

Teen scene

Dating ain't what it used to be

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Save Mart steps in

Modesto grocery
chain buys
Albertsons

> page 6

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Danville

W E E K L Y

Mailed free to homes in Danville, Blackhawk, Diablo and Alamo

New mayor for Danville

Town chooses
Mike Shimansky
for 2007

> page 5

***Holiday spirit
can be found
at bicycle
workshop***

page 28

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Streetwise

ASKED IN DOWNTOWN DANVILLE

Q: What are you wishing for this holiday season?



I hope everyone has good health in the new year. I guess I'm getting to be that age where it matters.

Eddie Gallagher
construction equipment sales



Bailey: For there to be a really big parade because I want to see Santa come out and wave to everyone!

Brandon: Me, too! That's all I really want.

**Bailey Mees (left),
Brandon Fitzgerald**
first-graders



World peace ... or at least getting closer to it. It would be nice if we became a more peaceful world. And of course, spending time with my family during the holidays, too.

Rick Millington
professor at Diablo Valley college



A dog, like a Pluto stuffed animal. I love dogs. My favorite part (of Christmas) is getting things and every year we give Santa cookies, and sometimes cake.

Mayah Bartlow
kindergartner

COMPILED BY RACHEL MCMURDIE

ABOUT THE COVER

Santa's helpers Dave Struck (right), Rand Mahoney and J.P. Salgado refurbish donated bicycles that will be given, along with a safety helmet, to people who depend on them for transportation to work. Photo by Geoff Gillette. Design by Ben Ho.

Vol. II, Number 32

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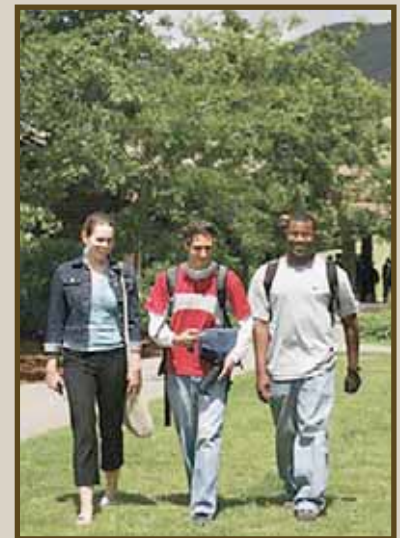
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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“ Plans are already being generated for their 75th anniversary to be celebrated Nov. 26, 2012. ”

—The family of Edward and Julia Land, who just celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. See story, page 22.

Danville forms tourism district

The Tri-Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Town of Danville have announced the creation of the new Danville Tourism Business Improvement District, so the bureau was able to formally welcome the town as its newest member. Other members of the bureau are San Ramon, Dublin, Pleasanton and Livermore.

“We look forward to partnering with Danville to promote its many assets as part of the CVB’s marketing efforts,” said Amy Blaschka, bureau president.

The new tourism district comes on the heels of the formation of the Tri-Valley Tourism Business Improvement District, which was finalized last January, placing a \$1 assessment on each room per night at lodging businesses with 35 or more rooms. The assessment began for the Danville district Dec. 1. Funds collected will be used to promote the area as a destination for visitors, meetings and events.

Since Danville has joined the bureau, its businesses are also eligible to join.

“Danville’s charming downtown, colorful history and events, and wealth of quality restaurants and shopping options make it a wonderful addition to the Tri-Valley portfolio,” Blaschka said.

“We encourage Danville merchants to join our organization, and are excited to offer them new opportunities and a regional vehicle to promote their businesses.”

Looking for Armed Forces members

The 2006 Sentinels of Freedom Ceremony will take place Wednesday, Dec. 27, to honor returning members of all the Armed Forces who are residents of Danville, Blackhawk, Diablo, Alamo, San Ramon and Dublin and thank them formally for their service to our country.

The community is invited to the event, which will begin at 6:30 p.m. and take place at the San Ramon Valley High School Performing Arts Theatre, 140 Love Lane in Danville. Elected officials, veterans, Blue Star Moms and community leaders will present the honorees with individual proclamations from their communities. A reception will follow in the cafeteria.

The event is being co-hosted by the Town of Danville, the cities of San Ramon and Dublin, and Contra Costa County District 3 Supervisor Mary N. Piepho. Organizers want to make sure they locate all appropriate service personnel to honor them and ask residents who know of returning members of the Armed Forces to call 314-3328 for Danville residents and 820-8683 for Blackhawk, Diablo or Alamo residents.

Santa to visit museum

Santa Claus will be visiting the Museum of the San Ramon Valley from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. tomorrow, Dec. 9, and next Saturday, Dec. 16. Parents are welcome to bring their own cameras and take pictures of their children with Santa.

While at the museum, families can enjoy Christmas Memories, the current exhibit featuring Christmas trees, toys and cards from past eras. Gingerbread houses replicating historic buildings from the area are also on display.

The museum is located at 205 Railroad Ave., Danville. Hours are 1-4 p.m., Tuesday-Friday; and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday. There is no charge for admission but donations are encouraged. Call 837-3750.



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Council chooses Mike Shimansky for mayor

Annual Danville awards ceremony to honor community volunteers is a call to action

by Geoff Gillette

Volunteerism was the order of the evening as more than 150 people turned out at the Community Center for Danville's 25th annual Mayor's Installation and Community Service Awards on Tuesday evening. The event honored several area residents for their commitment to the town and their willingness to give of themselves for the betterment of all, and installed Councilman Mike Shimansky as mayor for the next year and Councilwoman Candace Andersen as vice mayor.

The proceedings led off with a stunning rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" by vocalist Grace Leer and a number of holiday tunes sung by the San Ramon Valley High School Chamber Singers.

Then outgoing Mayor Karen Stepper began the awards ceremony.

"The awards night is always special in Danville," she said.

Stepper said that while she and the council were able to choose those to be honored, they had a difficult time limiting the number of awards.



New Mayor Mike Shimansky and Vice Mayor Candace Andersen after their swearing-in Tuesday night.

Council members unanimously approved giving the Danville Award to Jerry Yahiro. He was lauded by Mayor Stepper and Councilman Newell Arnerich for his work with East Bay Stand Down, which works to provide care to those veterans who have fallen on misfortune.

"East Bay Stand Down is a program that gives back to those in the community who served in the armed forces," said Arnerich.

"Jerry is an absolutely amazing person," added Stepper.

Yahiro was unable to attend the program because he is in Vietnam, distributing wheelchairs to those in need.

Once the awards were handed out, the council turned to its only other order of business. Stepper and Shimansky were sworn in to their new terms in office since they won the Nov. 7 election. Contra Costa County Court Commissioner Joel Golub presided over the swearing-in.

Council members then voted unanimously to make Shimansky

the mayor for 2007 and Andersen vice mayor.

Shimansky thanked all those who had supported him and promised to work hard on continuing the strong work done by outgoing Mayor Stepper. One area he said he intends to work on is communication.

"One thing I heard a lot when I was campaigning was 'I never heard of it until it was too late,'" Shimansky said. He noted he intends to hold a monthly coffee where residents can talk about their concerns and issues facing the town. The coffees are to be held at 7:30 a.m. on the first Friday of the month at Father Nature's.

Andersen said she has no grand sweeping plan for Danville's future. She said she hopes the town builds on the impressive base of volunteers it already has to face the challenges ahead.

"We have a lot of projects coming," she said. "To me it's a year with a real need for community involvement."

Standing among all those in attendance just honored for all their hard work, Andersen smiled and said, "It's the year to get involved." ■

Community Service Awards

- SRVHS Vocal Music Director Ken Abrams: Arts Commission Volunteer of the Year
- Tom Shaffer: Town Services Volunteer of the year for his work with Lend-a-Hand day
- Eric Johnson: Parks and Leisure Services Commission Volunteer of the Year for his work with Danville Baseball
- Awards of Merit went to:
 - Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: For sponsoring the disaster preparedness fair
 - Wayne Wickham: For his work on the Danville downtown walking map-
 - San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church: For efforts with the cleanup after Hurricane Katrina
 - Danville Rotary: For its role in obtaining defibrillators placed in town buildings
 - Community Presbyterian Church: For efforts in rebuilding homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina
 - Christy Campbell: For organizing the Cross County Partner School Program
 - East Bay Fellowship: For cleaning up the parade route after the July 4th Parade
 - Vicky Brown: For work with the Danville Garden Club maintaining the rose garden at Osage Park
 - Paul Baldacci and family: For work with and donations to the Sentinels of Freedom Program

'Runway clear' for Duffield to build in Alamo

Homeowners remove amendment to limit house size to 10,000 square feet in Bryan Ranch

by Natalie O'Neill

Another chapter in the saga between billionaire David Duffield and Bryan Ranch homeowners has unfolded, after months of litigation over how large his Alamo mansion is permitted to be built.

The Bryan Ranch Homeowners Association board has removed an amendment, filed last November, which restricted the size of a home to 10,000 square feet, or about four times that of the average American house.

Despite claims that the amendment was passed in an unofficial

way, the document was filed with Contra Costa County and still stood in the way of the project until three weeks ago.

"The runway is now clear for his plane to land," said George Bassett of the homeowners' board.

Houses built in the expansive semi-rural neighborhood now have

no square foot size limitations in their Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions. And Duffield, founder of PeopleSoft Inc., officially has the go-ahead to begin the building and approval process for his proposed 16,700-square-foot home.

Upset Bryan Ranch residents still say his mansion, which would

be the size of a large grocery store, will destroy the ambiance of the neighborhood. Constant construction will not only disturb immediate neighbors, but also the animals and children who live in Bryan Ranch, said resident Alicia Nance.

► Continued on page 6



Holiday cheer in Alamo

Judy and Downing Exley, owners of Cherubini Coffee House, hand out cups of hot cider last Sunday evening at the Alamo Tree Lighting at Andrew H. Young Park, hosted by the Alamo Merchant & Professional Association. School choruses entertained, fantastically decorated small trees were awarded to the highest bidders, and everyone enjoyed cider, coffee and cookies. Santa, accompanied by Monte Vista cheerleaders doubling as elves, welcomed small children to tell him their wishes. And the county sheriff's Valley Station employees were on hand to collect toys for children in need.

Charlotte Wood teacher in critical condition

Daughter, 17, killed in accident; friend suffers back injuries

by Jordan M. Doronila

A car crash critically injured a Danville teacher and killed her 17-year-old daughter Sunday morning in Yolo County. Her daughter's 17-year-old friend from Danville was also injured in the accident.

Debra Williams, a science teacher at Charlotte Wood Middle School, was driving a 2006 Ford Explorer north on I-505 in the slow lane and went off the road, hitting an embankment, at 7:50 a.m. Sunday.

Debra's daughter Danielle Williams, who was sitting in the

front passenger side, suffered fatal injuries in the accident, said California Highway Patrol Investigator Bob Lagomarsino.

Danielle's friend, Allison Hom, a senior at San Ramon Valley High School, suffered major back injuries.

"It's under investigation," said Lagomarsino, about the cause of the accident. He said Debra Williams was driving 70 mph, which was within the speed limit.

Both Debra Williams and Hom were taken to the UC-Davis Medical Center by helicopter. Debra suffered multiple facial injuries and trauma and is currently in a coma, Terry Koehne, spokesman for the San Ramon Valley Unified School

► Continued on page 6

Save Mart acquires Albertsons

Danville market included in sale of 132 stores

by Jordan M. Doronila

Save Mart Supermarkets are taking over Albertsons stores in Northern California, including the Danville store on San Ramon Valley Boulevard.

"We are going to have a stronger immediate Bay Area presence," said Alicia Rockwell, Save Mart communications manager.

Save Mart Supermarkets, headquartered in Modesto, announced last week that it has signed an agreement to acquire 132 Albertsons stores in Northern California and Northern Nevada for an undisclosed amount. The transaction also includes the Albertsons Roseville and Vacaville distribution centers,

as well as its division office in Dublin.

In June, Albertsons closed the store on Diablo Road near I-680, one of its two stores in Danville, along with 36 other stores in Northern California due to low sales.

Save Mart Supermarkets currently operates 124 stores, and after the acquisition will have a total of 256 locations. Both companies are privately held.

"Our people are dedicated to service, quality and operational efficiency, which kept us poised for growth," said Bob Piccinini, Save Mart chairman and chief executive officer. "Albertson's associates can look forward to joining this commitment to excellence and family pride, which began in 1952 with my father, Mike Piccinini and uncle, Nick Tocco."

Rockwell said the acquisi-

tion deal will close in February. Afterward, project and transition teams from Save Mart and Albertsons will devise a plan on how to market their new acquisition.

"We will actually be owners in February," she said. "It's going to be a significant effort."

She said current workers in the Albertsons store on San Ramon Valley Boulevard will still be employed.

"They will become our associates," Rockwell said. "It will still operate like an Albertsons through most of next year."

Save Mart Supermarkets is an independently owned grocery chain, which was founded Jan. 17, 1952, in Modesto. Save Mart also owns and operates Yosemite Wholesale, a distribution center in Merced, and SMART Refrigerated Transport trucking operation in



JORDAN M. DORONILA

Albertsons on San Ramon Valley Boulevard in Danville was among the hundreds acquired recently by Modesto-based Save Mart Supermarkets.

Lathrop. It is also a partner in Superstore Industries in Lathrop.

Rockwell said the acquisition will help Save Mart produce more streamlined services to costumers.

"This all translates to good (services) for customers," she said, adding that customers will have a variety of products and services to choose from at competitive prices. ■

Condition

► Continued from page 5

District, said Tuesday.

Hom has three broken vertebrae and is undergoing surgery to repair the damage, he said.

Danielle's friends and peers at California High School honored her in a service with banners, posters and tears on Monday.

"Debra Williams is a mentor to the students. She is a friend to the students."

—Principal Sandy Budde

"We have counselors on hand in all of the schools until there is no longer a need for them," said Koehne. "They'll find ways to help students deal with their emotions."

"The mood at both schools is somber," he said. "Kids are very reflective. Danielle was a very popular student, particular within vocal music and the drama department."

Koehne noted that approximately

200 students showed up in memory of Danielle.

At Charlotte Wood Middle School, the faculty expressed hopes Debra Williams will recover from the accident.

"She is a mentor to the students," said Principal Sandy Budde. "She is a friend to the students. She is a protector to the students."

"She is a comfort to the staff as well as a dear friend," she added. "There are a lot of emotions on this campus."

She described Debra Williams as a teacher who energized the school's science program by helping create a program to allow students to visit Costa Rica. She also noted that Williams is a leader of Charlotte Wood's Safe School Ambassador Program, which trains students to intervene when they see acts of cruelty such as name calling or feelings getting hurt.

Budde added that Williams' daughters Danielle and Kate attended Charlotte Wood. Kate currently attends Chico State.

Budde said the Charlotte Wood community will continue to bring prayers and positive energy.

"She (Debra Williams) is very strong and all of us can give her more strength," Budde said. ■

Duffield

► Continued from page 5

"It really will affect people's lives," she said.

Controversy over the original amendment was expected to be settled in April with a mail-in revote that required 75 percent of the 321 Bryan Ranch households to vote "yes" in order for it to pass. Unreturned ballots counted as "no" votes. When the votes were counted the second time, the amendment was about 8 percentage points short of passing.

The homeowners board then petitioned the court to have the votes recounted. The petition would have allowed the second amendment to pass with fewer "yes" votes.

"(Duffield) opened Pandora's Box," Nance said.

For cases like these to pass, however, the board usually has to prove that there was voter apathy, Bassett said. But with 90 percent of Bryan Ranch residents returning ballots, the court did not pass the petition.

After learning of the homeowners petition, Duffield and his

lawyer chose to take legal action in September by filing a lawsuit against the board in order to get the amendment withdrawn.

"We will have no choice but to pursue a lengthy appeals process to vindicate our community's electoral rejection of the second amendment," Duffield wrote in a letter to Bryan Ranch residents.

The letter stated that taking legal action was the last thing he wanted to do.

"We've made a number of good faith efforts to resolve this dispute," he wrote.

"Unfortunately ... the Board was working on an adversarial petition at the same time we thought all parties were working together to resolve this dispute without the necessity of litigation," Duffield stated.

Residents speculate that the board's recent amendment withdrawal was a result of lawsuit threats on the part of Duffield's lawyers. But Bassett said in his opinion the letter didn't affect the board's decision, adding that he wasn't concerned about the pending lawsuit.

"I'm not losing any sleep over it," he said.

Now, with the recent amendment

removal, some Bryan Ranch residents are considering moving.

"The other day my daughter looked at me and said, 'That means this place is never going to be the same again,'" Nance said.

Other Bryan Ranch residents, however, say Duffield should be able to do whatever he wishes with his land and his money.

"Things aren't always black and white," Bassett said.

It is also unclear how the large home will affect neighbor's property values, board members said. Bassett, who is a real estate agent, said he "could talk out of both sides of his mouth" on that specific issue.

Duffield's originally proposed 72,000-square-foot mansion may have been the root of the community controversy, board members said.

"I frankly don't think any of this would have happened if it was reasonably sized in the first place," Bassett said.

Today, neighbors who oppose the project say they hope the building process is done quickly and that Duffield doesn't opt to extend the size of the house.

"Let's just hope he's a man of his word," Nance said. ■

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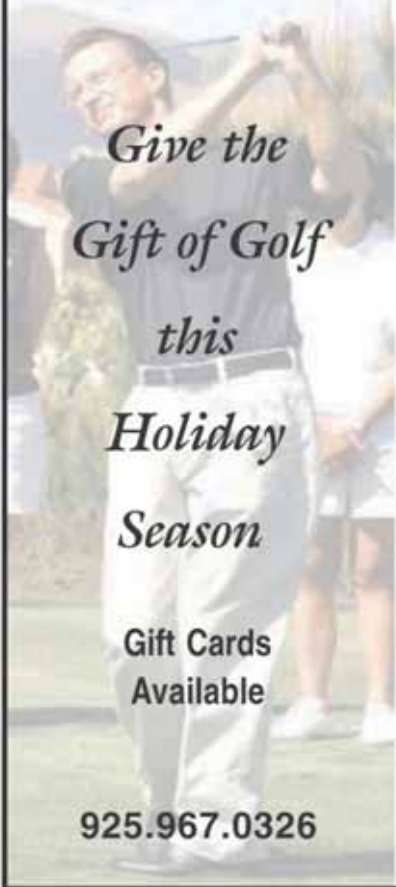
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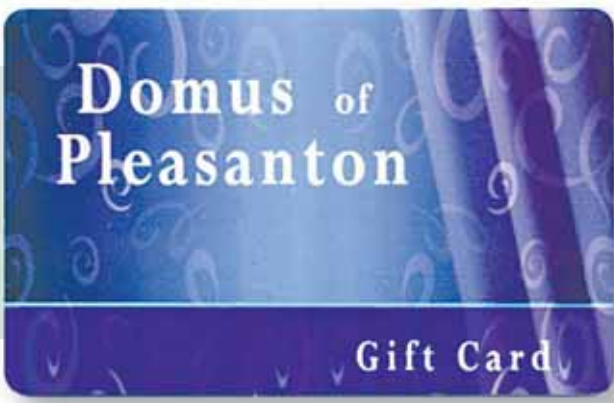
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Strong drama at San Ramon Valley High

Senior Caroline Sheahan plays Linda and Aaron Baruh portrays a young Biff in the San Ramon Valley High School production of Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman." Theater director Chuck Perryman was directing the dress rehearsal at the new San Ramon Valley High School Performance Arts Theater. "They're terrific," said Perryman, about his young group of actors. The play is about a failed businessman as he reconstructs the memories of his life. "It's my favorite," said Perryman. "It's right for this group. The message is really strong." The play runs from Dec. 14-17. Tickets are \$8 in advance; \$10 at the door. Call 989-4402.



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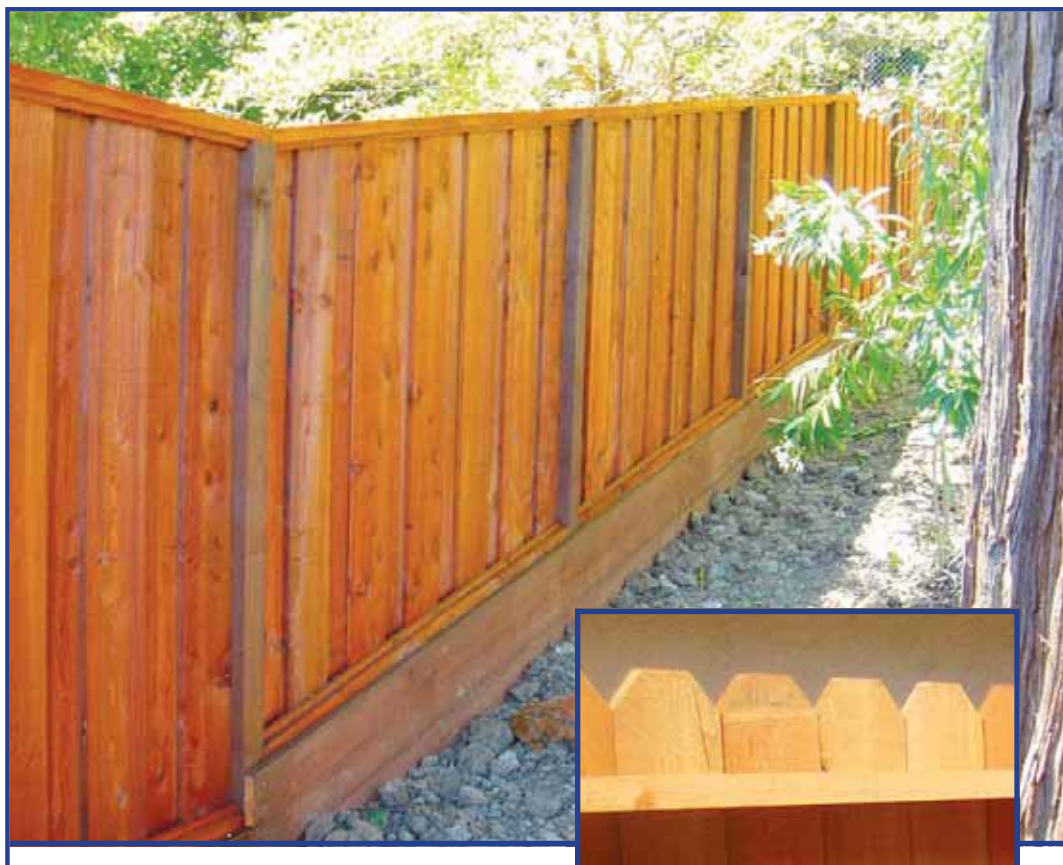
Pre-swim reading

Julia, Meg and Johnny Carter, shown on the dock at Lake Wawasee in Indiana, remembered their Weekly when visiting Hoosier relatives on their annual 4th of July vacation.



On the open sea

Ken and Lisa Jordan, with kids Jenny and Jeff, brought their Danville Weekly along on a Mexican cruise on the Carnival Pride the week of July 4. They said they missed the parade and fireworks but enjoyed the trip.



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Christmas trees for sale at Blackhawk club

Noble firs are even delivered for most convenience

by Natalie O'Neill

Decorating the Christmas tree is fun and festive, but for time-pressed families and elderly couples, picking out a tree and hauling it home can be an inconvenience. This year, for the first time in Blackhawk, residents can have large noble fir trees delivered to their homes through the Blackhawk Country Club.

"It's working out really well so far. They love how convenient it is and that they don't have to drive," said Joey Jacobsen, grounds operation manager at the country club.

The service is available to both country club members and residents from 10-4 p.m. Friday through Sunday, and this is the last weekend it will be offered. Trees can also be bought at the sports complex for those who don't mind picking up their own tree.

"We always look for ways to make life a little easier for people in Blackhawk," said Larry Marx, Blackhawk Country Club general manager.

The noble firs, which are 7-11 feet tall, were shipped down from Marcum Farms in Washington and range from \$85-\$200. Proceeds go to the Food Bank of Contra Costa County and will cover the cost and shipment of the trees.

"We're thrilled that Blackhawk residents have an opportunity to purchase their trees right here in the community," said Mark Goldberg, Blackhawk community manager.

Noble firs are generally considered the most visually pleasing type of Christmas tree and have dark greenish blue needles with



R.J. Millington, 5, plays on a tractor used to haul Christmas trees at the Blackhawk Country club.

thick sturdy branches for hanging ornaments.

"They are the best quality tree, we didn't want to mess around with anything else," Jacobsen said.

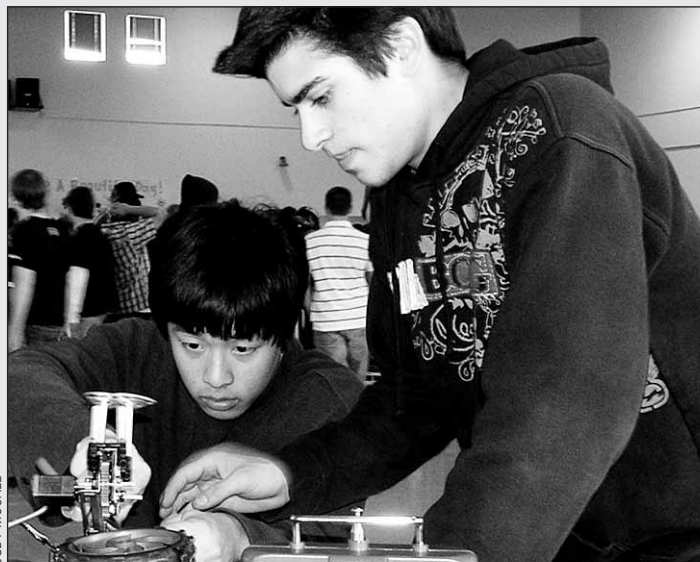
Jacobsen and fellow staff member Ricky Millington got the idea to start selling the Christmas trees through the country club when they were looking for a tree for the Falls Clubhouse this year. While looking for a tree in San Ramon, the two tossed around the idea that they could provide a convenient tree service for Blackhawk residents over the Christmas season.

"We were thinking out loud about trying it here and Ricky said, 'Yeah, let's do it!'" Jacobsen said.

In past years Blackhawk residents have shopped for trees at Windmill Farms in San Ramon and Alpine Christmas Tree Farms in Pleasanton, but now with the option of buying trees this close to home, many residents are choosing to buy trees through the country club.

"It's a great atmosphere out here. We've had a lot of families come out with kids," Jacobsen said.

Response from the community has been positive the last few weekends and he expects this weekend to be very busy, now that residents are really gearing up for the approaching holidays. ■



Chris Ling and Jeff More of Monte Vista fine-tune their team's robot for the Savage Soccer competition at Cal High. Their team, which included Jason Hateley and Josh Lee, placed first.

Robot revolution

Can robots play soccer? This was the question at the Savage Soccer tournament at California High School last Friday that ended with a coalition from Monte Vista High School taking top honors. Jeff More, Chris Ling, Jason Hateley and Josh Lee from Randy Lam's robotics engineering class emerged victorious when their handmade robot was pitted against those of teams from California and San Ramon Valley high schools.

"We're in a robot revolution," said John Korzick, who teaches robotics in his engineering class at Cal High. "It's where science, technology, engineering and math meet in the future."

The students work in teams, so they learn life skills and job skills along with academic content, he pointed out.

About 20 teams participated in the tournament. Each game lasted two minutes, with four robots on a playing field 8-feet

by 12-feet. The robots, about one foot in height, had been programmed by the students to operate on their own for the first 15 seconds and then they were remote controlled.

The object was for the robot to scoop up light tennis or billiard balls and drop them onto a balance beam. At the end of the game, the pendulum dropped in favor of the heaviest sides and that team won. After the elimination rounds, the top eight teams competed in the finals.

The hosts for this contest, the California Grizzlies, won first place at the statewide robotics competition held in San Jose on Oct. 28. At those games, Monte Vista won the Gracious Professionalism Award.

Robotics are part of Contra Costa County's Regional Occupational Program, which offers courses that are career-oriented. ■

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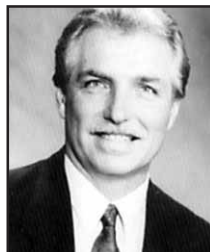
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Diablo Views

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI



A familiar face in Alamo

Who is that woman? She looks so familiar.

Diane Barley is a personal banker at the Bank of America in Alamo and says she often gets a quizzical look from customers who see her in other venues. She can tell when they are trying to place her, and her husband Bill always says she has to put them out of their confusion. So she usually walks up to them and explains with a friendly handshake that they are remembering her from the bank.

Of course people might also recognize her from her work at Alamo Rotary or when she was president of the Monte Vista High School PTA. Or they may have seen her when she worked at the thrift shop with the Friends of Discovery. In the 30 years since she and Bill moved to Alamo, after he was transferred from Pennsylvania by IBM, perhaps she's crossed paths with everyone.

This Alamo couple has moved five times since arriving here—and always stayed in Alamo. There was the house where they raised their two boys, Sam and Billy, then the downsized "empty nest" house in Roundhill North. They loved the views but soon figured out they needed more room after all for the returning extended family. Then they had their vineyard house off Las Trampas, where they produced Merlot, Chardonnay and Voignoir under a label called Chateau Kringle since they had purchased the home at Christmastime. But this place turned out to be too large. So they rented on Las Trampas until they finally got it just right in their current home at the end of Livorna Road.

Now they are wondering if they should retire elsewhere, perhaps in Placerville where Sam is a doctor, but they would miss their little granddaughters in Walnut Creek. Besides, Diane told me last week, when they look at other communities, they end up saying, "It's not like Alamo." And here they have the friends and support system built up during the last three decades.

What Diane appreciates most about Alamo is all the work that goes on behind the scenes. "There is so much energy and effort that goes into everything," she noted. "Like the tree lighting." It sounds like she's a strong part of that unsung effort: She is currently on the Alamo Police Advisory Committee and represents it on the Alamo Community Council, which includes representatives from all the community groups. They meet at Hap Magee Ranch Park

once a month to keep one another informed and discuss Alamo issues. Her good friend Karen McPherson represents Alamo Rotary.

"Alamo is in transition," Diane said. The county hasn't done bad by Alamo, she said, but the supervisor has to consider the entire county, and Alamo is just a small piece of the pie. "If we want to keep our identity, somewhere down the line, we have to incorporate," she noted.

In the 30 years since she and Bill moved to Alamo, after he was transferred from Pennsylvania by IBM, perhaps she's crossed paths with everyone.

We talked about the identity of Alamo and she reminded me that when I moved here 25 years ago, Danville Boulevard in Alamo was only two lanes. So how did it get up to four or six or whatever it is? This is the "creep" that needs to be guarded against by committed residents rather than the county, whose primary goal is to move traffic in the safest, fastest way, Diane said.

Alamo also has a sense of community because of the people—for instance, the pharmacist at Longs Drugs, which was founded by a local person. "People don't buy products, they buy because of people," she told me. With her attitude, she must be quite a draw for the Bank of America. I'm tempted to go in and open another account myself!

One time Diane and Bill were having dinner at Stars in San Francisco and she thought she recognized a man across the room. He looked like he knew her, too. He left before she had a chance to extend her hand and tell him he probably knew her from the bank. When she and Bill returned home, they turned on the TV and there was the man. He wasn't from Alamo, she told me; he was David Letterman. She laughed as she added, "Can you imagine what he would have thought if I'd approached him and said he knows me from the bank in Alamo?" ■

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A train passes by the gingerbread Vecki House, in the Christmas Memories exhibit at the Museum of the San Ramon Valley.



Left, an aerial view of the Vecki House and the train passing by with its load of Christmas trees. Below, a model of the old Danville Southern Pacific Railroad Depot that now serves as the museum. The gingerbread “homemaker” was Laurie Howard.



Sweet history

Gingerbread houses modeled after old-time buildings in the Valley story and photos by Jordan M. Doronila

Gingerbread. Its fragrance greets anyone entering the Museum of the San Ramon Valley these days to see the Christmas Memories exhibit.

A charming part of the holiday display is the gingerbread houses modeled after local historic homes that have been created by Danville resident Laurie Howard.

“They are whimsical,” Howard said with a smile.

She has been building the little houses for the exhibit for about seven to eight years, based on the designs of former engineer Jack Hamel. Seven of them are now sitting in a hodgepodge of decorated Christmas trees, dolls, nursery rhyme books, toys and a model train. The exhibit opened Nov. 24 and ends Jan. 6.

The gingerbread house models include the Silva House, Danville Depot, Tassajara School, Cohen/Vecki House, Wiedemann House, Glass House and the Harlan House.

“My personal favorite is the school,” Howard said. “It’s one of the first ones we did.”

She noted that she felt others deserve more credit than she does, such as Hamel, who did much of the intricate work in designing the homes.

“It’s fun working with Jack Hamel,” Howard said, adding that other volunteers spent more time than she did in putting together the museum exhibit. “A lot of people deserve a lot of credit.”

Howard said she began making gingerbread houses as a Girl Scout mother. She and her daughter had to do a project and learn how to make gingerbread homes. Howard followed a recipe. She said she has enjoyed it ever since.

“There’s a kid a little bit in everyone who likes to

play with candy,” she said.

Years later, Hamel approached her about doing gingerbread homes for the museum. He asked her to make a sample home based on his design.

“He’s artistic,” she said. “He had a lot of ideas. He actually chose which house should be done. I would try to do what I can do.”

Hamel liked her efforts, and they decided to work on creating the homes.

“It was a fun project,” Howard said. “It’s fun working with people.” She created 17 in all.

Last summer, disaster struck when a couple of mice and an army of ants attacked the sugary homes that were in storage. They ravaged them all—except for seven.

“It was gross,” recalled Howard, about seeing mice droppings on the little houses. She even found ants crawling on her arms as she brought her creations to the museum’s display area.

Out of the 17 gingerbread houses in storage, only seven of the charming replicas survived the rodent raid and the summer heat wave to make it to this year’s exhibit. These were given a prominent place among the Christmas Memories.

Museum curator Beverly Lane said she admires Howard’s work.

“She’s ingenious,” said Lane.

Howard believes that children are more creative than adults with their gingerbread homes.

“I think kids are more imaginative and adults are more symmetrical,” Howard said.

Nevertheless, her homes are drawing rave reviews at the museum.

“I just love nostalgia,” said Jan Fabbriatore, the museum’s greeter. “I love all of it.” ■

Gingerbread history on display

- **Silva House**—Built in 1907, this house in Alamo was part of the Tom Jenkins Ranch. A dentist from Oakland, Dr. Samuel J. Silva, purchased the farmhouse and 10 acres from Miss Kate Henry in 1918.
- **Danville Depot**—The depot was built in 1891 to serve the San Ramon Branch Line of the Southern Pacific. It was designed using Southern Pacific’s No. 18 design in a Victorian stick style and painted dandelion gold with brown trim. The ticket agent and his family lived upstairs. Three identical depots were built on this line in Concord, Walnut Creek and San Ramon.
- **Tassajara School**—This classic grammar school at 1650 Finley Road was built in 1889 to serve Tassajara Valley families. The students planted native walnuts around the school yard and put their horses in a nearby stable. The school has a bell tower, an entry room, a large classroom and two storage rooms. It is now owned by the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District.
- **Cohen/Vecki House**—This two-story Gothic Revival Victorian house was built by the Howard Brothers for Michael Cohen’s family in 1866. It is the earliest Old Town Danville house still standing and is located on 169 Front St. Cohen ran a general store. Later owners included pioneer John Chrisman and 1906 earthquake refugee Dr. Victor Vecki.
- **Wiedemann House**—Christian Weidemann and his partner build this Gothic Revival Victorian house in 1865, using redwood from Oakland. The Wiedemanns were ranchers whose descendants still live in the house, which is located south of Norris Canyon Road.
- **Glass House**—David and Eliza Glass moved to the Valley in 1852 and bought 740 acres south of the village of San Ramon in 1859. They built this elegant Italianate house in 1877. It has been moved to the Forest Home Farms Historical Park and will be a house museum.
- **Harlan House**—Called “El Nido,” this house was built about 1858 by Joel and Minerva Harlan who arrived in California in 1846. A Gothic Revival Victorian, which was once a showplace for the Harlans and their Geldermann descendants, it is located on Westside Drive, just west of San Ramon Valley Boulevard in San Ramon.

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Epicure

BY JACQUI LOVE MARSHALL



Hanukkah: Festival of Lights

"The holidays are the jewels on the crown of Judaism."

—The Jewish Way of Life by Karp

Chanukah ... Hanukkah ... the Festival of Lights ... is one of the most important Jewish holidays. One of two rabbinically-ordained festivals, it is built on a tradition that is almost 2,500 years old. It is celebrated every year in mid-to-late December. While the dates vary from year to year on the American calendar, Hanukkah always falls on the 25th day of Kislev in the Hebrew calendar. This year, Hanukkah runs from sunset Dec. 15 to sunset Dec. 23.

In the rededication ritual, the lamps were to remain lit for eight days. However, the Jews could find only one sanctified jar of oil—just enough to last one evening. The lamp was lit with this small jar of oil but it stayed lit for eight days. Hence, the miracle of Hanukkah.

The Dreidel and Gelt

During the years that the Syrians occupied Judea, they forbade Jewish children from studying the Torah. To get around this restriction, the children sought ways to study covertly. One strategy was to play the dreidel game as the Syrian soldiers came near. Thus, the dreidel became associated with the discipline of relentless study despite obstacles. Gelt are chocolate coins covered in gold foil, in lieu of real coins, and offered to children at Hanukkah as rewards for studying well.

Hanukkah Foods

Many Jewish families have Hanukkah parties and traditionally make potato pancakes, known as latkes in Yiddish. While latkes are not a part of the Hanukkah ritual, the tradition of eating them probably evolves from the practice of eating fried foods during Hanukkah to celebrate the miracle of the oil in the temple. It is also a popular custom to eat all kinds of doughnuts, or sufganiyot, deep-fried in oil.

Cheese and dairy products, especially cheese blintzes, are eaten at Hanukkah in remembrance of Judith, who during the ancient struggles against the Syrians, brought cheese and wine to the Syrian governor who ate and drank until he was drunk. After he passed out in a drunken stupor, Judith is said to have cut off his head. When the Syrians found their governor dead, they fled and the Jewish people were free.

My mother, Minnie, worked for a Jewish family for many years and the grandmother of that household taught my mother to make latkes every Hanukkah. Here is that recipe along with a "borrowed" recipe for the pink applesauce she often made with the latkes. I love them any time of year, especially with lamb or chicken and a steamed vegetable.

Jacqui Love Marshall lives in Danville with her vintage-car-loving husband, two pugs and binders of recipes. E-mail her at Epicure@DanvilleWeekly.com.



The Hanukkah Story

Hanukkah celebrates an important miracle in Jewish history and Israel's victory for religious freedom. In 165 B.C., Antiochus, a Syrian king, ruled Judea. In his attempt to assimilate Jews into Greek culture and suppress the Jewish religion, he desecrated the Temple with a pig. Judas Maccabeus, led a group of followers, known as Maccabees, to rebel against the Syrian oppressors. After three years of fighting, the Maccabees eventually overthrew the Syrians, and Jews were free to practice their religion again.

The Hebrews of Jerusalem discovered that their Temple had been defiled by the Syrians, and set about to purify and rededicate it on the 25th day of Kislev.

RECIPES

Minnie's Potato Latkes (makes 20)

2-1/2 pounds baking potatoes, peeled and quartered
2 large onions, quartered (1-1/2 cups grated)
3 large eggs, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon baking powder
1-1/4 cups corn oil
1 cup all-purpose flour
2-1/2 teaspoons coarse salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 cups matzo meal
Applesauce and/or sour cream as garnish (optional)

1. Using a food processor, finely grate potatoes (leave some texture, don't completely liquefy). Transfer to a colander to eliminate excess liquid; transfer to a large bowl. Finely grate onions, and mix 1-1/2 cups into potatoes.
2. Add eggs, baking powder, 3/4 cup corn oil, flour, salt and pepper. Stir to combine. Fold in matzo meal, blending well.
3. Heat remaining 1/2 cup corn oil in a deep skillet over low heat. With a large kitchen spoon, drop batter into pan,

creating pancakes about 3-1/2 inches in diameter; be careful not to crowd them. Fry until underside is a deep golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Turn and fry for 1 to 2 minutes more. Repeat with remaining batter. Drain latkes on a paper towel-lined baking sheet. Serve with applesauce and/or sour cream.

Pink Applesauce (makes 4 cups)

3 pounds red apples, such as Macintosh, quartered and cored
Juice from 1 lemon (2 Tbsp.)

1. In a medium saucepan, combine apples and lemon juice.
2. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until apples are soft and beginning to burst, 15 to 30 minutes, depending on variety of apples.
3. Pass through a food mill fitted with the medium disk.
4. Use immediately or store, refrigerated, in a covered container for up to one week.

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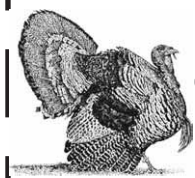
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BY KATHARINE O'HARA

Casual sex and serial 'hook-ups'

It seems the traditional high school date quaintly displayed in old movies—or WB dramas—is fading out, and is now only the clichéd desire of hopeless romantics. It rarely happens anymore that a guy asks a girl out on a date, picks her up in his car, brings her flowers, and then walks her to her door and kisses her goodnight when they return. Instead, a substantial portion of the teenage population has assumed the dating style (if you can call it that) of casual “hooking up.”

Relationships today typically become popular during middle school, when “going out” is not exactly going out. A boy “asks a girl out” simply so he can call her his girlfriend. After they establish their boyfriend/girlfriend titles, the couple might go to the movies (dropped off by their parents, as they are still too young to drive) once or twice during their time as a couple. Aside from the few times they hang out, the relationship is vacuous, and somewhat nonexistent.

Once high school starts and the years of silly junior high romances are left behind, relations between the opposite sexes seem to split into different spheres. There are those who are single, whose first and only fairytale date happens if and when they go to prom—which itself is an attempt to recreate the traditional way of courting that pretty much no longer exists. There are also some couples, who make themselves known with their public displays of affection—an issue I’ll save for a later date. But my primary perception, and that of many of my peers, is that more commonly, people fall into neither category. I find a significant number of teens’ love lives are characterized by casual sex and serial “hook-ups.”

“Although some people do have real relationships, hooking up or dating around is more common,” said Monte Vista High School senior Kate Mogannam.

So why is this happening? Two generations ago, high school sweethearts became husband and wife, and now only remnants of serious high school dating remain.

To begin with, new driving laws prohibit driving with passengers younger than 20 until the driver has had his or her license for a year; this in itself throws a wrench into the whole traditional date plan. Second, and more significantly, it seems fewer people are willing to commit to a relationship, because with a boyfriend or girlfriend comes pressure, jealousy and the obligation to spend time and money on gifts, phone calls and extravagant dates. Serious relationships have turned into casual kissing or having sex in an uncom-

mitted context, and revolve less around emotions.

“I have noticed high school is a place for kids to hook up. There are couples at my school, but they never last very long,” said Moniza Masud, a junior at Monte Vista High School. “Lust has a lot to do with today’s relationships. Kids don’t have emotional attachment but are rather just physically attracted to their significant other.”

Some teens have resorted to a more convenient way to reap the physical benefits of a relationship, without feeling the burden of commitment: “friends with benefits,” which entails two people casually fulfilling each other’s physical needs (oftentimes sex), free of emotional attachment or commitment. There are no expectations or formal goals and either partner is free to flirt, or even go out with another person while involved.

“I often ask myself why it is so hard for people to sincerely say ‘I love you’ but so easy for them to have sex. ‘Friends with benefits’ relationships deny emotions and intimacy and are based purely off of physical pleasure,” said Bryan Cox, a junior at San Ramon Valley High. “But for me, dating is more—an important way to find out what type of girls I am and am not interested in—things I might now know from being simply in a friendship.”

For Lani Amack, also a junior at SRVHS, “Relationships are supposed to be a fun way to talk to and spend time with the opposite sex, in a different way than just being friends. Conversations are more intimate and deep.”

By no means are all teenage interactions between the opposite sexes for the worse. High school is supposed to be a time for figuring things out like personal preferences and plans for the future, and the experience gained from dating, relating to, and bonding with the opposite sex can certainly help. But, for the actual committed couples that do exist, the expectation of sex is a tantalizing and looming issue. It seems a hormonal teenage couple can only go so long before there is pressure to escalate to a physical level. Once sex enters the picture, communication tends to shut down between the couple and true intimacy is lost.

It is hard to tell what trends the future will bring to the high school dating scene. But for now, it is important teens know themselves and what they want for their future, before making decisions they could come to regret.

The 411 offers information and insight on the teen scene by Katharine O'Hara, a junior at San Ramon Valley High School who spends her free time going to concerts, enjoying her friends, and playing the piano.

“Although some people do have real relationships, hooking up or dating around is more common.”

—Kate Mogannam,
Monte Vista High School senior

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The Nativity Story ★★

Rated: PG for some violent content. 1 hour, 41 minutes.

The timeless tale of Jesus, Mary and Joseph comes to cinematic life thanks to sweeping cinematography, exquisite costuming and a fantastic score. Unfortunately, the film is also about as exciting as an afternoon nap.

The pacing is so slow and the religious undertones so heavy that only Jesus himself could rise above the draining weight.

The story is familiar even to atheists. The Virgin Mary (Keisha Castle-Hughes of "Whale Rider") is betrothed to Joseph (Oscar Isaac), a humble and honorable carpenter. Uneasy about her arranged marriage, Mary

finds solitude in a nearby grove where she is visited by an angel (Alexander Siddig as Gabriel) who informs her that she will bear the child of God and name him Jesus.

Life is tough for the young peasant girl. Forced to wed a man she doesn't love, impregnated by a deity and all but ostracized by the suspicious townsfolk. But Joseph's love for Mary runs deep, and a dreamtime visit by Gabriel encourages Joseph to support his wife wholeheartedly. Together Mary and Joseph set out for Bethlehem — Joseph's native land — by order of the vicious King Herod (Ciaran Hinds), who is desperately trying to quash a prophecy that would threaten his power.

Meanwhile, the Three Wise Men venture

across the desert as they realize the prophecy is coming true. The once-and-future king will soon be born, and they want to be there for the occasion. As Mary and Joseph embark on their arduous journey, so too do the wise men, culminating in the extraordinary birth of Jesus.

It's difficult to give a fresh spin on a story that's more than 2,000 years old, so "Nativity" comes across as a dull lesson in religious history or season-friendly way to get more box-office bucks from churchgoers. "Passion of the Christ" raked in the cash and there's a sense that the filmmakers behind "Nativity" are hoping for a similar windfall.

Although Hughes earned an Oscar nod for her riveting performance in "Whale

Rider," here she is remarkably flat. Her Mary carries the same stoic expression throughout the film — save for when she's giving birth — so there is little attachment to a figure who would otherwise be rich with potential.

Joseph, on the other hand, is thoroughly engaging. Thanks to Isaac's strong performance and the selflessness of Joseph's character, it is Joseph who elicits the most sympathy and ultimately comes across as the most human.

People curious about the original Christmas story or eager for a dramatic retelling of the birth of Jesus will appreciate this visually impressive feature. But don't buy a ticket if you're prone to dozing.

— Tyler Hanley

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OF NOTE



Chris Gersley poses with just some of the 500 pairs of shoes collected at the EBAL cross country meet to send to runners without shoes in other parts of the world.

Helping others run

Competing teams banded together at a recent East Bay Athletic League cross country meet at Monte Vista High School and donated 300 pairs of running shoes to help youths around the world who might need them. Other groups, such as the Canyon Creek Presbyterian Church and mother's clubs also participated and added another 200 pairs. The 500 pairs of used sneakers will be shipped to One World Running, a 20-year charity that sorts, washes and ships the shoes to various countries.

The event was organized by sophomore Chris Gergley. The Monte Vista cross country team has been involved with nonprofit groups in the past, such as Save Mount Diablo. When Gergley was recuperating from a recent injury, he read about One World Running and decided to head up the collection.

One World Running is an international organization promoting an awareness of health, fitness, and nutrition by providing running shoes to those in need and organizing 5K run/walks to foster an environment of exercise and to increase understanding and goodwill between people. It was formerly called Shoes for Africa, and was started in 1986 after sports journalist Mike Sandrook returned from a coaching and racing trip to Cameroon, West Africa, sponsored by the U.S. Information Agency, where he found that many of the local runners ran barefoot. The group has now collected and distributed more than 35,000 pairs of running shoes.

The shoes will be shipped in mid December. To contribute more running shoes to the effort, e-mail Chris at tgergley@sbcglobal.net.

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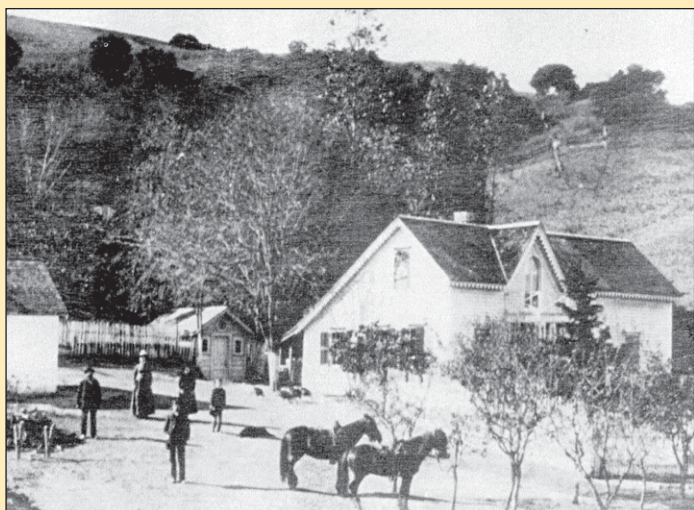
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BY BEVERLY LANE



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Welcome, winter sports

Promising preseason bodes well for high schools

by Rachel McMurdie

Two Tournament titles, a win over De La Salle, and a shut-out soccer match. Not a bad way for the high schools' sports teams to kick off the winter season.

In girls basketball, Monte Vista scored a sweet revenge Saturday when it defeated host Alhambra 50-35 for the Lady Bulldog Classic championship title. In 2005, the tournament championship game fell 49-47 in the Bulldogs' favor. This time, with the help of Stephanie Cornell, who scored a game-high 16 points, the Mustangs endured. Two other Monte Vista players, Niveen Rasheed and Kerry Beeman, also scored in the double-digits.

Monte Vista boys basketball team came up with the Russ Peterich Classics title, beating out East Bay Athletic League foe California High 62-64. Earlier that day, the Mustangs, ranked 10th in Northern California by CalHiSports.com, defeated San Francisco's Sacred Heart 57-39 with help from Ryan Whalen's 21-point effort.

In boys soccer, San Ramon Valley defense held off Concord's De La Salle for a 1-0 preseason win of significant weight. Both teams were last season's North Coast Section 3A semifinalists and if things go well, they could meet again.

San Ramon Valley senior goalkeeper Tommy Comer made 11 saves, including several in the tense final minutes, to make Brett Harada's 39th-minute goal hold up against the Spartans, 0-1.

In girls soccer, San Ramon Valley dominated over South Bay opponents in the early season over the weekend, showing stiffness against league rivals. Wolves' goalkeeper Aubree Southwick helped the team to a 6-0 shut out against Pinole Valley and a 6-1 win over Newark Memorial last week, but the team picked up its first loss Saturday, 2-0, playing against Foothill. ■

E-mail results to
Sports@DanvilleWeekly.com;
e-mail photos to Editor@
DanvilleWeekly.com.



Gooooooooo, Sharks

The U-12 Mustang Sharks, coached by Mike McNutt and Patt Cronin, took first place in the CYSA District Cup for Division 3 on Dec. 2-3. Shark team members are (front, l-r), Catherine Bronge, Leah Metz, Lauren McNutt, Erin Jeffery, Tess Kevorkian, Alyse Cronin, Brynne Ichiuji; (middle) McKenna Franklin, Samantha Simonich, Grace Cochran, Haley Dreyer, Shelby Vaculin, Nellie Davis, Brookelynn Graditi; (back) coaches Patt Cronin and Mike McNutt. Not pictured: Karina Fonzi and Olivia Romero.



Earthquakes win back-to-back

The U-14 girls Mustang Earthquakes Class III won the District Cup Finals last weekend for the second straight year, having won it last year as U-13. The Earthquakes defeated the Newark Magic 5-2, tied the crosstown rivals Mustang Spirit 2-2, and defeated the San Ramon Eclipse 5-0 to reach the championship game. In the final they defeated the Livermore Huskies 3-1. Scoring for the Earthquakes was well balanced, as it has been all year. Goalie Nicole Walden denied many potential goals by the opponents. Rachel Merlo, defense, and Natalie Rovetto, offense, were standout players along with Morgan Klimmick and Dani Chazin. The entire Mustang Earthquakes team played with intense emotion and team camaraderie and their coaches say they are well deserving champions both on and off the field. The team's coach is Keith Haisley, assisted by Darrell Bolognesi and Jim Branman.

PREP SCHEDULE

Friday, Dec. 8

Girls Basketball: San Ramon Valley at Aragon, 5 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 9

Wrestling: Bay Area High Reach Invitational, Castro Valley, 8 a.m.

Boys Soccer: Monte Vista at Pinole, noon, San Ramon Valley vs. Liberty, 1 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 11

Girls Soccer: Monte Vista at Foothill, 5:45 p.m., San Ramon Valley vs. Granada, 5:45 p.m.

Boys Soccer: Monte Vista vs. Foothill, 5:45 p.m., San Ramon Valley at Granada, 5:45 p.m.

Boys Basketball

Monte Vista at Fremont, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 12

Girls Basketball: San Ramon Valley vs. American, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 13

Girls Soccer: Monte Vista at Cal High, 5:45 p.m., San Ramon Valley vs. Carondelet, 5:45 p.m.

Boys Soccer: Monte Vista vs. Cal High, 5:45 p.m.

Boys Basketball: Monte Vista at American, 7 p.m.

Girls Basketball: Monte Vista vs. Rodriguez, 7 p.m.

Thursday-Friday, Dec. 14-15

Boys Basketball: San Ramon Valley Holiday Classic

Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 14-16

Boys Basketball: San Leandro Tournament

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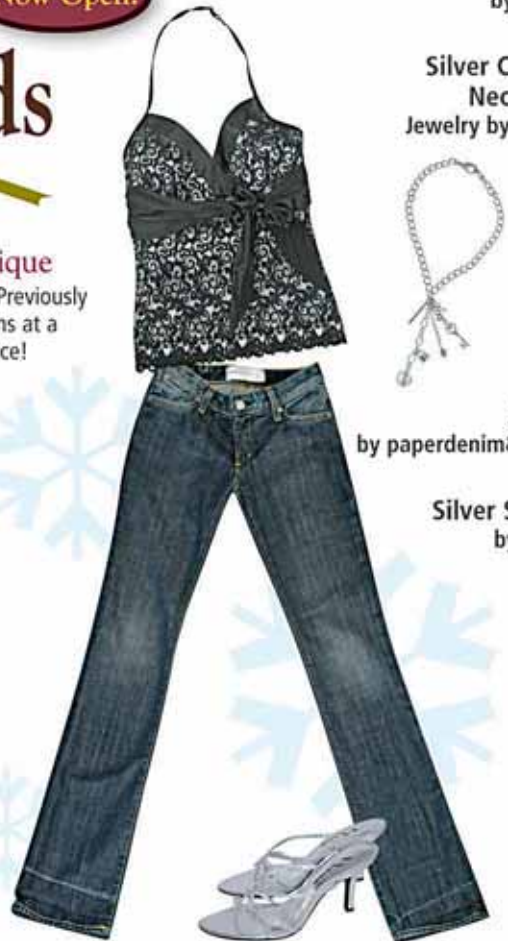
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Community Pulse

POLICE BULLETIN & LOG • OBITUARIES • BIRTHS & WEDDINGS

POLICE LOG

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

Sunday, Nov. 26

- Petty theft on Laurel Dr. at 8:27 a.m.
- Residential burglary on Provence Rd. at 8:37 a.m.
- Auto burglary on Old Orchard Dr. at 10 a.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on El Capitan Dr. at 5:30 p.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on El Capitan Dr. at 8:17 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 27

- Petty theft from vehicle on Paraiso Dr. at 7:06 a.m.
- Petty theft on Milwaukee Pl. at 8:11 a.m.
- Accident with minor injuries on Camino Tassajara at 8:30 a.m.
- Petty theft from coin operated machine at Charlotte Wood Middle School at 10:25 a.m.
- Possession of counterfeit bill on Hartz Ave. at 12:59 p.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on Westridge Ave. at 2:35 p.m.
- Auto burglary on Paraiso Dr. at 2:41 p.m.
- Misdemeanor driving under the influence (DUI), arrest, on Diablo Rd. and Green Valley Rd. at 5:35 p.m.
- Petty theft on Love Ln. at

5:38 p.m.

- Identity theft on Borica Dr. at 9:57 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 28

- Auto burglary on Paraiso Dr. at 12:16 p.m.
- Petty theft on Love Ln. at 1:50 p.m.
- Credit card fraud on Montego Pl. at 2 p.m.
- Accident on El Cerro Blvd. and I-680 off northbound off-ramp at 3:19 p.m.
- Credit card fraud on Aptos Pl. at 4:55 p.m.
- Identity theft on Borica Dr. at 7:03 p.m. and at 8:41 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 29

- Grand theft from Laurel Dr. and Willow Dr. at 7:55 a.m.
- Vandalism on Sycamore Valley Rd. W. at 8:55 a.m.
- Vandalism on Brookside Dr. at 9:59 a.m.
- Identity theft on Sherburne Hills Rd. at 1:33 p.m.
- Credit card fraud on Crestridge Dr. at 1:53 p.m. and at 2:26 p.m.
- Petty theft on Sycamore Valley Rd. W. at 8 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 30

- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on Love Ln. at 8:36 a.m.
- Credit card fraud on Montana Dr. at 12:24 p.m.
- Drunk in public on Boone Ct. and San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 3:18 p.m.
- Identity theft on Rancho

POLICE BULLETIN

Smokeless tobacco ignites citation

Danville police caught a 17-year-old senior at Monte Vista High School carrying three cans of smokeless chewing tobacco last week, said Danville Sgt. Troy Craig.

A school resource officer caught the juvenile male carrying the tobacco at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, Nov. 29, said Craig, and wrote a citation and notified his parents. The officer, the youth and his parents then were supposed to meet at the Danville Police Department to discuss the incident.

"Possessing alcohol and tobacco is illegal," Craig said. "These kids know this stuff."

—Jordan M. Doronila

Verde Cir. W. at 4:11 p.m.

- Petty theft on Silver Lake Dr. at 4:24 p.m.
- Forgery of fraudulent documents on St. Joan Ct. at 5:34 p.m.
- Identity theft on Rancho Verde Cir. W. at 6:21 p.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on Camino Tassajara and Shady Creek Dr. at 8:14 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 1

- Prowler heard on Still Creek Rd. at 12:12 a.m.
- Petty theft on Turrini Dr. at 8:46 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Diablo Rd. and Serena Ln. at 11:21 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Railroad Ave. at 12:05 p.m.
- Grand theft on San Ramon Valley Blvd. at

12:19 p.m.

- Suspicious circumstances on La Gonda Way at 3:20 p.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Brookside Dr. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 7:05 p.m.
- Petty theft, shoplift, on San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 2

- Accident on Blackhawk Rd. and Camino Tassajara at 8:33 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Love Ln. at 9:05 a.m.
- Littering on Hartz Way at 9:28 a.m.
- Brandishing weapon on Camino Tassajara and Woodranch Dr. at 12:02 p.m.
- Battery on Pownattan Ct. at 2:47 p.m.
- Fight disturbance on San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 8:07 p.m.

ANNIVERSARY



Edward and Julia Land

Longtime Danville residents Edward and Julia Land celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary Sunday, Nov. 26, among many friends and relatives. Family members and friends met at the Brass Door in San Ramon for cocktails and dinner. Glasses were raised many times over as those in attendance proposed toasts to the love and inspiration that Ed and Julia have provided to so many during the last 70 years.

The couple met while in college in 1935 and were married on Thanksgiving Day 1936, in

Berkeley. Their honeymoon consisted of a drive across the San Francisco Bay Bridge, which had just opened the previous week. He is a retired employee of Bethlehem Steel.

Their early years were spent in Oakland before moving to Danville. They have three children, Catherine, Dorothy and Stephen; seven grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren.

Plans are already being generated for their 75th anniversary to be celebrated Nov. 26, 2012.

OBITUARIES

Miles Eugene Sandstrom

Alamo resident Miles Eugene Sandstrom died Sept. 26.

He was born Oct. 7, 1925, the fourth of six children born to Olaf Einar Sandstrom and Tillie N. Sandstrom in Sioux Falls, S.D. Later the family moved to Chadron, Neb., where he attended school and graduated from Chadron High School. After graduating from high school, he served in the U.S. Navy during World War II aboard a destroyer escort as a Quartermaster. He returned to Chadron and attended Chadron State College. He was later called up during the Korean War and served aboard the aircraft carrier USS Shangri-la CVA-38.

He returned to Chadron after his service in the Korean War and the

family moved to California in early 1957, settling in Castro Valley then moving to Hayward. He went to work as an Interior Designer for Jackson's furnishing in San Francisco.

He moved his family to Alamo in 1963 and went on to open his own Interior Design firm, Contract Design Associates. He ran his own company until his retirement in the 1990s.

He is survived by his loving partner of 17 years, Lillian Nemetz of Alamo; his son, Richard Sandstrom, wife Vivian and grandson Miles of Pittsburg; his stepdaughter, Laurie Nemetz Peel, husband Gregg, and granddaughter Melissa; his stepson, Gary Nemetz, wife Christi and grandchildren Cari, Curtis and Connor; and his great grandchildren Madeira and Milo. He is also survived by his sister, Viola Borton of Red Cloud, Neb.

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PUBLISHER

Gina Channell-Allen

EDITORIAL

Editor

Dolores Fox Ciardelli

Staff Reporters

Jordan M. Doronila

Natalie O'Neill

Sports Writer

Rachel McMurdie

Contributors

Cheri Eplin

Geoff Gillette

B. Lynn Goodwin

Beverly Lane

Jacqui Love Marshall

Katharine O'Hara

Christina Straw

ART & PRODUCTION

Art Director/

Operations Manager

Shannon Corey

Assistant Design Director

Ben Ho

Designers

Steve Bruzenak

Trina Cannon

James Greenfield

Jason Lind

ADVERTISING

Advertising Manager

Mary Hantos

Advertising

Account Executives

Terry Bertolini

Susan Sterling

Classified Advertising

Susan Thomas

BUSINESS

Office Manager

Amory Foreman

Ad Services

Veneta Roberts, Manager

Kate D'Or

Business Associate

Lisa Oefelein

Circulation Manager

Bob Lampkin, ext. 32

How to reach the Weekly

315 Diablo Road, Suite 100

Danville, CA 94526

Phone: (925) 837-8300

Fax: (925) 837-2278

Editorial e-mail:

Editor@DanvilleWeekly.com

Calendar@DanvilleWeekly.com

Display Sales e-mail:

sales@PleasantonWeekly.com

Classifieds Sales e-mail:

Ads@DanvilleWeekly.com

Circulation e-mail:

circulation@DanvilleWeekly.com

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EDITORIAL • THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

Singles are an important part of the mix

Danville has a reputation as a good place to raise a family but last week's cover story pointed out the existence of a singles scene, too. This is good news for those who would like their grown children to live here or who are newly entering the single state themselves. The 2000 Census showed that 70 percent of Danville adults are married. So the number of unmarried adults is not small.

The census also noted that of the total population of 41,715 residents in Danville, 48.5 percent are male and 28.6 percent are under 18. In Alamo, the 2000 population of 15,626 was almost equally divided among the sexes and included

27.6 percent under 18, with 78.1 percent of Alamo's households being married couples living together.

One noteworthy statement in last week's story was that some singles prefer venues in Danville rather than the busier nightlife in Walnut Creek because they are more likely to run into people they know here. It truly does seem to be the town that has everything, despite what some seniors said in another story last week. They were unhappy that the town does not offer more services and activities aimed directly at the aging population. While the 2000 Census listed the Danville population over 65 at 10.3 percent, that segment of the population in Alamo came in at 12.2 percent, and everyone seems to agree these numbers are rising.

This area is fairly homogenous. It's good to know there is some diversity in marital status and age—and politics. Contributions to political candidates in the 2004 race broke out to \$203,387 going to Democratic candidates, and \$178,229 going to Republicans, although \$101,404 went to re-elect President Bush.

Another interesting observation was made last week by dating coach Jeannine Kaiser: Two halves don't make a whole; two wholes make a whole. That's the real aim for any community, so each person can contribute in a positive way whether married, single, young or old.

Some singles prefer venues in Danville rather than the busier nightlife in Walnut Creek because they are more likely to run into people they know here.

YOUR TURN

The Danville Weekly encourages comments on our coverage or on issues of local interest. Deadline is 5 p.m. Monday for that week's edition; please limit letters to 250 words, and provide your name, street address and daytime telephone number. We reserve the right to edit contributions for length and style and for factual errors known to us.

LETTERS: Mail or hand deliver to Danville Weekly, 315 Diablo Road, Suite 100, Danville, CA 94526

Fax: (925) 837-2278

E-mail: Editor@DanvilleWeekly.com

LETTERS

Peace—an impossible dream?

Dear Editor:

Last week's Guest Opinion, "Thanks to Dad, and all WWII veterans," was an exceptional tribute to our service personnel in World War II. But it had one real misconception. Peace has not existed in our world, or for our service personnel, in any decade since Dec. 7, 1941.

I was just 1 year old on that date and I have not seen a decade of peace in my lifetime:

- WWII - 1939 to 1946

- Korea - 1951 to 1953

- Vietnam - 1959 to 1974

- And so on with our involvement in Central America, the Balkans and more in each decade.

- Today, we will have never-ending decades of wars in Asia and Africa.

Thus, it is my view that we need to respect the sacrifices of our service personnel and understand that we, the people, have not learned our lessons from such service. In our blind devotion to punishment of our own people, with 11 percent of U.S. Americans in jails, prison or on parole, we export our desire to punish those that do not follow our cultural and political views by participation in wars against such peoples.

We have learned nothing, and we have no peace.

Hal Bailey, Vietnam 1967

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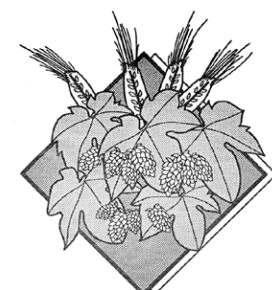
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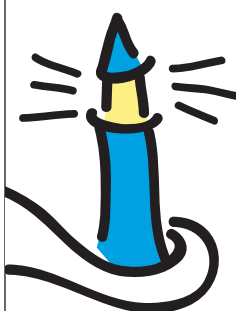
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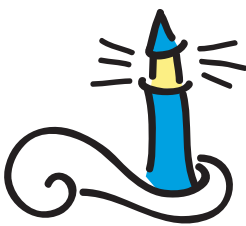
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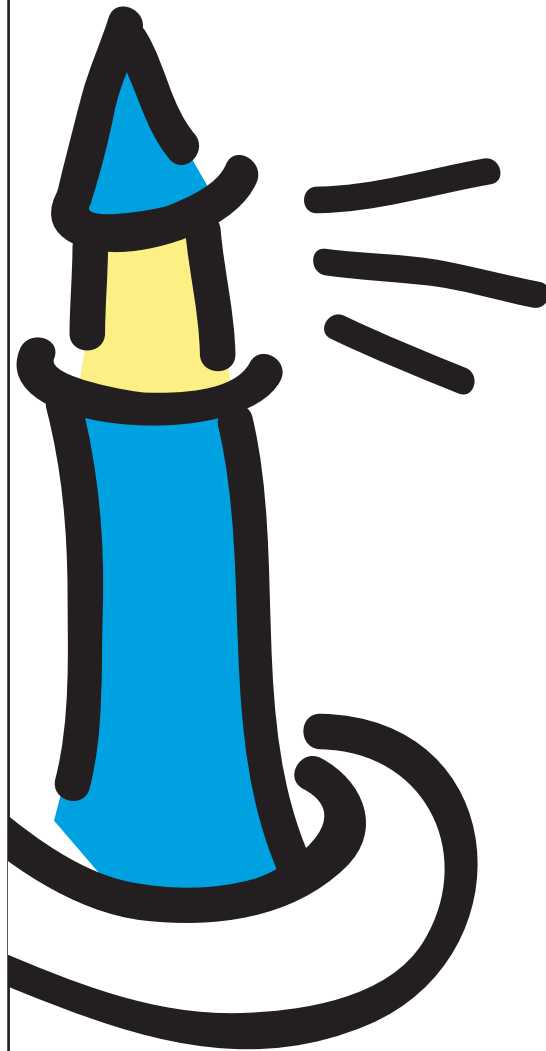
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Magic Spokes

Holiday spirit can be found at bicycle workshop

story and photos by Geoff Gillette



Rand Mahoney and his son Ryan, 11, operate as a team at the workshop to refurbish bicycles. The bicycle program at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Danville was able to provide 160 bikes last year.



Pedro received his bicycle through the Monument Crisis Center after it was refurbished at the workshop run by St. Timothy's. He needs it to ride to a center to wait for jobs as a day laborer.

Every mall in America lays claim each year to being an outpost of the North Pole complete with Santa and elves. Brightly colored banners are hung, Christmas carols are piped out of speakers, and every sign in every window has some holiday proclamation in it.

Displays glitter with fake snowflakes and glass baubles but have little or nothing to do with the Christmas spirit.

To see a real example of what Christmas means, go to the Town and Country Center in Danville. In a donated storefront tucked away amid the stores is Santa's workshop come to life, albeit with some subtle differences.

The elves there aren't rosy cheeked cherubs, drinking hot cocoa and singing merry tunes. They're family men, some with their children helping out. They drink water, Coke or Sierra Nevada Ale and hum along with the rock station playing on the radio as they turn battered and unused bicycles into gleaming Christmas gifts.

They are the driving force behind the annual bike program through St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Danville. For the fourth year in a row, volunteers are working from early November until mid December taking in used bicycles, fixing them up, and sending them north to be given away to underprivileged residents of Contra Costa County.

Program coordinator Tania Hanson-De Young said that in the four years since the program started, they've seen it continue to grow.

"It started out in the basement of the church, and now it's in this retail space donated to us by Realtor Gary Riele," she said.

Donations have been a big factor in growing the program. Danville Bikes has given a number of items as has California Pedaler. Frames come from Pacific Rim Recycling, and the church gets a deal on Bell Helmets so each bike comes with a helmet.

Hanson-De Young said the level of work going into the bikes now is incredible.

"It's not just fixing flat tires and putting on chains. We've got some real spoke-heads involved," she noted.

Chief among the laborers is Dave Struck. Struck first got involved through a bicycle drive at his children's school and has watched with pride as the event has drawn in more bikes and volunteers each year.

"That first year, there were older members of the parish who would come down to the basement to help," Struck recalled. "They'd find a comfortable spot and just pump up tires as long as they could."

Initially, it was a patch-'em-up-and-ship-'em-out operation, but now the work crews tackle nearly any issue with the bikes, from restringing brake lines to replacing derailleurs.

And if a bike is beyond repair, Struck said they still have uses for it. "Towards the end, when we're running out of bikes, we'll take parts off one and put it on another. We make FrankenBikes."

Once completed, the bikes are shipped up to the Monument Crisis Center in Concord for its Adopt-A-Family Program. If any are left over, they go to the Salvation Army in Concord to be given out.

The first year the group did this, they gave away 40 bikes. Last year it was 160.

"You can never have too many bikes. There's always a need," Hanson-De Young said.

Monument Crisis Center Director Sandra Scherer agreed. "Bicycles are something people can really relate to," she said. "They need them to get to work because buses are very expensive in Contra Costa County."

She said the bikes from St. Timothy's have made a big difference for those who get them.

One of those recipients is Pedro, 53, a resident of Concord's Monument Corridor. Pedro is a day laborer. Each day he rides from his apartment down to Monument Futures, where he waits with more than 80 other men to see if any jobs will be available that day.

"Having it (the bicycle) is a big help," he said. "It becomes a big part of your life. A daily necessity."

Pedro is now on his second bicycle through the Crisis Center. His first was stolen just two months after he received it. He said it has been a great gift and he hopes more bikes come for the other men in the neighborhood who don't have one.

Scherer said Pedro's reaction to the generosity of the St. Timothy's program is the common one.

"There are some people who are just so excited to receive a bike and they are just like 'this is the best thing I've ever received,'" said Scherer. "It's overwhelming."

For Struck and the other volunteers, stories like Pedro's are what keep them coming back year after year.

"I think you just appreciate that a lot of these families don't have these things. It's really cool that we can do something to help," said Struck.

Fellow volunteer J.P. Salgado summed up the feeling among the group.

"We're leveraging skills we all have," he said. "It doesn't take a lot of effort to make a difference. A little push helps a lot of people. That's what's satisfying." ■

Anyone who would like to help repair bikes next year can contact Dave Struck at dtarstruck@yahoo.com. Those interested in having a bike collection or helping with Adopt A Family next year can contact Tania Hanson-De Young at taniahd@sbcglobal.net.



Top: J.P. Salgado shines up a bike before it is shipped off to Concord for distribution.
Middle: A donated bicycle is badly in need of a tune-up, some new parts and a fresh seat.
Bottom: Ryan and Rand Mahoney test the wheel balance.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Clubs

Blackhawk Republican Women

This club will host a luncheon meeting starting at 11:15 a.m., Monday, Dec. 11, at Blackhawk Country Club, 599 Blackhawk Club Drive, Danville. Please bring an unwrapped gift for the Marine Corps Toys for Tots Foundation. Lunch is \$16. Guests are welcome. Reservations are required by noon, Friday, Dec. 8 by calling Ms. Lyons at 820-6452.

Tri-Valley Republican Women Federated

This club will host a dinner meeting with guest speaker Ward Connerly at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 11. New members and visitors are welcome. For reservations and location information, call Marilyn at 485-9869.

Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 75

The organization meets every second Thursday of the month and will start up the new year with their first meeting Thursday, Jan. 11, at Danville Veteran's Hall, 400 Hartz Avenue, Danville. For information, call Post Commander Mac McCuskey at 837-2740 or visit www.vfw.org.

Concerts

Blackhawk Chorus

Come and see the 130-voice Blackhawk Chorus perform "Rejoice Greatly!" at 7 p.m., Friday, Dec. 15, at Peace Lutheran Church, 3201 Camino Tassajara, Danville. Tickets are a suggested donation of \$20. There is also another concert at 5 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 17, at Resurrection Lutheran Church, 7557 Amador Valley Blvd., Dublin. Call 828-1580 for ticket information. Call 648-7000.

Golden Bough Holiday Concert

Community Concerts at the Wesley Center presents "Golden Bough Holiday Concert" at 7:15 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 16, at the Wesley Center, 902 Danville Blvd., Alamo. Tickets are \$22 for adults, \$20 for seniors and children. Call 229-2710 or visit www.communityconcerts.com.

Jazz at Peace

Peace Lutheran Church will host "Quijjerema" during its Jazz at Peace series at 5 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 10, at the church, 3201 Camino Tassajara, Danville. This event is free. Call 648-7000 or visit www.peacejourney.org.

Musical Celebration for Christmas

Saint Mary's College presents "Musical Celebration for Christmas" at 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 9, at the college chapel, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga. Tickets are \$25 for general, \$24 for seniors and \$12 for students. Call 631-4670.

WEEKEND PREVIEW



Toys for the Troops' Kids

Toys for the Troops' Kids has a goal to provide two toys to each child whose parents are serving in the military overseas or who have died while serving in action since Sept. 11. Donations are accepted 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday, through Dec. 23 at Placer Title Company, 101 Sycamore Valley Road West, Danville, and 4000 Blackhawk Plaza Circle. Call (916) 974-8387 or visit www.toysforthetroopskids.org.

Winterfest

Conductor Duane Carroll and the Contra Costa Wind Symphony will host "Winterfest" at 7:30 p.m., Monday, Dec. 11, at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. This event is free, but donations are accepted. Call 944-5392.

Young Performers Concerts

Young Performers Orchestra and Diablo Regional Youth Orchestra will present their Holiday Concert at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 12, at Shadelands Campus of Civic Arts Education, 111 N. Wiget Lane, Walnut Creek. Advance tickets are \$10, \$12 at the door. Call 943-5846.

Events

Coffee, Music and Shopping

Yellow Wood will host the San Ramon Valley School Choir at 10 a.m., Saturdays, Dec. 9 and Dec. 16, at the shop, 215 Alamo Plaza, Suite E, Alamo. Call 837-1175.

Nuclear Weapons Hearing

U.S. Dept. of Energy will hold a public hearing on Nuclear Weapons at 11:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 12, at Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave. Call 443-7148 or visit www.trivalleycares.org.

Exhibits

Christmas Memories at the Museum

The Museum of the San Ramon Valley will host "Christmas Memories"

until Jan. 6, at the museum, corner of Railroad and Prospect avenues, Danville. Donations are encouraged for admission. The museum is open 1-4 p.m., Tuesday-Friday and 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday. Call 837-3750.

European Train Enthusiasts

Blackhawk Museum presents the European Train Enthusiasts exhibit from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Wednesday-Saturday, running until Jan. 7, at the museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. The exhibit will include 360' of track, 57 turn-outs, 35 working signals and more! Call 736-2277.

Lindsay Wildlife Museum

The museum will feature two new special exhibits: "Broken Wings: Portraits of Non-Releasable Raptors" and "One Man's Window" from now until Dec. 31, at the museum, 1931 First Ave., Walnut Creek. Call 935-1978 or visit www.wildlife-museum.org.

Fundraisers

Claws for Paws

Tri-Valley Animal Rescue will host Claws for Paws second annual Crab Feed from 6-10 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 27. Cost is \$40 before Jan. 10 and \$45 after. To purchase tickets, visit www.tvrar.org, email events@tvrar.org or send a check to TVAR, P.O. Box 11143, Pleasanton.

One Warm Coat

Celebrate the 11th anniversary of "Protection from the Cold" with San Ramon Valley Rotary Club and donate a coat, sweater or blanket until Dec. 16. There are various drop off loca-

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We need a graphic designer

The Pleasanton Weekly and the Danville Weekly is currently seeking a **Full-Time Graphic Designer** to help produce our Tri-Valley community newspapers.

Responsibilities will include both editorial and advertising design. Must have Mac experience, basic production skills and a good design portfolio. InDesign, Photoshop knowledge is required, Web/Flash experience a bonus. Candidate should be able to work under tight deadlines in a busy environment with attention to detail. Guaranteed to work hard—but also have fun in a small office with a dedicated staff.

This full-time position offers health and dental benefits and a 401(k) plan—plus the distinction of working for an award-winning and ever-growing hometown newspaper.

Please e-mail your resume to Shannon Corey, Art Director, at: scorey@pleasantonweekly.com

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tions in Danville including: Heritage Bank, 310 Hartz Ave.; Pascal's Cafe, 155 Railroad Ave.; or ReMax Accord, 313 Sycamore Valley Drive West. For information, call Larry at 200-7640 or Dany at 838-9110.

Toys for Tots
Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Danville will host a collection site for the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots until Friday, Dec. 15, at 600 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville. Toys should be new and unwrapped. Call 837-4100.

Health

Cancer Treatment Help
The Wellness Community will host many different workshops for cancer patients and their friends and family. Managing Holiday Stress from 10 a.m.-noon, Saturday, Dec. 9; Mindful Chi Kung from 3:30-5 p.m., Thursday,

Dec. 14; and African Drumming Circle from 5:30-6:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 15, all at The Wellness Community Center, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. Call 933-0107.

Holidays

Celebration of Christmas
To celebrate the Christmas season, come and enjoy performances by the Monte Vista High School Chamber Singers, San Ramon Valley High Chamber Singers, Charlotte Wood Choir and Danville Stake Choir from 7-8:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 17, at Danville Stake Center of the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter-day Saints, 655 Old Orchard Road. Refreshments will be served.

Christmas in Danville
Community Presbyterian Church will host "Christmas in Danville" at 9 and 10:30 a.m., Sundays, Dec. 10, 17 and

24, at the church, 222 W. El Pintado Road, Danville and at 9:30 a.m., Sundays, Dec. 3, 10, 17 and 24, at the Tassajara campus, Diablo Vista Middle School, 41 Camino Tassajara, Danville. Call 837-5525 or email info@cpcdanville.org.

Community Chanukah Party
Tri-Valley Cultural Jews will host a family Chanukah Party from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 17, at the Bothwell Center, 2466 Eighth St., Livermore. Bring a brunch potluck item and a potato to make latkes. The party will include the game of "ganef"; if you wish to participate, bring a gift not more than \$10. Call 485-1049 or e-mail culturaljews@aol.com.

Contra Costa Grand Menorah Lighting
Chabad of Contra Costa and The Broadway Plaza will host a Grand Menorah Lighting from 3-6 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 17, in Broadway Plaza, Promenade Fountain (across the street from Nordstrom) and a community night skate "Chanukah on Ice" from 7:30-10 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 19, at the downtown Walnut Creek Ice Rink in Civic Park. Call 937-4101 or visit www.jewishcontracosta.com.

Here comes Santa Claus
Here Comes Santa Claus ... right down Sycamore Valley lane with visits and photos until Christmas: noon-3 p.m., Dec. 9-10; 6-8 p.m., Dec. 14-15; noon-3 p.m., Dec. 16-17; and from 6-8 p.m., Dec. 21-22, at the Danville Livery, at Sycamore Valley Road West and San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Parents may take their own photos. Call 838-7070 or visit www.danvillelivery.com.

Holiday Home Tour
Valley Children's Museum will host its third annual Holiday Home Tour from noon-4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 10, in the Pleasanton community of Ruby Hill. Cost is \$35. Proceeds will benefit the museum. Call Linda at 461-6574, ext. 3 or e-mail linda@childrensmuseum.org.

Holiday Performances, Santa and Pet Photos
Blackhawk Plaza will host holiday performances by local area school choirs and jazz bands, and Santa Claus will be at the plaza to pose for pictures through Dec. 24. The plaza is located at 3480 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. For information, call 736-2751 or visit www.theshopsat-blackhawk.com.

Lighting of the Hospice Tree
Join the Hospice of Contra Costa in the Lighting of the Hospice Tree with a spaghetti feed starting at 5:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 10, at 1401 Danville

Blvd., Alamo. Cost is \$15 for adults, \$10 for teens. Call 878-5200.

Menorah Lighting Ceremonies
Blackhawk Plaza will host the Beth Chaim Congregation's Menorah lighting at 7 p.m., Friday, Dec. 15, and Thursday, Dec. 21, at the plaza, 3480 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. Call 736-2751 or visit www.theshopsat-blackhawk.com.

New Year's Eve Casino Classic Celebration
Blackhawk Museum and BHEI Inc. will host their New Year's Eve Casino Classic Celebration from 7:30 p.m.-1 a.m., Sunday, Dec. 31, at the museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. Tickets are \$135; deadline to reserve your seat is Sunday, Dec. 24. Black tie optional. Call 736-2277, ext. 653, or visit www.blackhawkmuseum.org.

New Year's Eve Party
USS Hornet invites you to its ultimate New Year's Eve party from 8 p.m.-1 a.m., Sunday, Dec. 31, abroad the ship, Pier 3, Alameda Point, Alameda. Tickets are \$48 for general admission, \$65 for reserved seating and \$95 for premium reserved. Call (510) 521-8448, ext. 282, or visit www.hornetevent.com.

Santa Claus at the Danville Train Depot
Santa Claus is coming to the Danville Train Depot from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 9 and 16, at the Museum of the San Ramon Valley, 205 Railroad Ave., Danville. There is no charge for admission, but donations are encouraged. Call 837-3750.

Sing-A-Long Messiah
San Ramon Arts Foundation presents "Sing A-Long Messiah" at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 9, at San Ramon Community Center, 12501 Alcosta Blvd. Visit www.sanramonarts.org.

The Big Fat Year End Kiss Off Comedy Show
Pleasanton Civic Arts will host Will Durst and friends in "The Big Fat Year End Kiss Off Comedy Show" starting at 8 p.m., Friday, Dec. 29, at Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton. Advance tickets are \$15, \$20 and \$25; call 931-3444.

Toys for the Troops' Kids
The 2006 Christmas Toy Drive "Toys for the Troops' Kids" is taking place from now until Saturday, Dec. 23. The drop off locations are open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday, at Placer Title Co., 101 Sycamore Valley Road West and 4000 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. Visit www.toysforthetroopskids.org.

Kids & Teens

Bethlehem Breakfast
Creekside Community Church will host a festive breakfast and crafts for children K-5 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 16, at the church, 1350 Danville Blvd., Alamo. Cost is \$10 per child. Registration is required by visiting www.creeksidechurch.com. For information, call 820-9031.

Spanish for Preschoolers
Town of Danville will host a new class, "Spanish for Preschoolers," for children ages 3-5 years old meeting from 9-11 a.m. on Tuesdays, Jan. 9-March 6, at Veteran's Memorial Hall, 400 Hartz Ave., Danville. The cost for Danville residents is \$222, \$266 for non-residents. An additional \$20 materials fee will be due on the first day of class. Call 314-3400 or visit www.ci.danville.ca.us.

Lectures/Workshops

Attracting Equity Investors
Technology Ventures Corp. will host "Attracting Equity Investors and Lessons Learned" from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 13, at Radisson Hotel, 6680 Regional Street, Dublin. This event is free, but reservations are required by calling 960-1600.

Early Stage Alliances
East Bay I.T. will host "Early Stage Alliances" from 6:30-9 p.m., Monday, Dec. 11, at Crown Plaza Hotel, 11950 Dublin Canyon Road, Pleasanton. This event is free to members, \$10 preregistration for non-members and \$20 at the door. Visit www.ebig.org.

Miscellaneous

2006 Citizen, Business and Educator of the Year Nominations
Danville Chamber of Commerce is looking for nominations for the 2006 Citizen, Business and Educator of the year. Forms can be found at the Chamber offices, 117-E Town and Country Drive, Danville or by visiting danvillechamber.com/join_us.html. The deadline is Friday, Dec. 15. Call 837-4400.

On Stage

'A Christmas Carol'
Center Rep Company presents "A Christmas Carol" until Dec. 17, at Dean Leshar Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. Tickets are \$14-38. Call 943-7469.

'The Nutcracker'
City of Pleasanton Civic Arts presents "The Nutcracker" at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 8, at Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton. Tickets are \$10, \$14 or \$18 for adults; \$6, \$10 or \$14 for children. For information, call 931-3444 or visit www.civictartstickets.org.

Spiritual

Catholics@Work Breakfast Meeting
Catholics@Work will be hosting a breakfast series with an opportunity to network with people who are looking for a purpose and leadership in their lives, from 6:45-8:30 a.m., every second Tuesday of the month, Sept.-Dec., at Crow Canyon Country Club, Danville. The next meeting will feature "What Religious Differences Mean in Your Everyday Life" with speaker James A. Donahue on Tuesday, Dec. 12. Call 389-0704 or visit www.catholicsat-work.org.

Longing for the Healing Balm of Christ Coming
San Damiano will host "Longing for the Healing Balm of Christ Coming" from 7-9 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 14, at San Damiano, 710 Highland Drive, Danville. Cost is \$15, pre-registration is recommended. Call 837-9141 or visit www.sandamiano.org.

Thinking about a new sales career? Let's talk.

The Pleasanton Weekly and the Danville Weekly continue to expand with opportunities, so we're always looking to strike up conversations with talented sales professionals. If you have experience in newspaper sales, or a strong sales background in a similar field, we'd like to speak with you. Exceptional communication skills, proficient computer skills, and attention to detail are a must. We're a deadline-oriented company, so the ability to work accurately and efficiently is highly valued. If you possess these qualities, we're open to explore new possibilities with you.

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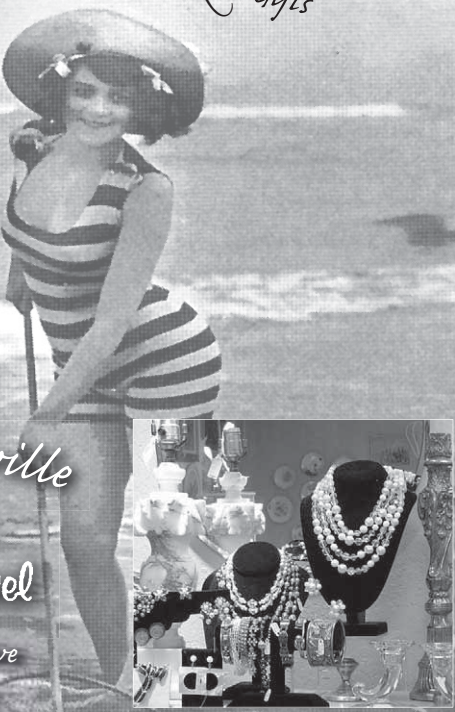
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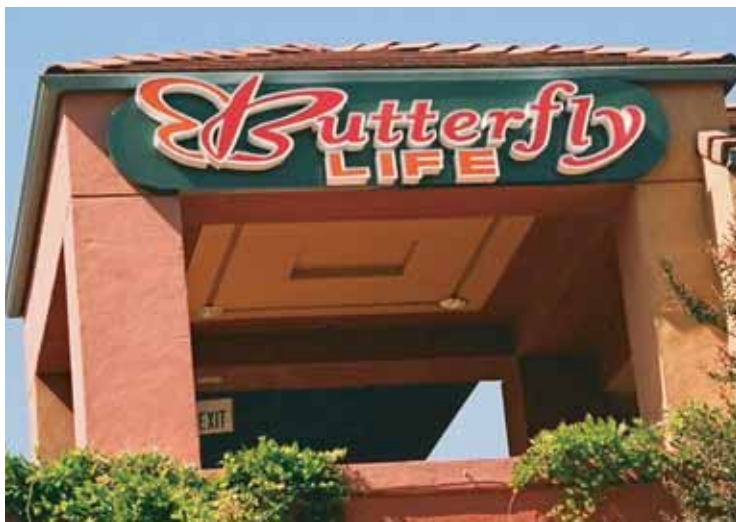
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San Ramon, CA.

The new fitness craze sweeping the San Ramon Valley is the latest women's fitness facility, Butterfly Life. Butterfly Life is owned by Kathy Barney, a long time Danville resident. Kathy opened her two new fitness centers in San Ramon and Pleasanton during the summer of 2004.

This fitness center is like no other "designed for women" fitness center in the country. At this fitness center the motto is "healthy living solutions for women". "We not only believe in exercise, but we wanted to provide an educational environment that deals with issues such as health, nutrition, and fitness. Combine all that with a first class facility that reaches out to women of all ages and all fitness levels and you have Butterfly Life" says Kathy.

"We have been so pleased with the response to our new fitness clubs, the women in our community have really supported us in a big way. Our membership numbers have exceeded our expectations, growing over 40% over the same period when the facilities were under different ownership." Kathy adds.

That stands to reason since both San Ramon and Pleasanton facilities have been renovated from top to bottom, "we truly did a complete makeover". says Kathy. "With over 18,000 sq. feet I like to think of us as the Super Gym's Designed for Women".

Butterfly Life is unique from any other women's fitness center in that they are the "real deal" a full service fitness facility offering a state of the art 30-minute Circuit, extensive cardio area complete with treadmills, elliptical trainers, stairclimbers etc., a large aerobic area for the over 80+ classes weekly, free weight area, personal training area, childcare, executive locker rooms, complete with towel service and a host of amenities. The price of this high end women's fitness and health facility is the same or lower than most other women designed fitness clubs which feature primarily a 30-minute circuit.

Our target market is women of all ages and fitness levels. "Most women facilities are limited in what they offer and limit your progress. At Butterfly Life there is no reason to go anywhere else, we offer equipment, training and programs that allow you to progress, regardless of your fitness level or age." says Kathy.

At Butterfly Life you really find that the club is the "perfect size". The environment is extremely comfortable and non-intimidating for women. At Butterfly Life, you really get the feeling of a local club for women, a place where you can get fit, socialize and make new friends.

One of the most popular activities at Butterfly Life are the group exercise classes, and oh my, do they have group exercise classes. Butterfly Life has over 80 classes a week including Pilates, Yoga, Step, Dance, Body Sculpting and a whole lot more. The best part is that these classes are included in the cost of the membership. "There are studios all over charging a lot of money to offer their clients yoga or pilates, you even find other health clubs doing the same. We are very proud of our Group Exercise Program and we are pleased that we can offer this as part of our total package. The best part is our outstanding instructors, we truly feel we have the finest instructors in the area" Kathy proudly explains.

Another area that makes this fitness experience unique, is the education opportunity it provides to it's members. Through an innovative approach, Butterfly Life brings to its members seminars

on Nutrition, Health, and Fitness. They bring this information to its members through Life Vision. Life Vision is a presentation tool that allows the members to educate themselves about the various topics important to women. The other way members can get educated and motivated at the same time is through the extensive team of certified personal trainers and a certified nutritional consultant. The trainers at Butterfly Life are trained specifically to deal with fitness as it relates to women. The best way to put it is, "its women helping women".

Exercising is not a chore at Butterfly Life its fun. "It is amazing how time flies while I'm here" says member Heidi Scott, "whether I'm taking a class or just working out, there are plenty of things that will make the time go by" In the cardio area you will find TV's with a variety of program as well as the Butterfly Life seminars playing around the clock, you can even check out a book on tape to help you pass the time.

"We want our members to have a high quality workout experience. We want to help pass on valuable information but most of all we want them to feel comfortable and enjoy their experience so that they want to come back." says Kathy

Looking for a place to get away from the hustle and bustle, a place where other women share the same issues that you do, a place where you can take care of yourself while having fun. Looking for the absolute best value in women's fitness, then go to Butterfly Life Fitness Club in San Ramon, located at 2410 San Ramon Valley Blvd. or 3170 Santa Rita Rd. in Pleasanton. It is truly the place to be.

A membership to Butterfly Life is a perfect gift for the Holidays. Call the following locations for more information.:
San Ramon 925-855-3855
Pleasanton 925-426-0105



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

From Butterfly Life



Kathy Barney - Owner

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426-0105

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SALES AT A GLANCE

This week's data represents homes sold during November 2006

Danville	Alamo	Walnut Creek
Total sales reported: 17	Total sales reported: 4	Total sales reported: 22
Lowest sale reported: \$430,000	Lowest sale reported: \$1,160,000	Lowest sale reported: \$295,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,298,500	Highest sale reported: \$1,550,000	Highest sale reported: \$955,000
Average sales reported: \$917,618	Average sales reported: \$1,415,000	Average sales reported: \$669,818

HOME SALES

Source: California REsource

Danville	Alamo	Walnut Creek
235 Bridgeside Circle National Residential to T. Wheelan for \$715,000 1374 Brookside Drive Fralick Trust to S. & P. Maldonado for \$875,000 114 Center Court NEI Global Relocation to N. Cooper for \$845,000 1374 Fountain Springs Circle C. & J. Aldredge to G. Leonard for \$1,050,000 2201 Genoa Street Lennar Homes to R. Khanna for \$1,038,000 63 Haskins Ranch Circle Kreske Enterprises to L. Thomas for \$790,000 501 Mantova Court KB Homes to H. & N. Das for \$1,039,500 504 Mantova Court KB Homes to T. & L. Welter for \$1,246,500 509 Mantova Court KB Homes to A. & M. Ferriols for \$1,298,500 137 Midland Way D. Johnson to D. Farren for \$430,000 115 Nanterre Street KB Homes to T. & J. Abdollahian for \$850,000 119 Nanterre Street KB Homes to A. & M. Kok for \$827,000 157 Nanterre Street KB Homes to R. & M. Rigo for \$931,000	19 Pulido Court L. & P. Henderson to K. Wong for \$1,070,000 22 Rainbow Circle G. Chaw to Mehranfar Trust for \$585,000 50 Rockport Court R. & J. Spencer to Kremer Trust for \$979,000 712 Via Hermosa B. Clark to K. Deflores for \$1,030,000 1590 Las Trampas Road D. & S. Hourany to T. & G. Vitzthum for \$1,160,000 2051 Pebble Drive J. & T. Freeman to D. Javaheri for \$1,500,000 41 South Via Lucia Lane B. & S. Mitchell to Brenner Trust for \$1,550,000 135 Wilson Road K. & M. Voss to J. Yang for \$1,450,000	1146 Conejo Way Brick Trust to M. King for \$655,000 2333 Dapplegray Lane Sutherland Trust to J. & A. Harrison for \$847,500 314 Fenway Drive Eggleston Trust to I. Khersonsky for \$799,000 3248 Hudson Avenue S. & E. Leach to T. & H. Maloney for \$659,000 1420 Huston Road C. & L. Divine to G. Cannella for \$825,000 2600 Jones Road #19 N. Shaver to M. Alizadeh for \$379,000 481 La Vista Road P. Coyle to S. Amarant for \$775,000 932 Leroy Lane Hightower Trust to M. & K. Dadasovich for \$635,000 1751 Magnolia Way H. Tang to A. & M. Potter for \$745,000 250 Northcreek Circle Vujovich Trust to L. Michael for \$545,000 2560 Oak Road #225 Bridgeport Commons to R. & J. Nathanson for \$455,000 2730 Oak Road #27 V. Nazarenko to S. Chan for \$295,000 32 Picardy Court D. Loo to N. Yoshimoto for \$775,000 115 Pickering Place Baietti Trust to Astin Trust for \$750,000

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OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

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

Alamo

3 Bedrooms

134 Canyon Vista Pl. **\$1,050,000**
Sun 1-4 Blackhawk RE 736-6000

4 Bedrooms

46 Vista Ln. **\$1,595,000**
Sun 1:30-4 Intero 672-2499

Blackhawk

3 Bedrooms

11 Deer Meadow Ct. **\$1,199,000**
Sun 1:30-4 Blackhawk RE 736-4155

Danville

4 Bedrooms

140 Soda Pl. **\$1,059,000**
Sun 1-4 Intero 855-4125

11 Jillian Wy. **\$1,699,900**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Intero 818-4078

21 Ocho Rios Pl. **\$999,000**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 791-2513

5 Bedrooms

126 Bormio Ct. **\$1,250,000**
Sun 12-3 Intero 984-1945

254 San Rey Pl. **\$1,299,900**
Sun 1-4 Prudential CA 463-6113

5 Bedrooms

112 Laurelwood Dr. **\$2,049,950**
Sun 1-4 Intero 977-8965

124 Victoria Pl. **\$2,279,000**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Intero 785-1386

246 Stetson Dr. **\$879,000**
Sun 1-4:30 Prudential CA 876-5554

1390 Brookside Dr. **\$959,000**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Intero 736-1666

6 Bedrooms

586 Zephyr Cir. **\$1,049,000**
Sun 1-4 Intero 855-4123

San Ramon

3 Bedrooms

1407 Dawn Ct. **\$599,000**
Sat/Sun 1-5 Coldwell Banker 640-8283

1094 Vista Pointe Cir. **\$710,000**
Sun 1-4 Intero 855-4128

2516 McLaren Ln. **\$738,900**
Sun 1-4 Re/Max 735-7653

4 Bedrooms

604 Vine Hill Ln. **\$1,155,000**
Sun 1-4 Intero 833-1822

7 Henry Ranch Rd. **\$1,425,000**
Sun 1-4 Empire 623-6234

4 Bedrooms

2794 Marsh Dr. **\$650,000**
Sun 2-5 Coldwell Banker 362-2058

116 Claremont Crest Ct. **\$779,000**
Sun 2-4 Re/Max 510-501-2439

120 Claremont Crest Ct. **\$799,999**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Intero 788-6155

1923 Hollyview Dr. **\$949,500**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 968-1452

48 Mainprice Ct. **\$949,500**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 968-1452

2433 Wildhorse Dr. **\$974,900**
Sun 1-4 Intero 323-8051

5 Bedrooms

642 Dromana Ct. **\$1,095,000**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 968-1452

301 Adelaide Hills Ct. **\$1,099,000**
Sun 1-4 Intero 785-1386

16 Pine Valley Pl. **\$1,434,000**
Sun 1:30-4 Intero 648-5342

1424 Allanmere Dr. **\$990,000**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Intero 785-1386

Dublin

2 Bedrooms

6953 Stagecoach Rd., #F **\$469,950**
Sun 1-4 Intero 800-492-6365

3 Bedrooms

7429 Brigadoon Wy. **\$548,000**
Sun 1-3 Cartier Prop. 989-4663

4621 Sandyford Ct. **\$599,900**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Hometown GMAC 426-3859

4 Bedrooms

3916 Gorham Ct. **\$779,000**
Sun 12:30-4 Intero 963-0093

Pleasanton

2 Bedrooms

3399 Norton Wy., #1 **\$379,000**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 621-4085

4101 Stanley Blvd. **\$549,950**
Sun 1-4 Assist 2 Sell 200-2602

3 Bedrooms

2398 Bay Meadows Cir. **\$639,500**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 846-6500

1477 Trimmingham Dr. **\$669,999**
Sun 1-4 Prudential 918-3093

6834 Via Quito **\$679,000**
Sun 1-4 Nobrega RE 202-6755

684 Grapevine Dr. **\$699,888**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 260-2508

3856 Promenade Wy. **\$699,950**
Sun 1-4 Re/Max 577-2600

4719 Golden Rd. **\$729,000**
Sun 1-4 Allied Brokers 846-3755

3509 Arbor Ct. **\$775,000**
Sun 1-4 Prudential CA 484-0900

4 Bedrooms

3955 Churchill Dr. **\$749,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 397-4300

1316 Orchard Wy. **\$809,000**
Sun 1:30-4:30 Alain Pinel 462-7653

2717 Laramie Gate Cir. **\$929,000**
Sat/Sun 2-4 Assist 2 Sell 200-2602

Livermore

1 Bedrooms

1099 Murrieta Blvd., #77 **\$249,950**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Assist 2 Sell 200-2602

3 Bedrooms

5556 Mines Rd. (2 homes/1 lot) **\$1,299,995**
Sat 1-4 Valley Properties 321-0468

727 Del Mar Ave. **\$599,950**
Sun 1-4 Coldwell Banker 847-7355

6341 El Capitan Ct. **\$609,950**
Sun 1-4 Intero 200-5026

465 Cedar Dr. **\$625,000**
Sat/Sun 2-4:30 Valley Properties 337-6061

4 Bedrooms

6147 Sunnybrook Wy. **\$699,950**
Sun 1-4 Olde Towne 426-9122

196 Summertree Dr. **\$749,000**
Sun 1:30-4:30 Valley Properties 487-2080

612 Paradise Valley Court S ~ Danville



*Fabulous Upgraded Scottsdale Model - 4 Bedroom 2.5 Baths,
Approx. 2,137 sq.ft. - Excellent Location! Premium Lot - Backs to Open Space!
Gorgeous Professional Landscape with Flagstone Patio
Gated Community with Pool
Easy Commute, Near Shopping - Great Schools.*

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ALAMO

Outstanding Details!

\$7,950,000

Spectacular new Tuscan Villa w/distressed hardwood floors, imported tile & stone, Main-6bd, 5-full/2-half baths. Cabana-2rooms, full bath, kitchen.

Sharon Dare & Pamela Schmid

925.855.4018



DANVILLE

Two Homes on 5+Acres

\$3,200,000

3200+/-sf main residence w/4bd, 3ba, remodeled to perfection & amenities galore. Second residence is 1200+/-sf w/2bd, 1ba. Top equestrian set-up.

Ralph Sessa

925.858.5233



ALAMO

Westside Alamo Estate!

\$2,699,000

Multi-dimensional property includes main house, 2 in-law units and a pool house. Gorgeous backyard with Mt. Diablo views, pool, waterfall.

Khrista Jarvis

925.855.4065



DANVILLE

New Construction-Amenities Galore

\$2,450,000

Beautiful 6bd, 6.5ba, 4900+/-sf, 4-car garage. Private location, nearly 1.2 acres. Center atrium, game room kids bonus room area. This is a must see property!!

Dale Schroeder

925.785.6219



DANVILLE

Entertain, Relax, Enjoy!!

\$1,699,900

Make me an offer on this incredible home in desirable Diablo Wood! 4bd, 3.5ba, 3-car garage, beautiful pool, gorgeous tile roof and more.

Elias Mouawad

925.818.4078



DANVILLE

Sought-After Magee Ranch!

\$1,679,000

Gorgeous semi-custom, expanded "McPherson" floorplan, 4000+/-sf, 5bd, 3.5ba, library, elegant living & dining rooms, granite/stainless kitchen.

Dave Bauer

925.855.4040



DANVILLE

Estate Home in Diablo Highlands

\$1,675,000

5bd, 4.5ba on a large, private lot near town. 4351+/-sf, fantastic floor plan including bonus room. End of cul-de-sac, backing to open space w/views.

Joyce Papas & Glen Landrum

925.855.4075



ALAMO

Totally Remodeled Westside

\$1,595,000

4bd, 3ba, slab granite in kitchen, wood & travertine floors. Many French doors, all new windows, new master bath. Great grounds.

The McDougall Team

925.672.2499



DANVILLE

Reduced \$144K-Bring Offers

\$1,250,000

5bd, 3.5ba in Hidden Valley, one of Danville's most desirable areas. Italian design, gourmet kitchen, 20' ceilings, light & bright.

Peggy Kissinger

925.984.1945

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