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about

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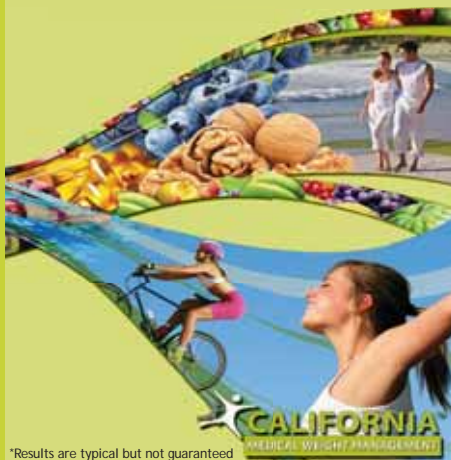
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# out & about

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## Celebrating mothers

Mother's Day — is it a greeting card holiday foisted upon us or is it a great opportunity to show appreciation for Mom?

The answer is easy when the children are little and are thrilled to deliver homemade cards to Mom in bed along with coffee and

toast. Moms love this although part of them may be saying: "Just give me a day to myself!"

When the kids reach adolescence and must be forced to do just about anything in the vicinity of their families except eat, sleep and text, can the spirit of the day survive? It's a question that must be answered individually by each family but Mom just might find the whole thing an embarrassment and be willing to forego the observation for a year or two.

When "the children" are adults, the answer is easy: Mom is always dying to see them so if Mother's Day brings them around, that's as good an excuse as any.

This issue gives lots of ideas of places to go and activities to enjoy, from Tao House to Mount Diablo to places farther afield, so grab Mom and go for it. Just don't make her do the planning, pack the lunch, and clean up afterward.

**—Our Views are just that as we explore subjects that pique our interest. What are your views? Let us know at: [views@DanvilleExpress.com](mailto:views@DanvilleExpress.com) [views@SanRamonExpress.com](mailto:views@SanRamonExpress.com)**

## Attention, pet lovers

The June issue of Views will feature our beloved pets, including poignant or fun pieces on our dogs, cats, etc., from their cute puppy/kittenhood through old age. Do you have a tale to tell? Write it out in 200 words or less and email it with a photo (jpg only) to:

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ALL ABOARD!

Sunol-Niles canyon route makes a beautiful train ride

#### STORY AND PHOTOS BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

The Niles Canyon Railroad is a popular Sunday excursion judging by the crowd at the Sunol station on a recent sunny day. Get there early to park and buy a ticket, and be ready to board as quickly as possible for a good seat.

Tickets are sold in the quaint old train station by a volunteer in vintage railroad attire. Requested donations are \$10 general; \$8 seniors 62 and older; \$5 ages 3-12. When the train pulled in from Niles it was immediately surrounded by folks with cameras on scrambling to board for an outside seat.

The train travels 13 miles round trip between Sunol and Niles meandering near and sometimes crossing

SEE **NILES CANYON RAILROAD** ON PAGE 8





## NILES CANYON RAILROAD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Highway 84. It leaves Sunol four times on Sundays — 10:15 a.m., 12:01 p.m., 1:45 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. — a ride that takes about 40 minutes. The train is pulled by a diesel engine to Niles along the old Southern Pacific tracks then chugs back with a steam engine, although there is no return trip for the last train. In Niles an old-time bus is available to shuttle folks between downtown and the station.

The train isn't long. It has old passenger cars and open air cars, converted for passenger use from old flatcars. One enclosed coach has restrooms, a snack bar and free wine tastings from local vineyards.

A caboose is available for rent, as is the entire train. Check out the Niles Canyon Railway website for more information:

[www.ncry.org](http://www.ncry.org). The Train of Lights is a favorite in December as it winds through the canyon at night decked out in a colorful display of holiday lights with Santa onboard; tickets sell out quickly when they go on sale in October.

The clunky old cars may not give as smooth a ride as BART or Amtrak, but they take riders back in time — and through beautiful scenery. In the spring, the hillside is lush as the route follows the Alameda Creek, which flows like a river after generous rainfalls.

The ride isn't so smooth, explained railroad aficionado Jess Steven Hughes, who was visiting from the state of Washington, because the converted flatcar wasn't made for comfort.

"They were made for freight," Hughes said. "Plus these are old tracks. This track

FROM [DANVILLEEXPRESS.COM](http://DANVILLEEXPRESS.COM)

## MORE TRAIN ADVENTURES

Go to Martinez to catch Amtrak's Capitol Corridor train to Sacramento for the day; one-way fare is \$17. Sacramento's station is next to its historic district, Old Sacramento, a collection of restaurants, shops and the California State Railroad Museum, which has 21 lavishly restored locomotives and cars, some dating back to 1862. The museum also has a full-scale diorama of an 1860s construction site high in the Sierra Nevada as well as a bridge elevated 24 feet above the museum floor.

The museum is also the starting point for the weekend Sacramento Southern Railroad, a 40-minute, six-mile roundtrip ride in vintage passenger coaches and converted freight cars along the levees of the Sacramento River on a steam locomotive. Tickets are \$10 adults, \$5 youths (ages 6-17), ages 5 and under ride free. Call (916) 445-6645.





is from 1905-10.”

Parts of the track were replaced after it was damaged during the 1906 earthquake, he said, plus heavier track was laid when the trains themselves got heavier.

The transcontinental railway, completed in 1869, originally completed its journey to the San Francisco Bay via this stretch until Southern Pacific upgraded its line through Benicia and Martinez and the main line switched to the shorter route in 1879.

Many of the riders on the Niles Canyon Railway seemed to be train enthusiasts as they traded stories of riding the rails and wielded cameras before, during and after the ride. The excursion was also popular with families of small children, who were helped up the steep boarding steps by the volunteers decked

out in traditional train garb.

The railway is an entirely volunteer endeavor, run by members of the Pacific Locomotive Association, which was begun in 1961. The association began rebuilding the rail line in 1987 and its volunteers worked for more than a year on the section between Sunol and Brightside maintenance facility, about halfway to Niles.

“On May 21, 1988, almost 122 years after the first Western Pacific excursion, the Pacific Locomotive Association brought railroad passenger operations back to life in Niles Canyon,” states the website.

For a traditional, old-fashioned train experience or just a fun outing through the beautiful canyon, gather your family and friends together and say, “All aboard!” ■



AND [SANRAMONEXPRESS.COM](http://SANRAMONEXPRESS.COM)



Above: The Niles Canyon Railway is pulled by a steam locomotive on its return trip from Niles to Sunol. Passengers and volunteer train crew alike get into the spirit of the historic train ride on the old Southern Pacific tracks, which once the transcontinental gateway to the San Francisco Bay.



# *BART and ACE train: Not just for commuters*

BY JESSICA LIPSKY

San Ramon Valley residents only need to open their wallets to realize the crunch their cars put on cash flow. New research from AAA finds the cost of owning and operating a vehicle is up nearly \$300 from a year ago.

With summer months on the horizon and no relief from \$4 gallons in sight, hop on BART or ACE Train for a cheap and eco-friendly staycation to some of these destinations.







JESSICA LIPSKY

Above left: Passengers wait for a Stockton bound ACE train at the Pleasanton station. Right: Hundreds of spaces make parking a breeze at the new West Dublin/Pleasanton BART station.

### **BART**

#### **First Fridays/Art Murmur**

Take a westbound train to 19th Street in Oakland for an art walk on the first Friday of every month. Galleries in downtown Oakland are open to the public from 6-9 p.m. and streets are closed to traffic. Unique craft, art and food vendors are also on site. Visit [oaklandartmurmur.org](http://oaklandartmurmur.org).

#### **Tech Museum in San Jose**

From the Fremont BART station, take the Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority Express Bus No. 180 to downtown San Jose and walk two blocks to see "Body Worlds" at the family friendly, interactive museum. The Tech has free admission days on the second Sunday of every month. Visit [www.thetech.org](http://www.thetech.org).

#### **Oakland A's and Raiders games**

Take a train to Oakland Coliseum/Airport to skip the traffic on I-880 and \$20 parking. The Oakland A's will have \$2 tickets on Wednesdays for 11 games this summer.

#### **Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive**

Take BART to the downtown Berkeley station and walk 15 minutes through UC Berkeley for art and film exhibits. Visit [www.bampfa.berkeley.edu](http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu) for programs.

### **Pacific Pinball Museum**

Take a westbound train to Oakland 12th Street and AC Transit bus #51 to Alameda for unlimited pinball on vintage machines. Visit [pacificpinball.org](http://pacificpinball.org) for details.

### **ACE Train**

#### **Great America and San Jose Jazz Festival**

From the Pleasanton station, take a special train to the theme park or event on June 11 and Aug. 13; \$50 includes the cost of the ride, full park admission and an all-you-can-eat lunch buffet. Visit [www.acerail.com](http://www.acerail.com).

#### **Santana Row and Winchester Mystery House**

From the Pleasanton station, take the train to San Jose and catch the Downtown Area Shuttle (DASH) for your spooky and shopping needs.

### **Livermore**

Avoid I-580 traffic and take a Stockton-bound train to the Livermore Transit center. Hop on a Wheels bus to visit Wente and other wineries, play bocce ball at Campo di Bocce or take a stroll downtown. Visit [www.wheelsbus.com](http://www.wheelsbus.com) for schedule and route information.



RIDING THE RAILS



VIEWS MAY 2011  
12

LEAH YAMSHON  
*Clockwise from left: A chef prepares appetizers in one of the train's specialty kitchens. Passengers can enjoy wine tasting and appetizers inside a Pullman lounge car, complete with original art. The Silverado dining car is decorated with authentic western artifacts. First-class dining in the Vista Dome car, one of few built in 1956.*

# *Wine and dine* on an antique train

BY JESSICA LIPSKY

Those looking for a relaxing road trip needn't stock up on granola bars and mountains of maps. The Napa Valley Wine Train, only 40 miles north of the San Ramon Valley, is the perfect day trip for those in need of a little R and R, boozing and cruising.

Established in 1989 by Vincent De Domenico, the Wine Train offers daily lunch and dinner tours between Napa and St. Helena with optional nighttime vineyard tours and special events, including monthly murder mystery dinner theater.

The nine lavishly restored Pullman cars all date between 1915 and 1917 and include plush seating, beautiful wood walls and original artwork. The train also features an exclusive Vista Dome dining car with elevated views of vineyards, as well as the more casual Silverado car, decorated with authentic western artifacts from De Domenico's farm.

While lounging in the lap of early 20th century luxury, passengers can enjoy more than 30 different local wines by the glass or purchase four tastes for \$10. Visitors are also welcome to bring their own wine for a \$15 corkage fee — thrifty folk may rejoice in the fact that screw top bottles are not subject to the fee and should flock to a wine sale.

As you cruise through the countryside, enjoying mustard flowers at this time of year, horses and never-ending rows of grapes, the Napa Valley Wine Train will serve gourmet appetizers and entrees, prepared in one of the train's specialty kitchens.

"All the food that we have is environmentally sound and changes seasonally because the chef

likes to have seasonal fruits and veggies," says Savannah Mattfield, Napa Valley Wine Train marketing assistant. The Wine Train prides itself on being sustainable, buying line-caught fish and humanely raised, hormone-free meats.

On a cool March afternoon, guests enjoyed sage cheddar cheese, hearts of palm, shrimp with tartar sauce and a seaweed salad. A three-course lunch, held in a separate dining car, featured grilled and roasted beef tenderloin, sweet pea raviolis, Achiotte pork tenderloin and a perfectly toasted crème brûlée.

After the feast, guests are invited to stand outside on various platforms to take in the sights and smells of the slow-moving countryside, guess where Francis Ford Coppola's winery is, and try to walk a straight line.

While the three-hour ride might be a little pricey — \$99-\$129 per person, without wine — Mattfield says ridership hasn't gone down during tough economic times. Instead, many Napa locals have opted to take the train themselves.

"The economy hasn't affected us, which is surprising," Mattfield says. "We're very locally based, so this stimulates the local economy. Instead of taking a vacation, residents are taking a staycation."

Once passengers have de-boarded, the Wine Train recycles 80 percent of its waste, using thousands of corks to make shoes, corkboard and flooring. Its engines are also two of five in the United States that run on 100 percent natural gas.

For more information about the Napa Valley Wine Train, visit <http://winetrain.com>. ■



*Napa Valley Wine Train offers unique experience and libation*



FROM [DANVILLEEXPRESS.COM](http://DANVILLEEXPRESS.COM) AND [SANRAMONEXPRESS.COM](http://SANRAMONEXPRESS.COM)



# Ups and downs of a teenager

*Remembering rides on eight roller coasters in three days*

BY JESSICA LIPSKY

*Long ago and not very far away, I was a high school junior and journalist hopeful looking for any excuse to get out of class. As summertime neared, staff at California High School's "The Californian" began preparations for their final issue and I signed up for one of my favorite assignments to date.*

*Together with my senioritis-ridden friend Leah Yamshon, I took three glorious days off school to visit the Bay Area's theme parks, ride roller coasters till I was blue in the face and rate them all. We returned to class with one near-death experience (watch out for buses on Fairgrounds Drive in Vallejo), wicked sunburns and a new hatred for seagulls — much to the annoyance and envy of all our classmates.*

*So sit back, relax and enjoy this minorly edited, speedy trip through the tummy tumbling twists and turns of memory lane — I'm happy to report that all of the coasters are still up and running.*

Who needs a \$5 bottle of water and an ice cream cone the size of a pinky finger? We do!

For those of you who can handle overpriced food and scantily clad soccer moms at Great America in Santa Clara, Vallejo's Six Flags Discovery Kingdom and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, your summer should be full of wonder and intense fun if this handy guide is followed.

## Best of the Bay

### *Flight Deck aka Top Gun (Great America)*

It is such a classic that you have to ride it twice. Despite the natural headache, Top Gun has the best corkscrew-loop interval and keeps you screaming through the entire ride. It is by far the fastest ride in the park, with portions sinking into a nearby swamp, making it feel like your feet will touch the water.





As with all the best coasters, it has a great drop that will accelerate the hearts of first time riders, and keep veterans' anticipations high. As soon as you get back on land, you'll want to run around and jump back in line.

### ***Medusa (Six Flags Discovery Kingdom)***

Probably the best ride in the entire park, this coaster has back-to-back super loops and is the only ride that incorporates corkscrews into its loopage. While it could be faster, it maintains a good speed and covers a large area of the park, maximizing fun potential. It has an amazing, near face-first, initial drop that will have your eyeliner running down your cheeks, making you look like a raccoon. Despite its anti-climactic nature, it seems to be everyone's favorite Marine World ride.



### ***Demon (Great America)***

What appears to be a simple coaster is actually a set of crazy loops and turns, climaxing with a descent into a giant skull. The satanic sounds accompanying your journey into the first tunnel are the icing on the cake.

### ***Invertigo (Great America)***

This looks daunting at first, but it is actually a very smooth ride. Riders sit face-to-face and are propelled backward and forwards through intricate corkscrews and a loop. It keeps a good speed and will have you shaking even after you get off.

### ***The Giant Dipper (Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk)***

Built in 1924, this coaster is a true classic and the best wooden coaster we encountered throughout our trips. Beginning in a pitch-black tunnel, the Giant Dipper puts you through a series of dips rivaling that of many modern coasters. The bumps are enough to make you fly out of your seat, and what more can you expect from an 80-year-old ride?

## **Worst coasters**

### ***Kong (Six Flags Discovery Kingdom)***

By far, the biggest disappointment of

our journey. This ride is deceiving: It looks cool, but lacks in speed and safety and sounds like it is going to fall apart at any minute. But if you enjoy waiting in hour-long lines, this is the ride for you.

### ***Boomerang (Six Flags Discovery Kingdom)***

Although the same design as Invertigo, it lacks intensity and speed. Much smaller, it has very abrupt stops that hurt the head and chest and evoke the need for aspirin. The best part of this ride: While waiting in line, you are covered by shade. No sunburns here.

### ***Psycho Mouse (Great America)***

This ride has two different stories. Leah, normally a very brave person, cried like a 5-year-old girl. She seemed to think that the car would derail and plunge us both to our deaths. Jessica was delighted at Leah's pain, but maintains that the ride is stupid. Come on, you're riding a pink mouse.

There you have it, our comprehensive roller coaster guide. Please buckle your harness. Keep your hands and arms inside all times. "The Californian" is not responsible for any lost or stolen items while in the park. Thank you and enjoy the ride. ■







# TREASURES CLOSE TO HOME

*Local museums make nice outings*

Have a few hours? Visit one of our local museums/historic sites for a stimulating, fun experience. It's hard to believe that they are right in our back yard.

## **Mount Diablo Summit Museum**

Mount Diablo itself is a treasure — a place to camp, hike, meet wildlife and bike (see page 25). The Summit Visitor's Center has displays chronicling the history and ecology of Mt. Diablo State Park including hands-on exhibits about the flora and fauna. Around the corner is the observation deck with telescopes to enjoy views from the Bay to the Sierra. An Interpretive Center is located at the south end of Mitchell Canyon Road in Clayton.

## **Eugene O'Neill's Tao House**

The Eugene O'Neill Historic Site, run by the National Park Service, includes the Tao House, barn and grounds in the west hills where playwright Eugene O'Neill and his wife Carlotta Monterey lived from 1937-44. The site is open Wednesdays through Sundays, with free guided tours at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Access is via a shuttle that leaves from the Museum of the San Ramon Valley. Call 838-0249 for reservations. No reservations are needed on Saturdays; vans leave at 10 a.m., noon and 2 p.m. Call for a large group.

## **Museum of the San Ramon Valley**

The museum, with permanent and changing exhibits and many interesting weekend presentations, is situated inside the restored Southern Pacific train depot, 205 Railroad Ave. in Danville. Hours are 1-4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday; noon-3 p.m. Sunday. Memberships are \$35 for free admittance. Cost for non-members is \$5 per family; \$3 adults; \$1 children; students with ID, \$2.

## **Blackhawk Museum**

Even people who don't especially care for classic cars, go gaga over the shiny classics at the Blackhawk Automotive Museum. Features include a display of 90 cars, an Automotive Research Library and a bookstore. Hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday. Admission is \$10 adults; \$7 seniors and students; free for 6 and under and for active military personnel. Call 736-2277.

## **Forest Home Farms Historic Park**

The Valley's agricultural history is featured at this 16-acre park with barns, ranch equipment and old tractors, at 19953 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon. Its 21 structures include the historic Boone House and the David Glass House.

## **David Glass House**

This home, built in 1877, is open for tours on the second Saturday of every month at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m. Tours of the Glass House and the Boone property are \$8. ■



BY GLENN WOHLTMANN

# The ultimate festival

## *Burning Man: a place of extremes*

Every year at the end of August, parts of the East Bay start to empty out; people go on unexplained, mysterious vacations they may seem reluctant to discuss.

If you don't go, there's a good chance that you know somebody who does, or maybe know someone who knows someone, just a few degrees of separation from what may be the biggest festival in the world: Burning Man.

For some, it's a huge outdoor art show in the Nevada desert. For others, it's a chance to get away from their normal professional lives — 68 percent either have a bachelor's degree or higher — and run wild. Burning Man is rowdy, often bawdy, and for many it's a chance to exhibit behavior that would be totally inappropriate and unacceptable anywhere else. People come from as far away as Europe, the Middle East and Hawaii for the event, and while most are in their 20s and 30s, it's not unusual to encounter a septo- or octogenarian, and there's a kids camp as well.

Karen Vogel, a 1966 graduate of San Ramon Valley High School, attended her first Burning Man last year with her husband, Dan. Both said they were amazed by the community they found.

"I found such a diverse crowd, everything from the young people to people who have been attending for all the years," she said. "Volunteer groups, very, very community-oriented and of course a lot of artsy people."

Nudity, drugs and alcohol abound, although many Californians don't realize that they're subject to Nevada's harsher penalties for marijuana or that driving an art car around the desert (known as the playa) while intoxicated can get them a DUI and an overnight trip to the local jail.

That doesn't mean everyone there drinks or does drugs. There are at least four sober camps for recovering alcoholics and drug addicts at Burning Man and a fair number of people who choose to not partake for other reasons.

SEE **BURNING MAN** ON PAGE 18

*Fireworks and live performances precede the burning of the man, the main event at the weeklong festival in Nevada every year.*







PHOTOS BY  
JERRY BOSAK  
*Top to  
bottom: Bliss  
Dance, one  
of the many  
art pieces  
brought to  
or built on  
site; a baby  
burner; dust  
storms cause  
whiteouts that  
can last for  
hours.*

Even the participants have a hard time explaining what Burning Man is. “It’s so hard,” said Kaley Oldani — known as Phoenix on the playa — a 2005 California High graduate who attends with her father. “There’s something for everyone at Burning Man and it just depends on the kind of person you are. If you’re an artist there’s all kinds of art, there’s fire for people who are into fire art, and there’s the community aspect: You’re in a small little city. You set up camp and get to know your neighbors.”

It may be easier to explain Burning Man, simply referred to as the burn by most burners, by what it isn’t. The Burning Man website explains that it’s not: a pagan event; a modern Woodstock; a hippie festival; based on “The Wicker Man” (a ‘60s-era thriller featuring Edward Woodward); or an apocalyptic anarchist party, although there are some aspects of each at the event.

All that begs the question of what Burning Man actually is. There’s an element of William Golding’s novel “Lord of the Flies,” with its theme of civilization vs. savagery/order vs. chaos and the notion of creating a new type of society. There’s Burning Man’s gift economy: Bartering or selling items isn’t allowed, except for ice and coffee sold by the Burning Man organization itself (although admittedly, there must be some exchange of goods for services when it comes to the buying and selling of illegal substances).

“Just not handling money for an entire week,” said Suzi Grishpul, who graduated from Cal High in 2006. “It’s a really awesome feeling, to just put that aside.”

Contrary to popular myth, Burning Man wasn’t founded when Larry Harvey — the man who is single-handedly responsible for it — burned a statue on a San Francisco beach more than 25 years ago that represented himself, his broken heart or his ex-girlfriend.

Burning man culture was quite different when Harvey and 20 friends torched an eight-foot statue on San Francisco’s Baker Beach in 1986. The fact, it wasn’t called Burning Man until 1988, when the crowd had grown to 200 or so and the man had grown to 30 feet. Trouble from law enforcement forced the burn to the Nevada desert in 1990, and the burn — but not the party that preceded it — moved to Labor Day weekend. By that time, the man was 40 feet tall and the event attracted 800 people.

Harvey has never been afraid of recreating the burn and what it means. According to Burning Man legends about those first years in the Nevada desert, the event included guns and explosives, which are now forbidden. The gift economy, art and the notion of radical independence grew over time, as did the population, which now comes to nearly 50,000 people, making the Burning Man site, Black Rock City, the third largest city in Nevada once a year.

Radical independence was summed up simply by Oldani.

“You’ve got to be smart and take care of yourself,” she said. That means bringing everything needed to survive a week in the desert, where the high altitude means temperatures can top 100 degrees in the daytime, then plummet to the low 40s at night. The ticket price includes admission only.

Water, food, costumes, swag and everything else required to survive must be brought in. Nothing grows on the playa. There are no animals, insects or even plants, and the Burning Man survival guide includes in its lengthy list of “must haves” a mask and goggles for the frequent dust storms and whiteouts that can kick up in minutes and last for hours.

Which brings up the notion of radical interdependence. Participants — which is what attendees are called by the Burning Man organization — who find



themselves lost in a storm walk into the nearest camp, which can provide shelter while the lost help keep the camp from blowing away.

"My first year, I was supposed to meet up with people who were bringing in water, so I didn't bring any myself," said one participant who asked not to be named. "I mentioned it at a camp and within 15 minutes, I had enough water donated to me to last the week."

While some people choose to go nude when it's not too cold, costumes are very much a part of the Burning Man experience, and can range from simple outfits "gifted" by a group that operates the Black Rock Boutique to elaborate garments that can take weeks or even months to prepare.

"I love to do costumes. I love glitter and jewels and color," Oldani said, adding Burning Man "lets me do my creative side."

Theme camps are also a big part of the experience. Groups of every type offer the opportunity to participate in everything from the carnal to the sublime to the bizarre: Strip poker at the Filthy Gentleman's Club (one of the milder carnal experiences available), massage, reiki and yoga at HeeBeeGeeBee Healers and mutilated Barbie dolls at Barbie Death Camp & Wine Bistro.

Jon Ciampi of San Ramon and his wife Darby are part of Sunrise Coffee Camp, which shares "from sunrise until our pots run dry."

"We want to create a community that fosters conversation, to provide people something nice in the morning to greet their day," he explained.

Ciampi said he was taken by Burning Man at his first burn, five years ago, when he encountered the greeters who welcome everyone who enters.

"Just driving up, and you get the biggest hug," he said, adding, "At coffee camp, people just open up to us."

That's just one of the many camps that offer free food or, in many cases, free liquor.

The Vogels, for instance, run a martini bar and lounge called Yoshiwara that features, among other things, pickle martinis — both sweet and dill, according to Karen, who goes by the name Mamasan on the playa. She and Dan — his name is Hayabusa in the desert — are already planning to attend this year. They attended with family, and Karen got a chance to reconnect with some cousins during the course of the burn.

Music never ends at Burning Man, from live rock to DJs spinning everything from old school funk and classic rock to techno and dubstep, a relatively new form of music that incorporates drum and bass beats and reggae-influenced sounds. The survival guide suggests earplugs for people who want to get some sleep.

Art and art grants have become part of Burning Man's prime missions, and a big draw for some.

"It's such a creative area there and I wish I could put forth that creative energy all the time," said Grispul. "When I'm at Burning Man, it's like the world's biggest art galley ... I wish I could be stimulated that much every day in my life."

In addition to the huge art installations on the playa, there are slews of art cars and "mutant vehicles," some of which ferry people around Black Rock City and are popular places to watch the man burn.

There are typically three big burns at Burning Man. On Friday night, there's usually a burn that changes from year to year and is centered on Burning Man's theme for the year. In 2010, for example, the theme was Metropolis, and a large structure resembling a skyline was torched.

SEE **BURNING MAN** ON PAGE 20

## 10 ways to tell if your neighbor's a burner

1. A wistful look in the eyes at certain times of the year, especially at the beginning of August and end of September.
2. An unalterable schedule that requires a week off just before Labor Day.
3. She or he goes on a mysterious camping trip with a bunch of friends in the desert at the same time every year.
4. Your neighbor returns from that camping trip more tired than when he or she left.
5. Sunburn in unusual places.
6. A closet full of unusual clothes that never seem to get worn.
7. Feverish work on unexplained trinkets during the month of August.
8. Uncharacteristic mellowness for most of September.
9. A tendency to give unprovoked hugs before and after the trip.
10. A thick coat of dust on her or his car, body, hair, clothing and camping gear.



An art car, one of many that ferry participants around the desert.



Saturday night brings the main burn, the man, and the design of that structure changes yearly as well. The event begins with drummers and fire spinners as the crowd gathers and moves into a huge fireworks display. The man generally takes some time to light, but when it starts, the structure burns with an intensity that can leave the participants even 50 yards away sweaty and hot.

Sunday night is the temple burn, and all through the week, items are dropped off there to be burned: photos of loved ones, messages from people with issues they're having a hard time letting go.

"The burning of the temple, that's a spiritual thing," Oldani explained. "People write on the walls in messages to their loved ones, they're letting go of stuff."

Oldani said touring the temple during the week, she came across a diary left by another woman.

"She obviously wanted it to burn," Oldani said, adding that parts of the diary brought her to tears. "I knew her but I didn't know her. I felt like I met someone but never knew her ... Seeing the smoke go up, it looked like souls escaping the fire."

Getting people into and out of Black Rock City is a chore. The city lies outside Gerlach, Nev., about three-and-a-half hours outside Reno. The road to Gerlach is a simple two-lane road, with traffic backups that can run for miles, as cars, RVs and trucks loaded with equipment make their way to and from the burn.

Burning Man is a leave-no-trace event. Members of each camp are charged with cleaning up MOOP (Matter Out Of Place), a job that can last for hours.

"It's a pack-in, pack-out event," Oldani explained. "It's such an innovative concept — it's not easy, but people do it."

Both Oldani and Grishpul said they brought something back from the burns they attended.

"Questioning my openness to different types of people," Grishpul said. "I'm pretty easy to get along with but sometimes we build up these walls and that gets totally knocked aside."

"Burning Man is just fun and hedonistic, and that's OK," she continued, adding, "Burning Man is not everything."

Tickets run from \$210 to \$320, depending on when they're bought.

With more than 50,000 people at Black Rock City for the burn, dressed in every kind of outfit imaginable, one question begs to be answered: Are they rebellious or simply conforming in unconformity?

Both, according to Ciampi. Some people go out as a rebellious act, to, in his words, "put their finger up at the world," while others seek out a sense of community.

"There's no sense of pecking order. Everybody's the same and money's taken off the table," Ciampi said. "Where else can you just dress up and go crazy? You get to be anyone you want to be." ■

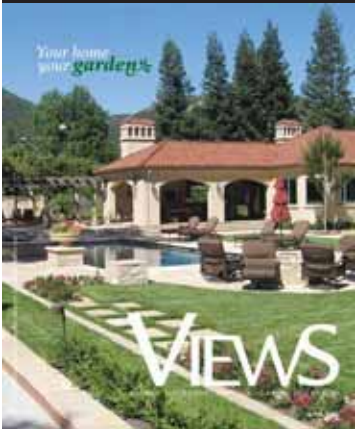
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# From Kites to O'Neill

*Local festivals and more to explore*

If your tastes don't include five hours of driving and desert camping at Burning Man, there's ton of local fun right in our back yard.

- Danville Wine and Chocolate Stroll. While it's not a festival per se, Danville's third annual Wine and Chocolate Stroll is May 12 from 6-9 p.m. An evening of wine tasting, chocolates and, of course, shopping. Businesses will be open late to host some local wines, all accompanied by gourmet chocolates. The jazz band, The Lost Cats, will perform at the corner of Hartz and Prospect and A Positive Spin will play at Danville Chocolates.
- Kick off the summer season with the San Ramon Art and Wind Festival. It's free and is held Memorial Day weekend, May 29-30, in San Ramon Park. This festival features professional kite flying demos on both Sunday and Monday, and a hot air balloon launch on Monday at dawn, along with entertainments, crafts and food.
- The Danville Fine Arts Faire, sponsored by the Danville Area Chamber of Commerce, will celebrate its 20th anniversary June 18-19 with 200 artisans from across the country, new collections and art, from sculptures to ceramics and everything between, including Italian street painters working in chalk on sidewalks. There will also be street corner concerts and, of course, food. Admission is free.
- Danville's 17th annual Hot Summer Nights Hot Rod and Classic Car Shows this year are July 21 and Aug. 18. The event stretches from Faz's restaurant on Hartz Avenue to San Ramon Valley High School and is on many of the side streets as well. See collector cars, hot rods, muscle cars and a turtle named Tank.
- Although the official date hasn't been announced, the annual Alamo Music & Wine Festival usually takes place the second weekend in September at Alamo Plaza. Sponsored by Alamo Rotary, the activities include games for kids, community booths, performances by local schools, and professional entertainment that gets everyone dancing.
- Also in September, a festival that's more highbrow than most: The 12th annual Eugene O'Neill Festival, with a three-week exploration of O'Neill's work, has more than two dozen events.



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# VIEWS

Here are some of the more than 100 locations where you can find Views magazine:

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 Alamo Post Office, 160 Alamo Plaza  
 Bagel Street Café, 124 Alamo Plaza  
 24 Hour Fitness, 140 Alamo Plaza, Ste. A  
 Starbucks, 200 Alamo Plaza  
 Casaxpresso, 3158 Danville Blvd.  
 Alamo Liquors, 3168 Danville Blvd.  
 Creative Learning Ctr, 120 Hemme Ave.

Danville Town Hall, 510 La Gonda Way  
 Bally's Fitness, 101 Town And Country Dr., Ste. A  
 Danville Chamber Of Commerce,  
 117 Town And Country Dr., Ste. E  
 Lotsa Pasta, 171 Hartz Ave.

### DIABLO

Diablo Country Club, 1700 Clubhouse Road  
 Diablo Post Office, 1701 El Nido, Diablo

### SAN RAMON

Anytime Fitness, 9140 Alcosta Blvd.  
 Borders, 120 Sunset Dr.  
 Starbucks, 9150 Alcosta Blvd., Ste A.  
 Starbucks, 500 Market Pl.  
 Fitness 19, 160 Market Pl.  
 Nob Hill Foods, 130 Market Pl.  
 Bagel Street Cafe, 142 Sunset Dr.  
 Peets, 166 Sunset Dr.  
 Levy's Bagels, 2435 San Ramon Valley Blvd.  
 Starbucks, 3110 Crow Canyon Pl., Ste. B  
 Peets, 3132 Crow Canyon Pl., Ste. C  
 Starbucks, 2508 Crow Canyon Pl.  
 City Offices Of San Ramon, 2228 Camino Ramon  
 San Ramon Valley School District, 3280 Crow Canyon Rd.  
 San Ramon Regional Medical Center, 6001 Norris Canyon Rd.  
 Peets, 11000 Bollinger Canyon Rd.  
 Club Sport, 350 Bollinger Canyon Ln.  
 Rolls Cafe Deli, 3211 Crow Canyon Pl., Ste E.  
 San Ramon Chamber Of Commerce, 2410 Camino Ramon  
 Starbucks, 146 Crow Canyon Pl.  
 Sunrise Bagel Cafe, 132 Crow Canyon Pl.  
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 Tassajara Veterinary Clinic, 3436 Camino Tassajara  
 Crunch, 3464 Blackhawk Plaza Circle  
 Pinnacle Fitness, 3464 Blackhawk Plaza Circle  
 Draegers, 4100 Blackhawk Plaza Circle  
 Starbucks, 4000 Blackhawk Plaza Circle  
 Danville Post Office, 2605 Camino Tassajara  
 Starbucks, 11000 Crow Canyon Rd., Ste. E  
 Big Apple Bagels, 9000 Crow Canyon Rd.  
 Blackhawk Veterinary Hospital, 9000 Crow Canyon Rd.  
 Danville Veterinary Hospital, 812 Camino Ramon  
 Bagel Street Cafe, 316 Sycamore Valley Rd. W.  
 Luckys - Rack In Front, 660 San Ramon Valley Blvd.  
 Oak Tree Animal Hospital, 579 San Ramon Valley Blvd.  
 Danville Library, 400 Front St.  
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# 100 YEARS of high school

*SRVHS gala raises \$100,000 for programs*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JESSICA LIPSKY

San Ramon Valley High School celebrated its centennial in style on March 19 at a formal gala and fundraiser inside the Blackhawk Auto Museum.

More than 450 people attended the soirée, which included wine tasting from Acacia and Pacific Rim wineries, a school memorabilia room and dancing to 11-piece cover band, Jamfunkshus. The gala was the first large-scale community event sponsored by the SRVHS Wolf Foundation.

"As we got cut more and more, we had to try to figure out how we would continue to support all our teams," said San Ramon Valley High School Principal Joe Ianora. "I went to the elementary school model where they have one fundraising event a year and

we did (the gala) for all of our programs — band, drama choir, football, lacrosse and our clubs."

More than 2,000 students now attend the high school, and despite recent upgrades to classroom buildings and the addition of the new gym, several facilities and programs, including the pool built in 1954, are in need of support beyond what the San Ramon Valley Unified School District can provide.

Through online, silent and live actions of everything from SRHVS gear to a 5-day stay at a Cabo San Lucas villa, the gala raised over \$100,000 for school programs and the addition of a snack shack and restroom to the school's stadium.

"We are truly amazed at all of the agener-

ous donations we've received for the auction," said Leslie Madden Ward, SRV 100-Year Gala co-chair and class of 1975 alum.

"We really had no idea how much money we would make and with the economy and everything that 's going on, we're really happy that we made so much money."

Auction items included an African Safari for four people, a one-week stay at a private condominium in Nuevo Vallarta, a seven-night stay on Carnelian Bay, Nate Schierholtz World Series items and marketing internships at Comcast.

Forty-five percent of items that were donated by club, program or sport parents will go back to their clubs while the person who won the item could specify which program



Danville business owner Leslie Madden Ward (Westside Salon) and Pat Peed (Buena Vida) enjoy



Guests were seated among the museum's many gorgeous cars.



Leslie Ward and Pat Peed chaired the event.



Guests dance to party band Jamfunkshus.



Owners Dena Barbier and Suzette Cabatu (left) at the gala.



High school students attended the gala and some worked the event.



Danville Mayor Karen Stepper looks over auction items.



Class of 2001 grads Marissa Parry, Katie Murphy and Jerome Pandell.

they wanted their money to go to. The other 10 percent will go back to the Wolf Foundation. Ward said they are still tallying up money and should disperse it in the next few weeks.

In addition to time spent preparing for the gala, Ianora will donate his time and talent to two families who bid a collective \$3,800 for a pizza and beer night with the principal.

"Calzones are my specialty, but I do a wicked deep dish as well," he said. "Having the principal come to your house and cook and clean and serve you is a real fun event."

While he didn't bid on anything, class of 2001 alum Jerome Pandell was happy to spend \$75 on a ticket to support his alma mater.

"I just finished doing fundraising for my five-year college reunion, so I know how important fundraising can be, especially in light of budget cuts," he said.

Pam Winaker has a freshman at SRVHS and said it had been "an awesome experience so far."

"We're happy to support the school because, nowadays, schools can use all the help they can get," she said.

Current San Ramon Valley High leadership and student government students also attended the gala, working the coat check and tallying bids during the live auction.

"I think this is really cool and interesting," said Beverly Wong, a senior who also helped during the gym's grand opening. "I helped

three older people who graduated in 1961. They were so excited to be back, one lady ran down the hallway and said, 'This is my locker!' It was so cute."

Ianora and Ward both said the gala went off without a hitch and more than accomplished the committee's goal of throwing a great party.

"The whole event was just electric. I couldn't take five steps without bumping into someone and hearing about their connection to San Ramon Valley and how much fun they were having," said Ianora. "I think that's what SRV means to so many people, it's a focal point, a connector to the community and we succeeded in doing that Saturday." ■



Attendees enjoy a wine tasting and silent auction.



SRVHS Jazz Vocal Group sings a capella.



# MOTHER'S DAY

## Bring on the blooms

Mother's Day beats out even Valentine's Day for flowers purchased (24 percent vs. 20 percent) although dollar-wise they're neck in neck, at 25 percent. Christmas/Hannukah account for 30 percent of dollars spent on floral arrangements; Easter/Passover does 10 percent of the business; and Thanksgiving comes in at 5 percent.

Those Mother's Day purchases break down as follows:

Fresh flowers	63%
Garden plants	35%
Flowering houseplants	22%
Green houseplants	12%

The gifts are purchased for many women relatives:

Mother	58%
Wife/spouse	28%
Mother-in-law	17%
Other relative	12%
Friend	5%
Girlfriend/SI	2%
Other	6%

Also, 8 percent of the Mother's Day flowers are purchased by people for themselves.

—[www.aboutflowers.com/Data](http://www.aboutflowers.com/Data) collected by Synovate eNation national online poll (2010 and 2009) and IPSOS-Insight FloralTrends Consumer Tracking Study (2005).



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# Get rolling

Local bike rides offer challenges for every skill level

BY GLENN WOHLTANN

With warm weather finally here, it's time to get off that stationary bike at the health club, dust off that road bicycle and head out.

There are tons of local road rides organized by area bike shops, but for those who want something different, there are local events that offer something for all ages and skill levels.

Barbara McKay and Melanie Harbert own Livermore wine and cycle tours, which run Saturdays and Sundays from mid May through mid November. These are short tours averaging about six miles, according to McKay.

"We design our tours based around safety and ease of the ride," she said. "If we have any uphill we try to do those at the beginning of the ride. We have people of all fitness levels that come out during the ride."

The tours include a ride through Livermore wineries, visits to two wineries, and a wine tasting a lunch for \$85 per person. A premium package includes a tasting of state-grown olive oil and balsamic vinegar with a dessert and port pairing, which runs \$150 per person. If you don't have a bike, you can get a Trek bicycle and helmet delivered for an extra \$30.

SEE BIKE TOURS ON PAGE 25



The groups are small. McKay said she tries to keep them to about 16 people and if there are more than 20, an extra guide is added and a support vehicle follows the entire ride.

The bonus here is that the wineries know and love McKay and Harbert, and the riders get to taste the reserves and meet the owners.

Wine drinking and biking may sound a bit dangerous, but McKay said she's never had any problems.

"I've done this 60 times and I taste along with my customers," she said. "You're tasting wine, not drinking it. Once you have a few sips of wine and get on your bike, it dissipates fairly quickly."

She added that if she or Harbert thought a rider had had too much, they'd put the rider in the support vehicle for the remainder of the trip.

For more serious riders, there are large local events that bring together hundreds of riders, with major rides in April and October. The advantage to these rides is that you can find a group of riders about the same ability level and ride with them, or push yourself by riding with those just a bit faster.

The Mount Diablo Challenge takes place in October and is a relatively short ride with a big climb. The event starts Athenian School in Danville and runs just over 11 miles, climbing more than 3,000 feet to the summit of the mountain. About 1,000 riders compete and prizes are awarded for several categories in a ceremony at the summit with food and beverages for some carb reloading. Proceeds go to Save Mount Diablo's land conservation efforts. This year will add a women-only competition.

Register before Sept. 13 and the fee is \$60; it jumps to \$75 on Sept. 14. The registration fee includes a T-shirt, water bottle, sponsor swag bag, mechanical support for riders with problems during the ride and the meal.

Later in October is the Cruella Cycling challenge, which offers century (100-mile) and metric century (100 kilometers or 62 miles). As the name implies, this is a wicked course, with hill climbs totaling 8,500 for

the century riders and 4,000 for the metric century riders. For the totally committed, the ultimate challenge is to tackle the Double Junction, a second trip up to the Junction of Mount Diablo. Century riders who conquer the Double Junction earn a commemorative medal made from recycled bike parts. The ride is Oct. 22 and registration starts June 1, although the fees haven't been released.

April brings two well-known events to the area: the Diablo Century and the Cinderella Classic.

The Diablo Century brings about 750 riders and like the Cruella Challenge, offers century and metric century rides, although the Diablo Century also has a 25-mile route for recreational riders. Both events offer rest stops with food along the way.

The Cinderella Classic is a women-only ride that's 65 miles, just a bit longer than a metric century. There's also a Cinderella Challenge, a full century ride. The classic starts at the Alameda County Fairgrounds and roll through town, then on to Livermore, then north along the base of Mount Diablo to Danville, where it turns south and winds back to the Fairgrounds. The Challenge is for experienced riders only: It includes an additional 23 miles and nearly 2,000 feet in additional climbing, up Patterson Pass, with a six-mile descent into the valley and a return through the Altamont Pass, Carroll, North Flynn and the great descent of South Flynn, rejoining the Classic route 10 miles before the lunch. A portion of the proceeds from each go to support women's organizations.

Even if you haven't had your bike out yet, there's still time to log 1,000 miles before the end of summer and get in shape for the two major fall events. Call your local bike shop to find out about weekly rides, but you can start small, with Bike to Work Day on May 12, which promotes both cycling and reducing your carbon footprint.

Bike to Work events take place throughout the month and include a Team Bike Challenge and Bike Commuter of the Year Awards. Employers are urged to encourage bike riding, especially since physically active employees are more alert, healthier and more productive. ■



## Hello, spring

You don't have to spend a lot of money on home improvements to welcome spring into your home:

- Try a new paint color: It may have been years since you painted — or the walls may all still be factory white from when the house was built. A fresh coat in a warm spring tone can help waken any room from the winter doldrums. Soft pastel colors or vibrant warm hues can really change the look of your house.
- Fabrics help give rooms pop: Shop for inexpensive pillows, or make your own blankets, slip covers and pillows, keeping an eye out for discounts and coupons.
- Spruce up the yard: Give your front and back yards some bright color with beautiful flowers and new shrubs. Consider planting

a container garden on your deck or adding a couple of house plants to the windows of your house to bring a spring-like feeling into your house. Delicious fresh vegetables and herbs can add to your summery menus.

- Let the breezes blow through: Find new blinds or sheer curtains for your windows to help keep the penetrating sun rays out, yet allow the light and airy breezes to filter in through your open windows.

Freshening your house for spring doesn't have to cost a lot of money. Check out the local sales, push up your sleeves with a paint brush or a cleaning rag in hand, and spread the color around to make your house look bright and airy and ready for spring.

—ARA Content



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Z?

## What's really keeping you awake?

What do sleep deprivation and pain have in common? Much more than most people realize. First, many people suffer from both conditions. More than 150 million Americans say they are not getting enough sleep, according to the National Sleep Foundation. And back pain affects more than 80 percent of Americans at some point in their lives; as we grow older, more than 50 percent of us will have chronic pain of some sort, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Second, and more importantly, each condition deeply affects the other. Pain disturbs

sleep, taking away from its restful and restorative properties. And poor sleep actually lowers our threshold for pain, perpetuating the problem cycle.

Lack of sleep can lead to more than just irritability, lethargy and health concerns. In fact, research shows that sleep deprivation is a contributing factor to a wide array of health issues, including weight gain, stress, illness and chronic pain.

Here are six tips to help pain sufferers get a good night's sleep:

1. Watch your medication. Most pain medications significantly alter sleep patterns and may contribute to enhanced pain perception during the day.
2. Stretch. Many pain conditions have proven therapies to naturally reduce pain levels.
3. Get enough quality sleep. Research shows that poor sleep is a risk factor for developing chronic pain later in life. Poor sleep can also make you feel more pain. Making sleep a top priority is essential to manage pain.
4. Re-evaluate your mattress. It's a myth that "firmer is better" for people with back pain. Recent clinical studies conclude that an overly firm mattress can actually contribute to pain. The best mattress is one that supports your unique and ever-changing body.
5. Watch your posture. Your spine is dynamic. Pay attention to your body mechanics both during the waking hours and at night, working to keep a lengthened, straight spine.
6. Avoid poor sleep habits. Certain habits can contribute to poor sleep, such as caffeine and alcohol consumption, vigorous exercise in the evening, and computer and television use in the bedroom. Focus on establishing a nightly sleep routine to help your body relax. Consider adding relaxation techniques, such as deep abdominal breathing, to your routine to help you fall asleep.

—ARA Content

# Where do you take visitors from out of town?

ASKED AT THE LIVERY IN DANVILLE



**KERRI SADIGH**

REALTOR

Definitely to Ghirardelli Square for a hot fudge sundae. Also, shopping at Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek and grabbing either coffee or a bite to eat in downtown Danville. A good day trip for a family with young kids is to go to Gilroy Gardens.



**BARBARA HEINZER**

FRENCH TUTOR

When my son, Jim, got married in Half Moon Bay we entertained out-of-town guests by taking them on a sunset sail of the Bay. Our friends loved going out under the Golden Gate Bridge and around Alcatraz on a beautiful evening. We also have to show them downtown Danville.



**BOB STORKAN**

RETIRED SCHOOL SUPPLIER

When visitors come in we like to take them over to Sausalito. Then we go into the city to Chinatown. We always drive down to Monterey and eat lunch at the lodge at Pebble Beach. We also take guests around to different restaurants in the Danville area.



**LORIE HAVEY**

REGISTERED DIETITIAN

In nice weather we like to take visitors outdoors to places like the Lafayette Reservoir, Mount Diablo, the Iron Horse Trail, and Tilden Park in Berkeley. Another place we love is Tiburon. We take the ferry there. We love to shop, so I don't want to leave out Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek.



**LEE ARBACH**

WHITE WATER RAFTING EQUIPMENT SALESMAN

I like to take visitors to the Las Trampas trails where they can get a good view of the whole valley. Also, we like to take out-of-town friends to Sunol and the Elliston Vineyards there. And we never leave out downtown Danville along Hartz Avenue.

—Compiled by Stan Wharton

Have a Streetwise question? E-mail [editor@danvilleexpress.com](mailto:editor@danvilleexpress.com)

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### Until May 7

#### 'THE FOREIGNER'

Role Players Ensemble Theatre presents "The Foreigner" directed by Chris Ayles, at 8 p.m., Fridays-Saturdays, and at 2 p.m., Sundays, April 15-May 7, at the Village Theatre, 233 Front St., Danville. Tickets are \$15-\$25; to purchase, visit [www.villageheatreshows.com](http://www.villageheatreshows.com) or call 314-3400.

#### 'BEAR IN MIND'

Museum of the San Ramon Valley's current exhibit is "Bear in Mind, The Story of the California Grizzly." On May 1, park ranger and filmmaker Steve Bumgardner talks about "Black Bears in the Sierra." The museum is located at the corner of Railroad and Prospect avenues in downtown Danville. Call 837-3750.

### May 1

#### 'MY MOM'S THE BEST!'

Heller Jewelers presents the "My Mom's the Best!" contest with a \$500 gift certificate for the winner's mom and a \$200 check for the student's classroom. Submit an essay of 100 words or less explaining why your mom is the best mom in the world; three groups include 3rd graders and under; 4th-6th graders; 7th graders and up. Deadline is May 1. Include name, address, phone number; name of school, teacher and grade level; and total number of words. Submit by e-mail to [scott@hellerjewelers.com](mailto:scott@hellerjewelers.com); mail or hand deliver to: Heller Jewelers, 2005 Crow Canyon Place, Suite 168, San Ramon 94583.

#### PLAYWRIGHTS' THEATRE

The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House and the National Park Service are presenting "Where the Cross is Made," a staged reading of three scenes inspired by playwright Eugene O'Neill, 1918, at the Old Barn Theatre at the Tao House. Play is at 3 p.m. Cost is \$25. Call 820-1818 or visit [www.eugeneoneill.org](http://www.eugeneoneill.org).

#### WORKDAY DEVIL MOUNTAIN RUN 10K & 5K

Workday Devil Mountain Run invites competitive runners, walking enthusiasts, families, and local businesses to strut their stuff for a good cause with a 5K, 10K and Kid's Fun Run for children ages 3-8. The event starts at 8 a.m. in downtown Danville. Proceeds benefit the Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland. To register, visit [www.rhodyco.com](http://www.rhodyco.com).

### May 5

#### 29TH ANNUAL SPRING FASHION SHOW

Danville Women's Club will celebrate 100 years of community service with its 29th annual Spring Fashion Show from 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Thursday, May 5, at Crow Canyon Country Club, 711 Silver Lake Dr., Danville. Tickets are \$40. Proceeds benefit Hospice of the East Bay. Call 837-1165.

### May 6

#### 'THAT'S ITALIAN' CONCERT

San Ramon Symphonic Band presents its "That's Italian" concert at 7:30 p.m., Friday, May 6, at the Dougherty Valley Performing Arts Center, 10550 Albion Road, San Ramon. Tickets are \$6 for adults; children under 12 years old and students with an ID are free. Call 973-3343 or visit [www.sanramonperformingarts.com](http://www.sanramonperformingarts.com).

### May 12

#### DANVILLE SPRING WINE AND CHOCOLATE STROLL

Enjoy an evening of chocolate and libations at Danville's Chocolate and Wine Stroll from 6-9 p.m., Thursday, May 12, in downtown Danville. Tickets are \$25, including a commemorative glass, wine



#### 'INTO THE WOODS'

San Ramon Community Theater presents "Into the Woods" at 7:30 p.m., Fridays; 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Saturdays; at 3 p.m., Sundays, May 13-29, at the Front Row Theater, 17011 Bollinger Canyon Road, San Ramon. Tickets are \$16 for adults; \$13 for children and seniors; everyone pays the kids price for the Saturday matinees. Visit [www.sanramonperformingarts.com](http://www.sanramonperformingarts.com).

tasting, chocolate and live entertainment. Call 339-8330 or visit [www.discoverdanvilleca.com](http://www.discoverdanvilleca.com).

### May 14

#### TRAIL MIXER: MADRONE TRAIL/LAS TRAMPAS REGIONAL WILDERNESS

Explore the trails in your own back yard at a Danville's Trail Mixer from 9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, May 14, at the Madrone Trail/Las Trampas Regional Wilderness (meet at the Ringtail Cat Staging Area off Hemme Avenue in Danville). Registration is required; call 314-3400 or visit [www.danvilleceregguide.com](http://www.danvilleceregguide.com) (reference barcode # 22166).

### May 14-July 16

#### REMEMBER THE LADIES

This Museum of the San Ramon Valley special exhibit featuring the Centennial of California woman suffrage will focus on local women's lives and provide programs at the museum each Saturday.

### May 21

#### EIGHTH ANNUAL LIVE WELL RESOURCE FAIR

Come to the eighth annual Live Well Resource Fair from 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, May 21, at the Alcosta Senior Center and Community

Center, 9300 Alcosta Blvd., San Ramon. This event is free and will have resources for "Boomers," seniors and their families. The day begins with a complimentary breakfast by the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District, along with professionals from many businesses distributing valuable information and providing screenings. Call 973-3250.

## May 22

### PLAYWRIGHTS' THEATRE

The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House and the National Park Service are presenting "Gold," a staged reading of this 1921 play by Eugene O'Neill, at the Old Barn Theatre at the Tao House. Play is at 3 p.m. Cost is \$25. Call 820-1818 or visit [www.eugeneoneill.org](http://www.eugeneoneill.org).

## May 23

### SAN RAMON YOUTH SYMPHONY CONCERT

Enjoy music by the San Ramon Youth Symphony in concert at 7 p.m., Monday, May 23, at the Dougherty Valley Performing Arts Center,

10550 Albion Road, San Ramon. Admission is free. Visit [www.sanramonperformingarts.com](http://www.sanramonperformingarts.com).

## May 26

### DOGGIE NIGHT

Dog owners and lovers alike will enjoy the annual Doggie Night from 5-8 p.m., Thursday, May 26, in downtown Danville. Participants will follow a map to Doggie Night businesses for free dog treats and canine couture. The event begins at Molly's Pup-pur-ee at 425 Hartz Ave. For information, visit [www.discoverdanvilleca.com](http://www.discoverdanvilleca.com).

### SENIOR HEALTH FITNESS DAY

Town of Danville and Senior Services will promote physical fitness, good nutrition and preventative care at this year's Senior Health Fitness Day from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Thursday, May 26, at Oak Hill Park, 3005 Stone Valley Road, Danville. The morning begins with a Fitness Walk, breakfast and coffee. The day will continue with cooking and fitness demonstrations, massages, health screenings, putting contests, door prizes, lunch and exhibitors. This event is free. Call 314-3491.

## May 29-30

### SAN RAMON ART AND WIND FESTIVAL

San Ramon Art and Wind Festival blows into town from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday-Monday, May 29-30, in Central Park, 12501 Alcosta Blvd., San Ramon. The festival includes over 200 arts and crafts booths, entertainment on three different stages, kite-flying demos and more. There will be a hot air balloon launch at 6 a.m., Monday, May 30, at the soccer fields in Central Park.

## May 30

### MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

Honor and remember our fallen veterans at Danville's Memorial Day Celebration starting at 10:30 a.m., Monday, May 30, at Oak Hill Park, 3005 Stone Valley Road, Danville. Enjoy live music, entertainment, and a special ceremony including guest speakers and tributes to past and present service members. Bring a picnic lunch and share this patriotic and educational event with the whole family. Visit [www.vnvdv.com](http://www.vnvdv.com).

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