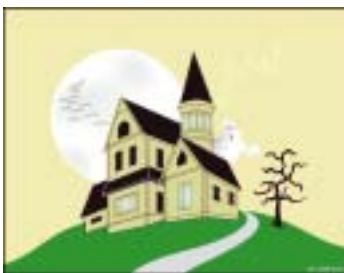




Sharon Grant

LARPD Staffer Helps Create Moscow Program

American swimmers in Moscow are receiving expanded water safety instruction, thanks to a Livermore swimming supervisor. Livermore resident Sharon Grant, aquatics supervisor for Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARPD), visited Moscow for three weeks this summer to create a group of instructors for water safety, lifesaving, and lifeguard classes at the Anglo-American school in Moscow. The 1200 students at the school are children of diplomats, business people, and others from English-speaking countries. The swimming director at the school wanted to establish a training program that could create a higher number of qualified lifeguards and other water safety and lifesaving personnel at the school's swim center. Grant went to Moscow with (See PROGRAM, page 16)



Variety of Halloween Events Set

Livermore Downtown Inc. will host the 21st Annual Downtown Trick or Treat today, Thurs., Oct. 25. Hundreds of businesses will be open from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. They will be handing out candy and goodies. The event also includes a costume contest, games, photo opportunities, puppet performances, DECA's scream contest, the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department fire safety trailer, haunted businesses and performances, and much more. Livermore Downtown Inc.'s annual Costume Contest will be held on L Street between First Street and Second Street. The following businesses have special events for the evening: "Mad Deli" at Tommie's Deli & Sandwiches, 2152 Second Street; "Spooky Old Theater Mall" on Second Street between J Street and K Street; "Ghoulish Dance Recital" at It's All About Dancing, 2247 Second Street; Carnival Games and the "Spooky Spider Buggy" at Woopsiedaisy Toy Shop, 154 S. J Street; and "Spooky Photo Opportunity" from ultra-spectre photography: music: design at 156 S. Livermore Ave. The Livermore Pleasanton (See HALLOWEEN, page 7)

Wounded Veteran Now A U.S. Citizen

Wounded army veteran Mariela Mason became a United States citizen on October 23rd in Livermore. Every veteran who has served during an authorized period of conflict is eligible for U.S. citizenship. Ms. Mason's naturalization service took place in the dining room of the Livermore VA nursing home. The room was filled with friends, mostly those who have only known her since her accident like the Blue Star Riders, her family and several government representatives. They came to honor a woman who was never expected to come this far. On December 19th 2004 Army Sergeant Mariela Mason was serving in Kuwait when she volunteered to help a woman change a tire on the side of the road. While helping the woman a car hit Ms. Mason along with three (See CITIZEN, page 6)

Comprehensive Conservation Plan a Priority

The Tri-Valley Conservancy (TVC) has finished mapping the Tri-Valley and has put together a conservation plan for the entire area. Sharon Burnham, executive director of TVC, said that the different projects within the plan would cost about \$14 million to carry out. "The board has unanimously approved the plan and is ready to forward and implement the priority projects." Among the priority projects is the creation of a comprehensive resource conservation plan for North Livermore. The plan would

help provide understanding of what areas are in the most need of protection, such as Doolan Canyon, said Burnham. Among those would be the alkali sink area. Some land and some easements would need to be purchased within the watershed for the sink. Zone 7, in conjunction with other groups, is also preparing a resource plan for North Livermore. Burnham said that the two plans have different goals. The Zone 7 led effort is strictly looking at mitigation. "That is very different than how we look at

the area. Their goal is to have regulatory agencies ease the permitting process to make mitigation easier. TVC is looking at areas for protection, not just for mitigation," she explained. Other areas of focus include the habitat and rangelands in the southeast Pleasanton hills, where there is a desire to establish regional trail connections. Burnham said the area is of concern. One of the reasons is its location within the urban growth boundary. The Pleasanton City Council recently approved a plan for 51 homes. The city

would receive 496 acres of permanent open space as part of the plan. A referendum of the approval was launched last week. Burnham said the TVC would continue working on preservation in South Livermore. She anticipates an additional three easements over the next three years. The TVC will work in partnership to establish a trail corridor from Del Valle to Shadow Cliffs and work on a similar connection between Brushy Peak and Del Valle, she continued. There will be an effort to raise

the visibility of conservation resources. The TVC will need to raise the money. Burnham said a consultant has been hired to help set up a fund-raising plan. "Part of that will be asking the public to help. We will definitely need the help of the public to maintain the quality of life in the Valley." The map prepared by TVC identifies watersheds, streams, important habitat, vegetation, trails, habitat corridors, and high risk areas. Because of increasing urban pressures, the Conservancy (See PLAN, page 4)



Photo - Doug Jorgensen
The Haag family goes all out decorating their home for Halloween. Testing the dining are Sally and Bill.

Joe Michell Could Become a K-6 School

By Patricia Koning
Last week trustees of the Livermore Board of Education voted to move forward with a plan to establish a K-8 school in the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District. In a 4-1 vote, the trustees decided to develop a plan to add the 6th grade to Joe Michell Elementary School for the next school year. Bill Morrison was the dissenting vote. Joe Michell is currently a K-5 school. To implement the program, at least 60 students must commit to enroll in the program next fall. The District will begin distributing Letters of Commitment in November and make a final decision in January. Kelly Bowers, Assistant Superintendent Educational Services, said that at a recent meeting Michell parents had a positive response to the concept.

Meetings at Sunset, Rancho, and Jackson will be held in the coming weeks. The curriculum would be the same as at other middle schools in the District, taught by highly qualified teachers. This means that teachers credentialed for and experienced with middle school would be hired, rather than giving existing staff sixth grade classes. Superintendent Brenda Miller noted that Michell Principal Angela Ehrlich, who joined the District this school year, was hired in part because of her experience as a teacher and administrator at middle schools. "I am very excited. The staff at Michell is just waiting for the thumbs up," said Ehrlich. "We think this program is a win-win for everyone. A lot of kids will benefit from being in a smaller

size environment. The transition to middle school is extremely difficult for some children." The program would likely consist of a three-period core class, including arts, reading, and history/social science with a single teacher. A two-period math/science Core class may be offered if a dual-credentialed teacher were hired. Bowers said an elective wheel, which is in place at Junction, is also a possibility. The educational day will have the same number of minutes as at other District middle schools. However, the schedule might vary to match Michell's starting time, depending on parent input. Students may have to join with other District middle schools for extracurricular activities such as sports and band. "Parents interested in this pro- (See JOE MICHELL, page 3)

Pleasanton Wants More Transparency in Campaign Financing

More transparency in election campaign finance reporting is needed. That was the determination of the Pleasanton City Council's discussion regarding campaign finance reform last week. The council directed staff to come back with some proposals as to how to post donations and expenditures in real time on the Internet as a way to achieve greater transparency. There was no interest on the part of the council to raise the reporting threshold from the current \$25. The council also wanted more information on donations and expenditures to and by political action committees and similar organizations. The council asked staff to look into voluntary spending limits. It was noted by staff that expenditure limits are considered a direct restraint on speech and association. The City of San Ramon has a voluntary spending limit of two mailings to registered voters. In the last election, the cost was \$21,544. Candidates pledge to adhere to the limits.

The discussion regarding election campaign reform was requested by Councilmember Matt Sullivan. He said he is concerned with the escalating costs of running for office. Pleasanton does not have a limit on campaign donations. Members of the public agreed that some changes were needed. Former Councilmember Kay Ayala said that San Ramon's method is a great idea. "I would love to see voluntary spending limits." She also wanted candidates to pledge not to accept money from political action committees (PACs). "That would send the message that the vote of individuals is the most important thing in an election." Mary Roberts asked for "lots of disclosure. Put finance statements on a website so everyone can see them," she said. She felt that reporting should include the year leading up to the election and any contributions and expenditures after the election. Councilmember Jerry Thorne said the idea of posting contri- (See CAMPAIGN, page 3)

Livermore Council Asked To Save 'Unique' Home

Residents asked the Livermore City Council to help preserve a home located at the corner of North L and Chestnut Street. The home, built in 1926, is scheduled for demolition to make way for new housing. Deborah Fields told the council, "I find it shocking and appalling that the home at 292 North L is to be torn down. It is a Bothwell designed home. It is unique. Everything about the

home is original." Fields added that she has enjoyed the changes in the downtown. However, she is concerned that the demolition will take another bite out of the number of heritage homes. "People come from all over to see historic homes. There is no reason why this home can't be moved," she stated. She suggested that the city work with the developer in an (See HOME, page 4)

Las Positas Programs Cited for Excellence

The Campaign for College Opportunity recognized Las Positas College by singling out three programs at the Livermore campus as exceptional. It was the only institution with more than one program in California that was recognized for the honor. The programs are The Design Shop, Head Start on College, and the Integrated Learning Center. In its Practices with Promise Report, the non-profit selected 15 programs across the state of California from four-year, two-year and kindergarten through 12th grade institutions that are working to address issues of college access and success. "The recognition of these three exceptional programs demonstrates how our staff and faculty consistently work to put students first," said interim President Bob Kratochvil. "Two of these programs are part of our two-year curriculum designed to help students move rapidly into the work force. The third one—the Integrated Learning Center—serves students regardless of their short-

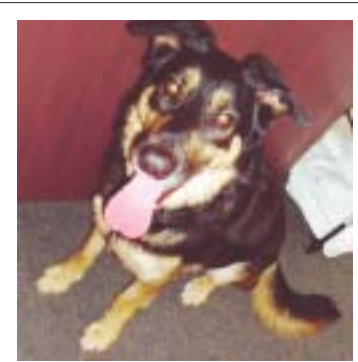
term goals and helps them succeed." "The mixture of programs is typical of the Las Positas approach to help all students reach their goals, whether it's to transfer with full credits to a four-year university or to update their skills or learn new skills to move into the work force," Kratochvil said. The Campaign for College Opportunity analyzed 120 programs submitted by high schools and colleges across California. It selected 15 programs to highlight the type of practices that best serve students. The three Las Positas programs cited are: • The Design Shop: Offered through the visual communications department and instructor Fredda Cassidy, the graphics program provides real-world experience to students once they've completed basic courses. Using state-of-the-art technology, the class functions as a full-service design shop for (See EXCELLENCE, page 4)



Photo - Doug Jorgensen
Walnut Grove Elementary School's Go Green program and the Rotary Club of Pleasanton sponsored a Del Valle Creek cleanup on Saturday, October 20, along the stretch of the creek between Main Street and Harvest Circle in Pleasanton. Students and families from Walnut Grove and Alisal elementary schools, Harvest Park Middle School, and Amador Valley High School participated. The Pleasanton City Naturalist and a Zone 7 water education specialist were on hand. Participants were engaged in investigations, explorations, and activities, along with picking up litter. This event was made possible by a \$1000 donation from the Rotary club.

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PET OF THE WEEK
Sammy is a five year old Shepard mix with a heart of gold. He is a big dog who thinks he is a little dog! He loves to play and will show you his belly for a tummy rub. He is fully housetrained and enjoys riding in the car. He is fine with children, but may be a little overwhelming for toddlers. He likes meeting new people and

other dogs, and will shake your hand in greeting. For more information about Sammy, call Valley Humane Society at 925-426-8656. VHS is located at 3670 Nevada Street in Pleasanton. Hours are Wed-Sun from 11AM to 5PM; dogs may be seen every Saturday from 11AM to 2PM at Valley Humane Society.

Lights of the Valley Illumination Ceremonies

Hope Hospice will host illumination ceremonies for "Lights of the Valley" 2007.

Lights of the Valley offers a unique way to honor or memorialize a loved one with a special evening of warm remembrances. Hope Hospice invites residents to light a bulb on a Tree of Life in memory or honor of a loved one. The tax-deductible donation of \$20 lights a bulb on a tree of choice. The light will burn throughout the holiday season.

Livermore Illumination Ceremony: Tuesday, November 27, 2007 - 6:30 p.m.; Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Avenue; Guest speakers: Honorable Marshall Kamena and City Poet Laureate, Connie Post; Music by the Asbury Ringers and the Arroyo Seco Choir.

Pleasanton Illumination Ceremony: Wednesday, November 28, 2007 - 6:30 p.m.; Heritage Bank Lobby, 300 Main Street; Guest Speakers: Honorable Jennifer Hosterman and City Poet Laureate - Martha Meltzer; Music by the Golden Gate Boys Bellringers.

Dublin Illumination Ceremony: Thursday, November 29, 2007 - 6:30 p.m.; Dublin San Ramon Services District; 7051 Dublin Blvd. (Lobby); Guest speakers: Honorable Janet Lockhart - Poetry Reading - Kirk Ridgeway; Music by Cantabella Children's Chorus, directed by

Bee Chow.

San Ramon Illumination Ceremony: Thursday, December 6, 2007 - 7:00 p.m.; San Ramon Regional Medical Center; Guest Speakers: City Representative;

Music Entertainment by Honor Choir of Danville Children's Chorus and Contra Costa Children's Chorus - San Ramon. For further information call: (925) 829-8770.

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VALLEY ROUNDUP

Property Taxes Due

More than 417,000 secured roll property tax bills for the Fiscal Year 2007-2008 amounting to \$2.53 billion dollars were mailed in October 2007 by Alameda County Treasurer and Tax Collector Donald R. White to all real property owners of record in the Alameda County Assessor's Office.

The secured roll taxes due are payable in two installments. The first installment is due on November 1, 2007 and is delinquent at 5 p.m. December 10, 2007, after which a 10% delinquent penalty attaches. The second installment is due on February 1, 2008 and is delinquent at 5 p.m. April 10, 2008, after which a 10% delinquent penalty and \$10 cost attaches. Both installments may be paid when the first installment is due.

There are now several payment options: by mail or in person at the County Tax Collector's Office, 1221 Oak Street, Oakland, Ca 94612, between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, holidays excepted; by credit card, available 24 hours a day by telephone at 510-272-6800, or online at www.acgov.org; by Echeck, available 24 hours a day online at www.acgov.org; a KIOSK located in the Tax Collector's lobby area allows taxpayers who visit the office to make payments via credit card and/or Echeck.

Payment by mail, telephone or online is recommended to avoid delay at the cashier's window.

Real property owners that do not receive their tax bill by November 15, 2007 should notify the Tax Collector's Office by calling (510) 272-6800, or by writing to the office. Tax bills received for property no longer owned should be forwarded to the new owner or returned to the Tax Collector's Office.

Supplemental tax bills are an additional tax liability due to a reassessment of your property value and are due on the date the bill is mailed to you. Check the supplemental delinquent dates to be sure to pay the taxes timely.

Robertson Park Planning

The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARPD) will host a second meeting on the Robertson Park Master Plan on Wednesday, November 7, at 6:30 p.m. This marks the second of three public meetings designed to generate public input on the first update of the Robertson Park master plan in 20 years. The meeting is open to all members of the public and will be held in the Cresta Blanca South room of the Robert Livermore Community Center, located at 4444 East Avenue in Livermore.

The objective of the park Master Plan is to

develop a series of goals for the use, management and development of Robertson Park. The existing master plan was completed in 1988. Since that time, Livermore has almost doubled in population size, with more residential housing surrounding Robertson Park.

The first public meeting to address a new master plan for Robertson Park was held in July. Public comment and ideas were solicited to form a direction for the park in the master plan development process. A final draft of the master plan will be presented to the Board of Directors by January 2008.

For more information, please contact Chiye Azuma, Project Manager, at (925) 373-5724. Residents who would like to be notified of subsequent planning meetings can contact Vicki DeBrum-Wiedenfled by phone at (925) 373-5723, or email at vwiedenfled@larpd.ds.ca.us.

Protecting Water Supply

Local residents and land managers interested in learning how to help protect the local water supply are invited to attend two free workshops on November 3 and 14 in Livermore.

The Alameda County Water District, the Zone 7 Water Agency, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District, in cooperation with the Alameda County Resource Conservation District, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the South Bay Aqueduct Watershed Workgroup, are organizing the workshops. They will focus on land, home and livestock management for clean water. The South Bay Aqueduct system, which is part of the State Water Project, supplies drinking water to more than two million people in Alameda and Santa Clara counties.

The first workshop will be held from 10:30 to 12:00 pm on Saturday, November 3 at the Livermore Public Library, 1188 South Livermore Ave., Livermore. It will feature speakers on fire safety and water pollution prevention. The second workshop will be held on Wednesday, November 14, 6:30 to 8:30 pm, at Livermore City Council Chambers, 1052 S. Livermore Ave., Livermore. This session features speakers on grazing, erosion management and conservation easements. Interested parties are invited to attend and may also call (510) 668-6533 for more information.

Workshop attendees will learn about tools for protecting local waterways that benefit the environment, provide for recreation, and contribute to local drinking water supplies.

Financial support for the workshops is being provided through a Proposition 13 Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Grant administered by the State Water Resources Control Board for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

CAMPAIGN

(continued from page one)

butions on the web was a "great one. One of the critical issues in an election is who gives what and when." He added that he is proud of his contributors and could use the postings as part of his campaign.

One speaker, Judy Symcox, wondered how to account for the value of volunteer time in an election. "Money is not the sole issue."

Reporting all contributions and expenditures prior to election day should be part of the reform. "Many large contributions come in after the election," noted Brian Arkin.

Resident Joe Ely said that elections and government should be about ideas and the common good, not big money. "The campaign finance system is extremely unfair and unhealthy for our democracy." He felt that full public financing would be the only way to truly level the playing field to allow candidates to be accountable to voters, and not to wealthy contributors.

Former Mayor Tom Pico pointed out that there is no perfect system. There will always be loopholes. He called independent expenditures the wild card in any election. He noted, "What's important is not how much is raised, but how much is disclosed." He agreed that greater transparency is needed. For example, the final summary doesn't come out until almost January 31 of the following year. That doesn't provide voters with what could be important information.

Pico continued, "Don't set a cap on expenditures for candidates. That gives further advantage to independent expendi-

tures. There is no cap." If the council feels a need for a cap, select something already in place, such as the cap on expenditures by State Assembly candidates.

As for the San Ramon system, Pico said it works because the city is small. One mailing in Pleasanton would cost \$38,000 based on \$1 per registered voter.

Councilmember Thorne said that he felt spending limits tended to favor incumbents, who have the visibility and name recognition not afforded challengers. "We need to be cautious as to how we limit campaign finances," he said. He added that limits could result in funds going to PACs and independent expenditures. Thorne continued, "I do think there are reporting issues in terms of timing and reporting. I hope we look at real time reporting. I would like to see it implemented as soon as possible."

Councilmember Cindy McGovern was interested in limiting PACs contributions to candidates. She also wanted the same level of reporting applied to PACs as to individual candidates. "I want extreme transparency."

McGovern said that when she ran for council in 2004, she had a budget and she stuck to it. She raised \$11,689 and spent \$10,260. "I was told I needed \$50,000 to run for council. That's scary. It takes time to raise that kind of money. I'd rather spend time talking to my constituents. Candidates can set a budget and work within it. Candidates need to have control of themselves. I think that's what voluntary controls accomplish."

One of her concerns was last minute hit pieces by independent expenditures. She felt that candidates should be able to respond. Controlling when expenditures are reported could limit that possibility, McGovern stated.

Cheryl Cook-Kallio also felt that limits on donations to candidates could push the money somewhere else. She argued that candidates could refuse the large donations. She liked the idea of posting contributions on a website in real time.

"The effect money has on politics is bad for democracy at the state and federal level," said Sullivan. "It hasn't been an issue in Pleasanton until recently. My concern is the trend towards the increasing amount of money going to campaigns." He too talked about his 2004 campaign, during which he spent \$8000. "I didn't send out a mailer to the entire town. I had people walking the streets handing out xeroxed fliers," said Sullivan.

"I think this goes beyond transparency. We need to look at all those tools and decide what makes sense for Pleasanton." Sullivan said he believes it is possible to put limits on direct contributions to candidates by PACs.

Mayor Jennifer Hosterman agreed with speakers who felt that limiting contributions to candidates would push the money in another direction, to PACs and independent expenditures. It would also hurt the efforts of challengers to unseat incumbents. "The idea appears to be moving towards possibly providing more opportunity for the wealthy to run for office."

Pleasanton Wants Train Quiet Zones

Pleasanton will proceed with plans to create railroad quiet zones at grade crossings.

Federal law requires train horns to sound as they approach at grade crossings to warn motorists and pedestrians of their

approach.

Pleasanton Director of Public Works Rob Wilson said that the horns are considered a safety measure. If the city were to limit the horns, it would have to provide an alternative to make the crossings safe. The option would be to construct 4-quadrant gate systems at each of the four crossings. Currently, the gate systems are 2-quadrant. The 4-quadrant option prevents motorists from going around the gates.

The estimated cost at each crossing is \$400,000 for a total of \$1.6 million. Wilson said the project would not go out to bid. Union Pacific would construct the gates.

Wilson said that the work could be accomplished in conjunction with other train projects, such as the ACE improvements proposed as part of the regional rail plan. That could lower the cost to the city, because the funding would be part of the project.

Members of the public urged the council to move forward. Dennis Thompson there are several thousand residents who live within wake-up distance of the trains. "The biggest issue is not

just the cost to the city. There is the lost productivity and the loss in property values."

Councilmembers agreed that the horns were a problem. Jerry Thorne said the trains wake him up at night, as well. He doesn't live close to the tracks.

Cindy McGovern said there seems to be more trains today. "It's going to get worse, not better. I believe that makes building the new gates a pressing issue."

City staff will bring back the project for discussion during next year's mid-year review of the capital improvement project plan. At that time, there would be a plan proposed for financing the project.

JOE MICHELL

(continued from page one)

gram need to know they are going to give up something," said trustee Kate Runyon. "We are trying to see if the community wants to make the trade-offs with this type of program, because there will be trade-offs."

The K-6 school would offer cross-age mentoring and tutoring opportunities, as well as whole-family activities.

Additional costs to the District's General Fund will be primarily in the areas of facilities and increased staffing, as the K-6 educational program will mirror the District's current program. There will be additional one-time facilities costs, such as a science lab, which is projected at about \$75,000.

Morrison described the program as "a wolf in sheep's clothing." While the current plan is to add only sixth grade, he said that

parents will be expecting the program to continue through eighth grade.

"This is a significant financial investment. I heard estimates of \$1-2 million to go all the way to eighth grade," he said. "Do we have the money to open another middle school? We've had conversations about closing an elementary school and a middle school in the next few years. Those two ideas don't come together well."

Morrison also questioned the implications for Portola Elementary School if a K-6 program were implemented at Michell.

"If you decide on K-8 at Michell, you are also making a decision that the school to be closed will be Portola," he said. "Portola is a Program Improvement school and one of the easiest ways to get out of PI is to close

the school. I'm not sure I want to do that."

The other trustees supported the addition of sixth grade at Michell and questioned why Morrison was bringing up concerns 16 months after the K-8 concept was first introduced. The first meeting at which K-8 was discussed was on May 26, 2006, and it has been on the agenda at 10 subsequent meetings.

Trustees Tom McLaughlin and Runyon accused Morrison of changing his mind based on the personal needs of his family.

"I sat here all last year when Mr. Morrison pounded the table for K-8," said Runyon. "It's no secret that your daughter went off to middle school. As soon as that happened you lost interest. But it's not about your family."

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Dr. Salyapongse received his medical degree from the St. Louis University School of Medicine where he graduated with honors. He completed his internship and residency in orthopedic surgery at St. Mary's Medical Center in San Francisco. He completed a Total Joint Replacement Fellowship at the New England Baptist Hospital in Boston, where he studied tissue preserving hip replacement, computer-assisted surgery, and complex hip and knee reconstructions. He specializes in utilizing minimally invasive techniques, promoting accelerated rehabilitation protocols, and providing comprehensive care for those who have already had their joints replaced.

Dr. Salyapongse has joined the Webster Orthopaedic Medical Group in their Pleasanton office, 5555 W. Las Positas Blvd., Suite 400, Pleasanton. For an appointment, please call 925-463-3400.



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MAILBOX

(Opinions voiced in letters published in Mailbox are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Independent. Letter Policy: The Independent will not publish anonymous letters, nor will it publish letters without names. Frequent letter writers may have publication of their letters delayed.)

Looks Great Ellen Schaefer Livermore

I was skeptical about the plan to put multistory new residence structures in the heart of Livermore's downtown. Now that I see the infill developments sprouting up in many under-utilized parts of the city core, I'm very impressed. Rather than standing out like too-tall eyesores, they have been cleverly designed to seem an organic part of their total surroundings. Color schemes from a natural earth-tone palette have also minimized their size and helped them blend in quite attractively.

Even the new movie theater has been done in good taste, rather than the Las Vegas garish style of Dublin's cinema. I couldn't have asked for a more restrained and handsome structure.

Congratulations to those responsible for the long-range planning, especially Councilwoman Marj Leider. I'll be voting for her in November, along with Jeff Williams, who helped guide these projects as a member of the Design Review Committee.

The Environment Henry D. Shay Livermore

The selection of Gore to receive the Nobel Peace Prize should remind us inhabitants of the Tri-Valley of the role that we must play, right here, in preserving the environment.

Every day hundreds of thousands of commuters, many, if not most, of them from communities to the east of us, clog I-580 on their way to and from work in the Bay area. Immobilized in traffic jams they idle their engines, often sitting alone in their cars, consume gasoline, and foul the atmosphere with carbon dioxide. The remediation of this problem is not to be found within the boundaries of any one of our Tri-Valley cities. Solutions must address the regional issues directly - only through regional co-operation can this issue be successfully addressed.

What form can such solutions take? Regional planning of developments is needed. High-speed east-west arterials on the northern and southern flanks of the valley (the Isabel off-ramp and the widening of Route 84 are minimal efforts) could convey traffic away from the I-580 bottlenecks. A viable mass transit network with BART extended to the far eastern edge of the Valley could reduce the number of single occupant vehicles. And, not to be overlooked, each community should build high density, affordable housing in inti-

mate contact with the mass transit network.

As we enter yet another election season, let us not forget the overarching principles that must guide our responsible husbanding of the environment.

Vote for Williams Larry H. Thompson Livermore

I would like to comment on the Oct. 4 front-page article about cutting greenhouse gasses by "smart-growth" planning. At a recent conference in Oakland, legislators and environmentalists released the report "Growing Cooler: The Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change." Essentially they concluded that reducing auto and industrial emissions would be insufficient to reverse atmospheric damage. (Although the article stated "ozone layer problems", I assume it should have referred to greenhouse gas emissions.) Gains in these areas will likely be quickly offset by the state's rampant population growth.

"A meaningful swing to smart growth is needed," according to the study, which strongly advocates compact development design along the lines of the "village concept." Reducing the outward spread of cities reduces the amount residents have to drive "by 20 to 40 percent," significantly lessening harmful vehicular emissions.

Readers should be pleased to know that this is exactly the far-sighted policy that City Council candidate Jeff Williams has been advising for Livermore. His goal is to help make Livermore a more self-contained community where core development enables residents to shop and enjoy the city's downtown vitality, rather polluting their way to other areas.

Major visible steps toward this goal are the new downtown residential buildings, Livermore Cinema, Performing Arts Center, adjacent restaurants, and specialty shops. Jeff Williams, as a creative thinker on our City Council, will help sustain this momentum. After a career at Lawrence Livermore Lab, including leadership of the Mechanical Engineering Department, Jeff has both the practical background and the imagination to serve us well in the coming years.

The inevitable pressures for sprawling growth and well-funded assaults on our Urban Growth Boundary mean that we need a Jeff Williams to fight for Livermore's best interests. I trust caring, thoughtful residents will want to preserve Livermore's character and current smart-growth trend by electing Jeff Williams on November 6.

Inconvenient Truths Valerie Raymond Livermore

I am bemused by the Independent's rants against Lorraine Dietrich, since they carefully ignore some inconvenient truths.

The only North Livermore development that Lorraine has ever voted for, as a city

councilmember or as a planning commissioner, is the city's 1994 North Livermore General Plan Amendment. That plan was designed by smart growth guru Peter Calthorpe, won a State award for smart growth, and was supported by Greenbelt Alliance. The Independent wrote at least six editorials urging the plan's adoption.

Your editorial complains about "the kind of planning that has given us freeway gridlock, clogged city streets, vanishing open space and deenergized downtowns" - presumably the low-density, single-family homes that constitute most of Livermore. Most of that development resulted from the policies promoted by former councilmembers now active in Friends of Livermore.

The Independent apparently thinks that the thousands of new apartments, condos and townhomes now planned for inside the city's current boundaries will not result in more clogging of city streets. That is deluding both itself and the public. The new city General Plan anticipates a daily traffic increase around 480,000 car trips a day - all on existing streets. This is one good reason why Lorraine refused to vote for it, although she continues to support judiciously planned infill.

I suggest that the main reason your newspaper wishes to see Lorraine defeated is that she is the only councilmember over whom you have no control.

(Editor's Note: The Independent controls no councilmember. The paper supports councilmembers and candidates who share what we believe to be a community-first point of view, as opposed to one that puts growth foremost.)

Dump Dietrich Paul Weiss Livermore

Livermore doesn't need Lorraine Dietrich on our City Council any more. She's been a disgruntled nay-sayer for the past few years, voting against some of the best innovations in Livermore's downtown redevelopment.

Prominent in her support for the unpopular Pardee project, she is continuing to represent all those who favored this plan.

Her supporters also include the unsuccessful candidates from the last election. Not one current popularly-elected official is on her side and for good reason.

Livermore has clearly

dumped all the Pardee boosters except for lame-duck Lorraine. Now it's time for her to leave the Council in favor of those who really represent public opinion, Marj Leider and Jeff Williams. Vote for Williams and Leider as an investment in Livermore's best interests for the future.

Re-elect Lorraine Dietrich Cathie Brown Former Livermore Mayor

Dear Editor, Several recent letters to the editor, regarding Lorraine Dietrich, are factually in error. I'd like to set the record straight. Lorraine Dietrich served on the Livermore Planning Commission from 1990 until 1999. During that time, she worked on the South Livermore Plan and served on the committee that established the by-laws and membership of the South Livermore Valley Land Trust which later became the Tri-Valley Conservancy. She was definitely part of our success in preserving lands in South Livermore.

Lorraine works hard as a Councilmember. She provides an independent voice. She's smart, dedicated and willing to roll up her sleeves and work for all of us. Lorraine has done a lot for Livermore and its families. She worked in youth sports, in the schools and in community non-profits. Most notably, she co-

chaired the campaign for Measure L, the bond measure that passed with 82% approval. This measure funded the City's main library, the Robert Livermore Community Center, and the upgrades that are visible at school campuses around town.

I urge you to re-elect Lorraine Dietrich.

Two Viewpoints Brad Hirst Pleasanton

Two groups in Pleasanton advocate their respective position and vision regarding the future land use of Staples Ranch. It would be best for the two groups to merge their resources and viewpoints and put Pleasanton first to benefit all the residents of our community. Pleasanton First advocates that the County-owned property be annexed into the City of Pleasanton. Pleasanton First supports the Memorandum of Understanding signed by Alameda County and the City of Pleasanton. That M.O.U. proposes the city publicly consider the County's application. This will be done by our Parks & Rec-

reation Commission, our Planning Commission, and our City Council.

The M.O.U. proposes that the 124 acre property include an upgraded Hendrick Auto Mall; a senior living congregate care facility; a community park with all-weather lighted sports fields, lighted tennis courts, lawn bowling, a dog park, and, hopefully, an ice skating facility; and an 11-acre retail center.

The Friends of Pleasanton want the same land to have only the auto mall and the rest be permanent open space. The problem with that viewpoint is that Alameda County will not accept such a large reduction in value of this County taxpayer asset. The County Supervisor has publicly stated that if the minority viewpoint continues to delay the project, he will arrange to annex the property into either Livermore or Dublin. That would be a bad deal for Pleasanton residents.

Please respectively decline to sign any petition that would encourage the County to annex this land into any city other than Pleasanton.

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(COMPOST)

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Q Can you tell me what the three arrows on the recycling symbol mean? *Gail*

A Yes. The arrows represent three components of the recycling process. The **top arrow** represents the collection of recyclable materials for processing. The **bottom right arrow** represents recyclables being processed into recycled products. The **bottom left arrow** represents consumers purchasing products made with recycled content.



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Historic Mosaic Faces Uncertain Future

By Patricia Koning

A large mosaic depicting historical Livermore that has graced the entrance of East Avenue Middle School for nearly 50 years will be removed as part of an upcoming renovation. The mosaic might have been heading for the trash heap. However, East Avenue Principal Vicki Scudder is determined not to let that happen.

"This mosaic is worthy of real attention. You can see its historical relevance," she says. "I'd love to know more about its history."

The mosaic covers most of the wall opposite the multipurpose room before the hallway into the school. A plaque to the right of the mosaic states that it was created in 1958 by 820 students.

The mosaic includes a windmill with cows, biplane, grapes and barrels, atoms, the sun rising over the hills, U.S. and California flags, the old train depot, a church, the rodeo grounds with a cowboy on a bucking bronco, a farmer on a wagon filled with hay bales, and other images.

Mike Morgan, owner of the Morgan Insurance Agency, and Linette Smith, who works for him, were sixth graders at East Avenue in 1958 and helped create the mosaic.



East Avenue Middle School student body president Ashley Holtz talks about one of the drawings in the mosaic. Photo - Doug Jorgensen

"First they asked us to draw pictures of Livermore or something that reminded us of California. There was a school-wide contest. The winning pictures

were used in the mosaic," recalls Smith.

Smith's older sister, Henrietta Haynes, was one of the winners of drawing contest. She drew the poppy and part of the quail.

"Everyone in the entire school helped, even the youngest students. We were given time during the school day," says Morgan. "The mosaic is the result of thousands of hours of work by the teachers and students."

In 1958, East Avenue had been open for two years and served students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade.

Both Morgan and Smith remember how exciting it was when the mosaic was finished. It was something that every student at

the school was proud of, says Smith. "Some of the guys I knew, they wouldn't be caught dead doing an art project. They were just thrilled," says Morgan.

Scudder is seeking former East Avenue students who worked on the mosaic in 1958. She's planning to have the mosaic, which is mounted on plywood, removed during the renovation and hopes to have it placed in a suitable location.

Morgan says he'd like to see the mosaic placed on the exterior of a building downtown, in the library, or in the Robert Livermore Community Center.

Former East Avenue students can contact Vicki Scudder at 925-606-4711 or vscudder@livermore.k12.ca.us.

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Health Fair Offers Variety of Information and Activities

Fitness Together will host a Health Fair on Sat., Oct. 27 from 1 to 3 p.m.

The fair will include muscle activation analysis by Oakland Raider team chiropractor Kyle Prusso, body fat testing by Joseph Freschi of IntelaMetrix using the BodyMetrix. Joe Rodrigues, certified executive chef will explain Chef to Trainer's prepared gourmet nutrient balanced meal program. John and Diane will introduce elements therapeutic massage opening at Fitness Together.

Matt Bogdanowicz will attempt to break the pull-up world record. He will be trying to regain his world record of the most pull-ups completed in 30 minutes. Last year, he completed 433 in the time span. His record was eclipsed by a British man who completed 442. Matt believes he can do as many as 470. In January 2008, he will attempt to break the 60 minute record with a goal of 800.

The event will be held at Fitness Together-Ruby Hill, 101 East Vineyard Avenue, Suite 111, Livermore. Appetizers and beverages will be compliments of Campo di Bocce Restaurant. Aventine Med Spa will participate in the health fair.

Five percent of all proceeds in October will go to a breast cancer awareness foundation.

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PROGRAM

(continued from page one)

Darcy Mironov, who oversees Bay Area swim programs for the American Red Cross, which was asked to teach the classes. It was the first time Americans had been contacted by the U.S. State Department to do such a thing, said Grant. Some 200 students had signed up for the instruction program. However, their number had to be winnowed down through competition, because only a relatively small number could be taught in three weeks.

"They were all excellent swimmers. They had done their homework in the reading assignments they were given. They were well prepared for class," said Grant. Creating a new program was quite a challenge. "There was lots of pressure, because we had to open a full-service program immediately," said Grant.

The two women spent long afternoons and evenings instructing youths. Grant didn't mind the time, because it got her back to the role of instructor, something she left at LARPD for her administrative duties. Grant also enjoyed the cultural diversity in the classes. The people they instructed were from Australia, Canada, Russia, Brazil, and the United States.

The visit to Moscow was not all work. Grant and Mironov had time in the mornings to tour the traditional sights of the city, such as Red Square, the Kremlin and the Cathedral of Christ Our Savior. One of the big attractions for Grant was the Moscow subway.

"The metro system is a work of art. The walkways are marble. It has chandeliers. The ceilings are inlaid mosaics. We took tours of lots of different stations. One is all stained glass. The trains run every two minutes, and have 9 million riders a day. It seems like all 9 million were in our transfer station," said Grant. The fare was 30 cents to any destination in the system.

It was a busy travel summer for Grant. She also went to Brazil, to see her son Andy compete in the Pan American games. Andy was captain of the Stanford swimming team before he graduated last year. He plans to be in Omaha next June to try to qualify for the 2008 U.S. Olympic team.

He posted several qualifying-level times by virtue of his performance in U.S. team events at the Pan American games. Andy swam in water sports at Livermore High School, as did his brother and sister. His brother, David, has gone on to play water polo for Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

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