



Photo - Doug Jorgensen
Principal Candice Flint-Torres rewards students by getting soaked.

Principal Gets Soaked

By Patricia Koning
Altamont Creek Principal Candice Flint-Torres will go to extreme measures to motivate her students. Last week she took a soaking by students and staff in the Accelerated Reader (AR) Challenge Pitchburst. Last year, she donned a bridal veil and kissed a full-sized, dirty pig. "I'll do just about anything for my students—except shave my head," said Flint-Torres. Her goal for students this year was to earn 17,500 AR points by the end of the school year, a mark they hit in March. The students went on to earn more than 27,000 AR points as of last week. The top two students at each (See ALTAMONT CREEK, page 5)



From Soweto To Stanford

Mbali Mphande
South African native Mbali Mphande will attend Stanford University this fall after receiving a full scholarship to the prestigious private university. Mbali will major in international relations and psychology and add another chapter to her amazing story. She's one of six children who grew up living in poverty in the black township of Soweto in Johannesburg, South Africa. During her childhood, the South African system of Apartheid was abolished and blacks took control of their country for the first time since colonization. Mbali came to the United States in 2005 to pursue an education thanks to her oldest sister, Mulenga. "She sacrificed a lot to get me (See STUDENT, page 5)

Pleasanton Honors Artists

The Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council (PCAC) celebrated achievements in the arts at its annual awards dinner held last Wednesday in Pleasanton. PCAC announced winners of its young artists awards and the annual art supporter of the year award, Kirk Ridgeway. "It's impressive what our young people are doing," said artist Charlotte Severin, who presented one of the awards. Another presenter, Don Lewis, stated, "This community really comes alive as we get to see the lives of these young people start to blossom. I am amazed with the talent we have in this little place called Pleasanton. I am pleased to live in a community that recognizes its young people." Young artists were recognized in four areas: literary arts; visual arts; film, drama, dance, other performing arts; and music. Each of the winners received a certificate of achievement and a check for \$500. Alicia Brown, age 14, is a freshman at Amador Valley High School. She was the recipient of the literary arts award for her (See ARTISTS, page 5)

Council May Appoint Reitter Successor

Livermore Mayor Marshall Kamena and Councilmember Marj Leider are planning to run for re-election when their terms expire in November. The other council member with a term expiring term, Lorraine Dietrich, was not available for comment about whether she will run. Filing for the November election opens in August. The council also appears likely to start a process June 11 for appointing a successor to councilmember Tom Reitter, who said that June 30 will be his last day on the council, as well as at

his job at LLNL. He will be retiring to Marin County. If a successor is appointed, that person would serve until the end of Reitter's term, which would be November 2009. Kamena, Leider and Reitter all told the Independent that they support appointing Reitter's successor on the council. All said that it's best to have the council up to full membership as soon as possible, in order to distribute the council's committee work load fairly, and to prevent any possible tie votes. If the council does appoint a

successor, Reitter said that he would like to be in on the council discussions. However, he cannot vote for a successor. City Attorney John Pomidor said that there must be a vacancy before the council can appoint a successor. (Steve Pulido voted on his successor earlier this year on the Pleasanton school board, before leaving the board. However, school offices are governed by the state education code, not the government code, which Livermore must follow, said Pomidor.) The other option is to leave

the seat vacant and call for a special election for filling out the remainder of Reitter's term. If the council were to act by July 15 on a special election, it could combine that election with the regular November election for city council. That would save the city some money compared to waiting until after July 15, and holding a special election in the spring, when there are fewer agencies on the ballot to share the costs of elections. Tom Bramell, who finished in third place when two seats were up for election in 2005, said he is

considering a run again. He said he will be watching the meeting closely June 11 to see whether the council appoints or leaves the seat open. Bramell said that he would like to see the seat stay open, so it can be voted on in the next election. However, he did comment on both sides of the question. "It's obviously more to their (the current council's) favor, if only four people, and not the general populace make the selection. But it also makes sense to have someone sitting in the seat" (See COUNCIL, page 4)



Photo - Doug Jorgensen
Dublin Mayor Janet Lockhart, incoming president of the air district, and Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty discussed the free ride program.

Free Rides on Spare the Air Days

"We can all help make the air better," was the message Supervisor Scott Haggerty wanted people to hear. "We will never be able to build ourselves out of congestion and bad air." His comments were made during a press conference last Friday in Livermore to announce this year's Spare the Air free rides program. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) will once again offer free rides to Bay Area

residents as part of the summer-time Spare the Air program. This year's free fare program includes 9 transit systems from all nine Bay Area counties providing free commutes on four Spare the Air days. Beginning June 1, free rides will be offered on the Altamont Commuter Express and other transit providers the first four times the Air District issues a Spare the Air advisory on a non-holiday weekday. New this year - free transit will be available on BART, CalTrain, ACE Train, and

Bay Area ferries until 1:00 p.m., and all day on Bay Area bus systems. "It's not just about free transit, it's about changing the mind set of people," said Haggerty. The goal is to convince more people to use public transit, rather than cars to get around. There is an increase in transit ridership of 10 to 18 percent when rides are free. MTC is conducting a survey of transit riders and drivers to determine the retention of riders (See RIDES, page 5)

Sandia Scientists Mentor Spelling Champ Evan O'Dorney

By Patricia Koning
These days 13-year-old 8th grader Evan O'Dorney is best known for his spelling prowess, having won the 2007 Scripps National Spelling Bee on May 31. However, the young prodigy actually prefers math and music to spelling, which he considers just a bunch of memorization. "I really like math," said Evan on a Good Morning America appearance last week. "I like the patterns that the numbers make, and the way that it is so logical. You can't argue about something if you've proven that it's true." He placed 5th in a recent Northern California MathCounts competition and earned a perfect score in the American Mathematics Contest 10, in a test designed for 10th graders. He's so advanced in math that he's been receiving special instruction from scientists at Sandia National Laboratories. It all started about four years ago, when computer scientist Ken Perano was giving a talk as part of a tour for advanced math students. "I just assumed Evan was a younger sibling of one of the kids on the tour," Perano said. "He came right up to the front and

started asking questions beyond the ability of most high school students." Perano struck up a conversation with Evan's mother Jennifer, who home-schools her son. She said she was reaching the limit of what she could teach Evan, who was 9 at the time, in math. Evan was eager for the opportunity to learn from Perano, who holds a PhD from UC Davis in engineering, and other Sandia scientists. The tricky part was convincing Sandia security that it was necessary to bring a 9-year-old on the site. Jesse Davis, a former Sandian, and Eileen Cross, a Sandia scientist, have also been part of the mentoring team. Evan has been learning college- and graduate-level differential and integral calculus, graph theory, differential equations, tensor analysis, matrix analysis, and chaos theory. "This experience has been very rewarding," Perano said. "I look at it as a rare opportunity to work with a truly gifted student. The rate at which Evan learns is phenomenal. He uniquely (See MENTOR, page 4)



Photo - Doug Jorgensen
Amador Valley High School chemistry students hosted a Spring Science Extravaganza last week. The event, designed by the students, is a day of hands-on science for students of the surrounding elementary schools. Pictured trying out "tornado tubes" is Tyler Robinson, a 3rd grader from Alisal. Eliza Lamson explains how the experiment works.

Livermore Police Chief Retires

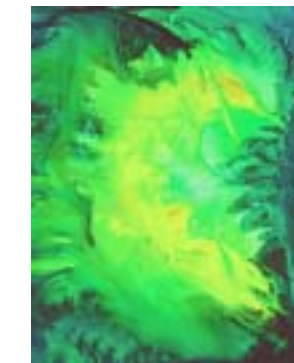
A press release issued by Livermore City Manager Linda Barton on Monday announced the retirement of Livermore Police Chief Steve Krull. He was appointed to the post in December 2002.

The release stated that Captain Steve Sweeney will act as interim Police Chief. Barton said, "We are very grateful for the many contributions Chief Krull made to the department and the community, and

we wish him well in his retirement." Chief Krull, in a released statement, declared, "I am proud of all the accomplishments at the department during my tenure. We (See CHIEF, page 5)

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The Artist's Gallery located in the Livermore Main Library at 1188 S. Livermore Ave in Livermore is hosting a new exhibit called "Abstractions." The show features over 40 pieces of abstract art by local artists. The types of art include a three dimensional weaving called "Rock & Roll," large and small sized paintings in oil,

watercolor and acrylic, and some collage. The public is invited to visit the Gallery during normal business hours until June 30th. Admission is free. A docent will be provided on request. For more information, call Linda Jeffery Sailors at (925) 449-7274. At left is "Crescent Muse," by Linda Jeffery Sailors, one of the paintings in the show.

Do You Remember?

By Anne Homan



Rodeo Clowns

Before Brahma bulls became a part of the Livermore rodeo program in 1927, the main function of the rodeo clown was to entertain the audience. He usually had a set program. However, the announcer could also call on him to amuse the crowd or ease the tension on the spur of the moment when something happened to interrupt the flow of the scheduled events: for example, a chute becoming stuck or a contestant being injured. Many of the early clowns also competed in rodeo events.

In 1920 Ty Stokes, a black cowboy, not only clowned at the Livermore rodeo but tied for second place in the bucking horse event, came in second in steer roping, and won the fancy roping and trick riding event. Stokes came the next year and also in 1925. Charlie Chaplin clowned along with Ty in 1920. Abe Lefkowitz, who later changed his surname to Lefton, came for the first time to Livermore as a clown in 1920. In 1929 when Abe came for a fifth time, he discovered that another clown act had been hired, and rodeo director M.G. Callaghan talked Lefton into being the announcer. From that day on, Lefton retired his clown suit; he had found his niche in rodeo as a quick-thinking and humorous announcer. He worked the megaphone and later the microphone numerous times at Livermore and other rodeos.

Many clowns worked with animals in their acts. In 1920 Professor Agraz brought his trick ponies and burros to amuse the Livermore crowd. In 1925 clown Ira Levin performed with a dog and a mule. "Farmer" Ed Wright used his "educated" mule in his act in 1926 and 1927. "Shorty" Jack Knapp, who came from 1929 through 1931, staged a Mexican bullfight with dogs dressed as bulls. Pete Genant also came in with Knapp to Livermore. He had a chariot that they tied to the tail of a wild steer, and the two clowns had a wild ride that ended in a grand spill in the middle of the arena.

"Tin Horn" Hank Keenen and his son came to the Livermore rodeo in 1932, 1933, and 1935. They brought a trained bucking horse named Steamboat that gave the clowns spectacular rides. Hank Keenen Jr. said, "When I started working with my father, as little Tin Horn Hank, a single day's clowning included riding a couple of steers backwards while holding a suitcase and firing a pistol, stepping off a horse and turning cartwheels and clowning on Steamboat." Homer Holcomb worked the Livermore rodeo for the first time in 1935 with his mule Parkyurkarkus. Later mules in his act were Orphan Annie and Mae West. Clown Wilbur Plaugher often came to Livermore in his wig, striped shirt and baggy pants after his debut in 1949 with his menagerie of trained dogs and ducks, including a dachshund that herded calves.

Veterinarian John Shirley worked at the rodeo for several years. One year the rodeo clown's act had two sheep dogs that would play around with and "herd" a skunk. The clown brought the skunk to Dr. Shirley, saying that he had used the skunk in numerous rodeos and indoor entertainments for about three years and had assumed it was descended. However, in his act that day the clown had gotten a whiff of skunk odor. When Dr. Shirley checked the animal and found the scent glands intact, the clown asked him to remove the glands. "I anesthetized the skunk and removed the largest scent glands I had ever seen, at least 2-3 inches long and full to the brim. The skunk made a fine recovery, and the show went on."

With the advent of the Brahma bull into the rodeo arena, the clown's role became more serious and dangerous. Pick-up riders could not help bull riders off when the horn blew because the Brahmas would attack the horse. The Brahmas also often tried to gore downed riders. Sometimes a rider's hand became stuck under the riding rope. Many clowns became known as "bull-fighters" whose job was to protect the bull riders. In 1936 the *Herald* headline read "Homer Steals Show." Holcomb had hung red flags from a Brahma's horns and challenged death "a thousand times in an unequalled exhibition of pure audacious deviltry." Holcomb aided champion Johnie Schneider in 1939 when a Brahma knocked Schneider down and scraped his thigh with one horn. Holcomb waved his red serape and managed to distract the bull long enough for Johnie to hightail it out of danger. Holcomb sometimes worked with bullfighter George Mills as his partner. In 1944 Holcomb suffered two broken ribs in a clown act with Mills near the end of the rodeo. When Holcomb was knocked down by a Brahma at the San Francisco rodeo in 1945, it was Slim Pickens who lured the bull away. Holcomb came to St. Paul's Hospital in Livermore to have his broken leg treated.

Slim Pickens, born Louis Bert Lindley, was a rodeo performer from the 1930s to the 1950s. He worked at the Rowell Ranch in Dublin before going on the rodeo circuit. He first appeared at a Livermore rodeo in 1947 with Holcomb. His last appearance was probably in 1957, although the local newspapers do not list the clowns in 1958. Pickens was scheduled to work here in 1959, but the bleacher seats were condemned, and the rodeo was cancelled. Bert Christensen remembers that Pickens would come to a barbecue at the Christensen ranch whenever he came to perform at the Livermore rodeo. For his work as a bullfighter, Pickens wore a toreador outfit, complete with white stockings, skin-tight pants, decorated bolero and cape. As Pickens became more involved in his Hollywood career in film and on television, he gave up his rodeo appearances.

Don't forget to attend the Livermore parade and rodeo this coming weekend—a part of Livermore for the last 89 years! (Readers can reach me at am3homan@yahoo.com.)

Foothill Students Have Lesson in Global Warming

By Patrick Brogan

Despite almost 90 percent of the world's scientists agreeing that global warming is an issue, students at Foothill High School in Pleasanton were mixed in their reactions to a discussion about global warming during the school's first annual Global Chillout Week. In their response to a three member panel discussion, there were audible laughs and groans to such things as the video that was played, the announcement of the 50-minute time length of the discussion as well as a general feeling of apathy to the issue itself.

The discussion, led by Congressman Jerry McNerney, Pleasanton Mayor Jennifer Hosterman and Chris Jones, Foothill's science teacher, was repeated three times and varied in style. One discussion included views from a senator who believed global warming was a hoax. Another had a student-created video that showed the potential effects of global warming. All three panel members were in agreement that global warming is an issue of immediate concern. However, they cautioned the students not to blame natural causes instead of human activity.

Foothill High student Melissa Martin was not concerned that global warming was an issue. "I'm very skeptical about global warming and the need to act immediately," she said. Martin, a junior, said that one cannot rule out the possibility that global warming is a natural phenomenon like the Ice Age or the Medieval Warming period. She would be willing to make small changes such as wearing a sweater when it's cold or using a pool when it's hot outside but not go out of her way to make drastic changes.

Patrick Kosinski, also a junior at Foothill, echoed Martin's feelings. "I don't believe it,"

Kosinski said. "My parents are the same."

Social studies teacher Dan Schneider, part of the Charity and Global Leadership class responsible for creating Global Chillout Week, explained the overall feeling of dissent as a product of the student's youth and conservative views. "A lot of these students' parents don't think of global warming as a serious issue," Schneider said. "So the students tend to feel the same way." Schneider likened the global warming discussion to the Truth.com commercials which use startling facts or dramatic pictures to bring attention to smoking. "As long as we change a few students' views, then I'm happy," he said.

Alexa Deutschman, one of the founders of Global Chillout Week, said that Al Gore's movie, "An Inconvenient Truth," was an inspiration for the panel discussion.

Deutschman, a sophomore, was also on the other side of the fence of the global warming issue. "I'm passionate about saving the environment and will make an effort to save energy," she said. She found the video to be impressive and was glad that the students had a chance to watch it. She also said that she would be content with even a few students who change their views on global warming.

Congressman McNerney rounded out the discussion by saying that there will be winners and losers in the fight against global warming. We need to be part of the winning solution. He went on to discuss how everyone has an opportunity to benefit from proposed solutions to global warming such as electric cars, wind energy and so forth. "There needs to be a move from competition to cooperation," McNerney said.

Livermore Riders Lead College Rodeo Team to #1 Ranking

Three roughstock riders from Livermore — Ted Athan, Kyle Labrucherie and Jake Larsen — have helped boost West Hills Community College to number one ranking in college rodeo's national standings.

Athan is a bareback and bronc rider. Labrucherie rides bareback. Larsen is a bull rider.

West Hills, located in Coalinga, outscored its closest competitor by almost 1000 points. West Hills scored 8424.5, trailed by New Mexico State with 7499.5 and Cal Poly with 7388.5.

The college competition, which involves both two-year and four-year schools, takes place in 11 regions throughout the nation. Ten rodeos are held during the season.

West Hills competes in the West Coast Region, where the teams include powerhouses such as Cal Poly, according to Paula McGowan, Labrucherie's mother.

"To compete at that level and be ranked the best in the nation is quite an accomplishment," says the proud mother.

The top 10 teams in the national standings are, in their order of ranking: West Hills, New Mexico State, Cal Poly, Walla Walla Community College, University of Montana, Utah Valley State, Weber State, University of Tennessee, Panhandle State and Montana State.

Capping off their accomplish-

ment in the team standings, Athan, Labrucherie and four of their West Hills teammates have qualified individually for the college rodeo finals.

The finals will be held in Casper, Wyoming June 10-16.

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1,100 to Graduate In Pleasanton

Pleasanton Unified School District will congratulate more than 1,100 graduating seniors at ceremonies to be held next week.

On Wednesday, June 13, seniors at Horizon High School will participate in a ceremony at 11:30 a.m. in the Village High School multi-purpose room (4645 Bernal Avenue). Also on June 13, at 7:00 p.m., seniors from Village High School will graduate at a ceremony at the Amador Theater (1155 Santa Rita Road).

On Friday, June 15, Amador Valley and Foothill high schools will hold their graduation ceremonies in the amphitheater at the Alameda County Fairgrounds. Amador Valley seniors will graduate at 2:00 p.m., followed by Foothill's at 6:00 p.m. Both of these ceremonies will be simulcast in the adjacent Exhibition Hall.

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VALLEY ROUNDUP

Jim Concannon Honored

The California Exposition and State Fair has selected three individuals for the annual Lifetime Achievement Award. Jim Concannon, Jerry Lohr and Robert Gallo were chosen as the 2007 recipients based on their outstanding lifetime of contributions to the California wine industry.

Concannon is the president of Concannon Vineyard in Livermore. His contribution to the wine business reaches back to the late 1960s when he acted in a leadership capacity to provide Cabernet Sauvignon root stock used in the development of what are now known as Clone 7, 8 and 11. This in turn advanced the opportunity for California Cabernets to lead the world in quality standards for this red wine grape.

Concannon was the first to produce wine labeled as Petite Sirah in 1984 from a 1961 vintage and led the nation in advocacy for Petite Sirah wine.

He is also a founding member of the Wine Institute.

The three winners will be recognized for their work at the California Grape and Gourmet at Cal Expo on Thurs., July 12.

Aircraft Backup Power

Sandia National Laboratories and Boeing are collaborating on a project to look at the feasibility of using a hydrogen-powered fuel cell for providing backup power in aircraft.

Commercial and military aircraft use a variety of techniques for providing backup electrical power to critical subsystems during emergency scenarios. Depending on the aircraft, these may include dedicated battery power, in-flight operation of the auxiliary power unit, a ram air turbine, or other technologies.

The project is a new task under an umbrella cooperative research and development agreement signed between the two organizations in 2002.

The project focuses on the use of a polymer electrolyte membrane (PEM) fuel cell for backup power. Sandia is leading investigations looking at electrical and environmental requirements, storage issues, and efficiency.

"Fuel cell technology represents a straightforward and innovative approach to gaining experience with alternative energy sources for airplane electrical power," says Joe Breit, project manager and an associate technical fellow at the Boeing Systems Concept Center. "A significant part of our focus at Boeing Commercial Airplanes is looking at environmentally progressive technologies that can further reduce dependencies on oil-driven power sources. Our collaborative work with Sandia on this application is a step forward in that regard."

The project taps Sandia's 60 years of experience in hydrogen storage for weapons applications and more recent R&D in materials science and hydrogen storage engineering through its DOE-sponsored Metal Hydride Center of Excellence, said project manager Lennie Klebanoff of Sandia's Livermore site.

Sandia PEM researcher Chris Cornelius will evaluate fuel cell requirements, implementation and efficiency; Klebanoff will provide analysis of hydrogen storage options and issues.

The "Woz" in Pleasanton

Tri-Valley Macintosh Users Group will host a presentation by Steve Wozniak (The Woz), co-founder of Apple.

Wozniak will be speaking at the Amador Theater at 7 p.m. on Thurs., June 21.

The program will be presented in cooperation with Amador Valley Adult Education.

Wozniak will cover all aspects of personal computer technology and its growth. In addition, he will be signing his latest book, "iWoz: From Computer Geek to Cult Icon: How I Invented the Personal Computer, Co-Founded Apple, and Had Fun Doing It."

The book can be purchased at the event for \$10.

There is no admission charge to attend the program. The theater is located at 1155 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton.

For additional information, contact Izak Mutlu at imutlu@comcast.net.

Hayashi Named to Committee

Assemblymember Mary Hayashi (D-Hayward) has been appointed by Speaker Nunez as the Chair of the Select Committee on Community Colleges.

The select committee will focus on a wide range of issues including part-time faculty, the need to educate more health care providers, and workforce development programs.

Hayashi serves the 18th Assembly District, which includes Dublin, Hayward and San Leandro; all of the unincorporated areas of Ashland, Cherryland, and San Lorenzo; most of Castro Valley, Pleasanton and Sunol; as well as a portion of Oakland.

Humorist Featured Speaker

Humorist Larry Wilde will be the featured speaker at the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce June 26 luncheon.

Wilde was declared "America's best-selling humorist" by The New York Times. His 53 books have sold more than 12 million copies in 41 countries.

Chamber Luncheons are open to the community. The luncheon will be held at Palm Event Center, 1184 Vineyard Avenue in Pleasanton, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Cost is \$30 per person for members; \$35 for non-members.

For reservations, call the Pleasanton Chamber at (925)846-5858.

Conservation Funds

Assemblyman Guy Houston (R-San Ramon), who indicated that he is frustrated with the amount of federal conservation and restoration funding that goes unspent every year, has authored Assembly Bill 1074 to remove barriers to restoration and maximize the use of these available dollars.

AB 1074 was taken up on the Assembly Floor Tuesday, June 5th.

Participants in federal cost-share conservation programs will benefit from this bill. The largest of these programs is Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers to promote agricultural production and environmental quality. EQIP provides assistance for improving structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

"The goal of this bill is not to create incentives for conservation, rather remove disincentives. The money for conservation is there, and will likely grow larger as time goes on. We need to ensure that this money is spent and spent effectively," said Houston.

Last year, California received just over \$44 million in cost-share dollars for EQIP. Of this federal allocation, only 29% of it was spent as payments to landowners for conservation practices.

Currently, state permitting agencies don't distinguish between a parking lot over a wetland and a resource conservation project. This leads to a backlog in the expenditure of federal conservation funds while state agency paperwork is filled out.

AB 1074 will bring together regulatory agencies and interested stakeholders to create a California State Conservation Permit. This permit will allow landowners involved in a conservation project to complete this permit in the place of the various permits they would otherwise have to obtain from several agencies.

The Defenders of Wildlife, Environmental Defense, California Cattleman's Association, California Farm Bureau Federation, and the Resources Agency were among the participants in crafting the measure.

Corrections

An incorrect phone number was listed for the Reinstein Ranch Camp for Kids in Livermore. To reach Fiona Boggie, call 510-366-2131.

The story on Ravenswood in the magazine, mentioned LARPD as owner of the site. The site belongs to the City of Livermore. It is managed by LARPD.

Blast off! Elementary GATE Social Takes Livermore Students into Deep Space

By Patricia Koning

Recently hundreds of elementary students from across the Livermore School District and their families experienced an evening at space camp, complete with a planetarium, NASA researcher, moon rocks, model rockets, and hands-on activities. The real question is who had more fun—the kids or their parents?

The event was the Third Annual Space Night GATE Social, hosted by Croce and Altamont Creek Elementary Schools. Approximately 400 elementary students from each of the 10 schools in the Livermore School District, all participants in the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program, were invited.

Brian Day from the NASA Ames Research Center spoke about the upcoming Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite (LCROSS) mission, which looks for water on the moon. Participants experienced the District's new Planetarium and watched a 15-minute educational program about the constellations and stars.

The students and their fami-

lies built hovercrafts, straw rockets, and sky wheels. They created their own unique space mission patch, assembled a pipe structure in a simulated space environment, made paper airplanes, and went head-to-head in Space Jeopardy.

Bill Orvis from the Livermore Unit National Association of Rocketry (LUNAR) was on hand to display model rockets and answer questions. LUNAR (www.lunar.org) is a group of model rocketry enthusiasts of all ages who gather together to learn rocketry, teach rocketry, exchange modeling techniques, and, of course, fly model and high-power rockets. Many parents and children left the Space GATE Social with plans to build their own rockets.

One goal for GATE socials is to encourage students to mix and socialize with one another. Students at the social were given a "Solar System Passport Challenge." Each school was assigned a different planet and students were encouraged to complete the solar system on their name badges by approaching

GATE students from other schools to trade planet stickers.

There was a raffle for space-related prizes including puzzles, a model space shuttle, books, and games. The grand prize was an autographed photo of an astronaut and four tickets to Chabot Space and Science Center.

This event is the only District-wide Elementary GATE Social; other GATE socials involve only one or a few schools. About 500 students and their families typically attend.

Teresa Zieminski-Myers, a parent volunteer, started the event three years ago after the District cut funding for elementary science due to budget constraints. Through a Lockheed Martin Space Day program she first put on a space week for Croce, which led to the Space GATE social.

"Space is my passion," she says. "It's fun and interesting. This event is important because it gives these kids continued opportunities to explore outer space."

Zieminski-Myers also teaches

(See SPACE, page 14)

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The City of Livermore is holding a public ceremony to honor the opening of the Livermore Valley Center Park Plaza and Amphitheater.



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After 42 Years in Livermore Schools, Nancy Steele Retires

By Patricia Koning

Last week Nancy Steele presided over her last graduation ceremony. After a 42-year career with the Livermore School District, half of which was spent as principal of Adult Education and Alternative Programs, Steele is retiring.

"In the alternative education setting, I've gotten to do it all. We're developing new programs all the time," she says. "I'm a little sad to retire now, because there are so many new things happening, such as distance learning and career technology applications."

She may be stepping down from the principal's chair, but Steele plans to remain an active force in Livermore schools. She'll continue her involvement in Rotary and intends to help out the District as needed, but only in a volunteer capacity. She'll also take advantage of her more relaxed schedule by attending day football and baseball games.

Steele started her career as a physical education teacher and synchronized swimming coach at Livermore High School (LHS). She went on to serve as the LHS Dean of Girls/Assistant Principal and Assistant Principal at Granada High School before moving into alternative education.

When she took over the program, Adult Education had 200 students. The program now serves approximately 4,000 students. Course offerings include English as a Second Language, Microsoft Certification, vocational training, and an entire group of classes just for senior citizens.

Steele also oversaw the devel-

opment of the Vineyard Independent Study program, which offers home school opportunities for students from first through twelfth grades. About 260 students are currently enrolled in Vineyard.

"Nancy's passion for education is reflected in the many successful programs she has run and the many grants she has written," says Superintendent Brenda Miller. "The District is very proud of the opportunities Nancy has offered our senior citizens and adult community. Her understanding of the adult needs in the community has made her so successful in her current position."

Steele's many accomplishments and awards include: Alameda County's Women's Hall of Fame inductee (2000), Livermore Chamber Community Service Award, President of Livermore Management Association, Livermore Management Administrator of the Year (1992), Alameda County Office of Education Community Service Award, California Department of Education Alternative Program

"Most Supportive Principal", State Department Special Programs Field Representative for High Risk Students, and the Livermore Adult Day Care Service Award for establishing adult day care in the community.

The District recently named a community center located on the Marilyn Avenue Elementary School campus after Steele. The center houses the Instituto Nacional para la Educacion de los Adultos, Migrant Education Preschool, GED Examination preparation, and Adult Education English as a Second Language, Civics, Computer Skills, and Basic Literacy classes.

At the Vineyard/Adult Education graduation ceremony, Livermore School Board member Tom McLaughlin spoke about Steele's impact on education.

"Nancy epitomizes diversity," says McLaughlin. "She believes children are children and students are students and they should all be given the best education possible. Her whole life was truly dedicated to educating children regardless of background or ethnicity."



Photo - Doug Jorgensen
Aissa "AJ" Lee was one of the performers at the opening of the Friday Night Concerts in Downtown Pleasanton. She performed with her mother and sister. The June 1 event was a youth concert. Concerts are held each Friday 7 p.m. in Wayside Park, corner of Neal and First St. There is no admission charge. The concerts are hosted by the Pleasanton Downtown Association.

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SPACE

(continued from page 3)

enrichment space classes at both Croce and Altamont Creek. This year she covered engineering concepts by having students experiment with materials on model rocket ships to protect a jello payload.

Corporate contributors included NASA Ames Research Center, Lockheed-Martin, Tech-

nology Ventures Corporation, and Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne. NASA Ames loaned the schools a genuine sample of a moon rock, exhibits, and a space suit for the children to view. Pratt & Whitney generously donated a number of solar system-related items and projects that every child received to take home.



PET OF THE WEEK

Deuce is a charming, sweet, and well-behaved 11-month old black and tan Australian Kelpie mix. He has had formal obedience training, knows many commands, and walks wonderfully on a leash. He is crate trained and house trained, and plays well by himself with his toys. He absolutely loves to play ball, and does amazing aerobatics while catching. He is compatible with other dogs, but not with cats. For more information on the amazing flying Deuce, call Valley Humane Society at 925-426-8656, or visit our new Adoption Center at 3670 Nevada St. in Pleasanton's Stanley Business Park Wed-Sun 11 am-5 pm to visit our cats. Valley Humane Society holds mobile pet adoptions for dogs at Pet Extreme in Livermore every Saturday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

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LIVERMORE \$629,000 By Appointment Bright open floor plan has 4bd/2ba, remodeled kitchen and baths. Close to everything. Large yard. Newer roof.	LIVERMORE \$585,000 By Appointment Great opportunity! 3bd/2ba home is freshly painted, newer roof, some dual pane windows. Large side yard.	LIVERMORE \$579,950 By Appointment Completely remodeled and extended gorgeous 3bd/2ba, 1,600+/-sf Sunset home with pool. New carpet, windows and roof.	LIVERMORE \$579,950 By Appointment Updated 3bd/2ba, 1,400+/-sf home in a great established area. Close to shopping and freeway. Too many upgrades to mention!	LIVERMORE \$549,950 By Appointment Beautiful 4bd/3ba home (one bedroom downstairs). Formal LR/DR, central heat and air dual zone. Professionally landscaped.

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