



Thousands of Tri-Valley and Bay Area Muslims gathered at the Alameda County Fairgrounds on Friday, March 20, for Eid ul-Fitr. Often called the “Festival of Breaking the Fast,” it is one of the two most important holidays in the Islamic calendar, marking the end of the dawn-to-sunset fasting month of Ramadan. The joint celebration, hosted by the Muslim Community Center (MCC) East Bay and San Ramon Valley Islamic Center (SRVIC), brought the community together for morning prayers at 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. (Photo — Leah Silveira)

## City Officials and Nonprofits Partner To Meet Diverse Community Needs

Tri-Valley Mayors Reflect on Their Mission to Support Service Organizations

By Christina Cavallaro

LIVERMORE — The Tri-Valley Nonprofit Alliance (TVNPA) hosted its annual panel discussion with the area’s five mayors March 18 at the Bankhead Theater.

TVNPA is a collaborative organization designed to strengthen nonprofits in the Tri-Valley area through advocacy, collaboration and educational support.

While the usual pillars of governance were touched upon — housing, budgets and infrastructure — TVNPA Board Chair and event moderator Marti Sutton, began the talks with a more philosophical theme.

Inspired by her recent attendance at the San Francisco Chroni-

cle’s “Longevity Conference,” Sutton said she’s been thinking about “healthspan” — versus lifespan — or the years one lives vibrantly, free of disease and disability.

“We often obsess about the four big things: diet, stress, sleep and exercise,” she said. “There’s a fifth component that actually outweighs all of them, and that is purpose and connection.”

### Motivations for Public Service

Sutton opened by asking the panel what drives them daily to serve the community.

“We used to be a city that people would drive through, and now we’ve become a city that people drive to,” Livermore Mayor John Marchand said, citing the feeling of

a responsibility to keep Livermore thriving.

San Ramon Mayor Mark Armstrong said he aims to keep improving upon an already flourishing community.

Drawing a parallel between the work of nonprofits and elected officials, Danville Mayor Newell Arnerich said both roles require passion and compassion for other people and continuing to ask the question, “How do we make lives better?”

On the eve of his State of the City address, Pleasanton Mayor Jack Balch said he had been contemplating the notion of “progress with purpose.” “The concept of leaving it better than you found it is what’s driving me,” he said.

(See PANEL, page 9)

## Local Community Rallies as Deported Resident Awaits Crucial Court Ruling

Lopez Family Hopes for Reunion in Time for Youngest Son’s Graduation

By Vivien Wenneker

LIVERMORE — The case of deported Livermore resident Miguel Lopez continues as U.S. District Judge Trina L. Thompson considers whether to send his case back to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). If that happens, the Board must render a decision, which might allow Lopez to return to the United States.

Lopez, a grandfather and father of three, formerly worked as a welder at Wente Vineyards in Livermore. Each of his children attended Granada High School. Following a routine immigration appointment in May 2025, he was

detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and without due process, subsequently deported to Mexico. He has been living with his father ever since on the outskirts of Mexico City.

At a court hearing on March 17 in San Francisco, Lopez’s attorney Saad Ahmad argued that Lopez, who has lived in the U.S. for nearly three decades, was wrongfully stripped of his permanent residency designation and never given the opportunity to argue his case before the BIA.

“There is no conclusion yet,” Ahmad explained. “The judge has taken the matter into submission, and if she decides in our favor,

the case goes back to the BIA, the highest administrative body adjudicating immigration cases, and they will have the final say.”

According to Ahmad, the decision could take anywhere from two weeks to two months, but he is hopeful that Judge Thompson will issue a decision soon.

If Judge Thompson sends the case back to the BIA for consideration, it could allow Lopez legal grounds to return to the U.S. while continuing to fight his case, which concerns his permanent residency designation, not citizenship. Ultimately, the best result, according to Ahmad, would be for him to return and obtain a green card.

(See LOPEZ, page 7)

### State of the City Address

## Mayor Balch Notes The ‘Progress with Purpose’ Roadmap

New Revenues Help Bridge \$44M Funding Gap

By David Jen

PLEASANTON — Mayor Jack Balch presented a city focused on “progress with purpose” at the annual State of the City address last week.

Achievements in the past year — such as a strengthened partnership with PG&E, expansion of the city’s healthcare industry and the completion of Pleasanton’s first comprehensive asset management plan — were tempered by headwinds that continue to weigh on city finances.

“Progress is not automatic,” Balch said at the March 19 event at

the Casa Real Events Center at Ruby Hill Winery. “It requires discipline, hard choices, focus. It requires thinking beyond the next budget cycle and definitely beyond the next election cycle. ‘Progress with purpose’ means making the tough decisions — thoughtful decisions — today that will protect and enhance the quality of life for tomorrow.”

Last June, the city council approved a two-year budget that cut some \$7 million per year of city services and approved \$4.8 million in transfers from its pension-trust and Retiree Medical/Other

(See STATE OF THE CITY, page 7)

## Trust Fund Use Approved To Tackle Pension Debt

Pleasanton Council Adopts Plan with 3-2 Vote

By David Jen

PLEASANTON — The city may start drawing down its \$60 million pension trust fund next fiscal year. It would use the money to ease the mountain of pension payments that the city must pay to CalPERS, the state’s public employee pension fund. Pleasanton’s pension payments are expected to rise through the end of the decade.

In 2018, a previous city council established Pleasanton’s Section 115 Pension Supplemental Trust Fund when it learned that required city general fund payments into CalPERS would soon surge. A state-run organization, CalPERS collects funds from government agencies and manages and pays the pensions of California’s public employees, including Pleasanton’s city, police

and fire employees. The city put \$38 million into its pension trust fund between 2018 and 2021, and investment earnings within the fund have since brought its balance to its current \$60 million level.

On March 17 this year, the city council approved in a 3-2 vote, with Councilmembers Julie Testa and Jeff Nibert opposed, a pension-funding policy that sets 100% of the city’s annual pension costs as the minimum balance for the pension trust fund and 150% of costs as its target balance. With next fiscal year’s pension costs estimated at \$31 million, the policy sets \$46.5 million as the target balance, leaving some \$13.5 million in the pension trust fund for the city to use toward its pension obligations next fiscal year.

(See PENSION, page 6)



Rosa Lopez addresses a crowd of supporters outside the U.S. District Court in San Francisco on March 17. Following the hearing, Lopez expressed her gratitude for the community’s presence as she continues the legal fight to bring her husband, Miguel, back to Livermore. (Photo courtesy of Indivisible Tri-Valley)



“Spring’s Overture” by local artist Wei-Ting Chuang is one of 16 artworks selected by the Livermore Art Association (LAA) to be transformed into a silent film. The piece will be screened at the Bankhead Theater as the Livermore-Amador Symphony performs its “Spring Awakenings” concert on April 11 at 7:30 p.m. (Photo courtesy of LAA)

## Symphony and Art Converge at Bankhead

Orchestral Masterpieces, Visual Imagery Combine in ‘Spring Awakenings’ Concert

By Jessica Zimmer

LIVERMORE — On April 11, the Livermore-Amador Symphony will bring a sense of renewal to the Bankhead Theater with its “Spring Awakenings” concert at 7:30 p.m.. The performance will include Alexander Glazunov’s “Spring: A Musical Tableau for Orchestra,” Aaron Copland’s “Appalachian Spring,” and Robert Schumann’s “Symphony No. 1 in Bb major, Op. 38,” also known as the “Spring Symphony.” There will be an “Inside the Music” talk before the

concert. At intermission, Livermore violinist Jim Hurley will play in the theater lobby.

This event marks a first-time collaboration with the Livermore Art Association (LAA). From more than 100 entries submitted in December, the LAA selected 35 artworks for the project. Sixteen of these will be featured in a silent film screened as the symphony plays, chosen based on artistic excellence and their ability to visually interpret the music being performed. Six to eight artworks from the LAA will also be on display in the theater lobby,

while the full collection will be on display at the Spring Art Show April 18 and 19 at the Bothwell Arts Center in Livermore.

The collaboration is supported in part by a grant from the City of Livermore Commission for the Arts. Denise Leddon, a member of the second violin section in the symphony, coordinated efforts between the symphony and the LAA.

This concert features a guest conductor, Geoffrey Gallegos. Gallegos, a resident of San Francisco, serves as the music director and conductor for the Kensington Sym-

(See SYMPHONY, page 9)

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### PET OF THE WEEK



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# Tri-Valley Democratic Club Endorses Swalwell for Governor

By Jessica Zimmer

TRI-VALLEY — On March 20, the Tri-Valley Democratic Club, a regional political group chartered by the Alameda County Democratic Party, endorsed U.S. Rep. Eric Swalwell (District-14) for governor of California. The endorsement signaled that Swalwell received at least 60 percent of the total votes cast by club members.

The club serves Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin, San Ramon, and other cities and communities in the Amador, Livermore and San Ramon valleys. The Tri-Valley Democratic Club is Swalwell's home club, which he joined as a teenager. Swalwell, who now resides in Livermore with his wife and three children, previously served on the club's board. He has chaired the Tri-Valley United Democratic Campaign and the Alameda County Democratic Party's Tri-Valley Political Action Committee.

The endorsement follows a March 16 Zoom meeting. During the meeting, Swalwell and other Democratic candidates — Xavier Becerra, Katie Porter, Tom Steyer and Betty Yee — took questions and discussed their candidacies. Co-sponsors of the meeting included Livermore Indivisible, Indivisible Tri-Valley and the San Ramon Valley Democratic Club. Participating organizations included

the Castro Valley Democratic Club and Indivisible Tracy. Members took an endorsement vote March 16 and 17 via online ballots.

As of early March, Swalwell holds a 17 percent lead in the gubernatorial race. The next three leading candidates are former Fox News host Steve Hilton (Republican) with 13 percent of the vote, and former Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco (Republican) and billionaire Tom Steyer (Democrat), tied with 11 percent of the vote. The club's endorsement comes close to a week after the endorsement of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) California, a 750,000-member labor union composed of service employees from across the state. In the meeting, Swalwell opened by saying that he intended to work with club members to maintain a firewall between "the most corrupt, cruelest president



Eric Swalwell

ever" and Californians concerned about field and factory jobs, troops in city streets, and federal cuts to funds for cancer research.

"Our state has had war declared against it. I'm running to be a fighter and protector, who will stand up, and shoulder to shoulder, work with you against this administration," Swalwell said.

Swalwell talked about his involvement in the Tri-Valley Democratic Club for the last decade. He said, "Money cannot buy you into the arenas where I have fought, from the council chambers in Dublin to a courtroom in Oakland to Congress, for the last 14 years. Money can't buy the experience of standing up to somebody as corrupt as Donald Trump."

Ellis Goldberg, secretary and political director of the Tri-Valley Democrats, said leadership is the outstanding quality that differentiates Swalwell.

"He convinces others to follow his lead, and he can lead the legislature and California. He gets stuff done," Goldberg said.

Beverly Weiss, a club member, liked that Swalwell indicated he would not stand down.

"He is not frightened to fight. We need leaders like this to represent us in these very dangerous times," Weiss said.

Club member Dr. Jeff Colvin said Swalwell was the only

candidate who recognized the necessity of countering the threat posed to Californians by Trump's declaration of war against the state.

"He is the one best equipped to do so," Colvin said.

Livermore City Councilmember Evan Branning (District 1, representing northwest Livermore), said Swalwell has a long history of standing up for District 14 and its communities.

"He will bring that compassion and leadership to the governor's office. I am glad to support him," Branning said.

After the meeting, the club issued a press release calling upon Tri-Valley residents to support Swalwell by volunteering, spreading the word and making their voices heard.

Of California's approximately 23.2 million registered voters, close to 45 percent are Democrats, 25 percent are Republicans, and 30 percent are independents or affiliated with other parties. California has a "top-two" primary system. All candidates run on the same primary ballot and all voters can vote. The two candidates with the most votes move on to the general election. California Democratic Party officials stated at the 2026 California Democratic Convention that they were concerned Republicans Hilton and Bianco would advance to the general election, leaving Democrats locked out of the

governor's race. That is avoidable if Swalwell considerably grows his lead, or the field of eight, including other Democratic candidates for the seat, narrows.

governor's race. That is avoidable if Swalwell considerably grows his lead, or the field of eight, including other Democratic candidates for the seat, narrows.

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(See PUSD, page 7)

## PUSD Faces \$3.4 Million Deficit for Year

By Sanestina Hunter

PLEASANTON — The Pleasanton Unified School District (PUSD) reported a projected deficit of about \$3.4 million in its second interim budget update for the 2025–26 school year, presented to the Board of Trustees on March 12.

The district remains under negative certification and will continue under oversight from the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), meaning it may

not be able to meet its financial obligations without adjustments.

ACOE has also assigned fiscal expert Kate Lane to review district finances and provide guidance.

Ahmad Sheikholeslami, PUSD assistant superintendent of business services, said projections show the district's budget could balance over the next two fiscal years if approved reductions are implemented, based on the district's multi-year outlook.

He said the latest update reflects continued financial pressure in the short term, but noted that monitoring spending for the remainder of the year could help improve the year-end balance.

Since the first interim report in December, the district's financial outlook has worsened, with the projected ending fund balance declining from negative \$2.5 million to negative \$3.4 million as of Jan. 31.

District officials said the deficit is driven by declining enrollment, constrained state funding and rising operational costs, which have continued to outpace revenues and contribute to a structural imbalance in the budget.

While the district has relied on one-time funds in recent years to help stabilize its finances, officials said

## City PFAS Investigation Continues

By David Jen

LIVERMORE — The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board approved this month the city's plans to look further into possible PFAS contamination. Last year, the Water Board began sending directives to possible

new treatment facilities at its Stoneridge and Chain of Lakes wells.

Independent of treatment plans, the Water Board has been searching for the source of the PFAS contamination. Last year, the Water Board began sending directives to possible

PFAS sources, including the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department's training center and fire stations, area circuit-board manufacturers and medical-equipment producers, in addition to the airport.

(See PFAS, page 7)

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# EDITORIAL

## Our Schools Are in Crisis; There's a Way to Fix the Problem

We shouldn't be in this situation in the first place, but the old saw still rings true: Wouldn't it be nice to fully fund our schools, while the Air Force has to hold a bake sale to build its bombs?

Yet here we are again, embarking on a war that averages about \$1.2 billion a day, and whose rationale shifts by the hour, while our schools are spinning from crisis to crisis. Neither situation is sustainable.

We can't do much about the war until President Trump is out of power. But we can do more for our schools. Consider their financial situation today:

- The Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD) needs to cut \$14.8 million for the 2026-'27 school year, and make another \$1.5 million in cuts for the following year. The board has raised the possibility of closing elementary schools. The Pleasanton Unified School District (PUSD) has an \$8 million-\$9 million shortfall for the coming school year, and is under a "negative certification" from the Alameda County Office of Education, a designation that indicates it may need intervention to resolve its budget crisis. The district has already identified \$11.2 million in planned cuts.

- The Dublin Unified School District (DUSD), which just settled a strike to provide teachers with a 2.3% cost-of-living increase, has already cut \$16 million over the past two years due to declining enrollment. The board has warned that further increases to salaries or benefits could threaten its financial solvency.

There are no easy solutions. Taxes, specifically property taxes, are the primary source of school district funding for salaries and day-to-day operations, and those taxes can't be raised without a vote of the people. If a district wants to issue bonds for specific projects—renovations, construction, or something else—that too must go before the voters.

In Alameda County, the base property tax rate is 1% of assessed value, not counting additional debt service or special assessments issued by local municipalities. But there are limits as to how much that can be increased.

Property taxes are restricted by Proposition 13, the 1978 law that limits annual increases to 2% until a property is sold or new construction occurs. That 2% limit is well below the actual increase in property values. The value of residential property in Livermore, for example, increased from fiscal year 2025-'26 by 5.2%.

The effect is that people who've owned their homes the longest, and most likely have less outstanding debt, pay less taxes than people who are new homeowners.

Proposition 13 also tends to delay new construction or renovations, lest they trigger a revaluation and correspondingly higher tax rate, at a time when California is already dealing with its biggest affordable housing and homelessness crises in decades.

For facilities upgrades, school districts have to issue bonds, and those require a public vote. LVJUSD's current bond, which passed in 2016 and raised \$245 million for facilities upgrades, amounts to \$48 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation, or \$384 for an \$800,000 home. Those funds have been spent, with the final project, a renovation of the science classrooms at East Avenue Middle School, scheduled to be completed this spring. The district is considering issuing a new \$1.2 billion bond for next year for the next phase of facilities upgrades.

PUSD meanwhile is working through a \$395 million bond approved in 2022, and wrapping up a similar \$270 million measure from 2016. The rate amounts to \$392 per year for an \$800,000 home.

DUSD's \$283 million bond of 2016, and its \$290 million bond passed in 2020, together amount to \$110 per \$100,000 of valuation, or \$880 for an \$800,000 home.

General obligation bonds can only be used for facilities or infrastructure, not operating expenses. They require a 55% majority vote to pass, and sometimes they are quite close: Dublin's 2020 Measure J bond passed with 57.8% of the vote, for example, while Pleasanton's Measure I bond of 2022 passed with just 57.2%. It may be too soon for those two districts to go back to the voters.

Some have proposed increasing sales taxes for schools, but that looks even more dubious than the uncertain electoral math of bond issues. Sales tax for Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin and Alameda County as a whole is already at 10.25%, some of the highest levels in the state, and equal to some Los Angeles neighborhoods. By comparison, San Francisco only has an 8.625% sales tax, and San Jose's is 9.375%.

Sales taxes are also highly regressive, with the poorest in our communities most affected by them.

The parcel tax is another funding mechanism for schools unique to California. LVJUSD has an annual \$138 parcel tax in place, approved as Measure A in 2022. The measure expires in 2029. Dublin's parcel tax is \$96 per year and expires in 2028, while PUSD is considering a new parcel tax for this year.

Parcel tax revenues are tiny compared to general obligation bonds, and typically are used as supplemental support, offsetting state budget cuts, keeping class sizes down, maintaining libraries or educational support for students, and so on.

Another potential solution is to change the state's Local Control Funding Formula to increase the base amount provided per student. All Tri-Valley school districts, including Sunol Glen, have joined a statewide Raise the Base campaign to get the state to increase the formula.

Even if enrollment is down in some districts, like Dublin, that doesn't lead to a corresponding decrease in expense. A school with 50 fewer students still needs to be heated, air-conditioned and have reliable water supplies. And with rising gas prices due to the war in Iran, everything is becoming more expensive: utilities, transportation, food... any commercial product that is not manufactured on-site will feel the pinch.

Californians have long been averse to paying taxes—that's what fueled Proposition 13 in the first place. But the "solution" to budget shortfalls in the past has simply been to hope we grow out of it.

That's no longer a reliable position, especially with the widespread damage being inflicted on the U.S. economy

by federal policies. Fixing our schools requires money, and the only way to get that money is through taxation, in one form or another. Californians might be more amendable to taxation if we weren't blowing through billions of dollars every day in a war nobody asked for.

We've noted before that California is increasingly going to have to rely on itself to solve its own problems, from housing to social services. This applies to our schools, too. Californians might be amenable to some limited tax reform at one level or another. But that's going to require political courage, which has been in short supply in recent years.

And that's where California's Raise the Base campaign comes in. Raising it could be part of the state's budgeting process. The legislature has the ability and the political will to take stands, including passing laws to increase health care coverage for menopause, hormone therapy, and behavioral therapy for wildfire victims. The legislature has attempted to ban products that contain forever chemicals, such as cookware and cleaning products. It also passed a bill to protect school districts from defunding if students stay home due to increased immigration raids.

The only problem is that Gov. Gavin Newsom has vetoed all those bills. The legislature may or may not have the votes to override Newsom's veto on a bill that raises the base funding rate for school districts, but doing so as part of the budgeting process might have a better chance of getting enacted into law.

But if he does veto it, this is an election year. Next year, we'll have a new governor. As we get ready for the race this fall, it's worth asking our candidates who is going to be a champion for our schools, and how they will right the scales next year if it doesn't happen this year.

The "no new taxes" mantra of the 1980s and beyond is no longer sustainable; we can't just sit back and hope the magic of the free market still works. We need a vision for the future of California's schools, and someone who can carry out that vision in the future.

## MAILBOX

### A Message from the Managing Editor

For years, our letters page has been a place for you to speak your mind. We've seen heartfelt thanks, sharp critiques, and passionate debates. But we've also noticed a trend that mirrors the world around us: one letter writer takes on another with harsh language, rather than a compelling argument.

At The Independent, we believe local journalism should be more than just a platform for complaints; it should be a tool for building a better community, even a better world.

Our goal is to create a space where neighbors can disagree on policy without attacking each other's character.

Additionally, to address issues of limited space in the newspaper, please note the following update to our Mailbox Guidelines:

**Word Count:** Letters will be limited to **300 words or less** (previously 400). We are offering a **transition period** to allow our regular contributors time to adapt their writing style; this new standard will officially take effect on **April 2, 2026**.

### Mailbox Guidelines:

Opinions voiced in letters published in Mailbox are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Independent. Anonymous letters will not be published. All letters are required to have the name(s) of the person(s) submitting them, city of residence and phone number, for verification purposes. Letters may not contain advertising. Abusive letters and letters containing ad hominem attacks may be rejected or edited. Letters are subject to verification and may be edited for clarity at the discretion of the editor. We reserve the right to decide whether or not the letter will be published. Headings for all letters may be edited at the discretion of the editor to properly reflect their content. A headline will be added to letters received without one. Frequent letter writers may have publication of their letters delayed or not run at all. Letters should be limited to 400 words or less and should be sent by email to [letters@independentnews.com](mailto:letters@independentnews.com) or submitted using the form below.

The letters to the editor deadline is Monday at 8 a.m. If you wish to submit a letter pertaining to a special event or meeting taking place on a Monday before any given Thursday print edition—and you would like your letter to run that week—please contact the editor ([editor@independentnews.com](mailto:editor@independentnews.com)) as soon as possible on Monday to discuss the content and publication options. Otherwise, all letters submitted after 8 a.m. on Monday must hold until the following week.

and energy.

Each definition leads to a different kind of "nothing."

Physics: Why isn't it empty?

Quantum vacuum: Even if you remove all particles and cool a region to near absolute zero, zero-point energy remains. Quantum fields can never be perfectly still. They fluctuate, producing virtual particles that pop in and out of existence.

Vacuum instability: Some theories suggest the vacuum could undergo sudden transitions-like a bubble of lower energy "true nothingness" expanding at light speed. This is speculative, but grounded in quantum field theory.

Cosmic voids: On the largest scales the universe contains vast regions with almost no galaxies. Even these "voids" contain dark matter, radiation, and quantum fields. Empty space is a structured part of cosmic architecture.

Philosophy: The paradox of nothingness. Philosophers have long debated whether nothing can be conceived. If you can talk about it, is it still nothing? If nothing exists, does that make it something? Can absence have properties? These questions shape metaphysics, logic, and even theology.

Mathematics: Zero and the empty set. Mathematics formalizes nothing in two powerful ways. Zero represents the absence of quantity. The empty set (∅); a set with no members. From these simple ideas, entire number systems and logical strictures emerge.

Emerging "nothingness studies": Some researchers can explore "nothing" as

a domain of study-like the institute for nothing which examines theoretical and computational models of absence including technologies built around storing or representing no data.

Why the science of nothing matters: Understanding helps answer big questions. What existed before the universe? Why is there something rather than nothing? What is the true nature of space? Could the vacuum change and reshape the cosmos? These are not abstract puzzles; they influence cosmology, particle physics, and the search for a unified theory.

### Press Release by Tri Valley Democratic Club

Eloise Hamann, Dublin  
The club discussed supporting a bill proposed by Eloise Hamann at its January meeting, and formally approved it at its February meeting. The proposition follows below:

Re Bill dubbed as Make Polluters Pay

Whereas Climate change in California contributes to disasters such as fire, flood, poor air quality, danger to human health, and that these disasters are exacerbated by corporations who pollute excessive amounts of carbon and greenhouse gases:

Whereas Californians pay taxes to fund a Disaster Fund that helps cities, occupied lands, parks, and more that have cost billions of dollars for a single disaster like the ones in LA and Paradise, and that home insurance rises after major disasters:

Therefore Be It Resolved that corporations

(See MAILBOX, page 5)

### Bouquet of Spring Holidays

Patricia Munro, Livermore

When I was growing up, Easter was the only spring holiday celebrated publicly, with Passover (sometimes) getting a nod. How things have changed! As we transition into spring, here's a whole bouquet of different religious holidays that take place around the vernal equinox.

Easter, which tells Chris-

tianity's central story, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus as the Son of God, takes place on the first Sunday after the Spring Equinox, which is April 5 this year (April 12 for Orthodox Christians). It is preceded by many holidays, from Mardi Gras and Lent to Palm Sunday and Good Friday, all of which are part of the Easter story.

Islam follows a lunar calendar, so Ramadan rotates through the solar year and

happens to fall in late winter/early spring this year. It, too, commemorates a central religious moment; in this case, the revelation of the Qur'an to Mohammed. Ramadan is a month-long Muslim holiday marked by dawn to dusk fasting and just concluded with Eid al-Fitr, the festival of breaking the fast, on March 20.

Though now celebrated by many Middle-Eastern peoples, Nowruz is an ancient Zoroastrian holiday, over 3000 years old, that marks new life, rebirth, and the triumph of light and good over darkness and evil. It is observed on the vernal equinox, the first day of spring.

And then there's Passover, the story of the Israelites Exodus from Egypt, of leaving slavery and becoming the free Jewish people. The week-long holiday begins on April 1 and 2 with ritual meals, Seders, that retell the story.

Each religion's central narrative has a different meaning, but all take place

as spring begins, as new growth blooms. May all our celebrations, be they religious or secular, be meaningful and joyful!

### The Science of Nothing

Michael Austin, Pleasanton

The science of nothing turns out to be the science of something very strange: when physicists, philosophers, and mathematicians try to describe "nothing", they consistently find structure, energy, and rules hiding inside the void; what "nothing" means in different fields. Nothing sounds simple, but each discipline defines it differently.

Philosophy treats nothingness as the absence of being. Ancient Greek thinkers argued whether true nothing could exist at all. Some, like Aristotle, denied the possibility of a vacuum. Classical physics imagined an empty space as a container with no matter inside. Modern physics shows that even the emptiest possible space is full of activity fields, fluctuations,

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A row of runners maintains a tight pack during a girls' heat at the two-day Dublin Distance Fiesta track meet this past March 20 and 21. With hundreds of athletes competing, the event hosted annually by Dublin High School remains one of the premier showcases for distance talent in the region. (Photo — Jacob Clouser)

## MAILBOX

(Continued from page 4)

which emit very significant amounts of carbon and greenhouse gases be made to contribute to the reparation in line with the essence of SB684 and AB1243.

BE IT Further Resolved that Democrats become cognizant of the claim that gas prices will be raised is contradicted by four economists from the well-respected Economics Department of UC Berkeley, and that even if they were incorrect, the savings in taxes to fund the Disaster Fund and homeowner's insurance increases will be much greater than any increase in gas prices.

The Climate Group of Tri Valley Indivisible is supporting this bill. They understand that it has been postponed until 2027. They are asking candidates for governor if they will support it.

### General Plan 2045

Jean King, Livermore

Livermore is finalizing its "General Plan 2045" (Plan) and the Draft Environmental Report (DEIR) that analyzes how Livermore will grow over the next 20 years. Citizens should voice their ideas to City Council before the vote in July.

For more than 20 years, Livermore citizens have supported our Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) through voter approved initiatives, public votes and at public meetings. One city-wide vote had 72% supporting the UGB that has protected the Valley's open space, vineyards and agriculture. It's very important that the Plan continues that protection.

The Plan's map shows the East of Greenville land outside the UGB as open space. Let's keep it that way. As we don't want Dublin to break its Urban Limit Line and commercially develop the open space to its east in Doolan Canyon right up to Livermore's western border, Livermore shouldn't move its UGB to develop East of Greenville.

The Plan states to "focus growth within the Urban Growth Boundary". Better language would be "limit growth to within the Urban Growth Boundary".

East of Greenville is outside the UGB and should not be a "Study Area". No other land outside the UGB has this label, nor should East of Greenville.

Last May, the State Department of Finance estimated that Livermore's total population decreased by 1,896 residents between April 2020 and January 2025. The population decline isn't because there were fewer housing units, since the number of housing units of all kinds increased annually. Instead, the average number of persons per household has declined every year from 2.75 in 2020 to 2.63 in 2025.

Yet, the DEIR projects an increase of more than 43,000 new residents from 2025 to 2045. That is forecasting a 50% increase in population—half again as many new residents as live here now.

The most recent projections from the State Department of Finance showed Alameda County's total population projected to increase by more than 157,000 from 2024 to 2045. If Livermore's population were to grow by the Plan's estimate, that would represent 27.8% of the entire county's projected growth.

According to the U.S. Census figures online, Livermore's 2024 population was approximately 5.2% of Alameda County's population.

Why should Livermore, presently with 5% of the County population, absorb almost 28% growth in Alameda County in the next 20 years?

It's not realistic, nor do I believe most residents want our population to grow by 50%.

### Complicity With Zionist Control of the United States

Greg Scott, Livermore

"The U.S. involvement in this war is the responsibility of the current Republican regime. Terms like "Zionist control" push the blame to a shadowy conspiracy that does not exist." (Lani Longshore, "Who Are We?", Mailbox, 3/19/2026)

"[S]hadowy conspiracy"? The factual evidence clearly shows the Zionist control by wealthy Zionists and their lobbies over U.S. politics — of both Republicans and Democrats — and over U.S. mass media and higher education. We conveniently forget the support for the genocide in Gaza and aggression toward Iran by Democratic presidential candidate and former Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Biden and his administration. Democrats are standing up to this war of aggression against Iran? How about Arizona Democratic U.S. Senator Mark Kelly, considering the millions of dollars he has received from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)?

"Congress is dead for all intents and purposes. These [politicians] are useless. They're all in the Zionist lobby payroll. They have diverted trillions of dollars to this madness." (Professor Jonathan Sachs) Not all, but most. This would include Livermore's Congressional representation by Congressman Swalwell. Listings of Zionist lobby donations are readily available online.

Certainly, Israel has invested more in the Republican Party.

"I cannot in good conscience support the ongoing war in Iran. Iran posed no imminent threat to our

nation, and it is clear that we started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby." (Excerpt from resignation letter by Joseph Kent, former Director of National Intelligence National Counterterrorism Center, March 17, 2026)

"We could see that President Trump was not very happy when Netanyahu came to see him because Netanyahu came to give him orders. That's what you're going to do Donald. And if you don't do that, we press the Epstein button." (Haim Bresheeth-Zabner, Israeli anti-Zionist scholar)

Criticism of Zionism as being "hate speech" is Zionist weaponized propaganda.

(I dedicate this letter to Epstein-class victim Virginia (nec Roberts) Guifre, author of the book "Nobody's Girl," who, shortly after writing she wasn't suicidal, of course, reportedly committed suicide. I also hereby source Maria Farmer's interviews revealing the Zionists Epstein's and Wexner's insidious social environment treatments of, and references to "Goyim.")

Zionism, through control in detriment to Israel and the United States, is in decline in world opinion and relations, from its own manifestations of repression, oppression, genocide of Palestinians, and wars of aggression.

### Measure D Griffin Beemiller, Sunol

The Independent's March 12 editorial badly mischaracterizes what is happening with Measure D.

No one has "stripped power from the people." No boundary change has been approved, and no ordinance has been adopted. The County is simply exploring public opinion and political feasibility before deciding whether any proposal should even be drafted and sent to the voters. The voters would still have the final say.

The editorial also suggests previous Boards of Supervisors respected Measure D by never touching it. That is not true. In 2022, the County sponsored amendments to Measure D, placed them on the ballot, and Alameda County voters approved them with 70% support. That is clear evidence that countywide voters are open to thoughtful amendments. The real question is not whether Measure D is sacred and untouchable, but whether it can ever be updated responsibly through the ballot box when real-world conditions show that some provisions may no longer work as intended.

It should also be noted that the voters who approved Measure D in 2000 are not the same voters we have in 2026; I was still

attending Sunol Glen Elementary. That does not diminish the legitimacy of the original vote, but it does underscore that no policy should be treated as permanently beyond reconsideration by the generations that must now live under it.

The editorial reduces every discussion of Measure D reform to "developers versus open space." That cartoonish framing is politically useful, but not serious. Many of the people asking for this conversation are families, farmers, ranchers, and agricultural landowners trying to keep working lands viable across generations. One practical question is whether 100 acres should remain the minimum agricultural parcel size in Alameda County. For many in my generation, that is a major barrier to becoming a farmer.

Measure D has done important things. It helped protect open space and reinforce thoughtful growth. But that does not mean it is perfect, or that every future amendment is a Trojan horse for sprawl. Measure D should be evaluated on how well it balances open-space preservation with agricultural vitality.

The County should be transparent about what problems it is trying to solve. But public discussion is not corruption, research is not secrecy, and testing voter sentiment is not disenfranchisement. Allowing the public to vote on a possible update to Measure D is not an attack on democracy. It is the exercise of it.

### Bad Emergency Care Experience Eve Sprunt, Dublin

We had a dangerously horrible experience

at Stanford Valleycare Emergency Care on Friday, March 20, beginning mid-afternoon.

I discovered my husband, who is a type 2 diabetic with heart and kidney issues, had an ulcerated and infected toe, and took him to Stanford Urgent Care in Dublin. They put us in a room and said he needed an x-ray, but returned later to say they couldn't x-ray him because they didn't have an x-ray technician, and we needed to go to Stanford emergency care. We did so immediately, arriving around 4 p.m.

The waiting area was very frightening because it was full of contagiously sick people and my hus-

band is immune-compromised. After we had waited a couple of hours, the triage lady said my husband would be next, but

(See MAILBOX, page 6)

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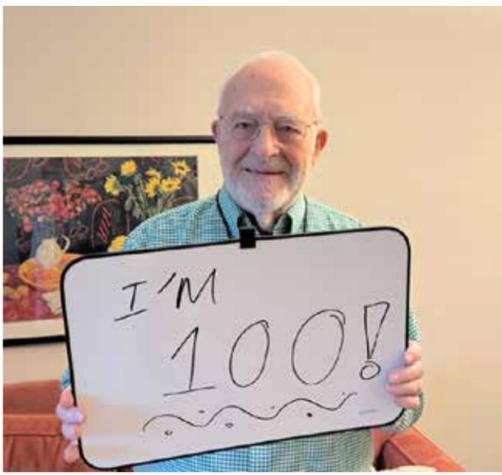
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At 102, World War II veteran Dan Ashton from Stoneridge Creek bridges 250 years of American history through his deep family roots and a century of personal stories. (Photo courtesy of Chelsea Wilson)

## MAILBOX

(Continued from page 5)

he then waited for another hour before I became outraged and made a scene, because they kept taking more recent arrivals before him. The ignorant triage lady didn't think my husband was sufficiently ill. (Obviously, like the stupid person who didn't provide a separate waiting area for contagious patients, she had no clue as to how sick he was.) When he finally was able to speak to a medical person, they immediately tested him and decided he needed to be admitted to the hospital.

Once an intelligent staff member saw him, they transferred him to cardiac care and put him on an antibiotic drip.

Stanford Hospital should be ashamed of the dangerously bad waiting room conditions and ignorant staff who make elderly, ill patients wait surrounded by sick children. I was horrified by the incredibly bad service by the "gatekeepers" for the emergency room.

### Hell No

Samuel Warner, Pleasanton

Hell, no — I am not willing to send my grandson to fight in this unnecessary war. Of COURSE the billionaires (and Trump family) will benefit from an oil

war. Prices up? Good for them! Do you really think that Trump and his cronies care an ounce about how the average person has to live? We ordinary citizens are expendable, as long as a profit is to be made by a small, selfish group. Trump and his class can't be bothered if our children might die for it. How is it that there is no money for health care, education, veteran services, public television, our parks, government workers, etc., but endless debt to fund a war we don't need? Do you really believe Trump's words, his spokesperson Karo'lyin' Levitt, FOX and others backed by the billionaires — who keep making up new false reasons why we had to stir up this hornet's nest? Too bad he had to go and insult all of our allies, otherwise maybe this could end.

I pity the young people who have bravely and proudly chosen to serve in our military; wanting to defend us from invasion and to keep peace around the world, not to sacrifice themselves for an oil war that we don't need.

This catastrophe is spinning into WWII, and at the whim of a power-hungry draft-dodging con-

victed felon. I respect my Republican senators and congressmen who know when to stand up for what is wrong and don't kowtow to bullying.

### Are You Scared Yet?

Frank Cannella, Livermore

So now we are threatening to blow up one of the world's largest oil storage sites if Iran doesn't open up the straits of Hormuz within 48 hours of this writing. Of course, this would be a war crime and would likely increase Iranian attacks on other sites within the region, thereby escalating the possibility of expanding the regional war and with devastating effects on the world's economy. Trump's wartime leadership and vision continue to disappoint.

Meanwhile, our president took time out to explain to Japan the wisdom of his surprise attack, since they had a similar approach in 1941's attack on Pearl Harbor. One presidential comment destroying 80 plus years of successful cooperation with a former enemy.

Last but not least, our president found it necessary to say he was glad Robert Mueller had passed away since after months of investigation Mueller could not unequivocally exonerate Trump from involvement in the Russian election interference.

I, for one, am frightened that this man is our president.

### Trump's War

Barry Brynjulson, Pleasanton

Trump's ill-conceived, unsanctioned war on Iran is wreaking havoc in the U.S. and Middle East. Its purpose is unclear given that his own intelligence groups said Iran was not currently enriching uranium and was several years from long-range missile capability. Joe Kent, the Director of Counterterrorism for the U.S., resigned in protest because he knows Iran posed no

imminent threat.

Oil prices have risen 50% nationally, according to AAA. Trump feebly tried to con his base by saying, "When oil prices go up, we make a lot of money." Yes, his big donor oil companies make a bunch while the rest of us pay at the pump.

Trump's war is costing taxpayers \$1-2 billion per day plus American lives, but he HAD to cut US AID, food stamps, National Park funding, cancer research, Radio Free America, PBS, participation in the World Health Organization, etc. The Pentagon asked Congress for \$200 billion last week to fund the war.

When the U.S. Embassy and other U.S. targets were bombed recently in Iran, it was determined by U.S. intelligence that Putin's Russia was leaking classified information to Israel. Trump's response? He lifted sanctions on Russia, giving them the ability to sell its oil and make billions to world markets starving for oil because Iran is blocking oil transport ships from passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

In attempt to counter that blockade, Trump asked European nations to assist the U.S. to reopen the strait. Their collective, icy response, as of this writing, has been ostensibly, "Forget you." A couple of days later, Trump did a 180 and posted in all caps, "WE DON'T NEED THE HELP OF ANYONE." Stable genius.

Yes, our 43-time felon President, who couldn't get hired at McDonalds, Walmart, or the USPS, is a crazy, impulsive buffoon, recognized as such worldwide, but still has 36% support in the U.S. He and everyone who voted for him may destroy us all... figuratively or literally.

Silence is compliance. Numbers matter. Turn out peacefully for No Kings 3 on March 28 in Livermore 10-12 noon, Pleas-

anton 1:30-3:30, or at any of the thousands of other locations that day. Go to mobilize.us for more information.

### Deportation, Really?

Keith Jackson, Dublin

In my letters to this paper, I have always advocated that we all need to find out on our own what is going on since there is so much disinformation going around. You decide what is real and then speak out for what you believe in. Call your congressman, contact the newspaper, or protest peacefully if you feel what is being done in your name is wrong. (Like the No Kings protests on March 28.) The most important thing any of us can do is vote when the opportunity arises. That is really the only time any of us can have an effect on which way our country is going. Everyone on all sides needs to be able

to vote. In last week's paper, there was one person who wrote that we should be "deporting America-hating Democrats" for not supporting our peace-loving president. I am against President Trump, but I still think that Trump supporters should be allowed to vote, and I do not think that they should be deported. Freedom of speech means the freedom to disagree. Do you think that anyone who does not agree with you should be deported? Apparently, some people do.

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## ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR POET LAUREATE

The City of Livermore and the Commission for the Arts is seeking a local poet to serve as the City of Livermore's Poet Laureate. The person selected will serve as a public advocate for the appreciation and advancement of the arts, particularly poetry. The person selected for this position will not receive compensation, as this is a voluntary position. **The deadline to apply is April 3, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.**

The Poet Laureate will be called upon to write themed-based poetry and read poetry at civic events such as public ceremonies and dedications. He or she will serve as a resource and liaison between the City's Cultural Arts Program, local schools, and literary organizations.

Following are the requirements for the Poet Laureate:

- Be a Livermore resident
- Be the author of published poetry deemed appropriate by the selection committee
- Be affiliated with the poetry culture
- Promote and advocate the City of Livermore as a venue for poetry
- Be an advocate for the inclusion of poetry in public and civic events
- Inspire and foster an awareness and appreciation of the role of poetry in the community through poetry readings, writing educational programs, and other outreach events, activities, and programs
- Interface with various literary organizations
- Collaborate with elected officials and city staff
- Serve a two-year term with no compensation
- Work with the previous Poet Laureate during a 6 - 12 month transition period
- Orient and train the next Poet Laureate.

Interested applicants must submit:

- A two-page letter of interest
- Five original poems, two of which have been published
- Your resumé indicating active participation in promoting the literary arts in the community
- An outline of your vision, goals, projects, and activities for the Poet Laureate Program during your tenure (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2028).

If you have questions, please contact the City Clerk's office at (925) 960-4200 or by e-mail at [cityclerk@livermoreca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@livermoreca.gov)

**SAVE THE DATE!** Information regarding interviews will be provided at the close of the application period. For more information or to apply, please visit [www.livermoreca.gov/AB](http://www.livermoreca.gov/AB), call the City Clerk's office at (925) 960-4200, or email: [cityclerk@livermoreca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@livermoreca.gov).

## PENSION

(Continued from front page)

Testa and Nibert opposed the policy because of the guidelines it sets around pension obligation bonds. The bonds are a financial tool in which an agency borrows money to make a one-time payment to CalPERS. The bonds carry significant risks if the CalPERS return rate moves unexpectedly, causing the city to pay more in debt interest than it saved through the CalPERS payment.

Testa asked to remove the bond language from the policy, believing its inclusion presented it as an option for future councils.

"The risks are so complex that I think we would be better (off) to not have that for our strategy," Testa said.

Nibert also mulled whether to "take that tool away from future councils."

The mayor and the other two councilmembers felt that the policy's bond guidelines, which include requirements for expert advice from actuaries and municipal advisors along with conservative parameters for the bonds themselves, were necessary to caution future councils against the risky tool.

The policy's inclusion or exclusion of the bond guidelines do not enable or prohibit future councils from issuing pension obligation bonds, explained city staff. Future councils may also change the policy itself if they choose.

Mayor Jack Balch, who pushed for council unanimity on the pension trust fund policy, said the council agreed that such bonds should only be approached with extreme caution. He

wanted to keep the guidelines in for that reason. "I am just simply trying to make sure that someone doesn't think we didn't think of it and try to caution against it," Balch said.

### The Root of CalPERS Costs

Public employers across the state are facing looming pension payments, which stem from over-optimistic projections made by CalPERS around the turn of the century.

"Basically, CalPERS made assumptions that they would earn over 8% in the market; that has not happened," said Meyer at the meeting.

The end of the 1990s saw multiple, consecutive years of annual returns over 20% in the stock market, leading to "super-funded" retirement plans that inflated benefits, offered contribution holidays and added "free" benefit improvements.

While the benefit obligations remained in the system, the stratospheric stock performances did not. Lower mortality rates, which prolong pensioners' draws on the system, and rising inflation rates also increased the strain on the CalPERS system. The Great Recession in particular, which spanned from late 2007 to mid-2009, caused CalPERS to fall short of its return targets.

Each time CalPERS misses its target return rate, currently set at 6.8%, it passes the funding gap onto the state's public employers as a liability spread out over 20 years.

"This mountain peak is not going away," Meyer

warned. "It's really a function of what happened in '08 when the Great Recession happened. There were big losses that got amortized over 20 years, and you're still paying for that. That's why all members are facing this peak in payments that's really the next five, six years primarily."

The City of Pleasanton's total unfunded liability now stands at \$239 million. NHA expects the city's \$31 million annual CalPERS payment to climb to \$36 million per year in 2030 before descending and ultimately paying off the unfunded liability in 2046.

With the council's decision last week, the city plans to use pension trust-fund withdrawals over the next 12 years to save the city's general fund, which previously shouldered the entirety of the city's CalPERS obligations, an average of \$4.4 million per year. NHA estimated the pension trust fund would still have \$44.3 million left over at the end of the 12 years to help cover any additional CalPERS losses.

Meyer said that the city started its trust fund early compared to other California agencies, and its current balance of over 200% of annual pension costs justified the start of withdrawals.

Both Meyer and Pleasanton Director of Finance Susan Hsieh said that the withdrawal recommendation aligned with advice last year from city actuarial consultant Foster & Foster Actuaries and Consultants, which had advised against using pension trust fund money to ease the city's budget deficit.

"(Our recommendation) is also a conservative strategy," Hsieh said. "The recommendation is consistent with what Foster & Foster recommended back in March 2025. It's just that we are evaluating this a year later, and the assets in the trust have changed as well. The liability also looks slightly different than before." The new policy includes a provision for the city to periodically review the policy for any necessary changes and to "ensure progress is being made towards funding the city's CalPERS pension costs and mitigating the impact of the costs associated with future (unfunded liabilities)."

## PLEASE HELP BRING MIGUEL HOME



Miguel Lopez left in the photo, next to his son, Julian Lopez, and his wife, Rosa Lopez.

Livermore Wenté Winery worker, married father of three and grandfather

## Miguel Lopez

remains in Mexico after having been illegally deported in early June.

To donate to a GoFundMe account supporting the Lopez family, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/bring-miguel-back-to-his-loved-ones>



On March 19, Livermore Police Officer Meredith, Support Dog Murphy and his handler Lisajoy Calegari met with LARP's Jane Addams Pre-K class at the Livermore Library. The kids explored a patrol car, met Support Dog Murphy and went home with a March collector's sticker and mini patrol car. (Photo courtesy of LPD)

## Next Up: 'P is for Pleasanton' Book

PLEASANTON — "P is for Pleasanton" will be joining author and illustrator Kori Barton's series of local history picture books for children.

Barton, whose "L is for Livermore" is now available, said Pleasanton is "next on our docket," joining Livermore, Concord, Walnut Creek, Brentwood and Martinez.

Each book, co-authored by Barton's husband, Sammy, features an A-to-Z sampling of a city's landmarks, facts and destinations.

Barton said "L is for Livermore," with a foreword by

Mayor John Marchand, is now available at several local businesses. The authors have also introduced greeting cards featuring art from the book, which are available at local retailers.

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### STATE OF THE CITY (Continued from front page)

Post-Employment Benefits funds over the two-year period.

A mid-year budget update in February, however, showed that the city's business-license and development-fee revenues were stronger than expected, enough to forgo the pension-trust transfer this year.

The budget, Balch said, "reflects thoughtful spending, careful forecasting and long-term planning. We're not budgeting based upon hope. We're budgeting based upon reality because responsible optimism requires honest math."

Despite the painful budget cuts, forecasts still show the city's general fund facing a significant deficit moving forward, driven by ever-rising personnel costs and softening property-tax revenue. The

city must also find a way to increase its current \$19 million-per-year infrastructure budget to \$63 million per year in the next decade.

"We're taking that challenge head on by improving our long range forecasting, conducting independent financial reviews, undertaking a pension review, which we just did on Tuesday, and using data-driven planning and exploring additional revenue options that you might have heard of, including a hotel tax, sponsorship opportunities and cell-tower leases," Balch said.

Two days prior to the event, the Pleasanton City Council adopted a new pension-funding policy that allows the city to tap into a city pension trust fund previously set aside for pension costs as soon as the next fiscal year. Such a strategy could relieve

the city's general fund of some \$4.4 million in annual expenses for the next 12 years, according to city staff.

Beyond city finances, Balch highlighted conversations with PG&E that resulted in a capital improvement program of 12 PG&E projects for critical upgrades in Pleasanton, 11 of which have been completed.

Earlier this year, PG&E also bought a building at Stoneridge Mall with plans to increase its Pleasanton workforce.

In healthcare, Balch also mentioned Sutter Health's \$20 million investment in Pleasanton office space, along with the Pleasanton Planning Commission's recent approval of a 66,000-square-foot expansion at Stanford Healthcare Tri-Valley.

The mayor closed his ad-

dress with a nod to events beyond the city in the context of the country's 250th birthday this year.

"We are more divided than many of us ever expected," he said. "And too often, we are talking past each other instead of listening. Yet, the strength of our democracy has never depended upon uniform agreement. It has depended on participation and compromise to move us forward. As America approaches her 250th birthday, I hope we are not simply marking time. Two-hundred and fifty years ago, ordinary people made an extraordinary choice, and America's promise was born. It now rests with us. So, I hope we don't simply celebrate our history. I hope we pause and reflect on who we are. What binds us, and what is asked, no, what is required of us?"

### LOPEZ (Continued from front page)

"It's a very long and tedious process," Ahmad said. "A lot of people don't understand the difference between a citizen or a green card holder — I see that even with our politicians. Many of them ask if someone can become a citizen, and I say, well they first have to become a green card holder. Citizenship is higher than what Mr. Lopez is arguing for, but hopefully, once he becomes a permanent resident, he can also become a citizen."

The impending result of Thompson's ruling is weighing heavily on the Lopez family, who have spent almost ten months now without him. Lopez's wife, Rosa, in particular, has been fighting to stay positive and is praying that her husband will be home in time for the high school graduation of their youngest son, Julian.

"My youngest has really been struggling, especially with games, awards and all the things that Miguel was always there for," Rosa said. "Now, with his graduation coming up, he's very concerned that his dad won't be there and is really hoping that Miguel might be home in time because that's

something which can't be repeated."

Rosa added that despite the separation, it's been incredibly moving to see the level of support, that her husband's deportation has inspired in the community and throughout much of the Bay Area, with several rallies organized in support of Lopez since June 2025.

The latest, organized by Indivisible Tri-Valley, was held outside the courthouse on the day of the March 17 hearing. Dozens of supporters, including friends, fellow community members, and strangers, rallied on behalf of the Lopez family.

"We have a lot of support," Rosa said. "Like I told my husband on the day of his court hearing, the courtroom was full and it felt so good to see so many people there and faces of people who I don't even know. The support, and them coming up to say that they're there to support us and are praying for the best — that really motivates you to keep pushing forward."

According to Ward Kranowsky, co-founder of Indivisible Tri-Valley, the atmosphere at the hearing was

hopeful yet subdued. While there is strong community support for the family, they face the hard reality that Lopez remains separated from them and may miss his son's high school graduation.

In addition to showing support through continued presence and organizing rallies, Kranowsky said that Indivisible Tri-Valley keeps in touch with the office of U.S. Congressional Representative Eric Swalwell to keep members informed and to discuss ways of supporting Lopez and his family, and to raise awareness of their story.

With Indivisible Tri-Valley, Kranowsky is helping organize a third "No Kings" rally in Pleasanton set for Saturday, March 28, where Rosa Lopez is expected to address the crowd.

The "No Kings" movement began in 2025 as a series of grassroots demonstrations opposing what organizers describe as authoritarian escalations in federal immigration enforcement and the bypassing of legal due process. More information on the event can be found at: [indivisibletrivalley.org/events/no-kings-tri-valley-3](http://indivisibletrivalley.org/events/no-kings-tri-valley-3). For further updates on the Miguel Lopez case, or to donate to the GoFundMe campaign, visit: [gofundme.com/f/bring-miguel-back-to-his-loved-ones](http://gofundme.com/f/bring-miguel-back-to-his-loved-ones).

### PUSD (Continued from page 2)

those funds cannot be used to support ongoing expenses, limiting their ability to address long-term budget challenges.

To address the shortfall, the board has adopted a multi-year \$11.2 million reduction plan, largely focused on staffing, as salary and benefit costs make up more than 85% of district spending.

That leaves limited flex-

ibility in other areas of the budget and few alternatives for significant cost reductions.

District officials said they will continue identifying savings and pursuing opportunities to strengthen revenue as they work to rebuild required reserves and maintain academic programs.

Trustee Mary Jo Carreon said the decisions facing the

board were not easy.

"Decisions like this are never taken lightly," Carreon said. "One of the core responsibilities of the Board of Trustees is to ensure the long-term fiscal health of the district. We are required to make decisions that keep the district financially solvent so that we can continue to serve students not only this year, but for many years to come."

### PFAS (Continued from page 2)

Livermore's first investigation at the airport, completed by Geosyntec Consultants, Inc., sampled 14 locations near the airport's runways, hangars and fuel farm for PFAS. It also installed four groundwater monitoring wells to assess PFAS migration onto and off the airport.

Although Geosyntec, in its Oct. 13, 2025 report, at-

tributed elevated PFAS concentrations found during the investigation's first phase to the background PFAS pervading the area, those results piqued the Water Board's interest. Two weeks later, the Water Board sent a directive to the city requiring additional testing.

Geosyntec's new workplan details steps to take more soil and groundwater

samples around the airport's south hangars, especially near its waste-storage area and its large S-1 hangar.

The City of Livermore must complete its second investigation phase and submit its report by July 30, including a map of sample locations and results, conclusions and any recommendations for additional investigation work at the airport.

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# Heart of the Valley



## WHAT'S DOWN IS UP

By Christina Cavallaro

TRI-VALLEY — A family friend whom I grew up calling Auntie has enjoyed reminding me over the years of the time when I was about 4 years old and we were on a visit to Lake Tahoe to play in the snow. Dragging sleds and saucers, we headed up a steep and slippery incline, walking single file in our clunky Moon Boots — footwear staples of '70s and '80s ski culture — and my aunt held out her glove and asked if I needed a hand.

Always one to try and do everything by myself, I apparently replied sweetly but firmly, "No thank you, I have one of my own."

It was around that same era I heard the phrase "out of the mouths of babes" uttered several times in my direction with a snicker.

There have been moments in my adult life when I wish I'd had the confidence to be so clear, direct and sure of my own abilities, instead of politely dancing around them or trying to please others with my composure and good nature.

But as an adult, life tends to pull you in directions away from that core little human being conceivably oozing with self-confidence and joy at birth.

Super Bowl advertisers have capitalized on this existential loss of self in grownups with segments like the long-running Haribo Goldbears "Kids' Voices" campaign. Adults dressed in corporate attire — often in professional or serious settings like an office boardroom — are sitting around eating Haribo candies. As they enjoy them, they begin to talk with the dubbed over voices of children, discussing their favorite gummy bears. Men and women in suits gushing over the "red ones" and the "squishy" textures with their adult faces and baby-like voices is kind of cute and a little creepy, but it does the job of sticking in one's head. And as the advertisers put it, it inspires "moments of childlike happiness."

The further from childhood we get — objectively speaking, due in part to stature, but also societally and idiomatically — we tend to "look down on" youth and "look up to" adults we respect or admire.

Enter the East Bay's own Anita Liu, who burst into our lives, onto our flatscreens and into our hearts last month during the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan when she became the first U.S. woman to win an individual Olympic gold medal in figure skating in 24 years.

After becoming the youngest-ever U.S. national champion at age 13, Liu unexpectedly retired at 16 following the 2022 Beijing Olympics. Her return to the ice two years later, now culminating in an Olympic gold

medal, is regarded as one of the greatest comeback stories in sports history.

But honestly, it wasn't her athletic prowess that brought so much admiration. It was her wisdom. Liu is widely praised for her honesty regarding burnout and her decision to step away from the sport to prioritize her mental well-being and live a normal life.

We also cannot get enough of her joy and authenticity. I have yet to see a face not plastered with a full-on grin when talking about her. Family and friend text threads were blowing up with images of Liu's magnetic performance to Donna Summer's disco rendition of "MacArthur Park." And with her signature streaked hair and mouth piercing, she is competing in sports and in life on her own terms.

And we are here for it. And if all that goodness were not enough, we love her heart. In a moment of pure sportsmanship that went viral, Liu, having just secured gold, rushed to hug 17-year-old Ami Nakai of Japan immediately after Nakai's bronze medal scores were announced.

Liu is who we want to be when we grow up.

The thing is, before Liu, I had been starting to see a trend all around me here in the Tri-Valley of young people whom I look up to, from student activists to founders of environmental nonprofits to artists and musicians.

The words of Las Positas College student and artist Inara Hepting have in particular stayed with me these last few months as I have taken on more responsibility here at The Independent.

Hepting shared thoughts on her involvement in a collaborative clean-air transportation mural project for the Livermore Municipal Airport that was installed at the end of last year. "I encourage anyone to not shut down an opportunity because you think you aren't good enough, or you don't think you're ready, or it's out of your comfort zone. Some opportunities only come around once," she said.

I don't know if it's just that my eyes are more open or maybe my ears, but there's a lot of wisdom coming out of the mouths of babes right now — and I for one want to hear it, and I think you might too.

Coming soon to The Independent — The Indy Youth Media Team. More details to follow.

*Do you have tidbits about the Tri-Valley or know of interesting people, places, events or unique perspectives that should be featured in the Heart of the Valley monthly column or podcast? If so, we want to hear from you. Please email me at christina@independentnews.com.*



The Islamic Center of Livermore hosted their annual Interfaith 'breaking of the fast' iftar (dinner) with members of the Livermore community. Ramadan, observed by Muslims worldwide, is a month of fasting, communal prayer, charity and strengthening community ties. (Photo courtesy of Julie Wild)

## CityServe to Host 'Ladies Night Out: A Prom to Remember'

PLEASANTON — CityServe of the Tri-Valley will host a "Ladies Night Out — A Prom to Remember" at the Veterans Memorial Building, 301 Main St., from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday, April 18.

The nonprofit, which serves as a resource hub connecting those in need with service providers, said proceeds from the fundraiser would go to "support our community's most vulnerable residents."

"Ladies Night Out is more than just a night of fun," said CityServe CEO Christine Beitsch-Bahmani. "Every ticket, donation and sponsorship directly helps individuals and families access the resources they need to succeed."

CityServe said the Ladies Night Out is for women 21 and older.

Women are encouraged to dress in their favorite attire, whether that is a prom gown, bridesmaid or

wedding dress, or any other formal or fun outfit from any era to "dance the night away."

In addition to a disc jockey, the evening will include refreshments, a silent auction, photo booth, wine and cocktails, sparkle bar and awards for tackiest dress, mean girl crew and best dance moves.

The cost is \$50 per person.

To purchase tickets, go to [cityservecares.org](http://cityservecares.org).

## TRI-VALLEY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Friday, March 27

#### ANNI PIPER AT LAS POSITAS VINEYARDS

"Australia's First Lady of Blues," bassist-vocalist Anni Piper, will perform a free concert at Las Positas Vineyards, 1828 Wetmore Rd. in Livermore, on March 27 at 6:00 p.m. Piper is renowned as a formidable live performer, fronting her tight three-piece band on bass and vocals, with playful stage banter that make for a thoroughly enjoyable live show experience. For more info, call 925-449-9463 or visit [laspositasvineyards.com](http://laspositasvineyards.com).

### Friday-Sunday, March 27-29

#### SPARC THEATER PRESENTS "THE MOON IS ALWAYS FULL"

SPARC theater presents The Moon Is Always Full, a new play by Cleavon Smith. This work is part of the Science@Play staged reading series that blends theater and scientific discovery. Performances are on March 27 and 28, 7:30 p.m. and March 29, 4:00 p.m. at SPARC Studio, 2172 Railroad Avenue, Livermore. Tickets are \$35 and include a complimentary non-alcoholic beverage or snack. Advance tickets may be purchased at [sparctheater.org](http://sparctheater.org) or at (925) 443-2273.

### Saturday, March 28

#### PICKLEBALL FUNDRAISING TOURNAMENT

A pickleball tournament benefiting Goodness Village will be held on March 28 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at May Nissen Park, 685 Rincon Ave., Livermore. Sign up at [secure.qgiv.com/for/gvevents/event/pickleball](http://secure.qgiv.com/for/gvevents/event/pickleball). This event is open to all, as matches will be set based on skill level. \$50 per person.

### Saturday, March 28

#### CELEBRATE EASTER AT HACIENDA CROSSINGS

Come Celebrate Easter with a free event that includes photos with the Easter Bunny, face painting and balloon artists, and colorful crafts and goodie bags (while supplies last). On March 28, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., at 4820-5000 Dublin Blvd., Dublin (Entertainment Village near Ike's Love & Sandwiches).

### Sunday, March 29

#### CHILDREN'S DAY AT HAGEMANN RANCH

The Hagemann Ranch open house on March 29 from 1-5 p.m. is specially designed for kids. It is Children's Day, and 4-H are bringing an assortment of small animals and some goats to create a petting zoo. The special guests will be a couple of Kunekune pigs who appreciate attention. The HistoryMobile will be onsite for all to tour. Kids can help with ranch chores such as doing the laundry the way the pioneers would have done it. Always free and family-friendly at 455 Olivina Ave., Livermore.

### Tuesday, March 31 deadline

#### STUDENT EXCHANGE IN PLEASANTON SISTER CITY

Experience a reciprocal two-week exchange in Pleasanton's sister city in an immersed, safe family household coordinated by Sister City Association members in both cities. Very affordable and a great chance to immerse yourself in the Spanish language and culture, and to share yours! From June 14-28 in Pleasanton, and June 28-July 12 in Tulancingo, Mexico. If interested, please contact Jorge Victoria at [javictoria45@gmail.com](mailto:javictoria45@gmail.com) or 925-989-6882. Visit [www.ptsc.org](http://www.ptsc.org) for student exchange information.

### Wednesday, April 1

#### DROP-IN GENEALOGY ASSISTANCE

Begin your family history search with assistance by members of the Livermore-Amador Valley Genealogy Society. On April 1, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Livermore Public Library, Civic Center Branch, 1188 S Livermore Ave., Room 135.

### Saturday, April 4

#### DRESS A GIRL AROUND THE WORLD

Make simple dresses for girls in Third World countries! The next monthly Sew-Fest is on April 4, from 9

### a.m. to 3 p.m., at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1020 Mocho St., Livermore. Bring your sewing machine or serger, iron, ironing board, scissors, along with your helping hands. Come for an hour or all day! (Please bring a bag lunch if you plan to stay all day.) Cheerful cotton fabric donations are always welcome. Contact Suzanne Beck, 925-352-8447, or [suzbeck@yahoo.com](mailto:suzbeck@yahoo.com) for questions or kits that you can sew from home.

### Thursdays, beginning April 9

#### GRIEF SUPPORT WORKSHOP

The death of a loved one is unlike any other loss. Although there is no right or wrong path, there are stepping stones that are part of each grief journey; they will be explored in this 8-week workshop. Held at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Drive, Pleasanton. Meetings will begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday evenings; April 9, 16, 23, 30, and May 7, 14, 21 and 28. These meetings are open to all, regardless of religious affiliation. For more information, please call Barbara at 925-846-3904.

### Thursday, April 9

#### LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY GARDEN CLUB MEETING

At the April meeting, C.L. Fornari "The Garden Lady" will meet via Zoom from the East Coast. Her talk will be about entertaining in the garden. On April 9 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Crosswinds Church, 1660 Freisman Rd., Livermore, at the red Farm Theater Building.

### Monday, April 13

#### LIVERMORE-AMADOR GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING

Come hear Dawn Kosmakos speaking about genealogy. Dawn will share three different case studies (an unknown father mystery, identification of a John Doe, and her own great-grandfather's biological father.) Join via Zoom at 7 p.m. (see flyer to register: [www.l-ags.org](http://www.l-ags.org), click on Speakers & Topics on upper left). No charge, non-members welcome.

### ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

#### FOOD RELIEF SERVICES

Local residents can access vital food-assistance services to help meet basic needs. Food relief services can be found at: Children's Emergency Food Bank; 7421 Amarillo Rd., Dublin; appointments M-F, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; 925-828-5363; St. Raymond Catholic Church, 11555 Shannon Ave., Dublin; third Sat. of the month, 8 to 11 a.m.; Open Heart Kitchen; M-F, 1 to 5 p.m.; 450 N. Livermore Ave., Livermore; Tri-Valley Haven Food Pantry, 150 N. "L" Street, Livermore; 925-449-1664 — M-Th, 1 to 5 p.m.; Fri/Sat 12 to 4 p.m.; Alameda County Community Food Bank; 510-635-3663; M-F, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### ONGOING EVENTS

#### ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

In AA, we don't tell anyone to do anything. We talk about our own drinking, the trouble we got into, and how we stopped. To find a local meeting in person or online, visit [valleyservicecenteraa.org](http://valleyservicecenteraa.org) or call the 24-hour hotline at 925-829-0666.

### SATURDAY PLEASANTON FARMERS MARKET

Open Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Main Street and West Angela Street. Seniors 60 and over are welcome for specialized shopping from 9 to 10 a.m.

### SUNDAY LIVERMORE DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET

Open year-round on Sundays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in downtown Livermore, on Second St. between J St. and L St.

Email non-profit events to [calendar@independentnews.com](mailto:calendar@independentnews.com) for newspaper calendar and visit our website [www.independentnews.com](http://www.independentnews.com) to promote all events online.

## Pleasanton Pizzeria Owners to Compete at International Expo

PLEASANTON — Mark and Kira Zabrowski, owners of Much Ado About Pizza, will be competing with the U.S. Pizza Team at the International Pizza Expo in Las Vegas later this month.

Kira Zabrowski will compete in the Traditional American Division, highlighting the Pleasanton pizzeria's sourdough style, while Mark Zabrowski will compete in the Best Cheese Slice category. He will also serve as a culinary judge, evaluating top talent from around the world.

"As a small, independent business from Pleasanton, it's an honor to represent our community on a global stage," Kira Zabrowski said. "We built this from the ground up with intention, from our sourdough to our community roots."

Much Ado About Pizza, which has already been named one of the top 25 Fast Casual Brands to Watch in 2026 by Fast-

Casual.com, will also be recognized as one of the industry's Top 100 Movers & Shakers during award ceremonies at the International Pizza Expo, the world's largest pizza trade show.

Pizza is one most popular foods worldwide, with 38% of American family saying they eat pizza at least once a week, according to WorldMetrics.org.

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# City of Dublin Sponsoring Pride Week Student Contests

DUBLIN — In partnership with the Dublin San Ramon Women's Club, the city is sponsoring poster and essay contests for students in kindergarten through high school as part of the annual Dublin Pride

Week celebration.

The contests are open to students who live in Dublin.

The theme for this year's contests is "Rooted in Dublin, United by Pride."

Essays can be typed or handwritten and must be no more than 250 words for students in kindergarten through third grade and 500 words for students in fourth grade through high school.

Posters can be no larger than 11-inches by 17-inches, but can use any coloring or drawing media. There will be five grade-based categories.

The grand prize winner will receive a \$100

gift certificate. First place winners in each category will receive \$25, with \$15 going to second place.

Winning posters and essays will be displayed at the Dublin Civic Center during May and June.

Posters and essays must be submitted to school offices or the Dublin Civic Center by Monday, April 20.

For more information, email recreation@dublin.ca.gov.

## Armchair Travelers and Bicycling Enthusiasts Tour Poland, Slovakia

LIVERMORE — Bicycling enthusiast Dan Moore will present an Armchair Travelers program about his 2024 tour

of Poland and Slovakia at the Civic Center Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave., at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 9.

The program, "A Bicycle Tour of Poland and Slovakia," is free. Registration is not required.

### PANEL

(Continued from front page)

Finally, Dublin Mayor Sherry Hu said she draws inspiration from her immigrant journey. "I want to make our country a better place for sure, and our community the happiest," Hu said.

#### Partnership with Nonprofits

The conversation turned to the interconnected relationship between city government and nonprofits. Arnerich described nonprofits as "the first responders to human beings," connecting on everything from mental health services and food security to youth development and arts. "In the Tri-Valley, nonprofits are really that humanity in each of us. They're our social conscience," he said, tackling areas of human infrastructure cities cannot manage alone.

The mayors each highlighted ways their cities work to support nonprofits.

Hu has formalized her city's support for its culturally diverse community and celebrations, such as Diwali and Lunar New Year, by providing facilities to nonprofits at zero cost.

The City of Livermore has invested energy into streamlining administrative processes, Marchand said, such as moving to a two-year grant cycle to provide nonprofits with financial stability for long-term planning and doubling the funding of the Social Opportunity Endowment (SOE) fund.

Armstrong highlighted his city's partnership with organizations such as Eden Housing to meet the community's essential needs directly through affordable housing projects.

While the mayors championed affordable housing, they also highlighted the economic and legal hurdles preventing its progress.

Arnerich noted that state-level fees and building codes have made land so expensive that it is nearly impossible to build without massive subsidies.

Marchand highlighted that the Eden Housing project in Livermore has been stalled in court for six years due to local opposition.

Balch shared a recent win for Tri-Valley Haven—the reallocation of a City of Pleasanton block grant toward a new capital project. The announcement was met with enthusiastic applause.

#### Regional Challenges

The group toggled between more complex regional issues ranging from homelessness to the unfolding presence of artificial intelligence in communities.

Marchand spoke to the inherent complexities of dealing with unhoused individuals. "People are very, very complicated," he said. "And each individual has their own multifaceted story. There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution." He argued against searching for a "silver bullet," and instead advocated for "silver buckshot"—a series of individualized, persistent strategies.

Wondering aloud about a future where AI replaces tedious work and entry-level jobs, Hu posited a unique perspective. She envisioned a world where the arts and nonprofits take on an even more critical role. She asserted that centers for the arts and human enrichment will become increasingly important for providing community members with purpose and connection. To that end, she shared news of a new dual-purpose building opening soon in Dublin that will be a dedicated arts and civic center. The new structure

will include a space for performing arts, display areas for artwork, and classrooms for various programs. A specific opening date is not yet public.

#### ICE-Free Zones

A question from the audience asked if other Tri-Valley cities would follow the lead of Alameda County and the City of Dublin in designating city properties as "ICE-free zones," where U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement would be barred from enforcement.

The question was posed to the entire panel. After a pause in which no other panelists volunteered, Hu — whose city's position was already public — was the only one to answer. She commented that while the city does not have jurisdiction over the federal prison land (FCI Dublin), the city had passed a resolution expressing support for the community against a rumored ICE facility being built on that land. Balch indicated that the conversation in Pleasanton is ongoing but challenging, citing legal questions regarding the county's resolution that the City Council and City Attorney still need to resolve.

Though there were no clear policies laid out, aside from Dublin's, the mayors generally framed the issue around public safety, emphasizing that their primary goal is to ensure all residents feel safe within their communities.

Sutton closed the panel by drawing a connection between the "healthspan" of a community and the strength of its local support systems. She reiterated the core philosophy of the Tri-Valley Nonprofit Alliance: "Strong, healthy nonprofits lead to strong, healthy communities."

## Blood Center Requests Donations

TRI-VALLEY — The Stanford Blood Center, which has a collection site in Dublin, is encouraging donors to schedule appointments "as soon as possible" due to critically low supplies.

The blood center, which supplies area hospitals, said last week that all blood types are needed, although Type O is most needed for emergencies.

The blood center said it typically provides about 70 units of type O blood per day to local hospitals.

Donors can schedule appointments by calling 888-723-7831 or going to stanfordbloodcenter.org.

The Dublin collection center, 3738 Fallon Road, also accepts walk-ins.

## Urban Sketching Workshop Led By Local Artist Focuses on Beauty in Daily Life

LIVERMORE — The Civic Center Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave., will host an urban sketching workshop led by artist Paula Kim from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

on Sunday, April 26.

The workshop is focused on discovering beauty in daily life and how to capture those everyday scenes in a simple, relaxed manner.

Art supplies will be provided, although participants are encouraged to bring their own supplies if available.

To register, call 925-373-5505.

### SYMPHONY

(Continued from front page)

phony Orchestra, the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra, and West County Winds, a winds performance group at Contra Costa Community College. Gallegos is also the artistic and executive director of the Golden Gate Philharmonic, a San Francisco-based youth string orchestra.

"This is my first time conducting the Livermore-Amador Symphony. I know some of the musicians from other orchestras that they play in (with which) I have worked," said Gallegos.

He said Glazunov's "Spring" has a pastoral quality, with literal depictions of bird calls in the woodwinds, and other sounds that imitate the sounds of spring.

In contrast, Copland's "Appalachian Spring" is less about the season and more about new beginnings. Its other themes include youth, hope, community identity, and the celebration of an exit from war. Copland composed this piece during World War II as a ballet for American modern dancer Martha Graham and her dance company.

"The ballet takes place in a small Appalachian settle-

ment in 19th century Pennsylvania. We're playing a concert suite from the ballet, with dance episodes of a wedding, a subsequent celebration, a revivalist, and a moment of fear in the night. The climax of the suite is a set of variations on the Shaker hymn, "Simple Gifts." The suite closes with a contemplative community prayer," said Gallegos.

The Schumann Symphony No. 1 subtitled "Spring" is in four movements. It evolves from a dreary, gloomy winter in the first movement to a nocturnal romance and third movement, ultimately depicting spring at its height in the finale.

"This is a more abstract work than Glazunov's piece, in that Schumann is expressing the idea of spring less literally," Gallegos said, noting that Alpine horns and a bird-like flute solo recall spring in the finale movement.

Leddon said Gallegos has a good downbeat.

"The Schumann symphony in particular is incredibly beautiful. It has a number of difficult passages. As second violins, we don't always get the melody. We do a lot to help the

symphony keep rhythm," Leddon said.

The Livermore-Amador Symphony Guild supports the symphony through fundraising and promotion throughout the year. After intermission, the president of the guild will present an annual cash gift to the president of the Livermore-Amador Symphony Association. This concert season the amount is \$12,000.

The guild will also host a lobby information table, a wine reception after the performance and a donor gathering in the Founders Room.

"We're pretty interested in and infatuated with the connection between art and music," said PJ Wells, president of the Livermore-Amador Symphony Guild.

The LAS Guild looks forward to welcoming first-time audience members and frequent concertgoers to the guild table. The guild welcomes comments on the artwork on display and suggestions for future collaborations with the Livermore Art Association.

For more information, visit: livermoreamadorsymphony.org.

## OBITUARIES

### Bonnie Marie Avila June 16, 1940 — Feb. 1, 2026



Bonnie Marie Avila passed away peacefully on Feb. 1, 2026, at the age of 85. She is now reunited in heaven with her beloved husband Lionel Avila.

Bonnie was born on June 16, 1940, in Grass Valley, California. She later moved to Albany, California, but always cherished her summers spent in Grass Valley at her grandparents' home. She was the daughter of Antony Bertino and Fern Trezise and grew up alongside her two sisters Gail and Lila, all of whom have since passed.

Bonnie graduated from Albany High School in 1958. In 1960, Bonnie married the love of her life, Lionel. Soon after their marriage, they purchased their first home in Livermore, where Lionel worked at Lawrence Livermore Lab and where they together raised their four children. Bonnie and Lionel shared a beautiful life together and celebrated 60 years of marriage before Lionel's passing in 2020.

Bonnie is lovingly survived by her four children: Steven Avila (Wendy), Brian Avila (Kenna), Carla Kessler (Tom) and Kevin Avila (Leslie). She was a proud grandmother to 13 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren

and many beloved nieces and nephews.

Bonnie was a woman of deep faith, compassion, and service who devoted her life to God, her family, and her community. She was a devoted wife, loving mother, cherished grandmother, and loyal friend to so many. Those who knew her will always remember her strength, warmth, and the kindness she showed to everyone she met.

For many decades, Bonnie faithfully served the parish community at Saint Michael's Church in Livermore. She volunteered at the parish school, worked in the church office, and served as the wedding director for 35 years, helping countless couples begin their married lives with grace and joy. Serving others was not simply something she did—it was truly the heart of

who she was. Bonnie was also active in many parish ministries and proudly served as President of Los Domingos and Golden Friends.

Her greatest pride and joy was her family. She was always there for them—offering love, wisdom, encouragement, and unwavering support through every season of life.

Bonnie leaves behind a lasting legacy of faith, love, and generosity that will live on in the many lives she touched. Her memory will forever remain in the hearts of her family and friends. She will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered always.

A funeral Mass will be held on March 30, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. at Saint Michael's Church, 458 Maple St., Livermore, CA 94550. A burial will follow at Saint Michael's Cemetery and reception at Saint Michael's Hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Michael's School or UCF Benioff Oakland Children's Hospital in Bonnie's memory.

"Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May her soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen."

### Margaret Rose Bartlett Feb. 7, 1929 — Feb. 14, 2026



Margaret Rose Bartlett, age 97, passed away peacefully on Feb. 14, 2026, in Livermore, California.

Margaret was born on Feb. 7, 1929, in Maple Heights, Ohio. She lived a full and faithful life centered on family, love, and her Catholic faith.

She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, John E. Bartlett, and her son, Richard R. Bartlett. Margaret was a devoted and loving mother to her four boys: John J. Bartlett, Frank F. Bartlett, Donald D. Bartlett, and the late Richard R. Bartlett. Her

greatest joy was her family. She was blessed with eight grandchild-

dren and eight great-grandchildren, each of whom brought her immense pride and happiness.

Margaret was known for her warm smile and gentle spirit. She was a devoted mother and grandmother who always put her family first. An avid baseball fan, she loved watching the game and cheering on her favorite teams. Her faith was a steady foundation throughout her life, guiding her with grace and strength.

Margaret's legacy of love, kindness, and unwavering devotion to her family will live on in all who knew her.

### Jeffery Dale Benton Jan. 9, 1959 — March 8, 2026



Jeffery Dale Benton, resident of the Livermore area for his entire life, passed away at the age of 67 on Sunday, March 8, 2026. Jeff was born in Livermore on Jan. 9, 1959, at St. Paul's Hospital. He graduated from Livermore High School in 1977 and received his machinist certification from Chabot College. He worked as a journeyman machinist for 47 years. He was preceded in death by his parents Don and Betty Benton and his brother-in-law John Dudley. He is survived by his daughter Breanna Sprock (husband Drew), his two grandchildren

Clara and Leland, his siblings Danna Dudley, Keith Benton

(wife Comelia), Martha McGrath (husband Steve), and numerous nieces and nephews. Jeff was a lover of animals and being outdoors. One of his favorite hobbies was to go gold panning in the Sierra Nevada Foothills. Services were held on Sunday, March 15, 2026, at Tri-Valley Church of Christ in Livermore. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to www.animalrescuectrcy.org in Jeff's honor. Callaghan Mortuary is honored to be serving the Benton family. An online guestbook is available for condolences at www.callaghanmortuary.com.



SJ Martin competes in the 2025 CIF State Girls Wrestling Championship, where she finished as the runner-up in the 120-pound division. Martin returned this season to become Granada's first-ever state wrestling champion, and is now the top-ranked high school wrestler in the nation. (Photo courtesy of SJ Martin)

## 'SJ' Martin Ranked No. 1 in Nation by Sports Illustrated

By Vivien Wenneker

LIVERMORE — Stevie Joyce "SJ" Martin of Granada High School has been ranked No. 1 in the nation by Sports Illustrated for high school women's wrestling at 120 pounds.

Martin also made school history this season, winning a California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) State Championship title, and becoming Granada's first-ever state champion in wrestling. This makes her the second state champion ever from Livermore, joining Garen McDonald (Livermore High School, Class of 1980) who won the title 46 years ago.

Beyond the state title, Martin is also the school's first four-time CIF State qualifier, first four-time CIF North Coast Section placer, and first two-time state placer, according to Granada athletic director Eileen Greenlee.

"SJ becoming a state champion and being ranked No. 1 in the nation means a lot to the Granada community," said Granada Principal Clark Conover. "We are all proud of SJ. She works hard at her academics and her sport. She represents what we want our student-athletes to strive for."

Despite facing some adversity at the start of the season, due to a torn ACL, Martin pushed through and made it back in time for the state tournament and post-season.

While the ranking has solidified her career and place among the top high school wrestlers in the nation, Martin is extremely grateful for the opportunity to compete this season.

"It's been an honor to step out on the mat this season, especially after the

injuries I faced at the beginning," Martin said. "With regard to the ranking, I always say that rankings don't matter because then you have more of a target on your back, but being that person now, it just shows how much I've grown as a wrestler throughout my high school career."

Among her other achievements, Martin took second last year at the Women's National Championships, which qualified her to represent Team USA at the 17-and-under Pan-American Games in Rio De Janeiro where she won a gold medal in the summer of 2025.

Martin comes from a family of wrestlers; her father, Steve Martin, owns a wrestling gym in Castro Valley, called the ZMATA Grappling Academy. She started wrestling in sixth grade and thought that since she'd already tried judo and jiu-jitsu, it wouldn't be too dissimilar as a grappling sport.

"It seemed like a lot of fun, which was why I started it in the first place because I thought I would have fun doing it and I also had friends who were doing it too," Martin said.

According to Steve Martin, his daughter has been ranked in the nation for some time, but this year was the first time she was ranked first.

"She's been working hard for a long time since she started in junior high, so this wasn't a surprise to us," he shared.

"I come from a family of wrestlers, but none of us have been as good as SJ, she's the best one. I wrestled in high school and college, and my dad was also a wrestler. SJ's little sister is a freshman at Granada, who

sustained an injury this season, so she was out for the year, but she's pretty good herself and so we're looking forward to her career at Granada as well."

Following her graduation this spring, Martin has a scholarship to wrestle at Lehigh University for its Division 1 wrestling program next fall. She's most excited for the high-level, coed she'll have there, and getting to compete with high-level partners, in addition to the opportunities to improve her wrestling.

With a GPA of 4.1, Martin takes pride in her academics and is equally looking forward to her studies. At Granada, she is a candidate for the International Baccalaureate diploma, which was one of her main reasons for choosing to attend, along with wanting to join the wrestling team.

"I've taken hard classes throughout high school, because I know it's going to set me up for my future," said Martin. "So that was another reason why I chose Lehigh, for the wonderful academic opportunities there."

Beyond college, Martin says she's still undecided on her future career plans but is interested in perhaps pursuing a career in the medical field or something that would allow her to work with athletes.

"I feel like I definitely can't escape wrestling, especially because my family owns a martial arts gym, so that's been a part of my life for a very long time," Martin said. "I'm always going to be involved in wrestling, but I would like to... become a dermatologist or something of that nature, which I'm not really sure about yet, but I have plenty of time to decide."

## Prado Makes History with Emerald's First Home Run

By David Scholz

DUBLIN — Being the first ever has a pretty good ring to it, and Aadyn Prado owns that distinction in the annals of the Emerald High School baseball program, now in its second year.

The first new comprehensive high school to open in Alameda County in over 50 years, Emerald High School welcomed its first students to its permanent campus in August 2024.

And one of them just made school history. On March 3, the right-handed-hitting 16-year-old junior, Prado, sat back and stroked a 1-0 pitch well over 315 feet to easily clear the left-field fence at Fallon Sports Park. And in the process, he etched his name into Aerouant lore — a nod to the school's Celtic dragon mascot.

"Making history, it felt pretty cool," said Prado of his first home run this season.

Recalling the at-bat, Prado said the Bradshaw Christian pitcher had just missed on the first pitch. So, he expected a good pitch would be coming to avoid falling further behind in the count.

He sat back on a slow pitch and leaned into the role of Celtic beast, connecting for a 315-foot blast he'll never forget.

"I knew it was going far, but I didn't think it was going that far," he said when he saw it take off. "So, I started running super fast."

But the reality of the moment quickly set in when the first base coach let him know what had just happened.

The ball, which hit the netting beyond Fallon Sports Park's outfield fencing and bounced back into the field of play off the surrounding sidewalk, now sits in Prado's bedroom.

Knowing it's a piece of history, he expects to give it to the school if officials want to display the memento in the trophy case.

His excited teammates were jumping up and down as he circled the bases.

"They rushed me," Prado said as he approached home plate. "I saw they were very fired up."

For the game, Prado, in his first year at Emerald High starting in the middle infield positions, went 1-2, adding two runs and two RBIs.

With short fences at the opposing ballparks of Deer

Valley and Millennium high schools where Emerald will travel, Prado thinks he might have a chance to hit another home run and make more history. Prado's prowess may be connected to some baseball lineage with a relative who is currently playing in the Detroit Tigers organization.

Personal accomplishment aside, Prado is more excited that it proves his team can compete with the area's bigger names.

"We are definitely a team that is upcoming," he said. "We have special things going on over here."



Aadyn Prado is all smiles after launching the first-ever home run for the Emerald High School Aerouants. With a bright season ahead, Prado is proving that this new program is ready to compete with the best. (Photo courtesy of Emerald High School Athletic Boosters)

## LARPD Starts Youth Soccer League

LIVERMORE — The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARPD) is now accepting registrations for a youth soccer league that will start play in August.

Designed for players of all experience levels, LARPD said the league will emphasize skill-building, teamwork and sportsmanship.

"This league is about creating a space where kids can learn the game, build confidence and play with friends," said Sebastian Forero, who will serve as league coordinator. "I'm passionate about the game and excited to share that with our community through a fun and positive soccer experience."

The league will include weekly practices and dedicated field space for teams.

LARPD said the league will include four age-based divisions for players from 5 to 12.

Registration fees range from \$235 to \$250, plus the cost of a team uniform.

Financial help will be available through the Community Support Program funded by the LARPD Foundation.

Players will also have access to optional group training sessions.

Volunteer coaches will also receive training and ongoing guidance from LARPD.

Matches will begin Saturday, Aug. 22, at LARPD facilities throughout Livermore with the season running eight to nine weeks.

To register, or for more information, go to [larpd.org/soccer-league](http://larpd.org/soccer-league).

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## Las Positas College to Host Superhero-Themed 5K

LIVERMORE — Las Positas College (LPC) will host an on-campus superhero-themed 5K run to support higher education and non-profit organizations from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 25.

The 2026 LPC Run for Higher Education & Tri-Valley Non-Profits is open to all ages and ability levels and will also include a 1-mile walk.

In partnership with the Livermore Chamber of Commerce (LCC) and Tri-Valley Non-Profit Alliance (TVNPA), this year's event will allow participants to pledge their registration fees directly to one of a dozen nonprofit groups, including Special Olympics Northern Califor-

nia, Valley Humane Society, Open Heart Kitchen, City-Serve, the LPC Foundation and TVNPA.

LPC said the superhero theme celebrates the everyday heroes serving the region through their nonprofit work.

"This event reflects the heart of our mission — community, service, and opportunity," said LPC President Dyrrell Foster. "Our nonprofit partners are true superheroes. By bringing our campus and community together, we're not only promoting health and wellness, we're directly investing in the organizations that strengthen our region every day."

Early bird registration for

either the 5K or the 1-mile walk is \$30 until April 22, when it goes up to \$40. The cost for LPC students is \$15.

Registration includes a race T-shirt and superhero cape.

There will be a com-

plementary barbeque and marketplace celebration, sponsored by the LCC, with local vendors and music following the run.

To register, go to [bit.ly/LPCRUN26](http://bit.ly/LPCRUN26).

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# LEGAL NOTICES/CLASSIFIEDS

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## LEGAL NOTICES

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 620924

The following person(s) doing business as: Emixmia, 40459 Landon Ave, Fremont, CA 94538 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Emilie-Anne Roxas, 40459 Landon Ave, Fremont, CA 94538. This business is conducted by Co-Partners. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Emilie-Anne Roxas, General Partner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 18, 2026. Expires February 17, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6741. Published March 5, 12, 19, 26, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 620512

The following person(s) doing business as: Pillowcrave, 1050 Larkspur Drive, Livermore, CA 94551 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Pillowcrave LLC, 1050 Larkspur Drive, Livermore, CA 94551. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Roy Solorio, COO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 29, 2026. Expires February 28, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6742. Published March 5, 12, 19, 26, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 620972

The following person(s) doing business as: Realside Records, 11501 Dublin Blvd, Ste 200-466, Dublin, CA 94568 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Realside Holdings LLC, 11501 Dublin Blvd, Ste 200-466, Dublin, CA 94568. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Marcellus McCarver, Manager. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 19, 2026. Expires February 18, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6743. Published March 5, 12, 19, 26, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621086

The following person(s) doing business as: Proflow Supply Chain Solutions, 7920 Wentworth PL, Newark, CA 94560 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Emma Lara, 7920 Wentworth PL, Newark, CA 94560. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Emma Lara, Manager. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 25, 2026. Expires February 24, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6744. Published March 5, 12, 19, 26, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621088

The following person(s) doing business as: Okaya Insurance Agency LLC, 783 Facon Way, Livermore, CA 94551 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Okaya Insurance Agency LLC, 783 Facon Way, Livermore, CA 94551. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Simrat K. Pabla, Member. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 25, 2026. Expires February 24, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6745. Published March 5, 12, 19, 26, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621182

The following person(s) doing business as: Authentic Beginnings, 1244 Roosevelt Ave, Hayward, CA 94544 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Authentic Beginnings LLC, 2648 International Blvd Ste 301 PMB 137, Oakland, CA 94601. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 9/1/2025. Signature of Registrant/s/: Charles Onyemem, Managing Member. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 27, 2026. Expires February 26, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6746. Published March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 620414

The following person(s) doing business as: Bzy Bee Event Management, 249 W. Jackson ST #2055, Hayward, CA 94544 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Shawn Renee Robinson, 249 W. Jackson ST \$ 2055, Hayward, CA 94544. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 6/6/2022. Signature of Registrant/s/: Shawn Renee Robinson, Founder, CEO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on January 26, 2026. Expires January 25, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6747. Published March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621126

The following person(s) doing business as: Akha Collective

5501 Claremont Ave, Apt C, Oakland, CA 94618 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Nicha Goldman, 5501 Claremont Ave, Apt C, Oakland, CA 94618. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 2/24/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Nicha Goldman, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 25, 2026. Expires February 24, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6748. Published March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621154

The following person(s) doing business as: Oh's Nail and Spa, 6635 Dublin Blvd, Ste C, Dublin, CA 94568 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): MK Beauty Corporation, 3455 Hillsborough Way, San Jose, CA 95121. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 2/26/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Miki Nakayama, President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 27, 2026. Expires February 26, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6749. Published March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621178

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. Pleasanton Auto Repair; 2. Pleasanton Auto Repair and Service; 3. Pleasanton Auto Service, 3880 Old Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Pleasanton Auto Repair Inc., 3880 Old Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 1/1/1991. Signature of Registrant/s/: James Bowen, CEO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 27, 2026. Expires February 26, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6750. Published March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621030

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. The Curated Concierge; 2. Your Perks Passport, 701 S L St, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Lindsey Knight, 701 S L St, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Lindsey Knight, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 23, 2026. Expires February 22, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6751. Published March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621197

The following person(s) doing business as: Golden Crumb Bakery, 16183 Ashland Ave, Apt. 102, San Lorenzo, CA 94580. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Nur Ivanov, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 2, 2026. Expires March 1, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6752. Published March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621279

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. East Bay New Parenthood Consultation and Therapy; 2. New Parenthood Consultation and Therapy; 3. Bay Area New Parents; 4. EBCAT, 220 S Livermore Ave, #7, Livermore, CA 94550-9998 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Vanessa Hernandez, 220 S Livermore Ave, #7, Livermore, CA 94550-9998. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Vanessa Hernandez, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 4, 2026. Expires March 3, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6753. Published March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 2026.

Clerk of Alameda on March 5, 2026. Expires March 4, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6759. Published March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621097

The following person(s) doing business as: Happy Body Connections, 1152 Farmington Way, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Lindi LaBine, 1152 Farmington Way, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 1/1/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Lindi LaBine, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 25, 2026. Expires February 24, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6754. Published March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621102

The following person(s) doing business as: All Creatures Veterinary Hospital, 6612 Dublin Blvd, Dublin, CA 94568 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Dublin Veterinary Services Inc., 6612 Dublin Blvd, Dublin, CA 94568. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 2/1/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Harinder Judge, President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 25, 2026. Expires February 24, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6755. Published March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 620663

The following person(s) doing business as: Beachcorner Studio, 154 Jensen Way, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Loren C. Oik, 154 Jensen Way, Livermore, CA 94550; Elizabeth L. Oik, 154 Jensen Way, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by a Married Couple. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 2/29/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Loren C. Oik, Co-Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 5, 2026. Expires February 4, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6756. Published March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621397

The following person(s) doing business as: Maia Energetics, 1278 Asti CT, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Rain Shine and Rainbows, LLC, 1278 Asti CT, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 3/9/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Corey Vadurro, Manager. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 9, 2026. Expires March 8, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6757. Published March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 620788

The following person(s) doing business as: Desserts and Doughs by Dana, 452 Windermere Cir, Livermore, CA 94551 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Dana Youngblood, 452 Windermere Cir, Livermore, CA 94551. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 1/16/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Dana Youngblood, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on February 11, 2026. Expires February 10, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6758. Published March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621300

The following person(s) doing business as: My Profit Group, Inc., 6436 Tiffany Common, Livermore, CA 94551 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): My Profit Group, Inc., 6436 Tiffany Common, Livermore, CA 94551. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 2/13/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Harshavardhan Jadhav, President. This statement was filed with the County

Clerk of Alameda on March 5, 2026. Expires March 4, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6759. Published March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621185

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. Yesu Healthcare Transportation; 2. Yesu Medical Courier; 3. Yesu Healthcare Logistics; 4. Yesu Transportation; 5. Yesu Transportation Service, 5648 Bay Street, APT 421, Emeryville, CA 94562 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Yesu Nent LLC, PO Box 8511 Emeryville, CA 94562. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 3/2/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Surafel Tensai, Managing Member. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 2, 2026. Expires March 1, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6760. Published March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 2026.

### STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME ORIGINAL FILE NO. 611134

The person(s) listed below have abandoned the use of the following fictitious business name(s): Diablitos Tree Service, 66 Franklin ST, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94607. Registered by the following owner(s): Carlos Heriberto Berumen Ornelas, 66 Franklin ST, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94607. The fictitious business name statement was filed on 12/11/2024 in the County of Alameda. This business was conducted by an individual. Signature of Registrant/s/: Carlos Heriberto Berumen Ornelas, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 3, 2026. The Independent, Legal No. 6761. Published March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 2026.

### ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 26CV176009 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF ALAMEDA TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

**Petitioner:** Skylla Jennifer Brown 2772 Provence Court Livermore, CA 94550  
 I filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:  
**Present Name:** Skylla Jennifer Brown  
**Proposed Name:** Skylla Jennifer Pineda  
**THE COURT ORDERS** that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

**NOTICE OF HEARING**  
**Date:** 05/22/2026  
**Time:** 9:00 AM  
**Place:** 514 The address of the court is: Superior Court of California 24405 Amador Street Hayward, CA 94544  
 A copy of this Order To Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation printed in this county: The Independent Newspaper 2250 First Street, Livermore, CA 94550  
 Dated: 03/17/2026 /s/: Michael Markman, Judge.  
 The Independent, Legal No. 6762. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621462

The following person(s) doing business as: Wings 4 Words Speech Therapy, 5375 Sandra Way, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Rachel Muldoon, 5375 Sandra Way, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by an individual. The

registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 3/12/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Rachel Muldoon, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 10, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6763. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621523

The following person(s) doing business as: Pawse Pet Furniture, 567 Oak Ridge Lane, Alameda, CA 94501 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Hiu Tung Lai, 567 Oak Ridge Lane, Alameda, CA 94501. This business is conducted by a Married Couple. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Hiu Tung Lai, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 13, 2026. Expires March 12, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6764. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621357

The following person(s) doing business as: Mayacamas Weather Consultants, 4425 View Street, Oakland, CA 94611 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): John R. Monteverdi, 4425 View Street, Oakland, CA 94611. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 3/11/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: John Paul Monteverdi, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 9, 2026. Expires March 8, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6765. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621470

The following person(s) doing business as: Hella Dough, 1375 Pullman Way, Oakland, CA 94607 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Allison Northam, 1375 Pullman Way, Oakland, CA 94607. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 3/7/26. Signature of Registrant/s/: Allison Northam, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 11, 2026. Expires March 10, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6766. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621555

The following person(s) doing business as: Schememotone Music, 726 E 24th ST, Oakland, CA 94606 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Marc Levinthal, 726 24th ST, Oakland, CA 94606. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Marc Levinthal, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 16, 2026. Expires March 15, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6767. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621612

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. Casa Real at Ruby Hill Winery; 2. Casa Real; 3. Casa Real Event Venue, 410 Vineyard Ave, Pleasanton, CA 94566 is hereby registered by

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621562

The following person(s) doing business as: Maxwell Process Serving, 849 E. Stanley Blvd, Unit 122, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Tyler Maxwell, 849 E Stanley Blvd, Unit 122, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Tyler Maxwell, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 16, 2026. Expires March 15, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6768. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621589

The following person(s) doing business as: Livemore #2, 1025 North Vasco Rd, Livermore, CA 94551 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): R.A.T. Oil, Inc., 1045 Airport Blvd, S San Francisco, CA 94080. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 3/12/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Jonathan Ariza Aguilar. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 17, 2026. Expires March 16, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6769. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621408

The following person(s) doing business as: Patch Ya Later, 1030 Centre Ct, Alameda CA 94502 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Meaghan Mena, 1030 Centre Ct, Alameda, CA 94502. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 2/10/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Meaghan Mena, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 10, 2026. Expires March 9, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6770. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621624

The following person(s) doing business as: HydroBlast, 2150 Portola Avenue, Suite D298, Livermore, CA 94551 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Jeremy Laine, 2150 Portola Avenue, Suite D298, Livermore, CA 94551. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Jeremy Laine, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 18, 2026. Expires March 17, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6771. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621612

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. Casa Real at Ruby Hill Winery; 2. Casa Real; 3. Casa Real Event Venue, 410 Vineyard Ave, Pleasanton, CA 94566 is hereby registered by

the following owner(s): Beet Catering, Inc, 316 Stealth Ct, Livermore, CA 94551. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 10/10/2008. Signature of Registrant/s/: Read Phillips, Vice President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 18, 2026. Expires March 17, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6772. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621612

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. Pal Event Center; 2. The Palm; 3. The Palm in the Vineyard, 1184 Vineyard Ave, Pleasanton, CA 94566 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Beet Catering, Inc, 316 Stealth Ct, Livermore, CA 94551. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 10/10/2008. Signature of Registrant/s/: Read Phillips, Vice President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 18, 2026. Expires March 17, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6773. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

### FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 621620

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. Llave Floral; 2. Llave Floral Studio; 3. Llave Studio, 1310 Wood Street, Oakland, CA 94607 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Veronica Lave, 1310 Wood Street, Oakland, CA 94607. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 3/1/2026. Signature of Registrant/s/: Veronica Lave, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on March 18, 2026. Expires March 17, 2031. The Independent, Legal No. 6774. Published March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2026.

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 Follow: TRI-VALLEY ANIMAL RESCUE on Facebook, and Instagram

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**BE WARY** of out of area companies. Check with the local Better Business Bureau before you send money or fees. Read and understand any contracts before you sign. Shop around for rates.

**TO PLACE CLASSIFIED ADS** go to [bit.ly/Ingo-Classifieds](http://bit.ly/Ingo-Classifieds) or call (925)243-8000

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## Professional's Choice Real Estate Directory

Local guide to the Valley

# Story Meets Art in 'Light of the West' Show at Library

By Christina Cavallaro

LIVERMORE — The Livermore Art Association (LAA) in its second year partnering with the annual Livermore Reads Together

Parker, is the first novel by a local author selected for the program.

"Silver Lies," set in an 1879 Colorado mining town, was the first book in the "Silver Rush Mysteries"

to the light of innovation that characterizes Livermore and the West, I see light as being central to Livermore's identity as a Western city."

With this show, LAA has moved beyond a traditional

explore concepts from the book, Western culture, and the idea of place through their own perspectives. The show connects reading, storytelling and visual expression.

the artists' interpretations of the exhibition's theme.

"Each artist interprets it through their own lens, and together those perspectives form a larger narrative about place and belonging," Triolo said.

This year's judge, Tri-Valley artist and educator Zina Kassab, awarded Best in Show to Mary Young for her painting "Yosemite Trees." The judge expressed a love for the colors of the water and the way the sunlight on the treetops and the surface of the water draws the viewer's eyes to the middle ground.

There were four honorable mentions. One winner, "The Luminous Iron Road" by Angela Cox, also received the Library Award, a special honor given to an artist whose work best captures the spirit of the community reading program.

Kassab appreciated the "excellent perspective in the road leading the eye into the soft color, contrasting with the trees in the foreground."

Paul Sevilla, head of adult programs for the Civic Center Library, presented

the award at the opening reception on March 7 and commented on the turnout.

"Approximately 165 art lovers joined us to celebrate and support the incredibly talented artists in our community," Sevilla said. "The energy, creativity, and appreciation shared by everyone made it a truly special event. A heartfelt thank you to the Livermore Art Association for organizing such a wonderful show. We're grateful for all you do to make events like this possible."

The "Light of the West" art exhibit will be on display throughout March at the Civic Center Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave



The photograph "Sheep in Foggy Vineyard" by Bonnie Polson received an honorable mention in the "Light of the West" exhibition now on display at the Livermore Public Library. The photographer used a combination of monochrome and black and white to show the poses of the sheep, and the textures that added contrast. (Photo courtesy of Bonnie Polson)

program, is showcasing a group exhibition at the Library's Civic Center Gallery through March 31.

The exhibit brings together local visual artists responding to the reading program selection, chosen by the community last November in online and in-person voting from six Western-themed titles suggested by the library. The winning title, "Silver Lies," by Livermore resident Ann

published in 2003.

In support of the public library reading program, now in its 20th year, LAA Show Chair Heather Dever said the theme for the art show was inspired by her feeling that Livermore is the epitome of the American West. "And light is at the center of that," Dever said. "From the old (Centennial) Light Bulb to the lasers they use at the lab, to the beautiful physical light of our area,

exhibit format, said LAA Publicity Chair Assal Triolo, providing another way to bring the featured book to life for residents.

"It's been exciting to see how a book can inspire visual storytelling in such different ways," Triolo said. "We're essentially bringing the story off the page and into the gallery space."

Through largely the media of painting and photography, the artists collectively

The theme "Light of the West" lends itself beautifully to this layered approach, Triolo said. "For many artists, "light" can represent landscape, identity, change, or even personal journeys. When all of these interpretations come together in one space, the exhibition becomes a reflection of the broader community."

Just as a reader's individual experience with a story is wholly unique, so too are

## Hope Hospice Sets Annual Hike for Hope

LIVERMORE — Hope Hospice, which offers end-of-life care and support for patients and their families, will hold its annual Hike for Hope fundraiser at Del Valle Regional Park on Saturday, May 9.

"More than ever, families are seeking hospice care they can trust that puts people before profit," said Anthony Lupian, senior vice president for By the Bay Health.

Hope Hospice, which serves about 2,000 patients in the East Bay area, merged with By the Bay Health and

Mission Hospice & Home Care in 2024 to create the largest independent non-profit hospice organization in Northern California.

Proceeds from the annual Hike for Hope help fund Hope Hospice services, which includes hospice and palliative care, dementia care education, grief support and family caregiver resources.

"As an independent non-profit agency, Hope Hospice's top priority is excellence (of care) and answering first and foremost to the patients and families we

serve," Lupian said. "Community generosity through events like Hike for Hope helps sustain our mission, so we are grateful to each and every person who shows up for this in support of a great cause."

The hike will get underway at 8:30 a.m., followed by a barbeque and raffle.

Registration fees, including an event T-shirt, are \$35 for adults and \$15 for youths from 13 to 17. Kids 12 and under are free. Parking at De Valle Regional Park is included.

To register, call 925-829-

8770 or go to [thehikeforhope.com](http://thehikeforhope.com).

## Donor Will Match Gifts to LVO

LIVERMORE — An anonymous donor has pledged to match \$100,000 in new or increased contributions to the Livermore Valley Opera (LVO), according to the nonprofit organization which is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year.

"Reaching our 35th anniversary is a remarkable milestone for any arts organization," said Jonathan Kleid, president of the LVO Board of Directors. "This generous matching challenge from an anonymous donor celebrates our history while inviting the entire community to help sustain opera in the Tri-Valley for the next generation."

LVO said donations would be matched dollar for dollar from April 1 through July 31.

Founded in 1991, LVO has brought professional opera productions to the region for more than three decades while expanding access to the arts through education and community engagement. It is a resident company at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore.

"This anniversary is both a celebration of what Livermore Valley Opera has built and a commitment to what comes next," said Artistic Director Eric Mills. "The matching challenge directly supports the productions our audiences

experience on stage and helps ensure that opera continues to thrive in the Livermore Valley for years to come."

To donate to the 35th Anniversary Matching Challenge, go to [livermorevalleyopera.com](http://livermorevalleyopera.com) and click on 'Matching Donations.'

### LIVERMORE CALIFORNIA

#### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

LIVERMORE RESIDENTS: Share your talents with the community by volunteering on one of the City of Livermore's advisory bodies. We are accepting applications now through April 3, 2026 at 5:00 PM.

##### Historic Preservation Commission (1 Vacancy)

Join us in identifying, protecting, and preserving Livermore's historic resources. The Commission's successes are visible in the beauty of Livermore's historic structures and landmarks.

(1) Regular Term ending 5/1/2030  
Meeting 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM  
Next meeting: April 2<sup>nd</sup>

##### Library Board of Trustees (2 Vacancies)

Join us in helping to set goals and objectives for the broad variety of services and programs the Livermore libraries provide.

(2) Regular Terms ending 6/1/2029  
Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM  
Next meeting: March 26<sup>th</sup>

##### Livermore Housing Authority (1 Vacancy)

Join us in administering and overseeing affordable housing for low-income families, seniors, and persons with disabilities in the City of Livermore.

(1) Unexpired Term ending 1/1/2027 and a possible regular term ending 1/1/2031, subject to City Council approval.  
Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 5:30 PM  
Meeting location: 3203 Leahy Way

**SAVE THE DATE!** In-person interviews tentatively scheduled the week of April 6<sup>th</sup> or April 13<sup>th</sup>. For more information or to apply, please visit [www.livermoreca.gov/AB](http://www.livermoreca.gov/AB), call the City Clerk's office at (925) 960-4200, or email: [cityclerk@livermoreca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@livermoreca.gov).



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