

County Fair Manager Will Lead State Fair

Rick Pickering, who has managed the Alameda County Fair in Pleasanton for the past 14 years, will have a new job on Dec. 28 -- manager of the California State Fair.

Pickering said that he is looking forward to the challenge of helping the state fair, known as Cal Expo, rise again in attendance.

The state fair reported more than 1 million in attendance at a peak about 10 years ago, said Pickering. That number has declined steadily to 736,000 in 2011, according to Venues Today, a publication devoted to coverage of the sports and entertainment industry's live locations.

Cal Expo attendance declined because of tougher economic times in the Sacramento area.

Pickering will replace Norb Bartosik, who is retiring. He will face a new set of circumstances at Cal Expo. The county fair is a non-profit, and has paid its own way for many years, including the capital improvements to facilities. The fair is run by directors from throughout the county, who hire the general manager.

Cal Expo is owned by the state, so state money is used, although the objective is for the fair to be self-supporting, said Pickering. The governor appoints the board of directors.

Pickering said that his proudest achievements at the county fair have been "so many things we have done so very well to become the fastest growing fair in North America in the past



Photo - Doug Jorgensen

Friends and family gathered to welcome home Marine Lance Corporal Anthony Fernandes (AJ) of Livermore. He is returning from deployment in Afghanistan. AJ serves with the HMLA-469 Helicopter Squadron, Marine Air Group 39, 3rd Marine Air Wing. The ceremony was hosted by the Livermore Military Families organization. He was met at a downtown business, then escorted to his home.

California Utilities Partner with Lawrence Livermore to Improve State's Energy Grid

California utilities will use the advanced technologies and expertise of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to improve the efficiency, security and safety of the state's utility systems under an agreement approved last Thursday by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The agreement will provide up to \$150 million in funding over five years.

The CPUC approved funding for a five-year research and development agreement between Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Southern California Edison Company, San Diego Gas and Electric Company, and Lawrence Livermore (LLNL). The grant will provide the utilities with access to LLNL technological capabilities, such as supercomputing, and related

domain expertise in engineering and applied science. The collaborative project will tap LLNL expertise to develop new tools and techniques to address challenges California faces as it implements its clean energy policy agenda.

Called California Energy Systems for the 21st Century (CES-21), the initiative is expected to yield benefits including: creation of the

tools needed by California to achieve aggressive renewable energy and greenhouse gas goals; application of the country's most sophisticated cyber security technology to the state's energy grid, which relies increasingly on digital systems; planning for widespread deployment of electric transportation; and helping to build a smarter energy system that will ac-

(See ENERGY GRID, page 4)

Axis Growing to Meet The Need

2012 was a significant year at Axis Community Health, with more people using services than ever before. Axis provided 38,000 medical visits; 7,000 mental health visits for children, adults and families; 4,800 teen drug and alcohol visits; 22,000 adult drug and alcohol visits; and 36,000 WIC nutrition visits.

"Each month, 300 new medical patients came to Axis," said Sue Compton, Axis CEO. "To meet this need, we expanded evening and weekend hours. In fact, the need for affordable primary medical care is so acute, particularly for low-income and uninsured Tri-Valley residents, that we've begun planning for an additional clinic set to open in 2014, which will double our service capacity."

Axis purchased a building at 5925 W. Las Positas Blvd. in Hacienda Business Park. When renovated it will include 28 exam rooms, 8 mental health counseling rooms, a pharmacy and other services. The overall project cost is \$9 million. The new facility will significantly impact healthcare in the Tri-Valley. More people will be able to access primary and preventive care, resulting in better health outcomes. When people

(See AXIS, page 12)

"Pretty much the first thing she said to me was, 'Hey, I like your paintings. How do you think we can use your art to help kids in West Africa?'" said Muldoon, of meeting More Than Me founder Katie Meyler.

The non-profit organization, for which Muldoon has since served as a team member, garnered national headlines earlier this month when it was awarded the Chase American Giving Awards \$1,000,000 grant.

With a mission of getting young Liberian girls off the street and into school in one of the world's most dangerous slums, the organization offers education and opportunity in place of exploitation and poverty.

"I was surprised by how incredibly small, grassroots and volunteer-driven the organization is compared with how much they accomplish," said Muldoon. "Everything major that we've been able to do so far has been by the grace of good people volunteering their time and skills. It's going to be very interesting to see what will happen now that we have some money to work with."

Hosted by Joel McHale, the American Giving Awards aired on NBC December 8th. It is the first-ever televised celebrity tribute to recognize community heroes. A total of \$2 million was granted to five charitable organizations voted on by Chase customers and fans of "Chase Community Giving" on Facebook. The organization with the most votes received the largest grant of \$1 million.

"We were one of the smaller organizations to

zila, the Netherlands, South Africa and the US rallying their friends and family via email, to Jada Pinkett Smith tweeting and Facebooking her fans - is what helped push us over the edge to win this grant."

Added mom Martie Muldoon, "We never dreamed that More Than Me would be a big winner. We thought it was great that they were recognized as a top charity, and amazing when Maggie said they were a finalist. I wasn't able to watch the program, but Maggie texted us as it happened. I really didn't believe it till I could get home and look online."

This fall, More Than Me launched an awareness campaign that highlighted its cause by inviting people to write, "I am Abigail" on their foreheads and post it on Facebook.

"Abigail's story is the story of many of the young women we work with," said Muldoon. As an orphan, Abigail was forced into prostitution at 10 years old, having no other means to earn money necessary to buy food or a glass of water.

In a Facebook video, Meyler said, "This is a poverty issue. This is a women and girls' issue. It's an injustice issue. This is a health issue. But more than anything, this is a people issue. Abigail is a person, and she could be you."

The Chase grant will help fund the More Than Me Academy, a girls' center that broke ground in October. It is scheduled to open in 2013.

"The money will allow us to greatly increase the number of students we're able to give scholarships to, and allow us to attract the best teachers in the country," said Muldoon, who spent last summer in West Point,

AXIS

(continued from page one)



Dr. Divya Raj, Axis is the new Axis Medical

receive regular preventive care, they remain healthier and are able to avoid costly emergency room usage and hospitalizations, noted Compton.

Axis reported many other accomplishments this year. It became the first community health center in Alameda County to go live with Electronic Health Records (EHR). Medical providers now access and input information right in the exam room. EHR has enormous benefits for patients, giving doctors quicker access to critical medical information, facilitating laboratory tests, and expediting pharmacy orders.

In October, Dr. Divya Raj became Axis's new Medical Director bringing a background of knowledge in primary care delivery and clinic management. She is taking Axis to the next level in maximizing the new EHR system for clinical management.

Two transformative projects were launched: the Patient Experience Action Community (PEAC) and Integrated Behavioral Health.

Axis is one of only eight community health centers in California selected for PEAC, an opportunity to implement innovations to benefit patients. The new Integrated Behavioral Health department brings together medical and mental health providers for patient treatment, a holistic approach resulting in better health outcomes.

Axis also marked its 40th anniversary as a provider of affordable, quality health services for Tri-Valley residents. What began as a small clinic for children today has grown to an organization with a staff of 147 and five service sites that offer medical, behavioral health, and WIC nutrition services for more than 14,000 Tri-Valley residents.

"We are truly grateful for all the support we receive from community members who care about our work," said Compton. "Without our committed board members and caring donors, we would not be able to keep pace with the needs in our community."

In 2013, all indicators are that Axis will be serving more people, according to Compton. This is due to three factors: the growing population in the Tri-Valley (a 22% increase in 10 years); the economic downturn that has left more Tri-Valley

families in need of access to affordable, quality primary care; and changes in the healthcare delivery system. "We're here and we'll be ready," says Compton.

For information about services, call 925-462-1755 or visit www.axishealth.com.

The Coolest Place in Livermore



CASBAH CAFÉ is one of Livermore's most authentic Middle Eastern eateries. This Mediterranean kitchen churns out classic dishes, including lamb chops, lamb shank, lamb gyros, falafel, and a host of other innovative home-style specialties. Try the Caspian salmon smothered in cumin and tarragon, or the fesenjan chicken, sautéed breast meat with pomegranate sauce and crushed walnuts. And you can't go wrong with the ever-popular kebobs: the Persian (koobideh) features spices so delicious, you'll be transported to another continent. Vegetarian/vegan and gluten free offerings of eggplant and soy meatballs round out a very inviting menu.

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2012

(continued from page 10)

leader in the field of rapid human DNA identification, acquired SV Corp, a wholly owned subsidiary of GE Healthcare Bio-Sciences.

Over 100 Hope Hospice volunteers and staff members were on hand for the 31st annual recognition dinner. During the annual event, Irene Philips, Rose Stack, Diane Stein, and Judy Rosgnien were rec-

