

Higher rates for substitute teachers

District prepared for cold season with long list of subs ► **page 9**

Exploring the lust for fame

Role Players spoof
show business
in 'Ruthless'

► **page 16**

Vol. III, Number 25 • October 19, 2007

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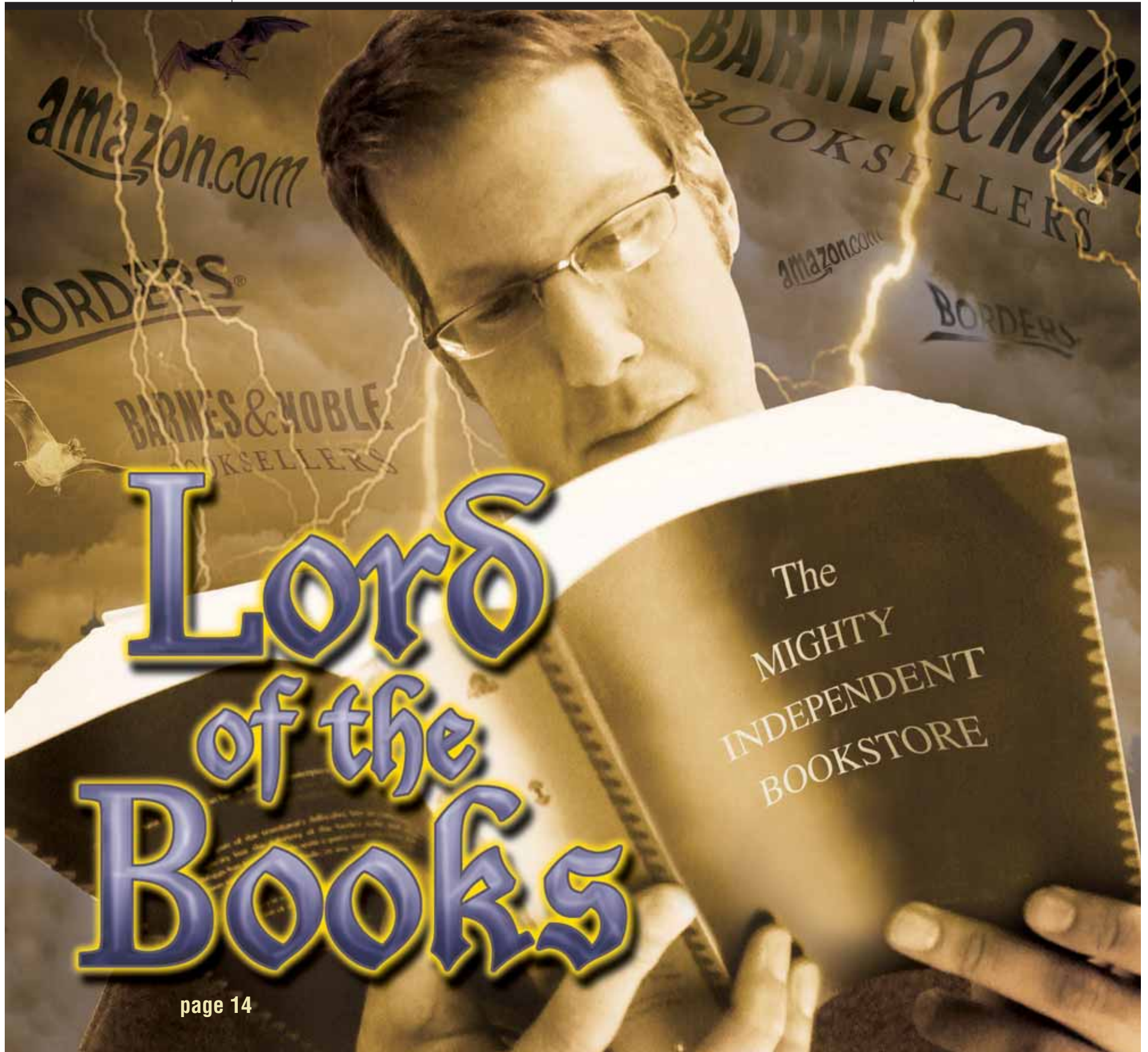
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How about 'Alamo Boulevard?'

County considering
change from
Danville Boulevard

► **page 9**





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Streetwise

ASKED AT PRIMO'S RUN

Q: When and where are you the happiest?



I'm generally a happy person, I like to think. I'm happiest when I'm outside doing something outdoorsy—that makes you feel good. Like hiking in the open space.

Hali Pontrelli
junior at California High



In Auburn University (in Alabama) during a football game—when we're winning. I try to go once a year. I have family in Birmingham.

Clay Hyght
chiropractor



Probably cycling. I usually go around here. I've been cycling for about 15 years. It's good exercise, it feels great, and it keeps me in shape.

Carol Stillman
sales at Cisco



I am the happiest when I'm with my family—with my girlfriend and four brothers and sister—and when the Cubs are in the playoffs.

Danny McLarty
personal trainer, basketball skills coach



With family, my son Cameron, 7, and Dane, 14. And our dog Payton; she's a Yorkie-Pom mix. We like to snuggle, and watch sports and read. I like to read with the kids.

Shondra Rundell
director of Muscular Dystrophy Association

COMPILED BY DANVILLE WEEKLY STAFF

ABOUT THE COVER

Rakestraw Books owner Michael Barnard has been running his prosperous independent store in Danville since 1995. His success is largely due to cultivating personal relationships with his customers and sharing his enthusiasm and book knowledge with clients, he says. Photo by Jordan M. Doronila. Design by Shannon Corey.

Vol. III, Number 25

The Danville Weekly is published every Friday by Embarcadero Publishing Co., 315 Diablo Road, Suite 100, Danville, CA 94526; (925) 837-8300. Application to Mail at Periodicals Postage Rates is Pending at Danville CA. The Danville Weekly is mailed free to homes and apartments in Danville, Blackhawk, Diablo and Alamo. Voluntary subscriptions at \$30 per year (\$50 for two years) are welcome from local residents. Subscription rate for businesses and for residents of other communities is \$50 per year. © 2007 by Embarcadero Publishing Co. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

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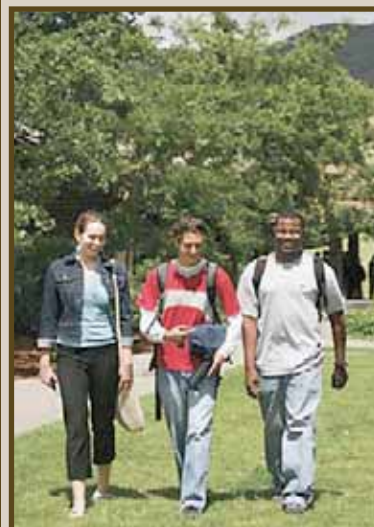
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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“ Your child is at the whim
of the suspect. ”

—Detective Sgt. Chris Simmons, about young people
making dates with Internet predators. See story, page 5.

Fall Crafts Festival to take over
downtown Danville

All things fall are happening in downtown Danville this weekend at the Danville Fall Crafts Festival, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday on Hartz Avenue. It will feature a Halloween parade, a kids activity area, street and stage entertainment, food, wines and microbrews as well as 200 artists. Scarecrow Alley, created by the Bay Hills Pony Club, has the theme of Scarecrows Gone Hollywood.

This is the 16th year for the event, hosted by the Danville Area Chamber of Commerce. “The Fall Crafts Festival really is the perfect time to begin thinking about the change of seasons and a wonderful time to start your holiday shopping,” said Chamber president Melony Newman.

Kids can don their costumes for the Halloween Parade beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday at School Street. Merchants will provide trick-or-treating, and there will be inflatables for bouncing.

Next weekend, the Danville Livery will celebrate Halloween with its annual Pumpkin Jubilee Festival. Kids and families are invited to dress in costumes, and enjoy live music, pumpkin giveaways, trick-or-treating and more, from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 27.

Books, books, books this weekend

The Friends of the Danville Library is holding its quarterly Giant Book Sale today through Sunday in the Mt. Diablo Room of the library, 400 Front St., to benefit its programs. Members only can shop from 9-10 a.m., then the sale opens to the public from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Saturday hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday times are noon-4 p.m.

Friends is a nonprofit all-volunteer organization started in 1958 to provide the library with books and materials that would not otherwise be available.

Town sets schedule for next year

The Danville Town Council has approved its meeting dates for 2008. Regular meetings will continue the first and third Tuesdays of each month, with exceptions in January, February, June, August and November. January will only have one meeting, on the third Tuesday. There will be no regular meeting in August. Also, meetings will be held on three Wednesdays to accommodate election activities Feb. 5, June 3, and Nov.4.

Eleven legal holidays are observed by the town each year. For the 2008 Christmas and New Year holidays, its offices will close Dec. 25, reopening Monday, Jan. 5.

County Equal Employment
committee has openings

The county Advisory Council on Equal Employment Opportunity has vacancies for an education representative and for a community representative. The Advisory Council serves the Board of Supervisors regarding the implementation of the County’s Affirmative Action Plan. Its members review the Affirmative Action Program and recommend actions that facilitate the county reaching its goals.

Members serve without compensation, and meetings are held the morning of the fourth Friday of each month in the County Administration Building in Martinez. Call 335-1045, for an application, which is due Oct. 22.

Corrections The Weekly desires to correct all significant errors. To request a correction, call the editor at (925) 837-8300 or e-mail: editor@DanvilleWeekly.com

Alamo fed up with speeders

Is speed limit the problem or enforcement?

by Natalie O'Neill

The speed limit on Danville Boulevard might be lowered from 30 to 25 miles per hour to keep non-local drivers from blasting through Alamo, public works traffic officials told the Alamo Community Council last Thursday.

But the answer to the speeding dilemma could have more to do with traffic enforcement than it does with a speed limit or engineering on the major Alamo artery, residents said.

Average speeds on the boulevard have dropped four miles per hour since the flashing lights at Jackson Way were put in last summer, according to county public works. But even with the improvements, danger is still knocking at the door, residents said.

"There is zero traffic enforcement on Danville Boulevard—zero," said Mike Gibson of Alamo Improvement Association.

Traffic control in Alamo must rely on the California Highway Patrol since it is an unincorporated area. Towns and cities, on the other hand, can assign members of their own police departments to monitor specific areas for traffic. And some Alamo residents see this safety concern as a solid argument in support of cityhood.

Less attention from the highway patrol is just a reality when you're dealing with other, more vital free-

► Continued on page 8



CHRIS SCOTT/WWW.CALSPORTSPHOTO.COM

And the band played on

The Monte Vista High School band adds pizzazz to the fun last Friday at its Homecoming Game against Livermore High School. The Mustangs prevailed, 27-0. See more photos of the band, the game and the cheerleaders at DanvilleWeekly.com.

Police warn students about Internet predators

Sex offenders socialize in chat rooms to set up dates

by Jordan M. Doronila

Watch out for sexual predators—they prowl and come in all different shapes, sizes and names, especially online.

Members of the Danville Police and the Contra Costa County Sheriff's departments gave a presentation about sexual predators and Internet safety Tuesday evening last week at San Ramon Valley High School in Danville. Sexual predators solicit sex from minors on the Web, they said.

Danville Police Chief Chris Wenzel noted there are 12 sex offenders that live in the Danville area and 14,290 in the county.

"We feel it's an important presentation for safety," he said.

"The better informed you are, the better you can make decisions," said Sgt. Chris Simmons, a detective at the Sheriff's Office's homicide department. "This happens everywhere."

Sex offenders socialize in Internet chat rooms using various names, Simmons said. They communicate with children through major online services, such as Yahoo!, MySpace.com, Facebook.com, AmericanSingles.com and Craigslist.com.

Offenders know their victims'

information through their online profiles, he explained. They begin chatting with young people about general topics. Eventually, they start talking about sex and solicit sex from them, setting up a date.

Adults soliciting and engaging in sex with a minor is a felony.

"At the meeting, your child is at the whim of the suspect," Simmons said.

The date could escalate into kidnapping, prostitution, child trafficking, rape, molestation, assault, torture and even murder, he said. Offenders may use weapons, a rape bed, rope, handcuffs, blindfolds, cameras, porn and sex toys on their victim, he added.

In a sting operation, Simmons posed as a 13-year-old on the Web, garnered solicitations from a business executive from San Francisco and developed a rapport with him over several months. The wealthy businessman arrived for a sexual encounter, and the police arrested him. The suspect also had maps of isolated places, and Simmons conjectured he may have been thinking of committing murder.

"Somehow, these children are confused," said Mary Dillow, a parent who saw the presentation. "Sex has become conditioned at a young

► Continued on page 9

Windmill Farms to stay open

Owners re-evaluating how to handle bulk food sales

by Natalie O'Neill

Owners of Windmill Farms, a beloved outdoor market in San Ramon, say they are pleased with a county ruling Tuesday that found the business exempt to a law requiring them to build four walls.

But before they celebrate, they'll need to take a closer look at the ruling, they said.

William Walker, director of Contra Costa Health Services, found that a grandfather clause makes Windmill Farms immune to a law stating the market must be enclosed.

But his ruling also dictates the market will not be able to sell bulk food and cut fruit in the open air, as this opens products



NATALIE O'NEILL

Windmill Farms owner Carol Smith Benavidez says she believes the bulk foods are sanitary in their plastic cases, although the health department ruled Tuesday that the market will not be able to sell bulk food and cut fruit in the open air.

► Continued on page 7



CHRIS SCOTT/WWW.CALSPORTSPHOTO.COM

Run, coach, run

Matt Waterson of Alamo, who is a familiar face as an assistant coach in Little League, does the Primo's Run on Front Street on Sunday. See story, page 7.



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Rancho Romero students still have energy after taking part in the Primo's Run: (l-r) Danny Carpentier, Chris Bortolon, Justin Kim, Samantha Carmel, Greg Carmel and Matthew Kim. See more photos at DanvilleWeekly.com.

Primo's Run means fun

Runners and walkers pack streets to benefit education

Sunday's 24th annual Primo's Run for Education drew record crowds to earn money for the San Ramon Valley Education Foundation. The 5K walk/run had 3,015 entries, while the half marathon drew 418.

The new Dougherty Valley High School had the most participation among district high schools with 13 percent. Rancho Romero won for elementary schools with 69.6 percent taking part.

"It's a banner year," said foundation director Vanessa Chan. "This year's run was a record breaker."

Rancho Romero was followed by Tassajara Hills Elementary, which had 43.2 percent participation, and John Baldwin with 34.7 percent.

Charlotte Wood led the middle schools with 21.9 percent. Stone Valley received an honorable mention for coming in a close second

with 20.9 percent.

The winner of the half marathon (13.1 miles) was 24-year-old Alex Cardiasmenos, whose time was 1:14:34. The winner of the 5K (3.1 miles) walk/run was Dmitry Kislyuk, 17, of San Ramon with a time of 15:37.0.

Gold sponsors for this year's Primo's Run were Shapell Homes, Comcast, Forward Motion Sports, Brookfield Homes, Primo's and Clif Bar.



This runner couldn't help but check his time as he and thousands of other runners left from Primo's Pizza and ran down Front Street.



Replacing his nutrients is Shannon Bosick, who ran the 5K and worked at the Fidelity Investments booth. He said he used to run in college but needs to get back into it.

Windmill

► Continued from page 5

up to a high risk of contamination. These products are about 25 percent of the family's sales, owners said.

"We're happy we don't have to be enclosed, but we're still working on the bulk food part of it. We're not sure how to interpret that," said Jason Smith, whose family has owned the market for 33 years.

Owners plan to cut and keep melons in a room with four walls, store them in a cooler, and then bring the slices out when customers

ask for them, Smith said.

The bulk food—like nuts and candies—on the other hand, are a different story. They are sold in the open air but are kept in plastic covered containers. And the family may have to cut this product out of their sales.

"Yeah, our sales will go down. But at least we won't have to close," Smith said.

Smith also detailed Windmill Farms' sales have gone down about 20 percent since the conflict between the business and the health department began gaining media attention in August.

People have heard it is not a sani-

tary establishment, but this isn't the case, he said.

County records show the market has had no previous serious health and sanitation violations in the last 20 years.

Earlier this month, supporters of the produce market rallied together at a county health department hearing to explain why the market should not be subject to new regulations.

California Retail Food Code, redrafted last year, states eggs in shells, whole produce and prepackaged foods are the only products that can be sold without a fully enclosed building. ■

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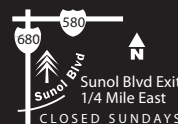
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Planning dessert

Guests view the bakery section at the preview party the night before Draeger's Market opened in Blackhawk last Friday. Draeger's completely remodeled the 43,000-square-foot building in the anchor tenant position at Blackhawk Plaza to accommodate its cooking classes, a 3,500-bottle wine selection, a wide variety of European-style breads and pastries made from scratch, award winning meats and delicatessen and locally grown produce.

DOLORES FOX CHARDILLI

Water polo coach pleads not guilty to embezzlement

Monte Vista puts coach on administrative leave

by Jordan M. Doronila

A Monte Vista High School coach has pleaded not guilty to embezzlement charges.

Todd Halverson, 37, Monte Vista girls water polo coach and aquatics coordinator for Clarke Memorial Swim Center at Heather Farm Park in Walnut Creek, allegedly embez-

zled tens of thousands of dollars paid by pool visitors by tampering with a computerized swim pass registration system, according to reports.

Jeff Tarpley, 48, Walnut Creek aquatic supervisor since 1988, has also been charged with embezzlement, accused of stealing around \$150,000, said deputy district attorney Steven Bolen for Contra Costa County. Both Halverson and Tarpley were arraigned and booked Wednesday, Oct. 10. Their court date for a hearing to see if there is enough evidence to go to trial will be held Thursday, Nov. 29, at Walnut Creek Superior Court. The cases are being held separately.

Bolen said he would not comment on any of the cases' details.

City employees contacted the police when they saw financial irregularities involving Halverson and Tarpley, reports said.

Halverson, a resident of San Ramon, has been placed on administrative leave until further notice, said Terry Koehne, spokesman for the San Ramon Valley Unified School District.

"It's a precautionary step that the district takes when an (employee) has been accused of a serious crime," Koehne said.

Halverson has been coaching at Monte Vista since 1997 and did not return phone calls to the Danville Weekly as of press time. ■

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Tours For Tickets

Speed

► Continued from page 5

way issues, said Jerry Fahy, senior civil engineer for the traffic section of Contra Costa County.

"The enforcement on a county road becomes a different priority when there's an accident on the freeway," said Fahy, who has worked with the CHP to solve traffic problems.

Public works will take a sample of 100 cars that are free-cruising, without signal lights or other traffic to interfere, in order to test whether the speed limit should be lowered.

The last sample was taken 10 years ago, when the speed limit was lowered from 35 to 30 miles per hour. It showed speeds of over 50 miles per hour on Danville Boulevard.

The root of the issue may be commuters, who get off the freeway exit during rush hour to avoid a clogged freeway flow, residents said.

"The real problem is the non-local traffic," Gibson said. ■

Danville
WEEKLY.com

Subs lined up for cold season

School district raises rates for substitute teachers

by **Natalie O'Neill**

Long-term substitute teachers are finding jobs in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District more attractive, thanks to an increase in payment rates.

A back-to-school review of raised day-to-day rates showed the hike drew over 30 more guest teachers to the district than last year.

With cold and flu season approaching, having plenty of qualified subs on hand is important for keeping students engaged and teachers healthy, said Roberta Silverstein, assistant superintendent. It also helps keep staff teachers from getting "burnt out," she said.

"There are a number of teachers who are worried about who is covering their classes. We wouldn't want them to not be able to take a sick day because they are worried about that," said Silverstein.

The rates were bumped up \$20 per day, from \$120 to \$140, for subs who stick around 11 days or more.

This incentive is good for classes with, for example, younger teachers on maternity leave or older teachers with a more severe sickness, she said. Having one stable teacher

as opposed to several coming and going makes for a stronger learning environment.

"We try to have the concept that the teaching continues on and the expectations are still there," Silverstein said, of the substitute classroom environment.

For guest teachers who stay less than 11 days, the payment is \$95 dollars per day, and those who stay more than 60 days earn \$160 per day.

Substitute teachers must have a bachelor's degree, a California Basic Educational Skills Test card or waiver, and special training depending on the grade level and subject.

But while there's a checklist for qualifications, sometimes what makes a great sub isn't something that can be learned by studying for a test. Subs who have mastered the social classroom dynamic—a skill that comes naturally to some and not to others—make the really exceptional teachers, Silverstein said.

Understanding the delicate balance between holding an air of authority and relating to the students is part of what makes a big difference, she noted.

"I think it's a really challenging

job; you don't have that established relationship," she said.

"We look for someone who can connect with the students—someone who likes the students and responds to them, can maintain the learning environment, and yet not be so authoritarian that they scare the kids," she explained.

Repeating subs generally prefer to stick to fewer than three schools, in order to get familiar with the kids and the culture of each campus. In general, subs in the district tend to be teachers who moved to the area after the school year started, retired teachers and people who just want part time work.

As this school year progresses, the district may consider offering incentives for guest teachers at schools that are more difficult to drive to—like Dougherty Valley High School and Live Oak Elementary. The district has the ability to raise rates at only certain schools, if need be.

For now, though, the district feels prepared with 543 subs registered.

"We're doing pretty well on subs as the cold season begins," Silverstein said. ■

Contact Natalie O'Neill at noneill@danvilleweekly.com

County suggests 'Alamo Boulevard'

Residents would have to agree to name change

by **Natalie O'Neill**

What's in a name? Quite a bit, county staff says.

Danville Boulevard may be changed to Alamo Boulevard if enough residents give the go-ahead, county officials told the Alamo Community Council at its meeting last Thursday.

"We feel this would be an extra identity to add to Alamo, an extra asset," said Gina Ferretti, south county field representative for District 3 Supervisor Mary N. Piepho.

The road change would only occur within Alamo limits, from El Portal to Rudgear Road. This would give the artery five different names in about 10 miles including San Ramon Valley Boulevard, Hartz Avenue, Danville Boulevard and Main Street.

Ferretti noted that county staffers had been asked to look into the possibility of a name alteration by Alamo residents. In order for it to happen, 90 percent of residents who live on the boulevard would

need to favor the switch and indicate their agreement in writing.

The Board of Supervisors would then look at whether the road title was duplicated by checking with the local fire district or post office. They would also consider how much of Danville Boulevard to alter to Alamo Boulevard.

"It's not a small undertaking," said Jerry Fahy, senior civil engineer for the county traffic department.

Costs would include changing street signs, which would range from \$200 to \$800. Businesses would be responsible for the cost of updating their own mailing addresses.

When changing a street name, the county also considers whether the current name has cultural or historical significance. If it is named after an individual or family that still lives on the street or elsewhere in the county, the county will consider whether the person or family agrees with the change.

The effort is still in very preliminary stages, Fahy said. ■

Internet predators

► Continued from page 5

age. It's (appalling) that a child would get sucked into that."

Simmons urged parents to talk to their children about sexual predators and monitor their computer use, noting the police can't catch all sexual offenders.

Megan's Law in California requires all sexual offenders to register their information publicly where they live. County residents can find profiles of offenders living in their area by visiting www.cocosherriff.org. Danville police inform residents when an offender moves into their neighborhood.

But sex offenders are not the only ones who have abused the Internet. Jeff Martin, tech specialist at San Ramon Valley High School, said kids have misused the school's Internet service for things such as pornography. They have also expressed themselves in a smutty manner.

A few years ago, a girl took sexual pictures of herself, posted them online and told boys to give her a call, Martin said. This incident happened in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District, and it has already been handled internally, he noted.

Martin said 1,800 out of 2,086 students at San Ramon had mySpace accounts and hordes had been flocking to school computers to access them. He added that some students had posted times when

their peers would fight each other. The district has been able to clamp down dramatically on the abuse.

"Internet (in school) is for educational purposes," Martin said.

The district has been using online filters to monitor students using the Web and to block them from using it for anything other than schoolwork.

"We busted a lot of kids," Martin said.

About a dozen people attended the event. Chief Wenzel said he was disappointed in the turnout, but on the other hand this hopefully means it is not a problem in Danville and Alamo. ■

Contact Jordan M. Doronila at jdoronila@DanvilleWeekly.com

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Middle East wonders

Brian and Valentina Holroyd in front of the Burj Al-Arab in Dubai, UAE, in April. It was a business trip for Valentina and Brian went along for the fun, as did the Danville Weekly.

Take Us Along on your travels and send photos to travel@DanvilleWeekly.com or 315 Diablo Road, Suite 100, Danville 94526. Be sure to include a daytime telephone number.

Diablo Views

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

June becomes Eleanor



June Pass wasn't available to talk Friday afternoon—she was off searching for a wheelchair. It wasn't for her. It was for FDR, a supporting role for her portrayal of Eleanor Roosevelt in "Remembering Eleanor," which she is performing at the Danville Library next week.

"It's not easy finding a wheelchair from that era," she said when she returned my call. Luckily, June, the director of J&L Center Stage Inc., has access to the props used at the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, and found what she was looking for in its warehouses.

I met June two years ago when I wrote a story about her and her production company. We visited for three hours in her condo off Camino Ramon, me enthralled by her memories of Hollywood as well as captivated by her warm manner. June recounted the happiness in her life and the sadness, especially the passing of her beloved husband Lowell and her daughter Carol, both 10 years ago. When she and Lowell moved to Danville in 1990, they founded J&L Center Stage, a non-profit theater group to bring plays to youths that reflect humanitarian

values. For awhile they ran a teen theater program with the town.

June also shared her enthusiasm about Eleanor Roosevelt, who refused to give up her activism when she became First Lady. In fact, she became FDR's "eyes and ears" since he was in a wheelchair. She traveled all over the country, giving lectures and radio broadcasts. June met Eleanor at a fundraiser in the 1950s in Beverly Hills for the United Jewish Appeal. She recalls shaking Eleanor's hand, looking her in the eyes and seeing her spirit. "It was a long time ago, but it's a memory I cherish," June told me.

In 1946, Eleanor Roosevelt, as a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations General Assembly, was instrumental in the adoption of its Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Roosevelt said she felt this was her greatest accomplishment. Inspired by this and all of her life, June partnered with a Hollywood writer to create "Remembering Eleanor," and it was presented by J&L Center Stage in 2000 at the Leshner Center. June invited members of the Roosevelt family who lived in San Francisco, never expecting a reply. One of them, Janet Roosevelt Katten, not only attended the performance but joined the board of J&L. When I talked to her two years ago, June had made plans to present a one-hour version she rewrote of the show to students during the school day at Mt. Diablo High School in Concord as part of the J&L School Outreach Program.

"Mrs. Katten is encouraging us to bring it to the schools because it is important for young people to

understand human potential," June said.

But then the school sound system went kaput. Next, June fell and broke her hip and had to get a hip replacement. After that, she struggled against double pneumonia, and it took more than a year for her to recover.

Now she has recovered her strength. Mt. Diablo High has installed a new sound system, and "Remembering Eleanor" was rescheduled for Oct. 18. Students were involved in the production, operating the sound and light system and projection machine, which were all set up by June's grandson, Pete Simms, who is a sound and light engineer in L.A. Her other grandson Jeff Levin, who lives in Berkeley, is one of the technicians in the production. She said Jeff visited her every Tuesday during her recent convalescence and called it "Tuesdays with Nani."

June said cutting the play from a full-length production to one hour was challenging, and she had to leave out a lot about Eleanor's personal life.

"Both versions have their strengths," June said. "The main purposes of Eleanor's life are especially strengthened in this revision."

"Remembering Eleanor" begins at 7 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 24-25, in the Mt. Diablo Room at the library. Fittingly, Oct. 24 is also United Nations Day. But! The room isn't very big so be sure to get there early.

—Dolores Fox Ciardelli
can be e-mailed at editor@DanvilleWeekly.com.

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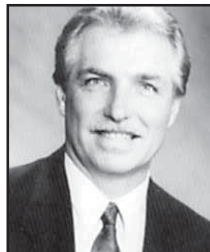
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POLICE BULLETIN & LOG • OBITUARIES • BIRTHS & WEDDINGS

POLICE BULLETIN

Battery charge at gas station

A 62-year-old Danville resident allegedly slapped a young man over a parking space at the Chevron gas station on Hartz Avenue last week.

Paul Reynolds, 62, of Danville, felt a 26-year-old man from Pittsburg took his parking space at Chevron and engaged in a verbal argument with him at 6:15 p.m., Monday, Oct. 8, said police Sgt. Troy Craig. The suspect then got out of his car, reached into the victim's open driver side window and slapped him. The Pittsburg man detained him by clutching

his shirt; however, Reynolds struck him again, giving him a bloody nose. Police arrived shortly at the scene, reports said. Reynolds admitted to having had a few drinks before coming to the Chevron, according to police reports.

Police arrested Reynolds on battery charges based on the victim and suspect's statements, as well as witness accounts, Craig said.

"There are better things to do than arguing and fighting over a parking space," he said.

—Jordan M. Doronila

POLICE LOG

The Danville Police Department made the following information available from its incident summary report:

Monday, Oct. 8

- Commercial burglary on 100 block of Hartz Ave. at 8:36 a.m.
- Petty theft from vehicle on Camino Ramon at 8:48 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Crow Canyon Rd. and St. George Rd. at 9:03 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Diablo Rd. at 9:56 a.m.
- Vandalism on 3100 block of Stone Valley Rd. at 1:54 p.m.
- Petty theft on St. Ramon Ct. at 2:01 p.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on La Gonda Way at 2:10 p.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 4:45 p.m.
- Fight disturbance, arrest, on 100 block of Hartz Ave. at 6:27 p.m.
- Petty theft on Camino Ramon at 7:20 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 9

- Accident, property damage, on Morninghome Rd. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 9:05 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Brookside Dr. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 9:07 a.m.
- Vandalism on Del Amigo Rd. at 11:28 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Diablo Rd. and Green Valley Rd. at 2:17 p.m.

- Auto burglary on Fostoria Cir. at 5:18 p.m.
- Battery on Love Ln. at 5:19 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 10

- Credit card fraud on Belgian Dr. at 11:57 a.m.
- Auto burglary on Shelly Pl. at 12:18 p.m.
- Petty theft on Love Ln. at 1:01 p.m.
- Auto burglary on Las Barrancas Dr. at 3:42 p.m.
- Auto burglary on Danville Blvd. and Del Amigo Rd. at 3:50 p.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on 3100 block of Stone Valley Rd. at 4:02 p.m.
- Auto burglary on Danville Blvd. and Del Amigo Rd. at 4:01 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 11

- Auto burglary on Glasgow Cir. at 8:36 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on San Ramon Valley Blvd. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 1:12 p.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Brookside Dr. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 3:34 p.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Railroad Ave. and School St. at 3:57 p.m.
- Vandalism on Shadowhawk Cir. and Swan St. at 8:40 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 12

- Vehicle traffic stop, arrest, on Love Ln. and Railroad Ave. at 1:19 a.m.

- Vehicle traffic stop, arrest, on Camino Tassajara and Glasgow Dr. at 1:57 a.m.
- Suspicious subject stop, arrest, on San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 5:55 a.m.
- Accident, major injuries, on southbound I-680 and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 5:11 p.m.
- Accident, major injuries, on San Ramon Valley Blvd. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 5:13 p.m.
- Petty theft on Fostoria Way at 6:34 p.m.
- Promiscuous shooting on Fountain Springs Cir. and Tea Tree Ct. at 10:12 p.m.
- Promiscuous shooting on Clear Creek Pl. N. at 10:17 p.m.
- Battery on 3100 block of Stone Valley Rd. at 11:18 p.m.
- Accident on Old Orchard Dr. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 11:41 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 13

- Petty theft on Santiago Dr. at 8:08 a.m.
- Accident on Alamos Dr. and Diablo Ct. at 8:12 a.m.
- Petty theft on Fostoria Way at 9:38 a.m.
- Misdemeanor driving under the influence (DUI), arrest, on Diablo Rd. and southbound I-680 off ramp at 10:59 a.m.
- Vehicle traffic stop, arrest, on San Ramon Valley Blvd. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 9:44 p.m.

OBITUARIES

Phyllis Jean Smith

Phyllis Jean Smith, a former resident of Danville and Diablo, lost her battle with cancer at her home in Lincoln, Calif., on Sept. 22, at the age of 81.

She was born June 4, 1926, to Joseph and Isabel Courchene in Beverly, Mass. She received her Bachelor of Science in Education from Salem Teacher's College in 1948 and was on the president's list for Scholastic Excellence all four years. She was a gifted artist and designed the college seal.

She taught elementary school in Long Beach, and married Franklin J. Smith in San Diego on Oct. 6, 1951. They moved to Danville in 1952, then to Diablo in 1966 where they resided for 45 years. They moved to Lincoln in 2001. While living in Diablo she worked for the San Ramon Valley School District in food services. She was active at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church,

and enjoyed traveling, playing bridge, reading, scrapbooking, and sharing her creative talents in many ways.

She was a loving wife to Franklin for 56 years, a loving mother to Janet, Karen, Stephen and Pamela, a loving grandmother to Jennifer, Jeffrey, Stephen, Ryan, Jason, Alicia, Sarah and John, a loving mother-in-law to Bob, Tom, Kelly and John and a loving friend to so many. A memorial service was held at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church on Monday. Memorial donations may be made to Sutter VNA and Hospice, 1836 Sierra Gardens Drive, Suite 130, Roseville 95661 or the American Cancer Society.

Thomas J. Foley

Thomas J. Foley, 78, a former resident of Danville, passed away Sept. 21 in Grass Valley.

He was born April 5, 1929, in Compton. He received a BS degree

from Loyola University and then served three years in the Navy during the Korean War. He then married Betty and they settled in Los Angeles, where they started their family. They later moved to Danville, where they lived for 33 years. They were currently living in Penn Valley.

He retired as vice president of sales in the trucking industry after 28 years, and then worked as a substitute teacher in the San Ramon Valley for the next 14 years. He was a coach of youth sports and later was an ardent fan and supporter of all of his grandchildren's sports and activities.

He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Betty; sons Patrick and Michael; daughters Donna, Kathleen and Karen; and 11 grandchildren. Services were held Sept. 29 at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Grass Valley. Donations may be made to Hospice of the Foothills in Grass Valley.



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Circulation e-mail:
circulation@DanvilleWeekly.com

The Danville Weekly is published every Friday by Embarcadero Publishing Co., 315 Diablo Road, Suite 100, Danville, CA 94526; (925) 837-8300.

Mailed at Standard Postage Rate. The Danville Weekly is mailed free to homes and apartments in Danville, Blackhawk, Diablo and Alamo. Voluntary subscriptions at \$30 per year (\$50 for two years) are welcome from local residents.

Subscription rate for businesses and for residents of other communities is \$50/year.

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Perspective

EDITORIALS • LETTERS • OPINIONS ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES IN OUR COMMUNITY

EDITORIAL • THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

Fine-tuning the trail

San Ramon hosted a meeting this week to discuss building three Iron Horse Trail overcrossings, at Sycamore Valley Road in Danville and Crow Canyon and Bollinger Canyon roads in San Ramon. We back this plan, despite the expense and years of planning it will entail: An overcrossing would not only be safer for trail users crossing Sycamore Valley Road, it would cause less disruption to traffic.

Walnut Creek went through the planning process in the 1990s to build an Iron Horse Trail overcrossing at busy Ygnacio Valley Road. After years of discussions on the feasibility of the project—especially focusing on how it would impact the environment visually—the overcrossing was dedicated in May 1998. It is applauded by cycling and pedestrian groups.

The Contra Costa County Redevelopment Agency for many years has been planning an Iron Horse Trail overcrossing across Treat Boulevard at Jones Road near the Pleasant Hill BART station. This process also has entailed community workshops plus a “visual preference study” to compare the different possible types of overcrossings: railroad truss, cable-stayed, arch or concrete girder. Agency Director Jim Kennedy said they are in the final design phase of the project, and he hopes it will go out to bid in the spring.

The Treat Boulevard site is complex, with other roads crossing it and exiting freeway traffic as well as BART. Kennedy said the setting is just as complicated underground because the historic railroad right of way has lines for water, sewers, high pressure jet fuel, fiber optics, cable TV and telephone. The cost was estimated at \$3.7 million in 2004 but he said it must be way higher now.

The Danville intersection of the Iron Horse Trail at Sycamore Valley Road is a busy one, also contending with traffic exiting the freeway as well as Camino Ramon and the Park and Ride. But the trail would be far “friendlier” if users did not stop to wait for the light at the busy thoroughfare. And traffic at this congested corner also would move much more smoothly.

An overcrossing would not only be safer for trail users crossing Sycamore Valley Road, it would cause less disruption to traffic.

YOUR TURN

The Danville Weekly encourages comments on our coverage or on issues of local interest. The deadline is 5 p.m. Monday for that Friday's edition.

Submit Letters to the Editor of up to 250 words to editor@DanvilleWeekly.com. Include your name, address and daytime phone number so we can reach you. We reserve the right to edit contributions for length, objectionable content, libel and factual errors known to us. Anonymous letters will generally not be accepted.

Submitting a letter to the editor or guest opinion constitutes a granting of permission to the Danville Weekly and Embarcadero Publishing Co. to also publish it online, including in our online archives and as a post on Town Square.

For more information, contact Dolores Ciardelli, editor, at 837-8300, ext. 29.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Farm animals are most abused

Dear Editor:

I represent East Bay Animal Advocates and I am hoping to get the word out to local residents about a new campaign to place a measure on the California ballot to prevent cruelty to calves raised for veal, pigs during pregnancy and egg-laying hens. We are looking for 650,000 signatures of registered voters to get this approved for the November 2008 elections.

I personally will be all over the Bay Area collecting signatures and would love for people to know in advance what it is we are trying to do, and to be able to get into contact with me personally for more information or to volunteer to also collect signatures. My e-mail is : shanigurl@gmail.com.

The new Web site to volunteer to collect signatures was launched a few days ago: www.humanecalifornia.org

Thank you in advance for being a voice to these animals who have no rights at all and not enough room to even stand up or turn around. Farm animals are the most abused and neglected creatures on this planet; they literally have no basic rights and this is what we are fighting for, compassion for all living creatures.

Shani Campbell, San Ramon

Thanks to emergency personnel

Dear Editor:

To all who read the story last week, “Cardiac arrest: What do you do?” which was about my Mom and Dad, I want to say that I hope you never have to go through what we went through. My brother Chris and I live in Texas and came to be with my Dad and Mom for the surgery when this happened. I

cannot say enough about the San Ramon Fire Units.

Thank you to the 911 call taker Ronda Leen; 911 dispatcher Mary Kamacho; responding units to the house: Fire Engine #33 with Capt. Matt Dakin, paramedic Matt Terry and driver Mark Purnell; Rescue Unit #34 with Capt. Jeff Breasher, paramedic Tom McKennic and driver Tim Morley.

And to the staff of San Ramon Regional Medical Center: You are the best in the world!

*Mark Seaman,
New Braunfels, Texas*

One man's opinion

Dear Editor:

In elections of interest to Danville voters in 2008:

In the California Feb. 5 Presidential Primary, I endorse Republican Congressman Ron Paul (Texas-14th) for president and am opposed to the extension of term limits for state legislators.

I also oppose changing the current two-thirds requirement for California budget passage.

In the June 2008 California Primary, I endorse former Assemblyman Joe Canciamilla in the Democratic Primary for State Senate, District 7; San Ramon Mayor H. Abram Wilson in the Republican Primary, and SRVUSD Trustee Joan Buchanan in the Democrat Primary, for Member of the Assembly, District 15. For Contra Costa County Supervisor, District 3, I endorse Republican Assemblyman Guy Houston.

If admitted to associate membership in the San Ramon Valley Republican Women Federated, I will endorse the Republican nominee for Congressional District 11. If not admitted to membership, I will endorse the re-election of incumbent Democrat Congressman Jerry McNerney, Ph.D.

Ralph Hoffmann, Danville

ONLINE READER POLL

Give your opinion at
www.DanvilleWeekly.com
**Should the Alamo
portion of Danville
Boulevard
have its name
changed to Alamo
Boulevard?**

Results from last week:

Does Danville spend too much time and money trying to protect its ridgelines?

✓ **No:** 78.79%
Undecided: 9.09%
Yes: 12.12%
Total votes: 33

What's your opinion?

Write a Letter to the editor at Editor@DanvilleWeekly.com or put your opinion on Town Square at www.DanvilleWeekly.com

Code of ethics The Danville Weekly seeks to adhere to the highest level of ethical standards in journalism, including the Code of Ethics adopted Sept. 21, 1996, by the Society of Professional Journalists. To review the text of the Code, please visit our web site at www.DanvilleWeekly.com

Parent photographers

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



CHRIS SCOTT/WWW.CALSPORTSPHOTO.COM

Happy homecoming

Mustangs wide receiver Taylor Brewster carries the ball for Monte Vista last Friday for its homecoming defeat against Livermore High School, 27-0. San Ramon Valley High also won, beating Cal High, 10-9, giving the Wolves the lead in the East Bay Athletic League. See more photos at DanvilleWeekly.com.



Red Devils get results

The Mustang Red Devils U-12 Boys placed second in the Tiburon/Mill Valley Division III Fall Kickoff Tournament, with (front, l-r) Robert Horewitz, Omar Tleimat, Marcus Lebovitz, Grant Breyton, Nick Morefield, Cole Babcock; (middle) Sean Jensen, Dylan Shariatpanahy, Nicholas Jimenez, Ryan Darrah, Shea Kapulica; (back) Dominic Williams, Assistant Coach Dugan Babcock, Alexander Trautner, Shane Moody, Coach Nassar Shariatpanahy, Thomas Mannell.

PREP SCHEDULE

Friday, Oct. 19

Football: San Ramon Valley vs. Foothill, 7 p.m.
Monte Vista vs. Terra Linda, 7 p.m.

Friday-Saturday, Oct. 19-20

Water Polo: North V. South Tournament

Saturday, Oct. 20

Cross Country: Mt. SAC Invitational at Mount San Antonio College

Tuesday, Oct. 23

Water Polo: San Ramon Valley vs. Livermore, 3:45 p.m.
Monte Vista at Foothill, 3:45 p.m.

Women's Volleyball: San Ramon Valley vs. Granada, 6 p.m.

Monte Vista at Cal High, 6 p.m.

Women's Tennis: San Ramon Valley at Dougherty, 3:45 p.m.

Monte Vista vs. Amador, 3:45 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 24

Water Polo: San Ramon Valley at LL, 3:45 p.m.
San Ramon Valley at Monte Vista, 3:45 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 25

Women's Tennis: San Ramon Valley vs. Livermore, 3:45 p.m.
Monte Vista at Foothill, 3:45 p.m.

Women's Volleyball: San Ramon Valley vs. Cal High, 6 p.m.

Monte Vista at Livermore, 6 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 26

Football: San Ramon Valley at Freedom, 7:30 p.m.
Monte Vista at Amador, 7 p.m.

Correction

The story Oct. 12 on the San Ramon Valley High School boys water polo team should have said it was one of two teams from Northern California to participate in the Villa Park tournament.



Classic Colts

The East Bay Colt .45s, based in Danville, went 3-1 at the Twin Creeks Harvest Classic USSSA 13U tournament in Sunnyvale on Sep. 29-30 to take second place. The team is coached by Jason Brosnan and Kyle Gross. Ryan Kirby was selected as team MVP for the tournament. Kevin Alexander, Mark Hirsch and Zach Argiros were the winning pitchers.



Stephen Armstrong (right), Mikkail Torru (center) and Casey Sbrana race the ball down the field for the Division III Mustang Sharks U-15, coached by Ziad Tleimat and Steven Hoffman.

Big week for Sharks

This week the Sharks beat Fremont 9-1 on Saturday and pulled off a big win against the Pleasanton Ballistic, 4-3. Ballistic scored first midway through the first half but the Sharks answered back with a shot by Zuheir Tleimat, assisted by Casey Sbrana. Kevin Trisko had a fantastic goal outside the 18 yard line with an assist by Spencer Woberoski to bring the score to 2-1. Pleasanton came back to tie it up at the half.

Jordon Guisti was alone on a breakaway and brought the score up to 3-2 early in the second half. The Ballistic got their third goal by just barely getting it past the Shark's goalkeeper, Austin Anderson, who had some terrific and hard earned saves.

Mikhail 'Tree' Torru scored the winning goal in the last 10 minutes of the game on a penalty kick. Jacob Clark, Derek Morefield and Steven Armstrong made some key defensive plays to give the Sharks their third win over the Pleasanton Ballistics and keep them in first place.

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Chapter One:

The quintessential bookseller

Readers find wisdom from sundry stories, a notion that Michael Barnard—owner of Rakestraw Books—holds in his book of beliefs.

“You get a more complete understanding of the ultimate answer by reading many books,” Barnard says.

“So much learning is the search,” he adds. “The search is the journey. You know what you need to learn on the way.”

Barnard, 37, feels patrons strolling into independent bookstores, such as his shop in Danville, get a taste of diverse choices, as they sample the shelves, reading vivid words or viewing illustrious pictures. He knows the particular flavors that his customers enjoy because of his deep relationship with the San Ramon Valley.

He won the 2007 Debi Echlin Memorial Award for Outstanding Community Bookselling from the Northern Californian Independent Booksellers.

Barnard, owner of Rakestraw since 1995, also is active in charities. His fashion show in May, where wardrobe television personality Tim Gunn appeared before a crowd of 250, raised money to buy prom dresses for high school girls who cannot afford them.

But Barnard’s undying love for books is what makes him stand out. His passion electrifies his store and inspires him to share the most recent story that captivated his imagination with his clientele. Independent book dealers call this hand-selling, and they say Barnard is among the elite. He earned a degree in English history (specializing in 1450 to 1750) and a minor in English literature, as well as a masters degree in European history.

“He’s the quintessential bookseller,” says Orinda Books owner Janet Boreta. “He likes books. He reads them. He’s opinionated. He doesn’t hesitate to give you an opinion.”

“If you go into his store, you’ll find Michael at your side asking what you like to read,” says Rich Van Tassell, owner of Bay Books in San Ramon and Concord.

However, intellectual vanity can invoke a man or woman—whether young, old or in between—to belittle the less-informed. While many consumers revel in Barnard’s knowledge and enthusiasm, others say they have found him off-putting and snobbish at times.

“He’s a dear but slightly prickly person who loves what he’s doing and loves people,” Boreta says. “He gets opinionated and you’re mowed down by the sure righteousness of what he says. Sometimes, there’s a little room for disagreement.”

“Some customers reported the interaction with Michael a bit intimidating,” says Van Tassell. “Then others found Michael’s expertise (valuable).”

Barnard says he has strived to appease all his customers.

“I’m not as snobbish as I used to be,” he says. “I try very hard to be open to people’s tastes.”

“I can be impatient with people who I think can do better,” he adds. “As a culture we seem to be satisfied with what isn’t admirable. We spend so much time watching Britney Spears.”

Chapter Two:

His lifestyle is his store

French vanilla hues glaze Rakestraw’s interior, and a dark timber sign with an engraving of rakes and open books hangs inside the shop on Railroad Avenue. Wood tables with colorful cloths hold book covers of flying gray fairies, samurai with swords, and a black spotted giraffe. Posters on the walls show green orchards under the bright sun, a woman languishing in a white dress, and a man with a sinister black hat.

“He runs a very attractive store,” says Boreta. “He



Rakestraw Books owner Michael Barnard shares memories of a v

makes it beautiful. If anyone can run an independent bookstore these days, he’s the man.”

“It’s not just a sideline for him, it’s a lifestyle for him,” she adds. “He puts in extra effort. He puts imagination and creativity.”

Although, Barnard says his peach Saltillo tile floor could have been better. He says if it were saturated linseed oil and dried and waxed, his floor would have had a lasting appearance. Instead, the company decided doing so was out of fashion. As a result, one can see small cracks, tiny lumps and tattered strokes.

“It’s distressed,” he says. “As you can see, it doesn’t work well.”

His customers arrive during the day and ask him a assortment of questions. They inquire about fiction, children’s books, traveling guides, history, fantasy and even cooking. Barnard answers them swiftly, in passionate detail. Danville readers tend to like thoughtful, well-written prose—not avant-garde. They delight in reading strong stories and feeling like part of the narrative, Barnard says.

One customer keeps talking about how much she appreciated a book recommended by Rakestraw. When he mentions an upcoming trip to France, Barnard suggests another book. He tells him to read “A Corner of the Marais: A Memoir of a Paris Neighborhood” by Alex Karmel as he saunters through Parisian streets.

Another patron inquires about Jeannette Walls’ popular memoir.

“How is ‘The Glass Castle’?” she asks.

“It’s the ultimate dysfunctional memoir,” Barnard says. “She didn’t have a happy childhood.”

Some consumers are immersed in the chapters of Barnard’s life. A woman in her twilight years tells him she gave a birthday card to his mother Julie, who helps him run his store.



Michael Barnard points to a fascinating children’s book he enjoyed with Gwen Aberer, the mother of an 11-year-old daughter.

Lord of the Books

story and photos by
Jordan M. Doronila



wonderful read with a customer.

nt Barnard remembers his mother reading to him at age 5 when he lived in Boston and recalls falling in love at first word.

"It's safe. It's cozy," he says.

As he matured, his love blossomed.

"I loved reading on my own even more," Barnard says. He cried after reading several books, including E.B. White's "Charlotte's Web."

He grew up with two younger brothers outside of Boston, and they roamed in their parents' three-acre back yard filled with creeks, gullies, blackberries and pine trees.

"We wandered at will," Barnard says. "It was just fun. It was a great place to explore. There was so much more freedom for us than children today."

He moved to Pleasant Hill when his father got a job in California in 1979. After attending UC Davis and Northwestern, and traveling in Florence, he returned to the Bay Area. He bought Rakestraw Books in 1995 from Mary and Brian Harvey, who named the store after his father's middle name.

Barnard chose a career in bookselling because he enjoyed hanging around bookstores, and it united all his interests—fiction, history and human interaction.

"Much of my variety of tasks involves my interests and enthusiasm coming into play," he says. "No one goes into this business to make money."

He spends between 60 and 70 hours per week running his business. He organizes author appearances, writes a newsletter, holds children's events and involves himself with schools in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District while knowing all his customers.

"I genuinely love being at work," he says.

He notes one of his greatest achievements was running the 18-mile Trans Sierra Crossing when he was 26. He admires former U.S. President Thomas Jefferson and writer Oliver Wendell Holmes.

"Despite being in the upper class, they had such a powerful faith in everyday Americans," he says.

Barnard reads fiction, children's literature, food writing and nonfiction. His favorite dead novelists are Robertson Davies, E.M. Forester and M.F.K. Fisher. His preferred living writers are Rick Bass and William Boyd. Though he likes to read, he doesn't write.

He does not read comic books, drama or poetry.

"I love poetry," he says. "I just don't read it. It's never a priority."

He says one of his regrets is waiting to get into shape at 35. He weighed 210 pounds, but now weighs 175.

"I did it for extra energy and for the fun of it," he says.

He lives in a flat in Berkeley. He notes that eating dinner with friends is one of his precious past times. Singing on the right key is a talent he would like to have, but he has never tried it.

"I have no idea," he says.

He is irritated by shorthand writing, such as text messaging and e-mail.

"They typically don't sound very good," Barnard says.

And of course he hopes to die with a book in his hands.

"I want to die falling asleep on my bed reading the last page of a new book," he says.

Chapter Three:

Survival of the independent bookstore

The dominance of Amazon.com and colossal book chains such as Barnes and Noble, as well as Borders Books and Music, has been swallowing the market share of the book industry for years, making it difficult for independent bookstores to survive—let alone thrive.

Cody's Books, one of the high profile independent bookshops in the Bay Area, closed its Berkeley store on Telegraph Avenue several months ago. Booksellers believe a multitude of voices will be lost if independent bookstores fade into the dust, not to mention the loss of money to local economies, community networking and personal connection.

"They are dwindling," says Jack Rems, owner of Dark Carnival Bookstore in Berkeley. "The Internet is like a tide."

"If customers are looking for the cheapest purchase, the Internet is a large threat," says Jon Stich, manager of Diesel Bookstore in Rockridge, who notes that customers realize money spent in his store stays in the community. "That's how strong economies are built."

Bookstore retail sales had been slumping for 11 months in the past year, according to reports by the American Booksellers Association. But the slide ended in July due in large part to the success of the seventh and final title in the Harry Potter series.

Barnard says the industry as a whole is going through challenges, including staffing, spaces, taxation and fiscal responsibility. He believes Rakestraw will continue selling quality books and cultivating personal relationships.



Second-grader Nicholas Marini shares a picture book with a big brown teddy bear at Rakestraw Books.

"In the future, Rakestraw will still be a vital presence in Danville," he says.

"I like shopping locally," says Rakestraw customer Gwen Aberer.

Customers are determined to shop at local bookshops because they see their value, Boretta says.

"The tax dollars goes back into the community," she says. "The bookstores are involved in community life. That's the way to go, that's what Michael's is, that's what ours is."

Barnard notes, even with evolution of technology, he doesn't think books will ever be phased out.

"I don't think so, at least for the moment. We talk a lot about this," he says. "Much remains to be seen."

He recalls how his colleagues were saying in the 1990s that CD ROMS were going to replace books. That has not happened.

Meanwhile, as the world evolves, Barnard keeps reading—and recommending.

"Read 'Bridge of Sighs,'" he says. "It's just that good." ■

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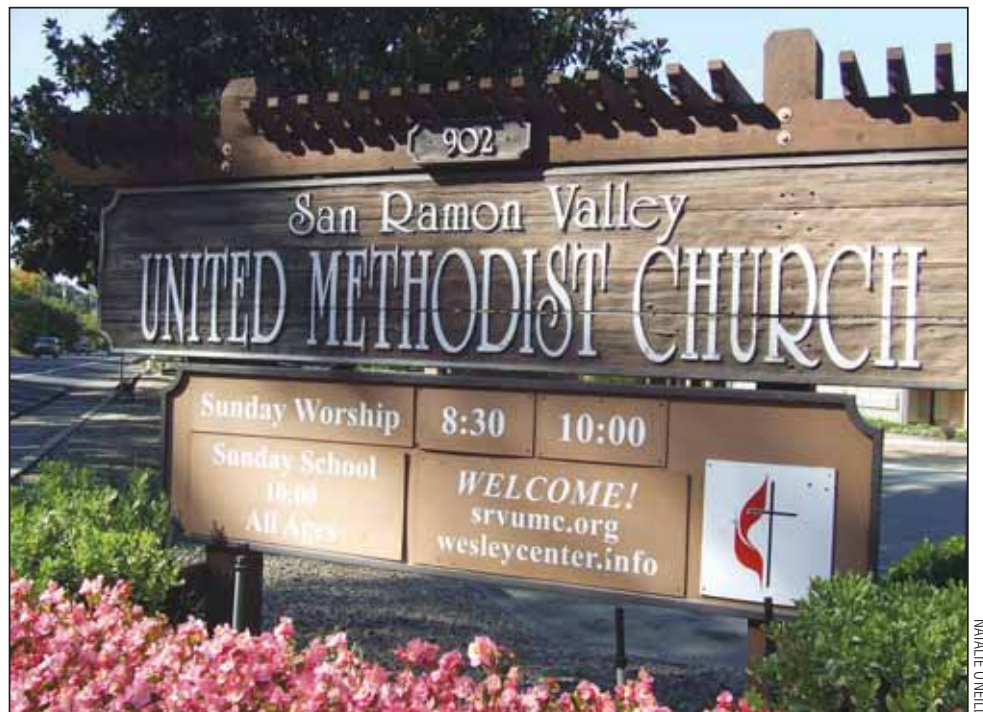
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NATALIE O'NEILL

ACTING THE FAITH

METHODIST CHURCH CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF PRAYING, LOVING—AND THINKING



NATALIE O'NEILL

Pastor Heather Hammer, who says San Ramon Valley United Methodist church is theologically progressive, stands in the sanctuary.

The church, located on Danville Boulevard in Alamo, started 50 years ago with 33 members and now has 1,200.

by Natalie O'Neill

A thinking church. That's what Pastor Heather Hammer calls her place of worship.

Some say faith and reason are like oil and water. But San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church—an Alamo congregation that's turning 50 years old this year—is mixing the two.

The church isn't a place where you're told what to believe. It's a place where you're encouraged to use your mind to better understand God, said Hammer.

"Theologically we are progressive. We believe people worship God in different ways," she said.

What started as a gathering of 33 at the San Ramon Valley Mortuary has grown into a meeting place where 1,200 members ask questions and have discussions about religion and society.

"There are some churches where people go and if they disagree they leave," Hammer said. "But in order to live well together, we must

talk—the dialogue is critical."

Exploring different cultures and creeds is one way to understand and love one's neighbor and the world at large, she noted. This has prompted pastors to give sermons on subjects like bridging the gap between Muslims and Christians—and in some cases—even Christians and Christians.

Subject matter like this sometimes fuels disagreement among church members, but leaders believe it should be a place where conversation and communication are welcome. A wide range of political and social views among church-goers help them better understand each other and the world around them, she said.

"It causes us to look beyond ourselves," she explained.

Originally, the congregation was an extension of a Methodist church in Walnut Creek. The San Ramon Valley Church was founded in July 1957 because the bishop saw the need for a Methodist community in the Danville-Alamo area. The first ceremony was held in a funeral

home on Front Street and they also held a Sunday school for 66 children at Lynn School.

One year later the church moved to its present site on Danville Boulevard and the sanctuary was built in 1961.

"We were a very loving church and I think our spirit was contagious," said Daphne Kimbell, an original member, who remembers having to set up before and clean up after the tiny gatherings.

Kimbell said she can recall the ad hoc worship sessions at their beginning stages, when one charter member accidentally ran Sunday's cash donations through the washing machine. She laughed recalling that they hung all the dollar bills on a clothesline to dry.

About 20 years after the church was founded, members began an Experiment in Practical Christianity, a 12-week commitment in which church-goers studied how to best apply the teachings of Jesus to their day-to-day lives.

Today, the church practices a

similar "thinkers" philosophy.

For example, book groups through the church focus on combining faith with present day social issues. The group just read "The Price of Privilege: How Parental Pressure and the Material Advantage are Creating a Generation of Disconnected Unhappy Kids."

After reading the book, the group began analyzing how pressure from parents affects youths, why there is a lack of quality family time and how to use religion to prioritize what really matters.

"The pressure to succeed is so heavily pushed on kids...Families have very little relaxed time together," said Hammer, 57, who quit her job teaching English and became a pastor after her son died.

Hammer finds that changes in one's life—like the one she endured—are often the catalyst for acquainting or reacquainting oneself with God. New members often join during two major events in life—births and deaths.

With the birth of their firstborn,

families tend to reprioritize religion, Hammer said.

"Young couples want their children to grow up seeing the value of being connected to the church," she said.

Similarly, people turn to the church in times of need, like death, sickness and hardship. A caring positive community helps these members know they are not alone in their trials.

A youth group program, Sunday school, volunteer-abroad opportunities, performances and meetings—including Alcoholics Anonymous—at its John Wesley Center are other resources the church has to offer.

Church members have also joined together to help people build homes in Mexico and for hurricane relief in Mississippi. Here in the East Bay, they work with Loaves and Fishes and the Salinas Hispanic Fellowship in Richmond.

"The idea is that we act on our faith—that your life is changed because you believe a certain thing," Hammer said. ■



Pass the bread—please!

People can generally be divided into two groups—the “bread people” and the “non-bread people.” You probably know which category your family members and close friends fall into but the next time you are out dining, watch and see what other diners do regarding bread. Sometimes they are swearing off bread for their waistslines but more often than not, it’s a matter of personal preference and long-established habit.

Of course, there are always non-conformists like myself who defy grouping. When I’m eating out, I tend to identify with the “bread people.” On the other hand, at

home alone, I rarely think about bread. Well, there’s the occasional sandwich or slice of toast but bread is not essential to my eating enjoyment. However, at a fine restaurant or banquet dinner, you’ll find me asking my dinner mate: “Will you pass the bread, please?” Then, I magically become a bread connoisseur—whether it’s sourdough rolls, slices of a French baguette, chipatis or tortillas—even adding butter, dipping oil or salsa to complete the culinary pleasure. Somehow, for me, bread is just tastier away from home. I bet there are a few others of you out there reading this column.

All that said, this column is

dedicated to the “bread people.” They enjoy and savor bread at most meals. “Bread people” (who also cook) often take extra effort to enhance a meal with bread—fresh-baked in their own kitchen or newly bought from the grocer. The recipes here and online represent a cross section of my favorite bread recipes, all easy to make and highly rated by those who are in a position to judge—“bread people” I have known and loved.

Jacqui lives in Danville with her pug, Nina Simone, and volumes of cookbooks and recipes. Her column runs every other week. E-mail her at jlovemarshall@yahoo.com.

RECIPES

Sally Lunn
(makes enough to serve 12-16)

This simple, brioche-like bread comes from England, where Sally Lunn made and sold it in the 18th century. Baked in a tube pan with a golden crust, it is delicious as dinner bread, and is also great for breakfast or tea served with butter and preserves. The bread should be eaten quickly, but days-old Sally Lunn is great for making toast, French toast or bread pudding.

- 1 package (1/4 oz) active dry yeast
- 2 cups milk, boiled and cooled to lukewarm
- 6 Tbsp. (3/4 stick) unsalted butter, soft
- 4 large eggs
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 6 cups unbleached flour
- 1-1/2 tsp salt
- 1-1/2 Tbsp unsalted butter (for buttering the pan)
- 1. Dissolve the yeast in 1/2 cup of the lukewarm milk in a large mixing bowl. Put the butter in the remaining milk and stir to melt. Beat the sugar and eggs together, then add to the butter/

- milk mixture. Add all to the dissolved yeast and mix well.
- 2. Stir in the flour, 1 cup at a time, adding the salt midway. Stir vigorously with a wooden spoon until all the flour is mixed in thoroughly, then continue stirring for 4 minutes longer to develop the dough’s texture.
- 3. Scrape the sides of the bowl and cover the bowl with plastic wrap. Let rise until doubled, 1- to 1-1/2 hours. Stir down the dough, which should be loose and silky.
- 4. Butter a standard tube pan with the 1-1/2 Tbsp butter. Spoon the dough evenly into the pan and let rise until almost doubled, about 1 hour.
- 5. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake dough on the bottom rack for about 40-50 minutes, until toothpick or skewer test comes out clean. Be careful not to overbake; if necessary, cover top loosely with foil, shiny side up, to reach doneness. Remove from pan immediately onto a cooling rack and cool completely.

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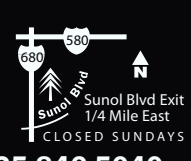
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Exploring the lust for fame

Vicious side of show business shown through musical comedy

by Natalie O'Neill

In theater, the death of a child is typically the recipe for an on-stage tragedy. But put away your tissue—Danville Role Players Ensemble Theatre's production of "Ruthless!" isn't that kind of a play.

Unless, of course, your eyes are watering from laughter.

When 8-year-old actress Tina Denmark, played by Kathryn A. Foley, says, "I'll do anything to play this part," she means *anything*. And that includes murdering her classmate with—of all the delightfully ludicrous weapons—a jump rope.

The musical parody uses dark humor to highlight the vicious, cut-throat nature of show business, while simultaneously satirizing dramatic novels like "The

► Continued on page 19



COURTESY ROLE PLAYERS

Judy (Jessica Magers-Rankin) and Sylvia (John Blytt) try to keep a handle on Tina (Kathryn A. Foley), a third-grade entertainer who will do anything for the lead in her school play.

The 411



BY KATHARINE O'HARA

Can crushed creativity be revived?

I am sure by now most seniors have at least glanced at the essay prompts for their college applications. While the college admissions essay elicits fear, anxiety and a frantic sense of urgency in all college-applying seniors, it is the blunt reality of applying to UC and private schools that has snuck up on the lot of us.

How-to books have been published, seminars have been held, and college advisors have been hired, all with the common goal of instructing students on how to write the best possible college admissions essay. The main object: Be creative.

However, it seems unfair to expect students to suddenly revert to creative thought, when it has in a sense, been banned for so long. What is now supposed to get us into college—creativity—has been carefully removed from most aspects of school curricula year upon year, rubric after rubric, and has left students in the dark, feeling around for a hint of something clever or unique.

Many teachers require students to conform to a strict rubric that leaves little room to be creative, and teachers often base their lesson plans only in strict accordance with tests. This has the potential to happen especially in AP classes, where teachers base everything they teach off the probability of its showing up on the final AP exam. This method, however, seems to strip students of the passion and true enjoyment gleaned from learning, and provides little room for creative digressions, all in the name of being "well-prepared" for a test. Teachers have the dangerous capacity to make what once was an interesting subject to a student, a tedious bore.

As Albert Einstein once said of his late 19th century schooling, "one had to cram all this stuff into one's mind, whether one liked it or not. This coercion had such a deterring effect that, after I had passed the final examination, I found the consideration of any scientific problem distasteful to me for an entire year."

For a final project last year in my U.S. History class, the teacher assigned students a limitless, purposefully vague assignment regarding American historical trends, where students were free to express a thesis of their choice in any medium they desired—a poem, painting, essay, musical piece or otherwise. My teacher was met with dumbfounded, and soon, angry students who did not know what to do with this absence of guidelines and limitations. It seems students are so used to a litany of rules they must abide by when given an assignment—anything from font size or page length to structural or content requirements—it is impossible to simply revert back to a creative, boundless way of thinking.

Sir Ken Robinson, a world-renowned expert on innovation and creativity in education, leader of the "The Arts in Schools Project" and author of "Out of Our Minds: Learning to Be Creative," has toured the world speaking about the Western educational method of training children to be workers rather than critical thinkers. At his talk at the TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) Conference in Monterey in February 2006, Robinson emphasized the need to mold creative, questioning kids—the hope for the future—in order to further human inquiry, and thus, progress. He points out that we are all in a sense "educated out of creativity."

"Creativity now is as important in education as literacy, and we should treat it with the same status," says Robinson. "My contention is all kids have potential talents, and we squander them, ruthlessly."

Picasso once said, "All children are born artists. The problem is to remain an artist as we grow up."

Children educated in Western society have been adamantly trained to stay away from the passions that will not bring them the most money. Youth are often urged against art and music as careers because these passions have a low probability of turning into a stable profession. While some level of financial stability is certainly important, whatever happened to the saying "do what you love and the money will follow"?

Robinson also emphasizes that in the Western world, we are educated to think it is not OK to be wrong. However this fear and stigma around making mistakes has a significant possible danger: If always stunted by the fear of being wrong, there is no potential for one to come up with anything original—the human being's greatest legacy.

With college application deadlines quickly approaching in the next couple months, I can't help but wonder if (and only hope) the institutions of higher education from which we all so desperately seek acceptance can possibly salvage the vestige of creative thought deeply rooted in all of us.

Correction: The Oct. 5 column should have said San Ramon Valley High School (exclusively) is implementing an experimental plan that requires first time offenders to promptly attend three counseling sessions with an approved therapist that will be paid in full by the school in hope that the student and family will move forward themselves with further treatment.

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. E-mail her at ohara5@comcast.net.

Presenting the Past

BY BEVERLY LANE



MUSEUM OF THE SAN RAMON VALLEY

Hard at Work on Woodside Farm

This threshing machine used 15 horses and operated on the Woodside Farm in Sycamore Valley during the 1890s. When driven in a circle, the slow rotary motion was converted through a series of gears to the high rotary motion needed by the threshing machine. From the 1860s to the 1890s, the valley's hard dry wheat went from Martinez ports to the Liverpool Corn Exchange where it was highly valued.

Ruthless

► Continued from page 18

Bad Seed" and "All about Eve."

Tina, a manipulative third-grade entertainer, whose lust for fame knows no bounds, is the hook upon which author Joel Paley hangs this absurdist play.

After Louise, a talent-less friend of Tina, beats her out of the star role as "Pippi" in the school play, Tina's evil streak starts to flare up. And this prompts the audience to both adore and abhor the singing, dancing psychopath.

"You took a human life. Do you know what that means?" her mother pleads.

"Yeah, it means I'm playing Pippi!" says Tina, who possesses a Children-of-the-Corn wickedness and a Shirley Temple charm.

Over-the-top foreshadowing gets a laugh from the audience, too, when the eyes of Tina's framed living-room portrait begin to light up with a red, devilish glow—as if to say, "I'm dangerous."

A flamboyant agent, played by an in-drag John Blytt, along with Tina's pushover mother, played by Jessica Magers-Rankin, bring character eccentricities to the forefront, adding rich complexities to the plot. And a cameo from Danville Mayor Mike Shimansky is the cherry on top.

The cast of surreal characters and colorful comic book costume

designs help the audience realize the characters have been placed in intentionally exaggerated situations—in order to make a statement about the industry.

When it comes to spoofing show biz, no actor, director, or reviewer is safe from falling victim to the candid satire of "Ruthless."

But much like painting a portrait of a painter or writing a book about a writer, the show may be best suited for a specific audience member: the theater-goer who already knows and loves theater.

Take the two women sitting on either side of this reviewer, for instance. These ladies were having polar opposite reactions to the show, notably when the theater-specific jokes arose. The woman to my right was literally gasping for air from so much laughter, while the woman to my left refused to crack even half a smile.

Overall, though, the performance carried enough of a classic performance appeal to be, at the very least, appreciated by a general audience. You've got tap-dancing, puns, songs, quick wit. And, of course, the lure of murder.

Also appearing in the production are Bevin Bell-Hall as Louise, Shari Oret as Lita, and Shannon Wicker-Mitchell as Ms. Thorne. ■

Spoofing show biz

Who: Danville Role Players Ensemble Theatre

What: Ruthless!

When: 8 p.m. Oct. 18-20, 25-27, Nov. 1-3; 2 p.m. Oct. 21, 28

Where: Danville Village Theatre, 233 Front St., Danville

OF NOTE

Club honor essay winners

The Exchange Club of San Ramon Valley honored the winning student essayists at last week's luncheon on the subject of "The Impact of 9-11 on America."

Gautam Ramesh, a sixth-grader at Diablo Vista Middle School, received \$100 for first place; Spencer Carter, a seventh-grader at Pine Valley, received \$50 for second place.

Utkarsh Vasa, a junior at San Ramon Valley High placed first among high school entries and was awarded \$100 First.

The winners were also awarded certificates and medals on ribbons.

Walking to fight against cancer

Danville residents Julia and Julius Durmis walked in the 19th annual Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk on Sunday, Sept. 16, joining more than 7,000 participants who are expected to raise \$6.3 million for cancer research and care for children and adults at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. The walkers use the historic 26.2-mile route from Hopkinton to Boston.

"The Walk gives people the opportunity to join a community of friends and families to support cancer research," says Ed Wiederhold, director of the Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk.

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Pleasanton, 1699 Orchard Way, 7a.m.-3p.m. Oct.20

Pleasanton, 1817 Sinclair Dr, October 20th 8 to Noon

Pleasanton, 3895 Mammoth Cave Ct., October 20, 9-4

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Send a cover letter and resume to Gina Channell-Allen, president / publisher, gallen@pleasantonweekly.com; The Weekly, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Ste. 100, Pleasanton, CA 94566; or fax to 925-600-9559.

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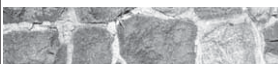
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PET OF THE WEEK



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Little Tracy has been with Tri-Valley Animal Rescue
for more than a year now and is still looking for a home
to call her own. Everyone can meet Tracy and other
dogs at a special adoption event being held tomorrow
in honor of National Adopt a Shelter Dog Month.

More than 10 rescue groups will participate, includ-
ing Pug Rescue, Tri-Valley Animal Rescue, Golden
Gate Lab Rescue, Border Collie Rescue, Contra Costa
Animal Services, SF Samoyed Rescue, Amazing Grey
Greyhound Rescue, Northern CA Sled Dog Rescue and
the Tri-Valley SPCA. Each group will have dogs available
for adoption, information about their foster dogs and/or
breed specific information, and most dogs can be taken
home that day.

The event takes place from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Saturday,
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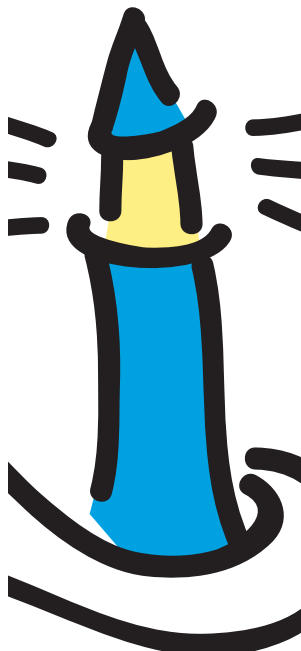
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Art

ADAS Pioneer Art Open House ADAS Pioneer Art Center will host an open house from noon-7 p.m., Oct. 20-30, at ADAS Pioneer Art Center, 524 Hartz Ave., Danville. Noted oil painter, Beth Batchelor, will be featured. Sales will support the San Ramon Valley Schools and local arts. A reception is from 4-7 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 20. Call 820-2050.

Author Visit

Rakestraw Books Hosts Numerous Authors Rakestraw Books will host numerous authors including: Nicky Hornby, author of "Slam" on Monday, Oct. 22; Richard Russo, author of "Bridge of Sighs" at 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 26, tickets are \$5.25 at Rakestraw Books, 409 Railroad Ave., Danville. Most events require reservations, call 837-7337.

Clubs

2008 Primary and General Elections San Ramon Valley Republican Women will host Dan Schnur, a leading California political and media strategist from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 23, at Crow Canyon Country Club, 711 Silver Lake Dr., Danville. Cost is \$23. The public is invited to attend. Visit www.srvrwf.org.

Alamo Women's Club Scholarship Luncheon This club will host a scholarship bridge luncheon starting at 11:30 a.m., Thursday, Oct. 25, at the clubhouse, 242 Linda Mesa, Alamo. Cost is \$60 per table. Scholarships will be awarded. For a reservation, call 820-2621. Danville Women's Club, 242 Linda Mesa, Danville.

Taking Care of the Caregiver Alamo Women's Club will host Sister Dorothy Stack CSJ, who will speak on the importance of caregivers to the community as well as families from noon-2 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 24, at Alamo Women's Club, 1401 Danville Blvd., Alamo. Cost is \$15. Call 820-2621.

Tri-Valley Writers Association Tri-Valley Writers Association will host plot and story consultant, Martha Alderson, and author of "Pure & Simple" from 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 20, at Oasis Grill, 780 Main St., Pleasanton. Cost is \$20 for members, \$25 for non-members. Call 296-0447 or visit www.trivalleywriters.com.

Concerts

Musaic Musaic, is a non-profit vocal ensemble performing male a capella music from 5-6:30 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 21, at St. Timothy's Church, 1550 Diablo Rd., Danville. General admission is \$18, \$12 for students and seniors. Call 837-4993 or visit www.sainttimothysdanville.org.

Events

Adopt a Shelter Dog Event Find your new best friend at the Adopt a Shelter Dog event from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 20, at Bishop Ranch Veterinary Center, 2000 Bishop Dr., San Ramon. Rescue groups include: Pug Rescue, Tri-Valley Animal Rescue, Lab Rescue and more. Call 866-8387 or visit www.webvets.com.

Danville Fall Crafts Festival Danville Area Chamber of Commerce presents the 16th annual Danville Fall Crafts Festival from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 20-21, in downtown Danville. The day will include high quality art and crafts exhibits, Halloween parade, kids activity area, Scarecrow Alley, street and

stage entertainment, great food, fine wines and microbrews. Call 837-4400.

Robin Purcell Art Watercolors by Robin Purcell will be on exhibit at the Wente Vineyards Tasting Room during October. Call 648-0971 or visit obin-purcellpaints.blogspot.com.

That Old Blackhawk Magic XI Blackhawk Museum will host a Halloween Party "That Old Blackhawk Magic XI" from 8 p.m.-1 a.m., Friday, Oct. 26, at Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. The night will include dancing, drinks, appetizers, prizes and more. Tickets are \$25 and will be available after Oct. 1. Call 736-2277 or visit www.blackhawkmuseum.org.

Tour of the Alamo Cemetery Museum of the San Ramon Valley will host a tour of the Alamo Cemetery at 10 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 27, meeting at the front gate of the Cemetery located at the end of El Portal near La Gonda Way in Danville. This tour is free, but donations are welcome. Call 837-3750.

Exhibits

'Leaded' Bedford Gallery will host a reception for the traveling exhibition "Leaded" The Materiality and Metamorphosis of Graphite" from 3-5 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 21, at Bedford Gallery, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Admission is \$3. "Leaded" curator, Elizabeth Schlatter, will discuss different approaches in making art at 10 a.m., Wednesday, Nov. 14, at the Bedford Gallery. The exhibit will remain on view until Dec. 22. Call 295-1418 or visit www.bedfordgallery.org.

The First Families of Our Valley Museum of the San Ramon Valley presents "An Indian Life Exhibit: The First Families of Our Valley" until Nov. 13, at the Museum of the San Ramon Valley, 205 Railroad Ave., Danville. Museum hours are 1-4 p.m., Tuesday-Friday and 1-4 p.m., Saturday. Call 837-3750 or visit www.museumsvr.org.

Fundraisers

Friends of the Danville Library Large Book Sale Friends of the Danville Library will host a large book sale from 9-10 a.m. (members only), 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday, Oct. 19, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 20 and noon-4 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 21 (bag sale day), at the Danville Library, 400 Front St. Proceeds will benefit Danville Library. Call 837-4889.

One Warm Coat Golden Hills Brokers are collecting clean, reusable coats and jackets to give to those in need in Oakland until Nov. 15. Coats may be dropped off at Golden Hills Brokers, 3223 Crow Canyon Rd., Suite 110, San Ramon. The offices are open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Saturday. Call 216-4590.

WFO Fall Fashion Event Enjoy an evening of fashion and inspiration at 'Power of Change' from 6-8 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 25, at The Rotunda Building, 300 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Oakland. The evening will feature a cocktail hour, hors d'oeuvres, wine and a chocolate fountain and a runway show starring successful Wardrobe for Opportunity clients. Cost is \$55 in advance, \$65 at the door. Proceeds benefit Wardrobe for Opportunity. Call (510) 463-4100 or visit www.wardrobe.org.

Holiday

Operation Christmas Child Bay Area residents will be able to drop off shoe boxes filled with toys, school supplies and personal items for Operation Christmas Child from Nov. 12-19, at Creekside Community Church, 1350 Danville Blvd., Alamo.

Call (800) 383-1459 or visit www.samaritanspurse.org.

Kids and Teens

Children's Authors at Rakestraw Books Rakestraw Books will host children's authors including: Elisa Kleven, author of "The Apple Doll" on Tuesday, Oct. 23; Michael Hoeye, author of "Time to Smell the Roses" at 10 a.m., Monday, Oct. 29 at Rakestraw Books, 409 Railroad Ave., Danville. Most events require reservations, call 837-7337.

Children's Storytimes Danville Library hosts storytimes for children of all ages held until Nov. 14. Mother Goose Time for children ages from birth to 24 months is at 10:15 a.m., Mondays and Tuesdays; Toddler Storytime is for children ages 25 months to 3 years old at 11:15 a.m., Mondays and Tuesdays and Preschool Storytime is for children 3-5 years old at 10:15 a.m., Wednesdays, at the Danville Library, Mt. Diablo Room, 400 Front St. Call 837-4889.

Fall Fest Town of Danville will host Fall Fest from 4-7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 26, at the Danville Community Center, 420 Front St. The night will include arts and crafts, face painting, games, trick-or-treating and more. Cost is \$5 for residents, \$6 for non-residents. Pre-registrations is required, call 314-3477.

Family Funshop: Transportation Blackhawk Museum will host a family funshop on "Transportation" from 1-4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 27, at Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. Children will learn about all forms of transportation through children's literature and movies. This event is free for children with paid museum admission.

Lectures/Workshops

9/11: Blueprint for Truth Richard Gage will present "9/11: Blueprint for Truth: The Architecture of Destruction" from 7-9 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 24, at



WEEKEND PREVIEW



Enjoy fall fun, Halloween activities

Barbara Davies prepares for the Danville Area Chamber of Commerce's 16th annual Danville Fall Crafts Festival from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 20-21, in downtown Danville. The day will include high quality art and crafts exhibits, a Halloween parade, kids activity area, Scarecrow Alley, street and stage entertainment, great food, fine wines and microbrews. Admission is free. Call 837-4400.

Mt. Diablo Peace & Justice Center, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek. This event is free, but donation are accepted. Call 933-7850 or visit www.mtdpc.org.

Affordable Residential Solar Power Interested in installing solar on your home? Come and learn about affordable residential solar power from 10-11 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 20, at Alamo Women's Clubhouse, 242 W. Linda Mesa Ave., Danville. This event is free. Call (415) 982-9000 or visit www.sunrunhome.com.

Am I Just Forgetful or is it Chemobrain During and after treatment for cancer, many people report difficulty with their thinking abilities. Symptoms, tips and pointers for managing chemo-

brain will be discussed from 10 a.m.-noon, Saturday, Oct. 20, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. Call 933-0107.

Rolls Royce Lecture Hear wonderful stories about John Harris' Rolls-Royce, the 'Guacamole Ghost' from 10:15 a.m.-noon, Saturday, Oct. 20, at the Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. Cost is \$8 for adults, \$5 students and seniors. Call 736-2277.

On Stage

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Birdie" at 7:30 p.m., Thursday-Saturday, Nov. 1-3, at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 655 Old Orchard Dr., Danville. Admission is free, but donations are suggested and will be donated to the Wheelchair Foundation. Call 831-3027 or e-mail byebyebirdiedanville@yahoo.com.

'Ruthless!' the Musical Role Players Ensemble Theatre presents "Ruthless!" the Musical at 8 p.m., Thursdays-Saturdays, and at 2 p.m., Sundays, until Nov. 3, at Village Theatre, 233 Front St., Danville. Tickets are \$20-25; \$15 for students and groups of 10 or more. Call 820-1278.

Remembering Eleanor Roosevelt Danville Library Foundation and J&L Center Stage present scenes and readings from the original play, "Remembering Eleanor," at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 24, and Thursday, Oct. 25 at the Danville Library, Mt. Diablo Room, 400 Front St. Call 837-4889.

The Mousetrap Center REPeritory Company presents "The Mousetrap" with different showtimes until Nov. 17, at Center REPeritory Company, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Tickets are \$15-40. Call 943-7469 or visit www.dlrca.org.

Seniors

Laugh Club Research has shown increased levels of endorphins, neurotransmitters, immune system cells, and decreased levels of stress hormones. This club meets at 10:30 a.m.,

every Tuesday, at San Ramon Senior Center, 9300 Alcosta Blvd. Cost is \$1 facility use fee and is open to the public. Call Fred Turner at 216-4590.

Prime Time Prime Time for seasoned citizens meets from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., every Tuesday, at Community Presbyterian Church, 222 W. El Pintado, Danville. Activities include line dancing, English handbells, ceramics, wood carving and more. A home-cooked meal is served at noon for \$4. Rides are provided by County Connection Link for \$3.50 round trip; call Gloria at 837-5229. For information, call 820-6387.

St. Isidore's 'Young at Heart' Join this group for a meeting from 11:15 a.m.-2 p.m., the third Tuesday of every month at St. Isidore's Ministries Center, 440 La Gonda Way, Danville. Optional Mass starts at 11:15 a.m.; lunch starts at 11:45 a.m.; bring brown bag lunch from until August, beverage, fruit and dessert are provided. Nonprofit bingo follows. This event is free, but reservations are appreciated by calling 820-4447.

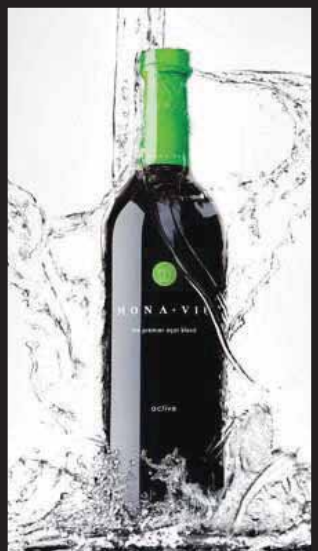
Support Groups

ClutterLess Self Help Group Is clutter stressing you out? Cluttering is a psychological issue, not just an organizing issue. Join the group at their meeting from 7-8:30 p.m., Mondays, at Pleasanton Presbyterian Church, 4300 Mirador Dr. Optional \$2-5 donation. Call 297-9246 or visit www.clutterless.org.

Danville TOPS The Danville chapter of Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) meets at 9 a.m., every Tuesday at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, 1550 Diablo Road. Call Bob Blendow at 935-9344 or Rosemarie at 838-7870.

Find Help For Addiction Problems with drug or alcohol addiction in a loved one? Don't know whom to turn to for help? Contact Drug Rehab Resource for a free confidential consultation to find the help you need. Call (866) 649-1594 or visit www.drugrehabresource.net.

Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous Are you having trouble controlling the way you eat? There is a solution to weight and diet obsession. This effective 12-step program has proven results. There are no dues, fees or weigh-ins. This group meets from 7-8:30 p.m., every Wednesday, at Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek. For a complete listing of East Bay meetings, call 838-1837 or visit www.foodaddicts.org.



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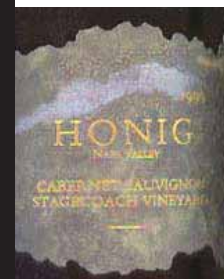
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SALES AT A GLANCE

This week's data represents homes sold during September 2007

Alamo	Danville	Walnut Creek
Total sales reported: 4	Total sales reported: 20	Total sales reported: 16
Lowest sale reported: \$950,000	Lowest sale reported: \$455,000	Lowest sale reported: \$267,500
Highest sale reported: \$3,900,000	Highest sale reported: \$4,500,000	Highest sale reported: \$1,240,000
Average sales reported: \$2,266,250	Average sales reported: \$1,255,050	Average sales reported: \$574,250

HOME SALES

Source: California REsource

This week's data represents homes sold during September 2007

Alamo

30 Bevmar Lane Buyer: S. Shelby for \$3,900,000
76 Chancellor Court Buyer: J. & J. Stratton for \$1,265,000
59 Hagen Oaks Court B. Mize to W. & S. Hsu for \$950,000
1463 Vine Lane Buyer: C. Bjorkman for \$2,950,000

Danville

37 Alamo Springs Place Buyer: T. & B. Baldacci for \$4,500,000
4 Bueno Court Buyer: A. & R. Moreno for \$1,254,000
483 El Capitan Drive Buyer: T. Folk for \$790,000
433 Everett Drive Buyer: J. Vanbackle for \$950,000
735 Genoa Court Lennar Homes to M. Wong for \$1,257,500
857 Griffon Court Buyer: Chan Trust for \$1,091,500
1150 Lawrence Road S. Dwyer to P. Yanchik for \$1,350,000
125 Menton Court Buyer: X. Chen for \$865,500
404 Old Orchard Court Buyer: C. Hsu for \$455,000

19 Padilla Court Buyer: R. & W. Emmett for \$602,500
232 Pembroke Street Shapell Industries to D. Black for \$466,000
277 Pembroke Street Buyer: M. & S. Cava for \$502,000
280 Pembroke Street Buyer: S. Moghaddam for \$502,000
340 Pheasant Run Drive R. & M. Maninang to L. Neil for \$2,825,000
1831 Rioja Street Buyer: K. Demetz for \$1,095,000
911 Saddlehorn Court Buyer: N. Saechao for \$1,420,000
2015 Scarlet Oak Place K. & G. Simoneau to P. & J. Fry for \$1,450,000
621 Stevens Court S. & K. Huey to M. & T. Jordan for \$1,660,000
4097 Sugar Maple Drive Buyer: S. & J. Obriant for \$1,120,000
526 Zenith Ridge Drive Buyer: R. & J. Lynn for \$945,000

Walnut Creek

566 Churchill Downs Court Buyer: T. Langley for \$465,000
111 Crosby Court Buyer: D. Givens for \$344,000
2107 Darby Court D. Zauner to Koelbl Trust for \$725,500

34 Iron Horse Lane Buyer: D. & C. Tavarez for \$545,000
440 North Civic Drive #301 Buyer: C. Lee for \$330,000
2013 Ptarmigan Drive #3 Buyer: B. Hardin for \$340,000
3266 Ptarmigan Drive #4B Buyer: King Trust for \$650,000
3282 Rossmoor Parkway #4 Buyer: W. & M. Davison for \$600,000
1653 Skycrest Drive #14 Walker Trust to Vanboeschoten Trust for \$475,000
1766 Stanley Dollar Drive #4C Buyer: Lin Trust for \$600,000
2074 Stratton Road Grajek Trust to V. & L. Naselli for \$885,000
1860 Tice Creek Drive #1149 Buyer: Wisecarver Trust for \$360,000
1917 Via Appia Buyer: D. McKillop for \$626,000
2562 Walnut Boulevard #56 D. & V. Nordahl to L. Squaglia for \$267,500
166 Warwick Drive Huang Trust to B. & C. McCarthy for \$735,000
15 Wild Oak Court Buyer: Miller Trust for \$1,240,000

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Town Square

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Review a restaurant and more

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A free breakfast event that will feature Dr. Margaret Deanesly of the Palo Alto Medical Center and others speaking on the changes to expect with aging, as well as a informative and useful advice that has specific application to retirees.

Saturday, November 3, 2007
8:30 am to Noon
San Ramon Marriott Hotel
2600 Bishop Drive,
San Ramon

If you would like to attend this event, please call or register online immediately.

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West Side Alamo 3.72 acres

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West Side Danville .93 Acre

X2000



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Read Joe and Nancy's Real Estate Column in Alive East Bay Magazine

RE/MAX

DANVILLE WEEKLY OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

For an online version with mapping or to list your open home go to: www.DanvilleWeekly.com/real_estate

ALAMO

5 Bedrooms

4055 Stone Valley Oaks Dr. **\$2,399,900**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 785-7777

BLACKHAWK

3 Bedrooms

3319 Quail Walk Ln. **\$1,195,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 984-9658

305 Live Oak Dr. **\$1,295,000**
Sun 1:30-4:30 Alain Pinel 577-4004

106 Kingswood Cir. **\$899,000**
Sun 1:30-4:30 Alain Pinel 577-4004

4 Bedrooms

311 Live Oak Dr. **\$1,195,000**
Sun 1:30-4:30 Alain Pinel 577-4004

5098 Blackhawk Dr. **\$1,813,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 984-9658

21 Deer Creek Ln. **\$2,399,000**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 998-1818

DANVILLE

3 Bedrooms

1618 Brush Creek Pl. **\$789,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 998-9449

4 Bedrooms

2651 Finley Rd. **\$3,700,000**
Sun 1-5 Keller Williams 260-8883

423 Sutton Cir. **\$664,950**
Sun 1-4 Prudential 858-4384

138 Belgain Dr. **\$987,500**
Sat/Sun 1-4 UCB 351-8686

5 Bedrooms

60 Casablanca St. **\$959,000**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 998-1818

405 Skycrest Dr. **\$990,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 260-8883

SAN RAMON

2 Bedrooms

9024 Craydon Cir. **\$265,000**
Sat/Sun 1-4 UCB 580-4524

108A Norris Canyon Pl. **\$417,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 260-2508

3 Bedrooms

4549 Sweetgale Dr. **\$849,500**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 968-1452

4 Bedrooms

2212 Maidenhair Wy. **\$819,950**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Prudential Ca 734-5000

8075 Briar Oaks Dr. **\$884,500**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 968-1452

5 Bedrooms

6019 Westside Dr. **\$1,549,000**
Sun 1-4 Coldwell Banker 831-3326

DUBLIN

3 Bedrooms

4513 Peacock Ct. **\$778,500**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 260-8883

4 Bedrooms

8333 Creekside Dr. **\$1,100,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 463-0436

5 Bedrooms

5402 Blackstone Wy. **\$950,000**
Sun 1-4 Prudential CA 998-0382

PLEASANTON

1 Bedrooms

68 Peters Ave. **\$353,000**
Sat/Sun 10-4/1-4 8 7 6 - 3 7 5 6

2 Bedrooms

4309 Krause St. **\$615,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 463-0436

3 Bedrooms

3193 Montpelier Ct. **\$719,000**
Sun 1-4 Re/Max Accord 922-1575

4 Bedrooms

1397 Whispering Oaks Wy. **\$1,059,000**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 846-6500

3302 Prairie Dr. **\$1,125,000**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 463-0436

668 Abbie St. **\$1,475,000**
Sun 1-4 Hometown GMAC 413-1912

6823 Singletree Ct. **\$650,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 397-4390

3326 Hadsell Ct. **\$850,000**
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 463-0436

5 Bedrooms

5725 Ohana Pl. **\$2,097,500**
Sat/Sun 2-5 2 4 6 - 6 5 0 0

2009 Foxswallow Rd. **\$997,000**
Sun 1-4 Alain Pinel 462-7653

LIVERMORE

2 Bedrooms

1718 Hollyhock **\$465,000**
Sat/Sun 1-4 Prudential Ca 734-5000

5 Bedrooms

3006 Picholine Dr. **\$1,595,000**
Sat 1-4 Alain Pinel 621-4049

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OPEN HOME GUIDE FORM

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City

of
Bedrooms

Street Address

\$ Price
of property

Day, Date &
Time Open

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Number

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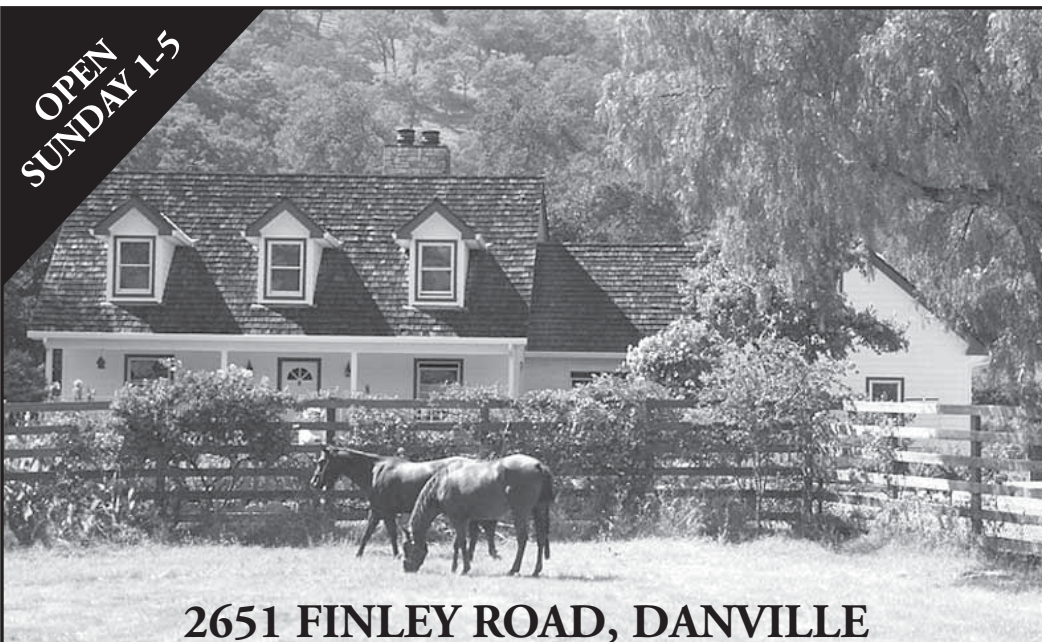


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“A Doctor’s Confession To The Town of Danville...”

And why, despite all, I still do what I do

Dear friend,

Confessions are tough. Real tough. But, sometimes a confession can set the record straight, and I want to give credit where credit is due. Before I talk about my confession, though, let me say a few other things first.

Let me start by explaining the photo in this letter. You know, when I meet people in town they usually say, “*Oh, yeah, I know you, you’re Dr. Jake. I’ve seen your ad with that picture of you, your wife and that cute little girl.*” Well, I’m the guy on the right.

Years ago something happened to me that changed my life forever. Let me tell you my story.

I had experienced low back pain ever since I was a teen, but this was different. I was playing hoops with the boys after class, and I made an abrupt move and felt a “pop” in my low back and *pain flew through my body* and sent me to my knees. Tears shot out of my eyes. It was a pain that words cannot explain. I had shooting pain down my leg, numbness in my foot, and I was unable to stand up straight for two weeks! My doctor said I had “*blown two discs in my back*”. After considering surgery (that was the only option, according to the surgeon) I decided against it. *But wait, there’s more...*

A friend of mine convinces me to give their doctor a try. This new doctor does an exam, takes some films, and then ‘adjusts’ my spine. The adjustment doesn’t hurt, it actually feels really good. I get relief, and I can walk again. *Oh, did I mention that this doctor is a chiropractor?* It works so well for me, and I’m so impressed with the other ‘miracles’ I see in his office, that I eventually go to chiropractic school myself.

Now for Pia, who is the little one in the photo. Pia had a traumatic entry into the world. *At one week of age she couldn’t turn her head to the left.* Breastfeeding was very difficult for her, and we were concerned. At birth I noticed she had a bone out of place in her neck, and I started to gently adjust her, and she began to turn her head in both directions. Now she is a happy and healthy three year old and she tells *me* when she needs to be adjusted. She never gets sick. That seems like a small thing, but it makes a huge difference to her.

The other lovely woman in the photo, Dr. Julie, is not only my wife, but also a chiropractor. We are partners not only in life, but also in health!

It’s strange how life is, because now people come to see *me* with their low back problems.

Also they come to us with their *headaches, migraines, chronic pain, neck pain, shoulder/arm pain, whiplash from car accidents, backaches, ear*

infections, asthma, allergies, numbness, just to name a few.

Here’s what some of my patients had to say:

➤ “*...after 1 week the 30 yr. pain in my right leg was gone!*” —Carol

➤ “*I rarely get headaches and my arm numbness is gone!*” —Barbara

➤ “*I was taking Ibuprofen for pain...Chiropractic is a Life-Saver*” —Patricia

➤ “*My menstrual cramps have DISAPPEARED!*” —Kim

➤ “*I no longer wake up in the morning with agonizing low back pain!*” —Philip



Several times a day patients thank me for helping them with their health problems. But I can’t really take the credit. **My confession is that *I’ve never healed anyone of anything.*** What I do is perform a specific spinal adjustment to remove nerve pressure, and the body responds by *healing itself*. We get tremendous results. It’s as simple as that!

Being a chiropractor can be tough, because there’s a host of so-called experts out there. They tell people a lot of things that are just plain ridiculous about my profession. But the studies speak for themselves, like the Virginia study that showed that over 90% of patients who saw a chiropractor were satisfied with their results. That’s just incredible!

Forty-eight million Americans no longer have health insurance, and those who do have found that their benefits are reduced. That’s where chiropractic comes in. Many people find that they actually save money on their health care expenses by seeing a chiropractor. Another way to save...published, peer-review-ed research indicates that the immune system may be enhanced by chiropractic adjustments. The

immune system is the system that helps the body fight colds, the flu, and many other sicknesses. Maybe you won’t be running off to the doctor as much once you start chiropractic. This is especially important if you are **self-employed**. And an entire week of care in my office may cost what you could pay for **one visit** elsewhere.

You benefit from an Amazing Offer- Look, it shouldn’t cost you an arm and a leg to correct your health. You are going to write a check to someone for your health care expenses, you may as well write one for a lesser amount for chiropractic. When you bring in this article, you will receive my entire new patient exam for \$17. That’s with x-rays, exam....the whole ball of wax. This exam could cost you \$250-\$350 elsewhere. But, please call right away because this offer expires on November 1st, 2007 and I don’t want you to miss out. By the way, further care is very affordable and you’ll be happy to know that **I have affordable family plans**. Further care is very important to consider when making your choice of doctor. High costs can add up very quickly. By law, this offer excludes Medicare/Medi-caid patients.

Great care at a great fee...Please, I hope that there’s no misunderstanding about **quality of care** just because I have a lower exam fee. You’ll get great care at a great fee.

Dr. Julie is a Suma Cum Laude graduate of Life West. We’ve been entrusted to take care of tiny babies too. After working in an office in San Jose for two years, my wife and I moved to the East Bay Area where we wanted to start not only a practice, but raise our family. We just have that low exam fee to help more people who need care.

Our assistants are Desiree & Angel, and they are great people. Our office is both friendly and warm and we try our best to make you feel at home. We have a wonderful service, at an exceptional fee.

Our office is called **BACK TO HEALTH CHIROPRACTIC** and it is located at 801 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Suite B (we are 1/2 block south of the Livery). Our phone number is **925.820.1500**. Call Desiree or Angel today for an appointment. We can help you. Thank you.

Yours In Health,

—Dr. Jacob Lyhne, D.C.

P.S. When accompanied by the first, I am also offering the family members this same examination for only **\$10**.

P.P.S. Can you imagine not having to wait at a doctor’s office? That’s why we have a no-wait policy.