

Helping Others

By Janet Armantrout | Posted: Friday, November 7, 2014 12:00 am

Poverty and homelessness are issues facing local communities.

Last week, The Hidden Poverty of the Tri-Valley Lunch brought together representatives from Kaiser Permanente, Hacienda Helping Hands, the East Bay Community Foundation, and the East Bay Leadership Council, community services agencies and city and local businesses leaders. They met to address the issue of suburban poverty in the Tri-Valley.

Organizers aim to find innovative solutions to lift struggling residents out of poverty and to increase donors and volunteers for the local nonprofits that are often a first stop for those facing challenging times.

Some startling statistics were revealed at the lunch, such as the recent recession led to a 53% increase in the number of individuals in poverty while funding for safety net services decreased. The rate of poverty in Pleasanton is 8.3%; in Livermore it is 7.5%. No numbers were provided for Dublin. On average, the suburban poor spend 27% of their income on transportation and 32% on housing, leaving little for anything else.

In addition to poverty, efforts are underway to help deal with those who are homeless or on the verge of becoming homeless.

Abode Services, a nonprofit, entered into a partnership with the City of Livermore and its police department to increase the agency's services in street outreach. Agency staff members engage people who are chronically homeless and connect them with permanent housing and services.

The Livermore City Council approved establishing a committee to look at solutions to the issue of homelessness. The council also okayed a survey that will provide information regarding how many people are homeless in Livermore and the factors that contributed to their situation.

The information gathered by the survey will be used to develop an action plan. Other cities, as well as regional agencies, will be invited to participate in the conversation.

Both poverty and homelessness are daunting issues. It will take everyone working together to come up with viable solutions.