

MAILBOX

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Livermore Airport Brett Wayne Livermore

With regards to Evelyn Murphy's recent letter regarding the Livermore airport, there is nothing in the proposed regulations and minimum standards that have anything to do with creating a "jetport" or "expanding" the airport. That critics of the airport continue to use this loaded, emotive language every time the airport is discussed underscores that they are not interested in an honest discussion of the issues.

The fact is there are already several FBOs and aviation related businesses providing services at the Livermore airport. If the Livermore City Council adopts the proposed rules and standards, all they will be approving are a set of ground rules that would apply to both existing and future aviation related businesses that conduct their business on publicly-owned, city-managed airport property.

One motivation for adopting the new rules is to enable Livermore to relinquish the city-owned, exclusive fuel franchise. Ask yourself this, how many automotive service stations does the city own and operate? The answer is obvious - zero. Then why is Livermore managing full-service fueling at the airport? That answer is steeped in decades-old and antiquated decisions regarding how the airport is managed. Allowing an FBO to provide fueling services while collecting flow-based taxes would enable airport staff to focus on maintaining the airport without exposing the City of Livermore to the significant liabilities of pumping gas.

Opponents of the airport cling to the absurd notion that somehow city-owned fueling gives them leverage over the behavior of pilots and users of the facility. If Livermore started discriminating on who they sold fuel to, they would soon find themselves crosswise with the FAA and worse, expose the City to a huge legal liability should an accident occur as a result of their refusal to sell fuel on the basis of noise.

With respect to the arrival of very light jets - what critics of the airport fail to note is that those jets can already operate from the existing runways at the Livermore airport. No expansion is required to accommodate them. Fortunately, for residents concerned about noise, there is a huge difference between the noise generated by VLJs that weigh less than 10,000 pounds and the large, 85,000 pound Gulfstream's that occasionally arrive at Livermore. Most of the VLJs that have already achieved

FAA certification have noise profiles that are quieter than many of the piston-powered aircraft that currently use the field.

Definition Herbert H Marshall Pleasanton

I usually follow my father's advice and "never get in a squinting contest with a polecat." However; I could not let Janet Linfoot's exhibition of ignorance, published November 30th, go unanswered. She accuses my daughter of using foul language; I suggest she get her mind out of the vulgarities used for the human anatomy and see if she can find a dictionary. They are available at any book store or library. Quoting from my copy of Noah Webster's volume, published in 1834, ASS is defined "a dull, heavy, stupid fellow; a dolt". The current Websters include a similar definition (meaning). For the benefit Miss Linfoot the plural of ASS is ASSES.

Reply to Letter Gail Shearer Livermore

Oh dear! Reading proficiency seems to be declining everywhere, or perhaps there is a deliberate misunderstanding.

In his November 23 Letter to the Editor, Rich Buckley states that in an earlier letter of mine I implied that he represented Cedar Grove Community Church in their purchase of the South Livermore Avenue property and that I was wrong. He is mistaken. Nowhere in my letter did I suggest this. The facts are that Rich Buckley Realty represented the seller (not the buyer) in this transaction. It was his sign that was posted at the site, and it was Mr. Buckley who told me the "buyer was confidential" when I called his office on October 29, 2001, to seek information after "sold" appeared on the sign.

Mr. Buckley correctly states in his letter that "Churches are acceptable uses in any zoning district subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit." However he does not point out that this permit may be disapproved. Four conditions must be met before approval of a conditional use permit in Alameda County. On October 2, the County Planning Commission, after lengthy testimony and deliberation, voted 5 to 2 to deny the church application for a conditional use permit because these four conditions could not be met.

Churches are not "permitted" uses in the Agriculture-Cultivated Agriculture zoning that applies to this property. Instead they require a conditional use permit and, if certain findings are made, an Environmental Impact Report. Wineries and olive mills, for example, are permitted uses and do not require a conditional use permit. Since they conform to the South Livermore Valley Area Plan, they do not have to submit a new Environmental Impact Report, one having been done before the SLVAP was adopted.

The South Livermore Urban Growth Boundary Initiative passed by 82% of the voters in 2000, the South Livermore Valley Area Plan adopted by the

Alameda County Board of Supervisors in 1993, and the Agriculture-Cultivated Agriculture zoning for this property are very specific about encouraging and protecting cultivated agriculture, particularly on the land "classified as having the better quality soil for grapes," and limiting other uses. Finding pretty pictures on the internet of churches in Europe surrounded by vineyards will not change the wording of these planning documents, which apply to this property and legally must be followed.

People like Mr. Buckley have not done the Church a service by asserting that they do not think these planning documents mean what is clearly stated in writing. It would have been in the Church's best interest for their planners to have read these documents for themselves and to have thought about what is actually written before purchasing the property. Any prudent buyer of property who wants to add new uses would check out the general plan and zoning for themselves before making a financial commitment.

Mr. Buckley considers restrictions placed on site coverage, which relates to the size of the church, to be "subjective" and "arbitrary." On the contrary they are clearly articulated in the written ordinances cited above. There is nothing in these ordinances that exempts churches from having to follow the same rules and restrictions as everybody else. Mr. Buckley also does not point out that this is not an empty piece of property. It already contains three houses, which are grandfathered in on a 14 acre parcel, now zoned for one house per 20 acres with 90% of the site set aside for agriculture.

Mr. Buckley uses his own church, Asbury United Methodist, as an example of a church that successfully moved into a rural area. Again the old maxim "Location, location, location!" applies. This church chose a site which, although in the county at the time, was considered "Suburban Residential" in the City of Livermore's General Plan. Because it adjoined other residentially zoned properties on the west, it could be annexed to the city in 1989 and later, when their new sanctuary was built, could be connected to the city sewer system. On the east the Church adjoins the County "Rural Residential" area along Buena Vista Avenue.

This is a quite different location from the piece of property purchased by Cedar Grove Community Church on South Livermore Avenue outside the South Livermore Valley Urban Growth Boundary. It is surrounded on all sides by cultivated agriculture under permanent easement, to which it is adjacent on two and a half sides. Thus it is prevented from being annexed to the City of Livermore or receiving a city sewer connection. The area is classified as "Agriculture/Viticulture" in the Livermore General Plan.

Mr. Buckley is correct in writing that the City of Livermore finds churches "suitable" with a conditional use permit. During the past few years local realtors and the City Planning Staff have enabled numerous churches to

construct large new facilities within the City limits. Contrary to what some of its supporters feel, Cedar Grove Community Church would have encountered the same helpful attitude if it had looked for and found a new larger site within the City limits of Livermore. Generally Environmental Impact Reports have not been required for these new Church facilities, parking has been shared. City services, such as sewerage, are available. We urge the officers of Cedar Grove Community Church to consider seriously some of the alternative sites which have been suggested to their planners.

BART Costs Robert S. Allen Former BART Director Livermore

BART trackway costs about \$12 million/mile at grade in a freeway median or along the former railroad grade. That includes ballasted double track, traction power, train control, ductwork, and fencing/barriers. This figure is based on 2001 figures escalated to 2006.

People who should know better are throwing out the figure of \$100 million/mile, citing the cost of BART to SFO. That line was put in subway (over my strong objection) instead of at grade along SP's abandoned San Bruno branch. As a result, it cost close to \$500 million more than it should have. Subways are fabulously costly, and normally warranted only in a patronage-rich city core.

With a freeway median, little environmental, structural, or earth work is required. The major capital costs in addition to trackway are for land, cars, stations, special trackwork (e.g. crossovers), "implementation," and yards/shops (if really needed).

Having a freeway median or old railroad grade available is the key to getting a low cost BART line. That is why I so strongly oppose ACCMA's eastbound I-580 HOV project. The HOVs should be part of a freeway widening that accommodates both them and a future BART line. The ACCMA project would greatly increase the cost of getting BART to Livermore.

The project would make sense if it were revised to widen I-580 from Hacienda to the future Isabel interchange in Livermore and not block BART in the median to Greenville Road.

What we need now is a better freeway oriented bus link to BART.

Stoneridge Extension George Withers Fire Chief (Retired) Pleasanton

Prior to Christmas I delivered a gift to Huff Drive and then was off to see my mother in Livermore. Huff Drive is located near the Eastern most extension of Stoneridge Drive. After delivering my gift, I return to Stoneridge Drive and looked to the East and saw a Bright Star (OK, so it was only the lights of Livermore a short distance away to the East). But I could not drive toward it,

because the road had not yet been completed. I thought, if only we had 3, or more, Wise Men (or Women) on the City Council who could also see this vision in the East, and realize the urgent need to complete the extension of Stoneridge Drive, and save the rest of our City.

Instead of going east, I turned west on a vacant Stoneridge Drive and proceeded on to a heavily congested Santa Rita Road. I turned south and drove to Valley Ave, which was gridlocked all the way to Stanley Blvd. I continued south on Santa Rita Rd., past Alisal School, and Amador High School, and then turned left onto Stanley Blvd. and continued to the intersection of Stanley & First St. where I again turned left and finally headed toward Livermore. As I approached the intersection of Valley/Bernal and Stanley Blvd. I once again encountered gridlock traffic, where I joined up with the nightly caravan heading toward that Star in the East. We did proceed at a Camel's Pace!

Holiday Spirit Angelica Norman-Beltran Livermore

My name is Angelica. I have lived here in Livermore my whole life. I am writing to you because I thought you should know of a very thoughtful little boy who lives here in our town. I'm not sure of his name but, he has shown me that the Holiday Spirit is not fleeting.

These last few Christmas seasons it seems as though more and more people are fighting about religious beliefs, being offended when their place of work at puts up Christmas tree or anything that is indifferent to their spiritual beliefs during this holiday time of year. It seems as though we are all forgetting what the holiday spirit is all about. Last night around 6:30 pm, my grandfather answered the door to see a young boy of maybe 9 or 10 at our door. He said that he wanted to sing us a Christmas song, we stood there and listened to him sing "Jingle Bells."

After he was done singing I asked if there was any specific reason he was going around and caroling that night to houses. He said that he "just felt like it." He wasn't looking for donations, food or anything, he just wanted to go to people's houses and sing to them, putting smiles on their faces.

I thought to myself, that with all that is going on in our lives as Americans and all that's happening around the world this little boy, with just a song and his holiday joy, made me and my family's night by just singing to us. I had to stop and think. We all, no matter our spiritual beliefs, used to come together during this time of year and just be happy, hospitable and in the holiday spirit. Now it seems as though we are slowly losing sight of what the holiday season is about. It's the idea of putting a smile on someone's face just because you want to, being kind to others, and this little boy restored my faith in the holiday spirit.

Tips On How to Deal With Skunks

Alameda County Vector Control has been receiving a lot of calls from the Springtown area about skunks.

Daniel Wilson, community outreach coordinator, offers the following advice

Skunks are opportunistic foragers, and will eat almost anything. In neighborhoods, pet food is a significant component in their diet, and are not often deterred from a meal by dogs, other animals, or people. Skunks also dig for grubs in yards; lawns, meridian strips of grass, golf courses, and parks. A well-watered grassy area will be sites where larval insects develop that attract insectivores such as skunks. They use their nose to sniff out the larva and they dig them up and eat them. Reduction in watering, or turf treatment can reduce this food supply.

The stuff in skunk spray that stinks is a series of odorous compounds called thiols. Skunk spray also contains compounds called thioacetates, which slowly break down into thiols. When a skunk sprays a dog, thioacetates in the spray (and absorbed into the skin of the dog) break down and replace the old thiols, resulting in the skunk odor reappearing on the dog. Water seems to rapidly speed the process of thioacetates breaking down into thiols, but part of the release seems to be time-sensitive. Getting a dog wet repeatedly over several days will not "drain off" all the thioacetates.

To help discourage skunks do the following:

- Less watering of lawns, or turf treatment can reduce grub populations, resulting in less food for skunks and raccoons.

- Don't leave pet food out at night. Skunks set up a nightly foraging route and will repeatedly visit areas where they find food

Vector Control takes many wildlife calls and will render advice to help reduce skunk, and wildlife nuisances, and advise on pest-proofing, as well as environmental modification. Skunks are poor climbers; so securing a fence line will help keep skunks out of the yard. This advice often solves the problem. Trapping is not a favored approach because it does not get at the source of the problem: food.

In times past animal control agencies used to accept wildlife brought in by the public. Do not assume animal control will help if you trap an animal; always call animal control prior to beginning a trapping project. There is a tendency to think that you just need to re-locate the offensive animal. However, California Fish and Game regulations prohibit the relocation of wildlife more than a couple miles away. At that distance they are likely to return. Trapped animals must be euthanized.

There are many wildlife specialty pest control companies that will trap and try to help you resolve your wildlife problem, but they can be expensive \$100.00 and up.

One good reason for calling vector control is that there may be other neighbors calling, and investigation may turn up a core reason for many skunks or raccoons. Over a two-year period, one neighbor feeding skunks, or raccoons can result in very large skunk populations. Wilson's phone number is (510) 567-6826.

OBITUARIES

Shirley L. O'Callaghan

Shirley L. O'Callaghan died December 7, 2006 in Pleasanton. She was 79.

The native of Des Moines, Iowa had lived in Dublin for 5 years. Prior to that she had lived in Castro Valley for 20 years. She was a homemaker.

She is survived by her sons David O'Callaghan of San Leandro, Michael O'Callaghan of Pleasanton and Rourke O'Callaghan of Livermore; a sister, Sandra Fitzsimmons of California, seven grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Private services are planned. Arrangements by Graham-Hitch Mortuary.

Dorothy Virginia Innes

Dorothy Virginia Innes died December 13, 2006 at her home in Pleasanton. She was 84.

She was a native of Manilla, Philippine Islands. Virginia worked as a public health nurse for Alameda and Sacramento counties for 40 years and was school nurse at Marilyn Avenue Elementary School in Livermore. She also volunteered at Valley Memorial Hospital in Livermore. Virginia liked going on senior trips with the Livermore Area

Recreation and Park District, and loved music, art and reading.

She is survived by her children Joni Hirth and her husband Gregory Hirth of Pleasanton, Laura Fennell of Los Altos and Gerald R. Innes, Jr. and his wife Melodie of Ventura, and seven grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband Gerald Richard Innes in 1985.

Private services will be held. Memorial contributions may be made to Hope Hospice, 6500 Dublin Blvd., Suite 100, Dublin, CA 94568 or Alzheimer's Association, 2065 W. El Camino Real, Suite C, Mountain View, CA 94040.

Arrangements by Callaghan Mortuary.

Edward Eugene Heise

Edward Eugene Heise died December 14, 2006 in Livermore. He was 89.

He was born in Wakarusa, Kansas and came to California in the early 1940s settling in Los Angeles. He worked in motion picture studios before finding out he was a woodworking artist. He worked as a carpenter for 55 years and was a member of Carpenter's Union Local #1622. When he first came to Livermore, he

worked with Jensen Construction and Sunset Homes, building homes around Livermore. He loved to travel and visited several foreign countries. He spent ten years in retirement in Palm Springs and ten years in Modesto. He loved to watch football and golf. He always had a ready friendly smile and will be greatly missed.

He is survived by his wife, Irene Heise of Livermore, son and daughter-in-law Tom and Jackie Heise of Livermore, daughter and son-in-law Marie and George Bolis of Virginia Beach, VA, grandsons and spouses, Tom and Jean Heise, Don and Sandra Heise, Ron and Caroline Heise and George Bolis Jr., granddaughters Jackie Bolis and Christina Hart and seven great grandchildren.

Mass of the Resurrection was celebrated December 19 at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Livermore. Burial was at St. Michael's Cemetery in Livermore.

Arrangements by Callaghan Mortuary.

Richard "Red" Winters

Long time Livermore resi-

dent, Richard "Red" Winters passed away at his home on December 12, 2006. He was 65.

He was born in Grand Rapids, MI. He was a retired employee of Automotive Engineering in Oakland and a 35 year member of the East Bay Automotive Machinist Union. Red enjoyed collecting, photography and Sprint car racing. He was also a NASCAR fan. He loved his pet cats, Jackie, Big Red, Meatball, Bonnie and Beebus. His two grandchildren held a special place in his life. He was a devoted and loving grandfather.

He is survived by his wife of 42 years, Dianne Winters and by his children Richard Winters and wife Michelle of Livermore and Elizabeth Masoodian and husband Bobby of Patterson. Also surviving are his brother Donald Winters and his wife Marilyn of Redlands, nephew Dana Winters and wife Melanie of Colorado, nieces Julie Rakestraw of Reno, Linda Miller of Santa Rosa and nephew Don Phillips of Roseville and his grandchildren, Savannah Winters and Donovan Winters of Livermore.

Funeral services were held December 18 in Livermore. Burial was at St. Michael's Cem-

etry in Livermore.

Donations may be made to Hope Hospice or to the American Diabetes Association.

Arrangements by the Wilson Family Funeral Chapel.

Ka'rin Amerine-Oren

Ka'rin Amerine-Oren died December 14, 2006 in Vallejo. She was 44.

She was born in Oakland and grew up in Dublin. For the past 12 years, she lived in Solano County. She was a workers compensation claims examiner. Her main interests were her family, friends and being together. She was known for her love for God.

She is survived by daughters, Linda Churchill of Sacramento, Abby Amerine-Oren of Vacaville, Lucy Bush of Fairfield and Izzy Amerine-Markus of Sacramento, her father, Phillip Martinez Jr. of Dublin and a brother Phillip Martinez, II of Dublin, as well as two grandchildren.

Funeral services were held December 20 in Livermore.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society.

Arrangements by Callaghan Mortuary.

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