51 a.m.
- Warrant arrest: Arrest on Diablo Rd. at 4:30 a.m.
- Burglary-miscellaneous: on Love Ln. at 7:26 a.m.
- Malicious mischief: on Stone Valley Rd. at 7:29 a.m.
- Malicious mischief: on La Gonda Wy. at 7:32 a.m.
- Malicious mischief: on Quinterra Ln. at 8:53 a.m.
- Malicious mischief: on Pagosa Ct. at 9:25 a.m.
- Petty theft-from vehicle: on El Pintado Rd. at 9:05 a.m.
- Stolen vehicle: on Diablo Rd. at 10:20 a.m.
- Accident-property damage: on Sycamore Valley Rd. at 4:30 p.m.
- Possession of counterfeit bill: on Dutch Mill Ct. at 5:12 p.m.

Aug. 16

- Suspicious circumstances: on Matadera Cr. at 3:13 a.m.

Aug. 17

- Battery-domestic: Arrest on Pelican Ct. at 11:33 a.m.
- Accident-property damage: on San Ramon Valley Blvd. and Sycamore Valley at 3:43 p.m.
- Malicious mischief: on Bueno Ct. at 5:50 p.m.

Aug. 18

- Disturbing the peace-domestic: on Clydesdale Dr. at 8:03 a.m.
- Malicious telephone calls: on Clarita Pl. at 10 a.m.
- Credit card fraud: on St. Beatrice Ct. at 4:13 p.m.

Aug. 19

- Accident-property damage: on Diablo Rd. and I-680 south-bound at 2:27 p.m.
- Malicious mischief: on La Gonda Ct. and La Gonda Wy. at 4:35 p.m.
- Suspicious circumstances: on Ferncroft Ct. at 4:50 p.m.

Aug. 20

- Defrauding innkeeper: on Camino Ramon at 2:34 a.m.

- Battery-misdemeanor: on Camino Ramon at 2:55 a.m.
- Driving under influence (DUI)-misdemeanor: Arrest on El Pintado Rd. and La Gonda Wy. at 3:48 a.m.
- Suspicious circumstances: on San Rey Pl. at 7:29 a.m.
- Disturbing the peace: on Tassajara Ranch Dr. at 1:32 p.m.
- Drugs-possession of syringe: Arrest on Linda Mesa Ave. at 7:07 p.m.
- Contributing to delinquency of minor: Arrest on Oak Ct. and San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 10:33 p.m.
- Assault with deadly weapon: Arrest on Greenbrook Dr. at 11:50 p.m.

Aug. 21

- Disturbing the peace: on Hartz Av. at 1:57 a.m.
- DUI misdemeanor: Arrest on La Gonda Wy. at 3:54 p.m.
- Accident-property damage: on Winterwood Ct. at 4:26 p.m.

The Office of the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department's Valley Station in Alamo made the following information available.

ALAMO

Aug. 15

- Petty theft: on Regent Pl.
- Malicious mischief: on Indian Wy.
- Malicious mischief: on Red Wing Dr.
- Malicious mischief: on Stone Valley Oaks Dr.

Aug. 16

- Disturbance: on Stone Valley Wy.
- Malicious mischief: on High Eagle Rd.

Aug. 17

- Malicious mischief: Alamo Plaza

Aug. 19

- Malicious mischief: on Danville Blvd.

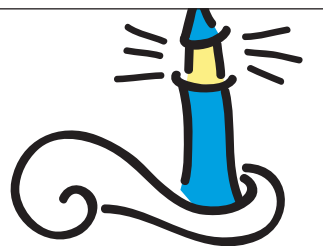
DIABLO

Aug. 15

- Burglary-residential: on Avenida Nueva

Aug. 16

- Grand theft-from building: on Alameda Diablo



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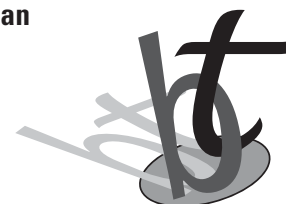
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CASEY REWICH

In the mainstream

*For Danville's Christine Burke,
life with a disability is 'No big deal'*

by Julie Nostrand

Sitting in a blue sleeveless summer dress in front of Starbucks, Christine Burke is enjoying the heat of a Danville summer. Today, she drove herself to coffee and loves the freedom her new drivers' license allows. She is also free of her wheelchair this afternoon, but has her crutches tucked discreetly under the table.

When another patron walks by and asks, in a friendly voice, "What happened to you?" she laughs. Realizing then that she is disabled, not injured, the customer stammers out an apology. Burke smiles and reassures the stranger, "No big deal."

For Burke, disabled since birth, living with physical limitations is "no big deal." Born with spina bifida, a problem caused when her spinal column didn't close properly in the womb, Burke is comfortable with her physical abilities. She knows she doesn't have feeling in her feet and she suspects the feeling in her legs has been affected, but she doesn't let it slow her down.

Burke's ability to live in the mainstream of life is a relief to her parents, Dawn Graeme and Randy Burke. There was no sign of trouble during her pregnancy, and Graeme remembers clearly the fear she felt when she realized in the delivery room something was wrong.

"Nothing prepares you for this," says Graeme of the day she learned her baby girl had spina bifida. A physical therapist by training, Graeme knew a bit about the

birth defect when Christine was born, but had a lot to learn. "I was very sad and worried. I questioned if I could deal with this," recalls Graeme.

As time passed, doctors evaluated Christine's condition. Infants born with spina bifida suffer from a broad spectrum

"Christine is strong-willed, positive and a pleasure to work with. She does every piece of homework, and teachers love her positive attitude."

of physical and developmental problems. According to Graeme, the unknown extent of the disability left the family holding their breath. But as time passed and their little girl began hitting developmental milestones, the family was able to relax: Her only limitations were physical.

Five years after her birth, like other kids her age, Christine was ready to start kindergarten, at Baldwin Elementary School. The school administrators originally wanted to place her in a Special Education classroom, insisting she would be more comfortable in an environment tailored to her needs. The

family refused this arrangement, arguing their daughter would benefit from being with able-bodied kids. Their determination landed Christine in a mainstream classroom with her peers.

Graeme points out that the family has had a positive school experience, and at the same time, they have had to be their own advocates. Burke's disability has not affected her cognitively, only physically, but in those early school years, many teachers needed reassurances that her disability would not create a distraction in the classroom.

So, each year, Burke's mom and dad advocated to keep her mainstreamed, and each year, Burke excelled in school, proving her parents right.

Today, Burke is a confident, accomplished 16-year-old, entering her junior year at San Ramon Valley High School. She is a budding leader in the disabled community, sings soprano in the school choir, and still finds time to play competitive wheelchair tennis and basketball.

Debbie Beyers, a resource teacher at San Ramon Valley High School, has worked with Burke and her family for the past two years. As a resource teacher, Beyers helps about 30 students with different disabilities by advocating for and supporting their needs. Throughout her time in high school, Beyers has been her "Mom away from home," says Burke.

And Beyers says that it is a delight working with Burke.



Christine Burke enjoys skiing every winter, despite a hectic schedule that includes choir, tennis and basketball.

“Christine is strong-willed, positive and a pleasure to work with,” says Beyers. “She does every piece of homework, and teachers love her positive attitude.”

Her grades reflect her dedication to schoolwork. Despite missing six months of her first two years in high school due to surgeries related to her disability, she maintains a 3.5 grade point average.

“Christine will definitely go on to a four-year school, and it is likely she will earn either an academic or athletic scholarship,” adds Beyers.

Once her schoolwork is complete, Burke’s passion is athletics. She focuses her efforts on wheelchair tennis and basketball and is playing both at a national level.

In tennis, she is currently ranked No. 10 in the country in the juniors and No. 11 in the country in Women’s A division for U.S. Wheelchair Tennis. She boasts of having competed in the U.S. Open Wheelchair Tennis Competition.

In basketball, she plays off-guard for the Bay Area Outreach and Recreational Program’s (BORP) Bay Cruisers Varsity Basketball team. Tim Orr, the director of BORP’s sports program has known Burke for many years.

“Christine has great communication on the court, and she is very good at supporting other players,” said Orr. “She is increasing in strength and agility and improving her shooting.”

Orr says that wheelchair basketball is tough to master. It takes about seven years for players to learn to handle the wheelchair, the ball and the defense by the other team, he explains, but Burke is well on her way to excelling in the sport.

Her athletic ability has allowed her to travel the country competing in basketball and tennis. In fact, last year she was a starting guard on the National Championship Junior Varsity team.

Burke uses her athletic endeavors to connect with her peers. This spring she helped organize an exhibition game pitting the BORP Cruisers’ against the varsity basketball players of San Ramon Valley High. The Cruisers spotted the Wolves 70 points, but the Wolves had to play in wheelchairs.

Led by Burke, the Cruisers beat the Wolf Pack by 2 points, 77 to 75. All had a good time, and the varsity basketball players developed a new appreciation for life with a disability—and some sore arm muscles.

“It was just the right combination of fun and competition,” said Orr of the event.

Wanting to build on the leadership experience gained by organizing the basketball game, Burke attended the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) in Sacramento this summer. Sponsored by the Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, a part of the Employment Development Department, the forum brings youths with visible and hidden disabilities together to live, laugh and learn with each other for five days. Of thousands of applicants, Burke was selected to be one of 60 participants this year.

The conference included leadership development exercises, small group discussions, and meetings with legislators to discuss issues impacting the disabled community. The objective of the conference is to prepare students with disabilities to reach their career goals and lead independent lives.

For Burke, the conference was eye opening. Familiar with the challenges she faces daily, some of the exercises helped her see the variety of challenges faced by people with other disabilities. The conference provided her with tools to be a proactive leader for the rights of the disabled community, and it made her feel the outlook for the disabled is brighter now than ever before.

Burke wants to use her experience at the Youth Leadership Forum to spearhead an effort to start a disability awareness day at her school. She hopes the effort will include the opportunity for students to live a day with a simulated disability. Her hope is this exercise will deepen the understanding her peers have for challenges faced by the disabled.

Even though college is two years away, Burke is already making plans for life after high school. With her sights set on attending the University of Arizona in Tucson, Burke plans to continue her academic and athletic career through college. The school has strong wheelchair basketball and tennis teams. Ideally, Burke would love to play on those teams while studying to be



Christine Burke and her BORP Bay Cruisers’ teammates are recognized at last year’s Wheelchair Basketball National Championships. Burke is playing with the varsity team this year.

a pediatric nurse. Being a nurse would allow her to give to other sick kids some of the support she has received from the nurses who have helped her.

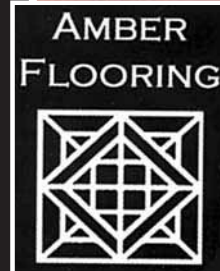
“With a lot of nurses, I am just a teenager,” says Burke. “They come into the room and just talk to me. They don’t treat me like a medical case.”

And Burke knows about being a “medical case.” She has spent a lot of time in hospitals, enduring a total of 15 surgeries. Many have been on her back, but others have been on her ankles, hips and neck.

But the surgeries are history for now, and she is busy shopping for school clothes and planning for her future.

Perhaps that is the most striking thing about Burke. Through her positive outlook and strong will, her disability is “no big deal.” She is just another teenager getting ready for the new school year. ■

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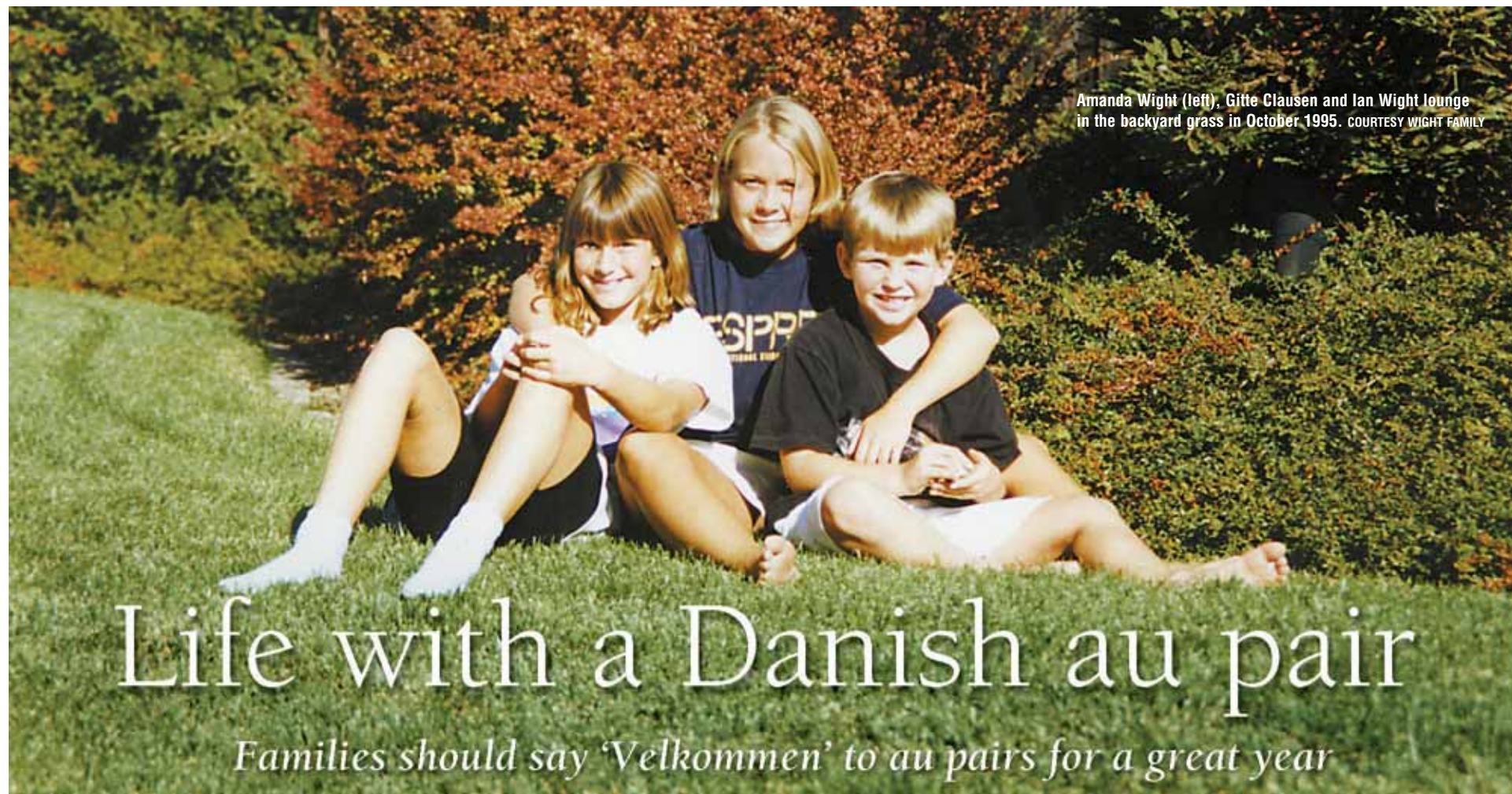
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Amanda Wight (left), Gitte Clausen and Ian Wight lounge in the backyard grass in October 1995. COURTESY WIGHT FAMILY

Life with a Danish au pair

Families should say 'Velkommen' to au pairs for a great year

by **Amanda Wight**

“Hvordan var din flytur?” I asked with the overinflated confidence of an 8-year-old, not concerned that my Danish accent wasn't quite what it should have been.

“My plane trip was good, thank you,” Gitte Clausen replied after a moment of stunned silence, taking in her surroundings, a look of awe on her face.

It was October 1994, and my family was gathered at the San Francisco airport to welcome Gitte to the United States. She had arrived from Odense, Denmark, to live with our family for a year and care for my 4-year-old brother, Ian, and myself while my parents were at work. Her official title was au

pair, but she would become a sister to me over time.

We stood in a little huddle around Gitte: my father, Terry, held a sign with her name on it; my mother, Patti, held a bouquet of flowers; Ian and I held a sign saying “Welcome” in Danish (Velkommen); and our first au pair, Pernille Pedersen, held a bunch of balloons.

I talked nonstop the entire car ride back to Danville, bombarding Gitte with questions about herself and scarcely giving her time to answer before launching into my next inquiry. She handled it quite well, pacifying my curiosity while trying to entice my brother into joining the conversation. In

between all of this, she still managed to speak in rapid-fire Danish to Pernille, much to my annoyance. I didn't like not being able to understand what was being said, but I got over it, of course.

It was a Friday night when Gitte came, and we tried to acclimate her to our American traditions as soon as possible. We introduced her to the concept of eating pizza with potato chips for dinner, and my dad flipped on “The X-Files,” which Gitte had never seen. She went to bed later that evening, exhausted but excited about beginning the next year of her life.

Gitte told me years later that when she chose to be an au pair, she really had no clue what she was getting into. She was worried about my family not liking her and not getting along with us, as well as being too homesick or not liking the United States. She said her biggest fear was that something bad would happen to Ian or myself while she was in charge of us.

My parents decided to join the au pair program in 1993, when our full-time babysitter decided she was going back to school. My dad traveled frequently for business, and my mom worked evenings as a clinical scientist at John Muir Hospital. She had heard about au pairs from a work colleague, and thought an au pair would be a convenient solution to her child-care needs.

They worked with EF Au Pairs (now Cultural Care Au Pairs) in

About au pairs

Cultural Care Au Pair (culturalcare.com), which my family used, has the following guidelines:

- Au pairs are 18-26 years old and high school graduates. They are proficient in conversational English, and must have recently completed 200 hours of childcare experience. Au pairs possess a legal visa to visit the United States for 13 months (12 for working, one for traveling). Each au pair candidate submits to a reference check as well as a complete background screening. While in America, they must earn at least six academic credits at an accredited post-secondary institution, usually a community college or nearby university, in any subject. The host family must contribute \$500 toward the cost of classes.

- The au pair's first week in America is spent at Au Pair Training School in New York where they participate in workshops on child development and safety.

- A host family must be committed to cultural exchange, U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of children requiring up to 45 hours of childcare per week, and able to provide a private bedroom.

- A host family pays an average of \$260 per week for individualized, live-in care, regardless of the number of children or their ages. When beginning the search for an au pair, a \$250 application fee applies. Once an au pair has been selected, the basic cost of the program is \$5,995, which includes the recruitment, screening, and preparation of the au pair by experienced staff; training at the Au Pair Training School in New York; host family and au pair orientations; international airfare; a full year of medical and travel insurance; training materials; and year-long support from the Cultural Care staff and local childcare coordinator. In addition to the Program Fees, \$500 for academic classes and a weekly stipend of \$139.05 rounds out the cost of hosting an au pair.

—Amanda Wight



Ian and Amanda Wight enjoy a reunion with their former au pair Gitte Clausen (center) in July 2004.

► Continued on page 18

AT THE MOVIES

Note: Screenings are for Friday through Tuesday only.

2046 (R)	CinéArts: Fri-Tue: 1:35, 9:40 p.m.
Batman Begins (PG-13)	Regal Imax Theaters: Fri-Tue: 4, 9:30 p.m.
Broken Flowers (R)	CinéArts: Fri-Tue: 11:50 a.m., 2:25, 4:55, 7:25, 9:55 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue 11:40 a.m., 2:25, 5:10, 7:50, 10:25 p.m.
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (PG)	Century 14: Fri-Tue: 12:05, 2:40, 5:20, 7:55 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 12:45, 3:45, 6:30, 9:45 p.m. Regal Imax Theaters: Fri-Tue: 11 a.m., 1:30, 7 p.m.
Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo (R)	Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11:15 a.m., 1:15, 3:25, 5:40, 7:55, 10:05 p.m.
Four Brothers (R)	Century 14: Fri-Tue: 11:35 a.m., 2, 4:25, 7:05, 9:30 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11:10 a.m., 1:50, 4:25, 7, 9:40 p.m.
Grizzly Man (R)	Century 14: Fri-Tue: 11:55 a.m., 2:25, 4:55, 7:30, 10:05 p.m.
Junebug (R)	CinéArts: Fri-Tue: 4:35, 7:10 p.m.
March of the Penguins (G)	Blackhawk Movies 7: Fri-Sat: 2:50, 4:55, 7:10, 9:15 p.m.; Sun-Tue 2:50, 4:55, 7:10 p.m. Century 14: Fri-Tue: 12:25, 2:30, 4:40, 6:55, 9:15 p.m. CinéArts: Fri-Tue: 11:45 a.m., 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45, 9:45 p.m. Crow Canyon 6: Fri-Tue: 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:40, 8:40 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11:10 a.m., 1:10, 3:20, 5:20, 7:40, 9:50 p.m. Vine Cinema: Fri: 1:15, 3:10, 5, 7, 9 p.m.; Sat-Sun: 11:20 a.m., 1:15, 3:10, 5, 7, 9 p.m.
Must Love Dogs (PG-13)	Century 14: Fri-Tue: 11:40 a.m., 1:55, 4:20, 6:50, 9:20 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 3:50, 9:35 p.m.
Pretty Persuasion (Not Rated)	CinéArts: Fri-Tue: 11:40 a.m., 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:50 p.m.
Red Eye (PG-13)	Blackhawk Movies 7: Fri-Sat: 2:40, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30 p.m. Sun-Tue: no show 9:30 p.m. Century 14: Fri-Tue: 12:15, 3, 5:15, 7:25, 9:35 p.m. Crow Canyon 6: Fri-Tue 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 7:15 9:25 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 12:30, 1:20, 2:50, 3:30, 5:15, 5:50, 7:30, 8:10, 9:50, 10:30 p.m.
Sky High (PG)	Century 14: Fri-Tue: 11:25 a.m., 1:40, 4:50, 7:20, 9:55 p.m. Crow Canyon 6: Fri-Tue: 12:50, 3:20, 6:45, 9:10 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue 11:35 a.m., 2:05, 4:30, 7:05, 9:45 p.m.
Supercross (PG-13)	Blackhawk Movies 7: Fri-Sun: 3:15, 7:50 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11:05 a.m.
The 40 Year-Old Virgin (R)	Century 14: Fri-Tue: noon, 1:30, 2:45, 4:15, 5:30, 7, 8:15, 9:40 p.m. Crow Canyon 6: Fri-Tue: 1:15, 4, 7, 9:40 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11:05, 11:30 a.m., 1:45, 2:10, 4:35, 5, 7:25, 7:55, 10:15, 10:40 p.m.
The Aristocrats (NC-17)	CinéArts: Fri-Tue: 11:30 a.m., 2, 4:25, 7, 9:10 p.m.
The Brothers Grimm (PG-13)	Blackhawk Movies 7: Fri-Sat: 2, 4:45, 7:30, 10:15 p.m. Sun-Tue: no show 10:15 p.m. Century 14: Fri-Tue: 12:30, 1:45, 3:15, 4:30, 6, 7:15, 8:45, 10 p.m. Crow Canyon 6: Fri-Tue: 1, 3:50, 7:10, 9:50 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11, 11:30 a.m., 1:40, 2:10, 4:30, 5, 7:20, 7:50, 10:10, 10:40 p.m.
The Cave (PG-13)	Blackhawk Movies 7: Fri-Sat: 2:55, 5:20, 7:45, 10:05 p.m. Sun-Tue: no show 10:05 p.m. Century 14: Fri-Tue: 11:45 a.m., 2:15, 4:45, 7:10, 9:45 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11:50 a.m., 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 10 p.m.
The Dukes of Hazzard (PG-13)	Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 2:25, 4:55, 7:25, 10:10 p.m.
The Great Raid (no rating)	Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 12:50, 6:30 p.m.
The Skeleton Key (PG-13)	Blackhawk Movies 7: Fri-Sat: 5:25, 9:55 p.m.; Sun-Tues: 5:25 p.m. only Century 14: Fri-Tue: 10:30 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11:20 am, 2:05, 4:40, 7:35, 10:20 p.m.
Undiscovered (PG-13)	Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tues: 12:05, 2:35, 5:05, 7:40, 10:05 p.m.
Valiant (G)	Blackhawk Movies 7: Fri-Sat: 3, 5, 7, 9 p.m.; Sun-Tue: No show 9 p.m. Century 14: Fri-Tue: 11:50 a.m., 1:50, 3:50, 5:50, 7:50, 9:50 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11 a.m., 1, 3:05, 5:10, 7:15, 9:30 p.m.
War of the Worlds (PG-13)	Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11:20 a.m. 1:55, 4:30, 7:10, 9:55 p.m.
Wedding Crashers (R)	Blackhawk Movies 7: Fri-Sat: 2:05, 4:50, 7:35, 10:15 p.m. Sun-Tues: No show 10:15 p.m. Cent. 14: Fri-Tue: 11:30 a.m., 2:20, 5, 7:40, 10:20 p.m. Crow Canyon 6: Fri-Tue: 12:50, 3:30, 6:50, 9:30 p.m. Hacienda Crossing 20: Fri-Tue: 11:15 a.m., 2, 4:45, 7:45, 10:30 p.m. Vine Cinema: Fri: 2, 4:30, 7:15, 9:35 p.m.; Sat-Sun: 11:30 a.m., 2, 4:30, 7:15, 9:35 p.m.; Tue: 2, 4:30, 7:10, 9:20 p.m.

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Au pair

► Continued from page 16

selecting the perfect person to join our family. Pernille was our first au pair. My brother and I loved her, and my parents enjoyed some extra time to themselves on the weekends. We all got along great, so when the year was up, my parents decided to welcome another au pair into our home.

The agency matched us with Scandinavian girls, although we did not have specific requests for that locale. Cecilia was our third au pair, from Sweden, and Camilla was fourth, also from Sweden. By the time I was 10, my mom no longer worked evening shifts, so she could stay home with us whenever my dad traveled, rendering au pairs unnecessary. However, I will always treasure the memories of my four years with four amazing women as great times in my life.

Gitte was the best, and I remember her most clearly. She truly cared about what my brother and I thought, encouraged our hopes, dreams and creativity, and would always play with us. I have so many fantastic memories of my year with Gitte, and I feel like having her around made me a better 8-year-old back then, and a better 18-year-old now.

Gitte taught us about Danish culture, and my favorite thing was Danish pancakes. They are similar to crepes, and we would help Gitte

make them for dinner sometimes. We filled them with strange combinations—cinnamon and sugar, butter and syrup, peanut butter and jelly—but all were delicious. The first time we attempted to make them, Gitte was unfamiliar with our griddle and we wound up setting off the smoke alarm. But we got better as the year progressed.

In return for teaching us about Danish culture, we showed Gitte some uniquely American things. Her favorites were Starbucks, Taco Bell, Tootsie Rolls, and frozen yogurt. She also told me that she loved the beautiful nature of the States—that there are so many different people and great cities. She said that she did actually lose her heart in San Francisco.

My parents decided to throw Gitte a surprise 21st birthday party at our house in May. All of the other au pairs in the area were friends with Gitte, so they came over to help set up and surprise her when she got back from swimming with her friend Anette. I remember running around, so excited that we were going to surprise Gitte, and when she walked through the door into our living room, I think I yelled "Surprise!" louder than anyone.

In August we went on a family vacation to Mount Lassen and, of course, Gitte came too. I have great memories of the time a deer came into our campsite while we were eating lunch, and we just stared at it while Gitte ran to get her camera. She loved taking pictures of everything.

We didn't always get along, however. Whenever I would get mad at Gitte, I would call her Miss Elf Ears, due to her slightly pointed ears and 5 foot 1 inch frame. That made her so angry with me, but we look back on it now and laugh.

When Gitte left America, it was hard for me to see her go. I loved Gitte with all of my heart, and the knowledge that I wouldn't see her again for quite some time was difficult to deal with.

I did get to see Gitte again, but it wasn't until the summer of 2003. My family went to England for vacation, and we decided to go to Denmark for a few days to visit Gitte. That was a great experience because we got to meet her parents and her sister, who welcomed us as if we were part of their family. Gitte was able to play tour guide to us as we had been to her when she first came to California, which was a lot of fun.

In July 2004, Gitte and her sister, Nina, came to visit California. They stayed with us while going on trips to San Francisco, Los Angeles and Las Vegas. But the best thing about their visit (besides getting to spend time with them) was that they were able to attend our family reunion. Gitte couldn't believe how much my dad's family had changed in the 10 years since she'd seen them.

Gitte and I stay in touch through e-mail and letters, and I know that I'll always have her to turn to for advice or just to tell her a fun story. She is one of my favorite people, and I am so thankful that she decided to become an au pair and that she ended up with my family. I cannot think of a better match. ■

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Run for education

Ready, set, register for annual Primo's run

Runners: It's not too soon to sign up for the annual Primo's Run for Education, which takes place this year Sunday, Oct. 9.

The run benefits the San Ramon Valley Education Foundation, which raises money to fill in the gaps in funding at each school site of the San Ramon Valley Unified School District.

"We feel each student deserves to have programs and tools in their education to help them reach their full potential," said Allan Frumkin, who founded the organization in 1980.

The run will be celebrating 22 years since its beginning, and it is the biggest fundraiser for the foundation. In 2004 alone it distributed more than \$85,000 in teacher grants, and it has raised more than \$2 million total.

The half-marathon begins at 7:30 a.m. at Primo's Pizza & Pasta

in Danville, at the corner of Hartz Avenue and Diablo Road. The 5K Family Fun Run/Walk begins at 8:30 a.m. at Iron Horse Middle School on Alcosta Boulevard in San Ramon. Both races are certified by USA Track & Field.

The courses cover Danville and parts of San Ramon and both end at Iron Horse Middle School. After the race, a Fun Fair is held. Participants who have runner sponsors will be eligible for prizes.

Primo's Run is the largest event to benefit the foundation and attracts thousands of runners from all over the Bay Area. Registration can be done online at www.primosrun.com. All online registrations must be completed by 10 p.m. Oct. 5. In-person registration can be done at Forward Motion Sports on Hartz Avenue Sept. 24, Sept. 28, Oct. 1, Oct. 5 and Oct. 8.

—Dolores Fox Ciardelli

Registration fees are:

Through Sept. 15:	
5K individual\$25
5K families of three or more\$15 per person
Half-marathon\$35
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5K families of three or more\$20 per person
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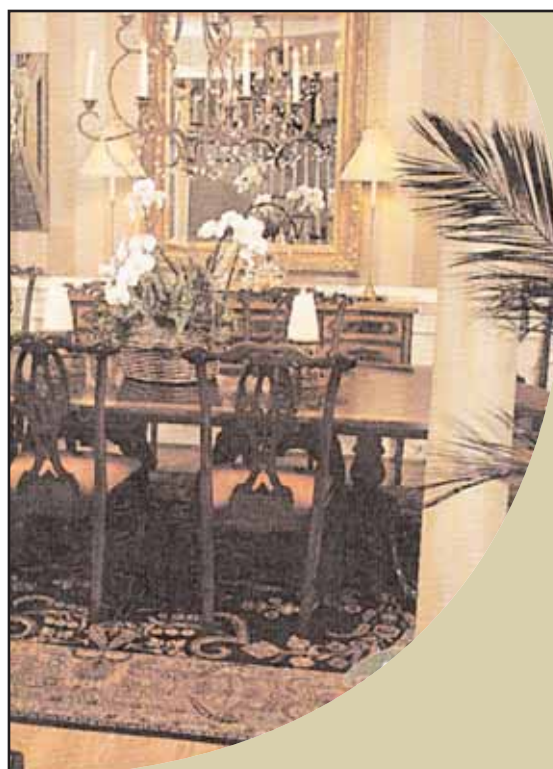
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Crow Canyon Sea Lions swim to victory in county championships



Kiana Shokouh, 10, swims the butterfly for the Crow Canyon Sea Lions at the 2005 County Meet.

by Mike L. Mc Colgan

The Crow Canyon Sea Lions were crowned 2005 Contra Costa County Champions for the first time in their history, at the county championships held Aug. 13-14 at Acalanes High School in Lafayette. Fifty-nine teams participated.

"The kids were dedicated all summer long. They came to practice every day with a new challenge and always rose above the coaches' expectations," said swim coach Dan Cottam. "They never complained about training, no matter how hard it was." He also noted that both younger and older teammates were supportive of each other. "They knew what each other's goals and dreams were."

"They finished 492 points ahead of Blackhawk Country Club. Round Hill Country Club finished third," Cottam said, beaming.

Cottam and co-head coach Ethan Hall have coached the Sea Lions for the past four years. This was the first year Hall coached the summer team but he has coached the swimmers in the fall for the past four years, said Cottam. He has been swimming for 23 years and swam competitively for 20 years.

Both coaches were teammates on the Terrapins Concord U.S. Swim team and swam for UC Santa Barbara for four years.

The entire team deserves credit for this impressive victory, Cottam said, providing the following list of "only some of the standouts of the swim meet as there were too many to list all of them."

- JJ Koski, 8 - high-point winner for 7-8 boys (first in butterfly; first in Individual Medley)
- 7-8 boys Medley Relay (Kyle Kearns, JJ Koski,

Connor Doyle, AJ Silva) broke the County Record

- 13-14 boys Medley and Free Relays - first place (Justin Gribble, Jason Roudnev, Byron Gruendl, Patrick Weiss)

- 7-8 girls Free Relay - first place (Kelly O'Connell, Kristin Schumann, Marina Smith, Katherine Klass)

- 9-10 boys Medley Relay - first place (Dillon Williams, Colin Chiapello, Kyle Schumann, Brian Roudnev)

- Chris Glass - first place 100 backstroke 15-18 boys

- AJ Silva - first place in 25 freestyle 7-8 boys

- Dillon Williams, 9 - second place in 50 back and 50 butterfly 9-10 boys

- Colin Chiapello, 9 - second place 50 breaststroke 9-10 boys

- Kyle Schumann - first place 50 butterfly 9-10 boys

- Kristin Schumann - second place 25 breaststroke 7-8 girls

- Logan Bjorkman - second place 100 backstroke 15-18 girls

- Marina Smith - fourth place 100 IM; third place 25 butterfly 7-8 girls

Parent photographers

Send a jpeg to Editor@DanvilleWeekly.com of the best action shot from your child's game for consideration for our Sports page. Remember to include caption information: who, what, when, where—and the score.



Devon Chiapello, 12, shows her freestyle form. She placed second in breaststroke.



Winning girls get goofy

The Diablo Country Club 6-and-unders won both the medley relay and the freestyle relay at the recent Contra Costa County swim meet. Celebrating their victory are members of the freestyle team: Erin Ospeck, Katie Keller, Maddy Scerpa and Haley Schreiber.

Golf Champion

Danville resident MJ Mc Colgan won his fifth straight Northern California Special Olympic Golf Championship at Castlewood Country Club. Trailing by 3 shots with 3 holes to play, Mc Colgan rallied and made a crucial 15-foot downhill putt to seal the victory by 2 shots on the last hole and post the lowest score of the tournament. His next goals are to play in the first ever 2006 National Games to be held in Ames, Iowa, and the 2007 Summer Games to be held in China. He also is a finalist for the 2005 Nike Casey Martin Award and is a three-time National Champion.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

WEEKEND PREVIEW



Life is a cabaret, my friends

Multi-Media Musicals is a "Cabaret in Concert Event" benefiting the Contra Costa Youth Council and featuring two Danville residents, Sophie Tamiko Oda (right) and Samantha Samuels. The "Hits & Misses ... from Broadway to the Big Screen" begins at 8 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 27, at the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek. County Supervisor Mary N. Piepho will represent her father, former State Sen. John Nejedly, founder of the Contra Costa Youth Council, who also hopes to attend. For tickets, call 943-7469.

Art

Art of Fashion

The show, which benefits Danville Area Cultural Alliance (DACA), will be from 4-7 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 18, in the Village Theater, 233 Front St. There will be a bazaar and wine tasting after the show. For information, call Yasmine Austere at 998-9747.

Artist Reception

The Blackhawk Art Gallery is hosting a free artist reception on Saturday, Aug. 27, at the Blackhawk Art Gallery, 3628 Blackhawk Plaza Circle. The Reception is open to the public and will feature the paintings of Bill Weber, the sculptures of Michael Rizza, and holographer Nancy Gorglione. Wine and appetizers will be served from 5-9 p.m. For information, call 736-5640.

Portrait Painting Demonstration

The Alamo-Danville Artists' Society will host an artist's demonstration by portrait painter Wanda Kemper, at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 13, at the Danville Congregational Church, 989 San Ramon Valley Blvd. The session is free and visitors are welcome.

Author Visits

Bestselling Author M.J. Ryan

Join one of the creators of the "Random Acts of Kindness" series, bestselling author M.J. Ryan as she discusses and signs her latest book, "The Happiness Makeover," at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 20, at the Danville Library, Mt. Diablo Room. For information, call 937-4889.

Christopher Paolini Book Signing

Meet Christopher Paolini at a reading and signing of his latest book "Eldest," at 6 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 17, at the San Ramon Valley High School Performing Arts Center. This event is sponsored by Rakestraw Books. Tickets are \$5.25 and can be purchased at Rakestraw Books. For additional information, call 837-7337.

Joan Bechtel, Linda Cohen

Local authors Joan Bechtel and Linda Cohen will discuss and sign their new book, "Motherhood Confidential: The

Strange Disappearance of My Best Friend," at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 20, at Rakestraw Books at 409 Railroad Ave. For confirmation, call 837-7337.

Book Clubs

Library Book Discussions

The Book Discussion Group will resume meeting Thursday, Sept. 8, to discuss what members have read over the summer and to choose books for December and 2006. In October the selection is "Housekeeping" by Marilynne Robinson; in November it is "Will in the World," by Stephen Greenbelt, a non-fiction book that explores 16th Century England and what enabled Shakespeare to become Shakespeare. The discussion group meets at 11 a.m. the second Thursday of every month from September through May at the Mt. Diablo room of the library. Everyone is welcome.

Civic Meetings

Danville Parks and Leisure Services Commission

The Commission meets regularly on the second Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. in the Town Meeting Hall, 201 Front St.

Danville Planning Commission

The Commission meets regularly on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Meeting Hall, 201 Front St.

Town Council Meeting

The Danville Town Council meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Meeting Hall, 201 Front St.

Classes

For Moms of Teenage Boys

"Get out of my life...but first, could you leave money for pizza?" Sharing support and strategy for parenting our teen boys. The class is from 9-10:30

a.m., Wednesdays, Sept. 7-Oct. 19 (no class Sept. 28), at the Community Presbyterian Counseling Center, 375 Diablo Road, Suite 109. Cost is \$140. For information, visit Web site at www.cpccounseling.com, or call 820-1467 to register.

Clubs

Alamo Cribbage Club

The club plays cribbage for fun. It meets at 6:15 p.m. every Wednesday at the Safeway conference room, 200 Alamo Plaza, Alamo. Call 935-3325.

Alamo Women's Club Federated

The club meets on most Wednesdays at its clubhouse, 1401 Danville Blvd. It holds a business meeting and tea the second Wednesday at noon; meets for Mah Jong at 10:30 a.m. the third Wednesday; and holds a luncheon with program at noon the fourth Wednesday. For information, call Jean Stringfellow at 552-9733.

Bay Area Single Christians

BASC club is a free, large, online group with event listings for Christian single adults around the S.F. Bay Area. See information at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bascingles/>.

Danville AM Toastmasters Club

The club meets from 7-8:30 a.m., every Tuesday, at Father Nature's, 178 E. Prospect Ave. Guests are welcome. Call Marge, 831-3802.

Danville Business Network International (BNI)

The Danville Business Network International (BNI) meets at 7 a.m., every Friday, at the Marriott Residence Inn, 1071 Market Place, San Ramon. Guests are welcome. Call Susanne Olsen, 937-5055.

Danville Mid-day Referral Group, BNI

Danville Mid-day Referral Group, a chapter of Business Network International, meets from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., every Wednesday, at Louka's, 267 Hartz in Danville. Call Fran Bates at 363-4327 or e-mail franbates@marykay.com.

Danville PM Toastmasters

The club meets from 7:30-9 p.m., every Monday, at the San Ramon Campus of Diablo Valley College, 315 Crow Canyon Place, Room 109. Guests are welcome. Call Debra Elmore at 934-3113.

Diablo View Toastmasters

This chapter meets from 7:55-9 a.m., every Tuesday, at the San Ramon Community Center, 12501 Alcosta Blvd. Novice and veteran speakers meet to develop speaking skills. Guests are welcome. Call Josh Taves, 791-2233.

Mt. Diablo Genealogical Society

The society meets from 1:15-3 p.m., the third Thursday of every month except August, at the California Savings Building, Rossmoor Shopping Center, Tice Valley Blvd. and Rossmoor Parkway, Walnut Creek. Guest speakers are at each meeting.

Mt. Diablo Macintosh Users Group

Get questions answered, solutions for problems, share experiences and explore new Mac developments. Club meets at 7:30 p.m., the third Monday of every month, at the Alamo Safeway Community Room. For information, call 837-1111 or 829-5501.

San Ramon Valley Newcomers Club

Members and guests are invited to attend the San Ramon Valley Newcomers Club luncheon at 11:30 a.m., Thursday, Sept. 15, at Garlic dePasta in Pleasanton. Come enjoy lunch and bingo. For information, call Mickey at 803-2918.

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Concerts

Blackhawk Summer Music Series
The 11th annual Blackhawk Plaza Summer Music Series 2005 concludes Saturday, Aug. 27, with Pride and Joy (R&B, Soul and Motown). The concert is free with paid reserved seating available. Advance reserved seats are available for \$5 each, while they last. Ticket proceeds benefit the Troy and Alana Pack Foundation. Purchase tickets at Cinemark Blackhawk Movies 7 at 736-0368. Seating area opens at 4 p.m. No outside chairs, coolers, food or beverages allowed.

Concerts at Livorna Park
Bring the family and a picnic and enjoy local talent. The last concert of the year will feature Silk and Soul (jazz, blues and soul) from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Friday, Sept. 16, at Livorna Park, Livorna Road and Miranda Avenue in Alamo.

Events

Antique Roadshow - Appraisal Event
The Blackhawk Museum Guild is sponsoring an Antique Roadshow type Appraisal Event from noon -4 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 2, at the Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle. You are invited to bring small antiques, art and collectibles to be verbally appraised by expert appraisers for a donation of \$10 per item. For information, call Anita Venezia, Appraiser (964-9999) or Joyce Tucker, Guild Program Chairperson (736-9393). Donations contribute to the Museum's Children's Education and Transportation Fund.

Brass Era Cars
Blackhawk Museum presents Brass Era Cars in collaboration with the Horseless Carriage Club of America - NorCal Chapter from 10:30 a.m.-noon, Saturday, Sept. 24. Members of the HCCA will discuss some of the great horseless carriages from the Brass Era. Museum's docents will tour the Brass Era cars inside the Museum after the presentation. For information, contact Jon Hart at 736-2277, ext. 248.

Connecting Women with Women
Mt. Diablo Business Women are hosting a networking extravaganza and sit down dinner at 5:45 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 8, at the Lafayette Park Hotel, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Cost is \$35 by reservation, and \$40 at the

door. Guarantee your spot by Friday, Sept. 2, by calling 429-9253.

Docent-led Tour of the Blackhawk Museum
Blackhawk Museum sponsors a docent-led tour of the museum's Renowned Exhibitions at 2 p.m., every Saturday and Sunday. The tour is free with admission. For information, call 736-2280.

Moonlight Movies on the Town Green
The Danville Community Services and Police Youth Services invites you to watch free movies on the Town Green, located between the Danville Library and Community Center. "Are We There Yet?" (PG) will show Friday, Aug. 26. Bring lawn chairs, blankets and snacks and enjoy movies under the stars. Movies begin when the sun goes down at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Opportunity Quilt 2005
The Diablo Valley Quilters will present its 22nd annual quilt show from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 24, and 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 25, at Charlotte Wood Middle School, 600 El Capitan. Sally Collins, award-winning quilter and DVQ member, is the featured artist. Funds raised are used to sponsor educational meetings and community outreach programs. In addition, there will be quilts for sale, a silent auction of members' quilts, numerous vendors, handcrafted items and door prizes. Admission is \$6.

Fundraisers

Annual Day in the Park
The Taylor Family Foundation will host its 15th annual Day in the Park auction fundraiser that benefits children living with life-threatening diseases and disabilities, from noon-6:30 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 28, at Camp Arroyo, Livermore. Individual tickets are \$175 and a table of 10 is \$2,000. For information, call 455-5118.

Mickey Rooney live in 'Let's Put On A Show'
"Let's Put On A show" is an autobiographical play with music and video that celebrates the life and times of Mickey Rooney. This special evening of songs, reminiscences and jazz is at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Aug. 26, at the Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, and is a fundraiser for the California Independent Film Festival Association which sponsored Danville's Children's Art Festival. Tickets are \$57 general admission; \$52 seniors. Purchase

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Quilt Drawing for Hospice

"Hearts of Hospice" is the name given to a spectacular double-bed size quilt that features 70 large "ragged" hearts set on a mixed off-white background and has been professionally machine quilted. Tickets are \$10 each or three for \$20. The winning ticket will be drawn at the Hospice of Contra Costa Foundation's annual auction and gala at Blackhawk Country Club on Oct. 29. Make checks payable to Hospice of Contra Costa Foundation, 3470 Buskirk Ave., Pleasant Hill 94523. You need not be present to win. Proceeds go directly to the Hospice of Contra Costa Foundation, benefiting Hospice and Palliative Care of Contra Costa.

Unique Flair of Fashion

Join the 2005 Danville Area Cultural Alliance and Art Gallery fundraiser show and bazaar, "The Unique Flair of Fashion," from 4-7 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 18, at the Village Theater, 233 Front St. Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased at the gallery and Flobell Boutique at 362-0813. For phone orders and information, contact the gallery director at 838-1959.

Health

Seminar on Cholesterol, Exercise and Diet

Learn how cholesterol, exercise and diet can affect your heart health, at a free educational seminar from 7-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 30, at the San Ramon Regional Medical Center in the South Conference Room in the South Building, 7777 Norris Canyon Road in San Ramon. Reservations are required. Call to register at 800 284-2878 or online at www.sanramonmedctr.com.

Kids & Teens

Back to School Bike Safety Night

On Track Learning presents Alamo's first Back to School Bike Safety Show. Everyone is invited to this free, community-sponsored event. Three shows will run from 4:30-6:30 p.m., Friday, Sept. 2, at Creekside Community Church, 1350 Danville Blvd. Picnic facilities are available and some food will be available for sale.

New SAT Strategy Session

A free strategy session on taking the new SAT college entrance exam and getting into the college of your choice will be presented by the professionals

from the Princeton Review from 6-7:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 29, at the Danville Library, Mt. Diablo Room. Seats are limited and registration is required. Reserve your spot at the Danville Library Information Desk or call 837-4889.

Red Light, Green Light

Robin Wiley has put together an informative and entertaining Family Funshop on bus safety with something for every child. Learn about safety while playing games like Red Light, Green Light and making stoplight cookies. Ongoing from 1-4 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 11, at the Blackhawk Museum. For information, call 736-2280 or visit www.blackhawk-museum.org.

Story-Telling at Rakestraw Books

Rakestraw Books has a free storytime for children ages 3-6, followed by a simple craft activity that complements the story. This activity is at 11 a.m. every Wednesday at Rakestraw Books, 409 Railroad Ave. Aug. 24 the story is "Don't Be Silly, Miss Millie!" by Judy Cox; Aug. 31 is "My Granny West to Market" by Stella Blackstone. For information, call 837-7337.

Live Music

Antonia Venezia performs live

Vocalist Antonia Venezia, and John Seppela on the piano will perform from 5:30-8:30 p.m., Friday, Aug. 26, at the Six 80 Lounge, 519 San Ramon Valley Blvd. No cover charge for the Happy Hour jazz show. For information, call 552-6050.

'Hearts for the Arts' Smooth Jazz

"Hearts for the Arts Smooth Jazz Series 2005" will feature Earl Klugh at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Aug. 26, at the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. The show will include performances by the Moving Arts Dance. For tickets (\$175 for three shows), call 943-7469 or visit www.dirca.org and www.heartsforthearts.cc.

Miscellaneous

Society of Single Professionals

WineSocials and the Society of Single Professionals are hosting a Wine Tasting Party from 7:30-10 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 3, at Consignment Plus Home Furnishings, 1299 Parkside Drive, Walnut Creek. Cost is \$20 in advance; \$30 at the door. For information, visit <http://winesocials.com> or call 945-8340.

On Stage

Role Players Ensemble Theatre

Season tickets are now available for "Red Hot & Cole" (Cole Porter is throwing a party and you are invited!), Oct. 1-Nov. 5; "Wrong Turn at Lungfish" (story of a blind and bitter college professor and his encounter with a saucy, street-wise young woman who volunteers to read to him in the hospital), Jan. 20-Feb. 11; and "Gun-Shy" (no-holds-barred comedy about marriage, divorce, infidelity, incompatibility, eternal love, etc.), April 21-May 13. Performances are at the Village Theatre, 233 Front St. For information and ticket purchases, call 820-1278.

Reunions

Greenbrook Mother's Group

The Greenbrook Mother's Group invites all alumni of the Greenbrook Babysitting Co-op to join them at 6:30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 24, at the Greenbrook Clubhouse to celebrate past, present and future members. The cost is \$15 per person or \$30 per couple, which includes appetizers, desserts, wines and fun drinks. For information, call Kelly Hales at 552-8149 or e-mail rchaless@juno.com.

Sports

Golden Skate Roller Hockey League

Register Now! The fall season begins Sept. 19 for the Golden Skate Roller Hockey League. New players welcome. Leagues are the Mites (6-9 year olds), Squirts (10-13 year olds) and Juniors (14-17 year olds). Register at www.TheGoldenSkate.com/hockey.html before Sept. 2 to avoid a late fee.

Volunteering

Contra Costa Academy of Fine Art

The academy seeks new volunteers and members to help with tasks ranging from bookkeeping to recruiting instructors. The group meets noon-1 p.m., the second Friday of the month at Richard's Art & Craft Store, 225 Alamo Plaza, Alamo. Call Beth Batchelor at 837-5654.

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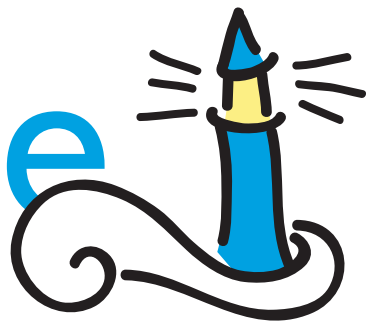
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PLEASANTON, 3108 Joanne Circle,
Sat 8/27, 8-4

Pleasanton, 3150 Catawba Ct., Aug.
27, 8a-1p
bedroom set, desk, etc.

Pleasanton, 320 Trenton Circle, Yard
Sale Aug. 27 & 28, 8-2pm

Pleasanton, 4121 Churchill Dr, August
27, 8-3

PLEASANTON, 4153 Morganfield Ct,
Sat 8/27, 8-2

Pleasanton, 4153 Morganfield Ct., Sat.
Aug. 27th 8-2

PLEASANTON, 5400 Black Ave, Fri
8/26 & Sat 8/27, 8-2

Pleasanton, 692 St John St, Sat
8/27, 10-4 No Early Birds!
Antique bottles, wood doors, Art Deco
items and more!

Pleasanton, Christina Court, August
27, 8am - 4pm
Antique Tea cups, kit gadgets,
silver&clothing; reg household items

215 Collectibles & Antiques

Baseball Card Collection - \$15

Chenille Bedspread - \$120.00

picture of screaming - \$10

Pokemon Collection - \$49

230 Freebies

Take it, it's yours!
1982 Fisher woodburning stove with
parts, never been used.
FREE

240 Furnishings/ Household items

BEDS—Niagara Adjustamatic Beds -
\$200

Cherry Wood Dining Table - \$500/OBO

Chimney Cap - \$100

Chippendale Hall Table - \$100

Chrome Walker - \$30.

Custom-Built Sofa and Loveseat -
\$250.00

DOUBLE OVEN 925-837-8852
Self-cleaning Frigidaire double oven in
good condition. \$95 or best offer.

Elegant Brass Chandelier - \$190

ESTATE SALE & more! 925/846-4299

Firepit - \$20

Fireplace Door Set - \$10

Fireplace Door Set - \$10

Jenn-Air Stainless Backsplash - \$125.

Kid's chest with shelves - \$30, OBO

Loveseat & Oversized Chair - \$45

Mattress set - King size - \$170 OBO

Oak Armoire and Dresser - \$650

Oak Dining Table - \$500

Pecan wood bedroom set - \$800

Pretty Barbie Roller Skate - \$10

Queen Down Comforter - \$50.

Refrigerator, Very good - \$150, OBO

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Sofa and matching loveseat Taupe color
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Twin Comforter Set - \$25.

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Twin/Day Bed Set - \$55

245 Miscellaneous

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Pet of the Week



Catherine Hansen Rush

Dark, handsome stranger

This handsome dog with warm brown eyes is a 4-year-old, neutered, male black Labrador named "Chuck." Chuck is very social and he enjoys a good energetic game of ball. He dominates most other dogs, so the SPCA recommends he be in a one-dog household. Chuck would welcome a family that could take him on long walks and give him lots of attention. For more information about Chuck, visit him at the Tri-Valley SPCA, 4651 Gleason Drive in Dublin, open Wednesday and Thursday 1 - 8 p.m. and Friday - Sunday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call 479-9670. Call the SPCA's Spay/Neuter Clinic at 479-9674 for information about their vaccination and microchip clinics on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3 - 5 p.m.

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picture: screaming - \$10

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for Sale. Fish Lake Valley, Nevada. \$400,000. Visit at http://www.BuySmithRanch.com or call 775-848-4193 (Cal-SCAN)

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Real Estate

OPEN HOME GUIDE AND REAL ESTATE LISTINGS

SALES AT A GLANCE

This week's data represents homes sold during July 2005

Danville	Alamo	Walnut Creek
Total sales reported: 29	Total sales reported: 11	Total sales reported: 34
Lowest sale reported: \$530,000	Lowest sale reported: \$735,000	Lowest sale reported: \$255,000
Highest sale reported: \$3,075,000	Highest sale reported: \$1,740,000	Highest sale reported: \$2,065,000
Average sales reported: \$1,064,948	Average sales reported: \$1,255,409	Average sales reported: \$856,425

HOME SALES

Source: California REsource

Danville	Alamo	Walnut Creek
200 Abigail Circle A. & A. Ezrilov to R. Nocerini for \$929,000	307 Conway Drive H. Dominguez to H. & H. Dorris for \$1,010,000	343 Jacaranda Drive M. & D. Henn to D. & J. Nanneman for \$1,000,000
153 Alta Vista Way D. & K. Smith to R. & C. Johnson for \$1,415,000	47 Danville Oak Place V. Coll to B. Stewart for \$605,000	671 Logan Lane Moody Trust to F. Fereydouni for \$1,530,000
3341 Blackhawk Meadow Drive Guyon Trust to D. Rose for \$1,810,000	763 El Pintado Road Beedle Trust to K. & D. Kantor for \$3,075,000	69 Marques Court Stefani Trust to J. & D. Zaitz for \$653,000
159 Blackstone Drive D. & P. Krause to I. & E. Marks for \$989,000	2010 Fostoria Circle C. Liebelt to M. Espinoza for \$530,000	20 Mauri Court K. & S. Miller to M. & P. Lytle for \$1,520,000
260 Clydesdale Drive S. Dunster to T. & C. Gleeson for \$805,000	202 Glen Meadow Court Landamerica Trust to N. Wallace for \$985,000	202 Monte Carlo Way D. Bucchianeri to A. Yannuzzi for \$870,000
4350 Conejo Drive C. Hall to V. Gaddam for \$655,000	122 Heritage Park Drive K. Pelton to J. & J. Medina for \$705,000	1609 North Clear Creek Place G. Walls to R. Campo for \$625,000
	10 Hidden Oak Court J. & K. Silva to M. Deffina for \$1,660,000	2192 Oneida Circle P. Maguire to N. Taovil for \$702,500

OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

To list your home in the Danville Weekly Open Home Guide, please email: OpenHomes@DanvilleWeekly.com

Danville	San Ramon
3 Bedrooms	2 Bedrooms
119 Rubicon Cir. \$560,000 Sun 12:30-3:30 p.m. Keller Williams 577-8692	3783 Crow Canyon Rd. \$499,000 Sat/Sun 1-4 p.m. Pacific Union 487-1194
7109 Pelican St. \$599,990 Sat/Sun 1-4 p.m. Re/Max Accord 788-5685	3 Bedrooms
315 Fontaine Dr. \$849,000 Sun 1-4 p.m. Pacific Union 314-4814	5 Lupine Ln. \$799,000 Sat/Sun 1-4 p.m. Remax Accord 699-9099
4 Bedrooms	300 Blakesley Ct. \$879,950 Sun 1-4 p.m. Pat Huffman 698-4422
4170 Rockcreek Dr. \$1,049,000 Sat/Sun 1-4 p.m. Re/Max Accord 895-2804	2246 Dewberry Dr. \$974,950 Sun 1-4 p.m. Empire Realty 355-1187
37 Lily Ct. \$1,099,999 Sun 1-4 p.m. Empire Realty 918-0417	4 Bedrooms
90 Princeton Ct. \$939,000 Sun 1-4 p.m. Intero 855-4141	1468 Allamere Dr. \$1,029,500 Sat/Sun 1-4 p.m. Alain Pinel 899-8651
Blackhawk	2870 Ascot Dr. \$1,085,000 Sun 1:30-4:30 p.m. Blackhawk RE 786-0600
4 Bedrooms	9994 Torreon Ave. \$799,000 Sat/Sun 1-4 p.m. Alain Pinel 899-8651
3819 Cottonwood Dr. \$1,439,000 Sun 1-4 p.m. Pat Herrera & Diane Gilfether, Blackhawk Real Estate 736-6000	3242 Munras Pl. \$835,000 Sat/Sun 1-4 p.m. Prudential 734-5045
102 Silver Pine Lane \$1,839,000 Sun 1:30-4 pm The Blackhawk Real Estate Co. 683-6058	500 Bagado Ct. \$899,950 Sun 1-4 p.m. Intero 648-5354
5275 Blackhawk Dr. \$2,499,000 Sun 1-4 p.m. Intero 648-5359	246 Westvale Ct. \$905,000 Sun 1-4 p.m. Ohlmeyer Team 831-3390
5 Bedrooms	Walnut Creek
3170 Blackhawk Meadow Dr. \$2,950,000 Sun 1:30-4 p.m. Blackhawk Real Estate 389-0425	3 Bedrooms
Diablo	1859 Late Horizon Ct. \$990,000 Sat/Sun 1-4 p.m. Empire Real Estate 271-3113
6 Bedrooms	4 Bedrooms
2315 Caballo Ranchero \$2,395,000 Sun 1-4 p.m. Empire Realty 217-5048	2331 Trotter Way \$949,900 Sat/Sun 1-4 p.m. Empire Realty 217-5050

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