

General Election

New 5th District Up For Grabs

Ex-Rep. McNerney, Shoemaker Spar for Redrawn Senate

By Larry Altman

REGIONAL — Redistricting has moved the Tri-Valley into the 5th District of the state Senate where a Democratic former Congressman from Pleasanton faces off against a longtime Republican businessman from the San Joaquin Valley.

The newly drawn lines following the 2020 Census shifted Livermore, Pleasanton, Sunol and Dublin out of their former home in the 7th District. Now they are united with communities in the western portion of San Joaquin County, including Stockton, Mountain House and Tracy.

Jerry McNerney, first elected to Congress in 2006 to represent a district that included the Tri-Valley, moved

(See SENATE, page 14)

Livermore Sued Over Land Buy

Citizen Group Says City Hasn't Followed Notification Rules

By Larry Altman

LIVERMORE — The Citizens for Balanced Growth (CBG) group has filed a complaint against Livermore, alleging officials breached an agreement to meet with the group before the City Council approved the purchase of the 82-acre Hartford Hills property outside the urban growth boundary.

The complaint filed in Alameda County Superior Court on Oct. 9 does not appear to try to stop the nearly completed transaction authorized in July, but demands the city meet with the group and restore \$980,000 from the Dougherty Valley Settlement Agreement (DVSA) Fund that was used toward the \$1.96-million land buy. The city said it intends to preserve the land as open space, although it has not taken any action that would guarantee that.

The 1999 DVSA stip-

(See HARTFORD, page 17)



Runners, walkers, strollers ... and barkers turned out for Pleasanton's annual Halloween Spirit run on Sunday, Oct 13. The event, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Pleasanton, offered 5k, 10k and kids' challenges. The proceeds go to scholarships for local students and to support local nonprofit organizations. (Photo — Doug Jorgensen)

General Election

Brown, Balch Vie for Mayor's Seat

Race Driven by Pleasanton's Finances, Housing, Water Supply

By David Jen

PLEASANTON — Mayor Karla Brown is seeking a second term as Mayor of Pleasanton, presenting herself as a proven leader who has steered the city through pandemic recovery, historic inflation and the revelation of city financial troubles.

Along with listing the

arrival of businesses 10x Genomics and Kaiser Permanente as highlights during her term, Brown counted the city-sponsored parklet and small-business-loan programs during the depths of the pandemic as responsible for saving Pleasanton's downtown.

"I understand that our downtown is the gem of our

city," said Brown. "It is the hub of our community; it is where people look to determine if we are economically successful."

Councilmember Jack Balch is challenging Brown for the mayoral seat on a platform of changing toward longer-term planning.

"Pleasanton's a beautiful city, and I think that it's been

(See MAYOR, page 16)

General Election

Term, Urban Limits on Dublin Ballot

Measures Give Council New Power, Extend Length of Service

By Chris Winters

DUBLIN — One measure on the ballot Nov. 5 asks Dublin residents to vote on whether to give their city council power to annex open land outside the city's urban limit line (ULL), and the other, if approved, would extend council term limits.

Measure II is officially named the "Dublin Traffic Relief, Clean Air/Open Space Preservation Measure." If it passes, it will allow the city to pursue annexation of the Crosby property, a 180-acre square of open land in unincorporated Alameda County between Dublin and Livermore.

Because the property lies outside the city's urban limit line, it has been protected from development by the 2014 Open Space Initiative, which states that the city may consider development on the property as

of 2024 if the voters approve of moving the ULL, clearing the way for annexation. The city also wants to extend Dublin Boulevard to connect with North Canyons Parkway in Livermore and had proposed splitting the \$110 million cost of the roadway with Livermore.

Environmental organizations Save Mount Diablo and Friends of Livermore have joined in a suit against City of Dublin in order to oppose breaking the ULL. The City of Livermore also favors maintaining the status quo and has communicated to Dublin that if the annexation proceeds, it would not contribute money to the road extension project.

Yes on Measure II

Emails from The Independent sent to the Yes on Measure II campaign were not returned before our deadline.

The measure was ap-

proved 3-2, with Vice Mayor Sherry Hu, and council members Jean Josey and Janine Thalblum voting in favor of it, and Mayor Michael McCriston and Councilmember Kashef Qaadri opposing it.

According to the campaign's argument statement in favor of the measure, passing the measure would allow the city to complete the road without using taxpayer funds by permitting "limited commercial" development to be built on 80 acres of the property. The remaining 100 acres would remain open space.

The campaign claims the road and development will reduce traffic on I-580, provide high-paying jobs, and retain the open space buffer between Dublin and Livermore. The measure does not overturn previous voter-passed restrictions against residential development on the property, nor does

(See MEASURE, page 18)

General Election

Open Seats Could Shape the Future Of Livermore

Two Winners May Shift Political Balance

By Larry Altman

LIVERMORE — Voters in two Livermore districts will select new City Council representatives on their November ballots.

Three candidates are vying for Livermore's District 3 seat, which represents the southeast portion of the city roughly bordered on the north and northwest by Fourth Street and the railroad tracks, the Arroyo Mocho Channel to the southwest, and city limits to the east and south. The winner will replace City Councilmember Brittini Kiick, who did not run for re-election. The

choices are Planning Commissioner Steven Dunbar; David Farley, who serves on the Airport Commission; and Jeff Kaskey, a 43-year resident who has volunteered with or served with numerous civic organizations, including the city's Historic Preservation Commission.

District 4 covers the southern portion of the city below Stanley Boulevard and the channel, bounded by city limits on the east, west and south. Here physicist Tom Soules is facing Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District Trustee Kristie Wang. The winner will replace Vice Mayor Bob

(See COUNCIL, page 14)



Teriza Ylagan and her son, Lorenzo, 5, enjoy quiet pool time during The Wave's Sensory Splash program on Oct. 13. The program is for children susceptible to sensory overload. (See story on page 3.) (Photo — Doug Jorgensen)

General Election

For House, Swalwell Faces GOP Executive

Incumbent Congressman, Opponent Vin Kruttiventi Vie for 14th District Seat

By Larry Altman

REGIONAL — Democratic U.S. Rep. Eric Swalwell is seeking his seventh term representing most of the Tri-Valley in Congress. This year he faces Republican businessman Vin Kruttiventi.

The 14th District includes Livermore, Pleasanton, Union City, Ashland, San Lorenzo, Cherryland, Fairview, Castro Valley and portions of Hayward. Fifty-two percent of its registered voters

are Democrats, with 17% Republican.

Eric Swalwell

Swalwell, a former Dublin City Council Member and Alameda County deputy district attorney, said he plans to continue to focus on supporting the ValleyLink train system over the Altamont Pass. That planning stays on schedule, he said.

"We've seen recent federal funding for a hydrogen hub and look forward to ValleyLink being the first

(See CONGRESS, page 17)



Julie Dunkle of the Youth Voter Movement and League of Women Voters encourages Foothill High students to register to vote, or pre-register for future elections if they don't turn 18 before Nov. 5. Approximately 1,200 students attended the Oct. 9 drive. (Photo — Doug Jorgensen)

Pleasanton

Voter Drive Comes to Foothill High

Students Register to Vote, Learn Valuable Civics Lesson

By Ruth Roberts

PLEASANTON — Foothill High School students got an up-close lesson in civics last week during a voter registration rally for juniors and seniors.

Hosted by the Foothill Coalition for School Progress in conjunction with the League of Women Voters, the Oct. 9 event in the Foothill gymnasium offered an opportunity for students to pre-register for the next election cycle,

and for 18-year-old first-time voters to register for the General Election on Nov. 5.

Shivansh Bansal, student director of the Foothill Coalition for School Progress, along with student and local volunteers, helped the 1,200 students at the rally fill out their voter registration forms. Students under 18, pre-registered for the next General Election in 2028.

"This is the first high school voter registration

rally that Pleasanton has ever seen ... Amador (Valley High School) has been here for over 100 years, and we still beat them to it," Bansal said.

The registration program, started by the League of Women Voters, was developed following the Parkland, Florida, mass shooting in 2018 as a way to honor the students whose voices were silenced.

The Foothill rally included a video greeting

(See FOOTHILL, page 16)

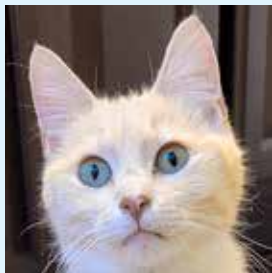
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PET OF THE WEEK



TECHIE

This stunning cat with her beautiful markings is the perfect playmate! She arrived at VHS in April and has been waiting for someone like you to scoop her up. Techie is ready to download all her love and affection straight to your heart. Ready to sync up with Techie? She's just a click away. Visit valleyhumane.org to learn more or email info@valleyhumane.org to start the adoption process. (Photo courtesy of Valley Humane Society)

Century Old Farm Bureau Reinvents Itself with New Generation of Leadership

By Christina Cavallaro

Agriculture has changed greatly over the past several decades, with a decline in large-scale ranching and rising trends in urban agriculture with emphasis on locally produced foods and farmers markets. The 114-year-old Livermore branch of the Alameda County Farm Bureau seemed stuck in time, with a dust-covered typewriter in the corner and a 15-year-old computer that most board members didn't use anyway, preferring snail mail to email. The Farm Board, whose mandate is to support agriculture in Alameda County, was running operations out of its offices on Enos Way in the same manner as it has for the past century.

Brenda Vieux, a board director of the bureau, said former Executive Director Sue Russo, after 31 years of dedication to the organization, said to her that she wasn't "doing this place any good." Russo stepped back. "She thought she was going to shut the doors and the (Livermore branch) Farm Bureau would go away," said Vieux, who is also Russo's niece. Russo's retirement instead presented an opportunity for a new wave of leadership.

"I love my Aunt Sue to death, and she was wonder-

ful, but she was old-school. It was time for her to move on." Vieux said membership had dwindled over the years and the aging board didn't understand new ways of tracking and attracting members online. "When I mention urban ag, they want to come out of their skin. And I have said, 'But that's their new farming. People doing these farmers markets and that type of thing. That's our new agriculture in Alameda County and we need to support them any way we can.'"

Vieux, who is also a director on the Alameda County Fair board, then met an enthusiastic young woman, Jenessa Hofmann, whose deep connection to the agriculture community in Sunol made Vieux think she might be just the kind of fresh energy the bureau needed for its survival, and revival. "People really respect her in the 4-H and FFA world," she said.

Hofmann took on the lead role at the bureau. The learning curve has been steep, Hofmann said, as she has pulled the organization through the struggle of updating decades of outdated systems to the needs of a new era.

For one thing, the group still had no website. "We technically have the website

purchased, but nothing built on it yet... so much new technology — not even really new technology, but dif-



Jenessa Hofmann

ferent, you know, for Sue."

The new website slated to launch Nov. 1 is tied to an overall shift in how the national organization of the American Farm Bureau and its affiliates at the state and county levels have gone about acquiring and tracking new memberships online. The U.S. agricultural organization and lobbying group, long considered the voice of agriculture, has evolved through updated newsletters and sponsorships, but the Livermore branch had not.

In addition to online optimization and focusing on bringing in new, younger members of future ranchers and farmers with roots in the Tri-Valley, Hofmann is

looking at the community as a whole.

Hofmann said the bureau should follow the example of the Sonoma County Farm Bureau. "We have the Livermore wineries here and they've accomplished a lot. They're not Farm Bureau members yet. I'd like to get them on board and see what we can do for them."

One of the greatest benefits of the bureau is the support it provides at the legislative level and keeping the agricultural community in the county informed. "Sometimes (legislation) accidentally gets passed up to our government to try and get voted on. And that could potentially be devastating for farmers and ranchers," Hofmann said.

Hofmann also has a long list of more day-to-day perks to update, like business discounts and beneficial programs, scholarship opportunities, and targeted workshops for members, not to mention adding to some of her popular new swag — bags, trucker hats with leather patches and Yeti cooler raffle prizes.

Hofmann moved herself to tears when she recounted a story of her father and his buddies riding their horses from Pleasanton to Shadow Cliffs when they were kids in the late 1970s and early '80s. "It's just a way of life

and a time I wish I had been born in."

"We have more pavement than we have grass and fields now, and it's sad," she said.

"I think that food and fiber is first and foremost in life. Ag is really important to me," she added, choking back emotion. She has tried to give her son Riley, 21, and daughter Addie, 15, as much of that lifestyle as possible.

Her daughter has been on horseback since she could walk, she said. "She still can't even ride a bike, but she can ride a horse."

Hofmann said the Farm Bureau is not just for people directly connected to agriculture though.

"It is for everybody in this county, is my thought. If

you put clothes on your back and food in your stomach every single day. Agriculture should be important to you."

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Livermore City Council Proposes 5% Pay Raise

By Larry Altman

The City Council on Monday introduced an ordinance Monday that would give panel members a 5% pay increase in December, the first in 18 years.

Once the ordinance is approved at a future council meeting, the panel sworn in following the November election will still remain the lowest paid of their counterparts in Dublin and Pleasanton.

"The City Council has not had a raise in years, and I think it's time to really consider that," said Mayor John Marchand, who was first elected to the council in 2005, and has served two stints as mayor — from 2011 to 2020, and since 2022.

The ordinance would raise council members' pay from the current \$1,070 a month to \$1,123.50 a month, and the mayor's pay from \$1,490 a month to \$1,564.50 a month. Together, the increase will cost the city an additional \$3,462 a year.

Comparatively, Dublin's city council members earn \$1,600 a month, with the mayor at \$2,400 a month. Pleasanton council members and the mayor are paid

\$1,321 a month and \$1,421 a month, respectively, according to a city report.

During public comments, former Councilmember Trish Munro said she supported the raise because low pay hinders people who are not wealthy, retired or earning a good income from serving.

"It makes it much more difficult for those people to be able to run for office and to have to juggle the necessity of full-time jobs (and) perhaps families (with) council duties, which are extensive," Munro said. "This at least gives a move in the right direction. It's not enough, but it's what we can do right now."

City Clerk Debbie Elam explained that the state legislature determines City Council compensation for general law cities based on population size, but Livermore voters enacted more restrictive pay limits when they approved Measure W in 2014. Measure W locked in the council pay at the time and excluded multi-year pay increases. The measure allowed for a single increase before each new term of office begins, but no increase has been made.

Council member Brittni Kiick, who was elected in

2020, but chose not to run for reelection this year because of family and professional commitments, said council members are asked to serve on numerous committees and attend county meetings during their own workdays. She said Marchand, who is retired, took up many of her duties because she had to attend to her job and family.

"Without an amendment to become a charter city, we will never reach a fair compensation level with other county bodies," Kiick said. "As you know, we are here every two weeks, sometimes more, to discuss general matters and vote on items. (There's) an extensive number of county bodies that we serve on as well."

City Council member Evan Branning requested that the issue be placed on a future agenda to address a pay increase in advance of 2026.

The council voted 4-0 to place the ordinance on a meeting agenda next month for a vote. Council member Ben Barrientos was absent from Monday's meeting.

In other action, the council voted 4-0 to amend the city's Development Code definition of "public" and

"quasi-public" use to include emergency shelters and supportive housing. Public and quasi-public entities include schools; civic, public utility and government buildings; churches; museums; art galleries; fire and police stations; reservoirs; libraries; parks; and hospitals.

Public and quasi-public uses are "typically valued as important to community identity and function" and are "conditionally allowed in all land use designations."

Emergency shelters and supportive housing would continue to be subject to review by the city's Planning Commission and conditional use permits to operate would be evaluated individually. Public and quasi-public projects are exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) rules, which apply to projects that have a potential to cause significant effects to the environment.

The city described Goodness Village at Crosswinds Church, which provides tiny homes for the unhoused, as one example of supportive housing.

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews Mark Sukkot, Feast of the Tabernacles

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews will celebrate Sukkot, or Feast of the Tabernacles, in Pleasanton on Sunday, Oct. 20, by building and decorating a traditional sukkah.

Sukkot is a weeklong celebration of the fall har-

vest. Historically, Jews would build temporary huts (sukkah) for community meals. The Feast of the Tabernacles also celebrates the Jewish exodus from Egypt.

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews is a secular organization for those who identify

as Jewish through family, culture and history. The Sukkot celebration will begin at 10 a.m.

For more information, including where the Sukkot will be held, email culturaljews@gmail.com or call 925-399-8029.

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The Wave Creates a Calm and Quiet Space for Neurodiverse Kids

By Christina Cavallaro

Teriza Ylagan and her son Lorenzo, 5, made the drive from Oakley last Sunday morning, to attend the first ever Sensory Splash offered at The Wave in Dublin. Sensory Splash is an open, recreational swim for the special needs and neurodiverse communities, designed to foster a calm and comfortable environment for those with sensory sensitivities.

There is no music played, no whistles used (except for emergencies) and admission is capped at 40 people, which includes a caregiver who must accompany each participant and be within arm's reach in the water at all times. The \$6 participant fee covers both parties as a two-for-one deal.

"It's quite a drive, but it's so worth it," Ylagan said as Lorenzo splashed around, playing with a colorful ar-

ray of sensory-friendly toys provided by pool staff. "You can just see that he's regulated — this is his happy place for sure, in the water."

But should Lorenzo or other participants feel overstimulated at any point or just want to take a break from pool time, there's a conference room that has been transformed into the "Quiet Room," outfitted with soft play mats and adaptive toys. A large screen TV played a soothing beach scene with the soft sounds of waves.

The aquatic center aims to offer the swim once monthly to start but is open to expanding if the demand for it is there.

Ylagan guessed it would be. "We're happy to be here and have fun. I like that this is a safe time for children on the spectrum. I love that little sensory calming room. I don't think there are a lot (of these programs), it would be

nice to have more. I know a lot of mommies that want to do more."

In fact, the program's inception was the result of another mother like Ylagan and her honest conversation with Taralyn Wood, aquatics recreation coordinator for the City of Dublin. The mother had come to the water park on a Tuesday last July, thinking it might be a lower attendance day, but the stimulation proved too much for her autistic son.

"I sat with them for a little bit," Wood said, "and she was really open with me about their struggles with trying to find something that worked for her son, that allowed him to participate in things everybody else got to participate in."

The woman asked Wood if The Wave provided any sort of program for the special needs community.

"It made me very sad to

have to tell her that there wasn't," Wood remembered.

While they do offer an adaptive swim lesson she told her, it was only available in the offseason, because at a recreation center like The Wave during water park season there can be thousands of people at the facility on any given day, so pool space is at a premium.

Wood felt terrible turning the mother and her son away with apologies and passes for them to come back and try again.

But their conversation stayed with Wood and got her wheels turning.

"I credit her with challenging me to think out of the box a little bit and do something different that we haven't been able to offer before."

Wood had the full support of her boss Dustin Stene, a recreation super-

visor for the City of Dublin who said, "It's not about making money for this program. It's about creating an opportunity." Since the facility doesn't open until 1:00 p.m. on Sundays during the fall, winter and spring season he gave her carte blanche in the time frame before that to dedicate the entire facility to Sensory Splash. "If it takes off to where we want to do it every Sunday, let's do it," Stene said.

Wood added, "We as a society are continuously evolving and becoming more inclusive and I just want to be a part of that. I think it's really important that the City of Dublin is a

part of being as inclusive as possible."

And to the audience for whom she designed the program, she wanted to remind them that "not only is our pool open, but we made something special just for you to have fun and enjoy."



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Livermore High Grad Wins \$100K with a Kick

By Dawnmarie Fehr

Daniel Villasenor recently took the internet by storm when he kicked a 33-yard field goal in a pair of slip-on Vans during an ESPN "College Game Day" event, winning \$100,000.

Villasenor, a Livermore High School graduate and current University of California, Berkeley sophomore, entered a raffle for the opportunity to make the kick but didn't expect to win. He's a soccer player, not a football player.

That's why he showed up in comfortable shoes. But he didn't want to miss what he called a "once in a lifetime opportunity."

"I've seen the show before, and I heard from a friend it was going to be here at Berkeley," he said. "It was the first time

they filmed here, and I didn't know if there would be another, so I thought I should do it."

The civil engineering major got in line before midnight on Friday, Oct. 4, and spent the night waiting to see if he would make it on the show. By Saturday morning, he knew he was chosen and tried to warm up with some kicks backstage.

"I played soccer and I've tried making field goals before, and I've been successful," he said.

When the time came for his kick, Villasenor missed, the football flying too far to the right. It did go the necessary distance, however. Game Day hosts Pat McAfee and Kirk Herbstreit expressed surprise the kick had almost been successful, and offered him a second chance,

upping the original prize amount from \$75,000 to \$100,000, and offering to donate an additional \$100,000 to victims of Hurricane Helene.

Villasenor agreed and made a second kick, sending the ball right between the goal posts. Everyone on the field screamed with joy at his success, including Villasenor.

With the successful kick, Villasenor ensured the donation to hurricane victims and put the prize money into his own pocket. He said he still isn't sure what he's going to do with it.

"I still have no idea, maybe tuition, maybe some fun things," he said.

Villasenor still plays soccer on an intramural team and enjoys kicking balls around Robertson Park in Livermore with

his brothers when he visits home.



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Endorsements

Tom Soules and Jeff Kaskey Will Provide a New Direction for the Livermore Council

The Nov. 5 election has the potential to fundamentally alter the future course of Livermore. Longtime community leader Jeff Kaskey, Planning Commissioner Steven Dunbar and physicist David Farley are competing for the District 3 seat. In District 4, it's a choice between open space activist Tom Soules and school board director Kristie Wang.

There are many issues all the candidates agree on, most notably reining in Livermore's sky-high housing prices. But there are key issues that divide them.

Both Kaskey and Soules strongly oppose breaking the city's urban growth boundary (UGB) for more industrial development. The urban growth boundary has preserved Livermore's surrounding natural beauty and kept Livermore a desirable place to live. Breaking the boundary to build residential, commercial or industrial development would irreparably harm the quality of life in the city.

They also support moving the proposed Eden Housing project to nearby land. Then a park can be developed on city-owned

land that will become the focal point of a downtown that celebrates the vibrant natural environment that surrounds the city.

If Kaskey and Soules were elected, they would work to preserve Livermore's most quintessential elements that distinguish the city from the rest of the Bay Area's suburban sprawl.

David Farley also says he doesn't want to break the UGB and considers Eden Housing to be ill-conceived. However, he doesn't appear to believe the Eden Housing project should be built downtown at all, which we disagree with. Some of his other proposals, such as trying to reduce the number of high-paying jobs in the area to reduce housing costs, aren't reasonable.

Dunbar and Wang want to build Eden Housing where the city proposes, on a prime piece of city-owned land in the heart of downtown.

Dunbar and Wang also say they don't support breaking Livermore's urban growth boundary, but at a recent candidates' forum, they avoided answering when questioned on the subject.

In addition, some of the mailers endorsing Dunbar and making disingenuous attacks against Kaskey were paid for by Livermore Forward, a committee that is funded by a number of property developers, one of which appears to own land east of Greenville Road, outside the UGB; presumably it wants to develop the land.

Furthermore, digital advertising for both Dunbar and Wang has been paid for by the 2024 re-election campaign of Mayor John Marchand.

And that cuts to the heart of the matter. This election should be a referendum on many actions the mayor has taken that have harmed Livermore.

Marchand has championed Eden Housing and with his city attorney killed a referendum that would have allowed the public to vote on the matter; they later lost their case in court. Now they're trying to jam the project through with a council resolution, bypassing the public entirely.

He supported building a hotel project in south Livermore

that violated city regulations. When the city lost a citizens' lawsuit, Marchand worked with the council to push through a change in the city's rules to accommodate the developer, not citizens.

The Airport Commission has allowed one of Marchand's political donors to skirt airport policies by acquiring more hangars than is permitted under the city's rules.

Marchand supported giving the city attorney a golden parachute deal that would pay him a year's salary if he were to leave his job.

Livermore under Marchand's leadership is headed in the wrong direction. Livermore needs a city council majority that will stand up to Marchand and protect our urban growth boundary and the character of our downtown. If Kaskey and Soules are both elected, then along with Councilmember Ben Barrientos, Livermore will have a city council majority that represents the public. The Independent strongly endorses Jeff Kaskey and Tom Soules.

For Pleasanton, Mayor Karla Brown Deserves Another Term

Pleasanton has been facing multiple challenges lately: its financial condition has changed because, its shopping centers, office parks and hotels have lost business, the pandemic created pressures on the economy that are still felt today, and its wells were forced to shut down after contamination by forever chemicals was discovered.

City councilman Jack Balch would have you believe Mayor Karla Brown should take the

blame for this and be turned out of office. We disagree.

We don't think the current government is at fault. In a council-manager form of government, which all three cities have in the Tri-Valley, the top executive officer is the city manager. And it is only this year that City Manager Gerry Beaudin has uncovered the extent of Pleasanton's issues.

Brown hasn't been willing to blame the former city manager, but the problems Pleasanton is

dealing with go back longer than 2020 and have been a surprise to everyone.

Brown has been willing to take necessary steps to try to right the ship. She has already led the city through more than \$20 million in budget cuts, and along with all the other councilmembers except Balch, backed a half-cent sales tax increase with Measure PP to fund necessary services and forestall deeper cuts, especially

to emergency services. Earlier, she helped keep the downtown viable during the pandemic with small-business loans and park programs and has been working to see more housing built in the city.

Brown should be thanked for making difficult decisions. She should have the opportunity to continue to serve the best interests of Pleasanton. The Independent endorses Karla Brown for mayor.

For Dublin's Ballot Measures, Vote No on Both

There are two ballot measures that Dublin voters will decide. Both of them are poorly written and disingenuous attempts by the Dublin City Council to mislead the public.

Measure II is called the "Dublin Traffic Relief, Clean Air/Open Space Preservation Measure," but if it passes, it would do precisely the opposite: more traffic, dirtier air and less open space. The measure simply allows the city to break its 10-year-old urban limit line (ULL) and annex the last sliver of open space between Dublin and Livermore so that it can build commercial or industrial facilities on 80 acres of the site.

The city claims it needs this

development to pay for the extension of Dublin Boulevard — to which Livermore has said it will not contribute any funds if Dublin moves forward with the annexation. Dublin's cost would be \$55 million if it keeps its ULL and shares the expense with Livermore. If it revokes its ULL, Dublin would be on the hook for the entire \$110 million cost. It's also not clear that new commercial development will pay for the road extension, as the city claims.

There are other ways to support road construction than to line it with unappealing warehouses or office parks, and the city doesn't need to annex the property in order to build the road, if it so wishes.

Measure JJ purports to be about clean government and is called the "Dublin Government Accountability Act." Again, this is deceptive. While the measure lists a number of activities that are ostensibly good ideas, they're only on the ballot to obfuscate the real agenda: extending city council and mayoral terms. That's why the city council padded the issue with feelgood issues: they didn't think the public would otherwise support extending term limits to 12 years.

Perhaps there are good reasons for extending term limits. If that's the case, have the city come out and put that item by itself on the ballot, and let it pass

or fail on its own merits. But no one has actively been campaigning for Measure JJ — no committee organized around it, no "pro" statements were placed in the voter guides. It seems they're hoping to sneak this one past the public. Don't let them.

The Alameda County Grand Jurors Association, which scores ballot language, said the title of Measure II is misleading and that Measure JJ is "particularly deceptive" for trying to conceal the term limit extension.

The Dublin City Council is trying to pull a fast one on the public. Don't reward their behavior. Vote "no" on both Measure II and JJ.

For Dublin City Council, Razi Hasni is the Best Bet

Two first-time candidates are running to represent District 3 on the Dublin City Council. On a divided five-member council,

whoever wins this seat will have a strong voice on issues facing the city.

Razi Hasni is a local business owner and married father of a high school senior. He's served on the boards of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce and the Dublin High School Athletic Boosters Club.

John Morada is an entrepreneur and mar-

ried 12-year resident, but he does not appear to have served in the community before. Morada also said he would welcome new business growth along an extended Dublin Boulevard if Measure II passes.

Hasni has said it is premature to decide how he would vote if Measure II passed.

We're cautiously optimistic that Hasni is the better bet for the city council. We would like to see him take a stronger stand

against both breaking Dublin's urban limit line and developing an important piece of open space separating the city from Livermore.

Hasni has served the community and he's taking a thoughtful approach to large projects like the proposed 12-block Dublin Commons development, in which one of the buildings would be eight stories high. For these reasons, The Independent supports Razi Hasni for Dublin City Council.

THE Independent

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Tri-Valley Conservancy Encourages Dublin to Vote "No" on Measure II

Mark Triska, Livermore

At any point, TVC would be glad to be at the table to help to mediate a solution and to offer our services of land conservation. But until then, we cannot support Measure II and Dublin's desire to potentially annex all of this area and develop portions of it. We urge the citizens of Dublin to vote "No" on Measure II.

“...voted off the (Livermore) Cultural Arts Council.” Didn’t happen. It is a great non-profit consortium. To my knowledge, no one has ever been voted off. I enjoyed serving LCAC as a representative of the Livermore

Jack's campaign literature tries to scare the public by stating that Karla authorized the use of PFAS contaminat-

Join us in voting for Karla Brown!

I am writing to encourage you to vote for Steven Dunbar, District 3, and Kristie Wang, District 4. They are the only candidates on the ballot who know and understand how city government works; Steven through his appointment on the Livermore Planning Commission and Kristie having been elected to serve as a trustee on the Livermore School Board. Recently, two of the other candidates for District 3 and District 4 council seats have run campaign ads in this paper suggesting that the current city council is not transparent and doesn't listen. These are common tropes for people running for office. These candidates have no evidence to support their statements that the council isn't transparent and doesn't listen. City council members take an oath of office, are governed by the Brown Act, and also commit to a local set of norms and values to which we all comply. On every item coming before me on city council I have kept a tally of residents for and against the item. I have never voted against the majority of Livermore residents. To state that I don't listen is insulting.

The ads also support city investment in new parks. These same candidates, claiming lack of transparency and listening skills by the present council, are against a new downtown park honoring our veterans that the city council approved a couple of years ago. At a recent

(See MAILBOX, page 6)

We need candidates for
Livermore City Council who are
passionate about protecting our
Natural Environment

Not candidates backed by the
real estate industry that typically wants
to break the Urban Growth Boundary
Tom's opponent Kristie Wang is endorsed by the Bay East Association of Realtors

We need Tom Soules
for City Council

TOM SOULES
FOR
DISTRICT 4

Ad paid for by Candidates That Listen FPPC# 1475128.
www.candidateshatlisten.com

Not authorized by a candidate or a committee controlled by a candidate.
Funding Details at www.fppc.ca.gov



Foothill High Senior, Rohan Raina, a member of Troop 998 in Pleasanton, has received his Eagle badge, the highest rank in the traditional Scouts BSA program. For his service project, Raina and his team built and installed two picnic tables for the community garden area of Pleasanton's Val Vista Park. (Photo courtesy of Rohan Raina)

MAILBOX

(Continued from page 5)

candidates for city council who will both honor the will of the majority of voters and be informed sources of information are Steven Dunbar (District 3) and Kristie Wang (District 4). Cast your vote for them.

**Tom Soules is the Best Candidate for District 4
Donna Cabanne, Livermore**

So many critical choices in this election. However, the choice for Livermore City Council District 4 is clear. Tom Soules is by far the best candidate; Tom is thoughtful, intelligent, considerate and ready to serve. He wants to hear your concerns and to understand your vision for Livermore.

Tom wants to protect our Urban Growth Boundary and save what remaining open space we have. He favors carefully planned development when necessary that protects each neighborhood's character, not haphazard economic growth that favors developers looking for maximum profits at the expense of residents.

It is not clear where his opponent, Kristie Wang, stands on many critical issues. Her vague positions are problematic. She lists her position on the Livermore Valley Joint Unified District School Board as a qualification for city council, but the school district continues to face major deficits. "The district is spending more than its annual operating budget allows." In fact, the Alameda County Office of Education said "the district's 2024-25 adopted budget poses a financial risk" and warned that the district could face fiscal restraints imposed by the County in the near future. If the school board and the school district cannot manage its finances adequately, why should we trust Kristie — a current school board member — to do a better job with the city budget??

In contrast, Tom is a fiscally responsible candidate, who promises no new taxes. In these uncertain financial times, his reasonable approach to budgeting is reassuring and makes sense.

Tom has demonstrated his commitment to serving the community through tutoring non-English speaking residents, and numerous volunteer activities.

Additionally, his calm demeanor and respectful attitude will bring a welcome change to the city council.

Looking for a dedicated, reliable, and fiscally responsible candidate who will add a new voice to the current city council ?? Vote for Tom !!!

For more information, please visit TomSoules.com

Join us in voting for Tom Soules District 4 .

**Why I am Running for Livermore Council
David Farley, Livermore**

By now, many of you in Livermore District 3 know me, but I'd like to remind you

of why I'm running for City Council.

My story is the "road less traveled". My elder daughter Ellen was born in Japan and my younger Jessica was born in New Jersey, but both were raised here. Ellen is now at Boston University studying biochemistry, while Jessica is at Granada and is awesome at lacrosse (walk-on varsity as a freshman).

While pursuing my engineering degree at Cal Poly, SLO, I worked summers at NASA, and had a nice job awaiting me in San Diego upon graduation. However, I instead decided to serve my country, so went to Pensacola to have my head shaved and harassed by a Marine drill instructor on my path to flight school.

While later pursuing my PhD at UCSD, I took immersion Japanese language as a diversion from all my technical courses and lab work. That Japanese capability surprisingly resulted in a job with an American energy research company in Osaka, Japan. With Japan as my home base, I traveled the world involved in a variety of energy research projects. I was in 30+ countries, and experienced many cultures and challenging geopolitical situations (I was traveling often right after 9/11).

After a decade being on an airplane, and two toddlers, I took a position with Princeton University working on fusion energy. We moved here in 2010 to work at the National Ignition Facility (NIF), and then I moved across the street to Sandia. Adding to this path, my small business has a quantum technology education contract with a HBCU.

The road less traveled now includes knocking on the doors of thousands of houses, and it has been my pleasure to meet you and discuss multiple topics of importance to you. I enjoyed speaking with Roberto on Hazel Street, who was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam. I spent 20 minutes discussing new energy technologies with Stephen of Norma Way, who has been involved in energy electrification projects with his work. I have bumped into numerous current and former lab colleagues, who support my current road to city council. People resonate with my many years coaching girls lacrosse, and are impressed that I also offer my time as an airport commissioner.

The road less traveled has led me here, to serve you with substance as council member for Livermore District 3.

**Preserve Livermore's Democracy — Vote for Jeff Kaskey and Tom Soules for City Council
Alan Heckman, Livermore**

When Californians created our State Constitution, they reserved the right of the people of referendum — a veto. We hold the ultimate power, not government officials.

The Livermore City Council election is about safeguarding our democratic rights, particularly the right to referendum. Jeff Kaskey and Tom Soules understand that preserving this right is crucial for an accountable and transparent government. They are committed to ensuring that Livermore residents have a direct say in decisions that impact our community.

In stark contrast, Steve Dunbar and Kristie Wang represent a threat to this essential democratic process. Both are endorsed by current city leaders who have blatantly ignored a clear appellate court decision directing them to process a referendum petition. Rather than respecting the court's straightforward directive, they chose to reinterpret it to avoid holding the referendum — undermining our right to direct democracy and silencing the voices of Livermore residents. This maneuver reflects a disregard for public input and sets a dangerous precedent.

Furthermore, Steve Dunbar's record on the Planning Commission raises serious ethical concerns. Despite being an employee of Gillig, he has openly stated that he doesn't consider this a conflict of interest when voting on matters involving the company. This position directly contradicts California's Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) guidelines, which state that income from an entity is a disqualifying financial interest. Such actions demonstrate a disregard for ethical standards that have no place in public office.

Kristie Wang's tenure as a Livermore school trustee is equally troubling. During her time on the school board, test scores have dropped, enrollment has declined, and the district is on its third superintendent in just four years — all while facing multimillion-dollar structural deficits. Recently, a parent expressed concerns at a school board meeting about injuries her daughter sustained on school grounds, only to be met with indifference from board members. This record of poor performance and disregard for community concerns should disqualify Wang from seeking a role on the City Council.

Livermore deserves leaders who will respect our democratic rights, prioritize ethical governance, and genuinely listen to residents. Jeff Kaskey and Tom Soules are the candidates who embody these values. Voting for them means voting to preserve Livermore's democracy and ensuring our voices are heard and respected. On election day, stand up for Livermore's future — vote for Jeff Kaskey and Tom Soules.

**Why I Am Voting for Tom Evans for Mayor
Nancy Johnson, Dublin**

Dublin needs a mayor who is thoroughly familiar with Dublin issues and can bring a fresh perspective to the table. Tom Evans is the ideal candidate. He knows Dublin better than most of our current council members. He and his wife, a retired educator who taught at a local school, regularly attend council meetings and voice their opinions. Tom does his research. His opinions — whether they involve proposed development projects or city ordinances — are supported by facts and figures. He is ready and willing to tackle the tough problems and find workable solutions. He will make sure that our city is more accountable and responsive to its residents. Tom has never forgotten who he is or where he came from.

Although they may have city council experience, Ms. Josey and Ms. Hu lack some key leadership qualities. Ms. Hu sometimes seems out of her depth. Ms. Josey often is more preoccupied with process than substance.

Perennial candidate Shawn Costello has been a long-time disability rights advocate in our city and county. He deserves a permanent position that makes the best use of his knowledge and talents. Dublin is in dire need of a full-time ADA coordinator. Shawn would be perfect for the position.

**The Negative Ads Have Started
David Rounds, Livermore**

Friday I had just left yoga and was feeling fairly centered until I got home and read the mail. Right on top was a hit piece from Livermore Forward aimed squarely at Jeff Kaskey. I have never liked this type of advertising. It is heavy on innuendo and sometimes outright lies. This type of "speech" has become common in today's national politics (and now, local politics) and is for the most part protected from libel. It is also a very lazy way to try to influence an election. I won't blame the candidates, in this case, Mr. Dunbar, because candidates cannot legally control what PACs like Livermore Forward say. But Livermore Forward is clearly very concerned about their candidate's chances and feels this type of ad is necessary.

What is Livermore Forward? They are a PAC that spent tens of thousands of dollars to elect Marchand and Branning in 2022 and that now has \$37,000 in their coffers. The latest election reports include donations to Livermore Forward by Ponderosa Homes II (\$5,000); GBN Partners, a developer in Danville (\$2,500); Signature Homes (\$2,500); Greenville Road Land Company (\$5000) and Patterson Pass Land Company (\$5,000). NOTE: These two land companies have vested land interests in the East of Greenville area.

Also included were some other smaller donations and some cash on hand from the 2022 election.

My question is why would a PAC supported by developers and land companies, with land interests East of Greenville, support Dunbar and oppose Kaskey? My guess, they all would benefit if Livermore is successful in breaking the Urban Growth Boundary and the open space East of Greenville gets annexed to Livermore for development. Clearly they are betting that breaking the UGB would be more likely with Dunbar in office. If that is what you as a voter want then vote for Dunbar. If this gives you pause, then consider voting for Kaskey.

**No On Dublin Measures II and JJ, Vote for Tom Evans for Mayor
Shannon Miller, Dublin**

I urge all Dublin voters to vote against two deceptive measures which do the opposite of what they say they would do. II would not preserve open space and JJ does not promote government accountability.

JJ is a term extension measure, which adds meaningless/redundant ethics language to deliberately mislead the voter. If you listen to horrible Dublin city attorney Bakker's remarks (Nov. 7, 2023, city council video, about one hour and 32 minutes in), you will hear exactly why they decided to add accountability language. Bakker said, "Most of these [term limit extension measures] get smoked. They go down in flames if it's just a straightforward ballot measure." Dublin desperately needs a comprehensive ethics and complaint/whistleblower policy. This is not it. I personally will not support term extensions until Dublin has more competent and ethical representation across the board.

I also urge all Dublin voters to vote for Tom Evans for mayor. He is eminently qualified for the position. This extremely knowledgeable and decent man knows our city and the region well. He regularly attends and/or views city council meetings and speaks out on a variety of issues. His altruism is inspiring. He does not aspire to higher office. He wants to do his best for Dublin.

**Thanks to Livermore Valley Arts
Julie Wild, Livermore**

For the first time ever, the Palestinian community of Livermore was provided a space to showcase the beauty of their culture through art, and many thanks are due to Livermore Valley Arts and

Anne Giancola. The people of Palestine, despite facing significant upheaval and displacement over the last 75 years, have managed to preserve their cultural heritage, which binds them together regardless of where they live.

This rich tapestry of art was on full display this past Saturday at the Livermore ArtWalk through handmade embroidery work, henna, handmade ceramics and glass, along with olive wood products from Bethlehem. The joy and laughter while Dabke danced was a crowd favorite. Whether Palestinians are feeding you or dancing with you, they want you to have a place beside them. Members of the community joined in, and for many it was the highlight of the ArtWalk.

The Soul of my Soul Exhibit is dedicated to giving children an artistic voice and outlet, and creates events that leave attendees feeling more aware and empowered. Our display had a sampling of the hundreds of pieces of art that we've received over the past 10 months when children were asked what their hopes and dreams are for Palestine. The art is hopeful, sometimes sad, but always from the heart.

As a young poet wrote, "Kids deserve to flourish fiercely. To play without bombs highlighting the cityscape. Without checkpoints guarding their freedom from forming. Kids wither without someone to hold their hand. Dying under a depressed moon. Swallowing their pride. Replacing it with fear. This is the reality of youth in Gaza." - Magdalena, age 13

Many Palestinians call Livermore home, and our community made it feel like home for the first time, in such a special way. Thank you Livermore Valley Arts for understanding our vision for this exhibit, and a big thanks to the community for showing up in such large numbers to support, laugh, and dance with us.

And if you'd like to continue to support the Palestinian community, we would love to have you join us for a Palestinian Cultural Day on Saturday, Oct. 26, at Asbury Methodist Church 2-4 p.m. Go to www.soulofmysoulexhibit.com to learn more.

**Arkin and Gaidos for Pleasanton City Council
Susan Reid, Pleasanton**

Pleasanton is fortunate to have Valerie Arkin on the City Council (District 2). She served many years with the Pleasanton School Board and now represents residents on the city council. She has demonstrated a high degree of integrity, competence, intelligence, and understanding of complex issues. She is known for fairness, kindness, and being respectful to all opinions. She is not accepting money from developers or other special interests. She will represent the residents on issues such as preservation of the historic Downtown, avoiding extreme development that does not fit with the infrastructure (traffic, water supply, etc.), and maintaining the excellence of Pleasanton schools. Re-elect Valerie Arkin, City Council (District 2).

Matt Gaidos, a prosecuting Attorney with Alameda County, long-time resident and member of the Planning Commission, also deserves to be elected to City Council (District 4).

**Schools Matter for Everyone
Patricia Munro, Livermore**

It is easy to imagine that only parents and children need to worry about schools and school districts. The reality, of course, is that all of us benefit from public schools. They are the way we, as a society, enable the next generation to understand and engage in society, to have the skills to be competent adults, and to have an appreciation of the world.

Those who serve on school boards must balance that broader societal view with meeting the needs of different families and students, all while ensuring fiscal stability in the face of state requirements.

Tara Boyce has the financial and organization background to understand the fiscal responsibilities. She has personal experience with two children in the schools and the ability to generalize that experience to others' individual needs. She supports giving students the tools and knowledge to become informed citizens and critical thinkers. And she had the experience and ability to work with other school board members and LVJUSD administration to lead toward community goals. Vote for Tara Boyce for school board.

**Tom Soules Versus ???
Doug Mann, Livermore**

OK everyone, we're starting to receive the Council candidate mailers in Livermore. Let's take a look at District 4.

Tom Soules and Kristie Wang are the candidates. Since December, I have been asking candidate Wang about specific actions she would take as a council member. I wanted to hear something besides ambiguous generalizations, but all I ever seemed to get was ???

The mailers make things clear; do we want more high-rise towers like Legacy in the middle of downtown? Tom Soules doesn't, and he tells us that directly. All his opponent can manage is ???

Meanwhile, ??? has sent a mailer that mentions "housing affordability", but what does that mean? Does ??? bring a specific action to take in order to achieve that "housing affordability"? Tom Soules tells us directly that he will enforce the requirements on developers to actually build lower cost units within the development projects they bring to Council for approval. That way, they will get built immediately, along with the rest of a given project.

We have to assume that ??? will follow the same failed policies as her principal supporters, struggling through government-managed housing projects which take forever to build and can't enrich the occupants like more modern inclusionary configurations. Tom Soules is tired of waiting for progress on housing that people can manage financially.

Tom Soules has a tax policy — he doesn't want to raise taxes. All ??? has to say about tax policy is ??? Her supporters DID try to raise our taxes; they want to do it again, and they want to get ??? elected to do the same.

???s mailer doesn't say anything about protecting the UGB either. That's the urbanization line that keeps us from descending into Dublin-like growth patterns. Tom Soules WILL protect the UGB and the open spaces we cherish.

We shouldn't put someone in charge that leaves us with more questions than answers. Vote Tom Soules!

**Truths in Pleasanton
Debbie Ayres, Pleasanton**

To provide clarity for social media posts:

10% pay increase: Fact - the council voted to increase city council's stipends over a two-year period. This was done 1.5 years ago and hasn't been done since. Stipends are \$1,300 per month. Keep in mind that Council provided 6% raises to employees over a ONE-year period.

Capital / skateboard: Fact — When \$ were available for capital projects, \$ were allotted to priorities that all council members approved and that was based on a public process with community input. Providing recreational opportunities to our youth is important, such as the cricket pitch recently installed. Millions have been spent over the years for sports fields (soccer, baseball, football, lacrosse), such as the sports park and Bernal Park. Nonetheless, the City's capital projects have been deferred due to budget projections.

Water rates: Fact- clean and safe drinking water is a top priority for residents and businesses. Rate increases were necessary due to aging

(See MAILBOX, page 7)



On Oct. 9, the Livermore Police Community Outreach Unit attended Kaiser Permanente's Safety Fair. Livermore Police connected with community members, shared important safety tips, and got everyone excited for upcoming events like Trunk or Treat and Drug Take Back Day. (Photo courtesy of the Livermore Police Department)

MAILBOX

(Continued from page 6)

infrastructure and PFAS contaminates. Our rates had not been increased in many years and we are still one of the lowest in the region. None of us want to pay more, but ensuring our safe drinking water is necessary and a city responsibility.

Turning in wells: Fact - the council had to make a difficult decision due to ensuring enough water pressure in the system for our firefighters during peak fire season. Only IF needed, and only IF the levels were deemed safe by the state compliance, wells could be turned on for a very short time. That would have been about five percent of our water as the rest would still be from Zone 7. Loss of human lives, pets, and property were at risk. It's important to note that the city never had to turn them on.

Please join me in re-electing Karla Brown as Mayor. Her children attended public schools in Pleasanton. She does not accept money from developers or in turn for favors. Her goal is to finish the work she has been doing to provide clean safe drinking water. All decisions are made putting the people of Pleasanton first, not for her own benefit.

Kristie Wang for City Council District 4
Georgette and Mark Thomason, Livermore

I am writing in support of Kristie Wang for Livermore City Council, District 4. Not only is Kristie a dedicated member of our community, she is also a tenacious advocate for our students and a passionate community organizer. I met Kristie a few years ago at a community event in front of our main city library. We struck up a conversation and she invited me to join a planning committee for a local event. I had heard of Kristie prior to that, thanks to the successful anti-vaping initiative she helped champion. Since then, I have spent hours with Kristie, planning, organizing, and celebrating our community. I am honored to call her my friend.

Kristie's education has given her the tools to represent our city. Her lived experiences have given her the compassion to want to make our small corner of the

world a better place. She is the perfect candidate to lead our city. Please join me in voting for Kristie Wang for City Council, District 4 on November 5th.

Their Attack Mailer Is Not Truthful — Vote for Jeff Kaskey
Richard Andrews, Livermore

I received a specious attack mailer on JEFF KASKEY from a developer/real estate group – Livermore Forward. They hope their lies if told loudly and often enough will be accepted as true. It's obvious they're afraid their candidate, Steve Dunbar, isn't going to win the District 3 Council seat, and they'll lose control of our Council, a Council that needs to become transparent and honest.

Even the Mayor has used HIS OWN war chest to pay for digital ads for his puppet, Steven Dunbar. We in District 3 are smarter than that, and know only JEFF KASKEY has the backbone to stand for us, instead of big money.

Here's the truth about Kaskey positions, experience and values:

- He's supported a destination downtown, with an expansion of Stockmen's Park in the city center, preservation of Blacksmith Square, and an increase of low-income housing nearby or at other appropriate locations.
- Kaskey brings over four decades of experience in the private sector and city government to the creation and management of projects. He's worked as a Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory technologist, then participated in a number of successful start-ups, and is the current owner of a prospering business. He served for eight years on the city's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

He has proven that his vision, experience and talent can bring projects to fruition. For example, he initiated the idea of preserving the historic Southern Pacific Depot as a transit hub on Railroad Avenue. Then, serving on HPC, he shepherded it through. He is the one who could take a look at city projects that have stalled, like the proposed downtown hotel. He has the creativity and government experience to help make a

high-level Livermore hotel a reality, not just a pipedream.

Dunbar hasn't demonstrated that he has the qualities that are needed to bring community projects to fruition.

• Also, can Dunbar, who's been supported with so much developer money and worn a path to the mayor's door, listen to the people? As a return on their investment, developers and real estate companies will expect a friendly ear to their interests — such as pushing aside our urban growth boundary.

If we want to create an imaginative downtown center, bring important projects to fruition and protect our surrounding open space, vineyards and ranchlands, we need to elect Jeff Kaskey.

Kaskey is independent, beholden to no one's money.

Vote for Karla, Valerie, and Matt!
Laurene Green, Pleasanton

As you fill out your ballot, I hope you'll vote to keep our skilled and thoughtful Mayor Karla Brown, Councilwoman Valerie Arkin (District 2) and newcomer Matt Gaidos (District 4) at the helm. I've worked with both Karla and Valerie as an Energy & Environment Committee Chair and Water Expert Advisor to our City Council, and more recently as a fellow elected (Zone 7 Director); I find both to have the best of intentions and the skilled detailed engagement needed to manage and grow our wonderful town. They honor our motto of "The City of Planned Progress", protect our downtown from being "Manhattanized", bring large new businesses and revenues sources to Pleasanton, address the difficult and expensive PFAS and water supply problems, and also shepherded us through COVID-19. Matt comes to us with a strong work resume and community participation that shows he will similarly protect and grow our town sustainably. I think residents will be very pleased to see the energy, intelligence, and ideas that Matt (a Pleasanton resident from childhood) will bring to the position. Karla, Valerie, and Matt all have strong work ethics, histories of positive engagement, the ability to take tough votes, and work well with others

to find common solutions. The current council has had to grapple with the results of decisions made long before they were elected (e.g., PERS and previous decades of underfunding water infrastructure maintenance, etc.). Karla and Valerie have rolled up their sleeves, helped slim the budget by \$20M, negotiated sustainable employee pay and benefits, reinforced the Water Enterprise Fund, and created a choice for Pleasantonians to maintain our current standard of service while we work through the next decade of challenges (Measure PP). These were tough but necessary votes, and Karla and Valerie met, and will continue to meet, the moment. As a Pleasanton resident, I look forward to Karla, Valerie, and Matt keeping Pleasanton a great and safe town. Please support them, as I do.

No on Josey
G. Rez, Dublin

Jean Josey does not deserve to be Dublin's mayor. In fact, she does not deserve to continue as council member. She may have experience on the council, but she lacks the integrity, honesty, and ethics that good governance demands. She occasionally has exercised extremely poor judgment.

I regularly watch council meetings. Jean may ask good questions at some of the meetings, but she often disregards valuable information elicited from those questions and votes in what seems to be a predetermined fashion. She likes to lecture other council members regarding procedural matters, but being a good mayor or council member involves much more than knowing Robert's Rules of Order.

Jean rattles off her supposed accomplishments at candidate forums and meet-and-greet events. I can tell you that many of these accomplishments are exaggerated or nonexistent. She could have done much more during the pandemic — particularly for our seniors. She

is not the avid listener and advocate she pretends to be. If inconvenient, she does not take the time to fact check. Many of us have seen her give short shrift to others.

Her ties to outgoing city manager Linda Smith D'Ambrosio have been troubling. Smith D'Ambrosio has been acting unethically for years and should have been removed some time ago. Josey has been one of her most consistent champions. Smith D'Ambrosio's sister, Michelle Smith McDonald, was Josey's first campaign manager (for a city council seat). In matters directly relating to Smith D'Ambrosio's misconduct, Josey failed to recuse herself. Smith D'Ambrosio was front and center with Josey at a campaign event masquerading as a city event last March.

Smith D'Ambrosio and previous city manager Chris Foss flagrantly abused their authority. They did everything in their power (using city funds/resources) to stifle criticism and destroy their critics. New city manager Colleen Tribby, who was chosen by the city council in a closed process, never openly challenged the bad actions of her predecessors while serving as assistant city manager or ASD director. Many of us would have preferred the selection of a city manager from the outside, who could take an objective look at management practices and put Dublin back on track.

At this critical juncture, Dublin needs a mayor and

council members with the moral courage to challenge the status quo and oppose corruption — even when it involves personal friends and supporters. Jean Josey is not up to the job.

My Friend and Sister in Christ, Deena Kaplanis
Starla Rodriguez, Livermore

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for my friend and sister in Christ, Deena Kaplanis, as a candidate for the LVJUSD school board. I have had the privilege of getting to know Deena for the past year, and I can confidently say that she would be a tremendous asset to our district. Deena has a natural gift for connecting with children. Her patience and kindness create an environment where students thrive. She understands the challenges our educators face and has innovative ideas for saving the district money, while supporting our teachers. Her thoughtful approach combines fiscal responsibility with a genuine commitment to enhancing the educational experience for all students. Beyond her impressive qualifications, Deena is one of the most caring individuals I know. She approaches every situation with warmth and compassion, making her a beloved figure in our community. I fully and faithfully believe that Deena would bring fresh perspectives and a heartfelt dedication to the school board. I

(See MAILBOX, page 8)

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The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARPD) is saddened to announce the passing of Boomer Bowers, the 2024 Livermore Ambassadors. Boomer, a beloved English Labrador retriever, was named the inaugural Ambassador earlier this year in a joint effort by Valley Humane Society and LARPD to foster a dog-friendly environment in Livermore. (Photo courtesy of Kelly Bowers)

MAILBOX

(Continued from page 7)

urge everyone to consider her candidacy seriously.

On Voting for Steven Dunbar for City Council
Randy Simpson, Livermore

Livermore is fortunate to have Steven Dunbar in our community; he has become a local treasure. Steven has demonstrated that you can be wise without being old.

Steven has honed the skills needed for being on the city council through passionately and successfully working on challenges in Livermore. Whereas some people tout ideals and make unsubstantiated assertions, Steven brings a system engineer's rigor in examining the details of issues facing Livermore and the near- to long-term ramifications. Steven knows the laws and rules in civic planning, and he's realistic; he knows how to get things done.

Our elected leaders need to be culturally current with a modern understanding of local business, local manufacturing, employment, housing, and science & technology. Steven has the needed breadth and depth.

Steven has a track record in doing the right thing for our community, the entire community. He is not interested in just winning arguments. You can count on him to be thorough, consistent in his approach, and to truly listen and understand all sides of an issue. Steven is principled; he can be trusted to speak honestly and share the facts, regardless of the audience.

State and national elections often leave us wanting for better candidates. Bringing fresh talent into local elections plays an essential role in the governance of our community and it has a long-term positive impact regionally and nationally.

Get to know Steven and you'll vote for him.

Vote Karla Brown for Mayor
Tom Hall, Pleasanton

I have personally known Mayor Karla Brown for several years and can attest to her honesty, diligence, and commitment to the residents of Pleasanton. Karla's knowledge of the issues indicates that she researches every issue, using its impact on the community and budget constraints as prime considerations.

My family has lived in Pleasanton for over three decades and I spent more than 30 years teaching various science and math classes at Amador Valley High School. Often my classes were full, presenting the challenge of teaching a lab class to 36 or more seniors. They absolutely got the best instruction that I could provide, but crowded classrooms can affect learning.

Karla Brown has worked tirelessly for more than 15 years to reduce the amount of growth in our city. With a hillside ordinance and a chain of lakes, there is a finite amount of space left to build new housing. New housing means more people and more students in those classrooms.

Vote Karla Brown for Mayor and keep Pleasanton the city that first drew you here, and keep its classrooms a manageable size for students and teachers.

Can't Vote
Ann Giannini, Livermore

Hello citizens, Many of us in Districts 1 and 2 cannot vote for two very qualified fine candidates: Tom Souls in District 4 and Jeff Kaskey in District 3.

Those of you who may be undecided please consider our endorsement when you vote . Thank you.

Tara Boyce and Christiaan VandenHeuvel are the Best
Joanne Morrison, Livermore

Due to state funding shortfalls following COVID, school districts throughout California are now forced to tighten belts and make cuts. Through no fault of its administrators, LVJUSD is facing a \$4.4 million budget deficit and must make difficult decisions about where to cut.

With an MBA in finance and years of experience advising major organizations, Tara Boyce is the candidate for school board most qualified to help shepherd the district through these financially trying times. She is the one most able to work with district administrators to minimize the impact of cuts on programs that students need. With two small children of her own attending public schools, she has "skin in the game" now and in the future.

In addition to having extensive knowledge, Tara is honest, transparent, and ethical. She is endorsed by the Livermore Education Association (the teachers' union), Livermore Advocates for Public Education, AC Dems, a host of other organizations and prominent individuals, and most recently, Moms Demand Action has designated her a Gun Sense Candidate. A compassionate person, she will be an ally to LGBTQ+ students and community.

Christiaan VandenHeuvel stands out as deeply involved with and knowledgeable about the district. He has served as president of the Livermore High School PTSA, has participated in the School Site Councils for LHS and East Avenue Middle School, served on the post pandemic reopening committee, and he serves as a frequent substitute teacher in the district. He is married to resource teacher Kristina VandenHeuvel and is the father of a LHS student and two LHS grads. There is no other current candidate with comparable direct experience and knowledge. In addition, Christiaan is compassionate with students who struggle, including English learners different-learners, and those who feel uninvited. He has taken the School Board Integrity Project Candidate Pledge (schoolboardintegrityproject.org), a strong indication of his character. Moms Demand Action has designated him a Gun Sense Candidate. My friends in the LGBTQ+ community consider him an ally.

Tara and Christiaan are the candidates we need right now to fill the two seats available in the upcoming school district election. Please vote for both of them.

Which Do You Want?
Veronica Long, Livermore

If you want the same 'ol, same 'ol, for a city council, do not vote for Jeff Kas-

key, because he will bring a new energy and break up the current "groupthink." If you want someone who prioritizes relationships with friends over representing citizens, don't vote for Jeff Kaskey. Jeff Kaskey is there to do the job of representing citizens, while other candidates vote lockstep with their friends because they are nice and don't make waves. If you want someone who has decades of experience in running local businesses and organizations, vote for Jeff Kaskey. If you want someone who has demonstrated a willingness to fight for democratic processes and citizen rights — Jeff Kaskey is the only choice. We need to move away from the group of local politicians who mock and ridicule citizens, and who after a public comments session at a council meeting said, "Does anybody even think anymore?" If you like demeaning and arrogant — don't vote for Jeff Kaskey. But if you prefer an intelligent and humble man who is not afraid to say when the emperor has no clothes, vote for Jeff Kaskey.

It Is About You; Vote Jeff Kaskey
Glenn Stewart, Livermore

Are you still deciding if Jeff should be on the City Council.

Read about him from his website's home page... "I am City Council Candidate Jeff Kaskey. With over 40 years in Livermore, having served on City Commissions and non-profits boards, I humbly ask for your support in my effort to join the City Council in District 3.

I am excited by the opportunity to keep our town vibrant and welcoming, while addressing some of the issues that need serious attention.

My commitments to our city and making Livermore a great place to live, play and work are absolute.

I particularly commit to being your voice on City Council. I will listen to the concerns, needs and opinions of Livermore residents, and work to understand and include those voices in city government.

Each person's list of critical issues is different. I am committed to supporting Livermore residents through the range of ways in which the city touches their lives, and to improving the city by listening to our residents.

With your support I am confident we can win this seat on the Livermore City Council. I am excited by the opportunity that victory will give us... to shape Livermore for the future, honor its past, and serve today's needs."

When is the last time you heard of a city council member who is committed to listening to the concerns and opinions of residents... committed to being the people's voice on city council... committed to preserving open space... and committed to having an efficient and responsible city government?

People supporting Jeff... Cathie Brown, past mayor; Dr Susan Cota, past president of Las Positas College; Ben Barrientos, current city council member; David Furst, past LARPD; Brenda Kusler, executive director of Fertile

Groundworks community garden; Bob Coomber, former City Council member; Kelly Cousins, Bankhead Theater board member; Mark Eaton, retired judge, now professional mediator; Denise Leddon, board member of various art and cultural organizations; Craig Bueno, school board member; Mony Nop, business owner and non-profit organizations supporter; Jeff Williams, former city council member; Lee Younker, geoscientist; Don Milanese, VP Emeritus at Las Positas College; Sierra Club.

Vote Jeff... because it's about you.

Arkin the Right Person for Job
Joan Nibert, Pleasanton

In these difficult times with projected budget deficits and water quality concerns, we in Pleasanton are fortunate to have Valerie Arkin on the Pleasanton City Council.

I have known Valerie for 30 years. She is fair-minded and makes the right decisions for all residents, and has the experience to do so. In her 16 years of elected public service, she has always been at the forefront of thoughtful questions and researching the best solutions to hard budgetary decisions. Valerie's 12 years on the Pleasanton Unified School Board of Trustees included a term during the recession.

Valerie goes above and beyond by always responding to residents' concerns with a willingness to discuss the issues, while balancing their diverse interests and needs. Her strong support of the arts, youth and recreation programs contributed to our new extremely popular pickleball courts and the addition of a cricket pitch at the Sports Park.

Valerie was also a strong proponent of the Alternate Response Unit for our police department, a program that pairs police officers with mental health clinicians to respond to calls related to a mental health crisis.

Valerie is a person of highest moral character. She embodies all of the Community of Character traits, especially integrity, honesty, compassion, and respect. Her moral compass is always pointed in the right direction! Please join me in re-electing Valerie Arkin to the Pleasanton City Council. She is absolutely the best candidate for the job.

Building Affordable Housing is a Complex Process
Marc Ross, Livermore

I am a board member of Interfaith Housing, a local nonprofit consisting of representatives from eight local faith-based organizations who administer the Tri-Valley's only affordable and supportive housing program specifically designed for low-income senior citizens. We run three very well-maintained, very highly rated by residents, senior apartment communities in Livermore: Arbor Vista; Hillcrest Gardens; and Vineyard Village. I'm one of two board members from Congregation Beth Emek, and I'm especially interested in the process of financing our new project, Pacific Avenue Senior Housing. I am very pleased that we have recently received state and federal tax credits to complete our construction costs.

As I quickly learned, the process of funding our project, and affordable housing projects generally, is complex and involves many different funding streams. Any hiccup or delay in starting construction can mean the loss of any of the existing funding streams. Satellite Affordable Housing Associates [SAHA], our contracted partner for development and program administration, was able to maintain our other funding, while we applied for tax credits, the final piece.

The reality is that affordable housing takes a very long time to develop, fund and build. Take the infamous case of our friends at Eden Housing (another nonprofit affordable housing developer), who have been struggling against people who refuse to accept changes in their communities. The nonsen-

sical opposition to a family apartment project in downtown Livermore has been costly, time consuming, and has unintended consequences, like slowing the City in processing development of other affordable projects like ours. Fortunately, Interfaith Housing did not suffer any lawsuits or setbacks on our project from shadowy opposition groups like Move Eden Housing [MEH] or Save Livermore Downtown [SLD].

Jean King's letter indirectly criticizing our project in the Sept. 26 edition of this paper highlighted one thing for me: she and MEH have no idea of the complexities of funding affordable housing and really have no intention of learning. Programs that help lower-income people purchase a house cannot be the only solution. As others have said, this housing crisis needs a multipronged approach to create more homes for more people, including agricultural workers and our unsheltered residents. We must be focused on all types of housing and consider all viable projects that meet our city's needs.

That's why we should support the practical, well-informed housing policies of three candidates running for City Council: Kristie Wang, Steven Dunbar and John Marchand.

Why I Like Dublin, California
Eloise Hamann, Dublin

I live in West Dublin, which is convenient to two nature parks: Martin Canyon and Schaefer Ranch Park. The views in both parks are awesome and soul-soothing. In addition, there are parks ideal for picnics and playgrounds, including a water slide within a water park. I'm also near the park containing an old cemetery and farm buildings from a long-ago era. At one corner of the park stands a collection of statues representing Dublin's pioneers and Native Americans.

Where I live, there are five grocery stores within five minutes of my home. Stoneridge Mall is nearby in North Pleasanton. Both Dublin and Pleasanton have sizable medical facilities. A new school has recently been built. I'm thus spoiled with convenient health care, hiking, and easy grocery shopping.

California needs 250,000 more homes, and it has passed laws requiring each city to provide a specific number of new affordable housing units based on its current size and possibly other factors. If a city fails to adopt a state-required housing plan and ignores housing mandates, it can face a series of penalties, including losing the power to control its own zoning or being sent into a court receivership and having decisions made for the city.

There is insufficient ground space for many one- to two-story homes with two cats in the yard, and Dublin has complied primarily with condos. The density of the condo homes can be seen on West Dublin Blvd. I find current condo buildings attractive, and when canvassing for a political cause, I was impressed by the interiors between buildings, which provide a safe place for children to play.

I am proud that Dublin's governance strives to comply with California's mandate, while attending to the aesthetics of the buildings and surroundings. Someday, Dublin Blvd will be a tunnel of trees. The new Commons is considering a restaurant on the top floor of an eight-story building, including two floors of parking. Imagine dining surrounded by views of the hills.

Dublin will be voting for a mayor this election, and some candidates do not appreciate that not building is not an option. I'm choosing Jean Josey, who has served Dublin since her 2018 election to the council. She is ready and willing to make the tough decisions we Dubliners face.

Oh, C'mon!
Linda Milanese, Livermore

A ridiculous hit piece against Jeff Kaskey hit my mailbox on Friday. It was

sent by Steven Dunbar supporters.

It shows Jeff Kaskey superimposed on a background of what looks like the rubble of a bombed-out, war-torn Livermore. The other side shows a picture of dead vineyards. I guess we're supposed to assume both will happen if Jeff is elected to City Council. The flyer lists 9 "facts," all of which are complete lies. The only thing missing is that Jeff eats your pet dogs!

Deena Kaplanis for Livermore's School Board
Cathryn Villasanor, Livermore

Vote this coming Nov. 5. Deena works well with people from all walks of life. She deeply cares for the safety of all children. Her ability to accomplish much has been proven time after time as she has volunteered at Junction school even when her child no longer attended. It seems that someone made an issue of it without offering to take her place on the PTA. Despite the hateful way she was treated, she still has the enthusiasm to contribute to the community. We will be doing Livermore a favor to vote for Deena Kaplanis to the Livermore School Board this Nov. 5.

Vote No on Measure PP, Pleasanton Sales Tax Increase
Steve Maher, Pleasanton

On Nov. 5, Election Day, Pleasanton's mayor and current City Council want us to approve a .05% tax increase, generating \$100 million in tax revenue over the next ten years.

I strongly oppose this measure for many reasons, but two stand out.

Before putting this on the ballot, a budget advisory committee comprised of civic leaders, business leaders, and the community should have been formed to provide feedback on where money could be saved or additional revenues generated to address Pleasanton's budget shortfall.

The City Council wants the revenue generated by this measure to go into the general fund. This would allow the spending of funds without planned oversight by the community and civic leadership.

Please, vote NO on Measure PP.

Jeff Kaskey's \$25M Lie
David Jonas, Livermore

Jeff Kaskey, a candidate for Livermore City Council / District 3, has accused the City of "losing track of over \$25 million" in affordable housing funds. He also claims the City has tens of millions of dollars "more than we thought" since the funds have been "found."

Mr. Kaskey's allegations are false. In fact, the City did not "lose track" of any funds, and the routine accounting transactions at the heart of Mr. Kaskey's allegations had zero impact on the amount of funds in city coffers.

The City simply reclassified some affordable housing loans, as its independent auditor advised, and valued the loans at \$38.3M. However, that value exists on paper only. It is not "real" money available for affordable housing, as Mr. Kaskey seems to believe.

The actual amount of available affordable housing funds is \$11.9M.

Here are the facts, culled from the city's website:

The City subsidizes low-income housing projects, such as Chestnut Square and Vineyard 2.0. One way the City helps build these projects is providing low interest loans, enabling developers to rent units at below market rates that don't fully cover operating costs.

Repayment on these loans typically occurs only after the project has generated sufficient funding to cover all annual expenses and fund reserves. Repayment can take 50-100 years, if at all. These types of loans cannot be sold to investors and therefore have no meaningful value in real money terms.

(See MAILBOX, page 9)



Steve Profumo, a graphic designer who has been turning his Livermore home into a haunted house for Halloween since 2014, has two new rooms for the brave to explore this year, “Reapers Alley” and “Inside the Walls.” Profumo’s Frightmare, 697 Sonoma Ave., will be open from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 25, Saturday, Oct. 26, and Thursday, Oct. 31. Entry is free and recommended for kids 10 and older. (Photo courtesy of Steve Profumo)

MAILBOX

(Continued from page 8)

The auditor the City used prior to 2022 advised the City to classify these loans as “Unavailable Revenue” valued at zero. In 2022, the City engaged a new auditor who advised reclassifying the loans to “Assets,” adding \$38.3M to the City’s balance sheet. It did not make more funds available for low-income housing, as Mr. Kaskey falsely states.

Separately, the new auditors determined that \$4.5M in affordable housing loans previously recorded as expenditures should have been classified as assets. This reclassification had zero impact on city finances, nor increased cash available for affordable housing.

As a candidate for office, Mr. Kaskey’s misstatement of facts and false accusations are alarming. This behavior embodied in a councilmember is unthinkable.

Mr. Kaskey maligned city staff and council clearly without performing due diligence. He could have asked city staff for help in understanding the financials. Instead, he jumped directly to faulty conclusions.

District 3 voters, for the good of Livermore, please vote for Steven Dunbar: dunbarforlivermore.com.

Craig Eicher for Pleasanton City Council District 2

Richard Pugh, Pleasanton

To restore leadership and good governance in Pleasanton, we need new city council members who can bring a proven commitment to the Pleasanton community and who will act with confidence and integrity.

That’s why we need to elect Craig Eicher who is a dedicated public servant committed to making public safety and clean and safe drinking water as critical priorities.

Craig Eicher has a solid track record of achievements, such as being the President of the Community of Character Collaborative. Importantly, he is endorsed by former Pleasanton City Managers Nelson Fialho and Deborah Acosta McKeethan.

With Craig Eicher, we can expect committed leadership to deliver meaningful fiscal responsibility and accountability, and real effort to improve the local economy with more opportunities for all of our residents. We can also expect the deteriorating city budget to be stabilized with better imaginative thinking than just adding yet one more unhelpful sales tax hike.

Craig Eicher is the change we really need now for the best interests of the community. Please vote for Craig Eicher for Pleasanton City Council District 2.

Tired of the Lies

Tamara Reus, Livermore

If you are tired, as I am, of political advertising that is full of lies, reject the spurious claims of Livermore Forward. Livermore Forward is funded by developers who want to elect Steve Dunbar to the District 3 Council seat to further their goal of devel-

oping the area east of Greenville Road outside the City’s urban growth boundary.

Jeff Kaskey has emphatically stated that he is opposed to changing the urban growth boundary (UGB) in Livermore. He has extensive public experience, having served on the Livermore Historic Preservation Commission for eight years, the Downtown Steering Committee which explored options for Downtown Livermore, the Livermore Cultural Arts Council and more. Livermore Forward’s baseless advertising hopes you will ignore the truth and vote for Steve Dunbar, because they believe Dunbar will support their goals. Dunbar has not stated he will protect the east side UGB, even when asked about his position at a recent candidate forum. It’s easy to understand why they would like to see him elected.

Don’t fall for the lies and deception. Jeff Kaskey has the right experience, the commitment, and the passion to make Livermore a better place to live and work while avoiding the devastating sprawl development that characterizes cities like Dublin. Let’s not become Dublin. Vote for Jeff Kaskey.

Dublin City Hall Out Playing Games

Mike Grant, Dublin

I and three others (customers) were at Dublin City Hall trying to get our business conducted. As I drove in, I noticed the city manager and others on her team outside at 8:45 a.m. playing pickleball on a private court right by the city hall offices. I was wondering why on Oct. 2 at 8:45 a.m. they were not working? Then it struck me that this is the norm at Dublin City Hall under this city management. All games! Dublin, these games go on every day at this office and our tax dollars are paying for this. The question I have is whether any of these staff members take PTO today to be late for their job.

Remember, I said three of us were going into City Hall at this same time. One of the guys went upstairs to the city manager’s office for a meeting. As I was leaving, I ran into this person again and asked him if he had his meeting with the city manager. His response was that she is not in. I then told him she is outside playing games. He looked like a deer in headlights. His only response was — you kidding me! I said no, she’s right outside the door. He also told me that he has called her several times about issues he was having, and she never returns the calls. About that time, the "pickleball team" came through the side door as I was leaving, and I asked them if this is what our tax dollars pay for — games! Not one of them said anything!

Dublin citizens, this is why we need to hire outside for the new replacements rather than taking the same old pass downs from the city managers’ recommendations when they leave. New blood is needed in Dublin City Hall, and under this council

we have now nothing will change. I want the Dublin citizens to think about how we can get change in this city hall. Maybe we should put a proposition on the next ballot and ask the citizens if they would like an oversight committee to watch all actions of the city council and city staff. This way all items that people bring up would be looked at by the committee and exposed, so we would know what is going on each day inside this government office.

Bright Future for Livermore

Alan Marling, Livermore

From the windmills crowning our hills, our tradition of green energy can bolster our other tradition of agriculture. As temperatures warm, solar panels installed over fields can help keep plants cool. In turn, the green growth lowers local temperatures, increasing the efficiency of photovoltaic cells. This partnership is called agrovoltatics.

Green tourism can flourish thanks to building artistic solar statues, solar-shaded walkways, and the Lab’s renown as the world’s first successful fusion ignition. Visitors can stay at a new hotel downtown, and they can arrive on The Valley Link or other trains, continuing our proud heritage as a train town. Increased use of public transit will reduce congestion on 580 and pollution.

Within the city, better safety pathways combined with more e-bikes and other transit options ranging from buses to golf carts will alleviate parking woes downtown and decrease car collisions. Though we will need to build more housing, creating walkable communities near hubs of public and active transportation will allow Livermore to grow in a responsible and healthy way.

Achieving this bright future will require the participation of citizens, elected officials, and volunteer commissioners, all working together to improve their community. If you want my opinion who would best serve as councilmembers to help Livermore adapt to the twenty-first century, they are Kristie Wang and Steven Dunbar.

Steven Dunbar for Livermore City Council, District 3

Stewart Gary, Livermore

Our City needs to continue to evolve and bring balanced perspectives to the City Council. Steven has proven his ability to see all sides and find common ground as a Planning Commissioner since 2020. Before that, he served on the City’s Asset Management Advisory Committee. Steven is a bright, inquisitive person as an engineer with a respected local firm. He researches and thinks before acting. He represents the “middle” both in age and career. He is no novice now to governance and is a not a holdover from the legacy past political action groups that wanted Livermore bent to only their viewpoint.

The next generation of independent, caring, thought-

ful, and compassionate leaders must emerge for Livermore to thrive, while respecting the past and looking to future opportunities. Steven has the open mind to represent not just District 3, but as part of a 5-member City Council, he can represent ALL of Livermore.

Steven has earned my respect and that of many others. I suggest we vote for the most experienced, balanced candidate in District 3, where I reside.

Find out more at dunbarforlivermore.com.

Unjust, and Untrue Carol Wahrer, Livermore

I saw the hit piece sent by Steven Dunbar’s supporters (Livermore Forward) this past week. It was disgusting and nothing but lies. Livermore can do better. Vote Jeff Kaskey for Livermore City Council, District 3

Why I Am Voting Against the Sales Tax Sheryl Cook-Kallio, Pleasanton

Leadership matters. This current shortfall was predictable. What steps did the council take to plan for this? In the last few years, we have heard bickering over issues that cater to a small number of residents and arguing over whether we can overturn state law (didn’t we learn this lesson?) which has caused this council to take their eyes off essential services. We have seen our water rates explode, in part by mismanagement and the council, except Councilmember Balch, argue over a raise stipend because, as the mayor put it, she is “worth” it. The proposal for a THIRD skate park was tone deaf. The optics are horrible. It a surprise that we had this deficit.

During the recession and the steps that were taken to preserve jobs and services? The senior staff led by example and spread out the cuts to make sure everyone kept their jobs with minimal cuts to essential services. The city council was informed with time to shift priorities; nonessential projects were delayed. When I left after the recession, we had a 178M dollar unrestricted reserve, no capitol debt and progress on pension reform. We can do better. The mantra the council majority has put forth that the residents are the ones who will decide by vote puts the responsibility on the citizens. They work with this budget daily. Yet, the council majority refuse to take responsibility. I served on the audit committee for eight years. Pleasanton received the highest accolades for fiscal management. Now we are 47th. I served when we looked further than the end of our collective noses.

The vote will conveniently focus the blame on the voters. If we say no, we are then responsible for the loss of jobs. If we say yes, we have taxed ourselves because of mismanagement. The city council has not done their job in a transparent way. It’s a disservice to you all who work on our behalf daily and for those who put their lives on the line for all of us. City staff, especially the rank and file, are worth every penny they earn. This pains me BUT the only way to change course is to call out those who are responsible.

Leadership matters! Short term political decisions are what got us into this mess. Pleasanton deserves better.

Playing Dirty Politics Ron and Charlene Stark, Livermore

Yesterday we received a disgusting flying saying horrible things about our dear friend Jeff Kaskey, who is running for city council. The flyer was purchased and sent out by Livermore Forward FPFC#1391507 with a San Jose address of 333EW Carlos St., Suite 600, San Jose, CA. I noticed that this same group was aggressive and disparaging in previous elections about other candidates. The Independent should write an article about these despicable people. Jeff Kaskey is a great person who, since we have known him

for the past ten years, cares deeply about our community. Maybe the group filled with hate should be charged with some crime, as this is no way to attack someone who is a fine citizen and worthy of being elected. Thank you.

Addressing Concerns Regarding Dr. Deena Kaplanis

Betty Ellis, Livermore

This is to address concerns I’ve read about here concerning Dr. Deena Kaplanis, who is running for Livermore school board.

1. Her children do not attend a Livermore school. There are other candidates running for the Livermore school board who also have no children in the system. Kaplanis is wanting the best, and a safe education for all children.

2. Kaplanis is a Christian. Again, she is not the only Christian running; one is a pastor.

3. Kaplanis won’t follow the status quo. Actually, this is her strength, to question and think independently. She questions the wisdom of biological males using the girls’ bathrooms and having sexually explicit material in the school library.

Let’s bring common sense to the school board by voting for Kaplanis.

JJ? Ixnay!

Paul Stone, Dublin

Measure JJ in Dublin is a naked power grab by the Dublin City Council. Actually, it’s not so naked, as they have carefully crafted the measure to hide its real purpose.

Sherry Hu and Jean Josey and others incessantly tout their "experience" as justification for extending city council terms. Where has this so-called "experience" gotten Dublin?

It’s gotten us acres and acres of cookie-cutter condominiums, terrible traffic, and a disastrous downtown project called Dublin Commons in the offing.

Please, Dubliners, don’t be deceived by city officials seeking to extend their terms. Vote NO on Measure JJ.

Time to Fight Off Special Interest, Again!

John Lawrence, Livermore

Looks like our local name-changing special interest group is at it again. Currently calling themselves “Citizens for a Council that Listens”, they are promoting their chosen candidates as tools to help them take control of Livermore’s planning and development efforts.

This special interest group has already forced the city to spend millions of taxpayer dollars on responding to their challenges, lawsuits, petitions and ballot measures, as well as expensive delays in planning and construction resulting from their efforts. One of their recurring battle cries is that “Council is not listening to The People”. Well City Council is absolutely listening to “The People”, doing what the vast majority of Livermore supports, and doing what is best for Livermore. What Council isn’t doing, is surrendering control of the city to the demands of a well-funded group of elitists. This group’s ads and letters of support speak about the urgent need to invest in parks and open space, as if the City of Livermore and the Livermore Area Recreation and Parks District haven’t been successfully doing that for years.

Please help reject special interest pressure in Livermore and do not vote for candidates supported by special interest, specifically council candidates Kaskey and Soules. You can easily identify these candidates by the colorful half-page ads in the local newspaper, a publication that is owned by one of this name changing special interest group’s leaders. For council members who will listen to the people and who will not represent special interest, please vote for Wang and Dunbar.

Deena, Fire Your Campaign Manager Gail Sayers, Livermore

Deena, you should fire your campaign manager.

Your text to voters during

the week of Oct. 5, 2024, said, “I’m Dr. Deena Kaplanis and I’m running for Livermore School Board. Your vote for me will keep the children of Livermore under the protection of their parents and not schools bureaucrats, let’s keep the betterment of all students and families our priority!”

What kind of campaign runs on the premise of insulting the dedicated, caring, and serious administrators, superintendents, trustees, teachers, clerks, and other school officials of our school district who have worked tirelessly for Livermore’s students, educating them and keeping them safe all these years? What campaign wants to tear down and denigrate our democratic system of public education . . . wait . . . oh . . . you’re MAGA!

Well, that’s actually good information for voters to have.

Never mind about firing your manager. But you should clue her in on the proper use of periods, capital letters, and apostrophes. Also, just curious about why you want the “betterment of families?”

The Truth About Censorship May Shock You Thomas Gray, Livermore

Not that I ever advocated for censorship in any of my musings to The Independent (people, work on your reading comprehension), but apparently a lot of individuals need to understand that a newspaper choosing NOT to publish a letter is not censorship. Are there people who think newspapers are required to publish every letter received? Do those same people think their letters are to be published without exception?

In fact, the smartest decision a newspaper might make is choosing NOT to publish letters containing lies. Fox News and a few guests that appeared on the network are paying a hefty price for broadcasting false statements. News organizations would be wise to exercise caution in publishing letters containing lies. The Independent’s boiler-plate caveat, “Opinions voiced in letters published in Mailbox are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Independent” might do little to protect them (as a similar statement used by Fox News did little to protect them). Internal Fox News communications revealed that officials were aware the network was reporting false statements but continued doing so to retain viewers. Does The Independent publish letters containing lies also in an attempt to retain viewers?

Donn Day alleges I committed “several” lies in my letter, but only points to one? That’s describing their assertion charitably, because apparently the “lie” I committed was blaming Republicans for the border crisis. Republican Mitch McConnell has stated that any border bill that cuts funding for Ukraine (e.g. Dave Ott’s pet bill, HR2) is a nonstarter in the Senate. Apparently, pointing out that fact means I am blaming Republicans and therefore a liar.

While I would hate for Donn Day’s head to explode, Donald Trump did say that there “...were very fine people on both sides.” Who were the two sides? One side was cheering the demolition of a Robert E. Lee statue. The other side was protesting the demolition of the statue and trying to prevent its destruction. Who would protest the destruction of a statue of an American who fought against his own nation and opposed racial equality for African Americans? One might call those people neo-Nazis and white supremacists. There are no “very fine people” on the side of hate.

Elect Jean Josey Catheryn Grier, Dublin

Dublin needs to elect Jean Josey as Mayor to guide our community into its exciting future. As a planning commissioner, I know that when we make recommendations about the projects that will

(See MAILBOX, page 10)



Livermore Valley Opera (LVO) Artistic Director Erie Mills has received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Opera Association (NOA) for her illustrious career as a soprano performing with major opera houses around the world. Mills was appointed LVO artistic director in 2016 after serving as a member of the opera's advisory board for several years. (Photo courtesy of Erie Mills)

MAILBOX

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define our community for decades to come, Jean will ensure that the City Council asks the right questions, considers the important issues, and makes decisions that benefit all of Dublin. Jean is a leader. She served as the Vice Mayor in 2022, and the list of the many committees and commissions on which she represents Dublin is long and critically important: transportation, education, libraries, water, public safety and crime prevention. She comes to all of this work with deep knowledge and commitment. She does her homework. And she makes good things happen for Dublin. We could not ask for a better representative of leadership for Dublin. Elect Jean.

Servicepeople from WWII are Appalled
Mick Hanou, Pleasanton

Voters, please be educated about what is at stake! A few weeks ago, Trish Adams speculated that if men and woman of WWII were still alive, they would “be appalled” that Trump refused to pass on the peaceful transfer of power. I can confirm that viewpoint. Last week, I was at an 8th Air Force Reunion and four WWII veterans attended – average age about 100 but very cogent. Their view can be summed up as follows: “80 years ago I risked my life, and many of my friends died, to rid Europe of a brain-addled, narcissistic, dictator.” They’re not voting for him, nor are their families.

I could never understand how Germany was taken over in the 1930s; now I do. If you don’t like the Hitler reference, look at what has happened in modern times to Hungary under Victor Orban, or Venezuela. Dictators/autocrats follow a plan that consists of taking over the legislature, the courts, and the media. They eventually suppress any protest to what is happening. Look at what has happened to our Republican party for a clue on how this is working here.

Please learn about Project 2025, and don’t believe Trump’s lies about not knowing anything about it. It is a dangerous scenario, threatening our democracy by removing checks and balances in our government, centralizing power, and planning to impose narrow views on all Americans. It would undermine the rule of law, separation of powers, separation of church and state, and civil liberties. It would enable a President to become a dictator.

To be clear, I am not a fan of many of the policies being proposed by the Democrats. If there was a candidate like McCain, HW Bush, or Reagan, I’d vote for them (again). However, the threat to our nation is too great! Vote for Harris.

I always thank those WWII Veterans for freeing my parents from Nazi-occupied Europe.

Vote No on PP
Arne Olson, Pleasanton

As a member of the Pleasanton City Council nine years ago, I was part of a 5 to 0 vote to establish an IRS Sec-

tion 115 pension trust fund to address the City’s rising pension liability, which, based on actuarial projections at the time, would likely peak in 8 to 10 years. Karla Brown was also part of the unanimous vote. Fast forward to today and voters are being told by City staff and the Council majority there’s a financial crisis and a need to increase the sales tax. An increase currently is premature for the following reasons:

1. The 115 fund currently valued at \$51MM can provide \$3-5MM annually to help cover pension expenses.

2. Additionally, the retiree medical trust fund with \$56MM can provide \$1.5MM annually to meet these expenses.

3. Contract out business license services to reduce expenses and increase revenue, netting about \$800M annually.

4. Gain full cost recovery from recreation programs and use of facilities, contributing about \$1MM annually.

5. Charge a credit card convenience fee to recover an estimated \$500M annually.

City staff’s 10-year projection used to justify the sales tax increase is too conservative. Tax increases on existing property are below historical rates and new development is not assumed. The non-majority council member, Jack Balch, has argued for a new 10-year projection using current actuarial projections and the trust funds and structural changes mentioned above. Hopefully, the city issues their June 20, 20224 fiscal year-end statements before the election.

Vote for Jen Flynn
Mojoy Shariaty, Pleasanton

I am writing to express my heartfelt support for Jen Flynn for PUSD School Board, Area 4. Having worked and volunteered with her in our local schools for over ten years, I have witnessed her dedication to our students firsthand. Her support and commitment to our teachers, schools and community are above and beyond. By also serving on the board of directors for PPIE, where she continues to champion education and community involvement, enables her to understand the needs of our schools. As a mother of three children in Pleasanton schools, she brings invaluable perspective. Her broad support from the community underscores her commitment to making our schools the best they can be. I invite you to visit Jen’s website: www.votejen-flynn.com.

A Year into Israel's Continuous Genocide and Wars
Greg Scott, Livermore

The first fourteen pages of names of the dead Palestinians from Israel's genocide in Gaza since October 7, 2023 are babies, one-year-old and less. There are those who think, in their inhumanity, this is the result of some sort of "justice" and a rationale for "defense."

America has entered an era of darkness with its support of this insanity and the impunity for it. In all probability, a pro-genocide, major-party candidate is going to be

elected through the Electoral College in the trope of "the lesser of two evils." There isn't much greater evil than genocide. We can never say "Never again," for tragically, for the most part, we do not mean it. We apply "never again" to Whites; however, we are not to apply it in the racist depiction of swarthy Arabs of Muslim religion and other non-Caucasians (e.g., Sudanese, Rwandans)?

"There is a crack, a crack in everything / That's how the light gets in" (Leonard Cohen, "Anthem"). Tenacious human will for good tends to prevail against incredibly immense odds. "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

In the Muslim religion, "Al-Rahman" is a descriptive noun, meaning a state of excess mercifulness, which there cannot possibly be enough of. "Al-Rahim" is a noun signifying a doer of the act of giving mercy or giving mercy to others. The unifying thread of both is love. Where are we currently with these sentiments in America?

Apartheid, settler-colonial Israel is destroying itself through genocide and war - and it is taking the American Empire with it. Metaphorically, it is late in the afternoon, with the daylight of the season lessening, and a "chickens" of human grief and resentment are going to come home to roost, as is always the case in response to such enormously horrific events.

We are to reward genocide by electing a pro-genocide presidential candidate? The world is watching, and acting, to counter this, as all-powerful America marches to drown itself in its own enfeebling debt.

All this is occurring as the endowment of the man who invented dynamite, Alfred Nobel, honors two Americans for their vast insight and discovery into gene regulation by microRNA (Ribonucleic Acid). We open the doors of understanding to the miraculousness — and perhaps the necessity — of life, and yet, at the same time, we are on the path of life's destruction.

Downtown Debate Delusions
Alan Burnham, Livermore

At the recent Livermore candidates’ forum, Jeff Kaskey and Tom Soules reiterated their unrealistic desire to move Eden Housing to north of Railroad Ave. Kaskey also erroneously stated that there are abandoned buildings in that area. Both ignore the facts that (1) Eden already has title to the current downtown site per the Alameda County parcel viewer, (2) Eden has an approved design (entitlement) for the buildings that withstood a lawsuit by allies of Kaskey and Soules, (3) the owners of the proposed land north of Railroad Ave. have not agreed to the proposed move and may not without eminent domain legal actions, (4) the financial costs of the move will likely exceed \$25 million, much of which will have to come from the City’s general fund, (5) adopting such a proposal without a legally and financially viable plan will likely generate lawsuits from various affordable housing entities, and (6) there is no uncommitted \$25 million bonanza from phantom affordable housing funds.

I’ve spent considerable time exploring whether there could be a way of improving the approved downtown plan, and I see no legally or financially viable pathway to accomplish a significant change without the agreement of Eden Housing at a minimum, and they are on record of opposing any changes. If you want council members who are willing to delay downtown affordable housing at great financial and legal risk to the City, they are your candidates. But if you want to move on and change the undecided future for the better, you must choose other candidates. My choices are Steven Dunbar and Kristie Wang, who made their rational positions clear at the forum.

Maggie Tufts for Livermore School Board
Randy and Marianne Sekany, Livermore

We are writing to express our enthusiastic endorsement of Maggie Tufts for the Livermore School Board. Having known Maggie for nearly a decade, we have witnessed firsthand her dedication to education, her unwavering commitment to our community, and her ability to bring people together to work towards a common goal.

Maggie has a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our schools today. She is passionate about ensuring that every child in Livermore has access to a high-quality education, regardless of their background or circumstances. She is also committed to working with teachers and administrators to create a supportive and nurturing learning environment for all students.

In addition to her experience and qualifications, Maggie possesses several personal qualities that make her an ideal candidate for the school board. She is a strong listener, willing to consider all sides of an issue before making a decision. She is also a skilled bilingual and bi-cultural communicator, able to clearly and effectively articulate her ideas and vision for the future of our schools.

We are confident that Maggie will bring a wealth of knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm to the school board. She is a proven leader and a dedicated advocate for our children. We urge you to vote for Maggie Tufts for LVJUSD School Board.

Peace
Yosra Abdelaziz, Dublin

I’ve been thinking about this word a lot lately.

The truth is, if you live in Gaza, peace is something you’ve probably never experienced in your life.

If you are a 16-year-old living in Gaza, then you have lived through six different Israeli aggressions over your lifetime.

The scenes we’ve all witnessed this past year have been so difficult to bear for just this past year. That anyone would have gone through this six different times is almost unthinkable.

I wanted to take a moment to remember Reem Nabhan.

Many of us have seen the video of Reem in her grandfather’s arms. Her grandfather, Khaled, held her lifeless body, stroking her hair and said “she was the soul of my soul.”

Reem and her brother Tariq were murdered by an Israeli air strike in late November. 11 months ago.

The truth is there are thousands of Reems and Tariqs whose stories we will never know. Gaza has been called a graveyard for children and a living hell for everyone else.

As we approach a year of genocide in Gaza, we want to renew our intentions to continue fighting for a free Palestine. We want to reach out to our Palestinian brothers and sisters and tell them they are not forgotten.

We also want to reach out to our community. One of the most amazing things that has happened this past year has been the opportunity to meet people we may have never interacted with otherwise — and yet we all come together, from all walks of life, to say that this injustice needs to end.

And that’s why over 80 residents of the Tri-Valley came together on Saturday, Oct. 5 in Dublin for a vigil.

We will never forget and we will never stop fighting for a free Palestine.

Vote for Craig Eicher
Lisa Cavellini, Pleasanton

I am writing to express my strong support for Craig Eicher as a candidate for city council. In these challenging times, our community needs a leader with a proven ability to manage fiscal issues effectively, and Craig is that leader.

Craig Eicher has demonstrated a remarkable skill for digging deep into financial challenges, finding innova-

tive solutions that benefit both our city and its residents. His analytical mindset, combined with a hands-on approach, allows him to understand the intricacies of our budgetary needs and to develop strategies that ensure responsible spending while enhancing community resources.

Moreover, Craig embodies the spirit of respect and understanding in all his interactions. He treats everyone with dignity, no matter their differences of opinion, which is crucial in fostering a collaborative environment. His willingness to compromise when necessary shows his dedication to finding common ground and working towards the greater good for all citizens.

With years of dedicated service to our community, Craig has built a strong track record of involvement and leadership. His commitment to public service has shown that he truly cares about the concerns and aspirations of the residents he seeks to represent.

I believe that Craig Eicher would make an excellent city council member. His unique combination of fiscal responsibility, respect for diverse opinions, and community dedication is exactly what our city needs as we navigate the future ahead.

Let’s support a candidate who is prepared to bring thoughtful solutions and respectful dialogue to the city council. Vote for Craig Eicher!

No on Prop 5!
Theodore Schaefer, Livermore

Prop 5 makes it much easier to raise real estate taxes on single family/detached housing citizens. It reduces from the current 67% to just 55% the votes necessary to pass billions in new taxes in the future, for projects such as affordable housing, which has failed to pass repeatedly in the past. For example, so-called affordable housing would be voted upon by renters as well as other voters, but the \$500 per year tax increase would only apply to detached homeowners, since renters all live by the thousands on a single parcel owned by the landlord who could care less if his already very low Prop 13 taxes go up by a measly \$500/year. Beware of any parcel taxes and measures like Prop 5 which weakens their approval. One man, one vote! Not one man with exempt consequences for thousands.

Teachers Support Boyce and VandenHeuvel for School Board
Lisa Wilson, Livermore

Livermore teachers did their homework and endorse Tara Boyce and Christiaan VandenHeuvel for School Board!

Tara's background in finance and managing large budgets will help our district make sound choices while supporting our Livermore students. She has two elementary school students who are just beginning their educational journey. Her children have experienced the success of early literacy instruction. Keeping budget cuts away from the classroom is a priority she shares with teachers.

Christiaan is a former Parent-Teacher-Student-Association President at Livermore High School. He has one child at Livermore High and two children who have graduated from Livermore Schools. He has even worked alongside Livermore teachers as a substitute teacher. He supports students and teachers in countless ways in our classrooms.

Join the Livermore Education Association and current LVJUSD Trustees Craig Bueno, Steven Drouin and Kristie Wang to support Boyce and VandenHeuvel for School Board. Boyce and VandenHeuvel make the grade!

Harris' Policies Will Ruin America and End Democracy
David Ott, Pleasanton

Harris’ spending, taxing and excessive regulation policies will continue where

Biden left off and will kill any chance for America to be a prosperous nation once again. Harris’ unsecure border policy will continue to allow millions of illegal aliens into America, which is the number one security threat for our nation. Along with the illegal aliens, fentanyl and human traffickers, murders and terrorists are entering the country unvetted due to the Harris policies. This must stop.

The failures by the Biden / Harris administration are the biggest threat to our democracy. Their rhetoric causes division in America and results in violence in our society. Harris says that Trump is Hitler, when in reality the Biden / Harris administration has been acting like Hitler with their one-party dominating view and the control of the media. Biden / Harris have attacked the first amendment by attempting to censor free speech when the facts and truth get in the way of their lies. Harris wants to pack the Supreme Court in an effort to tear down the sacred Constitution. They say Trump is a threat to democracy when they have weaponized the DOJ against political opponents and parents, will not enforce voter ID to ensure fair and secure elections ,and their foreign policy in Ukraine and the Middle East is a failure and a threat to democracy in the free world. Harris is the threat to our democracy, not Trump.

Harris has flip-flopped on all of her major policies just to get votes. She says America needs change, yet she is in office now; why hasn’t she brought forth any of these changes in the past four years?

Finally, recently Bill Ackman, a lifelong democrat and a former major donor to the democrat party, shared his 33 reasons why he cannot support Harris and instead is supporting Donald Trump for president. Google “Bill Ackman 33 reasons” to learn why. This should be a wake-up call for all voters.

The American people need an experienced leader who will end inflation, lower taxes, reduce spending, stimulate the economy, secure the border and end the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East and will make America safe, prosperous and great again. Trump did all of this once before and will again. Your vote is precious – use it wisely and vote for Donald Trump for President.

Vote Tara Boyce & Christiaan VandenHeuvel for LVJUSD School Board
Katherine Koziowski, Livermore

As a parent of three children in the Livermore school district, I strongly urge our community to elect Tara Boyce and Christiaan VandenHeuvel to the school board. Our district needs leaders who are deeply invested in the future of public education, and both Tara and Christiaan have demonstrated their commitment to ensuring our schools thrive.

Tara Boyce’s background in finance and budgeting will be a significant asset to the board, especially as our schools face ongoing financial pressures. Her expertise will help ensure that district resources are allocated efficiently and effectively, keeping the focus on students and teachers. Christiaan VandenHeuvel, known for his pragmatic, no-nonsense, and empathetic approach to problem-solving, brings leadership grounded in common sense and a deep understanding of community needs. Together, they offer a balanced and thoughtful approach to the challenges our schools face.

On the other hand, it’s concerning that Deena Kaplanis, despite no longer having children in public school, continued to serve on the Parent Club Information Council (PCIC). This committee is meant for parents with active students in the district, and her prolonged involvement raises questions about

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The Zone 7 Water Agency in Alameda County has received a 25-Year Directors Award from the Partnership for Safe Water for its operation of the Del Valle Water Treatment Plant. Staff presented the award to the Zone 7 Board of Directors at the September 18 board meeting. (Photo courtesy of Zone 7 Water Agency)

MAILBOX

(Continued from page 10)

integrity, representation and accountability. While every parent's voice matters, it's important that those serving in advisory capacities reflect the current realities of our schools and families.

Livermore deserves board members who are fully invested in the present and future of our public schools. Tara Boyce and Christiaan VandenHeuvel represent the best choice for ensuring our schools remain strong and responsive to the needs of our students and families. Let's make a decision that benefits the entire community.

Support for Deena Kaplanis

Maria and Rodney Isorda, Livermore

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Deena Kaplanis as a candidate for the Livermore School Board position. I have known Deena for over seven years and have been consistently impressed by her dedication, intelligence, and compassion.

Deena is a remarkable wife and mother of two boys, plus an individual who possesses a unique combination of qualities that would make her an exceptional asset to our school district. She is a natural leader, a skilled communicator, and a tireless advocate for our community. Her ability to connect with people from all walks of life and her unwavering commitment to making a positive difference have always been inspiring.

As a friend, Deena has consistently demonstrated her loyalty, kindness, and generosity. She is always willing to lend a helping hand and is a source of constant support and encouragement. Her positive energy and infectious enthusiasm are contagious, and she has a remarkable ability to bring people together.

I am confident that Deena Kaplan would be an outstanding representative for our school district. Her dedication, experience, and passion for education make her the ideal candidate to lead our community toward a brighter future.

Harris and Flynn for PUSD Board

Mark Miller, Pleasanton

As a two-term PUSD board member and two-time PUSD board president, I learned a great deal about what makes an effective board member and what is required to build a high functioning governing team. Donalyn Harris and Jenifer Flynn will be outstanding board members and will be essential parts of a team that will work collaboratively with district personnel, parents, students, and their fellow board members to keep our district on the right path.

Of the many qualifications both Donalyn and Jen possess, the one I appreciate most in both of them is their dedication to the district through extensive volunteer activities, including PTA leadership positions. I also appreciate their direct knowledge of our schools, especially as witnessed through their children's experiences. They are both cognizant of the many challenges facing our district, especially financial, and I'm confident they will support pragmatic solutions.

Pleasanton voters should take note that both Donalyn and Jen are endorsed by most past, and sitting, PUSD board members, in stark contrast to their opponents. Especially glaring is the omission of Kelly Mokashi from those endorsements, a sitting board member who has repeatedly alienated district staff and board members through words and actions, including campaigning against our recent Bond Measure I.

The choice on these two board positions is clear — Donalyn Harris and Jenifer Flynn.

While You Weren't Looking

Richard Combs, Livermore

Not sure how I noticed this, but I was surprised to find that my 10-cent bottle refund fee is taxable. So the refund fee is $0.10 + .1025 \times .10 = \0.11025 . COSTCO places an A after taxable items, Trader Joes puts a T before the item. When I pointed this out to Trader Joes, they didn't believe it until they saw it. If I take the bottle to a refund center, if I can find one, do I get \$0.11025 back? Unlikely. Since most of us just toss the bottles in the recycle bin, who gets the refund fee? Does it really encourage us to recycle our bottles? Most likely we just will continue to toss them in the blue bin, refund fee + tax or not. Surely the refund fee is just a tax to pay for whatever recycling operations are out there. I hope. But putting a tax on a semi-bogus fee is a bit much to stomach. Any elected representatives listening?

Vice-Principal Endorses Jen Flynn

Beth Louderback, Pleasanton

Do you want someone on our school board with a mature, balanced, and local perspective with true insight into the ins and outs of PUSD? Then vote for Jen Flynn for School Board Area 4.

During my time as a teacher and vice principal in Pleasanton schools, I have had the privilege of knowing Jen as an involved parent of three students, an admin secretary, and a friend. Jen is a strong advocate for our students. She has incredible compassion, integrity and an all-encompassing lens. As a parent involved with PTA and PPIE, she thinks about what would benefit a wide range of students, not just what would be best for her own children. When presented with a challenge, Jen doesn't stop until it's figured out. I saw her compassion, integrity, and tenacity firsthand when she was our administrative secretary. Her interactions with students, families and staff members left everyone knowing that they were seen and heard. She often made suggestions to the administrative team based on those interactions that were then implemented. One holiday, I gave Jen a sign that said, "Everything is figureoutable." This is Jen in a nutshell. No challenge is too big. She approaches difficult topics with a level-headedness and clarity that is truly inspiring.

I have never felt more certain in endorsing a candidate. PUSD is in need of a lot of healing. Jen will help to mend broken relationships,

as she is someone who we can wholeheartedly trust. Visit Jen's website at votejenflynn.com for more information!

Former United States Tom Murphy, Pleasanton

We no longer have the right to identify our country as the United States of America. This is due to the fact that we are currently a sharply divided country and there is not a foreseeable chance to realize unity. Perhaps we should call our country the North American States vs. the United States, a more accurate description.

If we, the people, do not reset our priorities to include an expectation that our elected representatives will place a priority in their platform to deliver nonpartisan solutions toward delivery of objectives that benefit the majority of their constituents both Democrat and Republican vs. just their party, we have no chance of unity. Negotiating and meeting in the middle for the good of the people no longer exists in the House and the Senate. If your representatives will not work for the common good, do not reelect them. Fire them and vote for someone new who might honor their pledge to work across the aisle.

Voters must also demand objective media reporting on candidates running for office. Currently, the media is responsible for fueling the strong division in our country. Their failure to verify sources, report facts objectively, their partisan opinions, and vilification of the party they oppose poisons the minds of voters. They do not allow people to objectively determine who to vote for and who will deliver the results that will benefit the majority of Americans. Nonbiased journalists such as Walter Cronkite, "the most trusted man in America", David Brinkley, Douglas Edwards, David Reasoner, and John Chancellor no longer exist.

In the meantime, consider options for what our flag might look like under the banner, North American States, not the United States. However, while doing so, remember the thousands of brave American men and women who have died defending what the United States of America represents. Sadly, it no longer exists.

Tara Boyce for LVJUSD Board Trustee

B.J. Reynolds-Koonce

I am the parent of a child attending a Livermore school and I wholeheartedly endorse Tara Boyce for Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District Board Trustee. As a parent of young children in the district, Tara has a personal stake in the quality of education our schools provide. Her strong business acumen equips her to tackle the difficulties ahead, especially as we face upcoming budget challenges.

With a successful background in business, Tara understands the importance of effective management and fiscal responsibility — skills that are crucial for navigating these tough times. She is committed to finding innovative solutions that prioritize our students while making the most of our limited resources.

Tara's passion for education and her dedication to our community shine through in her advocacy for student success and an inclusive, innovative learning environment. She will actively seek input from parents, teachers, and students, ensuring that every voice is heard.

Her vision for enhancing educational opportunities and focus on equity will help ensure that every child in Livermore receives the support they need to thrive, even in challenging circumstances.

To learn more about her campaign and goals for our schools, please check out her website: www.taraboyce.com.

Let's support a candidate who genuinely cares about our children's futures. Vote for Tara Boyce for LVJUSD Board Trustee on November 5th!

Tufts and Boyce for School Board

Sherry McGowan, Livermore

I love election season. Voting is one of my greatest joys. It's a chance for me to show I've done my research, and I'm ready to take a stand for the candidates who most align with my values. As a public school educator and a mama of a child in our Livermore schools, no election gets me more excited than our school board election. I am proud to support Tara Boyce and Maggie Tufts for the LVJUSD School Board. In a crowded race, there were two issues that secured my support for my two favorite candidates.

Maggie's life work has been to pour into her Pedrozzi Young Scholars and ensure their academic potential is realized. (I use "her" intentionally, knowing she treats these children as her own, pouring so much dedication, love, and hope into them.) She helps the students and their families navigate an often-confusing system to make sure they graduate high school college- and career-ready. When I was the teacher librarian at Granada, she invited me to share about our library's resources, and I watched as her students started to spend more time in the library and were more willing to approach me for help; they trust her and take her advice! She teaches students and parents to advocate for their needs, in their preferred language. Maggie has the experience and know-how to make sure our most systems-disadvantaged students have access to the resources they need to succeed. Maggie lives a life of service to others. It's really beautiful.

Though I don't know Tara personally, I aligned with her stances in the School Board Candidate Forum. Tara clearly understands the needs of our LGBTQ+ students, and she is willing to take a bold, clear stance in support of their social-emotional needs. Tara knows that our school libraries should have something in them for everyone, including students who are looking for support with gender and sexuality issues. Libraries are for everyone, and I know Tara believes this. In Tara's words, "Free the books."

Get out and vote (or vote from your mailbox)!

Pleasanton Art League (PAL) Art Show Process

Alana Shoars, Pleasanton

Since recently taking on the role of President for the Pleasanton Art League, I have become aware that many people do not fully understand the process of entering art shows. I thought writing a letter to the editor would be a good way to explain the steps that the Pleasanton Art League (PAL) takes for every art show.

Each art show has a published prospectus, which is a set of rules governing the artwork that will be accepted into the art show. When artists sign up for the show, they agree to the rules contained in the prospectus. Each artist submits a digital image of the artwork he or she would like to enter. The images are reviewed by the gallery staff and PAL Board Members.

Occasionally, not often, an artist's submission may be disallowed by PAL or the gallery for not adhering to the rules set forth in the prospec-

tus, and/or the individual gallery's protocols. When this happens, PAL informs the artist and always gives him or her the chance to resubmit a different piece of artwork that does adhere to the protocols. At this point, if the artist chooses to not participate in the show, their show fees are immediately refunded. As an example, there were 85 entries into PAL's Fall Membership Show this year and only one artist was asked to resubmit a work of art.

The Pleasanton Art League has strong ties with and supports the community and will always make sure that the art in our shows is audience and age appropriate and follows the protocols of any gallery that we have a show at.

I Endorse Deena Kaplanis

Mindy Mahoney, Pleasanton

I wholeheartedly endorse Deena Kaplanis for the Livermore School Board 2024. As a long-time resident of Livermore, Deena has consistently demonstrated her dedication to her community. She is always ready to step in and assist wherever needed. Deena is the most hardworking individual I know, passionately committed to enhancing our schools academically and prioritizing student safety. She will work tirelessly to achieve these goals. Deena is a strong leader, driven to make a positive impact and improve the educational experience for ALL students. Her integrity and compassion make her a powerful advocate for students and families. Please vote for Deena Kaplanis to ensure a brighter future for our schools and community. Thank you!

Social Security

Phyllis Couper, Pleasanton

Before you decide which party to vote for, consider the disastrous history of Social Security:

Franklin Roosevelt (D) introduced the Social Security (FICA) Program and promised participation in the program as completely voluntary. It is no longer voluntary.

The participants were only to pay 1% of the first \$1,400 of their annual income into the program. Now it is 7.65% on the first \$90,000.

The money the participants elected to put into the program would not be deductible from their income for tax purposes each year. It is no longer tax deductible.

The money was to be put into the independent 'Trust Fund' rather than into the general operating fund, to fund the Social Security Retirement Program. The money was moved to the General Fund by Lyndon Johnson (D) and spent by the Democratically controlled House and Senate.

The annuity payments to the retirees would never be taxed as income. Many of us have paid into FICA for years and are now receiving a Social Security check every month. Many of us are being taxed on 85% of that money. The Democrat Party made this change.

Who started taxing Social Security annuities?

The Democratic Party, with Al Gore (D) casting the 'tie-breaking' deciding vote.

Who decided to start giving annuity payments to immigrants even though they never paid dime into it? Democrat Jimmy Carter and the Democratic Party.

The success of this country, and the preservation of freedoms we have in this Republic, rest on the hard, cold facts that are created by and applicable to political parties. Researching those histories and current actions of the parties and the politicians is necessary by each voter to preserve our quality of life.

PUSD School Board Members Endorse Craig Eicher for City Council

Kenneth Mano, Pleasanton

Four of the five current school board members of the Pleasanton Unified School District are united in their support for Craig Eicher, current candidate for the Pleasanton City Council.

Mary Jo Carreon, president

of the board and trustees, Steve Maher, Laurie Walker and Justin Brown have all endorsed Craig as their choice for the council.

Craig Eicher is a 32-year veteran of the Pleasanton Police Department, beginning as a volunteer officer and moving up the ranks, retiring as captain, serving six months as interim police chief during Covid.

He has served the community over the years, volunteering with many nonprofits; as board chairman of Hope Hospice for six years he was instrumental in bringing them out of a budget deficit of a million dollars to solvency.

Vote for Craig Eicher for City Council.

Sticks and Stones...

Janet Moore, Livermore

As a concerned Livermore grandparent I was very disheartened after seeing the slanderous letters aimed at LVJUSD School Board candidate Deena Kaplanis. Does one actually think personal character attacks are in any way persuasive rhetoric? In my mind this kind of public verbiage, no matter the subject, simply discredits itself. The truth of the matter is that we NEED strong advocates like Deena. She is a devoted citizen whose single desire is to facilitate open communication between the LVJUSD School Board, the parents of Livermore students and Livermore teachers. Navigating the enormous challenges of parenting and educating the youth of today in this ever-changing, fast-paced world can be daunting. For this very reason, a supportive partnership between this coalition mentioned above is critical. For the personal betterment, educational advancement and the safety of our children, respectful and candid conversation must flow openly between these integral groups. Deena Kaplanis is the one to help achieve this. Deena will make herself available, open for discussion of district matters...to include, but not limited to fiscal issues, curriculum choices, and policies personally affecting the students and their parents. By making the decision to run for the LVJUSD School Board a second time, (undeterred by disparaging words,) Deena shows great strength of character, and her ongoing, unwavering commitment to her family, extended family, many friends and her beloved community. This kind of determination demonstrates Deena's passion and priority to support our dedicated, hardworking teachers and to openly address any parental concerns that might arise...all of which will ultimately benefit the youth community of the Livermore Valley. Make your singular vote for Deena Kaplanis count! With it you will be guaranteed an open avenue for your voice to be heard and heeded.

Tara Boyce Is a School Safety Champion

Cathy Rainey, Livermore

Tara Boyce has been designated as a "Gun Sense Candidate" by Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. As a school board candidate, this demonstrates that Tara is knowledgeable about current gun-sense measures for protecting our schools. For example, creating safe and trusting school climates on Livermore school campuses is critical. Data shows that "most school shooters are current or former students." If our schools offer counseling to students and their families and offer restorative justice systems for misbehavior, there is a better chance that all students will have the support necessary to navigate their school years with positive mental health. Tara is focused on "mental wellness to create resilience" in students as they grow. Initiating trauma-informed emergency planning, where school personnel collaborate with law enforcement to create an effective plan in the event of a shooter on campus, is a best practice that Tara supports. Such a

(See MAILBOX, page 12)



Lance Gordon of the Mad Alchmey Liquid Light Show puts on a display at the ArtWalk After Dark show on Oct. 12 in Livermore. The light show provided a backdrop for a performance by the band Dustbowl Revival. (Photo — Doug Jorgensen)

MAILBOX

(Continued from page 11)

practice would be preferred to one involving students, as mounting evidence shows that practicing lockdown drills with students is causing harm to entire school communities. Tara mentioned the strategy of training school personnel during one of her visits to a house party.

Developing effective gun sense practices in our school district is part of Tara’s platform. She will tackle student safety and mental health with the positive energy and knowledge she has shown in her campaign, her career, and as a mother. Tara understands that the majority of Americans favor common sense gun legislation, and updating our school district plans, policies, and practices is a winning platform.

Vice-President of PUSD Supports Jen Flynn
Justin Brown, Pleasanton

I am writing as a Pleasanton resident to offer my strong support for Jen Flynn’s candidacy for the PUSD School Board, Area 4. Having volunteered alongside Jen in Pleasanton schools for years, I’ve seen her deep dedication to our students and teachers.

Jen has served on the Pleasanton Partnerships in Education Foundation (PIPE) Board and the Superintendent’s Budget Advisory Committee, demonstrating her commitment to enhancing education and ensuring responsible financial decisions. As a former PUSD employee and an active parent of three students in Pleasanton schools, she brings invaluable experience and perspective to the table.

For over a decade, Jen has consistently volunteered in our schools and community, earning the support of teachers and community leaders like retiring trustee Steve Maher. Her passion, experience, and leadership make her the clear choice for the PUSD School Board, Area 4.

I encourage you to vote for Jen Flynn this election.

What Does the School Board Do?
Cate Sarraille, Livermore

Before you vote to “hire” school board members, wouldn’t you like a job description? All the candidates care about kids, or they wouldn’t be running for office. But what exactly does a school board do?

Authority is granted to the board, not to each individual board member. Board members need to work together with the superintendent to make decisions that will benefit all students in the community.

Some of the critical responsibilities of a school board member are:

- District policy — members are required to set and uphold policies on school curriculum standards, school safety and student conduct.
- Budgetary oversight — identify cost saving measures to maintain fiscal accountability, prioritize funds to support students and provide needed services
- Hiring and evaluating the Superintendent — set clear performance goals for the superintendent that focus on student success and district efficiency
- Ensuring all academic programs meet state and federal standards — what students learn will impact their academic achievement

After reviewing all the information about the six candidates, it is clear to me that Tara Boyce and Christiaan VandenHeuvel are the most qualified candidates. Ms. Boyce, the mother of two young students, has an MBA and 20+ years of experience in finance. Her boys attend one of the three Title I schools in Livermore — she is aware of the challenges those schools (and students) face. Mr. VandenHeuvel has been involved in Livermore schools for over 10 years. His resume includes PTSA president at Livermore High, member of the School Site Council at both Livermore High and East Avenue Middle School and working as a substitute teacher.

Another requirement for board members is they be ethical leaders. Mrs. Kaplanis deceived members of the Parent Community Information Council (PCIC) and Superintendent Van Schaack by claiming her children attended Junction TK-8, when in fact, her children attend a private school. Mrs. Kaplanis believes parents should control what students learn in school. The purpose of public schools is to teach students what society needs them to know. Parents are not the “clients” of public schools — the community is.

While you may not agree with my choices for the LVJUSD school board, I hope you will review the “job description” I have provided

and see how well the candidates you have chosen meet these requirements. Every vote counts, so be sure to vote on November 5th.

Join Me in Supporting Christiaan VandenHeuvel
Kim Kennedy, Livermore

I am proud to support Christiaan VandenHeuvel for Livermore School Board. I have known Christiaan for many years and have also had the privilege of working alongside him. He is a tremendous leader, a man of great integrity, and has a heart and passion for our community. I believe Christiaan will ensure that every student feels valued and is able to achieve their full potential. In addition to being an active part of our community, he is also a frequent substitute teacher in the district. I honestly can’t think of anyone better for this position. Please join me in supporting Christiaan VandenHeuvel for the Livermore School Board.

What Kamala Ignores
Daniella Karo, Pleasanton

Ms. Harris ignores the fact that her old reputation precedes her. She is not aware that you can’t build a reputation by what you promise to do in the future!

Her old reputation haunts her, inflation out of control, illegals jumping fences in the millions, threatening wars abroad, crime out of control, police defunded, hurricane victims abandoned, criminals rescued from prisons, etc., etc.! The Biden/Harris administration promised at the beginning to unite this country, yet the opposite is happening. She talks a lot of bringing joy to our life, yet when asked if she would have done anything different from Biden in the last 3.5 years, her response was she wouldn’t have handled anything differently! Never mind our disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan with 13 dead American soldiers, just one of many other blunders and failures. Kamala has done what her mother warned her not to do all along growing up “a half ass job”, to use Kamala’s own recollection of the warning. She is not presidential material!

More of the Same or Something Different?
Vote Deena Kaplanis
Tracy Heskett, Livermore

If you want the status quo for the Livermore Joint

Unified School Board, then vote for ANY candidate but Deena Kaplanis. Deena is that different. The critics are quick to point out her differences. What are they afraid of? Challenging conversation? Differences of opinion? This is non-existent on the current board. How do we introduce NEW ideas if everyone thinks exactly the same?

In reference to her critics: Her children: Deena’s family was refused the ability to send her children to the same LVJUSD school. Her family had to make a last-minute decision to locate a school where her children would be together.

It shouldn’t be a distraction that she wants to affect change within the public schools. What would be the difference if her children were in college? The fact that she wants to help in schools her children do not attend says a lot about her upstanding character. She thinks beyond just her family.

Her medical practice: She has a thriving chiropractic business and chooses NOT to have website because she has all the clients she can handle by word of mouth alone.

LGBTQ+: Deena knows this part of our culture; she just wants all kids to be acknowledged and all children to have their emotional needs met. In reference to being against AB1955 (No parent notification), one of the reasons she made this stand is because children can be taken away from their parents; btw this passed.

Church: It is interesting that people can declare to be tolerant and accepting of all people, but the moment someone is found to go to church, they are rejected. Btw: Christiaan VandenHeuvel is a youth pastor at a church in Livermore.

Teachers’ union: Tara Boyce and Christiaan VandenHeuvel are supported by them. Is that what you want? Do you want more representation for the union or someone who will engage in balanced conversations with the highest priority being our students?Deena is a well-rounded individual who lost in 2022 by about 500 votes in a field of eight candidates with one incumbent and was asked by a Livermore public official to run again. She is very concerned with the academic performance of our children, which is poor. She is also concerned with the physical and emotional well-being of all children. She has original and fresh ideas. Vote for something different!

The Data Is Wrong
Brian Sanborn, Pleasanton

I am not sure where your writer of last week got her data, but Ms. Couper’s numbers are way off. Let’s look at 401Ks. The S&P 500 from January of 2017 to December of 2020 (Trump’s term) was up about 55%, not too bad. From January 2021 to October of this year it is up almost 60%, even better. Yet Ms. Couper lost 25% during that time. My 401K is doing great! I bet her broker told her not to put all her money into Truth Social!

Reading the Qur'an
Abdul Awwal, Pleasanton

One of the effects of the war in Gaza has been a surge of interest in the West in reading the Qur’an. A common question from such readers is, “Where do I start?” Tradition tells us that early Muslims read the short chapters of the Qur’an, found in the final and 30th section of the Qur’an. Historically, as the Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Mecca, those were the revelations that came down first.

What do the short chapters mostly talk about? They talk about faith in God, faith in the afterlife, and interestingly, about social justice (for example, warning people who do not encourage feeding the poor). Early Muslims were quoted to have said, “We learned faith in God first and then in the afterlife, so that when the commands for fasting and prayer came down, it was easy for us to follow.” Some modern thinkers recommend for people who have Judeo-Christian background to read chapter 19, about Maryam (peace be upon her), the mother of Jesus (peace be upon him), or chapter 20, which talks about Moses (peace be upon him).

What does a faith in the afterlife achieve in shaping one’s life in this world? The basic concept behind the afterlife is the concept of accountability. In our modern times, this is highly applicable and desired. You want to punish a driver who goes through a red light, because without this there would be eternal chaos on the road. One could say that in this traffic law, there is a protection of life. One would never recommend that we abolish the justice system or grant amnesty to all killers, thieves, etc.

Recently, I heard a speech by Rev. Munther Isaac from Palestine (www.youtube.com/live/MIEQDaHavNU). Around the 1-hour, 10-minute mark, he reminds the audience about the day of judgment with a reference to Mathew:25. He says that Jesus talked a lot about the day of judgment, although modern clergy usually shy away from such topics. He reminds that one’s position with God is related to how one treats the hungry in this world.

Some U.S. doctors who treated children in Gaza were surprised that children playing in the playground were hit by bullet right above their eyes. I wonder if a person with faith in the afterlife would be able to harm innocent children or others to justify such action!

Support for Tara Boyce and Christiaan VandenHeuvel
Sharon and Vaughn Draggoo, Livermore

Tara Boyce and Christiaan VandenHeuvel will be strong additions to Livermore’s Board of Education. As we met with candidates individually, studied their websites, and gave attention to each who were present at September’s School Board Forum, we listened for the value each held for team collaboration.

The leadership team for our district’s schools is charged with this mission: “Each student will graduate with the skills needed to contribute and thrive in a changing world.” This aspirational mission statement demands collaboration among leaders on behalf of the younger members of our city.

The leadership team for our city, the Livermore City Council, expressly addresses collaboration in its mission, vision, and values statements. As summarized for this letter, our city council leaders “understand and value our roles as members of a larger community” working together by “embracing collaborative ... engagement.” They practice at being “deliberately inclusive as we make decisions ... for all our diverse community members.”

Our younger city members deserve what all of us grown-ups expect of our civic leadership teams. Tara Boyce expresses it this way: “The best board is one comprised of individuals from unique backgrounds who come together as one to guide our schools to continually improve.”

Christiaan VandenHeuvel offers this: “My priorities include improving education quality through data-driven best practices, fostering a collaborative board culture that resists polarization and dehumanization, and ensuring every student can achieve their fullest potential.

We encourage our fellow voters to support Tara Boyce and Christiaan VandenHeuvel as they seek to co-labor with sitting board members for the benefit of each of our city’s students.

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Dr. Chirag Pandya, board certified in Pulmonology, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, has moved to a new location.

He has been serving the patients in the Tri-Valley area for the last 15 years and has held several leadership roles at Stanford Tri-Valley (ValleyCare) hospital.

Dr. Pandya specializes in asthma, emphysema/COPD, trouble breathing, lung infections, lung cancer, interstitial lung disease, snoring, sleep apnea, trouble sleeping (insomnia), narcolepsy and restless leg syndrome.

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Budgetary Issues Drive Race for Two LVJUSD Trustee Seats

By Ruth Roberts

Six candidates are competing for two at-large seats on the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD) Board of Trustees. Current trustees Yanira Guzman and Kristie Wang are not seeking re-election. This is the district’s last at-large election. In 2026 LVJUSD will switch to by-area trustee voting.

Tara Boyce

Boyce is a financial consultant and parent of two elementary-age students who attend school in the LVJUSD. Born and raised in Pennsylvania, Boyce moved to California in 2007. She holds a B.A. in economics and political science and has an M.B.A. from the University of Scranton. She says she is running on a platform of accountability and believes her background in finance makes her uniquely qualified to understand the changing needs of the district.

If elected, Boyce says the district’s two top challenges are becoming financially stable and settling the high school scheduling situation which this year made the change from quarters to semesters.

“LVJUSD must do the necessary work to prove out that we can be financially solvent as required by the County and State Departments of Education,” Boyce wrote in an email to The Independent. “First, all financial data must be scrutinized to make sure our budget for this school year is realistic and actionable. Second, existing programs with expiring funding must have their outcomes evaluated and if determined to continue, new funding must be identified to provide continuity.”

She added that the high school scheduling issue, triggered in part by the change from quarters to semesters, must be resolved with input from students, parents, and faculty to ensure that both state standards are met and students receive a comprehensive education throughout their four years.

“Solutions must be found in order to make this a more timely and sustainable process that proactively communicates schedules prior to the beginning of term and allows concerns to be addressed,” she said.

Boyce believes that creating quality programs at every school in the district at every level will reduce the number of transfer requests from families and allow students to remain in their neighborhood schools. She also supports wellness centers in the schools to help address student needs.

“Students who feel supported in their environment have a higher propensity to thrive in their studies,” Boyce said.

For more information, visit www.taraboyce.com.

Deena Kaplanis

Kaplanis is the married mother of two young boys. Her children do not attend school in the district, but she hopes to re-enroll them in the district soon. She and her husband are small business owners who have been active in the community for more than 20 years.

She is a graduate of Whitler College with a B.A. in kinesiology and leisure science. She earned a doctorate in chiropractic from the Southern California University of Health Sciences and has served on several committees in the community including the PTSA, her church’s ministry and as a coach for youth sports.

Kaplanis says she is running on a platform of fiscal stability and student well-being.

“The district is facing significant financial challenges, including a need for substantial budget reductions and cash flow issues that have required internal borrowing,” she wrote in an email to The Independent. “We need to make tough decisions to en-



Tara Boyce

sure long-term fiscal health while protecting the quality of education. This includes prioritizing expenditures that directly impact students, scrutinizing administrative costs, and ensuring transparent, responsible financial management.”

She said that student mental health is paramount to their success both in the classroom and out. If elected, Kaplanis said she will work to ensure the district provides a high-quality education and supportive learning environment.

“Recent data shows that only 43% of students in grades 6-12 feel a sense of belonging at school, putting our district in the bottom percentile nationally,” Kaplanis said. “This is unacceptable ... We must focus on creating a more inclusive and supportive environment where every student feels valued. This means addressing bullying, improving mental health resources, and fostering a culture of respect and inclusivity across all schools.”

Kaplanis said she would encourage transparency, engagement and accountability within the district and community, including detailed financial reporting and public forums where budget proposals are discussed before decisions are made.

For more information, visit <https://drdeenak4lvj.usd.com>.

Jean Paulsen

Paulsen is a 30-year resident of Livermore who attended elementary and middle school in the district and is a graduate of Livermore High School. She holds a bachelor’s degree in political science from Humboldt State University and has a paralegal certificate from San Francisco State University.

Paulsen has served nine times as an election worker for the Alameda County Registrar of Voters, has been a legal intern for the San Francisco Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and a Census worker in 2020.

She sees the district’s biggest challenges as safety and funding and says if elected she will, along with the help of the rest of the school board and community, reintroduce another school bond.

“For safety, I want our school district to adopt a due diligence safety contract for every parent/guardian to sign,” Paulsen said in an email to The Independent. “Parents/guardians are to be held as an accessory if he/she fails to prevent his/her child from bringing a weapon, posting hate speech/bullying on social media, and/or bringing drugs to distribute to school. This is to protect the safety of all students. I will not allow complacency anymore.”

She added that she would also crack down on local vendors who continue to sell illegal vape pens in Livermore. She also believes the district should hire a grant writer.

Paulsen is against banning books and would like to see an increase in math and computer science classes to help attract more girls to the sciences.

“A recent Livermore report showed that there were few girls in the algebra with computers classes, and no girls in geometry,” said Paulsen. “It’s time to end the gender gap.”

Amanda Pepper

Pepper and her husband have lived in Livermore with their three children



Deena Kaplanis

since 2012. Her two younger children attend school in the district while the older one is in college. She has been an active member of the community serving as a classroom volunteer, library aide, PTA board member and is the vice chair of the Community Bond Oversight Committee.

Pepper earned a bachelor of science degree in communication (media studies) from the University of Texas at Austin and a master of arts in writing, literature and publishing from Emerson College. She has worked in textbook publishing at Houghton Mifflin and Pearson where her first projects were the California Reading and California Math series.

She says the school district faces several challenges, with its budget being a top priority.

“The budget has the knock-on effect of impacting programs,” she wrote in an email to The Independent. “We’ve seen recent attempts to curb or end things like the International Baccalaureate, music programs... Ideally, we can find solutions that don’t require putting key programs



Amanda Pepper

on the chopping block. The budget has also impacted the hiring of enough teachers, which has meant some larger class sizes — some are topping 30 kids in a class — and that isn’t optimal, either.”

Another priority for Pepper if elected, is ensuring high school students are college ready.

“I recognize that not all high school students want to go to a four-year school,” she said. “We’ve got Del Valle, which is great for students looking to learn trade skills, and I’m consistently wowed by what they’re able to do — but our numbers for getting Livermore students accepted to U.C.s and C.S.U.s have been underwhelming the last couple of years.”

If elected, the first-time candidate says she will approach the job with a collaborative spirit, and also not just focus on a pet issue, but keep an open mind and be in it for the long haul.

For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/amandapepper4livermoreschools>.

Maggie Tufts

Tufts and her husband and



Maggie Tufts

two sons have lived in Livermore for 16 years, with both children attending school in the district. Tufts grew up in Southern California and Guadalupe, Mexico. She holds a bachelor’s degree in education and taught as a bilingual teacher in Mexico before returning to the United States and continuing her education



Christiaan VandenHeuvel

before eventually becoming a teacher. She currently works managing the Pedrozzi Young Scholars Program with Livermore students where she mentors students and works with families to navigate the school system and emerge ready for college or a career.

(See TRUSTEE, page 14)

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TRUSTEE

(Continued from page 13)

Tufts believes her bi-cultural and bilingual upbringing and years of experience in the Livermore school system make her uniquely positioned for a seat on the board.

Tufts says the LVJUSD has the tools to successfully graduate its students but added that data shows many students are not graduating college and are not career-ready. If elected, she would like to see that change.

“We need to make sure that the resources provided to be ready for their preparation beyond high school are available to all students,” Tufts said in an email to The Independent.

SENATE

(Continued from front page)

to Stockton in 2010 after his district’s boundaries shifted into San Joaquin County. McNerney represented the Stockton area until leaving Congress in 2023, then moved back to the Tri-Valley and chose earlier this year to run for the legislature.

McNerney’s opponent is Jim Shoemaker, a 30-year San Joaquin County resident who has owned trucking, financial services and popcom distribution businesses.

The district leans Democratic, with 42% registered Democrats; 31% Republicans; and 21% expressing no party preference.



Jerry McNerney

**Jerry McNerney —
Democratic Party**

McNerney said he had not expected to return to elected office, but many community leaders convinced him to run for the seat.

“I’m the only candidate to have lived on, and represented in Congress, both sides of the Altamont Pass,” McNerney said. “This gives me intimate knowledge of the people and issues throughout District 5. Beyond District 5, California’s State Senate has a record

of crafting policies that lead the nation — and the rest of the world — forward. It is a legislative body that actually works together to get things done, and that is very appealing. I feel a duty to work for a better future however I can, and the best way to do that is stepping up and becoming the bold State Senator that we deserve.”

McNerney said that while serving in Congress, he delivered major results for the Tri-Valley and San Joaquin County. He cited the initiation of Valley Link train service, the construction of much-needed Veterans Affairs health care facilities, the modernization of roads and levees, and the expansion of clean energy and green manufacturing industries.

If elected to the Senate, his “top focus will be helping our region build a stronger, smarter, and greener economy.” “That requires getting traffic and congestion, particularly between the Tri-Valley and the Central Valley, under control,” McNerney said. “Valley Link was a great first step, and I will push Sacramento to ensure that it finishes on time, but we need to kick-start more projects to enhance our region’s transit hubs.”

McNerney said economic renewal and climate action should go “hand-in-hand.” “After rooting my family in the Tri-Valley, I spent my career developing the wind energy technology that graces our Altamont Hills, cuts our carbon emissions, and creates so many good local jobs,” he said. “I want to help other green enterprises emerge in

future and with less stress.”

Tufts is a volunteer at the Granada High School library where her son attended, and has volunteered for many years while her boys were in the Boy Scouts. She is also a member of her church’s hospitality group and a volunteer for Quest Science Center.

For more information, visit www.maggietufts4schoolboard2024.com.

Christiaan VandenHeuvel

VandenHeuvel and his family have lived in Livermore for more than a decade. His wife is a special education teacher at Livermore High School and their

children have gone through or are currently enrolled in the LVJUSD. He says his involvement as a pastor, parent, substitute teacher and volunteer on various committees such as the Livermore High School PTSA, of which he was the past president, and the Reopening Task Force during the pandemic, has given him valuable insight into the needs of the district’s schools from various perspectives.

Additionally, as an immigrant and a former English learner, he says he understands firsthand the difficulties many students face when it comes to language barriers and cultural adjustments.

will take the time to learn and lead on the issues of both the Tri-Valley and the Central Valley; I spent over a decade doing exactly that.”



Jim Shoemaker

**Jim Shoemaker —
Republican Party**

Shoemaker said he is running to represent the 5th District because his background in blue-collar work better represents the average citizen.

“I have worked with my hands every day since I was 10 years-old, granting me in every trade from trucking to financial services,” Shoemaker said. “My professional background has given me a keen understanding of infrastructure and municipal development and lends itself to the challenges presented to Livermore and the Tri-Valley.”

Shoemaker said he is proud of California’s “natural beauty, loving families and can-do work ethic,” and wants to ensure its communities are safe. He said California has failed to hold criminals accountable by “pushing soft-on-crime initiatives onto its citizens, prioritizing lawbreakers over the law-abiding.”

“As a business owner, I

“This experience fuels my passion for ensuring all students — regardless of their background — have access to the resources they need to succeed,” he said in an email to The Independent.

VandenHeuvel says he is running on a platform of inclusivity, equitable learning environments for all students and advocates for transparent decision-making.

“Increased transparency around decision-making processes could help build more trust between the district and the community,” he said. “I like that Dr. Gibson (our new superintendent) values transparency, and I would

like to see clearer and more accessible explanations of key decisions, especially around budget allocations, facility improvements, and curriculum changes.”

VandenHeuvel added that enhanced engagement among the parents, students and teachers would make for better long-term decisions and a stronger sense of community. If elected, he would spend more time listening and learning from the current trustees, staff and the community to fully understand the existing protocols and procedures.

For more information, visit <https://vandenheuvel-forschoolboard.com>.

in their education, and the “quality should match what our taxes pay for.” He said retail theft was rampant in Alameda County and slammed the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office for a “catch and release” approach to criminals.

Shoemaker acknowledged that Tri-Valley and northern San Joaquin Valley residents might have different priorities because of different economies. He described the Tri-Valley as “the home to emerging scientific industries and highly educated residents who work throughout the Bay Area, while San Joaquin County boasts thriving agricultural exports thanks to its Mediterranean climate.”

“Differences aside, I have found that housing development and upkeep of our transportation infrastructure are common needs between San Joaquin and Alameda counties,” he said. “Many families find themselves pushed further and further east due to the high cost of living, ending up in the Tri-Valley and/or San Joaquin County. Residents of both counties are looking for a permanent home to raise their families with confidence. I intend to keep our district hospitable to those desires.”

“I hope to earn the vote of residents in Pleasanton, Dublin, and Livermore because I understand the value of hard work,” he added. “I intend to deliver the same diligence and ambition that Tri-Valley residents are known for, all of which is driven by their love of their families.”

COUNCIL

(Continued from front page)

Carling, who will leave office because of term limits.

Mayor John Marchand is running unopposed for re-election.

The Independent posed a series of questions to the candidates, including why they are running, the issues they consider most important, their take on the Eden Housing project and calls for a public referendum, the urban growth boundary (UGB) and Dublin’s effort to break its own urban limit line and develop the Crosby Property that separates the two cities.

DISTRICT 3

STEVEN DUNBAR

Livermore Planning Commissioner Steven Dunbar said he is hoping to bring his experience serving on the city’s Planning Commission and Community Asset Management Program (CAMP) Committee to represent residents on the City Council.

Calling Livermore a “wonderful city,” the six-year resident, who works as an engineering supervisor for Gillig, said he wants to help Livermore “thrive in ways that preserve our values and history.”

“I bring the combination of detailed knowledge, a proven record of showing up and doing the work, a commitment to empathy and open outreach, and a calm disposition to lead Livermore in meeting our challenges together,” Dunbar said.

Dunbar said he believes Livermore shares echoes

of his hometown Arroyo Grande’s history and character, but is “more inclusive and connected in its opportunities, more committed to continuous improvement, and more vibrant in its outlook.”

“I love Livermore’s balance, connectedness to the Bay without being overrun by it, and (being) still down-to-earth and friendly to everyone who wants to visit or even stay long term,” Dunbar said. “I use our trails, our transit system, our library, and our businesses.”

Top Issues

Dunbar identified his top issues facing the city as providing fair and affordable housing opportunities, finding space for small businesses to succeed and maintaining funding for essential services, maintenance and environmental protection as Livermore grows.

“The city meets all of these challenges by carefully planning to provide the most benefit within our means,” he said. “The council connects the community to the public servants, represents the interests of everyone, and makes decisions on priorities. I will focus our resources on what we can control, explain our tradeoffs openly, and make proactive and clear decisions towards small but meaningful improvements based on my time talking with the community.”

Dunbar said the General Plan update must be completed so the city can “create better policies and objective

design standards that meet our needs,” and “finish the Asset Management Plan and act on it to ensure efficient spending and fund our essential services, using what is left to provide the most benefit per dollar.”

Dunbar said concerns that he hears from District 3 residents include making Vasco Row a center for small businesses, dealing with pockets of homelessness, and handling East Avenue and other street safety concerns.

“The pilot has taken far too long, and the communication has been poor. Even some of my own feedback as a citizen was missed. Other areas such as College, Mines and Fourth Street also have issues.”

Other Issues

- Dunbar supported the downtown Eden Housing project as a planning commissioner, because it met the development code requirements under state law. The decision, he said, was upheld by the California Supreme Court. “I believe that attempting to ‘call it off’ at this time would be extremely unwise and take precious resources that are needed elsewhere,” he said. Dunbar added the referendum petitions did not directly create an option to hold a referendum about the entire project. A referendum, he said, would result in significant legal action, severability, and damage claims.
- He supports programs that promote rooftop solar power

generation, suggesting slightly reduced parking requirements or reduced tree shading requirements in commercial and industrial parking lots to accommodate the support poles; default layouts on parking designs to speed permitting; public education about the benefits of bidirectional car charging; staff working with larger industrial buildings for new installation opportunities. He also supports an investigation of canal solar covers and resources for solar installers who will work with homeowners’ associations.

- He supports the existing UGB, saying the city “should work to meet its obligations and economic needs for growth within the existing city limit, because it protects valuable open space, strengthens perception and outcomes of community character, statistically has lower emissions overall, and avoids long term asset maintenance problems.
- Dunbar said he found in his role as a planning commissioner that there was “insufficient evidence to move forward with the East of Greenville expansion, much less bring the issue to a vote on the ballot as would be required.”
- He supports Livermore’s efforts to prevent Dublin’s proposal to develop the Crosby Property that serves as an open space buffer between the cities.

- Dunbar said he reviewed the city’s Climate Action Plan and passed it as a planning commissioner in 2022. He said the city can help provide the infrastructure for effective public transport, safe bike routes, and convenient electric vehicle charging stations. He said he bikes to work, buys 100% renewable products and uses smart home devices.

DAVID FARLEY

ALivermore resident since 2010, David Farley said he has always felt a duty to serve society, including as a U.S. Navy officer.

A physicist who has worked at both Lawrence Livermore and Sandia National Laboratories, Farley owns a small high-tech business that develops a quantum technology education program at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU). He serves as a Livermore Airport commissioner and is a volunteer coach for girls’ lacrosse.

He said he and his two daughters, ages 16 and 19, “like the combination of a vibrant downtown, good schools, and open spaces,” and he can be found often at restaurants downtown, listening to live music, or running a weekly 5k along the trails.

Farley said he is seeking office because he believes the Livermore City Council needs depth and expertise that it currently lacks.

“I have strong leadership skills, deep knowledge of

clean energy and emerging technologies, business acumen, and significant community involvement,” Farley said. “I believe my background and proven capabilities would be of great benefit to the City of Livermore.”

Top Issues

Farley cited the most critical issues facing Livermore as housing affordability, energy and water, and public safety.

Farley said the cost of housing has made Livermore unaffordable and state mandates to build nearly 5,000 new homes will not reduce the cost per square foot. He said supply and demand must be addressed to make homes affordable. He touts building “empty nester friendly” new units and offering incentives for Livermore incentive nesters to buy the homes.

“So long as high paying jobs are within an hour commute, demand will remain insatiable,” he said. “We need to work with Sacramento to consider smart incentives to distribute Bay Area high paying jobs to other parts of California.”

Farley said Livermore’s Climate Action Plan has made good strides toward improving the city’s climate footprint, but more needs to be done. He noted that most of that plan is behind schedule or not started.

“Clean water and clean energy can be mutually dependent, and water access will continue to be a major issue going forward, especially for

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COUNCIL

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STEVEN DUNBAR

a large agricultural city like Livermore,” Farley said.

He said Livermore is a “pretty safe city,” but nearby East Bay cities are experiencing significant crime. He said he will have zero tolerance for crime, including low-level crime, and fully supports law enforcement doing its job.

Other Issues

- Residents, Farley said, complain repeatedly about the white plastic bollards on East Avenue and poor lighting on some streets. He plans to discuss the issues with City Manager Marianna Marysheva “to ensure she knows of these concerns and see how I can help address them.”
- The downtown Eden Housing project was ill-conceived, he said, because the people it intends to serve — teachers, public safety workers, laboratory employees, city workers, and skilled labor and union workers — would not qualify because they earn too much money.
- “While I support the concept of housing for people who are struggling, I have determined that choosing the downtown site, the most enviable location in Livermore, breaks the fairness barrier,” Farley said. “If I was on council at the time, I would have strongly opposed the downtown location and pushed for some other location where, by and large, our residents would assess the location to be fair.”
- He added that the council “should have foreseen the pushback on a downtown location for this project,” and said the public should have a referendum on the full project. “The City looks bad when it tries to play games with a referendum, even if technically there is some legal basis to separate the components of the Eden project,” he said.
- He supports programs that promote rooftop solar, and incentives for customers to install solar and receive bill reductions from PG&E.
- He opposes expanding the UGB into unincorporated areas, especially if the purpose is job creation. He said Livermore does not have a jobs problem, “we have a housing affordability problem.”
- He supports an open-space buffer between the “Dublin-style growth and Livermore’s preference for less intrusive growth.”
- Pleasanton and Dublin need to provide more facilities for the unhoused population to share the responsibility to deal with the issue.

JEFF KASKEY

A resident since 1981, Jeff Kaskey said he is running for City Council because “things don’t happen unless people who are able, step up and offer their time and energy.”

“Not everyone has the time and resources available, so I am fortunate to be able to offer to serve,” he said. “I will use my decades of civic, community and corporate experience to bring a more collaborative approach to managing the city and solving hard community problems.”

Kaskey said he moved to Livermore to join the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. He worked in technology jobs in Livermore and Silicon Valley for four decades. He is married and owns a small company that makes and sells audio accessories internationally.

“I love the active and involved community, volunteering for and supporting many Livermore nonprofits,” he said. “I have volunteered with, and/or served on the boards



DAVID FARLEY

of, the Livermore Heritage Guild, Livermore Cultural Arts Council, Livermore Lions, 4-H, and Livermore Valley Arts. I take frequent advantage of our walkable downtown, our diverse restaurants, and our surrounding ranching and agricultural land. I like that our town incorporates its heritage into its modern identity, from the rodeo and wineries to many of the historic organizations and an appreciation for our historic homes and buildings.”

Top Issues

Citing important issues facing the city, Kaskey said Livermore needs to finish the work of updating downtown, incorporating “alternatives that deliver on downtown low-income housing, as well as a vibrant, active public space in the center of our town.”

“With a council interested in adopting a collaborative plan, housing can be placed where it has been planned for years: north of Railroad Avenue in the area defined in the Downtown Specific Plan ‘Downtown Neighborhood, North Side,’” Kaskey said.

That includes the Eden Housing project, which Kaskey said the development can be “productively modified to provide downtown housing and the public space for a vibrant downtown center. The city already defines the area north of Railroad Avenue as the Downtown Neighborhood, North Side, so there is space that the city agrees is suited for housing.”

On homelessness, he said the city “already does a lot on this issue, but like other cities, we are still working on answers.” Partnering with local nonprofit service organizations is key, he said, along with providing for basic needs, including safe parking. Mental health and addiction should be dealt with on a regional level in partnership with neighboring cities, the county and the state.

Kaskey also cited maintaining roads, lighting, sidewalks, parks and buildings as a key issue.

“The city has reported an ongoing deficit in this area, although they have started to create and fund reserves for this purpose,” Kaskey said. “We need to both track our maintenance and also our asset liabilities to make sure we are funding for the future”

Other Issues

- Kaskey cited traffic, lighting on East Avenue, and car, bicycle and pedestrian safety as important concerns of residents. He said the bollards on East Avenue are “almost universally unpopular.”
- Nothing has happened for years with the Nob Hill shopping center, he added. “The community members I talk to would love to see some form of market there,” Kaskey said. “There are many locals, including many nearby apartment dwellers, who would benefit from a local market, and the addition of more housing would only increase the need.”
- He supports rooftop solar power generation, in addition to placing solar panels in parking lots within the city’s boundaries. He opposes building industrial solar farms on open space in county land.
- He sees no compelling reason to expand the urban growth boundary. Besides preserving open rural space, “the UGB also encourages us to focus on thoughtful development within the boundary, discourages sprawl, and incentivizes cleaning up of



JEFF KASKEY

problematic sites within the city, rather than ignoring them and plowing into our rural land.”

- Annexing the Crosby Property between Dublin and Livermore is “not much better than having Dublin do it”, because a development-oriented council could rezone it. He said Livermore should negotiate an agreement with LAFCo and Dublin to keep the land as open space.”

DISTRICT 4
TOM SOULES

The controversial Eden Housing project downtown and a visit to a downtown park in Cary, North Carolina, prompted physicist Tom Soules to run for office. A Livermore resident since 2002 when he arrived to work at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Soules said he supports a public referendum on whether the project should go forward.

“If the voters voted for the city plan, the decision would be made. This is democracy,” he said.

Soules said public parks in downtowns across the United States serve as community centers for families and visitors. He prefers that for downtown Livermore.

“Why couldn’t Livermore have such a park, when the vacant land already exists and is owned by the city?” he said.

Soules said his background working in manufacturing for GE Lighting in Cleveland, Ohio, and in the scientific world at LLNL, gives him experience to understand the city’s infrastructure needs and budgets.”

“I have a good understanding of what can and what cannot be done when one proposes things like electric airplanes at our airport or fusion energy,” Soules said. “I also think my experience in industry has given me a more down-to-earth view of other things. When someone throws around a word like ‘affordable,’ I immediately ask, ‘What does that mean?’ And if the answer is less than 30% of your gross income, (or) the HUD definition, then I ask where the difference comes from.”

Soules said he volunteers for the nonprofit organizations Open Heart Kitchen, Hagemann Ranch and others. He also tutors five immigrants in English from China, Taiwan and Venezuela. He and his wife, Barbara, have been married since 1968 and have two children.

“We love Livermore and frequent downtown for its shops and restaurants many times a week,” he said. “We also regularly attend shows at the Bankhead and love the Vine Theater. We particularly like the small-town character of the city and the mixture of vineyards, rural farms and high-tech national laboratories. It is certainly an eclectic combination: rodeos, farmer’s markets, national lab influences and a lovely community college, Las Positas.”

Top Issues

The most pressing issues for the city, Soules said, are providing lower-cost housing, keeping Livermore “a safe and beautiful city and keeping its eclectic small-town character,” and having a “bottom-up city government that not only listens to its citizens, but acts on their behalf.”

Soules said housing in Livermore is not affordable. He proposes increasing the in-lieu fees on developers to add to the city’s affordable housing funds. He said he supports any affordable housing program.

He said he opposes the downtown location for Eden Housing, and moving the development to a nearby



TOM SOULES

site would have avoided the litigation and controversy. Soules said he collected signatures for a referendum on the whole project, not a portion of it as the city council had considered.

“My position on the city’s apparent goal of submitting the referendum to only affect the proposed park is that this was the city’s way to skirt the real issue in voters’ minds and go ahead with what the city wanted to do anyway,” he said.

Other Issues

- Term limits exist, Soules said, because elected officials sometimes make moves that disregard citizen’s interests. “I think this has happened in Livermore and many of the folks I talked to as I go door-to-door say Livermore is heading in the wrong direction. They like Livermore, but they liked it a lot more before.”
- He strongly supports rooftop solar panels, which he has on his roof. He believes the locations for utility scale solar farms outside the city must be carefully studied and located in regions where they are not harmful to the environment.
- He is opposed to expanding the UGB, saying “we do not want urban sprawl or a high-rise jungle.” There is no need to annex the Greenville area outside the city’s limits because there is enough space for residential development and residential renovation within the UGB, he said.
- He would like to maintain open space between Dublin and Livermore at the Crosby Property and as a council member, he will examine “all the options to keep as much of the space open as possible.”

KRISTIE WANG

Kristie Wang, who has served on the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District board since 2020, is seeking to bring her public service experience to the city’s government.

Wang called this a “time of challenge and opportunity for our city, as we finalize our General Plan for the next 20 years, fulfill state mandates on housing, address infrastructure needs, and face the impact of a hotter and drier climate.”

“I want to bring to the city my training and experience in policy making, as well as connections and relationships I’ve developed with community leaders and our elected representatives in the city and regionally,” Wang said. “I have the skills, knowledge and governing experience to bring our community together to move the city forward.”

A Tri-Valley resident for 25 years, Wang and her family moved from Dublin to Livermore 18 years ago. She said the pace of Dublin’s development negatively impacted their quality of life.

“We liked Livermore’s commitment to open space and thoughtful growth and planning,” she said. “It’s part of the character of our city. We also value the engaged community of Livermore, with its high spirit of volunteerism and love of the arts and multiculturalism.”

Top Issues

Wang identified the most critical issues facing the city as affordable housing, asset management and climate resilience. To address them, she said, she will consider the city’s “needs, existing laws and regulations, and community interests to develop thoughtful, forward-thinking plans and budgets to preserve the character of Livermore, while moving



KRISTIE WANG

our city forward.”

In addressing District 4’s needs, Wang said she has spent months listening to its residents, business owners and community leaders, some of whom are longtime residents and others who are new.

“The issues that have come up most often are downtown development, the future of our wine industry and local economy, and neighborhood traffic safety and efficiency,” Wang said. “Most are pleased with the direction of the city and city leadership and would like to see our local businesses — including our wineries — be supported so they can sustain and thrive. This includes needed infrastructure, as well as downtown and wine country hotels.”

Wang said her academic training and professional experience are in public policy at all levels of government, and she has built strong and positive relationships with community leaders and elected officials in Livermore and beyond. She serves on the Livermore Climate Action Team (LCAT), a community group composed of residents, business owners, representatives of the National Labs and local nonprofit groups working to support the city’s Climate Action Plan.

“I have a track record of working with people across boundaries,” Wang said. “I’ve demonstrated this through my effective leadership to eliminate vape products from the Tri-Valley and helping to lead our school district out of the pandemic.”

Other Issues

- It is time to build the “much needed” Eden Housing project approved by past city councils and held up in the courts. Wang said that over the last year, she has spoken to residents and the majority wish to move forward with the development “because people want progress, and we need it for our city’s workers and employees.”
- She supports affordable housing for all income levels, which she said is critical for employers and public safety leadership’s ability to recruit and retain workers. A city needs a mix of inclusionary housing and those built with in-lieu fees, because the latter better serves those at low-income levels as well as renters, she said.
- Many school parking lots are covered with solar panels and she “would generally support efforts to incentivize the use of solar panels within Livermore’s built environment.”
- The UGB is the “reason many of us moved here.” She added there is no compelling proposal to break the UGB by annexing the land east of Greenville Road.
- She is disappointed Dublin is looking to develop the Crosby Property that serves as an open space buffer between the two cities. Dublin, she said, should honor its agreement with Livermore to jointly develop Dublin Boulevard. If Dublin’s Measure II passes, she said, “we’ll be at the beginning of a long process with plenty of opportunities for the two cities to cooperate.”
- The city’s infrastructure priorities are “those that involve our most critical public safety needs, such as water and sewer systems, roads, and traffic signals.”

MAYOR

JOHN MARCHAND

Livermore Mayor John Marchand, who served as



JOHN MARCHAND

Livermore’s mayor from 2011 to 2020 and was reelected to the post in 2022, is seeking another term. He is running unopposed. He previously sat on the city council for six years, starting in 2005.

A 40-year resident, Marchand said he loves the city and believes the city deserves proven and effective leadership.

Top Issues

“There are a few projects that I think are critically important to Livermore and I want to bring them over the finish line,” Marchand said. “Among them are Eden Housing, Valley Link (the proposed hydrogen-powered train running from Pleasanton to Stockton) ... the downtown Wine Country Hotel and the Wine Country Inn. Public safety continues to be a top priority, as well as asset management and the infrastructure necessary to support the long-term success of our wine region.”

Marchand said he has been paying down Livermore’s long-term pension liability and balancing its budget, while neighboring cities are increasing sales taxes to fund basic services; building a new fire station and emergency operations center; approving five parks; acquiring 58 pieces of public art at no public expense; and converting 27,800 —square feet of turf on city property into a low water-use landscape. The city also was ranked one of the 20 safest suburbs in the country “because of our strategic investments in public safety under my leadership.”

During his next two-year term, Marchand said his focus will be on public safety, infrastructure and quality of life.

“Under my leadership we will be making significant capital improvements in support of public safety, such as Fire Station Number 6 modernization and our Police Building renovations,” he said. “We will continue to focus on our sound fiscal policies and strategic asset management.”

Other Issues

- The city is meeting its obligations for state-mandated housing requirements, including the Isabel neighborhood plan, the approval of almost 1,300 units, including 300 deemed affordable.
- He will continue to push for completion of the controversial Eden Housing project in downtown Livermore. Voters, he said “have consistently supported the Council actions with respect to Eden Housing.”
- He supports the UGB and only voters can choose to adjust it. He said the city has no plans to develop the area east of Greenville Road.
- Livermore has applied twice to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to keep the Crosby Property that separates Livermore and Dublin as open space. Livermore is still negotiating with Dublin, which says it wants to develop the area to help pay for the eastward extension of Dublin Boulevard. If Dublin annexes the land to Doolan Canyon, Marchand said, Livermore will provide no funding for the extension.
- The city is working to obtain grants to support its Climate Action Plan, which would include placing solar power-generating shade structures over parking lots.

“I love our community and I’m proud to serve as the Mayor of Livermore,” Marchand said. “We have a great city and I will continue to devote my expertise and energy to make it even more successful.”

As Tri-Valley Population Declines, Cities Turn to Housing

By Vivien Lucia Wenneker

The population of Livermore and Pleasanton has been declining for five years, according to data released by the U.S. Census Bureau in September. The data comes from the American Community Survey, an annual estimate of population across the country conducted by the Census, which shows a steadily declining population in the Tri-Valley.

And the likely culprit: a lack of available housing.

According to the survey, Livermore’s population in 2023 was 82,899, compared with 90,188 in 2019, a drop of 8%. Pleasanton, whose population was 74,660 in 2023, had fallen from 81,794, a drop of 8.7%. That’s more than twice the size of Alameda County’s population decline as a whole. The county’s population has fallen 3% since 2019 to 1.6 million, and even California’s population has been falling, dropping 1.3% in that time to 38.9 million residents.

In the Tri-Valley, only Dublin has a larger population than it did four years ago: 69,129 in 2024, 12.9% higher than 2019’s figure, 61,240. Despite this fact, Dublin’s population has slid since its 2020 peak, just not below its 2019 level.

“While our population may have declined a bit, we

are not concerned,” said Shari Jackman, communications manager for the City of Dublin. “Dublin offers a high quality of life with highly rated schools, beautiful homes, proximity to top jobs (including two BART stations for commuters), more than 25 beautiful parks and an expansive trails network, and wonderful shopping centers. It is a very desirable place to live, and we expect more people to discover Dublin.”

Population decline is not a new pattern at the state level, as increasingly more Californians move to other states such as Texas, Arizona, Nevada and Florida, according to Census data reported on by numerous media outlets, including by The San Francisco Chronicle in 2023. The high cost of living in California is often cited as the reason for out-migration.

Lack of available housing — and by extension, the rising prices for what housing is available — is also a driver of population trends.

A March 2024 report from Livermore’s Planning Department states that while there was a definite population decline during the pandemic, the overall number of households in the city has continued to grow, “so much so that housing vacancy fell to just 3.6%.” According to the Livermore General Plan Eco-

nomics Existing Conditions report, housing availability has since declined alongside population growth, making the market more competitive and harder to buy into overall.

Since 2010, there has been an increase of approximately 2,800 housing units in Livermore, according to the city’s report, and despite those units being quickly swallowed up, the number of households in Livermore has continued to grow from 31,300 in 2019 to 32,000 in 2023. All the Tri-Valley cities have lower vacancy rates than Alameda County at large, the report stated, with Livermore being the lowest at 3%, while Pleasanton and Dublin are both at 4%.

Additionally, 70% of Livermore homes are owner-occupied, the report said, and it lags significantly behind Dublin and Pleasanton in building townhouses and buildings with five or more housing units since 2013, which tend to stimulate population growth by attracting younger residents.

“Significantly higher interest rates are leading more people to stay in their homes, and consequently less people are selling their homes now,” said Bradley Bettridge, a political science professor at Las Positas College.

And housing prices continue to climb. The average sale

price of a home in Livermore, according to Zillow, is \$1.16 million, which is lower than that of Dublin and Pleasanton, with \$1.37 million and \$1.67 million, respectively. Livermore’s average home price has risen 9.6% since 2023.

“This is a considerable amount of money for most people,” Bettridge said. “You need to be either moving from your starter home to Livermore, after you’ve made some money on it. Or, you have to be getting one of those tech/engineering salaries.” This makes it harder for younger people, those from immigrant backgrounds or others who are just starting out, to buy into the Tri-Valley market.

A result of this gradual shift in demographics is that residents tend to be older, at least in their 30s, by the time they can consider buying a home in the Tri-Valley. The median age of the population in Livermore has already been trending upward slightly, increasing from 39 in 2011 to 40.3 in 2022. According to the American Community Survey data, 30.6% of Livermore’s population in 2023 were between the ages of 30-49 years old. In Dublin, it was 37.7% and in Pleasanton, 29%. The numbers in this age bracket for all three cities were considerably higher than any other age group and have increased since 2019.

All Tri-Valley cities, in their respective general plans and most recent housing elements of those plans, recognize the need for more affordable housing options in order to maintain their current populations and stimulate economic growth. And all the cities, as part of the Association of Bay Area Governments’ Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plan, are required to build more units over the next decade to accommodate future anticipated growth: Dublin’s allocation is 3,719 units, Livermore’s 4,570, and Pleasanton’s 5,965 units.

The mandates also specify how many of those units should be targeted at people with very low incomes (defined as less than half the area median income), low incomes (between 50% to 80%), moderate incomes (80%-120%) and above moderate incomes.

In July, the Livermore City Council approved the Isabel Crossing project, to build 1,299 new condominium units, out of which 363 will be affordable, southwest of Portola and Isabel Avenue. The construction is expected to begin later this year and to take multiple years to complete.

In addition, Dublin approved the Dublin Centre housing project last May, which will build 500 new homes along Tassajara Road,

Gleason Drive, Brannigan Street and Dublin Boulevard. The development is set to begin later this year and is expected to be completed in late 2025. The project will include up to 100 affordable housing units, as well as 105 accessory dwelling units that will be deed-restricted to low- and moderate-income people. The proposed Dublin Commons project could eventually add as many as 1,500 more units.

Pleasanton City Council is currently deliberating the annexation of land in East Pleasanton, on which it may build up to 733 new housing units, with 114 reserved for low-income households. The city also approved a project for senior housing development near Foothill Road in July, which will have 110 new homes, including 18 affordable units. However, there is still a pause on the Stoneridge Mall housing project, which the Pleasanton City Council hopes will contribute significantly to the city’s future housing stock, with an initial allocation of up to 1,170 housing units.

Though these efforts mark a clear step in the direction of addressing the need for available housing, which is directly related to the general decline in population, Tri-Valley cities likely will need to take other steps to meet their needs and their mandates.

MAYOR

(Continued from front page)

a beautiful city because of people that have leaders who have always chosen the long-term investments over time to make it better in the future,” said Balch. “I am concerned we have not been doing that, and that is something I think we need to get back to, being a well-managed city looking (out) for our long-term growth and prospects.”

The two have served alongside each other — Balch on the city council and Brown as mayor — since 2020, at times presenting opposing views across the dais as the council grappled with deteriorating city finances, requirements to provide more housing, and evolving drinking water regulations.

Financial Headwinds

Sales and hotel tax revenues depressed by the pandemic and the loss of businesses in Stoneridge Shopping Center and other locations have converged with rapid inflation and rising pension liabilities to form an uncertain financial future for the city over the next eight years. Financial forecasts show the City of Pleasanton losing an average of \$13 million annually beginning in the next fiscal year, causing the city to look hard at its expenses and to search for new revenues.

“This was all new information for the entire city council and for, I would say, the rest of the city,” said Brown, referring to a 2021 audit — presented to the council for the first time last month — that revealed insufficient reserves for overdue infrastructure maintenance, such as for its water, sewer and road systems. “So, it was surprising; it was disappointing. But most of all, I was disappointed in the leadership that withheld critical information for those of us on the council to use to

make good decisions about our financial health.”

Nelson Fialho, Pleasanton’s previous city manager, retired in November 2021 after serving 17 years in the role. After a temporary term held by Assistant City Manager Brian Dolan, Gerry Beaudin, Pleasanton’s former community development director, took the city manager role in May 2022.

So far, \$18.9 million has been cut from the city’s capital improvement budget and another \$2.5 million in cuts through city staff streamlining. But even with those cuts, the city still expects to see a deficit of at least \$13 million per year extending into the future. Brown believes that a sales tax increase is needed to address the remaining portion of the city’s deficit. She supports Measure PP — a half-percent sales-tax increase within the city to help alleviate its budget difficulties.

In July, the council, with only Balch opposed, approved the placement of Measure PP on this year’s ballot. City staff have estimated that bumping the city’s sales tax rate from 10.25% to 10.75%, if approved, would generate an additional \$10 million in annual revenue for the city. Proponents list the city’s emergency response and disaster preparedness as the first beneficiaries of the increase.

“Four of us said, clearly this should be a decision that is made by the residents,” said Brown. “I stand with our firefighters, with our police officers and with our employee union that, in order to maintain the quality of our community, we should pass the half-cent sales tax.”

But Balch questioned whether other financial avenues — such as changes to the city’s developer impact fees — had been explored sufficiently before turning

to taxpayers. He also asked staff for more clarity from their models, which included the city’s deficit possibly ballooning to over \$20 million per year in the event of a recession.

“If we could have built trust by taking a few more steps, if we could have adjusted the model to show how it is very accurate based



Jack Balch

on inputs — less sensitive to any of these assumptions, not one of them being a significant factor — maybe that would have helped bring a lot more of the community along,” said Balch.

Balch has also voted against recent city-budget adoptions on the grounds that they should have included more cost cuts to spread out the load. His votes included opposition to a decision to spend over \$10 million towards a new skatepark and the remodeling of the Century House.

“For me, I was not able to support the last three years of budgets, because they aren’t doing what I thought would have been strong enough and necessary to provide the best glide path we could for financial success,” said Balch.

In addition to impact fees, Balch has suggested placing school-district properties already slated for housing on the city’s property-tax roll, revisiting architectural standards to encourage de-

velopment, and exploring other projects at Stoneridge as other ways to add city revenues.

Housing

Balch supports zoning for the missing middle — affordable-by-design duplexes and triplexes aimed at family starter homes. He feels that Pleasanton has artificially



Karla Brown

suppressed its growth, partly contributing to the rise in housing prices that should have foretold rising city expenses.

“How could we not assume that then raises and other things like cost of living or salaries would need to raise accordingly?” said Balch. “Our employees need to be able to afford to live here and afford to live overall, and the cost of housing is a big factor.”

In 2021, the Association of Bay Area Governments assigned Pleasanton a mandate to allow for some 6,000 new housing units through 2031, almost triple its requirement during the previous eight-year cycle.

Brown pointed to active development projects on Santa Rita and Hopyard roads, and the Rose Pavilion as evidence that the city is on track to meet its state mandated requirements. Discussions to build housing at the Stoneridge Shopping Center also remain ongoing, she

continued, although rising interest rates and construction costs have slowed the process.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development approved Pleasanton’s latest housing element in August 2023.

While Brown remains adamantly against moving the city’s urban growth boundary, Balch said he would consider discussions on a change if the city’s east side developments came online, while still noting that much of the city’s UGB is already protected as parkland or open space and not open to development.

PFAS Contamination

In November 2022, Pleasanton shut down the remaining two of its three groundwater wells due to discovery of PFAS contamination in the area’s aquifer. While the city originally planned to build treatment facilities at those wells, rising costs and ever more stringent drinking water regulations caused the city to partner with Zone 7, the Tri-Valley’s water manager, to build three new wells in southwest Pleasanton.

The city has since obtained all of its water from Zone 7, which has led Northern California in PFAS removal.

“There is PFAS or Teflon still on many people’s pans in their cupboards, makeup, fire suppression foam, food wrappers,” said Brown. “There is PFAS in many areas of our lives. But there is no PFAS in our drinking water. None.”

In May, the council unanimously approved a \$19 million bond to finance new wells, pumps and pipes. Both Brown and Balch also support test wells, which are expected to be started this year.

Brown and Balch did

disagree on a 30% water rate hike last November, when Balch, along with Councilmember Valerie Arkin, opposed the increase based on its magnitude.

Brown, however, felt the increase was necessary.

“Three people on this council made the very difficult decision to bring water rates into where they should have been, which is a sustainable point in water,” she said. “Otherwise, we would have been insolvent in two years. I needed to make the tough decision to bring our water rates into a sustainable fund balance.”

Availability and Conduct

Brown emphasized that, despite its pay of just \$1,400 per month, the mayoral role is a full-time job and questioned whether Balch has the time. In addition to her commitments to sitting on 10 boards, Brown has taken numerous trips to Sacramento and Washington, D.C., with the mayors of neighboring Danville, San Ramon, Livermore and Dublin to advocate for the Tri-Valley.

“We’ve been successful in garnering funding for the region and for modifying some bills that are going through the state and adjusting them so that they’re in line with the values of the Tri-Valley,” said Brown. “I’m really proud of that. I work very well with those other leaders.”

Balch pointed to his conduct as chair of the Ava Community Energy Board, as well as his actions on the Pleasanton City Council, as how he differs from Brown.

“We run meetings differently and we have a different opinion on a lot of things,” he said. “I tried to provide the voters with a clear understanding of my perspective and how I conduct myself and expect a high level of respect and decorum to occur.”

FOOTHILL

(Continued from front page)

from U.S. Congressman Eric Swalwell who stressed the importance of voting and participating in the electoral process.

“In Congress, we are doing the work so that all Americans can exercise their rights to participate in elections ... I encourage you to stay vigilant and be invested in our voting processes,” Swalwell said.

Pleasanton Mayor Karla Brown and City Councilmember Jack Balch, who are both running for

mayor, also encouraged students to get involved in the political process on a local, state and federal level.

“When you vote,” Balch said to the students. “You are not just expressing your views you are lifting your voice to have your perspective be counted ... your vote chooses leaders who are going to decide environmental issues, quality issues of life, all the things that are important to you are advanced through your

vote.”

Brown harkened back to John F. Kennedy’s inaugural address in 1960.

“Years ago I had a knock on my door and it was about a PG&E powerline that was going to go right down my street,” Brown said “I raised my hand and I got involved and, just like John F. Kennedy, I did not ask what my community could do for me, I thought ‘What could do for my community? I thought what can I do, how

can I get involved?’ And you know what? We took on PG&E and we won.” Brown encouraged students to shadow members of their local government and school boards, to see how the process works and to become involved, adding, “Register: it means so much to your future.”

For students like Damon Decker, 18, a first-time voter, the rally was just the next step in his inaugural voting experience.

“I am definitely going to

vote this year,” said Decker. “It is very important that I know I can make a change in my nation and participate in the democratic system. Especially now that there is a lot of controversy around the candidates. It is very important that we have new people who are not just influenced by the politics of 30 years ago.”

John Edwards, 16, is pre-registered to vote. He says today’s politics and election outcome are crit-

ical for the next election in 2028.

“You want to vote with a thought to the future,” he said. “It’s important for the next generation.”

Mina Hamza, 16, said that although she can’t vote in this upcoming election, she is watching both candidates carefully.

“I am very interested in politics because it’s important to vote and understand that every vote counts in order to make a difference,” she said.

Dublin Holds Onto Early Lead, Defeats Foothill High

By Phil Jensen

Dublin High School football coach Napoleon Kaufman has nicknamed Ethan Kennedy “The Slim Reaper.”

Kennedy sure did some reaping against host Foothill on Oct. 12. The senior cornerback/wide receiver, listed on MaxPreps.com as 6-foot-1-inch and 175 pounds, returned a perfectly-timed interception 64 yards for what turned out to be the winning touchdown in an 18-14 Gaels victory.

“He’s a really good football player. He just makes plays,” said Kaufman, the former Oakland Raider in his first season as Dublin’s coach. “I’m proud of him.”

Kennedy flew in front of a Foothill receiver right before a pass got to him and continued at top speed down the field with 3 minutes, 54 seconds left in the first half for an 18-0 Dublin lead.

“I saw the pick coming because they ran (the play) earlier in the game,” said Kennedy, who then said about plays like this, “A lot of it is just in the moment, just trying to read the game and the situation and the down marker.”

Dublin, which improved to 2-5 overall and 1-0 in the East Bay Athletic League Valley Division, hosts Granada (2-4, 0-0) in a

division game on Oct. 18 at 7:15 p.m. Foothill (3-4, 0-1) travels to play Dougherty Valley (2-5, 0-1) on Oct. 18 at 7 p.m.

The Gaels scored on the opening possession of the game against Foothill. Rome Raymore bolted down the left sideline on a 55-yard touchdown run. The Gaels, however, then missed the first of three point-after-touchdown plays.

Dublin ended a 46-yard drive on the first play of the second quarter with a one-yard touchdown run by Andre Armendariz. Kennedy returned his interception into the end zone later in the quarter. The Gaels produced 140 of their 252 total yards, and all of their points, in the first half.

“I thought we left a lot of meat on the bone,” said Kaufman, referring to Dublin scoring opportunities. “But I’m proud of the kids. They fought hard, were resilient, and they finished the game and got the stop.”

Foothill scored on the last play of the first half on a three-yard run by quarterback Jason Knight. The PAT pass failed, but the Falcons took the opening possession of the second half 68 yards into the end zone, when Knight sent a perfectly placed pass to Michael O’Donoghue

for a 26-yard touchdown. O’Donoghue made a great catch at approximately the 5-yard line and went into the end zone with 10:28 left in the third quarter. A two-point conversion pass from Knight to George Schmitt narrowed the score to 18-14.

But there would be no more scoring in the game. Foothill’s final drive started at its own 18 and took more than 5:30 off the clock, but stalled on a fourth-down incompletion at the Dublin 11 with 3:44 left in the game.

On the next series, Armendariz made a smart decision to help clinch the win. The junior ran for a first down on the Gaels’ second play, but he slid inbounds after 16 yards rather than going out of bounds, which kept the clock running. Armendariz carried the ball on Dublin’s final five plays of the game (including another first down with 30 seconds remaining) and finished with a game-high 127 yards on the ground.

“I want him with the ball because you see that,” said Kaufman, referring to Armendariz’s slide and that most players would have gone out of bounds.

O’Donoghue produced a game-high 10 receptions for 121 yards for Foothill, including the first six of

Knight’s 11 completions. Schmitt added a team-high 68 yards rushing, and teammate Amaree Hill added 41 yards on the

ground. Foothill had 237 total yards in the game. Defensively, Foothill received an interception by Ryan Mayer.

Anthony Pickens paced Dublin in receiving with three catches for 26 yards. Defensively, Dhruv Vootkuri had a sack for the Gaels.



Dublin High School junior Andre Armendariz plows through a tackle in Friday night’s victory over Foothill. Armendariz ran for 127 yards during the game. (Photo — Doug Jorgensen)



Granada High goalie Olivia Theille stretches for the ball in the Saturday matchup against Dougherty Valley. The Matadors hosted the Wildcats in the Pink Out for Breast Cancer Awareness Month game, featuring pink balls, caps, swimsuits (for the boys) and sunscreen. Granada defeated Dougherty Valley 12-2. (Photo — Doug Jorgensen)

HARTFORD

(Continued from front page)

ulates that Livermore officials must “meet and confer” with CBG before using the funds. The City Council’s July 22 approval of the Hartford Hills purchase followed a monthslong disagreement over failed efforts of the city and CBG to meet. In its vote, the council included the caveat that City Manager Marianna Marysheva could use money from an alternative fund.

Livermore officials said Monday that DVSA funds were used for the property transaction, which closed escrow on Oct. 10. The city declined to comment on the complaint.

The DVSA Fund was established after CBG members filed a lawsuit against the Zone 7 Water Agency for deciding to deliver water to a 5,170-unit development outside its jurisdiction in Contra Costa County. A settlement to the suit required the developer to pay nearly \$5.2 million to Livermore as an open space conservation fee.

CBG contends in its complaint that the city never met with the group following the announcement in December that the city was seeking to buy three parcels, including Hartford Hills. One plan to buy one of the parcels, the “Jesus Saves” property overlooking I-580, was ultimately scrapped,

but Livermore obtained grants from the Altamont Landfill Open Space Committee (ALOSC) toward purchasing the Hartford Hills parcel and a vacant 125-acre site on Greenville Road south of I-580.

Under Livermore’s purchase plans approved by the City Council, the city opted to use \$856,000 from its Open Space account toward the Greenville Road site, and \$980,000 from the DVSA Fund toward Hartford Hills.

During a July 8 City Council meeting, the panel delayed its vote to approve the Hartford Hills purchase after CBG president Michael Ferrucci said during public comments that the vote would violate the DVSA. At the time, Ferrucci would not indicate the reason for the violation, but Mayor John Marchand questioned whether it was because CBG had not met with city officials.

Marchand said the city had tried, but CBG was not cooperative.

“The city, as I understand, has been reaching out to CBG for months and has not received a response,” Marchand said during the meeting. “So, (Ferrucci’s) calling it a violation, I presume, because we haven’t been in touch with them, although it’s my understanding we have made numerous over-

tures to CBG.”

The council agreed to postpone the vote to July 22 to offer another chance for a meeting.

According to CBG’s complaint, Livermore city staff first requested a meeting on Dec. 11, 2023. CBG, the complaint said, wanted more information about the potential purchase before meeting with the city. The two entities then engaged in a lengthy back-and-forth that continued into April without a meeting. CBG contended city staff had not provided the necessary information the group “required for a responsible review of the proposed expenditure of DVSA funds.”

The complaint said Livermore officials requested a meeting following the July 8 City Council meeting, but CBG said the group needed more time to confer with its attorneys. A meeting was never held, and the council approved the Hartford Hills purchase two weeks later.

The complaint asks a judge to declare that Livermore violated the DVSA agreement; order the city to replenish DVSA funds; and compel the city to comply with the DVSA in future transactions.

The case was assigned to Judge Jenna Whitman and scheduled for an initial hearing on March 18, 2025.

CONGRESS

(Continued from front page)



Eric Swalwell

hydrogen-powered public transport rail line in the country,” Swalwell said. “We’ve rallied support from all levels of government and I will continue to fight for less congestion in our communities and safer air to breathe for our families.”

Swalwell said he has secured more than \$23.5 million in funding in 2023 and 2024 to support 30 local projects that include removing forever chemicals from the water supply, constructing hydrogen fueling stations for public transportation, and building affordable and supportive housing.

“I’ve also supported numerous bills to improve public safety,” Swalwell said. “I voted for the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which will help combat gun violence, improve access to mental health care, and help equip schools with resources to keep kids safe. I was also proud to support a package of public safety bills to invest in law enforcement and community violence intervention to keep our communities safe.”

Should Democrats retake the majority in Congress and Vice President Kamala Harris win the presidency, Swalwell said he will focus on expanding gun violence protections, including reauthorizing an assault weapons ban. He also will focus on housing affordability and helping the Harris Administration enact its housing plan to increase the supply of multi-housing and single-family housing. Swalwell added he will work to grow the number of small businesses, making it easier for them to expand, including increasing the tax credit for new small businesses.

If Republicans keep control of Congress and former President Donald Trump wins the White House, Swalwell — an

outspoken Trump critic who filed suit against him following the Jan. 6 insurrection — said he will “work to protect our democracy and the rule of law and seek compromise to mitigate policies that hurt the middle class and small business.”

Swalwell serves on the House Judiciary and Homeland Security Committees.

In other issues, Swalwell said he will continue to support voting rights and will “never compromise on ensuring that women have the freedom to decide what happens to their bodies.”

“No government official should be supervising the decisions made between women and their doctors,” Swalwell said.



Vin Kruttiventi

Vin Kruttiventi

Republican Vin Kruttiventi said Swalwell is “completely absorbed by Washington’s power games and the noise of cable news, obsessed with Trump while ignoring the real needs of the people back home.”

“Our small businesses have been abandoned, left to struggle under crushing burdens while he turns a blind eye,” Kruttiventi said. “This isn’t about Democrat or Republican. It’s about who is actually fighting for the people, and whether that fight is working. Our community is sinking under rising crime, unaffordable housing, soaring inflation, and homelessness. What does Swalwell do? He votes against the very measures that would ease the pain for small businesses and struggling families. He’s not here for us — he’s mingling with the elite, rubbing elbows with celebrities while ignoring the people he swore to serve.”

Kruttiventi said that unlike “career politicians,” he comes from the “real

world of business.” Kruttiventi owns A5, a business and technology consulting firm, and lives with his family in Pleasanton.

“I’ve built companies from the ground up, created jobs, and balanced budgets,” he said. “I’ve seen firsthand what the pandemic and inflation have done to our small businesses. These aren’t just numbers on a spreadsheet to me — they’re people, families, and dreams struggling to survive.”

Kruttiventi, who chairs a foundation that aids nonprofit organizations in the Tri-Valley region, said he has “helped businesses get back on their feet, guiding nonprofits to thrive” and said he will “take that fight to a much larger scale” in Congress.

He cited housing affordability and homelessness, safer neighborhoods and economic prosperity as his top issues.

“Our neighbors are being priced out of their homes, families are left struggling, and too many are forced to sleep on the streets,” he said. “Crime has crept into our once-safe neighborhoods, making us feel less secure in the places we call home. Meanwhile, economic prosperity remains a distant dream for too many hardworking families. This is where career politicians have failed us.”

In the 14th District, Kruttiventi said special economic zones should be created in San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Hayward and Union City to attract new public and private investments. He said he wants to bring “cutting-edge tools like AI, predictive analytics, and drones to law enforcement, funded by federal grants ‘to fight crime before it happens.’”

Kruttiventi said cities in the East Bay are facing budget shortfalls and “bonds and measures are flooding the ballots, threatening to raise taxes on hardworking families.”

“This isn’t a long-term solution,” he said. “We need to create real avenues for economic growth, so these cities don’t have to rely solely on property taxes. We need strong sales tax revenue generated by thriving businesses to maintain and enhance essential services for every resident.”

MEASURE

(Continued from front page)

passage of the measure commit the city to a course of action.

No on Measure II

The ballot title and summary of Measure II are deceptive, said Seth Adams, a spokesperson for the No on Measure II campaign and the director of land conservation with Save Mount Diablo.

“It’s exactly the opposite of what this measure would do,” Adams said. “You’re destroying open space; you’re increasing traffic; and you’re increasing air pollution.”

Passage of Measure II is not necessary to complete the road, Adams said. This is more of a giveaway to developers, whose developments would pay for Dublin’s share of the road extension.

“They’re trying to have their cake and eat it, too, by conflating the road with the project,” Adams said.

What the city is expecting if the measure passes is that the narrowest portion of the open space corridor between Dublin and Livermore would be the site of something akin to an Amazon distribution warehouse, similar to what’s in Tracy. At the same time, the city has no agreements with any developers that would back up its promises.

“There’s not a thing to hold the developer to any of their promises,” Adams said.

The city also has not performed the necessary environmental review, claiming that there is no “project” to trigger the requirements under the Califor-

nia Environmental Quality Act. This triggered a lawsuit from Save Mount Diablo. A hearing has been scheduled for Nov. 7.

Measure JJ

Measure JJ is called the “Dublin Government Accountability Act.” It was sent to the ballot in November 2023 by a 3-2 vote of the council, with then-Mayor Melissa Hernandez and councilmembers Qadri and McCorriston in favor, and councilmembers Hu and Josey opposed. If adopted, it would amend Dublin’s municipal code to do several things:

- Prohibit the mayor, councilmembers, and members of council-created commissions from receiving gifts from city contractors or lobbyists;
- Prohibit any person from

- making and any city official from accepting gifts with intent to influence official acts;
- Prohibit any city official from accepting gifts from anyone for performing any service normally required of them;
- Prohibit lobbyists from serving on commissions;
- Require the city to post on its website most city contracts that require council approval;
- Require the city to post monthly financial statements; and
- Extend term limits for city council members from two, or eight years, to three terms, or 12 years, not including half-terms or less. The current mayor and council may only serve the number of consecutive terms allowed prior to the enactment of the measure.

Yes on JJ

The measure was placed on the ballot by the city council, but no statement in support of the measure was submitted to elections officials. The Independent was unable to verify if there was a campaign in favor of it, and no contact information has been provided for advocates of the measure.

No on JJ

Tom Evans, a candidate for mayor of Dublin, submitted a statement against Measure JJ.

“This measure was crafted for one reason — extending term limits,” Evans wrote.

The measure should, in the interests of clarity, simply ask the voters if they should extend term limitations for the mayor

and council members, Evans wrote. “But City leaders were concerned you might not vote for an extension, so they tried different wording and added three additional items; items that would take no effort to comply with but yet sounded like they’re watching out for you.”

The measure also does not specify whether the 12-year limit is limited to 12 consecutive years, or that 12 years is a lifetime limit.

The wording was discussed in the Nov. 7, 2023, city council meeting, Evans wrote. “Survey research showed that if they used certain words and added the three extra fluff items about lobbyists and contracts, then voters would be more likely to vote for it.”

OBITUARIES

Walter Gewing
April 28, 1930 — Oct. 11, 2024

Walter Gewing passed away at the age of 94 ½ on Oct. 11, 2024, in Pleasanton, California. Born on April 28, 1930, in Leoben, Austria, Walter’s early life took a dramatic turn when his family fled to Shanghai, one of the few places that accepted Jewish refugees during the Holocaust. He and his family spent a decade in the Shanghai Ghetto before finally receiving permission to emigrate to the United States.

After settling in San Francisco, Walter met Anna, the love of his life. They soon married, raising three children and sharing a long, fulfilling life together. Over the years, they moved from San Francisco to San Ramon and eventually to Stoneridge Creek Retirement Community in Pleasanton.

Walter built a successful career with Prudential Insur-



warmth, and generosity, Walter’s presence was cherished by all who knew him. To those who had the pleasure of his company, he was the epitome of a “mensch” — a person of integrity and honor.

Walter was predeceased by his wife Anna, and is survived by his girlfriend Beth Wilson, his daughter Ruth (Robin), his sons Shimon (Shula) and Martin (Cheryl), his granddaughters Jordan, Zohar, Krystle, and Jaclyn, his grandsons David, Carmi (Mei-Tal), and Nadav (Avigail), his brother Ehud, and many beloved nieces, nephews and great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to ActBlue.com, Congregation Beth Emek in Pleasanton, California, or Hope Hospice in Walter’s memory.

ance, and after retiring, devoted his time to traveling, family, his beloved dog Dixon, Torah study, improv classes, baking, friendships, gardening, and — by his own humorous admission — “stagnating.” Walter most recently found new love as well.

Known for his sharp wit,

Kaitlin Zoe Maberry-Hall Repine
Sept. 20, 1991 — Oct. 9, 2024

Kaitlin Zoe Maberry-Hall Repine, aged 33, passed away on Oct. 9, 2024, in Walnut Creek, California. She was born on Sept. 20, 1991, and during her vibrant life, Kaitlin embodied qualities of kindness, compassion, and courage, touching the lives of many with her energetic and adventurous spirit.

After graduating from Granada High School in 2009, where she double lettered in swimming and water polo, Kaitlin’s academic pursuits led her to California State University, Monterey Bay, where she received a Bachelor’s of Science in Psychology. She then continued on to St. Mary’s College of California, where she received a Master’s in Education. Kaitlin began her journey with the International Order of the Rainbow for girls in Livermore Assembly in 2005 and served as Grand Circulation Manager and Representative to Oregon and Brazil in 2010, showcasing her leadership and dedication to youth development and service. She continued her passion for nurturing young minds at The Growing Room Childcare Center, Gehringer Elementary and Murray Elementary schools,



where she was cherished for her supportive and dependable nature as a 5th grade teacher. Kaitlin was named Murray Elementary Teacher of the Year in 2023.

Beyond her professional life, Kaitlin enjoyed attending live music concerts, snowboarding, wine tasting, and above all socializing with her friends and family at every opportunity. She was an avid reader and enjoyed shows like “The Vampire Diaries” and “Friends,” which mirrored her sense of friendship and loving personality.

Kaitlin’s life was a beacon of empathy and courage, qualities that she held dear and exemplified daily and had

hoped to pass on to her Angel Baby, Zoey. She leaves behind a loving family: her husband, David ‘Donald’ Repine; her mother, Mary Jane Maberry-Hall; father and mother in-law, Jeff and Mary Repine; brother, James Maberry-Hall; sister-in-law, Elizabeth Hall; and her cherished nieces, Brooke and Charlotte Hall, and nephew, William Hall. She was preceded in death by her daughter, Zoey Patricia Repine and her father, Robert D. Hall.

After two rounds of IVF, Kaitlin was so excited to become a mother; even through her tough pregnancy, she couldn’t wait to welcome Angel Baby, Zoey. Kaitlin is fulfilling her dream in heaven with Zoey.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Bay Area Crisis Nursery, reflecting Kaitlin’s lifelong commitment to supporting and nurturing others.

Kaitlin’s absence leaves a void in the hearts of those who knew her, but her spirit and legacy will continue to inspire.

Callaghan Mortuary is honored to be serving the Repine family. An online guestbook is available for condolences at www.callaghanmortuary.com.

June Waitman Weiss
March 19, 1926 – July 13, 2024

June Waitman Weiss was born on March 19, 1926, to Benjamin and Lura Pepple Waitman in Lima, Ohio. She passed away on July 13, 2024. June was the church administrator at Asbury United Methodist Church for 23 years until she retired in 1992. She was a member of Asbury Methodist Church, Soroptimist International of the Americas, and Van Wert Chapter #48, Order of the Eastern Star in Van Wert, Ohio. June was preceded by her loving husband, Arthur Lester Weiss and is survived by her sons, Arthur (Barbara) Weiss of Newbury Park, California, and Mark (Bonnie) Weiss of Washington, Utah, three grandchildren, Mark-Christopher (Nina) Weiss, Lauren



(Scott) Stolkin, and Philip (Genevieve) Weiss and five great-grandchildren, Tipton, Talon, Katie, Wyatt and Madison. The family would like to thank Paul and Mimi Lam with Desired Peace in Brentwood, California for their care of our mother in her final days. June’s ashes will be

interned next to her husband Art at Woodland Cemetery in Van Wert, Ohio.

A memorial service to celebrate June’s life will be held at 10 a.m. on Oct. 19, 2024, at Asbury United Methodist in Livermore. In lieu of flowers, the family request memorial donations be made to the following:

Alzheimer’s Association, 1060 La Avenida St., Mt. View, CA 94043

Fertile Groundworks, 4743 East Ave., Livermore, CA 94550

Asbury United Methodist Church, 4743 East Ave., Livermore, CA 94550

Callaghan Mortuary is honored to be serving the Weiss family. An online guestbook is available for condolences at www.callaghanmortuary.com.

Celebration of Life

Arlene Webster Folkers
June 5, 1935 — Sept. 6, 2024
Livermore

Heaven got an Angel on Sept. 6, 2024.

Long time Livermore resident, Arlene Folkers, passed away at the age of 89 after a brief hospitalization. Arlene was an elementary school teacher for over 20 years in the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District. She taught at both Almond Avenue and Jackson Avenue schools.

Born in Lansing, Michigan, teaching was in her genes. She came from a long line of schoolteachers on her mother’s side. Her mother was a first-grade teacher, her mother’s sister was a high school teacher, and her maternal grandfather taught in a one-room schoolhouse in Ohio. When Arlene was in high school, her father (who was not partial to teaching) got a job as an electrician at the Naval Shipyard in San Francisco and moved the family to California.

Arlene is survived by her daughters, Ramona Foster (Harry Saez) and Ingrid Nixon (Elvin); her son, Roger Marsh (Cheryl Carlson); stepdaughters, Susan Bernstein, Nancy Folkers (Peter Lemcke), Marcia Webster (Doug Farrell), and Trina Lagier (Rick Dyer); stepson, Mark Web-



ster; grandchildren, Brittany Foster, Erin Gardner (Jon) , Nikki Bernstein, Andrew Bernstein, Sophia Lemcke, and Brigitte Lagier; and great-grandsons, Jesse and Elias Medina. She was preceded in death by her husband Charles (Chuck) Folkers, and her parents Byron Wilson Dickinson and Lois Groves Dickinson.

Arlene was a “people person” who belonged to many groups, clubs and organizations throughout

her long life, making friends wherever she went with her loving and generous nature. She will be greatly missed.

A celebration of life will take place on Saturday, Oct. 26, 2024, at 2 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church of Livermore located at 2020 5th St. in Livermore. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to the Livermore Heritage Guild Midway School project, the California Retired Teachers Association Tri-Valley Division 85 Scholarship Fund or Hope Hospice.

Callaghan Mortuary is honored to be serving the Folkers family. An online guestbook is available for condolences at www.callaghanmortuary.com.

Stella Kachel
Sept. 12, 1932 – Sept. 20, 2024

Stella Antoinette Kachel, beloved wife, mother, sister, grandmother (“Nonnie”), great-grandmother, aunt, and friend passed away peacefully at home surrounded by her family on Sept. 20, 2024, in Livermore, California at the age of 92.

Stella was born in Santa Cruz, California on Sept. 12, 1932. Her parents were Cottardo Peter “Trub” Ghio and Chiara Angela (Loero) Ghio, first-generation immigrants from Riva Trigoso, Italy.

Stella was the youngest of her siblings and she enjoyed having an older brother and sister to guide her and to make her laugh. She grew up surrounded by the love and laughter of countless relatives and friends. She graduated from Santa Cruz High School, where she was a popular cheerleader who was often asked to recreate the school’s famous “Give ‘Em the Ax” cheer (eventually banned following objections by rivals).

Stella’s high school basketball career was short-lived, but well remembered. Her exploits on the court were chronicled in the local paper after she grabbed a loose ball, dribbled down the court and scored two points...for the other team. She always said it was the most “beautiful shot” she ever made because players from both teams ended up giving her a hug. Nothing more perfectly sums up what Stella valued most in life — a warm embrace. Similar to the character Maria in “The Sound of Music”, she was “a cloud you could not pin down” and someone people could not help but love.

At the age of 25, Stella planned to become a nun, but that was derailed when she first saw the love of her life, Peter Kachel, at a Christmas party. After their first date three months later, she introduced this “nice Catholic boy” (the youngest of 15 children from Frazee, Minnesota) to her parents. They were so smitten with him, they told Stella if it didn’t work out, they were keeping him and kicking her out. Not



to worry — Stella and Peter were married at Holy Cross Catholic Church (a mere 100 yards from where they first laid eyes on each other) on June 29, 1958 — only a week or so before Stella had initially planned to enter the convent. The two were inseparable for the next 66 years of marriage, rarely spending time apart.

After the wedding, they moved to San Luis Obispo so Peter could attend college at Cal Poly. In June 1961, they welcomed their first child, Michael Kachel, into the world. The following year, Peter, aided by Stella’s expert typing prowess, graduated, accepted an engineering position with GE Nuclear Energy, and they moved their young family to Livermore, California. Their daughter, Korrin Kachel (Wade), was born in June 1964, and the family regularly attended St. Michael Catholic Church in Livermore, where Stella volunteered in a variety of ways while her children attended the parish school.

Stella made many friends while attending church events, dance recitals, youth baseball and soccer games and other gatherings — almost always in support of her children and others. She was well known for her sweet nature, self-deprecating humor, pure and generous heart, warm hugs, wonderful laugh and making the best darn sandwiches and potato salad known to mankind. There was never a person who entered her home who was not offered copious amounts of food

and drink, a hug, or made to feel like part of the family. She was truly a child of God.

Stella was preceded in death by her parents, as well as her beloved brother and sister — Stephen “Johnnie” Ghio and his wife, Kathleen, and Victoria Ghio (Torchio) and her husband, Egidio, all of Santa Cruz. She was also preceded in death by her nephew, Dennis Torchio, and great-niece, Anna Torchio, both very dear to her, and also of Santa Cruz.

Stella is survived by her husband: Peter; son: Michael and his wife, Deborah, of Manakin-Sabot, Virginia; daughter: Korrin and her husband, Rod Wade, of Los Gatos, California; grandchildren: Katerina Kachel-Day, Tatiana Kachel, Michael Wade, and Isabella Wade; great-grandchildren: Kassidy Scott and Ryan Scott, Jr.; nephews: Donald Torchio, Stephen John Ghio, Jr., and Donald Ghio; niece: Debra Ghio (White); and dozens of members of Peter’s large family — many of whom routinely called to check in on “Aunt Stella and Uncle Pete.” Stella was also blessed by the arrival in her life of Agatha Stokes, who provided loving, tender care for Stella as her health declined the past several years.

Services will be held on Oct. 23 at Benito & Azzaro Pacific Gardens Chapel, 1050 Cayuga Street, Santa Cruz, California, with the vigil starting at 6 p.m. and earlier visitation hours from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. On Oct. 24, a funeral Mass will be held at Holy Cross Catholic Church, 210 High St., Santa Cruz, California at 11:30 a.m. Immediately following the Mass, the entombment will take place at Holy Cross Cemetery, 2271 7th Ave. in Santa Cruz, California.

In remembrance of Stella Kachel’s life and love of her community, the family asks that any charitable donations be made in her name to St. Michael Catholic Church, 458 Maple St., Livermore, CA 94550.

LEGAL NOTICES/CLASSIFIEDS

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LEGAL NOTICES

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 24CV091321 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner:
Belkasim Makdaf
1680 Almond Avenue
Livermore, CA 94550.
filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

Present Names:
Belkasim Makdaf
Proposed Name:
Belkacem Makhlaf

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: 1/31/2025

Time: 9:30 AM

Dept: 103

The address of the court is:
Wiley W. Manuel Courthouse
661 Washington Street
Oakland, CA 94607

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: 9/13/23 /s/ A. Thomas J. Nixon, Judge of the Superior Court.
The Independent, Legal No. 6125. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609160

The following person(s) doing business as: Lil Jester Hat Art, 2101 Shoreline Dr., Apt 299, Alameda, CA 94501 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Link Jakob Huie Arneson, 2101 Shoreline Dr., Apt 299, Alameda, CA 94501. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 5/1/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Link Jakob Huie Arneson, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on August 9, 2024. Expires August 8, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6127. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 608983

The following person(s) doing business as: Mindful Indulgence, 271 Jayne Avenue, Apt 5, Oakland, CA 94610 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Vanessa Hope Balanon-Padilla, 2104 Ascot Court, Pittsburg, CA 94565. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 8/12/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Vanessa Hope Balanon-Padilla, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on August 29, 2024. Expires August 28, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6128. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609305

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. A.S.I. Cyber Concepts LLC, 2. Recycle1234.com; 3. E-Waste & Solar Recycling Center, 30311 Whipple Road, Union City, CA 94587 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): A.S.I. Cyber Concepts LLC, 30311 Whipple Road, Union City, CA 94587. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 10/8/2019. Signature of Registrant/s/: Aditya Inamdar, CEO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 16, 2024. Expires September 15, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6129. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609331

The following person(s) doing business as: First Response Cleanup, 2150 Portola Ave, Ste D, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): BioHoard Services LLC, 2150 Portola Ave, Suite D, Livermore, CA 94551. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Candus Baca, Managing Member. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 17, 2024. Expires September 16, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6130. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

FILE NO. 608764

The following person(s) doing business as: Anderson Pro Electric, 371 Lincoln Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Andrew Anderson, 371 Lincoln Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 8/17/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Andrew Anderson, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on August 20, 2024. Expires August 19, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6131. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 608995

The following person(s) doing business as: Transportation for Humanity, 1727 5th Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Anna Vickroy, 1727 5th Street, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Anna Vickroy, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on August 29, 2024. Expires August 28, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6132. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 608733

The following person(s) doing business as: Puesto Market, 226 Jackson St, Hayward, CA 94544 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Puesto Markets, 213 Lusitano Way, Gilroy, CA 95020. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Antonio Mejia, CEO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on August 20, 2024. Expires August 19, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6133. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609281

The following person(s) doing business as: Access Hardware Supply, Inc., 14447 ST, San Leandro, CA 94577 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Access Hardware Supply, Inc., 14447 ST, San Leandro, CA 94577. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 6/6/1996. Signature of Registrant/s/: Steven K. Harris, President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on August September 13, 2024. Expires September 12, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6134. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609317

The following person(s) doing business as: Law Office of Hellas Leung, 15808 Hesperian Blvd #127, San Lorenzo, CA 94580 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Hellas Leung, 15808 Hesperian Blvd #127, San Lorenzo, CA 94580. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 9/16/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Hellas Leung, Executive Director. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 16, 2024. Expires September 15, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6135. Published September 26, October 3, 10, 17, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609481

The following person(s) doing business as: Soccer Shots Central East Bay, 236 Ortega St., San Francisco, CA 94122 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Bay Area Enrichment LLC, 236 Ortega St, San Francisco, CA 94122. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 8/16/2024. Signature of

Registrant/s/: Jonathan Velasquez, CEO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 24, 2024. Expires September 23, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6136. Published October 3, 10, 17, 21, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609359

The following person(s) doing business as: Hawaii Fluid Art Pleasanton, 1304 Stoneridge Mall Rd, Pleasanton, CA 94588 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Ditan Arts LLC, 6901 Syrah Dr., Dublin, CA 94568. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 9/15/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Preeti Garg, Managing Member. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 18, 2024. Expires September 17, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6137. Published October 3, 10, 17, 21, 2024.

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 24CV088976 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner:
Kevin Eugene McLemore Jr.
1254 Lexington Way
Livermore, CA 94550
filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

Present Names:
Kevin Eugene McLemore Jr.
Proposed Name:
Kevin Eugene Castillo Jr.

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: 12/27/2024

Time: 9:30 AM

Dept: 103

The address of the court is:
Wiley W. Manuel Courthouse
665 Washington St.
Oakland, CA 94607

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: 8/27/2024 /s/ Thomas I. Nixon, Judge of the Superior Court.
The Independent, Legal No. 6138. Published October 3, 10, 17, 24, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609603

The following person(s) doing business as: Purple Ghost Media LLC, 876 Geraldine St, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Purple Ghost Media LLC, 876 Geraldine St, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 1/16/16. Signature of Registrant/s/: Edward Martelle, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 17, 2024. Expires September 17, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6145. Published October 10, 17, 24, 31, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609136

The following person(s) doing business as: Covet Travel, 1937 Fourth St, Apt 4, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Kitera Dent, 1937 Fourth St, Apt 4, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the

registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Kitera Dent, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 6, 2024. Expires September 5, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6140. Published October 10, 17, 24, 31, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609559

The following person(s) doing business as: Ariba Healthcare Group, 37553 Fremont Blvd, CA 94536 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Ariba Healthcare Group, Inc., 37553 Fremont Blvd, CA 94536. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 4/15/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Tariq Mirza, President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 26, 2024. Expires September 25, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6141. Published October 10, 17, 24, 31, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609217

The following person(s) doing business as: Jessica Builds, 1452 North Vasco Road #347, Livermore, CA 94551 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Jessica Banks, 1452 North Vasco Road 3347, Livermore, CA 94551. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 5/3/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Jessica Banks, CEO/Founder. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 10, 2024. Expires September 9, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6142. Published October 10, 17, 24, 31, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609645

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. Cellcore Solutions; 2. CCBS, 4400 Keller Ave, Suite 189, Oakland, CA 94605 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Coco Business Solutions, 4400 Keller Ave, Suite 189, Oakland, CA 94605. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 9/30/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Ibrahim Baqae, Owner/Principal. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 30, 2024. Expires September 29, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6144. Published October 10, 17, 24, 31, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609360

The following person(s) doing business as: Teds Dent Works, 57 California Ave, Suite H, Pleasanton, CA 94566 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Edward Martelle, 57 California Ave, Suite H, Pleasanton, CA 94566. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 1/16/16. Signature of Registrant/s/: Edward Martelle, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 18, 2024. Expires September 17, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6145. Published October 10, 17, 24, 31, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609658

The following person(s) doing business as: Infinite Blue Chip, 22725 7th St, Hayward, CA 94541 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Infinite Blue Chip 22725 7th St, Hayward, CA 94541. This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Xiaodan Chen, CEO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 1, 2024. Expires September 30, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6146. Published October 10, 17, 24, 31, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

FILE NO. 609366

The following person(s) doing business as: Eri Rose, 852 Division ST, APT 3, Pleasanton, CA 94566 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Erica Honesto, 4300 Black Ave #74, Pleasanton, CA 94566. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Erica Honesto, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 18, 2024. Expires September 17, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6147. Published October 10, 17, 24, 31, 2024.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to section 21707 of chapter 10 to division of 8 of the business and professions code, notice is hereby given by the undersigned that a public lien sale of the following described personal property will be held at the hour of 9:00 am PST on November 1st, 2024. The sale will be conducted by John Cardoza, auctioneer, (209)667-5797, bond number 5860870, located at:

UNITS East Bay

6011 Las Positas Rd,
Livermore, CA. 94550
The items to be sold are generally described as follows:

Household/Miscellaneous goods
B489 Meldy Imelda
B524 Peggy Logan
B589 Peggy Logan
B505 Lisa Vigil

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609829

The following person(s) doing business as: Crazy Lady Creations, 22457 Linden Street, Hayward, CA 94541 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Jennifer FERIA-Vantley, 22457 Linden Street, Hayward, CA 94541. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Jennifer FERIA-Vantley, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 9, 2024. Expires October 8, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6148. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609761

The following person(s) doing business as: BW Consulting, 3911 Stanford Way, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Brandon Todd Williams, 3911 Stanford Way, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Brandon Todd Williams, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 4, 2024. Expires October 3, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6149. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609613

The following person(s) doing business as: Healing Perspectives, 11740 Dublin Blvd., Ste. 206 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Helen Rozanski Savin, 11740 Dublin Blvd, Ste. 206, Dublin, CA 94568. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which

the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 3/4/2022. Signature of Registrant/s/: Helen Rozanski Savin, LCSW, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 30, 2024. Expires September 29, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6150. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609329

The following person(s) doing business as: Gundy Pet Services, 2497 College Ave, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Ethan Gundersen, 2497 College Ave, Livermore, CA 94550; Jacob Gundersen, 2497 College Ave, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by a General Partnership. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Ethan Gundersen, General Partner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 17, 2024. Expires September 16, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6151. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609782

The following person(s) doing business as: 1. Dunder First Street Partnership; 2. Civic Center Station, 4725 First St., Pleasanton, CA 94566 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Vera Revelli, 2 Krohn Lane, Oakland, CA 94611; Jennifer Stenrose, 2 Krohn Lane, Oakland, CA 94611; Scott Revelli, 2 Krohn Lane, Oakland, CA 94611. This business is conducted by a Limited Partnership. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 9/5/1998. Signature of Registrant/s/: Vera Revelli, General Partner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 7, 2024. Expires October 6, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6152. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609829

The following person(s) doing business as: Crazy Lady Creations, 22457 Linden Street, Hayward, CA 94541 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Jennifer FERIA-Vantley, 22457 Linden Street, Hayward, CA 94541. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Jennifer FERIA-Vantley, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 9, 2024. Expires October 8, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6148. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609743

The following person(s) doing business as: Ourhs, 560 S P St., Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Sybil Gertrude de Clark, 3020 Bernal Ave, Ste. 110 #2016, Pleasanton, CA 94566. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Sybil Gertrude de Clark,

Dr. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 3, 2024. Expires October 2, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6153. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609789

The following person(s) doing business as: The Art of Home, 318 Capricorn Ave, Oakland, CA 94611 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Mochita S Corp, 318 Capricorn Ave, Oakland, CA 94611. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 1/1/2021. Signature of Registrant/s/: Jennifer FERIA-Vantley, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 7, 2024. Expires October 6, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6154. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609754

The following person(s) doing business as: East Alameda Tutoring, 3020 Bernal Ave, Ste. 100 2016, Pleasanton, CA 94566 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Sybil de Clark, 3020 Bernal Ave Ste. 110 2016, Pleasanton, CA 94566. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: 9/1/2024. Signature of Registrant/s/: Sybil de Clark, Dr. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 4, 2024. Expires October 3, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6155. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609616

The following person(s) doing business as: Imperial Star Empire, Incorporated, 4075 Compton CT, Livermore, CA 94550 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Imperial Star Empire, Inc, 4075 Compton CT, Livermore, CA 94550. This business is conducted by a Corporation. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: John Marques, President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on September 30, 2024. Expires September 31, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6156. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 609884

The following person(s) doing business as: Cruz Construction, 8212 Birch ST, Oakland, CA 94621 is hereby registered by the following owner(s): Jesus Wilfredo Cruz Abrego, 8212 Birch ST, Oakland, CA 94621. This business is conducted by an individual. The date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above: N/A. Signature of Registrant/s/: Jesus Wilfredo Cruz Abrego, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Alameda on October 11, 2024. Expires October 10, 2029. The Independent, Legal No. 6157. Published October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 2024.

CLASSIFIEDS

ANIMALS



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EMPLOYMENT

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SERVICES

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Karen H. Winter, LMFT, CBEIP-MH.
Email Kwin3@comcast.net

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

Pleasanton Schools' Budget Shortfalls Shape Election Race

By Ruth Roberts

Four Pleasanton Unified School District (PUSD) candidates are running for two seats in Areas 3 and 4 (central and eastern Pleasanton, respectively), and one uncontested incumbent is seeking re-election in Area 1 on the western side of town. All are vying for a full term.



Mary Jo Carreon

AREA 1
Mary Jo Carreon

Running unopposed, Carreon was first elected to the board in 2020 and is the current board president. Carreon said in an interview with The Independent that the district's budget and the hiring of a permanent superintendent will remain at the forefront of the board's priorities in the coming term.

She added that the board is being proactive in looking at how it can leverage existing resources to bring in additional funding.

"The first step (in addressing the budget) was at our Sept. 24 board meeting when the board passed a resolution saying that we are willing to make the necessary cuts to be fiscally solvent," Carreon said. "Also, the district has been proactive in engaging with our community to inform our decision-making process. We have a budget advisory committee composed of community members, students, parents/guardians and staff who have been meeting since May 2024. We are also looking at ways to generate revenue."

Regarding the search for a new permanent superintendent, Carreon said it has been a collaborative effort between the community and the district.

"It was important to the board that we listen to our community prior to engaging in the selection of a permanent superintendent," she said. "At our Oct. 10 board meeting we received a report based on the input from surveys, focus groups and meetings which was extremely informative and helpful to the current and future board in making this important decision."



Donalyn Harris

AREA 3
Donalyn Harris

Harris is a Pleasanton native and Amador Valley High School graduate with two children currently in the PUSD and is a University of California, Berkeley alumnus. She has been president of Walnut Grove, Pleasanton and Harvest Park Middle School PT-SAs, as well as a member of Harvest Park Music Boosters and received the Pleasanton PTA Council's Continuing Service Award in February 2024.

She believes the district's budget situation is the top priority going forward.

"This issue isn't getting enough attention," she said in an email to The Independent. "District school boards are supposed to act in partnership with the county and be mindful of their oversight requirements. I will collaborate with the county board to ensure that PUSD adheres to county fiscal standards and requirements, and works with them on long-term budget planning so we can avoid issues like what we're seeing now."

She added that regular audits and financial reviews along with the county's guidance can help the district stay compliant and on track. She said the district should also pursue alternative funding sources such as grants and partnerships with local businesses.

Harris said that ensuring the PUSD board hires the best new superintendent in the coming term is also a top priority.

"Our community is tense and fractured at this moment, and there is considerable distrust following the contract negotiations last time," she said. "Nobody wants that again ... so while I think exercising the interim-super option met the community's needs at the moment, it wasn't the greatest long-term choice for continuity, stability or fiscal responsibility."

Harris added that student mental health and wellness must remain at the forefront of the board's priorities. Updating the district's aging facilities with the funds

from Measure I, the \$395 million facilities bond that passed in 2022, is also important, she said, in order to attract and retain families and staff to the area.

For more information, visit <https://harrisforpleasanton.com>.



Kelly Mokashi

Kelly Mokashi

Mokashi, a seven-year resident with three children in the district, is running for a second term on the board. She is a community school coordinator in the Fremont Unified School District and believes the PUSD's budget situation should be among the board's top priorities next term.

"Our school district must overcome deficit spending while considering significant budget cuts, totaling nearly \$8 million to \$13 million to ensure a positive budget evaluation from the ACOE (Alameda County Office of Education)," she said in an email to The Independent.

Mokashi added that the board has taken positive steps to address the shortfall including the establishment of a budget advisory committee and reviewing contract positions and staff-to-class ratios to see about possible adjustments, to name a few. She also believes that what will help over the long term is conducting a review of district programs and services to determine how many students are served and the overall effectiveness of each program.

Mokashi said that the PUSD Board unanimously voted last summer to hire an interim superintendent with previous superintendent experience on the understanding that the members of the PUSD board will shift after the 2024 election. She supported this move and believed it was the right choice for the district.

"This is important because one of the most important roles of a trustee is to hire, fire, and manage the superintendent of the district and therefore the new PUSD board should own that process," she said. "Dr. Ghysels has leveraged his expertise and experience

to pivot quickly and lead our district this school year and has made tremendous strides ... the current salary for the interim superintendent is competitive. Still, it has also resulted in some cost-saving measures, compared to what was initially budgeted for the former superintendent (i.e. exclusion of paid benefits)."

For more information, visit <https://votekellypusd.com>.



Jen Flynn

AREA 4
Jen Flynn

Flynn is a longtime resident with three boys in district schools. She is an active volunteer in the PUSD community and is a current member of the board of Pleasanton Partnerships in Education and vice-chair of the superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee.

She believes that priorities for the district should include expanding the district's Kids Club after-school program, which brings approximately \$1.6 million to the district's general fund. Flynn added that the district's access to Proposition 28 funds at all school sites is important and she is committed to ensuring those dollars are used in part to enhance the district's music and arts programs. She added that the district's budget is a top priority.

"I am eager to deepen my understanding of the budget and explore ways to maximize our available funds to guarantee that all Pleasanton students receive an exceptional education," she said in an email to The Independent. "It's essential for our district to pursue alternative funding opportunities through partnerships with local businesses and to actively seek out available grants. I also advocate for regular budget reviews and monitoring to ensure fiscal responsibility and transparency."

She said pushing off the selection of a new superintendent until the new 2024 board was in place was the right decision and looks forward to participating in the process.

"Our district needs to

invest in a strong leader," Flynn said. "Whether we had considered hiring from within, extending Dr. Ghysels's contract, or bringing in a new interim, we must prioritize the search for a capable Superintendent. Dr. Ghysels has been doing an excellent job, and I believe it's wise to allow some time before entering into a new contract. Together, we can ensure that PUSD continues to thrive under effective leadership."

For more information, visit <https://votejenflynn.com>.



Charlie Jones

Charlie Jones

Jones is a first-time candidate for the PUSD board and a Pleasanton native. The 34-year-old Jones is a social studies teacher and department chair at Tennyson High School in Hayward. He said that as a teacher he will always fight to keep budgetary cuts as far away from the classroom as possible. In order to address the district's deficit issues, Jones supports expanding the PUSD's Kids Club program and hiring a grant writer to explore ways to increase revenue.

"The district should also try to bring back many of the students that never returned after COVID, because declining enrollment is a huge reason for our current crisis," Jones said in an interview with The Independent.

Jones added that he

is pleased the district is conducting a full superintendent search and says bringing in stakeholders and conducting in-person group interviews and surveys has been important to including the community in the process.

"I have also said on the record that we should have hired internally for our interim Superintendent because we have qualified candidates who could have done the job and already know our community," he said. "This would have saved us money amid our budget crisis, since we would not have had to hire a firm to help us recruit an interim superintendent."

Other priorities for the new board said Jones should include expanding the district's dual language and multilingual learner programs to allow immigrants and newcomers to be able to keep up with their peers. Enrollment is down due in part to COVID and Jones believes the board must do its best to reject any budget cuts to the mental health and counseling services students still need.

He is also an advocate for community collaboration.

"By forging stronger partnerships with labor associations, we can expand career-technical education and tech access at all schools, with an even deeper focus on local job opportunities," Jones said.

For more information, visit <https://charliefor-schoolboard.com>.

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Festival Celebrates History of Sunol Wilderness

The East Bay Regional Park District will celebrate the history of the Sunol Wilderness Regional Preserve during the annual Sunol Heritage Festival from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 19.

The festival pays tribute to those who have inhabited the wilderness area near Sunol,

including the Chochenyo Ohlone-speaking Taunans and homesteaders who have ranched in the area since the 1860s.

The festival will include live music by the Polka Cowboys, crafts, Ohlone stories, and old-timey games and ranch activities, including

learning to lasso.

For more information, go to ebparks.org/Sunol-heritage-festival.

The park district has also opened a new trail at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, a 9,000-acre oak-covered ridge overlooking Pleasanton and the Livermore Valley.

The new mile-long Valle Vista multi-use trail leads off the North Ridge Trail and meanders down along grassy slopes and through woodlands to the Turtle Pond Trail.

The trail was built with help from the nonprofit Santa Cruz Mountains Trail Stewardship.

Dublin Seeks to Fill Volunteer Positions

Dublin is seeking applicants for the volunteer positions of city historian and poet laureate.

The city historian works with city staff to help manage Dublin's historical records and responds to public inquiries regarding the city's past.

The historian may also act as a liaison to local schools, historical groups, and members of the media and public, and will assist researchers in accessing historical resources.

The historian will be appointed by the City Council. The poet laureate is

also a volunteer and serves as a public advocate for literary arts.

Both positions are appointed by the City Council.

The deadline to apply is Sunday, Oct. 20.

Forms to apply for either position are available online at tinyurl.com/3eync67.

TV30 Interviews Local Election Candidates

Tri-Valley Community Television (TV30) has produced Election Specials for eight local races on the ballot in November.

The videos cover races for Dublin City Council, Dublin Unified School District, Dublin mayor, Livermore City Council,

Livermore Joint Unified School District, Pleasanton City Council, Pleasanton Unified School District, Pleasanton mayor.

Candidates for contested races were invited to provide opening remarks and then answer questions from TV30 news anchor

Ian Bartholomew and TV30 Foundation President and former Livermore Mayor Marshall Kamena.

The eight election specials are available at tri-valley-tv.org, and Comcast channels 28, 29 and 30. They are also available on AT&T U-Verse channel 99.

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