

Alamo manhunt

Suspects hide near creek after
Rite Aid burglary > **page 6**

Vol. III, Number 35 • January 4, 2008

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Having tendon troubles?

Danville doctor
enjoys success
with new treatment

> **page 20**

Danville

W E E K L Y

Chevron reopens

Alamo gas station
features new pumps,
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> **page 5**

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Q: Which sex do you think has it easier in our culture?



Men have it easier. Women feel like they have to be everything—that they have to go to college, have a career and be a mother. Men don't have all those expectations.

Mark Vandenberghe
real estate developer



I think men have it easier because they are in a position of power. I guess I feel like they are given more respect. Even in school there are more male professors and people with Ph.D.s.

Jenna Galvez
student



Men. There's less pressure on them for what you're supposed to look and act like.

Mike Eng
student



Men have it easier. It's not as hard for them to get a job and make more money. I think we're still kind of a subtly sexist society. But better than some countries.

Kim Hertz
student



Women because they are capable of controlling men—unless they're a gay man.

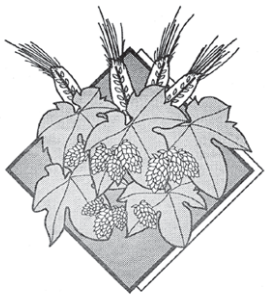
Chris Swallow
barista

COMPILED BY DANVILLE WEEKLY STAFF

ABOUT THE COVER

Twenty-six-year-old Andre Lay sets sail from Santa Barbara headed for New Zealand in an eight-month adventure that he plans to chronicle in a book. Cover design by Manuel Valenzuela.

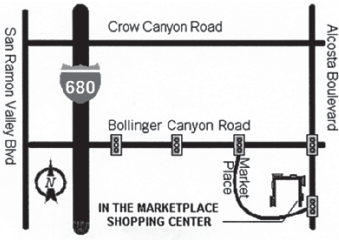
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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“It's a quality of life thing.”

—Podiatric surgeon Howard Sokoloff about helping patients with their tendon injuries. See story, page 20.

Library helps with stress, weight loss

The Danville Public Library is offering two timely programs in January. A workshop called “Managing Stress in Your Life” will be held at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 16. The one-hour talk will describe current research to help understand and manage stress. Discussion will include information regarding the unique ways that people respond to stressful situations.

The following week a workshop will present “Achieving Healthy Weight Loss,” beginning at 7 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 24. Dr. Nathalie Bera-Miller will help people keep their New Year's resolutions, discussing the key ingredients of achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

For more information, call Adult Services Librarian Vickie Sciacca at 837-4889.

Funds for emergency communications

U.S. Rep. McNerney (D, 11th) announced Dec. 20 that as a result of his requests, more than \$800,000 in federal funding has been received for the East Bay Regional Communications System. The funding was included in the Appropriations Bill that passed Congress in December.

“The impact of fires, earthquakes, and storms that strike the Bay Area are felt all across the region,” said McNerney. “That's why when major events like that take place, emergency personnel from across jurisdictions should be able to communicate and coordinate.”

The \$808,400 will be used to purchase communications equipment for a digital communication system that will allow for shared public safety-related communications between the five Tri-Valley cities in Alameda and Contra Costa counties: Danville, San Ramon, Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton. The proposed system would also allow communications with emergency service personnel in San Francisco and Oakland.

“We're very appreciative that McNerney has been able to secure federal funding to continue to the build out of the system in the Tri-Valley,” said Bill McCammon, the East Bay Regional Communications System's interim executive director.

The Tri-Valley sector is part of a larger East Bay network, which itself is part of a much larger network that encompasses the entire Bay Area.

County needs EEO advisory members

The county Advisory Council on Equal Employment Opportunity has vacancies for three community representative seats. The function of the Advisory Council is to serve as an advisory committee to the Board of Supervisors regarding the county's Affirmative Action Plan; review the Affirmative Action Program; and recommend actions to help the county attain its goals for affirmative action. All members serve without compensation.

Meetings are held from 9:30-11:30 a.m. the fourth Friday of each month at the county Administration Building, 651 Pine St., Martinez. For information, call the County Affirmative Action Office at 335-1045. Applications must be submitted by Jan. 31.

The county is also accepting applications for committees for Alamo Beautification, Steering Committee for Zone 36; police protection services for Round Hill; Alamo/Lafayette Cemetery District; Mental Health Commission; and the county Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board.

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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Alamo Chevron reopens

Improvement Association worked on new design for gas station

by **Natalie O'Neill**

Last week's reopening of a completely remodeled Alamo Chevron is expected to help business in and around Alamo Plaza flourish, say members of Alamo Improvement Association and Chevron officials.

The gas station on the west side of Danville Boulevard near Stone Valley Road was completely torn down and rebuilt, starting in late July in order to upgrade 30-year-old fuel pumps, expand the convenience store, and construct a new configuration to encourage efficiency.

Gas pumps were up and running early last week without a formal grand opening. Alamo drivers noticed the new station open upon returning back to work after the holiday and arriving home from out of town.

"I was surprised to see they were pumping gas," said Preston Taylor of Alamo Improvement Association, which worked with Chevron on the approval process of the new design.

He said he thinks the opening will be good for business in Alamo.

"It's nice to have everything in Alamo open. When businesses are closed or under construction it's not good," he said.

Chevron spokesman Juan Garcia said, in general, when Chevron opens expanded convenience stores, existing surrounding shops benefit.

"They work off one another. By adding a convenience store, business does pick up a little more. It does generate more traffic," he said.

With the possibility of cityhood lingering, some residents are hop-

► Continued on page 6



Trader Joe's specialist Jessica Pizzagone passes the new mural on the wall, which was created by art students at San Ramon Valley High School, on her way from the back store room.

DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

New mural at Trader Joe's

High school students add local flare to back wall

by **Dolores Fox Ciardelli**

Walk into some chain stores and you could be anywhere in the world. Walk into Trader Joe's and you know you're in Danville.

"We try to make sure each store reflects the neighborhood," said Danville Trader Joe's sign artist Alexis Lopez. "We have an art-

ist who does several stores in the area."

Lopez creates the shelf signs in the Danville store but did not have time to do anything original for the large blank wall in the rear leading past the restrooms to the storage area. So she called San Ramon Valley High School and talked to art teacher Jeff Torquemada. They discussed

painting large murals that reflected the Danville area.

"My boss originally said he wanted the train station, the oak tree and the Danville Hotel," recalled Lopez. "I gave them some pictures but they must have done their own research. And they stuck Mount Diablo in there."

► Continued on page 7

AIM answers 'legitimate questions'

Incorporation Web site now updated

by **Natalie O'Neill**

Murmurs that the Alamo Incorporation Movement has stopped answering Web site inquiries about cityhood were echoing around town—but operators of the site and representatives for the organization say AIM has responded to "every legitimate question."

"It's in our best interest to be as responsive as we can," said Chris Kenber, spokesman for AIM.

Kenber says they have received a handful of questions that are actually more like statements, that some are "faintly incoherent" or "so far out of left field" that they either cannot or will not respond to them.

"You're just going to start a conversation that's not useful," he said about responding to some of the letters that have come in via the Web site.

One e-mail he found particularly outrageous—and that didn't garner a response—accused AIM of being rude to an elderly woman in a wheelchair, he said.

Before last week, the Web site had not been updated for about a month, beginning Nov. 22.

The week before the update, discussion on DanvilleWeekly.com's Town Square forum drew attention to what residents considered a neglected AIM Web site. They noted that questions hadn't been answered and that there had been a lack of

media coverage about incorporation.

"In 45 days, these proponents went from constant commentary and ubiquitous presence in our community to inaccessible silence," one poster wrote.

An Alamo resident who noted a lack of communication on the part of AIM declined to comment.

"It's in our best interest to be as responsive as we can."

—Chris Kenber, spokesman for AIM

The AIM Web site is a place where Alamo residents are able to educate themselves on incorporation. It's not the forum for a pro-and-con debate, Kenber said.

"The time and place for that is during an election campaign," he said.

The AIM Web site was updated Dec. 21, after the firm Winzler & Kelly was selected to conduct the comprehensive fiscal analysis—the study to determine if cityhood is feasible.

Kenber said if there was a dip in communication it had more to

► Continued on page 7



Canine Corral closed for maintenance

Andrew Reichhold, who was home from the University of Oregon for the holidays last week, stops at the Canine Corral at Hap Magee Ranch Park with Cocoa, a 6-year-old chocolate lab, and Lucy, a terrier mix, but they have to get their exercise on the trails because the dog park is closed Dec. 1 through Feb. 29. Danville sports fields are also closed during this time for the town to do maintenance and to let the areas recuperate from the wear and tear they receive during the rest of the year.

Meanwhile dogs can enjoy being off-leash in Danville in the Sycamore Valley Open Space on Camino Tassjara. San Ramon has a dog run at Memorial Park off Bollinger Canyon Road east of I-680; in Las Trampas Regional Wilderness at the end of Bollinger Canyon Road; and at Del Mar Dog Park at Pine Valley Road adjacent to the Iron Horse Trail.

DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

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Danville
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Chevron

► Continued from page 5

ing for a stronger business district in Alamo. According to Alamo Incorporation Movement, property taxes would finance 35 percent of sustaining the town or city, and sales taxes would finance 11 percent.

Garcia said he couldn't be sure if or when there would be a grand opening for the location since Chevron staff in charge of the project was away on holiday vacation.

But store employees said they heard talk of a grand opening celebration and expected it to be about a month down the line.

Plans for the remodeling originally showed the gas station on a diagonal slant to Danville Boulevard. Alamo Improvement Association then advised Chevron to design a perpendicular building, noting that the diagonal positioning would expose the unattractive sides of existing buildings. ■



The renovated Chevron station is open for business in Alamo, with new fuel pumps and a large Extra Mile convenience store.

DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Alamo manhunt yields 3 suspects

Neighbors help police locate fleeing burglars

by Dolores Fox Ciardelli

Police apprehended three of the four suspects within hours who allegedly stole liquor from the Alamo Rite Aid around 4 p.m., Friday, Dec. 28.

"One of our deputies patrolling in Alamo Plaza shopping center got flagged down by a Rite Aid employee who said the store was burglarized by four men," said county Sheriff's Office spokesman Jimmy Lee.

The employees told the deputy the suspects had taken liquor and then fled north in a gray van.

"They collided with another vehicle at Danville Boulevard and Livorna Road," said Lee. "Then the four suspects took off on foot."

Deputies from the Sheriff's Office and the California Highway Patrol spread out in the area, and canines and a helicopter helped in the pursuit. Police marked off the perimeter as far as Trotter Way with their vehicles, lights flashing in the cold early darkness. Deputies could be seen from Livorna Road searching in culverts with their flashlights and police dogs near Alamo Elementary School, although Lee said the suspects stayed mostly on the west side of I-680.

"They went into back yards and the residential area around the creek," Lee said.

Three of the suspects were caught that evening, Lee said. Two were booked into County Jail, and the third, a minor, was taken to

Juvenile Hall. Lee said Monday that they have the name of the fourth suspect.

"Kudos to the numerous citizens who called and said they were in particular places," said Lee. "We received a number of calls from citizens."

He said the helicopters used "forward looking infrared," which can detect body heat to locate individuals. This enabled deputies with search canines to locate the suspects.

"They have helped out in numerous cases like this," said Lee.

The suspects will face felony hit-and-run as well as burglary charges, said Lee. He noted that some of the individuals in the vehicle they struck suffered minor injuries. ■

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Members of the Alamo Rotary Club enjoy the Danville Weekly while attending the Rotary International Convention in Salt Lake City in June: (front, l-r) Jeannine Makely, Jean Mello, President Al Makely, Beth Burlingame Randall, Suma Canzius, Carolyn Thiessen, Sharon Schuyler, past District Gov. Brian Thiessen, Ron Mello, Greg Schuyler and Bill Randall.

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

Save Mount Diablo gets Christmas present

Largest grant in history allows 320-acre purchase

Save Mount Diablo announced a \$756,100 grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and the purchase of 320 acres near Mt. Diablo State Park, on Dec. 20. The foundation grant is the largest in the organization's history.

The total price of the 320-acre Irish Canyon property was \$1.344 million, and this grant allowed Save Mount Diablo to complete the purchase.

"This is the largest foundation grant Save Mount Diablo has ever received," said executive director Ron Brown. "We're really pleased by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation's confidence in our efforts and are taking seriously the incentive they've provided to increase the speed of our work."

The grant includes stewardship funds to lay the groundwork for long-term creek and oak woodland restoration, said Save Mount Diablo representatives. At the same time the grant is meant



The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation granted Save Mount Diablo \$756,100 to complete its 320-acre Irish Canyon purchase.

to encourage the organization to speed up its preservation efforts in the Marsh Creek-Morgan Territory region northeast of Mount Diablo.

"The San Francisco Bay Area is renowned for its beautiful landscapes," said Helen Kim, chief program officer for the San Francisco Bay Area Program of the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

"However, during the next 30 years, an estimated 400,000 acres of open space are at risk from suburban development. The foundation seeks to protect the Bay Area's unique and irreplaceable lands for future generations by making grants for land acquisition and conservation easements. Save Mount

Diablo's Irish Canyon project is an excellent example of our efforts."

On the same day that Save Mount Diablo closed escrow on Irish Canyon, it purchased another small property east of Mount Diablo, nine acres it is calling Marsh Creek-I.

"We were able to make this second land deal in less than three weeks," said Brown.

Save Mount Diablo has been preserving lands on and around Mount Diablo and educating the public to the mountain's natural values since 1971. The preserved lands have increased during this time from 6,788 acres to more than 90,000. For more information, call 947-3535 or visit www.savemountdiablo.org. ■

AIM

► Continued from page 5

do with the person in charge of updates being out of town.

"It's absolutely not a strategy of ours," Kenber said.

On the front page of the AIM Web site there is section that reads, "Comments or questions? Let us hear from you!" Users can click in the section and be linked directly to an AIM e-mail account. People are encouraged to ask questions about becoming a city to help determine whether or not they support incorporation.

Many of the questions sent in are then published in the "frequently asked questions" section of the Web site.

"We answer every question we can. Some are truly unanswerable," Kenber said.

For more information visit www.alamoinc.org. ■

Mural

► Continued from page 5

Torquemada told her four teachers and 11 students from different classes worked on the murals.

"They had it for a couple of months—they were busy with midterms and other things," said Lopez.

The paintings were completed

Dec. 20, the last day before the winter break, and the murals were installed.

The Trader Joe's artist personalizes each store when it opens, said Lopez. For instance, the Santa Cruz store is decorated with surfboards.

The Danville front walls have a jungle theme.

"We're known exclusively as 'the monkey store,'" Lopez said.

Last week, Jessica Pizzagioni, a

specialist at Trader Joe's wearing a flowered shirt, said she liked the colorful murals and their subject matter.

"Danville is known for its trains," she said, nodding toward the colorful Southern Pacific engine that looked about to chug right off the wall and into the store.

"It's our way to get the community in the store a little more," said Lopez. "We are a neighborhood store." ■

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"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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Danville
WEEKLY

Serving the communities of Danville, Blackhawk, Diablo and Alamo

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

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

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

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Perspective

EDITORIALS • LETTERS • OPINIONS

EDITORIAL • THE OPINION OF THE WEEKLY

News or not

A story Nov. 30 about a plastic surgeon in the Alamo hills and his controversial parties raised the issue of what is appropriate to run in the Danville Weekly. Some folks were fascinated to learn that Dr. Playboy is hosting these gatherings right in their own back yard. Others said the article clarified rumors they had heard.

But some readers contacted us to say they thought the story had no place in a "family" newspaper. Others said that although the doctor and his legal problems might warrant a story, it should not have been given so much space or run with the suggestive photographs. Several said we were "condoning" the doctor's behavior.

The editorial mission statement of the Danville Weekly is as follows:

Our mission is to be the most incisive, thoughtful and trusted source of news, information and analysis of the Danville area community. We aggressively pursue stories that reflect the diversity and vitality of the community and present them in a compelling, lively and useful manner.

The story on Dr. Playboy fulfilled these criteria. The fact that his social activities are unusual for this community is what made it news. When we began to look into the story, we learned about the lawsuits, which raised issues about personal freedoms and residents' responsibilities to their neighbors. Sources for the story included police, partygoers, lawyers, county court documents, neighbors and Dr. Kevin Degnan himself.

It is not our job to condone or censure anyone's behavior. We merely report on it in our news pages, although we do make editorial comments in this Perspective section. As far as being a family newspaper: Much of our news is aimed at families, such as our Sports pages and the Scout and school news we print. But some news, by its very nature, will be more adult-oriented, including stories about violence and criminal activity. This story is one of those.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Study incorporation

Dear Editor:

I wish to encourage all Alamo neighbors to protect their desire to study and consider incorporation.

In signing the Alamo Incorporation Movement petition, each of us requested an in-depth feasibility study of the costs and impact of incorporation for Alamo neighborhoods. That study has been contracted by CCC LAFCo and will be complete prior to any

community meetings conducted by CCC LAFCo in Alamo.

Community counsel members, as resident attorneys, have the ability to create formal editions and additions to the incorporation proposal based on the feasibility study for LAFCo review in preparation of the incorporation election documents. In the end, as voters, we will have a clear choice to be the majority voice in the outcome for our community.

Harald A. Bailey, Alamo

YOUR TURN

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

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

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

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



Parent photographers

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



Classic action on the soccer field

Monte Vista's Courtney Jones (in red) goes for a header at the Tri-Valley Classic girls soccer tournament, Dec. 20-22, sponsored by Las Lomas, Monte Vista and San Ramon Valley high schools for teams throughout the Western United States. At right, Melanie Birch edges out the opponent; Chloe Langon drives the ball down field; and No. 6 Hannah Marsala and No. 3 Jackie Spinner get caught up in the play. Monte Vista faced Torrey Pines of San Diego County in the finals and lost a shootout in double overtime. San Ramon Valley High won its final, 3-0, against Nolan Catholic from Fort Worth, Texas. Both Danville high schools played their games at the new Mustang Soccer Complex on Camino Tassajara.



PREP SCHEDULE

Friday-Saturday, Jan. 4-5

Wrestling
Monte Vista at Sonoma Valley High, 7 a.m.

Saturday, Jan. 5

Women's Soccer
San Ramon Valley Alumni Game, 11 a.m.

Wrestling
Oakland Tech Tournament at Oakland High, 9 a.m.

Monday, Jan. 7

Men's Basketball
San Ramon Valley vs. Amador, 7 p.m.

Monte Vista at Granada, 7 p.m.

Women's Basketball
San Ramon Valley at Amador, 7 p.m.

Monte Vista vs. Granada, 7 p.m.

Men's Soccer
Monte Vista vs. Mt. Eden, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 8

Women's Soccer
Monte Vista vs. Amador, 5:45 p.m.

Wrestling
San Ramon Valley vs. Amador, 7 p.m.
Monte Vista at Granada, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 9

Men's Basketball
San Ramon Valley at Granada, 7 p.m.

Monte Vista vs. Cal High, 7 p.m.

Women's Basketball
San Ramon Valley vs. Granada, 7 p.m.

Monte Vista at Cal High, 7 p.m.

Men's Soccer
Monte Vista at Amador, 5:45 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 10

Women's Soccer
San Ramon Valley vs. Livermore, 5:45 p.m.

Wrestling
San Ramon Valley at Granada, 7 p.m.
Monte Vista vs. Cal High, 7 p.m.

Thursday-Saturday, Jan. 10-12

Women's Soccer
Monte Vista at Nike/Red Bull Nolan Showcase in Texas, 8 p.m.



Eagles soar to the top

The Mustang Eagles U12 Girls won their third consecutive tournament with the high profile District Cup Championship held in Pleasanton over the Dec. 1 weekend. Eagles wrung up 10 goals while their tenacious "D" did not give up a single goal in four games en route to claiming the big prize. The Eagles are now looking forward to the Association Cup in January.

Team members are (back, l-r) Head Coach Lee Geary, Gabby Franklin, Emma Sol, Taylor Partin, Sarah Luther, Ali Kitchin, Kate Berry, Team Manager Greg Schwartz; (front) Stephanie Aurelius, Phoebe Ritter, Jessica Schwartz, Amanda Saunders, Olivia Schikora, Riah Kitchin and Melissa Freemon. Not pictured: Brit Geary, Maddy Laird.

Bronze boys win District Cup

The Mustang Bronze boys were victorious at the U13 win District Cup, thanks to great play under coaches Gabe Tenaka, Craig Kurtz and Edmund Eusebio.

Team members are Nick Amador, Tony Bell, Chris DaSilva, Austin Kurtz, Cameron Lober, Wyatt Martin, Matt Maxwell, Jake Nobriga, Ryan Reder, Sam Sarver, Max Shore, Dallas Stevens, Aidan Struck, Connor Tetzloff, Sammy Yorke, and Andy Zeiger.



Third time for the Blast

The Danville Mustang Blast U-13 Girls were able to bring home another Championship Victory from the 2007 Nor Cal State Cup held mid-December. This was a third time for the Blast showing at the Nor Cal finals, and marked a second consecutive Championship win. After a challenging but exciting weekend, the girls defeated the CV Chilipeppers with a final score of 3-2.

The coaches and players are (from top left) Coach Lance Feldman, Kerianne Hunt, Hannah Koski, Kimberly Low, Shelby Cota, Coach Rob Vandevanter, Amy Harioka, Katelyn Rader, Lynsey Hromatko, Coach Doug Norvelle, Serena Lee, Katherine Tao, Bethoney Ritter, Rachel Feldman, Rachel Hamilton, Morgan Idso, Alexa Vandevanter, Reilly Parker and Alyssa Alarab.

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Community Pulse

POLICE BULLETIN & LOG • OBITUARIES • BIRTHS & WEDDINGS

43 killed in state at Christmas

71 percent of fatalities were not wearing seatbelts

by Natalie O'Neill

A count taken in the four days leading up to Christmas shows 1,661 arrests for driving under the influence were made by the California Highway Patrol.

During that time, 43 people were killed in drunk-driving accidents, 71 percent of whom were not wearing seatbelts.

"It's hard. You get people indulging that don't normally," said Jamie Coffee, spokeswoman for the CHP.

No fatalities occurred in Danville during the time period but one Danville resident was arrested for driving intoxicated near Camino Tassajara in Blackhawk, said Officer Steve Creel, spokesman for Dublin's CHP office.

The figures were taken from Dec. 21-25, during a heightened patrol period, in which 80 percent of

uniformed personnel were on the road, looking for impaired drivers on the highways and unincorporated areas of California.

California is divided into eight regions and, of those, the Bay Area had 253 arrests—the third highest in the state. Los Angeles County was the highest, with 354 arrests.

The best way to avoid drinking and driving is to make transportation arrangements before you go out—before the first drink, Coffee said.

People are less likely to drive intoxicated if they set up a designated driver, plan to stay the night, or call for a taxi home ahead of time, she explained.

Other time periods where heightened CHP are used to control intoxicated drivers include Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Fourth of July and New Year's Eve.

"We're not telling people not to have a good time. Just plan ahead," Coffee said. ■



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OBITUARIES

William Hugh Dyer Jr.

William Hugh Dyer Jr., a 50-year resident of Alamo, died peacefully at his home with his two sons Dec. 7 at the age of 89 after a long illness.

He was born March 16, 1919, in Newport, Ark., and moved with his mother and stepfather to Southern California in 1933 at the age of 15. He worked at Swenson Markets for three years while attending Wilson High School in Long Beach and then started a job at the brand new Dollar Market store. He attended Long Beach State College, then UCLA to take pre-law courses. In February 1941, he completed training at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis and became a commissioned Ensign.

By mid-June, he was serving on the USS Gregory and he met Annette Glover who was working for a top naval officer at the same base. The two planned to marry in December 1941, but after the attack at Pearl Harbor, he was soon shipped out, carrying food, supplies and fuel between Noumea to Guadalcanal and Tulagi. The USS Gregory was shelled numerous times and sank, leaving the crew in life boats or life jackets floating in freezing water. He was awarded the Purple Heart by the U.S. Navy for wounds he sustained, and concluded his service with the Navy with a rank of Lt. Commander.

After the war, he was rehired at Dollar Market Stores and became vice president and general manager. Foremost Dairies acquired GSD in 1956, and later merged its Lucky Food Stores, and he was elected vice president and a director of Lucky Stores Inc. In 1957, he moved his family to Alamo to be near the San Leandro headquarters of Lucky. He continued to be promoted and eventu-

ally earned the title of chairman and CEO in 1971 which he held until retiring from those duties in 1974; he remained as a director until 1987.

He and his wife traveled to Africa, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Pacific Rim, South America and Europe after he retired; they also visited all 50 states. He was a Mason and local philanthropist.

He was preceded in death by his dear wife Margaret "Annette" Dyer. He is survived by his two sons, William H. Dyer III, (Sylvia) and John D. "Jack" Dyer, (Nancy); six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Masonic Homes of California in Union City or the John Muir Health Foundation, 1400 Treat Blvd., Walnut Creek 94597. A memorial service is planned for 2 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 5, at the San Ramon Valley Methodist Church, 902 Danville Blvd., Alamo.

Bruno M. Polce

Danville resident Bruno M. Polce, known to his family as "Nonno," died peacefully at home surrounded by his family on Nov. 27, at the age of 85.

Bruno was born in Pratola Peligina, Italy, on Jan. 2, 1922, and immigrated to Canada at the age of 29. At Niagra Falls, Ontario, he attended night school and met his wife Eva while singing, which was his favorite hobby. Bruno sang in many talent shows, some with Eva, church functions and family gatherings, also playing the guitar and piano.

Bruno and Eva married in 1954 and made their way to California with their firstborn by car and trailer. They settled in San Leandro and raised three children. Bruno had many careers but will mostly be remembered

for his rich and vibrant voice and love of his family and his Italian heritage.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Eva L. Polce; his son Peter Polce, daughter Debi Amaral and her husband David, and daughter Carina De Herrera and husband Rick; and six grandchildren.

Friends and family are invited to his Celebration of Life from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 12, at 2008 at Round Hill Country Club in Alamo. In lieu of flowers the family is asking for donations to your favorite charity. RSVP to Carina at 736-1032.

Lester Allen Proctor

Lester Allen Proctor, a 45-year resident of Danville, passed away Dec. 11 at San Ramon Regional Medical Center at the age of 87 after battling a variety of health issues.

He was born to Roy and Grace Proctor on July 24, 1920, the youngest of three brothers, in Turlock. He grew up in Santa Cruz, later moving to Southern California where he took aeronautical engineering classes at the local junior colleges, prior to entering the Air Force in 1941. He flew 35 combat missions on the B29 aircraft from his assigned base in Tinian to the Japanese mainland. After World War II, he entered the printing industry, designing business forms for corporate businesses.

He is survived by his beloved wife June; two sons, Randy and Greg; daughters-in-law, Lori and Terri; and five grandchildren. A Celebration of Life took place Dec. 16. Donations may be made to the Foundation Fighting Blindness Inc., P.O. Box 17279, Baltimore, MD 21203-7279.

Passage to New Zealand

*Adventurer sets sail on 6,000-mile
odyssey across the Pacific*

Story by Jordan M. Doronila
Photos courtesy of Andre Lay

The tropical midnight air was calm as Andre Lay steered the 65-foot schooner through the Pacific Ocean somewhere between Tonga and Fiji last August. The rest of the crew was slumbering.

Then suddenly, within minutes, violent winds began to stir, attacking the vessel from all directions.

“O Lord, thy ocean is so big, and my ship is so small,” wrote Lay, 26, in his August log. “What we lacked in news before, we have more than made up for today.”

The winds rushed angrily for 20 minutes, shaking the boat and thrashing the main sail back and forth, smashing it into the mast shrouds.

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Andre Lay looks for lobster on the reef in Tahiti, just one of a multitude of enjoyable adventures during his sail across the Pacific Ocean from California to New Zealand.



The sailing yacht Tamasha proved seaworthy during violent squalls and lightning storms.



Crew members keep a lookout for coral heads.



Land ahoy! The crew spots its first landfall 18 days after leaving Santa Barbara. Andre Lay said the 18 days bl

Sailing

► Continued from page 11

"That woke up everyone," Lay said. "The seas were picking up."

Skipper Peter Weaver, and his wife, Cathy, emerged from their cabins as the boat was entrenched in wrathful winds—a tempestuous storm thundering from the horizon. Lightning flashed. The furor of Mother Nature rattled the water, unleashed a squall and terrorized the boat. The Weavers' two daughters lay in bed, seasick and scared.

Hard rain fell like fat, falling dogs, Lay said. The storm blew their hats and ripped at their raincoats. Amid the turmoil, Lay also was suffering from fever and fatigue.

"Metal bake ware and pots and pans flew from one side to the other, creating an effect that was so surreal, it was now movie-like," Lay wrote. "Mother Nature was giving us a serious shakedown. But that wasn't

enough. All the motion had caused some electrical wires in the engine to chafe through and short out."

"The throttle linkage, tachometer cable, and radar cable were all melted, filling the cabin with the acrid stench of an electrical fire," he added. "We had no control over the engine speed, no RPM indicator and no radar."

The winds had pinned the boom and the sail against the shrouds, Lay noted. If they jibed the other way, the boom and shrouds would break, damaging the boat.

"You're holding on for your dear life," he said. "If you get washed overboard, it's unlikely you'll be found."

Cathy took over the steering while Peter and Andre tended to the sail. Lay listened to Peter's instructions and threw a lasso around the boom and hauled it back, taking the sail down.

"It's an extremely difficult job," he said. "One, you're scared. Two, the boat is rocking like crazy."

After they tamed the sail, the skipper and his crew were able to endure the squall, which suddenly, after

six hours, ended.

"It went as quickly as it came," Lay said. "It's a great feeling to have prevailed in the end knowing that you did your best. It's very gratifying."

Growing up in Blackhawk and even after graduating Athenian School in Danville, Lay dreamed of sailing in the Pacific Ocean to New Zealand, which has all his passions: bungee jumping, skydiving, skiing, scuba diving, sailing and other outdoor activities.

"It was a dream to live in New Zealand," he said. "I'm adventurous."

His dream was postponed while he worked as a professional skydiver and lived with his girlfriend. But when they broke up, he thought again about his fantasy.

"I quit my job and I quit my girlfriend," he said.

He searched online and found Peter Weaver, a skipper from Santa Barbara, who was sailing to New Zealand on the 65-foot sailboat Tamasha and needed crew members. Weaver and Lay interviewed each other and agreed on the trip together. Weaver invited

previous crew members on

Lay said sailors have to trust strangers on a boat, and they aren't prone to seasickness.

"I'd done it before," Lay

When things go wrong, they perform their jobs later.

The crew members' families in Santa Barbara. Lay's parents but they had trust and confidence.

"It's an opportunity of a lifetime," he said.

That evening the crew ate a barbequed chicken, ribs, and next day, Easter Sunday, they took off.

"It was tearjerker," Lay said. "It was mostly moms and girlfriends when I would see my family."

As the Tamasha sailed



The Tamasha carried supplies that the crew supplemented by fishing in the open sea.



Andre Lay crewed on a different vessel for the last leg of his journey, from Fiji to New Zealand.



The crew of the Tamasha heads out to open sea from Santa Barbara.

ended together, and they felt lucky to spot a bird or anything besides the blue of the ocean and the sky.

the journey, too. "People on the dock—cried. I didn't know they were sad to see him go, but I knew I'd be OK." "I was afraid to look behind. There was no way the boat was going to ride above them. It was hard to get any rest." "There were times he wouldn't sleep. "It's a pretty strange feeling," he said. "I got anxious." After losing sleep and being constantly restless, he finally decided to accept his conditions and get rest. "I knew without any doubt that this was a new chap-

Lay saw California disappear. "Well, this is it," he wrote in his journal. "This is what I asked for. Here it comes." The early part of his trip was difficult. Sixteen-foot swells sometimes hovered on every side of the boat. "There was a mountain of water," Lay said. "I was afraid to look behind. There was no way the boat was going to ride above them. It was hard to get any rest." He also felt isolated on the boat with strangers. Crew members had to take turns steering the Tamasha, and he felt uncomfortable when another person was navigating. In the beginning, he would glare at his compass and stare out into the ocean when a stranger was at the helm. "There were times he wouldn't sleep. "It's a pretty strange feeling," he said. "I got anxious." After losing sleep and being constantly restless, he finally decided to accept his conditions and get rest. "I knew without any doubt that this was a new chap-

ter in my life," he said. "This was one for the record book." Most of the crew members got along. They would play cards, watch television, read and play the guitar. Lay said respecting personal space and being responsible were the two major qualities that kept the crew together. He recalled that one elderly crew member was kicked off the boat. "All he did was eat, sleep and enjoy the free ride," he said, noting that other crew members had been unhappy with the man before he was dropped off at an island. "He was a liability, not an asset." Crew members have to pull their own weight, according to a contract they all signed, Lay said. The boat was stocked with food plus sometimes the sailors would catch fish. Each crew member would take turns cooking. When they reached the equator, the crew drank champagne and took a quick swim. If they swam longer, sharks would come by and devour them, according to sailor legends, Lay said.

They stopped on several islands in Polynesia and Tonga. "The island people were eager to see us," he said. "They are not used to seeing white people. Kids come running and people come out in their canoes paddling." But the sailors still had a long way to go; they were 800 miles away from their destination. One stretch at sea was 18 days when the sun didn't shine, the stars didn't come out, and the crew didn't spot any other vessels. "Eighteen days is a long time," Lay said. "The days blend together. You're not seeing anything new. If you're lucky, you might see a bird. You see blue." "I had a longing to be with my friends and family and solid ground underneath my feet," he added. "It gets under your skin." Once in the tropics, the Tamasha stopped near a lagoon, which Lay heard from an islander contained

► Continued on page 14



Andre Lay enjoys wading with friendly children in Fiji. The crew remained in port for two months to repair damages from a storm.

Sailing

► Continued from page 13

hidden treasures. He and a scuba buddy went to the lagoon, but his friend decided to go back because the waves were too dangerous. Sharks swam nearby, he said.

"It's scary," Lay said. "If you're not scared, there's something wrong with you."

To enter, he had to dive into incoming waves inside the lagoon. Once he was in, a person manning a dive boat would be waiting for him.

But it wasn't easy. After diving in, he found himself far from the dive boat. He was saved by blowing a whistle. The boatman heard him and came to his rescue.

"I panicked," Lay said. "I definitely had a high heart rate."

However, he managed to regain his cool.

"There's no point in fighting the current," Lay said. "It's more powerful than you. You

have to use your head when you get into these situations."

He said the risk was worth it.

"It's known as the 'lagoonarium,'" he said. "You see much life."

Diving in the lagoon, he saw tropical fish, sharks, turtles, octopuses, corals and much more.

"When I saw all of this magnificence in clear water, I was amazed that these things exist on our planet," he said.

"However, I can personally say that global warming is happening," he added, noting that the rising temperature and pollution has killed sea life. "For every live coral, there is more dead coral."

After facing the huge storm, the *Tamasha* landed in a port at Fiji where the crew remained two months for repairs. Meanwhile, Lay decided to sky dive and found a pilot. He jumped out of the plane and the view thrilled him, he remembered, and the clean blue of the ocean glazed his eyes.

"It was the most gorgeous view," Lay said. "It was the best jump I ever made."

He landed, parachute drifting, amid yacht crews, a banquet and beachgoers. He noticed people looking at him and teased them.

"Excuse me," he asked a young couple. "Do you know where I am?"

"Are you serious?" asked one of them.

He grabbed a beer and left the beach after he finished drinking it.

When it was time to depart for New Zealand, he decided to join another crew.

"I wanted to learn how another skipper operates," Lay said.

As he and his new crew set sail from Fiji to New Zealand, he said he felt sad because his journey was about to end. Nonetheless, he was excited that he was about to reach his destination and begin a new journey.

And soon he reached his goal.

"Wow," he said. "I did that."

New Zealand was worth it. It had green grass, rolling hills, leaves with morning dew

dropping.

"It has the best people I've ever met," Lay said. "They're friendly and welcoming and wanting to help you out. They bend over backwards for you."

"You couldn't help but be happy," he added.

He set sail from Santa Barbara in April and arrived in New Zealand in November. He now plans to write a book about his sea adventures.

"I need to be in the proper mood to write it," he said, noting that hundreds of people have read his travel logs and encouraged him to write. "It's not everyday you have these experiences."

Lay said he is now living in New Zealand and has learned two important lessons.

"One, my family and friends are most important to me," he said. "They always will be."

"Two, you can basically do whatever you want to do in your lifetime. There's no point in making excuses." ■

Calendar

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

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.

Class Reunions

Monte Vista High School 20 Year Reunion The Monte Vista High School Class of 1987 is seeking members for its 20 year reunion. The reunion is planned for February 2008. To receive your invitation, e-mail monte_vista_1987@yahoo.com.

Clubs

Alamo Cribbage Club The club plays cribbage for fun. It meets at 6:15 p.m. every Wednesday at the Safeway conference room, 200 Alamo Plaza, Alamo. Call 284-7044 or e-mail almay1@prodigy.net.

Alamo Rotary The Alamo Rotary meets at noon every Wednesday at Roundhill Country Club, 3169 Roundhill Road. Call Mark Kahn at 837-3262.

Alamo Women's Club This club will host Millie Greenberg who will speak about the empowerment of Alamo women at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, Jan. 23, at the Alamo Women's Club, 1401 Danville Blvd. Call 837-6548.

Alamo-Danville Newcomers Club This club is open to new and long-time residents of the surrounding areas. If you are interested in making new friends, learning more about the area or getting involved in various activities, call 775-3233 or visit www.alamodanvillenewcomers.com.

Amador Valley Quilters This club will host its January meeting with guest speaker, Leora Raiken, a fiber artist, from 1:30-3:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 12, at Pleasanton Middle School, 5001 Case Ave. Leora will conduct a workshop the following day. Visit www.amadorvalleyquilters.org.

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 Lions Club The Danville Lions Club meet on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m., at the Brass Door Restaurant, 2154 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon. Join as their guest to learn the contribution you can make as a Lion. For information, call 984-1541.

Danville Mid-day Referral Group, BNI Danville Mid-day Referral Group, a chapter of Business Network International, meets from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., every Wednesday, at Crow Canyon Country Club, 711 Silver Lake Dr., Danville. Call Eric Samuels at 946-1400.

Danville PM Toastmaster Club #1785 The club meets from 7:30-9 p.m., every Wednesday, at DVC, San Ramon Campus, 1690 Watermill Rd., San Ramon. Guests are welcome. For information call Debra Elmore at 934-3113 or visit www.danvilletoastmasters1785.com.

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.

Delta Nu Psi Delta Nu Psi provides packages to troops in the War Zone. The group collects donations before the third Friday of every month in front of Longs Drug Store in Alamo and before the third Saturday at Lunardi's in Danville. It puts together the packages on the third Wednesday of every month. For information, e-mail Alicia at deltanupsi@comcast.net.

Diablo Bonsai Club This club will meet for a lecture on "How to Approach the Art of Bonsai" from 7:30-9:30 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 16, at Heather Farm Garden Center, Upper Room, 1540 Marchbanks Dr., Walnut Creek. Call 937-4216.

Diablo Valley Quilters' Guild The Diablo Valley Quilters' Guild meets at 7 p.m., the third Wednesday of each month at the Danville Congregational Church, 989 San Ramon Valley Blvd. Guests are welcome (\$2 donation). Annual membership fee is \$30 (\$20 for seniors 65+). For information, call Dianne at 837-1863.

Diablo View Toastmasters AM Afraid of public speaking? Loose your fears and develop communication and leadership skills by meeting with the Diablo View Toastmaster from 7:55-8 a.m., every Tuesday, at 111 Deerwood Rd., San Ramon. Call 838-9163 or e-mail marie@mmwi.com.

Exchange Club of San Ramon Valley The Exchange Club of San Ramon Valley meets from noon-1 p.m., on the second Wednesday of every month, at Faz, 600 Hartz Ave., Danville. Meetings include lunch, a guest speaker and business networking. Guests are invited with reservations; call 275-2412.

Friends of the Danville Library Friends of the Danville Library are renewing annual memberships and recruiting new members to help support, raise funds and sponsor programs for the Danville library. There are many benefits of being a Friend including merchant discounts, volunteer opportunities and preview of book sales. Dues and donations are tax deductible. Application forms are at the library, 400 Front St. Call 837-4455.

Grandmother's Club Grandmothers of all ages meet for lunch at 11 a.m., on the second Friday of every month, at the Brass Door, 2154 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon. Lunch and fellowship. If interested, contact Fran Britt at 743-4026.

January Exchange Club Luncheon Exchange Club of San Ramon Valley will host Congressman Jerry McNerney, at their January Luncheon from noon-1 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 9, at Faz, 600 Hartz Ave., Danville. He will speak on "Leading America to Energy Independence and a Greener Future." Cost is \$16, including lunch. Call 275-2412.

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.

Model RC Boaters Association The Danville Model RC Boaters Association seeks new members. To learn more, call president Rich Mahan at 785-0421.

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

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

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society The society meets at 10 a.m., every third Tuesday of every month (except August and December), at the Danville Family History Center, 2949 Stone Valley Rd., Alamo. Guest speaker at every meeting. Call Ed at 299-0881, or visit www.srvgensoc.org.

San Ramon Valley Rotary Club This club meets for dinner at 7 p.m., every Wednesday, at the Crow Canyon Country Club, 711 Silver Lake Dr., Danville. Guests are welcome. The club offers a great way to make new friends while making a difference in your community. Call Bill at 838-9110.

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.

Concerts

California Symphony Presents Joyce Yang Van Cliburn Silver Medalist Joyce Yang reunites with the California Symphony at 4 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 27, and at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 29, at the Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Tickets are \$39-59. Call 280-2490 or visit www.californiasymphony.org.

WEEKEND PREVIEW



BLACKHAWK MUSEUM

'Trains, Track and Trestle'

Blackhawk Museum will host "Trains, Track and Trestle" on the last day of the "All Aboard 2007! European Train Enthusiasts" model train exhibit, 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.

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.

East Bay Lock and Key Dance Party Come and enjoy one of the most fun and innovative nights out from 8 p.m.-midnight, Friday, Jan. 18, at the Radisson Hotel Ballroom, 6680 Regional St., Dublin. Cost is \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Call 945-8340 or visit www.lockandkeymatch.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.

International Sportsmen's Exposition San Mateo International Sportsmen's Exposition (ISE) will gather from noon-8 p.m., Thursday-Sunday, Jan. 10-13, at the San Mateo County Event Center, 2495 South Delaware St. Admission is \$12 for adults, free for children.

Exhibits

'Christmas Memories' Museum of the San Ramon Valley will host "Christmas Memories" exhibit until Jan. 5, at the Museum of the San

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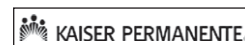
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Ramon Valley, at the corner of Railroad and Prospect avenues in downtown Danville. Admission is free, but donations are welcome. The museum is open 1-4 p.m., Tuesday-Friday and 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday. Call 837-3750.

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.blackhawkmuseum.org or www.theshop-satblackhawk.com.

Fundraisers

Annual Crab Feed Come and support a great cause at Outdoor Adventure Faire's Annual Crab Feed at 5:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 26, at Charlotte Wood Middle School, 600 El Capitan Dr., Danville. Tickets are \$40 for adults, \$25 for children or \$350 for a table of ten. Menu includes garlic bread, salad, pasta, crab and dessert. The night will include live music and silent and live auctions. Call Jim at 820-3874 or Pete at 719-1950.

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.

Oscar Party Town of Danville will host an Oscar Party at 5 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 24, at the Village Theatre, 233 Front St., Danville. Proceeds will benefit the Danville International Children's Film Festival. Tickets go on sale Jan. 28; call 314-3400, visit the Danville Community Center, 420 Front St. or www.village-theatreashows.com.

Health

Achieving Healthy Weight Loss Danville Library will host a workshop on "Achieving Healthy Weight Loss" 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., 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 strengthn 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.

Kids and Teens

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

Couples and Cancer Come with your partner for a group discussion on the impact of cancer on relationships from 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 22, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. Share struggles, solutions, issues and insights to support your relationship during and after cancer treatment. Call 933-0107.

Free Real Estate Purchasing Seminar Come and learn about real estate purchasing from a diverse group of real estate agents from 5:15-9 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 9, at Shadelands Art Center, 111 North Wiget Lane, Walnut Creek. Free buffet dinner will be provided. Call (949) 885-8879 or visit www.marshallreddickseminars.com

Got Kids? Parenting Class Come learn how to discipline your children with love and limits, how to help your child become responsible and make good choices, from 7-8:30 p.m., Wednesdays, Jan. 9-Feb. 6, at Community Presbyterian Church, 222 W. El Pintado Rd., Danville. Class for parents of pre-school through middle-school children. This workshop is free. Call 855-1367, ext. 211 or visit www.cpcdanville.org.

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.

Life Beyond Cancer The Wellness Community will host this six-week workshop designed to help cancer survivors make the transition from active treatment to life after treatment ends from 6-8:30 p.m., Jan. 22-Feb. 26, at the Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. 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 start-

ing 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.

Spiritual Psychodynamics of the Enneagram The enneagram is a powerful and affective tool for developing self awareness and understanding. A workshop will be held from 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Friday, Jan. 18, at San Damiano, 710 Highland Dr., Danville. Cost is \$95 for CEU's; \$70 without; lunch is included. Call 837-9141, ext. 315.

U.S. Tour of Duty: The Iran Talks Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center, Tri-Valley CARES, Peace Action West and Lamorinda Peace and Justice Group will host Scott Ritter and Jeff Cohen who will speak on "U.S. Tour of Duty: The Iran Talks" from 7:30-9:30 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 15, at Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek. Cost is a suggested donation of \$5-\$20. Call 933-7850.

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.

Literary Events

Applications Available for Student Days High school students in Contra Costa County are invited to apply to participate in the 2008 Student Days, a program that offers professional training in drama, art, photography and writing, at the Eugene O'Neill's Tao House in Danville. The program begins on March 5 with workshops on art; March 6 will focus on drama; March 12 with workshops on photography, and March 13 with workshops on writing. Applications are available by calling 820-1818 or visiting www.myspace.com/eugeneoneill; applications are due by Feb. 15.

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 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.

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.

On Stage

'Bus Stop' Classic American play in which a mixed bag of bus passengers (and strangers) are stranded in a 1950s Topeka diner in a snowstorm. "Bus Stop" plays at 8 p.m., Friday-Saturday and at 2 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 18-Feb. 9, at the Village Theatre, 233 Front St., Danville.

Tickets are \$22-25, \$15 for students and groups of 10 or more. Call 820-1278 or visit www.danvilletheatre.com.

Carnival of Chaos You never know what's going to happen in any given show at "Carnival of Chaos" showing at 7 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 5, at Front Row Theater, 17011 Bollinger Canyon Rd., San Ramon. Tickets are \$14 for adults, \$9 for youth or seniors. Call 973-3372 or visit www.sanramonperformingarts.com.

Company C Contemporary Ballet Company C Contemporary Ballet will perform repertoire by David Parsons, Antony Tudor, Alexandre Proia and Artistic Director, Charles Anderson at 8 p.m., Friday, Jan. 25, at the Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Tickets are \$40 for adults, \$25 for students and seniors. Visit www.companycballet.org.

Late Nite Catechism San Ramon Performing Arts presents "Late Nite Catechism" at 2 p.m., Sundays, Jan. 6-27, at the Dougherty Valley Performing Arts Center, 10550 Albion Rd., San Ramon. Tickets are \$25. Call 973-3372 or visit www.sanramonperformingarts.com.

Twelfth Night Front Row Theater presents "Twelfth Night," regarded as Shakespeare's greatest comic achievement, at 7 p.m., Friday, Jan. 18, at Front Row Theater, 17011 Bollinger Canyon Rd., San Ramon. Tickets are \$14 for adults, \$9 for youth and seniors. Call 973-3372 or visit www.sanramonperformingarts.com.

Seniors

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 \$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.

Spiritual

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.



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Sports

Adult Open Gym Basketball

Danville Parks and Recreation Department holds drop-in basketball year-round at the Los Cerros Middle School, 968 Blemer Road, for ages 18 and over. Drop-in times are 7:30-9 a.m., Saturdays. Bring your own ball. Cost is \$3 for residents, \$5 for non-residents. Call 314-3400.

Adult Softball Adult Softball plays pickup softball at 9:30 a.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays year-round. New members welcome. Call Bob Randall at 855-4646 for more information

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. The final mile will be completed on May 3 at Spring Fest.

Learn Tennis, Get Free Racquet Learn to play tennis in six hours and receive a free Dunlop Tennis Racquet. Sponsored by the United States Tennis Association, new classes start the first Monday of each month, from 6:30-8 p.m., at San Ramon Valley High School. The cost of six hours of group lessons is \$100 per player. Lessons taught by former world ranked tennis professional/30-year coach. To register, call Brett, USPTA P-1 at 683-2460.

San Ramon Valley Tennis Club This women's league is year round for both A and B players meeting for practice weekday mornings. Membership is \$30 annually. For information, call Patty at 820-8131 or Laurie at 820-0695.

Walnut Creek Tennis Club WCTC is a free, co-ed tennis group for single adults of all ages and levels (primarily 2.5-3.5). It plays drop-in tennis from 9 a.m.-noon, Saturdays and Sundays at Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek (S. Main). See information at <http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/wctc/>.

Support Groups

Addiction Counseling Narconon offers free counseling, assessments and referrals to centers nationwide to families in need of drug or alcohol addiction help. Call (800) 468-6933 or visit www.stopaddiction.com.

American Chronic Pain Association The ACPA group meets from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. every second and fourth Monday at the Community Presbyterian Church Library at 222 W. El Pintado Rd., Danville.

Bipolar Support Group The Tri-Valley Support Group provides free peer support for people with mood disorders. It meets from 7:15-8:45 p.m., every Wednesday, at St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton. Call 560-0842

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.

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 celebratercovery@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.

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

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

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.dvig.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

Animal Fosters Urgently Needed Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF) is looking for short-term fosters for dogs, puppies, cats and kittens. ARF will provide the food, supplies and vet care; all you need to do is provide the love. Call 296-3173 or visit www.arf.net.

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.

Assistance League of Diablo Valley This chapter of the National Assistance League seeks new volunteer members to help with a wide range of philanthropic service projects in many Contra Costa communities. These include vision screening in elementary schools, distributing clothing to school children in need, daily reassurance phone calls to homebound

elderly and handicapped clients, and staffing the chapter's Lafayette thrift shop. Call 934-0901 or visit <http://diablovalley.assistanceleague.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.

California Independent Film Festival Association Support the Arts in the Tri-Valley by joining the California Independent Film Festival Association. The donation of the membership will support independent film events. For information, visit www.caindiefest.com.

CCI Volunteer Puppy Raising Program Canine Companions for Independence (CCI) are looking for special volunteers interested in raising a CCI puppy for 15-18 months and are now accepting applications. For information, call 1-800-572-BARK (572-2275) or visit www.cci.org.

Child Abuse Prevention Council The Contra Costa County Child Abuse Prevention Council needs volunteer speakers for the community education program. Volunteers must complete a mandatory 24-hour speaker's training course. For information, call 946-9961.

Contra Costa Academy of Fine Art Volunteers are needed with secretarial skills for the Contra Costa Academy of Fine Art. For information, call Beth

Batchelor at 837-5654 or Nana Dicta Graves at 777-1717.

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.

Lindsay Wildlife Museum Docents are needed to lead class tours, teaching children and others about our important connection with wildlife and the world we share. No experience needed. Call 627-2444 or visit www.wildlife-museum.org.

Make a Difference Reutlinger Community for Jewish Living (RCJL) in Danville provides assisted living, Alzheimer's and skilled nursing care in a community our residents call home. Volunteers play a key role at RCJL and opportunities are available for students and adults. For information, call Volunteer Coordinator Irma at 964-2098.

Museum of the San Ramon Valley The Museum of the San Ramon Valley welcomes volunteers and has a current need for greeters who give three hours one day a month to welcome visitors to the museum, register their attendance, and give them an introductory tour of the Waiting Room and the Museum Store. Call Carmen Curtis at 837-9781 or the museum at 837-3750.

Sheriff Seeks Senior Volunteers The Sheriff's Valley Station Office in Alamo is seeking people interested in assisting law enforcement in the community. Citizens should have a clean criminal history and would be responsible for one shift a week for four-and-a-half hours. Interested applicants should call James Hogan or Elmer Glasser at 837-2902.

Trails Maintenance East Bay Trail Dogs is an all-volunteer group that has built, repaired and helped maintain single-track trails in the East Bay Regional Park District, the Mt. Diablo State Park, and Walnut Creek open space. Volunteers meet the fourth Saturday and one weekday each month. To participate, call Harry at 443-3925.

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115 Announcements

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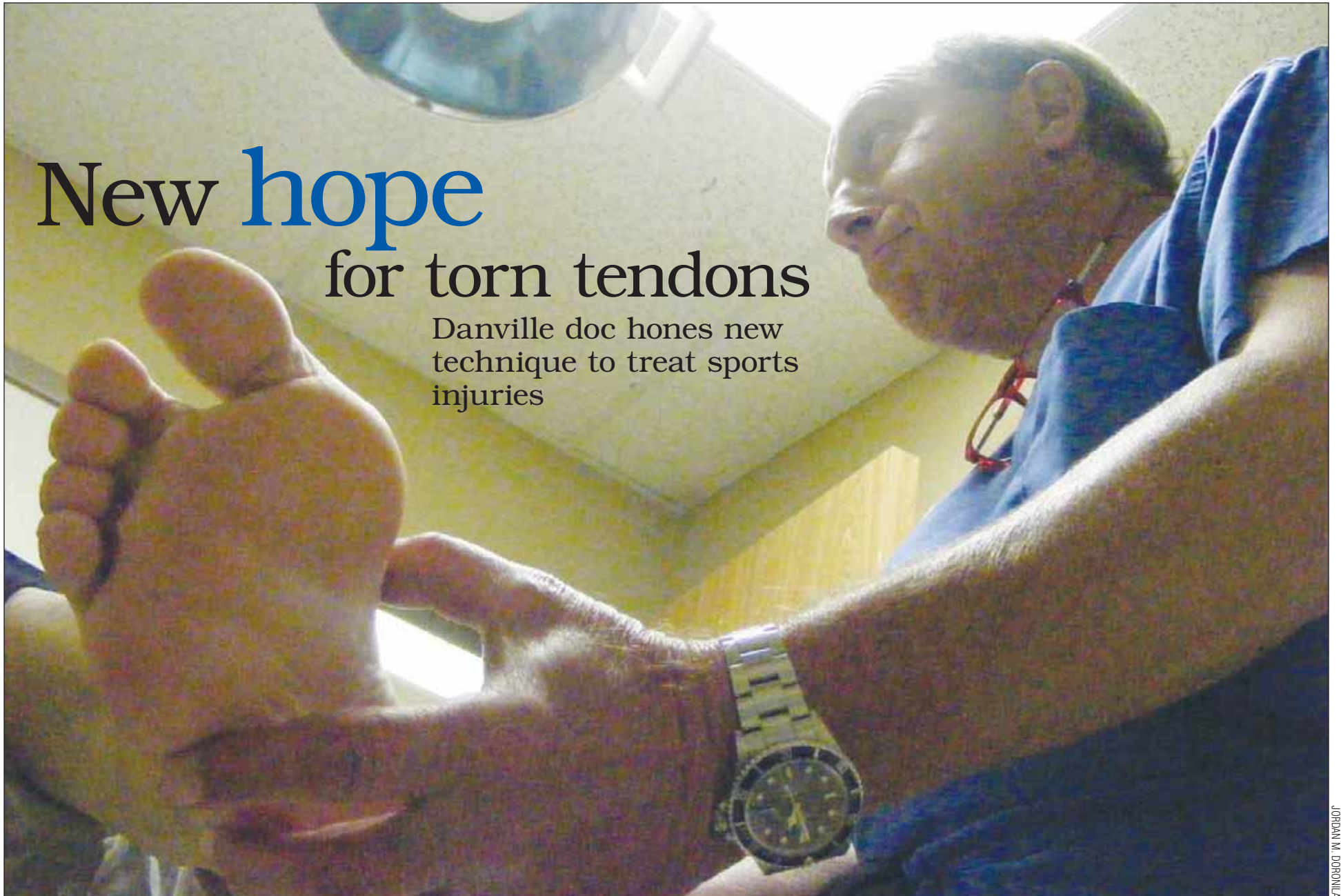


Meet Topsy

This six pound, 4-year-old, spayed female blonde Terrier needs a special home. Topsy had a successful spinal surgery but she was left with some impaired motor skills which make her look a little "tipsy" when she walks. She doesn't appear to have any pain with her condition. Because of her impairment, Topsy will need an adult only home where she will receive special attention. Topsy likes to cuddle and she enjoys being held and petted. She's an excellent watchdog, as are most small breeds. Topsy will need to be kept indoors and she walks best on carpeting where she can get some traction. Topsy gets along with other dogs as long as they are gentle with her and respectful of her small size. For more information about this adorable dog, visit the Tri-Valley SPCA, 4651 Gleason Drive in Dublin. It's open from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. Wed. and Thurs., and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fri. through Sun. Call 479-9670. See Topsy on the Web at www.eastbayspca.org. She is listed under adoptable dogs at East Bay SPCA—Tri-Valley.

New hope for torn tendons

Danville doc hones new technique to treat sports injuries



JORDAN M. DORONILA

Dr. Howard Sokoloff, a podiatric physician and surgeon from Danville, has been using a new surgical technique, which is less invasive, to help people with foot ailments.

by **Jordan M. Doronila**

Milt Vardakis, an avid sportsman from Danville, searched in desperation for a solution to the severe pain in his tendon, which began two years ago. It prevented him from the physical activities he loved—playing basketball and tennis.

Vardakis finally found Danville podiatrist Howard Sokoloff, who used new technology to repair the damage in his broken Achilles tendon.

“Sokoloff is one of the gifted podiatrists here in the Bay Area,” said Vardakis. “His methods enabled a better lifestyle.”

Howard M. Sokoloff, a podiatric physician and surgeon whose office is in San Ramon, has been using a new technique called Topaz Ablation—developed by ArthroCare Corp.—to heal Achilles tendons, plantar fasciitis and tendinopathies. The technology is a surgical procedure that increases blood supply and oxygen in the wounded area, allowing healing. It is less invasive than other techniques, which often involve sewing and suturing. Although, like all surgeries, there are risks of the ablation therapy causing an infection or not working, Sokoloff noted.

Nonetheless, he has seen positive results since he started using it last year. He said he has treated more than 30 cases of plantar fasciitis using ablation. It has been used in cardiology, urology and now orthopedic medicine.

“The results are so favorable that more surgeons are using it,” Sokoloff said.

Common ailments Sokoloff has treated are hereditary deformations, foot and ankle injuries, often from sports injuries and fractures. He also said he sees many tendon problems. He said preparing and stretching physically are ways to prevent injuries. He noted that understanding the activity or sport one gets involved in helps, too.

Mustang soccer coach Dwight Maloney said he has his kids stretch and exercise before playing. But he hasn't seen

many serious injuries other than minor scrapes.

Andy Lutz, San Ramon Valley High School varsity tennis coach, said he also requires his player to stretch and wear shoes that are specially made for the sport.

Whatever injury his patients are facing, Sokoloff said he treats their injuries with a conservative approach, such as physical therapy. If this fails, he then makes a recommendation.

Sokoloff grew up in Pennsylvania.

“I was always interested in small joint surgery,” he said.

He studied at the Pennsylvania College of Podiatric Medicine and received his degree. He moved to California in 1976 and studied podiatric surgery at the California College of Podiatric Medicine. He did surgical residency in Hayward.

“He has a sense of passion,” said Vardakis.

When Vardakis was looking for a doctor to repair his ankle, he wanted the best. Through word of mouth, he found Sokoloff. At first, they approached Vardakis' healing conservatively, through physical therapy for three months. But that didn't work.

Then Sokoloff recommended ablating his wound. Vardakis listened to the doctor's advice. Although Sokoloff had said it would be two months before he would be fully healed to play sports, Vardakis was able to play basketball again after four weeks.

Sokoloff has been helping other doctors use the ablation method and lecturing other medical professionals about it.

“It's a quality of life thing,” he said. ■



Danville resident Milt Vardakis extends his foot to Dr. Howard Sokoloff for treatment.

JORDAN M. DORONILA

The Wine Guy

BY GREGORY PEEBLES



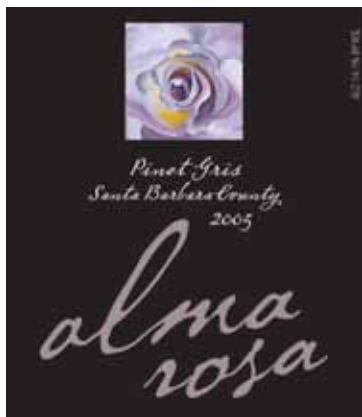
For fans of aromatic whites

2005 Alma Rosa Pinot Gris (Santa Barbara County) (Jackson's Wine & Spirits—Lafayette, \$14.99)

Richard Sanford is arguably the patriarch of viticulture and fine winemaking in Santa Barbara County. His roots run deep, back to the original planting of Sanford & Benedict vineyard in 1970 and the founding of Sanford Winery with his wife, Thekla, in 1981. For nearly 25 years under their passionate ownership, Sanford Winery consistently produced award-winning Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Noir-Vin Gris (23 vintages under the dedicated, watchful eye of charismatic winemaker Bruno D'Alfonso).

After selling their winery to Paterno Wines International (recently renamed Terlato Wines International), Team Sanford opened Alma Rosa Winery & Vineyards in 2005, with the first releases reaching select retailers and restaurateurs in 2006. The winery and vineyards (over 100 acres of certified organic vineyards in the mega popular Sta. Rita Hills appellation) produce Pinot Gris and Pinot Blanc, but concentrate primarily on Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

With Bruno D'Alfonso deciding to concentrate on his own winemaking projects (DiBruno and Badge), Richard and Thekla are now working with world renowned winemak-



er Christian Roguenant. A native of Burgundy, graduate of the viticulture/enology program at University of Dijon and long-time winemaking guru, Monsieur Rougenant consults with several other properties on California's Central Coast (Baileyana, Carpe Diem, Rosenthal-The Malibu Estate, Tangent, etc.) and across the globe.

Combine the Sanford's superb care for the vineyard land (and surrounding ecosystem) with Roguenant's two decades of expertise in the cellar and the sky's the limit. Alma Rosa has the potential to be a standard bearer in Sta. Rita Hills.

Fans of aromatic whites will certainly be satisfied by this Pinot Gris. Do yourself a favor, buy a bottle and sip it along with spicy Mediterranean or Asian fare. However, act quickly for only

2,133 cases were produced and there is high demand nationwide for all of Alma Rosa's wines.

The colors are crisp and vibrant. Shades of straw, yellow and gold overlap one another in stunning fashion.

There is a vast, interesting array of aromas. Flint, mineral and pencil shavings make way for lemon peel and orange blossom which lead to ripe apricot and lanolin.

Please, do not to serve the Pinot Gris too cold for it will definitely stunt the aromatics. Wait 15 minutes after removing it from the refrigerator before swirling and tasting.

Your palate will experience some wonderful contradictions: Rich and round, yet angular; lively and energizing, yet refined; delicate, yet heavy. Distinct, focused flavors include litchi nut, lime, mandarin orange and tangerine. Believe it or not, I even detected a couple of my favorite Jelly Belly flavors as well—Buttered Popcorn and Lemon Drop. No kidding!

The finish culminates with essence of orange crème brûlée. Even better, it lasts an eternity.

Let your palate be the judge. Here's to a healthy and prosperous 2008 for all!

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



Fighting like cats and dogs

Q. My 15-week-old puppy and my 1-year-old cat keep fighting. Please help me—we have tried everything, disciplining, separating and even yelling. My puppy just doesn't understand. She had my cat's neck in her mouth, and thank goodness she didn't bite down, or else she could of seriously injured or killed my cat.

A. There's a reason for the phrase "fighting like cats and dogs." Remember that a dog, particularly a puppy, has no idea that the cat is a member of your family. Some breeds, like herders and retrievers, will instinctually try to herd or pick up the cat. Some breeds, like terriers and hounds, are natural hunters of cats. Even if the dog is simply trying to investigate the cat, running away from the dog will almost always stimulate his chase instinct. The cat's previous experience and age can play a role as well. A kitten who has learned "dog language" at a young age is at a clear advantage for relating to dogs for the rest

of his life. An adult cat who has had negative or no experience with dogs is going to take a lot longer to adjust. Some people think the cat scratching the dog will teach the dog to leave it alone. This usually does not work, as the cat learns to respond negatively, and the dog just gets more aroused and more stimulated to fight and possibly harm the cat.

When introducing a dog and cat, you should plan for a long period of introduction. First let the dog and cat smell and hear each other through a door that blocks the view. After they are comfortable, which may take several days, you can let them see each other but with two barriers between them. The barriers could be crates, baby gates, or see-through doors or windows. Or you can keep the dog on a leash or the cat on a harness and leash. The idea is for both animals to be calm in the presence of the other. Be careful to maintain both animals' trust by not allowing accidental

contact. Try to keep the dog's attention, and offer rewards of praise or treats for calm behavior. Only when both animals are comfortable seeing each other should contact be allowed, and even then you must be careful to have control of the dog and try to focus his attention away from the cat. Gradually extend the period of time that they are together as long as things are going well. You should never leave the animals alone together until you feel sure they will not fight at all. And remember that dogs who accept cats calmly inside the house often treat them as fair game outdoors.

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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Presenting the Past

BY BEVERLY LANE



"FOOTPRINTS IN THE SOIL," BY ROSE PETERS EMERY

Workers on the Peters ranch eat a second lunch in the field. Rose is seated toward the right.

Women on the farm

Author Rose Emery recalled some of the work her mother accomplished on the Peters Ranch at the turn of the century in her autobiography "Footprints in the Soil." Her mother, Rose L. Peters (1874-1967), was raised in the Tassajara Valley, one of 12 Lawrence children.

"First and foremost on her list of jobs was the task of providing meals for the family and the farm workers. Food for hardworking men had to be substantial, nourishing, and as tasty as possible. And it had to be ready on time, whether served at home, as was usually the case, or at the Butcher Ranch, or out in the fields at harvest time. Ma was expert at this.

"Three big meals were served daily—breakfast, the mid-day dinner and supper at night. In addition, when they were doing exceptionally heavy labor like harvesting, a high calorie second lunch would be taken to the field in mid-afternoon for the men in our family and the hired crew. The men would be sitting or lying around on the ground as in a Brueghel painting when Ma arrived in her sunbonnet with a basket over her arm. In it she carried slabs of her own bread and huge hunks of cheddar cheese. I would come behind her with homemade doughnuts and a pot of hot coffee. How good that must have tasted after all that hot, hard work!

"It took great quantities of food to feed the eight or nine people

who usually sat at our table. Many of the staples, such as hams, bacon, eggs, milk, butter, potatoes, and certain other vegetables came from the farm itself, along with an occasional chicken. Whenever possible, supplementary food was bought in large quantities, which not only saved money but the time and energy of trips to town with a horse-drawn wagon. Considerable storage space was necessary."

The family was largely self-sufficient but, as Mrs. Emery describes: "We counted on people who came to the door to sell us things we couldn't or didn't want to produce for ourselves. The butcher wagon came around twice a week. Rather like a large box, it had doors in back and carried ice inside to keep the meat cold. The owner, Mr. Joe Lawrence (no relation to my mother), the local butcher, no doubt sold us back some of the beef that Papa had sold to him. Though our family butchered pigs, killing a steer was too big a project for us. Ev and I liked to accompany Mama to the butcher wagon because usually we would walk away from it nibbling on a slice of bologna the butcher had given us."

"The fish man came on Friday, the fast day for local Catholics. I remember that the flounders were delicious, though it seemed freakish that both their eyes were on one side, the top side. Other types were less tasty—barracuda, for example. As the fish man didn't carry the salt cod (baccala) that is a Portuguese favorite, we bought that at the gen-

eral store."

"It may seem strange, but we bought many of our vegetables from a vendor who delivered them to the door. The farm operation took so much time that Pa couldn't give a lot of attention to his garden. The vegetable man was a middle-aged Italian with black sparkling eyes and magnificent mustachios that curled up on the ends. Papa use to refer to him as 'gaitado' (the bagpipe player), because he was given to sudden, startling bursts of shrill laughter at the slightest provocation. The variety of vegetables he carried was limited but he always had cabbage, carrots, turnips, beets, iceberg lettuce, string beans and sometimes peas—no exotics like artichokes, asparagus, or even broccoli."

The author recounts a daunting list of other tasks tackled by her mother, which included canning, bread-making, washing clothes for the family and the farm workers, ironing, sewing and mending clothes and curtains, raising turkeys and chickens, producing cream and quilting. Her father paid his wife a high compliment in the 1930s which Rose Emery recalls: "She did a lot of work in her time."

Source: "Footprints in the Soil, A Portuguese-Californian Remembers" by Rose Peters Emery.

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."

A movie review of what's AT THE MOVIES

by Joe Ramirez

Charlie Wilson's War

★★★

Rating: R strong language, nudity/sexual content and some drug use.
Run Time: 1 hours, 37 minutes.



Whether playing a boy-man in "Big" or a sleepless widower in Seattle, Tom Hanks effortlessly exudes child-like charm and everyman likeability. But can you picture him as a cocaine-snorting, boozing womanizer? He's more convincing as a castaway who befriends a volleyball called Wilson than the Texas congressman sharing the same name in Mike Nichols' oddly toned movie.

"Charlie Wilson's War" attempts to walk the razor wire between comedy and drama. Good-time Charlie (Hanks) trades playful barbs—in the bathtub and the bedroom—with Houston socialite Joanne Herring (a stiff Julia Roberts) as though in a screwball comic romp. The politically savvy pretty woman wants the U.S. to provide arms to the Afghans fighting invading Soviet forces. She sets Charlie off on a serious mission that will become his crusade.

Screenwriter Aaron Sorkin's snappy dialogue veers the dramedy more into the halls of "West Wing" and "Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip" than into George Crile's gripping 2003 report of the secret war that changed history.

During the Reagan era, the relatively unknown Texan politician partnered with a rogue CIA agent to launch a covert operation that funded the mujahideen rebels against the Red Army and helped the Afghans topple a superpower. By clearly positioning Wilson as a hero and provoking laughter through good banter, the movie never addresses the pressing questions raised in Crile's nonfiction page-turner. It also never encourages the viewer to consider that a solitary congressman appropriated more than \$40 million of taxpayer money for his cause.

The movie lionizes rather than criticizes the fact that two mavericks hijacked American foreign policy. The film's satiric edge never cuts to the heart of the matter: Charlie Wilson headed an extra-government conspiracy. For this, he deserves CIA honors and our admiration?

Although Hanks and Roberts are often unconvincing in their roles, Philip Seymour Hoffman owns the part of the CIA loose cannon and Wilson co-conspirator Gust Avrakotos. His booming voice and screen-filling presence create a vivid character in seconds. Angry at the Agency and clever in clandestine ways, Avarakotos aids Wilson in brokering a deal between an Israeli arms dealer and the leader of Pakistan to deliver weaponry to the "freedom fighters."

Without implicating Wilson in wrongdoing, the ending spins the stranger-than-fiction true story as a cautionary tale. The Soviet Union fell, and the Cold War melted. But Charlie Wilson helped arm an Islamic group that later turned those weapons against us. Nichols' celebration of Wilson's secret war sweetens an irony that should taste of cold metal.

—Susan Tavernetti

For more movie reviews or local show times, go to www.DanvilleWeekly.com

OF NOTE



Girl Scouts collect items for troops

Girl Scouts from the Las Trampas Association—about 50 troops—collected items such as popcorn, oatmeal and granola last month to give to the Blue Star Moms, who packed the goods and sent them to U.S. troops in Iraq.

Eighth-grade Cadette Troop 1964 hosted the Blue Star Moms Collection Drive as part of its Silver Award project with a drop-off location near Los Cerros Middle School. A colorful flier for the event was designed by eighth-grader Alanna Leong. The Scouts encouraged donors to write post-cards to the soldiers, too.

Helping assemble the donations are (l-r) Sammie Hugo, Mary Kate Rupley, Janine Elya, Kartina Henderson and Jillian Tom.

Home builders see market recovering in New Year

But policymakers must remain vigilant in 2008

by **Jeb Bing**

With help from the Congress and an accommodating policy from the Federal Reserve, the housing industry will begin its recovery in the second half of 2008, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) said today in a year-end housing forecast teleconference.

"I think the best bet is that 2008 is the year we will be looking at the bottom for various components of the housing market," said NAHB Chief Economist David Seiders.

"We are in a down time, and many markets that overheated during 2003-05 such as Las Vegas, Phoenix and Miami are undergoing a natural correction," added Jerry Howard, executive vice president and CEO of NAHB. "But all housing is local, and the reason we think that the market will stabilize and come back is because many smaller markets that did not experience overheating are still performing at a relatively healthy level. If you balance those markets against those that are undergoing major corrections, we see a solid recovery down the road."

Seiders, who is forecasting slow economic growth next year, said this forecast is based on several assumptions—the economy avoids recession, Congress passes key reforms to address the subprime lending crisis, and the central bank remains ready to step in if needed to keep the economy moving forward.

Noting that NAHB's Housing Market Index, which predicts demand for new single-family home sales, has stabilized at low levels during the past three months, Seiders said that this is an indication that "we are now approaching the bottom of home sales activity, and we anticipate a recovery in sales beginning in the second quarter of 2008."

Getting sales stabilized is the key to turning around housing production. Housing starts peaked in the first quarter of 2006, and Seiders expects starts to bottom out in the second quarter of 2008, registering a 55 percent decline from peak-to-trough activity.

"As sales begin to improve, this will whittle down excess inventory, allowing the production of new homes to begin moving forward in the latter half of 2008," he said.

To help the housing industry to begin its recovery next year, Howard said Congress must act quickly to pass an FHA modernization bill and legislation to reform Fannie Mae

and Freddie Mac so they can play a larger role in restoring stability in the mortgage markets.

"I am happy to report that policymakers have been doing the right thing," said Howard. "The Fed has stepped in three times to lower interest rates, which underscores how seriously they are taking the issue. The Administration has stepped in with its Hope Now and FHASecure programs—both designed to limit the number of homes that actually go into foreclosure and back on to the market. And just this week, Congress passed mortgage debt forgiveness legislation that the President signed into law today."

While these are all positive developments, Howard said that Congress still has plenty of unfinished business that must be attended to.

He called on lawmakers to move promptly to reconcile competing bills in the House and Senate that would allow the FHA to provide a viable alternative to the subprime market by increasing its loan limit for high-cost markets and providing flexible down payment requirements. He also urged the Senate to act on companion legislation to House-passed bill H.R. 1427, a measure that would reform government-sponsored enterprises (GSEs) Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

"GSE reform would help to provide much-needed liquidity in the jumbo loan marketplace by raising the conforming loan limit in high-cost areas, allowing Fannie and Freddie to purchase more mortgages in these markets," said Howard.

Another reason that Howard cited for optimism looking ahead is a new report from Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies, which found that even with the large inventory of unsold homes on the market today, the long term demand for conventional housing units will run at a strong clip of 1.82 million per year between 2008 and 2014.

The Harvard report concluded: "Do not mistake short-term reactions to the housing slowdown as a harbinger of things to come for the long term. On the strength of demographically driven demand for housing, the market will bounce back from its currently suppressed levels."

Still, the fragile housing market and economy show that policymakers must remain vigilant in 2008. ■

SALES AT A GLANCE

This week's data represents homes sold during November 2007

Alamo	Danville	Diablo	Walnut Creek
Total sales reported: 2	Total sales reported: 24	Total sales reported: 1	Total sales reported: 18
Lowest sale reported: \$1,140,000	Lowest sale reported: \$425,000	Lowest sale reported: \$3,350,000	Lowest sale reported: \$168,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,200,000	Highest sale reported: \$1,420,000	Highest sale reported: \$3,350,000	Highest sale reported: \$1,560,000
Average sales reported: \$1,170,000	Average sales reported: \$893,208	Average sales reported: \$3,350,000	Average sales reported: \$768,500

HOME SALES

Source: California REsource

Alamo	Danville	Diablo	Walnut Creek
74 Chancellor Court Evans Trust to T. & J. Krause for \$1,140,000	2114 Lusitano Street Shapell Industries to P. & M. Tan for \$854,000	2702 Carina Court Crosthwaite Trust to P. Karbassi for \$1,320,000	1611 Carmel Drive A. Rohrs to R. Thomas for \$630,000
1646 West Livorna Road Day Trust to J. & M. Ford for \$1,200,000	1928 Mantova Street KB Home to Weber Trust for \$915,000	3621 Citrus Avenue T. & P. Madge to P. & K. Andrade for \$765,000	1812 Coulter Pine Court A. Infante to J. & M. Shelger for \$1,100,000
826 Ackerman Drive S. & E. Simonich to M. & L. Holloway for \$999,000	3179 Martingale Drive Ponderosa Homes to E. Bartlett-Calvillo for \$1,199,000	2210 Gladwin Drive Williams Trust to R. Snyder for \$720,000	889 Holly Hill Drive Affinity Land to N. & T. Galambos for \$1,560,000
3452 Cashmere Street Shapell Industries to Z. Sun for \$827,000	3143 Martingale Street Ponderosa Homes to A. & A. Vega for \$1,308,000	1655 North California Boulevard #205 Trinity Avenue Limited to Chisaki Trust for \$945,000	2759 Pontiac Drive B. & J. Kronick to N. Crisostomo for \$980,000
144 Channi Loop Shapell Industries to J. & C. Orman for \$456,000	705 Mistral Court H. Fitzsimmons to A. & H. Broholm for \$949,000	2933 Ptarmigan Drive #2 Durham Trust to Jacobsen Trust for \$168,000	2604 Saklan Indian Drive #3 Perlberg Trust to Tudor Trust for \$265,000
158 Channi Loop Shapell Industries to K. Hung for \$501,500	2509 Montreux Street Lennar Homes to H. Kim for \$1,151,500	1710 Stanley Dollar Drive #2B Simenson Trust to E. Bordessa for \$588,000	1840 Tice Creek Drive #2428 Mendenhall Trust to Craig Trust for \$875,000
166 Channi Loop Shapell Industries to L. Chen for \$456,000	937 Redwood Drive C. Horton to R. & J. Kalman for \$1,135,000	110 Vallecito Lane Ream Trust to D. Thomas for \$870,000	2560 Walnut Boulevard #24 Tebelman Trust to M. Henrichs for \$275,000
170 Channi Loop Shapell Industries to M. Huang for \$492,000	396 St. Norbert Drive S. Costa to D. & D. Montelongo for \$745,000	2036 Walnut Boulevard Aurora Loan Services to S. & J. Dimaggio for \$500,000	
600 Colmar Court KB Homes to A. & R. Ammsso for \$1,120,500	129 Sunhaven Road L. & J. Drozdowski to S. & L. Ruesink for \$1,420,000		
605 Colmar Court KB Homes to G. & T. Simmons for \$1,100,000	536 Sycamore Circle D. & S. Ross to M. Caldwell for \$515,000		
3045 East Griffon Street Shapell Industries to Huang Trust for \$1,004,000	2307 Tree Creek Place Houston Trust to D. & S. Wilson for \$1,162,500		
3044 Fostoria Circle S. Gurson to W. Hom for \$425,000			
380 Glen Arms Drive D. Golding to A. Chen for \$945,000			
341 Hartford Road Haagensen Trust to Peters Trust for \$1,200,000			
113 Heritage Park Drive C. & S. Hsia to L. Giuntini for \$557,000			

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7823 Crossridge Rd. \$779,000
Sun 1-4 Hometown GMAC 997-2411

5 Bedrooms

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

PLEASANTON

4 Bedrooms

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

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

LIVERMORE

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2551 Vintage Ln. \$1,365,000
Sun 1-5 Valley Brokers 484-0506

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