

= Amador Valley High School =

Amador Valley High School is a public high school in Pleasanton , California , United States , a city east of Oakland . The school was founded as Amador Valley Joint Union High School ( AVJUHS ) , which graduated its first class in 1923 . The school has been named a California Distinguished School , a National School of Character , and a National Blue Ribbon School . Amador Valley is one of four high schools in the Pleasanton Unified School District , which includes Foothill High School , Village High School , and Horizon High School .

As of 2009 , Amador Valley offered its 2 @, @ 500 students 20 Advanced Placement courses , 23 varsity sports , a program to study local aquatic wildlife , and vocational training . A monthly school publication , the Amador , reports on athletics , academic and extracurricular issues , and news of the school and community . Amador 's location allows it to be the launching point for parades and to host the site of the Amador Theater , Pleasanton 's central performing arts facility for more than 60 years . The Amador Theater has remained a part of the Amador Valley campus since the 1930s , despite major school construction in 1968 , 1997 , and 2004 . Amador is the rival of Foothill High School , across town .

Student groups , including the Marching Band and Math Team , have toured out @-@ of @-@ state after achieving high rankings in Californian competitions . In national competitions such as We the People : The Citizen and the Constitution , the Amador Valley team has ranked in the top four places from 1994 to 1996 , 2006 to 2009 , 2011 , 2013 , and 2014 . Similarly , the Amador Valley Robotics Team , AVBotz , is recognized nationally as the best performing high @-@ school team in the autonomous underwater vehicle ( AUV ) competition hosted by the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International ( AUVSI ) .

= = History = =

= = = Region and districts = = =

Amador Valley High School , originally Amador Valley Joint Union High School , was named for its location in the Amador Valley ( part of the Tri @-@ Valley area of the San Francisco East Bay ) . The valley 's namesake was a wealthy Californio rancher , Don José María Amador . The school was founded on March 14 , 1922 , as part of the Amador Valley Joint Union High School District ( AVJUHSD ) , out of concerns of overcrowding and transportation for students traveling to nearby Livermore High School . Amador Valley 's first class graduated in 1923 .

From 1922 to 1988 , the school was part of the AVJUHSD . Originally this district also taught students from nearby Dublin and served the local rural community . In the late 1930s , the Amador Theater was added to the main campus building . The " original " campus building ( c1922 ) was taken down in 1968 leaving only the theatre towards the front of the Amador Valley High School campus . The theater hosted school plays , band concerts , performances , lectures , and assemblies , and was the former home of the successful community theater group Cask and Mask , now known as The Masquers . The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 led to the building of a series of freeways in the region , which led to increased population and an increase in student enrollment .

In 1988 , voters approved the unification of several school districts in the region . On July 1 , 1988 , the AVJUHSD merged with the Pleasanton Joint School District to form the Pleasanton Unified School District . As of 2009 , the district contained two comprehensive high schools ( Amador Valley and Foothill ) , two continuation high schools ( Horizon and Village ) , three middle schools , seven elementary schools , and an adult education program .

The school grounds are bordered on the east and southeast by Santa Rita Road , a Union Pacific railroad track on which the Altamont Commuter Express runs , and Arroyo Valle . To the north are several businesses and residential districts lie on the western border . The school is the launch point for the annual Pleasanton Hometown Holidays Celebration Parade and the annual Fall Festival Parade , a part of the Alameda County Fair since the 1940s . The Fall Festival parade , which

features bands , floats , balloons , horses , and antique cars , starts on the Amador Valley parking lot , travels down Main Street , and ends near the fairgrounds .

= = = Court battle = = =

In 1978 , the AVJUHSD challenged the constitutionality of California Proposition 13 , which placed a cap on county real estate taxes . The proposition limited property tax assessments to the 1975 standard , eliminating \$ 7 billion of the \$ 11 @. @ 4 billion in property tax revenue collected each year . According to the Washington Post , the " severe " limitations this imposed on state funding forced local governments and most school districts in California to make " drastic cutbacks " . Furthermore , an article in the Los Angeles Times noted that Federal aid money for Californian schools , worth about \$ 98 million each year , may be reduced if state @-@ funded programs are cut . A recent Congressional report had found that Proposition 13 would not result in any major " local spending " cuts . In order to receive Federal aid , the state needed to maintain present levels of spending on local programs or secure local matching funds . However , the enforcement of this spending was " flexible in many programs " and the Federal Impact Aid program for schools was therefore in jeopardy .

The district held that the measure was " so drastic and far @-@ reaching that it was ' a revision ' of the state Constitution and not a mere amendment " . Ultimately , the district was unsuccessful in its suit . In their ruling , the judges distinguished between " amendment " and " revision . " The court confirmed that an initiative cannot " revise " the constitution ; Proposition 13 , however , was an amendment to the California Constitution and not a " revision " . In 2009 , Amador Valley was cited by dissenting Justice Carlos R. Moreno in arguing the non @-@ constitutionality of California Proposition 8 .

= = = Development = = =

The first class of eight students graduated in 1923 , and the school quickly became known for its municipal bands and sports teams , along with their cheerleaders . The school selected the Don as its mascot , in honor of the title used by Amador ; Don is a Spanish term used as a mark of high esteem for a distinguished nobleman or gentleman .

Parents of Amador Valley students became involved with student activities . In 1927 , Pleasanton mothers decided to start a school lunch program to provide students with a better environment for learning . Parents donated pots and pans , and a newly hired cook prepared lunches , to be eaten at new tables and benches . The tables and benches were constructed by the custodian and the music teacher from wood of horse stalls formerly on the campus . This project led to the formation of a Parent @-@ Teacher Association ( PTA ) chapter at Amador Valley in the late 1920s .

Much of the original Amador Valley High School building was demolished in 1968 leaving only the theatre to which a community fund raising effort restored . The following year , the school reached its maximum capacity , about 1 @, @ 895 students . To accommodate the larger student population , Dublin High School was founded . Both schools held classes on the Amador Valley campus during the 1968 ? 69 school year . A continued influx of families to the Pleasanton region prompted the foundation of another high school , Foothill , in 1973 .

Starting November 3 in 1986 , Amador Valley teachers went on a rolling strike to " protest a breakdown in negotiations for a new contract . " The school brought in substitutes to replace the picketing teachers . Amador Valley teachers are unionized under the California Teachers Association and the National Education Association .

In March 1997 , the city passed Measure B , which granted the school district \$ 69 million to replace old and crowded facilities and modernize the school campus . The renovations revived one of the school 's last original structures : the Amador Theater , the city 's most popular performing arts facility . The measure enabled the addition of renovated science classrooms , a multipurpose room , a library and media center , and a sound @-@ proofed music building . The parking lot and central quad were expanded , with more than 550 parking spaces in the new lot , and classrooms were

equipped to be more energy efficient .

In 1999 , responding to a directive from the California Superintendent of Education , the district identified character education as one of its goals . As selected by the community , six character traits ( responsibility , compassion , self @-@ discipline , honesty , respect , and integrity ) were listed as " expected behaviors " for Pleasanton . In 2004 , Amador Valley and the school district won national recognition ( National School of Character ) for its program emphasizing the Community of Character .

In 2004 , a new two @-@ story building was completed , containing twenty @-@ four new classrooms . The following year , the Charles " Chuck " Volonte Aquatic Center was built for Amador Valley 's swimming , diving , and water polo teams . Lighting retrofits were added in December 2004 for improved energy efficiency and illumination . In 2005 , Amador Valley High School was the first high school to join the worldwide Go Green Initiative . In the same year , Pleasanton was selected as the " Go Green City of the Year . "

= = Academics = =

As of 2012 , Amador Valley operates on a 7 : 00 a.m. to 3 : 00 p.m. schedule . Most students do not take first period , with their schedules starting at 8 : 00 a.m. This includes seven periods of instruction , a lunch , and a brunch . Amador Valley is a closed campus ; students are not allowed to leave school supervision during school hours .

= = Enrollment = =

In the 2011 ? 12 school year , Amador Valley High School had an enrollment of 2 @, @ 623 students and 170 faculty members , for a student @-@ faculty ratio of 15 : 1 . The student population at Amador Valley is predominantly White , with a large Asian minority and Hispanic and Latino Americans and African American minorities . Seven percent of Amador Valley students are involved in special education , three percent qualify for English language learner support , and two percent qualify for free or reduced price lunch .

= = Awards = =

The school has been deemed a three @-@ time California Distinguished School , a National School of Character , and a two @-@ time National Blue Ribbon School . Performance results for 2008 show Amador Valley with an Academic Performance Index ( API ) of 10 on a 10 @-@ point scale . The Daily Beast / Newsweek ranked Amador Valley High School 171th in 2013 , and 238th in 2012 , in its list of the Best High Schools in America . In 2008 , a team of Amador Valley students won the national UNICEF @-@ sponsored Junior 8 Competition . The team traveled to Toyako , Japan to attend the 2008 Group of Eight ( G8 ) Summit of World Leaders to collaborate on solutions to world problems . Eight of Amador Valley 's teachers ? Mark Aubel , Debbie Emerson , Jon Grantham , Tom Hall , Debbie Harvey , Brian Ladd , Marla Silversmith , and Eric Thiel ? have been recognized as a Pleasanton Unified School District teacher of the year ; one of those honorees , Brian Ladd , was also designated an Alameda County teacher of the year .

= = Programs = =

As of 2009 , Amador Valley curriculum offered 20 Advanced Placement ( AP ) classes , the most popular of which are AP Psychology , AP English Language and Composition , AP Calculus , AP Government , and AP United States History . Nearly half of Amador Valley students participate in the school 's AP Program . The average participant takes 4 @. @ 3 exams per year and 87 @. @ 5 percent of students receive at least one score of 3 or greater . The school offers the complete range of AP courses in the STEM fields ( science , technology , engineering , mathematics ) , as well as AP Language courses and their literature complements in English , French , German , Japanese ,

and Spanish . Amador Valley also offers AP courses in social sciences and visual and performing arts .

The school offers specialized instruction through vocational education as part of the valley @-@ wide Regional Occupational Program . Courses offered include computer @-@ assisted drafting , electronics , welding , medical training , and auto body repair .

The Amador Valley science department initiated Project Creek Watch in 1994 . The project provides students with resources for the long term study of Arroyo Valle ; these resources include information about the chemistry in the creek , images of the creek , a guide to flora and fauna , and student projects on aquatic species . " The goal is to let kids realize there are a number of different physical and biological components that allow these organisms ( in the creek ) to coexist , " said Eric Thiel , an Amador Valley Biology teacher and a co @-@ founder of the project . " I hope they walk away able to see how complex ecosystems are . " In 1999 , the project received a Golden Bell Award for excellence in education from the California School Boards Association . Research projects about the creek and other topics have won first place awards at the Tri @-@ Valley Science and Engineering Fair . In 2001 , Thiel and the school received a National Semiconductor " Internet Innovator Award " for the Project Creek Watch website .

= = Extracurricular activities = =

= = = Athletics = = =

As of 2009 , the school offered 12 varsity sports teams for boys and 11 varsity sports teams for girls . These sports are run under the Amador Valley Athletics Boosters and include baseball , basketball , cross country , football , golf , lacrosse , soccer , softball , spirit squad , swimming / diving , tennis , track , volleyball , water polo and wrestling . Amador Valley competes in the East Bay Athletic League and has won four East Bay Athletic League Championships .

The Amador Valley Booster Club also has hosted East Bay Special Olympics basketball tournaments , track meets , and volleyball competitions at Amador Valley High School since 2004 . The school coordinates parent and student volunteers , donates proceeds from snack sales , and provides facilities free of charge for three Special Olympic events : basketball , track , and volleyball . In 2006 , the Amador Valley Booster Club won " Volunteer Organization of the Year " from Special Olympics Northern California . In 2009 , the Booster Club provided over 200 volunteers to help with the logistics of the competition .

The Amador Valley Varsity Boys ' and Girls ' basketball teams both host an annual eight @-@ team basketball tournament , the Amador Basketball Classic ( ABC ) , in the first two weeks of December . The ABC brings high school basketball players and teams from within the state and outside of the state to play in Pleasanton . Each team plays four games between Wednesday and Saturday . Taking place every year since December 1961 , the ABC is the longest @-@ running eight @-@ team basketball championship in California . The girls ABC tournament has been held since December 1994 .

= = = Band and Color Guard = = =

Amador Valley 's music program was founded in 1928 by Harry Tripp , a native of England . Tripp , the director of bands at Amador Valley , established an orchestra and a glee club , and recruited performers for parades and numerous operettas . The Amador Valley band program is now the largest student activity on campus and hosts the annual Campana Jazz Festival , named after Jim Campana , who led the band from 1959 to 1979 .

Amador Valley 's band program consists of four concert bands : Wind Ensemble I , Wind Ensemble II , Wind Symphony , and Symphonic Band . At the annual California Music Educators Association Band Festivals , all four of Amador Valley 's concert bands regularly earn " Unanimous Superior " ratings .

The Marching Band and Color Guard compete in the Western Band Association ( WBA ) circuit . The band practices a competitive field show , performed at football halftime shows and competitions . The Marching Dons are classified into WBA Class AAAAAA . The Amador Valley Marching Dons have received sweepstakes ( highest score in combined AAAA and AAAAAA classes ) and first place awards and earned sixth place in 2008 at the WBA Championship .

In 2006 the marching band competed in the Bands of America Regional Competition for the first time , and placed fourth in the 2007 competition . In 2005 and 2009 , Amador Valley was invited to perform at the annual London New Year 's Day Parade .

In 2014 , the Amador Valley Marching Dons earned fourth place at the WBA Grand Championships with their program , " The Forest , " receiving a school @-@ high score of 93 @. @ 15 .

= = = Math Team = = =

The Amador Valley Math Team hosts outreach events and participates in mathematics competitions . The Mathematical Association of America placed Amador Valley High School on its School Merit Roll for performance on the American Mathematics Competitions series . The Math Team placed fifth nationally on the 2008 Collaborative Problem @-@ Solving Contest and placed in the top 25 nationwide in the 2005 ? 2009 Fall Startup Events .

Amador Valley is the first high school in California to host a MathLeague.org tournament . The tournament was run by Amador Valley math teachers with help from the Amador Valley Math Team . The event served as a qualifier for MathLeague.org 's Northern California Championships and served as a tryout for the Bay Area American Regions Math League team . The math team was praised for " showing leadership in mathematics . "

At the 2009 Northern California Championships , the Math Team placed second in Northern California to Lynbrook High School and received an invitation to MathLeague.org 's multi @-@ state championship in Kansas City . Amador Valley High School , the first to represent California at the Midwestern event , finished fifth in the championship out of the ten qualifying teams .

The Math Team also hosts the Amador Valley Geometry Bee , modeled after the Scripps National Spelling Bee . This competition invites students from Amador Valley , Foothill High School , and the district 's three middle schools to compete in timed rounds . The style of the competition consists of rounds of 10 questions each , deviating from the traditional spelling bee format .

The Math Team also hosts an event for parents and students , Family Math Night . This event lets parents preview course material with their students through hands @-@ on activities run by math team members . The goal of Family Math Night is " to help parents become comfortable assisting their students with math homework . "

= = = Robotics Team = = =

The Amador Valley Robotics Team , founded in 1999 , is the first and only high school team to compete in the Autonomous Underwater Vehicle ( AUV ) Competition hosted by the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International ( AUVSI ) . Each year , with a minimal amount of outside technical assistance , the team develops an AUV to maneuver an underwater obstacle course .

The team first entered the competition in 2000 with its Hammerhead AUV , weighing 98 kg ( 220 pounds ) . They placed seventh in the field of twelve . According to Daryl Davidson , the executive director of AUVSI , " The Amador group really broke the ice by being the first high school team at the competition ... It caught everybody off @-@ guard and their enthusiasm was very infectious . "

At the 2001 competition , Amador Valley placed second to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with its Manta Ray AUV . The Manta Ray weighed less than 100 kg ( 220 pounds ) and featured a modular design . According to Jim Bales , technical director of the competition , the technical details of the Manta Ray impressed many judges and its performance surpassed a number of university teams .

The Amador Valley Barracuda line , started in 2002 , " is propelled by two laterally mounted SeaBotix thrusters controlling speed and heading and two auxiliary thrusters aligned vertically

controlling pitch and depth . " To guide the AUV autonomously , a pressure sensor , compass , camera , and hydrophone array return navigation input data to the software . The AUV uses a Beagle Board single @-@ board computer that runs Angstrom Linux .

In 2008 , several fundamental changes were made to the robot . The control system was reorganized and the mission control software was revamped to improve communication and to limit overhead . A low @-@ level microcontroller @-@ based control system was added to free up system resources . This extra processing capability will be used for mission control and image processing tasks .

== Speech and Debate ==

Amador Valley 's main Speech and Debate teams places a heavy emphasis on public speaking skills . The school 's Mock Trial team represented Alameda County at the California State Championships in 2007 , and competed as the wildcard in 2009 . The Mock Trial team has perennially been Alameda County finalists in this Constitutional Rights Foundation sponsored competition , holding the finalist title five of the six years from 2004 ? 2009 . Alameda County Superior Court Judge George Hernandez , who presided over the final county round in 2007 , praised the level of preparedness of Amador Valley 's Mock Trial team .

The national We the People : The Citizen and the Constitution competition takes place each spring in Washington , D.C . The Amador Valley " We the People " team has represented the state of California at the national competition more than a dozen times since 1992 . The team earned the national title in 1995 , and took second place in the 1996 , 2006 , and 2007 competitions , in addition to placing third in 1994 . In 2008 and 2009 , the team placed fourth and third in the national competition , respectively , and then took second place again in 2011 , 2013 , and 2014 . Congressman Jerry McNerney and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi congratulated the 2009 team on Capitol Hill .

== Student outreach ==

Amador Valley 's Interact Club was founded in coordination with the local Rotary chapter , and is one of 33 @, @ 000 Rotary chapters in the world . Every year , the Interact Club coordinates several local fundraisers as well as nationwide campaigns in conjunction with Rotary events . Club members are a part of millions of worldwide Rotary and Interact members who work " locally , regionally , and internationally to combat hunger , improve health and sanitation , provide education and job training , promote peace , and eradicate polio under the motto Service Above Self . " Amador Valley 's Interact Club has been praised for its efforts to " educate , advocate and fundraise for life @-@ changing programs . "

The Human Rights Club is a similar sort of outreach group , affiliated with Amnesty International and STAND . The club was founded in 2007 by Amador Valley student Shelby Margolin , the California state high school outreach coordinator on the national STAND leadership board . The club focuses on ways to address issues such as genocide , disease and poverty in Africa . The student group hosts educational seminars and keynote speakers in an annual Human Rights Conference in the hope of " raising awareness about and helping to end genocide . "

== Other extracurricular activities ==

Additional Amador Valley clubs include Go Green , which encourages recycling on campus , and FISH Club , a non @-@ denominational Christian club . Around election years , Young Democrats and Young Republicans clubs are popular . The school 's Fashion Club hosts fashion shows , and the school 's Flight Club introduces students to aviation and aircraft . Cultural clubs at Amador Valley include Black Student Union , Muslim Student Association , and Multi Cultural Club . Other clubs at Amador Valley include Anime , Art of Movement , Astronomy , Bhangra , Book Club , California Scholastic Federation , DECA , Don Squad , Drama , Environmental , French , GO , Gay

@-@ Straight Alliance , Interact , Junior State of America , Lumberjack , Model United Nations , Political Ideals , Puzzle , Rugby , Short Film , and Students Interested in Medical Sciences ( SIMS ) .

= = Notable people associated with school = =

= = = Alumni = = =

Craig Billmeier ? 2008 World Air Guitar Champion , 2006 and 2008 US National Air Guitar Champion

Cary C. Chun ? former commander of the United States Air Force 's 50th Space Wing

Kevin Crow ? former professional San Diego soccer player , manager , and coach

Aliya Deri ? National Vocabulary Champion in 2008 , Scripps National Spelling Bee Runner Up in 2005

Rick Kane ? NFL player for the Detroit Lions and the Washington Redskins . Running back , career total 1 @, @ 486 yards . Class of ' 73 .

Paul Korver ? filmmaker and actor

Joel Kribel ? Former member of the PGA Tour , Web.com Tour and PGA Tour Canada .

Greg Kragen ? Former NFL player for 13 years for the Carolina Panthers , Kansas City Chiefs , and Denver Broncos . Went to one Pro Bowl and started in three Super Bowls .

Kevin Laue ? Division I Manhattan College basketball player with one hand , debuted in the 2009 ? 2010 season . Former President George W. Bush asked to meet with Laue while he was a student at Amador Valley .

Abby Martin ? journalist & community activist ; host of Breaking the Set on RT Network ; founder of Media Roots ( [mediaroots.org](http://mediaroots.org) ) , a citizen journalism project .

Tom Orloff ? district attorney for Alameda County

Scott Peters ? Former NFL offensive lineman for the Arizona Cardinals

Stephen Piscotty ? Major League Baseball player for the St. Louis Cardinals .

Donna Theodore ? singer and actress , Theatre World Award and Drama Desk Award recipient for role in Shenandoah

David Yost ? actor known for his role of Billy Cranston on the television series Mighty Morphin Power Rangers

= = = Staff = = =

Jim Trimingham ? Mayor of Pleasanton , member of the Immortal 21

= = = Online resources = = =