

## Weber lawsuit goes to court

Judge concerned over tree removals for project > **page 5**

Vol. III, Number 34 • December 21, 2007

www.DanvilleWeekly.com

### A soldier's story

Danville man tells about his holidays in Iraq

> **page 18**

# Danville

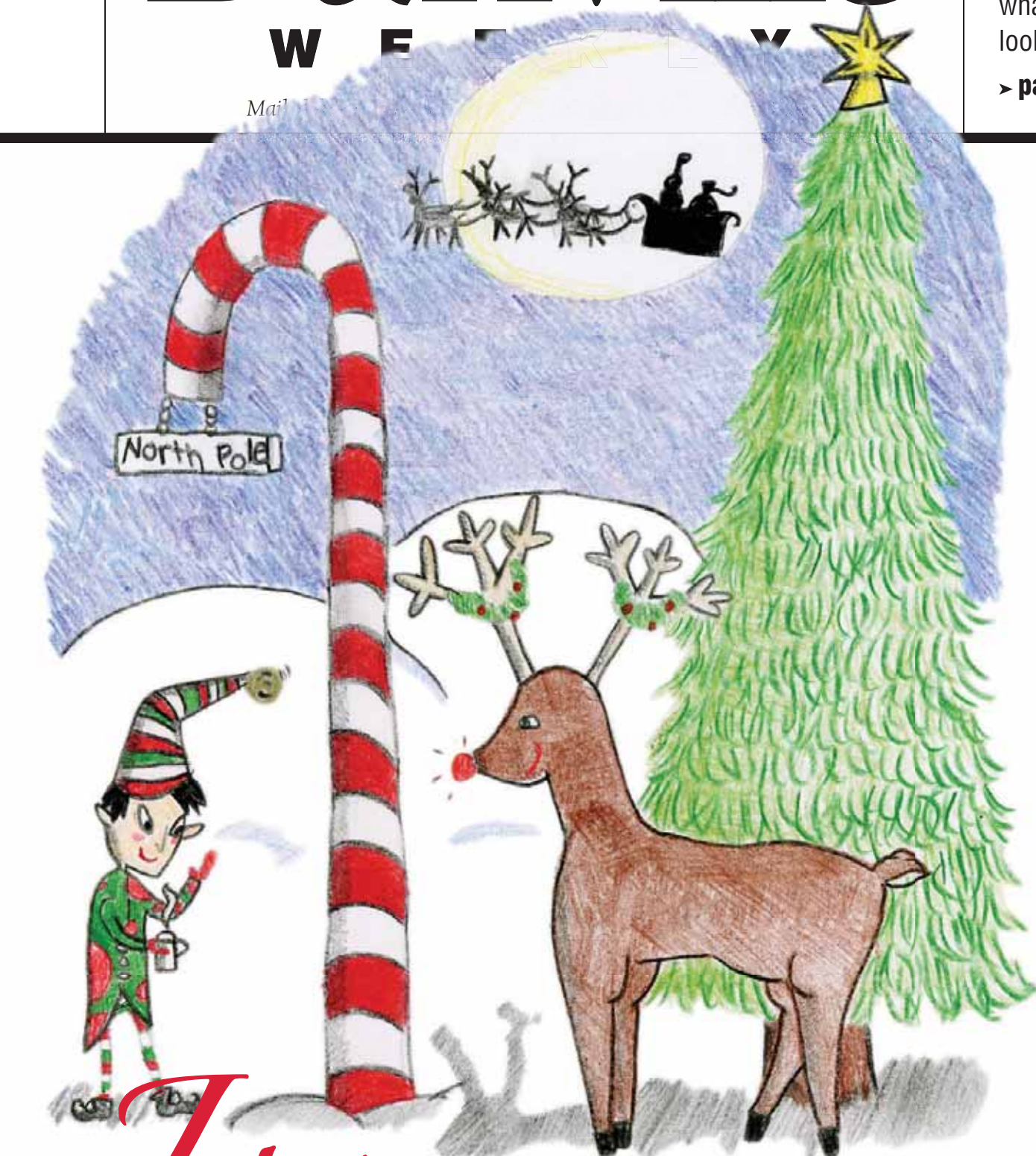
W E E K L Y

Mail

### Fresh signs for Green Valley center

New grocer shows what shop will look like

> **page 5**



Maryn Martens

## Jays of the season

page 14

Children's art expresses the wonderful feelings of Christmas

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# Streetwise

ASKED AT THE SENIOR HOLIDAY LUNCHEON.

## Q: Have you ever "re-gifted" a present?



Yeah. I have done that. It would have to be new and it would have to be something I don't need. I would rewrap it and send it to a friend or relative, preferably in another state.

**Anne Dubail**  
*retired from the travel business*



Absolutely. Anything that you can't use should be recycled. And if that's what "re-gifting" is, I'm all for it. I'm a consignment store owner. That's an interesting question.

**Linda Stolow**  
*co-owner of the Small-Fry store*



I don't think that I would ever feel that way. If someone would give me a gift, I would cherish it.

**Tony Konecny**  
*retired teaching engineer*



If it's a gift I don't like, I'll give it to Goodwill, the Salvation Army or another charity. I'm afraid if I give it to a person, someone is going to know it's a "re-gift."

**Jennifer Wlasenko**  
*nurse*



I think everybody has done that one time or another. Sometimes you receive a gift and you accept it out of goodwill. Someday you'll find a good use for it. Then you hang onto it for awhile and pass it to someone else. As the old saying goes: "What goes around comes around."

**Len Myzells**  
*retired*

COMPILED BY DANVILLE WEEKLY STAFF

### ABOUT THE COVER

This scene from the North Pole by Maryn Martens of the San Ramon Valley Christian Academy is sure to get everyone excited about the impending arrival of Santa. Design by Lili Cao.

Vol. III, Number 34

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“ The artists—who are pressed for money—are the ones donating. ”

—Tracy Bauer of Alamo Danville Artists' Society, which gives 10 percent of its earnings to school art programs. See story, page 9.

**Giants Danville outfielder signing autographs today**

San Francisco Giants outfielder Nate Schierholtz, a 2002 graduate of San Ramon Valley High, is returning to Danville today, Dec. 21, to sign autographs from 4-6 p.m. at the Talkin' Baseball memorabilia store on Town and Country Drive near McCaulou's. Autographs are \$10, and folks can bring their own items or purchase pictures and baseballs for signatures at the event.

Last season was Schierholtz's first in the big leagues. Giants managers have said that Schierholtz will be in the mix for significant playing time next season.

"If he continues on the baseball fast track, \$10 for an autographed item now might be the best investment a collector can make this year," said store owner Ken Brisson.

For more information, call the store at 743-9922.

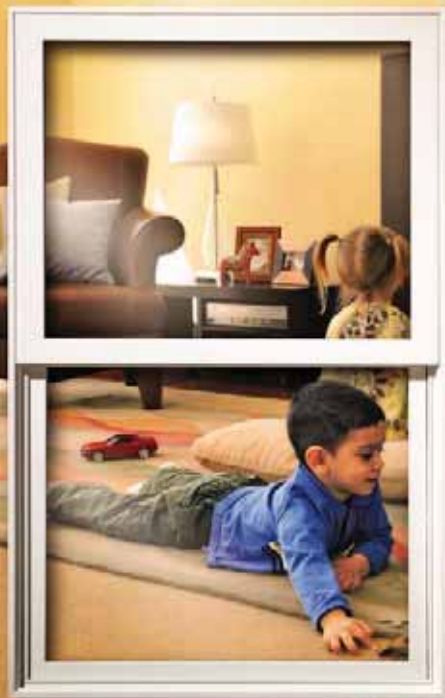
**Chow opening in Danville**

The Planning Commission gave the go-ahead last week for Chow Food and Drink to open on Railroad Avenue in Danville, where the Blockbuster Video Store closed recently. The majority of commissioners voted in favor of the project, with Commissioner Bob Nichols voting no, said Town Attorney Rob Ewing.

The restaurant will occupy the 5,184-square-foot facility at the Iron Horse Plaza Shopping Center, with 126 seats for seating inside and 93 outside. There will be a mezzanine area for storage, and owners will expand the parking lot. They will also build a new trash enclosure area to serve the restaurant.

The small chain also has restaurants in Lafayette and San Francisco.

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## Merry, merry Christmas at museum

No, this isn't grandma's fireplace welcoming holiday visitors—it's the Museum of the San Ramon Valley. The "Christmas Memories" exhibit runs through Jan. 6, with three trees displaying toys and keepsakes from the eras of 1890, 1930 and 1950. This year the display includes a restored 1937 Buick pedal car, antique wind-up toys, gingerbread houses of historic buildings and a miniature Christmas scene (right).

Santa will make one more visit to the museum, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., tomorrow, Saturday, Dec. 22, a chance for parents to take photos. The museum shop offers unique gifts, including the commemorative book, "Vintage Danville: 150 Years of Memories," which can be pre-ordered for \$35 to await its release this summer.

The museum is located on Railroad and Prospect avenues in Danville. Call 837-3750.



DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

## Fresh and Easy market presents design plans

*Grocer will share former Albertsons' space with drugstore*

by **Natalie O'Neill**

The Danville Design Review Board factored a new drugstore tenant into the equation last week, when advising Fresh and Easy representatives to keep colors and design uniform with the rest of the shopping center.

The market will take up about 55 percent of the 26,500-foot vacant building on Diablo Road next to I-680—where Albertsons' once stood. It will likely share signage space with the pharmacy, although the name has not yet been confirmed.

Changes proposed for the building were minor—a green Fresh and Easy sign accompanied by an overhang and green color scheme. The design board gave them the go-ahead to move on the next step, getting a

building permit from the town.

Fresh and Easy spokesman Mark Warden said he hoped to open the store in the shortest amount of time possible but couldn't estimate when that would be.

He said part of keeping prices low is through "straight forward" buildings.

"We try to keep our buildings simple," he said. "It's a very clean concept."

Warden said the company philosophy is that everyone should be able to afford healthy food. He came to the Danville meeting straight from a groundbreaking ceremony for a new store in San Francisco's Hunters Point, a low income area.

The grocery store will offer organic produce, fresh sandwiches, meats and cheeses but will cut out

secondary items like pet food and medication. In part, this is how they keep their prices low—similar to Trader Joe's philosophy.

Board members said approval would be contingent on the rest of the center being redone. They also noted that green and teal signs from existing tenants clash with the brighter green Fresh and Easy sign. And they considered that most drug store signs have red and blue corporate colors.

"The entire center needs to be cohesive," said board member Jim Wood.

The issue of sign placement was also a topic of discussion as the board reviewed renderings of two sign shapes, one that was long and thin and another that was short and fat.

► Continued on page 6

## Court to decide if Weber project could hurt environment

*Judge focuses on town-protected trees*

by **Jordan M. Dronila**

Will removing trees from a development in Danville hurt the environment?

A judge is deliberating whether removing town-protected trees from a development on the Weber estate would impact the surrounding aesthetics, wildlife and oak woodlands. He is reviewing a lawsuit filed by a group of 60 Danville residents—Citizens for Civic Responsibility—that claims the Town of Danville violated a provision in a state law by OK'ing a project in April.

The group said before the Danville Town Council gave the approval to develop the 15-acre

Weber estate into 22 single-family homes, it first needed to do a comprehensive environmental study.

Representatives of the group, the town and the project developer met at a hearing in court last week. The judge has approximately 90 days to make a decision.

"We are just waiting to see what the judge will rule," said Town Attorney Rob Ewing. "The judge had some issues with the trees."

The council approved the Davidon Homes proposal for the property on Blemer Road and Matadera Way, which included donating 3.7 acres to the town and removing 126 trees to pave way for the development.

► Continued on page 6

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## Dan Rather will narrate DUI film

Dan Rather, former news anchor for CBS Evening News, will narrate the Troy and Alana Pack Foundation's reality-based film that chronicles four teens on their graduation nights.

The film, "Graduation Day," is 30 minutes long and follows four high school teenagers through their graduation and a party during the evening. The end of the film will have a testimony by former Fox "Prison Break" TV star Lane Garrison, who was recently sentenced for his involvement in a crash that killed a passenger.

The foundation was started by Danville residents Bob and Carmen Pack after a driver who had been abusing alcohol and prescription painkillers killed their two children four years ago in an accident. They have since had a baby girl, Noelle Corinne Pack, born May 29, 2006.

For more information and preview of the film, visit [www.troyandalana.org](http://www.troyandalana.org).

## Fresh

► Continued from page 5

The space has been vacant for nearly two years and was controlled by Albertsons. Owners had to buy back the lease in order to get another grocery store up and running.

Co-owner Ted Peterson told the board he regretted having the space vacant for so long, but that he was not in control of the lease.

"We were dealing with a group out of Chicago and it was really about money," he said.

The Fresh and Easy Web site expresses its dedication to reducing its impact on the environment, structurally and functionally at its stores. An effort to make the building structure more green, however, wasn't discussed at the Design Review Board.

Green Valley Center is currently home to Taco Bell, Christy's Doughnuts, China Bistro, Diablo Printing and a photo shop.

Peterson said Danville couldn't ask for a better tenant than Fresh and Easy.

The company is part of Tesco, the United Kingdom's largest retailer.

"We're really excited about what they represent," Peterson said. ■



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## Weber

► Continued from page 5

The Planning Division would monitor their removal.

The town's tree ordinance states that no one can destroy or remove a protected tree on any property in Danville without obtaining a tree removal permit from the Planning Division. Davidon did receive a permit, and it would replace the 26 town-protected trees with younger ones, said Town Principal Planner David Crompton.

"We felt that was adequate mitigation with the removal of the trees," Ewing said.

He said the town's defense was that it had complied with state law. Nonetheless, the judge still had concerns about the town's initial environmental studies.

"He was worried," said Brian Gaffney, attorney for Citizens for Civic Responsibility.

Gaffney noted that analyses done by the Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish and Game, a wetlands restoration ecologist and the California Oaks Foundation said that developing the Weber property would impact its surroundings. An environmental report is needed before developing the estate, his clients said.

Lucille Weber, who still lives on the property, previously owned the 15-acre parcel. She decided it to the Salvation Army, which in turn sold it to Davidon.

Now, the neighbors, town and Davidon await the judge's decision to see if an environmental impact report is needed.

Crompton said Davidon is going forward with getting approvals for development and improvement plans. Davidon executive Jeff Thayer did not return phone calls by press time. ■

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# Behring tells about wheelchair giving

One disabled boy just wanted to feel the sun on his shoulders

by Natalie O'Neill

Money only takes you so far—then you have to find other things to make you happy. That's what former Seattle Seahawks owner and Blackhawk developer Ken Behring told fifth-graders at Greenbrook Elementary School last week.

The classes he spoke to are raising money by recycling cans and bottles in order to donate to Behring's nonprofit Wheelchair Foundation. Students listened quietly as he praised them for helping less fortunate young people.

"There are a lot of poor places in the world, where kids don't have a chance to be leaders like you," he told them.

He then recalled a few short stories about disabled people he encountered in developing countries—to illustrate whom their money will be helping.

"If you're born with a disability in those countries, you're thrown in the back and your family is ashamed of you," he explained.

Behring began the Wheelchair Foundation in 2000 with a pledge of \$15 million. His mission was to raise international awareness about people with physical disabilities, along with creating independence for them through mobility.

One story he told was about a boy with cerebral palsy he met overseas. After he gave the child a wheelchair, the boy asked, "Do you know where my father is?"

"He knew someone had just dumped him," Behring told the audience of wide-eyed 11-year-olds.

In those countries, a wheelchair gives you the ability to move—and ultimately a reason to live.

"They are the same as you, except they don't have control of their body," he said. "They aren't able to communicate, but you look in their eyes and you can tell they appreciate it."

Teacher Pam Vamvouris said the effort to donate money to the foundation is part of character education.

"We wanted to teach them that even at their age they can give back," she said.

Through interpreters, several disabled children abroad have told Behring that having the wheelchair has been the difference between wanting to live and wanting to die, he said. He illustrated that through another story.

There was a young man who spent most of his life lying inside in the dark, on rags in the back of the house. Without the ability to walk or move his body, he was stuck there.

With the help of a translator, he



Fifth-graders at Greenbrook Elementary School ask Ken Behring questions about what prompted him to start his nonprofit Wheelchair Foundation.

told Behring all he'd ever wanted to do in life was sit in the sun, something we take for granted. After he received a wheelchair he could go outside and see the world. He could be pushed around—and he could feel the sun on his shoulders.

"You have to let them know you care, these people don't think anybody cares," he said.

Behring wore a big smile as the kids asked him questions they prepared for him ahead of time. They wanted to know what countries he had gone to, how many wheelchairs had been donated, and what made him want to start the foundation.

The Wheelchair Foundation has



► Continued on page 9

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JORDAN M. DORONILA

**Christmas feast with the seniors**

Danville Mayor Candace Andersen enjoys the annual Senior Holiday Luncheon at the Veterans Memorial Hall on Hartz Avenue last Friday. Andersen, who was recently installed as mayor, has been around and about town listening to her constituents' needs.

Dozens of seniors attended the festive luncheon and were served buttery rolls, turkey, and pumpkin and pecan pies by helpers in Santa hats.

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# Artists help fund art in schools through grants

ADAS gives \$7,400 to Alamo and Danville programs—10 percent of its members' earnings

by Natalie O'Neill

If athletics are the school district's strong successful son, the arts are a neglected stepchild, members of the Alamo Danville Artists' Society say.

So to give some tender loving care to what some call an underfunded department, the group of artists wrote checks for \$7,400 in grant money to 12 district schools last week.

"A lot of art teachers have to dip into their own pocket for supplies ... Funding for art programs has been continuously cut back," said Tracy Bauer, spokeswoman for ADAS.

The money, which was distributed by the Community Arts Education Program (CAEP), was taken from 10 percent of what artists earned through sales this year. It went to paying for supplies like canvases, brushes and moldable display panels at schools.

"The artists—who are pressed for money—are the ones donating," Bauer explained.

More emphasis should be put on arts in the district, she said, because creativity and problem-solving in spatial relationships are used in nearly every career.

"There is a lot of academic pressure to achieve in predictable textbook ways ... Why is art less important than these other areas?" she said.

Katharine O'Hara, teen columnist for the Danville Weekly, commented on the issue in her Oct. 19 column, "Can crushed creativity be revived?" She explained the main objective in college application letters is to be clever, creative and unique, and that students had almost no experience doing that in Danville and Alamo schools.

"What is now supposed to get us into college—creativity—has been carefully removed from most aspects of school curricula year upon year," she wrote.

The school district, which is the fourth least funded unified school district in the state, has been diligent about trying to get its hands on state funds since 2002, the year the Measure A bond passed.

Measure A funds must be spent on facilities, but state funds and local donations can be used specifically for arts education. In the 2006-07 school year the district received about \$1,456,000—or \$56 per student—in state funds for art, music and physical education.

Students and parents often hold car washes, bake sales and other fundraisers but they are more often held to benefit athletics than arts.

In the district, \$15 million in budget cuts were made during about a three-year period starting in 2000. A slump in the California economy in 2003 then threatened more cuts to administration, music programs

and health education.

"It's a very painful process," district spokesman Terry Koehne said about the budget cuts. "We try to stay as far away from the classroom as we can."

Grant applications for CAEP funds were sent to every school in the district, and schools were asked what supplies they needed. Every school that applied received funds, including Alamo Elementary, Vista Grande Elementary, Charlotte Wood Middle School, Rancho

Romero Elementary and Monte Vista High School.

"It's whoever responds," said Pauline Cortez, chairwoman of the program.

In the San Ramon Valley, emphasis is put on kids to test well and make top scores on tests, some students say.

"There is a lot of parental pressure," Sam Kikes, a student at San Ramon Valley High, said before graduating in June.

Art can help with stress and

expression, ADAS members say.

"It's therapy and release for us in a busy society," Bauer said.

In the past six years, ADAS has raised about \$7,000 annually to fund art in schools. And the demand for arts education funds is growing every year, ADAS members explained.

"We are subject to the California economy. When it's bad we suffer. And the next couple years don't seem to be getting any brighter," Koehne said. ■

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## Behring

► Continued from page 7

donated over 650,000 chairs in more than 145 countries worldwide including Africa, the Middle East

and South America.

As for what prompted him to start the foundation? When you've got everything—giving is the only thing left to do, he said.

To find out more or donate to the Wheelchair Foundation, visit [www.wheelchairfoundation.org](http://www.wheelchairfoundation.org). ■

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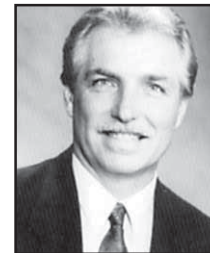
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20937 (09/07)



BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI



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## Demise of the yule log

“Chestnuts roasting on an open fire,” croons Bing Crosby every Christmastime. Well, bada Bing! I have a question for you: Can one roast chestnuts on a gas fire? I fear the answer would be a big N-O. Yet another tradition now a thing of the past.

We replaced our fireplace with gas about 10 years ago. It was my husband Jim's idea actually, once he caught on to the fact that one could have a beautiful roaring fire without hauling in the wood and kindling, rolling the newspapers tightly, placing everything just so and babying it until it caught. This was his job, a “man” job. My job was to make sure we had wood. Our Livorna Swim Team used to sell it by the half-cord; later I bought it in big handy boxes from Safeway. I also got to do the cleanup.

The biggest downside of the “real” fire was that it would be burning beautifully in our living room but we would want to do something else in another room, like watch TV in the family room, or do something in the kitchen, or go to bed. Often, knowing we

would only be in the living room for an hour or so, we wouldn't light a fire, although we really wanted one on cold winter afternoons or evenings. Now we just switch our gas fireplace on and off at will. Got a half hour? Pull up in front of the fireplace and enjoy a cup of tea.

“Now yule logs burn during the Christmas season only on our TV screens.”

There are times when a real fire is important. Such as for burning things. I remember when I was a teenager and had a painful breakup with a boyfriend. I carried a shoebox filled with his letters into the living room, sat on the floor in front of the fireplace and, one by one, watched his false declarations of love go up in flames. The finality of it—and the twisting and distorting of the pages as they turned into ashes—was strangely satisfying. I guess these days, teenagers sit on

the floor in front of their family's paper shredder and watch their letters get sliced into oblivion.

Now that wood-burning fireplaces are discouraged, and in many places outlawed, due to environmental concerns, what has happened to the traditional yule log? Jim and our son Pepe used to take great care in picking the biggest, best-shaped log in the woodpile for this honor each Christmas Eve, which they would manfully bring into the house while our young daughter Zoe and I oohed and aahed.

We have a yule log is our office right now that was decorated by a Boy Scout as a fundraiser. It looks lovely, adorned by real holly with berries and pine branches and a scroll explaining the history of the yule log, but what will be its fate come Christmas? At one time, the decorations would have been removed and it would have had the place of honor in the fireplace. Now yule logs burn during the Christmas season only on our TV screens.

We installed our gas fireplace shortly before Thanksgiving and were looking forward to Pepe's reac-

tion when he came to dinner from his home in San Francisco. We had the fire burning from the time our guests arrived and all through dinner and no one said a word. Finally, as half of us still sat at the table but Pepe perched on a footstool to warm himself by the fire, Jim asked him if it needed another log. He glanced over and said, no, it looked fine. Perhaps he was distracted by the girlfriend he had brought to dinner. Jim asked him to look harder. And then—the outrage! The scorn! “But you taught me to build a fire!” he railed at Jim. “It was an important lesson—to be a man!” Gee, said Jim, he didn't know Pepe had been listening.

Now Pepe lives in Berlin, where chestnuts are roasting over coals on street corners and at the Christmas markets, to be savored along with the hot mulled wine. I don't think we could roast them in our gas fireplace—but then, to tell the truth, we never did.

Coming next week: “Jack Frost nipping on your nose.”

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

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Sunday Dec. 30 9:00 & 10:30 am

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**PUBLISHER**  
Gina Channell-Allen

**EDITORIAL**  
**Editor**

Dolores Fox Ciardelli

**Staff Reporters**

Jordan M. Doronila

Natalie O'Neill

**Contributors**

Geoff Gillette

Beverly Lane

Jacqui Love Marshall

Katharine O'Hara

Gregory Peebles

Heidi Strand

Christina Straw

**ART & PRODUCTION**

**Art Director/**

**Operations Manager**

Shannon Corey

**Designers**

Trina Cannon

Lili Cao

Kristin Herman

Manuel Valenzuela

**ADVERTISING**

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**Circulation Manager**

Bob Lampkin

**How to reach the Weekly**

315 Diablo Road, Suite 100

Danville, CA 94526

Phone: (925) 837-8300

Fax: (925) 837-2278

Editorial e-mail:

Editor@DanvilleWeekly.com

Calendar: DanvilleWeekly.com

Display Sales e-mail:

mhantos@DanvilleWeekly.com

Classifieds Sales e-mail:

Ads@DanvilleWeekly.com

Circulation e-mail:

circulation@DanvilleWeekly.com

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**EDITORIAL • THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY**

**The perfect gift**

When we were asking our Streetwise question last week—What would you do if you were alone on Christmas?—one woman talked about working at an animal shelter. She also told the reporter something interesting: Some shelters say they have plenty of volunteers on Christmas Day; but they need them badly every other day of the year.

The Volunteer Center of Contra Costa, which works out of an office in Walnut Creek, links volunteers with opportunities. It lists special ways to help during the holidays. One was to distribute Christmas food, partnering with the Bay Area Rescue Mission to deliver boxes to 500 families in need. Another opportunity was to assemble food and toys for families. Another gift giveaway needed help in its Richmond warehouse.

Volunteers were still needed for Sunday, Dec. 23, to wrap Barnes & Noble purchases in the entrance of the store in downtown Walnut Creek. Two volunteers at a time work in three-hour shifts at the gift-wrapping table and donations go to Las Trampas, which supports adults with developmental disabilities to lead fuller lives in their homes, at work and in the community. Past volunteers said it was a great way to get into the Christmas spirit.

Another fun way to volunteer was to go Christmas caroling at hospitals. The group is called Love is the Answer (LITA) and although its caroling is finished for this year, it's a fun volunteering opportunity to keep in mind.

The Volunteer Center has more than 600 opportunities available for community volunteers year-round. It is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. five days a week and Wednesday evening until 8 p.m. Call 472-5768 to find out more. Its Web site is [www.helpnow.org](http://www.helpnow.org).

Or visit [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org) and enter your ZIP code to find out where to volunteer within the distance you want to travel, starting within five miles. It lists everything from Hope Hospice home or office volunteers—to animal shelters.

Some shelters say they have plenty of volunteers on Christmas Day; but they need them badly every other day of the year.

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

**YOUR TURN**

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

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

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

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



**Guest Opinion**

**Domestic violence hits the holidays**

The holiday season is a time of merriment, family and peace, but for too many families in Contra Costa County this holiday season has none of those qualities. This season, like every season for families struggling with domestic violence, is a time of anxiety and fear. Fear of a family member or partner who turns home from haven to hell. Ashamed and terrified, victims of domestic violence become hostages in their own homes.

STAND! Against Domestic Violence's emergency housing is often the only safe place these women and children have to go. STAND!'s crisis line is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for anyone who needs it. Here are the telephone numbers:

• 24-hour crisis line: 1-888-215-5555

• If you are hurting some you love: 676-2968

• Calling from outside Contra Costa County: 1-800-799-7233

• To volunteer: 676-2945

As the sole provider of comprehensive domestic violence services for victims of domestic violence in Contra Costa County, STAND! provides a critical resource as it moves women and their children from dangerous, violent situations to safe, supportive homes, where fear and anxiety is no longer a part of their lives. STAND!'s services include peer support groups, counseling for women and children provided by caring, supportive staff, life skills classes, legal services, as well as jobs and education.

—STAND!

*Against Domestic Violence*

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

**Mayors don't rotate**

Dear Editor:

I found your Dec. 14 editorial, "New mayor for Danville," very interesting, and in part very true, yet, also in part inaccurate. As a 22-plus year politically active resident of Danville, I have the knowledge to judge.

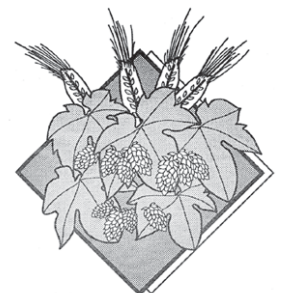
The paragraph about Mike Shimansky's service as mayor in 2007 was accurate and deservedly complimentary. However in the preceding paragraph, the phrase, "The mayoral position rotates among the five Danville Town Council positions," is false. In the past Shimansky, for example, has been skipped twice when it was his "turn" to be mayor.

On Dec. 4, Mayor Candace Andersen, Vice Mayor Newell Arnerich, and Councilman Mike Doyle, recipient of a public service award, were all unanimous actions. Andersen, Arnerich and Doyle are also the three council members up for re-election in 2008. Coincidence, or a violation of the Ralph M. Brown Act?

"How many times can a man turn his head, and pretend that he just doesn't see? The answer my friend is blowin' in the wind, the answer is blowin' in the wind,"...

Bob Dylan, 1963

*Ralph Hoffmann, Walnut Creek*



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# Sports

A LOOK AT THE LOCAL SPORTS SCENE

## PREP SCHEDULE

Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 20-22

Wednesday-Saturday, Dec. 26-29

### Women's Soccer

Tri-Valley Classic Tournament at Sycamore/MSC

Friday, Dec. 21

### Men's Basketball

Monte Vista at Serra, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 22

### Women's Basketball

San Ramon Valley at Mission San Jose, Newark, 6 p.m.

### Men's Basketball

Modesto Christian Tournament

### Women's Basketball

Costa Mesa Tournament

Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 27-29

### Men's Basketball

St. Francis Tournament at Mountain View

### Women's Basketball

Newark Memorial Tournament



The Mustang U-13 Crew District Cup winners are (front, l-r) Sam Sarver, Andy Zeiger, Austin Kurtz, Sammy Yorke, Wyatt Martin, Tony Bell; (back) Coach Gabe Tanaka, Cameron Lober, Max Shore, Mat Maxwell, Aidan Struck, Ryan Reder, Dallas Stevens, Nick Amador, Conner Tetzloff, Chris TT DaSilva, Coach Craig Kurts; (lying down) Jake Nobriga; not shown: Coach Edmund Eusebio.

## 'Twas the Weekend of District Cup

by Christine Reder

'Twas the weekend of District Cup, when all about the grass

All the players were stirring, waiting for a pass.

All eleven carefully placed on the field with care

In hopes that a gold trophy soon would be there.

The Crew arose up early and out of their beds

While visions of blasting their opponents danced in their heads.

And Craig and Gabe at the helm Stood on the sideline about to be overwhelmed.

When out on the lawn there arose

such a matter

The parents and coaches making such chatter.

The Crew had come to take names Winning not one, two, three, but four shutout games.

Now Aidan! Now Max! Now Austin and Cameron

On Chris! On, Connor! On, Dallas and Matt!

To the top of the goal! To the top with the ball!

Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!

A few obstacles stood in the way, but there was no stopping them today

With Jake coaching from the side and Ryan and Andy determined to play.

The team spoke a few words, but went straight to work.

They held their own with the Storm, this achievement a major perk.

Now Sam and Nick! Now Sammy! Now Tony and Wyatt

Put your game on; it's time for a riot! Getting even with the Blast was what the team would do.

The Crew came to show them they would stick together like glue.

The team sprang to their feet, as the ref gave a whistle

And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.

"We are the champions" was heard as we all drove out of sight.

Happy District Cup to all, and to all a good night!



## Mavericks battle 'til the end

The Mavericks, an U11 Division 3 Red Team, played in the District Cup on Dec. 1-2 and ended up going to the Championship game. They tied 0-0, then went to two 10-minute overtimes, then into penalty kicks. They placed second in the District Cup. Team members are (back, l-r) Coach Steve Sidore, Alexis Baillie, Mackenzie Shrieve, Corinne Lafayette, Michelle Morones, Christina Chace, Kyndel Sidore, Jenna Chase, Sabrina Chiang, Sarah Wayland, Coach Chris Gil, Coach Rob Hansen; (front) Chloe Winn, Emma Gil, Sonali Verma, Sophia Tomei, Christy Hammill and Brianna Engle.



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**Monte Vista JVs win James Logan Classic**

Monte Vista won the James Logan Classic JV Soccer tournament recently, which drew 28 teams from throughout the Bay Area.

In the final game, Monte Vista played against California High, winning 2-0. On their way to victory, Monte Vista beat Bishop O'Dowd 6-1, Palo Alto 2-1, and Dougherty Valley 3-0.

Team members were Coach Jeff Kendall, Brad Bridwell, Sebastian DeLuca, Taylor Durand, Jake Erlick, Ryan Freshman, John Geagea, Tyler Lanman, Max Louie, Ryan McNutt, Zach Nielan, Kevin O'Brien, Andrew Perez, Arman Salimpour, Gabe Sandler, Jake Stringer, Ryan Tan, Drew Terry, Jacob Torres, Mark Tyson, Jaymi Van Dam, Garrett Weiss and Mark Wenden.

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# Toys of the season

Amelia Clute, second grade, St. Isidore's School



by Jordan M. Doronila

Children's art expresses the wonderful feelings of Christmas



The ho-ho-holidays are arriving like winter snowflakes, as families begin to celebrate. Feel the warmth of cozy fires, hear the joy of the carols and the bells, and smell the favorite foods that are prepared at this time each year.

The holidays have inspired children at San Ramon Valley Christian Academy and St. Isidore's School in Danville to create art that reflects an endearing spirit of giving, hope and memories. Art teachers have been working with students to come up with interesting pieces to express the warm feelings of the season.

Second-grade students at St. Isidore's made glittering, ornamental birds under the supervision of art instructor Katie Mirault. Her eighth-graders studied positive/negative images in their holiday designs. Those at the Christian Academy created a myriad of pictures in Christmas themes with art teacher Bill Di Michele, who encouraged his students to find the holiday spirit in their artwork. They used pastels and colored pencils.

Enjoy the children's art—as a gift of the holiday season. ■



Camille Debreczeny, eighth grade, San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Raquel Royal, eighth grade, San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Annie Raines, second grade, St. Isidore's School

Jennifer Kolander, seventh grade, San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Brittany McIntosh, sixth grade, San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Kevin Danis, fourth grade,  
San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Evan Luc Pihon, second grade,  
St. Isidore's School



Ivy Allen, eighth grade, San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



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## COVER STORY

Brian Danis, seventh grade, San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Jennifer Quillen, seventh grade, San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Marco Gee, second grade, St. Isidore's School



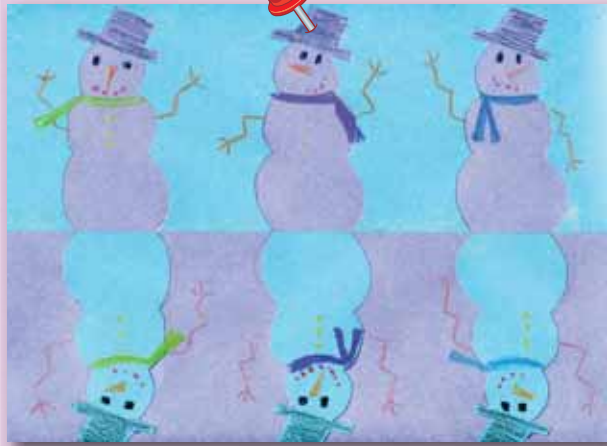
Adelle Rose, eighth grade, San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Karen Kennedy, seventh grade, San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Lauren Larson, sixth grade,  
San Ramon Valley Christian Academy



Erin Wright, eighth grade, St. Isidore's School



John Rabago, eighth grade, St. Isidore's School



Camille Grager, seventh grade,  
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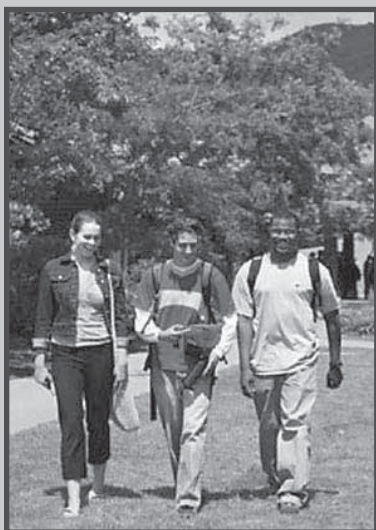
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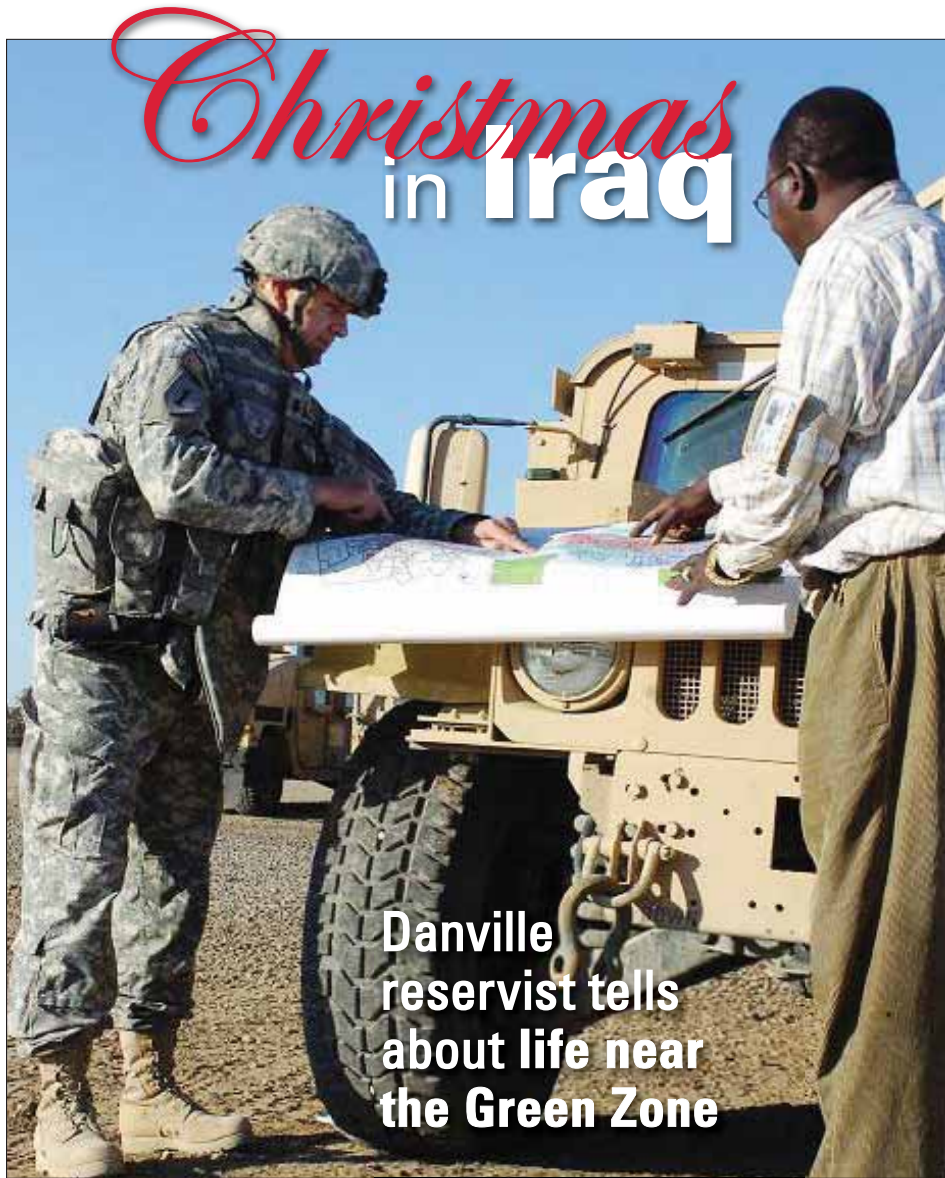
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COURTESY FELIX BOSTON

## Danville reservist tells about life near the Green Zone

Lt. Col. Felix Boston and American interpreter Bob Prince map out the route for a day of rebuilding northwestern Iraq.

by Natalie O'Neill

From a gravel parking lot five miles outside Baghdad's precarious Green Zone, Lt. Col. Felix Boston is losing reception on his cell phone.

He walks a few feet.

"Can you hear me now?" he asks.

It's 10 p.m. at Camp Liberty and the 50-degree evening is winding down as Boston explains a day in the life of soldiers in northwestern Iraq.

"Most people will never fire their weapons, but they could die any minute," he says. "We're just trying to make things better over here, so we can go home."

On this Tuesday, exactly two weeks before Christmas, Boston is finishing up administrative work. He's handling paperwork, not ammo. But this is just one Tuesday—24 hours—in a place where even the most mundane hour could be his last.

Up until last spring, the 57-year-old Danville Army reservist sold insurance on Front Street. Now he's at the forefront of "provincial reconstruction"—a fancy name for rebuilding schools, businesses, power plants and sewers.

In nine months, Boston has gone from insurance agent to international diplomat, complete with a translator, body armor and rifle.

To the locals he works with, he's the face of the American military. He's side by side Iraqi community leaders and businessmen, and he knows firsthand the attitudes of those Iraqi civilians.

"The guys that used to shoot at us, now they're on our side. They're tired of the war,"

he says.

Last week the American military death toll reached 3,888. According to Iraqi Body Count, an independent organization tracking the country's death toll, more than 78,500 Iraqi civilians have died in war-related incidents since 2003.

The numbers are grim, but Boston says he's hopeful.

"It's getting better. You have to be honest with them and try to help them," he explains.

November marked the lowest death tolls for both military service members and Iraqis since February 2006, when the bombing of a Shiite shrine set off a violent retaliation, according to the Associated Press.

In the past three months, Boston says he's seen about 250 businesses open in his area. Previously there were only about 50, he says.

When it comes to rebuilding Iraq, nothing much changes on Christmas Day—or Thanksgiving, or Hanukkah for that matter.

"It's pretty much a normal workday, maybe with a little more decorations... You're not around your relatives and neighbors, but you're around military members and that's your family. Everything you do is for the guy next to you," Boston says.

In Iraq, military holidays are generally defined by more food and more time to sleep. On Thanksgiving, he says the most notable change on base was that the cafeteria was open longer.

A lot of people don't know how much great food is at the base, he says, including "the best pecan pie you've ever had."

Sending holiday food packages to soldiers isn't the best choice if they are at Camp



COURTESY FELIX BOSTON

Young Iraqi interpreter Ayet and Moroccan interpreter Jamie help Boston communicate with locals. The Danville man says honesty goes a long way when talking with civilians.



COURTESY FELIX BOSTON

Boston teams up with Iraqi community leaders—including this local sheikh—to work on provincial reconstruction.

Liberty, he says, although he adds that homemade brownies are an exception to the rule.

"We don't need more candy. Someone sent a daily newspaper and people were more interested in that," he says.

His friends joke there is so much food at Camp Liberty, they should be sending it home to civilians.

The level of comfort that service members have on base is one thing that's unique about the war, he says. At his base there's a food court, big screen TVs, new release (albeit bootleg) DVDs, cold drinks, work-out facilities and air conditioning.

But outside, where the front line is essentially invisible, every person and object must be thought of as a potential explosive device. In the summer months, temperatures climb into the mid 130s—and they nonetheless keep wearing their 60 pounds of gear.

"It's not like the John Wayne movies, we only shoot people when they are shooting at us," he says.

Many of the men and women who work with Boston on provincial reconstruction have to learn how to be engineers and diplomats on the spot, he said.

"The way it's been working is someone will say, 'I need a sewer guy,' and, well, he majored in English but he's gonna learn," Boston says.

Provincial readiness teams consist of a senior State Department officer as the team leader, a civil affairs officer as the deputy team leader, and up to nine other members with a variety of skill sets.

One common misconception is that most Americans in and near Baghdad are young

men ages 18-21. While that demographic is generally outside "the wire" and involved in combat, the bulk of Americans that Boston comes in contact with are middle-aged civilian contractors on base.

Boston is part of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division and agreed to come out of a command assignment in civil affairs to be the deputy of the team.

He moved from Texas in 1990 and had been in the Air Force for 12 years before he joined the Army 13 years ago. He is scheduled to arrive back in the States in late March.

Boston had to relinquish his insurance business of 17 years when he was deployed, and he has nothing set up for the spring.

"He's got a good heart," Steve Luehe, a friend who is concerned that Army reservists aren't protected enough by their employers after they are activated.

Boston said he'd rather not comment on the issue.

American reserve soldiers perform part-time but can be called upon at any time to do full-time duty. When they are activated in times of war they must sometimes abruptly uproot their lives, including jobs and personal relationships. Often after serving duty, employers have filled their positions and can't or won't hire them back.

In March, Boston plans to fly into North Carolina and take a cross-county motorcycle trip back home in order to unwind. He's says he's most looking forward to visiting his old friends and seeing his black Labrador, Mabel.

"It's getting safer over here—but there is still a long way to go," he says. ■

# The Wine Guy

BY GREGORY PEEBLES



## Only the Aussies

**2006 Tait Wines**  
**"The Ball Buster" Shiraz**  
(Barossa Valley, South Australia)  
(Draeger's Market—Blackhawk,  
\$18.99)



Admittedly, the name played a huge role in my decision to review this Shiraz. A man looks for a big, juicy red and discovers a wine labeled "The Ball Buster"—it's like a moth's instinctual attraction to a Coleman lantern. I could not resist the purchase despite the numerous strolls through Draeger's extensive wine department searching for a more classy sounding choice.

By creating such a name, winemaker Bruno Tait set my expectations quite high. Although Bruno's version is not in the same "ball buster" league as brash stand-up comedians Bobby Slayton and the late Lenny Bruce or even my pal Rodger from Long Island, it's a darn tasty Shiraz which exceeded my expectations in many respects and is certainly worthy of your hard-earned cash. Here's why:

- Color: Purple, purple and more purple. This uniform color spectrum is indicative of a very young red wine.

- Nose: Oodles of fresh raspberry, blueberry, blackberry and cassis aromas are supported by touches of mint, eucalyptus and dusty earth. One would expect a "hot," even offensive, aspect to the nose since the wine sports nearly 16 percent

alcohol, but it's surprisingly not the case at all.

- Palate: A blend of 78 percent Shiraz, 12 percent Cabernet Sauvignon and 10 percent Merlot provides pinpoint examples of juicy red raspberry, deep black cherry and lush plum. Flavors are bright, not brooding, and brimming with life-giving acidity. It's shockingly well balanced. Again, the restrained impact of the considerable alcohol level is a pleasant surprise.

- Finish: Elegant; full of ripe berries, vanilla and a splash of caffè latté.

No doubt, "The Ball Buster" is a big wine. A huge, bungling, overly alcoholic, out-of-balance fruit bomb it is not. It's a ripe, broad shouldered, 100 percent enjoyable bottle of very well made Shiraz (with a cool name).

Although Cabernet Sauvignon and Grenache play prominent roles in South Australia's Barossa Valley as well, Shiraz is the star attraction. Three top-shelf exam-

ples of this region's benchmark red varietal worth searching for include Barossa Valley Estate's "E&E Black Pepper," Wolf Blass' "Platinum Label" and Grant Burge's "Meshach."

Australia continues to maintain a well deserved reputation for producing some of the world's absolute best price-to-value wines. Unfortunately, that status is being threatened by Mother Nature. South Australia, with more acreage (over 173,000) dedicated to grape vines than any other state in the nation, is being drastically impacted by two years of extreme drought—perhaps the lowest rainfall totals since 1919. As a result, some wineries have experienced harvests approaching only 60 percent of normal and total wine production is really suffering.

The bottom line: Buy wines like Tait while you can for prices will most likely increase. How much? It's yet to be determined. Price increases may be even more dramatic should the U.S. dollar lose its current, modest strength against Australia's currency.

What should you throw on the barbie to accompany "The Ball Buster"? Perhaps a kangaroo filet would be recommended by the Australian locals, but since you're in the beautiful East Bay suburbs, try a grilled pepper steak, lamb, duck or venison.

Let your palate be the judge. Cheers, mates!

*Have comments or questions about wine? Gregory Peebles, wine industry professional and East Bay resident, can be contacted at [caledoniawine@sbcglobal.net](mailto:caledoniawine@sbcglobal.net).*

# The Pet Vet says...

BY DR. HEIDI STRAND



## Catfights in the home

**Q.** I have two female cats, each about 3 years old. They are a couple of months apart, and we have had them since they were kittens. One is a little bigger than the other and she fights with the smaller one. I feel so bad because the smaller one is always getting beaten up and when I pet her head it always feels like she has scabs. What can I do about this? I thought about getting them declawed, since we live in an apartment and they do not go outside, but I have heard conflicting opinions about this procedure. Is this safe, or will it hurt them? Is there anything else than can be done?

**A.** There is always going to be some amount of conflict in a multiple cat home. Felines are territorial animals and the dominant cat continually reasserts her dominance by "beating up" on the submissive cat. Usually the dominant cat will approach the other with hissing or stalking behavior. If that doesn't chase the submissive cat away, she will progress to swatting, wrestling or biting. These kinds of interactions are normal. However, if the submissive cat is

being hurt or is hiding excessively, then you need to intervene.

Often a surge in dominance behavior is associated with a perceived threat to her territory. Changes in the household such as a move, a new pet, a new baby, or new cat in the neighborhood can all cause increased aggressive behavior. But the most common cause is fighting over resources. Your cats' resources are their space, food and litter boxes, and to some extent, their people. Because you live in an apartment, they are probably fighting over resources.

But, you say, they got along great while they were young. It is typical for cats to start to fight when one or both reaches social maturity, between 2 and 5 years of age. This is when they start to recognize what their resources are and whether they need to have control over them.

I would recommend providing two sets of food and water dishes and two litter boxes in separate locations. Ideally, the cats cannot see each other from each location. Watch the cats closely to see if they are fighting over a particular space such as a preferred

chair or cat tree. You may need to provide additional "prime spots."

Three-dimensional spaces such as kitty condos or cardboard boxes will increase their perception of safety. If they only fight in front of you, perhaps they need more one-on-one attention with you. Your goal is to reduce the aggression to an acceptable level. It will probably not be eliminated completely.

I do not think declawing would help this problem in any way. You can learn more about declawing at [www.eastbayspca.org/petownership](http://www.eastbayspca.org/petownership). Additionally, you may want to have the bumps on your cat's head checked out by your veterinarian to make sure it is in fact trauma and not dermatitis or a flea allergy. Your kitties are fortunate to have an owner who cares about them enough to help them solve their kitty problems.

*—Dr. Heidi Strand is a veterinarian for the East Bay SPCA in Dublin. Questions can be mailed to 315 Diablo Road, Suite 100, Danville 94526; or e-mailed to [hstrand@eastbayspca.org](mailto:hstrand@eastbayspca.org).*

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## Giving birthday girl



Danville resident Alexa Sheldon asked her friends to give her toys to donate to Toys for Tots to celebrate her 12th birthday last month. Sheldon, a sixth-grader at Los Cerros Middle School, took 12 friends to see the film "Enchanted" on Nov. 29 and asked them for the toys instead of giving her presents.

This is her third year making this birthday request, said her mother Heidi Sheldon. She donates the toys at law offices at the Doyle House, 571 Hartz Ave. The Toys for Tots program is sponsored by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, and its goal is to collect and distribute toys to needy children during Christmas.

## Montair earns \$1 each to give to others



Montair Elementary School students in Danville raised \$731 to buy new uniforms for their sister school, E.M. Downer Elementary School in San Pablo. Students raised money after learning that Downer students needed new uniforms, which the public school pupils wear.

The students worked through the Cross-County School Partner's Program, which provides support to schools in disadvantaged areas in Contra Costa County. Each child was encouraged to earn \$1 and donate it; this paid for 42 uniforms, plus a \$200 donation.

"The kids were so excited about this," said Marisa O'Rielly, Cross-County representative for Montair's PTA. "We are very blessed to live in an area that has top-notch schools; however, this is not the case for everyone."

"It's critical that our students know this," she added.

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# Presenting the Past

BY BEVERLY LANE

## Rose remembers WWI



"SAN RAMON VALLEY: ALAMO, DANVILLE, AND SAN RAMON" BY BEVERLY LANE AND RALPH COZINE

The Peters family on the front steps of the farmhouse, about 1912; (l-r) Ed, Rose Lawrence Peters, Rose, Evelyn, Joe Peters and Frances.

A remarkable woman's memoirs of growing up in the San Ramon Valley was published in 2003. The book is titled "Footprints in the Soil. A Portuguese-Californian Remembers" and was written by Rose Peters Emery when she was 97.

Rose Peters Emery tells the story of her family, who lived in Bollinger Canyon and on San Ramon Valley Boulevard (today's Danville Ranch). Her father, Joe Pires Azevedo (Joe Peters) emigrated from the Azores Islands in 1872 at age 18; her mother was Rose Lawrence from Tassajara Valley. Mrs. Emery's book tells about life on the Peters Ranch, at San Ramon Grammar School (1911-19) and San Ramon Valley Union High School (1919-23).

Here is a short excerpt about World War I and the flu epidemic of 1918:

"In 1917, when I was in the seventh grade, the United States entered World War I. Shortly thereafter, Mary and Mira More, unmarried sisters who, though middle-aged, were always known as 'the More girls,' came to our house. As their contribution to the war effort, they were going around the area teaching grade schoolers to knit. We girls would knit wool strips of alternating pink and blue squares which were later sewed together to make 'Blankets for Belgian Babies.'

"The boys used thick wooden needles to knit strips of cotton material for use as mop rags. We kids also saved tinfoil, and we gathered black walnuts because we were told they would be used in making gas masks. Everyone was asked to save white flour for 'Our Boys,' so Mama baked rye and corn breads for the family.

"As a food conservation measure, several government inspectors taught local farmers to poison the ground squirrels that ate so much wheat. My father learned to make balls of sacking, saturate them with carbon bisulfide, poke them into the squirrel burrows, then stop up the entrances with dirt. Many were killed in this way, though some survived, and it did lead to a small

increase in the yield per acre.

"Everyone was very patriotic. Danville held parades and flag-waving kids piled into trucks, singing 'Over There,' and there was a fashion among young women for wearing khaki dresses. My half-brothers were too old to go as soldiers, my brothers too young. But two of my cousins went, sons of Mama's sisters, Mary Freitas and Louise Bettencourt. They later came home safely. In all, the war didn't have a lot of impact on the lives of us kids on the ranch and we had no idea at all what the political issues were or why we were fighting."

"A great many people lost their lives during the great flu epidemic of 1918. We were instructed in school to wear gauze masks in the hope of warding off the disease. That did our family no good; all nine of us came down with it. Either we were remarkably strong or we didn't have the most severe form, because it seemed to us only a little worse than the usual flu, with its fever, cough, and aches and pains. We had no idea that millions of people worldwide were dying of it. Fortunately, dear, kind Mrs. Penn, a nurse from Danville, took charge of cooking, feeding and sponge baths. She pulled us all through.

"I remember my father paying her at least once with a huge, shining gold piece which he fished from a small leather sack he carried in his pocket. My mother gave her a handsome square scarf which Papa's sister had sent from the Azores. Nothing would have been too good for her."

Many old timers remember Peters Hill, which is near today's intersection of Greenbrook Drive and San Ramon Valley Boulevard. A plaque in honor of the Peters family has been placed by the homeowners in front of the Danville Ranch House.

Source: Rose Emery's "Footprints in the Soil," (pages 134-5, 145-6). It is available at the Museum of the San Ramon Valley for \$14.

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."

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## POLICE BULLETIN

### Upscale burglary

Fine wine, vodka and \$1,000 were stolen from the Peasant and the Pear in Danville.

The burglary occurred at the restaurant on Hartz Avenue on Dec. 9, said restaurant owner Rodney Worth. High-end wine worth \$5,000 was stolen, as well as \$1,000 from a safe. Among the upscale wines taken were Opus One, Joseph Phelps and Silverado, he said, noting that a case of each was stolen. Also four cases of Grey Goose Vodka and Ketel One Vodka were taken.

The burglary was discovered Monday morning, Worth said.

The restaurant apparently was entered through the back door by pushing it open, said Worth.

He noted that police are still looking for leads.

"It's sad," Worth said. "It's during Christmas. You wouldn't think it would happen in a community like this."

"This is the first time in four years that this happened," he added.

—Jordan M. Doronila

## POLICE LOG

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

### Monday, Dec. 10

- Identity theft on Meadow Blossom Ct. at 4:41 p.m., 5:26 p.m. and 6:31 p.m.
- Petty theft on Crow Canyon Rd. at 8:14 p.m.
- Residential burglary on Glen Rd. at 8:26 p.m.

### Tuesday, Dec. 11

- Accident, property damage, on Camino Tassajara and Shady Creek Dr. at 7:47 a.m.
- Auto burglary on Calistoga Ct. at 7:49 a.m.
- Trespassing on Manchester St. at 9:09 a.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Diablo Rd. and W. El Pintado Rd. at 10:01 a.m.
- Auto burglary on San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 10:44 a.m.
- Vandalism on Diablo Rd. at 11:30 a.m.
- Identity theft on St. George Rd. at 1:35 p.m.
- Identity theft on Shadewell Dr. at 2:36 p.m.
- Accident, major injuries, on Camino Tassajara and Crow Canyon Rd.

at 3:34 p.m.

- Grand theft on Lawnview Cir. at 5:14 p.m.
- Vehicle stop, arrest, on Sycamore Valley Rd. W. at 11:12 p.m.

### Wednesday, Dec. 12

- Vehicle traffic stop, arrest, on Danville Oak Pl. at 12:43 a.m.
- Credit card fraud on Edinburgh Cir. at 9:38 a.m.
- Auto burglary on San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 12:01 p.m.
- Auto burglary on Camino Ramon and Sycamore Cir. at 4:30 p.m.
- Residential burglary on Vista Del Diablo at 5:34 p.m. and 6:20 p.m.
- Vandalism on Mission Dr. at 6:50 p.m.
- Vehicle traffic stop, arrest, on Podva Rd. and San Ramon Valley Blvd. at 11:50 p.m.

### Thursday, Dec. 13

- Suspicious subject stop, arrest, on 3100 block of Stone Valley Rd. at 12:11 p.m.
- Terrorist threats on Via Cima Ct. at 1:58 p.m.
- Grand theft on Edinburgh Cir. at 2:43 p.m.
- Vehicle traffic stop, arrest, on Danville Blvd. and El Cerro Blvd.

at 7:29 p.m.

### Friday, Dec. 14

- Petty theft on Hartz Way at 1:01 p.m.
- Auto burglary on Cumberland Ct. at 3:04 p.m.
- Accident, property damage, on Fostoria Way at 4:28 p.m.
- Residential burglary on Haven Hill Ct. at 4:57 p.m.
- Defrauding innkeeper on Rock Island Cir. at 8:36 p.m.

### Saturday, Dec. 15

- Drunk in public, arrest, on 300 block of Hartz Ave. at 1:18 a.m.
- Welfare check, arrest, on San Ramon Valley Blvd. and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 11:52 a.m.
- Drunk in public on Camino Ramon and Sycamore Cir. at 11:52 a.m.
- Miscellaneous burglary on Rolling Hills Lane at 11:57 a.m.
- Drunk in public on Camino Ramon and Sycamore Valley Rd. at 11:58 a.m.
- Trespassing on Camino Ramon at 2:43 p.m.
- Drugs violation on Harlan Dr. at 6:15 p.m.
- Juvenile disturbance, arrest, on 400 block of Hartz Ave. at 9:04 p.m.

## OBITUARY

### John Kraus

Alamo resident John Kraus, a longtime businessman in Contra Costa County, passed away Nov. 27.

He owned Alamo Pools and Crystal Springs Pools in San Mateo. He was instrumental in designs and construction on many buildings in the Midwest and has his name on many plaques displaying his gunite and construction work. He was a World War II veteran and was one of the Battling Bastards of Bastogne, 101st Airborne Division, Screaming Eagles. He loved fishing and boating on Lake Berryessa with his family and friends.

He was the beloved father of Patricia Lynn, Cheryl Nelson, Colleen Thornhill, Bonnie Matthey, and Dennis Kraus; and the cherished grandfather and great-grandfather of 20 children. He was preceded in death by his brother Karl Kraus Jr.

A memorial service was held Dec. 1 at Chapel of San Ramon Valley. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to the Hospice of East Bay.

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# Calendar

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

## WEEKEND PREVIEW



### Santa Claus is coming to town

Santa Claus will be visiting with little children at different locations in the area including: the Livery from 6-8 p.m., Friday, Dec. 21 and from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 22-23, located at Sycamore Valley Road West and San Ramon Valley Boulevard, Danville; Blackhawk Plaza from noon-7 p.m., Thursday-Monday, until Dec. 24; and at the Museum of the San Ramon Valley, 205 Railroad Ave., Danville, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 22.

## Art

**High School Artists and Musicians** Pioneer Art Gallery presents an exhibit of students' work from local high schools from Jan. 25-27, at the gallery, 524 Hartz Ave., Danville. This is a unique opportunity for young artists to display their work, win awards and gain recognition.

## Civic Meetings

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

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

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

## Clubs

**Danville AM Toastmasters Club** The club meets from 7-8:30 a.m., every Tuesday, at Father Nature's, 178 E. Prospect Ave. Guests are welcome. For more information, contact Dave Miklasevich at 899-1543 or dmik210@yahoo.com or www.danvilleamtoastmasters.org.

**Danville Job's Daughters** Job's Daughters is an international organization for girls between the ages of 10-20 with Masonic heritage who like to have fun and make friends. The

group meets at 7 p.m., the second and fourth Tuesday of every month, at the Danville Grange Hall, 743 Diablo Rd. Call 829-8505.

**Danville Rotary** The Danville Rotary meets at noon every Monday at the Brass Door, 2154 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon. For information, visit www.danvillerotary.org.

**Danville-Sycamore Valley Rotary** The Danville-Sycamore Valley Rotary Club meets for breakfast at 7 a.m., every Tuesday at Crow Canyon Country Club, 711 Silver Lake Drive, Danville. Join them for great fellowship and make a difference in your community and the world. Call Scott at 743-8449.

**Kiwanis San Ramon Valley** The San Ramon Valley Kiwanis meets from noon-1:30 p.m., every Thursday, at Round Hill Country Club, 3169 Roundhill Road, Alamo. Meetings include networking, lunch and a guest speaker. For information, visit its Web site at www.kiwanis-srv.org or call 244-1227.

**San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society** The society meets at 10 a.m., every third Tuesday of the month, except August and December, at the LDS Church, 2449 Stone Valley Road. Guest speaker at every meeting. All welcome. For information, call Ed at 299-0881.

**Valley Stitchers Guild** This club will kick off the new year at 10 a.m., Monday, Jan. 7, at Faith Lutheran Church, 50 Woodsworth Lane, Pleasant Hill. Guest speaker is Jan Lewis, quilter and owner of The Quilter's Inn in Danville. Annual membership is \$25. Call Marie at 947-5817.

**Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 75** The organization meets at 7:30 p.m., every second Thursday of the month (except December), at Danville Veteran's Hall, 400 Hartz Ave., Danville. For information, call Post Commander Tony Carnemolla at 932-4042 or visit www.vfw.org.

## Events

**2008 O'Neill International Conference** Scholars and devotees of Eugene O'Neill will come together

at the 2008 O'Neill International Conference held from June 11-15, at the Tao House, Danville. Registration is now open; contact Diane Schinnerer at 828-0659 or dmdds@aol.com.

**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.

## Exhibits

**Contemporary Warrior: Modern Day Tomb Soliders** Bedford Gallery will host "Contemporary Warrior: Modern Day Tomb Soliders," an exhibit of ceramic figures by Chinese artist, Wanxin Zhang, Jan. 13-March 9, at the Bedford Gallery, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. An opening reception is from 3-5 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 13, featuring Chinese musicians and dancing dragons. Admission is \$3; free for members. Call 295-1416 or visit www.bedfordgallery.org.

**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., until Jan. 6, at the Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. Call 736-2751 or visit www.blackhawk-museum.org or www.theshopsat-blackhawk.com.

## Fundraisers

**Book Sale** Friends of the Danville Library will host a book sale from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday, Jan. 18, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 19 and noon-4 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 20, at the Danville Library, 400 Front St. Proceeds will benefit Friends of the Danville Library. Memberships for the Friends of the Danville Library will be available at the door. Call 837-4889.

**Crab Feed and Silent Auction** Youth Homes Auxiliary will host its annual Crab Feed and Silent Auction at 6 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 12, at

Shadelands Arts Center, 111 N. Wiget Lane, Walnut Creek. Tickets are \$40 per person or \$320 for a table of eight. Proceeds will benefit programs for Youth Homes Auxiliary. To purchase tickets call 935-4531; to donate silent auction items call 930-7803.

at 7 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 24, at the Danville Library, Mt. Diablo Room, 400 Front St. Dr. Nathalie Bera-Miller will discuss the key ingredients of achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. Call 837-4889.

**African Drumming Circle** Drumming has been shown to boost immune system functions and metabolism. Join Patricia Frame and experience this fun way to get "good vibrations" from 4:30-5:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 17, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave.,

## Health

**Achieving Healthy Weight Loss** Danville Library will host a workshop on "Achieving Healthy Weight Loss"



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# Original Sin

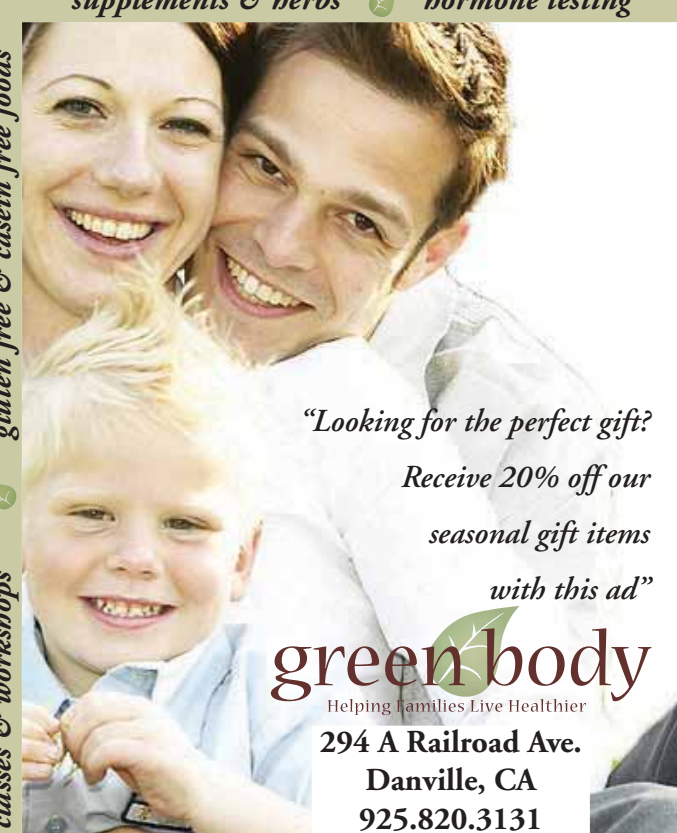


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Walnut Creek. This event is free. Call 933-0107.

**Mindful Chi Kung** Chi Kung is a moving meditation that integrates mind, body and spirit to enhance health and strength the immune system. Learn about this system from 10 a.m.-noon, Saturday, Jan. 19, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. This event is free for cancer patients,

their families and friends. Call 933-0107.

**Open Gym** Town of Danville is offering Adult Open Gym from 7:30-9:15 a.m., Saturdays, and High School Open Gym, 6-8 p.m., Sundays, both at Los Cerros Middle School Community Gym, 968 Blemer Road, Danville. Discounted pass cards are \$4 for residents, \$5 for non-residents. Call 314-3386.

## Holiday

**Santa at the Livery** Santa Claus will be at the Livery visiting with children from 6-8 p.m., Friday, Dec. 21 and from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 22-23, at the Livery, located at Sycamore Valley Road West and San Ramon Valley Boulevard, Danville. Bring your own camera. Call 838-7070.

**Santa Claus at the Blackhawk Plaza** Santa Claus will be at Blackhawk Plaza every weekend throughout the season to pose for photos with children from noon-7 p.m., Thursday-Monday, until Dec. 24, at Blackhawk Plaza. Call 736-2751 or visit [www.theshopsatblackhawk.com](http://www.theshopsatblackhawk.com).

## Kids and Teens

**'Trains, Track and Trestle'** Blackhawk Museum will host "Trains, Track and Trestle" which is run on the last day of the "All Aboard 2007! European Train Enthusiasts" model train exhibit. It is from 1-4 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 6, at the Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. This event is a free drop-in activity, with paid museum admission. Call 736-2277.

**When Mom or Dad Has Cancer** School-age children participate in fun, creative activities to help them express themselves while teens have a group where they can discuss concerns from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 12, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. Parents meet concurrently. Call 933-0107.

## Lectures/Workshops

**Lebed Method: Focus on Healing** This workshop is a six-week series of a total body exercise set to music from 9:30-10:30 a.m., Jan. 17-Feb. 21, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. It helps you regain and maintain range of motion, relieve pain, and reduce the risk of lymphedema from any kind of cancer. Call 933-0107.

**Managing Stress in Your Life** Danville Library will host a workshop on "Managing Stress in Your Life" at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 16, at the Danville Library, Mt. Diablo Room,

400 Front St. Discussion will include current research, unique ways to deal with stress and ideas for coping. Call 837-4889.

**Newly Diagnosed Breast Cancer Group** This 16-week series is for women who have just been diagnosed and are either in treatment or starting treatment from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Jan. 9-April 23, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. Guest medical experts will present information to assist in understanding the disease. Call 933-0107.

**Understanding Clinical Trials** Learn about clinical trials, what they entail and how to find them for your type of cancer from 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 15, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. Local clinical trials will be discussed. Call 933-0107.

## Miscellaneous

**Blood Drive** Hats Off America will host a Red Cross Blood Drive from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 13, at the San Ramon Community Center, 12501 Alcosta Blvd., San Ramon. Donor identification is required prior to donating blood. For an appointment, visit [www.beadonor.com](http://www.beadonor.com) or call 855-1950.

**E-Waste Recycling Event** Ring in the new year and recycle that old, unwanted electronic equipment from noon-5 p.m., Friday, Jan. 4 and from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 5-6, at Diablo Valley College, Overflow Parking Lot (across the street from the main campus) 321 Golf Club Rd., Pleasant Hill. This event is free. Call (866) 335-3373 or visit [www.noewaste.com](http://www.noewaste.com).

**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](http://www.recycleforbreastcancer.org).

## On Stage

**'Bus Stop'** Role Players Ensemble Theatre presents "Bus Stop" which is "a true American classic seasoned with a dash of bittersweet experience" from Jan. 18-Feb. 9, at the Village Theatre, 233 Front St., Danville. For tickets, call 314-3400 or 314-3463, or visit [www.ci.danville.ca.us](http://www.ci.danville.ca.us).

**'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](http://www.wiggedout.org).

## Recreation

**World Walk to Wellness 2008** Enjoy a self-guided walk around the Pleasanton Sports and Community Park from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Monday, Dec. 31, at the park, 5800 Parkside Dr., Pleasanton. The walk is about 5,000 steps (2.15 miles) or a 20-minute, 2000-step walk led by Mr. Pedometer at noon. Call 226-0888 or visit <http://walking10000.org>.

## Spiritual

**Christmas Eve Services** San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church will host different Christmas services on Monday, Dec. 24, at the church, 902 Danville Blvd., Alamo. Family services will be held at 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., including a pick-up pageant for children, children's and youth choirs, carols and "O Holy Night" will be performed by Jenny West, soprano. Services at 8 p.m., 9:30 p.m. and 11 p.m., will integrate Scripture readings with music by the Chancel Choir. Holy Communion celebrated at 11 p.m. Call 837-5243.

**Martin Luther King Convocation for World Peace** An interfaith peace service with speakers from Hindu, Muslim, Jewish and Christian traditions will meet at 7:30 p.m., Monday, Jan. 21, at the Wesley Center, San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church, 902 Danville Blvd., Alamo. The public is invited to pray together and work for peace. Call 837-5243.

**New Year's Retreat** San Damiano will host a retreat titled "Leaving the Old-Welcoming the New," Dec. 30-Jan. 1, at San Damiano Retreat, 710 Highland Dr., Danville. Look back to see where you've been and notice how far you've come. Cost is \$195 for private, \$165 for shared. Call 837-9141, ext. 315.

## Support Groups

**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](mailto:celebraterecovery@eastbayfellowship.org) or visit [www.eastbayfellowship.org](http://www.eastbayfellowship.org).

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

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

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

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| <b>Basketball is Fun Clinic</b>                                                  | <b>Age 4-12</b> |
| <b>Baseball is Fun Clinic</b>                                                    | <b>Age 3-8</b>  |

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## SALES AT A GLANCE

This week's data represents homes sold during November 2007

Alamo	Danville	Diablo	Walnut Creek
Total sales reported: 4	Total sales reported: 28	Total sales reported: 1	Total sales reported: 22
Lowest sale reported: \$375,000	Lowest sale reported: \$465,500	Lowest sale reported: \$1,850,000	Lowest sale reported: \$135,000
Highest sale reported: \$850,000	Highest sale reported: \$2,873,000	Highest sale reported: \$1,850,000	Highest sale reported: \$1,130,500
Average sales reported: \$622,500	Average sales reported: \$1,017,196	Average sales reported: \$1,850,000	Average sales reported: \$627,273

## HOME SALES

Source: California REsource

This week's data represents homes sold during November 2007

### Alamo

- 172 Alamo Square** Callagy Trust to D. & V. Giri for \$515,000
- 1650 Cervato Circle** R. Stewart to J. Fergus for \$750,000
- 1470 Danville Boulevard #10** J. Walker to K. McIlvaine for \$375,000
- 228 Stone Valley Way** L. Spady to R. Amatrone for \$850,000

### Danville

- 1143 Blue Spur Circle** Shapell Industries to Khaleel Trust for \$1,087,000
- 341 Bolero Drive** Martin Trust to G. & N. Long for \$1,030,000
- 1530 Colchester Street** Lennar Homes to H. & B. Anderson for \$1,155,500
- 2001 Colmar Street** KB Homes to M. Mok for \$1,088,000
- 2012 Colmar Street** KB Homes to N. & W. Damian for \$1,151,000
- 2018 Colmar Street** KB Homes to H. Suh for \$986,000
- 2025 Colmar Street** KB Homes to C. & J. Chin for \$928,500
- 2041 Colmar Street** KB Homes to J. Yang for \$910,000
- 204 Garden Creek Place** T. & G. Dolan to K. Grizard for \$533,000
- 307 Karelian Street** Shapell Industries to C. & S. Francioch for \$466,000
- 366 Karelian Street** Shapell Industries to P. & S. Sullivan for \$465,500
- 750 Kirkcrest Road** Ageno Trust to Morris Trust for \$2,873,000
- 220 Live Oak Drive** M. Sabah to V. Burgos for \$1,012,000
- 1943 Mantova Street** KB Homes to P. & M. Kiteley for \$1,053,000
- 1952 Mantova Street** KB Homes to C. Hogan for \$955,500

\$955,500

### 2419 Marsanne Street

Lennar Homes to B. & C. Mihelich for \$1,200,000

### 3167 Martingale Drive

Ponderosa Homes to J. Sakaguchi for \$1,236,000

### 100 Menton Court

KB Homes to J. Moskow for \$823,500

### 2518 Montreux Street

Lennar Homes to A. & T. Franks for \$1,135,500

### 284 Pembroke Street

Shapell Industries to A. Ly for \$465,500

### 285 Pembroke Street

Shapell Industries to J. & S. Campbell for \$502,000

### 208 Pinewood Court

C. & G. Martinez to A. & E. Hunter for \$1,175,000

### 336 Red Maple Drive

L. Eldridge to J. Petersen for \$1,200,000

### 1175 River Rock Lane

P. & J. Forrest to Weber Trust for \$670,000

### 628 St. George Road

D. & M. Alfaro to T. & B. Reynolds for \$750,000

### 4033 Sugar Maple Drive

Neill Trust to M. Sabah for \$1,325,000

### 134 Sunhaven Road

Stromstad Trust to J. & B. Nearon for \$1,470,000

### 539 Zenith Ridge Drive

M. & B. Lohf to M. & C. Scanlan for \$835,000

### Diablo

### 1811 Clubhouse Road

R. & B. Johnson to Miller Trust for \$1,850,000

### Walnut Creek

### 1602 Encanto Place

K. & J. Niemeyer to J. Mandel for \$605,000

### 2162 La Salle Drive

Madsen Trust to M. Dibenedetto for \$740,000

### 1245 Lindell Drive

Guillory Trust to C. Ecklund for \$675,000

### 230 Marshall Drive

K. Trevethan to C. Switzer for \$882,000

### 2832 Mi Elana Circle

Putnam Trust to R. & R. Savidge for \$765,000

### 1655 North California Boulevard #206

Trinity Avenue Limited to S. Holland for \$525,000

### 1655 North California Boulevard #210

Trinity Avenue Limited to E. Knowlden for \$1,130,500

### 1655 North California Boulevard #301

Trinity Avenue Limited to J. Resch for \$997,000

### 1655 North California Boulevard #302

Trinity Avenue Limited to Saucy Trust for \$799,000

### 1655 North California Boulevard #312

Trinity Avenue Limited to D. Diaz for \$645,000

### 1655 North California Boulevard #321

Trinity Avenue Limited to L. Hinman for \$549,500

### 1655 North California Boulevard #420

Trinity Avenue Limited to R. & K. Ross for \$635,000

### 1655 North California Boulevard #422

Trinity Avenue Limited to B. Critchlow for \$774,000

### 1995 Pomar Way

Moulton Trust to B. Betov for \$385,000

### 2013 Skycrest Drive #1

Welch Trust to J. Fiss for \$290,000

### 1509 Skycrest Drive #6

D. Wolf to B. Norris for \$238,000

### 3655 Springer Court

C. & D. Wong to F. Dill for \$746,000

### 896 Terra California Drive #2

L. Porter to Brunk Trust for \$574,000

### 4348 Terra Granada Drive #2A

Mckillip Trust to J. & B. Case for \$610,000

### 1860 Tice Creek Drive #1242

M. Moore to K. Nouri for \$135,000

### 1840 Tice Creek Drive #2132

Nichandros Trust to H. Nichandros for \$315,000

### 2452 Warren Lane

T. & G. Angelo to M. & D. Nieto for \$785,000

# Homes Today



BY JOE COMBS

## Alamo high end market on the rise

Nothing I see on the news about the dire condition of the real estate market astounds me any more, so I ignore it for the most part and conduct my own research. This month, I took a look at high end properties in Alamo, those properties selling at or above the \$2 million mark, to determine how badly they have been impacted by the various and sundry crises that apparently fog the lenses of every newscaster in America. If you make your real estate investments based upon the network news, you may find these results hard to believe.

There are currently 26 high end properties listed as active in Alamo. One is marked pending and a total of 36 high end properties are listed as sold as of Nov. 30, 2007. Average selling price is \$2,835,165 compared to an average selling price of \$2,627,764 for the same time period in '06 when only 34 properties sold in the same time period. If I am not mistaken, that is a 7.8 percent increase in average selling price and a 5.8 percent increase in unit sales for properties valued at \$2 million and up. If those facts leave you wondering about whether you missed the bottom of the market and a buying opportunity, the data presented on the chart below may absolutely unnerve you.

The number of properties sold above \$2 million in Alamo has been steadily increasing since in 2003, with the exception of 2005 when the number rocketed up to 44 before dropping back to a more normal 34 in 2006. If 2007 can be viewed as an indicator, it looks like the upward march continues.

Surprisingly, the average sales price of high end homes sold during this five-year time period has increased steadily in each of the years reported - not a single backward step. The low was in 2003 with an average price of

\$2,328,235 and the highest reported number just in for 2007 stands at \$2,835,165 or about 21.7 percent more than in 2003. Median price shows similar movement with a small negative blip recorded in 2006. The median price for Alamo high end homes currently stands at \$2,737,500 compared to \$2,225,000 in 2003 or a slightly greater change of 23 percent. Although it follows a more choppy line, price paid per high end square foot has risen from \$442 per square foot in 2003 to \$552 in 2007 for an incredible 24.9 percent rise.

No one can predict the future, but the past can certainly be useful in thinking about it. So let's think for a moment about what that means to Alamo's high end market. If the current five-year growth rate slips to only 20 percent over the next five years, it means that the average Alamo high end home now selling for a bargain price of \$2,835,165 will be selling at a price of \$3,402,198. Can you imagine what this number might be if the newscasters decide that the real estate disaster is over and begin reporting that the market has recovered?

If you would like to receive a copy of our Alamo High End Market Review including the complete details, please send an e-mail to joecombs@thecombsteam.com and place Alamo High End Market Review in the subject line. You will receive a copy via pdf file. You will not be spammed. No e-mail, no worries; call me at 989-6086 to arrange delivery.

*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.*

### Alamo High-End Market Jan. 1-Nov. 30

	Houses sold	Days on market	Average price	Median price	\$ per sq.ft.
2003	17	48	\$2,328,235	\$2,225,000	\$442
2004	29	39	\$2,425,773	\$2,350,000	\$443
2005	44	21	\$2,455,113	\$2,387,500	\$497
2006	34	30	\$2,627,764	\$2,330,000	\$549
2007	36	39	\$2,835,165	\$2,737,500	\$552

Data includes Alamo properties sold for \$2 million and up

## OPEN HOMES THIS WEEKEND

### DANVILLE

#### 4 Bedrooms

**842 Matadera Cir.** \$1,282,888  
Sat/Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 260-2508

### PLEASANTON

#### 1 Bedrooms

**68 Peters Ave.** \$319,000  
Sat 11-2 Keller Williams 398-0234

### 4 Bedrooms

**307 Brianne Ct.** \$1,249,000  
Sun 1-4 J. Rockcliff Realtors 998-3078

**4677 Helpert Ct.** \$729,000  
Sun 1-4 Keller Williams 463-0436

### LIVERMORE

#### 4 Bedrooms

**1579 FrankFurt Wy.** \$769,000  
Sun 12:30-3:30J. Rockcliff Realtors 785-4546

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Stop by Countrywide Home Loans at Danville to pick up an official Food Bank Brown bag and go shopping and go back to Countrywide Center at Danville. **YOU will help** children, Senior citizens, working poor, Homeless families, single parents, Chronically Ill.

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