



July 2026 Newsletter

Dear Sunflower Hill Friends,

July is **Disability Pride Month**! We celebrate disability as a beautiful, powerful part of human diversity. Sunflower Hill proudly fosters inclusive spaces for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), where every person's strengths shine and every individual is valued.

Last month, a group from Sunflower Hill joined friends from Tri-Valley REACH for a fun and joy-filled day at the Alameda County Fair. Everyone had a fantastic time exploring the grounds together and soaking in the festive atmosphere. We're incredibly thankful to **Supervisor David Haubert** for generously providing free tickets, making this special outing possible for our residents and participants.

Residents enjoyed a memorable afternoon thanks to the **Dublin Leprechauns Baseball Team** and **Guy Houston**, who generously hosted a hands-on baseball clinic. The event brought together great energy, teamwork, and plenty of smiles as participants learned foundational baseball skills, including throwing and catching. Join us for **Sunflower Hill Day** at the Dublin Leprechauns game on Sunday, July 26th!

With Gratitude,
The Sunflower Hill Team



Remembering Former Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty



Top left: Scott Haggerty at the 2015 Sunflower Hill Garden Ribbon Cutting
 Top right (L to R): John Marchand, Susan Houghton, Scott Haggerty, Kathy Narum
 Bottom (L to R): Lynn Monica, Scott Haggerty, Christina Bogert

Over the Fourth of July weekend, we were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of former Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty. At just 68 years old, it is a heartbreaking loss for his family, friends, and our entire community.

There are moments in the life of every nonprofit when someone steps forward and says, "I believe in you." For Sunflower Hill, Scott was one of the first people to do so.

Scott stood with us at the groundbreaking of our Garden at Hagemann Ranch in Livermore in 2015, and two years later he surprised us with a transformational \$500,000 gift that helped launch the next chapter of our journey. His belief in a young nonprofit with a bold vision gave us the momentum to pursue our residential communities and expand our impact throughout the Tri-Valley. Quite simply, Sunflower Hill would not be where it is today without his faith in our mission.

Even after retiring and moving to Tennessee, Scott remained a proud supporter, joining us again at our 2023 gala. His generosity was never just about funding—it was about believing in people and the power of public/private partnerships.

Like the sunflowers that symbolize hope, resilience, and possibility, Scott helped us grow. His kindness, leadership, and belief in our mission will continue to bloom in the lives we touch every day.

Scott, thank you for believing in us from the very beginning. We will always be grateful, and we will never forget the difference you made. We send our condolences to his family and all the lives he touched.

Susan Houghton, Founder

Gala Featured Speaker: John Lengyel



We are honored to welcome John Lengyel as the featured speaker at our [Roll Out the Red Carpet Gala](#) on **Saturday, October 3** at Castlewood Country Club in Pleasanton!

As a recent board member, John's connection to Sunflower Hill is **deeply personal**—rooted in the remarkable growth he witnessed in **his daughter, Becca**, through our community garden and virtual classes during the pandemic. Be there with us to hear John's powerful journey firsthand.

Celebrate, connect, and make a lasting impact while supporting Sunflower Hill's programs and residential communities. Don't miss this unforgettable evening!

Buy Gala Tickets!

[Garden Explorers Summer Camp](#)



Last chance to register for Garden Explorers Summer Camp!

Our special day camp is designed for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), ages 13 and up.

Monday-Friday, July 13-17

9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Sunflower Hill Garden

455 Olivina Ave, Livermore

Last day to register is today, July 6!

Regional Center of the East Bay clients welcome.

Register for Camp Today!

Community Support



Our heartfelt thanks go out to the incredible partners who continue to uplift Sunflower Hill and strengthen the programs that serve our community.

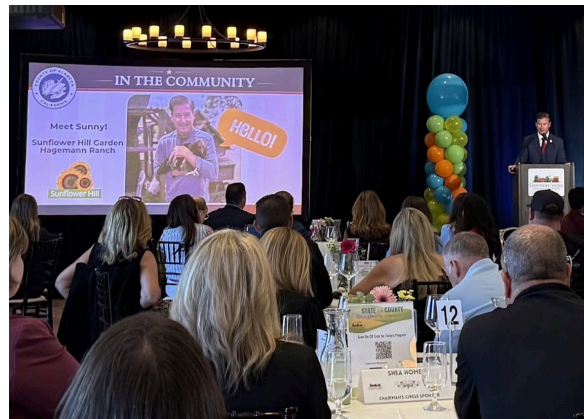
Kiwanis Club of San Ramon Valley — Thank you for your generous donation providing our Garden Explorers Summer Camp participants with sun hats and a special visit from the Lindsay Wildlife Museum. Your support helps create joyful, hands-on learning experiences for our campers.

Las Positas College & Tri-Valley Nonprofit Alliance — We're grateful to be one of the beneficiaries of the Superhero Run and had an absolute blast participating. Your partnership energizes our mission and brings the community together in such meaningful ways.

Chicken Parents



Livermore Mayor Marchand

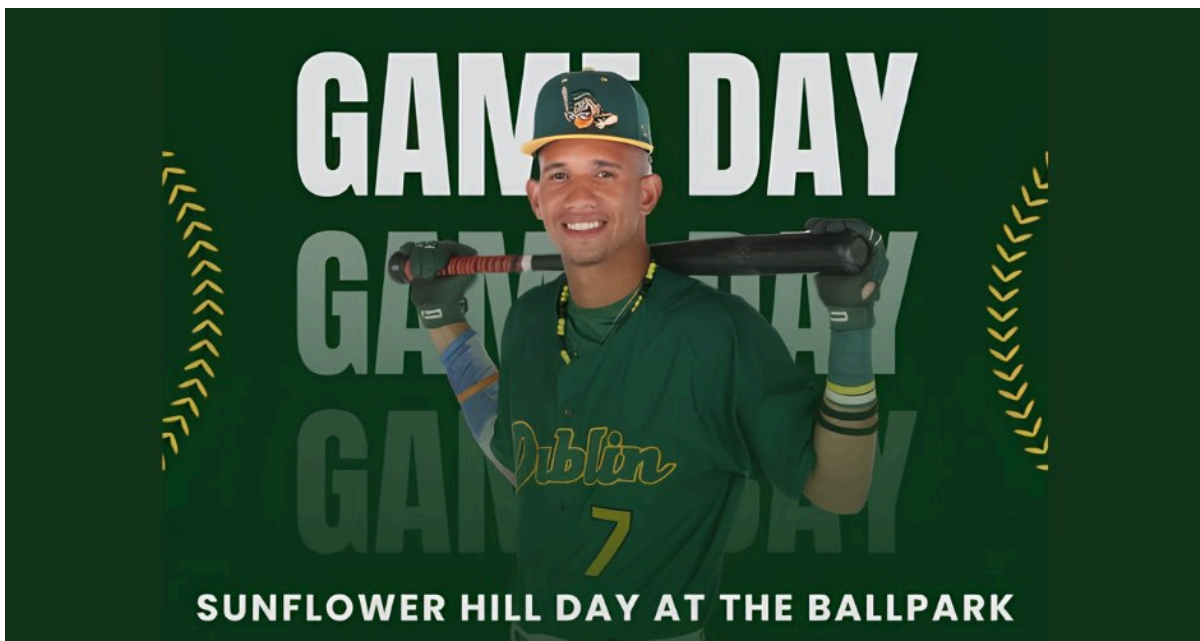


Alameda County Supervisor Haubert

We were delighted to hear Annie Yorkley and Sunny receive shout-outs during both the State of the City and State of the County addresses. **Livermore Mayor John Marchand** highlighted Annie Yorkley, and **Alameda County Supervisor David Haubert** recognized Sunny — a fun nod to the joy our chickens bring to the community.

A heartfelt thank-you to Mayor Marchand, Supervisor Haubert, and all of our wonderful chicken parents for supporting the Sunflower Hill flock and helping us create inclusive, engaging spaces for adults with I/DD.

Sunflower Hill Day at the Dublin Leprechauns Game



Join us for **Sunflower Hill Day** at the **Dublin Leprechauns game** on Sunday, July 26 for a fun-filled evening of baseball and community!

Sunday, July 26 at 2:00 PM
Fallon Field
2605 Central Parkway, Dublin

Individuals with I/DD may request complimentary tickets by emailing Annie at annie@sunflowerhill.org. Support staff and caregivers will need to purchase their own ticket (\$13 each).

Please check your calendar and request a ticket only if you can commit to attending. Tickets **must be picked up at Irby Ranch in Pleasanton** during the week prior to the game.

Come cheer on the Leprechauns, connect with friends, and enjoy a summer night at the ballpark!

Buy Leprechauns Game Tickets

Garden News



It's officially summer, and the garden is bursting with abundance. Stone fruits like nectarines and peaches are coming off the trees, tomatoes are beginning to blush red, and eggplants are setting fruit. Our second round of sunflowers is starting to bloom, and the new thornless blackberry plants are already producing.

A huge thank-you to the local Eagle Scout who built our new three-tiered raised beds, creating more accessible garden space. And gratitude to the Danville San Ramon Rotary for weatherproofing the benches they crafted last year and helping level and arrange pavers behind our harvest station.

We're gearing up for summer camp and excited to welcome campers into the vibrant, colorful garden.

Community Member Spotlight

COMMUNITY MEMBER *Spotlight*

**EVAN
RUTTER**

Program
Participant



Evan is 35 years old and has lived in the Tri-Valley since 2001. He lives with his mother, father, and dog, Shadow. He lived in Michigan and Massachusetts before settling in Pleasanton. His challenges include mild intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder with high levels of anxiety and obsessive thoughts. When stressed, Evan retreats into his head rather than acting out. His withdrawal has made recognizing that he has a problem more difficult. Most people find Evan easy to get along with, cooperative, and kind. A structured environment and a busy schedule help mitigate his anxiety and obsessive thoughts. He enjoys the company of other people and is very inquisitive.

Evan worked for over six years as a courtesy clerk at Safeway. Currently, he attends a day program twice a week (Futures Explored, GO Group). He also participates in sports (track, tennis, golf, softball, floor hockey, and basketball) through Special Olympics of Northern California (SONC) and Recreational Activities for the Developmentally Disabled (RADD) through the City of Pleasanton. Evan loves movies, reading, Japanese anime, history, travel, and learning about the rest of the world.

He enjoys activities at Sunflower Hill (exercise class, cooking classes, social club, and the garden and garden camp). While not a resident, participating in Sunflower Hill programs has improved Evan's life, making him more confident, willing to expand his horizons, and more understanding and empathetic toward the challenges faced by others.

We are so grateful that Sunflower Hill opens their activities to nonresidents. The structure and opportunities for socialization are invaluable to folks like Evan, who otherwise might be more isolated. The staff at Sunflower Hill and ILS/VIP are incredible and have been very helpful and flexible in meeting Evan's needs.

We are fortunate that organizations such as Sunflower Hill, Futures Explored, Special Olympics, REACH, and RADD exist in the Tri-Valley to support individuals like Evan, who benefit immensely from them.

Evan's parents, Ed and Tammy Rutter

Outstanding Advocacy Award

2026 Bettie Hamilton Award for Outstanding Advocacy



Sunflower Hill Founder Susan Houghton with Las Trampas Executive Director Daniel Hogue

We are thrilled to share that Sunflower Hill Founder **Susan Houghton** has been honored with the **2026 Bettie Hamilton Award for Outstanding Advocacy** by the Alameda County Developmental Disabilities Council.

This award recognizes not only Susan's vision in creating affordable, inclusive housing opportunities, but also her powerful advocacy — including her leadership last year to secure \$500,000 in Measure W funding to support individuals with I/DD experiencing food insecurity.

We extend our sincere gratitude to **Daniel Hogue, Executive Director at Las Trampas** for the nomination. Please join us in congratulating Susan on this well-deserved honor!

[Irby Ranch Activities](#)



Featured Upcoming Activities:

- Exceptional Needs Registry Presentation**
Wednesday, July 8, 3:00-4:00 PM
 The Pleasanton Police will be at Irby Ranch giving a presentation about their Exceptional Needs Registry. The ENR serves as a valuable resource for them to support community members with I/DD. This tool grants officers swift access to vital information, enabling them to provide improved assistance in various situations. This is open to anyone and we encourage parents to come and ask questions.

- Sunflower Hill Board Game Night with Roll for Inclusion**
Friday, July 10, 5:30-7:30 PM
 Join us for a **FREE** board game night at Sunflower Hill Irby Ranch, led by Roll for Inclusion and made possible by a grant from **Stanford Health Care Tri-Valley**.

Participants **ages 14+ of all abilities, neurodiverse and neurotypical**, are welcome to join!

Enjoy a variety of adapted board games in a fun and inclusive environment. Light snacks and refreshments will be provided.

Sign up for this event and future Roll for Inclusion board game nights [HERE](#).

- Dublin Leprechaun Baseball Game**
July 26th at 2:00 PM
 Join us for Sunflower Hill Day at the Dublin Leprechauns game for a fun-filled evening of baseball and community!

Register for Irby Ranch Activities

[Donate to Sunflower Hill](#)