

Recalling the past each month

Historic calendar celebrates Danville with old photographs > **page 16**

On the road with teens

Young drivers put horror stories on Web site

> **page 5**

Vol. III, Number 30 • November 23, 2007

www.DanvilleWeekly.com

Danville

W E E K L Y

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

Response to bike collision

Deputy shares biking safety tips at middle school

> **page 6**

**Danville mom takes
on PTA over
'junk food fundraising'**

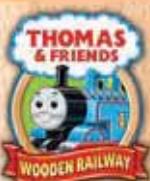
Page 14

EATING RIGHT



Games Unlimited

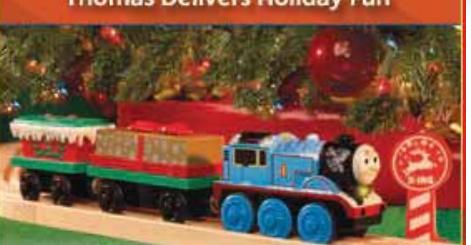
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ASKED AT THE BLACKHAWK REPUBLICAN WOMEN'S FORUM FOR ASSEMBLY CANDIDATES

Q: What do you look for in a candidate?



I like to get the strong indication that they are honest. If they are elected to office, they would do what they said they would do. I'm happy with that. I look for candidates that are electable. They embody the party's positions.

Tracy Wheeler
retired stockbroker



I look for facts. How they voted in the past. If they are pushing for an issue, the need to know the facts. That's about it.

Shirley Meloy
retired



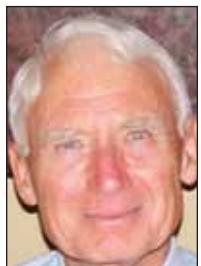
I look for education and experience to tackle the most pressing issues. I'm looking for people who have experience to deal with budget problems. Our fiscal house needs to be put in order.

Valerie Remley
retired investment banker and full-time mom



I like common sense leadership. Someone who knows the issues. I like someone who gives straight talk answers vs. ideological answers.

Jenniffer Rodriguez
political consultant



Honesty. Fiscal responsibility. Concern for constituents. They are important to me. Remember who elected you and work for them.

Alex Meley
retired engineer

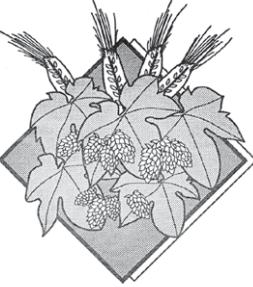
COMPILED BY DANVILLE WEEKLY STAFF

ABOUT THE COVER

Six-year-old Ainsley Lane snacks on an apple, her favorite fruit. Her mother Christine Lane is pushing to stop Rancho Romero Elementary's annual cookie dough fundraiser in order to combat childhood obesity. Photo by Jordan M. Doronila. Cover design by Manuel Valenzuela.

Vol. III, Number 30

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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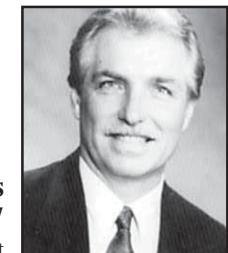
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NEWS DIGEST

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“ We wanted to inform them a fellow classmate had been struck by a vehicle. ”

—Alamo Deputy Elmer Glasser about his bike safety tips class. See story, page 6.

County OKs Alamo signatures

The county Elections Department certified the Alamo Incorporation Movement gathered valid signatures for at least 25 percent of Alamo voters this week. The department stopped counting at about 2,760 signatures, although AIM provided about 3,115 of the 9,820 registered voters.

“ We are delighted and grateful that the Elections Department reached such a quick conclusion, ” said Vicki Koc, president of AIM.

The next step is for the Local Agency Formation Commission to select a consulting firm to conduct a comprehensive fiscal analysis of Alamo cityhood. If the study shows it’s possible, along with the other steps LAFCO must take, a vote will then occur.

Black Men’s Group offering scholarships

The Diablo Black Men’s Group (DGMG) is looking to provide scholarships annually for two new college applicants. DGMG Scholarship Fund will offer \$2,500 scholarships to students who live in Contra Costa County and are going to a four-year college/university, junior/community college or trade school.

Applicants must have been in the Contra Costa County school system for at least two years and have earned a minimum grade point average of 2.5 from 10th to 12th grades. Moreover, they must show a promise of continued academic achievement.

Applications must include a personal statement; educational achievements; leadership experience; extracurricular activities; community involvement; academic goals; and future plans and goals. Send applications by Feb. 28 to Diablo Black Men’s Group annual Education Golf Scholarship Application, P.O. Box 1154, Danville 94526. Scholarships will be awarded in June.

For more information, e-mail the DMBG scholarship chairman at dbmg4@yahoo.com.

News from the farmers market

Due to the recent oil spill in San Francisco Bay, crab season has been postponed until Dec. 1 or later so fresh local crab will not be available at the Danville Farmers Market tomorrow. Northbay Quality Seafood, the market’s long-time fish vendor, will continue to offer a supply of fresh salmon, halibut and various other fishes and shellfish during this waiting period.

Farmers market manager Max Timms wants to thank all the customers for supporting Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa year round by donating food and money to the cause at the market.

“ Their support helps provide hot meals each weekday for over 800 people who are living below the poverty line in Contra Costa County, ” he said.

Kids Holiday Fun will take place at the Danville Farmers Market on Saturday, Dec. 8. Children can make a tree ornament to take home as well as a holiday activity book and a candy cane. Also a drawing will be held for a big poinsettia. Homemade wreaths will be available for sale.

Appointed to Arts Commission

Blackhawk resident Petral (P.J.) Shelton has been appointed an alternate to the at-large representative on the Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County. She is a sales consultant in the transportation/logistics field. She previously served on the Danville Arts Commission and is a former board member for the National Defense Transportation Association.

Shelley Barry of San Ramon was appointed the at-large representative; she is an artist, art consultant and gallery owner with more than 17 years experience in the art field. Joan Trezek is also a commissioner from District 3.

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

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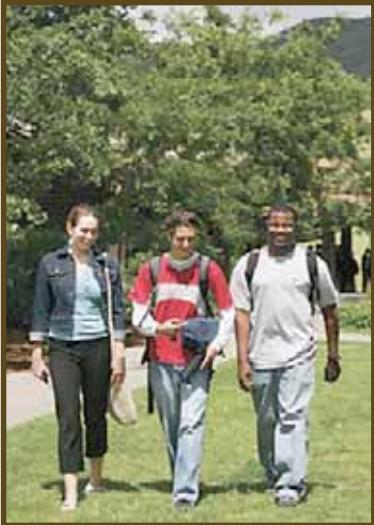
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Reimers gets nine years in prison

Swindler used clients' money to live the high life

by **Jordan M. Doronila**

The federal court Friday sentenced former Danville resident Francis William "Bill" Reimers to nine years in prison for mail fraud and money laundering.

The judge also ordered Reimers, 62, to pay \$9.6 million in restitution to the victims he swindled.

He pleaded guilty in March, admitting he created an entity purportedly to provide financial and investment management services to individual investors. However, when engaging his clients, he told them a series of lies including that he'd developed a "regression analy-

sis" program which could predict whether mutual fund values would rise or fall. He also lied about promising returns of at least 9 percent and said he would follow a conservative investment approach.

Reimers later admitted he did not invest these client funds, instead using the money to pay his mortgage and to pay for luxury cars, exotic vacations and hunting trips. He also used their money to fund his two other businesses: Plan Compliance Group and Univest Capital Management. These companies were created to handle third-party administration of school employee accounts and benefits for federal government employees.

As third-party administrators,

► Continued on page 6

What's your homework? Find out on the Internet

Virtual outreach gives access to assignments and grades

by **Natalie O'Neill**

New technology is putting parents in the loop. The school district is piloting an online communication tool that keeps students, parents and teachers connected and up-to-date on assignments and grades. After two months, it is already redefining the concept of homework and report cards in some classrooms.

"It has taken off. It really took us by surprise," said Rob Kessler, superintendent for the San Ramon Valley Unified School District.

School Loop is an online community in which students can ask each other questions and access "virtual lockers" for notes and projects they may have lost or missed while being absent.

Teachers, parents and students

told the school board last week it makes life a whole lot easier for everyone.

School Loop provides a by-assignment grade report for how each student is doing. And parents can log-in as well.

But there could be a problem: how to pay for it.

"Here's the dilemma and it has to do with cost.... It's something that would be good for the community. How are we going to fund it in the long run?" Kessler said.

The system is expected to cost about \$4 per student. If it eventually eliminates the need for paper progress reports, the district could end up saving money.

"I would suggest adding it to the parcel tax. I think it would be a big seller," said School Board Trustee

► Continued on page 7

Don't let it happen to you.

Here for the prizes? We'll get to that. But first, welcome to *It Happens*. It's all about you and your on-the-road experiences.

Maybe you haven't crashed, but you've probably had a close call. So, talk about it. This month, we're collecting the real-life, from-the-car stories of San Ramon Valley High School students. We'll post stories here and film the top six authors telling their own tales. This December, you and your friends can view and vote for the best website – and the winner gets an Apple iPhone!

It's all part of *It Happens* Rewards, where you earn points for submitting stories, watching and voting. Rewards points are good toward prizes on the *It Happens* Web site.

Lani tells her story of being stopped by a policeman at www.ithappens2u.com, where students from San Ramon Valley High School are sharing their experiences.



JORDAN M. DORONILA



Baskets of bounty

Seventh-grader Laurra Bryant-Biglow gathers canned goods and food items at Los Cerros Middle School's 12th annual Basket Brigade in Danville on Thursday, Nov. 15, while at left in the green top, six-grader Haley Morrison waits with others to fill baskets. The brigade receives food donations from vendors and in a two-week food drive conducted by students.

This year, the drive brought in 3,000 items, and the students baked pumpkin bread to add to the baskets, which included produce, gelatin, chicken broth and pasta. The students gathered the donated products into baskets and delivered them to a dozen shelters throughout the county Friday.

"We are feeding 350 families this year, and we've received generous donations from our student, parent and staff community in addition to vendors," said Amy Gee, brigade coordinator.

Teens share true stories of driving misadventures

Web site details police stops and car crashes—along with lessons learned

by **Dolores Fox Ciardelli**

Lani looks at the camera and tells about how her life took a turn after a police officer stopped her for speeding while she was giving a friend a ride home, which was illegal because her license was only a few months old.

"I had to go to court three times," she says. "I felt like a criminal ... I lost my license for one month ... I never thought I would spend my whole summer, like, doing community service."

Alanna tells about accepting a ride home with a friend of a friend, who proceeded to drive 110 mph down the freeway. He contin-

ued to speed on Paraiso Drive, ran a stop sign and raced over a dip, which sent the car out of control, narrowly missing a tree before it crashed.

These stories and more are posted at www.ithappens2u.com, the new Web site where teens at San Ramon Valley High School are asked to share their real-life, from-the-car stories to help everyone learn from their experiences, in this year's Street Smarts campaign.

Street Smarts, a traffic safety education program in its fourth year, kicked off its 2007-08 season last week at San Ramon Valley High

► Continued on page 8

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Alamo deputy gives bike tips

Talk prompted by collision with student cyclist
by Natalie O'Neill

One seventh-grader told Glasser the scariest part of his ride home is the crosswalk at Stone Valley Road, where drivers are trying to make a right turn but are looking left.

Some parents in the district feel bike safety is a more eminent issue, now that busing to and from school is no longer offered in the San Ramon Valley.

"It's a real hot issue around here," Glasser said at this month's Alamo Police Advisory Committee meeting.

A county survey taken in April showed about 3.5 percent of students in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District ride their bikes to school.

The survey, taken from about 2,500 families, didn't specify the ages of the students or where they were from specifically. But middle-schoolers are likely the biggest bikers in the district, as they are too young to drive themselves, yet generally are old enough to bike alone.

Glasser helped teach the bicycle safety class at Stone Valley Middle School last week to help prevent similar accidents in the future. He explained to the kids that making eye contact with car drivers, especially around busy intersections like Stone Valley Road, is crucial for bikers.

"I had them identify what roads they used home from school and whether they felt safe," he said. "There's no one who knows those bike routes better than the kids."

He also explained how to wear helmets and ride bikes properly, along with the importance of locking them up. "We wanted to inform them a fellow classmate had been struck by a vehicle and to provide facts and the truth of incident," he said. "The student hadn't been doing anything wrong."

County transportation officials said last week that busing will be provided to schools in the district by September 2009. ■

Reimers

► Continued from page 5

his two companies collected payroll distributions from thousands of employees and remitted them to institutional investment companies and to insurance providers. Reimers used the cash flow to pay investors who requested monthly dividends or who asked to close their accounts.

Reimers sent account statements that falsely stated his clients' funds were invested in various mutual

funds and tax-free market funds.

On March 12, the U.S. Attorney charged Reimers with six counts of mail fraud and one count of money laundering. He pleaded guilty March 23 to all seven counts. The prosecution was the result of a 15-month investigation by the FBI and the IRS Criminal Investigation.

Sentencing took place in the U.S. District Court in Oakland, where emotional victims spoke out against Reimers. Judge D. Lowell Jensen sentenced Reimers, ordering him to report to federal prison Jan. 16. ■

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Danville OKs 33 new computers at library

Renovation project will update services and create more space for shelves

by Jordan M. Doronila

The Danville Public Library will be getting new technology, tables and other items for book lovers.

"Many of our patrons are very excited about it," said branch librarian Seng Lovan. "We are already seeing quite a few changes. They are excited how it will all turn out."

The Town Council approved a contract to install 33 new computers in the Danville library, at its meeting Nov. 6. The library will be replacing its 16 computers plus adding another 17; they all should be installed by the end of the month.

The Danville Library Renovation Project is part of the town's Capital Improvement Program. The project includes new tables and chairs, consolidating the children's and adult's circulation desks, and creating more shelving space. The total project cost is \$250,000 and will be finished sometime in January, said Town Manager Joe Calabriga.

"We built the Danville Library in 1996, and we committed to it being a state-of-the-art facility," he said. "This is following our commitment to do that. We want to make sure that everything that we offer is up-

to-date and first rate."

The library is also the first in Contra Costa County to have radio frequency identification, which is a self-automated machine for checking out books. Two-thirds of the library's items are in the new system, said Rochelle Flotten, renovation project manager and assistant to the town manager.

"It's well-received by parents and children at the library," she said.

"It's a joint project," added Calabriga. "All the libraries will be using that technology."

In addition, the library has received two early literacy computers for children from the county.

"It's a learning tool," Flotten said.

There continues to be a shortage of funds for operating libraries statewide, Calabriga said. In the past, the county has put funding measures on the ballot but they have come up short. Towns often had to make it their priority if they wanted to see library improvements.

"Funding was cut back in the early 1990s for the last 15 years," Calabriga said.

The county offers funding for all its libraries, including Danville,



The 16 computers at the Danville Library will be replaced with new ones, plus 17 more will be added as part of the Danville Library Renovation Project.

for baseline services. Clayton and Danville are the only two towns that have built new libraries in the county; Walnut Creek is closing its downtown facility next week to construct a new 42,000-square-foot, two-story library scheduled to open in spring 2010.

Danville goes beyond the baseline service by being open 60 hours a week and on all seven days. ■

cially since e-mail complaints can be sent with a quick mouse click.

Hurd suggested putting assignments up top and the current grade further down in the e-mail.

"That daily barrage creates that anxiety," she said.

At least 130 schools have used the tool, including some students at San Ramon Valley High School, Monte Vista High School, Diablo Vista Middle School and Alamo Elementary.

Other concerns ranged from the availability of household comput-

ers to how to monitor chat rooms.

"For students without computers, what are we doing to keep them in the loop?" asked Trustee Bill Clarkson.

School Loop can be accessed from any Internet site, at home, on school premises and in public libraries or Internet cafes. Schools that have piloted the system have invited parents without Internet access to use the school's computers.

School Loop is based out of Burlingame and was founded in 2004 by a former high school teacher. ■

School Loop

► Continued from page 5

Joan Buchanan.

The tool is for high school and middle school students and some elementary school students, although it hasn't yet been perfected for the younger grades.

"The feedback we've gotten is that it's not as user-friendly for elementary school students," said Christine Williams, assistant superintendent.

One high school student at the meeting explained the system helps him prioritize his time and have questions answered when he's confused.

It presents a clear timeline for when assignments are due, he said. He explained he could log on and know right away his most pressing deadline for the week.

Teachers explained they are able to spot increasing and decreasing trends in student performances with the "trends up, trends down" function. For example, if one student's grade is slipping, the teacher is able to spot that easily and give him or her extra help and attention.

The same goes for students who have improving grades. The function notifies teachers of the progress, which allows for appropriate praise and positive reinforcement.

But while the system helps solve some communication problems, it could create its own set of issues, said Trustee Rachel Hurd.

"My concerns are about teachers getting inundated with e-mails from parents, saying, 'Why is my child getting this grade?'" she said.

In the School Loop e-mail update sent to parents, the child's grade is at the top of the letter and is the first information visible. This can cause an impulsive response, espe-

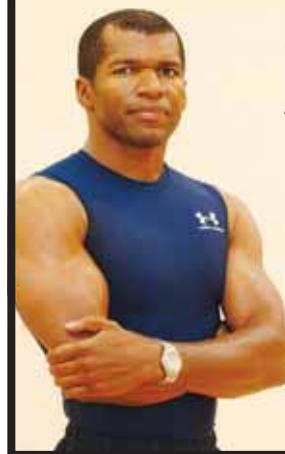
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Street Smarts

(continued from page 5)

to tell the students about the new campaign, called "It Happens."

"We really struggled on the Advisory Committee on what to do with high school students," said Councilwoman Candace Andersen.

Previously, Street Smarts targeted elementary and middle school students.

"No one wants to be preached to," she added. "We actually hired a marketing firm to do a very small focus group."

They found that teens wanted real life stories, something edgy, and stories from their peers.

"They get their information from the Internet so they wanted a site where students can go in and work on the Web site," said Andersen. "These 'Web-isodes' tell about near misses and accidents that have occurred to them."

Six of the episodes posted to the Web site will be chosen for filming by a professional videographer and posted onto the site; SRVHS students will be asked to vote for their favorite.

The focus group also found the teens were interested in getting prizes and that many smaller prizes would be more of an incentive than a chance at one large prize. As a result, students who interact on the Web site by watching videos, taking quizzes or submitting stories will have the opportunity to earn points good toward prizes such as iPods, Xbox 360s and gift cards to local businesses. The grand prize will be an iPhone.

"Since we launched, it's been quite positive. We've had over 200 unique visitors," said Nat Rojanasathira, Street Smarts coordinator for Danville, six days after the launch. "We're still trying to get word out. Each day last week we had a different trailer, two-minute videos of students as a passenger or driver."

Only students from San Ramon Valley High can sign up for rewards on the Web site, but anyone can visit it to see the videos, Rojanasathira noted.

"Each year we will roll it out at a new campus," Andersen said. "My goal is to be able to maintain it at all of our high schools."

She said they brought in corporate sponsors to defray costs, including State Farm.

Again this year middle school students can enter the Street Smarts "Be Reel!" video contest by submitting 60-second videos on traffic safety themes. Finalists will premiere at the Danville International Children's Film Festival in May. High school students have shown an interest in a video contest, too, so the Street Smarts committee is thinking of branching out to this age group.

Elementary school students are entering a Storybook Poster Contest this year; in January they will draw illustrations for a storybook written by local children's book author Dana Mentink.

Street Smarts is a partnership involving the San Ramon Valley Unified School District, the Town of Danville, San Ramon, Contra Costa County and the San Ramon Valley Council of PTAs. ■

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI



Living at the newspaper

Ever feel like you can relate to someone who was in your position 60 years ago? I recently met the son of the founding editor of the old Valley Pioneer, Beverlee Holly, and she sounds like someone I would have liked.

The office for the popular San Ramon Valley paper was located on Prospect Avenue and its first issue was Feb. 2, 1945. The old Danville Meat Market was converted into offices for the newspaper with living quarters in back. Beverlee was at the Lafayette Sun, and when its publishers C.C. Morse and Eugene Haney began the Valley Pioneer, they appointed her editor. She moved to Danville with her toddler, Ernest D. Holly III, and they lived at the office. Beverlee went about covering the news in Danville while her husband Ernest D. Holly II served in the Army in Belgium.

Ernie (III) and his wife Cyndie came by the Danville Weekly last week and shared early editions of the Valley Pioneer.

"My mother took pride in the fact that I was with her," Ernie told me. "She used to say she put me in the window to amuse the people—and the people amused me."

Beverlee also edited the State Farm Insurance magazine, "Tempo," and Ernie has a 1943 letter from them acknowledging her request for a "State Farm Nursery." This was a woman ahead of her time in childcare issues. Beverlee's middle name was Peace because she was born Nov. 11, 1918, the day the Great War ended, and the headlines proclaimed "Peace!"

Those old newspapers reported on all aspects of everyday life, including Alamo School seventh- and eighth-graders taking a trip to the archery shop in Oakland; Mrs. Rose Peters opening her home for a card party; cattlemen meeting; and Girls Scout enjoying an eight-mile hike to Rock City on Mount Diablo. It also included news from farther afield, such as a Christian World Facts report that a chaplain overseas was making communion cups from empty 50-calibre shells.

Beverlee had a calendar that doubled as a diary and was published as a way for mothers to document their baby's early days, which she did through the eyes of her son, intertwining national, work and baby news.

- Jan. 28, 1945: "We moved out to Danville today."
- Jan. 30: "Mother is editor of the Valley Pioneer & I'm the assistant."
- March 1: "Mama and I went into Lafayette to get the paper off the press."
- March 3: "It's cold and there is snow on Mt. Diablo."
- March 5: "The war news sounds good in Europe and Mama and Daddy got an income tax refund today."
- April 25: "Peace conference started in S.F. today. Paul opened his Danville Hotel."
- May 1: "We went to the Van Gordon's for dinner. Hitler reported dead."
- May 24: "NO mail from daddy. Mama folded all the papers tonight alone."

Beverlee and little Ernie moved back to Lafayette that summer and she went back to work at the Lafayette Sun, which eventually became the Contra Costa Sun (where I used to work as a copy editor). She also wrote a column called "East Bay Banter" for the San Francisco Chronicle and later became public relations director for Merritt Hospital in Oakland. She retired to Oroville and pursued her lifelong love of hiking and camping; she passed away in 1999.

The more I talked to Ernie and Cyndie, the more we found in common. After leaving Danville and living for awhile in Berkeley, Beverlee and Ernie II raised their family on Grandview Place in Walnut Creek, right across the street from my son's piano teacher of many years, Doris Marliave. Ernie was a Scout in the 1950s and his leader was John Nejedly, who later became a state senator and whose daughter Mary Nejedly Piepho has her supervisor's office right next to the Danville Weekly. Ernie II was discharged at Camp Beale, which later became Beale Air Force Base where I (OK, my husband) was stationed. Ernie III's son-in-law works for Wilson so his daughter parties with all the stars—and I like tennis. (Maybe that one is a stretch, but I liked seeing a photo of her with Roger Federer.) And, of course, Ernie and his mom had lived at the hometown newspaper office—and sometimes it feels like I live here, too.

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

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Classifieds Sales e-mail:
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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.

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EDITORIAL • THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

'The season' arrives

Thanksgiving was early this year, which means we have an extra week to enjoy the holiday season.

It kicks off in each community with tree lightings, accompanied by songs of the season and warm beverages. These events are free and are fun for families or individuals—from the big oak tree lightings being held in Danville today and in Alamo on Dec. 2 to the Hospice of the East Bay Tree of Light ceremonies, taking place at the Livery on Nov. 25, in Blackhawk on Nov. 30, and Alamo Women's Club on Dec. 12. People can purchase lights on the Hospice tree to symbolize the life of a departed loved one or they can just go to the lighting to share in the commemorative ceremonies, which have music, poetry and a short talk by a hospice speaker. To purchase a light for \$20, call 887-5678.

The Museum of the San Ramon Valley has its special Christmas Memories display, with trees from the 1890s, 1930s and 1950s, guaranteed to be a nice outing for the whole family. And the museum shop is a good place to pick up a gift for history lovers or a stocking stuffer.

Whether folks have shopping to do or not, it's fun to stroll through the streets and shopping centers and enjoy holiday decorations. This is the time when shop owners are most inspired to make their stores inviting and to play upon the holiday theme.

Speaking of decorations, many neighbors enjoy lighting up their homes and yards, too. One new trend is to list the more noteworthy houses at Lightsofthevalley.com to let others know about spectacular houses, from Alamo to Danville to the South Bay to Marin.

Hopefully the longer holiday season will make things less rushed and give everyone time to savor what our community has to offer at this special time of year.

Whether folks have shopping to do or not, it's fun to stroll through the streets and shopping centers and enjoy holiday decorations. This is the time when shop owners are most inspired to make their stores inviting and to play upon the holiday theme.

Infill development requires oversight

Dear Editor:

Since first arriving in Alamo in the fall of '72, I've seen tremendous changes. Mostly for the worse. Congestion, poor planning, substandard roads, lack of recreational opportunities and disappearing open spaces due to haphazard development. It barely resembles the same rural one-stoplight town I moved to. And who controlled what happened in Alamo? Was it Alamo residents or bureaucrats sitting in Martinez? Far too often, it was the latter, often over the strenuous objections of Alamo residents.

Over the years, the only community-wide voice has been the Alamo Improvement Association. As an advisory committee they were ignored at the County's pleasure (and still are). Deep-pocketed developers with significant political ties (greased by large cash "contributions") to the CCC Board of Supervisors effectively ran roughshod over the planning and development process. Politically, our community has been marginalized by gerrymandered districts; as such, we are disenfranchised and "represented" by those who have little concern for Alamo residents.

A recent Letter to the Editor by Phil Erikson stated "there is no growth left to control." On the contrary, over building (big homes on small lots) is just as detrimental to our community's character as the rampant development we've experienced for the last 35 years. This "infill" development requires even greater oversight and community sensitivity, not less.

Since Alamo is a wonderful cash cow, the County is loath to lose that cash (and was the reason Alamo wasn't allowed to incorporate in the last effort). With newly enacted regulations that give the decision to a newly independent LAFCO, we finally have the ability to take control of our own destiny.

We fought a War of Independence

a few hundred years ago over taxation without representation with a King who governed as he saw fit. Today, we substitute a myopic Martinez bureaucracy and the results are the same. Thankfully, reason and determination prevailed back then. I have faith they will prevail again.

Paul Barker, 35-year resident of the soon-to-be Town of Alamo

Old politics influence today

Dear Editor:

Some political facts of several years ago have not been brought out, which have a bearing on the current effort of Alamo incorporation. Were it not for the threat of abolishing the San Ramon Valley Regional Planning Commission, I don't believe the incorporation effort would have gotten off the ground. That threat, which would abolish the last vestiges of local control, I believe is at the heart of the Alamo incorporation move.

One has to go back to the Joint (County plus Regional) Planning Commission Hearings on developers Shappell and others' plans for Alamo Creek and related properties, east of Danville. The two commissions took opposite sides, but oddly the County Commission was the lead agency. The ensuing approved plan ruined the commute times from east of Danville via Camino Tassajara, and via Crow Canyon Road.

Dirty politics ruined the political careers of highly respected former Mayor and Danville Councilwoman Millie Greenberg, who had been appointed to the Board of Supervisors, and likewise highly respected former Supervisor Donna Gerber.

LAFCO is a dangerously powerful agency. Time and again, our Founders' principle that the government closest to the people, governs best, has proved correct.

Ralph Hoffmann, Danville

From the publisher:

There are (at least) two sides to every story

The purpose of Town Square, our online readers forum at www.DanvilleWeekly.com, is to allow community members an opportunity to talk with each other and with us. This is an arena where visitors have the freedom to voice their opinions and ask tough questions, safe from abuse, degradation and the perpetuation of rumors.

To this end, the Danville Weekly will remove known errors of fact. Unsubstantiated claims that are potentially harmful or destructive from an ethical standpoint, such as accusations of alcoholism, drug abuse and the like, will also be removed.

However, we extend contributors a lot of latitude to state their opin-

ions. The basis for any opinion or argument is the source of the information from which the statement is formed. It is up to the reader to assess whether or not the opinion is valid, based on the original source and their own research. We encourage people on both sides of an issue to present their case and let visitors decide on the merits of the presentation. Unless the discussion turns destructive, we will allow such an open line of communication.

Take for example, a recent forum in which a writer accused a county supervisor of saying he and another resident had endorsed her when they did not. The supervisor responded that she has their written and signed

endorsements.

In the Town Square forum for our newspaper in Pleasanton, writers were questioning police procedure and some posts were sarcastic and condescending; we allowed them because the opinions expressed and the questions asked were legitimate. An official from the police department eventually responded and provided information which eliminated the need for speculation on the part of posters.

While it can be assumed the department was not overly happy that law enforcement practices and procedures were being questioned in an open forum, representatives took advantage of the situation to

educate the public and clear up any misconceptions. The visitors were very appreciative of the time this police officer took to address their questions.

Let's face it, we all know this type of conversation and these types of questions are asked everyday, be it on the sidelines at the kids' soccer games or over a cup of coffee at Yellow Wood or Peet's. At least with forums such as Town Square, both sides get an opportunity to present their case.

Gina Channell-Allen, a 20-year journalism veteran, is publisher of the Danville Weekly. Send questions to gallen@DanvilleWeekly.com

Community Pulse

POLICE BULLETIN & LOG • OBITUARIES • BIRTHS & WEDDINGS

POLICE BULLETIN

Don't be a turkey—drive safely this holiday

The California Highway Patrol is putting every available officer on the road for this Thanksgiving weekend to make sure everyone obeys the rules.

"Our message is simple ... drive safe, drive sober and buckle up," said Contra Costa Area Capt. Jim Cahoon.

During last year's Thanksgiving period, 42 people died in 4,768 collisions in California, reported the CHP. More than half of those killed were not wearing their seatbelts. In addition, last year 1,670 people were arrested by CHP officers

for driving under the influence during the long weekend, a nearly 10 percent increase over the previous year.

Millions of Californians take to the roads over Thanksgiving, and the crowded highways can lead to frustrations at the wheel, noted the CHP.

"Be prepared for traffic tie-ups, especially on the Wednesday before and the Sunday after Thanksgiving," said Cahoon.

Inclement weather also can plague travelers, with rain, fog, wind and snow creating hazardous conditions.

"Many crashes are caused by driving too fast for current conditions," Cahoon added.

POLICE LOG

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

Sunday, Nov. 11

- Miscellaneous burglary on Gatetree Dr. at 12:33 p.m.
- Vandalism on Farm Hill Ct. at 1:34 p.m.
- Court order violation on Tassajara Ranch Dr. at 2:24 p.m.
- Suspicious subject stop, arrest, on Highland Dr. at 4:05 p.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Brookside Dr. and Greenbrook Dr. at 5:15 p.m.
- Vehicle traffic stop, arrest, on San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 11:22 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 12

- Identity theft on Haven Hill Ct. at 11:33 a.m.
- Petty theft, shoplift, in custody, on Railroad Ave. at 2:39 p.m.
- Auto burglary on W. El Pintado Rd. at 10:17 p.m.
- Residential burglary on Alta Loma Ct. at 11:54 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 13

- Identity theft on Haven Hill Ct. at 10:35 a.m.
- Accident, major injuries, on Camino Ramon at 2:23 p.m.

- Residential burglary on Sheri Ln. at 4:36 p.m.
- Accident, major injuries, on Diablo Rd. and northbound I-680 at 6:19 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 14

- Auto burglary on Indian Home Rd. at 10:39 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Crow Canyon Rd. and St. George Rd. at 11:52 a.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on Diablo View Ct. at 3:14 p.m.
- Brandishing weapon on Holbrook Dr. at 6:29 p.m.
- Misdemeanor driving under the influence (DUI), arrest, on Danville Blvd. and El Cerro Blvd. at 6:47 p.m.
- Petty theft on La Gonda Ct. 9:15 p.m.
- Vandalism on Heritage Park Dr. at 10:14 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 15

- Credit card fraud on Verona Ave. at 7:35 a.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on 300 block on Hartz Ave. at 9:15 a.m. and 10:11 a.m.
- Vandalism on Diablo Rd. at 11:36 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Diablo Rd. at 2:32 p.m.

- Auto burglary on San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 9:11 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 16

- Vehicle traffic stop, arrest, on Iron Horse Trail and San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 12:23 a.m.
- Accident, major injuries, on Alameda Diablo and Diablo Rd. at 6:52 a.m.
- Miscellaneous burglary on Glasgow Cir. at 7:37 a.m.
- Misdemeanor hit-and-run on W. El Pintado Rd. at 9:05 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Camino Tassajara and Sherburne Hills at 9:07 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on San Ramon Valley Blvd. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 11:55 a.m.
- Auto burglary on Fostoria Way at 1:37 p.m.
- Vandalism on Valley Creek Ln. at 1:41 p.m.
- Vandalism on Paraiso Dr. at 8:41 p.m.
- DUI, arrest, on El Cerro Blvd. and southbound I-680 at 11:50 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 17

- Vehicle traffic stop, arrest, on Hartz Ave. and Hartz Way at 3:48 a.m.

OBITUARIES

George W. Schutz

Danville resident George W. Schutz passed away Oct. 26 at the age of 93.

He was born Aug. 30, 1914, in Alameda to George and Violet Schutz, the oldest of three children with a sister Melba and brother Clyde. He attended local schools and graduated UC Berkeley in 1938 with a degree in electrical engineering. At UC he was active in rowing crew and Naval ROTC, and he received his pilot's license.

He was called to active duty in November 1940 before Pearl Harbor, and he married Jinny on Feb. 1, 1941. They spent their first three years of marriage in Panama during World War II. He was transferred to the USS Nevada, and was on board during the D-Day invasion of France. He completed his tour of duty in the South Pacific and returned to his home in California in 1945. He

was active in ROTC until 1960 and retired from the Naval Reserve with the rank of Commander.

He worked as an engineer for PG&E for 44 years. His family moved to Danville in 1950 and never left. He and his wife traveled to 30 countries, and tennis was their passion, as were the Cal Bears.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years Jinny; daughter Jan and son-in-law Ed; son Paul and daughter-in-law Karen; two grandchildren and one great-grandson.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 24, at Wilson & Kratzer Chapel of San Ramon Valley, 825 Hartz Way, Danville.

Cheryl Lynn Humphrey Merkle

Danville resident Cheryl Lynn Humphrey Merkle, 53, died peacefully

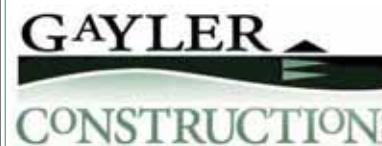
Nov. 8 at her home surrounded by her family.

She suffered from breast cancer for 14 years and was a successful fundraiser for the American Cancer Society raising over \$100,000 in five years as Team Sherri.

She is survived by her loving husband John; her children Jason, Adam, Weston and Laurel; sisters Barbara and Marge; and numerous nieces and nephews.

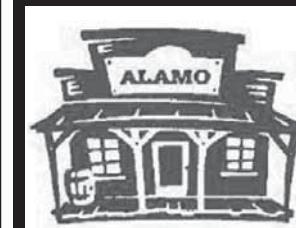
Services were held Nov. 15 at St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church in San Ramon. Donations can be made in honor of Cheryl to the American Cancer Society using the following link: <http://www.acsevents.org> and then using the Mosaic Memories link search for Cheryl Humphrey Merkle, Danville, CA.

► Continued on page 12



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Transitions

OBITUARIES • BIRTHS • WEDDINGS

Obituaries

► Continued from page 11

Evelyn Tognoli

Evelyn Tognoli passed away peacefully at her home in Danville on Oct. 6 at the age of 85.

She was born and raised in San Francisco and will be fondly remembered for her great cooking and entertaining.

She was predeceased by her husband of 62 years, Aldo Tognoli; she is survived by her son Allyn (Tina) Tognoli; daughter Linda (Bob) Barry; and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She is also survived by her sister Lorraine Johnson and is "Aunty" to many nieces and nephews.

A Memorial Mass was held Oct. 11 at St. Isidore Catholic Church in

Danville. Donations can be made to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, 1390 Market St., Ste. 1200, San Francisco 94102.

Dorothy Lutz

Dorothy Lutz passed away peacefully in her sleep surrounded by her family Oct. 12 in Danville. She was 83.

She was born and raised in Harlingen, Texas, where she met her husband Irving who was stationed there during World War II. They moved to Oakland after the war and started their family. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Irving; her children Mark Lutz of Novato and Terri Lutz of Oakland; five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Services

were held Oct. 16. The family requests donations in her memory to the Reutlinger Community for Jewish Living, 4000 Camino Tassajara, Danville 94506.

Albert Werner King

Albert Werner King passed away Oct. 13 in Danville.

He was born in Sacramento to Werner and Freida King. He was a graduate of Alameda High School and attended UC Berkeley where he obtained a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering. He worked for Spreckels Sugar Co. as a factory manager for 33 years. His special interests were playing card games, yard work, enjoying the outdoors, and spending time with his family.

He is survived by his wife Barbara, daughter Elizabeth, sons Anthony and Nicolas King; four grandchildren and his sister Louise Patton. A Memorial Service was held in October at Community Presbyterian Church in Danville. Donations can be made to the Alzheimer's Association 225 N. Michigan Ave., FL 17 Chicago, Ill. 60601-7633.

Fred Mario Caporicci

Fred Mario Caporicci, an Alamo resident, died Oct. 13 at the age of 87.

He was born May 30, 1920, and raised in Oakland. He also lived in Piedmont for 23 years and Alamo for 30 years. He was a proud member of the Sierra Club.

He was the beloved husband for 61 years of Shirley Caporicci; father of Gary (Kathy), Wendi, Julie (Stephen) Pelley and Jan (Pracha) Pises; grandfather of seven; and great-grandfather of four.

A funeral Mass was celebrated Oct. 19 at St. Isidore Catholic Church in Danville. Interment is at Queen of Heaven Cemetery in Lafayette. Donations may be made to Stanford University Lymphoma Clinic, 875 Lake Wilbur Dr., Stanford 94305.

Wallace 'Kent' Runswick

Wallace "Kent" Runswick passed away at the age of 63 at his Danville home Oct. 18 after a long and valiant battle with colon cancer.

He was born in San Francisco in 1944 and raised in Richmond, El Cerrito and Kensington. He and his wife Nancy also lived in Hayward, Alamo and Danville. When he was young, his father Wally co-founded Prescolite in Berkeley, and Kent went on to found Inlite Corp. He loved his antique wooden boat "Mach Schnell," a 1958 Century Resorfer, and he was a fly fisherman who always released his catch. He and Nancy also enjoyed international traveling.

He is survived by his wife of 43 years Nancy; daughters Nikki Spear of Texas, and Michelle Pinch of the U.K.; son Duane of Idaho; sister and brother-in-law Carol and Darryl Eisner of Westlake Village, and brother and sister-in-law Richard and Jeanie Runswick of Lafayette; sons-in-law Jamie Spear and Steven Pinch, daughter-in-law, Delda; and seven grandchildren as well as nieces and nephews. A service was held at Sunset View Mortuary in El Cerrito. Memorial contributions can be made to Hospice of the East Bay, 3470 Buskirk Ave., Pleasant Hill 94523.

Nicholas Edward Broderick

Danville resident Nicholas Edward Broderick passed away Oct. 20 at the age of 82.

He was born March 24, 1925. He graduated from Fordham University in 1948, and worked at Lawrence Livermore Lab.

He was predeceased by his wife of 50 years, Dorothy, and his son Mark; he is survived by his son and daughter-in-law Jay and Carolyn, and his daughter and son-in-law Lynn and John; and two grandsons.

A Memorial Mass was celebrated Oct. 27. Donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, or to Fordham's Annual Fund, c/o Nicole Paciello, 888 7th Ave., 7th Floor, New York, NY 10019 (in memory of Nicholas E. Broderick, Fordham College, '48).

Edgar F. Woolery

Danville resident Edgar F. Woolery passed away Oct. 22.

He was born Dec. 2, 1932, in Springfield, Mo., to Orville and Lorane Woolery. He served in the U.S. Navy as an aviator from 1953 to 1976 and retired as a Commander. He was a graduate of the USN Test Pilot School, Class '32. His bachelor's degree was in mathematics and chemical engineering; he also had masters degrees in Physics, Theology and Divinity. He worked as a design physicist at Lawrence Livermore Lab from 1971 to 1993.

He is survived by his wife Jeannine; sons Bruce, David and

Alan; daughters Susanne Wagner and Virginia Rogstad; 14 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held Oct. 28 at San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church in Alamo.

Mildred F. Fitzpatrick

Mildred F. Fitzpatrick, a 28-year resident of Danville, died in Saratoga on Oct. 25 at the age of 92.

Mildred was born Nov. 12, 1915, in San Francisco. She is survived by son Richard J. Fitzpatrick of Gig Harbor, Wash., daughters Janet M. Fitzpatrick of Carmel, and Margaret A. McCarthy of Los Gatos, and grandchildren. Funeral services were held with interment at Queen of Heaven Cemetery in Lafayette.

Bernice 'Bernie' Arata Fereira

Bernice "Bernie" Arata Fereira passed from this life peacefully on Oct. 30 in her Alamo home surrounded by his family.

She was born Nov. 7, 1917, in San Francisco and raised in Oakland, where she attended West Lake Junior High, Roosevelt High, and Lake Merritt Junior College. For 45 years she was a employee of Metropolitan Life Insurance, and was honored to be president of the company's San Francisco Bay Region Veteran's Association and the recipient of the Ecker Award. She served as president for the Lafayette Business & Professional Women's Club, Alamo Women's Club, Tioga Club at the John Muir Auxiliary, and a member of the Civic Arts League.

She was predeceased by her husband Gordon Fereira. She is survived by her nephew Charles (Laura) Fereira and great nephew and niece, Tyler and Koren, along with many adopted nieces and nephews. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Nov. 7 at St. Isidore Church in Danville with a reception at the Alamo Women's Club. Donations may be made to the Contra Costa Humane Society, 609 Gregory Lane #140, Pleasant Hill 94523, or Martinez Hospice, 200 Muir Rd., Martinez 94553.

Sergio Fanucchi

Sergio Fanucchi, a resident of Danville, passed away Nov. 2 at the age of 70.

He was born May 19, 1937, in Arancio, Port Elisa, Lucca, Italy. He left Italy in 1960 to find a new life in the United States. In 1961 he married Mary; they had three sons, John, David and Gregory.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated Nov. 7 at St. Isidore Church in Danville. Donations may be made to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Pl., Memphis, TN 38105 or Hope Hospice, 6500 Dublin Blvd., Ste. 100, Dublin 94568.

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Sports

A LOOK AT THE LOCAL SPORTS SCENE



T-Birds headed to Turkey Bowl

The San Ramon T-Birds Football Jr. Pee Wees are on their way to the Turkey Bowl tomorrow, Nov. 24, for their first appearance in at least 14 years. They shut out the Napa Saints, 20-0, to qualify, with great play on both the offensive and defensive sides. Tomorrow's game begins at 9 a.m. at Deer Valley High School in Antioch, and everyone is invited to come watch the action.



Blast to victory

The Danville Mustang Blast U-13 Girl's Soccer Team won the 2007 Placer United Foothill Cup on Oct. 27-28. After a long and challenging weekend, the girls defeated DVSC

Black 94 with a final score of 2-1, making it a third consecutive championship win at the Placer tournament. Team members are (from top left) Coach Lance Feldman, Alexa Vandevanter, Lynsey Hromatko, Amy Harioka, Alyssa Alarab,

Hannah Koski, Shelby Cota, Coach Rob Vandevanter, Kimberly Low, Morgan Idso, Bethoney Ritter, Coach Doug Norville, Katherine Tao, Katelyn Rader, Rachel Hamilton, Serena Lee, Kerianne Hunt, Reilly Parker and Rachel Feldman.

Attitude pays off

The U10 girls team Mustang Attitude brought home the gold from the Kick or Treat Tournament. After shutting out its first three opponents, the Attitude beat the Montclair Red Rockets in an exciting game that ended in penalty kicks. Team members are (l-r) Coach Greg Weiss, Madeline DeWalt, Kira Weiss, Hanna Platter, Haley Schreiber, Kiana Kenny, Maggie Gibbons, Kristin Prochazka, Jenny Sharpe, Sophia Friedler, Emma Reynolds, Ali Panconi, Leila Gaemi and Lauren Marmo.



Swimmer, 12, headed for Junior Nationals



Madison White, 12, of the Crow Canyon Sharks brought four records at the Pacific Swim Senior Meet, held at the Terrapin pool on Nov. 3-4.

Crashing the water in her 200 backstroke, Madison set a record time of 2:04.65 to break Karen Wang's Pacific record of 2:06.45. Later, seeded first in the finals, Madison came back and broke her own record, a time of 2:02.18 and qualified for the Junior Nationals being held in Minneapolis in 2008.

In the medley relay, Madison was the lead-off, swimming the 50 backstroke, breaking Artemis

Daphni's 11-year Pacific record of 28.10 with her new Pacific record time of 27.72.

Finishing the day, Madison, swimming the 100 backstroke, broke her own record of 59.24 with her new Pacific record of 58.91.

Swimmers competing in the Pacific Swim Senior Meet were ages 12 to 24.

"They were so tall and fast. I said to myself, 'Do it,'" said Madison. "I wanted to go all out from the start and swim as fast as I could to the finish."

Madison trains with coaches Ethan Hall and Dan Cottam. ■

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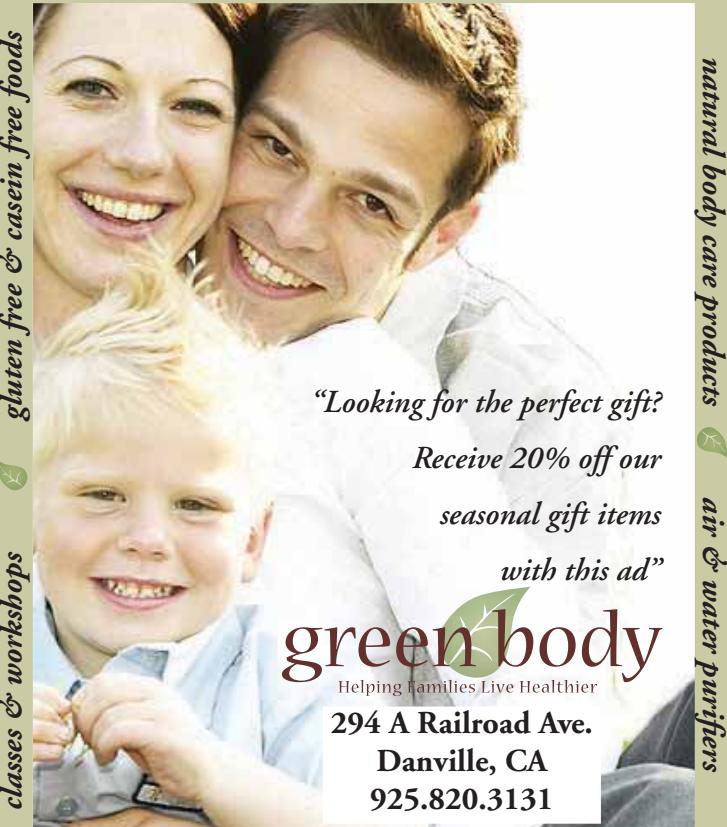
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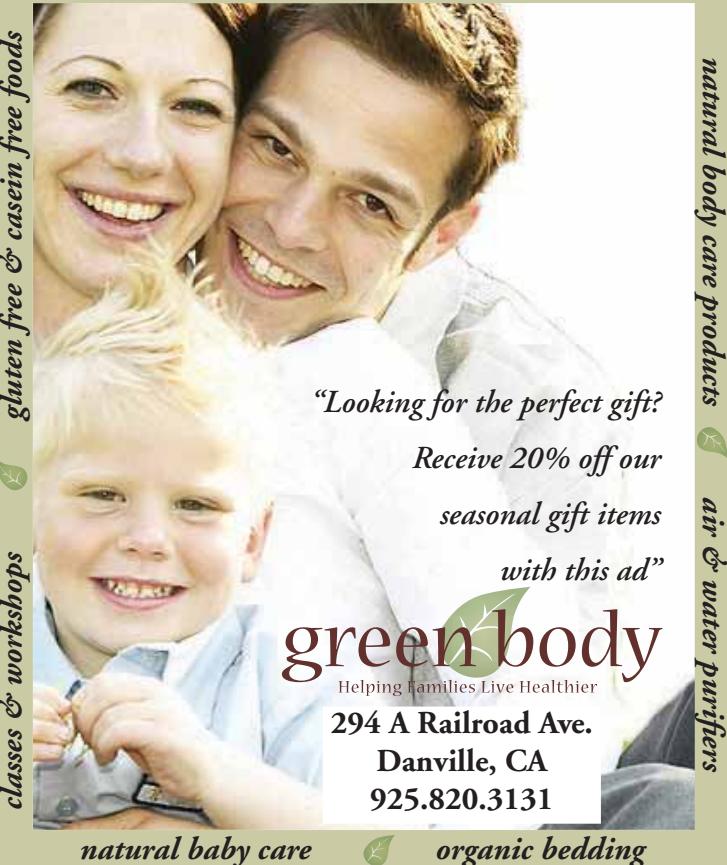
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JORDAN M. DORONILA

Above, Olivia Lane celebrates the end of a school day with an apple as a snack.
 Below, Christine Lane makes a point about high national childhood obesity rates.

Danville mom takes on PTA over 'junk food fundraising'

by Natalie O'Neill

It started with a photograph. The image was attention-grabbing: thick buttery cookies on the front page of a glossy brochure. The booklet, sent home in the backpack of every student at Rancho Romero Elementary school, was part of an annual Parent Teacher Association cookie dough fundraiser. And it arrived at Christine Lane's house for the first time on a crisp fall day about a year ago.

Her daughter Ainsley—then an energetic kindergartener—came home, pamphlet in hand, pumped up to sell. Students were told to tout the frozen dough, cheesecake and brownies at school and that high sellers would get exciting prizes, like toys and class parties. So Ainsley was thrilled.

Lane, an Alamo fitness instructor, took one look at the photograph and started to ask questions.

With childhood obesity rates soaring nationally, she figured there had to be a better way to raise money than through "junk food fundraising."

She'd seen her father battle disheartening health problems due to type 2 diabetes and couldn't bear the idea of kids buying and selling such high fat food, with almost no nutritional value.

"The school faculty are role models to our kids. When they take it upon themselves to ask my child to sell junk food, it's a problem," Lane said.

Back then, she approached the PTA, pushing for a more healthy fundraiser. And she hit a brick wall.

"It's been kind of strange. These people have been very resistant to change," she said.

Members of the PTA board explained that the cookie dough fundraiser, a 10-year tradition, was the school's most successful fundraising event and was an asset. It earned \$10,000 for the kids last year alone and, ultimately, did more good than bad, they said.

"On one hand, it works. It's in place. Why change it?" said PTA member Wendy Thomas, explaining the mindset of some board members.

Fit or quit: the ultimatum

This year, when it came time to confront the PTA about a fundraiser change, Lane was ready.

She prepared a presentation and volunteered to spearhead a walk-a-thon, with the working title, "The Student Body Campaign." She pitched it for fall 2008. And she made a promise. If it didn't raise at least \$10,000, she and her husband would write a check for the difference.

She presented her plan to the PTA this month.

"It was like entering the lion's den," Lane said.

At the PTA meeting, 12 mothers, some clad in sweatpants, others in power suits, sat in a circle in the school's multipurpose room. A lingering tension was in the air—in some women's voices and others' facial expressions.

November is national PTA healthy lifestyles month, and Lane told them it's a little too ironic that PTA is advocating junk food and promising pizza parties for high sellers.

Initially, the PTA members said she should do her healthy fundraiser in the spring and that they would keep selling the cookies in the fall.

But Lane insisted they were missing the point. To instill a healthy mentality in kids early on, you have to get rid of junk food fundraising all together, she said.

So she gave what PTA members called an ultimatum. In order for her to do the walk-a-thon, they had to stop selling

cookie dough completely.

"I was surprised by the tension," Thomas said. "I think when you have people come to the meeting to present an idea, the presenter doesn't usually ask for a decision right then and there. People get a little uncomfortable with that."

When it came time to vote on the fundraiser for fall 2008, however, Lane's proposal passed with a vast majority. She was prepared. She pitched it ahead of time. And she had plenty of background in fund-raising for other causes.

"Motion passed. Here we go. Here's our rollercoaster," said Janet Nunan, vice president for the PTA.

Big kids, big trouble

Nationally, the number of obese children has tripled in the last 30 years. The epidemic is one of the nation's leading health threats, as more youths than ever are developing adult health problems like high blood pressure, heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Today, about 12 million kids are overweight in the U.S., with another 12 million at risk. Increased fast food marketing geared toward children, coupled with the popularity of sedentary activities—like video games and the Internet—have only accelerated the problem. And researchers predict this might be the first generation to live shorter lives than their parents.

A 2002 report from the California Center for Public Health showed that 26.5 percent of children in the state are overweight. Taking into consideration California's high population, the report was telling. It illustrated California was home to the most overweight kids in the country.



Ainsley, 6, takes big bites of an apple, while Olivia Lane, 4, is more interested in poking toothpicks in her healthy snack.

In 2004, the Childhood Nutrition Act put more responsibility on schools to advocate healthy lifestyles for kids. Now, schools with federally funded meals are required to have policies that outline a healthy school environment, such as offering fresher options in the cafeteria.

"It should be taught at home, but it needs to be reinforced at schools," Lane said.

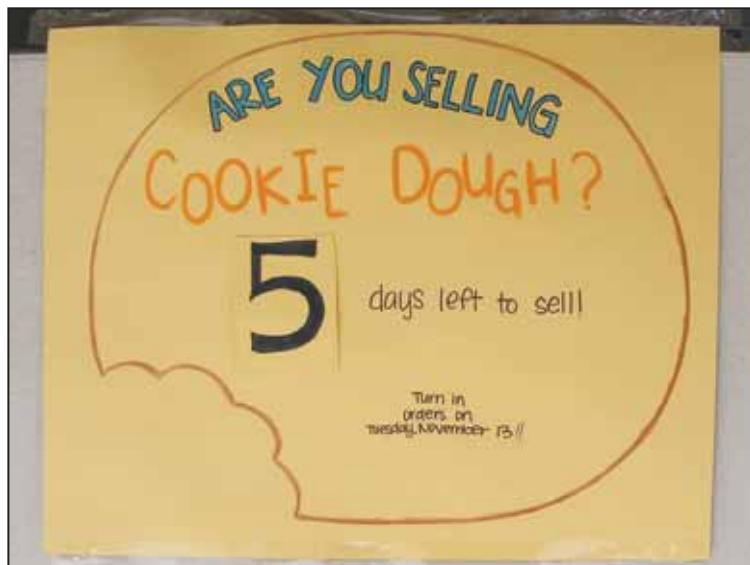
Childhood obesity has been linked to socio-economics, with studies showing that the poorer the family and the less open space in their community, the more likely the child is to become obese.

That being said, some Alamo PTA parents felt the issue isn't as pressing in the Rancho Romero community—one that's well-off and semi-rural.

If you maintain a balance of fatty foods with healthy food and exercise, then selling and buying a little cookie dough is not the end of the world, some parents said.

"You help your kids make choices. If you work hard with them, it won't be an issue, as long as you provide a healthy supplement," Thomas said.

Ultimately, though, it's the mentality and habits of



This sign at Rancho Romero Elementary School reminds students to sell for the school's PTA fall fundraiser.

the kids that Lane says she is most concerned about. She wants them to learn early on that eating right and being active makes you feel good. She hopes her walk-a-thon will do just that.

If you wait too long, it can be "like swimming upstream," she said.

"Our students get a lot because they are in an affluent area, but none of that matters if they're not in good health," she said.

Money matters

Here in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District, grade schools tend to rely on auctions for fundraisers. Some of the larger high schools raise from \$80,000 to a \$250,000 per year, said Terry Koehne, spokesman for the district.

Parent Teacher Association members from Tassajara Hills Elementary and Vista Grande Elementary said they have a carnival in the fall and an art auction in the spring.

"We are very steeped in tradition," Julie Felipe, a Tassajara Hills PTA board member and former president. She said it hadn't changed in at least nine years, since she had been involved.

But some things are changing. Now, more than ever, PTAs in the district are taking on social issues affecting children, Koehne said. In general, they are leaving the fund-raising to the school's education fund committees.

"PTAs have become more focused on child advocacy in the last five years They are very involved legislatively," he said.

Even with the trend, Lane said she felt the board was less concerned with the social issue and more with how much money it would bring in.

"Overall they weren't getting a sense for why I was there. It shouldn't be about the bottom line ... about the money and the ease," she said.

The president of the Rancho Romero PTA, Mona Tom, said she fully supports the new method of fundraising, even considering how lucrative the cookie dough sales have been in the past.

"I don't have any hesitation," Tom said. "Anything that's healthier is better, right?"

When the "The Student Body" walk-a-thon begins next fall, parents will make pledges and the event will take place on the school's field, if all goes as planned. The Rancho Romero Education Fund will be taking on the event.

Lane hopes to get vendors to provide fresh and tasty snacks on site. Educational games to get the students excited about healthy living and recycling will be featured as well.

"I'm not the only one who is saying this. There's a national epidemic...I'm just the only one who chose to speak," Lane said. ■

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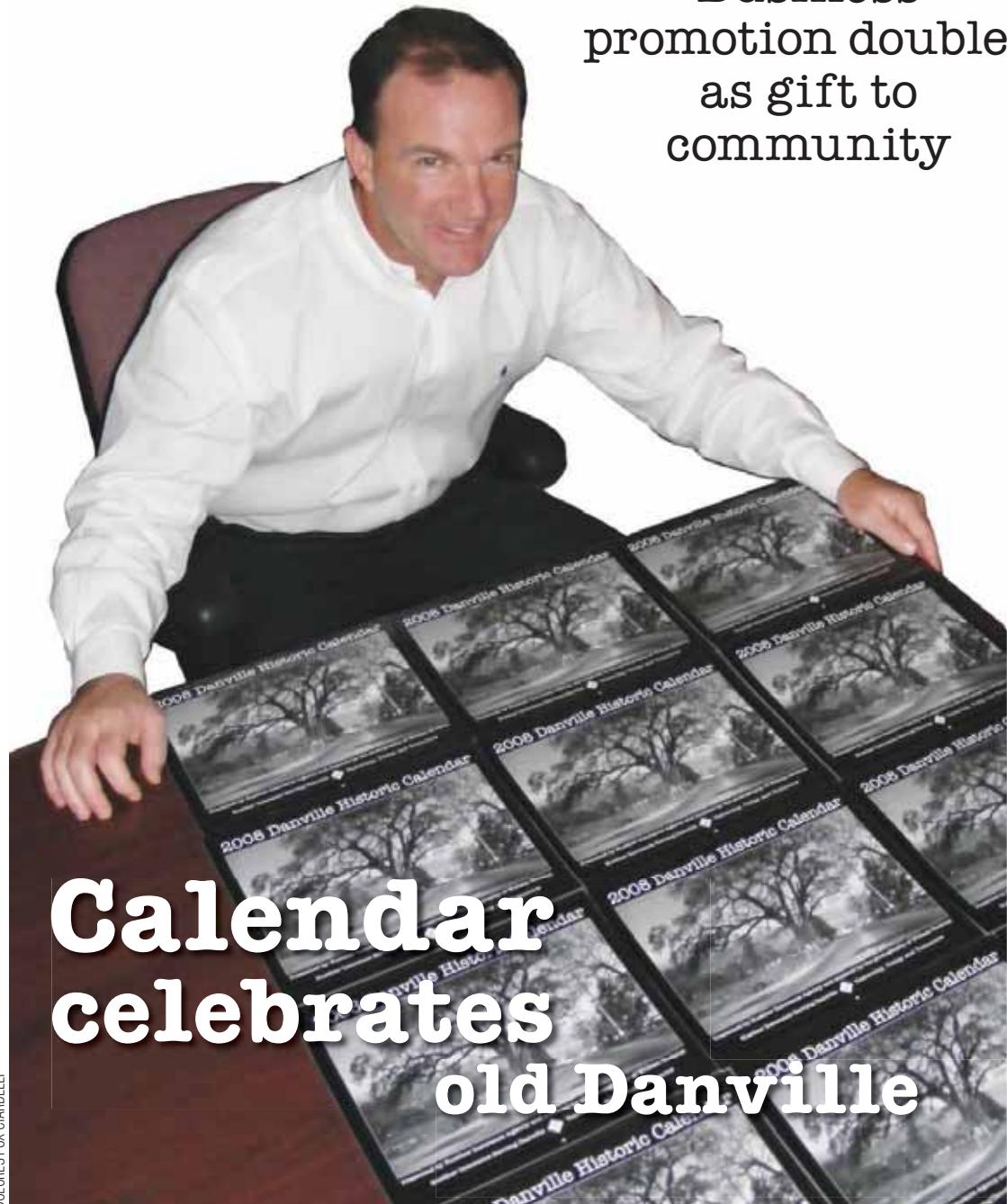
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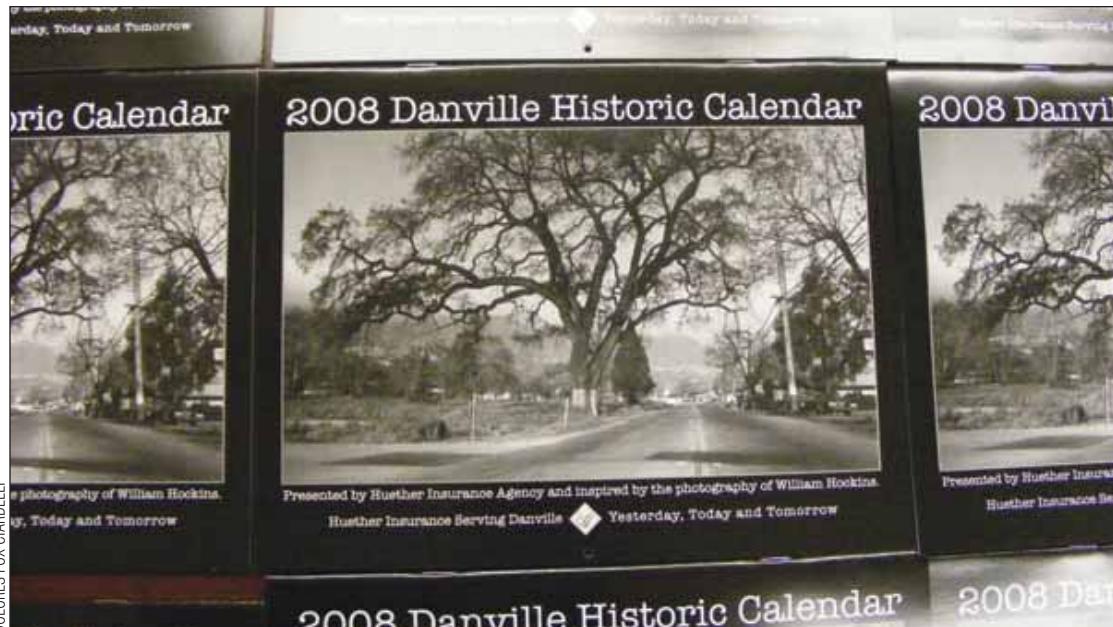
by Dolores Fox Ciardelli



Calendar celebrates old Danville

DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Insurance agent Bill Huether is busy distributing the 2008 Danville Historic Calendar that he produced, in a two-year project that included family members and friends.



The calendar features Diablo Road in 1975 on the front page and as the November photo. It clearly shows the changes that have taken place in only 32 years.

How Diablo Road has changed. A photo of the Danville Oak Tree in 1975 shows it to the south side of Diablo Road rather than in a center divider with geriatric braces. Yet a big improvement has been the removal of the line of telephone poles.

Diablo Road of yesteryear is just one picture in the 2008 Danville Historic Calendar produced by Huether Insurance Agency with photographs by Bill Hockins. Tim Huether proudly hopes the calendar will hang in every home and office in the area.

"Everyone who sees it says, 'Wow!'" Huether said. "The neat thing about the project is that people come in with their stories. One guy came in whose father owned the gas station in one of the pictures."

Huether's father was a New York police officer, who patrolled Central Park on a horse. The family lived on Long Island where Huether became acquainted with a neighbor who owned a horse farm—and was in insurance.

"When I was an adult, our paths crossed," recalled Huether. "He offered me a job, to learn insurance."

Huether found it satisfying to help people in this way and was happy to ply his business on Long Island—until Karen Peterson came to nearby Fire Island from California for a family reunion. It soon became clear that they wanted to live in the same place. Karen tried out New York but Tim also visited California, where her family had moved.

"I fell in love with it," Huether said, noting that Danville reminds him of his hometown on Long Island before it "surrendered to highways and franchise restaurants."

He moved here in April 1993, and they were married that September. Now they have four children.

Huether opened his insurance business in Danville six-and-a-half years ago.

"I specialize in providing comprehension risk analysis of insurance needs for affluent clientele for both personal and commercial needs," he said.

He recalled attending an Insurance Agents Association gathering in his early years here and meeting photographer Bill Hockins, a retired agent whose office had been in Danville.

"Photography was his love," Huether said. "And he was always putting forward his love of Danville."

"What is unique about Danville, and what Bill and I both loved and sometimes discussed, is its appreciation for the past and its passion for saluting that heritage as it grows and necessarily modern-

izes," Huether said.

Hockins had begun taking photos when he was a boy growing up in Piedmont. He and his wife Hazel moved to Danville in the 1950s. When he began to sell insurance in the San Ramon Valley, he took photographs of the homes and businesses he was insuring.

"This was the start of my taking over 50,000 negatives of the rural San Ramon Valley," Hockins is quoted as saying, on his Web site, www.fototopia.com.

Hockins passed away in October 2005 and his son Russell took over his business selling the photographs; some are set onto sturdy wooden puzzles, where are available at the Museum of the San Ramon Valley.

When Huether began to ask himself what he could do to get his name out into the community—at the same time doing something nice for it—he remembered Hockins' lovely and nostalgic images. He liked the idea of producing a historical calendar, and contacted Russell who provided plenty of photos for the project.

"They were in binders," Huether said. "There were at least a thousand pictures."

After much deliberation he whittled them down to a few dozen, and from there to the 13 photographs in the calendar.

"It's fun to see what used to be where on some familiar streets, and what events like the Independence Day parade looked like 40 or 50 years ago," Huether said.

He printed 5,000 calendars, at a cost of about \$6,000. His friend and publicist Paul Hirsch wrote the captions. His father-in-law Gary Peterson, an engineer, helped with the proofreading as did his wife, who was an English major.

"I was told to get an engineer and an English major for the best proofreading—and I did," Huether said.

Distributing thousands of calendars has proven to be a huge undertaking. Huether keeps the museum supplied. They often go home with schoolchildren from there, and one father came into Huether's office for more. They are available at his office, 319 Diablo Road, Suite 100, as well as at the Danville Weekly office right next door, 315 Diablo Road, Suite 100.

"It's been a really fun project," Huether said.

He said the undertaking took two years, from start to finish. He hopes the 2008 Danville Historic Calendar will be a salute to his old friend, photographer Bill Hockins, as well as help those living here today to appreciate and preserve what they have. ■

The Wine Guy

BY GREGORY PEEBLES



Finding Serenity

2005 Brassfield Estate Winery
"High Serenity Ranch" Pinot Grigio
(High Valley Appellation)
(BevMo!—Danville, \$12.99)

Located in Clearlake Oaks and nestled in a mountainous valley 1,800 feet above sea level, Brassfield Estate Winery resides in California's newest A.V.A. (American Viticultural Area)—High Valley. Contrary to California's two most famous wine-making valleys, Napa and Sonoma, High Valley has an east-to-west orientation. The region's geology makes for wide-ranging temperature variations and unique soil compositions. Established in August 2005, this appellation is only one mile wide by five miles long.

High Serenity Ranch, purchased by Jerry Brassfield in 1973 and found in High Valley's western half, was once a sprawling 1,600-acre cattle ranch and wildlife preserve. The cattle have now been replaced by grape vines and a modern wine



production facility. Thankfully, the myriad of wildlife still remains. Subsequent land purchases have expanded Mr. Brassfield's holdings to 2,500 acres.

Among the 16 varietals found on Brassfield Estate's 250 planted acres is Pinot Grigio. Winemaker Kevin Robinson produced just over 5,000 cases of this wine in '05.

Its colors are pure and straightforward. Bright shades of wheat

and straw dominate while being accompanied by the faintest suggestion of pale green.

Without question, the wine's strongest feature is its fantastic array of aromas. The enticing fragrances of exotic fruits, perfume-y wisteria and honeysuckle, earthy flint and wet river stone are wonderful.

Sadly, the palate is one-dimensional and underwhelming. Both its acid level and flavor profile (citrus, green apple and mineral) are extremely understated. Typical of the varietal in this price category, the finish is quite rapid.

Should you wish to give Brassfield Estate's Pinot Grigio a try, my suggestion would be to serve it as a light cocktail. As always, please trust your own palate to be the ultimate judge.

Have comments or questions about wine? Gregory Peebles, wine industry professional and East Bay resident, can be contacted at caledoniawine@sbcglobal.net.

The Pet Vet says...

BY DR. HEIDI STRAND



Yes, there's a pill for dog obesity

Q. Our vet recently told us that our Pug is obese. He has trouble breathing sometimes so we don't exercise him as often as we should, and he probably eats way too much. I've heard there is a prescription weight loss pill for dogs, but our vet didn't mention it. Is it still available?

A. The medication you're thinking of is called Slentrol. It's the first ever prescription weight loss pill for dogs and was approved by the FDA back in February. It is often considered to be similar to Orlistat, which is marketed for human weight loss as Xenical and Alli. However it is somewhat different. Slentrol is a type of drug known as a MTP inhibitor. It works by decreasing fat absorption and promoting satiety (the feeling of being full). The human drug Orlistat is a lipase inhibitor and mainly works by blocking fat absorption. Hence the nasty side effects (increased stool, oily stool, frequent defecation) seen with Orlistat should not happen. However, vomiting and diarrhea are possible side effects.

The manufacturer of Slentrol, Pfizer, claims it is very effective, with one study demonstrating 20 percent weight loss after six months in overweight Labrador retrievers. It does not appear to have any long term side effects, but as with any new drug, only

time will tell for sure. I am aware of several veterinarians who have recommended using the drug for dangerously obese dogs. Your dog might be a good candidate, since he may need to have his weight loss "jump started" so he can start exercising. Stopping the drug will cause a return of appetite and weight gain unless food intake is controlled. It is usually taken for several months and is not prohibitively expensive.

And to answer your next question, no, Slentrol cannot be used in

humans or cats, because of possible effects on the liver.

—Dr. Heidi Strand is a veterinarian for the East Bay SPCA in Dublin. She has lived in the Tri-Valley for 10 years with her family and an assortment of four-legged friends. Questions can be mailed to 315 Diablo Road, Suite 100, Danville 94526; or e-mailed to hstrand@eastbayspca.org. Her column runs every other week.



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What makes their office so unique is the fact that they have been successfully helping patients not only with excellent chiropractic care, but are also helping their patients look good, lose weight and change their lives.

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The program not only peels off the fat, it increases a person's energy, lean muscle mass and improves mood and focus. This is why famous author John Gray (Men are from Mars women are from Venus) highly recommends this program.

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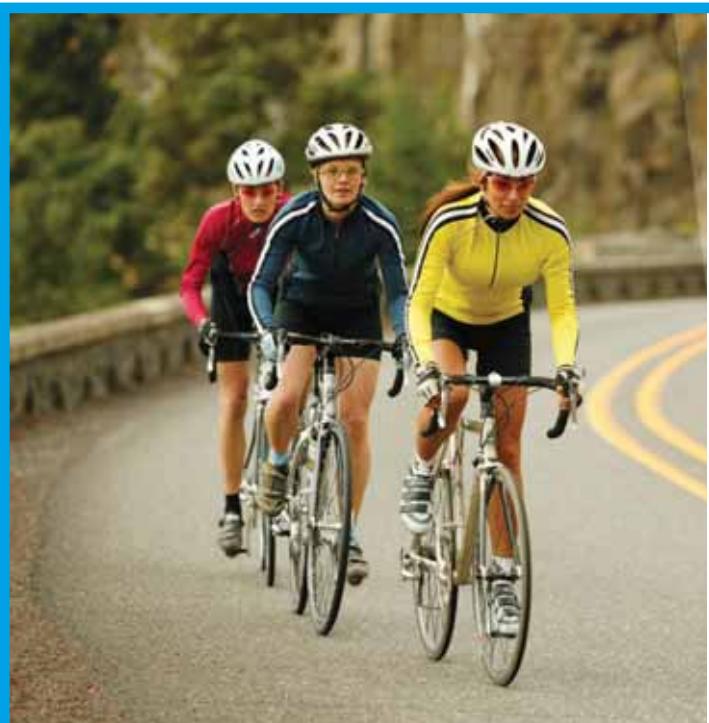
The body stores dangerous impurities in fat tissue as a way of diluting and neutralizing them, keeping impurities away from vital organs. If you gently remove the impurities, the body no longer needs to hold onto fat and you turn the body into a "fat burning" machine.

"What we have seen in our patients is nothing short of miraculous" explained Dr. Dees. "One of my patients, who is currently on the cleanse, reported that he has lost 40 pounds in four weeks, another lost 7 pounds and 12 inches in just four days. Results may vary. In a recent study participants averaged a weight loss of 7 lbs at the completion of the first 9 Day program. This is not a starvation diet or a fast, but a fully nutritionally balanced program." The program is doctor monitored, safe and effective.

"Everyone needs to cleanse to avoid the effects of impurities from food and the environment," said Dr. Dees. "Especially thin people who store them in the liver, kidneys and vital organs."

To find out more about this program, contact Canyon Chiropractic at 925-867-1414 for our next workshop on this amazing program or go to www.GoCleanse.com/docdees.





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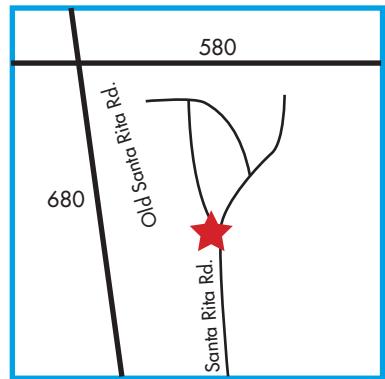
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A movie review of what's **READY TO RENT**

Love in the Time of Cholera

★★
Rating: R for sexual content/nudity and brief language.
Run Time: 2 hours, 18 minutes.

Trying to adapt Gabriel Garcia Marquez's rich and revered 1988 novel to the screen was a futile exercise.

The Colombian-born writer's sweeping narrative, evocative and sensory imagery, and spellbinding storytelling cannot be reduced to the requirements of a screenplay—translated to what viewers can see and hear within a couple of hours. Whereas the novel conveys what characters feel, think, remember and forget, the movie merely shows what they do.

Despite the talents of Academy Award-winning screenwriter Ronald Harwood ("The Pianist"), only the pale ghost of the Nobel Prize-winner's love story lingers on screen.

Even if you haven't read the book, several things about Brit Mike Newell's direction ("Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" and "Four Weddings and a Funeral") will strike you as wrong from the opening moments. The tone wavers unsteadily between drama and comedy, as wealthy Dr. Juvenal Urbino (Benjamin Bratt) teeters on a ladder and falls to his death. His widow Fermina (Giovanna Mezzogiorno) sinks into a swamp of grief, and the romantic Florentino Ariza (Javier Bardem)—who has loved her for 51 years, nine months and four days—declares his undying devotion once again.

The principal cast members look like actors pretending to play elderly characters instead of making us believe they are. The acting doesn't improve when the film flashes back a half century. As the father of the teenage Fermina, John Leguizamo chomps on a cigar while spewing anachronistic dialogue out the other side of his mouth. Sometimes he mumbles lines like Brando in "The Godfather." Big and broad also characterize the performances of Hector Elizondo, playing the successful uncle of the young Florentino (Unax Ugalde), and Fernanda Montenegro as his doting mother.

The film flits from era to era, as Fermina's father takes her far away from Florentino and his love letters. The young woman marries the good doctor, and they spend two honeymoon years in Paris.

The film has no dramatic conflict, only the trite reminders of unrequited love expressed in Florentino's occasional voiceover: "Life is like the sea—turbulent" or "She's a splinter I cannot pull out" or "My heart has more rooms than a whorehouse." Meanwhile, the lovesick man dulls his pain through a series of sexual conquests—622, to be exact.

Despite the challenges of adaptation, one wonders if a director like Alfonso Arau ("Like Water for Chocolate") might have captured some of the novel's magical realism, or if the talented cast might have performed more convincingly if speaking Spanish. Instead a few humorous scenes offer comic relief on the big screen, while the masterpiece about love and life can only be found on the printed page.

—Susan Tavernetti

OF NOTE

Artsy lady



Janice Byer won an Honorable Mention Award for her "Checks & Stripes" oil painting at the Art in the Park's "Inside Show" recently. The successful event was sponsored by Alamo Danville Artists' Society and the Town of Danville.

Awards for elected woman

The East Bay Chapter of the California Elected Women's Association for Education and

Research (CEWAER) recently presented its first Juanita Haugen Women Making a Difference Awards to the following women:

- Community Service—Dianne Jones, Museum on Main Street, Pleasanton, board member. Local nominations included Roxanne Lindsay, San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District board member and Museum volunteer; and Lynn Osborn, Danville Planning Commissioner;
- Education—Anne White, Livermore School Board;
- Business—Carolyn Cooper Degnan, President of San Ramon Chamber of Commerce, Board Member of SR Valley Education Foundation, SR Rotary, SR Valley YMCA; and
- Overall Achievement and Excellence—Erlene DeMarcus, former president of BART board of directors.

CAWAER, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, established

► Continued on page 19

Presenting the Past

BY BEVERLY LANE

Gold and the Harlans (part 3)

The Harlans' life in Coloma was an adventure.

Joel did some prospecting and returned one night with \$1,600 worth of gold. He neglected to leave a tool to mark his ownership of the hole and found others in his place the next day. Life went on, Gold Rush or not, as Jake's wife, Ann, had their first child on Sept. 9, 1848, at Coloma.

Jose Maria Amador went up to the gold country in June and July of 1848, netting by his account \$13,500 from mining and merchandise during one trip, and \$10,000 more in another. He and his son took cattle and food to sell and brought 25 Indians with him from his Rancho San Ramon to work for the gold. Their camp came to be called Amador's and later Amador city and county were named for him.

The Harlan cousins sold their store in Coloma and returned to San Francisco, where prices had gone up astronomically. Chester Lyman wrote that a 50-square-yard, unoccupied lot rose in value from \$15 in 1846, to \$400 the next year, to \$10,000 in 1848. San Francisco's population went from an estimated 600 in early 1848 to over 20,000 the next year.

Many others who later settled in the San Ramon Valley came from back East because of the Gold Rush. Felix Coats settled in Tassajara Valley in 1849. He wrote: "Hearing so many tales of the rich mines in California, which caused such wild excitement over the whole country, my father and I, having caught the 'Gold Fever,' were anxious to try our luck."

R.O. Baldwin and William Meese came from Ohio and mined, eventually discovering Danville in 1852 and planting some of the earliest successful crops in the county that winter.

Dan and Andrew Inman left Illinois in 1849 for the gold fields. Andrew began ranching in Green Valley in 1852, and Dan moved here for good in 1858, buying 400 acres



Joel and Minerva Harlan built El Nido, The Nest, in 1857 and 1858 in a Gothic Revival style. It was a showplace home for the Harlans and later the Geldermanns.

which is today Danville's Old Town.

Joel and Minerva Harlan moved to the San Ramon Valley in 1852, using some of their earnings to purchase land from Amador and Norris. Minerva told her children there was so much gold around, she found it hard to believe that gold would be worth anything.

Their first house was listed as a landmark when Alameda County was carved from the original Contra Costa County in 1853. In 1857 and 1858, Joel and Minerva built a new Gothic Revival house, called "El Nido," which still sits at 19251 San Ramon Valley Blvd. in San Ramon. The Harlans' house and ranch land were well known and their nine children were among the builders of young California. Joel died in 1875 and Minerva in 1915.

The Wimmers fade from memory, except for the famous "Wimmer nugget." Elizabeth Wimmer claimed she had kept the original gold which had been tested in her soap pot. Until the day she died, she wore the gold in a soft buckskin bag around her neck. The gold piece is occasionally displayed at the Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.

J.P. Munro-Fraser in his 1882 "History of Contra Costa County" called the first Valley pioneers "birds of passage" who had been to the mines, felt the blessings of the "glorious climate of California" and returned to settle. They were part of a huge immigration which raised California's population from 14,000 (not including Indians) in the 1840s to 225,000 by 1852. California ultimately skipped the usual territorial stage and became a state in 1850.

Gold started California as we know it. Some historians suggest that the abrupt beginnings of the state, with a practically all-male cast of characters, was not the best way to begin a new community and a great state. Historian Kevin Starr, for one, called it a "rapid, monstrous, maturity."

Sources: Jacob Harlan's "California 1846-1848," J.P. Munro-Fraser's "History of Contra Costa County, 1882," Museum archives.

Beverly Lane, a longtime Danville resident, is curator of the Museum of the San Ramon Valley and co-author of "San Ramon Valley: Alamo, Danville, and San Ramon."

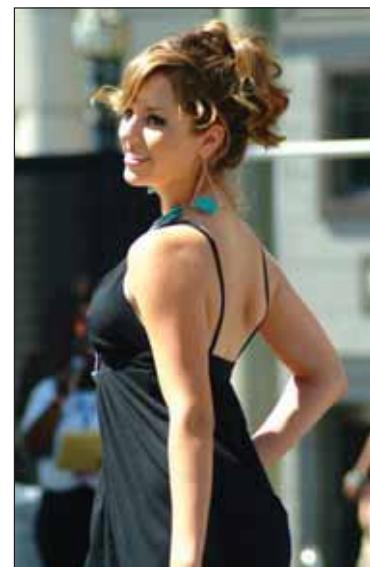
Of Note

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the awards to honor Haugen, who was a Pleasanton Unified School District board member and former state president of CAWAER. Its goals are to educate its constituencies as well as to encourage and support women to seek public office.

Meet Miss Danville

Alexandra Curtis, 15, of Danville, was second in the 2007



Miss California contest last summer, which is part of the national American Miss Pageant system. She won the Best Actress award, was first runner-up in Most Photogenic, and was named a State Ambassador for outstanding program participation. These achievements at the state finalist level qualified her in four ways to compete as Miss Danville for the national title, being held this month in Anaheim.

Alexandra attends Monte Vista High School and is involved in cheerleading and lacrosse. She also volunteers 200 hours a year as a junior coach for cheerleaders in the San Ramon Valley Thunderbird Football and Cheer program.



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Calendar

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY • POST CALENDAR ITEMS AT WWW.DANVILLEWEEKLY.COM

Art

Father Nature's Restaurant Art Event

Father Nature's Restaurant will host a two-day art event from 8 a.m.-3 p.m., Sunday-Monday, Nov. 25-26, at 172 Prospect Ave., Danville. Activities including viewing contemporary paintings, visit with artist Kevin Barry Dever, complimentary appetizers and a glass of wine. Call 820-3160 or visit www.finethingsart.com.

Stephen Sanfilippo Alamo-Danville Artists' Society and the Pioneer Art

Gallery will host Stephen Sanfilippo in a reception from 4-8 p.m., Friday, Nov. 23, at Pioneer Art Gallery, 524 Hartz Ave., Danville. You can meet Stephen Sanfilippo during the downtown Danville holiday kickoff. The exhibit is open 5-9 p.m., Friday, 1-9 p.m., Saturday and 1-5 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 13-27.

Author Visit

Rakestraw Books Author Rakestraw Books will host Penny Warner, author of "Official Nancy Drew Handbook"

Lights of the Valley

Remember or honor someone special this holiday season with the purchase of a symbolic light, star, name on a wreath or angel. Your donations help us provide end-of-life care for patients and grief support for families.

Illumination Ceremonies

11/27 – Livermore

11/29 – Dublin

11/28 – Pleasanton

12/6 – San Ramon



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11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Please bring your own camera and take
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Nov 25	11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Dec 1 – Dec 2	11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Dec 8 – Dec 9	11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Dec 15 – Dec 16	11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Dec 20 – Dec 21	6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Dec 22 – Dec 23	11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Holiday Open House
Sunday, November 25th
11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

After you visit with Santa,
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CALENDAR

p.m., Saturday, Dec. 1, at Danville Congregational Church, 989 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville. General admission is \$25, reserve seating is \$30, and seniors and students are \$18. Call 964-9994 or (650) 533-8939.

'Songs of the Season' Danville Girls Chorus and the San Ramon Valley High School Chamber Singers present "Songs of the Season" at 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., Thursday, Nov. 29, at Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Tickets are \$10; \$7 for children 14 and under. Call 943-7469.

Contra Costa Wind Symphony

Winterfest Contra Costa Wind Symphony presents "Winterfest" from 7:30-10 p.m., Monday, Dec. 17, at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Dr., Lafayette. The concert will include a sing-along of familiar carols. Call 944-5392 or visit www.ccwindsymphony.org.

Holiday Season Favorites Contra Costa Wind Symphony presents "Carols and Holiday Season Favorites" sing-along concert at 7:30 p.m., Monday, Dec. 17, at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Dr., Lafayette. This concert is free. Visit www.ccwindsymphony.org.

Valley Concert Chorale Holiday Concert Valley Concert Chorale presents their annual Holiday Concert at 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 8, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1225 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. Advance tickets are \$18; \$20 at the door. Call 866-4003 or e-mail info@valleyconcertchorale.org.

Events

ADAS Annual Holiday Party Alamo-Danville Artists Society will host their annual holiday party celebrating fund-raising efforts for arts educators in the San Ramon Valley from 6-9 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 11, at Congregational's Social Hall, 989 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville. After dinner, checks are presented to teachers who share personal stories about using these funds.

This event is free. E-mail artpromoter@sbcglobal.net.

Beacon Lighting Atop Diablo The Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, every year, memorializes Pearl Harbor Day by turning on the summit Beacon atop Mt. Diablo. This year they will gather at 3:45 p.m., Friday, Dec. 7, and the "Eye of Diablo" will be lit at sunset and will shine all night. Call 947-3535.

Farmers Market The Danville Farmers Market is open from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., every Saturday, at the Railroad Avenue Municipal Parking Lot, at the corner of Railroad and Prospect avenues. Call 825-9090 or visit www.pcfma.com.

Mayor's Installation and Community Service Awards

Ceremony Town of Danville will host the Mayor's Installation and Community Service Awards from 7:30-9:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 4, at the Danville Community Center, 420 Front St. Call 314-3401.

Exhibits

European Train Exhibit Blackhawk Museum will host the layout of HO-scale European model trains, track layout and scenery from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Nov. 23-Jan. 6, at the Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. Call 736-2751 or visit www.blackhawkmuseum.org or www.theshopsatblackhawk.com.

Fundraisers

Holiday Boutique San Ramon Senior Center Foundation is sponsoring a Holiday Boutique from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Tuesday-Wednesday, Nov. 27-28, at San Ramon Senior Foundation, 9300 Alcosta Blvd. Proceeds will benefit the San Ramon Center Foundation. Call 978-3250.

San Ramon Holiday Boutique Come and see 18 different vendors at a Holiday Boutique from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday-Sunday, Nov. 23-25, at

3100 Martingale Dr., Danville. Cash and credit cards will be accepted. Proceeds will benefit Shephard's Gate. Call (510) 220-7061.

Holiday Pet Photos with Santa 'Paws' Scoops Pooper Scooper Service presents "Holiday Pet Photos with Santa Paws" from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 1, at Pet Food Express, 609 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville. Cost is \$10. Proceeds will Tri Valley Animal Rescue. Participants will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one free month of Pooper Scooper Service. For information, call (888) 736-7667 or visit www.scoopsca.net.

Third Annual Crab Feed The TVAR third annual Crab Feed is from 6-10 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 2, at the Shrine Event Center, 170 Lindbergh Ave., Livermore. Advance tickets are \$45 if purchased by Jan. 10; \$50 afterwards. The dinner will include all-you-can-eat crab, salad, pasta, French bread and dessert; no-host bar will be available. Enjoy live and silent auctions, a 50-50 drawing and dancing. Proceeds will benefit the Tri-Valley Animal Rescue. Visit www.tvar.org.

Holiday

3rd Annual Holiday Home Tour Danville-Alamo Branch of American Association of University Women (AAUW) will host the third annual Holiday Home Tour from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Friday-Saturday, Dec. 7-8. Five homes will be open in the Danville and Alamo area. Advance tickets are \$25 before Nov. 30; \$30 thereafter. Mail SASE to Danville-Alamo AAUW, 255 Morris Ranch Ct., Danville, CA 94526. Call 837-0826 or visit www.aauw-da.org.

Lights of the Valley Illumination Ceremonies Join Hope Hospice as they light the Tree of Life at different locations: Danville at 5 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 25, at Pleasant Thoughts in the Danville Livery; Blackhawk at 5 p.m., Friday, Nov. 30, at the corner of Blackhawk Rd. at Blackhawk Dr.; San Ramon at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 6, at San Ramon Medical Center, 6001 Norris Canyon Rd.; and Alamo at noon, Wednesday, Dec. 12, at Alamo Women's Club, 1401 Danville Blvd. Remember or honor someone special with the purchase of a symbolic light, star, angel or name on a memorial wreath. Call 829-8770 or visit www.hopehospice.com.

Menorah Lighting Chabad of Contra Costa and Broadway Plaza will host the annual Contra Costa Grand Menorah Lighting from 4-6 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 9, at at Broadway Plaza Shopping Center, Promenade Fountain (across from Nordstrom). Visit www.jewishcontracosta.com.

Santa Claus at the Blackhawk Plaza Santa Claus will be at the Blackhawk Plaza every weekend throughout the season to pose for photos with children. Specific times include: noon-7 p.m., Friday-Sunday, Nov. 23-25; 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 28; 1-7 p.m., Thursday-Sunday, Nov. 29-Dec. 2; 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 5; 1-7 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 6; 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 12 and noon-7 p.m., Thursday-Monday, Dec. 13-24, at Blackhawk Plaza, 3454 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. Additionally, Santa will take pictures with pets from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 9. Call 736-2751 or visit www.theshopsatblackhawk.com.

Sixth Annual Bishop Ranch/San Ramon Tree Lighting

Bishop Ranch will host the sixth annual Tree Lighting from 5:30-7:30 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 29, at Bishop Ranch I, 6111 Bollinger Canyon Rd., San Ramon. Festivities will include a street fair, free photo opportunities with Santa, free sleigh rides and choirs by several schools.

Kids and Teens

Children's Authors at Rakestraw Books Rakestraw Books will host children's authors: Ashley Wolff, author of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" at 10 a.m., Thursday, Nov. 29; and Jim LaMarche, author of "Bear's First Christmas" at 10 a.m., Friday, Nov. 30, at Rakestraw Books, 409 Railroad

Ave., Danville. Call 837-7337.

Elf Workshop Town of Danville will host Elf Workshop for children ages 1-12 from 9:30-11 a.m. or 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 8, at Veteran's Memorial Hall, 400 Hartz Ave., Danville. Cost is \$5 for residents, \$6 for non-residents. Pre-registration is required; call 314-3400 or visit www.ci.danville.ca.us.

Family Funshop: Trains! Blackhawk Museum will host a family funshop "I Think I Can: Trains!" from 1-4 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 25, at Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. This event is free for children with museum admission. The day will include building track and blasting tunnels, train stories and tasty snacks. Call 736-2277.

Lectures/Workshops

Chemotherapy and Radiation Treatment Join Rishi Sawhney, MD, Medical Oncologist and Michael Moyses, MD, Radiation Oncologist, will discuss the latest in chemotherapy and radiation options from 6-8 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 29, at Regional Cancer Center at ValleyCare, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd., Suites 240 A and B, Pleasanton. This event is free. Call 933-0107.

Global Warming Professor Juliet Hoffman will exhibit compelling scientific evidence of global warming and the effect it has on our environment, from 1-2 p.m., Friday, Nov. 30, at Ohlone College Room 2133, 43600 Mission Blvd., Fremont. This event is free. Call (510) 659-7372.

Intimacy and Romance This workshop will present ways to bring romance and intimacy back into a relationship during cancer diagnosis and treatment, from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 27, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. Call 933-0107.

Project Censored 2008, with Peter Phillips Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center will host journalism professor Peter Phillips and his student assistants, who will talk about "Project Censored 2008" from 7-9 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 28, at Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek. Cost is a suggested donation of \$10-20. Call 933-7850 or visit www.mtdpc.org.

Stress Reduction and Guided Imagery This workshop will help those with cancer and their caregivers learn to focus and relax the mind and body to experience relief from negative emotional states from 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 4, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. This event is free. Call 933-0107.

Literary Events

Century House Reading to Feature "Mega Open Mic" City of Pleasanton's Civic Arts Literary will host Mega Open Mic from 2-4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 9, at Century House, 2401 Santa Rita Rd., Pleasanton. Poets may read a favorite or original poem of 40 lines or less. Admission is a new children's book or small stuffed animal to be donated to Project Night Night. Call 931-5350 or visit www.civicartsliterary.org.

Danville Library Book Club Danville Library hosts a book club that meets at 11 a.m., on the second Thursday of every month, at the Danville Library, Mt. Diablo Room, 400 Front St. The book selection for Dec. 13 is The Other Boleyn Girl by Philippa Gregory. Call 837-4889.

Holiday Music and Books Friends of the Danville Library and Kiwanis of San Ramon Valley will host their First Wednesday at the Library at 1 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 5, at the Danville Library, Mt. Diablo Room, 400 Front St. San Ramon Valley High School Chamber Singers will sing holiday songs and Michael Barnard of Rakestraw Books will talk about books for holiday giving. This event is free. Call 837-4455.

Miscellaneous

Adopt a New Best Friend Tri-Valley Animal Rescue (TVAR) offers wonderful animals for adoption every Saturday and Sunday, excluding most holidays. On Saturdays, from 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m., dogs and cats are available. For dates and times and other information, call TVAR at 803-7043 or visit its Web site at www.tvar.org.

Bay Area Crisis Nursery Drive Junior League of Oakland-East Bay Inc. is holding a drive to support the Bay Area Crisis Nursery during November by collecting large and extra large diapers, good night diapers, training diapers and infant formula. You can drop off these goods from 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, at the Danville Weekly, 315 Diablo Rd., Suite 100, Danville. Call 284-3740 or 837-8300.

One Warm Coat San Ramon Valley Rotary Club is hosting its 12th anniversary of One Warm Coat until Dec. 15. They are collecting coats, sweaters and blankets for men, women, children and infants in clean and good condition. Drop-off points include: Diablo Lodge, 950 Diablo Rd., Danville; Curves, 9500 Crow Canyon Rd., Danville; Moda Mi, 1400E Prospect Ave., Danville; Pascal's French Oven, 155 Railroad Ave., Danville; ReMax Accord, 313 Sycamore Valley Dr. W., Danville; Heritage Bank, 387 Diablo Rd., Danville and Oscar's Jeweler, 15 Alamo Square, Alamo. For information, contact Elizabeth Forth at 820-4077; Dany Gregory at 838-9110 or Mark at 552-9900.

Recycle for Breast Cancer Recycle for Breast Cancer is open seven days a week accepting free dropoffs for computers, monitors, cell phones, laptops, servers and TVs, at 31 Beta Ct., Suite C, San Ramon. Call 735-7203 or visit www.recycleforbreastcancer.org.

The Energy Primer for Kids The Energy Primer for Kids is a 25-page booklet of simple facts pertaining to current energy issues and is useful for adults that are evaluating energy related claims of politicians. For a free copy, write to Synergy Institute, P.O. Box 561, San Ramon, CA 94583. A speaker is available for groups wishing to hear about the global warming propaganda. Call 837-7612.

Toys for Tots and Food Bank **Giving** Countrywide Home Loans is a drop-off location for toys for the Toys for Tots program and filled Food Bank brown bags until Dec. 15. The offices are open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday and 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday; located at 7 Railroad Ave., Danville. Call 314-7003.

On Stage

'A Christmas Carol' Center REPertory Company presents "A Christmas Carol" Dec. 6-16, at Center REPertory, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Tickets are \$38; family four packs are available for preview performances at 2 p.m., Dec. 6-8. Call 943-7469 or visit www.centerrep.org.

'Wigged Out!' Hair on Stage (formerly Victoria's Hair on Stage) presents "Wigged Out!" playing until June 21, at Hair on Stage, 520 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville. The box office is open from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Saturday. Call 855-SHOW (855-7469) or visit www.wiggedout.org.

Recreation

Cowell Ranch State Park Join Ken Dyleski to preview the new 4000 acre Cowell Ranch State Park, not yet open to public, at 9 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 1, meeting at Round Valley Regional Preserve Staging Area, Marsh Creek Rd., Clayton/Brentwood. This is a 4-hour moderate hike, 4-5 mile loop. Bring lunch, liquids and sunscreen. Rain cancels. Call 947-3535 or visit www.savemountdiablo.org.

Seniors

Bridge Seniors meet to play bridge from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. every Friday at the Danville Veteran's Memorial Hall, 400 Hartz Ave. Experienced players only.



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CALENDAR

Cost is \$1. Reservations are required. Call Jerri Kaldem at 837-6283.

Buzz Sessions Town of Danville presents Buzz Sessions for seniors from 1-2:30 p.m., each fourth Tuesday of the month, at Danville Library, Mt. Diablo Room, 400 Front St. These events are free, but register to reserve your place by calling 314-3400.

Danville Senior Citizens Club The club meets from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m., every Monday at the Danville Veterans' Memorial Hall, 400 Hartz Ave., for line dancing exercise, bingo, mah jong and more. New members are welcome. Membership is just \$12 a year. Call Fran Britt at 743-4026.

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.

Seniors Program Danville Veterans' Memorial Hall Lounge hosts a senior drop-in program from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Monday-Friday, at Veterans' Memorial Hall, 400 Front St., Danville. Activities include playing cards and board games, visit with friends and meet new people. Call 314-3400.

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.

Valley Oak Respite Center Activities for Seniors Valley Oak Respite provides an interactive program for frail seniors and those afflicted with Alzheimer's or related dementias and physical disabilities, from 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at Danville Congregational Church, 989 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville. The cost is \$30 per session, which includes a morning snack and beverage; participants should bring a bag lunch. For information or an application, call Carmen McCarthy at 945-8040, ext. 53.

Sports

Danville Tennis Club The Danville Tennis Club meets 6:30-9 p.m., Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays; and 9-11 a.m., Saturdays for drop-in tennis at San Ramon Valley High School. This free co-ed club provides play for 4.0 to 5.0 and very strong 3.5 level players. See information at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/danvilletennisclub>.

Get Fit in 2008 Town of Danville will host "Get Fit in 2008" with My Own Marathon from Jan. 1-May 3. This marathon is designed for individuals who like to complete a marathon at their own pace. Participants will walk a total of 26.2 miles. To register, visit the Danville Community Center, 420 Front St., call 314-3400 or visit [www.ci.danville.ca.us](http://ci.danville.ca.us). The final mile will be completed on May 3 at Spring Fest.

Support Groups

Blue Star Moms California Blue Star Moms is a support group for families of members of the U.S. Armed Forces. It meets at 7 p.m., the second Wednesday of the month, at the Danville Veterans Hall, 400 Hartz Ave. Call Peggy at 866-7035 or Patty at 838-9096 or visit www.bluestarmoms.org.

Cancer Support Groups Free support, education and stress management for cancer patients and their

loved ones, including general support groups for all types of cancer patients as well as cancer specific groups for breast cancer, colorectal cancer, ovarian cancer, lung cancer, prostate cancer, brain tumor, support groups for caregivers and life after cancer. Groups meet at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. For times and days, call 933-0107.

Celebrate Recovery Celebrate Recovery is a forward-looking and balanced Christ-centered recovery program for people with hurts, habits and hang-ups. The group meets at 6:30 p.m. for dinner and the program starts at 7 p.m., every Friday, at East Bay Fellowship, 2615 Camino Tassajara, Danville. Childcare available for ages 5-11. Call 736-5100, e-mail celebraterecovery@eastbayfellowship.org or visit www.eastbayfellowship.org.

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.

Newly Formed Proactive Group for Women Support Group for FIBRO, CFF and Chronic Pain meets 12:30-2:30 p.m., every other Wednesday. Call 234-5621 or e-mail dsashby@msn.com.

Overeaters Anonymous The group offers a 12-step approach to issues around food, overeating, anorexia and bulimia. There are many different groups that meet at different times and places, visit www.dvog.org.

PFLAG The Danville/San Ramon Valley Chapter of Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) is a support group that meets at 7:30 p.m., every third Monday at the Danville Congregational Church, 989 San Ramon Valley Blvd. Call 838-8632.

SRV Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA) is a free 12-step recovery program for anyone suffering from food obsession, overeating, undereating and bulimia. This group meets from 7-8:30 p.m. every Tuesday at the San Ramon Library, 100 Montgomery St. Call Gordon at 899-3117 or visit www.foodaddicts.org.

Tri-Valley Parkinson's Support Group This group provides peer support for those affected by Parkinson's Disease and for their caregivers, families and friends. The group meets from 10 a.m.-noon, the second Saturday of each month, at the Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd. Call Norman at 831-9940 or Jackie at 244-1231.

Volunteering

Anna's Program Hospice of the East Bay is asking for volunteers to help with Anna's Program, a program which provides support to women diagnosed with recurrent breast cancer. Volunteers provide companionship and practical assistance. To apply, call 887-5678 and ask for the Volunteer Department or e-mail volunteers@hospiceeastbay.org.

Blackhawk Museum Docent Training If you are interested in becoming a much appreciated part of the Blackhawk Museum family while contributing to your community, making new friends, learning new things, and having fun, become a docent! Call 736-2280, ext. 238.

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

Friends of Discovery Discovery Counseling Center has received more than \$5 million, thanks to Friends of Discovery. The organization is looking for volunteers who can commit eight hours per month in the Thrift Station,

486 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville. Call Le Anne, 837-7998.

Handbell Choir Seeks Ringers The Agape Ringers are seeking teens and adults with musical backgrounds to rehearse from 7-9 p.m., Thursdays, in Danville. For information, call Margaret at 837-6371.

Help Your Senior Neighbors A lot of Danville seniors need rides to their appointments, stores or to special events. The Seniors' Club at Veterans Memorial Hall is looking for volunteers to provide rides on an "as-needed basis" on one or more Mondays a month. Call Jenn Overmoe at 314-3476 for more information.

Hospice and Palliative Work at Bruns House Hospice and Palliative Care of Contra Costa Bruns House In-Patient Hospice is looking for volunteers to fill two- to four-hour shifts during the weekdays and weekends. For an application, call 887-5678 or e-mail volunteers@hospicecc.org.



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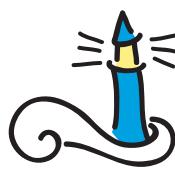
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36 AC - \$29,900. Price is drastically reduced by motivated seller. Beautiful setting with fresh mountain air. Abundant wildlife. Secluded with good access. Financing available. Eureka Springs Ranch is offered by AZLR. ADWR report avail. Call 1-877-301-5263. (Cal-SCAN)

Colorado Mountain Ranch

1st time offered! 35 acres- \$49,900. Priced for Quick Sale. Overlooking a majestic lake, beautifully treed, 360 degree mountain views, adjacent to national forest. EZ terms. 1-888-640-9023. (Cal-SCAN)

How Big is 40 Acres?

Come find out! 40 acres - \$39,900. Just outside Moses Lake, Washington. Beautiful land with captivating mix of rolling hills and occasional rock outcroppings - must see. Offered by a motivated seller. Excellent financing offered. Call WALR 1-866-585-5687. (Cal-SCAN)

Moses Lake, Washington

Bulk Land Sale. \$39,900. Priced for quick sale. Beautiful land, interesting topography, good views and setting, abundant wildlife. Surveyed on maintained road. Financing available. Call WALR 1-866-585-5687. (Cal-SCAN)

New Mexico Sacrifice!

140 acres was \$149,900, Now Only \$69,900. Amazing 6000 ft. elevation. Incredible mountain views. Mature tree cover. Power & year round roads. Excellent financing. Priced for quick sale. Call NML&R, Inc. 1-888-204-9760. (Cal-SCAN)

So. Colorado Ranch

Sale 35 Acres- \$39,900. Spectacular Rocky Mtn. Views Year round access, elec/ tele included. Excellent Financing available w/ low down payment. Call Red Creek Land Co. Today! 1-866-696-5263 x3155. (Cal-SCAN)

Utah Ranch Dispersal

1st time offered! 40 AC only \$29,900. Foothills of Uinta Mountains. Gorgeous views. Beautiful land and setting. Great recreational area. Accessed by county roads. Offered by motivated seller. Limited available. EZ Terms. Call UTLR 1-888-693-5263. (Cal-SCAN)

Washington

1st time offered. Old Farm Liquidation. River access and views. 5-15 AC from \$69,900. Recently annexed into city of Colfax allows subdivision of enchanting old farm. Gorgeous land & setting. Limited available. EZ Terms. Call WALR 1-866-836-9152. (Cal-SCAN)

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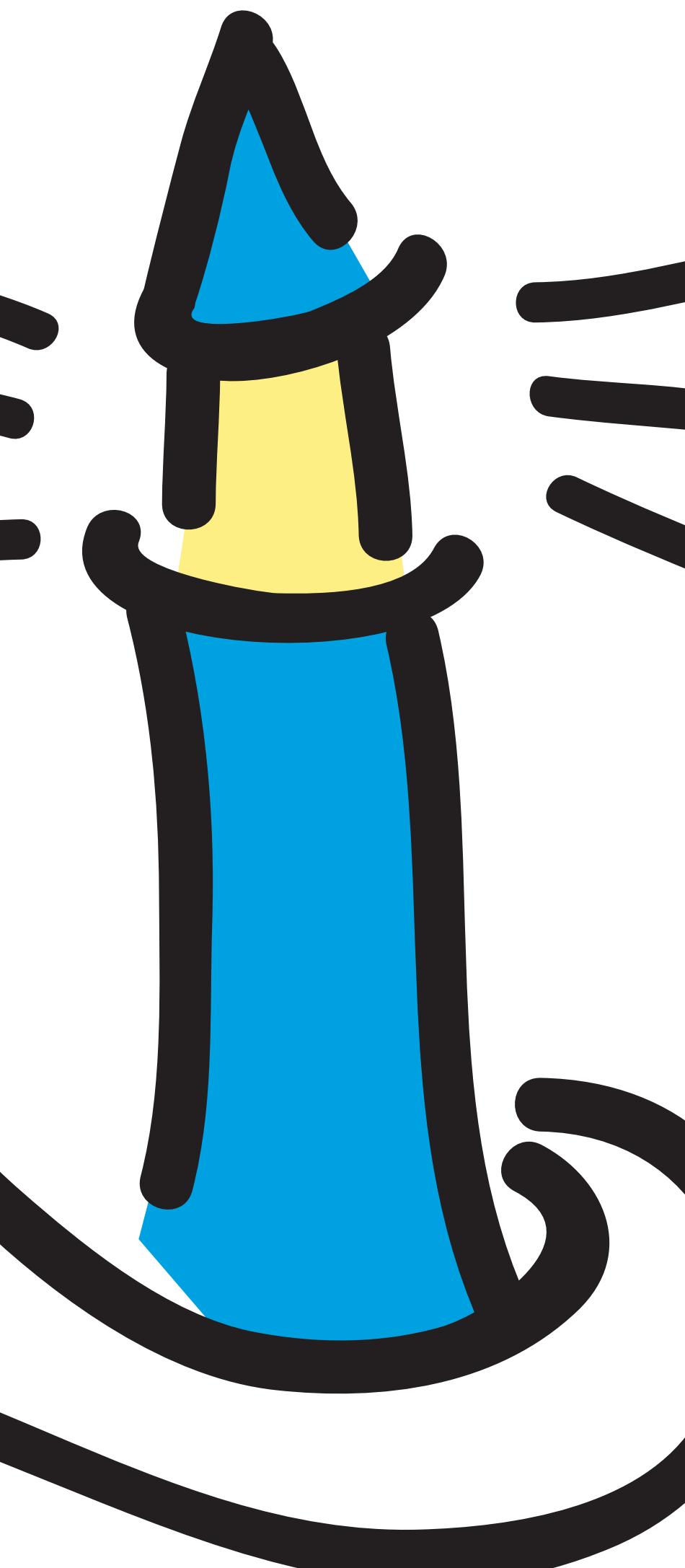
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PET OF THE WEEK



CATHERINE HANSEN RUSH

Friendly feline

Meet Kerri, a friendly and colorful Calico housecat. Kerri is a young adult female with beautiful markings and a sweet disposition. Kerri was found wandering in downtown Pleasanton last month and she was taken to the animal shelter. Kerri is searching for a new home with a loving and attentive family. For more information, visit Kerri (pet # 73809) at the East County Animal Shelter, 4595 Gleason Drive in Dublin. It's open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Call 803-7040.

No phone number in the ad?
 Go to **fogster.com**
 for contact information

SALES AT A GLANCE

This week's data represents homes sold during October 2007

Alamo

Total sales reported: 2
Lowest sale reported: \$1,478,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,675,000
Average sales reported: \$1,576,500

Danville

Total sales reported: 9
Lowest sale reported: \$830,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,286,500
Average sales reported: \$1,022,333

Walnut Creek

Total sales reported: 14
Lowest sale reported: \$360,000
Highest sale reported: \$2,000,000
Average sales reported: \$715,464

Homes Today

BY JOE COMBS

Examining the condo market

With the recent and much reported nationwide downturn in Real Estate, and the mortgage market singing "The Sub Prime Blues," one would expect that lower price point homes such as town homes and condos would be highly impacted. This month we will examine the market for town homes and condos in Alamo and Danville (The Condo Market) and see what is happening.

Taking a look at the condo market as it stands today (Nov. 12) we find 61 properties are listed as active or pending. Twelve properties are currently pending sale with an average list price of \$582,216. The average list price for the remaining unsold properties is \$585,709. The highest priced home currently on the market is listed at \$785,000 and the lowest price in these data is \$339,000.

Among the 12 properties currently pending sale, the highest price is \$769,000 and the lowest is \$399,000. The current pending list price is \$383 per square foot. We cannot know the actual sale price, but from experience we can surmise that it is somewhat less.

Looking at a year to date ('06-'07) comparison (Jan. 1-Nov. 12) we can see that 123 condos sold in 2006 and 110 condos sold in the same time period during 2007. This was a -11 percent decrease in unit sales year on year. Average sold price in 2006 was \$627,685 compared to \$592,818 in 2007. This represents an average price decline of -6 percent. Price paid per square foot also declined from \$433 per square foot in '06 to \$402 in '07 for a marked decline of -7.2 percent.

During the first quarter of 2006, a total of 33 condos sold. This compares to 28 condo sales in the same time period in 2007. This represents a unit sales drop of -15.2 percent. Average sold price in Q1 2006 was \$607,298 whereas the selling price in 2007 was lower at \$585,401 for about a -3.7 percent drop in price. Price per square foot during the first quarter in 2006 was \$427 compared to \$408 in 2007 reflecting a -4.5 percent decrease in price per square foot in the first quarter of the year. Not surprisingly, days on market more than doubled

from 19 to 49.

The second quarter in 2006 saw 50 condo sales while the second quarter in 2007 decreased significantly to 37 sales for a -26 percent decrease in units sold. During the second quarter of 2006, average sales price was \$650,377. Average sales price in Q2 2007 dipped to \$617,325 or, stated more simply, the quarter on quarter comparison shows a -5.1 percent decrease in average selling price for condos and town homes. In step with the overall down trend, per square foot price dropped -7.6 percent from \$436 in Q2 '06 to \$403 in Q2 '07.

Third quarter sales for 2006 were 29 properties sold compared to 41 sales in 2007. That's a surprising and significant upswing in unit sales of 41 percent for this time period. Average selling price Q3 '06 was \$611,380 while average selling price YTD 2007 dipped to \$578,347, a decrease of about -5.4 percent. Median price also declined -6.5 percent from \$620,000 compared to \$580,000. On a price per square foot basis prices also declined in the Q3 comparison from \$440 per square foot in '06 to \$397 per square foot in '07. This represents a -9.8 percent price decline quarter on quarter.

The picture is pretty clear that the condo market in Alamo and Danville has eroded significantly through the first three quarters of 2007. One bright spot is that unit sales in the third quarter are on the upswing in the face of what appears to be accelerating declines in price, begging the question, "Is this the bottom?"

If you would like to receive our periodic Condo Market report, please send an e-mail to joe.combs@thecombsteam.com and include "Condo Market" in the subject line. Or call The Combs Team, Joe and Nancy Combs, at 989-6086. Please visit our Web site www.thecombsteam.com to view properties for sale.

Data presented in this column is based in whole or in part on data supplied by the Contra Costa and Alameda Multiple Listing Service and other quoted sources.

Joe and Nancy Combs, Remax and the MLS Service do not guarantee the accuracy of this information.

HOME SALES

Source: California REsource

This week's data represents homes sold during October 2007

Alamo

29 Tam Oshanter Road C. & L. Jakub to F. & K. Willis for \$1,478,000

117 Via Serena R. & L. Cox to D. Brim for \$1,675,000

Danville

2128 Carmenere Street KB Homes to C. & R. Foster for \$993,500

60 Casablanca Street C. & K. Carpou to M. & D. Burnsides for \$910,000

19 Cedar Hollow Drive Chuah Trust to G. Carballo for \$830,000

1554 Colchester Street Lennar Homes to C. Chin for \$1,095,000

703 Genoa Court Lennar Homes to J. & H. Liang for \$1,030,000

1329 Monterosso Street Lennar Homes to M. & F. Sadeghi for \$1,286,500

2500 Montreux Street Lennar Homes to I. & S. Bengali for \$1,278,000

106 Nanterre Street KB Homes to R. & A. Imperial for \$853,000

1043 River Rock Lane Oler Trust to C. & L. Jakub for \$925,000

Walnut Creek

5954 Autumnwood Drive #1A Ayers Trust to P. Lindner for \$430,000

1842 Cannon Drive P. & E. Marienthal to J. & L. Collins for \$449,000

26 Cuesta Way Tridan Limited to T. & O. Hawkins for \$2,000,000

202 Ivywood Drive J. McGowan to R. & M. Edrosa for \$699,000

249 Marshall Drive Brazil Trust to K. Meyers for \$742,500

1655 North California Boulevard #232 Trinity Avenue Limited to N. Stimmel for \$585,000

1655 North California Boulevard #330

Trinity Avenue Limited to Yang Trust for \$1,131,000

714 North Villa Way Baumert Trust to J. & A. Sullivan for \$360,000

3100 Rossmoor Parkway #1 P. & D. Barale to Thompson Trust for \$660,000

2428 Shannon Lane Cook Trust to R. Gartside for \$752,000

1726 Stanley Dollar Drive #1A Paul Trust to S. & A. Barnes for \$652,000

1840 Tice Creek Drive #2201 Shepherd Trust to Regan Trust for \$609,000

1840 Tice Creek Drive #2347 Taylor Trust to T. Thomas for \$362,000

142 Titania Court Bank of America to M. Nunes for \$585,000

OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

Source: California REsource

DANVILLE

4 Bedrooms

21 Mauri Ct. \$1,450,000
Sun 2-4 Re/Max 351-6999

611 Derbyshire Pl. \$915,000
Sun 2-4 Re/Max 989-6086

5 Bedrooms

405 Skycrest Dr. \$965,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 260-8883

PLEASANTON

1 Bedrooms

68 Peters Ave. \$335,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 398-0234

3 Bedrooms

6386 Shorewood Ct. \$599,950
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 463-0436

4 Bedrooms

3302 Prairie Dr. \$1,098,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 463-0436

DUBLIN

3 Bedrooms

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

5 Bedrooms

10894 Inspiration Cir. \$1,399,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 398-0234

LIVERMORE

4 Bedrooms

6608 Tiffany Cmn. \$569,000
Sun 1-4 Hometown GMAC 963-8322

2329 Rapallo Cmn.

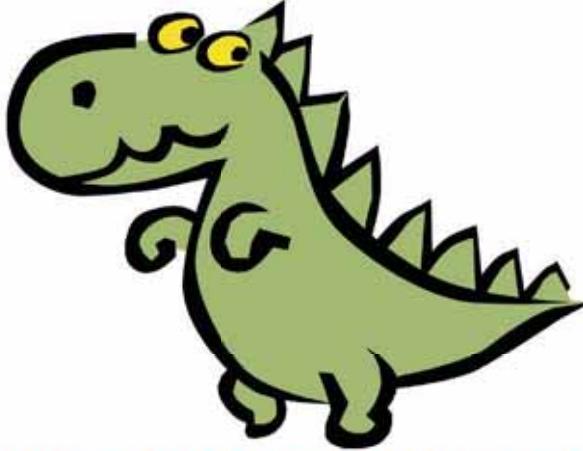
\$689,000
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 463-0436

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